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“WE KNOW WHERE YOU BELONG AT”:
INSTITUTIONS AND MARGINALIZED BODIES IN THE LITERATURE OF
CHARLES CHESNUTT, WILLIAM FAULKNER, AND EUDORA WELTY

A Thesis
presented in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of English
The University of Mississippi

by

MICHELLE AYERS

May 2019

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ABSTRACT

This thesis portfolio explores how three southern authors used fiction to push back against social norms. The literary works of Charles Chesnutt, William Faulkner, and Eudora Welty depict the ways in which marginalized bodies are socially regulated and punished. By using Michel Foucault's theories about power and knowledge, I explore how each of these works uses surveillance to regulate social behavior and what happens to marginalized bodies that refuse to conform to the norm. In Chesnutt's novel *The Marrow of Tradition*, Dr. Miller uses his "medical gaze" to diagnose problems within the black community while also elevating himself above his community. In Faulkner's novella "Old Man," the Tall Convict desperately desires to return to Parchman Prison because he has absorbed the effects of panoptic surveillance of prison. In Welty's short story "June Recital," female sexual awakening is inextricably linked to the judgmental and regulatory "social gaze" of the ladies in the community, as well as the threatening and possessive male gaze. Through each work, we see the effects of surveillance and the threat of institutionalization on marginalized bodies.

DEDICATION

This work is for my grandfather, Jack Dale Ayers, who always encouraged me to raise hell and was the best man I have ever known.

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Thank you to my invaluable friends and colleagues, but especially: my writing partner and dear friend, Laura Wilson; my soundboard and cheerleader, Autumn Bullard; my dog-park girlfriend, Irene Wey; my work-husband, Cullen Brown; my roommate and fellow cat-mom, Katie Turner; and the exceptionally kind Aine Norris. Thank you most of all to Quentin, Caddy, Bonkers, and Jinx.

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I would like to thank my family for their love, support, and patience during the many weeks I was too overwhelmed to call home. Thank you to my parents, Cindy and Tim; my sister, Mary; my cousin, Shelby; my grandmother, Madeleine; my uncle, Mike; my brother-in-law Michael; and my nephew and niece, Cameron and Evelyn.

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I. INTRODUCTION

As I reflect on my research interests while pursuing this degree, the common thread between my essays is a focus on marginalized bodies, what we do to and where we put people when they transgress, and how systems of power control and shape our attitudes and reactions to transgressive bodies. Beyond this link, I firmly believe that words matter, a simple mantra I have embraced in my own classroom and one that I believe is shared by the authors I have studied. For example, Charles Chesnutt wrote *The Marrow of Tradition* to correct the false narrative circulated by national news about the Wilmington massacre in 1898. He sent copies of his novel to members of Congress in the hope that reading it would help them understand the very real threat of racism in the United States at the turn of the century.

Each of the essays in this portfolio focuses on a single author and was written as a seminar paper. Since I am interested in historical analysis of events and institutions, I have organized them chronologically by the date of publication for each work rather than by the date in which they were written. The first essay, “‘Somethin’ to Live Fer’: Reinterpreting Racial Hope and Black Futurity in *The Marrow of Tradition*” explores Charles Chesnutt’s 1901 novel about the 1898 racial massacre in Wilmington, North Carolina. The second essay, “Flooding and Freedom: Parchman Prison and Modernity in Faulkner’s ‘Old Man’” examines the “Old Man”

section of William Faulkner's 1939 novel, *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*, which occurs during the 1927 Mississippi Flood. The final essay, "Bruised Magnolias: Female Sexual Awakening in Eudora Welty's "June Recital" explores one short story from Welty's 1949 collection *The Golden Apples*; although "June Recital" is the only piece not situated in a real historical event, it nevertheless depicts social attitudes toward transgressive behavior and how to punish nonconforming women in small town Mississippi.

In works of fiction that span just over fifty years, we see differently marginalized characters face similarly dehumanizing treatment because of their otherness. Chesnut's novel focuses on race and class, particularly in the figures of a radical dockworker and a middle-class doctor. Faulkner's novel-in-parts explores gender and sexuality, particularly regarding the Tall Convict's gynophobia and the camaraderie he feels for his partner in prison. Welty's story examines sexual awakening in a small southern town and how women are punished for their sexuality. At face value, these characters do not stand out necessarily as figures of resistance, but as they endure indignities and injustice they push back.

All three texts remain relevant in the 21st century as we continue to grapple with issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. At times, the authors themselves pushed back against societal norms and expectations. *The Marrow of Tradition* depicts an interrupted lynching, in which an innocent black man is narrowly saved from being lynched for a crime committed by a white "gentleman;" the white elite then blame the crime on an imaginary black man in order to preserve the white criminal's good name. By exposing the glaring hypocrisy of lynch mob mentality, Chesnut shows an acute understanding of white supremacy and the nature of racial violence. The observations Chesnut made in 1901 are still pertinent in 2019. As author Wiley

Cash argues, “Chesnutt was nothing if he was not a realist, and he would be the first to acknowledge that America is not repeating 1898—because 1898 has never stopped happening” (Cash). Wilmington is the perfect place from which to observe the impact of racial wounds: the city struggled to integrate public schools in 1969 and racial tensions escalated when arsonists burned down a white-owned grocery store in 1971. Nine young black men and one white woman, dubbed The Wilmington Ten, were convicted of arson with no credible evidence against them and collectively they received 282 years in prison. Their convictions were overturned in 1980 though they were not exonerated until 2012 (Mackey). Meanwhile, Wilmington had only recently come to terms with the facts of the Wilmington massacre of 1898. The official report on the massacre was published on May 31, 2006, 107 years after the event. In 2019, we still see the repercussions of the Wilmington massacre. Just two years ago, images of white supremacists marching with torches in Charlottesville, North Carolina dominated the news cycle. The “Unite the Right” rally resulted in the death of one woman and numerous injuries; it also lifted a curtain to expose a version of America we pretended no longer exists.

Both Chesnutt and Faulkner depict changes in legal punishment and forced labor; when read consecutively, we can see these changes in a historical timeline. In *The Marrow of Tradition* the “Wellington Three” discuss the transition of black labor post-Emancipation. Once slavery ended, white men created the Black Codes to trap black people in a cycle of servitude; it became essentially illegal for black men to be unemployed, so black men either remained bound to their former owners as exploited tenant farmers or risked arrest. Prisons leased out prisoners in chain gangs to companies and private enterprises; once again, white men were able to extract labor from black bodies, though this time without the paternalistic duty and protection they had bestowed on their slaves. Aspiring poor whites like McBane made their fortunes off of this

updated labor market and were able to join the elite class, even as former-slaveholders bankrupted by the war were now impoverished. These economic changes helped fuel white supremacist backlash against a thriving black middle-class that resulted in massacres in Wilmington, New Orleans (1900), and Tulsa (1921).

By the time we get to 1927, convict leasing was rapidly falling out of favor. In “Old Man,” Faulkner shows us the conditions of Parchman Prison, a plantation prison still in operation in Mississippi in 2019. The prison is a highly regulated space in which inmates work the land under the constant surveillance of mounted overseers. When the flood overwhelms relief efforts, the Parchman prisoners are bussed out to the river to carry out rescue missions by boat. Even though he cannot swim, the Tall Convict is directed to row out in search of survivors¹. The boat flips and the Tall Convict loses his partner; he finds a pregnant woman and spends seven weeks desperately trying to get her to safety so he can find his way back to Parchman. The prison officials assume that the Tall Convict has drowned so they declare him dead. Though he returns to prison of his own accord, the prison officials sentence him to an additional ten years for “escaping” in an effort to cover up their bureaucratic mistake. In a system that extracts labor as punishment, the Tall Convict is only valuable when he is working. Like Chesnutt, Faulkner shows that bodies are disposable when they do not perform as intended.

Though Welty does not examine forced labor, her stories often depict how communities use surveillance to command conformity and how women are punished within the social arena when they do not conform to these expectations. In “June Recital,” Miss Eckhart is too loud, too large, and too foreign for the Morgana community. In many ways, she refuses to conform to the

¹During the 2018 California wildfires, prisoners were paid one dollar a day to serve as firefighters, showing how much we value the lives of incarcerated people today.

prescribed behaviors of a southern lady: she is unmarried but militant rather than meek; her grief for Mr. Sissum is too visible; she refuses to fully assimilate, cooking German meals and using German phrases. Miss Eckhart's worst transgression, however, is that after she is raped she refuses to leave town: the town resents her for staying in Morgana because it both reminds them that it is not as safe as they want to believe, and that she is a "ruined woman". Welty mentions the rape in passing, in one of many nonchalant references to violence that runs throughout her work. As Noel Polk notes, "Violence in Welty is, to the contrary, so normal a part of women's every day experience as to be practically unnoticeable"(Polk 185). Not only is violence against women "normal" in Welty's work, the threat of sexual violence is also woven into the fabric of her stories, as my essay explores.

As a female author, Welty addresses the ways in which women are punished for being victims of sexual violence while perpetrators go unpunished. Miss Eckhart scrapes together a living teaching piano lessons; with her meager income, she rents a room in Miss Snowdie's house and uses a room on the first floor as her music studio. As a tenant in the house, she has no control over the other tenants and is therefore forced to live in close quarters with a sexual predator. Mr. Voight flashes Miss Eckhart's pupils at each of their lessons and the girls learn their first lesson in sexual harassment – that no one will believe them, not even their fathers. The men in Morgana respect Mr. Voight because he is financially successful and has the appearance of respectability; because of his social standing, they automatically believe the best about him and dismiss their daughters' accusations against him. Welty presents us with the cruel irony of a rape victim sharing a living space with a predator, yet nothing about the situation seems out of the ordinary. In a society that refuses to acknowledge sexuality in public, any violence or abuse is considered a private matter, to be handled privately. Welty shows us how this attitude

endangers women and children, who do not come forward because no one will believe them. In Welty's fiction, it seems that the feminist saying, "the personal is political" holds especially true.

In order to explore how power structures affect communities in these works of fiction, I use Michel Foucault's work in each of my essays. Foucault theorizes how knowledge and power shape institutions, and how these institutions control bodies. In my essay on Chesnut, I use *The Birth of the Clinic* to think about the professionalization of health care and how marginalized bodies are impacted by this professionalization differently. The hospital is the central black site in the novel; I am interested in how the hospital shapes the narrative and how Dr. Miller's role as founder and doctor impacts his relationship to his community. In my essay on Faulkner, I use Foucault's essay "Of Other Spaces" to think about the key sites in "Old Man": the prison, the River, and the creole hut. I also use *Discipline and Punish* to think about carceral space and surveillance. Finally, in my essay on Welty, I use *The History of Sexuality* to think about ways in which we regulate and normalize certain types of sexuality, as well as how we punish bodies that do not conform. I will begin this exploration of types of power, control, and social attitudes toward transgressive and marginalized bodies in Charles Chesnut's novel, *The Marrow of Tradition*.

II. “SOMETHIN’ TO LIVE FER”: REINTERPRETING RACIAL HOPE AND BLACK FUTURITY IN *THE MARROW OF TRADITION*

Charles Chesnutt’s novel *The Marrow of Tradition* has seen a resurgence of attention since the 1990s, with most criticism focusing on identifying a figure of hope for the future of the black race¹:

‘You men are running a great risk,’ said Miller. ‘You are rushing to certain death.’

‘Well, suh, maybe we is; bet we’re gwine ter die fightin’. Dey say de w’ite folks is gwine ter bu’n all de cullud schools an’ chu’ches, an’ kill all de niggers dey kin ketch. Dey’re gwine ter bu’n yo’ new hospittle, ef somebody don’ stop ’em.’

‘Josh – men – you are throwing your lives away’ (294-95)

Critics assume that Chesnutt intends us to agree with Dr. Miller’s opinion that Josh Green is throwing his life away by taking a stand against the white mob. While Miller is a highly educated, eloquent, and respectable middle-class family man, Green is poor, illiterate, rebellious, and childless. Miller encapsulates Du Bois’ Talented Tenth, while implying that Green is one of the untalented ninety-percent². In this paper, I will use Josh Green’s death as a foothold to reinterpret his life. By re-examining Green’s investment in black public spaces, his use of deformation of mastery, and his turn towards death, I argue that we need to recognize Josh Green as a figure of hope for black futurity through his defiance in life and agency in death.

¹As I will discuss later in this paper, *The Marrow of Tradition* is based on real events.

²Although the list of participants in the Wilmington massacre includes a Josh Green and two Millers, none bear resemblance to Chesnutt’s characters.

