
THOMAS L. CROAK

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THE HERO IN THE NOVELS OF J. P. DONLEAVY

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
THOMAS L. CROAK
1975

THESIS

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Thomas Lester Croak

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in English

Joseph J. Waldmeir
Major professor

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ABSTRACT

THE HERO IN THE NOVELS OF J. P. DONLEAVY

By

Thomas L. Croak

Focusing on the hero in J. P. Donleavy's novels, this essay considers Donleavy's fiction as a contemporization of the traditions of Sensibility, Gothicism, the elegy, and the Byronic hero. Gathering elements from these sources, Donleavy portrays the dilemma of a contemporary man of feeling thrust into a gothic world. The conflict between the hero's sensibility, which makes him a misfit in his gothic society, and his need for independence from the gothic world, which seeks to annihilate him, motivates his response to the world in which he finds himself.

Chapter I analyzes the world into which Donleavy places his hero. Drawing primarily from the elegy, Donleavy creates a gloomy, unstable, hostile world in which his hero is both an outcast and a victim. The dreary atmosphere in which the hero must live both reflects his world-view and preconditions his world-view, providing the initial impetus for the hero's response to his world, a response which

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constitutes both the motivation and the theme of Donleavy's novels.

Chapter II considers the hero's response to his world. The hero seeks a permanent position of stability, peace, and security--elements denied him by a hostile world. To bring meaning and order into a chaotic, valueless world, the hero must insist upon his independence from that world and must establish himself as the center of his own private universe.

Chapter III studies the problems inherent in the assimilation of a hero of sensibility into a gothic world. Intertwining Sensibility and Gothicism to fit a modern context, Donleavy portrays the tragic situation of contemporary man. Section III of this chapter suggests a definition of Black Humor in terms of literary history, analyzing the futile and desperately comic situations which Donleavy's man of sensibility necessarily encounters in a gothic world.

Chapter IV considers Donleavy's novels in chronological order of publication, searching out changes in the hero as Donleavy varies the degree of sensibility and the concomitant need for independence with which he invests his hero. These variations enable Donleavy to study a variety of possibilities for facing one's world. Chapter IV seeks differences among the heroes rather than similarities. Central to this chapter is an analysis of Donleavy's use of the Doppelgänger, or Double.

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Finally, Chapter V considers Donleavy's hero as a contemporization of the Byronic hero. Though he yearns for aristocratic status, Donleavy's hero remains an outcast and a victim, reacting with Byronic scorn to the hostility of his fellow men, maintaining his independence though he must deny his sensibility. By showing that both Donleavy and Byron draw upon the same Eighteenth Century traditions, this chapter serves as a summary as well, showing Donleavy's hero as a contemporization of the Byronic hero, who provides a bridge to earlier literary traditions.

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THE HERO IN THE NOVELS OF J. P. DONLEAVY

By

Thomas L. Croak

A DISSERTATION

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

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1975

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THOMAS L. CROAK

1975

For Anna,

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for my parents, who bought me books.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Professor Joseph J. Waldmeir's generosity with his time and talents has made the research and writing of this dissertation a multi-faceted learning experience. Professors Russel Nye and Linda Wagner also deserve my special thanks for their help on this and other projects during my graduate schooling.

DEDICATION . .

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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INTRODUCTION

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J. P. Donleavy's significance lies not only in his depiction of contemporary society but in his contemporization of traditional forms and trends in literature, particularly those associated with the eighteenth century novel. Blending elements of the elegy, Gothicism, and Sensibility, Donleavy achieves his own mixture of these traditional elements, creating in the process a contemporary world in many ways analogous to the world of eighteenth century British literature. The world in which the Donleavian hero finds himself, at once both contemporary and Gothic, departs from the traditional interpretation of Gothicism by substituting vague and subtle twentieth century horrors for the more obvious Gothic trappings of earlier writers.

Within this Gothic framework, Donleavy creates a hero whose character is dominated by sensibility, but a sensibility, unlike that of the nobleman of eighteenth century novels, governed by the hero's need to survive the pitfalls of his Gothic world. The hero's economic and social position, as well as his relationships with those around him, affect the degree to which he allows his sensibility to dominate his need for independence, the conflict which is the major, underlying motivation of his

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response--and his often desperately comic response--to the world in which he finds himself. The evolution of the hero through Donleavy's novels does not simply show a progression in terms of a changing state of consciousness, but also delineates the multiple possibilities, or impossibilities, for facing one's world.

Just as Byron developed his hero from the traditions of the elegy, Gothicism, and Sensibility, so too Donleavy blends elements of these same traditions to develop a contemporary version of the Byronic hero. Donleavy's hero, unlike Byron's, cannot rise god-like from the rabble to turn the tide of human events. In Donleavy's contemporary world such stature is not possible; the superhero capable of reversing events unassisted, the colorful Frank Merriwell of our past, is unbelievable to a contemporary audience. Yet Sebastian Dangerfield and his successors attempt to maintain, and to live by, their own values in a hostile world of conflicting values. They also attempt to destroy those other values, or to demean them, to make them ridiculous, often with comic results. Interpreting the Donleavian hero as a contemporary Byronic figure summarizes the central conflict of sensibility and gothicism vs. independence, delineating the dilemma facing a Byronic hero in contemporary society.

Donleavy focuses on his hero and thus on the individual's position in the contemporary world. He places his hero in a gloomy, hostile world which combines those

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aspects of the elegy and the Gothic novel most adverse to the hero. The dreary ambience in which the hero must live creates a melancholy mood and generates a concomitant awareness of his own sensibility, with which he must face a hostile world. Donleavy's chapters frequently open with a view of rainy, dreary weather engendering a general gloom worthy of Poe--e.g., "The Fall of the House of Usher." The ginger man even dreams elegy settings, casting himself in the role of victim/outcast which, he feels, reflects the reality of his life. George Smith's rustic cabin, Samuel S's dreary Vienna apartment, Balthazar's Trinity College apartment, Clementine's Charnel Castle, and Cornelius Christian's funeral parlors serve as bases of operations from which their respective occupants foray into a similarly gloomy, elegiac world.

Donleavy's heroes sense a link between themselves and their environments, suggested by Donleavy's juxtaposition of weather images with the hero's thoughts and actions and by his use of specific metaphors such as "numb chill of disaster,"[1] and the "creeping grey horizon" (OE, 239) of the future. Specifically, the spectre of death, both psychic and physical, looms over a hero whose sensibilities have been honed by constant rubbing against an elegiac setting. The cemeteries, funerals, mausoleums, and charnel houses integral to the hero's world provide the context in which he operates, giving rise to the themes of

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Time is the hero's enemy, the villain, the force which cannot be overcome; and at the end of life waits death, which, for Donleavy's hero, means the defeat of his ambitions. The psychiatrist's clock measures Samuel S's minutes on the couch, each second diminishing the opportunities, the possibilities, for his cure. Nothing stays the same, Times change, and Donleavy's hero realizes that with each passing second, as Time progresses arithmetically, his hopes of satisfactorily fulfilling his personal goals diminish geometrically.

Donleavy peoples his elegiac setting with hostile throngs whose presence threatens the hero's existence. Society, its institutions, and most of its individual members add an actively hostile element to a passively hostile environment. Hostility may be as vague as the physical setting, taking the form of threatening letters which may or may not be sent to the proper recipient, bills from unknown or forgotten creditors, or the merest possibility of disinheritance. Social rules of conduct, because they oppose his personal rules, preclude the hero's attaining the position which he desires. Since his society seems to be seeking his death, the hero cannot be a joiner, he cannot accept society's rules; unless he does so, of course, society <u>will</u> seek his death. Thus Donleavy's Byronic hero faces an irresolvable paradox. Though he longs to join

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society, the only society available to him remains hostile to his personal goals. His acceptance by society should indicate salvation, but, because his acceptance depends upon his abandoning his personal goals, such an acceptance brings damnation instead.

The disparity between the hero's actual and desired roles conditions his response to his world. The physical and social settings induce in the hero a sense of being an outcast and a victim; he considers himself a "man amuck,"[2] an oppressed misfit. He labors for what he considers his rightful place at the pinnacle of society, simultaneously avoiding the multitudinous traps which society sets for him. During the struggle, however, the hero realizes the inevitability of his death at the hands of the society he is attempting to join.

His self-image as a lonely, helpless victim makes the hero's life a struggle for survival characterized by a search, first, for a temporary escape and, finally, for permanent stability and security in a changing world. This struggle leads Donleavy's hero to seek independence from a society which cannot offer him stability and necessitates his view of himself as his own world-center.

The hero first attempts to overcome the loneliness engendered by the elegiac environment with its hostile populace. Indeed, loneliness has him on the brink of madness, and, though Donleavy's separate heroes differ in

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their reactions, all are pushed to the apparent limit of their endurance. Dangerfield's outbursts of violence, George Smith's hallucinations, Samuel S's rejoicing in the attention he receives as the object of his landlady's wrath, Balthazar's ever-deepening withdrawal from the world, and Clementine's projection of loneliness onto all mankind and all the universe indicate the depths to which loneliness has brought these characters. When the temporary respite of alcohol proves too transitory a solution, the hero contemplates the permanent escape of death, whose permanence is at once attractive in its ultimate peace and stability and repulsive in its insistence on the hero's role as victim, a role which the hero refuses to accept.

The peace which the hero finds in sexual encounters proves as transitory as the pleasures of drinking. While the intimate interaction with another human being provides a sense of peace, security, and stability in a hostile, fluctuating world, the hero ultimately finds his independence threatened by such a relationship. Sex becomes another of society's traps, alluring in its false sense of security, fatal in its ultimate subjugation of the hero's independent will.

Closely allied with the peace which the hero seeks in sex is the security of a refuge away from the world's hostility. The scene of his sexual exploits often provides the security of a refuge, a sanctuary in a Gothic world,

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enhancing the momentary peace which the hero finds with his partner. Ironically, the refuge proves self-defeating, for the refuge isolates the hero from the society which he hopes to enter on his own terms. Refuge can thus offer only a temporary respite for the hero, for to accept permanent separation from the world negates his attempts to become an independent member of society. To accept a refuge implies an acceptance of the world's terms and conditions, a situation antithetical to the hero's simultaneous drive for independence.

Stability, for Donleavy's hero, is peace and security on a higher plane. Stability is a peaceful refuge which can be preserved--an ideal marriage, a cessation of the earth's rotation, a train that simply continues without stops, the permanence of a mausoleum, the inherent strength of an enduring monarchy, and the general ordering and stratifying of society. This stability, however, is not possible in Donleavy's world, for even if the world itself could cease its motion and Time could stand still, the hero's fellow men would continue to be the instruments of hostility, precluding the hero's entrance into society on his own terms. Thus the hero's search for peace and stability leads to another significant aspect of his response to his world, his inherent scorn for his fellow men.

Donleavy's heroes share this scorn, in varying degrees, and with differing manifestations. Finding all men hostile

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or indifferent, the hero holds himself aloof, ever wary of being "trapped on this casual note of friendship" (GM, 202). His scornful aloofness completes a cycle of tragic absurdity--an absurdity focusing more on the preposterous futility of his quest for a refuge than on a reasoned philosophical stance--for scorning his fellow man forces him into the role of outcast. The hero thus places himself in much the same position as his society placed him when he first sought refuge from the world, a refuge he ultimately rejected as accommodation. Again the hero is cut off; but now, in addition to being denied access to the world on his own terms, he simultaneously relinquishes his independence through tacitly accepting those terms which necessitate his aloofness. Scorn proves to be a self-inflicted wound rather than a solution.

In reaction to his situation, the hero defies those oppressive forces which make him an outcast, thus attempting to place himself above, rather than below, the rest of society. He takes some quiet pleasure, and a great deal of pride, in defying society. Dangerfield defies his creditors, Smith invests his money in a mausoleum to deny his grasping wife a penny, Samuel S snobbishly refuses to have sex, Balthazar concurs in Beefy's defiant escapades, and Clementine, when pressed, returns threat for threat.

Cut off from society, the hero returns to a position of loneliness. By choosing to be an individual, however,

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the hero has become a rebel rather than an outcast victim. Refusing to accept society's rules, the hero now seeks life on his own terms. Thus the hero finds independence instead of loneliness, and, despite the concomitant loneliness, he opts for independence at any cost. Love and conformity to society become threats rather than desiderata, for he now sees himself as a victim in these situations. Though "amuck" in society, the hero finds satisfaction in having perverted mobility to his own ends. Avoiding the strictures of long-term relationships, the hero fiercely maintains his independence, avoiding society's traps and glorying in his individuality.

The hero's reactions fluctuate throughout his life, causing a shifting of values and a redefining of limits and boundaries which characterize the hero's non-linear progress. A closer focusing on the conflict between sensibility and independence clarifies the hero's vacillating moods and objectives.

The hero's sensibility is both an attribute and an affliction, for, given a Gothic world, the hero's desire to live as he feels tends to entrap him, threatening to stifle his other great drive, to maintain his independence. The interrelationship of the hero's sensibility and the Gothic world, placed in opposition to his drive for independence, provides the central conflict of the novels. The hero will maintain his independence ultimately, though,

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depending upon his social and economic situation, he gives up, at least temporarily, varying measures of independence in order to indulge his sensibility. The Gothic world which triggers his sensibility also threatens his independence; thus the world in which he finds himself offers the hero an irresolvable paradox: his need for independence precludes his succumbing to a powerful desire to join his society.

Donleavy, of course, is not writing eighteenth century novels, but he has drawn upon the Hero of Sensibility, "the man of feeling," to characterize the hero whom he places in a contemporary version of a Gothic world. Historically, Sensibility and Gothicism developed simultaneously--each strain in fiction remaining separate but each offering a great deal to the other. Sensibility and Gothicism in their historical context are important to a study of Donleavy's novels, but of even greater importance is the modern context which Donleavy has created for these two traditions. At this point some definitions are in order.

Sensibility rose to a dominant place in English literature during the years 1750-1775;[3] Northrop Frye has labelled the second half of the eighteenth century the Age of Sensibility, suggesting that this period provides a transition between the Augustan period and the Romantic era. Historically, the Age of Sensibility follows immediately upon the elegies of Thomas Gray and develops

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Sensibility, in the simplest sense, is the cultivating of the emotions for their own sake (Sickels, 195). Frye considers sensibility a corollary of anxiety, or fear without an object; in literature, this fear is derived from the gloom of the elegy and of Gothicism.[4] The consequence of this anxiety, pity without an object, for which we have no name, is very close to the basic concept of Sensibility. The principal result of this pity, which we see in Donleavy's work, is "a sense of sympathy with man himself, a feeling that 'no one can afford to be indifferent to the fate of anyone else'" (Frye, 150). Donleavy's perspective is that, in contemporary society, men are indifferent to each other.

The fundamental characteristic of Sensibility is the emotional response to stimuli, a reaction against logical, rational responses. In developing a response both emotional and individual, Sensibility reiterated the mutability theme found in the elegy, either casting the hero as a victim of time--allowing time to work on the hero--or using time as a limitation--emphasizing what the hero can accomplish in a limited amount of time.[5] Thus the background atmosphere of the elegy, the importance of the mutability theme, and, primarily, the emotional rather than the rational response to stimuli constitute the basic elements of the tradition of Sensibility into which I propose to place Donleavy's work.

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Within this context, the hero of Sensibility offers some specific comparisons and contrasts to Donleavy's hero. Always isolated, passive, egocentric, introspective, and aware of his own identity in a world of shifting values,[6] the hero of Sensibility is subject to melancholy (Thorslev, 39) and is:

> attuned to the slightest touch of joy or pain either in himself or in another, . . . capable of swooning with joy or dying of a broken heart, of rejoicing in the good fortune of a rival or weeping over a sad tale from the antipodes or the death of a pet mouse (Sickels, 195).

This emotional response, founded in the elegy, is shared with Gothicism, for the strange diseases of Gothicism may be either physical or emotional. From this perspective, therefore, Sensibility may be considered one element of Gothicism.

The Hero of Sensibility, the embodiment of the philosophy and characteristics of Sensibility, concerns himself with mutability, world-weariness, and meditation on death (Thorslev, 46). He is "distinguished not by daring exploits or superior intelligence, but quite simply by his capacities for feeling" (Thorslev, 35). To this point, Donleavy's hero fits the mold fairly well. Consideration of the hero's relationship to his society, however, reveals some contemporary reactions to a twentieth century society which differs considerably from the world in the Age of Sensibility.

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The traditional hero of Sensibility conforms to society's value system, preferring to channel his feelings within this established framework.

> The Man of Feeling is set apart from common man because of his peculiar and exacerbated sensitivity, although he shares the professed moral and social codes of his neighbors (Thorslev, 21).

The Hero of Sensibility is no rebel; unlike Donleavy's hero, the earlier Hero of Sensibility operates within the given social framework. While Donleavy's hero wishes to get inside his society, his view of his world, and his need for independence which wars with his sensibility, require that he remake the system of social values before becoming a member of that society.

Excepting a brief chronological period, Sensibility usually occurs as one characteristic of a larger work. There are few modern works--and Donleavy's novels are no exception--constituting a literature of Sensibility; generally, Sensibility is one characteristic of Gothicism, which has its roots in the elegy.

Elegiac poetry became increasingly associated with literary Gothicism (Sickels, 34), became macabre in character (Sickels, 32), developed such devices as the graveyard and the charnel house meditations, added gratuitous horrors (Sickels, 27), and developed the use of landscape to enhance a melancholy atmosphere, setting the stage, through a shifting of emphasis, for the Gothic novelists--beginning

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with Horace Walpole (The Castle of Otranto, 1764)--who were to rely heavily upon the landscape and physical setting to develop the prevalent atmosphere, and indeed the theme, of their novels. Gothicism has many important affinities with the elegy, its most significant and most immediate precursor, but it also has other roots beyond the major elegiac contribution of landscape and melancholy atmosphere. Precedents for Gothicism may be found in the folk tales of almost every culture; in English, the character Grendel in Beowulf is an archetypal Gothic Villain-hero,[7] and the belief in ghosts pervasive in folklore[8] provides a historical precedent for the elements and devices of supernaturalism characteristic of Gothic literature. The modern ghost story is derived from Gothicism,[9] indicating that the supernatural aspect of Gothicism represents a part of a long, continuing tradition.

In analyzing the structure of Gothic literature, Charles Muscatine finds juxtaposition, and expansion rather than concentration, to be characteristic of the Gothic form. The author leads his reader through the stages and stations of a journey,[10] the sequential progression which Muscatine sees as Chaucer's order in The Canterbury Tales[11] and which Donleavy uses, in a perhaps looser episodic form, in his novels. Donleavy, in playing off his hero's sensibility with the hero's gothic view of the world, uses the juxtaposition technique of gothicism on one level to motivate

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the episodic structure of his novels, one of whose characteristics, on another level, is gothicism. The same technical device conveys the essential Gothic conflict between noble designs and chaos, functioning in much the same way as the Gothic conflict which Muscatine sees in Chaucer's "The Knight's Tale."[12] Thus Donleavy's novels share elements of structure, theme, and technique which the Gothic novel gathered from earlier sources.

Gothicism held a major place in English literature for the half-century following Horace Walpole's publication of The Castle of Otranto in 1764. Walpole collated many of the elements of Gothicism found in earlier literature and, to an extent, codified these elements for later writers. Gothic novelists following Walpole added their own talents to their novels, but all followed Walpole's basic formula. A prescribed overall atmosphere, several recurrent themes which became Gothic conventions, the setting and atmosphere engendered by some stock devices and techniques, traces of a nascent Sensibility (which is far more important in Donleavy's work than in strictly Gothic novels), and the evolution of a villain-hero became characteristic features of Gothicism.

Some discussion of fundamental generalities concerning Gothicism and its times form a basis for a deeper look at the particular elements of Gothicism. The Gothic novel is greatly indebted to the general popularity of

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exotic themes and to literature's emancipation from overt moral commitment.[13] Exotic scenes--or in Donleavy's novels, bizarre scenes such as Balthazar's appearance as a hospital exhibit--became a part of the setting, and the freedom from a religious requirement allowed authors to project a sense of guilt and anxiety based upon the villain-hero's secret sin (Fiedler, 129). Thus liberated, Gothic novelists portrayed the power of evil, centering the novel on the villain rather than upon the heroine (Fiedler, 128). The forces of evil were projected in the person of the villain-hero, a type important to later literature as a forerunner of the Byronic hero. The villain-hero, and the theme of his bondage to evil, both of which originated in the Gothic novel (Fiedler, 128) have been important to later literature whose purpose is not moral in a wholly religious sense. Donleavy's novels, though more sophisticated than eighteenth century Gothic novels, share the depiction of the hero as evil. Donleavy's hero, however, is not evil according to his own standards; he is often simply at odds with his world. Since this hero would make his own rules rather than accepting society's rules, the question of what is evil, or of who may be allowed to define evil, remains a moot point. Thus Donleavy's hero, viewed from his society's perspective, indeed qualifies as a Gothic villain-hero; viewed from his own point of view, however, the hero is generally a paragon of his own concept of virtue.

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Donleavy deviates from Fiedler's explanation that Gothic fiction feels the "pastness of the past" (137). In the eighteenth century Gothic novels, the past became not merely a setting against which the author depicted the problems of his contemporary society, nor was the past used merely to contrast with a more modern world; rather, "the Gothic heroine evades the perils of the past, that is, of life as recorded in history" (Fiedler, 128). The terrors of a less sophisticated age, an overt belief in supernatural elements, and limited physical and scientific capabilities to deal with problems characterize eighteenth century, but not contemporary, Gothicism.

The action of a Gothic novel is enacted under an atmosphere of oppression and of innocence in danger.[14] This atmosphere, which permeates the entire novel, results from the focus on the villain-hero, who, as the novel's central figure, makes the force of evil an omnipresent threat to the weaker heroine and to the novel's lesser characters, most of whom are subservient to and dependent upon him in a feudal society. Donleavy contemporizes the society of his novels and shifts the focus by offering alternating views of his hero. Through Gothicism's interplay with Sensibility, Donleavy presents a hero who is alternately oppressor and victim of a villainous world. Donleavy's hero, having rejected his society's value system, becomes innocent in Ihab Hassan's sense of "valueless" and

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hence is incapable of transgressing established values. Thus Donleavy's hero can switch from the role of villain to a role akin to the heroine, persecuted and pursued by a sort of corporate villain, the world at large. Obviously, Donleavy's plotting and characterizations are more complex than those of his eighteenth century predecessors. The hero's internal struggle reflects the conflict of innocence with the forces of evil, a struggle further demonstrated in his outward struggle with the world.

Within this framework of oppression, love is a major concern of Gothicism. In his role as villain-hero, Donleavy's hero exhibits the uncontrolled lustful passion typical of a Gothic tyrant; but he also maintains his innocence. Through the hero's point of view, the reader sees Donleavy's hero alternately as the oppressor of a lower class working girl--a class conflict typical of Gothicism (Railo, 44)--and as the victim of his own lust, trapped on the brink of marriage, or at least responsibility, by the woman who proves neither so passive nor so naive as the hero--and the reader--at first assumed her to be. Dangerfield callously cons Mary out of her money but ultimately becomes a Christ figure in their relationship: the oppressor becomes victim, as sensibility and gothicism intertwine. The theme of love, shown in many different kinds of love in Donleavy's novels as well as in traditional Gothic novels, is developed within the prevailing atmosphere of oppression and persecution,

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Gothicism's recurring major themes, terror and love, good and evil, perversity, and usurpation, coupled with the concepts of innocence in danger, oppression, and persecution, result in the "substitution of terror for love as a central theme" (Fiedler, 134). For Donleavy's hero, terror often concludes a love relationship. The consequences of a love relationship distorted by the hero's society as well as by the hero's reaction to his society finally overshadow the relationship itself.

The representation of good and evil is important in Gothicism (Nelson, 267); indeed, the dichotomy of good and evil is the dominant theme of the Gothic novel. The love relationships, the atmosphere of oppression, and the concept of innocence in danger are all manifestations of the same basic conflict, with the forces of evil represented by the villain-hero and the forces of good represented by his victims. In Donleavy's novels, the hero's world, as well as the hero, functions as villain, and Donleavy's hero both victimizes other characters and is himself a victim of his society. Though other themes occur within Gothicism, most are actually more important as setting or incident than as theme, for Gothicism, traditionally, is not heavily philosophical. The basic good-versus-evil conflict--Donleavy's hero who sees himself as good in

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Perversity, a corollary to the conflict between good and evil, often motivates characters in Gothic literature (Nelson, 262), forcing a man to follow the path of evil because it is contrary to his reason and judgment, qualities which represent the forces of good in the Gothic tradition but come to represent, for Donleavy, the means by which the hero will lose his independence. Poe developed the theory as well as the use of perversity, evolving a recognition of the irrational, of the impulse to evil, from the earlier Gothic reliance on the supernatural elements to carry the story (Nelson, 263). For Donleavy's hero, the irrational is irrational in society's terms; the hero, who is not amoral as Fiedler finds Poe, but "valueless" in Hassan's sense of "innocence," defies not his own rational sense but that set of rules which his society imposes upon him as a rational construct. Fiedler criticizes Poe's lack of a "sense of sin . . . which alone dignifies Gothic fiction: (Fiedler, 428); Donleavy's hero, a man of great sensibility, possesses a sense of sin which differs from the concept of sin held by his society. Hence, Donleavy's hero, from his society's viewpoint, shares many of the Gothic villain-hero's traits; he sees himself, however, as a victim of a sinful world, as innocent by his own standards. Like Poe, Donleavy attacks the problem of

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good versus evil from a secular rather than a religious perspective. Without attaching a religious connotation, Poe notes that man as often follows an inherent impulse to evil as an inherent impulse to good; for Donleavy, the inclination to evil is not so much an impulse as a necessity motivated by the hero's need for independence. In Poe, evil is absolute: the hero sees himself as evil; in Donleavy, evil is relative: the hero disagrees with his society's verdict.

Donleavy's hero assumes the role of victim in situations involving the theme of usurpation, a staple of the Gothic tradition. The Gothic villain-hero's secret sin often involves his unjust usurpation of his throne, his attempts to usurp the rightful place of another, or his unjust efforts to maintain his own power following his usurpation. Walpole's The Castle of Otranto offers an example of the usurper in the person of Manfred; Shakespeare's Hamlet provides a pre-Gothic period example of the usurpation as used by Gothic writers.[15] This theme also falls under the more inclusive theme of good versus evil, for usurpation is a manifestation of the villain-hero's possession by evil. Donleavy's hero feels that society, here the corporate villain-hero, has usurped his rightful place, relegating him to a low life which he does not deserve.

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Gothicism was so codified following Walpole as to be a requisite for Gothic literature. The victim, haunted by the evil villain-hero, and the pursuing villain-hero, himself haunted by his secret sin, operate in a haunted castle in a haunted countryside (Fiedler, 131), a system used repeatedly by Donleavy and a system which he pushes to the verge of parody in The Onion Eaters. The landscape taken from the elegy reinforces the mood of the novel. Restoration drama, like the elegy, is a source for many specific Gothic effects (Fiedler, 127). The Gothic atmosphere sets and builds the emotional tone of the story (Railo, 10), a technique borrowed from the elegy by Gothic writers who passed the technique to the Age of Sensibility. The Gothic atmosphere is apparent throughout Donleavy's novels; from the initial Dangerfield residence at Balscadoon in The Ginger Man to George Smith's mausoleum, Charnel Castle, and Cornelius Christian's funeral parlors, Donleavy uses his settings, in the tradition of eighteenth century Gothic novelists, to convey an overall atmosphere and mood.

Railo lists the major elements of the Gothic setting, the first and most important of which is the Gothic castle, presented as a scene of horrors which therefore touches the reader's imagination each time introduced (Railo, 7). The castle is so important that it operates as a touchstone for the author, for a character or incident that does not fit into the castle scene does not belong in the novel.

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The "towers bathed in the spectral moonlight of Hamlet" (Railo, 7), a second, if subsidiary, element of the setting, introduces a supernatural aspect to the castle. While Donleavy's hero eschews a belief in the supernatural, clearly many aspects of his life are beyond his control, creating the contemporary Gothic situation in which the hero operates.

Within the castle, ancestral portraits constitute another element of the setting (Railo, 7). These portraits may be propitiously illuminated by moonlight (Railo, 11) to remind the villain-hero of his secret sin, perhaps by illuminating the portrait of the king usurped by the villain-hero. Additional elements are the underground vaulted passages (Railo, 7), which Mrs. Radcliffe develops into a labyrinth (Railo, 11), and the secret door, which leads to a cave outside the castle or to a church (Railo, 7)--either of which offers the pursued heroine sanctuary. Donleavy uses these or similar devices, most obviously in The Onion Eaters.

The elegy's charnel setting is duplicated by the silence of the castle's subterranean vaults, a silence broken only by the squeaking of rusty hinges (Railo, 7). Within the passage, the heroine often encounters a secret trap-door (Railo, 7), operated by some mysterious mechanical device known only to the master of the castle. The trap-door in Walpole's The Castle of Otranto and the spring locks on the windows in Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue" exemplify such secret-opening passages. The much-used

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castle dungeon (Railo, 7), often used by Poe, and the castle's banquet hall with galleries (Railo, 7), which enable the heroine or hero to observe events without the knowledge of the other characters, as Clementine does in The Onion Eaters, are both stock elements of the Gothic setting. Shakespeare employs this device when Hamlet observes Claudius' reaction to the play.

Mrs. Radcliffe further accentuates the castle by placing it upon a mountain peak or on a seacoast where the mood is enhanced by wild storms (Railo, 9). Donleavy sets this same scene in the opening of The Ginger Man, later emphasizing the weather, rather than the house-castle, as the recurring touchstone for the Gothic atmosphere. Mrs. Radcliffe also developed the technique of presenting two views of the castle. Viewed from afar, the castle appears strong and proud, creating the impression of the owner's power; upon closer inspection, however, the castle is discovered to be old, weather-beaten, and overgrown with weeds (Railo, 9). Modern American writers of the Southern Gothic school, notably Truman Capote in Other Voices, Other Rooms and William Faulkner, in Absalom Absalom, also use these contrasting views of the house. Donleavy's heroes occupy residences splendid or impressive from the outside, decaying and hostile on the inside.

The setting of Gothic literature, and especially the house-castle, functions as the basis for the emotional

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tone of the story. Like the setting itself, the technique of creating an emotional atmosphere is derived from the elegy. The use of ruins and the atmosphere of ruin found in Gothic literature has antecedents in the hermit's hut in Spenser's The Faerie Queen (Railo, 19) and in the hermitage of Milton's "Il Penseroso" (Railo, 20). Gothicism places a great value upon setting to create the desired emotional atmosphere--the haunted, gloomy sense of oppression which dogs Donleavy's hero--resulting from the introduction of a villain-hero into the landscape of the elegy. Thus Gothicism and the elegy are very similar in the use of setting, but the elegy is essentially philosophical whereas Gothic literature introduces incident, plot, and character, downgrading the importance of the philosophical theme. Donleavy shifts back to a philosophical theme, maintaining the importance of character and relying on a series of incidents rather than upon an integrated plot. Donleavy's plots resemble the loose Chaucerian juxtaposition noted by Muscatine.

In addition to the major themes and those elements of Gothicism closely related to the setting and the atmosphere, several general characteristics and recurrent ideas deserve mention. Many techniques and devices stamp a work as Gothic, and these easily recognizable elements facilitate a categorization which, though oversimplified, associates the various recurrent elements of Gothicism.

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perspective, art may be preferable to life, as Henry James suggests in "The Real Thing," a life whose horrors are masked by the synthetic horrors of the Gothic work.[16] A central vision "that all men are victims or cripples"[17] perhaps accounts for the writer's tendency to distort reality. Thus Gothicism may, in a broad sense, be an antecedent of such diverse literary philosophies as naturalism and existentialism.

The atmosphere of oppression discussed above results from the constant presence of evil. The villain-hero personifies evil, and, in addition, the incidents of murder, rape, and incest render evil an inescapable aspect of life. Sanctuary, a necessity in a life filled with evil, is a minor theme in Donleavy's novels as well as in older Gothic literature. Donleavy secularizes the concept of sanctuary, which had been an essentially religious part of the good-evil dichtomy in earlier Gothic novels.

In establishing a simple setting made unsocial by the confusion of conventional good and evil (Nelson, 266), Gothicism sometimes substitutes outright horror for the melancholy of the elegy (Sickels, 64). Donleavy escalates to the level of horror when he depicts his hero's violent reaction to his world, then quickly deescalates again as the hero's sensibility returns, leaving him with elegiac melancholy rather than Gothic horror. For Donleavy's hero, melancholy predominates, with occasional bursts of Gothic

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horror a constant possibility. Gothic horror springs from the dominance of the villain-hero, an omnicompetent hero embodying the evil forces of the mind, who is alternately Donleavy's protagonist and society itself. Society's opposing the protagonist results in the constant pursuit, capture, escape, and flight which is a trademark of the Gothic novel. The flight of the heroine, which may be either a flight or a quest in Donleavy's novels, is both a characteristic device (Railo, 40) and a major symbol (Fiedler, 131) in Gothic literature.

The dominant position of the Gothic villain-hero requires considering him within the context of Gothicism and discussing the devices and techniques accompanying his representation. The villain-hero's role as hero will be investigated below as a part of the chronological development of the Byronic hero, of which Donleavy's hero affords a recent example, but here a description of his general characteristics demonstrates his function as one of the aspects of Gothicism. Because of the hero's vague origin,[19] and the revelation of his true identity only at the novel's conclusion, the novel revolves about the villain-hero in the first telling of the story, and the entire story must be reevaluated in terms of the final revelations, again in terms of this central figure. Donleavy creates a similar vagueness about his hero, though as a ramification of Sensibility rather than of Gothicism. Donleavy has us step

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into and out of the hero's life by presenting a series of incidents, a technique akin to Sensibility's concept of writing as a process. Each incident, however, requires us to reevalutate all of the hero's actions, or at least to establish a different perspective, much as older Gothic novels forced a change in perspective by the final reversal. Like eighteenth century novelists, Donleavy builds his novels around a dominant villain-hero.

The Biblical Cain, with his distinguishing mark differentiating him from his fellow man (Nelson, 265), provides an important source for the characterization of the villain-hero. In addition to being an embodiment of the forces of evil, the villain-hero shows, in microcosm, the conflict of good and evil. His original good impulses thwarted, the villain-hero devotes his energy to massive, calculating revenge (Nelson, 265). Donleavy's hero, seeing his world as a Gothic institution, feels his innate goodness thwarted; he reacts with violence, countering the society which he sees as evil but from whose perspective we see the hero as evil. The villain-hero, haunted by guilt resulting from the characteristic "secret sin" which colors his attitudes toward life, becomes a wanderer whose skills are diverted to the service of evil (Nelson, 265). Donleavy's unencumbered hero, presented in various episodes, reflects Gothic wandering as well as Donleavy's "process" of Sensibility.

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Society's interest "in the solitary eccentric; the misfit, the social outcast, the guilt-haunted wanderer" (Nelson, 260) gave great impetus to the Gothic form. Responding to this vogue, late eighteenth century authors built upon the prototype of the Gothic villain-hero found in Shakespeare--notably in the person of Cassius in Julius Caesar (Railo, 33). The Gothic villain-hero became a fusion of the Wandering Jew and Faust, a "forgiveable victim of passion and circumstance" (Fiedler, 133). Donleavy's hero sees himself as such a victim, a man whose "world was made for me. Something got mixed up about my assets" (GM, 95). Like Faust, the villain-hero sells his soul to the devil. He does not simply risk damnation, as do all men; he commits himself to damnation, choosing to be damned (Fiedler, 133). The Faustian projection answered society's interest in the outcast, tailored by Gothic writers to fit their contemporary audience. Similarly, a part of Donleavy's hero's appeal results from his decision to assert himself against the forces of his society.

The Gothic villain-hero's "essential loneliness and feeling of incommunicability" (Nelson, 263), his contact with demonic forces as well as with the evil forces of the mind, and his extraordinary virtue thus transformed to extraordinary vice (Nelson, 263) illustrates that "human nature drives toward both good and evil" (Nelson, 262). Donleavy's hero vacillates, tending first toward the good

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of the hero of Sensibility, then toward the evil of the Gothic villain-hero. The impermanence of his dominant drive suggests an irresolvable conflict between good and evil, a conflict which Donleavy portrays as chronologically non-linear. While the Gothic villain-hero moves from good to evil, Donleavy's hero hops back and forth, perpetually swayed by the vicissitudes of life, adrift in an ever-changing world, seeking the stability which the Gothic villain-hero expects when he turns to evil. Donleavy's hero feels the mutability of his Gothic world in a way in which earlier Gothic villain-heroes do not; he thus reacts, reacts, moving back and forth from good to evil as the circumstances of his life change.

Coupled with his sense of loneliness and his "secret sin," the villain-hero suffers remorse, though the reasons for his remorse are vague and are often not revealed until the conclusion of the work (Thorslev, 166). Remorse, however, does not imply repentance, and the Gothic villain-hero, who is often cruel, is not a sympathetic figure. Sir Walter Scott's noble outlaw, a development of the villain-hero, is first a victim and only as a result is he a rebel against society (Thorslev, 22). Donleavy's hero, though often cruel, gains the reader's sympathy because he sees himself as society's victim, possibly inducing empathy in the modern reader, but his lack of social consciousness distinguishes him from Scott's noble outlaw. The Gothic

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villain-hero, a staple of Gothicism, provides a prototype for the many later heroes of literature, such as Donleavy's hero, who represent not new types but rather changes in the villain-hero.

In contemporary American fiction, spiritual voyages replace the literal pilgrimages of earlier Gothic novels; these spritiual voyages are often presented as mechanical voyages, to depict a perversion of the voyage of life.[20] A recurrent theme of imprisonment or entrapment as an ironic end to a search for a private place (Malin, 95-97 ff) is a Gothic legacy in contemporary fiction. In Saul Bellow's work, the search for a position of ultimate stability, seen clearly in the characters Augie March and Henderson, derives from Gothicism. "New American Gothic," Malin says, "presents ambivalent characters who want to see the big world but are afraid to leave the little world" (79-80).

