Bohemian Enterprises:
Modernism, Creative Labor, and Cultural Production, 1913-1962

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Abstract

Contrary to popular images of elite and isolated bohemian coteries of early twentieth-century Paris, New York, and London, the group of writers and artists known as modernists were surprisingly involved in the popular creative industries of their moment. From the 1910s through the 1950s, modernist writers and artists founded presses, design studios, magazines, theater companies, and architectural schools. They also worked directly with corporate media entities, in order to subsidize independent projects and contribute to the artistic character of the medium. My dissertation asks how modernists positioned their creative enterprises in relation to mass cultural industries, and how their literary and cinematic works characterized creative labor in its relation to dominant modes of mass production at the time. My core argument is that the strategies, tactics, and experiments modernists devised as entrepreneurs and freelancers were consistent with their formal and thematic critique of mass culture, as they explored, critiqued, offered alternatives to, and cautiously collaborated with cultural industries. Wyndham Lewis's interior design and magazine projects asserted autonomy from culture industries through satire, whereas Gertrude Stein claimed to have devised more advanced self-promotional techniques than Hollywood's. While Lewis and Stein maintained distance from culture industries, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nathanael West, and Ben Hecht worked directly for Hollywood studios. They were hardly Hollywood boosters, however, and sought to maintain boundaries between their literary and Hollywood careers by publishing critical fiction about the film industry. Orson Welles, a cinematic modernist worked sporadically in Hollywood, but also pursued independent production solutions through which he allegorized the plight of postwar political and economic exiles from the film community. Taken together, I ask how these efforts may have begun to lay out principles for the kind of flexible, contingent modes of labor that under the banner of creativity have now become pervasive.

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Introduction: Creativity, Modern Capital's "Sleight 'o Hand."

Johnny Sims, the central character in *The Crowd* (King Vidor, 1928), is profoundly alienated. A lowly clerk at an insurance company, he toils alongside dozens of hunched-over figures in the belly of monopoly capital, dreaming up advertising slogans to temper the dullness of number crunching. Born on the fourth of July in 1900, Johnny's father has raised him to believe in the potential of individuality and abundance of opportunity in twentieth-century America. But he is a dreamer, too creative and impulsive for his own good. A trip to Coney Island and a home-loan advertisement inspire him to propose to a woman he has known for a few hours, rather than continue his part-time studies. Years pass, he struggles to keep his family afloat, and the opportunities his father promised continue to evade Johnny. His only triumph in this narrative of downward mobility comes when he enters an advertising slogan ("Sleight o' Hand, the magic cleaner!") into a contest and wins $500. This brief success is eclipsed by the death of his daughter (hit by a delivery truck on a busy city street), which in turn catalyzes a series of misfortunes. He becomes contingently employed (as a vacuum cleaner salesman and a walking advertisement in a clown suit), and then unemployed and suicidal. In the end, although the outlook is still bleak, Johnny takes pride when he comes upon his "Sleight o' Hand" slogan in a cinema program.

Reunited with the products of his labor in the film's final moments, Johnny experiences a brief moment of disalienation within an otherwise bleak depiction of modern life and labor. The creativity that leads to this moment, however, also places him at odds with social and economic norms. When he should be hobnobbing with the company brass in order to climb the ladder, he is home juggling, playing the ukulele, and inventing lyrics. Instead of doing his clerical work, he thinks up advertising slogans. Only his creativity has the potential to liberate him from

alienation, yet it turns him into a bohemian outsider who favors alternative, risky, and flexible means of selling his labor over those available in the Taylorized workplace. In this way, he occupies a position similar to that of the avant-garde writers and artists of this period who have come to be called modernists. While many of these artists rejected and opposed current systems of mass production, others attempted to work within culture industries—often with the intention of improving mass culture, and with mixed results. F. Scott Fitzgerald, for instance, was eager to write for Hollywood. When given the chance, however, his scripts were repeatedly scrapped because he was too literary, too inventive with the format. Like Johnny, Fitzgerald was driven by the belief that individuality, creativity, and personality were the ingredients for overwhelming success in twentieth century America. Both were wrong.

Mass culture and modernism in this period formulated different but related responses to the routinized, stratified, and technocratically organized society of *the Crowd*, which has often been cited as an exemplary intersection of popular culture and avant-gardism. Vidor's visual depiction of the modern city's mechanized rhythms, abstract spaces, and cold inhumanity mimics the hard edges and abstract repetition of futurist paintings. It shares its preoccupation with advertising with such canonical modernist texts as James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Wyndham Lewis' *Blast*. Johnny is himself a modernist of sorts, not only in his creation of fragmented, cryptic bits of text but also in the way he wants to labor. His slogan creation mimics modern modes of artistry, as both offer several antidotes to corporate conformity: generous (if sporadic) rewards, a sense of connection with one's labor and its products, control over the means of production, and the thrill of innovation. He also experiences the pitfalls of modernist creative labor: contingency, inconsistency, and failed promises of autonomy.

While much critical attention has been paid recently to intersections of modernism and mass culture such as *The Crowd*, it is unique in its depiction of the risks, rewards, and shortcomings of creative labor. The film shows how, in the early decades of the twentieth century, culture workers developed models of flexible, contingent creative labor that served as alternatives against and modifications within mass cultural industries. Modernist and mainstream versions of creative labor emerged alongside and in conversation with one another. As Hollywood modified the Taylorist factory to account for the needs of a creative labor force, modernists gleaned inspiration from cultural industries in their own entrepreneurial projects. They launched magazines, opened retail stores and design studios, started presses, and formed theater companies. Many modernists moved freely between corporate and avant-garde sites of cultural production, and facilitated an exchange that promoted bohemian-capitalist creative labor and enterprise. The tenets of the modernist enterprise—disorganized innovation, collaboration, creativity, and (claimed) autonomy—would come to dominate capitalist discourse much later in the century. As was often the case for creative workers like Johnny, these values concealed the less favorable elements of contingency, exploitation, and appropriation that came along with cultural work. This ideological "sleight 'o hand" has become foundational in the workings of capitalism in recent decades, as global expansion and decentralization have provoked reliance on part time, contract, and unpaid labor.

In light of this correspondence, my dissertation asks how modernists conceived of their creative enterprises in relation to mass cultural industries, and how the literature, film and other expressions that arose from their entrepreneurial endeavors characterized creative labor in its relation to dominant modes of mass production at the time. The enterprises I discuss took diverse positions in relation to mass culture, and the men and women behind them often positioned their

work in relation to cultural industries, particularly Hollywood. Wyndham Lewis's interior design and magazine projects asserted their autonomy and superiority from culture industries through satire, whereas Gertrude Stein claimed to have devised more advanced self-promotional techniques than the studios offered their stars. While Lewis and Stein kept some distance from culture industries, Hollywood modernists F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nathanael West, and Ben Hecht worked directly for the studios, with varying degrees of success. They were hardly Hollywood boosters, however, and sought to maintain clear boundaries between their literary production and their scriptwriting, by publishing critical fiction that exposed the hard truths of the film industry. Orson Welles, a cinematic modernist, achieved brief semi-harmony with Hollywood, but for the most part remained an outsider who pursued independent production solutions and used his films to allegorize the plight of postwar political and economic exiles from the film community. Taken together, I ask how these efforts may have begun to lay out principles for the kind of flexible, contingent modes of labor that under the banner of creativity have now become pervasive.

As Laikwan Pang argues, with the advent of a late capitalist economy based in the input of ideas, "creativity is turned into a tool for economic development. While it may long have seemed so for those at the center of capitalist development, at this stage creativity gains democratic and liberating potential. Through the reification of creativity, freedom is celebrated, and a new type of democracy is conjured up, which is not based on political participation but on free access to creativity—everybody can produce creatively, and everybody can consume creative products according to individual tastes" (55). Such a turn was necessary over the course of the late twentieth century as new immaterial and disorganized forms of capitalism arose. Pang asserts that "in the affluent parts of the world, the new economy dematerializes not only commodities but also labor, in the sense that work is packaged as leisure, and hardship and

boredom are effaced by the promises of creativity and satisfaction" (56-57). Acceptance of these distortions relies not only on tendencies to romanticize Western design labor and obfuscate Eastern manual labor, as Pang asserts, but also in pre-existing depictions of creative labor as less alienated, no matter how industrial the context.