Understandably, critics uphold Dr. Miller as a figure of hope for black futurity, as he is the most rational and successful black figure in Wellington (the fictionalized Wilmington, North Carolina). Miller focuses on getting to his family throughout the massacre rather than join the resistance: “[He] had not been willing to throw his life away hopelessly, but he would cheerfully have sacrificed it for those whom he loved” (294). Miller ultimately decides against becoming a “race man”, desiring to protect his family over his hospital. While he sympathizes with the desire to fight, he believes that interfering with the white mob is hopeless. Since Miller has “too much invested in the system” (Rutledge 137) we must instead look to someone who has nothing invested in the system to lead a resistance against the destruction of black Wellington.

Josh Green is presented as Miller’s foil as he rallies the black community to take a stand against the violence of a racially inspired coup d’état. Few critics address Green at all, and those that do misread him. Critic Gregory E. Rutledge gives Green ample attention, but mistakenly focuses on his epic potential as a trickster figure rather than the key to a black future (136). Likewise, critic Eric J. Sundquist spends considerable time on Green, but misdiagnoses him as a hyper-masculine figure that is canceled out when he kills McBane (445). Sundquist’s criticism focuses on the construct of masculinity, as if Chesnutt merely means to identify the best kind of masculinity for a black futurity. If we read Green’s death as useless we deny Green agency in choosing when and how to die. Critic Andrew Hebard claims that “Chesnutt undermines [Green’s] act of heroism by conflating it with revenge” and even blames Green for the destruction of Miller’s hospital (478). From the initial quote in this essay, we see that Josh Green is invested in Miller’s hospital. To blame Green for its destruction willfully ignores his intentions and his reason for going to the hospital, which he believes will be burned down. Green understands that the mob will attack black institutions as well as people and he chooses to protect

Miller's hospital. These readings imply that there is no future in fighting against white supremacist violence, yet Green stands up to the oppressive social system throughout his life, as well as in his death.

Several critics dismiss Green's agency predominantly due to his death, since "it is William Miller who survives as what Chesnutt sees as the most rational and constructive posture for blacks to assume" (Yarborough 326). Miller's survival is not enough to qualify him as the only model of black futurity; likewise, just because Green dies does not disqualify him. It is time to reevaluate western views of agency: that death can only mean failure rather than an investment in future generations. Present criticism fails to recognize the power, agency, and futurity in Josh Green's actions, words, and death and in doing so, mimics the erasure of people of color from the American narrative.

These critical readings are problematic for several reasons. Most importantly, Josh Green has agency; he does not, as Miller says, throw his life away. While he does seek vengeance for his father's murder, he is not bloodthirsty or reckless. Josh Green actively defies the racial stereotype of the "black beast": he is not inherently violent and he does not have a death wish. He explains to Miller that "w'en de ole 'oman dies, doctuh, an' I gits a good chance at dat w'ite man, – dere ain' no use talkin', suh! –dere's gwine ter be a mix-up, an' a fune'al, er two fune'als," (Chesnutt 114). Green has no interest in killing anyone other than his father's murderer and he has set up strict limitations around this vengeance: since his mother depends on him as her caregiver, he will not kill McBane until she has died. Despite his intense desire for revenge, Josh Green prioritizes his mother's needs to his own. In his defense of the black hospital, Green also prioritizes his community to his own safety. It is imperative to examine *why* Green defends the hospital over other potential targets, which are all within the same area of

town. He does not protect the school, which symbolizes the traditional uplift narrative of the Talented Tenth, or the church, which looks to the afterlife rather than the earthly problems of the present. Josh Green leads his men to the hospital to protect the defenseless of his community: the ill, the infirm, and the incapacitated.

The destruction of successful black institutions was a real concern with a real precedent. In 1898, the only successful coup d'état on American soil occurred in Wilmington, North Carolina (Mulrooney 112). Local elections in 1894 and 1896 resulted in a Republican-Fusionist controlled government, which prominent white Democrats saw as another example of “Negro domination”: as black men gained political power, their economic advances seemed all the more threatening (1898 Wilmington Race Riot Commission 34). Democrats hatched a plot to steal the election by inciting racial outrage and intimidating black voters with threats of violence. Just before the election, the Democrats republished an editorial by a black editor named Alex Manly, who countered the “black beast” rape narrative by arguing that black men rarely committed rape, as lynch mobs often claimed, and consensual affairs occurred between black men and white women (1898 Wilmington Race Riot Commission 121). In the fictionalized version of the editorial, Chesnutt writes that it “touched the Southern white man in his most sensitive spot. To him such an article was an insult to white womanhood, and must be resented by some active steps, – mere words would be no answer” (248). The tactic worked: white men, rich and poor, took offense to the perceived attack on the virtue of white womanhood. Armed whites guarded polling stations to prevent black voters from casting their ballots and polls were rigged to ensure that the Fusionist party lost (Mulrooney 138).

After stealing the election, the Democrats drafted a White Declaration of Independence and ordered the immediate resignation of current elected officials. They demanded that Manly,

along with several prominent black men and Fusionists, leave town within twenty-four hours (Mulrooney 139). When they did not receive a reply the next morning, armed white supremacists burned down Manly's press along with other black public buildings and took to the streets. The governor sent State Guard units to Wilmington, including one unit to guard the city hospital, but without a declaration of emergency, the federal government refused to respond (1898 Wilmington Race Riot Commission 151). By the end of the coup d'état, there were an estimated six to 100 dead and 2,100 displaced African Americans. There were no white casualties (North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 272).

With family members living in Wilmington, Charles Chesnutt heard first-hand accounts of the racial attack on the black community (Mulrooney 152). With the only local black press in ashes, most national newspapers claimed that African Americans instigated the violence. In response, Charles Chesnutt published *The Marrow of Tradition*, an intentionally fictionalized but not inaccurate account of the events leading up to the massacre, to try to set the record straight.

Healing Black Spaces and the "Medical Gaze"

Dr. Miller's hospital is an important site throughout *The Marrow of Tradition*, yet the black hospital was not an actual place in Wilmington (Mulrooney 155). With no factual basis, we need to consider why Chesnutt created the fictional hospital, what the hospital represents for Chesnutt, and why Chesnutt has the mob burn down the hospital instead of Manly's press in order to better understand why Josh Green tries to protect the hospital. In order to do this, I will use Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* to understand how the hospital is a site of biopolitical power and how the "medical gaze" helps clarify Dr. Miller's role in Wellington society.

In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault theorizes that modern medicine changed how we think about the human body, death, and disease. As doctors became able to explore sick bodies, they developed new language to describe bodies and illness. This language contributed to the development of the medical profession, and as doctors claimed increasing knowledge about the human body, they treated bodies as objects in need of regulation. Medicine became linked to the destiny of the state (as in Foucault's writing on other systems of knowledge and institutions), and the hospital clinic became a site of social and political power over the body, or Foucault's version of biopolitical power (Foucault 39). The professionalization of medicine also created the "medical gaze," in which doctors objectify their patients by severing their bodies from their identities (110). From this position of power, doctors dehumanize their patients as they focus on treating bodies, not people.

With Foucault's social theory in mind, we can think about the significance of Dr. Miller's hospital and his position within it as founder and doctor. Dr. Miller "spent part of his inheritance in founding a hospital, to which was to be added a training school for nurses, and in time perhaps a medical college and a school of pharmacy" (Chesnutt 50-51). As founder, financier, doctor, and teacher, Miller has, whether knowingly or not, situated himself as the most powerful figure in the hospital; however, his decision to build his hospital in the South stemmed from his desire to help "his people...by means of this institution to contribute to their uplifting" (51). Despite his privileged role within the hospital, Dr. Miller proves himself committed to the future of the black community with his desire to bring jobs and training back home. His vision of his community's role in Wellington's future, in which the black race will lift itself out of simplicity and poverty, aligns Miller's beliefs with those of Booker T. Washington, especially with the loaded term "uplift". Miller's desire to improve his community through education shows how much he values

his own; his belief in the power of Reason leads him to deliberate before taking action, though he will act to save another's life¹.

While Miller leans toward Washingtonian views, Josh Green's incendiary attitude toward the color line is much more aligned with W.E.B Du Bois or Robert Charles.² Miller warns Green, "You'd better be peaceable and endure a little injustice, rather than run the risk of a sudden and violent death" (Chesnutt 110). Unlike Josh Green, Miller brushes off several indignities, from his removal to the "colored" car on the train to being barred entry to the Carteret home. Miller has unique power in Wellington because of his wealth, education, and acquiescence to "a little injustice". His hospital gives him considerable clout within the black community and sympathetic whites, but no matter what he does, he does not have the power across the color line that he craves.

The only time we see Dr. Miller working, he is working on Josh Green's body. There are two scenes in which Miller almost performs surgery and in both instances, Miller goes to the Carteret home to perform surgery on their only child, Dodie. Miller is turned away from the first surgery because Carteret is a white supremacist (Dodie then coughs up the piece of rattle and no longer requires surgery); at the end of the novel, Miller returns to the Carteret home to perform emergency surgery on Dodie, and though he is admitted inside, the novel ends before the surgery begins. Through this encounter with Green, we see how Miller interacts with a patient from a lower class and how the medical gaze impacts their doctor-patient relationship. Though the

¹When Sandy is wrongly accused of robbing and killing Polly Ochiltree, Josh Green goes to Miller for help in saving Sandy from a lynch mob. Miller does act after some hesitation and indecision, while he also insists that Josh Green stay away from the jail (although Mr. Watson asks Green to what the black community has to say, as well as to try to find concrete proof of Sandy's innocence). Miller then races off to bring Mr. Delamere back in time to save Sandy.

²Robert Charles was in a "standoff with a white mob in New Orleans" in July 1900; Chesnutt based the character Josh Green in part on Charles (Fraser 364).

medical gaze Miller casts on Josh Green is a black gaze, he still looks down on Green because of their class difference.

While Dr. Miller tends to Josh Green's arm, Green remembers witnessing the Ku-Klux Klan murder his father and his childhood vow to kill the man in charge: "It's jus' w'at I'm livin' fer, an' I know I ain' gwine ter die till I've done it...somebody's got ter take keer er de ole 'oman. But her time'll come some er dese days, an den *his* time'll be come – an' prob'ly mine," (111). Green cares, and too deeply; his emotions often dictate his actions, yet he never forgoes his responsibility to his mother. Miller "had often seen Josh's mother...wandering aimlessly about the street, muttering to herself incoherently. He had felt a certain childish awe at the sight of one of God's creatures who had lost the light of reason" (112). From his position of power, Miller uses his medical gaze to diagnose Silly Milly as someone without reason, rather than seeing someone who has endured extreme trauma. His "childish awe" is another iteration of this gaze; he does not feel empathy for her suffering, just wonder at what went wrong in her brain.

Despite learning that McBane lynched Josh's Green's father, Miller cannot help but question Green's purpose of revenge. As he treats Green's injuries, "[e]very worthy consideration required him to dissuade his patient from such a desperate course" (Chesnutt 113). Miller judges Green for his intentions to seek extralegal justice, despite McBane's history of extralegal violence against black men. Dr. Miller wraps up Green's treatment, "laying a cool hand on the other's brow, 'you're feverish, and don't know what you're talking about'" (114). After reading fever on Green's body, Miller dismisses Green's entire narrative, belittling his ambitions as the result of an illness-base lapse in judgment. Dr. Miller contemplates Green's story and vow to kill his father's murderer and thinks, "When his race reached the point where they would resent a wrong, there was hope that they might soon attain the stage where they

would try, and, if need be, die, to defend a right. This man, too, had a purpose in life, and was willing to die that he might accomplish it” (112-13). This scene provides an important comparison between the two men and their attitudes toward violence and resolution. In all of their interactions with one another, Miller warns Green that fighting back will get him killed and Green responds with a willingness to die, if it is for a worthy cause. Although Miller strongly disagrees with and discredits Green’s tactics of resistance, he finds hope in Green’s sense of purpose. Yet even this hope is condescending; his medical gaze prevents him from truly listening to Josh Green and he believes he knows what is best for his patient.

Chesnutt creates the black hospital as symbolic of a safe haven for black bodies and a site of uplift and black futurity. While segregation was often intended to humiliate people of color and keep black bodies out of “white” spaces, Dr. Miller’s hospital is a refuge for black healing. Green attempts to save the hospital because it is a positive segregated social site. The hospital is the ideal biopolitical site – where the health and future of the black population is managed.