Contemporary Gothicism portrays the terrors of the "buried life": "self-love, the need to destroy the community" (Malin, 161). The Donleavian hero's drive for independence makes him an iconoclast, for the hostile community must be destroyed if he is to remain independent. Donleavy's hero fits Malin's vision of the family's function as microcosm dramatizing the conflict between private and social worlds (8), for the hero sees marriage as a trap, an end to his private life because he has become a part of society. Dangerfield and especially Balthazar find their options and

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Contemporary Gothicism "is primarily concerned with love, knowing 'that there can be no terror without the hope for love and love's defeat'" (Malin, 5). Typically, the hero is a narcissistic weakling whose narcissism ultimately leads to total isolation (Malin, 15). Malin makes much of the narcissism of contemporary Gothicism, a characteristic, interestingly, of the Byronic hero, himself a development of Gothicism's villain-hero. The hero of contemporary Gothicism develops from the Byronic hero, thus tying contemporary American Gothicism to earlier English Gothicism, with the works of Byron rather than the earlier American Gothic works the most important intermediate step in Donleavy's novels. Donleavy's hero, I will show later, is a contemporary Byronic hero, a Byronic hero in a contemporary world. Donleavy relies most heavily on an English rather than an American literary tradition, though his contemporization of the earlier forms has stronger affinities with his American contemporaries.

Contemporary Gothicism presents a world out of focus (Malin, 12), a direct outgrowth of the distortion which has always characterized Gothicism. Departing from the expansiveness of Walpole's era, contemporary Gothicism focuses on a microcosm. The psychological aspect of

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contemporary Gothic novels, however, reflects Gothicism's expansiveness, as the entire field of psychological conflict, especially the conflict between the self and society (Malin, 4), becomes central to contemporary works. Donleavy's contemporization of the Byronic hero thus fits the Gothic mold in several ways, for Donleavy has updated the hero, his position in the novel, and the basic conflict of the Gothic novel as well. This new hero shows the "fear of solitude which is the price of freedom" as well as the inclination to an "hysterical attack on all institutions which might inhibit freedom or mitigate the solitude it breeds" (Fiedler, 131). The symbols and meanings of the Gothic "depend on an awareness of the spiritual isolation of the individual in a society where all communal systems of value have collapsed or have turned into meaningless cliches" (Fiedler, 131). Thus contemporary Gothicism, and Donleavy's novels in particular, coincides with the isolation derived from modern science. The overview of contemporary fiction advanced by Jerry Bryant in The Open Decision, which Bryant bases upon modern physics and social sciences, may also be viewed as a development of earlier Gothicism.

The Gothic author moves his story through use of prophecy, magic, superstition, and supernatural elements rather than by a strictly logical progression. Characters incur strange diseases, as Poe's hero in "The Fall of the House of Usher" who has exaggerated senses of hearing and

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touch. Characters can die of broken hearts or of shame, a direct link to the Hero of Sensibility; in this mode, the hero of Donleavy's The Onion Eaters is, at the novel's opening, slowly dying of boredom. Coupled with the omnipresence of evil, the intrusion of supernatural elements and of vague ailments leads to a sense of despair. Despair, too, is a hallmark of Gothicism, a characteristic found in the earliest heroines which continues in contemporary writing.

The focus on the villain-hero, the resulting atmosphere of oppression, and the themes of terror and love, good and evil, perversity, and usurpation are major characteristics of Gothicism. Many contemporary authors, Donleavy among them, cast their heroes as victims, making them the victims of oppression--often the oppression of a corporate villain such as society--rather than the oppressor. The themes of Gothicism persist, though contemporary authors often write not of love but of the terror of the hero who cannot find love. The themes, techniques, settings, and atmosphere of Gothicism, modernized and altered by knowledge of psychology and the physical sciences, continue to influence contemporary writers. The contemporization of Gothicism, coupled with Donleavy's contemporary interpretation of Sensibility, provides the center of this analysis of Donleavy's novels.

Donleavy's hero is a man of sensibility in a Gothic world; he is a Byronic hero attempting to hold himself aloof

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from society, simultaneously, and paradoxically, wishing to escape the gloom of his world through social communion with his fellow men. His need for independence can foment violent reactions, as when Dangerfield destroys the Dublin bar, yet in the aftermath, as Dangerfield reads an account of his antics in the newspaper, his innate sensibility returns, making his contemplation of his deeds truly sorrowful. Sensibility ends when independence is threatened, and independence is threatened when Donleavy's hero sees clearly the Gothic aspect of his world. This hopeless tangle of conflicting needs and desires provides the central conflict in Donleavy's novels, a study of which demonstrates contemporary versions of older literary traditions.

Donleavy's hero longs for love and for a family, but, like Beefy in The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B, he refuses to be trapped, realizing that man is ultimately alone in the world. He seeks to join society, yet the act of joining precludes his having life on his own terms. Thus the hero sees himself as an outcast and makes himself an outcast. There are self-imposed limits to independence; there are self-imposed limits to sensibility as well. Dangerfield rejects O'Keefe's death wish, for a cessation of the struggle for independence is, in his mind, the unforgivable sin. Yet he knows that a successful resolution of his conflict, attaining the final, stable, independent position within his society, is an impossibility.

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To this point I have been concerned with thematic analysis, proceeding from idea to idea through Donleavy's works, discussing the interrelationships of those ideas. I would next like to gain a different perspective by viewing Donleavy's work as a body, stepping back from an intimate acquaintance with characters and ideas to view the novels in their chronological order of publication. My focus shifts somewhat from what or who the hero is to where the hero is going. Furthermore, Chapter III, a study of the Sensibility-Gothicism dichotomy and its relationship to the hero's quest for independence, focuses on the similarities among the heroes; Chapter IV, a study of the evolution of Donleavy's hero, focuses on the differences among the heroes.

The evolution of Donleavy's hero must be discussed in terms of the novels' central conflict, the hero's drive for independence versus his sensibility. As each hero vacillates between sensibility and independence, each distinguishes himself from other Donleavy heroes by the limits he sets on his own sensibility, by the measure of independence he is willing to relinquish: the ginger man differs greatly from Clementine in The Onion Eaters. Donleavy's hero becomes progressively more passive through increased sensibility, giving up more and more independence. The aggressive, hostile ginger man controls his inclination to

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sensibility, fiercely maintaining his independence. In A Singular Man, George Smith shows a much lighter touch in maintaining his independence. Balthazar allows himself to be trapped in marriage, and Clementine allows himself to be manipulated by an assortment of eccentric strangers. The hero evolves, then, from an active, fiercely independent hero to a passive hero of sensibility willing to relinquish a large measure of his independence.

Donleavy provides an alter ego for his heroes, a counterpart whose solutions to life's problems offer some contrast to the solutions worked out by the novels' central figure. The use of the double, a literary device used by Edgar Allen Poe in "William Wilson," Dostoevsky in The Double, Joseph Conrad in The Secret Sharer, and Robert Louis Stevenson in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, offers the best approach to a study of the Donleavian hero's evolution. This approach also dictates a tri-partite division of this study, with The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B, probably the best of Donleavy's novels technically, central to the study.

No other supporting character is so fully developed as Beefy. Furthermore, Beefy seems a Sebastian Dangerfield reincarnated, while the passive Balthazar points to Donleavy's later heroes. The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B offers a close look at both ends of the sensibility-independence spectrum and is, I believe, a turning point in Donleavy's

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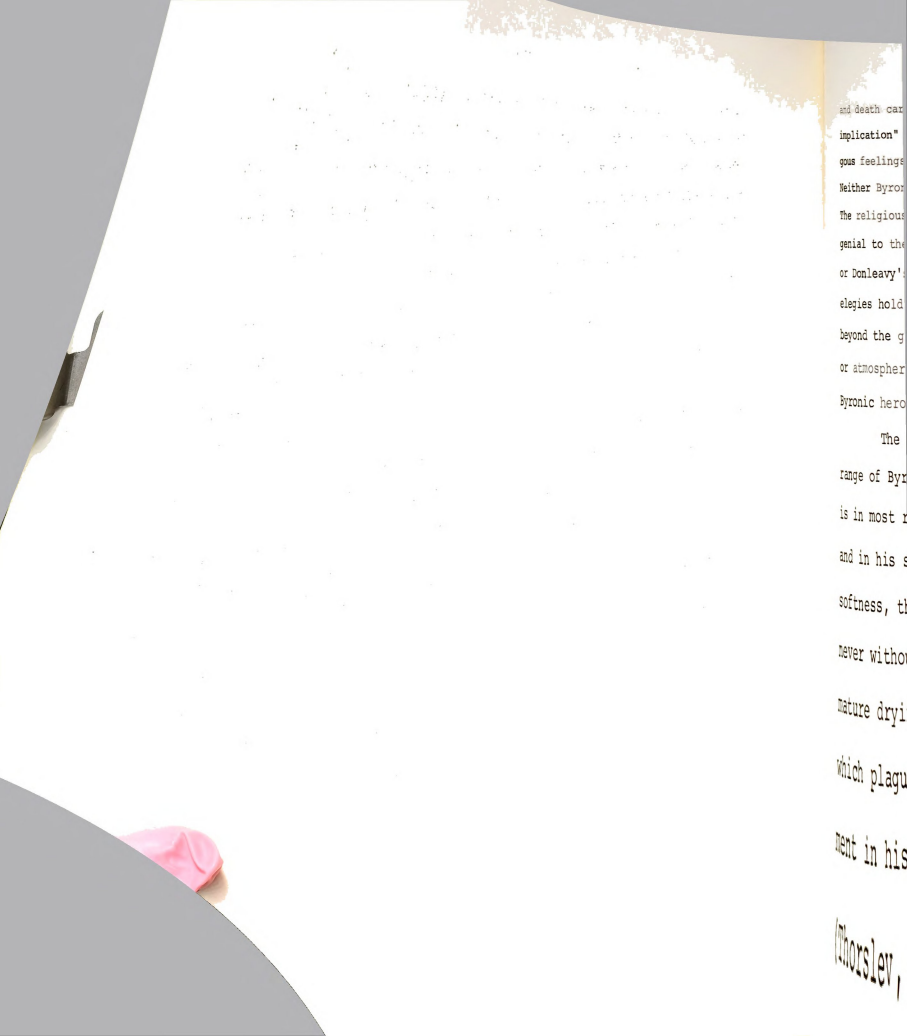
depiction of his hero. This novel suggests a number of interesting questions: how effective are the responses of Beefy and Balthazar to their world; is there any difference between the final positions of the two characters; or does the passive Balthazar occupy the same position finally achieved by Beefy--and by the ginger man?

While the first three chapters of this study focus on the hero's world and his reactions to that world, Chapter IV analyzes the evolution of the hero. However, though Donleavy's hero changes, all his heroes share basic characteristics and qualities which mark them as contemporary versions of the Byronic hero. Thus the final chapter will summarize this study by discussing Donleavy's hero as a contemporization of the Byronic hero. Byron combined the same major elements, Sensibility and Gothicism, which Donleavy intertwines; thus a brief definition of the Byronic hero provides a point of departure for this final summary chapter.

The Byronic hero evolved from elements of the elegy (Sickels, 160). Although the elegy has no heroes, the melancholy tone became a central feature of Byron's work. Carlyle noted "'Byron's life-weariness, his moody melancholy, and mad stormful indignation,'" all of which he derived from the elegy. Byron's central theme is always the hero's own melancholy (Sickels, 323), leading to the "gloomy introspection of the soul to whom time, change,



and death carry above all a nakedly personal and individual implication" (Sickels, 127). Donleavy's hero has analogous feelings derived from twentieth century causes. Neither Byron nor Donleavy imitate all aspects of the elegy. The religious nature of the elegy, for example, is uncongenial to the character of the Byronic hero, whether Byron's or Donleavy's. In Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, "Harold's elegies hold out no Christian consolation of an immortality beyond the grave" (Thorslev, 137). Yet the essential mood, or atmosphere, and the major themes became a part of the Byronic hero.

The theme of sensibility extends through the entire range of Byron's heroes (Thorslev, 161). In Cain, "Lucifer is in most respects a typical Byronic hero, in his courage and in his skeptical self-assertion, but he lacks that true softness, that sensibility, which the true Byronic hero is never without" (Thorslev, 180). Byron's hero fears a premature drying-up of the sensibilities (Thorslev, 43), a fear which plagues him because sensibility is an essential element in his nature. His characteristic "burnt-out passions" (Thorslev, 81) cause much of the hero's melancholy. For Donleavy's hero, the fear is not so much that the past is gone but that the future is empty. Though they have similar characteristics, Byron's hero fears the satiety of the early nineteenth century nobleman; Donleavy's hero fears that satiety is unattainable in the contemporary world.

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Sensibility and the Hero of Sensibility often constitute the developmental step preceding the Byronic hero's appearance. For example, Thorslev sees Childe Harold as a combination of the characteristics of the man of feeling and the gloomy egoist of the elegy (47). Harold's dominant trait of human sympathy relates him to the man of feeling (Thorslev, 137), and he resembles the man of feeling specifically in his passivity, his self-analytical introspection, and his projection of his ennui and suffering on the whole world of his vision (Thorslev, 142). The man of feeling's passivity provides a clue to the evolution of Donleavy's hero, for, as his hero develops sensibility, Donleavy invests him with ever-greater passivity, causing him to give up greater measures of his independence.

Byron's Manfred also has a soul of sensibility beneath his Gothic exterior (Thorslev, 168); like the Gothic villain-hero, he cultivates melancholy as a pleasure (Railo, 307). All Donleavy's heroes share this mix of Gothicism and Sensibility. The concept of joy in pain, which originates in the elegy, is developed by Sensibility and introduced into romantic literature by Byron. The hero of Sensibility in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, The Bride of Abydos, and other works is a Gothic villain turned sympathetic. Sensibility is the final step in the transition to the Byronic hero.

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women" (Thorslev, 8) demonstrates his sensibility. Conrad, in Byron's Corsair, is a sympathetic figure despite his crimes, for the reader is swayed by Conrad's sensibility in regard to women (Thorslev, 55). Byron learned from the work of Sir Walter Scott that such sensibility excused a multitude of sins. Donleavy has also mastered the trick of gaining the reader's sympathy for a rogue. Though women are often his hero's adversaries, Donleavy gives his hero enough touching moments of tenderness to make him a sympathetic figure.

As in his building upon the elegy, Byron neither accepts nor reproduces every aspect of Sensibility. The Byronic hero never approaches too close to humility and heart-break, nor can he die of a broken heart as can the Hero of Sensibility (Sickels, 237). While the Hero of Sensibility sees an indifferent nature, the Byronic hero finds an adversary in nature--as does Donleavy's George Smith in A Singular Man--becoming an agonized Hero of Sensibility (Thorslev, 144). The Byronic hero "feels too positive a sense of identity to be able to commit himself" (Thorslev, 142); thus his need for individualism differentiates him from the Hero of Sensibility and often causes his downfall. Byron thus adds his own characteristics to the Hero of Sensibility, building upon a prototype rather than merely imitating.

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imposing sensibility on the original Gothic character. Byron's hero, a "gloomy and remorse-gnawn" (Sickels, 171) figure whose constantly suppressed or hidden guilt provides the major link to the Gothic villain-hero, shares his predecessor's dark passions under an appearance of calm.[22] Largely due to his sensibility, "a large part of his secret burden is the remorseful consciousness of guilt" (Sickels, 322), a guilt shared by the Donleavian hero who regrets that he cannot fit into his society. While remorse without repentance demonstrates the Byronic hero's origin in the Gothic tradition, Sensibility causes Byron to emphasize this characteristic, which forces the Byronic hero to deeper and more frequent introspection. While the Gothic villain-hero spurns repentance out-of-hand (Thorslev, 54), the Byronic hero, with his great sensibility, has a heightened sense of remorse and is troubled by the conflicting forces which make repentance both necessary and impossible.

Like the Gothic villain-hero, the Byronic hero's checkered past provides an aura of mystery (Railo, 288) focusing on the "perpetually gnawing secret sin around which the thoughts of the Byronic hero, feeding his agony with his own blood, constantly revolves" (Railo, 289). Feeding his own agony shows the changes wrought by Sensibility upon the Gothic villain-hero. By endowing his hero with sensibility, Byron evokes a new response, both by the hero and the reader, to the taint of sin which clings to

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his hero. This ennobling of a criminal, though different from Scott's creation of a noble outlaw, represents a moral revolt from the social mores of Byron's time (Sickels, 172). Though changed by Byron, the Gothic aura of mystery regarding the hero's origin, sin, and true identity can be found in The Giaour (Railo, 233) and in Selim of The Bride of Abydos (Thorslev, 154).

Childe Harold shares a long lineage, a haughty pride and a cold reserve, burnt-out passions, secret sins, and flashes of half-hidden remorse with the Gothic villain-hero (Thorslev, 134). The villain-hero, however, never gains the reader's sympathy in his rebellion (Thorslev, 65), for, unlike the Byronic hero, the Gothic villain-hero acknowledges the moral code of his society (Thorslev, 53). The villain-hero, therefore, cannot be sympathetic, but the Byronic hero, with his sensibility and his personal rejection of his society's values, appears as a victim, thus gaining the reader's sympathy. The Byronic hero justifies, at least in his own mind, his deviation from a social standard; the Gothic villain-hero, on the other hand, defies conventional morality without denying it and without justifying his defiance (Sickels, 172). Donleavy's hero sees himself as a victim, sets his own values in accordance with Hassan's concept of "radical innocence," and thereby justifies his standing apart from his society. The Byronic hero can be sympathetic because, like Donleavy's Samuel S, his

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While misogynous Gothic villain-heroes delight in persecuting women (Thorslev, 55), the intervening era of Sensibility greatly ameliorates this characteristic in the Byronic hero. After Sensibility, the villain-hero becomes a romantic rebel defiant toward traditional social codes and morals (Thorslev, 61). The "villain turned remorseful hero is of primary importance in the development of such a protagonist as Byron's Manfred" (Thorslev, 57), illustrating the paradox of impenitent remorse central to the romantic melancholy developed by Byron (Sickels, 173). The Byronic hero is a fusion of the Gothic villain-hero and the Hero of Sensibility. The giaour, for example, is a sensitive Gothic villain (Thorslev, 150); ultimately, very little of the villain-hero remains in the Byronic hero of Byron's later works (Thorslev, 183).

The noble outlaw, or Robin Hood figure, represents an important transitional stage between the Gothic villain-hero and the Byronic hero. Though he can be as cruel as the Gothic villain-hero, the noble outlaw is first a victim, and only as a result of oppression is he a rebel against society (Thorslev, 22). Donleavy's hero, of course, considers himself society's victim, and, though we may tend to disagree, Donleavy adeptly wins the reader's sympathy for his hero by casting him as a sort of majority of one standing

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against the world's oppression. Though the noble outlaw had long been a literary figure, Sir Walter Scott added many elements of the Hero of Sensibility to his outlaw, providing an immediate precedent which Byron followed closely.

The pre-Byronic noble outlaw was a bigger than life hero who preempted the stage, personifying nostalgia for the bygone days of personal heroism and of great leaders capable of dominating their followers (Thorslev, 68-9). Donleavy's hero exhibits much the same attitude, regretting specifically that his society fails to recognize his own heroic proportions. He considers himself a world-center, albeit the center of a world peopled only by himself and unrecognized by the remainder of society. In Byron's Turkish tales, the hero is primarily a noble outlaw; he is a man of action, of impulse, of instinct (Thorslev, 164). Byron adds even more of the Hero of Sensibility to Scott's noble outlaw in these tales (Thorslev, 148), and, in his later works, he dropped Scott's medieval setting and Gothicism, retaining only the rudiments of Scott's noble outlaw (Thorslev, 83).

The grave, solemn, mournful manner of Childe Harold hints at a general belief in the noble ideals of mankind (Railo, 240). In the later cantos, Harold--like Donleavy's hero--is more sinned against than sinning (Thorslev, 139), showing the influence of the noble outlaw as well as of the

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Hero of Sensibility. The rebel who appeals to the reader's sympathy, the individual who is outside of society, forms the essence of the hero adapted by later English romantic writers (Thorslev, 22), and by Donleavy as well. Harold emerges, after the opening cantos, as such a typical romantic hero (Thorslev, 130).

Analysis of the Byronic hero's precursors, and the changes and combinations wrought by Byron, constitutes the major portion of an attempt at defining the Byronic hero. In addition, brief mention should be made of some outstanding characteristics which Byron either added or emphasized as he fashioned his own hero from existing materials. Byron's most significant contribution was his fusing of the Hero of Sensibility with the more substantial earlier heroes, for, before the appearance of the Byronic hero, the characteristics and philosophy of the Hero of Sensibility and those of the earlier heroes, such as the Gothic villain-hero, often seemed mutually exclusive.

Byron is essentially a melancholy poet who emphasizes a gloomy introspection (Sickels, 316). The elegy thus colors the mood and atmosphere of all of Byron's work. Gloom permeates The Giaour, and gloom, passion, and mystery become the giaour's chief characteristics (Railo, 234). Donleavy's work is akin to Byron's mixture of influences in The Giaour, a poem which illustrates the addition of the passion of Sensibility to the mystery of Gothicism within

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The Byronic hero's introspective gloom results in the mutability theme characteristic of the elegy (Sickels, 127). As the hero's melancholy becomes increasingly self-conscious (Sickels, 323), his melancholy leads at the very least to a characteristic unhappiness[23] and usually to despair and madness (Sickels, 131). Donleavy has many affinities with this aspect of Byron's work. Sebastian Dangerfield, for example, attempts to smother his daughter, breaks things in fits of spontaneous maliciousness, and tells his wife that his actions are the result of madness. Within the framework of world-weariness and disillusion, best exemplified in Byron's work in Childe Harold (Sickels, 319), despair and madness seem a logical conclusion to the hero's progress. Byron interrelates melancholy, unhappiness, and world-weariness--all derived from the elegy--in his characterization of his hero.

Also derived from the elegy is the Byronic hero's characteristic solitude, born of "the realization that he has overstepped the moral and emotional laws recognized by society" (Railo, 308). This realization, of course, provides an important conflict in Donleavy's hero, who attempts to establish his own, separate, laws. Solitude is also related to Sensibility, for the Byronic "hero's love for solitude springs from the sensibility of his emotional life" (Railo, 307). The hero's solitude leads to a "loneliness-

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in-the-crowd" (Sickels, 20) notion and eventually approaches a state of mind close to insanity (Railo, 308). As with melancholy, a longing for solitude causes the Byronic hero to be introspective, giving him the character of the giaour, who "broods over guilty woes" (Railo, 233). Solitude and introspection also create a nostalgic longing for the innocence of childhood (Sickels, 321)--Donleavy's Balthazar recalls the more innocent time at boarding school--as the hero seeks a way out of his loneliness by dreaming of a more congenial past. For Donleavy's hero, the past is not necessarily more congenial; thus a comic outlook, a comic interpretation of the past, becomes a way out, just as pure nostalgia worked as escape for Byron's hero.

Individualism, one cause of the hero's solitude, is a highly important aspect of the Byronic hero (Thorslev, 18) and is one reason for the hero's impenitence, for the individualist cannot submit to the laws of the group. Because he is an individualist, the Byronic hero is most keenly aware of his own suffering (Sickels, 323), differing significantly from the Hero of Sensibility who is often overly receptive to <u>any</u> emotional stimuli. Individualism also precludes fatalism (Thorslev, 161), and the Byronic hero "accepts the burden of his conscience willingly, even defiantly" (Thorslev, 163). Byronic heroes refuse to excuse themselves as victims of fate, for they "have too sure a sense of their independent egos and of their defiant

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wills to abdicate their moral responsibility in such a manner" (Thorslev, 163). Submission to fate denies individualism in its assumption that all men are bound to the same laws. The Byronic hero, including--and perhaps especially--Donleavy's contemporary version of the Byronic hero, sees himself as outside the laws of society and of nature.

The Byronic hero has only proud endurance with which to battle the world (Sickels, 322). He suffers proudly and defiantly (Sickels, 236), and his Gothic sense of guilt only moves him to a jauntier defiance (Sickels, 323). Harold shows "opposition and fashionable spleen" (Railo, 240), and the hero of The Corsair "hated men too much to feel remorse."[24] The giaour's scorn causes him to refuse the Last Sacrament (Railo, 237), and the cynical Don Juan finds nothing sacred or enduring (Railo, 241). The hatred and proud defiance of his fellow man is a Gothic characteristic inherited by the Byronic hero (Railo, 219).

The Byronic hero's capacity for love results from the influence of Sensibility. Byron's heroines have no spiritual mission; their only principle is love (Railo, 295). Unlike the Gothic villain-hero, the Byronic hero responds to this need. Donleavy's hero, while often--and essentially--a misogynist, can also, in moments when his sensibility is in its ascendancy, respond to this need. In the Turkish tales, Byron creates lovers for whom love

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"is the ruling passion of their lives--and they remain faithful, in true romantic fashion, until death" (Thorslev, 149). Donleavy's hero remains true to himself, though his sense of guilt indicates his desire to remain faithful to his woman as well. For this contemporary hero, too many worldly vicissitudes intervene. While the Byronic hero is not sentimental, neither is he unfeeling, for he is a man of great sensibility. He is "courteous towards women, often loves music or poetry, has a strong sense of honor, and carries about with him like the brand of Cain a deep sense of guilt" (Thorslev, 8).

Largely due to this sensibility, he remains "sympathetic in spite of his 'crimes'" (Thorslev, 8). He is an aristocratic rebel above motivation by such primitive needs as hunger; he is a man of Titanic proportions.[25] Childe Harold, the first Byronic hero, is the prototype for later versions of the hero (Thorslev, 128). Like the later heroes, Harold is:

(1) melancholy,
(2) unhappy,
(3) world-weary,
(4) lonely,
(5) nostalgic,
(6) introspective,
(7) individualistic,
(8) proud and scornful, and
(9) capable of love.

These general characteristics, which Byron derived from a multitude of sources, apply in some degree to all of Byron's heroes.

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Byron owes a debt to some early archetypal heroes as well as to immediate historical precedents. The figure of Prometheus--an individualist, a skeptic, and a rebel--is closer to the Byronic hero than is the later Gothic villain-hero (Thorslev, 124). Prometheus personifies the romantic attraction to the solitary wanderer beset by tragic fate (Thorslev, 23), though Byron perhaps derives this mood from the more contemporaneous elegy rather than from myth. The Wandering Jew, a traditional solitary wanderer, is a source for Harold, especially the Harold of Canto I, who is a mixture of the Wandering Jew and the Hero of Sensibility with Gothic sins (Thorslev, 130).

The Biblical Cain, exemplifying the romantic attraction to the outcast, provides Byron another important source (Thorslev, 104). The Byronic hero, and all romantic heroes, were outcasts, alienated from society (Thorslev, 18). Often the heroes choose to be outcasts--for Donleavy's hero the need for independence necessitates this choice--echoing the withdrawal theme of the elegy. Byron's Cain depicts Cain as a Byronic hero, a figure of romantic self-assertion (Thorslev, 178), bringing the essense of the Biblical character to a modern social structure. In addition to Cain, the Byronic hero was significantly influenced by Faust (Railo, 219) and contains some elements of Milton's Satan.[26]

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though his influence is great, the Byronic hero became his personal property. Poe imitates Byron in "Tamerlane,"[27] and his gloom may be taken in part from Byron. Byron often rebelled against his own convictions (Sickels, 319), and Poe may have seen an example of perversity in Byron as well as in the Byronic hero. Melville's Captain Ahab, though perhaps a direct descendant of Cain or other sources, has many aspects of the Byronic hero (Thorslev, 3). But, in general, only lesser writers have attempted to create Byronic heroes, the more competent artists choosing not to attempt to out-Byron Byron. One such imitator was E. D. Kennicott, who cast an Indian as a Byronic hero in "Kaughnawah" (1837).[28] Kennicott's poem is probably the best example of a multitude of such imitations, noteworthy only for their attempts at Americanization of the Byronic hero.

With the historical perspective of a century and a half, however, contemporary authors can use the essential Byronic hero to advantage in a contemporary setting. Cain, whom Thorslev considers the ultimate Byronic hero, sees "the 'absurdity' of his situation in a world he did not make" (Thorslev, 183). This view points both to the naturalistic writers--James T. Farrell being the most contemporary--and to the absurdists. Modern heroes have elements of the Byronic hero, but often one can only with difficulty detect a Byronic influence on a hero taken directly from

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Cain, Faust, the noble outlaw, or other of Byron's antecedents. The basic philosophy of the Byronic hero, whose nature prevents his mingling with the universe as he longs to do (Thorslev, 144) and who sees the tragedy of self-assertion in an alien universe (Thorslev, 143), is important in Donleavy's novels and in other contemporary fiction, though most often the contemporary hero is of far less than Byronic proportions.

Perhaps the changes wrought in the Byronic hero substantiate Thorslev's contention that the Byronic hero "is our last natural contact with this last great heroic tradition in our literature" (185). The contemporary hero cannot be the dominant, self-sufficient figure developed by Byron. The loss of love, hope, and joy which Byron added to the hero type (Railo, 239) is carried into contemporary literature on the shoulders of many slight heroes, none of whom are of the Byronic hero's stature. That Childe Harold is a child of nature (Thorslev, 133), and Manfred "is representative of almost every one of the hero-types of the Romantic movement" (Thorslev, 167), indicates both that Byron provided a prototype for later heroes and that his hero has never been bettered. Indeed, no later hero type matches the Byronic hero. Byron's work culminates many traditions, gathering elements from each, adding some elements, but most significantly creating an original blend from many antecedents, grasping most of their strengths

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Yet Donleavy has created a Byronic hero, though a contemporary world will not permit one of Byron's original proportions. Chapter V offers a final focus on this hero, seen in terms of Byron's original, summarizing Donleavy's hero's view of the world, his response to that world, his inherent sensibility-independence conflict, and his movement from violent independence to passive sensibility.

Notes

(Subsequent references to frequently cited sources appear in the text.)

[1]J. P. Donleavy, The Onion Eaters (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1971), p. 21.

[2]J. P. Donleavy, The Ginger Man (New York: Berkley Publishing Corp., 1955), p. 160.

[3]Eleanor M. Sickels, The Gloomy Egoist (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), p. 194.

[4]Northrop Frye, "Towards Defining and Age of Sensibility," English Literary History, 23 (1956), 149.

[5]W. M. Frohock, The Novel of Violence in America, 2nd ed. (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1957), p. 6.

[6]Peter L. Thorslev, The Byronic Hero (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962), p. 128.

[7]Lowry Nelson, Jr., "Night Thoughts on the Gothic Novel," Yale Review, 52 (1963), pp. 236-39, 247-57, rpt. in Eleanor Terry Lincoln, Pastoral and Romance (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 260.

[8]Eino Railo, The Haunted Castle (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1927), p. 243.

[9]Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, rev. ed. (New York: Stein and Day, 1966), p. 132.

[10]Charles Muscatine, "Gothic Form and the Knight's Tale," from Chaucer and the French Tradition, rpt. in Eleanor Terry Lincoln, Pastoral and Romance (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 225.

[11]Muscatine, p. 229. In placing "The Knight's Tale" within the larger structure of The Canterbury Tales, Muscatine makes a case for Chaucer as a major contributor to the Gothic tradition, demonstrating the similarity between Chaucer's ordering of The Canterbury Tales and the sequential progression and the juxtaposition of Gothicism.

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[12]Muscatine, p. 234.

[13]Nelson, p. 260.

[14]Railo, p. 299.

[15]Indeed, Hamlet has many Gothic elements: (1) the secret sin of the (2) villain-hero, (3) incest, (4) the graveyard setting, (5) the ghost, (6) the castle with passages, galleries, and various accoutrements. Shakespeare, who must be considered an influence on all later writers, incorporated into his work many elements which would later be considered Gothic.

[16]Chester E. Eisenger, "The Gothic Spirit in the Forties," from Fiction of the Forties, rpt. in Eleanor Terry Lincoln, Pastoral and Romance (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 291.

[17]Eisenger, p. 290.

[18]Eisenger, p. 278.

[19]Nelson, p. 265.

[20]Irving Malin, New American Gothic (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962), p. 121.

[21]Walter E. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 252.

[22]Mario Praz, The Romantic Agony (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1951), p. 64.

[23]Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p. 751.

[24]Russell, p. 750.

[25]Russell, p. 747.

[26]Praz, p. 61.

[27]William Ellery Leonard, Byron and Byronism in America (Boston: The Nichols Press, 1905), p. 52.

[28]Leonard, p. 82.

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD OF DONLEAVY'S HERO

Donleavy creates a gloomy, unstable, hostile world in which his hero is both an outcast and a victim. Minimizing the subordinate characters almost to obscurity, Donleavy focuses on his hero's often conflicting responses to a hostile environment. These responses encompass all the themes of Donleavy's work, for minor themes can be important only as they apply to the hero's journey through life. Analysis of Donleavy's novels must therefore begin with an understanding of the world which he creates, indicating some inevitable effects of that world on the hero. Donleavy's themes are delineated through an understanding first of the hero's conception of his world and later of the hero's responses to his world.

Donleavy presents a pervasive atmosphere of gloom in his physical settings, using scenes derived from the elegy and from the later Gothic development of elegiac scenes. Darkness, clouds, rain, and bleak vistas both urban and natural recur throughout each novel, continually reminding the reader of the dreary ambience in which the hero must live. The gloom of nature shown in the constantly

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inclement weather parallels the gloom of the hero's urban surroundings. The buildings in which he lives, as well as those he visits or merely views from the outside, are all in various stages of decay. Lack of plumbing, leaking roofs, and hallways littered with various debris contribute to the gloomy atmosphere which is a part of the hero's life.

Associated with the physical gloom of the elegy is the theme of mutability. Donleavy's hero sees himself as a victim of Time, helpless to stay Time's ravages and uncertain of the future. Knowledge of modern physics contributes another aspect of mutability, for Donleavy employs concepts of uncertainty learned from science to create an element of uncertainty and doubt in the hero's understanding of his world, thus combining traditional influences with the influence of modern physics which Jerry Bryant has found to be an influence on many contemporary novelists.[1]

As Donleavy peoples his gloomy settings, a hostile, institution-filled society mirrors the gloom of the surroundings. Both vague threats and direct affronts accost the hero, developing the mood established by the elegiac setting. The hero finds society to be an actively malevolent force, hostile to his individual needs and goals.

The gloomy atmosphere, the doubt and uncertainty, and the active hostility of society combine to cast the hero as an outcast and a victim. He is a victim of the active forces which he encounters, an outcast in seeking

a world which differs from the available physical reality. This combination of elements, and the hero's view of these elements, provides a composite picture of Donleavy's world, the world in which Donleavy's hero must operate.

When Kenneth O'Keefe visits Sebastian Dangerfield at the opening of The Ginger Man, he must follow a twisting path up a steep hill. The hill, the fog over the water, and the view from the back yard which "looked down precipitous rocks to the swells of sea many feet below"[2] place Dangerfield initially in a gloomy, Gothic setting which is reproduced with variations throughout the novel. This house, too, is occupied by demons (GM, 24), which both Dangerfield and the reader know to be a one-eyed cat prowling in the attic. The "demon," because it is explained immediately in natural terms, is not to be taken seriously, but the elegiac mood is to be taken seriously, for Dangerfield is haunted by real and figurative demons throughout the novel. More accurately, perhaps, the "demon" is to be taken seriously but not literally. From this gloomy scene Donleavy launches Dangerfield on his weary way.

Dangerfield, walking through Dublin, observes that "'everyone looked beat like me'" (GM, 64), gathering gloom first from his fellow men and then from the physical aspect of his world as he notes that Chris's carpet is faded and beat (GM, 68). Entering Trinity, he finds "not a spark of joy anywhere . . . a rogue's gallery of Calvinists" (GM, 67).

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> Dublin looming a Swiss Cheese of streets and running through them screaming in tears. Children shrinking in the doorways. Gutters running pig's blood. Cold and winter (GM, 71).

This vision illustrates the relationship between the physical setting and the hero's view of his world, as the realities of gloom engender anticipations of gloom in his future.

The weather establishes a prevailing atmosphere, as the everpresent rain, drizzle, and dark, bleak streets introduce episodes in Dangerfield's life. "The streets were wet, puddles of water on the granite blocks" (GM, 75), "Raining outside. Cold morning" (GM, 100), and "I can't bear to get out into the chill air with my legs all stiff" (GM, 117), illustrate the influence of the setting on the hero, for he feels that "the only thing the rain does is to keep down the dust and me" (GM, 119). Dangerfield indicates the influence of the weather as he chooses a metaphor for Miss Frost: "'But we'll see better days. Every cloud, you know, lined with lead'" (GM, 186); what should be a hopeful expression is distorted by the reality of his life, a life of gloom and sorrow which begins with the hero's surroundings.

Dangerfield's last dream vision reflects the reality of his environment. As he awakens, recalling that "my dream was all lament" (GM, 303), he remembers specifically "I was wearing boots in a frog pond. At the end there was

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a horde coming across the fields with hooks so I swam away to sea" (GM, 303). The close link between Dangerfield's vision and reality is provided by Donleavy's subconscious linking this sea image to his immediate situation: "Rub the chill out of my hands, slap them for heat" (GM, 303). The environment of Dangerfield's dreams reflects the physical environment which colors his entire life, engendering a melancholy mood associated with the setting of the elegy.

Donleavy's final picture of Dangerfield "walking down the slope side of the bridge past this broken building" (GM, 304) contrasts with the hero's wish for peace in a land with "the sea high and the winds soft and moist and warm" (GM, 304). The loneliness and gloom of Dangerfield's vision are elegiac, recreating the common mood and tone of the "graveyard poets." Significantly, the novel opens and closes on the same note of gloom, indicating that the hero cannot escape the gloom which permeates the world.

In A Singular Man, Donleavy ironically designates George Smith's apartment building Merry Mansions. Smith's continued melancholy, worsened by a series of unsuccessful love affairs, is an inherent part of his nature which is never explicitly explained. His melancholy world view, like Dangerfield's, results from his living in a gloomy environment. The "cold evening pavements,"[3] a "world of woe" (SM, 22), and the picture of Smith "walking towards the river. Shivering in the chill" (SM, 27) describe the

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atmosphere which makes Smith desperate for a mental check-up (SM, 30). We see Smith: "head in hands. Too sad to look up, out, forward" (SM, 33).

Retreating to his cabin in the country, Smith finds not an Emersonian refuge in nature but an elegiac setting which increases his sorrow and melancholy:

> Chin on chest. Eyes sad. Night chilly. Low moon making shadows in the trees. Hoot of owls. Out here the black snakes. And the tan and red and poisonous kind. Ready to slide over the pillow and wrap round the neck (SM, 123).

When he attends a party at Jiffy's house, Smith finds himself in Gothic structure which duplicates the mood of the elegiac cabin setting. Jiffy's house had a "great entrance hall. Flanked by spears, daggers, armour. Sandstone steps hung with a balustrade of crimson rope" (SM, 141). Finally, he enters a police station with "barren windows and faint lights against a sky of mountainous black cloud" (SM, 186). In every situation, Smith finds himself in a setting corresponding to his own melancholy mood. He loathes the gloomy atmosphere of his office, and, walking the streets at the end of the novel, he sees a "lonely street lamp on a cold pole" (SM, 291). As in The Ginger Man, the hero's world is permeated with gloom from the moment he is introduced until the conclusion of the novel.

