

2017

# Everybody's Story: Gertrude Stein's Career as a Nexus Connecting Writers and Painters in Bohemian Paris

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EVERYBODY'S STORY: GERTRUDE STEIN'S CAREER AS A NEXUS  
CONNECTING WRITERS AND PAINTERS IN BOHEMIAN PARIS

By Elizabeth Frances Milam

A thesis submitted to the faculty of the University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements of the Sally Barksdale Honors College

Oxford, May 2017

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## ABSTRACT

### ELIZABETH FRANCES MILAM: EVERYBODY'S STORY: GERTRUDE STEIN'S CAREER AS A NEXUS CONNECTING WRITERS AND PAINTERS IN BOHEMIAN PARIS

Advisor: Elizabeth Spencer

My thesis seeks to question how the combination of Gertrude Stein, Paris, and the time period before, during, and after The Great War conflated to create the Lost Generation and affected the work of Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway. Five different sections focus on: the background of Stein and how her understanding of expression came into existence, Paris and the unique environment it provided for experimentation at the beginning of the twentieth century (and how that compared to the environment found in America), Modernism existing in Paris prior to World War One, the mass culture of militarization in World War One and the effect on the subjective perspective, and post-war Paris, Stein, and the Lost Generation.

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## INTRODUCTION:

The destruction caused by The Great War left behind a gaping chasm between the pre-war worldview and the dark reality left after the war. Civilization's inability to process this shift through traditional approaches to art and literature catalyzed a demand for increasingly more conceptual modes of interpretation that could more accurately express the world's fractured reality. Gertrude Stein's belief in emotional and mental connection being prioritized over literal meaning merged perfectly with the shift towards subjective expression. The fragmented worldview left in the wake of the war, combined with the experimentation already occurring in Paris, created a mecca of expression for writers and artists. According to Stephen Sawyer in "Becoming Americans: Transatlantic Politics and Culture between the World Wars," the city of Paris had a unique reaction to the war:

"Indeed, the city of Paris did not sit neatly in its French box during these tumultuous years: far from a neatly yoked Russian doll, quietly nestled inside the large scales of the nation. Paris was something more like the young Lydia Sokolova who danced in every direction on stage in spite of the audience's cries on May 29, 1913. Paris vibrated as it sat at the intersection of multiple scales of the competing nations and empires structuring political and cultural life across the globe" (Sawyer 3).

Paris' unique reception of experimentation, rooted in the foundation built by Modernist visionaries such as Stein provided an ideal breeding ground for the

subjective voice standing in opposition to consumerism, industrialization, and militarization. Gertrude Stein inspired the intermingling of artistic forces that otherwise might not have intersected. In this way, Stein acted as a nexus for those artists and writers striving to produce forms of expression that better reflected the fractured environment left in the wake of The Great War.

## GERTRUDE STEIN'S FORMATIVE YEARS

“I wanted to find out if you could make a history of the whole world, if you could know the whole life history of everyone in the world, their slight resemblance and lack of resemblances. I made enormous charts, and I tried to carry these charts out” Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans*, page 50

Throughout Gertrude Stein's somewhat isolated and tumultuous childhood, two aspects remained consistent: her memories from living a year in France and her habit of escaping reality through reading. Although Stein much preferred to learn independently throughout her younger years, she attended Radcliffe College (the sister college to Harvard) where she met her mentor William James. James encouraged Stein to continue her education in psychology at Johns Hopkins Medical School and Stein heeded this advice. Although she did not graduate or want to practice medicine, her education caused her to realize many of the interests that significantly affected her career and understanding of creation. Malcolm Cowley argues in “Gertrude Stein, Writer or Word Scientist?” that Stein's formal education in the field of psychology heavily influenced her career and writing: “Gertrude Stein, even more than James Joyce, was a writer who carried the scientific spirit and experimental method into her artistic perspective”(147). In order to understand Stein's experimental approach to creation, observation of her childhood and education is imperative.

In 1874, Gertrude Stein was born to Daniel and Amelia Stein in Pennsylvania. A year after Stein's birth, the family moved to Austria to introduce a branch of their



wholesale textile business in Vienna. The family relocated once more in 1878 to Passy, France (which later became the Sixth Arrondissement of Paris). The family lived in France for two years before moving to Oakland, California (Stendhal 2). By the time Stein turned five she had been exposed to three languages: German, French, and English. Stein identified most closely with English, however. When her family moved back to the United States and utilized English more often, Gertrude wrote in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas of Alice B. Toklas* that: “her emotions finally began to feel like themselves” (82). Although the Steins lived in France when Gertrude was four and five years old, the country left a lasting impression on Gertrude Stein. Throughout her childhood, Stein felt that she also was a citizen of France. Stein’s early realization of dual national identity came naturally to her as a child and she assumed it to be true of all writers. She writes in *Paris, France*: “That is why writers have two countries, the one where they belong and the one in which they live really. The second one is romantic, it is separate from themselves, it is not real but it is really there” (2). France existed in an idealized and romanticized form throughout Stein’s childhood, perhaps planting the seed of interest in the country that led her to permanent residence in the country. Her time there came up incessantly throughout her childhood: “France was not daily, it just came up again and again. It came up in my mother’s clothes and the gloves and the sealskin caps and muffins and the boxes they came in” (*Paris, France* 3).

Stein’s interest in France also led to her discover her love of pictures. When Stein was twelve years old and had just finished reading Honoré de Balzac’s *Eugenie Grandet*, she came across Millet’s “Man With The Hoe” and was filled with a deep

admiration for both photography and the French country-side. Stein's exposure to "Man with the Hoe" marked not only the first work she appreciated aesthetically, but also the initial emotional and mental response she felt to a work. Stein states in *Paris, France* of this moment: "'The Man With The Hoe' made it different, it made it ground and not country, and France has been that to me ever since, France is made of ground, of earth" (6). This photograph piqued an interest in Stein for both the country of France and images that create nuanced emotion.

As did her love and fascination of France, Stein's interest in reading and writing developed while she was very young. She states in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*: "From her eighth year when she absorbed Shakespeare to her fifteenth year when she read Clarissa Harlowe, Fielding, and Smollett etcetera and used to wonder lest in a few years she would have read everything and there would be nothing unread" (82). Her love of reading was more than a passion; it was an obsession that offered her an escape from reality.

Stein's tumultuous home life provided little stability growing up. In 1885, Stein's mother, Amelia Stein, was diagnosed with cancer. Her father, Daniel Stein, became increasingly detached and distant, unable to cope with the pain of watching his wife become increasingly more ill (Stendhal 3). Perhaps as a result of her father's distance, processing her emotions through reading came more naturally to Stein than in real life: "I liked to cry not in real life but in books in real life there was nothing to cry about but in books there was so much to cry about" (*Wars I Have Seen* 24). Stein could discover the world through reading and distract herself from what was happening around her: "Evolution was all over my childhood, walks abroad with

an evolutionist and the world was full of evolution, biological and botanical evolution, with music as a background for reality and books as reality” (24). Stein’s affinity for books and reading did not just enhance her childhood; it created the reality of her childhood.

Rather than receiving a formal education, Stein was educated by a private tutor who gave her free reign to explore the subjects she found most stimulating. Because her obsessive reading habits were not channeled by a formal curriculum, Stein poured energy into what deeply interested her (*Autobiography* 82-83). When she was sixteen, Stein’s mother died and she and her brother Leo were forced to attend public school for a year. Stein detested this more structured, rigid style of learning and she dropped out soon after she enrolled. She continued her education through reading and spent a majority of her time working her way through the many San Francisco bookstores (Stendhal 16). The fluidity of Stein’s early learning style perpetuated the open-mindedness and curiosity she displayed throughout her career.

After her father died in 1891, Stein and her sister, Bertha, moved from California to Baltimore to live with their grandparents. Stein soon enrolled in Radcliffe College, where she met one of her most influential mentors, the professor William James. James recognized her strength for human understanding immediately and advised her to continue her education by studying either psychology or philosophy after graduation. James recognized Stein possessed a unique manner of thinking and encouraged her to remain devoted to retaining her open mind (*Autobiography* 88). In an interview that took place a few months before her death,

Stein quoted James' words: "Never reject anything. Nothing has been proved. If you reject anything, this is the beginning of the end as an intellectual" (Stendhal 23).

While she was studying under William James, Stein formulated her understanding of human personality. Her desire to create a book encapsulating all types of human personalities led to her realization that understanding people's personalities relied on the assumption of subjectivity- that what we understand to be personality is really just an automatic, habitual, and repetitive response to outside stimuli. Stein referred to this phenomenon as "consciousness without memory," which she described as a "state that is immediate and cannot be extended from one moment to the next" (Will 22). The notion that people's personalities and perspectives result from a momentary combination of setting, external stimuli, with their own automatic and habitual manner of processing life around them through art implies that their work would have to be subjective. To some degree, every aspect of human perspective is individualized (23). These revelations regarding how humans process their realities later manifested in Stein's interest in Cubism and other forms of conceptual representation.

Heeding James' advice to continue studying psychology, Stein enrolled in John Hopkins Medical School. Stein's passion for individuals and their stories and motivations, which created countless connections and relationships throughout her career, began during her time at Johns Hopkins. Stein wrote repeatedly that she enjoyed learning about her classmates more than she did the actual study of medicine. In *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, she states through Alice's perspective: "At Johns Hopkins, she always liked knowing a lot of people and being mixed up in a lot

of stories” (90). The manner in which others chose to approach and interact with the world endlessly fascinated Stein. Medical school proved to be an environment replete with diversified perspectives and gave Stein many opportunities to consider her understanding of personality and subjectivity.

Stein’s interest in how people operate inspired her to study human brain development independently. When she was not in class, she dissected embryo brains and reconstructed them using plastic models. Stein’s preference for independent study continued into her time at medical school- her classes never interested her to the same degree as her studies of personality or brain development and she decided in her last semester of medical school not to practice medicine. Stein dropped out of Johns Hopkins two classes short of graduating after becoming exhausted by the monotony of the actual subject matter: “She was bored, frankly and openly. There was a good deal of intrigue and struggle among the students, that she liked, but the practice and theory of medicine did not interest her at all” (*Autobiography* 90). Although Stein did not leave Johns Hopkins with the ability to practice medicine, she strengthened her understanding of the human mind and the way it processes the world.

Stein’s interest in people and the ways in which they expressed their realities became an integral part of Stein’s career. Instead of merely purchasing a painting or a book then enjoying it in solitude, Stein pursued artists and writers who created the works she connected to, many times becoming deeply invested in their lives. Stein expresses in *Fernhurst*: “Her deepest desire was in the varieties of the human experience and her constant desire was to partake of all human relations” (Stendhal 22). Throughout Stein’s career, art and literature served as the lenses through which

she observed the personalities and perspectives of others: “A passionate desire for worldly experience filled her entirety and she was still waiting for the hand to tear down the walls that enclosed her and let her escape into a world of humans” (22). These form the foundation for Stein’s later Saturday afternoons at Rue Des Fleurus and the many relationships with others she formed while simultaneously passing along her ideas of mental and emotional connection.

Stein’s background in psychology fundamentally shaped the way she defined successful creation. She disregarded entire art forms if they failed to prove themselves as psychologically and emotionally stimulating. Stein addressed her distaste for theatre through the perspective of Toklas in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*: “It is too fast and the mixture of the eye bothers her and her emotion never keeps pace” (74). In order to encourage the reader’s unique translation of her own writing, Stein marginalized the laws of punctuation. Stein believed that commas might interrupt readers as they navigate through the passage with a subjective perspective, erroneously encouraging them to attempt to locate a literal meaning within the passage. Stein believed that: “A reader’s sense should be intrinsic and not have to be explained by commas and otherwise commas were a sign that one should pause and take a breath but one should know of oneself when one wanted to pause and take a breath” (*Autobiography* 90). Carl Van Vechten observed of Stein’s writing: “She has turned language into music, really made its sound more important than its sense. And she has suggested to the reader a thousand channels for his mind and sense to drift along” (*Critical Essays on Gertrude Stein* 34). Although Stein’s enigmatic verses hardly inspired widespread popularity over the years, they exhibited

a progressive disassembly of literal meaning that was adopted by many Modernist writers and artists, including Matisse, Picasso, Sherwood Anderson, and Ernest Hemingway.