This makes Miller’s hospital the perfect target for white supremacist destruction. McBane leads the mob to destroy the hospital because he feels attacked by Miller’s success. By taking full advantage of the chaos of post-Reconstruction to make a fortune off of convict labor, McBane has risen from poverty to wealth; yet Wellington’s elite want little to do with a man of his background. Major Carteret and General Belmont tolerate McBane because he believes in the cause of white supremacy, but they do not respect him (Chesnutt 87). While the gentlemen do not respect Dr. Miller either, they acknowledge that he is ““a very good sort of a negro, doesn’t meddle with politics, nor tread on any one else’s toes. His father was a good citizen, which counts in his favor. He’s spending money in the community too, and contributes to its prosperity”” (252). McBane sees this as a direct insult, particularly because they talk well of

Miller's father but look down on McBane because of his lineage. Carteret and Belmont prefer respectable black men like Miller to crass white upstarts like McBane, and while McBane is indifferent to their favor, he strongly resents being compared to a black man, let alone seen as inferior to one. McBane's personal vendetta against black progress and racial uplift is merely a microcosm of what Chesnutt believes to be the opinion of white America. Contemporary critics accused Chesnutt of being "bitter" and promoting "a false perspective" (Lowery 423); instead, Chesnutt's interpretation of white supremacy has proven to be an accurate assessment and prediction of race relations up to the present.

Deformation of Mastery and Dialect as Defiance

As Southern whites feared the rise of black political power as a result of Reconstruction, white authors began to use black dialect as a way to discredit black agency. As critic Jay Watson states, "Guilty by association with the body, the black dialect voice could thus be safely dismissed – or at least severely discounted – as a political force to be reckoned with by post-bellum whites" (92). White authors exaggerated the dialect of a newly emancipated population to reinforce white supremacist beliefs that blacks were intellectually and socially inferior. Just as whites devalued the free black body, they considered dialect indicative of an inferior mind ready to revert back to its "savage" ancestry.

Chesnutt presents Josh Green in stark opposition to the caricature of the ignorant, low-class black brute. Green's dialect is typically set against "proper" English, and often in dialogue with Dr. Miller, the thriving middle-class doctor. This contrast provides a strong class distinction between the two men, but it also highlights their stark difference of character. Josh Green refuses

to moderate his speech in deference to his social “superiors”; he does not care if white men understand his dialect and he does not code switch based on his audience. Meanwhile, Dr. Miller speaks in grammatically correct English in accordance with his middle-class success. He has trained in Northern and European universities and converses with men of all backgrounds in his academic and personal careers. This education provides him with his livelihood, but at the cost of his connection to his community as he loses the ability to speak in his father’s (and Josh Green’s) dialect³. This “gap between the two views—symbolized by the gap that separates their language” (Sundquist 444) shows how far Miller’s classical education has removed him from the vernacular of his community. While on the Jim Crow car of the train to Wellington, Dr. Miller observes the frivolity of laborers as they enter the train; at first he is “amused and pleased. They were his people, and he felt a certain expansive warmth toward them in spite of their obvious shortcomings. By and by, however, the air became too close, and he went out upon the platform” (Chesnutt 60). Miller initially feels fondness for and closeness to the laborers, but he quickly feels stifled by their presence as they take up more audible and olfactory space. Despite his brief affinity for his people, Miller also thinks they are beneath him. As he seeks solitude on the platform he straddles two worlds in a state of double-consciousness, that of the Jim Crow car, and that of the white professional class.

The hospital scene is not the first time we *see* Green. Earlier in the novel, Green is a stowaway on the train to Wellington, but he is unidentified and silent. Miller watches as “a huge negro, covered thickly with dust, crawled off one of the rear trucks unobserved” (58). At first sight, Green appears monstrous, the embodiment of a “black beast”. Although Miller

³Du Bois presents a character with a similar challenge in the short story “Of the Coming of John.” After a Northern education, John returns to his hometown to teach at the local school, yet he finds he is now unable to speak their language (Gilroy 139).

acknowledges that he recognizes the figure, he does not identify him until Green cheerfully walks into the hospital. Chesnutt is conscious that this dichotomy between the monstrous beast and the jovial giant will transform the reader's opinion of Green, but only if we see his best side first. Had he been identified from the train, readers would find it difficult to completely dismiss a bad first impression. This moment also introduces us to Green's defiance against Jim Crow segregation: while it is likely that Josh cannot afford a train ticket, he also refuses to pay for a ticket on principle if it means riding in a "colored" car. By jumping onto the end car, Green ensures that his separation is self-imposed and that the space he claims for himself is not dehumanizing.

We later meet Green when he arrives at Dr. Miller's hospital "with a smile on his face and a broken arm hanging limply by his side" (Chesnutt 109). Despite his injury, Green is jovial and comfortable in Dr. Miller's hospital because as his injury is treated, he is free to confess the details of the racial fight to Miller without fear of repercussion or arrest. The man Josh Green fought is in the white hospital, where people are likely to ask more questions about injuries sustained, especially since the fight was race related, and where officials would likely report such fights to the police and seek punitive action. While Miller gently interrogates him about his injury, Green admits that he was in a fight with "one er dem dagoes off'n a Souf American boat" (ibid). Green uses the derogatory slur "dago" freely and we soon learn that it is retaliatory. Green informs Miller that this man is at the white hospital with a broken leg and missing teeth, but that Green refrained from killing him because "he might have somebody dependin' on 'im, an' I knows how dat 'd be ter dem. But no man kin call me a damn' low-down nigger and keep on enjoyin' good health" (110). Green refuses to tolerate disrespectful language about his race; he responds in kind to the man's insult with dialect and slurs. Out of the two fights in which we see

Green engage, both are in defense of the dignity and rights of his race. While Miller avoids conflict, Green refuses to allow anyone to degrade him or his racial identity, and by extension, his people. Despite these convictions, Green is capable of restraint: as caregiver to his mentally unsound mother, Green knows all too well what would happen to a dependent family without a provider. Chesnutt describes Green's magnitude and fury throughout the novel, yet Green never abuses his size. He may hospitalize men who insult his blackness, but the only life he takes in the novel is the life he sets out to take.

According to Houston A. Baker, Jr., a person performs deformation of mastery in the domain of dialect when the native speaker comprehends the dialect better than an outsider and the sound of the dialect appears monstrous only to the outsider⁴. Josh Green employs deformation of mastery in that he refuses to cater to or modify his speech to help whites understand him. Even the "eye dialect" looks distorted on the page, with apostrophes clipping into words in lieu of letters. During his final confrontation with McBane, Green says, "Dat's no news, Mr. White Man... We're use' ter bein' treated like dogs by men like you" (Chesnutt 302). Interestingly, this is the only time Green says "white" rather than 'w'ite.' Since this is what he calls McBane, it shows that Green has made a conscious decision to say 'white' properly. He surrounds the properly pronounced word with his usual dialect, accentuating the difference between the two to make a point that for Green, "White" is an insult.

As a poor black man, Josh Green already has limited social mobility, and by speaking in dialect, he further limits his social mobility. Sundquist correctly states that Green's dialect is "an explicit language of resistance and revolt" (442). Beyond using dialect, Green reclaims the word "nigger", applying it to himself and his fellow revolutionaries when he approaches Dr. Miller to

⁴ (Baker 50).

lead the men to the hospital: “[W]e’re lookin’ fer a leader. De w’ite folks are killin’ de niggers, an’ we ain’ gwine ter stan’ up an’ be shot down like dogs” (Chesnutt 281). Green invokes “we” to show his place as one of the “niggers” who will not be killed like an animal. By embracing the slur, Green takes back this loaded insult and re-appropriates it as a sense of community. The word becomes instead loaded with the power of resistance instead of the power of subjugation, showing that Green refuses to let the white supremacists kill with impunity, at least not without a fight, even in the realm of language.

The Problematic Passing of the First-Born

“But it was Exodus which provided the primary semantic resource in the elaboration of slave identity, slave historicity, and a distinctive sense of time” (Gilroy 207)

As I have shown via dialect, Miller steps down from his leadership role within his community to protect his wife and child; however, a stray bullet strikes his son and Miller cannot save him. If Miller is meant to be a figure of black futurity, we need to examine what it means that Dr. Miller’s bio-lineage is cut off. The passing of the first-born alludes to both W.E.B. Du Bois’ heartfelt essay on the death of his son⁵, as well as the Old Testament story of Passover. Du Bois’ essay invokes a black lineage that shares the plight of the Jewish people, and yet, his first-born’s death assumes an Egyptian fate: if his first-born dies, he has not been “passed over;” in other words, his first-born is typologically Egyptian, not Jewish. This complicated allusion carries over into *The Marrow of Tradition*, as Miller’s son is similarly not “passed over,” but literally passes over to the other side.

⁵(Du Bois 130).

I begin this section with a quote from Gilroy about the importance of the story of Exodus in the black community as a way to express a shared narrative of enslavement, promise, and chosen-ness. There is historical precedent of using biblical stories in spirituals during slavery to provide solace, comfort, and even information. Slaves used biblical stories in spiritual songs to convey messages without being discovered by their masters, including details about attempts to escape along the Underground Railroad. Chesnutt follows this tradition by employing Old Testament allusions throughout his novel, such as Moses, the exodus, and Mosaic Law, all of which carry an added significance to his black readers. If we view the coup d'état as symbolic of the Passover, the death of Miller's first-born situates Miller in one of two ways: either Miller belongs on the side of the Egyptians and Pharaoh, or Miller is so removed from his Jewish community that he did not know to smear blood above his door to protect his son. Regardless of where he belongs in this version of the Passover, Miller fails to protect his lineage despite his efforts to keep the peace.

In a moment of contemplation, Miller thinks,

The race which at the last shall inherit the earth...will be the race which remains longest upon it. The negro was here before the Anglo-Saxon was evolved, and his thick lips and heavy-lidded eyes looked out from the inscrutable face of the Sphinx across the sands of Egypt while yet the ancestors of those who now oppress him were living in caves, practicing human sacrifice, and painting themselves with woad – and the negro is here yet. (62)

This loaded passage is worth a closer look. Miller aligns the 'negro' with Egypt as the architects of an exceptional black empire, as the epic monument of the Sphinx displays distinctively black features in his 'thick lips and heavy-lidded eyes'. Compared to the elegance of the Sphinx, the 'Anglo-Saxon' was in a state of barbarity, 'living in caves, practicing human sacrifice, and

painting themselves with woad⁶.’ While white supremacist authors claimed black people were only one step back from reverting to back to pre-slavery “savagery”, Chesnutt shows us the cultivated past of a black dynasty against a barbaric white race. There is another layer to this history lesson, though; there is a contemporary critique in the passage: “before the Anglo-Saxon was evolved...[they] were practicing human sacrifice, and painting themselves with woad.” What is lynching if not a “human sacrifice” to the cause of white supremacy? Cannot blackface be a version of “painting themselves with woad”? Later in the novel, a privileged white man dons blackface to implicate his grandfather’s devoted servant in the robbery and death of an elderly white lady; Sandy is nearly lynched for the crime, and is only spared when his master proves his grandson committed the crime. In a mockery of justice, a black man is presumed guilty until proven innocent and the guilty white man is never punished. Chesnutt’s searing critique of his contemporary society flips the racial script, in which people who perform these savage acts are reverting back to a pre-evolved past. Paired with Miller’s earlier thought about the meekness of the ‘negro’ explicitly assumes that the black race will be the future of the human race⁷, a point Chesnutt drives home by stating that, despite lynch mob terrorism and grave injustices, “the negro is here yet.”

While the black race has potent bio-political power, Josh Green does not. Since Green has no children, he has no one to continue his social legacy by carrying on his name. Although Green does not have children, he takes excellent care of his charge, his mother. Silly Milly loses her bearings after witnessing the murder of her husband and remains mentally unsound for the rest of her life, requiring a great deal of medical care throughout her life. When she dies the

⁶A blue dye used as war paint by the Celts, woad is also know as the “asp of Jerusalem,” which hearkens to indigo, a plantation crop dependent on the power of slavery.

⁷Matthew 5:5: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

morning of the massacre, Green is free of his remaining obligations. He *had* something to live for, but she died; now with nothing to live for, he at least has something for which to die.

When Miller refuses to lead the assembled black men, Green becomes the de-facto “race man”. He rallies his followers, ““Come along, boys! Dese gentlemen may have somethin’ ter live fer; but ez fer my pa’t, I’d ruther be a dead nigger any day dan a live dog!”” (Chesnutt 284). In Green’s mind, they are going without a race leader. The irony is that they *do* have a “race man”: in Josh Green. Critics hesitate to name him as one because he refuses to acknowledge himself as such. Scholars continue to read Josh Green at face value, yet this reading is racially problematic in that it dismisses the inherent agency in his choice to die on his own terms.