Samuel S, the hero of the short novel The Saddest Summer of Samuel S, describes himself as a man who "skied

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down the spiritual slopes."[4] "He lived in a grey shadowy street in Vienna two flights up behind four dirt stained never opened windows" (S, 5), a residence which Abigail describes as being so "'lonely here it makes me sad'" (S, 65). Like Donleavy's other heroes, Sam sees the reflection of his melancholy mood in his surroundings, finding "all bravery dying in the chill of summer rain landing on the heart" (S, 92).

In The Beastly Beatitutdes of Balthazar B, "clouds growing greyer and sky darker,"[5] "heavy rain falling on Paris" (B, 19), a "lonely grey Tuesday. Rain pouring on Paris" (B, 31), and a generally "lonely friendless world" (B, 64) constitute the setting for Balthazar's earliest youth. This physical setting continues when he attends Trinity College, where the "grey and winterish conditions" (B, 128) affect his physical, as well as his mental, well-being. The cold and rain make his journeys to the bogs, the communal privy, a miserable experience. Even the most essential biological functions are influenced by the elegiac setting, for the weather induces irremediable constipation. On a cerebral plane, Balthazar is aware that the "cold greyness lays hold of me" (B, 115), and he cannot but "let the winter stay and stay in my mind" (B, 123). Balthazar, like Donleavy's other heroes, finds his mental attitude growing out of and reflecting his physical environment.

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Donleavy's earlier heroes,[6] he is especially conscious of his environment and often metaphorically links himself to his surroundings. Entering Breda's room after a disastrous night in which he and Beefy have been caught with girls in Beefy's college room, Balthazar reflects on the course of his life as well as on the evening rain when he thinks: "Years since one was in out of inclemency" (B, 211). His situation causes him "to feel like the midnight homeless" (B, 218). Balthazar looks back on the "grey expanse of college" (B, 239) after being expelled, and he also looks ahead to "a grey water haunted and lonely out to the horizon" (B, 243). His sensibility enables him to recognize the effects of his environment and to use his environment metaphorically in his introspective ramblings, illustrating the relationship between the hero and his surroundings which holds for all of Donleavy's heroes.

In a "cold misty rain,"[7] Clayton Clementine of The Onion Eaters discovers that he has inherited Charnel Castle. Visiting his new demesne, he encounters "a steep hedged lane. A gate with a sign. Lands Poisoned" (OE, 8). He senses a "terrible loneliness out here" (OE, 11) and finds the castle itself a "barren waste" (OE, 52). The scenes induce memories of similarly bleak occasions, the "sky darkened, rain falling" (OE, 62) at his mother's death, and his own impending death in the hospital, where "two a.m. was the greatest stillness. When we all lay wondering

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who was next to go" (OE, 68). Like Balthazar, Clementine finds that his surroundings impose a melancholy mood on his existence, reminding him of past misfortunes and promising more misfortune in the future.

Because Donleavy locates most of the novel's action in and around Charnel Castle, the elegiac setting is continuously reinforced by additional information about the castle itself and by subsequent Gothic landscapes which emphasize the wind and rain in Clementine's demesne. Charnel Castle, like the castles of earlier Gothic novels, recreates a mood each time it is reintroduced. In The Onion Eaters, Donleavy's castle creates physical and mental gloom rather than terror, presenting a hero terrified not by supernatural elements but by his own melancholy situation.

The elegiac settings which recur throughout the novel reinforce Clementine's sense of loneliness and melancholy. The "flat deserted cold grey coast" (OE, 71), the "ruined roofless houses and wintry marshlands" (OE, 72), the "dark grey tall walls of Charnel Castle" (OE, 134), whose interior consists of "stray boulders surrounding a huge pile of rubble" (OE, 134), affect both Clementine and his guests, upon whose faces "one could not even with hammer and chisel cut gladness" (OE, 140). The importance of the setting is indicated by its near-personification as "loneliness creeping over the dark mountain" (OE, 207) and by its harboring "creeping horrors unseen in the night" (OE, 137).

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Clementine, like Donleavy's other heroes, recognizes a personal link to his surroundings as a "cold hand encircles the heart. Numb chill of disaster" (OE, 208). His inability to consummate the sex act with Lady Macfugger is juxtaposed with the image of a "world wet and grey" (OE, 201). Clementine reads his future, as well as his past and present, in the setting of Charnel Castle, for the "creeping grey horizon" (OE, 239) of the future and his sensation that "winter seems always coming instead of going" (OE, 225) portend a bleak future for the hero. Clementine's study of the land's history reveals the inextricable link between the atmosphere and its melancholy effect upon humanity, for Clementine's land "holds the world's record for loneliness and rainfall" (OE, 112).

In his latest novel, A Fairy Tale of New York, Donleavy characterizes Cornelius Christian's world as "a sea of silent suffering."[8] As an employee of Vine's Funeral Home, Christian lives in a world of corpses and cemeteries, an atmosphere accentuated by a blizzard as he escorts Fanny Sourpuss to her husband's grave (FT, 42-3). Later, the blizzard intensifies as Christian drives Fanny to her apartment (FT, 54), creating both a physical danger to the motorists and a spiritual isolation from the rest of the world.

Christian responds to the elegiac setting by "sitting at the black grand piano. Playing a sad melody" (FT, 55).

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He is "homesick. . . . For the soft carpet upon which sadness treads" (FT, 147), and he longs for relief, the "one little word of comfort [which] saves you drowning" (FT, 147). As in Donleavy's other novels, the atmosphere permeates the hero's world from beginning to end. We last see Christian travelling "out of this city of gloomy coincidence" (FT, 340), wondering:

> Why do I get
> Grief on a platter
> And pleasure on
> A spoon (FT, 340).

Within the general framework of elegiac settings, Donleavy introduces specific images of death. The hero's contemplation of death, a natural consequence of his immersion in Donleavy's gloomy world, provides a clear link to the elegy whose atmosphere permeates all of Donleavy's novels. Dangerfield owns a special map of a cemetery which he displays under a thick glass (GM, 43); later he announces:

> I have bought myself a second hand bicycle and have painted it black and put a little black flag on the handle bars and I take up the rear of all funerals going to the Grange (GM, 98).

The preoccupation with death, both a part of the elegy and an outgrowth of the elegiac setting, recurs throughout The Ginger Man, culminating in the final scene of the horses "running out to death" (GM, 304), symbolizing Dangerfield's view that death is the unavoidable conclusion of man's struggle in life.

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George Smith best illustrates contemplation of death, for his frequent visits to the cemetery continually reinforce the notion of death's presence. The elaborate mausoleum which Smith is building reminds one that life is but a journey to death, echoing a theme of the graveyard poets which pervades all of Donleavy's novels. Samuel S, on "a solemn afternoon, always in sight of the crematorium" (S, 86), strolls through a local cemetery. Metaphorically, death is always in sight for both Smith and Samuel S, for the mausoleum and the crematorium dominate the landscape.

Echoing George Smith, Cornelius Christian considers that "with a bed and a fireplace one of these mausoleums would make a good place to live" (FT, 48). Christian's working for Vine, for whom undertaking is "the only thing I ever wanted to do" (FT, 69), offers Donleavy unlimited opportunities to present both serious and comic views of death, and Christian's thoughts on death abound throughout A Fairy Tale of New York. Christian responds emotionally to preparing corpses. He fantasizes sexual intercourse with a corpse (FT, 112), poses as a corpse for Vine's advertisement (FT, 81), fears his own death (FT, 113), and sees the faces of living people in terms of the possibilities which they offer a mortician (FT, 145), making Donleavy's theme of death most pervasive in this novel.

Balthazar's contemplation of death is more detached from immediate realities. Visiting the shabby room which

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Beefy has taken after being disinherited, he discovers that the window overlooks a junkyard. The pipes and car parts form an industrial graveyard which increases Beefy's gloom (B, 287). In a more conventional elegiac scene, Balthazar visits the grave of Elizabeth Fitzdare, situated amidst yew trees on an isolated section of her family's estate. His contemplations on their mutual love and on their anticipated life together give him the strength to "face any loneliness" (B, 371), completing a scene closely analogous to the conclusion of many mid-eighteenth century elegies.

In addition to the elegy's physical setting, mood, and contemplation of death, the theme of mutability deserves separate mention, for this theme recurs throughout Donleavy's work. Donleavy takes his concept of mutability in part from the elegy, showing man pitted against the ravages of Time, and in part from modern physics, which denies certainty in a changing world. From either source, mutability opposes stability, generating a conflict between the hero's needs and the implacable forces of the hero's world.

At Marion's new house in Geary, Dangerfield lies staring at the ceiling until the ceiling appears to move (GM, 125). This form of mutability, denying the stability which Dangerfield seeks, derives from physics. Marion, fearing the loss of her security as a result of Dangerfield's

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presence in her new house, says: "'I knew it wouldn't last'" (GM, 129). Dangerfield answers that: "'Nothing, my good Marion, lasts'" (GM, 129), voicing the mutability theme found in the elegy--that Time is relentless and omnipotent. Contemplating their relationship, Dangerfield notes that "things just don't last. They change" (GM, 152), implying that Time has destroyed their marriage.

Dangerfield sometimes shapes his point of view to suggest hopefully that Time can work in man's favor. "'Poverty is temporary'" (GM, 38), he tells O'Keefe. "'Better days coming'" (GM, 135), he tells Percy Clocklan. And he tells Tony Malarkey: "'Our day will come. Just stave off the starving and a few other things and our day will come'" (GM, 245). Significantly, these hopeful statements are all directed towards friends, occurring in situations in which a proud Dangerfield must maintain a front, possibly to assert his independence. When his day does come, Dangerfield realizes, that day too will be impermanent. Beginning an affair with Mary, Dangerfield wishes to "take her with me into my personal garden of sunshine which I do not call Eden for obvious reasons" (GM, 145). His garden differs from Eden only in its impermanence, for, though sex enables Dangerfield to step outside of Time, at the completion of the sex act transience again reigns. Since good also passes, Donleavy's world is not ultimately hopeful.

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Yet Dangerfield tries to hold Time to a hopeful interpretation when he suggests that man must:

> take the sun while ye may and when we pull the damp curtains over the soul of day, rest secure for we will see the light of day another time (GM, 130).

Like the hero of Saul Bellow's Henderson, The Rain King, Dangerfield would remain a Become-er, refusing to pass to the status of a Be-er, for Dangerfield recognizes that mutability is an integral part of life: without it there is no life. Awaking after a drinking spree, Dangerfield says: "I don't like this when I don't even know what month it is" (GM, 163). Though he recognizes that Time eventually destroys man and his works, Dangerfield finds in the codification of Time a comfortable, though temporary, sense of stability.

Yet despite Dangerfield's efforts to reinterpret Time so as to make the concept fit comfortably into his life, mutability remains a source of melancholy and terror. Mutability brings the terror of death, for death stands at the end of man's lifetime. "Hearts clicking" (GM, 178) signifies life while simultaneously measuring the minutes until death, for: "Just so many times and click, we go away in this roofless world" (GM, 178). Dangerfield's world is "roofless" in that it has no end point; man journeys through life toward a vague, ever-receding goal. Thus all of man's striving must be to no avail, for ultimately

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Like Dangerfield, George Smith attempts to see hope in the progress of Time; he can escape his trials by considering "tomorrow newborn. Leave today behind" (SM, 123). Yet even such cautious optimism is not justified in Smith's world, for "age comes slowly and hardly notice it at all" (SM, 130), leaving him "a child no longer" (SM, 44). Smith's own loss of innocence is mirrored by that of all men, who turn hostile with time, "with youth replaced with cunning. Age replaced by worms" (SM, 255-6), until men are "all marked with dying" (SM, 167).

Smith finds Time an enemy on a personal, practical level as well as on a philosophical level. Reviewing his deteriorated relationship with his wife, he remembers happy times before "a big dark hand came out and pushed the sun out of our togetherness" (SM, 59). Time is the villain, for Smith views his broken marriage as a consequence not of specific wrongdoings but of the unavoidable changes wrought by Time. By the end of the novel, Shirl is a stranger, and Smith observes that "between the hearts, time seeps" (SM, 298).

Time and change preclude Smith's establishing a satisfying relationship with Sally Tomson, for they are travelling different directions in life. Meeting Sally on a train, Smith is chagrined to find that they are bound for different destinations. "Why do they need a junction.

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Tearing two people apart. Where the tracks divide" (SM, 52). Smith feels their separation as a symbol of the misery which Time and change inflict upon him throughout life. "I was hurt when the train left. I hate anything to leave. Stay. Stay longer" (SM, 74), he pleads, asking not only for Sally but for stability in a changing world.

The distracting presence of the large clock in his psychiatrist's office measures Samuel S's few minutes on the couch, limiting the time available for him to be cured. In a parallel scene, Sam's watch measures the time as he and Abigail play psychiatrist for each other, each passing minute rapidly diminishing the possibilities for "cure" and for a satisfactory relationship. From his vantage point of middle age, Sam realizes that, in his youth, he did not:

> know there was nectar. Too busy tripping over the tiny customs that make people like you. Now there's nectar. With too many years of watching where I was going (S, 61).

Time has used him badly, for his youth was spent "keeping off the obstacles. Knocking over the nectar" (S, 61), until he can no longer recapture either his youth or the "nectar."

Balthazar, too, is constantly reminded of the passage of time. At thirteen years of age he thinks he has found a permanent stability in his relationship with Bella, but she informs him: "'Things change. . . . Listen.

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Balthazar, nothing stays the same'" (B, 91). Later, an older generation echoes Bella's words. Elizabeth Fitzdare's uncle tells Balthazar: "'So much has passed from us'" (B, 177), and her father observes that "'nothing stands still these days'" (B, 246). Even Breda sees that "'life is always travelling to a sorrow'" (B, 214), transforming Balthazar's moment of peace to a further lesson on the ravages of Time.

Having been so schooled, Balthazar finds Time a source of terror. "One does not want to grow old in misery. Trickle down to death" (B, 338). He sees mutability as an ever-present threat, dominating the entire world, leading to a vague, undefined eternity "At a time/ Told by/ A sea's sad/ Big clock" (B, 356). After death has claimed Elizabeth Fitzdare, Balthazar observes the effects of Time on the living when he sees an aged Bella, "careworn and sad" (B, 370), moving toward death. Time and change thus close many of Balthazar's possibilities, leaving him melancholy and without hope for the future.

An incident in The Onion Eaters illustrates the sense of mutability which modern physics has bequeathed to Donleavy's world. The onion eaters, for all their eccentricities, are given as serious and competent scientists. The frustrating uncertainty of modern science is illustrated by Rose's announcement that "they once beat the shit out of each other over the right time" (OE, 297).

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Significantly, the argument centers on Time, depicting a sense of mutability based on science which parallels the elegiac mutability which pervades Donleavy's world. For Cornelius Christian, not even death offers stability, for Vine puts the name of the deceased "on a little black sign with moveable white letters that slide on for the next and the next" (FT, 151-2).

The atmosphere of the elegy, with its associated themes of mutability and inevitable death, provides a background in all of Donleavy's work. Donleavy's heroes, however, are not hermits; they live within a society. As Donleavy peoples his elegiac setting, individual men, society, and society's institutions create an actively hostile environment which grows out of the passively gloomy elegiac atmosphere. While the elegiac atmosphere presents the inherent qualities of Donleavy's world, the social setting reveals those complementary characteristics which are the work of man.

Donleavy creates a vague sense of active hostility as pervasive as the elegiac gloom which the hostility reflects. The threatening letters which pour into George Smith's office have no apparent wrong to redress, yet they are implacable in their demand for vengeance. In The Ginger Man, Dangerfield refuses to open most mail, knowing that threats and demands for money comprise his world's interest in him. Even letters from his friend O'Keefe bring no good

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news, for O'Keefe's first letter says only: "We have the fangs of animals" (GM, 54), commenting on the voracious nature of man and society. The threatening social atmosphere gives Dangerfield a feeling of "'great strain'" (GM, 70) and engenders visions of monsters growling in the night (GM, 71).

Dangerfield finds himself surrounded by hostility. When his father sends Marion a check, she greets him with silence, "the sign that she has a weapon" (GM, 100). He encounters more hostility when a bartender refuses to serve him, thus denying him the peace available in stepping outside of Time through drink. As he escapes after wrecking the bar, Dangerfield encounters a street scene representing his world in microcosm:

> A little girl dragging a boy by the hair in the gutter. Kid screaming and kicking his legs. Bare feet swollen and cut. Another boy comes out of the house with a bundle of newspapers yelling for her to leave him alone and he gives her a punch on the arm and throws her down. She claws and scratches at his eyes and he bends her arms back and she spits in his face (GM, 113).

The children's senseless, unrelenting adversity mirrors the hostility of Dangerfield's world.

His reverie on his own childhood indicates that such hostility has always been his lot. The world, represented by his early teachers, was "insensitive to true beauty" (GM, 105). As a college student, Dangerfield

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dropped his tray in the cafeteria, fomenting a hostile reaction from the employees and students:

> They told me I was clumsy and asked why did I do it. And at times in my heart there is a music that plays for me. Tuneless threnody. They called me names. I was so afraid of them. And they could never look inside me and see a whole world of tenderness or leave me alone because I was so sad and suffering. Why did you do it (GM, 104).

Dangerfield finds the world constantly hostile, his life a continuous strain against society. He and Miss Frost "were in their little room together shut off from the rest of the house and the world out there ready to axe them" (GM, 217). "Life is a matter of resistance" (GM, 230), he concludes.

Social codes, an extension of man's hostile nature, serve to keep Dangerfield down. In mock seriousness, he thanks God for codes which regulate man's hostility. As an example, he cites the dictum: "'Never hit a man when he's down. Wait to see if he tries to get up and then by God, let him have it'" (GM, 199). The college, too, has an extensive set of rules which seem designed to entangle Dangerfield. His inability to function within the rules results in his failing to obtain a degree, metaphorically representing his broader inability to function within any ordered society. Dangerfield, of course, eschews accommodation, for, in his view, society seeks his death.

Thus society and its codes constitute an omnipresent threat from the beginning to the end of the novel.

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Dangerfield feels hostility from his earliest youth to the last moment at which we see him. Leaving Mary, he walks into the street: "where I always feel I'm going to get a bust in the head from some prowler. Violence is forever on my mind" (GM, 302). Conditioned by his past experiences, Dangerfield can anticipate only recurrent hostility from his society.

George Smith also lives in a hostile world, regularly receiving threatening letters whose headings, such as "the year is irrelevant" (SM, 78), universalize the hostility. The letters indicate that an undefined "they" are after Smith, a supposition supported by a stranger's gratuitous offer: "'you want a fight bud'" (SM, 24). In Smith's world everyone is trying to blow out the light of hope (SM, 122), "things come out of the void to get you" (SM, 110), and one dares not pick flowers from the "snake lurking shadows" (SM, 118). The wasteland image of Cinder Village, where the only refuge is The Goose Goes Inn, indicates that no segment of society is so small or so sequestered that it is exempted from the world's general plan of hostility. It is a society which, when it decides to "administer justice. Only takes a minute to attach the electrodes" (SM, 257).

In this world Smith "walks stiffly, quickly. Knowing every pause invites a punch out of nowhere" (SM, 248). Punches are provided by the irrational boiler watcher, who

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attacks Smith on the train platform (SM, 184), and by Smith's wife Shirl, who vows: "'I'll squeeze you dry'" (SM, 73). Indeed, Miss Martin is justified in her analysis that the "'whole world is horrible and mean'" (SM, 90). Smith's throwing money from the hotel window illustrates this conclusion, for the ensuing battle among the passers-by offers a microcosm of the larger world of George Smith, a world in which, as Samuel S observes, men attempt "to take off an enemy's underwear and sell it back to him thread by thread" (S, 87). Balthazar's hostile world induces a Melvillian dream:

> of eels with other eels' tails sticking out of their mouths in a whole great ocean of long grey devouring things waving up like seaweed to bite at one swimming and swimming (B, 31).

Balthazar is always aware of the hostile and inhuman nature of civilization. Leaving the house of Fitzdare's uncle, he observes: "windows ahead with bars. And human anguished noises somewhere behind those walls. Civilization can not be far away" (B, 136). He soon meets a representative of that civilization, a policeman who warns him "'that what I think and see here will be used against you'" (B, 143). Trapped in like manner throughout his life by the adversities of society, Balthazar can find only temporary succor. Like Dangerfield with Miss Frost, Balthazar and Alphonsine are "two people together against all others" (B, 353). Balthazar concludes that the "whole world is

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against you. Loneliness makes you look at other people. And they look away. Even faster. In their own loneliness" (B, 347). Balthazar remains at the mercy of a world which, as Beefy observes, "'has an instinct. Waits to deliver blows at the moment when it will hurt most'" (B, 376).

In The Onion Eaters, the army of the insurrection, both through its acknowledged presence and its correspondence, provides the same pervasive threat created by the letters to George Smith and by the mail to Dangerfield. The insurgents represent a society characterized by "gouging, testicle kicking greed" (OE, 107), "when terror went crouching through the streets. Citizens shot dead on lawns for wallets" (OE, 105). As the servant Charlene notes: "'a back turned is a back stabbed'" (OE, 185).

Charnel Castle represents the current confines of Clayton Clementine's world, and the specific terrors of the castle are in accord with the larger world's general hostility. Erconwald's mambas--"new vigorous lethal terrors drive out the stale mouldering ones" (OE, 61)--create a situation in which Clementine, metaphorically and literally, "is set hysterically dancing between a lot of slashing fatal fangs" (OE, 44). Mad guests continue to arrive, wreaking destruction, "making sure none of us capture a moment of pastoral peace" (OE, 329), until "wherever you look there's some kind of trouble" (OE, 301), with

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"nowhere safe left in the castle" (OE, 314). Hoping to sell the castle, Clementine advertises it as "suitable for continuance as an institution" (OE, 149).

Donleavy creates the castle as a microcosm of the larger mad world. The guests fight among themselves, destroying the castle. Finally, Lead Kindly Light hurls a vial of explosive acid, unleashing the explosive power of modern science. The chaotic mayhem in the castle symbolizes the similarly chaotic struggle of all men within a hostile society. Clementine's servant, Percival, summarizes man's actions within society when he observes: "' and if he can get his hands on any living things of beauty he will destroy it or kill himself trying'" (OE, 187).

In addition to the physical and social settings, the hero's conception of his position and role within those settings is essential to an understanding of Donleavy's work. The hero's reaction is in part a response to his environment, but, more importantly, he reacts to the role into which he believes society has cast him. The difference between this role and his desired role motivates the hero's response to his world, as he attempts to make his real world conform to his ideal world.

The gloom of his physical surroundings and the hostility of his social environment induce in the hero a sense of being an outcast and a victim. After fleeing the bar which he has damaged, Dangerfield ponders the newspaper

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account of a "Man Amuck in Public House" (GM, 117). The account shows society's view of his actions and society's attitude toward him; since the account is factually accurate, Dangerfield realizes that the world is hostile to his way of living. He is an outcast, a man amuck in society. He imagines himself on:

> a crazy boat on British waters screaming what ho bastards on port, starboard and everywhere. Are you mad? Want us to founder? Or spill me into the sea? Or twist me in the rigging? (GM, 196).

Like the Byronic hero, Dangerfield considers himself isolated and victimized. His friend O'Keefe is "loose, lost, and sinned upon" (GM, 41), and Dangerfield is "martyred and mussed, feeble and fussed, heart and soul covered in cement" (GM, 44). He envisions himself as the Wandering Jew, "the eternal tourist" (GM, 72), with no fixed place in the world.

Dangerfield perceives a hostile world mindlessly seeking him as its victim. He envisions a large group of veterans bent on his death. Without apparent reason, they attack him as a pervert and degenerate, until finally: "they pushed a flag pole out the window and dragged my from my corner, punching me in the ribs and twisting my balls and hanged me" (GM, 74). Running counter to society, Dangerfield can find no safe "corner." If he adjusts to being an outcast, society cannot be satisfied until he is a victim as well. Unaware that he has left his fly open,

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Dangerfield senses the hostility around him in the railroad car (GM, 87). Because of his perception of a hostile society, Dangerfield neither assigns nor expects a specific cause for the hostile atmosphere. Metaphorically, he is "exposed" to society.

Society's hostility is relentless, for Dangerfield notes that: "My problems come with me wherever I go. Even on detours" (GM, 160). His mail, done in "mean, gombeen handwriting" (GM, 232), symbolizes the world's pursuit of him, the gingerbread man.[9] As he tells Tony Malarkey: "'there is no end to it'" (GM, 241).

Like Dangerfield, George Smith inadvertently leaves his fly open, leaving himself "exposed" to society (SM, 70). He is a victim of the financial demands of his wife and children (SM, 65), and he fears exposure to society through "crucifixion on the front pages" (SM, 31) of a newspaper. He wears "shoes of grasshopper skin. For leaping high out of all the terrible traps set everywhere these days" (SM, 94). A society which pursues and attempts to subjugate him makes Smith a "self-employed slave" (SM, 64), an outcast who lives in constant danger of becoming a victim. The "corrugated soles I wear for nonskid agility" (SM, 10) help him avoid a slip which would place him at the mercy of a hostile society.

Samuel S, whose S is for "screwed" (S, 21), spends his life: "'trying to avoid the heels they're slamming at

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my outstretched fingers for laughs'" (S, 40). He considers himself a helpless victim--"A porcupine he was, and all his quills were gone" (S, 31)--engaged in a futile struggle against a society destined to be the ultimate victor. His final vision, in which he is crushed against the train wheels (S, 92), indicates the inevitability of his death at the hands of society.

The extremely sensitive Balthazar, acutely aware of the world's hostility, feels a great need to "look for love. And take part in college life" (B, 116), thereby becoming a member of society rather than an outcast. Meeting him on the quay, Beefy tells him: "'You look so left out of it all, Balthazar'" (B, 184), accurately describing the isolation which will always be Balthazar's lot. Balthazar admits that: "frightened of the world I'll always be" (B, 167), and wonders: "how can one ever be. Ideally suited for the world. And./ A/ Popular/ Personality" (B, 308).

Balthazar is always at society's mercy. Having contracted lice from a prostitute, he visits a public hospital where he unsuspectingly becomes an exhibit for a medical school class. Standing naked in the spotlight (B, 279), he is separated from the rest of society by the spotlight; like Smith and Dangerfield who leave their flies open, he is "exposed" to society. In a parallel scene, Balthazar can find no peace even in his own home, for his neighbors

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invade the premises to find him "in a state of undress" (B, 324). Balthazar is clearly a victim in these incidents in which an aggressive society attacks its passive victim.

Clayton Clementine, in The Onion Eaters, lives with a sense of impending disaster: "'Every morning I wake the blood starts pumping into my brain and my temples begin to throb. Imagining some new disaster'" (OE, 202). When Lady Macfugger wonders what is causing the shouts of distress, Clementine responds: "'the possibilities are encyclopaedic'" (OE, 204). She suggests he turn his head, ignoring the present trouble, but he replies: "'That's exactly what I do and it's always where the next disaster is'" (OE, 205). Powerless to extricate himself from these difficulties, Clementine envies "rubbery people who can twist and squirm" (OE, 263).

Clementine, like Balthazar, is a passive hero pitted against an actively hostile society. He views society as trying to make him "solemnly swear I deserve what the whole god damn bunch of you are trying to do to me" (OE, 330). At the novel's conclusion, the antiquarian tells Clementine: "'It's a comfort knowing there's someone out there beyond keeping the loneliness at bay'" (OE, 335). Clementine's function is to bear the world's loneliness, a duty imposed upon him by a hostile world, a duty he is powerless to refuse. Clementine's final observation that "The weary/ Wind/ Bewilders/ Me" (OE, 335) indicates

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his sense of being both an outcast and a victim, for he is unable to understand the world, and the final focus on "me" indicates the clear division between him and the monolithic remainder of society.

Cornelius Christian remembers that: "'All through my childhood. I felt nobody liked me'" (FT, 289), a feeling he carries into adulthood. Waiting for Fanny to open her door, a melancholy Christian contemplates his being an outcast: "Stand here unwanted. By everyone" (FT, 126). He easily becomes a victim as well. After politely telling a group of women on an elevator that someone has stepped in "canine excrement," Christian is embarrassed to discover the "whole god damn bunch are deliberately smelling me" (FT, 243). Wearing strange peach shoes causes Christian's expulsion from a restaurant, whose head waiter explains: "'We do not mind when persons come where this is not their natural habitat. We try to make them feel at home and not as if they don't belong" (FT, 327). Clearly, Christian does not belong. He remains the outcast he felt himself to be as a child. The society available to him is not his "natural habitat."

Donleavy's hero lives in a gloomy, changing world carrying him to his death. En route, the mindless hostility of his society complements the physical setting and the world's inherent adversity to cast him in the role of outcast and victim. The life-process which Donleavy portrays

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in his novels must be analyzed in the context of these physical, metaphysical, and social forces. The hero's life-process, a reaction against and a response to these forces, constitutes both the motivation and the theme of Donleavy's novels.

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[1]Jerry Bryant, The Open Decision (New York: The Free Press, 1970).

[2]J. P. Donleavy, The Ginger Man (New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1955), p. 11. Subsequent references will appear in the text with the abbreviated title GM.

[3]J. P. Donleavy, A Singular Man (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1963), p. 13. Subsequent references will appear in the text with the abbreviated title SM.

[4]J. P. Donleavy, The Saddest Summer of Samuel S (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1966), p. 7. Subsequent references will appear in the text with the abbreviated title S.

[5]J. P. Donleavy, The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1968), p. 18. Subsequent references will appear in the text with the abbreviated title B.

[6]The topic of sensibility is considered in Chapters III and IV. Sensibility should be the most basic consideration in an analysis of the development and the evolution of Donleavy's hero.

[7]J. P. Donleavy, The Onion Eaters (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1971), p. 1. Subsequent references will appear in the text with the abbreviated title OE.

[8]J. P. Donleavy, A Fairy Tale of New York (New York: Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, 1973), p. 147. Subsequent references will appear in the text with the abbreviated title FT.

[9]Dean Cohen, "The Evolution of Donleavy's Hero," Critique, 12 (1971), 95-109. Good analysis of the gingerbread man story as applied to Donleavy's novels.

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CHAPTER II

THE HERO'S RESPONSE TO HIS WORLD

The reactions of Donleavy's hero to a gloomy, hostile world which has made him an outcast and a victim delineate the hero's nature, his attitudes toward his world, and his methods of surviving in that world. Donleavy's hero attempts to ameliorate the loneliness imposed by the physical and social environment through the temporary escape of drinking, through a wishing for death, and then through a search for a permanent position of stability, peace, and security. Seeking a position of stability--similar to the axial lines which Saul Bellow's Augie March seeks--engenders a Byronic scorn for his fellow man, who would deprive him of stability; thus his scorn leads Donleavy's hero to a bold defiance of his world and to a struggle for independence from society.

Because a Byronic hero must be an anachronism in contemporary society--an idea developed in Chapter V--the hero's proud struggles for independence are often ludicrously futile and, from the reader's perspective, comic. A desperate Balthazar chokes on his cigar and stutters incoherently when Millicent's parents trap him at a hotel

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of assignation. George Smith, attempting to elude his pursuers, stands with both feet in pails in a broom closet, and Cornelius Christian achieves momentary relief from Mr. Quell's supervision by putting a chocolate purgative in his boss's coffee. While the hero engenders laughter, Donleavy's purpose remains serious, even tragic, as he depicts a hero who insists upon his own independence and who considers himself central to his own personal universe.

The pervasive mood of Donleavy's hero is an implacable loneliness, a trait which, like the gloomy atmosphere which engenders it, has its source in the elegy. Like the Byronic hero who is also rooted in the elegy, Donleavy's hero projects his loneliness on the entire world of his vision. Dangerfield believes all men lonely, for the rich appear to him "just poor miserable bastards like me" (GM, 62). Indeed, "'Everyone looked beat like me'" (GM, 64). A reverie of his childhood, another lonely time, indicates that not only are all men lonely in Dangerfield's present world, but, like Dangerfield, their lives have been lonely from childhood to the present. Donleavy thus universalizes man's loneliness, depicting it as a general characteristic of man's condition, confined to no specific time or place.

In one of his frequent moments of introspection, Dangerfield reveals his constant awareness of his loneliness: "I need people to talk to. I have nobody to talk to" (GM, 89). Leaving Marion in the house rented from

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Skully, Dangerfield rides the train "all alone" (GM, 104), aware not simply of being by himself in the train, but also of having severed his marriage, thereby losing the stability which might conquer loneliness. When he later tells Miss Frost: "'I have till now counted my friends on a hand of amputated fingers'" (GM, 177), he expresses his own loneliness and also strikes what he knows will be a responsive chord in Miss Frost, for she, like all mankind, shares his sense of loneliness. Throughout the novel, Dangerfield is often alone, and, significantly, he frequently mentions that he is alone, showing his awareness of this condition.

Dangerfield's loneliness, and his inability to find lasting peace, leads him to the brink of madness. When Marion wants to know why he acts as he does, he tells her:

> What's at the root? Can't you see I'm mad.
> Can't you see? Look. See. Madness. E.
> I'm mad (GM, 50).

While Dangerfield acts the role of madman, this act is little more than a caricature of the man he often is.

After O'Keefe's visit, Dangerfield wakes up drunk, with Marion screaming at him. When she slaps him, with the baby simultaneously starting to cry, Dangerfield leaps from the table, punches Marion in the face, and attempts to smother the baby (GM, 27). Later, after an argument

with Marion, the additional adversity of an empty salt cellar proves more than Dangerfield can bear, and he throws the offending salt cellar through a convenient window (GM, 61). Finally, before leaving Marion, he ties a knot in her sweater and drives a nail through the toilet pipe, causing fecal matter to flood the kitchen below (GM, 102). Dangerfield later vents his frustration on Mary in a similar manner, tying a knot in her towel and soaking her underwear in the sink (GM, 298). Such childish reactions indicate the extreme frustration resulting from Dangerfield's loneliness, from his feeling that he is cut off from other people. These moments of madness are temporary, and they do not represent Dangerfield's total personality, for he can also be urbane and coldly calculating. His acts of madness spring from an unameliorated sense of being society's victim and from a loneliness without bounds.

George Smith bears his loneliness with an air of resigned suffering. His introspective musings on his loneliness border on self-pity as he contemplates "my lonesome self" (SM, 44), a man "with a heart so hurt" (SM, 44). Smith has a constant remorse over his "lonely life" (SM, 103); he would "give anything to be able to stand in a crowd" (SM, 53). Like Dangerfield, Smith considers himself a social outcast, "a solitary figure" (SM, 103) forever damned to loneliness in a hostile world.

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The solitude of nature offers Smith no solace, for, though he at first feels a "good loneliness" (SM, 120) at his cabin in the woods, the loneliness soon causes hallucinations rather than bringing peace (SM, 133). He always remains within his "own lonely world" (SM, 154), "without friends" (SM, 298), "looking everywhere for love" (SM, 303). Returning to New York, he appears "forlorn on the Battery Station. . . . [with] hunger in stomach and heart" (SM, 182). Finding no way to surmount the loneliness which envelops him, Smith follows forever the "honest lonely pursuit of one's destination" (SM, 289).

Throughout the novel, Smith is a man "looking everywhere for love" (SM, 303). His haunting railroad stations in the vain hope of seeing Sally Tomson illustrates his sometimes irrational compulsion to overcome his loneliness. He is so desperate for involvement with another human being that he almost rejoices in Miss Martin's attempt to murder him. In a scene reminiscent of Edward Albee's Zoo Story, Smith finds satisfaction in a tragic relationship to Miss Martin. He observes: "This is the first time I've been held at gun point. Suppose it's better than being lonely" (SM, 223). This sensational episode delineates Smith's characteristic desperate loneliness.

Similarly, Samuel S enjoys even the adverse attention of his landlady, Agnes Anxiety. Chased from the

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house by the mop-wielding Agnes, Sam mops the water from the stairs as the gathering crowd laughs. For Sam, this situation is therapeutic, for it is a rare opportunity to be a part of a social group. As the object of Agnes's wrath, and the source of the crowd's amusement, Sam is the central figure, no longer an outsider, no longer ignored. "He was cured. This moment, this day" (S, 33), for at least temporarily he has escaped the loneliness largely responsible for his visits to the psychiatrist.

Such respite proves only temporary, however, for, like Donleavy's other characters, Samuel S is often found alone, musing on his sad and lonely life. Sam needs the warmth and comfort of a mother, a role he tries in vain to fill for himself: "Sometimes one had to give oneself a big bear hug of sympathy. When no one else will ever wrap arms around you like a mother" (S, 62). Yet self-pity does not offset loneliness, and Sam, perhaps more desperate than any other Donleavy character in his terror of loneliness, tells Abigail: "'I want to get married'" (S, 59). Sam would sacrifice his independence to conquer loneliness, an extreme step in Donleavy's world. In the novel's final scene, Sam is again alone and in despair, with "shoulders folded like wings and clutching his face with hands he lay against the corner of a doorway" (S, 92).

Departing for boarding school as a young child, Balthazar things: "They push you away, and say goodbye.

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Then you are lonely and afraid with all the emptiness deeper and deeper everywhere" (B, 21). Gloom and loneliness are living qualities for Balthazar, qualities which promise to grow progressively worse. Balthazar's prophecies prove accurate, for his is a lonely life. When Bella sends him out of her room, he laments that he is "shut out from all her warmth and love" (B, 80), and when she is dismissed, "B stood in the evening Tuilleries gardens near the big pond with his solitary love held in empty hands" (B, 104). In college he experiences "lonely Sunday evenings" (B, 119), and, even after dining with friends, he "returned lonely" (B, 120) to college.

Respites from loneliness are never more than temporary in Balthazar's life, for he needs a specific relationship to banish loneliness. Unlike heroes of lesser sensibility, Balthazar finds no succor in merely interacting with another person. After his marriage to Millicent, he wondered "if the sun would ever come up again" (B, 331). Clearly, only his idealized relationship with Elizabeth Fitzdare, not marriage per se, offers a permanent cessation of loneliness. Balthazar's thought that he would "quake with loneliness when she's forever gone" (B, 167) proves effective foreshadowing, for this is Donleavy's ultimate picture of Balthazar. When Elizabeth withdraws from the marriage arrangement due to a riding accident, Balthazar can find no way " to make the blank future lift its daily

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The picture of Balthazar sitting "with elbows planted holding the palms of my hands against my face" (B, 120) is identical both to Donleavy's final picture of Samuel S and to a recurring pose of George Smith's. Like these earlier heroes, and like Cornelius Christian, who moves even a casual cab driver to notice, "'you look lonely'" (FT, 4), Balthazar remains figuratively head in hands throughout his life. At the conclusion of the novel, he cannot take part in Beefy's wild orgy. From his early departure to boarding school to his final scene with Beefy, Balthazar remains "all alone" (B, 368).