I work from the premise that as capitalism transforms in ways that destabilize and undermine workers' lives, it must invoke pre-existing cultural tropes in order to facilitate and justify such transitions, or as Luke Boltanski and Ève Chiapello put it, capitalism "mobilizes 'already-existing' things whose legitimacy is guaranteed" (20). Modernist creative labor is not the only precedent for current conditions by any means, but it is a significant contributor. During the period of historical modernism, independent artists and writers often balanced their more esoteric work with labor in the culture industry and independent creative enterprises. However, the revolutionary claims of modernist formal experiments required the assertion of a high degree of autonomy. My core argument is that the strategies, tactics, and experiments modernists devised to navigate this contradiction were consistent with their formal and thematic critique of mass culture in that they explored, critiqued, offered alternatives to, and involved themselves cautiously in cultural industries. In order to assert autonomy, they portrayed themselves as heroic innovators capable of revolutionizing creative labor and combatting alienation. In doing so they contributed to early narratives of creative labor as an engine of corporate innovation, a concept that has come to dominate neoliberal discourse.

The chapters that follow explore a range of activities that I characterize as bohemian enterprises, a term that describes individual and collective efforts undertaken by modernist writers and filmmakers (as well as some critics and artists) between 1913 and 1962 to produce, distribute, and sell culture on their own terms. These labors are not necessarily fully autonomous,

but also encompass "enterprises of the self" a term Mark Banks uses to describe modes of freelance and contract labor in which creative workers labor within industries but attempt to maintain autonomy and achieve self-actualization (52).[1] I address five primary types of enterprise over the course of four chapters: the creation of independent businesses run and staffed by modernists, such as Roger Fry's Omega Workshops, and Lewis' *Blast* magazine and Rebel Arts Centre; the labors of self-publication, distribution, and promotion epitomized in Stein's career; freelance and contract work within cultural industries, such as that taken on by Fitzgerald, West, and Hecht in Hollywood; semi-independent media production, a practice established through Hecht's and partner Charlie Lederer's independent production wing within Paramount Studios; and fully independent filmmaking, a practice Welles pioneered while self-exiled in post-WWII Europe. Ultimately, all of these enterprises critiqued and engaged cultural industries, striking a careful balance of cooperation and rejection that can be read both from the resulting expressions in literature and film and from the career choices of the men and women behind them. Although these activities were not necessarily deliberately planned or mutually orchestrated, together they amount to the beginnings of alternative labor solutions that could take hold later in the century as Fordist and Taylorist systems of production waned.

Modernism's ongoing influence on creative labor and industries calls into question critical trajectories in which western cultural aesthetics progress from realism, to modernism (as naturalism overlaps both), and to postmodernism in rough correspondence with the successive regimes of industrial, monopoly, and global finance capital. The intersection of modernism and creative labor calls into question the historical framework for many debates over creative labor

[1] Banks places these activities in a larger framework of "enterprise culture," which entails "a policy and public language based on the primacy of individual needs, choice and market competition, and a refusal of the necessity of state intervention" (Banks 47).

that assume it is primarily a feature of post-industrial global finance capital. It also undermines the claim that modernism is a historically defunct movement. As I will show, exploitation in the name of creativity dates back to the early twentieth century, and its ongoing (and ever-expanding prevalence) in today's economy conversely suggests that modernism did not die, but rather found new life in corporate culture.

While modernism is usually associated with the economic regime of "Fordism" that was emergent in the U.S. from 1914 through the 1920s and 1930s and dominant in the U.S., (and to some degree) Europe and the U.K. from the mid-1940s to 1973, creative labor is most often analyzed as an element of "post-Fordism," which has been dominant since. Fordism, as David Harvey explains it, was an adaptation of numerous tendencies toward regimented organization, efficiency, and division of labor that became prevalent in the early twentieth century. Foremost among these were the principles of F.W. Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*, which "described how labour productivity could be radically increased by breaking down each labour process into component motions and organizing fragmented work tasks according to rigorous standards of time and motion study" (*Condition* 125). The popularity of Taylor's ideas spurred, in practice, "the separation between management, conception, control, and execution (and all that this meant in terms of hierarchical social relations)" (*Condition* 125). Ford's adaptations of Taylor's ideas recognized "that mass production meant mass consumption, a new system of the reproduction of labour power, a new politics of labour control and management, new aesthetics and psychology, in short, a new kind of rationalized, modernist, and populist democratic society" (*Condition* 126). Fordism entailed such well-known policies as the five-dollar, eight-hour day, and has come to stand not only for Ford's brief experiment, but for the essential features of Western capitalist economies during much of the twentieth century: hierarchical organization,

regulated labor, the rise of managerial labor, mass consumerism, and large-scale rigidity (*Condition* 126).

Scholars have often associated modernism with Fordism, with varying degrees of proactivity and reactivity. Michael Denning suggests that "modernism might be understood as the culture of Fordism, schizophrenically divided between the functionalist machine aesthetic of Ford himself, who wished to produce one generic car…and the aesthetic of packaging pioneered by Alfred B. Sloan of General Motors, who captured Ford's market by offering new styles, new models, new colors" (28). Whereas Denning implies a one-way relationship between Fordism and modernism in which the former inspires the latter, Harvey argues that "Fordism… built upon and contributed to the aesthetic of modernism" (*Condition* 136). Harvey does not detail what Fordism borrows from the modernist aesthetic, but Jackson Lears' study of twentieth-century advertising provides insight into the relationship between modernism and capitalism in this period. He likens the relationship between advertising and avant-garde art to a "courtship," complete with "the mingling of fitful tensions and longings for union" (301). Beginning in the 1920s, he argues, advertisers came to rely on a formalist aesthetic in which "the advertisement became detached from the product to which it referred," and thus "the gap between signifier and signified opened the same epistemological issues explored by René Magritte, who titled his painting of a pipe *This Is Not a Pipe*" (302). Modernism was not only a source of aesthetic inspiration, but also competition and talent. Cultural industrialists discovered new aesthetic possibilities by poaching styles and mining personnel. In order to accommodate modernist workers within cultural industries and borrow ideas from those who remained apart from them, new forms of creative labor appeared.

In advertising, for instance, modernists were recruited to maintain cutting edge aesthetics in a rapidly developing creative industry. Creativity was both fostered and constrained, as "the rapture of the modern was muffled by the need to fit into a smoothly functioning organization" (Lears 306). In Hollywood, screenwriters faced similar attempts to "tame" the modernist spirit to suit the Taylorist corporation. In Janet Staiger's account of the early standardization of Hollywood product, she likens writers' roles to those of engineers and researchers: "The pulp fiction factory, the art plant, and the scenario department resemble engineering research and development laboratories that large corporations were initiating during this period… the 'tame' writers of Hollywood were in a similar laboratory—industry's needs dictated their 'inventions'" (36). Most writers in classical Hollywood worked like laborers on a shop floor, crammed into small offices where they churned out not whole stories, but bits of dialogue and "structure" to be cobbled together before production. The writer's function also resembled that of a designer, who operates within a "scenario department [that] assured a constant supply of plots and standardized blueprints for production" (Staiger 43). To maintain a modicum of cultural legitimacy and allow their most successful writers creative leeway, however, studios also allowed "star" writers like Hecht and Dorothy Parker unprecedented autonomy and creative control. As such diverse creative labor practices show, within creative industries wholesale adaptation to Taylorist and Fordist principles was never fully possible, and hybrid forms were sought instead.

Although many industries maintained the rigid hierarchies of Fordism until the 1970s, Hollywood had to transform mid-century in response to a cluster of political, social, and economic crises.[2] New modes of semi-independent production emerged as studios began to hire

[2] Major factors contributing to the crises and subsequent reorganization of the Hollywood studio system after WWII include competition from television, the demand that studios jettison their exhibition business according to the 1948 Paramount antitrust consent decree, the relocation of audiences to suburbs, the baby boom, and foreign quotas. See

independent production units on a project-by-project basis. They turned to international production in order to circumvent state regulation and union rules, and employed an increasingly contingent and mobile labor force. Modernists, in the meantime, experimented with freelance and independent cultural production, and increasingly expanded the market for their own art through both bohemian and industrial networks. These emergent practices were gaining traction when the next major capitalist mutation occurred.