Josh Green’s Turn Towards Death

In *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy describes the turn towards death as “death as agency,” in which black Atlantic subjects, beginning with slaves, embrace death as a source of power that defies Western thinking (63, 68). Green and Miller disagree on how to respond to the massacre, and while Miller admires Green’s decision, he will not join him to defend the hospital. It is no accident that Green chooses to protect the hospital out of all of the communal buildings in town. He warns Miller that the white mob will burn the school, the church, and the hospital, but he does not go to the school or the church. These places are important to the community, but the hospital is where people go *to live*. Schools provide knowledge and racial uplift, while churches provide spiritual comfort and hope. The hospital alone heals the black body and keeps it alive.

As the mob lights the hospital on fire, Josh Green “dashed through the mob, which parted instinctively before him...raising his powerful right arm, buried his knife to the hilt in the heart

of his enemy. When the crowd dashed forward to wreak vengeance upon his dead body, they found him with a smile still upon his face” (Chesnutt 309). Green is exceptional; even the bloodthirsty white men make way for him. As a figure evocative of the “black beast”, Josh disproves the trope. He commits no injustices, instead defending his race against the injustice done upon them. He becomes a Moses figure, parting the crowd as Moses parts the Red Sea to lead his people to freedom⁸; however, his personal freedom leads to McBane so that he may avenge his parents. As Gilroy states, “The heroic figure of Moses proved especially resonant for slaves and their descendants” (Gilroy 207). Green is not reckless: he has always known and articulated that this is how he will die and he cherished his agency in death. From his first conversation with Miller, he says that he is saving his life for his chance to kill McBane, while admitting that he will probably die during the fight. That Miller “could not approve of Josh’s application of the Mosaic law of revenge” (Chesnutt 112) further entwines Josh Green as a Moses figure (it is also a clever pun on McBane’s missing eye). Previous critics claim that Green’s desire for revenge is selfish, or that he and McBane are foils that cancel one another out. Green values his life and his social responsibility to his community: he knows that McBane thrives on maiming and murdering black people and he intends to stop him. Green does not simply want vengeance; he has been saving his coin for something he *really* wants to buy: a future for his race.

Since Green refuses to conform to white standards, he does not attract things or people for which to live. He cannot become upwardly mobile without education or “proper” speech, so he remains poor. He cannot support a family, so he does not attract a wife and has no children. Without a future lineage, Green creates his own future. As he directs his men to defend the

⁸Exodus 6-15.

hospital, Green becomes a natural leader “with the eye of a general” and “the instinct of a born commander” (300-01). As a natural general, Chesnutt elevates Green above McBane, with his self-proclaimed title of Captain, while again ironically alluding to McBane’s disfigurement⁹. Green does not need to assign himself a title to gain the respect of his community. He sacrifices himself for the sake of his race. As Fraser argues, Chesnutt “distills black counterviolence, revealing it not as justification for lynching but as its result...he honors black militants not as fallen soldiers in a valiant, or even hopeless, war but as victims who were faced with an impossible choice: fight and die, or refuse to fight and die anyway” (Fraser 366). Green lives his life with the futurity of his race in mind and he wants that future to be on his terms. He defiantly carves out black spaces in his day-to-day life and decides to die protecting a black sanctuary that is worth more than his individual life: the hospital is the symbolic future of the black race.

Conclusion

Josh Green is a force to be reckoned with, a black giant who cannot be dismissed. He looms over the text: as a shadow riding the rails, haunting his father’s murderer; as a storyteller, remembering the stories everyone else wants to forget; as a “race man,” leading his men on a defiant march against the forces of white supremacy terrorizing their town. Green is also too large for the text: he overpowers each scene he enters with burning rage and massive love. Bent on vengeance for his ruined family, Green redirects his rage to defend Dr. Miller’s hospital from the white mob until McBane appears as its leader. Having served his purpose in killing McBane, Green is willing to die.

⁹McBane has “a single deep-set gray eye,” (Chesnutt 32).

Meanwhile, of all the black male characters in the novel only Dr. Miller remains in Wellington because he is invested in both black and white communities. By refusing to take the turn towards death, Dr. Miller turns toward whiteness instead, as whiteness turns to him. Miller is the only skilled surgeon able to get to the Carteret house in the chaos, and he arrives just in time to operate on Dodie. Having been turned away from the Carteret home because of his race earlier in the novel¹⁰, Miller is now not only invited, but the Carterets beg him to enter their home to save their child. He agrees, despite Major Carteret's involvement in fueling the violence resulting in the destruction of Miller's hospital and the death of his own son. While we do not know the result of the operation, the novel ends with Miller in the Carteret home with the somber yet hopeful, "There's time enough, but none to spare" (Chesnutt 329).

This does not mean that Chesnutt chooses Miller's actions over Green's; as critic J. Vincent Lowery argues, Chesnutt supports both men's tactics. In his biography of Frederick Douglass, Chesnutt compares Douglass to John Brown: "each played the part for which he was adapted. It would have strengthened the cause of liberty very little for Douglass to die with Brown" (Lowery 422). The same can be said of Dr. Miller; while Green's death helps the black community, Miller's death would not help further their cause. Chesnutt is not asking his readers to choose between Miller and Green; both characters represent different strategies to cope with racism in America that were being used at the time Chesnutt wrote this novel.

Josh Green sacrifices his life for his race because he knows that a future without freedom from fear and degradation is no future at all. It is a shameful failure of reading for critics to claim that Josh Green's death does not matter. I would argue that his death is the climax of the novel, intended to draw our attention to this seemingly fruitless venture. Josh Green's death matters

¹⁰Chesnutt 77.

because he invested it with agency as an investment in black futurity. His death is not a nullification of his life: it is a fulfillment of his self-determined purpose. If his death does not matter, critics argue that no black deaths matter.

While critics have struggled with interpreting which black character Chesnutt champions as the model of black futurity, I would argue that it is both, and neither. The models of black futurity that Josh Green and William Miller present will not solve the disease that is white supremacy. At the end of the novel, neither character has a bio-lineage, the city of Wellington has lost years of black progress, through the destruction of the hospital, and the deaths of Green and his men. Chesnutt's perceived ambivalence to an answer to the race problem is instead a careful and disheartened admission that neither accommodation nor separatism can save the white race from itself.

III. FLOODING AND FREEDOM: PARCHMAN PRISON AND MODERNITY IN FAULKNER'S "OLD MAN"

In Faulkner's story "Old Man," the unnamed Tall Convict and his fellow prisoners are sent from Parchman Prison to assist victims of the 1927 flood. When the Tall Convict is cast from his skiff into the Mississippi River, the prison incorrectly pronounces him dead (an ironic moment, since as a prisoner, he is already civilly dead). Presented with the opportunity to create a new identity for himself rather than returning to prison to serve the remaining eight years of his fifteen-year sentence, the Tall Convict spends seven weeks on the River trying to get back to prison, where he receives an additional ten-year sentence for his "escape." This essay will attempt to explain the Tall Convict's surprising desire to return to prison.

As detailed in *Down On Parchman Farm*, "the hallmarks of convict life were unpleasant enough to discourage recidivism in rational beings. While records are scanty for the early years of the century, available commentary suggests that few convicts offered themselves for recommitment" (Taylor 64). By the 1930s, Parchman was infamous for its abuse of prisoners and their unpaid labor. While we do not see direct abuse in "Old Man," we see reminders of violence as "the convicts work under the rifles and shotguns of guards and trustees" (Faulkner 21). Ted Atkinson argues that "the carceral familiarity of Parchman seems a welcome alternative to the unpredictable and destabilizing currents of *Woman* and *Old Man*" (Atkinson 57). I will argue

that the Tall Convict wants to return to Parchman Prison because the modernizing force of the flooded Mississippi River is too overwhelming; he cannot keep pace with its raging speed or process its thunderous sound, which Faulkner compares to “a deep faint subaquean rumble which (though none in the truck could have made the comparison) sounded like a subway train passing far beneath the street and which inferred a terrific and secret speed” (Faulkner 53). As the convicts are unable to make “the comparison,” as they have never encountered anything like a subway train, the sound and speed of the River would be all the more terrifying. By using Michel Foucault’s heterotopias, I will examine the ways in which Faulkner uses space to explore the effects of modernization on the Tall Convict.

Foucauldian Space and Heterotopias

In his essay “Of Other Spaces,” Foucault claims that the Western experience of space has become a “human site or living space” and is “the form of relations among sites” (23). Foucault posits that the vast majority of spaces are homogenous and normal; yet these spaces depend on heterotopias to define themselves as normal. While we have desanctified some contemporary spaces, we still hold some spaces to be sacred, such as the home versus the workplace. These sacred places are heterogeneous and can be divided into two types which are “in relation with all other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect” (24). These two types are utopias, which are sites with no real place but are related to the real space of society, and heterotopias, which exist in reality but “are outside of all places” (ibid).

There are six principles of all heterotopias, which include: 1) All cultures have heterotopias: While “so-called primitive societies” had crisis heterotopias, or sacred places for individuals in crisis, the modernizing world’s supply has dwindled to spaces such as honeymoons or boarding schools (Foucault 24). Crisis heterotopias have mostly been replaced by heterotopias of deviation, or places for individuals in crises outside the normal realm of society, such as prisons or retirement homes; 2) Societies can make heterotopias function in new ways; 3) Heterotopias juxtapose several incompatible sites in a single real place; 4) Heterotopias are linked to time and can function in one of two ways; either they “function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with traditional time” in heterochronies of accumulation, or they are linked “to time in its most fleeting, transitory, precarious aspect, to time in the mode of festival” in heterochronies of transitory time (26); 5) Heterotopias open and close in order to isolate and be penetrable: entry is either compulsory (as it is in prison) or an individual must enact rituals of purification in order to gain entry; and 6) Heterotopias “have a function in relation to all the space that remains” (27): Either they are heterotopias of illusion, which “create a space of illusion that exposes every real space as still more illusory” or they are heterotopias of compensation, which “create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled” (ibid).

Based on the above criteria, there are four categories that heterotopias can occupy: heterochronies of accumulation, heterochronies of transitory time, heterotopias of illusion, and heterotopias of compensation. I will argue that “Old Man” is full of heterotopias that account for the ways in which different spaces function in the text and how the Tall Convict encounters these spaces. I will focus on the spaces of the prison (as a heterotopia of compensation and heterochrony of accumulation of time), the River (as a heterotopia of illusion and heterochrony

of transitory time), and the Creole hut (as a heterotopia of illusion and heterochrony of accumulation of time). By using heterotopias to explain spaces in “Old Man,” I will explain why the Tall Convict would rather return to Parchman Prison rather than embrace freedom.

Parchman Prison

Using heterotopias to envision prison in favor of Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* requires an explanation. As Foucault demonstrates in *Discipline and Punish*, the 1840s American prison was a modernizing force; however, this is not true of any post-Reconstruction southern American prison, least of all Parchman Prison. I would argue that Foucault could not anticipate the way the American South reshaped the prison to reabsorb people of color into bondage, as his theory does not factor in the systemic racism of a post-Emancipation America. Foucault’s theory applies to prisons that served to rehabilitate and reintegrate wrongdoers back into society; but prison administrators did not believe black people *could* be reformed, and had to modify the prison model accordingly.

As Mississippi and other southern states adopted Black Codes to criminalize behaviors associated with black people, such as unemployment or public drunkenness, prison populations reached capacity. As Michelle Alexander explains, “[t]he criminal justice system was strategically employed to force African Americans back into a system of extreme repression and control, a tactic that would continue to prove successful for generations to come” (32). In order to accommodate the swelling number of black prisoners, prisons leased convicts to private companies and landowners, who provided conditions worse than in slavery, since employers no longer owned the laborers and therefore had little incentive to keep them healthy or alive. No

longer a fixed site, the prison became anywhere manual labor was needed (provided the owner had the money to lease inmates). When masses of ragged and dying inmates began using public roads to return to prison, public outcry over their ghastly treatment forced the government to find new “strategic forms of exploitation and repression” (ibid).