Stein's desire to emotionally connect with her audience without conveying meaning did not reflect the popular mindset at the turn of the century. However, the highly controversial Aestheticism Movement had previously introduced similar ideas of "art for art's sake" in the late nineteenth century. Writers and artists such as James McNeill Whistler and Oscar Wilde had begun to speak out against the limitations presented when art only strived to reflect reality. *A Gentle Art*, a collection of letters written between Whistler, a progressive painter from 1870-1895, and Oscar Wilde, a writer and art critic whose personality was associated with the most liberal form of Aestheticism, detail the controversy surrounding the topic of artistic license and experimentation (Mendelssohn 94). Whistler argued that while the painter ought to be unfettered by responsibility to nature, the writer should follow closely the formula of reality. Oscar Wilde defended the writer's platform against the double standards in place between writing and painting. Throughout the correspondence documented in *A Gentle Art*, Wilde explains the idea that writers seek the same freedom from literal meaning that artists do. In 1890, Wilde published a series of essays called *Intentions*, as well as *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, both of which strived to refine Aestheticism to include a tolerance for artistic collaboration and a variety of mediums (95). Wilde's book *Intentions* includes the essay "The Critic as Artist," in which Wilde articulates a perspective that parallels views held by Stein. He states: "The critic will certainly be an interpreter but he will not be a threat as a riddling sphinx, whose shallow secret

may be guessed and revealed by one whose feet are wounded and knows not his name. Rather, he will look upon art as a goddess whose mystery it is his province to intensify” (Wilde 334). Wilde’s belief in “art for art’s sake” was also inspired by Walter Pater, a British Victorian Era essayist and art critic whose most recognized work, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1879) influenced Wilde profoundly. Pater argued that art’s worth lay within the experience of the viewer rather than the intention of the artist. In the concluding section, Pater states art’s only purpose is to affect the viewer. While acknowledging a piece of art or literature, the viewer should not attempt to translate the work’s meaning, but instead open themselves to the experience. He writes: “What is this picture or song, this engaging personality presented in life or in a book, to me? What effect does it produce on me? What degree of pleasure?” (Pater) In *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Stein mirrors Pater’s understanding that the importance of art lies within experience and not intention: “For her, art is a very psychological- it needs to be able to hold her attention and appeal to her emotion” (83).



## EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY PARIS

“Paris would become the capital of the world. On the pavements, there would no longer be a handful of artists, as in Montmartre, but hundreds, thousands of them. It was an artistic flowering of a richness and quality that could never be rivaled” – *Bohemian Paris*, preface

As far back as the early 1700s, France maintained a reputation as a country open to immigration and accepting people of a more diverse range of religious and cultural backgrounds. The France of the Second Empire encouraged immigration with the motivation of attracting workers for building projects and the mining industry (Franck 10). Shortly thereafter, a large Jewish population found refuge in France from the Tsarist persecutions. In 1791, France was the first country to give citizenship and equal rights to Jews. In early 1900s, France attracted a different kind of immigrant: the creative thinker seeking freedom and space to experiment. In *Bohemian Paris*, Dan Franck states, “At the beginning of the twentieth century, it (Paris) was the incarnation of tolerance, the champion of civil rights. Hundreds of painters and writers came to live in France, a country where they could freely express a richness, a sensibility, and a language which were all unwelcome at home” (11). This universal language of expression and creativity captivated Pablo Picasso during The World’s Fair of 1903. His painting *Les Dernier Moments* represented his native country, Spain, in the global exhibition. Instead of returning home after the event, Picasso planted roots in Paris and utilized connections and inspirations in Paris to create what would become Cubism. The attraction which artists and writers felt towards richness,

sensibility, and shared language of expression created an environment fertile for artistic growth: “Modern art, born on the banks of Montmartre and Montparnasse, was the fruit of these multiple mixtures” (Franck 15).

After failing out of medical school, Stein moved to France in 1903 to join her brother Leo. Leo Stein relocated to Paris several years earlier to attend art school. Not long after her arrival in Paris, Gertrude Stein recognized the city as a green house for experimental thought and expression- the ideal environment in which to perpetuate conceptual art. Many of the observations documented in her book *Paris, France* elucidate the qualities possessed by French culture encouraging the emergence of popular culture throughout the twentieth century. After years spent surrounded by medical students who by no means shared Stein’s enthusiasm for literature and art, Stein found herself living in a place replete with artists and writers experimenting with different approaches to expression. Although many in Paris still rejected non-traditional art, the city itself proved to be an environment in which ideas could be planted and eventually spread.

According to Stein, France was receptive to abstract expression because of its deep root in tradition, which allowed the French perspective to evolve without loss of identity. Tradition, civilization, fashion, and daily living were prioritized instead of change and progress, resulting in the reservation of space for creativity and expression. In “Nostalgic Modernism and the Invention of Paris in the Twentieth Century,” Rebecca Wakeman echoes Stein by describing France as possessing a form of nuanced reflection, which she refers to as “Nostalgic Modernism.” Wakeman defines “Nostalgic Modernism” as expression that in equal parts reflects on the past

and moves in the direction of the future. She states: “French Nostalgic Modernism sought the path trodden as much as the future beckoned” (10). Nostalgic Modernism created an environment in which artists and writers could process the shifts of the turn of the century without losing sight of the past. In her book, *Paris, France*, Stein describes her understanding of the French creative advantage by stating: “I cannot write too much upon how necessary it is to be completely conservative that is particularly traditional in order to be free. And France is and was. Sometimes it is important and sometimes it is not, but from 1900 to 1939, it certainly was” (80). According to Stein, France possessed a stable enough foundation to anchor its national identity despite the overwhelming changes brought by the twentieth century. She states: “Their tradition kept them from changing and yet they naturally saw things as they were, and accepted life as it is, and mixed things up without any reason at the same time” (*Paris France* 18). Like Wakeman, Stein believed that France possessed the ability to remain firmly grounded in the present while maintaining respect for the past, and in doing so, creating an ideal environment for reflection: “Tradition was so firm to the French that they could look modern without being different, and where their acceptance of reality is so great that they could have the emotion of unreality.”

In countries where industry and technology progressed rapidly without “respect for the past,” Stein believed art and literature were sidelined in the name of practicality. Industrialization in America occurred at a much more rapid pace than in France. At the turn of the century, the pattern of migration shifted from out west to towards larger cities. This reallocation of population in America signified the

beginning of a period of industrial and urban growth that continued at an exponential rate (Carpenter 20). By the 1920s, the United States was unrecognizable to the wild and largely undeveloped country it was only a century before. Malcolm Cowley writes in 1921: “Today more than one half the population of the United States lives in an environment in which the jerry-builder, the real estate speculator, the paving contractor, and the industrialist have largely created” (Carpenter 22). Along with the rise of industrialism and commercialism, the idea of the American Dream was introduced. The newly realized, seemingly ubiquitous goal of homeownership and high standard of living undoubtedly stimulated the economy for a time did not have the most salubrious effect on the individual. After a trip to Paris, Sherwood Anderson pondered the American Dream. He recorded in his journal: “We have all been fed upon the notion that it is our individual duty to rise in the world. No doubt this philosophy has worked out with a certain splendor for a few individuals but on the other hand it may have much to do with our national weariness” (*Anderson/ Stein Correspondence* 113). Life in America moved more rapidly than in France, a quality which Stein also believed to inhibit the growth of popular culture.

In order to understand the disconnection between traditional cultural values and changes in society, a distinction must be drawn between “popular culture” and “mass culture.” In *Pulp Surrealism, An Insolent Popular Culture in Early Twentieth Century Paris*, Robin Walz argues: “Mass culture is produced by an entrepreneurial elite and marketed to the general population, while popular culture is generated by the people” (2). According to Walz, the forces of industrialization ultimately led to an increase in the production and distribution of “mass culture,” which ultimately

created a stifling effect on the growth of popular culture in the United States. France's more established historical background might have been a reason the country was less impressionable to mass culture than the United States. Because European countries possessed a more established foundation of popular culture, the citizens there were less susceptible to social pressures distributed by the "entrepreneurial elite" through the forces of mass culture (3). Walz points out that popular culture began blooming in Europe in the early sixteenth century following the invention of the printing press and the Protestant and Catholic reformations. While tensions between mass and popular culture had been stratifying for centuries in Europe, the forces of industrialization and commercialization in the United States were expedited by the lack of mature popular culture.

Stein's understanding of creative limitation in America parallels many of Walz's theories surrounding the idea of industrialization and commercialization stifling the forces of popular culture. In *Paris, France*, Stein attributes America's infertile creative environment to the "standardization, mechanics, and crimes" of the early twentieth century. While the citizens of France believed that the advancements in science and technology to be important to society, according to Stein, they generally did not allow these changes to drastically realign every day priorities. She states: "The reason why all of us naturally live in France is because France has scientific methods, machines and electricity, but does not really believe that these things have anything to do with the real business of living. Life is tradition and human nature. And so, in the beginning of the twentieth century when a new way had to be found naturally they needed France" (*Paris, France* 8). Matei Calinescu's

understanding of Modernism is quoted in *Popular Bohemia: Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris* and assists in explaining industrialization's conflict with creativity. Calinescu defines Modernism to be the "irreconcilable opposition between the sets of values corresponding to objectified, socially measurable time of capitalist civilization and the personal, subjective, imaginative time" (Gluck 4-5). To Stein and many other artists and writers during the Modernist Movement, France provided a more conducive environment for this "personal, subjective imaginative time" from which popular culture stems. Stein states, "America knew the twentieth century too well to create it, for in America there was a glamour in the twentieth century that made it not be material for creative activity" (*Paris France* 8). France's hesitance to embrace the forces of industrialization and consumerism allowed people to have a more intense connection to inspiration. In *Writing the Lost Generation*, Craig Monk articulates Stein's aversion to the United States by stating: "In a country with its modern character already determined, she feels that she would be at a disadvantage in exercising her creative genius, for 'the minute you or anyone else knows what you are, you are not it anymore'" (Monk 63).

France's fertile creative environment in the early twentieth century was unique not only when compared to the United States, but Great Britain as well. According to Stein, England was an ineffective background for cultivation of expression for another reason: "England was consciously refusing the twentieth century, knowing full well that they had gloriously created the nineteenth century and perhaps that the twentieth century was going to be too much for them, so they were quite self consciously denying the twentieth century" (*Paris, France* 19). While

America was overly invested in twentieth century progression, Stein believed England to be resentfully holding on to the nineteenth century. France's detached interest in the twentieth century provided an ideal backdrop for advancement in *popular culture* rather than *mass culture*. In England, twentieth century mass culture was rejected and fought against; in America, it was worshipped, however in France, mass culture neither infuriated nor enthused the average citizen, causing it not to affect the production of popular culture. Stein states: "They (The French) were too occupied by their daily life to worry about it, besides the last half of the nineteenth century had not interested them very much, not since the end of the Romantic Movement" (*Paris, France 20*).

Lack of concern for mass culture in France was reflected by citizens' apathy towards mildly well known artists and writers living among them. Rather than seeking out interaction with these artists and writers, the French offered them privacy and respect. As a result, artists and writers were able to spend more time working than maintaining their public image. According to Stein, curated mass culture created this kind of unwanted attention in America. Stein describes a friend who "suffered from publicity" in America. While in France, however, her presence was not news or even a piece of information worth repeating at the boulangerie. The French prioritized private life more than recognition: "Tradition and private life and the soil which produces something, this is what counts" (*Paris, France 20*). As a result, foreign artists and writers found relief from the public pressure present in their native countries. Stein wrote in *Paris, France*, "Foreigners were not romantic to them, they were just facts, nothing was sentimental, they were just there, and strangely enough it

did not make them the art and literature of the twentieth century but it made them be the inevitable background for it” (11).

In the same manner there was not as much glory in being well recognized for artists and writers, there was no shame in being dirt poor or unpublished. Obtaining a certain level of wealth did not distinguish the “talented” from the “untalented” (Franck 35, Hemingway 40). In the same way, no social barriers existed between rich lovers of art and poor lovers of art: “Rich patrons of the arts and art dealers of the moment, models and their painters, writers and publishers, poverty-stricken artists and millionaires lived together, side by side” (Franck 35). Instead the elite using their money to disperse commercialized mass culture into the population, they invested in art produced by members of the masses, which helped to create genuine culture generated by the people. In fact, those who did “make it” had their motivations questioned by other artists. Franck writes, “Modigliani, Soutine, and Picasso, who never gave themselves to anything but their art, criticized Van Dongen and others for spending too much of their time in high society. For them, these companions had gone back on their word and their values, compromised themselves” (36). Ernest Hemingway reflects this attitude in his book *A Moveable Feast*, his memoir of his time in Paris published posthumously. His words display the manner in which poverty was regarded as noble in the artistic community: “It was all part of the fight against poverty that you never win except by not spending. Especially if you buy pictures instead of clothes. But then we did not think ever of ourselves as poor. We did not accept it. We thought we were superior people and other people that we looked down on and rightly mistrusted those who were rich” (43).