In Harvey's account, post-Fordism took hold when "the sharp recession of 1973, exacerbated by the oil shock [of the post-Arab-Israeli War embargo] … set into motion a whole set of processes that undermined the Fordist compromise" (*Condition* 145). The "new regime of accumulation" of post-Fordism came to prominence in Fordism's wake, the main features of which are "flexibility with respect to labour processes, labour markets, products, and patterns of consumption… greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological, and organizational innovation… rapid shifts in the patterning of uneven development… [and] a new round of… time-space compression" (*Condition* 145, 147). In order to accommodate the demands of the a new, more flexible capitalism, a tendency arose to "reduce the number of 'core' workers and to rely increasingly on a work force that can quickly be taken on board and equally quickly and costlessly be laid off when times get bad" (*Condition* 152). While flexibility may have benefits for some, the negative effects of these developments are widespread, as detailed by Boltanski and Chiapello: "impoverishment of the population of working age, regular increase in unemployment and job insecurity, [and] stagnation in income from work" are compounded by significant blows to organized labor and social welfare (xxxix).

Chapter four for further detail. Peter Lev's *Transforming the Screen: 1950-1959* and Barry Langford's *Post Classical Hollywood: Film Industry, Style and Ideology Since 1945* offer robust accounts of this period.

Such negative consequences raise the question of why workers have accepted such unstable conditions in the decades since this transition. The workforce may have been vulnerable in the early 1970s, but prior to that organized labor had attained unprecedented power under Fordism. Louis Mumford's *Technics and Civilization* suggests that a widespread ontological shift must accompany socio-economic transformations: "Behind all the great material inventions of the last century and a half was not merely a long internal development of technics: there was also a change of mind. Before the new industrial processes could take hold on a great scale, a reorientation of wishes, habits, ideas and goals was necessary" (qtd. in Knapp 12). Although the transformation Mumford describes is the rise of Taylorism, the same sort of reorientation must necessarily be true for post-Fordism. The rise of neoliberalism, according to Harvey, accompanied the transition to post-Fordism, and therefore may have facilitated it. Harvey describes neoliberalism as the theory behind the practices of post-Fordism, "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (*Brief History* 2). These facets of neoliberal thought speak to those who own the means of production and control regulation. To maintain dominance, however, workers must also be convinced.

In regards to labor, therefore, proponents of neoliberalism leverage the concept of creativity in order to make flexibility and instability appear to be sources of self-actualization. As Sarah Brouillette argues, "creative-economy discourse dovetails importantly with neoliberalism, conceived as a set of shifting practices whose net effect is to erode public welfare, valorize private property and free markets, position government as a facilitator and 'pre-eminent narrator' of the shift to neoliberal policy, and orchestrate or justify a corresponding notion that

capitalism's continued and insuperable expansion is at once inevitable and welcome" (*Literature* 3). Rosalind Gill and Andy Pratt designate two trends that have come to uphold the vision that Brouillette presents: "the injection of 'creative' work into all areas of economic life," and "the growth of the particular industries that produce cultural outputs" (*Literature* 2). These have provoked a stream of scholarly studies that could now be labeled "creative labor studies."[3] This field gives voice to a variety of critical perspectives (Italian autonomous Marxists, industrial sociologists, and Harvey, a cultural geographer, to name a few). Critiques of creative labor often make reference to proponents of neoliberal creative rhetoric such as Richard Florida, whose 2002 *The Rise of the Creative Class* envisions a utopian future of gentrification fueled by urban bohemians. Such celebrants of creative labor tend not to engage with scholarly critiques, and as Brouillette points out, critics and promoters alike fail to historicize creative labor ("Creative Labor" 142).

Brouillette's *Literature and the Creative Economy* offers rigorous and provocative analyses of recent British policy and novels of creative labor, as well as the historical roots of creative-labor discourse in 1950s and 1960s psychology and management theory. Although she presents key insights into the status of writers as exemplary creative-industrial laborers, she does not address the history of writers'—or any type of artists'—labor beyond the last few decades.

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[3] Gill and Pratt's "In the Social Factory?: Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and Cultural Work" provides a comprehensive summary of scholarship on creative labor in post-Fordist society: "While capitalist labour has always been characterized by intermittency for lower-paid and lower-skilled workers, the recent departure is the addition of well-paid and high-status workers into this group of 'precarious workers'. The last decades have seen a variety of attempts to make sense of the broad changes in contemporary capitalism that have given rise to this – through discussions of shifts relating to post-Fordism, post-industrialization, network society, liquid modernity, information society, 'new economy', 'new capitalism' and risk society" (2). They attribute these terms to Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck, Manuel Castells, Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, Scott Lash and John Urry, Robert Reich, and Richard Sennett. They also draw a useful distinction between "creative industries" and "creative labor" scholarship, in that "Writers who stress the role of creativity (as a source of competitive advantage) point to the injection of 'creative' work into all areas of economic life. By contrast, scholars who are interested in the cultural industries point to the growth of the particular industries that produce cultural outputs" (2). Primary contributors to these discussions are David Hesmondhalgh, Geert Lovink and Ned Rossiter, Jamie Peck, Bernard Miege, and Nicholas Garnham. Harvey, Pang, Banks, and Brouillette also offer important contributions to the above discussions. See works cited for all title details.

Writers, Brouillette holds, "appear to experience making culture less an inherently fulfilling self-expression and more an encounter with heightened contradictions: between the traditional veneration of artistic autonomy and the reality of conscription onto proliferating state and corporate initiatives, and between the social production of culture and the lionization of the individual creator" (*Literature* 8). The absent history of creative labor might be best addressed through investigation into how culture workers navigated the contradictions Brouillette details.

While writers figure prominently in this history, they represent one faction of a growing creative labor force that developed alongside the rise of mass media, which also encompasses the visual artists and filmmakers whose work I will discuss. Moreover, those who labored within and against culture industries rarely were solely writers. Rather they were multi-media workers who crossed platforms and industries throughout their career. Fry, Lewis, and Welles did produce, publish and sell writing, but those activities accented their design, painting, filmmaking and theatrical labors. Stein and Hecht were also multi-media producers—Stein in her performance-based publicity work, and Hecht in his cinematic and theatrical work. If resistant and corporate modernists have anything in common, it is their tendency to express their ideas across as many media platforms as possible.

I use the term modernism throughout this dissertation to designate a set of formal and stylistic trends that writers and artists employed to make sense of the accelerated, fragmented, and unstable world of twentieth century industrial modernity. While modernism has taken on a variety of critical definitions, I choose to focus on those elements that were easily repurposed in the name of romantic instability. Aesthetic modernism here refers to the same traits that Jesse Matz assigns to the modernist novel: skepticism towards stability of perception; varying points of view; expressions of subjective truth; the use of stream-of-consciousness narrative techniques

and other ways of representing consciousness; attention to fragmented identities, temporal experience, and moral ambiguity; sexual explicitness; and attempts at radical autonomy (aesthetic and political) that necessitate apolitical status (215-226). Although these are meant to represent fragmented experiences of modern alienation, they also celebrate subjectivity in ways that support the transference of responsibility for risk onto individuals. As in today's "risk society" (Ulrich Beck's correlative concept to Harvey's Post-Fordism), modernist individualization makes people "the authors of their own lives," gives them "new freedom to shape and coordinate one's 'own' life" while as a result "risks are shifted from the state and the economy on to the shoulders of individuals" (54).

While modernism represents a response to the fragmentation and alienation of industrial modernity, it also reorganizes this experience within the framework of a new totality.[4] For Marshall Berman, such reckonings with industrial modernity are not limited to cultural production, as he defines "modernism as any attempt by modern men and women to become the subjects as well as objects of modernization, to get a grip on the modern world and make themselves at home in it" (15). Modernist works reckon with "an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are" (15). Cultural production, within the context of this dissertation, is often an attempt to remake "a universe in which, as Marx said, 'all that is solid melts into air'" (15). Like *The Communist Manifesto*, which Berman reads as an early work of modernism, modernist texts sought to reconcile contradictory tendencies toward rationalization and destruction. The techniques they

[4] Harvey cites Charles Baudelaire as responsible for a vision of modernism in which "the successful modern artist was one who could find the universal and the eternal, 'distil the bitter or heady flavor of the wine of life' from 'the ephemeral, the fleeting forms of beauty of our day'"—in short, modernism seeks to represent "the eternal and immutable in the midst of all the chaos" (20).

invented toward this purpose were also supple enough to help manage future transitions, such as those Harvey describes.