The State of Mississippi purchased swampland in Sunflower County under newly elected governor James K. Vardaman, which was painstakingly cleared by black convicts. Vardaman envisioned that “a good prison, like an efficient slave plantation, could serve to ‘socialize’ young blacks within the limits of their God-given abilities. It would not raise their intelligence or their morality, but it could teach them proper discipline, strong work habits, and respect for white authority” (Oshinsky 110). Although conditions improved for convicts, Parchman was constructed with the belief that blacks were mentally and morally inferior to whites. This prison’s aim was to keep black men out of the general population while using their manual labor for financial gain. In the early years of Parchman, which opened in 1904, only the “younger and healthier black men were placed at Parchman,” while women, white men, and elderly black convicts were sent to separate farms to perform lighter labor, such as sewing, gardening, or animal husbandry (Taylor 39). Meanwhile, all able-bodied black men “worked under the direct supervision of the drivers, and they labored in close, tight files that came to be called the ‘long line,’” an eerie homage to the antebellum plantation (49).

No part of Parchman looks like a traditional prison: it has “no walls or guard towers, no cell blocks or stockades. From the outside, it looked like a typical Delta plantation, with cattle barns, vegetable gardens, mules dotting the landscape, and cotton rows stretching for miles...with convicts in place of slaves” (Oshinsky 137-39). Its demographics changed, and by the “mid-1930s, white men made up nearly a third of Parchman’s inmates. More and more, their

working and living conditions approached those of the abused and degraded African American prisoners” (Smith 151). As white prisoners began receiving treatment as abhorrent as black prisoners, the public suddenly became interested in living conditions at Parchman. But moving from “*plantation* to ‘prison farm’ is scarcely a liberating mobility toward *modernism*” (Baker 92). What was briefly a modernizing force became a relic of the plantation system.

This is not to say that prisons remain outdated. Beginning with Nixon and expanded by Reagan, the American prison absorbed militarized technologies to become the modernizing force of the super-maximum security prison, which share little with the prisons from the late 19th century through the 1960s. As Angela Y. Davis writes, “[w]hile the convict lease system was legally abolished, its structures of exploitation have reemerged in the patterns of privatization, and, more generally, in the wide-ranging corporatization of punishment that has produced a prison industrial complex” (37). As Carol Anderson cites in her book *White Rage*, the ““United States did not face a crime problem that was racialized; it faced a race problem that was criminalized”” (137).

While my reasoning for discounting Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* is based on an absence of racial awareness, it is important to note that the Tall Convict is white, although descriptions of him are sometimes racially ambiguous. In the introduction to “Old Man,” we learn that he has “a sunburned face and Indian-black hair and pale, china-colored outraged eyes” (Faulkner 20). Regardless of the Tall Convict’s racial identity, Parchman Prison was created under the plantation model, which relied on slave labor. As such, all prisoners at Parchman are afforded some degree of the dehumanizing and racialized treatment of plantation slavery.

The State transformed the American prison to fit its needs, and as Foucault theorizes, societies can make heterotopias function in new ways. For example, in “Old Man,” the convicts

read newspaper articles about “conscripted levee gangs, mixed blacks and whites working in double shifts against the steadily rising water; stories of men, even though they were negroes, being forced like them to do work for which they received no other pay than coarse food and a place in a mudfloored tent to sleep on” (Faulkner 25). Merely days later, the guards at Parchman order the men into trucks to begin similar relief work. While reminiscent of the chain gang, this iteration is acceptable because convicts are deemed more expendable than the citizens in need of help.

As I have stated earlier, prisons are heterotopias of compensation, which are meticulously organized and regulated. As an example, Foucault offers the following: “daily life of individuals was highly regulated, not by whistle, but by the bell. Everyone was awakened at the same time, everyone began work at the same time; meals were at noon and five o’clock” (Foucault 27). This description matches the daily routine at Parchman Prison, in which inmates are forced to maintain a strict schedule of sleep, manual labor, and meals. Convicts “were roused by a work bell before dawn and allowed a short period to eat breakfast. . .at dawn’s first light the great mass filed past their cageboss, formed up in the yard, and underwent something akin to a military morning call. Then it was off to the rows” (Taylor 49).

Inmates were also required to wear regulation prison uniforms and use issued numbers as identification to replace their names. As David Oshinsky writes, “[t]he men got ‘ring-arounds,’ shirts and pants with horizontal black and white stripes; the women wore ‘up-and-downs,’ baggy dresses with vertical stripes” (137-38). Trusty-shooters, inmates who earned the job of armed overseers, “wore vertical stripes instead of horizontal ones” (140). The Tall Convict never asserts his name, so the reader knows him only by his descriptor. As Orlando Patterson explains, “[t]he changing of a name is almost universally a symbolic act of stripping a person of his former

identity (note for example the tendency among modern peoples to assign a new formal identification, usually a number, to both prisoners of war and domestic convicts)” (55). The uniforms and identification numbers deny inmates their individuality and humanity, categorically defining them all as criminals. The Tall Convict is so attached to his uniform that he has the woman scrub all the dirt out so he can save it for his return to Parchman.

Though the routine of Parchman breaks when the levee does, the guards maintain rigid control over the inmates’ movement. Without warning, “at midnight the sudden glare of electric bulbs and the guards’ voices waked them and they heard the throbbing of the waiting trucks” (Faulkner 26). Although convict leasing was banned in Mississippi in 1894, the prisoners are essentially leased out to the government for relief work. The inmates re-enact a land-based middle passage as they are crammed and bound into the trucks, “packed like matches in an upright box or like the pencil-shaped ranks of cordite in a shell, shackled by the ankles to a single chain which wove among the motionless feet and swaying legs” (52). The convicts’ feet are motionless, but their “swaying legs” suggest that they are struggling to remain upright as the army truck struggles to traverse the flooded earth. Bound as they are, if one stumbles, the collective will suffer the consequences; similarly, if the flood overtakes the truck, the convicts will share its fate. As Baker argues, “If there needs to be a carceral ‘middle passage’ ... that ‘passage’ is marked out by southern convict lease labor” (91).

According to Foucault, heterotopias must open and close in order to isolate and still be penetrable: entry is either compulsory or an individual must enact rituals of purification in order to gain entry. Entry into prison is compulsory, as it requires a conviction and sentence; during the sentencing process, “prison administrators invoked the ancient legal fiction of ‘civil death,’ divesting the inmate of rights and transforming him into a legal nonperson comparable to a

slave” (Smith 29). The prisoners only leave when they are forced to aid flood victims and only return when the guards decide to bring them back. After he is presumed dead, the Tall Convict is only allowed back into Parchman after the prison officials decide to cover their clerical error by sentencing him to an additional ten-year term.

Parchman Prison is also a heterochrony of accumulation of time, meaning that it creates an “absolute break with traditional time” (Foucault 26). Prison time remains stagnate: there is no past or future, only present. As Caleb Smith explains, “[t]he captive in the penitentiary is violently arrested in time, painfully fixated upon the past while the years creep by” (28).

Faulkner shows us another plantation along the flooded River:

Two hours later in the twilight they saw through the steaming windows a burning plantation house. Juxtaposed to nowhere and neighbored by nothing it stood, a clear steady pyre-like flame rigidly fleeing its own reflection, burning in the dusk above the watery desolation with a quality paradoxical, outrageous and bizarre. (59)

This passage explicitly links the plantation to the River. The burning plantation home signifies the effect of modernism on archaic models; the plantation house is subject to the modernizing force of the River because it cannot function without slave labor. Meanwhile, Parchman plantation is a heterotopic space outside of time and is thus immune to the River’s modernizing force. With legalized slave labor, Parchman plantation survives in both Mississippi and the text. As Marshall Berman postulates, fire and flood are the modernizing forces that wipe away relics of the past to make room for modernity, as “all that is solid melts into air” (21).

As Ted Atkinson notes, Faulkner described the Mississippi River in *Absalom, Absalom!* as a “‘geological umbilical’ (213)” (50). In “Old Man,” the chains connecting the convicts to one another and the truck are “twinned by their clanking and clashing umbilicals” (Faulkner 57).

While the Mississippi is the life force of much of the country, and therefore nurtures the land, the

chains do not provide life to the convicts. Rather, the chains bind them to their captivity, to their identities of civilly dead prisoners, in an anti-life force. This stark contrast provides a blistering critique of the conditions of Parchman prisoners.

The River/Old Man

As several critics have already noted, Faulkner intended “Wild Palms” and “Old Man” to be published together under the title *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*¹, “their ‘contrapuntal quality’” uniting the stories (Gwin 133). Early readers and publishers struggled to connect the two narratives, although critics have provided many interpretations. Minrose Gwin offers an incredibly engaging feminist reading of female flooding and how it merges in the two narratives:

the novel flows sequentially until the reader’s desire for the story reaches a point of fullness, beyond which it cannot go without flooding: “‘You can come in now,’ he said” (“Wild Palms” *WP* 22). Then the book stops to absorb and contain the flow of desire by folding back upon itself to proffer another story. (136)

In noting the power of the connection between desire and flooding in *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*, Gwin makes a convincing argument that the two narratives flow into each other because woman’s voice has infiltrated the text. Like the Mississippi River, this feminine voice overtakes the narrative when there is nowhere else for it to go. What is missing in her reading is an explanation for the stark difference in tone between the stories.

“Wild Palms” appears to be a tragic romance, based in the harsh realities of social and legal restrictions that create the need for backroom abortions. But “Old Man” refuses to don these dramatic overtones, instead having “the convicts cross out of the clearly defined and

¹When discussing the work as a whole from this point on, I will refer to it as *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*

plotted geography of their rural setting into the unplotted, formless topography of dream” (Lurie 135). The dreamlike landscape of “Old Man” dissolves into a waterscape that tosses the Tall Convict into a chaotic and carnivalesque world he is incapable of understanding. As a foil to the seriousness of “Wild Palms,” “Old Man” creates a humorous spectacle that would make Bakhtin proud. At the heart of this comedy of errors, is the Tall Convict’s quest to return to prison; what we do not know is *why* he wants so desperately to return.

Since the prison offers no concrete reason for his desire to return, let us turn to the River:

During the night an intact wooden barn had floated up. It now lay jammed by the current against the levee while a crowd of negroes swarmed over it, ripping off the shingles and planks and carrying them up the bank; eating steadily and without haste, the taller convict watched the barn dissolve rapidly down to the very waterline exactly as a dead fly vanished beneath the moiling industry of swarm ants. (Faulkner 62)

This moment offers a sense of foreboding about the destructive forces in and of the River.

Faulkner again² describes black men as ants to show man’s collective smallness in the face of the flood; the flood of men can dissolve a barn within the span of a morning, but the River can make all signs of man disappear, from the Tall Convict to entire towns.

As a heterotopia of illusion, the River “creates a space of illusion that exposes every real space as still more illusory” (Foucault 26). When he first sees the flood water from the trucks, the Tall Convict sees the reflection of cell bars: “there lay a flat still sheet of brown water which extended into the fields beyond the pits, raveled out into long motionless shreds in the bottom of the plow furrows and gleaming faintly in the gray light like the bars of a prone and enormous

²“the mudsplashed white men with the inevitable shotguns, the antlike lines of negroes carrying sandbags, slipping and crawling up the steep face of the revetment to hurl their futile ammunition into the face of a flood and return for more. Or perhaps it was more than this. Perhaps they watched the approach of the disaster with that same amazed and incredulous hope of the slaves” (Faulkner 25)

grating” (53). The River exposes the extent of the Tall Convict’s imprisonment as he watches from a truck to which he is shackled.

When the Tall Convict is in the skiff with the pregnant woman, he has difficulty navigating it to his destination. Margaret Rozga notes that the Tall Convict “goes in circles without realizing he does so,” showing that all of his movements are circular (69). In a nod to Mark Twain, the Tall Convict passes Vicksburg because the River is running backwards, just as Huck Finn and Jim pass Cairo in the fog. Constantly confounded by the River’s direction and violent motion, the Tall Convict never gets his bearings on the water.

Rather than the compulsory entry into the prison, the Tall Convict is ritualistically thrown into the heterotopia of the River in a violent baptism. The narrator tells us that “[t]hings had moved too fast for him. He had not been warned, he had felt the first snatching tug of the current, he had seen the skiff begin to spin and his companion vanish violently upward like in a translation of Isaiah” (Faulkner 121). After his ritualistic baptism in the floodwater, the Tall Convict does not know what happened to his partner. He cannot account for what is happening or where he is. A truly modernizing force, the river moves too quickly and is too loud for the Tall Convict to adapt, as “he seemed to see the trees and sky rushing past with vertiginous speed” (122). The speed of the River exposes the fallacy in the orderly monotony of prison regulation and routine.