Gallery owners reflected a similar lack of concern for profit, causing them to be more likely to risk purchasing pieces that might not provide a return on the investment. Stein states in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*: “There are many Paris picture dealers who like adventure in their business, there are no publishers in America who like adventure in theirs” (261). In *Bohemian Paris*, Dan Franck tells of a picture dealer named Soulie who sold art through a game of bartering. Soulie sold recycled canvases to artists who otherwise would not be able to afford them in exchange for the artists’ drawings, which he then sold so he could purchase more canvases for the artists. He sold these works in a small portable vendor booth on the sidewalk of the Seine so he could save money on rent. Art dealers such as Soulie made it possible for artists who were not financially stable or successful yet to create art, resulting in more artistic opportunity.

Often there was little or no money to be found in the occupation of selling paintings, but this mattered little to the dealers: “In Paris, there are picture dealers like Durand who went broke twice supporting the impressionists, Vollard for Cezanne, Sagot for Picasso. They make their money as they can and keep on buying something for which there is no present sale and they do so persistently until they create its public” (*Autobiography* 261). Art dealers purchased art because it was their passion, not because it was a wise investment. The non-conventional tastes of gallery owners in Paris reduced the risk artists felt to stay within the bounds of tradition, thus leading to a higher production of experimental pieces. These gallery owners supported popular culture rather than mass culture even at the risk of going out of business.

Artists in Paris lived lives devoted to their work and considered their creative endeavors their lifestyles, not professions. Dan Franck writes in *Bohemian Paris*: “The artist works alone. He has no staff, his is not a profession. Painting or writing are not just trades or crafts to him, they are the very breath of life.” The birth of the idea itself, the preservation of something larger – these were the goals of the artist. Whether or not people were willing to buy the end result totally unrelated to the purpose of creation. Franck continues, “The tool itself is uncertain. If an idea dies, or the imagination becomes stagnant, if one’s mind stops moving, nothing and no one can save a mind from this emptiness. And no one will replace him: the work of art is compared to no others” (15). Franck’s words highlight the motivation for foreign artists to come to France: the realigned set of expectations that allowed them to be captors of ideas instead of professionals. Stein reiterates this quality of Paris as a reason for attracting foreign artists: “Of course they all came to France a great many to paint pictures and naturally they could not do that at home, or write they could not do that at home either, they could be dentists at home she knew all about that even before the war, Americans were a practical people and dentistry was practical” (*Paris, France* 90).

While England may have faced similar struggles as the United States in terms of industrialization discouraging artists and writers, the United States had a particularly difficult disadvantage for writers who aspired to be taken seriously. Comparatively, the United States had produced far less literature than England, and with less of a historical background, literature produced in the United States was assumed inferior to literature being produced in England. Malcolm Cowley expresses

the partisan nature of a literary education in early twentieth century America in his book *The Exile's Return: A Literary Odyssey of the 1920s*. In high school, Cowley writes, the only literature they were exposed to was British. In fact, in order for writing to be considered worthy "literature," British origin was necessary. Even while attending Harvard, Cowley noticed a distinct lack of attention to domestic history, learning, and writing. He notes that while walking briskly to his European History class, he looked around him at all of the beautiful historic buildings on Harvard's campus and realized with frustration that he did not know their historical background. His education had placed all attention to what had occurred hundreds of years ago in a place thousands of miles away (33).

The same line of reasoning applied to what could be created within the Harvard classroom. Malcolm Cowley tells the story of a Jewish boy attending Harvard on a full scholarship. While in the classroom, the boy was expected to shed not only the tradition of rabbinical knowledge, but also his impoverished childhood in Brooklyn, and the story of the battle against poverty he had struggled with all his life, so that he could write for class work that reflected British literature: "But what he would write would be Keatsian sonnets about English abbeys" (34). A deep-seated insecurity in America prevented people from expressing what they knew, essentially because it was unprecedented. For this reason, the conception that in order for American writers to shed their country's self consciousness and write about their realities, leaving America was in some way necessary. Although writers such as Williams Carlos Williams and Walt Whitman proved this to be patently false, large amounts of people still believed British literature to be superior to American

literature. The many writers who chose to move to Europe in order to produce literature perpetuated this idea, including Stein. Although this migration hindered American popular culture further, the environment Paris provided to artists and writers seeking to express their realities benefitted American artist and writers significantly.

Although Gertrude Stein spent a majority of her life in France, the perspectives she exhibits in *Paris, France* are limited to that of an expatriate. In *The Critical Response to Gertrude Stein*, Dorothy Chamberlain points out that the Paris Stein refers to throughout her work is just that- Stein's Paris- and not necessarily indicative of the Paris of the French. Chamberlain points out Stein's tendency to dismiss the French throughout her work by stating: "Yet with these qualities that Stein recognizes them in, she does not grant them any role, except that 'inevitable background' in the creation of the twentieth century. In other words, the French looked on as by standers while the Picassos, the Steins, the Sir Francis Roses, and the Hemingways made modern art" (Chamberlain 146). Stein fails to mention any active role by French people in the movement. From this perspective, the city of Paris appears to be in some way borrowed for the breeding ground of artistic thought. To a Parisian, the actual influx of parasitic foreigners who desperately attempting to escape pressure from their mother countries might not have added a valuable layer to culture. Chamberlain points out another limitation to Stein's perspective – the level of wealth she inherited from her family and was in the position to spend. She frequented a more safe, tame radius of Paris, noting in her journals only her visits to more the bourgeois areas of Paris. Although these points do not invalidate Stein's Paris, it is important to

keep in mind that it is a “parochial point of view, and the view of the Sixth Arrondissement” (Chamberlain 147).

## PRE-WAR MODERNISM

“Beyond all matters of morals and dress, there is, more centrally, the question of art. An artist is, above all else, a producer of works of art. Picasso could wear whatever clothes he wanted, Alfred Jarry cock his pistol as often as he wished (which was frequently), Breton and Aragon get into fistfights with anyone they disliked; their behavior mattered little next to the importance of the creative seeds they were sowing. Modern art was born and shaped in the hands of troublemakers. From 1900 to 1930, they didn’t just lead the crazy artists’ lives which earned them the hate of some and the envy of others: far more crucially, they were inventing the century’s language.”  
-Bohemian Paris Preface

The professional success of Gertrude Stein is inextricably bound to her skills in collecting-- both artwork and people. The underlying motivation behind Stein’s interest in artists and writers has remained highly controversial throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and remains a topic of debate today. In 1941, Katherine Ann Porter argued that Stein’s primary motivation was to exert power over people: “Stein organized the people and things that she collected into an objective system that revolved around her—a system of productive narcissism that empowered her as an artist” (50-51). In 1951, critic Henry McBride described Stein as a collector of “geniuses rather than masterpieces” (2). In his book *Bohemian Paris*, Dan Franck compares Stein and her role in the Parisian art scene to Saint Louis IX of France. He describes Stein as “Sitting under her portrait like Saint Louis dispensing his judgments under a tree, she handed out comments with an authoritarian air, glaring angrily at anyone who dared interrupt her” (92). Whether or not Stein positioned herself in the lives of key Modernists as a means of obtaining power or if her desire

was to selflessly further the arts, the world may never know. However, the controversy surrounding Stein's personal motivations or the egotistical manner in which she presents her opinion in no way negates the influence she had through her relationships.

While critique of Stein might be merited, her narcissistic personality expedited her success as a collector and networker. From the years 1903-1914, Stein connected with the most rebellious forces of the Parisian art world and then introduced them to one another. The mutually beneficial relationships that were formed during this period inspired works of unprecedented subjectivity. Artists inspired and learned from one another: Matisse's interest in African masks influenced his *la Femme au Chapeau*, the painting that won Stein's attention and sparked their friendship, which led to the eventual introduction of Picasso to Matisse, then to Picasso's interest in the African Mask, the mask that was a key inspiration for Cubism. Cubism heavily influenced Stein's writing and understanding of expression, which later she impressed upon the writers she met after the war. The purpose of this section is to analyze and examine the flow of influence between Stein, Matisse, and Picasso; both in how these relationships influenced the breadth of Modernism and the effect they had on Stein's understanding of subjective expression.

In 1904, Stein embarked on her last trip back to America for thirty years and returned in June to rejoin her brother Leo in Paris permanently. The Steins both received an \$8,000 dividend from their family's estate, which enabled Leo and Gertrude to begin investing in the arts (Stendhal 58). The siblings were first attracted to the studio of Vollard in Montmartre after hearing he was one of the only dealers in

Paris that sold the paintings of Paul Cezanne. Gertrude Stein fell in love immediately with the gallery. She describes the experience through Alice's perspective in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*; "The first visit to Vollard has left an indelible impression on Gertrude Stein. It did not look like a picture gallery. Inside there were a couple of canvases turned to the wall, in one corner was a small pile of big and little canvases thrown pell-mell on top of one another" (35-37). The gallery's hodgepodge, eclectic atmosphere, the company of Vollard, and the extensive Cezanne collection delighted the siblings and they returned to the studio often. The discovery of Vollard's studio marked an important first step in the Stein's involvement in the Parisian art world. The siblings purchased a number of Cezanne paintings from Vollard, which established a distinct direction for the collection the siblings began to accumulate (*Autobiography* 29-73). Gertrude Stein's introduction to Cezanne played a profound role in her own writing and her interest in Matisse. Her eventual recommendation of his paintings to Hemingway inspired many aspects of his writing during his time in Paris, as well.

Around 1900, Henri Matisse began branching out into more experimental styles of painting after being inspired by Cezanne and African sculptures. Prior to 1900, he painted with a more traditional style and experienced a substantially larger amount of success. In 1905, Matisse displayed his more controversial pieces at the now famed "Salon D'Autumne." The salon began in 1903 with the intention of providing a platform for artists to display works that the public perceived as "rebellious." Matisse's painting, *la Femme au Chapeau* (The Woman in the Hat), was found to be particularly upsetting and offensive by the crowd (*Autobiography* 39).



The art critic Louis Vauxcelles saw the painting and exclaimed that the work belonged, “Dontello parmi les fauves” (among the wild animals) (Franck 30). Although the show’s purpose was to showcase the work of the “rebels” of the French art world, the audience was appalled by Matisse’s work. Even Leo, who loyally supported the work of Cezanne, detested the piece and commented the painting was the “nastiest smear of paint he had ever seen” (Lubow 2).

Stein writes in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* that the crowd reacted in even more extreme manner and attempted to destroy the work by digging their fingernails into the painting. The words printed in *Journal de Rouen* on November 20, 1905 reflected the crowd’s outrage: “Here we find nothing more than formless coloured streaks and dabs: blue, red, yellow, green, stains of color juxtaposed any which way, the crude and naïve games of a child who is experimenting with a box of coloured pencils of paints that he has been given as a present.” Although the Parisian art scene had recently accepted the wild colors of impressionism as an acceptable form of expression, the seemingly chaotic array of color in Matisse’s work sent them running back to their familiar and reasonably toned vases, fruits, and landscapes. Dan Franck describes the pattern of this reaction in *Bohemian Paris* by stating: “Since the end of the nineteenth century, scandal had always come more from the ways in which the artists were distancing themselves more and more from an outside reality and recomposing the world in their own way” (Franck 67). When Monet displayed his first impressionistic painting in 1872, art critic Louis Leroy commented that the painting looked unfinished, coining the phrase “impressionist” as an insult. Matisse took the unfinished look of Monet to an extreme level, choosing to apply unmixed

colors to the canvas and experimenting with complementary colors side by side (Fontaneau 2).

Stein experienced a very different reaction to the one printed in the *Journal de Rouen*. She was immediately attracted to the painting both mentally and emotionally: “Gertrude Stein liked that picture, it was a portrait of a woman with a long face and a fan. It was very strange in its colour and in its anatomy. She said she wanted to buy it” (*Autobiography* 39). To her the painting seemed “perfectly natural.” The painting’s aesthetic appealed only to Stein. The crowd’s inability to enjoy the painting frustrated her and she states from Alice’s perspective, “It bothered her and angered her because she did not understand why because to her it was so alright, just as later she did not understand why since the writing was all so clear and natural they mocked at and were enraged by her work” (40). Although Stein immediately recognized a similarity between the work of Matisse and Cezanne, she had never seen art inspired by African masks and was intrigued by this style.

Stein’s public demonstration of interest in Matisse’s controversial painting introduced a salient characteristic to her personality: her confidence in the validity of her opinion. In her mind, the line between good art and bad art was a line drawn only by her. In the case of *la Femme au Chapeau*, the controversial quality of the painting drew her in even more. She emphasized the fact that she alone is able to connect to the painting on a higher level than the crowd by using words and phrases such as “clear,” “natural,” and “making sense” to describe her experience. When juxtaposed with the confusion and anger of the crowd, Stein’s positive reaction to the painting isolated her understanding of Matisse and his work.