Clayton Clementine also senses the "crushing strange loneliness" (OE, 13) of his life. Like Donleavy's other heroes, Clementine has a feeling of loneliness even in a crowd, a feeling continually reinforced by his environment, for "the wild loneliness" (OE, 191) of Charnel Castle is complemented by a lonely, haunted land where there are "'not enough humans to fill the silence'" (OE, 270). But human beings also fail to fill the void, for Clementine finds no end to loneliness in a crowded castle. In a parallel to Balthazar's loneliness during Beefy's orgy, Clementine is seen "climbing lonely to the rampart" (OE, 323), escaping the wild guests of Charnel Castle who offer him no relief.

Donleavy offers additional insight into the pervasive

nature of man's loneliness when Clementine laments Erconwald's loneliness. Because Erconwald is a scientist, Clementine's observation on Erconwald's "lonely life prodding secrets out of the universe" (OE, 235) indicates that loneliness is not simply endemic to mankind but may also be an inherent quality governing every aspect of life in the universe. By thus universalizing loneliness, Donleavy demonstrates that man cannot end loneliness simply by rising above his own lonely existence. Loneliness is as much a characteristic of the world as it is a trait of the hero's character.

Dangerfield seeks temporary relief from his loneliness in drinking. Even while drinking, he retains a clear consciousness of his condition, realizing that drink can offer only temporary relief. Drink provides a moment of peace, a way to briefly step outside of Time after a difficult experience or before an impending trial. He tells Percy Clocklan he needs a "'drink to recover from the insecurity'" (GM, 136), and when Mary observes that he drinks rapidly, he replies: "'Got to with the lack of decency around us'" (GM, 158). Before meeting O'Keefe, he needs:

> a glass of malt because I cannot face those beaten in battle without some little thing to still my own restless despair (GM, 205).

O'Keefe accuses Dangerfield of seeing life through a haze (GM, 192), but, curiously, O'Keefe is the perennial failure

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while Dangerfield seeks, and finds, a temporary respite enabling him to begin his struggle anew.

Donleavy's subsequent heroes are infrequent drinkers, though Balthazar "smashed back a double brandy. To buoy up one's lonely hope of a friend" (B, 116), and Clementine notes that "wine cheers the spirit" (OE, 241). In a parody of man's reliance on drink, the old man in the pub treats Clementine and Bloodmourn to a long, rambling discourse on his first love, ale. The old gentleman contrasts with Dangerfield, for while Dangerfield successfully steps out of Time, the old man has substituted one form of oppression for another.

Donleavy's heroes are also attracted briefly to death, for death seems to offer an end to their lonely, miserable existence. Dangerfield watches funerals pass his house and finally buys a bicycle to participate in every available funeral (GM, 98). Yet death is only attractive in the short view, for, though he seeks relief from the vicissitudes of life, Dangerfield balks at the finality of death. He ultimately fears "getting that last and final chill, the one to be avoided at all costs" (GM, 165). He also asks that his casket not be nailed too tightly (GM, 247), for to finally and irrevocably die is to relinquish his struggle to have life on his own terms. Thus, Dangerfield concludes, death is to be avoided, for death eliminates the possibility of victory.

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George Smith lives with the aura of death, returning regularly to the mausoleum which he is building. He anticipates his death: "to the mortuary, change of socks, clean underwear. And evening clothes to sport through the longest night of all" (SM, 288); yet death, if inevitable, is not to be desired. His friend Bonniface, whose "bony face" is the spectre of death,[1] horrifies Smith (SM, 133). He refers to Bonniface as he "for whom I search, from whom I run" (SM, 143). Smith's ambivalent attitude toward death echoes Dangerfield's attraction to the rest and peace of death and his aversion to death's finality.

Balthazar, like his alter ego Beefy, sees death as an escape. Beefy's oft-rendered song, "O For the Wings of a Dove," shows a desire to transcend life through death, assuming the character of a spirit. Balthazar, weary of his lonely existence at college, muses: "If only one knew how to die. And go away from this lonely friendless world" (B, 64). Having lost first Fitzdare and then Millicent and his son, Balthazar again contemplates suicide: "Hurry up to die. So little reason left to live. Take a ship across the Atlantic, jump down into the cold waves" (B, 343). Yet there is no indication that Balthazar will attempt suicide. Like Donleavy's earlier heroes, he longs for the repose of death, but he will not actively seek death.

Clementine also longs for death, yet his previous experience has shown him that death is not his answer, for

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death ignominiously ends the struggle of life. He remembers: "praying it hurts less than living. . . . And it always pains more" (OE, 287). Nostalgic for the hospital where he lay close to death, he recalls how "peaceful it was back in that hospital bed slowly dying" (OE, 329). But in death one is "stacked and beaten" (OE, 329). Clearly then, to die is to lose the struggle of life, and suicide is an acceptance of failure. This attitude is reflected in the servant Charlene's complaint about the Charnel Castle guests: "'That's the thing with this place, you can do what you like to anyone but not one of them will get up and leave'" (OE, 293). Donleavy uses the guests and the castle as a microcosm, showing the analogy of man's refusal to commit suicide--to get up and leave--no matter how badly treated in life.

To counter the world's loneliness and hostility, Donleavy's hero seeks peace and security. Sex is a primary approach to peace, for through sex the hero momentarily steps outside of Time, briefly forgetting his awareness of mutability, escaping loneliness through liaison with his partner, and ignoring the world's ambient hostility. Peace occurs in any form of stasis, any method of surmounting hostility, but for Donleavy's hero sex is the most available and the most effective avenue to peace. Frequently, peace is simply wished for, illustrating the hero's dissatisfaction with his world and his belief that

he deserves a better world. Like drink or death, sex enables the hero to transcend life, but while death is objectionable because of its finality, and drink provides a means of ignoring a problem, sex offers active participation in a counter measure, creating in the hero a sense of usurping the world's authority.

Dangerfield calls Chris's room "an oasis of hiding with no door knocks for me" (GM, 68). Like the Byronic hero, he seeks an oblivion in which he is out of touch with the world. Because Chris's room offers a safe harbor, it is "comfortable and full of rest and peace and better than home" (GM, 69). With Chris, too, Dangerfield finds it "nice not to be alone" (GM, 77), and he echoes Chris's desire for "'a certain contentment'" (GM, 82). The beginnings of his relationship with Chris offer Dangerfield a refuge, an end to loneliness, and the promise of contentment. After having intercourse, "for the next silent minute he was the sanest man on earth, bled of his seed, rid of his mind" (GM, 84). Thus Dangerfield finds total peace through this sexual experience, but the state of peace is only temporary, for he is "rid of his mind" only "for the next silent minute."

Returning home to Marion's verbal assaults, Dangerfield tells her he is capable of anything, including killing her, unless he is given peace (GM, 90). Pushed to the breaking point, he says: "'I just don't want any more

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of this. Take it all away. Take it away'" (GM, 93). In contrast with Chris, Marion offers not peace but additional hostility in the form of demands and responsibilities. While Marion desires social status and wealth, Dangerfield often subordinates these desires, avowing that "ease and comfort and quiet is all I want" (GM, 102).

Because he finds no peace with Marion, he returns to Chris, where he finds "the only peace I have had for years" (GM, 116). Later, he tells Mary: "'Haven't known such peace in years'" (GM, 271). Peace, for Dangerfield, is a temporary respite from the world's hostility: "I need help and a polite period of rest, of sleep, of peace, to eke out these few more weeks till I'm absolutely rotten rich" (GM, 175). Thus peace, while often an end in itself, is, in the long view, a source of strength for a protracted struggle.

Closely allied to his need for peace is the hero's need for security. Dangerfield finds both peace and security with Chris--peace in the act of sex which enables him to step outside the world, and security in the refuge of her apartment, which offers him protection from the world. Viewing distant mountains, Dangerfield says: "I wish I were away out there with a massive wall built all around me" (GM, 113), and in Marion's house in Geary, he closes the drapes because "darkness gives a sense of security" (GM, 125). By cutting off the light, Dangerfield achieves

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a sense of enclosed isolation which simulates the protection of the mountains. This isolation offers Dangerfield peace and protection not only from physical violence but from the general hostility of the world as well.

George Smith, who would live in the secure refuge of his mausoleum (SM, 94), admits that he "hides" (SM, 107) in his office because: "I want peace" (SM, 107). He uses Miss Martin in the outer office as a buffer against the world (SM, 109). To achieve his much-needed peace, Smith, like Dangerfield, seeks sexual experiences. "Another sad body naked next to mine can mean a whole world of peace and tenderness" (SM, 151), Smith says. While he idealizes conventional marriage as "sultry with peace" (SM, 152), Sally Tomson really epitomizes the possibilities inherent in sex: "Sally, you blanket over the desperate cold cares and mailmen lugging all the undelivered dread" (SM, 179). Sally, and sex generally, offers deliverance, for she prevents the consummation of the hostile world's attempt to victimize Smith.

Her Majesty tells Smith to "pull the covers up on our faces. Let me teach you how to shut out the world" (SM, 211). Her hotel is "a refuge. For a safe relapse" (SM, 218), providing Smith the same safe harbor he has sought with Sally Tomson (SM, 162). Sex offers Smith security as well as peace, an opportunity to hide from the world as well as the opportunity to temporarily step

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Samuel S seeks oblivion by shutting all sound and light out of his room and submerging himself in a hot bath (S, 45). When Abigail tells him that his room is dark at mid-day, he replies: "'As far as I'm concerned, it's midnight'" (S, 49). Sam does not recognize Time, having created a refuge isolated from the world. He considers further isolation through sex with Abigail, with whom he would "rid the mind of knowledge" (S, 60), thus achieving a mental as well as a physical isolation and, presumably, a total sense of peace.

Balthazar, whose wealth precludes his ever feeling all the vicissitudes of life suffered by Dangerfield, nonetheless shares man's inherent need for peace. Even at an early age, before he has accumulated a backlog of adversity, Balthazar desires to be "lost together" (B, 99) with Bella. Arriving in Ireland, he finds:

> A wondrous simple peace. Without years of lonely grey. And upturned rafters in brick debris. With bombs and cannon chattering up against the night and searchlights waving over a terror torn sky (B, 110).

This peaceful environment overcomes loneliness and the world's hostility, offering Balthazar a safe refuge. This refuge is not real, however; it is Balthazar's idealized vision of the world he seeks. He is soon resubjected to the world's hostility, leaving him "so desperate to get laid" (B, 118) and hoping:

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Dancing with Fitzdare, Balthazar feels "so far away from all the rain" (B, 123). He envisions their life together as ultimate peace, a permanent resting place "away in the soft green peace" (B, 182). Balthazar, like Donleavy's other heroes, idealizes conventional marriage as optimum peace and security. He retains this vision perhaps only because his marriage to Fitzdare never takes place, sparing him the anguish suffered by George Smith and Dangerfield, whose marriages, once havens of peace, become additional sources of hostility.

Balthazar seeks security in solitude, isolating himself by installing a private phone whose number is known only to Beefy (B, 337). He attempts to duplicate the atmosphere which he initially found in college: "The green peace and beauty. The lovely walled silence safely away from the hurrying world" (B, 239). Breda's room, too, offers a place to be "safe a moment" (B, 211), a security much needed after his capture by the college officials (B, 196). Beefy's expression, "'rogering in deep solitude'" (B, 337), links solitude to a sexual image, illustrating the close interweaving of peace and security in Donleavy's world.

In The Onion Eaters, Clementine senses a loss of peace when Erconwald's crew arrives (OE, 36). Throughout

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the novel, he longs for an isolated, peaceful refuge in which to escape the hostile world. "Had I but just a house and lawn" (OE, 107-8), he muses. Later he thinks: "I could have settled in a small apartment. With a view out over the lake" (OE, 196). He also considers the possibilities of refuge within the castle when he says: "'I want this to be a normal castle'" (OE, 245), and again when he tells Percival he "does not wish to be disturbed" (OE, 245).

Clementine also seeks peace through sex, for he implores Lady Macfugger: "'Please don't go. This is the first civilized moment I've had. I'm desperate'" (OE, 199). Generalizing his need for the peace offered by sex, he declares that "a heart needs a haven to go on beating" (OE, 225), and "if the world is empty. The smile of another fills it up" (OE, 242). Seducing Charlene offers a moment of peace, a respite "before any more glooms gather" (OE, 331), a source of strength for the continuing struggle against impending hostility.

Though Cornelius Christian briefly considers suicide (FT, 7), and though his work with Vine and his relationship with a girl named Graves constantly associate him with death, Christian's focus remains on peace and security. Death attracts Christian only because "death is better than dying" (FT, 256). Like George Smith, Christian things: "With a bed and fireplace one of these

mausoleums would make a good place to live" (FT, 48). The mausoleum offers escape from life's adversity, a chance "to be accidentally somebody for a minute" (FT, 178).

The peaceful security offered by Mrs. Graves, his girl friend's mother, introduces Christian to the possibility of finding a refuge with women. Mrs. Graves:

> . . . always welcomed me. Into the comfort of her friendly beauty. Everywhere else I stood in people's hallways. Waiting. But she invited me in (FT, 154).

He later considers approaching women randomly, offering sex (FT, 147); he naively engages a friendly woman in conversation, innocently failing to realize that she is a prostitute (FT, 120); he asks Miss Musk to hug him (FT, 73); and he becomes desperate "to hold any warm quivering body" (FT, 115). He thinks of Fanny: "I need her so" (FT, 304), and he tells Jean How: "I was thinking that two people could live together and face the world" (FT, 287), echoing Dangerfield's speech to Miss Frost.

The need for peace and security grows out of the hostility to which the heroes are subjected. Both peace and security, however, only temporarily offset specific acts of hostility or fortify the hero against impending hostility. A desire for stability, a permanent form of peace which will conquer the mutability plaguing the hero, develops logically from the hero's need for peace. An adjunct of peace, stability answers a problem inherent in

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the universe, while peace offsets the world's man-made hostility. Stability is peace on a higher, permanent plane.

After striking Marion and stealing the money for the baby's milk, Dangerfield takes refuge in a bar. "I think moments like sitting here should be preserved" (GM, 29), he says, wishing to make his refuge permanent. Dangerfield and Mary look down on some swans swimming and gulls flying, which gives Mary a "'Nice feeling. . . . As if you were floating'" (GM, 153). Dangerfield bristles at this thought, for his interest in Mary lies in seeking a moment of peace if not lasting stability. Certainly, the floating transience in which Mary delights is inimical to his goals.

Dangerfield's idealization of marriage indicates his desire for stability:

> These are the things that make the marriage happy. Meals on time, sugar, butter, and salt on the table. Socks darned and go to the drawer and find a clean shirt. Miss Frost was right in there with those dishes. No fuss. No excuses. Fine person (GM, 177).

He wants Marion to remove the world's hostility, symbolized by the many minor inconveniences of life which she should set right. He visualizes marriage as a refuge, a permanent haven of stability different from the rest of the world, a haven reflecting the conditions not of the actual world but of Dangerfield's ideal world. When Marion finally leaves him, he realizes that his hopes for stability

are dashed. He attempts to simulate the stability which he has lost: "I must now lie without movement, eyeballs frozen in my head. Absolute zero" (GM, 167). The opposition of stability and mutability, and the hero's need for stability, are demonstrated in his conversation with Miss Frost:

> 'I want to settle somewhere. Stay there for good. I'm sick of moving. We must have somewhere to call our own, Lilly. I think that's what we need and stop all this moving' (GM, 220).

George Smith expresses a desire for stability when riding on the train: "Just let us continue on this train before reaching any stops. I want time" (SM, 48). His mausoleum, constructed to withstand floods and earthquakes (SM, 105), is located in the "permanency" of World Renown Cemetery (SM, 248). Smith expresses a desire to "be someone's little dog. . . . With a master all of ones [sic] own" (SM, 286), reflecting the same need for stability and permanence demonstrated by his building a mausoleum. He regrets that he has "just a vague fixed address which is beginning to move" (SM, 134), yet his independence gives him some stability, for Sally Tomson tells him: "'While the rest of us are skidding around, there you are in your own little world'" (SM, 241). Seeking stability in a changing world motivates Smith's attempts to create his own smaller world, defying the limits and conditions of the larger world.

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Samuel S shares a concept of permanency and stability in marriage with Donleavy's other heroes. He tells Abigail: "'You don't know what screwing without a future can do to me'" (S, 70), rejecting the temporary peace of a sexual relationship. Sleeping with Abigail would be "'a steam shovel full of sod flipped on my coffin'" (S, 71). He informs her: "'I'm finished screwing for screwing's sake'" (S, 75). Sam seeks a permanent stability. He is interested in marriage, albeit his idealized and false concept of marriage, which will provide stability rather than simply a temporary peace. Later, he considers his encounter with Abigail from another perspective, regretting that he did not plant a seed in her (S, 86) as a means of conquering the world's mutability.

Balthazar finds the strength to face the future in contemplating the stability he expected, but never actually achieved, in his proposed marriage to Elizabeth Fitzdare. He shares her general view of man: "It gets so hopeless for them because they think the world can't stop. It sometimes helps to think it can" (B, 260). Balthazar's need for stability is best exemplified by Beefy's account of meeting the king:

> One realizes in a moment such as that, that the Monarch is always there, head of the ship of state to whom one can appeal in spirit when life is most rough. That the Monarch speaks for truth when you known damn well everyone is lying through their litigations. The Sovereign, always the resistor to the irresistible impulse, steadfast

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> in jostling. Never unnerved in national turmoil and sorrow when from the Monarch's eyes the tears must fall (B, 363).

Balthazar finds strength in the permanency of the Monarch and in the permanency of Fitzdare, which help him to believe that the world can stop. Strength lies in conquering mutability by finding or establishing a permanence in a changing world.

Clayton Clementine remembers the first principle of naval warfare, to "'get squared away'" (OE, 211). From the resultant position of stability, further operations become possible. He shares Macfugger's views on the insurgents: "'These ruddy upstarts have got to be put in their place. Back down where they belong'" (OE, 118), and he would avoid cohabitation with his servants lest they forget their places (OE, 105). By suppressing the insurgents and the servants, Clementine supports an order which makes his life more stable.

Because his life is dominated by a gloomy world and a hostile society, Donleavy's hero considers peace, security, and stability essential to his survival. The hero's fellow men present an obstacle to his achieving respite from the world's adversity, however, for men are the instruments of hostility. The hero, therefore, finds himself engaged in a struggle with his fellow men, whose purposes counter his own. Because his need for peace and stability conflicts with the hostility of other men,

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Donleavy's hero develops a Byronic scorn for his fellow man, becoming as hostile as his world.

Contemplating his future wealth and social position, Dangerfield decides to raise the pawn rates. "People shouldn't be pawning anyway" (GM, 24), he concludes, denying others the privilege he so often uses. Like the Byronic hero, he holds himself aloof, acknowledging: "I don't get along with men" (GM, 105). He calls a bartender a "'Celtic lout'" (GM, 111), finds that telepathy will not work on Skully because he has no brain to receive messages (GM, 127), and viciously turns the tables on the carriage driver who attempts to exploit him (GM, 149). Dangerfield possesses a general scorn for all men, all of whom are his enemies. He refrains from stealing from Miss Frost, thinking: "Mustn't. Not playing the game. Although it's a little hard to know who's on whose side" (GM, 229). Though he excepts Miss Frost from his wrath, he demonstrates his view of all men as possible adversaries, thereby justifying, at least to himself, his hostility toward them.

Generalizing his scorn, he considers "people of a class with dogs" (GM, 256). In the Soho bar, he deliberately insults the local patrons (GM, 262), and his comprehensive "Christmas is a fraud" speech is a deliberate affront to almost everyone at the party (GM, 299). In response to a world which is universally hostile, Dangerfield strikes out in all directions, sparing only a few

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George Smith buys a brass pig as a "reminder of swine everywhere" (SM, 38). He considers his own children savages (SM, 56), and he begins his last will: "First off I should like to rear up and haunt all those who tried to screw me up while living" (SM, 100). Bonniface tells Smith that he turns his nose up at friendship (SM, 251), a result of Smith's distrust of the world. When he is attacked by juvenile delinquents in Central Park, Smith offers the following commentary on his fellow man:

> Faces peering out of the quickly passing cars to view the parkland spectacle. While running up their windows and locking their doors. A population to which you could appeal for help. If you wanted to share your money (SM, 264).

Finding all men hostile or indifferent, Smith responds with a comprehensive scorn. He admits to the gang leader that he has mercy "'just for myself, sonny'" (SM, 265).

As Donleavy's later heroes become progressively less aggressive and endowed with greater sensibility, they exhibit only a quiet, passive scorn. Balthazar sees "bad manners everywhere" (B, 120), and Clementine accepts his aunt's warning to "count on being surrounded by crass stupidity for most of your life" (OE, 67). Only once does Clementine appear hostile, offering to fight the "pen pusher" during his job interview (OE, 108). Balthazar and Clementine exhibit their scorn by seeking privacy--passively

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rejecting the society of their fellow men--rather than by displaying hostility.

While Cornelius Christian most often displays the passivity of Balthazar and Clementine, he also shares Dangerfield's violent capacity for scorn. As a child, Christian gleefully foments lawsuits by transplanting his neighbors' flowers during the night (FT, 131); as a young man, his "You bunch/ Of/ Rubes" (FT, 161) quiets inane banter at a party; later, he manifests his scorn for his boss, Mr. Quell, by putting chocolate purgative in Quell's coffee (FT, 265). He flashes the title of his mortuary manual to unpleasant faces on the ferry (FT, 32) and wonders aloud: "What kind of soulless additives are you using to preserve you, madam" (FT, 82). "'You can be such a snotty kid'" (FT, 268), Fanny tells him, and, indeed, Christian can react with Dangerfield's aggressiveness. He explodes at Mott's secretary--"This bitch sitting between me and survival" (FT, 177), and he dreams of describing a deceased woman to her husband as "a winner. In a dead heat. Ha ha. You fuckpig you" (FT, 120). While Christian often chooses to isolate himself from society, as do Balthazar and Clementine, he can also face mankind with Dangerfield's blatant scorn.

The heroes' scorn for mankind results in a self-inflicted wound. Driven by the gloom and hostility of the world to seek peace and stability, and finding mankind an

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obstacle to these goals, the hero responds with scorn, a hostility of his own. Tragically, this reaction brings him full circle, for, by rejecting society, the hero forces himself into the role of outcast, increasing the loneliness which he had sought to ameliorate. Thus he moves himself farther from the peace and stability which he seeks.

Donleavy's hero does not acquiesce at this point; rather, he reevaluates his relationship to his world and decides, since peace and stability are unattainable within the world, to defy the forces inimical to him. Through defiance, the hero remains an outcast, but with an important difference. While initially a victim of the world's hostility, his rejection of the world places him above, rather than below, his adversary.

Fleeing from the bar he has wrecked, Dangerfield is determined to escape the hostility represented by his pursuers. "I'll keep up the pace" (GM, 113), he vows, refusing to submit to capture. In response to Skully's letter demanding payment for rent and damages, Dangerfield replies: "I have caught my neck in a mangle and will be indisposed for eternity" (GM, 165). He neither acquiesces nor makes excuses; he simply refuses to meet Skully's demands and intends to refuse them to eternity. Envisioning Skully waiting for him to leave the house, Dangerfield glowers with defiant pleasures: "And/ I/ Won't" (GM, 236), resolving never to give up the struggle.

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Dangerfield admires Malarkey's holding out against society, and, though he will not isolate himself as Malarkey does, he feels that Malarkey's endurance leads to victory. "'We're going to win. Win win win'" (GM, 244), he chants, firm in his belief that defiance can result in victory. When his London landlady seeks rent money, he again strikes a defiant pose:

> Heave to, head into the wind, sails aback and
> I'll ride this out though most decks are awash
> and I'm taking water amidships (GM, 280).

He tells Percy: "'I'm down. Things seem to get worse by the day. But I'll manage'" (GM, 285). He reminds O'Keefe that they "'must fight'" (GM, 215), because the only alternative is extinction, which is "'to be avoided'" (GM, 215). Dangerfield consistently refuses to concede defeat. No matter the odds, his defiant spirit propels him to a re-engagement with the enemy.

Pride and dignity are subtle forms of defiance, means of standing against the world. Dangerfield plans to redeem his hat from the pawn to: "keep the dignity. Dignity in debt a personal motto" (GM, 66). When leaving the house in Geary, he takes his calling cards, for, though he is deeply in debt: "I've kept the dignity. Dignity in debt" (GM, 233). He criticizes a chemist's gauche sign for being "undignified" (GM, 94), and, defiant to the end, he wants his "last moments to have some dignity" (GM, 269).

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When down, George Smith never concedes defeat; rather, as he tells Miss Martin: "'I'll rear up once again I assure you'" (SM, 117). His investment in a mausoleum is a tacit refusal to give money to his grasping wife (SM, 85). As Bonniface tells him: "'Your pretentions are exceeded only by your outrageous nerve'" (SM, 249). Smith salutes the juvenile gang leader's decision to "call the bluff" (SM, 264), celebrating the defiant response later symbolized by Bonniface's sounding a trumpet in an isolated stall in the men's room (SM, 255). As Shirl observes, an always defiant Smith will never give in but will "sit even in your worst terrible sorrow, all alone" (SM, 298).

Smith shares Dangerfield's need for dignity. He remains aloof (SM, 9), and Sally considers him a man of pride and dignity (SM, 15). Waiting for Sally and her friends to observe him on the train platform, Smith must "pose just right. . . . look more indifferent" (SM, 53). He builds his mausoleum "because I had no friends. No respect" (SM, 131), and his greatest fear when Miss Martin proposes to shoot him is that his body will be unclaimed, thus denying him dignity in death (SM, 226).

Abigail characterizes Samuel S as "'a desperate snob'" (S, 26). Though downtrodden, Sam announces: "'I've got my ways of fighting'" (S, 53). He remains "Saint Stubborn Sam" (S, 65), defiant even in the face of death, which he will suffer with dignity (S, 92).

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Balthazar, a passive hero, does not exhibit the defiance of his friend Beefy, though he agrees with Beefy's philosophy and actions.[2] Balthazar once voices the opinion that: "You must go on. Even though one man sees no light" (B, 126), and, after Beefy recovers his diary from the headmaster, Balthazar says: "It is/ The random/ Accumulation/ Of triumphs/ Which is/ So nice" (B, 57).

Clementine likewise exhibits little active defiance, though he subscribes to his aunt's dictum: "Take no nonsense from inferiors and less from superiors" (OE, 67). When Mrs. Lead Kindly Light's lawyers inform him of litigation, he responds with a counter-threat (OE, 286), and he offers defiance on the highest level when he says: "Don't for Christ's sake commit your soul. Into the master's hands yet you eejit. It will make you think you're in your prime" (OE, 315). Clementine, like Balthazar, embraces the principle of defiance though neither frequently practices it actively.

"How does it feel to cheat a child" (FT, 156), a youthful Christian asks his newspaper customers. When they become irate, he tells them to drop dead. His defiance becomes more blatant when he becomes an adult; he warns Mott: "'Don't call me boy'" (FT, 196), and he reacts aggressively to a widow's complaint, shouting: "'I'll pump you full of formaldehyde and sell you as a bloody monster if you don't shut your ass you god damn fucking

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bitch'" (FT, 118). Though he prefers a passive defiance, Christian walks to "get into shape to carry out the threats I make" (FT, 82), preparing always to defy mankind and its adversity.

Through scorn and defiance, Donleavy's hero cuts himself off from society, returning to a position of loneliness. But this new form of loneliness differs significantly from his first position. Loneliness resulting from rejection by a hostile world places the hero in the role of outcast; by choosing to be alone, choosing to be independent, choosing to be an individual, the hero rejects society, casting himself as a rebel rather than as a victim. In the first case, society imposes rules upon the hero; by asserting his independence, Donleavy's hero seeks life on his own terms.

Dangerfield finds the greatest threat to his independence in a lasting relationship with another human being. Throughout Donleavy's work, either marriage or a love entanglement temporarily brings peace but ultimately results in a loss of independence. Dangerfield is not anxious for Marion to return home: "Stay away a little longer, please. Don't want the pincers on me just yet" (GM, 20). Children present a further encumbrance, a responsibility which limits one's independence. Dangerfield warns: "Never should let the lust sneak up on one. Passion of the moment, a disaster over the years" (GM, 24).

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While cutting a piece of meat, Dangerfield tells Miss Frost he loves her, to which she replies: "'Mind, you'll cut yourself, Mr. Dangerfield'" (GM, 196). Miss Frost expresses a double warning, for, metaphorically, Dangerfield is in danger of being cut if he relinquishes his independence. She reminds him of the possibility of being "trapped on this casual note of friendship" (GM, 202).

Similarly, his relationship to Mary threatens his independence, for he fears becoming the victim of an unbreakable attachment:

> I may be a bit younger than Christ whey they tacked him up but they've had me outstretched a few times already. And Mary you've got me pinned right here on the bed. With your lust (GM, 273).

Finally, Dangerfield seeks only momentary peace; he rejects the long-term attachment which at first suggests stability but which would terminate his independence:

> Didn't like the look in her eye when I asked her to hand me my socks from the back of the chair. Sign of rebellion. Might get to be the hard woman after awhile. Got to watch it (GM, 278).

Marion's correspondence with Dangerfield's father poses another kind of threat. He fears disinheritance, which would eliminate the financial independence which enables one to surmount many of the world's strictures. "'I'm not going to work. Never'" (GM, 92), he tells Marion. He is a man amuck in society, doomed by disinheritance to an existence within society's prescribed boundaries.

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Dangerfield objects to his college examinations: "They judge me. Just a paper with those little questions" (GM, 128). Since Dangerfield sets his own rules, he alone is a fit judge of his accomplishments. O'Keefe, who accommodates society, provides a contrast to Dangerfield. O'Keefe returns to Ireland because: "If I must be celibate I may as well live where celibacy is a virtue" (GM, 166). Dangerfield rejects accommodation and entrapment. He adopts the spider walk, saying "'mobility is what I like'" (GM, 187). By maintaining his independence through mobility, however, Dangerfield has sacrificed stability. The fear of being trapped is at odds with his need for stability, and Dangerfield is torn by the irresolvable conflict between overcoming mutability with stability and sacrificing independence to stability.

The responsibilities of marriage and a family present the greatest threat to George Smith's independence. He knows that love can lead to a loss of independence--he sees a wife "later turning utterly treacherous" (SM, 83). Having separated from his wife, Smith contrasts his own life with that of his neighbor who has eight children:

> He must wonder, that father, what it's like to be free of those burdens. Well mister, in the first place, its marvelous and in the second, again marvelous (SM, 40).

Smith maintains: "I'm self contained" (SM, 53), and vows that his wife has "interrupted my parade for the last time"

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(SM, 70). Conventional marriage and family life dictate a process of decreasing independence: "Gather little problems, drown in one big one" (SM, 160).

A love relationship outside of marriage ultimately results in the same encumbrances. Smith fears that, after intercourse, Miss Martin will tell him to do his own typing (SM, 127). As their relationship develops, his initial peace will be destroyed by his lack of independence. As he expects, Miss Martin becomes demanding: "Give warmth and they wrap you in chains" (SM, 132). Like Dangerfield, Smith seeks the peace of a short term relationship while attempting to avoid the inevitable strictures of a long-term relationship.

Samuel S asserts his independence, telling the Countess: "'I will not be bought'" (S, 19). He later tells Abigail that he takes money only under certain conditions (S, 67). He fears, too, that education imposes strictures, for the tag of a degree narrows his future possibilities (S, 35).

Like Donleavy's earlier heroes, Samuel S attempts to avoid entanglements, warily fending off Abigail (S, 51). He tells her that friendship "'is the most ominous relationship in the world'" (S, 47), and he resolutely refuses to risk his independence. Abigail's account of her father illustrates the end Sam fears, for her father is devoured by a wife who "'was taking the fat off my father and

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Balthazar is "'engrossed with film stars. I like the reckless abandon with which they live'" (B, 170). He is attracted to their independence, failing to realize that such remarkable independence exists only in a make-believe world. Looking into her future, Bella says: "'I ought to be putting a rope around some gentleman and tying his ankle to my stove'" (B, 83). The loss of independence explicit in the marriage relationship foreshadows the nature of Balthazar's marriage, for when he says, "'Yes. I'll marry Millicent'" (B, 307), he hears "chains winding round one with an eternal clank" (B, 307).

Balthazar has obviously been trapped, for Millicent's family knows more of his financial status than he knows himself. When Millicent's father asks if Balthazar can arrange a discount on the wine for the wedding, Balthazar is shocked to discover that he can (B, 338). He finds marriage a loss of independence, a situation described by Beefy as follows:

> The beads of sweat freeze on the brow and drop with a metallic clink to roll into a lonely corner of one's coffin room (B, 347).

Balthazar differs from Donleavy's earlier heroes in that, when he loses his independence, his passive nature precludes his taking action to regain it. Fitzdare appreciates his character, telling him she does not want him to feel trapped (B, 260). This exchange of sensibility

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is a major factor in Balthazar's idealization of his relationship with Fitzdare, a relationship available with no other woman. When Balthazar finally has intercourse with Millicent, he does "the brave thing instead of the smart" (B, 319), for he foregoes the opportunity for an annulment. Balthazar meekly gives up his independence, condemning himself to an unsatisfactory marriage.

Clementine, who shares Balthazar's passivity, never asks any of his uninvited guests to leave. Like Balthazar, he enjoys independence but does not struggle to achieve it. Significantly, both Balthazar and Clementine are wealthy and have always been wealthy. Having thus always enjoyed a great measure of independence, they are perhaps more willing to suffer partial encroachments on their independence.

Christian carries his childhood dreams of being a millionaire (FT, 154) into his adult life, wishing he could ask the corpse of Mr. Sourpuss how he made money (FT, 41), for money offers independence. Wealth may be useless in heaven, but "on earth it can save you from so much hell" (FT, 173). Since Fanny offers both love and money, Christian's relationship with her illustrates the importance he places upon independence. When Fanny complains" "'Never once did you say you loved me'" (FT, 301), Christian, concerned primarily with his independence, reacts as he did earlier when he coldly demanded: "'I'll

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have the bonds'" (FT, 222). He establishes the dictum: "'Nobody shapes me into anything. . . . Nobody buys me'" (FT, 92), as the basis of their relationship. "Marriage is a prison" (FT, 171), Christian thinks, and he remembers "all the times I wished you [his wife Helen] were dead. So I could be free" (FT, 16). Christian considers his possibilities with Fanny: "Marry and be rich. Stay free and be poor" (FT, 172). Finally, he cannot accept Fanny's offer of wealth, for, under the condition of marriage, wealth would not offer independence. He opts for independence, letting Fanny go, because: "Her life got in my way. Blocking my hopes" (FT, 308).

The conflicting forces which envelop the hero in each of Donleavy's novels do not proceed linearly: rather, they are inextricably intertwined and interwoven throughout the hero's life. The world's inherent gloom and mutability engender a feeling of loneliness; coupled with society's hostility, these forces create in the hero a sense of being an outcast and a victim. To assuage his loneliness, the hero attempts temporary escapes from his world and seeks peace and security within his world. Pressing his quest for peace and security further, he seeks stability--a more permanent form of peace--to counteract the world's mutability.

When a hostile society denies peace and stability, the thwarted hero reacts with scorn for his fellow man.

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By cutting himself off from his fellow man, the hero reverts to his previous loneliness, reaffirming his status as outcast and victim. Forced then to reevaluate his life and to redefine his goals, the hero strikes a defiant pose, rejecting his world and society by asserting his independence.

Independence, however, cannot coexist with stability, for stability circumscribes the hero's possibilities, eliminating his independence. But without stability, the hero remains at the mercy of the world's mutability, for he is unable to get outside of Time. The hero is thus caught in an endless cycle of conflicting forces, finding no permanent solutions, experimenting with temporary solutions which create new problems as they solve old ones.

By focusing on the hero, Donleavy makes a life-process central to his novels, depicting the hero's difficult journey through a maze of irresolvably conflicting forces. He offers no permanent solutions: none are possible in this world. His theme is man's plight in a hostile world.

Because he considers all of the world's forces directed at him personally, Donleavy's hero views himself as a world-center, the focal point for all of the conflicting forces defining man's relationship to the universe. Donleavy's hero operates, in this respect, according to the general pattern noted by Jerry Bryant in The Open

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Decision. For each of Donleavy's heroes, "the absolute is in the subjective individual experience, not in a transcendant order conferred upon our world by an antecedent force."[3] The hero takes life as he finds it, shapes life to his needs as best he is able, and operates within the life he creates for himself. "Each subject [person] is the center of his world, viewing it uniquely, seeking to order it, and conferring value upon it."[4]

Dangerfield complains that there are "too many damn people trying to be different" (GM, 28) when he wants "people in their place" (GM, 31). When his meal is interrupted by a waitress' tantrum, he insists: "There must be discipline" (GM, 154). Dangerfield, of course, would remain independent, with everyone else revolving around him in an orderly fashion; the order and discipline is for all others. He defines his relationship to his universe when he elaborates on his vision of a world filled with growling monsters:

> And me. I think I am their father. Roaming the laneways, giving comfort, telling them to lead better lives, and not to let the children see the bull serving the cow. I anoint their silver streams, sing laments from the round towers. I bring seed from Iowa and reblood their pastures. I am. I know I am Custodian of the Book of Kells. Ringer of the Great Bell, Lord King of Tara, "Prince of the West and Heir to the Arran Islands." I tell you, you silly bunch of bastards, that I'm the father who sweetens the hay and lays the moist earth and potash to the roots and story teller of all the mouths. I'm out of the Viking ships. I am the fertilizer of royalty everywhere. And Tinker King who dances the goat dance on the Sugar Loaf and fox-trots in the streets of Chirciveen (GM, 71-72).

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Pondering life's adversities, Dangerfield asserts that he will not "have to take what comes" (GM, 95). He will not conform to the world; the world revolves around him:

> But the world was made for me. Here long before I arrived and they spent years getting it ready. Something got mixed up about my assets (GM, 95).

He also sees himself as a world-center in his reverie of a night in Baltimore:

> I walked about the city, lost and trying to get it. Put it in one spot and look at it and stand there with all Baltimore around me where I could pick it up in my hand and take it away (GM, 106).

Though the world does not conform to his desires, Dangerfield remains open to experience, endeavoring to shape his world. Contemplating Miss Frost's life, Dangerfield generalizes his observation: "How small we make our worlds. Gather them in, tighten them up into little castles of fear. Must get out into the meadows" (GM, 231). Dangerfield thus affirms that the individual is a world-center, capable of "gathering" and shaping his world, and he advocates remaining open to experience--getting "out into the meadows"--as the means of retaining command of one's destiny.