Modernism's capacity to intervene in the structural conditions of modernity wavers according to timing and context. Harvey finds pre-WWI modernism, for instance, to be "a response to the new conditions of production" which over the course of the century becomes "hegemonic in its alignment with cold war ideology" (23, 35). In its relationship with scientific management, James Knapp suggests, modernism both reproduces and challenges dominant discourses (3). In the context of its autonomous institutions, however, Lawrence Rainey's *Institutions of Modernism* identifies "neither a straightforward resistance nor an outright capitulation to commodification, but a momentary equivocation that incorporates elements of both in a brief, necessarily unstable synthesis" (3). The indeterminacy of these critical assessments arises in part from a tendency to read modernist interventionism from the modernist text itself, which in its self-reflexiveness must necessarily question their own agency. Reading modernists' practical interventions alongside their texts helps to offset this trend. Nathanael West's critical satire *The Day of the Locust* and his labor rights activism in the context of the Screen Writers' Guild of America are, for instance, equally responses "to the specific forms of fragmentation and alienation that characterize modern experience," attempts "to reorganize this experience within the framework of a new totality" (Berman 15).

It is widely accepted now that modernism was not an entirely autonomous and resistant movement, but it is worth considering how the several decades of criticism that treated it as such may have spurred long-lasting myths capable of supporting corporate internalization of false autonomy and resistance. The ostensible "divide" between modernism and mass culture, which Andreas Huyssen famously asserted and interrogated, was as much a creation of mid-century

literary critics as it was of those writers and artists we now think of as modernists.[5] In the decades following WWII when modernism was ostensibly waning, critics now known as the New York Intellectuals sought to define and assess the chaotic, disparate forms of avant-garde literary efforts of the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s. In doing so, they attached superior aesthetic properties to modernist art and literature and deemed modernism to be worthy of institutional accolades. Modernism would no longer be restricted to the Parisian café or the Greenwich Village flat, but hung on the walls of museums and taught in Universities. The forefather of this project, Edmund Wilson, had already taken strides in the 1930s to liken modernist writers to the romanticists of the nineteenth century, and to assert the toxicity of mass cultural labor to their creative genius.[6] After WWII, its champions included Clement Greenberg, who maintained that kitsch (aka Hollywood) was trivial entertainment whereas the avant-garde produced art; and Frankfurt School critics such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse, who positioned modernist works as an antidote to a mindless and deceptive mass culture. Their separation of modernism and mass culture, however, was oriented more toward concerns about fascism and unregulated capitalism than with asserting American cultural legitimacy, as was the concern of the "new critics" and "New York intellectuals."

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[5] Huyssen designates a "great divide" between modernism and mass culture through which "modernism constituted itself through a conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination by its other: an increasingly consuming and engulfing mass culture. Both the strengths and the weaknesses of modernism as an adversary culture derive from that fact" (vii). Many books and articles have responded to Huyssen's argument by exploring modernists' engagement, replication, parody, and production of mass culture. Less acknowledged is Huyssen's assertion of "a plethora of strategic moves" within modernism that tended "to destabilize the high/low opposition from within" (vii). Huyssen suggests that it is not the case that modernism had no friendly dealings with mass culture—rather he sees these destabilizations as short-lived. Much of what he describes in relation to the "great divide," moreover, is the work of Frankfurt School critics more than that of modernist artists and writers.

[6] Wilson likens twentieth century writers whom he calls "symbolists" (W.B. Yeats, Paul Valéry, T.S. Eliot, Marcel Proust, James Joyce, and Gertrude Stein)" to nineteenth century "Romantics" in *Axel's Castle*. His *The Boys in the Back Room* makes a case that California, and Los Angeles especially, can deaden the sensibilities of writers, in part because of the dominance of cultural industries.

Irving Howe, on the other hand, was representative of the political commitment of New York Intellectuals who worried that modernism's repudiation of tradition and celebration of the individual sparked reactionary tendencies. Despite his skepticism, however, Howe (like Greenberg and Adorno) still asserted modernism's autonomy from everyday culture. The modernist writer, Howe asserts, "works with unfamiliar forms; he chooses subjects that disturb the audience and threaten its most cherished sentiments; he provokes traditionalist critics to such epithets as 'unwholesome,' 'coterie,' and 'decadent'" (13). The body of criticism that sets modernism apart from other cultural forms has often been reassessed, but the ideological project with which they were complicit—the assertion of American cultural superiority—is still underway, and modernism is still part of that project. During the Cold War, as Harvey observes, "high modernist art, architecture, literature etc. became establishment arts and practices in a society where a corporate capitalist version of the Enlightenment project of development for progress and human emancipation held sway as a political-economic dominant" (35). The decades since the cold war have witnessed the extension of these principles, as itinerant and precarious modes of modernist labor have become the foundation for the new economy.

Since Fredric Jameson's 1979 essay "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture" and Huyssen's 1986 *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture* began to dismantle the cold war vision of modernism, "New Modernist" scholars have worked to "[reconsider] the definitions, locations, and producers of 'modernism' [and] apply new approaches and methodologies to 'modernist' work" (*Bad Modernisms* 1). The ongoing project of these scholars, Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz assert, is to effect "temporal, spatial, and vertical" expansion of the field ("New Modernist" 737). This dissertation shares their goal of expanding the field vertically

(beyond typically "highbrow" platforms), in exploring "not quite sharp boundaries between high art and popular forms of culture" ("New Modernist" 737-738).

Within recent criticism, however, the project of enterprise still appears to be difficult to reconcile with the category of modernism. Alan Friedman's *Fictional Death and the Modernist Enterprise*, and Marjorie Beale's *The Modernist Enterprise: French Elites and the Threat of Modernity*, 1900-1940, for instance, address modernist entrepreneurial activities either tangentially or not at all. Friedman's inclusion of "enterprise" in his title is somewhat inexplicable, as the term is not discussed in the book itself. Beale offers an interesting account of French cultural professionals who "responded to modernity's threat and its promise by reinventing their social environment," but it is not clear what makes the advertisers, managers, technocrats, and other "elites" who formulate this response modernists (5). Such a study in an American context might reveal key points at which modernism and professionalism merged within the context of capitalist production systems, and moments arise in this dissertation where such a process is at work. The activities of modernist creative workers and entrepreneurs, however, offer a more direct point of entry into the history of professionalized creativity as a response to modernity.

Like modernist enterprise, creative labor prior to 1973 has received surprisingly scant attention. Traces of it appear in ongoing discussions of art and labor that have frequently accompanied critiques of industrial modernity. These stretch as far back as Karl Marx, who observed in *The German Ideology* that "the exclusive concentration of artistic talent in particular individuals, and its suppression in the broad mass which is bound up with this, is a consequence of the division of labour" (206). The special status of art, in other words, is a consequence of the division of labor. Marx, whom Berman labels an early modernist, wants to reclaim labor for

human fulfillment, and make it a part of humankind's "species being" (rather than a mere instrument of capital) which has been invoked as an antidote to alienation ever since Marx's critique. As a champion of the arts and crafts movement of the late nineteenth century, William Morris tried to reunite art and labor by elevating industrial production through artistry, and by achieving aesthetic effects that could integrate art into everyday life. As Eileen Boris recounts, Morris' "craftsman ideal sought a new wholism, an end to the division between the human spirit and material reality that from the late eighteenth century separated the mental from the manual, city from country, individual from community, work from play" (xi). Arts and crafts, in turn, helped inspire the modernist vision of labor as "often experienced, and represented, as oppressive, intense, and deadening… the negation of the individual" (Shiach 2). Like arts and crafts practitioners, modernists sought "wholism" through creativity and individuality. Morris' modernist legacy is relatively underexplored, a gap which I address in my discussion of the entrepreneurial efforts of Roger Fry and Wyndham Lewis, who continued Morris' project but stripped it of its utopian socialism. These Bloomsbury artists drew upon the visions of Morris and many others to develop alternative models to the deadening labor of industrial modernity.

Meanwhile, creative industries worked to integrate creative workers into the hierarchical structures of their Fordist entertainment businesses. The adoption of modernist aesthetics in advertising, for instance, both advanced the industry and made commercial work palatable for artists. Lears finds that the "formalist idiom" which advertisers co-opted from modernism "was tailor made for artists and writers in advertising. An emphasis on stylistic innovation resonated with the rage for novelty at the heart of consumer culture; advertisers' preoccupation with staying a half-step ahead of the pack allowed them to embrace a modified version of Ezra Pound's dictum: Make it new, but not too new" (301). It also helped to temper the experience of

alienation faced by the creative worker in mass industry: "concentrating on the deftness of one's brushstrokes allowed one to forget that one was painting a pack of Parliaments; the artist could preserve some self-esteem as he or she submitted to the subdivision of labor in the broader bureaucratic scheme" (301). Dual tendencies to accommodate and tame modern artists and writers influenced the development of not only advertising, but also creative industries across the board. As modernists increasingly turned to radio, film, theater, and pulp fiction industries for financial support (particularly during the Great Depression), they came to represent a new creative class long before the phrase became a neoliberal buzzword.