Stein's characteristic confidence in her artistic preferences drove her to action. Although Leo Stein abhorred the painting, Stein convinced her brother that they should purchase it. The Steins initially offered a price lower than Matisse's asking price. After Matisse's wife encouraged him to reject Stein's price, Stein did not back down. She offered a much higher price, which Matisse gratefully accepted. Stein's positive reaction to his painting offered much needed encouragement for Matisse. According to *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, his earlier success with painting more traditional pieces haunted him and the constant negative feedback was causing him to question his artistic direction. Stein states of Matisse in 1905, "Matisse was at this time about thirty-five years old, and he was depressed. Having gone to the opening day of the salon and heard what was said of his picture and seen what they were trying to do he never went again. His wife went alone. He stayed at home and was unhappy. This is the way Madame Matisse used to tell the story" (45). In a period of Matisse's career in which he felt dejected and insecure, Stein's interest gave him hope in his direction.

Stein's interest was piqued in the young artist whose painting caught her attention and she pursued a friendship with him; "Shortly after the purchase of the picture, they all asked to meet each other. In no time, they were all knowing each other and knowing each other quite well" (*Autobiography* 40). Her friendship with Matisse was the first in the expansive collection of artists and writers she kept close over the course of her career. She enjoyed her relationship with Matisse immensely: "Matisse had an astonishing virility that often gave one an extraordinary pleasure when one had not seen him for a long time"(42). Under the nurture of his relationship

with Stein, Matisse's painting style developed significantly: "Matisse at that time was at work at his big decoration, *le Bonheur de Vivre*. It was in this picture that Matisse first clearly realized his intentions for deforming the drawing of the human body in order to harmonize and intensify the values of simple colors." These elements were what initially attracted Stein to *la Femme au Chapeau*. Their friendship allowed Stein to encourage Matisse to experimentation with color and anatomy (Curnutt 20).

The relationship positively influenced Stein's career as well. Stein's small collection began to attract a multitude of visitors; "Little by little, people began to see the Matisses and the Cezannes, Matisse brought people, and they came at any time, and it began to become a nuisance, and it was in this way that Saturday evenings began" (*Autobiography* 47). Once a week on Saturday afternoons, the Steins' apartment came alive with visitors. Leo Stein did not share Gertrude's interest in socializing or artistic discussion and he avoided the studio on Saturday evenings, however. In her characteristically prideful manner, Stein explains the reason for the rift between her and her brother by stating: "Slowly and in a way it was not astonishing but slowly I was knowing that I was a genius and it was happening and I did not say anything. This thing of becoming a genius, there is no reason for it, there is no reason that it should be you and should not have been him" (Carpenter 33). The only thing the Steins agreed on was Alice, whom Leo had come to deeply appreciate. He described Alice's place in their lives as a Godsend, for her presence allowed the siblings to disagree without explosions. The disparity between the Stein's styles of interacting with the art world cost them their relationship. In 1910, Alice Toklas moved into Rue des Fleurus permanently, the same year that Leo fell in love with his

model, Nina Auzias, who later became his wife. The siblings began to spend less and less time together during this year. Not until 1913 did Leo and Gertrude separate after almost forty years of living life together. They even split the paintings that they had painstakingly collected together- the Reniors and Cezanne's *Apples* went to Leo, and Stein kept all of the Picassos (Stendhal 58).

Arguably Stein's most famous friendship began by attraction to the artist's personality rather than his art, initially. In 1905, Leo Stein happened upon a painting by Pablo Picasso at a gallery of an art dealer named Sargot. Ironically, Gertrude Stein did not match her brother's level of enthusiasm when she saw the painting: "Gertrude Stein did not like the picture, she found something rather appalling in the drawing of the legs and feet, something that repelled and shocked her" (*Autobiography* 49). Leo Stein fought Gertrude Stein for permission to buy the painting and Gertrude finally relented. After the siblings purchased the painting, Gertrude met a friend of Picasso and arranged a meeting between Leo and the artist in an effort to please her brother. After the meeting, Leo invited Picasso to visit 27 Rue Des Fleurus. The connection between Gertrude Stein and Picasso was instant: "He was sitting next to Gertrude Stein at dinner and she took up a piece of bread. 'This,' said Picasso, snatching back the piece of bread, 'this piece of bread is mine.' She laughed and he looked sheepish. That was the beginning of their intimacy" (*Autobiography* 52). Although Gertrude initially disliked Picasso's art, the two connected psychologically immediately. When Leo Stein took out his Japanese prints for Picasso one day at the salon, Picasso responded by telling him, "Moi, j'aime pas ca" (I do not like that). Stein states in *The*

*Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* of that moment: “Gertrude Stein and Picasso immediately understood each other” (51).

One of the most influential connections between Stein and Picasso was their shared discovery of portraiture. In 1906, Picasso painted his first portrait in years of Gertrude Stein: “Picasso had never had anybody pose for him since he was sixteen years old, he was then twenty four and Gertrude Stein had never thought of having her portrait painted, and they do not know how it came about. Anyway, it did and she posed to him for this portrait ninety times and a great deal happened during that time” (*Autobiography* 52). In the article “Experiment in Time and Process of Discovery: Picasso Paints Gertrude Stein, and Gertrude Stein Makes Sentences,” Jane Bowers points out that the 80-plus portrait sittings of Stein for Picasso ignited Stein’s interest in portraiture. Picasso and Stein recognized together the potential of portraiture to express truths limited by realism. The discovery of the subjectivity in portraiture to capture genuine personality tied in directly with Stein’s interest in personalities: “Stein always made her chief study people and therefore the never-ending series of portraits” (*Autobiography* 146).

The portraiture sessions between Picasso and Stein also sparked Picasso’s strides in the direction of Cubism. According to Knapp in *Gertrude Stein*, Picasso returned from a trip to the Catalan Highlands and visited the Steins’ with the intention of finishing the portrait he was currently working on of Gertrude Stein. When he got to the Steins’, Picasso began furiously working, not asking to see his model again. Franck writes of Picasso’s frenzied creation: “He painted in the head what he had erased before, as if in a single stroke. It too was the sketch of a mask. It was the

foundation of *Demoiselles d'Avignon*. And the first stuttering word in a new language of a new art, Cubism” (89). Because Picasso was not attempting to record every detail of Stein’s face, he was able to capture more of her personality. Knapp describes Picasso’s breakthrough by stating: “The non-resemblance allowing him to capture the ineffable on canvas.” Through abandoning traditional approaches to expression, Picasso was able to use his imagination to create something more emotionally evocative. Knapp continues, “Divesting on to the canvas of mimesis and abstraction, Picasso concentrated on volume, creating an angular nose, sharply etched mouth, and strangely piercing eyes.” When Gertrude Stein saw Picasso’s work, she realized immediately it to be uncharted territory in the world of abstraction. Leo Stein, however, hated Picasso’s early Cubist portraits and referred to them as “Cubist funny business” (Franck 90). Leo believed that Cubism was not art, but Gertrude Stein understood that it was the future of expression.

Stein’s desire to form relationships with artists led to one of the first artistic communities. Stein introduced Matisse and Picasso through her Saturday night salons, and although the two artists did not get along on a personal level, their relationship was influential to both their directions as artists. Matisse introduced Picasso to the African sculpture, which served as one of Picasso’s primary inspirations in cultivating his Cubist style. Stein documents in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, “In any case, it was Matisse who was first introduced, not so much in his painting but in his sculpture, by the African statues and it was Matisse who drew Picasso’s attention to it just after Picasso had finished painting Gertrude Stein’s portrait” (71). African art influenced the two artists in entirely different manners,

however. Stein states, “In Matisse, it was affected more in his imagination than his vision, in Picasso much more through his vision than his imagination.” Stein demonstrates the importance of subjectivism through this statement; although the root of inspiration for both artists is the same, their manner of capturing reality varies drastically. She continues, “In these early days when Picasso created Cubism, the effect of African art was purely upon his vision and forms, his imagination remained purely Spanish. The Spanish quality of ritual and abstraction had been indeed stimulated by his painting of Gertrude Stein. She had a definite impulse then and always towards abstraction” (*Autobiography* 72).

The nature of Picasso and Matisse’s mutually beneficial relationship was characteristic of other relationships between emerging Modernists. The environment Stein created in her salons at Rue Des Fleurus on Saturday nights allowed artists and writers with the similar goals of experimentation to exchange ideas and styles. Stein placed a premium on the value of artistic community, a sentiment she articulates in *The Making of Americans*:

“Brother singulars, we are misplaced in a generation that knows not Joseph.

We flee therefore before the disapproval of our cousins, the courageous condensation of our friends who gallantly sometimes agree to walk the streets with us, from all them who never in any way can understand why such ways and not the others are dear to us, why we flee to the kindly comfort of an underworld accustomed to take all manner of forms into its bosom” (59).

By calling the individuals who choose to join her in opposition against traditional expression “brothers” and those who disapprove “cousins,” she is clearly drawing the



line of alliance (Parkinson 3). This mindset clearly motivated Stein's desire to be close to like-minded thinkers of the time. The time spent with Picasso and Matisse in the beginning stages of the Modernist Movement influenced her own writing style greatly and inspired her to create word portraits of both Matisse and Picasso.

Stein recognized that the same means of capturing abstraction could be achieved in words as well as painting. Richard Kostelanetz states in *The Gertrude Stein Reader* of her word portraits: "By this leap Stein realized another great Modernist idea of emphasizing certain dimensions of art while completely ignoring others" (23). Her prose could be as highly conceptual and abstract as Picasso's Cubism: "As non-representational prose makes no pretense about referring to any reality beyond itself, it need not be 'interpreted' either." Through the invention of Cubism and Fauvism, Matisse and Picasso undermined the photographic purpose of painting, the same way Stein rejected the idea that had to possess a literal meaning or moral truth in order to evoke an emotional understanding. "Since Picasso," Stein writes, "No painter uses a model at least no painter whose painting interests anybody. The only thing outside them is the painting they have just been the painting and all others which of course are always around them" (*Everybody's Biography* 95). In the same way, Stein was more interested in "new perspectives, new forms, and new mediumistic possibilities" than "new ideas or new subjects" (Kostelanetz 23). She understood the types of perceptual shifts an experienced viewer of art would naturally experience while looking at a piece of abstract art would not occur as habitually while reading print. Stein accepted that the cost of experimentation might be readability: "Her initial scrambling of syntax could be considered an appropriate literary analogy

for painterly Cubism, which likewise scrambled the viewer's perspective upon an identifiable surface" (24).

In 1912, Stein publically associated her writing with the work of Picasso and Matisse. Stein's two Cubist word paintings of Matisse and Picasso were published along-side paintings by both artists in in the publication *Camera Work*. The article was captioned "The Post Impressionistic Spirit" and Stein's word portraits were intended to help navigate readers through non-traditional works. The attitude of the early 1910s towards the function of art is demonstrated by the inclusion of "descriptions" of what the portraits attempted to accomplish instead of printing them by themselves for organic interpretation. Alfred Stieglitz, the owner of the magazine, advertised Stein's word portraits as "a Rosetta stone of comparison and a decipherable clew to that intellectual and aesthetic attitude which underlies and inspires the movement; upon one phase of which they are comments and the extending development of which they are an integral part." His use of the word "clew" refers to the ball of string Theseus follows in order to find his way back through the labyrinth. Stieglitz attempted to encourage intimidated readers that these word portraits would lead them safely and comfortably through Post Impressionism (Parkinson 2).

Stieglitz's incorrect interpretation of Gertrude Stein's portraits demonstrated the prevalence of the attitude that Modernism fundamentally undermined– the perceived need to have the intention of a work spelled out through a formula. Stieglitz failed to realize that Stein's word portraits did not attempt to translate Picasso and Matisse's paintings into meaning but to demonstrate that conceptual abstractions

could be presented through writing as well. Stein's portraits directly opposed the notion of a unified theory of art established around an authoritative and stable group, a desire to produce feeling and emotion through expression that might not be able to be packaged into literal meaning (3).

In 1913, Cubism was exhibited for the first time in America at The Armory Show in New York. A friend of Stein, Mabel Dodge, owned a salon similar to Stein's in New York. She exhibited Stein's "Portrait of Mabel Dodge at the Villa Curonia" (another Cubist portrait by Stein) at her salon, along with several Picasso portraits, in an effort to publicize Cubism in America. Later in 1913, Stein met Carl Van Vechten, an American writer and photographer, who became a champion for Stein's work and later became her literary agent. In 1914, Stein was finally about to find a publisher for her book *Tender Buttons*, which is inarguably the peak of Stein's Cubist writing. At the very cusp of World War One, Modernism has been well-established as a movement, and although would inevitably disappear during the years of war, would emerge stronger than ever as a result of a magnified need for subjectivity in the years following the war (Stendhal 58).

## WORLD WAR ONE – INFLUENCE ON SUBJECTIVISM

“The soldier's habitual connection with the world is replaced by a sense of fragility forced on him by the concrete reality of war. And military training also taps into instincts that the experience of trench warfare cannot allow him to express.”