George Smith also considers himself a world-center. He remembers his boyhood encounter with a tinker woman: "I was a child king who owned all the land" (SM, 86). Like Dangerfield, he laments: "Nobody wants to keep in

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line these days. All out for special attention" (SM, 69). Bonniface reminds him: "'Comes a time when one is forced to take matters out of God's hands'" (SM, 247). Similarly, the taxi driver requires Smith to order the universe, telling Smith to give him a destination: "'I got to go somewhere. Too much responsibility going nowhere'" (SM, 200).

Smith's wife offers her most belittling insult: "'The only time traffic will stop for you, George, is when you're dead'" (SM, 63). Smith realizes the truth of her statement. He knows that he cannot force the world to conform to his conception of a well-ordered universe. But if he cannot succeed as a world-center in life, he is determined to do so in death. The mausoleum is his answer to Shirl's insult and to the world's hostility, for men passing the cemetery do pause to view the mausoleum. Thus Smith's mausoleum is a sort of macabre joke. He devotes his life to having the last laugh after death, when the world cannot strike back at him. Certainly, when Smith is entombed in his mausoleum, the world will at last stop for him.

Samuel S sees himself as God prescribing rules for his world. He envisions "a chapel where his friends could come from foreign cities to sit at his feet apologising for their worldly riches and success" (S, 81). Clementine finds it "good to sit for a change in one's own castle

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eating the lion's share" (OE, 296), mirroring Sam's position as the center of his own universe.

Bella tells Balthazar: "'O Balthazar. Don't you see. To you the world is just as you find it'" (B, 87). Bella considers Balthazar innocent and naive, but Donleavy's heroes do not see losing this innocence as maturation, for to outgrow this world view would result in accommodation and in a loss of their independence. Indeed, Balthazar never loses this view, for, leaving Fitzdare's grave, he would "reach up and gather all this world" (B, 379), thus reaffirming his position as a world-center.

Like George Smith's dream of himself as a child king, Christian remembers a childhood visit to an amusement park, thinking: "Was my city then" (FT, 41). Later, he longs to reestablish an old, comfortable relationship which revolves around himself: "And hi there you, Charlotte Graves out on the bobbing waves. I'm a ship come to safely take you back to shore" (FT, 335). Even Mr. How, a caricature of crass success, epitomizes man's need to order his universe around himself as world-center. Success, for How, consists of:

> 'extra shower down in the basement. Put up new storm windows. . . . These are the real things Cornelius. Like the four new snow tires I got stacked up in my garage, ready for winter' (FT, 253).

To see himself as a world-center enables the hero to order his universe. It is a position born of necessity,

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for the chaos of forces bearing upon him cast the hero adrift in a meaningless, random, and valueless world. If order is to be achieved, if meaning is to be found, if values are to be assigned, the hero must establish himself as a world-center, shaping his universe to his own needs. Donleavy's novels examine man's life-process as he attempts to shape his hostile universe.

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[1]Cohen, p. 105.

[2]The double is used here much as Milton contrasts "L'allegro" and "Il Penseroso." Beefy is very close to Dangerfield.

[3]Bryant, p. 23.

[4]Bryant, p. 23.

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CHAPTER III

SENSIBILITY AND GOTHICISM

I

As a descendant of the Eighteenth Century man of feeling, the Donleavian hero's capacity for feeling keys his response to his world, though his particular response differs from that of his Eighteenth Century predecessor. Donleavy intertwines Sensibility and Gothicism to fit a modern context, for Donleavy's man of feeling hones his responses on the abrasive wheel of his contemporary society. The tragedy of a sensitive hero adrift in a gothic world must be comic as well, for the inevitable incongruities, the absurdity of contemporary life, and the disparity between the hero's desires and what his world permits offer the reader a world out of focus, as gothic multiplicity wars with the hero's need for stability and unity. This disparity may be the essential element of what Bruce Jay Friedman has called Black Humor, of which more later.

Sensibility and Gothicism do not simply coexist in Donleavy's novels; rather, the hero's sensibility repeatedly wars with a gothic world. A shift from sensibility to gothicism, and, as we shall see later, a secondary movement back to sensibility as the gothic aspect of the hero's

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world subsides, characterizes the hero's progress. Though the heroes have different degrees of sensibility and varying reactions to their world, which will be discussed in Chapter IV, establishing the existence of the movement from sensibility to gothicism is a prerequisite to our expanded study here of the hero's conflict between sensibility and independence.

Donleavy's contemporary man of feeling has both a need for love and, as an amplification of this need, a need to belong to his society. Yet the hero is confused, for his drive for independence wars with these two needs. His sensibility is not restricted to love but, like his Eighteenth Century predecessor, encompasses his every reaction to his many-faceted world.

This hero soon discovers, however, that he is amuck in a gothic world. To remain a man of sensibility, the hero must maintain his independence. To do so, ironically, he must frequently, though temporarily, become a gothic villain of sorts so that he may eventually return to a mode of sensibility. In this confusing, chaotic situation, gothicism bridges the gap between, and catalyzes the hero's vacillation between, sensibility and belligerent insistence upon his independence.

Like the man of feeling, the hero turns to love for succor in times of stress; like a Gothic villain, he uses love--and sex, the ultimate, most intense expression of

love--to escape his gothic world. Yet despite the occasional sexual rampages, Donleavy's hero seeks sex not for its own sake but as a manifestation of consummated love. He acts the villain temporarily so that he may continue to be a man of feeling.

The ginger man, rebounding from the horror of his fight in the Dublin bar, instinctively visits Chris, the laundry girl who has opened her apartment and her heart, as well as her body, to him. Chris's apartment provides not only a physical refuge from the police but a place where love shields him from the mindless hostility of society. He is "starved for love" (GM, 156), as he later tells Mary, voicing not the seducer's badinage but the victim's urgent appeal to a fellow human being.

George Smith, who lives a lonely existence estranged from his wife, frequently visits his office on Saturday afternoon to cultivate his loneliness by sitting at his secretary's desk. Later, detraining with "not a soul. To look at me" (SM, 53) induces an imagined idyllic meeting with Sally Tomson:

> I want her to come over the country hills. Meet me where I wait at some junction under the frozen winter trees with a gleaming pair of skates slung over my shoulder (SM, 52).

Smith denies Sally's accusation that he has a mistress hidden away in the hinterlands, eschewing the tawdry, purely sexual connotation which she suggests: rather, he seeks

love. A maudlin Smith wishes to be someone's valentine, and he is transported when Miss Martin takes his hand in the car. After a separation, Smith suggests: "Miss Tomson after all these empty weeks let me kiss your feet" (SM, 203), conveying both his need for love and the excessive emotion characteristic of the man of feeling.

Smith can react just as emotionally to a lack of love, for his wife Shirl's "unlit heart" (SM, 215) depresses him. If anything is wrong with his relationship with Sally Tomson, Smith feels, it is not that his emotions run to excess but that she considers him "just some man to come to her bed" (SM, 206). Because he strives to be a man of feeling, love and its surrounding emotions, not sex with its physical sensations, dominate Smith's needs and motivate his actions.

In The Saddest Summer of Samuel S, Donleavy presents a hero whose deperation is largely a need for love. Samuel S tells his psychiatrist: "Doc, the whole world should have loved me right from babyhood, instead of sneaking out from underneath the thick green group of trees to shove me around in the clearing" (S, 36). Later, Sam's rapture for the Americal college girl Abigail is based not on her attributes but on his need for love. When Sam tells her, "'I want to get married'" (S, 59), Abigail balks, reacting precisely as he anticipated. Sam wants the permanence of love, not sex only: "To screw her is to let

her get away for ever" (S, 73). For Donleavy's heroes, sex,which is but one aspect of the quest for love, is valid only if part of a love relationship. While the hero is surely capable of enjoying the physical aspect of sex, he never allows the physical act dominance over the emotional ambience. Samuel S believes that: "Sometimes one had to give oneself a big bear hug of sympathy. When no one else will ever wrap arms around you like a mother. And hold you tight and safe from harm" (S, 62). The man of feeling requires sympathy, safety, mother love, the hugging and holding; the physical act of sex constitutes a logical part of this need, but the essential characteristic of Donleavy's hero is his need for love.

Balthazar exhibits a need for love long before he knows of sex, and he maintains this childhood need whether or not sex is a part of his adult life. The fatherless Balthazar, departing for boarding school in England, "squeezed his elephant Tillie tightly to his cheek" (B, 31). Later, at thirteen years of age, he responds in kind to his governess's declaration of love, and, when Bella goes to her own room, Balthazar laments: "To be shut out from all her warmth and love" (B, 80). He tells Bella, "'I feel awfully badly when I think you're cross with me'" (B, 82), and culminates his speech with a proposal of marriage. While Bella's physical attraction to a small boy may be abnormal, Balthazar's love is completely normal. Without

delving into complex psychological questions, we can note Balthazar's primary need for "warmth," a warmth provided neither by a dead father nor by an uncaring, absent mother. Balthazar's sensibility creates his need for love. Bella's dismissal and departure mean not an end to sex but that: "We were two lonely persons" (B, 103).

Loneliness still dominates Balthazar's character as a student at Trinity College, where he takes wine "to thaw the heart. And look for love" (B, 116). At a dinner arranged by his trustees, Balthazar talks to the three daughters with the simple thought that he is "desperate to get laid" (B, 118). He desires "to sow, please, one's desperate bag of wild oats in this country. Somewhere there must be a fissure in this granite ground" (B, 127). Yet Balthazar wants a conventional marriage with Miss Fitzdare: he has "no motives low" (B, 128). He longs to be Fitzdare's horse, wishing to receive her caresses and affection, and, when their marriage is cancelled, Balthazar's soul sinks: "Suddenly to be told you're not wanted any more" (B, 274).

Clementine, at the earliest chronological point in The Onion Eaters, lies in a hospital bed slowly dying of boredom, a "disease" certainly worthy of the hero of Sensibility. When three doctors and a nurse confer worriedly at his bedside, Clementine notes: "They are talking about me. And it's touching and comforting that they are" (OE, 72).

That love is his basic need is further demonstrated by his nurse's method of bringing him back to life. She kisses his penis until, after several weeks of "treatment," he achieves an erection. Clearly, love is the cure.

Later, when the inmates of Charnel Castle honor him at a dinner, a tearful Clementine observes that "no one ever singled me out for a little flattery before. It's nice" (OE, 139). No matter that he is paying for the food, no matter that he is beseiged with unwanted guests who will not leave, no matter that he provides the wine, no matter that he realizes that the party serves primarily the guests' selfish interests, "it's nice" to be honored, to be loved. The man of sensibility rejoices in those emotions which satisfy him; logical analysis is not to the point.

On the verge of intercourse with Lady Macfugger, Clementine implores: "'Please don't go. This is the first civilized moment I've had. I'm desperate'" (OE, 199). When Lady Macfugger suggests, "'Perhaps I'd better leave,'" Clementine insists, "'Don't. Please'" (OE, 202). Lady Macfugger promises a relationship different from Clementine's chaotic association with his "guests." She offers the hope he seeks "where the sadness stills. And you look for a smile" (OE, 225). Similarly, while wandering alone in the capital, he rejoices to find Veronica, because "If the world is empty. The smile of another fills it up"

(OE, 242). Throughout, Clementine remembers love as the cure which he found in the hospital.

In his latest novel, A Fairy Tale of New York, Donleavy continues to portray a hero of sensibility. Cornelius Christain finds his "heart warmed by the first man glad to see me" (FT, 100), ignoring the job role of the obsequious athletic club attendant. Without playing the seducer's role, he asks Miss Musk to hug him, and he is dismayed to discover that the girl who has smiled at him on the street is a prostitute. He considers approaching women randomly, offering sex. Any favorable response will buoy him, for "in a sea of silent suffering. One little word of comfort saves you drowning" (FT, 147). That he is homesick "with a hard on" (FT, 147) emphasizes a need not for physical pleasure but for a cure for his loneliness.

Cornelius resumes a friendship with a former sweetheart to recapture the warmth of a pleasant childhood experience, remembering his liking Charlotte's mother. "She always welcomed me. Into the comfort of her beauty. Everywhere else I stood in people's hallways. Waiting. But she invited me in" (FT, 154), a pleasant experience for one who remembers: "'All through my childhood. I felt nobody liked me'" (FT, 289). Charlotte sent him a note--"I love you"--in eighth grade, "and after that I never needed a mother and father. Or anybody else's love" (FT, 326). Charlotte and her mother provided the orphaned

Cornelius with the love missing in his life.

Similarly, Christian's relationship to Fanny depends primarily on his need for love. Though sex figures prominently in their relationship, Cornelius walks sadly out of Fanny's apartment:

> Just when I need silken sheets, froths of pillow, my head sunk in soft breasts and entwined about me the langorous arms. That ferry grapefruit juice, strips of bacon and golden toasted breads (FT, 169).

The refuge of a bed, the warmth and comfort of another human being, the satisfying of one's appetite in congenial surroundings, all appeal to the man of feeling, who seeks comfort and understanding in a world which, partly due to his heightened sensibilities, seems to be devoid of love.

Yet despite his sensibility, Donleavy's hero approaches love cautiously. He is loath to commit himself, fearing that, if his love is not reciprocated, he will be a victim of his own sensibility. Love traps the hero who loses his independence without truly finding the love he sought. "Everybody," Dangerfield says, "Wants it both ways. Money and love" (GM, 94). Thus the world offers a paradox: man cannot find love while maintaining his independence; conversely, he cannot maintain his independence if he commits himself to love. Realizing that he is an anomaly, Donleavy's hero of sensibility is chary of losing his independence, fearing that he will thus be forever at the mercy of a hostile world.

Kenneth O'Keefe, in The Ginger Man, tries to isolate love as an emotion or condition without concomitant responsibilities. "'Come in drunk, have a quick one and whoops, another mouth to feed'" (GM, 15). O'Keefe--and we understand that Sebastian Dangerfield agrees--senses that "mouths to feed" obviate finding love, because the resultant loss of independence makes him a victim of his own sensibility. "'All I want,'" O'Keefe says, "'Is my first piece of arse. Plenty of time to get snowed under with a wife and kids'" (GM, 13). O'Keefe will not "'get tangled with that beast of burden for the rest of me days'" (GM, 16), an attitude showing his reaction to Dangerfield's marriage. Dangerfield, sensing throughout the novel that his marriage has been a mistake, constantly antagonizes his wife Marion, not because they are incompatible but because he must guard against becoming her victim. In this respect, Dangerfield's marriage metaphorically represents his position in society: to be accepted is to lose one's independence. Similarly, Miss Frost's departure leaves Dangerfield extremely worried, for he cannot be sure that, in her near-hysteria, she will not pose a serious threat to his independence. Shoud their affair come to his wife's attention, Dangerfield's chances for a reconciliation, and for a chunk of the money Marion controls, would be negligible.

George Smith echoes Dangerfield's concern for

losing his independence when he hopes that someone will "say I love you. Without later/ Turning/ Utterly/ Treacherous" (SM, 30). Loving his housekeeper means she might "say George any second" (SM, 45), elevating her role and perhaps eventually dominating him. By expressing love, George has always succeeded in further disorienting his life. He met his wife Shirl by paying for her train ticket, and "I've been paying for her ever since" (SM, 58); indeed, Shirl has "contributed to my cringing" (SM, 65). His sensibility has not led to a satisfactory relationship with his world; rather, his great sensibility has made him the victim of an insensitive society.

When Miss Martin realizes that George wants her, George sees "all the cash registers of the world ringing at once" (SM, 124). After intercourse, George thinks: "You will tell me to do my own typing" (SM, 127). Indeed, Miss Martin asks, "'Can I call you George now, George,'" to which Smith replies, "'No'" (SM, 131).

George Smith's reaction does not involve a character change. While Miss Martin trusts him, he will take care of her, but, when he finds himself trapped--"give warmth and they wrap you in a chain" (SM, 132)--he reacts to maintain his independence. Neither Miss Martin nor any of his other liaisons, George feels, has reciprocated his love; rather, all have used him.

Samuel S, alerted to danger by the Countess's

"'I like you,'" responds "'Whoops'" (S, 17). Chary of entanglement, he refuses her offer of support: "'You're buying me. So that every once in a while when you're feeling down you can give me a kick in the teeth'" (S, 18). Similarly, Sam backs away when Abigail tells him: "'I want to be friends,'" a relationship Sam considers "'the most ominous relationship in the world'" (S, 47), ominous because, like Abigail's mother who "'was taking the fat off my father and putting it on herself'" (S, 55), a woman drains rather than complements a man. Sam, who sees both aspects of a relationship: "A wife like that could move a mountain. And break your neck" (S, 87), summarizes his view of what a woman does to a man when he wonders "how does one ever learn to take off an enemy's underwear and sell it back to him thread by thread" (S, 87).

As a child of twelve, Balthazar is oblivious to Bella's threat to his independence. "'Get your money and get your life. That's what she [B's mother] thinks. Maybe it's true. But I love you too'" (B, 102), Bella tells Balthazar. Curiously, she recognizes that "maybe it's true" that perhaps her motives are not so childishly open and uncomplicated as Balthazar's, describing a relationship which holds for all of Donleavy's heroes. Balthazar's situation differs only in that he is less aware than older heroes that he faces entrapment.

An older Balthazar objects to Fitzdare's "'Steady.

Steady now,'" protesting that she speaks "'just as if you were talking to a horse.'" Though Fitzdare assures him of her intention simply to help him while he is drunk, Balthazar persists, "'Well, I did feel I might be being led back to the stables'" (B, 130), insisting on establishing their relationship on a suitable footing. He wants none of those "slit-eyed wives with lemony smiles for waiters and silence for husbands" (B, 173). Fitzdare's sensibility matches Balthazar's, for she is more worried than he about his loss of independence. Rather than ensnaring him, Fitzdare leaves him a way out:

> But if you've any doubt that you want to marry me, please say. It would be too painful, I know, if I felt because I love you so much that I trapped you. I think I did (B, 260).

The Balthazar-Fitzdare relationship comes closer to the idyllic than any other created by Donleavy; their shared sensibility precludes victimization of one by the other. A fatal accident to Fitzdare demonstrates the impossibility of such an affair in the hero's world.

When Balthazar must look elsewhere for love, he finds a marriage to Millicent far different from the marriage he anticipated with Miss Fitzdare. After a long post-marriage period of rejection, Balthazar finally manages intercourse with Millicent. He reacts with mixed emotions, for he knows he has foregone the opportunity for annulment. "The Lord blesses the dead who have done the

brave thing instead of the smart" (B, 319), Balthazar thinks as he weighs his relationship to Millicent against his independence. His regrets prove well-founded, for he is shattered by Millicent's callousness. "Told to one's face. By a wife who has trapped you. Because of your money" (B, 338). A dejected Balthazar ponders his fate: a marriage sentencing him to a loveless life. Yet he most regrets not the loss of independence but the loss of love, which denies the demands of his sensibility.

In A Fairy Tale of New York, Cornelius Christian grieves for his dead wife, but he also remembers "all the times I wished you were dead. So I could be free" (FT, 16). "Marriage," he says, "Is a prison" (FT, 171), and Fanny's proposal breaks down to two neat alternatives: "Marry and be rich. Stay free and be poor" (FT, 172). Even when Fanny claims to be dying, Cornelius refuses her offer of marriage, because "the word marry closed doors all over my brain" (FT, 225). Finally, refusing to be dependent upon her, he lets Fanny go, because "her life got in my way. Blocking my hopes" (FT, 308). Fanny offers unlimited sex, but she offers only a limited amount of love. She would provide for his material well-being, but he is more concerned with maintaining the independence which leaves him free to pursue unfettered love. Though Cornelius offers Fanny love, he cannot succumb to marriage.

Cornelius, unlike the naive Balthazar, recognized

intuitively, even as a child, that independence must be maintained in love. In eighth grade, he rebuffed Charlotte's "I love you" note, telling her he did not like her. "You have to do this," Cornelius explains, "To someone who is better looking. And I did it to her and she cried" (FT, 327). The danger of his being accepted into their society because of Charlotte's love gives her the upper hand. Like Marion Dangerfield when she has money, Charlotte would forever have a weapon.

Donleavy has presented a paradoxical hero, one whose sensibilities drive him to seek love while his logic warns him of a trap. The hero appears callous only when his partner seeks to dominate their relationship. A man of great sensibility must be ever on guard against domination, for, given the world Donleavy creates for his heroes, his sensibility makes him an easy prey.

Despite his drive for independence, Donleavy's hero feels a need to belong to his society. While the Eighteenth Century man of feeling was a conformist, accepting the values and codes of his society, Donleavy's hero finds it more difficult to fit into the contemporary world. Society thwarts, rather than complements, the sensibilities of the contemporary hero. Nonetheless, Donleavy's hero shares the Eighteenth Century man of feeling's desire to be a part of his society, lamenting not that he must join but that he cannot join.

Dangerfield fantasizes a life of wealth and position. He wants a law office; he wants to be invited somewhere. "I want to own something" (GM, 71); "I need people to talk to" (GM, 89). O'Keefe takes a teaching job to join the "system. The well ordered life" (GM, 33), and Dangerfield longs "To put my shoulder/ To the wheel/ And push/ Like the rest" (GM, 31). He enjoys "fine clichés" (GM, 28), abhorring the many people trying to be different.

Yet Dangerfield voices a note of futility when Marion wants him to "get on." He responds, "Get on where? Where to?" (GM, 60), and wonders "Will I ever see time of largess" (GM, 73). But despite his doubts and anxieties, Dangerfield exchanges platitutdes with his butcher and likes the sound of Marion's new address. When he sees the house and its trappings, he knows he "must get in here at all costs" (GM, 121). As a first step, he buys "Imperial Leather" cologne, "for the class standing that was in it" (GM, 125). Later, Dangerfield leaves a party to "'drink with a better class of people'" (GM, 146), urges servants to know their place, and maintains a supply of calling cards. Vowing to "keep the dignity and to hell with the money" (GM, 94) he will get "back where I belong in this world" (GM, 169).

At Trinity, Dangerfield wants to be "like the rest of you" (GM, 201); he will join the Trinity Dining Club in London: "I keep telling myself that I'm one of you" (GM,

219). He even attempts to join the Student Christian Movement, an organization seemingly uncongenial to the ginger man, imploring: "I beg you, let me belong" (GM, 238). Finally, when Percy Clocklan gives him new clothes, Dangerfield drives around Piccadilly Circus, exclaiming "O I feel part of it now" (GM, 288).

George Smith worries about what his neighbors will think of his chasing children through the apartment building, and he fears the "public crucifixion on the front pages" (SM, 31) which would result from Matilda's starving to death in his apartment. Either event threatens to cut him off from society, whose approval he desperately needs. He even has a machine that "claps and roars." When Sally asks, "'Why do you need it,'" George answers, "'I'm lonely, sometimes, and feel powerless'" (SM, 279). Smith looks at the insane asylum and things: "What a relief to be crazy" (SM, 110), to show each other the cards during a card game, to have no need to conceal. Smith, obviously, cannot afford to be so open if he would fit into his society.

Like George Smith, Samuel S is concerned about having grown up on the wrong side of the tracks, which cuts him off from jobs and women. He wants "to get married and have kids" (S, 35-6). When he finds himself "'letting healthy prejudice sneak back into my life'" (S, 38), he considers himself on the road to recovery, for "recovery" means becoming a part of his society.

As Beefy observes, "'You look so left out of it all Balthazar'" (B, 184). Always the outsider, Balthazar wants to talk to people, but "'I don't know how'" (B, 123). To be a part of a group at a party makes Balthazar euphoric, but the party is a transitory, contrived fantasy. Leaving the party, Balthazar wanders drunkenly into a garden. In an excellent comic scene (see pp. 136 ff), Donleavy shows the party to be merely a brief respite in Balthazar's life, for, as detail follows ludicrous detail, as event compounds ridiculous event, Balthazar sinks away from his society to become a pariah. The results of his escapade are not lost upon Balthazar, for he sees himself forever cut off, "defamed. Disgraced across the drawing rooms of Rathgar. Up and down the mahogany sideboards and in all the silver salvers" (B, 161). Yet he does not belong in a lower stratum of society either, for, as he watches the fight between Breda and her landlady, Balthazar has bizarre visions of regattas, tea, and Wimbledon. He knows that he is out of place, that he does not belong. Finally, as he leaves college, Balthazar voices an often-recurring emotional response to life's hardships" "I never wanted to be sent away" (B, 239).

Though Clementine has apparently found a niche in society when he inherits a castle and the concomitant social position, he constantly seeks some footing upon which to build a satisfying relationship with his neighbors and

"guests." Often confused, Clementine wonders why his demesne has not made him an insider: "When you stand scratching your head. Asking. In one's own orgasm of discomfort. As you see so many others busily enjoying themselves" (OE, 281).

Cornelius Christian tells Mrs. How: "'I feel I don't belong in this country. I feel such an interloper'" (FT, 288). In a society in which "no one wants to know you" (FT, 316), where "every one of my best recent foots forward, someone stepped on the toes shined in my favorite store" (FT, 308), Cornelius remembers happier childhood days: "Was my city then" (FT, 41). He remembers a childhood dream of being a millionaire, of "having money. To date a rich girl I'd met. . . . I was as good as anybody else. But I had no proof" (FT, 154). When Mr. How, the personnel manager, tells Cornelius: "'Got wife, kids, nice home out on Long Island. The real things'" (FT, 189), we see him as a caricature, but as a caricature to which Cornelius aspires, for, as Cornelius observes when swept into the industrialist Mott's office, it "feels good to be accidentally somebody for a minute" (FT, 178).

Yet the hero's need to belong, like his need for love, must coexist with his need to maintain his independence. Donleavy presents another paradoxical element in his hero's life, a paradox as irresolvable as his need for love and his side-stepping of love's snares. While love

involves one other person, the hero's need to belong projects a very similar need onto his entire society, depicting his need for the "love" of the world at large.

After asserting himself by wrecking the bar, the ginger man depicts himself not as the villain but as the victim of a heartless drinking society which would shut him out. Marion's house symbolizes Dangerfield's position, for it "was in a dead end. It was both secret and trapped" (GM, 123). Achieving independence, he finds that he has cut himself off from his society, possibly relieving society of any responsibility toward him. His acceptance at Trinity, symbolized by the ritualistic visit to his tutor's home, traps him "on this casual note of friendship" (GM, 202).

George Smith, though he feels lonely at Jiffy's party, warily rebuffs a woman guest. "'I am Fang'" (SM, 145), he introduces himself. Samuel S does not like to shake hands, for it seems foolish "to begin things with a handshake when you know later they will be crawling up to clutch you around the neck" (S, 91). When Cornelius Christian realizes the ramifications of his position as a cog in Mott's machinery, he suggests to Mr. How, "'I think I'd rather be a messenger boy'" (FT, 188). Cornelius would like to have the "Very latest/ In popular/ Brains" (FT, 189). Of course, none of Donleavy's heroes have "popular brains"; they are damned to confronting the world as individuals. If they become rich and independent, they

find themselves cut off from their society as well as from the love of any individual. They are always "Too rich/ To laugh at/ Too lonely/ To love" (FT, 317).

If the hero's need for love and his need for independence seem paradoxical, if his need to belong to society and his drive for independence seem contradictory, his conflicts may be explained, if not resolved, in terms of a larger conflict of Sensibility and Gothicism. Donleavy's hero of Sensibility is immersed in a gothic world, a hostile world in which he will always be anomalous. The hero's personal characteristics oppose the character of an alien society; his sensibility makes his world seem gothic, perhaps more gothic than it actually is.

The hero's need for love and his need to belong to his society offer the most consistent evidence of his sensibility. Moreover, in his reactions to the minor occurrences of his everyday life, Donleavy's hero reflects Mrs. Sickels' criteria for the hero of sensibility cited previously, that he be:

> attuned to the slightest touch of joy or pain either in himself or in another, . . . capable of swooning with joy or dying of a broken heart, of rejoicing in the good fortune of a rival or weeping over a sad tale from the antipodes or the death of a pet mouse (195).

He is, as Thorslev suggests he must be, "distinguished . . . by his capacities for feeling'" (35) in his responses to all the events of his daily life. The presence of several

other personality traits distinguish Donleavy's hero from the Eighteenth Century man of feeling, but sensibility, always present in some degree, always returning to a dominant position, remains the most essential feature of this contemporary misfit.

Sebastian Dangerfield, the Donleavy hero most prone to violence, sentimentally keeps the menu from his last meal in New York. He finds Sunday a "day set aside for emptiness and defeat" (GM, 21). He recalls football in New York in "indifferent summertime"; though he does not care about football, he projects weltschmerz: "I could get down on my knees in this wretched little room and weep for things like that. I don't play football, however, but it wrings my heart for that dry wistful air. O the aching pangs of it" (GM, 73). When he feels the "fingers of the night touching me. . . . I must weep" (GM, 74). He gives an old woman beggar a coin, but his sensibility is not satisfied with a material act: he sings "O Danny Boy" as well (GM, 75). In addition to a metaphorical implication of his being exposed, Dangerfield's embarrassment at having his fly open in the train is a manifestation of his sensibility, as is his embarrassment and self-pity when the crowd belittles him for dropping his cafeteria tray.

His peripheral feelings associated with love show Dangerfield's sensibility towards women. Looking at Lilly Frost as a little girl who needs to be held, he feels

compassion for all women and a pervasive sorrow for woman's condition. Overcome, he faints, to be caught--and taken to bed--by Miss Frost. Later, when he sees Miss Frost "near to tears," Dangerfield is "concerned and loving" (GM, 217). He fears he has been unfair to Miss Frost, telling her: "Lilly I will make all this suffering up to you" (GM, 223), and he is nearly overcome with emotion at the termination of their relationship. Yet Dangerfield can tell Lilly: "I've not wanted to cause you pain" (GM, 218) and, in the next breath, heap scorn on the local shopkeepers.

Dangerfield's sensibility is not limited to his relationships with women. He has a brotherly rapport with Tony Malarkey and with Percy Clocklan--a male chauvinist who presents a contrast to Dangerfield--who celebrates Dangerfield because he "'will buy a man a drink when you have the money and you don't do all this yelling about it'" (GM, 137). When Percy becomes wealthy, he gladly gives Dangerfield money, because: "'You never crowed over buying a drink or whined on like the rest of them'" (GM, 285-6).

Dangerfield, who sees the entire world through his sensibility, feels the world needs more people like Miss Frost, "people with kindness and consideration" (GM, 170). He regrets the necessity of struggling with his landlord Skully, lamenting: "Why can't we all be little friends" (GM, 165). His initial reaction to the world's hostility, or his reaction to a low level of hostility, derives from

his sensibility: "World which has caused me so much distress and indignity. I'm heartbroken and frightened" (GM, 165). As a hero of sensibility, Dangerfield cannot "trust this acute joy. Misery is my forte" (GM, 194); his "nostrils just quiver with the sensibility that does be in me" (GM, 253).

Similarly, George Smith's sensibility motivates his introspection, causing him to ask two doctors to verify that: "YOUR HEART IS ALL RIGHT" (SM, 169). He is "kind to those who love me. Soft and tender to the helpless" (SM, 171). Faced with an impending automobile accident, George envisions "fox and toads and woodchunks [sic] cowering everywhere. Always find time to think of little animals" (SM, 156).

Like Donleavy's other heroes, George Smith especially shows sensibility towards women. After tackling Miss Martin to prevent her shooting him, he quickly asks, "'I haven't hurt you, have I Miss Martin'" (SM, 226). When his wife Shirl asks him to be aggressive, to pull her hair, he complies reluctantly: "I obeyed in a stiff mechanical manner because it was all so overt" (SM, 55). He cries as Sally Tomson leaves, and is almost maudlin when he decides to send her his dirty shirt so she can wash and iron it. He frequently remembers frankfurters and sauerkraut, the meal he shared with Sally, and he often refers lovingly to the little spider who frightened

a naked Miss Martin from her bedroom to his protective arms.

Sensibility is a way of life for Smith; it is his way of looking at the world: "'Bullets are the least of it, Miss Tomson. One can always deal with those. It's the insinuation and discourtesy I find weighs heavy on my spirit'" (SM, 236). A man sensitive to others' reactions finds that: "Wearing red underwear the mere suggestion of undress is frightening" (SM, 47). He is capable of an overflow of feelings for no particular reason: "Ah God. Anymore of this and I'll fold up and dissolve on this pavement" (SM, 258).

Samuel S, who recognizes that "the soul bruises like the body" (S, 19), mirrors Smith's concern for animals when he rescues an ant from the bath water, "against all instincts to kill it" (S, 45). A man of "sensibility, wit and knowledge" (S, 7), Sam proves himself different from his fellow men when he responds out of sensibility to a cheating cigarette vendor: "'You have cheated me. But if it makes you feel happier'" (S, 20).

Because of his sensibility towards women, we find "Samuel S dancing attendance" (S, 52) on Abigail, and, when she belittles him, "Samuel S could not stop the tears as they rolled like boulders out of each eye" (S, 29). While Abigail is surprised that Sam "showed your sorrow right there in front of us" (S, 58), the reader expects

such a display from a sensitive man who can project his own feelings on others. When he rejects Abigail, he "thought he could hear the plop of tears on the sheet" (S, 73).

Sam's sensibility conditions his response to his entire world. He remembers "in the old days there were friends to visit on a Saturday afternoon to keep warm from the world" (S, 85). The needs created by his sensibility cause an overflow of feelings:

> Before I break down and weep. For the buckwheat cakes smothered in maple syrup, bacon and butter. For the autumn morning, the cloudless blue sky, the curled up chestnut leaves on the lawns holding a silent scented air so many years ago (S, 21).

But Sam cannot reshape an insensitive world. His final tragedy is not a physical disaster but the spiritual surrender of a sensitive man to an unfeeling world. "Tears welling in Samuel S's eyes . . . . In a great heave of the spirit he broke" (S, 92).

Because of his youth, Balthazar best illustrates the naivete of the man of sensibility in an alien world. Balthazar's mother tells Bella: "'It is far too easy to seduce such a sheltered little creature as Balthazar'" (B, 101); perhaps this holds true throughout Balthazar's lifetime, for, like Donleavy's other heroes, he retains his child-like sensibility, and his sensibility makes him an easy mark. A stranger, who may or may not be a fellow student, asks directions of Balthazar, selecting him from

the crowd because: "'I have waited to see a face like yours. One of sensitivity'" (B, 339). Balthazar replies sincerely" "'I will help you'" (B, 340). Of course, the stranger also wants money; he has chosen the right face: Balthazar is an easy mark.

"They push you away, and say goodbye. Then you are lonely and afraid with all the emptiness deeper and deeper everywhere" (B, 21), Balthazar says upon being shunted to boarding school, where he "enquires gently as to the way in this world" (B, 40). He longs for "nannie and her soft hair to let me rest my cheek when I weep" (B, 45), and, in his loneliness, he cries when nannie cannot come to fetch him. While any child may feel this way, Balthazar retains this sensibility at college, where his shyness forces him to wait to use the water closet: "And when no one was looking quietly make for a neat mahogany water closet tucked away beyond the skulls and heads of beasts" (B, 115). For the man of sensibility, even necessary biological functions must be accomplished in a gothic setting of "skulls and heads."

Throughout his life, he does "'not know how to be unkind. I can suffer unkindness but I cannot be unkind'" (B, 134). He remains a quiet sensitive person who feels self-indulgent at drinking "'beef tea. I know it's awfully indulgent but then I have china tea and lemon to follow. Langorously sipping all the way to six o'clock'" (B, 165).

He confesses his social nervousness to Fitzdare, fearing he may "'have trodden too heavily in the etiquette, should have just said please and thank you. And not that I should be too delighted to have more trifle,'" a situation which he considers one of many social "'dilemmas'" (B, 133-4). Later, as a young adult, he "can weep with joy. To be at home again in London" (B, 292).

Balthazar's sensibility is nearly perfectly matched by that of Elizabeth Fitzdare, who feels "'one should devote part of one's life for the benefit of others'" (B, 127). Lust is absent from his daydreams of Fitzdare undressing, and, when he thinks of sex, he hopes to "give you joy without pain or heartbreak" (B, 239). He "nearly died when I thought she glanced and winked at me" (B, 253), and, at their first kiss, he mentally asks her to "wrap me tightly please as I hold you and softly cry" (B, 254-5). He cries again when Fitzdare agrees to go to France with him: "Tears came hopelessly carefree out my eyes. I had to turn my face away . . . . My God what's wrong with me. So afeared and frightened by her courage" (B, 241). Balthazar seems always close to tears in his relationship with Fitzdare, for his sensibility is attuned to her feelings as well as to his own. When Fitzdare comes to Balthazar's bedroom, he is not overcome with lust but with a desire to please. "I die to do what's expected" (B, 258).

Predictably, Fitzdare's cancelling their marriage

devastates Balthazar. "Suddenly to be told you're not wanted anymore" (B, 274) assumes titanic dimensions for a man of feeling. Balthazar, too stunned and too sensitive to react, desires to plead his love to Fitzdare, but he is a victim of his own extreme sensibility, too sensitive even to make inquiries: "If one is not wanted how can I ever go. Or know whatever went wrong" (B, 274). Significantly, Balthazar is not hardened by Fitzdare's apparent rejection. Like all Donleavy's heroes, Balthazar adopts Fitzdare's solution to life's problems: "'If there is no christian[1] answer, then I should think to follow one's heart is best'" (B, 127). Donleavy's heroes, finding no Christian answer, follow their own hearts.

Thus a Balthazar of still-great sensibility stands against the onslaught of Millicent and her family, who seek wealth through matrimony. At Millicent's suggested assignation, Balthazar tremblingly signs the hotel register, then leads Millicent to tea, so that "she'll know at least that one is not beset with uncontrolled desperate passion" (B, 299). An uncertain Balthazar urges himself to "God damn it, go over and grab her now" (B, 300), but his sensibility prevents such an overt act, for he would be humiliated if "God forbid she should ever resist" (B, 301). He cannot face adversity, even such minor adversity as "when someone squeezes on a bench. I always get up and walk away" (B, 301). Despite shoddy treatment by the world,

Balthazar remains a man of feeling who cannot but step into Millicent's trap.

Balthazar wonders:

> My God when will I ever become a man of the world. And put a noisy dirty lady sitting perched high on me spinning like a top, with her red hair waving and her light-coloured shoes flying off against the wall (B, 302).

Obviously, he will never be such a man of the world. He will always, despite all ill-treatment, have a "soul strewn with a simple little hope to please my wife" (B, 313). Though many weeks pass without his consummating his marriage to Millicent, Balthazar becomes neither hostile nor aggressive; he feels simply "stayed by the hand of protocol and ceremony" (B, 321). Though he has married Fitzdare "long ago in my heart" (B, 338), his "religious and gentlmanly feelings" made him search for a hotel acceptable to Millicent, whom he was "desperate to please" (B, 311). Even after Millicent leaves him, he cannot seduce his maid, whose boy friend Jacques "takes what he wants. And I must ask" (B, 354). To the end, Balthazar remains a man of great sensibility and, as a result, remains an enigma to the Dangerfield-like Beefy: "'You put out a kind and helping hand. I'll never know why. But thank you'" (B, 377).