Whether they worked independently or within industry, modernist creative workers charted alternatives and presented challenges to industrial alienation. Staiger's designation of writers as akin to designers and engineers and responsible for the differentiation of commodities, for instance, shows the degree to which they altered the existing framework of divided labor. Beyond their efforts to control their roles within the studios, writers and artists were also active organizers who fought for creative liberties, employment stability, fair compensation, consistent credit, and improved working conditions. Despite their importance to the supply chain, writers were painfully constrained within the studio system. As Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund argue, "after allowance is made for studio management's tolerance, even regard, for artistic talent, the producers' tendencies lay in the direction of controlling, exploiting, and channeling the artistic impulse toward goals largely uncongenial to it" (14). These conditions generated a "growing consciousness, solidarity, and understanding—qualities which, by the early part of the thirties, would impel the screenwriters into the vanguard of trade union and political activity in Hollywood" (15). Like the twenty-first century creative class, these workers represented the cutting edge of labor innovation. Instead of consciousness, solidarity, and understanding,

however, today's creative workers are expected to celebrate the forms of industrial labor against which their predecessors rebelled such as seasonal contingency and arbitrary pay scales.

Creative industrial labor overlaps professional-managerial labor, which has received more attention as an emergent form of labor in this period. Fordist development brought creative and managerial workers together in this period, as they began to identify as distinctive classes. Whereas, as Ronnie Regev notes, Hollywood's creative class "developed its own jargon, one that speaks for constructed identities oscillating between artistic integrity and system conformity," professional-managerial (PMC) workers identified as a "diverse group of technicians, managers, specialists, and professionals" that "performed some kind of intellectual rather than manual labor" (Regev, 7, Radway 250-251). Barbara and John Ehrenreich's seminal 1977 essay on the PMC argues that this group's function "may be described broadly as the reproduction of capitalist culture and capitalist class relations" (19).[7] Yet these groups had major differences. Creative workers—especially those with modernist roots—maintained faith in autonomy and intellectual freedom, and were fundamentally dissatisfied with Taylorist policies—unlike the PMC agents of instrumentalization. Writers and artists within culture industries typically lacked the stability and authority of the managers, technocrats, and engineers of the PMC. Unlike PMC workers, creative laborers often set up shop outside of and in competition with mass industry. The tendency to justify precarious and unstable working conditions in the name of creative freedom and expression belongs more to the creative class than the PMC, but the commerce between the two was significant, as they both contributed to the rise of creative labor.

[7] Richard Ohmann's discussion of the PMC further emphasizes its tendencies to exert widespread influence and its radical potential. He finds that "in relation to the working class, intellectuals managed that class's affairs and many of its institutions, and they derived benefits from this position, but they also strive for autonomy and for a somewhat different vision of the future" (79).

To call attention to such justifications is not necessarily to condemn modernism for its accidental complicity with Taylorism, as Knapp does. Modernism offered viable points of resistance and intervention during its peak decades, and has mainly been used to justify exploitation in gradually greater degrees from (roughly) the end of WWII on. Studies of modernism and labor generally acknowledge these resistant tendencies. Morag Shiach argues that modernist writing on labor represents "an effort to articulate the relations between writing and selfhood, expressed in ideas of fulfillment, absorption, vitality, will, species being, and agency"—in effect, an attempt to reclaim labor as human fulfillment rather than as labor-power, a component of capitalist accumulation. Michael Denning's vision of American modernist labor finds it to be directly engaged in progressive movements, a faction of the Cultural Front (the cultural wing of the Popular Front), that "represented a larger laboring of American culture" and expressed "the dreams, discontents, and cultural contradictions of the disaffected young people of the predominantly Anglo bourgeoisie as they came to grips with the changes in the corporate economy and the changes in proper sexuality in gender roles" (26). This "coming-to-grips" involved resistance, attempts at intervention, criticism, and some capitulation. Its specific effects in the long-term development of immaterial modes of labor in which modernists participated, however, deserve further attention.

Any argument about the impact of aesthetic movements on socio-economic history (and vice-versa) must avoid simplistic determinism. The relationship between a material 'base' and immaterial 'superstructure' in Marxist cultural theory is one of dynamic interdependence and mutual influence, and any study that deals with this interrelation must, as Raymond Williams suggests, acknowledge "the indissoluble connections between material production, political and cultural institutions and activity, and consciousness" (*Marxism* 80). The relative determination

exercised by economic and social institutions, cultural expressions, individual consciousness, and other material and cultural categories in the events and works I describe is impossible to quantify. In keeping with Williams' cultural materialism, I assume that the aesthetic and economic works of modernists in this period exist in a relationship of "overdertermination," that recognizes "multiple forces, rather than the isolated forces of modes or techniques of production," and understands "forces as structured, in particular historical situations, rather than an ideal totality" (*Marxism* 88). Like Brouillette, I hold that "It isn't so much that artists have been straightforwardly determining the transformation of spheres to which they do not belong… it is rather that they and their working habits have been a source of answers to questions that press upon all working people and are thus woven through the social fabric" (*Literature* 18). The economic activities that I discuss in the following pages show artists providing not only answers in the form of cultural expressions, but also in their practical economic activities, which provide models that have also "become woven through the social fabric" of everyday workers' lives.

The courtship in between artists, writers, and filmmakers on the one hand and cultural industries (namely Hollywood) on the other that structures this dissertation is not unlike the courtship of avant-garde and kitsch that Lears describes. The relationship begins (like many stereotypical romantic comedies) in a state of curious hostility, develops into flirtation, and eventually matures into a full-fledged partnership. The power imbalance between industry and artists quickly sours the relationship, and in the end the two reject one another, only to recouple sporadically over the coming years to everyone's regret. In the years just before WWI, Roger Fry and Wyndham Lewis turned the 'craftsman ideal' into the basis for modern design enterprises. Whereas Fry disdained and disregarded mass cultural products, Lewis begrudgingly enjoyed Hollywood films (namely Charlie Chaplin's). He scoffed at Hollywood taste and remarked on its

denizens' need for cultural management in the hands of tasteful modernists, but his intense interest in cultural industries such as film and advertising belies his hostility, and suggests the beginnings of an art-industry courtship. My argument in chapter one is that the Bloomsbury and Vorticist conception of design draws on the economics, aesthetics, and rhetoric of the Arts and Crafts movement, but as the ideal passes from Morris to Fry and then to Lewis, its collective spirit is stripped away in favor of individualism and new principles of expertise, partly inspired by a nascent Hollywood industry.

From here the scene moves from London to 1930s Paris, where Gertrude Stein has begun to market herself in a manner akin to—yet distinct from—Hollywood celebrities. Chapter two details Stein's entrepreneurial activities of self-publication and self-promotion, particularly those related to her mainstream breakthrough in 1933 with the crossover success of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. I interpret Stein's methods of production, distribution, promotion, and mass media circulation as alternative bohemian enterprises, poised to compete with mass culture on its own terrain. Stein's responses to the challenges of authorship in an age of mass media and celebrity culture positioned her as a flexible, mobile cultural producer, who partnered with Toklas to form a complete entrepreneurial unit. As these labors brought her back to the U.S. for the first time in decades on a whirlwind promotional tour, her work and publicity drew upon and attempted to surpass existing modes of cultural labor. Her flirtations with Hollywood brought her into contact with stars like Chaplin and Mary Pickford, after which she expressed interest in working for the studios (which never came to fruition). These promotional strategies, I argue, laid some groundwork for models of self-enterprise that could outlast Fordism.

Chapter three follows F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nathanael West, and Ben Hecht—writers with strong ties to modernist circles—as they join ranks with other culture workers as writers in

Hollywood. While there, all three leveraged perceptions of failure and success to navigate gray areas between modernism and artistry on the one hand, and industrial cultural production on the other. For purposes of public and critical perception, it was important to these writers to assert clear boundaries between art and hack-work, when in fact these activities were thoroughly interrelated. I argue that that in doing so, they internalized the massive structural and economic collapse of the Great Depression that had landed them at the nexus of these contradictions along with other creative workers, and reframed failure as a mental, physical and narrative problem of self-mismanagement. While the creative constraints and industrial demands of Hollywood took a toll on all three men (even provoking Fitzgerald's and West's untimely deaths, in many accounts) they nevertheless found opportunities to innovate either stylistically (in the cases of Fitzgerald and West) or industrially (in the case of Hecht). Their refashioning of failure as countercultural success and their vision of autonomous and semi-independent cinematic enterprise have had long-lasting consequences.