-Richard Greaves, excerpt from his 2003 review of Sarah Haslam's “Fragmenting Modernism: Ford Maddox Ford, the Novel, and The Great War”

The horror and senselessness of the years between 1914-1918 introduced a new level of depravity to the world. German general Erich Ludendorff described the chaos of World War One by stating: “It was impossible to distinguish where the sphere of the army and navy began and that of the people ended” (Ludendorff 11). World War One's unprecedented combination of industrialization and militarization created a war-centric mass culture and established a reality of “total war.” In “Total War, Great War, Cold War,” Jan Mieszkowski references the remarks of two prominent leaders involved in World War One that underscore the universal quality of The Great War. Ernst Jünger, in his 1930 essay "Total Mobilization" states: "In this unlimited marshaling of potential energies, which transforms the warring industrial countries into volcanic forges, we perhaps find the most striking sign of the dawn of the age of labor" (215). The mass culture of total militarization exempted no person from its grips; wartime was a unified anxiety of the future of civilization. In 1921, Italian air-bomb strategist Giulio Dauhet articulated this concern by stating: "Since society is evolving along this line (industrialization), it is within the scope of human foresight to see now that future wars will be total in character and scope” (215). The

war introduced a level of loneliness, disillusionment, lack of faith in humanity, and disorientation to everyday life. The mass culture of militarization undermined many of the objective truths held by society, as a result of the propaganda, bloodshed, and loss of innocence of such a large number of people. Stein believed that the mass culture of militarization led to “concentration of isolation” within the individual; the ultimate loneliness/ loss of personal identity through forced subjection to the “total war” culture. The culture of war created new tensions in challenging “the socially measurable time of capitalist civilization” with “subjective, imaginative time” (Gluck 4-5).

In 1915, the *Lancet Medical Journal* published that no civilian would suffer long-term mental damage from the trauma of the war. The journal argued that “the spectacle of millions of men abandoning home, family, ambition, money, and laying down their lives for a cause was glorious enough to transfigure ‘the pictures of bodies and humans beings gasping in their dark struggle against death’” (Tate 11). The use of the word “spectacle” demonstrates the mindset of the culture of militarization as portrayed through the media in America. Trudi Tate states in *Modernism, History and The First World War*, “Soldiers -- men-- are seen to have a symbolic function; their bodies form a grotesque ‘picture’ whose meaning transcends and redeems its own horror” (12). The words printed in *The Lancet* showcases the attempt to convince citizens that the “glory” of the whole is worth the death of the part, a message pumped through newspapers, photographs and pamphlets in all countries in an effort to boost morale. According to Tate, The Great War was the first war in which propaganda was scientifically organized and marketed in order to create unity (41).

Information that emerged in print during the war aimed almost exclusively to remind citizens of Germany's barbarianism and were many times proved to be false. Famous lies told through the papers in America included stories of raped nuns, soldiers with faces tattooed on their arms with enemy insignia, babies missing limbs, and a factory in Germany that transformed corpses into usable products (45). Ultimately, the goal of militarization to create unity obscured all objective truths.

William Faulkner's novel, *A Fable*, represents the struggle of the individual against the whole from the perspective of a soldier. The novel frames the narratives of several men who lived and fought in Southern France. These combatants are stripped of all individual rights as a result of the all-encompassing military/industrial dynamic determining their existence. Jan Mieszkowski states in her article "Total War, Great War, Cold War," "War takes priority over the people who fight it, the ideals they may hope to protect, and even the notion of a foe itself" (216). In *A Fable*, a commander selected his most expendable regiment to charge into a menial battle. When these soldiers recognize their positions as pawns in the meaningless exchange of blood, they stand still: "The regiment is called on to sacrifice itself, but in going on strike rather than striking out against their foes, the soldiers sacrifice the ability to serve as a sacrifice for the extra-human demands of the war machine" (Mieszkowski 216). By deciding to forgo the assembly line to death, the soldiers in *A Fable* reclaim their worth as individuals, and demonstrate to an extreme degree the struggle between individual needs and desires and the mass culture of militarization.

The ambiguity surrounding the soldiers' identities after death introduced another level of subjectivity. The mutilation of thousands of unidentifiable soldiers

occurred for the first time during World War One and inspired the construction of tombs for the Unknown Soldiers, a practice that gained popularity in France, Britain, and Italy (Whitman 3). Tombs of the Unknown Soldier symbolized the ultimate wartime subjectivity- the absence of any external indication of identity after death. Miezowski suggests that throughout the Great War, the “modern combatant was best understood with reference to an indefinite, ultimately unidentifiable entity” (218).

Although the Great War introduced an unprecedented amount of deaths and bodies, it also witnessed a new level of organization and efficiency in record keeping, as a result of advancements in technology. The developments in technology lessened the chances that soldiers’ papers would be misplaced, ironically juxtaposing the technological advancements in military weapons that drastically increased the possibility that soldiers’ actual bodies would be completely destroyed in battle. According to Allyson Booth, “There was a stark divide in World War One between the combatants' experience of death in the form of a landscape of omnipresent corpses and the civilian experience of death as the absence of any traces of the fallen” (25). Because record keeping was more efficient than ever before, people could not understand how their sons and husbands disappeared so entirely, leaving no proof of their physical existence. In past wars, worried wives were able to hold on to the idealized hope of her husband’s safe return. In World War One, the fate of a soldier could be objectively acknowledged without any identifiable remnants of the body. While these mass graves assisted with the sense of cognitive dissonance experienced by soldiers’ loved ones, the family had to come to terms with the absence of a personal grave for the loved one. The introduction of more dangerous and destructive

weapons created a heightened awareness of our frailty as humans and less objective understanding of existence.

Ambiguity marked not only death, but life as well. In *Paris, France*, Stein describes the observations and experiences of a girl named Helen Button reflecting her confused reality: “Helen thought that in wartime there was no difference between day and night. And she was right. The nights were black and the days were dark and there was no morning. Not in wartime” (90). War fractured temporal reality as it did the fallen soldiers’ identities. Stein continues, “When Helen Button went to sleep she did not dream, but then when she did dream, she dreamed it was war time. When she woke up, she did not get up, it was war-time and nobody just said to her get up but bye and bye and she did get up and she went out.” Every normalized pattern of life was distorted by the war: “There might be school and Helen might go to school. Nobody said she should and indeed so few went that day and so it was any day and it was wartime.”

People were unable live their lives based on objective truths, because the war erased them. The world was suspended in a sea of grey, with no direction as to when life would continue, as they had known it. “After a while Helen Button stood perfectly still and listened. She thought she heard it but did she. She listened and listened. She heard weather, she heard water, she heard snow, she heard water everywhere, it was that kind of weather. She heard snow around she very nearly heard the moon and she heard the rain and she heard the mountains.” Helen’s thoughts reflect a conceptual reality. She no longer trusts her senses to accurately portray truth; she is unable to tell the imagined from the real. Helen’s perspective represents the



walls between objectivity and subjectivity breaking down completely as a result of the war.

Throughout *Paris, France* and *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Stein reflected on the sense of isolation caused by World War One that she observes in the lives of the people all around her. According to Stein, the focus on the national effort of total war and loss of individuality caused a “concentration of isolation.” The “total war” mentality was either incredibly unifying or isolating- unifying for those who bought into war efforts and isolating for those who did not. Those who did not immediately feel isolation throughout the war felt isolated as soon as the war was over. Stein observes in *Paris, France*: “I once more realize that war brings you in contact with so much and so many at the same time concentrates your isolation. Undoubtedly this is what a war does and it is unconsciously one of the things that makes war happen, this thing” (72). Stein then explains isolation of concentration by telling a story of her neighbor, Helen Button. In this anecdote, Helen crosses paths with a German soldier on her way back to her home in Paris. Helen does not know how to appropriately acknowledge his presence and passes him without interaction. Instead of greeting one another as fellow humans occupying the same place, Helen and the soldier stare at one another and then continue their separate ways: “They all went away without saying anything. Helen did not know why but this was the first thing in wartime that made her cry. There are so many people who go away in wartime and there are always so many everywhere in wartime and here there and everywhere” (*Paris, France* 90-91). The soldier’s national identity preceded his individual identity to such a degree that Helen felt uncomfortable addressing him on a

personal level. Concentrated isolation can best be understood by this loneliness experienced by Helen after realizing the full extent to which war dehumanizes and negates personal identity.

According to Sarah Cole in “Modernism, Male Intimacy, and the Great War,” another type of concentration of isolation existed as a result of World War One. Though some soldiers experienced the feeling of unity while fighting, when they returned home and no one could understand their experience, disillusionment and isolation followed suit. Cole observes, “The figure of the bereaved male friend-- whose very being is constituted by the loss of war mates--becomes the war's representative *par excellence*, and that post-war disconnection and disillusion will thus be articulated specifically in terms of the creation and loss of powerful male friendships” (2). A soldier's separation from the men with whom he had carved out deep relationships created an intense sense of loss and isolation.

The dark reality of World War One exposed the darkest sides of humanity and caused deep skepticism in the direction of civilization. Stein's belief that war intervened with young men's civilization mirrors the late nineteenth century theory of human degeneration. Stein writes in *Paris, France*, “War is not civilizing and the men who were eighteen to twenty three in the war missed their time for becoming civilized. War cannot civilize, it takes private life to civilize, and of course publicity has the same effect as war it prevents the process of civilization” (58). The philosophical and scientific question of degeneration, the idea that human civilization is in the process of devolving, was popularized in the Victorian Age after Charles Darwin's introduction of his theory of evolution and re-emerged during the war.

Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (published in 1859) and *The Descent of Man* (published in 1871) had previously unsettled the world of science by proposing that all species were in a constant state of evolution. Darwin's theories stimulated scientific and cultural discourse about the future of the human race as a whole, outlining the discussion of degeneration.

Degeneration, defined by Edwin Ray Lankester in his 1880 book *Degeneration*, is "a gradual change in the structure in which an organism becomes less and less adapted to the conditions of life" (5). According to Stefan Zweig, a prevalent German historian in the 1920s and 1930s, the horrors and dehumanization of World War One embodied these Victorian theories of failure of humanity, reintroducing the fear of degeneration. Zweig writes that the war extrapolated "the most primitive and unconscious drives and instincts of the human beast" and demonstrated an unprecedented level of depravity of which humans are capable. According to Spanish historian Rafael Altamira, militarization "triggered a reservoir of primitive passions, barbaric legacies and ancestral instincts" (Monk 12).

The return of the theory of degeneration during World War One was not totally based in paranoia. In *Modernism, History, and the First World War*, Trudi Tate describes a 'regression' of humanity and quotes an essay by Maurice Nicoll to describe this phenomenon as retrograde of soldiers' maturity and intellect to display behaviors typical of children aged from five to twelve years of age. Nicoll recounts one soldier who demanded to be fed every two hours. The soldiers' regression as a response to the war as described by Nicoll as: "the exact opposite of adaption by progression, the psychic movement being inwards, away from reality-consciousness,

towards a level of phantasy consciousness” (Tate 22). This definition of regression as soldiers experiencing war-neuroticism parallels the language used by Lankester in 1880. As a result of the war, the very definition of humanity shifted to some degree to include the possibility of retrograde.

The sense of isolation and insecurity in what it really meant to be ‘human’ furthered the role of the subjective perspective. Because there was a distinct lack of universal truth that could be shared between individuals such as Helen and the soldier because of the defining presence of national identity, people were forced to interpret the world through relativism rather than dependence on an absolute truth. The relative perspective infused into the cultural mindset as a result of World War One was reflected by culture and art during and after World War One. In Greaves’ review of the article “Fragmenting Modernism, Ford Maddox Ford and The Great War”, Greaves states: “Literature responded by attempting to find coherence through narrative in the face of nervous illnesses and a fragmented and changing world.” This was achieved through an “impressionistic technique”, the idea that “memory refracts, not reflects light in many opposing directions” (3). The more people remember drastically varying versions of the same event, the more impressionistic the art and literature following the event becomes, in order to express fragmentation of reality. Throughout the article, a distinction is made separating the positive view of the writer as an “impressionistic, reflective glass”, opposing the more negative view of the writers and artists following World War One as “suffering from post-war doubts caused by fractured memory and perspective.” Regardless whether or not this shift

was positive or negative, little doubt surrounds the idea that the war and the opposing perspectives introduced throughout it created a more subjective writing style.