As a heterochrony of transitory time, the River works to destabilize and confound the Tall Convict. Heterochronies of transitory time show “time in its most fleeting, transitory, precarious aspect, to time in the mode of festival” (Foucault 26). In this festival atmosphere,

hierarchies can be toppled, and the grotesque celebrated.³ As the Tall Convict traverses the River, he feels like “he was being toyed with by a current of water going nowhere, beneath a day which would wane toward no evening; when it was done with him it would spew him back into the comparatively safe world he had been snatched violently out of and in the meantime it did not much matter just what he did or did not do” (Faulkner 124-25). The Tall Convict thinks of the River as an active subject that will “spew him back” into the world. From this vantage point, he remembers Parchman as “the comparatively safe world” from which he has been “violently snatched;” since Parchman is a prison, this is a surprising sentiment. Yet the Tall Convict finds the River so terrifyingly powerful, prison sounds like the safer option. When the River again overtakes the skiff, he continued “going through the motions of paddling though he no longer even had the paddle now, looked down upon a world turned to furious motion and in incredible retrograde” (133). Like a slapstick comedy, he continues rowing empty-handedly from the crest of the wave, as if miming the gesture. Unaware that he has lost the paddle, the Tall Convict loses all sense of reality amidst the power of the River.

We can see the Tall Convict’s decidedly un-modern interior throughout his escapades in the flood. When the oar strikes him in the face forcefully, making his nose bleed yet again, he likens it to a mule kicking him in the face (Faulkner 123). Mules are a language he speaks: they are archaic plow animals used in the Parchman fields while the rest of the country is moving towards mechanized farm tools. The Tall Convict often reminisces about “his” mule, John Henry, a mule “which no man save he had plowed for five years now and whose ways and habits he knew and respected and who knew his ways and habits so well that each of them could anticipate each other’s very movements and intentions” (202). As the only man who understands

³See Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of the carnivalesque

John Henry, the Tall Convict shares the closest bond with a plow animal.

As Marshall Berman theorizes, “communication and dialogue become both a desperate need and a primary source of delight. In a world where meanings melt into air, these experiences are among the few solid sources of meaning we can count on” (8-9). As the Tall Convict encounters other people along the River, he cannot effectively communicate with any of them. When he approaches the shanty boat, he cannot explain to the man with the shotgun why he will not remove his prison uniform, “he was still trying to state the incredible simplicity of his desire and need until the man with the gun...began to stamp at his hands” (Faulkner 142). Although his desire is simple, he cannot express it in a way that the other man understands. Frustrated by his inability to explain himself, the Tall Convict raises the paddle, “shaking it and screaming curses back at them even after the shotgun flashed and the charge went scuttering past” (ibid.).

At the first sign of land, the Tall Convict races to the shore in an eager attempt to surrender. He screams, “I want to surrender! Can’t you hear me?”, continuing to scream even as he whirled and plunged splashing, ducking, went completely under...save his plunging unmistakable buttocks” (Faulkner 146). Even though he waves his arms as he approaches, the soldiers misunderstand and begin firing on him. He leaves his rear end exposed as a target for the soldiers in a moment of carnivalesque humor, which focuses on the lower stratum of the body. He manages to escape unscathed, all the while utterly perplexed as to why he is still free. When they encounter the ferry, the Tall Convict requests to be dropped off at Parchman: ““Carnarvon?’ ‘What?’ the convict said. ‘Parchman?’” (200). Although the Tall Convict suspects that the man on the ferry has misheard him, he allows him to drop them off miles away from Parchman rather than correct him.

Yet oddly enough, the Tall Convict can communicate with the Creole, who does not

share a common tongue. The two men speak “in their two patois, the one bastard English, the other bastard French” (Faulkner 218). The River brings people and different languages into interactions in unprecedented ways, a modern Tower of Babel. Yet while it disassociates the Tall Convict on the ferry⁴, he does not seem to mind the Creole “gobbling down at them” (211). The Creole’s hut becomes a sanctuary for the Tall Convict, and I will argue that this is because it is a heterotopia that shares the qualities of both Parchman Prison and the River that the convict finds appealing.

The Creole Hut

The Creole hut is a heterotopia of illusion, creating a “space of illusion that exposes every real space as still more illusory” (Foucault 26). The Creole invites the Tall Convict, woman, and newborn into his home without knowing anything about them or without speaking the same language as they do. Through miming, gesturing, and noise-making, the Creole and Tall Convict come to an understanding, as they hunt alligators in the bayou and share the hides. In this egalitarian household, the Tall Convict is able to earn his keep through hunting, therefore avoiding the charity he is reticent to accept.⁵ He realizes that at Parchman, “the land they farmed and the substance they produced from it belonged neither to them who worked it nor to those who forced them at guns’ point to do so, that as far as either – convicts or guards – were concerned, it could have been pebbles they put into the ground and papier-mache cotton- and corn-sprouts which they thinned” (26). Although the work is hard and his body is beaten and

⁴“That’s the way they talked,’ the tall one said. ‘Gobble-gobble, whang, caw-caw-to-to’” (Faulkner 201)

⁵He refuses money from the Red Cross man on the ferry because he doesn’t have “any way to pay it back” (209); he also flees the refugee shelter, clearly uncomfortable with receiving charity (231)

sunburned,⁶ he finds peace in his ability to work with a purpose. His back is blistered and marked by “the fierce welts of tails” of alligators, much like the whippings Parchman prisoners receive for bad behavior, but he is content (Faulkner 220). And while the hut seems un-modern in its untouched remoteness, the Creole maintains an egalitarian household that is neither patriarchal nor racialized: unlike the prison and the chaotic River, there is room and protection for them all within its walls.

As a space that seems to exist in its own timeframe, the Creole hut is also a heterochrony of accumulation of time, meaning that it creates an “absolute break with traditional time” (Foucault 26). Although they share the space for ten days, the Tall Convict continues to think about the “eight or nine or ten days” in the bayou (Faulkner 211). Although it is where he is happiest in the story, the Tall Convict cannot remember the length of time he spent in the Creole hut. However, in this heterochrony, “where even the senses doubted which was which,” the Tall Convict is free to work when he wants, eat when he wants, and sleep when he wants (ibid). And perhaps most importantly, he is finally able to get the “symbol, a badge to show that he too was the best at his chosen gambit in the living and fluid world of his time” when he brings back the alligator hides from his successful hunting trips (22). While he considers not returning to Parchman during this time, he changes his mind once the hut is destroyed.

Conclusion

Once the detonation of the levee floods the Creole hut, the Tall Convict loses his refuge from the world of the flood and recommits to returning to Parchman. The world is too chaotic;

⁶An echo of the introductory description of his sunburned face (20)

the Tall Convict has had enough of carnivalesque time and wants to return to his safe routine. Paramount to his return is to find somewhere to “surrender his charge to and turn his back on her forever, on all pregnant and female life forever and return to that monastic existence of shotguns and shackles where he would be secure from it” (Faulkner 130). Throughout the text, the Tall Convict shows an unreasonable disgust for the pregnant woman he rescues. However, the pregnant woman (who gives birth during their journey) is an ever-present reminder of the uncontrollable River and its grotesque power. Her body is both uncontrollable (she cannot prevent the early birth of the child) and swollen, just as the River has spilled over its boundaries and overtaken the earth. The Tall Convict ends his story with, ““Women, shit”” (287). For women, and the River, are reminders of the abject and grotesque aspects of life.

IV. BRUISED MAGNOLIAS: FEMALE SEXUAL AWAKENING IN EUDORA WELTY'S "JUNE RECITAL"

In perhaps the most in-depth article regarding female sexuality in Welty, "Wild Strawberries, Cataracts, and Climbing Roses: Clitoral and Seminal Imagery in the Optimist's Daughter", Rebecca Mark rightly states that, "we are in danger of silencing the richness, the passion of Welty's creation, by demanding that she be a sweet Southern lady, rather than the highly passionate, sexual woman artist she writes into every story" (Mark 349). Noel Polk argues that "the parts of Welty's work that might unsettle and threaten us since they are actually subversive of those so-called 'values' of family and community – 'place' – that are so much a part of what we have been taught to think of as central to 'southern' literature" (Polk 19). While critiques of sexuality in Welty may make some uncomfortable, it is an important aspect of her work that deserves attention. Reading her work through a lesbian lens does not say anything about Welty's own sexuality, rather, it provides us with a richer exploration of her lifelong love affair with words.

Existing criticism mainly focuses on heterosexuality or male homoeroticism; I will examine how forbidden relationships between women are presented in "June Recital" with a particular focus on sexual awakening, female homoeroticism, and lesbianism. Throughout my research for lesbian readings of Welty's work, I found no results that use the term "lesbian"

directly. While Rebecca Mark addresses female sexuality in *The Optimist's Daughter*, her earlier feminist reading of *The Golden Apples* focuses primarily on rewriting mythology rather than non-heteronormative desire.

Compulsory Heterosexuality and Homoeroticism Between Women

To contextualize homoerotic relationships between women, I examined the historical attitude in American society toward female relationships. Lillian Faderman presents a comprehensive history of relationships between women, in which she explains that girls were encouraged to show emotional and even physical affection to their female friends throughout the nineteenth century. Faderman explains, “[i]t was not yet socially threatening if occasional independent women – those who, for example, could eke out a living as artists – chose to devote themselves to each other. Most American women still had little possibility of becoming independent in a fulfilling profession; they must and would marry, regardless of their youthful emotional ties” (Faderman 305). Since it was understood that women would eventually marry men and become dutiful wives and mothers, there was no inherent threat in young women romantically involved with one another. Women gained enough autonomy after the First World War to make marriage optional rather than a necessity. Faderman argues that Sigmund Freud’s sudden rise to popularity in America “cast the widespread suspicions on love between women that had already been prevalent in Europe” (ibid. 298). “June Recital” occurs post-World War I and Cassie’s memories encompass the years leading up to and during World War II. *The Golden Apples* short story collection was published in 1949 amidst a renewed anxiety about the emasculation of men in light of self-sufficient women who entered the workforce during the war.

An urge to reassert “the heterosexual romance plot is represented as a social imperative that brings with it a loss of creativity and potential” for women (Harrison 298).

Welty uses homoeroticism between her female characters to explore the role of the female artist in a patriarchal society. “June Recital” is a coming-of-age story “in which homoeroticism opens the imagination and creative possibilities, while heterosexuality closes them” (Harrison 303). Virgie’s talent blossoms while she is under Miss Eckhart’s tutelage, but she stops developing that talent when she begins sleeping with men. Likewise, Cassie’s ukulele playing improves while she is attracted to Virgie and refuses to physically engage with boys.

Erotic nature imagery symbolizes burgeoning sexuality and artistic expression in Welty’s work. Throughout “June Recital,” magnolias symbolize the homoerotic relationship between Virgie and Miss Eckhart. The town of “Morgana was extra deep in smell this afternoon; the magnolias were open all over the tree at the last corner. They glittered like lights in the dense tree that loomed in the shape of a cave opening” (Welty 336). While the white flowers intimate female purity, the cave opening symbolizes both womb and vagina. In a comparison to the artist Georgia O’Keeffe, Mae Miller Claxton suggests Welty “creates her own Language of Flowers, intertwining the written text of her story with the ‘text’ of the garden” (324). This Language allows women to address their sexuality through floral imagery, a traditionally feminine trope that is erotically coded. The most startling example is of the bruised magnolia flower that Virgie presents to Miss Eckhart before her piano lesson¹: that the white blossom is bruised symbolizes Virgie’s loss of innocence, as well as the inappropriateness of their relationship. Virgie “offered it to Miss Eckhart, neither of them knowing any better: magnolias smelled too sweet and heavy

¹“a magnolia bloom which she had stolen...the magnolia broken out of the Carmichaels’ tree and laid bruising in the wire basket on the handlebars” (Welty 350-351).

for right after breakfast” (Welty 351). That neither of them knows any better suggests that Virgie and Miss Eckhart are acting outside of the acceptable behavior for mentor and mentee. Mark states that the magnolia “blossom, a sexual symbol, is a physical manifestation of the relationship between Virgie and Miss Eckhart. If we tried to name this student/teacher relationship, the terms ‘too sweet’ and ‘too heavy’ would do better than ‘love’ or ‘friendship’ or any other socially defined word” (“Dragon’s Blood” 66).