Orson Welles' postwar career typifies the acrimonious breakup of modernists and Hollywood in chapter four. In the decades following WWII, politically progressive and aesthetically ambitious filmmakers were among the hardest hit by political and economic turmoil in Hollywood. I argue that Welles' films in this period allegorize the instability and opportunity of the postwar film industry as narratives of conspiracy, in which detectives, artists, and other professionals must make sense of unseen systems at work across borders and in distant nations in order to assemble a story that is true to their experience of events. In his films *the Lady From Shanghai* (1947), *Mr. Arkadin* (1955), *Touch of Evil* (1958), and *The Trial* (1962), borders, waterways, roads, and airways operate as spaces of corruption and conspiracy. These spaces were also pivotal sites of transformation for film workers, whose careers were

often impacted by postwar political and economic turmoil. Welles' films offer allegorical depictions of this history from the perspective of the creative laborer, and ultimately reveal that postwar "Hollywood" adopted some decentralized, global, on-demand, and flexible characteristics of a post-Fordist economic model about twenty-five years before the wholesale ascendency of post-Fordism in the 1970s. In the midst of this transformation, studios and artists each devised modes of international and independent production in attempts to shift the balance of power in their favor. The studio version was constructed to circumvent foreign protections and domestic labor constraints, while the independent artist's version sought more radical forms of autonomy in order to make films capable of critiquing a rapidly changing industry that was becoming more global, opaque, and decentralized than ever before.

The six people upon whom these chapters focus were exemplary modernist creative laborers, and many worthy figures have had to be excluded. Mark Twain's public speaking career could set a meaningful precedent for the activities I trace, particularly in the contrast between his success as an early "stand-up" comedian and his failure as an investor. Virginia and Leonard Woolf's Hogarth Press is as intriguing a case of small entrepreneurship as was Fry's Omega Workshops, but Fry's project begets Lewis', and is therefore more important in establishing early fascination with Hollywood. William Faulkner and Dorothy Parker are as interesting as West, Hecht, and Fitzgerald, but their success in maintaining boundaries between their corporate and literary endeavors excused them from the intense negotiation of art-industry identities seen in the careers of the other three men. Welles, on the contrary, is incomparable. My inclusion of six white men and one white woman also runs the risk of excluding important labors of female, queer, and minority writers and artists. This imbalance is not meant to be discriminatory so much as it is symptomatic of the face of an incipient creative class in this time.

That said, Gertrude Stein's career is exemplary of the countercultural capital a carefully managed queer female professional image could proffer, and Orson Welles' interest in racial justice and hybridity (articulated, albeit, from a position of significant privilege) speaks to the burgeoning of an image of the romantic creative artists capable of subsuming just enough difference to sustain the romance, while not disturbing the hegemony of straight white men.

At stake is the ubiquity of creative labor now as an engine for capitalist exploitation, as it draws upon the language of modernist enterprise to reify creativity and innovation. This trend extends beyond creative industries proper, into sectors as far flung as technology, hospitality, transportation, and higher education. As a result, the experience of alienation itself has changed. In Marx's time, alienation was a consequence of the division of labor, which isolated mental and manual activity from one another, isolated humans from their products and each other, and divided work and leisure. The worker in this situation "is degraded to the most miserable sort of commodity," and "the misery of the worker is in inverse proportion to the power and size of his production" (85). In the twentieth century, leisure briefly appears to combat alienation, but as Henri Lefebvre argues "The notion of free leisure is valid up to a certain point. Beyond that point it is inadequate. If we push it too far we run the risk of forgetting that there can be *alienation in leisure just as in work* (and alienation precisely in so far as the worker is trying to 'disalienate himself')" (39, italics in original). In the twenty-first century, creativity makes similarly false claims to disalienation. In a recent philosophical attempt to reclaim the liberating potential of labor, Bruno Giulli reasons that labor must be dissociated from capitalism and its potential for self-fulfillment restored, so that "the disposition with which one approaches any type of production should and could be re-directed toward the discovery and the experience of one's creativity" (151). The separation of art and labor that Marx lamented centuries ago can now "be

overcome if the concept and the practice of creative labor become the universal and common subject of the social" (151). Unfortunately, the creative labor that Giulli sees as the key to reclamation of labor-in-itself beyond the grips of capitalism has already become the foundational concept for a new regime of accumulation.

How much of the world of work is modernist now? Is every Etsy seller and Google programmer another Johnny Sims, hoping to win the big prize by way of creativity? The past cannot definitively answer these questions, but traces of modernist creative labor abound in 2016. The light, airy spaces of Omega are reinvented in the 'maker-spaces' of Google, Techshop, and University initiatives to fill classrooms with 3-D printers. Stein's self-promotional verve invigorates the culture of self-making that has brought us everything from LinkedIn, to Kickstarter, to reality television. Countless Youtubers, bloggers, and podcasters work for fame instead of compensation, hoping to achieve the compromises with corporate capital that West, Hecht, Fitzgerald, and Welles sought, but to greater success and with uncompromised creative control. This is not to say that all of these activities are complicit with post-Fordist systems of capitalism and neoliberal thinking. Rather, it is worth reminding ourselves and others that these practices are no less alienated than the work of previous generations. In fact, they may alienate more intensely, making greater degrees of exploitation possible.

Chapter 1:

Artisans, Enemies, and the Avant-Garde Transformation of the "Craftsman Ideal"

I. Introduction

When invited to write an essay for a collection titled *Art in the Great State* in 1912, Bloomsbury art critic, painter, and entrepreneur Roger Fry happened to compose his argument in a railway dining car. In the midst of his reflections on the possible fate of art in a socialist state, he breaks his line of reasoning to note that he "take[s] the pains to write the succeeding paragraphs in a railway refreshment room, where I am actually looking at those terribly familiar but fortunately fleeting images which such places afford" ("Art and Socialism" 187). He then proceeds to catalogue, in excruciating detail, the mass-produced décor that inflicts these "pains" on his composition process, from the stained glass of the window, to the wallpaper, the table linens, the centerpieces, and right down to the table legs. To emphasize that there is far more hideousness to be had in the room, he adds: "This painful catalogue makes up only a small part of the inventory of the 'art' of the restaurant" ("Art and Socialism"). The "pain" that this environment causes him, he reasons, stems from the joyless lives of the workmen who produced the shabby décor. The futility of their lives devoted to pseudo-art, he suggests, appears in their designs, which in turn inflict pain on those who encounter them.

At this point in Fry's career, his lifelong concern with the conditions of designers' labor and the experience of end-users of decorative design was about to manifest in his modernist enterprise, the Omega Workshops. Located at 33 Fitzroy Square, London, The Omega housed a small showroom and artists' workshop which Fry hoped would provide supplemental income to struggling artists and innovative interior designs to the general public. The problems Fry hoped to address through the Omega were similar to those that drove William Morris to start up his

influential Arts and Crafts design enterprise, Morris, Marshall, Faulkner And Co. in 1861. Art, Morris felt, was too inaccessible. As he explained in 1884, "the world of modern civilization in its haste to gain a very inequitably divided material prosperity has entirely suppressed popular Art: or in other words that the greater part of the people have no share in Art" ("Art and Socialism"). As a result, they have also lost "the natural solace of…labour," and the work of most men "has become even such a burden, which every man, if he could, would shake off" ("Art and Socialism"). As a socialist thinker, Romantic poet, Science Fiction novelist, and entrepreneur, Morris saw the potential for a utopian socialist society in which all activity contained an element of artistry, and the whole of the built environment could be beautiful.

Fry, however, was less optimistic. He was not fond of industrial capitalism in its current state, but opens "Art and Socialism" with the declaration "I am not a socialist, as I understand that word, nor can I pretend to have worked out those complex estimates of economic possibility which are needed before once can endorse the hopeful forecasts of Lady Warwick, Mr. Money, and Mr. Wells" (181).[8] In light of Fry's adoption of Morris' strategies of enterprise and labor, as well as his partial rejection of Morris' aesthetic and political theories, this chapter asks how English modernists such as Fry and Lewis who engaged in decorative design enterprises repurposed the tenets of Morris and Arts and Crafts progenitors like John Ruskin to suit the changing needs of the twentieth century. Whereas Ruskin and Morris worked to combat the drab aesthetics and social hierarchies of Victorian England, Fry pitched an aesthetic of "free play" against the organic rules of the Arts and Crafts movement, which Wyndham Lewis adapted into satire to oppose culture industries. For all three, the working environment of the designer

[8] Warwick, Money, and Wells co-edited the anthology *The Great State* in which Fry's essay originally appeared.

influences his products, which then condition the built environment in which people live and consume.