The destruction of civilization during World War One exposed an entire generation to a less civilized world. Stein, however, did not believe that the war marked the degeneration of humanity. She compared the war years to adolescence and the post-war years to young adulthood: “France prefers that the adolescent learn logic and civilization and fashion as he emerges out of adolescence, France who thinks that childhood and adolescence should be felt instinctively as not an end in itself but as a progression toward the state of being civilized” (*Paris, France* 119). Stein argued that after progress stagnates for a significant amount of time, it reignites with more momentum. Stein describes this process of growth by stating, “And after the war, England and France felt that it needed civilization. It would have to go through that period of revolution that every young person goes through when they think that systems will not be systems but something else, when everyone is certain they can reform everybody if they only go the right way to work about it”(120). Stein then reemphasizes her belief that loss of civilization is impermanent: “All this is natural after adolescence before the process of civilizing and recognizing the right of everyone not to be reformed when people become adult”. By defining civilization as “recognizing the right of everyone not to be reformed when people become adult”, Stein highlights a foundational idea of the Modern Age: the adherent right of each man to define his own experience and reality.

The idea that each person should define his or her reality as an individual was embodied by a shift towards representation of a more conceptual reality. According to

Stein, expression following the war was concerned predominantly with conception: “It was not interested in impressions, it was not interested in reality, it was interested in conceptions and so there was the twentieth century painting” (*Paris, France* 61). The Merriam Webster dictionary defines the word “conception” as “the capacity, function, or process of forming or understanding ideas through abstractions or symbols.” Using the word “conceptual” to describe the art of the twentieth century emphasizes the major shift in nineteenth century expression to twentieth century expression: the function of art shifting from the nineteenth century desire to capture ubiquitous beauty and truth, to twentieth century skepticism of universal truth. This art wanted to escape the industrialized mass culture by generating works that were subjective, not objective. Stein states: “These conceptions all have to do with the world being round and everybody knowing all about it and there being illimitable space and everybody knowing all about it and if anybody knows all about the world being round and all about the illimitable space the first thing they do is paint their conceptions of these things and that the twentieth century did” (*Paris, France* 62).

Stein demonstrates in one of her earlier works, *Tender Buttons*, assigning alternate meaning through conceptualization and how the subjective perspective transcends literal connotation can transfer emotion and meaning. Stein assigns qualities traditionally attached to humans across three categories of things: objects, food, and rooms (Dauber 20). The topics are not held together by a narrator or organizing presence, but by the shape and rhythm of the form of the words themselves. M. P. Dauber states in "Gertrude Stein's Passivity: War and the Limits of Modern Subjectivity," "The displacement of people by things, of patent meanings by

alternative ones, rather than confining Stein's world, opens it up for a place for play and a deep investment in language as a kind of language itself'. While Stein's inventive language is irritating for the modern reader to try to understand, it simultaneously invites the reader to work harder to interpret the work through his or her own perspective. Dauber continues: "Stein posits subjects who are not their whole 'punctual selves' to make conscious decisions, who make moral decisions, but who lack the organizing forces of religion, morality, mind/body dichotomy to make all discrete decisions together" (5). Hemingway utilizes a similar style of assigning symbolic meaning to create nuanced understanding of the loss felt in World War One throughout his book *The Sun Also Rises* (Tomkins 3).

The understanding of human personality and perspective that Stein formed while studying under William James fit well into this new post-war fractured understanding of the world. Her desire to create a book encapsulating all types of human types led to her realization that grouping people into types rested upon the assumption of subjectivity -- that peoples' "personalities" were really just an automatic, habitual, and repetitive response to outside stimuli. She would refer to this as "consciousness without memory," which she described as a "state that is immediate and cannot be extended from one moment to the next" (Will 22). The idea that people's personalities and perspectives are resulted from a momentary combination of setting, outside stimuli, with their own automatic and habitual manners of processing life around them through art, their work would have to be subjective. Every person's reality exists separately and uniquely.

Walter Pater described the human existence by stating: “To regard all matter of things as inconstant modes of fashion and thought has more and more become the tendency of modern thought: for birth and death and springing of violets from the grave are but a few of the thousands of combinations of existence” (234). Pater and Stein’s observations outlined the subjective perspective as a manner of recording our own unique experiences for others. The perspective of the inconsistency in reality from person to person made sense when relating to World War One by relieving the pressure of one objective understanding. In the conclusion to *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, Pater stated: “This as at least of our flame-like existence, that is but the concurrence, renewed moment to moment, of forces parting sooner than later on their ways” (236). In 1871, Pater pointed out that varying interpretation is an integral aspect of the human condition. World War One simply caused civilization to become increasingly more aware of the extent of the relative nature of perspective resulting from the thousands of variables of individual experience that interfere with perception of reality.



## POST WORLD WAR ONE PARIS, STEIN, AND MODERNISM

“A world without art would be blind to itself. It would be confined within the boundaries imposed by simplistic rules. This is why totalitarian regimes, when they rise to power, set out to censor, prohibit, and burn. This is how they destroy ideas, dreams, memory, and the expression of differences, which are the fertile soil from which artists spring.”

-Bohemian Paris Preface

The world emerged from the darkness and desperation of World War One with a distinct desire to process the deep sense of loss that corroded their realities. In the words of John Pidgeon in *Ernest Hemingway*: “This disillusionment served more than anything as a stimulus for a remarkably impressive literary production and philosophical stance on life presented in that literature.” Although Stein also found herself unsure of her direction in the years following the war, uninterested in the Surrealist Movement and estranged from her Picasso and Matisse, she soon met Sylvia Beach, owner of the famed Shakespeare and Company. Through this relationship, Stein met Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway, two writers with whom she was able to share her understanding of subjectivity, open mindedness towards expression, and impress upon literature conceptualization already realized by art before the war. Her relationship with these artists proves Stein’s value lies not within her opinion or ability to predict talent, but in her incessant encouragement for these writers to question the boundaries of expression as a generation of writers attempting to convey the loss and disillusionment of the post-war period.

The period of time after the war was disorienting for everyone, including Stein and Toklas: “It was a confused memory those first years after the war and very difficult to think back and remember what happened before or after something else” (*Autobiography* 209). Many of the artists Stein spent time with before the war were no longer living in Paris. Matisse moved to Nice and the friendship between Picasso and Stein was far less consistent as a result of his newfound popularity. In the year directly following the war, Dadaism enjoyed its heyday. Formed by a group of writers, painters, and musicians in Switzerland in 1916, Dadaism took root in Paris after the war as a direct response to the destruction and chaos from the war. Dadaism rejected all traditions and institutions and embodied the world’s confused and chaotic state after the war. In *From Baudelaire to Surrealism*, Marcel Raymond states of Dadaism: “Those who refuse to see in the Dada movement anything more than a Parisian scandal characterized by violence and buffoonery, will never understand the intense moral crisis of the 1920s and the current of anarchistic individualism, the refusal to be useful, that upset so many age-old slogans and age-old beliefs” (12). Raymond’s words underscore the juxtaposition between those who wanted to cling to meaning and those who had become completely nihilistic after experiencing the destruction of the war. The ideas of Dadaism provided no middle ground.

The world needed an outlet in which to express its anguish but with nuanced perspective. In *Ernest Hemingway and the Arts*, Emily Stripes Watts underscores the shortcomings of Dadaism by stating: “And yet this anarchy, which led on one level to the breakdown of formal types of literary expression, eventually pointed to a more profound order for the arts- the demand that art must stimulate a full sensual, as well

as intellectual, experience” (12). In other words, Dadaism did not fully exploit what was available - emotions and the subconscious. After recognizing the lack of constructive aim within Dadaism, many of the Dadaists including Picabia and Masson became Surrealists. In 1924, Andre Breton’s Surrealist Manifesto introduced the Surrealist Movement, which desired to express and discover the sub-conscious. Although Stein supported artists who eventually became Surrealists, she believed the Surrealism Movement as a whole was a “vulgarization of the early work of Picabia as Delaunay and his followers were the vulgarization of Picasso” (*Autobiography* 226). Stein’s desire to claim a foundational presence in the work of Picabia because of the heavy influences by Juan Gris may have influenced this claim and her rejection of Surrealism (227).

Stein documented a very interesting struggle of the Surrealists: “Picabia had conceived and is struggling with the problem that a line should have the vibration of a musical sound and that this vibration should be the result of conceiving human form and the human face in so tenuous a fashion that it would induce such vibration in the line forming it” (*Autobiography* 227). The issue Stein seems to find within Surrealism can be summarized by her words, “He who is going to be the creator of the vibrant line knows that it is not yet created and if it were it would not exist by itself, it would be dependent upon the emotion of the object which compels the vibration” (228). Stein believed that while Surrealism made strides towards subjective expression, it still disregarded the expression of emotion.

Stein met Andre Masson directly after the war. Stein writes from Alice’s perspective, “She was interested in Andre Masson particularly as a painter of white

and she was interested in his composition and in the wandering line of these compositions” (*Autobiography* 227). Masson possessed a similar style to that of Juan Gris, and this attracted Stein even more: “Masson was at the time influenced by Juan Gris in whom Gertrude Stein’s interest was permanent and vital.” Like Picabia, Masson eventually began producing Surrealist paintings to Stein’s frustration; “Soon Masson fell under the influence of the Surrealists” (228). The condescending manner which Stein documented Masson’s transition to Surrealism insinuates she believes Masson succumbed to the pressures of the movement rather than deciding to take his work in a new direction.

The year after the war, Stein began feeling stagnant, having no professional success or new blossoming relationships with protégés. Given the nature of Paris and the nature of Stein, after a few months, however, Stein met Sylvia Beach, an American living in Paris who had recently opened up a bookstore and library: “Someone told us, I’ve forgotten whom, that an American woman had started a lending library of English books in our quarter. We investigated and we found Sylvia Beach” (*Autobiography* 211). Stein was Sylvia Beach’s first library subscriber and the two formed a relationship that soon blossomed into a deep friendship. Stein’s relationship with Beach provided a new outlet for Stein to meet and form relationships with artists and writers.

To Stein’s great satisfaction, Sylvia Beach began to bring people to the Steins quite regularly. On June 13, 1921, Beach brought Sherwood Anderson to the salon and introduced him to Stein. The two became friends immediately. After meeting Stein, Anderson documented their visit in his personal journal: “The woman is the

very symbol of health and strength. She laughs, she smokes cigarettes. She tells stories with an American shrewdness in getting the tang and kick into the telling” (*Sherwood Anderson/ Gertrude Stein* 5). Anderson was also immediately taken with Stein’s writing style. In the book *Gertrude Stein*, Bettina Knapp writes of Anderson: “He was particularly intrigued by the manner in which Stein combined and fashioned words, giving old ones a fresh flavor and new ones a distinct tinge of old manner” (50). Anderson’s understanding of Stein’s writing style mirrors the “Nostalgic Modernism” of the city of Paris, combining respect for tradition but enlivened through experimentalism. Anderson was especially entranced with Stein’s repetition and verbal prowess. Her work *Tender Buttons* inspired Anderson to begin using more conceptual forms of expression (Knapp 52). Stein’s unpopularity surprised and confused Anderson; he did not understand how writing he found so inspirational was not popular with publishers. In a 1922 journal entry, Anderson writes of Stein’s earlier work: “A great revolution in the art of words had begun and was being passed over with a laugh” (*Sherwood Anderson/ Gertrude Stein* 12). According to Malcolm Cowley, the disconnection between the value Anderson places on Stein’s work and its popularity to the public can be explained simply: “Her work is like a chemical, useless in its pure state but powerful when mixed with others” (*The Critical Response* 90). Although this statement seems initially dismissive, Cowley’s second point is inarguable. Anderson reiterates this idea in the introduction paragraph he writes for Stein’s *Geography and Plays*. He writes of Stein: “The work of whom consists of rebuilding an entire new recasting of life, in the city of words” (*Sherwood Anderson/Gertrude Stein* 20).

Stein encouraged Anderson to carefully separate himself from his work. In a letter to Anderson, she suggests that Anderson's writing is inhibited by his reluctance to let go and let his creation speak for itself: "When it does not flow I think it is always due to the fact that you feel yourself more than your creation" (*Sherwood Anderson/Gertrude Stein* 27). Although Stein and Anderson were separated by the Atlantic, their relationship greatly enhanced the work of both writers. Stein pressed Anderson to experiment more often in his writing instead of fearing illegibility. In 1924, Anderson wrote that Stein's commentary revealed the limitations of his vocabulary. Stein was impressed with Anderson's ability to take her advice to heart and apply it to his writing in order to more accurately portray emotion and psychological connection. According to Stein, the ability to capture the "essence of life" required "essential intelligence." She points this out to be a rare quality for writers to have, and names four men including Anderson who do: "They do not reflect or describe life or embroider life or photograph life, they express life and to express life takes essential intelligence" (45). Stein believed capturing real emotion and feeling should be a writer's foremost priority: "Whether to express life is the most important thing to do, or the most interesting thing to do I do not know, but I do know that it is the most permanent thing to do." Regardless of how accurately an event or place is described, if it does not express life, Stein believed it to be worthless.