Like Balthazar, Clayton Clementine, the lord of Charnel Castle in The Onion Eaters, retains a child-like sensibility, "still begging for mommie. To come back" (OE, 61). He remains a man who will stop to touch flowers,

a man whose sensibility demands his feelings for animals. When Rose shouts, "'Fuck off you monster,'" at Clementine's dog, he remonstrates: "'Please don't speak like that to my dog . . . . You could easily hurt his feelings'" (OE, 64). Clementine finds it nearly impossible to kill a chicken, or to see it killed:

> I stood out in the yard clutching the feathery thing to my chest near the rain barrel turning my head away as I plunged it in. Tough to drown a chicken (OE, 183).

The maid assists by cutting off the chicken's head, while Clementine "had to keep myself from putting hands up to cover my eyes" (OE, 183).

Like Balthazar, Clementine stands out in a crowd as a man of sensibility. At a party, a boor singles out Clementine, speaks to him, observes that "'You're one of the first people I've met who has just stood there listening'" (OE, 322), and, affected by Clementine's sensibility, decides not to bother his polite listener further. At his own castle, though fully aware that the guests have prepared a feast at his expense, Clementine is overcome at being honored at dinner. He must excuse "himself from table. . . . Tears tumble. Good to cry" (OE, 139). We remember a similar scene upon his arrival in Ireland, when "some strange sadness took me and I felt tears running down my face" (OE, 107).

Clementine's greatest and most consistent display

of sensibility centers on his cordial treatment of his many uninvited guests. When Erconwald and his crew arrive, pleading car trouble, Clementine immediately responds: "'But surely I can help you'" (OE, 24). Erconwald sizes Clementine up immediately: "'Kind person I fear we put upon you. That you are too easily tempered to say any distressful word to strangers'" (OE, 25). Erconwald offers to depart but is stayed by Rose, whose "'depart. Like hell'" leaves Clementine "nervously tugging at his cravat, moistening his lips" (OE, 26). Clementine, a man of sensibility, a man easily upset, cannot, in the face of Rose's aggressiveness, stand his ground much less run counter to his "guests" wishes. Later, when five additional guests appear, Erconwald enjoins: "'Pray say the word and we shall depart'" (OE, 44); but Clementine is too passive to take advantage of even so blatant an opening. Indeed, despite the ever-mounting food bills, the emptying of his wine cellar, and the piecemeal destruction of the castle, Clementine never asks any of his guests to leave.

Not only will Clementine not ask guests to leave, he cannot refuse them readmission when they return. Though he has long wished to confront his guests with "when the hell are you leaving" (OE, 41), he generously tells Erconwald: "'I'm sorry to see you go'" (OE, 288). Erconwald, departing, responds: "'Good person you are of splendid mercy. Of kindness never failed'" (OE, 289). The

departure, welcomed though not requested by Clementine, is short-lived, for, after three days at the nearest pub, Erconwald's drunken troupe returns. And Clementine freely readmits them. Rather than barring the doors, he retires to spend "a pleasantly solemn afternoon planning my suicide" (OE, 291). Charlene depicts him as a victim of his own sensibility when she summarizes his plight: "'You're just too good hearted. Everyone is taking advantage of you'" (OE, 293).

Like the other Donleavy heroes, Clementine's sensibility is especially evident in his relationships with women. Unable to refuse when Rose climbs into his bed, Clementine finds himself "in an awful state of worry. What if she's afflicted with something not nice and catching. Which could send me down again only weeks after I've got up" (OE, 68). A brief dialogue illustrates Clementine's shyness and sensibility in the presence of the aggressive Rose, who wants to see him naked. When Rose requests him to "'stand up now on the bed and let me see a sight of you,'" Clementine responds, "'I'd rather not.'"

> "Come on haven't you a sight of me."
> "I'm shy."
> "Come on give us a flash of it."
> "Really I don't think so."
> . . . . . .
> "You're a retiring sort of gent then."
> "A little" (OE, 70).

Veronica also takes the aggressor's role; she puts her hand in Clementine's pants during a carriage ride,

commenting simply: "'Do you mind awfully. Helps ha ha keep my hand warm'" (OE, 112). Later, Clementine shares her bed, getting "hardly a second's rest through the night" (OE, 250). Yet, when Veronica suggests, "'I've tired you out,'" Clementine, fearing to give offense, replies, "'O no I'm all right,'" though he is in fact wondering "How to get out of here. While I still have a prick left at all" (OE, 252). Veronica, who cannot help but realize his sensibility, finally promises: "'I'll leave you quite alone. If you wish. You're so shy.'" She must comfort Clementine, assuring him: "'You needn't be frightened'" (OE, 253).

In A Fairy Tale of New York, Donleavy presents Cornelius Christian, a hero who "'can be tough when it's required . . . but painfully shy otherwise'" (FT, 61). Though there are indeed two sides to Cornelius's personality, he shares with Donleavy's other heroes the sensibility of the man of feeling. Vine immediately recognizes him as "'a man I can talk to, a person who's got a proper mental attitude'" (FT, 10). Always conscious of people's reactions to him, Cornelius likes Vine and decides to work in the Vine Funeral Home.

Because he finds that Vine has "given me comfort because I don't feel you're [his wife] laughed at or joked over dead" (FT, 16), Christian extends his sensibility to other corpses, feeling not a maudlin, "romantic," tearfulness at death itself but lamenting: "The indignity when

they get you stretched out like that'" (FT, 30). Overcome by feeling, Cornelius faints at the indignity of the embalming room. When he awakens to see the masked undertakers, he directs his sensibility towards himself, fainting again. He never becomes comfortable while preparing a corpse, and he tells Vine: "'I think maybe you're telling me too much about your business. I don't want to say anything but it's getting me down'" (FT, 17).

Christian's sensibility is most apparent in his long relationship with Fanny Sourpuss, whom he meets while directing her husband's funeral. Trying to emulate Vine's professional courtesy, while simultaneously, and unconsciously, adding courtesies derived from his own innate sensibility, Cornelius unintentionally impresses Fanny. "'You know in just a minute I'm going to pin a medal on you. You're just so god damn nice'" (FT, 45), she tells him. Later, she recognizes his innocence, his complete lack of guile. "'You have just about the cutest and most innocent face I've ever seen in my life'" (FT, 49), Fanny tells him, wondering" "'What would a mere infant like you know'" (FT, 58). Clearly, Fanny is the aggressor in their relationship; Cornelius, though he enjoys their sexual union, worries that he has violated Vine's trust.

When Fanny cries in bed, Cornelius would "reach for her arm to ask what was the matter" (FT, 133). He suddenly bursts into tears after a confrontation with

Fanny, and he crumbles at her merest supposed rebuke. "Fanny said please don't use my towel. O god what a thing to say to me. As if I was unworthy" (FT, 309).

Throughout, Cornelius, whatever else he might be, remains a man of feeling, a man described to the judge as "'a very unusual young man. He suffers from being over courteous as a matter of fact. And not wanting to give any offense'" (FT, 203-04). The courtroom confrontation proves too much for a man of Cornelius's sensibilities; he "stepped down from the stand, walked four steps and swooned" (FT, 214). He is "'against violent sport'" (FT, 137), "'against harmful acts'" (FT, 230). He is capable of feeling "abused by the insolent tone of the speak your weight machine" (FT, 223), of feeling "homesick. . . . For the soft carpet upon which sadness treads" (FT, 147). He wants "'to keep my dignity'" (FT, 268), to "be a gentleman . . . [my] whole life" (FT, 264). When he sees a Devon tag on some luggage, he "nearly sobbed" (FT, 266), over-reacting due to his extreme sensibility.

All Donleavy's heroes share characteristics of sensibility. Though they may differ in other respects, or, as I shall indicate later, in the degree to which they will indulge their sensibility, all are men of feeling. In their relationships with women, with their fellow men, and with their world at large, Donleavy's heroes' reactions are tempered, and often controlled, by the sensibility which characterizes them.

II

While the hero's sensibility probably makes his world seem more hostile, more horrifying, than it actually is, we are concerned here with the hero's point of view and reactions. In the context of this chapter, focusing on those aspects of the hero's world derived from the Gothic tradition amplifies the hero's view of his world by establishing the historical perspective of a hero of sensibility thrust into a gothic world. Donleavy uses distinctly Gothic images which serve to create a specialized world-view to which the hero, upon certain types of occasions, resorts.

The ginger man lives in and among buildings analogous to the gothic castle. His house at Bascadoon, where the novel opens, rests on a promontory overlooking the sea. Dangerfield and O'Keefe must climb a steep hill to reach this house surrounded by dying plants and shaggy grass. Once inside, they remain constantly aware of the "night outside and the boom of the sea" (GM, 14), while a one-eyed attic cat makes scrambling noises on the ceiling to the accompaniment of groans from under the floor. Though O'Keefe has grown accustomed to spiders on his own ceiling, Dangerfield's house, with its "funereal fittings" (GM, 29), seems too oppressive. Even Dangerfield abandons the house after awakening to discover his back yard, to the foundation of his house, fallen into the sea.

The unmistakably gothic aspect of Dangerfield's first house prepares the reader for gothic elements in his subsequent dwellings. While in bed with Lilly, he hears "rain beating against the window panes. Laurel leaves shaking crazily" (GM, 223). His London neighborhood features the pit of a bombed-out building; approaching his last girl friend Mary, he focuses on "this warehouse badly needing repair" (GM, 303-04). As a contrast, Dangerfield finds a sanctuary at Trinity College, which, though it has a gothic aspect, functions much as the castle chapel in gothic fiction, providing the hero a refuge from the horrors without.

Furthermore, Donleavy uses a gothic structure in his novels. As noted above, Charles Muscatine finds the sequential progression, the author leading the reader through the stages and stations of a journey, the expansion and juxtaposition, to be an essential characteristic of the Gothic genre. In The Ginger Man, for example, Dangerfield in kangaroo costume is led by an animal trainer and a bizarre beadle through Soho, stopping frequently at local bars, antagonizing bar patrons, and finally causing a brawl before making a hasty departure. This sequence of events, which Dangerfield calls "fourteen wild stations of the cross" (GM, 260), illustrates Muscatine's interpretation of the Gothic technique which Donleavy uses in all his novels.

George Smith frequently visits the cemetery where he is building a mausoleum. He is greeted by "marble, granite mausoleums bleak, cold. Up a steep hill. Along an avenue of leafless trees" (SM, 80). When he is not visiting the cemetery, he is having lunch "on a promontory near a dead end of street pushing out into the river by the fish market. Dark sheds. Barges bumping derelict" (SM, 87). Within his own office, Sally's Elkhound, "a man killer for sure" (SM, 9), lies chained to her desk. Later, the Elkhound fights another dog at Jiffy's mansion, creating gothic chaos as well as an immediate gothic horror.

Donleavy includes gothic sexual relationships in A Singular Man, continuing this aspect of gothicism begun with Dangerfield's oral and anal intercourse. Sally Tomson's discussion of her family's candor in sexual matters and of her family's openness regarding nudity sets the stage for her further rhapsodies on her brother's physique. The strong and unmistakable suggestion of an incestuous relationship makes George uncomfortable, a discomfort intensified when the young carolers, fearing that George is a child-molester, refuse to enter his apartment. Even children recognize Donleavy's gothic world, for they cannot believe in Smith's charity.

Even the short novel The Saddest Summer of Samuel S contains specific gothic images. The "grey stone church so cold inside in summer," with its "giant oaken doors" (S, 33)

is an awe-inspiring structure near a war-ruined area. Sam's apartment, with its dirty windows, furniture covered with sheets, and its insect population, provides a miniature gothic dwelling.

En route to his father's funeral, the child Balthazar sees "the little iron doors by the pavements that opened into dark cold cellars. Where ghosts and rats and monsters breathed out a chill to passing little boys" (B, 14). The haunted forest where Beefy hides his dog and, later, the haunted valley marking the approach to Fitzdare's secluded old mansion continue this gothic landscape. Like Beefy, who hung a picture of his grandmother on his wall to remind himself of her evil presence in his worldly affairs, the Fitzdare home is outfitted with ancestral portraits. Donleavy includes a gothic element even in happy times, for Fitzdare frightens Balthazar when she enters his bedroom via a secret passage. While in bed with Fitzdare, Balthazar is "hoping not to hear another creature meeting doom out in the wood. And be haunted. On this our honeymoon" (B, 260).

Balthazar envisions an exotic setting, another gothic characteristic, when he dreams of his servant in livery and "a great white throne for a crapper with frilly tassels about the seat. And a bath steaming with scents shielded with a Chinese lacquered screen" (B, 257). Beefy in fact has an exotic chamber at Trinity, but both

students' worlds are more accurately reflected in Beefy's grandmother's house. After slipping past the four Irish Wolfhounds, Beefy "'finally had to climb through a window in the pig curing room which by days looks like the most gruesome sort of mortuary. And by night should be avoided altogether'" (B, 373).

In The Onion Eaters, Donleavy presents a near-parody of the gothic setting, suggesting the hero's desperate laughter in the face of his contemporary gothic world. Significantly, this most gothic setting coincides with Donleavy's presentation of the hero of most overwhelming sensibility. Clementine's three testicles and his near-dying of boredom, akin to the strange diseases of gothicism, fit him for his role as lord of Charnel Castle. He is suited to bear "the years of misfortune haunting it and the lands around for miles" (OE, 11). Walking from the isolated crossroads, Clementine encounters "a gate with a sign. Lands Poisoned" (OE, 8), while behind a stone fence he hears the weird laughter of Clarence, one of many local eccentrics.

The castle itself is in an advanced state of decay, complete with a garden gone wild and a long-abandoned boat-house with yacht. The great conger, who haunts the nearby sea, has access to the castle through an underground tunnel. The ancestral portraits, the balcony from which Clementine, Hamlet-like, can observe his guests, the iron door

which can be lowered to seal the master bedroom, the ultimate chaos when the lights go out during a brawl, and, throughout, the omnipresent sea at the foot of the precipice, offer a gothic setting for Clementine's various eccentric guests.

Clementine is met at the crossroads by a seven foot tall giant who has "'never been known to open his eyes or speak. He's saving those faculties for when his others might fail'" (OE, 12). Soon Erconwald arrives, smoking hemp and carrying venemous reptiles in a cello case. The mambas are to be released in the snakeless fields of Ireland to counteract the natives' spiritual overconfidence (see OE, pp. 27-32). Erconwald and his crew are ostensibly scientists, but, unlike Lead Kindly Light, who fulfills the more customary role of Gothic scientist by devastating castle and occupants with a nitroglycerine bomb, Erconwald's explorations show a deviant obsession with sexual matters. Measuring sperm requires auto-eroticism; strapping Rose to an operating table becomes more sadistic than scientific; and timing Gloria's orgasms as she wears a death mask of his mother stamps Erconwald as Oedipal, or incestuous, or, by this time, God knows what.

Veronica despises the native Irishmen, but "'of course I do enjoy it when I see them pounding each other's faces in the pubs'" (OE, 109). Her sadism is further reflected in her excessive sexual demands on Clementine,

who can barely crawl from her bed. Macfugger, who loves war and dreams of displaying his marksmanship by blasting off his enemies' testicles while they are defecating, has found the perfect wife, for the masochistic Gail enjoys being beaten as much as the sadistic Macfugger enjoys beating her. Charlene adds an account of her childhood seduction in the then-empty castle, and Padrick convinces Imelda, one of Clementine's servants, to hold his penis, preferring manual stimulation to intercourse. Padrick is also accused of having sexual relations with animals, a gothic element reduced to a comic level when Donleavy introduces the notion of Padrick's raping chickens. When Padrick offers Imelda his penis, we hear "a squawk of rooks flying low overhead and chatter of pheasant away in the bush" (OE, 168).

Donleavy tosses in a number of brief gothic episodes. The fight between Bligh and Lead Kindly Light in "'the monk's passage'" in the castle's subterranean reaches involves a sadistic parody of medieval combat; Bligh and Lead Kindly Light twist each other's gonads until the weaker can endure no more pain. Bloodmourn explores a secret passage, finally stumbling through the wall in the master bedroom to discover Charlene in Clementine's bed. When Bligh confesses a homosexual act, the priest's lecture suggests the holy confessor's homosexually-oriented voyeurism (see pp. 307-08). The ex-prisoners pose a constant vague threat,

Elmer the dog urinates on would-be lovers, and a toad crawls into the mouth of a sleeping Clementine.

The catalogue of gothic, or pseudo-gothic, horrors would be incomplete without some scatology. Enter the madman who defecates on the floor. Veronica is horrified when Evil appears, remembering her earlier party ruined by Evil's using the living room as a toilet, much as Macfugger urinated into an unfortunately porous, leaky chamberpot in the presence of his assembled guests. But Evil's defecating on the floor is not half his enormous crime. Veronica confronts him with his sins: "'You bowel moved and made a sandwich of it. And put it in our picnic lunch'" (OE, 246). Surely this is parody, for Gothicism has degenerated to schoolboy humor. Later, Veronica's sexual conquest of Clementine is disturbed by a foul odor; Evil has clandestinely entered the house to contentedly defecate in a corner of the front room. Lest the reader harbor any doubts that Evil lives up to his name, Donleavy reintroduces him into a party scene at Charnel Castle. Evil's job, we discover, is to measure bodies for coffins, an occupation grotesque in itself but made more horrible by Evil's execution of his tasks:

> 'I'd measure them all a foot too short. They have to break the legs to fit them in. There would be them with the knees sticking up as they ride towards the flames. I'll tell you it gave the bereaved a sight they'll never forget. I'm villainous and mean' (OE, 319).

A Fairy Tale of New York opens with the death of Cornelius Christian's wife. To pay her funeral expenses, Cornelius works for Vine's funeral home, thus moving into a contemporary gothic setting of cemeteries, corpses, mortuaries, and death. Vine's "studio," where corpses are prepared, is equipped with fire extinguishers, a common enough safety precaution in a roomful of chemicals. But, for Cornelius, Vine's studio becomes a vision of Hell; when passing the entrance, he sees: "That door again to the cadavers. And the fire fighting equipment" (FT, 70). Christian projects the vision of death, thinking of Hart's Island, "where prisoners bury the amputated arms and legs and the unclaimed dead" (FT, 55). He projects his Hell vision as well, seeing a gothic world of despair in an institution "where the imprisoned troubled eyes stare" (FT, 119) and interpreting Fanny's garish apartment as "this orange inferno" (FT, 59).

Working in Vine's "studio" induces dream visions, fantasies in which he has intercourse with a corpse, with "a Vine assistant handing me a lubricant from the big shelf of chemicals" (FT, 64). Later, a fully-awake Christian considers intercourse with a beautiful twenty-three-year-old corpse lying, in a setting worthy of Poe, with "light aflood on the alabaster corpse" (FT, 112). The gothic setting not only evokes the gothic elements of Christian's nature, it triggers recollections of past

escapades--homosexuality in the Navy and childhood voyeurism.

Most importantly, Donleavy uses gothic images to trigger changes in his hero's sensibility. When the hero becomes acutely aware of the gothic aspect of his world, he temporarily sets aside his sensibility, matching his world's villainy in order to maintain his independence. Yet the gothic elements of his world do not change the hero; they merely emphasize the contrast between his sensibility and the hardness of his world. The hero briefly becomes a gothic villain, then quickly reverts to a man of feeling.

When he cannot stay Marion's badgering, Dangerfield punches her, smashes the bedroom door, and tries to smother their child. Yet this is only an impulsive reaction, for Dangerfield's sensibility immediately returns, plaguing him with feelings of guilt for the suffering he causes. Later, after his violent reaction to Marion's letter to his father, Dangerfield thinks: "O the weapons by which we the tender hearted, live" (GM, 94). Though a man of sensibility, he must react to oppression.

George Smith leaves no spaces between words when facing Miss Martin's rifle because "that's where the bullets fit in" (SM, 223). Failing to master a gothic situation with sensibility, Smith violently disarms the secretary: sensibility proves an inadequate weapon.

Later, a violent storm complicates Smith's trip to Miss Martin's home, providing a gothic transition between an episode of free sex with Matilda and the threat to his independence posed by Miss Martin's pregnancy. Clearly, the gothic image signals the temporary termination of Smith's sensibility, a necessity for survival.

Samuel S's fears of eviction are reflected in his noticing a gothic structure as he walks "along the twisting narrow shady street. . . . Past the grey stone church so cold inside in summer" (S, 33). He recognizes that no man can live entirely according to his sensibility when he tells Abigail: "'I'm finished screwing for screwing's sake'" (S, 75). Before becoming a victim of his own sensibility, he must "start the mental machinery and steer it away from the soul" (S, 16).

Even the passive Balthazar, though he can only infrequently be moved to action, feels the gothic intrusion into his world of sensibility. Images of bleak gothic settings follow Balthazar's learning that he has fathered a child, inducing not violence in Balthazar but melancholy. His dreams of Fitzdare are abruptly terminated by an apparition about to strike him. Though the apparition proves to be an old drunk tumbling into a coal bin, Balthazar, his mood shattered, runs. Donleavy effects a rapid shift from a dream world in which sensibility is possible to a gothic reality. Later, when the concerned

citizens invade his house, turning love-making to a scene of horror, Balthazar suddenly recalls newspaper accounts of murder and gore. Similarly, his nightmare in the Reptile Hall of the Natural History Museum foreshadows Fitzdare's breaking their engagement. In both cases, gothic images intrude to disturb the reveries of a man of sensibility.

Clementine, like Balthazar too passive to react violently, finds gothic possibilities imposing on his sensibility. Elmer's growls disturb Clementine's attempts at love-making with Lady Macfugger, causing him to wonder if Elmer has sensed "a Mamba long green and motionless unseen in the dark. Ready to sink fangs" (OE, 201). Macfugger's ravings, mostly sexual, make Clementine embarrassed at his own sensibility. On a grander scale, the pervasive gothic atmosphere of Charnel Castle transforms Clementine from the man of sensibility he once was: "Pardon my disfigurement. Wrought by the constant fear of snakebite blast and bullfight. And a double robbery recently of pieces of arse" (OE, 249).

Cornelius Christian has a capacity for gothic behavior as well as for sensibility; he has made love to Miss Musk, but he cannot resist replacing his own hand on her shoulder with that of an available corpse. The outside world provides a further measure of gothic invervention, countering that half of Cornelius given to sensibility.

As Jean begins seducing him, they are stopped by a gunshot outside. Similarly, gunfire provides a transition between Fanny's "Will you marry me" and Christian's thinking: "Marriage is a prison" (FT, 170). Later, "a siren screaming. A bell clanging" (FT, 239) suggests gothic chaos when the kindly Cornelius, attempting to buoy the old admiral's ego, accidentally gets knocked out in the boxing ring.

The conflict of sensibility and independence occurs because the hero's world refuses to permit these two traits to coexist. Thus Donleavy juxtaposes gothic images with passages depicting the hero's sensibility. Gothicism provides a reason for the hero's subordinating his sensibility to his drive for independence, for, in his gothic world, the hero must abandon his sensibility to maintain his independence. Further, gothic images provide a bridge, shifting the mood quickly as the hero passes from sensibility to aggressive individualism. Insistence upon his independence defines the other side of Donleavy's hero of sensibility. The essential conflict in the hero's life, the essential conflict of each novel, depends upon the hero's drive for independence being as important to him as his sensibility.

In addition to the pervasive gothic nature of his world, the hero's fellow men compound the threats to his independence, providing further reason for his subordinating his sensibility. All Donleavy's heroes feel the loss

of independence, and often they react with violence. The hero's sense of being a victim corresponds to the degree of independence which he is willing to give up and dictates the magnitude of his reaction.

Two incidents demonstrate Dangerfield's movement from sensibility to violence. Arriving with Mary at an iron-gated subterranean after-hours tavern in a sleazy cab pulled by a flea-ridden horse, Dangerfield threatens the driver and refuses to pay the apparently exorbitant sum which he demands. Dangerfield's choice of words: "'Show me some love or I'll strangle you'" (GM, 149), suggests that the cabman sins in his lack of sensibility. Ironically, Donleavy's hero must renounce his own sensibility in attempting to make his world more sensitive; obviously, he is doomed to fail before he begins. While Dangerfield clearly desires to be a man of sensibility, his leaving the driver to pay for their drinks makes the question of who is the greater rogue a moot point. Yet Dangerfield is, as always, first a man of sensibility; if he becomes something harder and coarser, it is only in reaction to the world's abuse.

Dangerfield's reaction to being refused service is to wreck the bar. Returning to the site of his earlier abuse, he upbraids the bartender: "'I'm a sensitive person. I hate abuse'" (GM, 111). He throws a bottle at the bartender, breaks bottles and glasses, and breaks the

fingers of a bar patron who tries to grab him. Yet, as he runs, his sensibility quickly returns. "I'll be disgraced. Must avoid capture for the sake of the undesirable publicity it will produce" (GM, 111). Though he has felt obligated to renounce the bartender's charge of drunkenness, Dangerfield also regrets his own reaction, lamenting: "How did I ever get into this frightful mess. How fantastically undesirable" (GM, 112). His belligerence and destruction are the actions of a victim of an oppressive world; as a hero of sensibility, he is a "crazy christian soldier, peddling off to doom" (GM, 112), a man who cannot fit into his society.

While desperately attempting to escape the police, Dangerfield rams his bicycle into a small boy. He is not too rushed to inquire about possible injuries, and he apologizes to the child--and gives him the bicycle--before he continues his escape. Seeking refuge in Chris's apartment, Dangerfield wants to know "'how I can get away from evil in this world'" (GM, 114). He continues to see himself as a victim, declaring: "'I'm not an evil person, nor do I ever encourage any type of trouble'" (GM, 115). While the reader may find this statement somewhat at odds with the literal facts, he cannot doubt that Dangerfield began the chapter as a man of sensibility, reacted to acts both hostile and derogatory, and finished by recapturing his sensibility after redressing wrongs and refusing,

in so far as possible, to accept the victim's role.

At Jiffy's Pomfret Manor, the random alligators and the two gigantic wolfhounds provide a Gothic setting bridging George Smith's sensibility and his next thought: "I could kill Miss Martin. Use me the way she has" (SM, 143). When a messenger boy pressures Smith by waiting for a tip, Smith hardens, much as he does in responding to the anonymous threatening letters, responding: "'Now sonny, if I ever see your face again, I'll put it through the floor, Bye bye'" (SM, 106). The obnoxious, aggressive man on the train platform finally forces an erstwhile passive Smith to knock him into the path of a train. When sued for knocking the man onto the tracks, Smith responds with a threat of his own (and creates a Gothic setting for his own purposes), giving his address as an institution for the criminally insane and suggesting that he and his fellow inmates will be happy to meet the complainant. When the gang of children attack his carriage in Central Park, Smith, putting survival first, begins strangling the gang leader, who is terrified at "George Smith's calm hard eyes" (SM, 264). The boy asks, "'Mister ain't you got no mercy,'" to which George replies: "'Just for myself sonny'" (SM, 265). George's self-evaluation does not tell the entire story. True, while strangling the boy, George is thinking of himself; but his actions are not self-motivated: his actions are responses to threats of physical violence or

to subtle pressures aimed at dominating him. He has "warm inner feelings which explode resoundingly at boiling point" (SM, 49).

George fights oppression every inch of the way. He ruins a pair of shoes kicking a vending machine, but finally "'it produced,'" after he "'kicked it to pieces'" (SM, 291). Sally observes that even "'little kids are always trying to beat you up'" (SM, 267). When he does meet an act of human kindness, George is wary, finding it "a pity to meet kindness. Lower one's guard. And wham" (SM, 213). The machinery of his world, he realizes, does not run on the oil of kindness, and George, though he would prefer to be a man of sensibility always, refuses to be ground up by the machinery. Sally tells him: "Don't ever, Smitty, join with those guys who after pulling some ruthless deals, sit back in the warmth of luxury looking everywhere for love" (SM, 303). Clearly, one cannot have both love and independence in this world; George Smith, inherently a man of sensibility, finally chooses independence, though he consistently laments the world's lack of love.

Samuel S objects to Abigail's suggesting alternatives in his private life. "'I've got my ways of fighting'" (S, 53), he warns her, suggesting that he will not be dominated. Later, he refuses to have sex with Abigail, explaining: "'You don't know what screwing without a

future can do to me'" (S, 70). Like Donleavy's other heroes, Sam puts survival first, refusing to be a victim of his own sensibility: "'For you this is just a tourist itinerary. For me it's a steam shovel full of sod flipped on my coffin'" (S, 71).

Balthazar B is distinguished more by the situations to which he fails to react than by his reactions to maintain his independence. Though he differs from other Donleavy heroes in the limits of his reactions--the subject of the following chapter--Balthazar shares the hero's conflict between sensibility and the need for independence. Balthazar early learns from Beefy to "never cry or show you are afraid" (B, 40). He lures the school bully into the boiler room, locks him in, and breaks him down with tales of poisonous adders loose in the dark. Balthazar proves a capable Gothic villain when forced to resist domination. Yet, once the bully is subdued, Balthazar's sensibility returns. Once independent, he shows no inclination toward permanently dominating the bully.

Balthazar refuses to allow his neighbors into his bedroom, but, unlike earlier Donleavy heroes, he cannot react violently. Yet he does react firmly. He responds with a simple "'No,'" feeling that "till now one has been so patient with the entire world" (B, 324). After much discussion and demanding on both sides, Balthazar says simply, "'I said please go'" (B, 325). Only after the

neighbors' further harrangues does he add: "'I shall take this coat hanger to you. If you don't get out of this house'" (B, 326), finally adding politely, "'Go away please'" (B, 327). Though his tolerance for invasion of privacy and for the loss of the stability and security of his own home exceeds that of Donleavy's earlier heroes, Balthazar too can be pushed to his limit. Despite consuming sensibility, he occasionally shocks both the reader and himself by opposing the world which is about to consume him. Like Donleavy's other heroes, he averts the final victimization which awaits the hero of sensibility in a gothic world.

Like Balthazar, Clementine can be defiant in a letter or can shout in a remote corner of his castle, but rarely can he confront his tormentors. On the ship to Ireland, Clementine regularly defeated an obnoxious stranger at chess. "Slowly with a positioning of knights and bishops I annihilated him. . . . His aggressiveness in early moves always decided me to not let him win" (OE, 106-07). Though Clementine avoids being dominated by an aggressor, he is seldom able to carry this reaction past the vicarious experience of the chessboard to reality. Only in a post-Naval-service job interview does Clementine assert himself: "Something in my father came out in me. I stood up from my seat at the interview and said come on you goddamn pen pusher put up your dukes" (OE, 108).

Usually, if Clementine reacts at all, he quickly returns to sensibility. Horrified at the thought of mambas loose in the castle, Clementine finally reacts out of fear of this gothic horror. Apropos of nothing in particular, he spontaneously blurts: "'I certainly don't want to get bitten by one of your god damn snakes.'" Erconwald replies simply: "'Ah. You have spoken,'" to which Clementine rejoins: "'You're damn right I've spoken,'" adding: "'I'm really mad, no kidding'" (OE, 49). Clementine's anger is indeed unbelievable. Though a man of extreme sensibility, his fear of the castle's gothic horrors--most recently poisonous snakes--finally forces him to assert himself. As he tells Erconwald, he is "'scared shitless'" (OE, 50).

Despite his fear, Clementine's sensibility quickly returns. As Clementine finishes his tirade, a tearful Erconwald melodramatically averts his eyes, causing Clementine to quickly respond: "'I'm sorry Erconwald I did not mean to upset your feelings. . . . I don't want to make anybody cry'" (OE, 50-51). Though his sensibility exceeds that of other Donleavy heroes, even Clementine, when faced with abundant gothic horrors, temporarily subordinates his sensibility to maintain some measure of independence.

Cornelius Christian, concerned with conducting a funeral with dignity, must face the widow's giant ex-husband. Willie's size and athletic prowess make the fight a gothic

mismatch, but Cornelius, who first tells Willie, "'If you don't leave this lady alone. I'm going to break you in two,'" quickly proves a conquering hero:

> Cornelius suddenly grabbing Willie's fingers and with a swift twist spinning them upside down and bending them back up under his wrists as he rose on his toes with a gasp of agony.

"'Now you big lout are you going to leave this lady alone,'" Cornelius shouts. Finally, he tells Willie to "'shut up.'" threatening to "'snap your wrists like dandelions'" (FT, 52). Cornelius proves equal to the situation, but the situation is one which he has tried to avoid.

Failing to placate another widow who objects to her dead husband's appearance, Cornelius reaches the breaking point. As a man of sensibility, he has endeavored to treat death with dignity, but the widow's ravings make death a gothic horror. Finally Cornelius, slighted and offended by the widow, tells her: "'I'll pump you full of formaldehyde and sell you as a bloody monster if you don't shut your ass you god damn fucking bitch'" (FT, 118). Similar motivation results in Christian's flattening a bouncer and a bartender in a scene reminiscent of The Ginger Man. Conned by a prostitute, lack of love again proves a catalyst. Realizing that his sensibility and need for love have enabled the prostitute to lead him to a subterranean bar-dungeon where he can be dominated by her male accomplices, Cornelius suddenly erupts violently. Like the

widow, the prostitute has cornered the man of sensibility in a gothic situation.

Nor will Cornelius be dominated by Fanny, who instructs her chauffeur to stay with him. He tells the chauffeur: "'And my instructions are, and I won't god damn well tell you twice, is to beat it'" (FT, 277). Cornelius walks to "get into shape to carry out the threats I make. For the sake of instant justice" (FT, 82). Fighting provides an opportunity for "conducting any more classes on discourtesy. Open to the public" (FT, 330) and is clearly the last resort of a sensitive man. When a bartender attempts to throw him out, Cornelius feels that he is:

> Trying to step on my feelings. Just tattoo a few on his jaw. Give him a solemn memory. In honor of the freedom of speech. When you want to shout. That you can't stand anymore. Of shit and concupiscence (FT, 309).

The hero of sensibility faces an irreconcilable paradox in a gothic world: "If you want [to] walk the earth in peace. You've got to bust asses. All the way" (FT, 168).

III

J. P. Donleavy has been called a Black Humor writer by Bruce Jay Friedman and others. What Friedman and Max Schulz are calling Black Humor, I suggest, may be a modern's look at the situation which I have attempted to place in a historical context. The man of sensibility confronting a gothic world faces choices and dilemmas very

closely related to those described by Schulz as typically Black Humor situations.

Schulz attempts to define Black Humor in terms of the individual and his world:

> With Black Humor, choice poses the primary difficulty. This is the consequence of a shift in perspective from the self and its ability to create a moral ambience through an act to emphasis on all the moving forces of life which converge collectively upon the individual.[2]

The difficulty of choice is precisely the problem facing a hero of sensibility confronting a gothic world. Finding himself incongruous with his world, Donleavy's hero must choose between a self-annihilating insistence on his individual values and a self-abnegating submission to his society's values. Neither choice is satisfactory. The forces of the gothic world described earlier do converge, as Schulz's definition of Black Humor suggests, upon the hero of sensibility. Thus the traditions of Sensibility and Gothicism, as Donleavy has utilized them, provide a historical context for the contemporary Black Humor school.

In defining sensibility above, I noted that the traditional hero of sensibility accepts, and conforms to, his society's values. Yet a writer "convinced of the truth of a closed ethical, philosophical, or religious system" cannot "conceptualize human experience in the terms of Black Humor" (Schulz, 13). Donleavy's hero, therefore, struggles first to establish a set of social values to

which he can conform. He rejects the social values imposed upon him, but he does not reject the concept of society. Indeed, his goal is to fit into society. Isolation is not, Schulz suggests, an ethical situation as in existentialism (9); yet Donleavy's hero will remain isolated until he can reshape his society. The hero finds too many unanswered questions; thus, he must withhold final acceptance of his society, and he must delay becoming a participating member.

Schulz, leaning on Northrop Frye, argues that comedy:

> always worked toward a reconciliation of the individual with society. Either the normal individual was freed from the bonds of an arbitrary humor society, or a normal society was rescued from the whims imposed by humor individuals (7).

The hero of sensibility would desire such a reconciliation, but, in the gothic tradition, no such reconciliation is possible. In a contemporary disjunctive world, Black Humorists must "arrest the traditional comic reconciliation of individual and society" (Schulz, 9). Quite possibly, Black Humorists have simply given the gothic tradition a comic twist. If contemporary events have become so absurd that, as Bruce Jay Friedman suggests, "the satirist has had his ground usurped by the newspaper reporter,"[3] then the horrors of the Eighteenth Century gothic novel, having become commonplaces in contemporary society, can elicit a response only if cast in a comic, rather than a tragic, mode.

As Joyce Carol Oates has suggested, "'"Gothicism . . . is not a literary tradition so much as a fairly realistic assessment of modern life."'"[4]

Donleavy uses gothic material for comic effect most obviously in The Onion Eaters, whose eccentric characters--for example, Veronica, who enters Clementine's bedroom "'stark naked on roller skates under a parasol'" (OE, 200)--provide humor rather than terror. When the moving wall in the master bedroom reveals a secret passage, Clementine's initial terror becomes comic as his dust-covered friend Bloodmourn appears. Rather than engendering terror, Bloodmourn makes the reader laugh, for his gothic intrusion, disturbing Clementine's sexual intercourse with Charlene, thwarts the hero's sensibilities but really suggests no threat of gothic violence.

Donleavy offers a microcosm of a larger mad world by depicting his guests' fighting in the castle. Lead Kindly Light, a gothic scientist-villain, threatens to blow up the castle--ironically for the purpose of ending the fighting. After incoherent speeches by Lead Kindly Light and by Erconwald, the villain rocks the castle with his glycerine bomb. That gothicism initiates a movement to sensibility is indicated by Clementine's evaluation of the incident: "the holocaust awakening sensitivities" (OE, 146). With "ghostly smoke rising from the debris," "a donkey honks out across the fields" (OE, 146), telling the

reader that he is viewing not gothic terror but a wild menagerie of jackasses whose bizarre antics can only be comic. For all its gothic trappings, the castle fight-explosion scene resembles a Harold Lloyd comedy, for, despite extreme physical abuse, no one ever gets hurt.