For Morris and Fry, the mass production of objects demeaned working, consuming, and living environments. Just as Morris lamented the dearth of artistry in both the life and work of most English people, Fry entreated the reader of "Art and Socialism" to "consider the case of those men whose life-work it is to stimulate this eczematous eruption of pattern on the surface of modern manufactures" (189). Commercialism, he argues, has squelched creativity, and as a result these workers "are compelled… to spend their lives behaving in an entirely idiotic and senseless manner, and that with the certainty that no one will ever get positive pleasure from the result" (189). Less than a year after "Art and Socialism" was published, Fry opened the Omega Workshops with the intention of demonstrating the practicality of artist-driven design and the importance of simple, colorful objects in everyday surroundings. Whereas Morris and Co. aimed to make everyday workmen into artists, however, Fry hired artists to do the everyday work of interior decoration. This divergence marks the key philosophical difference between the two men: for Morris, everyone should be an artist, but for Fry, artists should shape the environment of the mass audience.

Lewis, in turn, would rebel against Fry and adapt his ideas of artistic labor into a more extreme theory of autocratic artistic expertise. During the life of Omega Workshops (1913-1915), Lewis crafted his public persona, the "enemy." As a painter, critic, novelist, and journal editor Lewis' mission was to debunk, dismantle, and destroy. His targets ranged from his own avant-garde circles in Bloomsbury and the futurism movement—from which he formed his own manifesto-based movement, Vorticism—to mainstream mass cultural targets from Hollywood to corporate architecture. A few months into his Omega tenure, Lewis walked out publicly, took

three other artists with him, and published a letter accusing Fry of a litany of ethical and aesthetic travesties. The details of the "Ideal Home Rumpus" (as it came to be called) were melodramatic and gossipy, but key issues of deteriorating boundaries between art and craft underlie their quarrel over personal credit for work produced under the Omega brand. Despite Lewis' public disagreements with Bloomsbury, similar concerns of art, labor, and design continued to dominate his career as they had for Fry and Morris. In Lewis' hands, however, the ideal of English design is stripped entirely of its collective spirit, as he replaces Morris' utopian socialism with a proto-fascistic desire to control mass culture. In brief, my argument in this chapter is that the Bloomsbury and Vorticist conception of design draws on the economics, aesthetics, and rhetoric of the Arts and Crafts movement, but as the ideal passes from Morris to Fry and then to Lewis, its collective spirit is stripped away in favor of individualism and new principles of expertise, partly inspired by a nascent Hollywood industry.

I hope not only to demonstrate a progression from Arts and Crafts collectivism to Vorticist individualism through Bloomsbury, but also to explain how the business practices, labor patterns, aesthetic trends, built environment, and critical rhetoric of these formations enabled this transition. I hypothesize that it is through these elements of English avant-garde design enterprise that the political-economic foundations of Ruskin and Morris' philosophy could be reversed, while ideals of flexibility, creativity, and "human-centered" design espoused by these men could appear to gain strength throughout the twentieth century. The chapter will therefore begin with a discussion of Ruskin and Morris' contributions to modernist design and design labor. I find two pairs of concerns in their writings relevant: labor/enterprise, and environment/consumerism. These streams of thought run throughout the Bloomsbury and Vorticist phases of English design as well, but in the case of Ruskin and Morris they amount to a

sweeping theory of "unpretending labour," that, although it held the promise of either radical reform or revolution in the nineteenth century, also contained certain exploitable elements for twentieth-century capitalism—specifically, advocacy of humility and industry as values that could unite art, craft, and labor.

I will continue to trace the conceptual pairs labor/enterprise and environment/ consumerism through the Omega Workshops and Lewis' short-lived Omega competitor, the Rebel Art Centre. Fry's approach to labor and enterprise in regards to Omega created an awkward contradiction between collective, anonymous authorship and his belief in the special status of artists in society, both in his business practices and in the 'spirit of fun' he sought for the workplace. Lewis, in his split with Fry, elevates the role of the artist from craftsman to cultural manager, an expert figure prepared to compete with mass cultural institutions for the minds of the English public (Brezezinski 62-67). Rejecting 'fun' for humor (a subtle but key difference), Lewis leverages satire both within and against mass culture, in the graphic design schemes and literary content of *Blast!*.[9] Despite their differences, both Fry and Lewis adapt the language of Morris and Ruskin and render it exploitable in the corporate workplace. Ultimately, I speculate that corporate work today still carries residual traces of the design philosophies that occupy this chapter, but these ideals have been repurposed toward increasingly precarious modes of labor.

In scholarship that connects Modernist literature with other media forms, design has been somewhat overlooked. Mark Goble's *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life*,

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[9] Humor is fundamental to both mass culture and Lewis' critique, as Michael North argues: "throughout his career, and not just at the beginning, the joke was both an attraction and a difficulty for Lewis, a focus of uneasiness and inconsistency in a body of work notorious for the start harshness of its opinions. What might seem a minor hypocrisy, as the great photo of the child called turns out to be a secret fan of Disney cartoons, may therefore be the key to a much more fundamental division in Lewis's career, where the figure of humor seems to stand on both sides of the sharp line between the enemy and the age [Lewis] affected to despise" (4).

Susan McCabe's *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry and Film*, and David Trotter's *Cinema and Modernism* all argue that modernist literature takes formal inspiration from the cinema while at the same time maintaining a safe distance from the 'lower' form of culture in light of its potential corporate threat to their autonomy.[10] The limited impact of design on this conversation might be chalked up to what Goble describes as an "ongoing fascination with new media technologies" amongst critics. In spite of "the high pitch and hysteria" of the new media trend having receded in the new millennium, design has still not gained much ground in the realm of 'new' modernist studies in relation to its more hip cousins (25). After all, design is not entirely new nor straightforwardly a medium in itself. It did, however, take on new meaning over the course of the nineteenth century along with institutional and technological developments that rendered design a profession and discipline, rather than a theoretical principle that could be applied to all art forms.[11] Also, in scholarly work on modernist media it is rare that non-literary media are analyzed.[12] This chapter takes up the work of people who wrote, designed, and ran businesses, in order to interpret both theoretical and material connections between these endeavors. Design, as an element of modernist multimedia practice, is a key facilitator in the

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[10] Many studies of modernism and New Media do not get much further than Michael North's assertion that "there should be some significant relation between aesthetic modernism and new media" (although North himself, writing at the intersection of modernism and photography, does)[10] (v). Goble offers one of the more sweeping and sophisticated accounts of modernism's encounter with other media, in his emphasis on the idea of communications: "modernism itself desired communication and the many forms it took, not just as a response to the power of media technologies in the twentieth century but as a way of insisting that this power was already modernism's own" (3). Generally, the story these studies tend to tell is, like Goble's, one of various media coming together in modernism only to re-establish the specificity of a given medium.

[11] The solidification of design as a unique field of study and work rather than an abstract principle seems to begin roughly in the late eighteenth century. The rise of institutional and economic specialization over the course of the nineteenth century altered design's cultural meaning. The *Oxford English Dictionary* shows this development: in 1758, its use is philosophical ("variety uncomposed, and without design, is confusion and deformity"; soon after, in 1788, it is institutional ("Sieur Schneyder, the Master of Design to the College"); and by 1877, it is industrial ("The elements of machine design") (Hogarth, Pownal, and Unwin qtd. in "design, n.").

[12] Goble's book is an exception in this regard, in that he examines literary and cinematic works side by side. Given the lack of literal interaction between, for instance, Gertrude Stein and the movie *Grand Hotel*, however, Goble's claims are necessarily speculative.

twentieth-century dissolution of boundaries between art and craft, and between creative and industrial realms.