Throughout their relationship, “Miss Eckhart appears to be playing the part of coy woman to Virgie’s ‘suitor’ who woos her with flowers” (Caminero-Santangelo 133). Virgie presents Miss Eckhart with magnolia flowers before her music lessons, which Miss Eckhart accepts with gracious pleasure. Virgie continues to present flowers to her mentor, though not always magnolias. At community events, Virgie “hung Miss Eckhart with flowers while Mr. Sissum plucked the strings up above her. Miss Eckhart sat on, perfectly still and submissive. She gave no sign. She let the clover chain come down and lie on her breast” (Welty 361). Virgie’s clover chain is both childish and romantic, a fundamentally feminine gesture of weaving and presenting to close friends or an object of affection.

Until the turn of the century, relationships between women or girls were encouraged. This practice continued until the 1910s when “affection between women was becoming suspect” (Faderman 307). Mentorship between women suddenly suggested the same erotic component as the classical Grecian system wherein older men openly had sexual relationships with boys they mentored. In “June Recital” we may see how this female relationship is particularly suspect when it concerns art tutelage. Fear of the female artist is both a fear of “unnatural” attraction, but also a patriarchal fear of independent women with no desire for marriage. During a piano lesson,

“Miss Eckhart gave Virgie an armful of books that were written in German about the lives of the masters, and Virgie couldn’t read a word; and Mr. Fate Rainey tore out the Venusberg pictures and fed them to the pigs” (Welty 371). Venusberg can be a reference to the German municipality, implying that Fate Rainey tears them out in a show of anti-German sentiment. It is also a reference to the mythological mountain in Germany in which Venus holds court in a cavern hidden from mortal men; in this regard, Fate Rainey is disgusted by images of nude women and particularly the implications behind such a gift from an unmarried older woman to his daughter. Virgie is the “vaunting hero and the Venus” which posits her as the woman in control of the court, as well as over Miss Eckhart (Wild Strawberries 349).

Miss Eckhart presents a dangerous figure to the women of Morgana, who perpetuate the stigma of an unmarried, dangerous woman: “Missie Spights said that if Miss Eckhart had allowed herself to be called by her first name, then she would have been like other ladies ...Or if she had been married to anybody at all, just the awfulest man – like Miss Snowdie MacLain, that everybody could feel sorry for” (Welty 373). The women ostracize Miss Eckhart mainly because she is unmarried, which sets a bad example for their daughters. They claim that they would accept her if she made more of an effort to assimilate, including marrying anyone, regardless of how terrible her husband. Clearly the community never would have accepted Miss Eckhart, yet they need an excuse for their ill treatment of her. At Mr. Sissum’s funeral,

her round face seemed stretched...by a feeling that failed to match the feelings of everybody else. It was not the same as sorrow...Her vigorous nods included them too, increasing in urgency. It was the way she nodded at pupils to bring up their rhythm, helping out the metronome. (362)

Miss Eckhart’s nods, which the town later misidentifies as crying, are her way of encouraging the mourners to follow her lead, to get them to understand Mr. Sissum’s death. As the other

figure of non-hetero-normativity in the story, Mr. Sissum also did not fit into Morgana culture. When Cassie wonders, “But what could they either have done?” (359), she misreads the understanding between them as an attraction, when their bond is recognition of one another’s queerness. Mr. Sissum did not drown accidentally, just as it is no accident that he is buried beneath a magnolia tree² to highlight his feminization. Miss Eckhart gives “the daughters of Morgana’s community a forbidden vision of the passion, the genderless ecstasy available to the woman artist, Miss Eckhart is ostracized and incarcerated – punished more severely for her iconoclasm than are the men of Morgana” (“Because a Fire” 963). Although several of the men of Morgana perpetuate actual crimes, Miss Eckhart is most strongly punished. Likewise, “Virgie’s talents are a subject of dissatisfaction and disbelief in Morgana because of her gender as well as her social class” (Harrison 309). The Morgana women ridicule and ostracize Virgie because they believe she is too low class to play piano so well.

Hegemonic Masculinity, Sexual Violence, and the Male Gaze

The men of Morgana continue to intrude upon the female narrative in “June Recital” to reinforce hetero-normativity. This reflects the “American masculinity crisis coursing through the interregnum between World War II and the postwar 1950s” (Tipton 110). If women no longer rely on men there is a fear that men are no longer the dominant sex. The story begins with Loch’s male gaze as he spies on the activities in the house next door, but Mr. Voight and Mr. Morrison also insert themselves into positions of power above the women of Morgana. Loch feels

²“when the coffin was lowered into Mr. Sissum’s place in the Sissum lot under a giant magnolia tree...Miss Eckhart broke out of the circle” (Welty 362).

possessive over the dilapidated house and when “he saw the door prized open – the stretched screen billowing from being too freely leaned against – and let the people in, Loch felt the old indignation rise up” (Welty 337). Loch directs his anger at Virgie for leading the sailor in to the house. The billowing screen symbolizes Virgie, who too freely gives of her body. He is trapped in his bed by his illness and castrated by her sexual agency. While watching them, he claims that Virgie Rainey “would ruin any nice idea. She looked like a tomboy but it was not the truth” (336). Virgie’s sexual encounters with the sailor betray that she is attracted to men, not like a tomboy who would be merely interested in “male” hobbies. Loch’s jealous appraisal of Virgie is apparent as he makes her seem disingenuous. He then fixates on the sailor as “he was waiting for the day when the sailor took the figs” (336). Loch wants the sailor to take the figs, symbolic of testicles, to show that he is in charge of the sexual encounters with Virgie.

Loch continues to focus on figs throughout the story as he witnesses the escapades next door, indicating his imminent maturation and puberty. He dreams of “a magic tree with golden fruit... The sweet golden juice to come... he put his tongue out, and then his mother would be putting that spoon in his mouth” (337). Mrs. Morrison interrupts Loch’s sexual fantasy with a phallic spoon, again emasculating him. Morgana is full of “rusty old fig trees but the figs were the little sweet blue. When they cracked open their pink and golden flesh would show, their inside flowers, and golden bubbles of juice would hang, to touch your tongue to first” (336). The figs are graphically sexualized, both as blue testicles and pink vaginal cavities. Near the end of the story, Loch brags to Cassie, “ ‘I can show you how ripe the figs are,’ ” (392). As Loch is becoming aware of his sexuality, he is drawn to phallic objects as an expression of newly awakened desire and discovery, while demonstrating a hyper-masculine response to women.

Loch asserts his hetero-normativity to counter his anxiety about his masculinity. “He had the feeling that something was being counted. Then he too must count” (338). In a patriarchal society, there will always be a male fear of not counting, of losing power over women. He creates stories that revolve around men and, “before he saw anyone, he would just as soon have laid there and thought of wild men holding his house in thrall, or of a giant crouched double behind the window that corresponded to his own” (337). He does not envision women, but himself in the clutches of wild men. Loch’s fantasies are male-centric, and he transfers these onto the sailor “on a mattress delightfully bare – where he would love, himself, to lie, on a slant and naked, to let little cottony tufts annoy him and to feel the mattress like billows bouncing beneath, and to eat pickles lying on his back – the sailor and the piano player lay and ate pickles out of an open sack” (341). Loch imagines himself on the bare mattress, but places himself in Virgie’s spot to be with the sailor, eating phallic pickles while nude on the bed. He desires to be the sexually virile sailor and also *with* the sailor. The alliteration of the billowing, bouncing mattress offers an airy, dream-like quality to the scene.

When Loch tires of watching the lovers he moves his gaze to Miss Eckhart downstairs. He sneaks out of his window to get a better look, leaving the telescope behind, and “went out on a far-extending limb...He found his place in the tree, a rustling, familiar old crotch” (344). Loch trades one phallus for another, leaving the telescope for the tree limb. When the house sets fire, “Loch hollered out again, riding his tree, his branch in both fists” (387). He grips the branch between his legs in a masturbatory gesture in his excitement over the flames. After retrieving the metronome, Loch’s “lips clamped down, he held his bulging nightie and regarded it” (395). In his hope for virility, Loch looks on the metronome in his pajamas as if it is an erection.

While Loch is merely a silent observer, Mr. Voight presents a violent male sexual gaze looming over the girls. “While Miss Eckhart listened to a pupil, Mr. Voight would walk over their heads and come down to the turn of the stairs, open his bathrobe, and flap the skirts like an old turkey gobbler... When he flapped his maroon-colored bathrobe he wore no clothes at all underneath” (356). Mr. Voight wishes to intimidate Miss Eckhart and the girls so that they no longer inconvenience him with the noise from their lessons downstairs. Above Miss Eckhart, he echoes Virgie and the sailor having sex above Miss Eckhart’s head in the present, as well as Loch watching her from above. The threat of Mr. Voight’s presence looms over the pupils, so that all “the little girls and the one little boy were afraid of Mr. Voight’s appearance at every lesson and felt nervous until it had happened and got over with” (357). His intimidation tactics effectively make the children afraid and anxious, but they do not stop the lessons from occurring. The children and Miss Eckhart are held hostage by the threat of sexual violence within her home merely because he finds them annoying. He reasserts his hetero-normativity with threats are not without substance. He also “had done something that amounted to more than going naked under his robe and calling alarm like a turkey gobbler; it was more belligerent; and the least describable thing of all had been a look on his face” (358). He has done some unnamed thing beyond flashing the children, to which we never learn the details. The unspeakable menace of the male sexual deviant provides the irony that Miss Eckhart does not lose pupils due to Mr. Voight, but rather to her emotional outburst at Mr. Sissum’s funeral; the Morgana community finds uncontained emotion dangerous to their daughters, not unsolicited male sexuality.

The perpetrator of violent hetero-normativity goes unpunished, yet Cassie is chastised by her parents, who dismiss her experience. She “told all about Mr. Voight at breakfast, stood up at

the table and waved her arms, only to have her father say he didn't believe it; that Mr. Voight represented a large concern and covered seven states" (357). Since Mr. Voight is seen as a respectable member of society, Mr. Morrison refuses to believe Cassie. In order to maintain the balance of power in a patriarchal society, men often refuse to believe female accounts that present other men in a deviant light. Mr. Morrison's dismissal of his daughter's word is nearly as dangerous as the sexual threat itself. Cassie's mother is equally dismissive, telling her to, "Live and let live, Cassie," her mother said, meaning it mischievously. She showed no repentance, such as Cassie felt, for her inconsistencies," (357). Like the saying "boys will be boys" is used to excuse sexual assault, Mrs. Morrison makes light of the encounters. Cassie is repelled by her mother's lighthearted attitude toward Mr. Voight versus the outrage she directs at Morgana outcasts.

Rather than fear male aggression towards his daughter, Mr. Morrison fears independence in women. During Amelia Earhart's iconic flight, Loch remembers that, "the telescope had been gripped in his father's hand like a big stick, some kind of protective weapon for what was to come" (335). While he takes the family outside to watch the flight, Mr. Morrison holds the phallic telescope like a weapon to protect them from women's autonomy and independence. The similarity between Earhart and Eckhart clearly associates the danger present in both women in encouraging girls to disregard social expectations. Patricia Yaeger argues that, "Welty's use of phallic imagery keeps us continually aware of the tensions between the young girls' desires and the society which tries to shape their desires" ("Dangling Signifier" 431). The phallus continues to intrude the female space of the story as a reminder of male dominance and assertion of power. The phallic symbol is "a signifier which is clearly out of place, which dominates and speaks out

of turn, and yet by its very displacement, controls and disturbs those patterns of culture which women themselves have begun to initiate” (“Dangling Signifier” 431).

Female Artistry and Sexual Awakening

The female artists push back against the social restrictions enforced by the Morgana community through their music. The mothers going to the Rook party “were clicking their summery heels and drowning out...A little tune...coming from the piano in the vacant house” (Welty 339). Their pageantry drowns out Miss Eckhart’s music, indicative of their attitude towards her and independent women. Welty presents music as a female art and when Cassie hears Fur Elise, it is played “in a labored, foolish way. Was it a man, using one finger?” (366). Cassie assumes that only a man could play that poorly. She also notes that Loch can never tell songs apart, even when he is dressed in drag (382).

According to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s *Between Men*, there is a strong contrast between men and women regarding the sexual continuum. While men specifically have a break in the continuum between homosocial desire and homosexual attraction, women who love women and have women’s interests in mind are along an undisrupted continuum. Sedgwick accounts for this difference by suggesting the mandates of “obligatory heterosexuality” are a piece of a larger male-dominated, patriarchal structure of “kinship systems,” wherein “homophobia is a *necessary* consequence of such patriarchal institutions as heterosexual marriage” (3). The concept of the “erotic triangle” shows that the bond between the two male rivals is stronger than the bond between either man and the beloved (21). The two men compete for the same woman to repress erotic feelings for one another. The triangle is also based on the Freudian Oedipal Complex,

which dictates heteronormative behavior. Welty essentially queers the erotic triangle to address female sexuality. The inverse of the “erotic triangle” situates Cassie Morrison, Virgie Rainey, and Miss Eckhart in a love triangle as a means to discuss Cassie’s sexual awakening through her attraction to Virgie and to Virgie’s brazen sexuality. Virgie’s relationship with Miss Eckhart is closer than that of simply mentor and mentee and Cassie envies Virgie for Miss Eckhart’s attention and favor.