Near the novel's end, with "nowhere safe left in this castle" (OE, 314), with the guests' destruction "making sure none of us capture a moment of pastoral peace" (OE, 329), Donleavy presents a scene of gothic chaos, with a band calmly playing amidst a shower of shattering China and a hail of bullets, while guests randomly pummel each other in the dark as the world goes completely mad. On a night when all the local eccentrics will be gathered under Clementine's roof, the castle runs out of candles, "'plunging into blackness by the second,'" an unfortunate occurrence indeed when "'there be a lot of people around tonight that might do in the dark what they wouldn't do in the light'" (OE, 327). This vague threat proves a prelude not to terror but to comedy, for Donleavy's characters engender the reader's laughter at the absurdity of the human condition. That Donleavy is a comic writer is apparent. While the direction of this study focuses on another aspect of Donleavy's work, discussing Black Humor as a modern synthesis of the traditions of gothicism and sensibility suggests the inherently comic point of view which Donleavy imparts to his hero.

Black Humor's "denial of social reconciliation or individual release" (Schulz, 8) describes the hero caught between sensibility and gothicism. As a man of sensibility, the hero seeks a social reconciliation. Since the world is gothic, no such reconciliation is possible. Because this absurdity is reflected by contemporary society as Donleavy finds it, his only recourse is to portray the situation in a comic, albeit horrifying, manner. Thus Black Humor, as defined by Schulz and Friedman, is a contemporization, or a contemporary overlapping, of the traditions of Sensibility and Gothicism. Though these two traditions developed simultaneously, only contemporary writers have emphasized the conflict resulting from their simultaneous prominence within a single work.

Notes

[1]Donleavy commonly uses a lower case "c" for "Christ" and "Christian." Also, he frequently does not use the question mark though the dialogue clearly indicates a question. Quoted material follows Donleavy's stylistic peculiarities.

[2]Max F. Schulz, Black Humor Fiction of the Sixties (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1973), p. 7. Subsequent references appear in the text.

[3]Bruce Jay Friedman, ed., Black Humor (New York: Bantam Books, 1965), p. x.

[4]Quoted by Geoffrey Wolff in "Gothic City" (review of Them), Newsweek, September 29, 1969, p. 121C, reprinted in Hauck, Richard Boyd, A Cheerful Nihilism (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 243.

CHAPTER IV

THE EVOLUTION OF DONLEAVY'S HERO

Discussing the evolution of Donleavy's hero requires seeking differences among the heroes rather than similarities. All Donleavy's heroes have great sensibility, and all strive to achieve and to maintain their independence in a gothic world. I shall not attempt to prove again either of these points; instead, I shall consider the varying degrees of sensibility among Donleavy's heroes and the differing limits they allow their world to place on their independence. This new perspective delineates the evolution of Donleavy's hero in the same context already presented.

Differences among Donleavy's heroes are apparent in their relationships to those around them, particularly to those close to them. Donleavy provides a useful approach to a discussion of his hero's evolution with his use of the Double, for his heroes' changing relationships to their alter egos provide the clearest insight into their characters. Donleavy's Double is not complex; he is sometimes a metaphor, often a simply way to illuminate the hero by placing another character in counterpoise. While the

Doppelgänger and Double, as C. F. Keppler has observed, "have been so loosely used by writers on the subject that they can mean virtually anything,"[1] and despite the Double's lack of a "significant overall history in the sense of a pattern of development" (Keppler, 14), the Double provides an especially useful approach to studying the evolution of Donleavy's hero, for Donleavy's Double can be logically linked to the Gothic villain's "violent oscillation of evil deed and penitent mood,"[2] characteristics which establish the villain as "a character-type well instrumented to explore the evil and irrationality of man and his sharply personal sense of the war within" (Myoshi, xiv).

Commenting on Joseph Conrad's "The Secret Sharer," Robert Rogers finds that: "the characters representing doubles . . . have a more or less autonomous existence on the narrative level . . . and yet are patently fragments of one mind at the psychological level of meaning."[3] Donleavy's Beefy and Balthazar are obviously autonomous and indeed often seem mutually exclusive. As Rogers suggests the double should, Beefy and Balthazar "play the friendly role of secret sharers [rather] than that of bitter antagonists at the narrative level" (Rogers, 61), though they, like most doubles, are probably antagonistic at some psychological level.

Keppler, who prefers the term "second self," finds that:

> Their common theory can be reduced in very general terms to this: that the figure of the second self is created by its author, either consciously or unconsciously, to express in fictional form the division within his own psyche, whether caused by purely personal problems or by the wider problems of his culture or by both (189).

This last applies best to Donleavy, for his Doubles provide him a vehicle for delineating that conflict between the hero and world which I have discussed previously. Yet Keppler, who, like most critics, finds the Double important in a psychological approach to literature, insists that: "We are interested in what the second self does, but centrally we are interested in the results of this doing: in what happens to, and especially what happens within, the first self" (193). I do not think anything this complicated happens in Donleavy's novels, though A Fairy Tale of New York may suggest the possibility of psychological analysis. Donleavy simply uses one character to illuminate another, without any deep psychological meshing of the characters. For Donleavy's characters, the tension between the first and second selves--a condition which Keppler finds essential--results not from inner causes but from causes imposed by the external world. Donleavy's heroes know what they want; the difficulty lies in achieving their goals in a hostile world.

From the psychologist's point of view, Donleavy's novels are probably failures, for Keppler insists that the

Double "is never simply a technical device; he is a symptom (or collection of symptoms) of the writer's own inward disorder" (190). I would agree with Mr. Myoshi, however, that "psychoanalytic criticism in its purer form tends to fix on the writer as neurotic at the expense of his writing" (xvii). I will be satisfied to consider only the technical aspect of Donleavy's use of the Double, partly because I am unwilling to consider literature primarily a "symptom"--a very narrow and thus not very meaningful view--but primarily because a study of Donleavy's use of the Double is most useful as a way to understand the evolution of his hero. Beefy, Donleavy's most completely drawn Double figure, is most important when placed in the context of the entire body of Donleavy's six novels, showing the hero's shift towards passivity. And so I cheerfully consign Donleavy's novels to the body of work which Rogers finds "relatively static and esthetically uninteresting" (32). I propose to discuss the literature, leaving Mr. Donleavy to his analyst, if indeed he has one, who probably finds nothing very revealing in the novels.[4]

Donleavy's use of the Double is fairly simple and is very much similar to modern interpretations of Jean Paul Richter's Doppelgänger. Writing of Richter, Ralph Tymms states: "characteristic Doppelgänger are pairs of friends (in the original sense of 'fellows, two of a pair'), who together form a unit, but individually appear as 'half,'

dependent on the alter ego."[5] Tymms definition fits the situation of The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B most closely and therefore dictates this novel's central position in a study of the hero's evolution. I propose, therefore, to group Donleavy's first three novels in section I, to discuss Balthazar in section II, and to move on to the later novels in section III.

In discussing Donleavy's heroes from the perspective of the Double technique, sexual relationships and attitudes towards death reveal most clearly the hero's shift from aggressive independence to constipating sensibility. Dangerfield's violence would be impossible for the passive Clementine, just as Clementine's ever-dominant sensibility would spell death for Dangerfield. Individualizing the various heroes provides additional insight into the nature of all Donleavy's heroes.

I hasten to add that depicting differences among the heroes should not suggest a refutation of the heroes' characteristics as discussed previously. All remain heroes of sensibility; all seek independence. This chapter attempts a further focusing on the hero by distinguishing among them on the basis of their positions on a sensibility-independence spectrum. Using the Double as a frame of reference establishes the centrality of The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B and reconciles A Fairy Tale of New York, whose hero otherwise seems out of place in a linear progression.

I

When Donleavy introduces the minor characters O'Keefe and Bonniface as doubles for the heroes of The Ginger Man and A Singular Man, he "reveals not a disintegration of the personality but a reintegration, a recognition of the necessary balance between order and freedom."[6] These Doubles, like Poe's William Wilson, serve as "'guardian angel' seeking to anul the evil of the narrator" (Rosenfield, 321). In a larger sense, the double illuminates and helps to bring into focus the world's opposition to the hero of sensibility. The "balance between order and freedom" differs not at all from that uncomfortable balance between sensibility and independence which Donleavy's heroes must accept.

The virgin O'Keefe, frustrated because he cannot escape his world through a sexual relationship, contrasts with Dangerfield, who, no naif in sexual matters, finds temporary respite and escape in sex, enabling him to face his world with renewed strength. Sex makes Dangerfield master rather than victim. He rejects his role in his first love affair, when an aggressive girl friend fell on him, pinning him as if he were on a cross. He often reiterates his refusal to be Marion's victim and offers little response to Marion's claim that he does not love her. With Mary, Dangerfield refuses to be taken by force, finally righting their relationship when he tells her:

"'I'm going to kick the living shit out of you. Do you hear me'" (GM, 297).

Sex with Miss Frost and with Mary offers escape. Tenderly seducing Miss Frost, whom he sees as a lonely little girl needing to be held, makes Dangerfield master of the house. When she fills the role vacated by his wife, Dangerfield escapes the role of lonely outcast. He seals the house to establish a refuge from the world of Skullys without, an unfeeling world unaware "how much despair and yelling for love goes on in this shrouded house" (GM, 203). Though he has indeed seduced her to satisfy his own need, he is not entirely without sensibility, for he has, he feels, communed with a kindred spirit in a mutually satisfying relationship. "It was your willingness and interest which bound me captive, Lilly" (GM, 222-3), Dangerfield insists.

Similarly, Dangerfield schemes to seduce Chris, but again establishes a mutual relationship, for oral sex with Chris (see pp. 83-4), in contrast to Cornelius Christian's relationship with Fanny, is a mutual act. Despite his sensibility, despite the tenderness with which he handles each relationship, Dangerfield has seduced Chris, Mary, and Lilly Frost, and, having satisfied his own needs, he reasserts his independence by severing these relationships, heeding MacDoon's warning about "the hard demands made by woman" (GM, 257).

When Dangerfield warns Mary: "'There are a lot of bad people in this world'" (GM, 148), and when he shamefacedly plays the sinner to Mary, he very obviously shapes his own sensibility, and works on Mary's sensibility, as a method of seduction. Similarly, Dangerfield uses artifice on Miss Frost. Sensing that her loneliness matches his own, he contrives to sleep on a mattress on her bedroom floor, finally, and inevitably, shaping sensibility to achieve a seduction.

Dangerfield, more than any other Donleavy hero, carefully guards his independence. Having encumbered himself with a lasting responsibility by fathering one child, Dangerfield carefully limits later relationships. He holds Mary off, pleading: "'Easy, Mary. You don't want to have a baby, do you?'" (GM, 159). Contrasting with Samuel S, the experienced Dangerfield concurs with O'Keefe's assertion: "'I don't want kids. I don't want to be sucked down'" (GM, 188). A man of vitality must remain independent. Though he frequently shows great sensibility, Dangerfield reins his sensibility and aggressively maintains his independence throughout The Ginger Man.

Dangerfield considers death "that last and final chill, the one to be avoided at all costs" (GM, 165). When O'Keefe expresses indifference to death, Dangerfield quickly replies, "Nonsense" (GM, 206), for the ginger man must continue to live, he must not let the world beat him,

he must always bear up under his world's adversity. He warns O'Keefe that failure to fight results in the condition called "'extinct. To be avoided'" (GM, 215). Dangerfield dislikes the finality of having his casket nailed too tightly shut, for death eliminates all possibility of independence. Since the corpse cannot control its disposition, Dangerfield fears becoming an exhibit in a medical school morgue, a death without dignity.

Meanwhile, he joyfully follows passing funeral processions, mocking death, asserting his independence from death, celebrating his temporary victory over death while he may. He considers "death an obstacle to overcome till the good ripe years of lust, gluttony and sloth" (GM, 182). Death is acceptable only as a relief from satiety, when the world will have been forced to admit that Dangerfield has achieved independence, winning the contest by getting all he wants of everything he wants.

George Smith's manner, to be "silent and aloof" (SM, 109), contrasts to that of the violent Dangerfield, who offers to "kick the living shit out" of Mary when she attempts to dominate him. Smith cries as Sally leaves to get married, and he gently comforts a crying Miss Martin. Yet he can be both "silent and protective" (SM, 93) and, like Dangerfield, bent on seduction, for Smith's bringing Miss Martin to his isolated woodland cottage to dictate letters is a very superficial ruse indeed. Again like

Dangerfield, Smith refuses to be "further trampled upon" (SM, 44) by Sally, and he refuses to be dominated when Miss Martin will not share a car rug.

Smith's double, Bonniface, who summarizes his own situation with the simple pronouncement: "'I suffer'" (SM, 147), chastizes George Smith for "'the cold blank heart you have Smith'" (SM, 245). He encourages Smith to maintain his sensibility, advising him to get a dog, to "'be a true friend to animals'" (SM, 197). When Smith intends to seduce Miss Martin, Bonniface's apparition at the cottage window reminds him of his sensibility. Throughout, Bonniface's presence, or his imminent arrival, induces feelings of sensibility in a George Smith who is trying desperately to be as hard and cold as his world. After losing Sally, Smith, overcome by melancholy, goes to share Bonniface's misery (SM, 253), becoming one with Bonniface as a man dominated by sensibility.

Smith shares Dangerfield's views on children, whose presence constitutes a permanent threat to his independence. His own children form four strong links in the chain with which his estranged wife binds him. Children, the result of love, also put an end to love. Smith cannot remember the act of conception with Shirl because "four little freckled faces with constant throats and beating little fists drive it out of your mind" (SM, 82). He refers repeatedly to his harried neighbor's "eight

mistakes" (SM, 85), the eight children which have taken his independence, making him a slave to his job and to his household responsibilities. Yet, unlike Dangerfield, who tries to smother his daughter, Smith displays sensibility despite his hunger for independence. Contemplating his relationship with his children, he reminds the reader: "But make no mistake, I've got feelings" (SM, 58).

When his parents die, George Smith feels cut off; his sensibility increases. But when MacDoon asks Dangerfield if the telegram contains bad news, Dangerfield responds: "'Remains to be seen. My father's dead'" (GM, 259). The ginger man suspends judgment pending news of an inheritance.

His own death, however, is a different matter, for the ginger man must live. Smith accepts death's inevitability and constructs an imposing mausoleum to provide the dignity which Dangerfield also seeks. Smith, while he would avoid death, does not share Dangerfield's terror, planning instead to go "to the mortuary, change of socks, clean underwear. And evening clothes to sport through the longest night of all" (SM, 288).

Both O'Keefe and Bonniface are life's losers, failures who have been unable to cope with their worlds. While Dangerfield and Smith have not been completely victorious, neither have they acquiesced to society's demands. The heroes strive constantly, vigorously opposing their

world's hostility, vigorously maintaining their independence. Their characters are illuminated by contrast with the more passive, obsequious doubles, who depict the futility of life's struggle.

Unlike the first two Donleavy heroes, Samuel S does not seduce women. Older women--the Countess and his landlady--come to him, but he asserts his independence by refusing to be a paid lover. Sam asks his psychiatrist: "'How much longer is it before I'm cured. Before I can ask someone to marry me and have kids'" (S, 37). Sam's complaint: "'I'm so lonely'" (S, 39), dominates his personality, sustaining his sensibility when Dangerfield and Smith would assert their independence. Rather than seducing the easy college girl, Abigail, Sam refuses to have sex because he seeks the permanent relationship from which Dangerfield and Smith would like to extricate themselves. For the first two heroes, children terminate, or impinge upon, one's independence; Sam, however, feels "he should have planted a seed in Abigail" (S, 86).

Sam's passivity born of sensibility extends to other aspects of his daily life. While Dangerfield will wreck a bar and beat a cabman who overcharges him, and while Smith chokes the juvenile delinquent attempting to rob him and refuses to tip a bellhop, Sam passively accepts society's abuse. Shortchanged by a vendor, Sam says: "'You have cheated me. But if it makes you feel happier'" (S, 20),

allowing his sensibility, and the resultant passivity, to make him a victim.

Donleavy's first two heroes, Dangerfield and Smith, are ever-ready to maintain their independence; significantly, Smith has a lighter touch, eschewing Dangerfield's violence for circumvention of society's snares. Sam, the most passive of these three heroes, retains his sensibility in the face of serious threats to his independence; indeed, he would gladly relinquish a large measure of his independence for marriage and children. Without a stable family relationship, however, Sam refuses to be bought. He draws a line, but he clearly would relinquish more of his independence than would Dangerfield or Smith.

"God's mercy/ On the wild/ Ginger Man" (GM, 304), Dangerfield intones at the conclusion of The Ginger Man, proclaiming his defiant will, his opposition to his world. George Smith, though he has been defiant, hopes for a respite from his world's adversity, expecting, at the conclusion of A Singular Man, "Good news/ In the sweet/ By and By" (SM, 304). Samuel S, because of his passivity, is much more the victim. The world operates on him at the end of The Saddest Summer of Samuel S, where we find hum succumbing to a hostile environment, "Like/ A summer fly/ Waltzes out/ And wobbles/ In the winter" (S, 93).

II

In The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B, Donleavy offers his clearest and most comprehensive use of the Double. Donleavy uses Balthazar and Beefy, whose given name is also Balthazar, according to Rosenfield's criteria:

> The novelist who consciously or unconsciously exploits psychological Doubles may either juxtapose or duplicate two characters; the one representing the socially acceptable or conventional personality, the other externalizing the free, uninhibited, often criminal self" (Rosenfield, 314).

The uninhibited Beefy, a character much like the ginger man, contrasts with the passive Balthazar, who prefigures the hero of The Onion Eaters. Because Beefy is Donleavy's most completely developed double figure, The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B provides Donleavy's most complete representation of the two sides of his heroes' sensibility-independence conflict and thus becomes the central novel from which to study the evolution of Donleavy's hero.

Balthazar and Beefy share moments of sensibility when they bring supper to Boats, the feeble old butler, and when they smile at the small boy who interrupts Balthazar's wedding. Beefy's personality, however, most often contrasts with Balthazar's extreme sensibility, for these two characters occupy different ends of the sensibility-independence and violence-passivity spectrums. While Balthazar "'cannot be unkind'" (B, 134), Beefy learns to use sensibility to advantage:

"'I do believe Balthazar that I know how to butter up old ladies'" (B, 45). Beefy's guiding principle: "Never cry or show you are afraid" (B, 40), contrasts with Balthazar's being "'a sheltered little creature'" whom "'it is far too easy to seduce'" (B, 101). While Dangerfield defiantly justifies his wrecking the Dublin bar, Balthazar, though innocent, withdraws in embarrassment after his arrest: "'I thought people would think I was trying to look in their bedroom. And I suppose I just couldn't get myself to walk into class again'" (B, 166).

Having contracted lice from a prostitute, Balthazar seeks medical attention only to find himself a medical school exhibit. Despite his "crushed soul" (B, 281), Balthazar meekly stands naked before the students, following the professor's instructions until dismissed. Dangerfield, on the other hand, when caught with his fly open on a train, acts quickly to extricate himself from the embarrassing situation, and an unembarrassed Beefy nonchalantly doffs his clothes in a post-midnight visit to a laundromat, glibly explaining away his transgressions when the police confront him. Similarly, while George Smith refuses to tip a bellhop, the passive Balthazar "was so angered" at a waiter's looking down Millicent's dress that he "lavishly overtipped him" (B, 296). The passive Balthazar is distinguished by his inability to rebel or to reject what the world thrusts upon him.

While Dangerfield would extricate himself from the marital trap, Balthazar's acute sensibility plunges him into a catatonic state when he loses Fitzdare. He withdraws for a month to his mother's Paris apartment, "each day staring out across one's hands placed on top of knees" (B, 275). Later, he loses his voice when he learns of Fitzdare's death. Only with great difficulty could we picture Beefy or the ginger man thus immobilized by grief, for their forte is action. Unlike Dangerfield and Smith, whose children threaten their independence, Balthazar, like Samuel S, exhibits a paternal urge. He dreams of his and Bella's son, and while consulting with his lawyer, he is moved by the picture of the lawyer's wife, children, and dog--the family denied him by Fitzdare's death.

Dangerfield's selfishness and inattention finally alienate his wife, forcing Marion to leave him to avoid becoming his victim. While Marion leaves Dangerfield for self-preservation, Millicent leaves Balthazar out of selfishness and avarice. Dangerfield, for whom money is independence, admits to O'Keefe that he married Marion for her family's money. Similarly, Beefy pursues the Infanta for wealth. Donleavy reverses roles in Balthazar's marriage, however, for while Dangerfield and Beefy seek victims, the passive Balthazar accepts the victim's role, offering Millicent unlimited wealth while seeking only love in return.

Balthazar and Dangerfield react differently when

their wives leave them. Dangerfield pursues his seduction of Miss Frost begun long ago, moving from sharing a meal to sharing a bedroom to sharing a bed. Balthazar, in a time of particular loneliness, finds himself spontaneously drawn to Alphonsine the maid, primarily because she loved his son. Unlike the scheming Dangerfield, Balthazar's attempts at seduction are not premeditated and probably cannot be repeated, for Balthazar recognizes he "'may never drink enough again to have the courage to ask you'" (B, 354). Actually, Alphonsine seduces Balthazar. She observes: "'You are so flattering to me. Jacques does not flatter. He commands. Like a matador'" (B, 351). One cannot picture Balthazar as the hero of a Hemingway novel, and Alphonsine, accustomed to a "matador," might be attracted to Balthazar but cannot be seduced by him. She admits to having remained in the house because she wanted to do so. Indeed, Balthazar is seduced; Alphonsine takes the aggressor's role. When Alphonsine engages in oral sex, the passive Balthazar, unlike Dangerfield with Chris, is not a mutual participant.

The contrast between Beefy, who closely resembles Dangerfield and Smith, and Balthazar, whose extreme passivity is somewhat foreshadowed by Samuel S, is especially significant when they appear together. Beefy's treatment of women remains forever enigmatic to Balthazar, who finds it "so strange he treats them with such soft grace.

Between the threats of violence" (B, 188). Beefy gleefully plays the Gothic villain with the girls in his college room, threatening rape and tying Rebecca to the bed. Meanwhile, Balthazar longs for "a female I could call my own. To send tulips to" (B, 206). While dreaming of his etherealized Fitzdare, Balthazar encounters Beefy on the docks "'looking for sin'" (B, 183). When Beefy suggests: "'I shock you,'" Balthazar confirms their opposition, responding: "'You terrify me out of my wits, Beefy'" (B, 184).

While Beefy practices "defilements" on Rebecca, Breda tells Balthazar: "'You're a very funny person. Not like your friend'" (B, 207). Balthazar suggests: "'I don't want to cause you distress. It's no trouble for me to go. If it's difficult for you'" (B, 211), but Breda, who "'wanted to get you into bed. From the moment I clapped eyes on you back there in Dublin'" (B, 214), comforts him, holding his head to her breast as if he were a small boy. The aggressive Beefy smuggles willing women into his college rooms, but Breda must seduce the passive Balthazar after bringing him to her room. Beefy attacks Rebecca; Breda climbs on top of the submissive Balthazar.

Beefy brings Balthazar to a party, introducing him into a larger social world. Balthazar briefly "becomes" Beefy when he enters Beefy's world, leaving loneliness temporarily behind. Yet differences are always apparent. Beefy dances on the table, cutting into the mahogany with

his studded boots. While Beefy occupies center stage, a horrified Balthazar withdraws to a corner for a quiet talk with Fitzdare.

Like the ginger man, Beefy recognizes the:

> "Time to fight. Always been my strong point. To answer the call, take up the cudgel and wade into the enemy, laying about me with much what for" (B, 267).

He "won't be wiped out by the phenomenon of natural selection but shall triumph as the fittest with the fattest inheritance" (B, 310). Balthazar's spiritual kinship with Beefy, the only man who knows the number of his private phone, emanates from his appreciation of Beefy's aggressiveness and defiance, which complements Balthazar's passive nature. In a ginger man-like statement, Beefy asserts: "'The Almighty may have me by the balls now, but soon I will be tickling his'" (B, 376), and Balthazar proclaims: "He lights up one's whole lonely life. With his fighting flaming flesh and bone" (B, 291). Since Balthazar cannot be violent, his alter ego Beefy serves as protector and dream-fulfiller. Balthazar dreams of thrashing a chaperone at a college dance, but realizes he "can't even scare people in dreams" (B, 257). Beefy, therefore, will have an important function when Balthazar marries Fitzdare: "And Beefy best man. To punch anyone who says they know cause or just impediment why we two persons should not be joined together in holy matrimony" (B, 260).

After Millicent's departure, Beefy brings two prostitues to Balthazar's home. But while Beefy proclaims beatitudes and "gospel according to Beefy" (B, 366), dances on the table, and chases the giggling, screaming girls through the house, Balthazar remains "sitting in the corner of the candle lit dining room" (B, 367). Both Beefy and Balthazar have grown from little boys who "want/ A mommie/ And a daddy" (B, 368), but, while Beefy rages with the prostitutes, Balthazar is "an outsider in Beefy's games" (B, 367). The ginger man-like Beefy finds escape in sexual activity, while the passive Balthazar "turns away. To go and sit and wait in my study. So sobered by sadness. And too awfully shy to ever feel delight" (B, 368).

By contrasting him with Beefy, Donleavy shows us that Balthazar is no Dangerfield. When a cabman overcharges him, Dangerfield pulls the man from his cab, threatens to beat him, and finally leaves him to pay for drinks--and he never pays for the ride. In a similar situation, a taxi driver overcharges the passive Balthazar for:

> "This time of night. Been a lot of wear and tear on the tires. With the grain of cement lying the wrong way on the road if you understand me sir" (B, 207).

Balthazar passively concedes, replying simply: "'All right.'" When the driver solicitously adds: "'Now if it was another kind of road sir with the surface giving less trouble,'" Balthazar simply closes the interview with:

"'Goodbye driver'" (B, 207). The aggressive Dangerfield beats the swindler by paying nothing, George Smith refuses to be pressured into rendering a tip, Samuel S confronts the vendor but allows himself to be cheated, and the passive Balthazar pays the exorbitant sum, desiring only to avoid a confrontation. Balthazar's final position is neither defiance, nor hope, nor acceptance of the world's hostility, but the total inertia of passive melancholy: "It doth/ Make you/ Still" (B, 379).

Contrasting Balthazar's marriage to Millicent with George Smith's refusal to marry Miss Martin illustrates well the direction taken by Donleavy's hero. James Joyce's "The Boarding House" provides the prototype for both situations, in which a young woman and her mother pressure a man into marriage. Joyce's Mr. Doran, having had intercourse with his housekeeper's daughter, cannot resist social pressures, his own guilt feelings, and his own sensibility. Smith maintains his independence in the face of adversity, while Balthazar allows himself to become the innocent victim.

By visiting Ann Martin's mother, Smith displays greater sensibility than Dangerfield, who avoids Mary's father, or Beefy, who callously ignores Rebecca's wizened old father. Yet Smith, though he acts the gentleman, refuses to be pressured into marriage. Miss Martin's pregnancy, her mother assures him, has forever made her an

unmarriageable outcast, but, as Smith observes, "words say so little unless they're legal" (SM, 300). His drive for independence overshadows his sensibility, causing him to walk out of Miss Martin's life, immune to the pressure of personal obligation or social disgrace. "I would turn rat. I have excuses" (SM, 225), Smith says. Clearly, his "excuses" grow out of his primary need for independence.

Joyce's Mr. Doran, who has "violated" his young lady but has not impregnated her, stands midway between Smith and Balthazar. Doran will take the socially proper course; Smith places his own interests first; Balthazar succumbs to baseless pressure, for he has not so much as kissed Millicent. Balthazar's sensibility--his endeavor to maintain Millicent's reputation, his reluctance to prolong an uncomfortable situation, and his sense of social propriety and responsibility--overpowers his futile desire to maintain his independence.

Millicent in fact seduces Balthazar. "Why Balthazar, it would not be impossible for us to go to an hotel. One weekend along the river" (B, 296), Millicent tells him. Balthazar, almost too shy to accept an assignation, could never have engineered one. In the hotel room, Balthazar manages to touch Millicent only after a long internal struggle. When he does attempt to caress her neck, he clumsily breaks her necklace, then departs in embarrassment.

When he reaches the hotel lobby, the plot is clear,

for he finds Millicent's irate parents--whom Balthazar learns later know more of his financial affairs than he himself knows--accosting the hotel clerk, demanding their daughter. Balthazar chokes on his cigar, knowing he will not be able to extricate himself from this obvious trap. Confronting the irate mother, Balthazar babbles incoherently, finally admitting: "'I'm sorry. I don't know what I'm saying'" (B, 304). He escapes to the toilet, wondering: "How long I can hold out in here. Before Millicent's mother comes in and gets me" (B, 308). Significantly, Balthazar hides and attempts some verbal evasions, but, unlike George Smith, he neither takes a firm stand nor embarks on a decisive course of action. Smith's girl is pregnant, Doran's girl has been violated, but Balthazar laments: "No one has ever seen a kangaroo screw. Yet somehow I've been seen. And wasn't screwing" (B, 307). Yet Balthazar is the most completely and inextricably trapped of the three. Smith walks away. Doran makes his painful decision. But the guiltless Balthazar, too passive to assume his logical, proper role in this bizarre relationship, can only lament: "O my God. I am heartily sorry for myself" (B, 308).

III

Clayton Clementine, the hero of The Onion Eaters, proves even more passive than Balthazar; and his double,

Macfugger, proves more aggressive, more violent, and more anti-social--often in bizarre or grotesque manifestations--than either Dangerfield or Beefy. Always embarrassed by Macfugger's blatant, aggressive sexuality, Clementine is also dominated by Macfugger in social situations, for the passive hero cannot refuse the loud Macfugger's demands that he host a party and join a "war" against the insurgents. He suffers a "domination by the double or shadow; domination, it may be, by a personality . . . [he] has attempted to disown."[7]

Perhaps the double technique operates in another way here as well, for "one of the recurrent preoccupations of double literature is with the need to keep a suppressed self alive, though society may insist on annihilation" (Guerard, 2). Probably all Donleavy's heroes need to maintain this suppressed self, but none needs this so urgently as Clementine, Donleavy's most passive hero. Unlike his father, who attacked fellow motorists while waiting for traffic lights to change, the passive Clementine can be reduced to loneliness and extreme sensibility merely by the weather: "In this bereft clime resistance to intrusion lowered to nil" (OE, 22). Clementine weakly parodies Macfugger's martial preparations through the vicarious media of sport: "When summer comes, of course, I'll blast a few tennis balls off a battlement in my jock strap and tennis shorts" (OE, 20).

Rose's appearance on the parapet inspires Macfugger-like visions, as Clementine, entering the boathouse, fantasizes an aggressive sexual role: "Take Rose off the parapet, down a dram of donkey distillate, turn this vessel into a ship of shame" (OE, 43). Macfugger thus represents Clementine's suppressed self, for Clementine's sexuality remains latent. Though he fantasizes, Clementine acknowledges: "It has always embarrassed me to stand up in front of people with a bulge in one's trousers" (OE, 47). Indeed, when they finally have intercourse, Rose seduces Clementine, climbing into his bed uninvited.

Clementine's passivity may be best illustrated by studying situations in which he does not have sexual intercourse. When the naked Veronica falls, Clementine, unable to assume the aggressor's role, helps her to her own room rather than consummating the act. Later, he leaves a naked and willing Lady Macfugger when he goes to rescue Bligh; nor is he able to take advantage of his opportunity with Gloria. When Clementine does have intercourse, the women--Veronica and Rose--are always on top. When we expect him to be superior--with Lady Macfugger and Gloria--Lead Kindly Light takes his place. Even the maid Charlene must attack him--an especially significant situation because both Charlene and Clementine are acutely aware of their master-servant relationship.

The passive Clementine finds himself a wanderer in

a sexually aggressive, mad world. If doubled genitalia are, as Guerard suggests, one manifestation of doubling (1), Clementine, who is constantly embarrassed by having three testicles, has been cast uncomfortably between his own passivity and Macfugger's vulgar aggressive sexuality. This most passive of Donleavy's heroes has been thrust into Donleavy's most sexually-oriented--and often bizarrely sexually-oriented--world, a world whose every element seems to exude a sexuality which Clementine must find embarrassing. All of nature conspires to embarrass the misfit Clementine, who is shocked even by the donkey of which he observes: "Goodness, his darkish private part seems to wag expanded" (OE, 8).

Assuming ownership of Charnel Castle, Clementine unavoidably becomes a misfit in a quasi-medieval social structure centered on his double, Macfugger, whose blatant sexual actions and verbal ravings constantly embarrass the hero. When Clementine and Veronica arrive at Macfugger's castle, the host immediately asks Clementine: "'Now tell me did Veronica grab it on you'" (OE, 114). The passive Clementine, already badly shaken by Veronica's raving about penis sizes, including those of elephants she has seen, and by her grabbing his penis, responds weakly: "'I beg your pardon'" (OE, 114). Having been earlier embarrassed by Erconwald's exposing himself and by Veronica's catching him looking at Erconwald's "regenerative organs,"

Clementine had hoped to find a refuge at Macfugger's castle.

But Clementine finds no refuge, for he is immediately informed that Macfugger, who spent his childhood looking at geographic magazines and "'couldn't wait to get out of sight of my nanny to have a good beat off'" (OE, 86), is a voyeur who watches Veronica swim and an exhibitionist who urinates, and then has an erection, in the presence of male and female guests. When Veronica and Lady Macfugger kiss in greeting, Macfugger roars: "'Stop that this instant in my house you god damn lesbians'" (OE, 113). Clementine learns of Macfugger's crazy war against the "insurgents," an unexplained group which assaults landowners by sneaking onto their grounds to defecate on their lawns. His host reveals his sadism in his strategy:

> "We'll pick the buggers off, best time is when they're crouched for a crap. . . . Pair of balls dangling between the cheeks of the arse makes a marvellous target" (OE, 121).

That night, when Veronica appears naked on roller skates under a parasol, Clementine is assured that he is indeed in a mad world.

His women's aggressive sexuality bothers Clementine in subtle ways. In bed with Rose, Clementine cannot enjoy sex because:

> I'm in an awful state of worry. What if she's afflected with something not nice and catching. Which could send me down again only weeks after I've got up (OE, 68).

Similarly worried about Veronica, he earns a vigorous slap by asking if she has a communicable disease. He slaps her back, but when "her next blow nearly sent me out of the bed. I raised the bed covers up in front of my face." Veronica screams: "'Hit a woman would you,'" to which Clementine feebly replies: "'You hit me. Twice'" (OE, 126). For Donleavy's earlier heroes, sex provides a release; but as the hero's sensibility increases, sex is thrust upon him, making him the victim of an assault. Near the end of The Onion Eaters, Clementine can be victimized even by his maid: "Charlene charges. Tugging at my clothes. Tearing off her own. Crawling up on me pushing a breast smothering on my face" (OE, 300).

Lady Macfugger represents Clementine's only chance for a normal sexual relationship. Unlike the fetishist Gloria, who instructs Clementine to put on a bathing suit so they can "'have some fun'" (OE, 234), Lady Macfugger quietly gives the hero's "'hand a reassuring squeeze'" (OE, 199). Yet Lady Macfugger too must lead the passive Clementine every step of the way, instructing him in what to say and finally simply taking charge completely: "'Would you mind awfully. I can't find the entrance to your privates. Good Lord how many pairs of underwear have you got on'" (OE, 202).

Clementine, however, is distracted by Erconwald's alarm and cry, and though Lady Macfugger proclaims: "'I'm

all ready,'" Clementine reluctantly responds: "'I'm not'" (OE, 204). Finally, a distraught Clementine concedes: "'In the nervous state I'm in. I don't think I could manage a quick one'" (OE, 205). His mad world denies Clementine release in sex, adding instead to his frustrations. Reduced to frenzied shouting, Clementine, responding to Lady Macfugger's warning: "'Someone is going to hear you shouting,'" proclaims: "'It's my god damn castle.'" Clementine's brief outburt suggests an attempt to keep his suppressed self alive, for Lady Macfugger observes: "'You're behaving just like Jeffrey [Macfugger]'" (OE, 205).

Ultimately, the relationship parallels Balthazar's assignation with Millicent, for the passive Clementine, who has "missed piece after piece in the castle" (OE, 219), is though to have had intercourse with Lady Macfugger. He longs to tell "Nails" Macfugger that he was about to have intercourse with Lady Macfugger, desiring to cast himself even briefly as the seducer, as a man like his alter ego Macfugger.

Having gained courage by visiting Macfugger, Clementine returns home to confront Erconwald: "'Erconwald would you mind just cutting out the shit.'" Erconwald observes: "'Ah good person perchance you are aggrieved,'" to which Clementine replies: "'Yes I am'" (OE, 137). This brief exchange exhausts Clementine's wrath, however, and the encounter closes with Erconwald inviting Clementine

to dinner--at Clementine's castle. Accepting the invitation, Clementine leads Erconwald to the wine cellar, putting the stores at his disposal. Clementine cannot muster courage to halt the:

> "Constant cascade of whole meal bread, barmbrack, bacon, ham, eggs, and mineral waters in this castle which as soon as it arrives is descended upon by the inmates with an agility which one can only describe as disheartening" (OE, 176).

Though the consumption of food includes the theft of Clementine's breakfast while the maid's back is turned, the passive hero takes no action, merely lamenting that the situation is "disheartening."

Clementine's inability to act characterizes his role in any adverse situation. Like Balthazar cowering under the sheets while Breda fights her landlady, Clementine is unable to assist Veronica. When she discovers Evil defecating on her floor, Veronica calls for Clementine to "'come and strike him.'" Clementine, however, cannot physically assault anyone. Instead:

> Both hands go down. To pull up the sheets. In this land of ice cold sun. Called upon for courage. When all I want is calm (OE, 264).

Later, Clementine surrenders to the insurgents, inviting them to the ball rather than fighting. When a free-for-all erupts in Charnel Castle, Clementine simply watches, with the excuse that: "One's athlete's foot is playing havoc between my toes otherwise I'd sort them out in a hurry" (OE. 141).

Finally, Clementine, like Balthazar during Beefy's rampage at the end of Balthazar, is alone in the party crowd at Charnel Castle. "Cowering further in under the table" during the chaos ending the party, Clementine is "desperate for decorum" (OE, 329). He wonders at his own passivity: "Where do I keep my feelings. Of ferocious anger. While I make all my pleasant replies" (OE, 249). His concluding remark: "And/ The weary/ Wind/ Bewilders/ Me" (OE, 335), indicates that Clementine has moved beyond Balthazar's inertia to a state of bewilderment, the final level of alienation from a hostile world. Clementine lacks the rage of Dangerfield or the hopelessness of Balthazar; he cannot even understand why he does not fit into his world.

In Cornelius Christian, the hero of A Fairy Tale of New York, Donleavy presents his most complex use of the Double technique, for Cornelius, who often seems close to paranoia, embodies both aspects of the double personality. Christian displays the Gothic villain's "violent oscillation of evil deed and penitent mood" (Miyoshi, 5). He manifests the Double which Freud says lies within each of us, "a Double who may at any time assert its anti-social tendencies" (Rosenfield, 311). Christian's personality shifts from extreme passivity to an urgent need for independence; his sensibility matches Balthazar's or Clementine's, and his propensity towards violence rivals

Dangerfield's or Beefy's. Christian is a dual personality, an integration of two very different aspects of human nature: he displays the natural human ambivalence which Donleavy has been attempting to show us with his Doubles in each novel.