Anderson not only learned how to express life through Stein's subjective style, he defended her against critics that found her work meaningless because it could not be directly translated into ideas. In January of 1934, B.F. Skinner wrote an

article in *The Atlantic Journal* accusing Stein of “automatic writing.” Skinner believed Stein to be guilty of deceptively stringing together words without the goal of providing curated understanding for the reader, causing the writing to be worthless to society. In April of 1934, Anderson published an article in response to Skinner attempting to explain to the public the brilliance behind Stein’s understanding of language. He states, “The world of the novel, of the story, is a world being created. The object is not to be true to the world of reality but to the world outside reality. You want color -- word color -- that brings vitality also into that world” (*Sherwood Anderson/Gertrude Stein* 25). Anderson’s decision to use the term “word-color” ironically reflects the language used to tear down Matisse’s *la Femme Au Chapeau* in 1905.

The article published in *le Journal de Rouen* on November 20, 1905 described Matisse’s painting as “formless coloured streaks and dabs: blue, red, yellow, green, stains of color juxtaposed any which way, the crude and naïve games of a child who is experimenting with a box of coloured pencils of paints.” Anderson, however, argued that Stein’s unexpected word forms and unrealistic approach brought “vitality” to her creation. Anderson continued, unashamed of his admiration for her, “She has been a great, a tremendous influence among writers because she has dared, in the face of ridicule and misunderstanding, to try to awaken in all of us who write a new feeling for words” (*Sherwood Anderson/ Gertrude Stein* 26). Just as Matisse’s paintings are not limited by lack of coherent meaning, Stein’s words are liberated through subjective interpretation. In a letter to Anderson, Stein articulated this idea through her advise to Anderson, “Let the word-man in you come forth, dance for a

time.” If an author has dedicated himself to the goal of objectivity, his words are imprisoned. Anderson concluded his response to B.F. Skinner by humbly disclosing his own struggle to loosen his grip on the level of realism present in his writing: “For example, it is true of me, as I know it must be for any man who loves writing, that I have at times had great difficulty in making the escape out of reality, so-called, into what is the great reality” (81).

After going to Paris and meeting Stein, Sherwood Anderson advised his good friend and mentee Ernest Hemingway to move to Paris, assuring Hemingway that Paris was *the* city for serious artists. Hemingway had recently married a woman named Hadley Richardson, who possessed enough family money for the couple to live on for a short time. As soon as Hemingway successfully convinced Hadley to move to France, the couple relocated to Paris. Anderson arranged for Hemingway and Stein to meet shortly thereafter (Knapp 40). Following their initial encounter, Hemingway writes of Stein, “Miss Stein was very big but not tall and was heavily built like a peasant woman. She talked all the time and at first it was about people and places” (Hemingway 24). The two connected immediately and began spending large quantities of time together. Stein advised Hemingway to quit his job working for a corporate journal, feeling that although he might have less money, he would be happier and have more time for writing. She asked him one day, “Do you and your wife have enough money to live on without you working for the journal?” Hemingway replied that they did, and Stein responded, “Well, you should do it. If you keep on doing newspaper work then you will never see things, you will only see words and that will never do, that is of course, if you intend on being a writer” (24).



Stein's words reflected her vision of Paris as a space devoted to creativity, where artists and writers could barely scrape by and still be considered valuable members of society. Stein advised Hemingway to embrace the life as a starving artist in Paris: "You can either buy clothes or buy pictures. It's that simple. Only people who are very rich can do both. Pay no attention to your clothes and pay no attention at all to the mode, and buy your clothes for comfort and durability, and you will have the clothes and the money to buy pictures" (25). Through Stein's guidance and advice, Hemingway dove headfirst into the lifestyle of bohemian Paris.

Hemingway's decision to move to Paris proved foundational to his growth as an artist. Like many others before him, he found inspiration throughout the charming streets of the city. His routine for handling a writing block was simple; "I would stand and look out over the roofs of Paris and think, 'Do not worry. You have always written before and you will write now. All you have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence that you know.'" (Hemingway 22) Having time to take a step away from his creation and immerse himself in the city reengaged his creativity and offered him an escape from his work: "That way my subconscious would be working on it and at the same time I would be listening to other people and noticing everything, I hoped" (23).

Hemingway's writing was also heavily inspired by the artistic culture of Paris. Through Stein, Hemingway was exposed to the work of Cezanne, Matisse, Braque, Gris, and Picasso. Stein told Hemingway of the inspiration she gleaned from Cezanne's paintings and how she attempted to craft her sentences like his planes of color. Hemingway became increasingly interested in Cezanne and began making trips

to the Musée du Luxembourg to see more of his landscapes and the Louvre for his card players and the courtyard at Avners (Hemingway 40). Hemingway writes in *A Moveable Feast*, “I was learning something from the painting of Cezanne that made writing simple true sentences far from enough to make the stories have the dimensions I was trying to put them in. I was learning very much from him but I was not articulate enough to explain it to anyone” (23). Hemingway found strolling Musée Du Luxembourg to be a suitable alternative for eating a meal while he was adjusting financially to his self-employed writing career. He writes, “When you were skipping meals at a time when you had given up journalism and were writing nothing that anyone in America would buy, explaining at home that you were lunching out with someone, the best place to go was the Luxembourg gardens. There you could always go into the Luxembourg Museum and all the paintings were sharpened and clearer and more beautiful if you were belly-empty, hollow hungry” (65). Hemingway’s words demonstrate the romanticized poverty of the struggling artist in Paris: a life where consuming art prioritized over consuming food. Hemingway related to Cezanne through his hunger: “I learned to understand Cezanne much better and to see truly how he made landscapes when I was hungry. I used to wonder if he was hungry too, when he painted” (65). The experience of being an artist in Paris was unifying and transcended time, nationality, language, and art form.

In her book *Ernest Hemingway and the Arts*, Emily Watts states: “In the Paris of the Lost Generation, creative minds in all areas of art met and exchanged ideas, all of art participated or at least inspired to participate, so to speak, in a single art. It was a time when poets became Librettes, painters became poets, and musicians became

painters” (3). The boundaries of art forms were trampled, writers learned from painters, and painters from writers. Paris created an environment where, in the words of Charles Baudelaire: “The arts inspire, if not complement one another, at least to lend one another new energies” (Baudelaire 138). The work of Cezanne influenced Hemingway’s writing immensely, especially in the manner in which Hemingway depicted landscapes. Like Cezanne, Hemingway utilized color instead of intricate description to define forms within his literature in order to draw his audience in emotionally. Emily Watts states in *Ernest Hemingway and the Arts*: “Cezanne modulated his colors in such a way that they themselves defined the form, in the process, ignoring the traditional restrictions of light and shade” (6). Hemingway wrote using a similar understanding mixture of color by disregarding the pressure to create an accurate representation of light and shade of the object he was describing.

Both artists also used diffused color throughout their literature and paintings. Instead of using pure colors, they tended to use diffused color in shades of “yellow-grey” and “brown-purple” (36). Cezanne and Hemingway also used similar techniques to enhance their styles of their mediums. Samantha Kelly writes in *Seeing Papa: Cezanne and Hemingway in Paris*, “Hemingway using words like daubs of paint, each word chosen with calculated care to draw the reader in to the framework of the story” (73). Hemingway also borrowed Cezanne’s off-kilter perspective. Often times in Cezanne’s portraits, the person is turned around and looking in the opposite direction of the viewer. According to Kelly, Hemingway approached his writing the same way, “Some may argue that this approach reflects a lack of perspective or an inconsistent perspective but it is certainly a calculated one, one designed to present

the emotional more than the physical reality of his characters.” In the rare case that Hemingway gives a character’s story directly, he does not water down his writing with descriptive phrases or excessive details (74).

The peak of Stein’s influence on Hemingway took place in the beginning stages of their relationship. Michael Reynolds writes in *Hemingway, the Paris Years* that Stein struggled to criticize other author’s work objectively, most likely out of jealousy. He states, “Self-centered, public proclaimer of her mostly unpublished genius, and discreetly less sure than she appeared, Gertrude was not adept at critical appraisal of others” (Reynolds 37). Stein’s insecurity controlled, to some extent, her reaction to other writers’ work. Ernest Hemingway writes in *A Moveable Feast*, “She herself wanted to be published in the Atlantic Monthly... and she would be. She told me that I was not a good enough writer to be published there or in *The Saturday Evening Post* but that I might be some new sort of writer in my own way” (25). Perhaps Stein sensed Hemingway’s skepticism that she was brilliant as she thought she was and felt threatened. Hemingway by no means put Stein on a pedestal to the same extent that Anderson did.

Hemingway’s descriptions of Stein are particularly scathing in *A Moveable Feast*, which was published post humorously and was written by Hemingway after the relationship had soured considerably. He believed her success as a writer mostly resulted from her success as a collector, and the critics Stein interacted with first saw her pictures in her salon and were charmed by her personality, causing them to issue a false faith in her abilities (Carpenter 70). Hemingway writes of Stein: “She had such a personality that when she wished to win anyone over to her side she could not be

resisted and critics who met her and saw her pictures took writing of hers that they could not understand on trust because of their enthusiasm for her as a person, and their confidence of her judgment” (27). Stein’s talent never really stood alone – her charisma, well-established painting collection, and backdrop of well-known artists and writers preceded her.

Hemingway’s writing was more clearly influenced through Stein’s ideas surrounding expression and her strategies than her criticism to his work. He expresses in *A Moveable Feast* that he does not believe Stein’s work has any market value, but he integrated many aspects of Stein’s writing style into his own work. Michael Reynolds states in *Hemingway, The Paris Years*, “After reading Stein’s *Three Lives*, Hemingway knew he could learn something from Gertrude’s continuous present tense and her steady repetition of key phrases that created meanings larger than the words themselves. For the first time, in Paris, he analyzed what he was doing and how his prose worked” (Reynolds 37). Although Hemingway had been writing for years for corporate journals, he had not spent much time critically examining how his words functioned when their goal was not to transmit information but to create emotion and expression: Stein’s area of expertise.

While Ezra Pound encouraged Hemingway to be self-critical about his work and to constantly make corrections, Stein’s advice was the opposite. She believed in the power of the subconscious mind and in ignoring a few rules of grammar (Reynolds 20). As she told another writer in the 20s, “I have never understood why people could labor over a manuscript, write and rewrite it so many times, for to me, if you have something to say, the words are always there.” Stein’s words shaped

Hemingway's understanding of first draft work, as well as his confidence to begin integrating more literary tools into his literature. Stein taught Hemingway in a more creative manner: "Free association, verbal connections, puns, and alliteration- it was all there and moving. Sometimes it worked well, sometimes it even made sense. It was a way of short circuiting the brain, a way of preventing the critical apparatus from interfering with the creative flow" (21). Hemingway felt a similar level of freedom as Anderson after removing the pressure to create meaning 100% of the time. Hemingway found it especially helpful to utilize Stein's approach when "the well of ideas was empty". He would switch to Stein's automatic writing for inspiration. The line Hemingway wrote in 1924 reflected Stein's style almost perfectly: "Why is it down through the ages, down and out through the ages. Out through the ages. No not that. Go on down through the ages". Automatic writing was also a convenient way to take notes; "Soon he was using Gertrude's technique for capturing scenes quickly and pinpointing elements that gave an event its impact" (Reynolds 21).

Hemingway learned from Stein exceedingly quickly. According to Michael Reynolds, Hemingway was a man who could "seize anyone's gift and make it his own" (22). Reynolds' words underscore the controversy present in Hemingway and Stein's relationship: "Sometimes the gifts were freely given and later regretted when he took them to the market place." In the early days of their relationship, Hemingway would write as Gertrude did, in blue notebooks, and would "imitate her style with surprising adeptness." According to Michael Reynolds, Hemingway was able to understand concepts from Stein's writing that she was not about to understand

herself. In *Geniuses Together: American Writers in Paris in the 1920s*, Humphrey Carpenter states, “Hemingway picked up Stein’s elimination of complex sentence structures, the unembarrassed repetition of the same word rather than the use of synonyms, the description of a scene or person “cubistically” by setting down first one facet and then the other” (71). Hemingway combined a much smaller amount of these linguistic tricks, of course, perhaps understanding that they were more effective when used sparingly. Hemingway’s relationship with Stein also inspired Hemingway’s use of mundane vocabulary, deliberate repetition, purposeful syntactical shifts and use of symbolism (Kosenlantz 35). Stein’s understanding of emotional and mental connection through literature and this influence on Hemingway is apparent through the effectiveness of many of his war novels, including *The Sun Also Rises*.