When Miss Eckhart plays her recital in front of her pupils during the storm, they are bewitched by what they see and hear. Coming “from Miss Eckhart, the music made all the pupils uneasy, almost alarmed; something had burst out, unwanted, exciting, from the wrong person’s life. This was some brilliant thing too splendid for Miss Eckhart, piercing and striking the air around her” (364). Her passion and talent scares the girls with its honesty; this makes them see her as something more than a spinster piano teacher, which the Morgana community does not want her to be. This unbridled display of emotion is “a forbidden vision of the passion, the genderless ecstasy available to the woman artist” (Yaeger, “Because a Fire” 963), which allows the girls to see life beyond marriage and social convention. While playing, Miss Eckhart’s face contours, “erasing boundaries of gender, social status, even species” (Harrison 307). The female artist is dangerous and needs to be put in her place. Cassie does this by thinking about what “had happened to Miss Eckhart instead of about the music she was playing” (Welty 365). By bringing back Miss Eckhart’s violent rape, Cassie takes away her glory. She thinks, while she “had to listen, to the music that perhaps more than anything it was the nigger in the hedge, the terrible fate that came on her, that people could not forgive Miss Eckhart” (365). Since the music is forced on the girls, Cassie recalls when Miss Eckhart was forced upon. The Morgana women

blame Miss Eckhart for being attacked because it reminds them of shame and danger. The specter of the deranged black man provides a convenient bogeyman; then it is easier for them to blame the victim than address issues within the community.

Once the song ends, the girls “all ran out in the slackening rain without another word, scattering in three directions by the mimosa tree, its flowers like wet fur” (366). They divert three separate ways to mimic the erotic triangle between Cassie, Virgie, and Miss Eckhart. The mimosa blossoms evoke female arousal to symbolize the girls’ discovery of the power of their artistry.

Cassie begins as the figure of hetero-normativity: she submits to social protocol, her artistic tendencies are contained and approved by the ladies of Morgana, and she acts according to social norms. Cassie spends her day dyeing a scarf, demonstrating a safe artistry that the Morgana women approve. She “hung it in different dyes. The strings were supposed to leave white lines in the colors, like a spiderweb. You couldn’t possibly have any idea what you would get when you untied your scarf; but Missie Spights said there had never been one yet that didn’t take the breath away” (346-347). The spider web imagery echoes Miss Eckhart, the original artist. Cassie is also an artist, but she shows restraint and replicates the art of other women. Cassie once “painted a hair-receiver with rosebuds and caught it on fire drying it” (339). Cassie’s art projects are all superficial; they are decorations within the home or for personal adornment.

Although she follows the rules, Cassie longs to be spontaneous. She is a “young woman, rather traditional and even shy or restrained...attracted to another girl or young woman who represents freedom from restraint through her daring behavior” (Harrison 293). While Cassie is a virgin who does not let boys touch her, Virgie leads men into the vacant McLain house to have

sex with them. Cassie yearns for Virgie's freedom, but her longing is not fixed on the men Virgie sleeps with; it is fixated on Virgie herself: "To Cassie, Virgie was a secret love, as well as her secret hate. To Cassie she looked like an illustration by Reginald Birch" (Welty 353). The repetition of the phrase "To Cassie" reiterates her longing to be Virgie and also to be *with* Virgie. She fawns over illustrations that remind her of Virgie's features. Virgie rides a boy's bicycle and rolls her sheet music rather than carry it flat in a portfolio like the other girls. She straddles the "boy's bar" (350-351). She adopts masculine gestures despite the disapproval of Morgana. Virgie would "throw herself hard and panting on the ground, her open mouth smiling against the trampled clover" (360). Cassie remembers Virgie's vivacity and inappropriate behavior. The trampled clover is symbolic, as is the bruised magnolia, of Virgie's loss of innocence and spoiled reputation, which she disregards with a smile. Virgie and Cassie begin to emerge as the two sides to the Madonna-whore dichotomy presented by Freud³.

Cassie describes Virgie's recital performance in highly eroticized terms, which reiterates her sexual attraction to her peer. Cassie recalls the "time Virgie Rainey was most wonderful in her life, to Cassie, was when she came out...wearing a Christmas-red satin band in her hair with rosettes over her ears...she had a red sash drawn around under the arms of a starched white swiss dress" (379). That she remembers Virgie's outfit so vividly proves her infatuation. Again, the phrase "to Cassie" is repeated. The red bands contrast starkly with the white of her dress and skin to accentuate her maturation. After Virgie finishes her piece, "the red of the sash was all over the front of her waist, she was wet and stained as if she had been stabbed in the heart, and a delirious and enviable sweat ran down from her forehead and cheeks and she licked it in with her tongue"

³The Madonna-whore complex occurs when a man only desires a sexual partner who has been degraded (the whore) and cannot desire a respectable woman (the Madonna).

(379). The violence and eroticism of Cassie's description of Virgie symbolizes Cassie's homoerotic desire and the rite of female maturity: menstruation and broken hymen. "The blood can be seen to represent the menstrual blood... the blood of life" (Mark, "Dragon's Blood" 85).

Longing for Miss Eckhart's approval, Cassie "yearned – she did want to taste the cabbage... But when Miss Eckhart said, 'Please – please, will you stay to dinner?' Virgie and Cassie twined arms and said 'No' together" (Welty 370). Despite her desire to try Miss Eckhart's cooking, Cassie chooses to side with Virgie. This is both from an urge to be close to Virgie and an attempt to win Miss Eckhart's affection by imitating Virgie. Cassie admits that she "could never go for herself... could not see herself do an unknown thing. She was not Loch, she was not Virgie Rainey; she was not her mother" (382). She will never have the bravery to break the rules or abandon convention.

Having been expelled from Morgana, Miss Eckhart returns to complete her finale, in which she will burn down the house where she taught Virgie signifying the end of her love and her refusal to bow under societal pressure. Calling back on the Language of Flowers, Miss Eckhart builds her pyre, including "green leaves and one bloom from the magnolia tree – carried in her skirt" (342-343). The symbolic lone magnolia blossom represents Virgie: her many gifts of blossoms, the scent of magnolia throughout their lessons, and Virgie's gift – her talent. The magnolia is the centerpiece atop the exposed piano, her sexual organ. Miss Eckhart adds matting to the pyre, and "she wove and bent and struggled behind it, like a spider with something bigger than he can eat" (343). The association with spiders gives Miss Eckert a sinister appearance, while showing her artistic capabilities of a spider weaving a web. Miss Eckhart "climbed up on the piano stool, the way women climb, death-defying, and hung the quilt over the front window.

It fell down. Twice more she climbed up with it and the third time it stayed” (344). The three times Miss Eckhart ascends are symbolic of the love triangle with Virgie and Cassie.

Ultimately, Miss Eckhart fails to destroy the house and her two bumbling captors lead her away to be sent to an insane asylum. Her humiliation is complete: the house still stands, and the two most foolish men in the story have stopped her. Cassie watches as Virgie passes her former mentor and all “she was certain of was the distance those two had gone, as if all along they had been making a trip (which the sailor was only starting). It had changed them. They were deliberately terrible...No one could touch them now, either” (399). The two women pretend not to recognize one another and Cassie is amazed to realize how much they know of the world that Cassie herself will never know.

As outcasts from the hetero-normative society, both Virgie and Miss Eckhart fail to escape the restrictions of Morgana. In a critique of the hyper-masculine fear of lesbianism and female artistry, Welty exposes the hypocrisy of Southern small town ideals. Welty seeks a space for female art and sexuality within a patriarchal society. As Mark states, the “deepest tension in all of Welty’s work is the woman’s struggle to become the agent of her own desire specifically by finding a convergence of the culturally constructed codes of masculine and feminine” (Mark, “Wild Strawberries” 338). Welty makes a space for both the female artist and her sexual autonomy by allowing Virgie to walk away.

V. CONCLUSION

The resounding similarity between Charles Chesnutt, William Faulkner, and Eudora Welty is that each author belongs to the middle class. While they have different social positions within the middle class – Chesnutt is a man of mixed race, though he can pass for white; Faulkner is a white man; Welty is an unmarried white woman – they all share a middle class vantage point and privilege.

While I argue that each author pushes back against some social norms and stigmas, none of these authors are radical figures. Each has been accused of “apologist” behavior or stances, and in some instances, rightly so. Despite Chesnutt’s biting take on white supremacy in *The Marrow of Tradition*, he holds classist views, especially in regards to the Black community. He challenged Booker T. Washington’s accommodationist policies, but he also prescribed to W.E.B. DuBois’ belief in an exceptional “Talented Tenth.” Faulkner famously declined a public debate with DuBois regarding racial integration in Mississippi during the Emmett Till murder trial, stating, “I do not believe there is a debatable point between us. We both agree in advance that the position you will take is right morally, legally, and ethically....the position that I take in asking for moderation and patience is right practically” (Roger). Faulkner’s “slow and steady” approach towards desegregation and civil rights shows his willingness to put the comfort of white people

above the human rights of black people¹. Welty pointedly argued that it was not the novelist's place "to crusade" (Welty 803); she also pointedly refused to call herself a feminist, despite the feminist undercurrents in much of her work (Mark 13).

Despite these authors' sometimes apologist stances in their personal lives, they make aesthetic choices in their work in order to push back against unfair or unjust social norms. In *The Marrow of Tradition*, Chesnutt uses dialogue to get at the roots of white supremacy, particularly in the blunt statements made by characters Josh Green and "Captain" McBane. Green often plainly states the purposes of Jim Crow and mob violence; he cuts through Dr. Miller's naïve optimism and belief in the American Dream by unearthing the true goal of these practices – to incite fear in the black population and suppress black mobility. McBane confirms these intentions in his crude and unapologetic outbursts with Carteret and Belmont. The southern gentlemen find his crassness distasteful, but only because they prefer to obfuscate the truth with a polite front and paternal romanticism. In "Old Man," Faulkner uses humor to show the absurdity of modern forms of punishment, particularly the carceral system. Time and again the Tall Convict attempts to surrender to authority figures, but his attempts are thwarted by increasingly absurd scenarios. The irony – that he wants desperately to *return* to prison, while authorities continually misinterpret his intentions – exposes the absurdity of a bureaucratic system that fails to maintain even the semblance of order. Finally, in "June Recital," Welty uses children's perspectives to complicate the reader's understanding of quotidian displays of sexual threats against women. Loch Morrison spies on the neighbors while he convalesces, and between the fever and his youthful ignorance, he frequently misidentifies the people, things, and actions

¹The "go slow" argument continues to resurface in every new push from a marginalized group for human rights, from the LGBT+ community, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the Me Too movement.

he observes. His unreliable vantage point forces the reader to question everything, including the purpose of simple objects (such as a metronome). Cassie, Loch's teenage sister, encounters Morgana quite differently: while Loch is primarily an observer, Cassie's perspective shows her interactions with others. Through Cassie, we learn of Miss Eckhart's rape; we see Mr. Voight expose himself to a room of girls; we hear her father's dismissal of her experience. All of this occurs against the backdrop of Cassie's own sexual discovery as she navigates the social rules put in place for "good girls," while her former rival Virgie breaks all of the rules and has sex with a sailor next door. Through these combined viewpoints, Welty examines the stark disparities between what girls are allowed to do and with what men are allowed to get away.

I have argued that these authors are not radical figures, yet each offers radical perspectives to social issues with continued cultural relevance. We cannot know whether these authors would have supported important twenty-first century social movements such as Black Lives Matter, prison abolition, or Me Too or Time's Up. What we do know is that their works of fiction belong in the conversation.

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Primary responsibilities included: account management of F500 clients, third-party instructor training, writing and editing training manuals, accounting and invoicing, customer service, supervising interns and temporary employees, and data management

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Cat Socialization and Kennel Care at No Kill Los Angeles (NKLA/Best Friends Animal Society, Los Angeles, CA (September 2013-January 2015)

MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES

Modern Language Association
William Faulkner Society