Balthazar and Clementine differ from earlier Donleavy heroes in their romanticizing death. Balthazar visits Uncle Edouard's grave often, remembering "the only man who loved me when I was a little boy" (B, 275); he dreams of building a monument for Bella and of bringing flowers to her grave. Of Donleavy's heroes, only Clementine feels grief at his mother's death. Later, as a young hospital patient, Clementine expresses his sensibility in his kinship with his fellow sufferers: "Two a.m. was the greatest stillness. When we all lay wondering who was next to go. Wheeled out under a sheet" (OE, 68). Later, a dream vision of men carrying a child's coffin keys feelings of extreme sensibility.

Christian, of course, sees death from many perspectives, embodying the various attitudes of all Donleavy's earlier heroes. He is sometimes sensitive, sometimes callously indifferent. Death may catalyze his sensibility, or it may provoke humor. As an employee of Vine's Funeral Home, Christian is immersed in death, whose reality, inevitability, humor, and potential for profit are not lost upon him.

Initially, Christian's mourning his recently-deceased wife dominates his personality. His sensibility remains dominant in his early efforts in Vine's Funeral Home, where he romanticizes the preparing of a corpse and fearfully contemplates his own death. Soon, however, Cornelius decides that life does not "matter at all. . . . Once you blast your head off. Or wait awhile. Alive" (FT, 149). He learns from Dr. Pedro that: "'Nothing can kill you except a long life'" (FT, 215). Like George Smith, Cornelius learns to accept death's inevitability, thinking: "With a bed and fireplace one of these mausoleums would make a good place to live" (FT, 48). He nonchalantly associates aspects of his everyday life with death, writing his phone number on the back of Vine's business card for his girl friend, whose name, appropriately, is Graves. Finally, he can be indifferent to death, remembering: "Miss Musk. . . . Got it up her. . . . In Vine's best coffin" (FT, 293).

Shortly after his wife's funeral, Cornelius dreams of Vine directing a football team of morticians in Grand Central Station. Soon, however, his association with Vine, who "earned my first pennies when I buried a friend's pet bird. . . . It's the only thing I ever wanted to do" (FT, 69), opens Cornelius' eyes to the business opportunity death represents. He indifferently climbs into a casket to pose for Vine's advertising, and he learns to interpret

life in terms of death, analyzing a panhandler's face in terms of what he and his fellow morticians could do with it.

Fanny Sourpuss's laughter when her limousine rams her dead husband's hearse, causing the enraged hearse driver to complain: "'You could have killed the deceased'" (FT, 42), opens Cornelius' eyes to the humorous aspect of death, and what more fertile field for the black humorist. When Vine's business expands, Cornelius suggests they "christen his new building. Embalm a body right out up on that girder" (FT, 149). He becomes very creative, conceiving of business gimmicks like "coffin for master and pet" (FT, 150), or possibly: "Repose that arse. Face down, two cheeks up. Nude deceased. Revolutionize the industry" (FT, 149). He envisions "Miss Musk prancing by in a satiny yellow drum majorette's uniform. Leading a Vine funeral" (FT, 223). Vine himself might serve as owner-host of a restaurant where diners can watch morticians embalming bodies below. Should an irate husband question Cornelius' innovative approach, complaining: "You stretched out my wife like she was in a beauty contest," Cornelius dreams of replying: "You bet sir. She's a winner. In a dead heat. Ha ha. You fuckpig you" (FT, 120).

Is Cornelius a man of sensibility? Is he a realist who accepts death's inevitability? Does he fear death or does he taunt it? Is he frightened and solemn, or does he live as enthusiastically as the ginger man, loving life

with all its struggles, despite its inevitable conclusion? The answer, of course, is that Cornelius Christian possesses all these characteristics. He embodies the several aspects of Donleavy's other characters, fusing the divergent natures of the Double into a composite existence. He would agree with Dr. Pedro's view of death: "'Sure it's funny. It's fatal too'" (FT, 299).

Cornelius' ambivalence extends to his sex life, for he is alternately a naive hero of sensibility and an aggressive seducer. These mixed feelings are shown in his adolescent relationship with Charlotte Graves:

> Charlotte had the biggest tits of any girl friend I ever had. Waited through three dates at the movies and three pineapple sodas before I reached and felt them. Then felt like a dirty rat (FT, 157).

As an adult, however, Cornelius baits Charlotte during the restaurant scene. His sensibility has disappeared when he demands: "'You do want me to leave. Do you. Tell me. Do you want me to leave'" (FT, 325). Clearly, Cornelius does not feel "like a dirty rat" in this situation, though, had he retained his earlier sensibility, he logically should.

But with Fanny, Cornelius' sensibility forces him to accommodate her every whim. He enjoys sex, of course, but Fanny is clearly the aggressor, and Cornelius is powerless to refuse her. En route to her husband's funeral, Fanny's "hand came searching for mine under the furry rug" (FT, 54). Soon after the funeral, Fanny tells Cornelius:

"'The second you walked up to me in the funeral parlor I wanted you'" (FT, 61), then insists: "'Kiss me. Kiss me for christ's sake'" (FT, 62), and finally threatens: "'I'll put in a complaint. If you don't take your cock out. Right now'" (FT, 63).

On another occasion, Fanny briefly allows Cornelius to assert himself. At her suggestion, he literally walks on her, suggesting that he has subjugated her. Finally, however, Fanny methodically strips Cornelius, who is again seduced (see pp. 90-93). Fanny regularly plays the aggressor in oral sex as well, and only infrequently is Cornelius a mutual participant. In a confrontation with Fanny, Cornelius suddenly cries; Fanny melts, and comforts him--again in a reversal of traditional roles.

With Miss Musk, however, a different Cornelius plays the aggressive seducer. He asks Miss Musk to hug him because: "'I'm an orphan. And just a pampering enfolding caress, sinless and pure often rids me of the glooms I sometimes feel'" (FT, 74). He finds himself: "So hoping Miss Musk would get down on her knees and take it in the mouth" (FT, 75-6), as Fanny so often insists upon doing. When Fanny's telephone call awakens a desperate need "to hold any warm quivering body" (FT, 115), Cornelius intensifies his seduction efforts, soon spending a night with Miss Musk in Vine's studio. In his relationship with Miss Musk, Cornelius reverses the role he plays with Fanny, who

insists: "'Come on. Cornelius. Let's go back to my place and screw'" (FT, 221).

Jean How, his boss' wife, seduces Christian as he sits "frozen. In an indelicate fear. Of someone with a gat. Or an impure desire. To make more moral mincemeat of me than I am already" (FT, 287). Cornelius says: "'Mrs. How. . . . I'm awfully attracted to you'" (FT, 288), assuring her: "'When I saw you at the door. A whole flood of honesty swept through me. I couldn't lie. Not to you'" (FT, 288). Yet when he seems to be seducing Jean, she takes the initiative, protesting: "'Don't make me sit here any longer waiting,'" and falls into his lap, moaning: "'Kiss me kiss me'" (FT, 290). If we briefly supposed Christian the seducer, our illusions are dispelled when Jean proclaims: "'I just can't help myself Cornelius because I want you'" (FT, 292).

Similarly, a black girl accosts Cornelius on the street, takes him to her apartment, takes his penis in her mouth, then climbs on top of him for intercourse (see pp. 304-05). A sex-starved woman lures Cornelius from a delicatessen to her apartment, attacks him, and offers him money as Cornelius "struggles to get the unusually strong arms from around one" (FT, 261). Significantly, Fanny, like the woman from the delicatessen, demands sex. Jean How and the black girl are on top of Cornelius during sex, as is Fanny in most cases. While Cornelius seems to

normally take the role of the seduced hero of sensibility, a very different Cornelius remembers: "I pinned her [Miss Musk] squirming under me" (FT, 312).

Even Fanny recognizes Cornelius' double nature, telling him: "'You can be such a snotty kid'" (FT, 268), castigating him because: "'Not once did you ever say you'd come with me. You dirty rat. Your god damn cold heart. Never once did you say you loved me'" (FT, 301), and observing wonderingly: "'I sometimes think you're such a cold hearted fish'" (FT, 258). Indeed, Cornelius often meets his world with gratuitous aggression. He scares a teacher on a field trip with his "child molester leer" (FT, 241), puts a chocolate purgative in his boss' coffee, starts a neighborhood feud by transplanting flowers in the night, and threatens his landlady's relatives, offering to "hand you sliced to the seagulls" (FT, 82). When someone else offers the rest room attendant a bigger tip, Cornelius longs to "slap along his mealy long sideburned jowls. Quake some humility into him" (FT, 86). He decides it: "Best to cut this big Willie bugger to pieces across the midsection" (FT, 48). He explodes at Mott's secretary, "this bitch sitting between me and survival" (FT, 177), causing Mott to observe: "'Under this gentle innocent exterior of yours you seem to throw your weight about'" (FT, 194).

Cornelius agrees with Dr. Pedro's dictum: "'Young

man, you should fight'" (FT, 299). He halts inane juvenile banter at a party with: "'Size this up.' . . . You bunch/ Of/ Rubes" (FT, 161). He warns Fanny's doorman: "'You could get killed'" (FT, 167). He lures an obnoxious pedestrian into a compromising position, then beats and threatens him because: "'You abused my privacy'" (FT, 165). In a scene reminiscent of the ginger man, he wreaks havoc on a bar and its patrons. Vine notes: "'Patrolmen say the place looked like a slaughter house'" (FT, 315). He adopts as his "most recent code. Do unto others as they would so treacherously delight to do unto you" (FT, 125).

There is a passive side to Cornelius as well. Planning to fight "big Willie," he finds himself "astonished at my bravery" (FT, 48). He looks at: "My hands Fanny Sourpuss said were so beautiful. When they're not tightening in these two knuckle hard justice givers" (FT, 125). He refuses a panhandler a dime, then bargains for his life's story, not because he is hard but because, as a man of sensibility, he is truly interested in his fellow man. Like Samuel S, he asks his newspaper customers: "How does it feel to cheat a child" (FT, 156). Vine tells Cornelius he has "never met anyone in my life before to whom I could say so much" (FT, 314), yet Cornelius' constant sensibility contrasts with Vine's sensibility, which is so often overshadowed by businesslike crudeness.

Occasionally, Cornelius becomes too passive to act. When Fanny attacks Jean How, Cornelius remains immobile: "As one does in troubled times. I looked at the architecture down the hall" (FT, 297). When Fanny takes him from the How's home, he collapses like a child: "Gathered in her arms. I sobbed" (FT, 298). Watching a woman driver smash parked cars fore and aft, Cornelius decides to: "Step deeper into my doorway. Like any good New Yorker" (FT, 149).

Cornelius Christian, Donleavy's most recent hero, is a man of contradictions. As a synthesis of the Double employed by Donleavy, he represents, perhaps, the culmination of a long effort to create a single, composite hero. Through Donleavy's novels, a progression from the vigorous hero bent on maintaining his independence to the increasingly passive hero of sensibility is apparent. If Christian does not fit a linear progression, he does not because he is both the passive hero of sensibility and the misfit who would live vigorously, though it be in opposition to his society. Cornelius is both as violent as Dangerfield or Beefy and as passive as Balthazar or Clementine.

Notes

[1]C. F. Keppler, The Literature of the Second Self (Tucson, Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 1972), p. 2.

[2]Masao Miyoshi, The Divided Self (New York: New York University Press, 1969), p. 5.

[3]Robert Rogers, The Double in Literature (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), p. 41.

[4]Donleavy's Doubles are many things; most importantly, they reflect, as Miyoshi suggests in his study of Nineteenth Century British literature, the complexities and contradictions of their world. Beyond this point, however, Donleavy's use of the Double is not very consistent, and thus I believe depicting the complexities of an age, and the use of the Double simply as a technique, to be Donleavy's purpose. Further psychological study of Donleavy's Doubles must be a psychologist's nightmare, for somewhere in a Donleavy novel one could justify any interpretation of the Double: Pursuer, Tempter, Twin Brother, Saviour, Vision of Horror, and the Beloved (Keppler's major categories). Further, "the homosexual disposition invariably underlying paranoia" (Rogers, 38) adds nothing to an understanding of Donleavy. When Donleavy wants to give us homosexuality, he gives us homosexuality. O'Keefe writes to Dangerfield that he is trying young boys, and a Donleavy hero can follow a seedy gentleman who promises "oral rapture." Donleavy is similarly unembarrassed in presenting sodomy and incest; thus psychological circumventions are not to the point.

[5]Ralph Tymms, Doubles in Literary Psychology (Cambridge: Bowes & Bowes, 1949), p. 29.

[6]Claire Rosenfield, "The Shadow Within: The Conscious and Unconscious Use of the Double." (Daedelus, Spring, 1967) rpt. in Albert Guerard, ed., Stories of the Double (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1967), p. 320.

[7]Albert J. Guerard, "Concepts of the Double," in Albert Guerard, ed., Stories of the Double (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1967), p. 8.

CHAPTER V

DONLEAVY'S BYRONIC HERO

I

In Donleavy's contemporary world, a hero of truly Byronic stature is impossible. George Smith's wife Shirl justifiably wonders "'where all the big strong men in this world have gone'" (SM, 62). George, like all Donleavy's heroes, recognizes his inability to finally and ultimately have the world on his own terms. He fears "crucifixion on the front pages" (SM, 31), realizing the inevitability of his becoming the victim of a society in which a man can have "pride in his firm. Until his services are no longer required" (SM, 45).

Even Dangerfield laments having no college degree, for failing to gain the degree represents a failure to succeed in an ordered society. In an almost naturalistic mode, he finds himself lost in "a world too big" (GM, 109). Similarly, one of Clementine's guests reminds us of Stephen Crane when he proclaims: "'Humanity ist adrift in an open boat'" (OE, 215). The passive Clementine, aware of his diminished status, laments: "What can you do but just play along. With the graft" (OE, 108). Thus Donleavy's attenuated version of the Byronic hero, though he shares

many aspects with Byron's original, reflects his contemporary world as well.

Indeed, Donleavy's hero of sensibility shares many characteristics with Byron's hero. Both writers place a lonely, nostalgic, introspective, world-weary hero, a man proudly and scornfully individualistic, a man alienated from his society but impenitently justifying his deviation from that society's standards, in the melancholy and unhappy sphere of the elegy. Yet neither Donleavy's hero nor Byron's hero ever loses his sensibility; each remains capable of love despite his involuntarily immersion in a gothic world. As melancholy becomes self-conscious, leading toward despair and madness, Donleavy's hero evolves in terms of the passivity characteristic of the Byronic hero.

Sensibility always characterizes a Donleavy hero: an "'unusual young man. He suffers from being overcourteous. . . . And not wanting to give any offense'" (FT, 203-04). He does not "'mind what you say about me but please don't insult my dog'" (OE, 111). Cornelius Christian bursts into tears in a confrontation with Fanny (FT, 128), and Balthazar does not "'know how to be unkind'" (B, 134). Even Dangerfield, Donleavy's most hard-boiled hero, insists that, though he did not cry at his father's death, he is not hard (GM, 266). Sensibility, "which the true Byronic hero is never without" (Thorslev, 180), characterizes all Donleavy's heroes, motivating, and accounting for, many specific

reactions and personality traits.

A Byronic melancholy results when Donleavy's hero faces a world in which hostility is superimposed on an elegiac setting. George Smith's residence in Merry Mansions is a deliberate irony, for Smith sees a "world of woe" (SM, 22). Like Bonniface, who melancholically proclaims: "'I suffer'" (SM, 147), Dangerfield cannot "trust this acute joy. Misery is my forte" (GM, 194); and Balthazar, who lives amidst "so much unhappiness and misunderstanding these days" (B, 237), contemplates "'what sorrows passed here. Long before one's own'" (B, 252). Dangerfield is "heartbroken and frightened" in a "world which has caused me so much distress and indignity" (GM, 165), a condition which Balthazar's fear that "the pain will never go away. You just go on and live. In the dust of desertion" (B, 284) indicates as man's permanent condition. Balthazar's "seizures of self-pity" (B, 265), Clementine's propensity to "quietly weep" (OE, 16), and Christian's wondering: "Why do I get/ Grief on a platter/ And pleasure on/ A spoon" (FT, 340) illustrate the hero's characteristic melancholy. George Smith asks Sally: "'Will you come to my funeral when I die'" (SM, 179), and Dangerfield realizes: "my dream was all lament" (GM, 303).

Seeing his fellow men as "a rogue's gallery of Calvinists" (GM, 67) begets specific unhappiness in a universally melancholy world. Balthazar goes "so often to

lone sad sheets" (B, 347); Christian sits at a piano "playing a sad melody" (FT, 55) and, as O'Rourke notes, comes into the gym "'looking sad'" (FT, 230). To survive, Donleavy's hero must shape inescapable sadness and melancholy to the joy in pain characteristic of the elegy and of the Age of Sensibility. Melancholia, nonetheless, burdens the hero, evoking Byronic disillusionment and world-weariness.

Like Manfred, who has "lived many years,/ Many long years,"[1] George Smith sees "no reason for the world to go on. With me in it" (SM, 204). He finds the "'whole world . . . horrible and mean'" (SM, 90), a place in which everyone is trying to blow out the light of hope (SM, 122). A weary Samuel S contemplates suicide (S, 32) and complains to his doctor that:

> "The whole world should have loved me right from babyhood, instead of sneaking out from underneath the thick green group of trees to shove me around in the clearing" (S, 36).

As Donleavy's hero wonderingly ponders his future, asking with a Byronic weariness: "Will I ever see time of largess" (GM, 73), a sense of futility permeates his attitude. "Get on where? Where to?" (GM, 60), Dangerfield wonders, disillusioned by his world and wearied by his inability to achieve worldly success on his own terms. Like Byron's Manfred in his mountain retreat, Dangerfield wishes to be in the mountains with a wall around him (GM, 113). Since a permanent refuge is unavailable, he seeks

temporary sanctuary in Chris's apartment, in the cellar with Mary, and in Tony Malarkey's catacombs; he would shut out the world with a big door (GM, 199). Like Bonniface, "'all he wants is just a few hours away from it all'" (SM, 121). Similarly, Clementine nostalgically remembers the hospital and how "peaceful it was back in that hospital bed slowly dying" (OE, 329).

Finally, Donleavy's hero mirrors Manfred's contemplation of death. Balthazar, like Byron's aristocrat, wishes to properly face death: "If only one knew how to die. And go away from this lonely friendless world" (B, 64). Later, he simply wishes to "hurry up to die. So little reason left to live. Take a ship across the Atlantic, jump down into the cold waves" (B, 343). And the ever-passive Clementine, feeling death not only as a relief but as, in Cornelius Christian's words, a personal visitant, quietly thinks:

> Death could come now. In the middle of this recital. Unnoticed. Take me to lay under sods beyond the granite walls. Out on the headlands. Waves white along the coast. The wild loneliness. And a moist wind wetting the soul (OE, 191).

Though he attempts to put a good face on his unhappiness and melancholy, Donleavy's disillusioned hero becomes world-weary, living in the same elegiac atmosphere which is a central feature of Byron's work.

Like Byron's hero, Donleavy's hero feels the

personal implications of the elegiac elements: Time, change, and death. Dangerfield weeps when he finds "all is closed for winter" (GM, 239), feeling Time's relentless, irreversible process. Death, inextricably associated with the passage of time, becomes the focal point of the hero's paranoia as mutability becomes a personal threat. The "grinning happy faces escorting the lately dead" (GM, 31) terrify Dangerfield, who fears "that last and final chill, the one to be avoided at all costs" (GM, 165).

The hero's concern focuses on the certainty of the personal application of death. Donleavy's hero is no casual observer, detached from life's problems. Dangerfield reminds Chris: "'I know about life. I'm in this too'" (GM, 247). George Smith, lamenting his recently-deceased parents, thinks: "They never had a chance. None of us have" (SM, 77).

Donleavy's hero projects his trauma onto a larger world. Dangerfield fearfully ascends the stairs to his room, "Where I always feel I'm going to get a bust in the head from some prowler. Violence is forever on my mind" (GM, 302). The worldly conglomerate, focusing on the hero as a victim, motivates Cornelius Christian's fears that "behind each parked car someone might be crouched like Hephzibah's jet black mother with a razor to cut off my balls" (FT, 338). Considering themselves potential victims in a hostile world, Donleavy's heroes find survival

impossible, for at the end of melancholy and world-weariness waits death, the most personal aspect of an impersonal world. Balthazar "dreams at night of eels with other eels' tails sticking out of their mouths in a whole great ocean of long grey devouring things waving up like seaweed to bite at one swimming and swimming" (B, 31), a Melvillian statement which Donleavy focuses on the individual hero. Significantly, Balthazar "dreams" his vision. Unlike Melville, whose devouring creatures, as the cook notes in Moby Dick, characterize our world generally, Donleavy focuses the attack on one victim, the hero, who, seeing his world aligned against him, falls victim to a Byronic loneliness.

Byron's stage directions repeatedly place Manfred alone in an isolated setting, and Childe Harold finds his native land "more lone than Eremite's sad cell."[2] Clementine's guests at Charnel Castle mirror Harold's coterie; both heroes recognize that:

> . . . none did love him--though to hall and bower
> He gather'd revellers from far and near,
> He knew them flatt'rers of the festal hour,
> The heartless parasites of present cheer
> ("Childe Harold," 11).

Indeed, Clementine's awareness of the "terrible loneliness out here" (OE, 11), the "loneliness creeping over the dark mountain" (OE, 207), characterizes all Donleavy's heroes, from the ginger man, who needs "people to talk to" (GM, 89), to George Smith, who sees his "lonesome self" (SM, 44)

leading "a lonely life" (SM, 103) in "the dark abyss" (SM, 216), to Samuel S, who desperately attempts to escape loneliness through marriage. Balthazar's "lonely Sunday evenings" (B, 119), after which he "returned lonely" (B, 120) to college, reach a conclusion when, "all alone" (B, 368), he watches Beefy caper with the prostitutes. Like Balthazar, Clementine remains lonely in a crowd, "climbing lonely to the rampart" (OE, 323) while his multitudinous guests frolic below. Cornelius Christian remembers: "'All through my childhood. I felt nobody liked me'" (FT, 289), and recognizes that the city, unlike the city of his childhood, "belongs now to Vine" (FT, 41).

In his loneliness, the hero looks within. Like Manfred, whose "eyes but close/ To look within" ("Manfred," 309), Clementine is aware of the "secluded feelings spirited away within me" (OE, 48). On the eve of his law examination, Dangerfield sees a "massive vista of my total ignorance" (GM, 67), and Balthazar, spurning outside advice, has installed a private phone whose number is known only to his alter-ego Beefy.

For Donleavy's hero, introspection represents both a rejection of the world about him and a quest for independence; the result is a self-imposed alienation from his world in a Byronic spirit of "joyless reverie" ("Childe Harold," 10). But Byron holds his hero back from the precipice of humility and heartbreak, tempering the hero's

sensibility with a realistic appraisal of his gothic world. Like the Byronic hero, Clementine, who hovers near death due to acute boredom, cannot die of a broken heart, despite his world-weariness. Though his sensibility pushes him towards death, Donleavy's hero is condemned to live.

Like the Byronic hero, Donleavy's hero consciously and deliberately alienates himself from society. Because an indifferent world "never knows you're so lonely" (B, 320), Donleavy's hero of sensibility must attempt to get outside that world. Smith retreats to his "own little lonely world" (SM, 154), paradoxically feeling neglected while seeking solitude. Smith succeeds to a degree, for Sally observes that: "while the rest of us are skidding around, there you are in your own little world" (SM, 241).

Dangerfield sees both himself and O'Keefe as victims--O'Keefe as "loose, lost, and sinned upon" (GM, 41), himself as "martyred and mussed, feeble and fussed, heart and soul covered in cement" (GM, 44). Certainly a man of extreme sensibility cannot fit into a society which victimizes him; thus Dangerfield becomes "the eternal tourist" (GM, 72), plodding wearily but cautiously through his world. Like Samuel S, Dangerfield might wonder: "Who's the doctor, who's the patient" (S, 78) in his crazy world.

Balthazar's alienation is apparent even to his alter-ego Beefy, who observes: "'Ah Balthazar you look so

untouched by life'" (B, 290). The passive Balthazar, who "never wanted to be sent away" (B, 239), revels in being part of a group of students at a party. Alienation soon follows, for Balthazar blunders through a garden en route back to the college. The comic garden scene (see B, pp. 136 ff.) suggests perhaps that Balthazar is an outsider in Paradise; certainly he has no social status or political base with which to counter the allegations of the wealthy, socially-prominent matron, who accuses him of crimes far beyond his simple trespassing.

While the traditional Hero of Sensibility conforms to his society's value system, Donleavy's hero, alienated from his society, seeks his own code. He mirrors Byron's Childe Harold, who calls "Convention" the "dwarfish demon" who beguiles men's brains ("Childe Harold," 18), forcing them to "share Subjection's woes" ("Childe Harold," 19). Although Dangerfield needs to join society--thus rejecting for himself Tony Malarkey's permanent isolation in the catacombs--Dangerfield seeks respectability on his own terms: he will not be trapped by society's sophistries but will, like Childe Harold:

> ". . . slowly tear him the witching scene,
> Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
> Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot"
> ("Childe Harold," 46).

Dangerfield, who considers himself "an aristorcrat wherever I flee" (GM, 169), would not quarrel with Beefy's "'advice

in life . . . [:] to proceed in a blaze of contradictory remarks, and send one's trustees each year a valentine'" (B, 195). "'Theft is only in the heart'" (GM, 96), Dangerfield notes, shedding his sensibility to make his own rules: "The tougher things get, I become more immune" (GM, 98). The "world was made for me" (GM, 95), Dangerfield insists. He rejects the idea of college exams because he allows no one else to judge him.

Samuel S likewise considers himself the center of his own Universe. In his reveries, he sees himself as God, making rules and forcing others to adhere to his rules (S, 81). Similarly, George Smith is "self-contained" (SM, 53), and even the passive Clementine rebels at society's attempt to make him "solemnly swear I deserve what the whole god damn bunch of you are trying to do to me" (OE, 330), thus like Byron's hero, justifying his deviation from set social standards.

Beefy's most trying moment results from his struggle to marry--that is, to accept society's set values--a struggle which causes "the beads of sweat [to] freeze on the brow and drop with a metallic clink to roll into a lonely corner of one's coffin room" (B, 347). Characteristically, only his own rules apply. No matter what society's verdict in any given situation, Beefy assures Balthazar that "'in spirit and in heart, yes. We are [innocent]'" (B, 198). All Donleavy's heroes would echo

Dangerfield's Byronic advice to O'Keefe that he should keep his own values, that he not let society impose values on him (GM, 193).

The proud Byronic hero upholds his own values with a defiant scorn for his fellow men. "Patience," Byron's Manfred notes, is a word "made for brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey" ("Manfred," 319), and he will "be the slave of those who served me--Never!" ("Manfred," 325). Despite society's pressure, "I kneel not" ("Manfred," 329), Manfred declares, "I disdain'd to mingle with/ A herd, though to be leader--and of wolves./ The lion is alone, and so am I" ("Manfred," 337). Similarly, Donleavy's contemporary Byronic hero proudly and defiantly holds himself aloof from a society which he disdains.

Dangerfield "cannot tolerate bad table manners" (GM, 130); he will leave a party to "'drink with a better class of people'" (GM, 146). Always an aristocrat in his own mind, Dangerfield scorns dirty shopkeepers, insolent bartenders, and cheating carriage drivers. His threatening the driver with his dictum: "'Show me some love or I'll strangle you'" (GM, 149), demonstrates Dangerfield's conflict between his scorn for mankind as he finds it and his desire to shape a society to which he can comfortably belong. Faced with this irreconcilable paradox, Dangerfield remains a "desperate bastard" (GM, 120) who vows to "keep up the pace" (GM, 113).

Though he would prefer to be compassionate, George Smith "went out in the world ruthlessly" (SM, 74). He fantasizes himself as "a child king who owned all the land" (SM, 86), striking the pose of Byron's aristocrat while lamenting that "nobody wants to keep in line these days. All out for special attention" (SM, 69). Consequently, Smith has mercy "'just for myself'" (SM, 265). His mausoleum is a last answer to his wife's greed and insults--and a defiant answer to a hostile world. Men passing the cemetery will stop to see his mausoleum: the world will stop for him after he is dead, if not while he is alive. George Smith thus prepares to have the last laugh. In his will, George leaves a final message for his fellow men: "First off I should like to rear up and haunt all those who tried to screw me up while living" (SM, 100).

Beefy--as previously suggested a throwback to Dangerfield--proudly refuses to clerk. He insists that he "won't be wiped out by the phenomenon of natural selection but shall triumph as the fittest with the fattest inheritance" (B, 310). He will defend against enemies "by all means at hand. And do the indecent thing to do, if possible" (B, 64). Beefy's defiance "lights up one's whole lonely life" (B, 291), the passive Balthazar observes.

Like Dangerfield, Balthazar laments mankind's "bad manners everywhere" (B, 120). Though he shares Dangerfield's and Beefy's scorn for mankind, Balthazar lacks

their aggressive defiance; as a consequence, he "'sinks promptly in a vast sea of human betrayal'" (B, 196). Similarly, the passive Clementine, though schooled by his aunt to "count on being surrounded by crass stupidity for most of your life" and to "take no nonsense from inferiors and less from superiors" (OE, 67), shares Balthazar's inability to act. Nonetheless, he can quietly strike a Byronic pose, finding it "good to sit for a change in one's own castle eating the lion's share" (OE, 296).

A more aggressive Cornelius Christian quiets inane juvenile banter at a party with his loudly defiant "You bunch/ Of/ Rubes" (FT, 161). Recoiling at abuse of his family--perhaps with a Byronic pretension to aristocratic status--Christian threatens to "'belt you [the lawyer] out the window of this courtroom in a second, you sneaky little god damn fart'" (FT, 211). In a restaurant, he longs to "slam this place into respect, submission and christendom" (FT, 326), finally scorning the established order of things with a defiant "shoot me. I can't pay the bill" (FT, 340). Like Donleavy's earlier heroes, Christian holds himself aloof from society's rules and from society's pressures. Donleavy's Byronic hero defies his society, scorns his fellow men, and proudly maintains his own values in a hostile world.

When maintaining his own values forces him to counter his society, Donleavy's hero shows a Byronic

remorse without a concomitant repentance--a link to the earlier Gothic villain--yet both Byron's hero and Donleavy's hero remain sympathetic because their sins are deviations from their own standards, not from society's standards. Thus the hero's impenitent remorse is a logical consequence of his alienation from his society and his simultaneous defiant justification of his own set of values.

Dangerfield and Beefy offer the most striking examples of Byronic impenitent remorse. Dangerfield devastates a Dublin bar because he feels stripped of his dignity by the bartender's insults. He attacks the bar patrons only if they attempt to control him, for, if they cannot see his need for dignity, if they would impose other standards upon him, they align themselves against him. Reading the newspaper account of his attempts to maintain his own values, Dangerfield calls the whole situation fantastically undesirable (GM, 112); yet his actions, he feels, were necessitated by his society's attempt to subjugate him. Similarly motivated, Beefy does not wish to be expelled either from the boarding school of his childhood or from college; yet Beefy leaves without repentance, for he will stay only on his own terms. Donleavy, like Byron, creates a hero more sinned against than sinning, a hero desperately seeking to reshape his world so that he can become a part of it, refusing to compromise his own values, and thus regretting his alienation from society

while impenitently insisting upon the necessity of that alienation.

In addition to gaining sympathy through his voluntary alienation, Donleavy's hero wins the reader with his great sensibility, especially through his sensibility toward women. Despite his hostile world's adversity, the Byronic hero remains always capable of love. Only the hours of young love "redeem Life's years of ill" ("Childe Harold," 61), and, though Childe Harold reaches a satiety of passion, still, Byron tells us, "Nor was all love shut from him" (80). Like Harold, Donleavy's hero often appears a god of love, a man to whom women are attracted. Donleavy's hero, like Byron's, reciprocates this love. As Manfred dreams of his lost Astarte, Balthazar longs for Fitzdare, descending to a near catatonic state first at the termination of their engagement and again at her death.

Donleavy's heroes have both a capacity for love and a need for love. Balthazar intends to "look for love. And take part in college life" (B, 116). The priority given love signifies the hero's touchstone as he seeks a society to which he can belong. When a lonely Clementine meets Veronica in the capital, he gratefully observes that: "If the world is empty. The smile of another fills it up" (OE, 242). The child Balthazar offers Bella security in his arms, and Cornelius Christian asks Miss Musk to hug him. Later Christian feels his "heart warmed by the

first man glad to see me" (FT, 100), responding to the casual attention of a paid attendant at an Athletic Club. Even the often-callous Ginger Man wants his child to have a good image of him.

Dangerfield feels love for Miss Frost, seeing her as a little girl needing to be held (GM, 199). When he finds Miss Frost "near to tears," Dangerfield is "concerned and loving" (GM, 217); he projects his feelings for Miss Frost onto all women, lamenting their loneliness. Recalling past sins, Dangerfield fears he was "false-hearted" in taking advantage of the sensibility of a girl met casually in a Baltimore bar, and, when he thinks he has inherited his father's money, he vows not to be bitter toward Marion. He gives an old woman beggar a coin, and even sings "O Danny Boy" for her. Similarly, we see George Smith "looking everywhere for love" (SM, 303), trying to protect Miss Martin, comforting her when she cries, and offering to "peel a grape for her [Sally] to crush twixt those teeth" (SM, 239).

The passive Balthazar has "no motives low" (B, 128) as he seeks a conventional marriage with Miss Fitzdare; he hopes to "give you [Fitzdare] joy without pain or heartbreak" (B, 239). He offers to leave Breda's room, telling her: "'I don't want to cause you distress'" (B, 211). Balthazar is finally a Juanesque hero, seduced both by Breda, who "'wanted to get you into bed'" (B, 214), and

by Fitzdare, who "planned to get you just like this" (B, 258). He remains true to Fitzdare, whom he married "long ago in my heart" (B, 338), yet, having married Millicent, he springs to her defense when the hotel keeper suspects them of being unmarried, warning him to "'take more care than to risk slandering callers at your guesthouse'" (B, 312).

Clementine, another Juanesque hero, responds when women take the initiative. Rose, who "'got an itch first I set eyes on you'" (OE, 68), climbs into his bed. Veronica, who announces: "'I so want to corrupt you'" (OE, 126), gives him "hardly a second's rest through the night" (OE, 250), and "Charlene charges. Tugging at my clothes. Tearing off her own" (OE, 300).

As a young adult, Christian is usually a Juanesque hero, seduced by the women in his life. Fanny, who acknowledges: "'The second you walked up to me in the funeral parlor I wanted you'" (FT, 61), remains the aggressor throughout their relationship, stripping Christian and practicing oral sex on him, sometimes despite his objections. Significantly, both Hephzibah and Jean How are on top of Christian during sex.

The movement of Donleavy's hero toward the Don Juan of Byron reflects, in terms of the hero's sensibility, the overall evolution of Donleavy's Byronic hero. As his Byronic melancholy becomes self-conscious, leading first

to introspection as an intermediate step, Donleavy's hero tends toward despair and madness, manifested aggressively in Dangerfield's violent explosions and passively in Balthazar's losing his voice. Surveying the entire spectrum of Donleavy's heroes, a movement toward increased passivity, one hallmark of Byron's hero, becomes apparent.

Donleavy's hero, like Byron's hero, sees the tragedy of self-assertion in an alien universe. He longs to mingle with his world, but he cannot; he tries to remain aloof, but his crazy world will not allow him to do so. Donleavy's heroes, like Manfred, suffer to no purpose. As Byron himself notes:

> Manfred merely muses and suffers from the beginning to the end. His distresses are the same at the opening of the scene and at its closing, and the temper in which they are borne is the same.[3]

Donleavy's heroes have a sense of futility, sharing Childe Harold's view that "The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost" ("Childe Harold," 47).

II

Discussing Donleavy's hero as a contemporary Byronic hero provides a fitting conclusion to this study, because both Byron and Donleavy draw heavily from the same Eighteenth Century hero of sensibility, fitting him to their own ages, and both search out those gothic horrors most significant to their own times. Of greatest importance,

both Byron and Donleavy present a hero unable to accept the world in which he finds himself. Both heroes are outcasts, alienated from a society inimical to their sensitive characters.

Like the Byronic hero, Donleavy's hero refuses to accommodate his gothic society and is often forced into a comic role as he struggles desperately to maintain his independence. Playing off his sensibility against his need for independence dominates the Donleavian hero's response to his world; if his response is comic, it is only because of the ludicrous incongruities of his tragic situation.

Lacking the economic and social position of Byron's aristocrat, Donleavy's contemporary hero struggles for physical as well as for spiritual survival. While Balthazar and Smith are somewhat independent financially, their money does not give them status but rather makes them the prey of an acquisitive society. No matter how Donleavy proportions his hero's characteristics, his hero remains the victim in a gothic world. Donleavy's hero feels a link with the elegiac settings which Donleavy creates, and he evolves through the novels as the elegiac, and gothic, atmosphere affects his sensibility. By depicting his heroes with varying degrees of sensibility, and by varying the level of gothic adversity facing his heroes, Donleavy explores a multitude of possibilities, or impossibilities,

for facing one's world.

Donleavy's hero yearns for aristocratic status; he wants to join his society, assuming what he considers his rightful place in society's highest echelon. He remains, however, an outcast and a victim, reacting with Byronic scorn to the hostility of his fellow men, maintaining his independence--because survival comes first--though doing so necessitates acting contrary to the demands of his sensibility. Finally, the struggle proves futile. Donleavy's hero, like Byron's, ends as he started. If he can never win, he can, by fiercely and constantly struggling, at least prevent stumbling.

But he
Can do
No
More.

Notes

[1]Lord Byron (George Gordon), "Manfred," in Byron's Poems, ed. V. De Sola Pinto, rev. ed., vol. 2 (New York: Dutton, 1963), p. 320. Subsequent references to "Manfred" appear in the text.

[2]Lord Byron (George Gordon), "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," in Byron's Poems, ed. V. De Sola Pinto, rev. ed., vol. 2 (New York: Dutton, 1963), p. 10. Subsequent references to "Childe Harold" appear in the text.

[3]Lord Byron (George Gordon), Letter to Mr. Murray dated 9th April 1817, in Byron's Poems, ed. V. De Sola Pinto, rev. ed., vol. 2 (New York: Dutton, 1963), p. 306.

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