Although Hemingway writes in *A Moveable Feast* that Gertrude Stein coined the phrase “Lost Generation” during a conversation with him in order to “dismiss her contemporaries” (Monk 25), Stein writes in *Everybody’s Autobiography* that the term originated from a statement overheard of the proprietor at Hotel Pernollet; “And he said it this way: he said that every man becomes civilized between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. If he does not go through a civilized period then he is not a civilized man” (*Everybody’s Biography* 86). Hemingway gives a very different account in *A Moveable Feast*. One day Stein went to pick up her car that was being repaired from a garage. When her car was not ready in time, the owner of the car garage yelled at the young mechanic who had not done the job fast enough, “You are all a generation perdue”. After Stein could not get the phrase out of her mind all day,

she repeated it to Hemingway later that night. She told him, “That’s what you are: a lost generation. You have no respect for anything. You drink yourselves to death” (59).

Regardless if Stein did say these words to Hemingway or if she overheard a hotel-keeper mutter them, the concept of the “Lost Generation” embodies and in some way defines the generation of young men who fought in the war and returned home forever changed. The term “Lost Generation” reflects the idea that some aspect of the men’s “civilization” is missing (degeneration), the Stein’s concept of “concentrated isolation” and the concern that they have lost permanently some part of themselves. In *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Stein describes a French painter by stating; “He needs basal justification for the passionate exaltation in him. This he could not find, being of the immediate post-war generation, in wither religion or patriotism, the war having destroyed for his generation, both patriotism and religion as a passion. Surrealism has been his justification” (227). Stein repeatedly drew attention to this type of character in her literature.

The term “Lost Generation” frustrated Ernest Hemingway, perhaps because he perceived the term as depicting weakness or limitation. He rejected Stein’s belief that he and all of the young writers of his era were in fact a part of the “Lost Generation.” After the conversation he has with Stein, he thinks on his way back, “I will do my best to serve her and see she gets justice for the good works she had done as long as I can, but the hell with her lost generation-talk and all her dirty, easy labels” (Hemingway 62). Although Hemingway adamantly denies this generalization, his work does reflect the same sense of subjectivity and sense of loss and disillusionment



Stein and others use to describe the men of the “Lost Generation.” According to Craig Monk in *Expatriate Autobiography and American Modernism*, few “Lost Generation” writers purposefully attempted to engage the concept but instead to “inadvertently seek to elucidate the historical significance of their own lives” (56). For Hemingway, the intense connection between the plot of *The Sun Also Rises* and the phrase “Lost Generation” was clearly enough to inspire him to use Stein’s words “You are all a Lost Generation” on the first page along with a quote from Ecclesiastes which included Hemingway’s commentary on the “Lost Generation.” Ecclesiastes 1:5a states, “One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever... The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose.” Through combining these two ideas in the epigraph of *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway both validates Stein’s phrase and points out that suffering is present throughout every passing generation (Monk 58).

Stein’s quote was rightfully included in *The Sun Also Rises*, for the book provided profound insight on the effect of war on the psyche- men too young to have experienced the death of a friend, thrown into a reality where death was the only constant. To the boys to whom before the war the world seemed endlessly replete with possibility, who returned as men, acutely aware of the pain and evil caused by man. The world becomes a much less objectively good place, very quickly. The plot revolves around the absence of a body part hardly openly addressed; yet this loss propels the novel forward. David Tomkins states in his article “The Lost Generation, The Generation of Loss,” “Jake's closest confidantes establish a discourse of non-specificity whereby the inaccessibility of the novel's central preoccupation—Jake's

missing penis—becomes the unspoken source of a wide array of behaviors” (3). To the public, Jake might seem as though he returned from the war untouched, but in reality his life has been profoundly changed. Hemingway attempts to convey the message that simply because damage is not visible does not mean it does not exist. The largely hidden, yet incredibly painful loss experienced by Jake underpins the pain and emotional disfiguration that every soldier comes back with. Tomkins argues that Hemingway creates a “newly Modernist literary hero”(4). Although Jake was a part of the war for a time, he does not fit into any stereotype traditionally reflected in literature for the “soldier returning from war.” Jake’s lack of genitalia depicts the fragile state of American masculinity during and following World War One that wartime propaganda and mass culture of militarization attempted to mitigate. Hemingway’s character Jake also emulates Stein’s idea of “isolation of concentration.” Although Jake finds himself surrounded by fellow expatriate soldiers, he is overwhelmed by loneliness. He only connects with two other people, including his love interest. Because Jake is unable to connect sexually with Brett, his isolation becomes physically manifested throughout the story. Tomkin states: “Jake's inability to fulfill the sexual demands of the novel's heroine is of a piece with his failure to live up to the expectations of his heroic lineage” (4).

Hemingway’s novel *The Sun Also Rises* artfully translates Stein’s highly abstracted phrase “Lost Generation” into literal loss by associating the theme of loss with the body part responsible for reproduction and extenuating the generational cycle. Tomkins argues that Hemingway is attempting to “demonstrate that generations are always in the process of dying out and being born or, rather, of

disappearing and materializing”(4). Through this association, Hemingway insinuates that the sense of loss ever-present in *The Sun Also Rises* is a core aspect of human existence and to each generation. The conflation between the material absence of Jake’s penis with Hemingway’s ideological pairings of pain and loss introduce a level of abstraction to *The Sun Also Rises* that link it to Modernism: “An unusual nexus emerges between ideas about things that traverse the boundaries of individual subjectivities and ideas that do indeed reside within things” (Tomkins 5). Though it is absent materially, Jake’s missing penis drives the plot forward through ideas associated with it. Tomkins continues by stating: “The imagined idea of Jake's prewar sexual body, an idea that existed before and after the traumatic loss of his penis, impinges on subjective perceptions of that object's present circumstance of absence.” Hemingway explores the human desire to revisit the inaccessible past and the manner in which memory propels our present and future; the result of memory’s indefinite preservation by the subjective imagination.

The loss of life that was left in the wake of World War One was too deep to express objectively, causing the emotional and psychological connection to art which Stein valued so highly to become appreciated at a higher capacity. In his article “Ernest Hemingway,” John Pidgeon captures the juxtaposition existing within the minds of this generation: “They belonged to a generation that went to fight in the war, having been brought up on a very romantic and idealistic diet of Jeffersonian and American transcendentalism. Yet, emerged from the experience of war disillusioned and bitter.” The world as it was introduced to this generation no longer existed, and the fragmented place they found themselves occupying after the war shared no

resemblance to the idealized state of latter years. Tomkins writes, “If World War I and its aftermath exploded American literary history, it was the dilapidated remains of that tradition that helped formulate Hemingway's early Modernism, a Modernism that inevitably engendered a fiction that in part contained the residual shards of a forgone literary era” (4). Hemingway constructs Modernist literature in a similar manner as the French – with attention to tradition but still allowing interpretation. Hemingway is able to reflect on the pain and loss present in World War One and offer a nuanced perspective: “Fragments remain embodied in physically and psychologically damaged, sexually incapacitated figures like Jake—figures whose profound lack ironically allows Hemingway to pay a debt to the American literary past while, simultaneously, revising heroic convention.” Tomkins also states that writing and publishing *The Sun Also Rises* allowed Hemingway to embrace his identity as a Modernist writer separately from Stein. He states: “By claiming loss as a source of artistic power in *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway grants himself the artistic authority he formerly saw belonging to Stein, Anderson, and other members of the generation of American writers that preceded his own” (5).

Rather than being valued for the validity of her opinion, Stein should be understood as a force of Modernism that caused artists and writers to push themselves stylistically through expression of their realities. Although Stein possessed an ability to pinpoint talent before others, many aspects of her criticisms were not logical. Stein’s habit of comparing Anderson and Hemingway in their conversations ignited a spirit of competition for her approval. Hemingway and Stein adamantly disagreed on the level of Anderson’s talent, a topic that came up often between them. Stein’s

comments about Anderson elevated Anderson's work above Hemingway's to a degree that would be frustrating to any author and would perhaps motivate a desire to invalidate her comments. Through the observation of the unstable and self-motivated opinion Stein had of other authors, we more fully understand her method of choosing her protégés while dispelling others. Stein writes, "Anderson has a genius for using sentences and conveying direct emotion, this was in the American tradition, and that really except Sherwood Anderson, there was no one in America that could write such a clear and passionate sentence" (*Autobiography* 270). In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway writes about Stein's loyalty to Anderson, "I was prepared to tell Mrs. Stein how strangely poor his novels were, but this would have been bad because it was criticizing one of her most loyal supporters. When he wrote a novel called *Dark Laughter*, so terribly bad, I could not help criticizing it in a parody. Mrs. Stein was very angry. I had attacked someone that was a part of her apparatus" (60).

Although Stein granted herself the ability to define other's work as purely good or purely bad, she does not tolerate any criticism from others of authors she has already decided to be good. Hemingway argues in *A Moveable Feast* that the most influential factor in who she decided to display her loyalty to was who wrote positive things about her own writing; "I cannot remember Gertrude Stein talking well of any writer who had not written favorably about her work or done something to advance her career" (60). She resented any writer that would one day surpass her; "If you brought up Joyce twice, you would not be invited back" (60). Stein also rejected authors for incredibly petty reasons. Pound lost his privileges to visit Stein's salon for breaking a chair. Hemingway writes in *A Moveable Feast* about Ezra's banishment

from 27 Rue Des Fleurus, “That he could be a great poet and gentle and generous man and could have accommodated himself in a normal chair was not considered” (60). The reasons Stein stated later for disliking Pound were “invented” later, according to Hemingway.

Rather than being influential as a vendor of opinion, Stein made her most valuable contributions to the Modernist Movement simply by perpetuating her own ideas through her writings and approach to creating expression. The lines Stein drew between successful and unsuccessful creation were highly self-motivated and cannot be understood as objective truth. However, her understanding of creation profoundly impacted the writers that were granted Stein’s good graces. When Stein’s opinion is used as a scale of the talent of an artist or writer, she seems completely ridiculous. When her influence on painting and writing in the early Modernist Movement is considered, however, Stein’s narcissistic manner of approaching her role in Modernism must to some degree be forgiven in order to give her credit for way in which she challenged artists and writers to think deeper about how they expressed their realities.

## CONCLUSION:

The detailed account of those relationships Stein maintained throughout her years in Paris was published in her book *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* in 1935, which finally won Stein the acclaim she sought as a writer. Although she finally sold copies of a book, Stein traded in a large part of her life in exchange. Monk states in *Writing the Lost Generation*, “ She was clearly drawing a line under every major part of her career (in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*), as evidenced by her desire to separate herself from many of those she was surrounded. But after explaining to the world what she was, she was losing control of that part of herself forever” (Monk 64). She forced everyone in her life to define his or herself as a part of her larger story, and in doing so, making her largest successes and largest failures apparent to the world. The novel largely demonstrates how her selfish and dominating nature eventually isolated her from most of her protégés and how implicitly competitive she truly was, but also her brilliance and understanding of subjective perspective and insight into expression that creates emotion.

Stein’s influence influenced the Modernist Movement in multiple categories of art, because she understood that the subjective perspective was rooted in personality, emotion, mental connection, and rejection of reality. She learned from her friendships with the early Modernists, applied their conceptual style to her writing, and then was able to transfer more ideas of subjective expression to writers such as Hemingway and Anderson after the war. The environment of Paris during the

1900s-1930s perpetuated the exchange of artistic perspective between genres of art through the French lifestyle, their traditional take on Modernism, their attention to daily life but open mindedness towards to nuanced expression. Donald Gump writes in *Picasso, Gris, and Gertrude Stein*, “It was easy to see how such a stimulating and give-and-take atmosphere, filled as it was with tremendous energy and enthusiasm, must have been for the development of the artist. And Gertrude Stein herself drew so much upon Picasso and Gris to such an extent that it becomes impossible to conceive her work as existing separately from theirs” (23). The environment created through Stein her salons perpetuated the discourse surrounding creation, causing artists and writers to question the foundation on which their expression was built. Gertrude Stein pushed the boundaries of accepted creation and expression. Although her writing may be enigmatic and her personality narcissistic, her career challenged painters and writers alike to challenge the generally accepted guidelines of how expression must be executed.

In *The Gertrude Stein Reader: The Great American Pioneer of Avant-Garde Letters*, Richard Kolenstantz writes: “One of the reasons Stein’s writings are so contemporary is that they suggest even further possibilities in literary art; another is that force even experienced readers and writers to readjust- to stretch out or even to expand- their perceptual capabilities” (36). Stein assisted in re-writing the rules that the Victorian Era had so adamantly implemented. The realism recognized as the primary means of expression would no longer be able to capture the conflicted, relative post-war state left after 1919. Stein’s earlier contributions to Modernism caused her to have a more mature understanding of the subjectivity that would



become increasingly imperative in the world of expression. Stein's influence is explained further by Kolenstanz: "It is important to note that as a literary inventor, she ranks with Ezra Pound and Walt Whitman, but unlike them, she made decidedly innovative contributions to several genres."

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