This chapter therefore adds to studies of intersections of literary modernism and design that have gained notice recently. Walter Adamson's *Embattled Avant-Gardes: Modernism's Resistance to Commodity Culture in Europe* and Victoria Rosner's *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life* both emphasize the importance of design in the study of modernism, but where Adamson discovers avant-garde capitulation to market forces post-WWI, Rosner finds a progressive feminist viewpoint in literary treatments of interior design. Adamson's argument that "the dominant form of avant-garde modernist practice shifted during the war years from the pure or autonomous types associated with prewar futurism, cubism, and expressionism to the notion of an art-industry alliance" emphasizes its European post-war context and therefore obscures the pre-war (and even pre-modernism) industrial encounters between radical design and the mainstream economy exemplified by Morris & Co., the Omega, and the Rebel Art Centre (185).[13] I argue for the importance of these projects as alternatives to mainstream markets and attempts to improve the working conditions of artists and the built environment of modern life. Bloomsbury artists' use of design fits neither with the attitudes of hostility toward or capitulation to mass markets that Adamson posits—rather it looks more like what today's champions of flexible industry call "disruption," an underdog's challenge to big business.[14]

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[13] Adamson's overall argument is that the history of German and European design schools like Bauhaus and De Stijl from WWI onward suggests "that the dominant form of avant-garde practice shifted during the war years from the pure or autonomous types associated with pre-war futurism, cubism, and expressionism to the notion of an art-industry alliance or, more exactly, to a reorientation of art and artistic work that would prepare the way for the future possibility of such an alliance" (185). My account of avant-garde English design before and during WWI adds to this formulation the caviat that at least in this context, autonomy and alliance were not the only options. Rather Morris and Co., Omega, and Rebel Art each offer alternatives to mainstream industry.

[14] This buzzword refers to Clayton Christensen's theory of "disruptive innovation," which Jill Lepore summarizes in the context of technology industries: "Manufacturers of mainframe computers made good decisions about making and selling mainframe computers and devising important refinements to them in their R&D departments—

Unlike Adamson's assertion of economic concession, Rosner's findings on gender, sexuality, and domestic architecture foreground gender politics in her assertion that in modernist novels "the changing nature of middle class life could be said to have found material expression in a radicalized program of interior design," and in doing so "ineluctably and materially links feminism to modernism" (9, 14). Whether the study of modernist literature and design produces progressive identity politics, as Rosner argues, or regressive concessions to market forces as Adamson claims, the outcome of studies such as these tends to be moralistic—either modernism is inherently a force for the betterment of humankind, or a sham revolution based in shallow aesthetic rebellion. The latter accusation has been leveraged repeatedly at the Bloomsbury group. Edward Comentale's *Modernism, Cultural Production, and the British Avant-garde*, for instance, claims "The members of Bloomsbury, while driven by an admirably progressive hope, used the category of the aesthetic to promote an explicitly bourgeois ideology. Through their art, they domesticated the violence of futurism and freed the totalizing power of capitalism from the onus of war" (48). This may seem a fantastic feat for a tiny clique of eccentric artists, writers, and social critics, but such perceptions of Bloomsbury as complicit with dominant class structures are nevertheless pervasive.

Raymond Williams offers a more nuanced depiction of Bloomsbury as caught between bourgeois ideology and the desire to reject it. He describes the group as "a true *fraction* of the existing English upper class… at once against its dominant ideas and values and still willingly, in all immediate ways, a part of it" (*Culture* 156). Bloomsbury artists' ambiguous position relative

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"sustaining innovations," Christensen called them—but, busy pleasing their mainframe customers, one tinker at a time, they missed what an entirely untapped customer wanted, personal computers, the market for which was created by what Christensen called "disruptive innovation": the selling of a cheaper, poorer-quality product that initially reaches less profitable customers but eventually takes over and devours an entire industry." (2). The banner of disruption has been taken up widely and across industries, Lepore points out, in spite of numerous logical gaps and evidentiary holes in Christensen's theory.

to the dominant class exemplifies the indeterminacy of modernism's politics, as Williams asserts: "the politics of the avant-garde, from the beginning, could go either way. The new art could find its place either in a new social order or in a culturally transformed but otherwise persistent and recuperated old order" (*Politics* 62). In keeping with Williams, I aim toward correctives to the tendency to condemn or admire Bloomsbury. I am therefore less interested in whether the Bloomsbury designers were a force for good or evil than in the persistence of their countercultural values long after their rebellion appears to have been discredited.

After all, as Thomas Frank and others have argued, as the twentieth century progressed, counter-cultural corporate values inherited from Bloomsbury and other modernist formations gained prominence. In Richard Florida's celebratory account of neoliberal gentrification and labor precarity in the twenty-first century, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, he makes a direct comparison between the "creative class" and twentieth century avant-garde formations: "the essence of the bohemian response, whether in Paris or in Greenwich Village, was to celebrate or at least desperately seek 'the human thing.' Many values and credos espoused by the early bohemians are the same ones animating today's creative class—for instance, the desire to be 'always on' and make life a broad-ranging quest for experience" (195). At stake then is our contemporary working life and environment. Lewis' writing implies that modernism is "a world of innovatory capitalism: a neo-liberal cousin of what Michel Foucault would later call a heterotopic site, in which it functions as a utopian version of capitalism to come" (Brezezinski 52). Similarly, Fry's 1932 "Art and Industry" imagines a design industry based on practices that sound eerily similar to those of post-Fordism such as project management, consultation firms, prototyping, and internships. This chapter suggests that English avant-garde design might

partially explain why these trends appear to Florida and others as offshoots of utopian projects begun a century ago.

II. "Unpretending Labour" The Art of Work in Ruskin and Morris.

Inspired by the drab surroundings of industrial Britain and the poor quality of its workers' lives, John Ruskin and William Morris called for a return to handicrafts. Prominent contributors to the Arts and Crafts movement, Ruskin and Morris were responsible for some of the foremost critiques of late-nineteenth century industrial capitalism. As Eileen Boris' *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Morris, and the Craftsman Ideal in America* details, their "craftsman ideal" "would permit worker creativity, thus reviving beauty; as a result, art would merge with everyday life" (xiv). The Arts and Crafts movement was the practical expression of the craftsman ideal, "an organized movement dedicated to handicraft production, fine workmanship, and artistic integrity; in short, a reunification of art and labor, of artist and artisan" (xiv). As Boris recounts, Morris and Ruskin "sought… an end to the division between the human spirit and material reality that from the late eighteenth century separated the mental from the manual, city from country, individual from community, work from play" (xi). They also sought to dismantle the separation industrial culture had imposed between high and popular culture, and between the professional designer and the amateur 'maker'. This "craftsman ideal" would be adopted by Roger Fry's Omega Workshops, and (in a highly altered state) in Wyndham Lewis's design and magazine endeavors. Unlike Fry and Lewis, however, Ruskin and Morris' principles were based in Victorian morality and faith in organic forms. Through lectures, essays—and in Morris' case, novels and a start-up business—these entrepreneur-artists sought to demonstrate how society could be transformed by way of "useful work" into a place of greater beauty, equality, and productivity.

Unlike modernist art and literature, the design projects of Morris and Fry responded to systems of mass production rather than the onset of mass culture. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the built environment was their concern, as machine based mass production had come to dominate manufacturing. Such developments had positive and negative impacts. As Susie Steinbach notes, "By the 1850s, Britain was… a more industrialized and urbanized society… Mass production made many goods more affordable to the middle class, who forged and performed their identities in part through consumption and display" (7). Industrial developments had benefits, including a rise in literacy and leisure time, particularly thanks to a series of mid-century labor reforms. For Morris and his inheritors, however, the democratization afforded by mass production had two negative consequences: the alienation of craftworkers from their craft thanks to the division of labor on the factory floor, and a resulting ugliness and lack of artistry in goods manufactured under these conditions.

Morris dates the process by which such alienation and ugliness developed back to the earliest divisions of labor under capitalism, in which "it was essential to this system that the free-labourer should be no longer free in his work; he must be furnished with a master having complete control of that work, as a consequence of his owning the raw material and tools of labour" ("Art and its Producers"). As the worker now produces for his employer rather than his neighbor, Morris reasons, he is merely "a 'hand,' responsible for nothing but carrying out the orders of his foreman" ("Art and its Producers"). Such conditions produce inferior goods for the sake of mere profit, and he speculates that "there are not a few of the 'manufacturers' in this great 'manufacturing' district who would be horrified at the idea of using the wares which they 'manufacture,' and if they could be witnesses of the enthusiasm of the customers of the customers of their customers when those wares reached their final destination of use they would

perhaps smile at it somewhat cynically" ("Art and its Producers"). Such sentiments are indicative of the prevalence of mass production, and its perceived ill effects. The "revival of handicraft," on the other hand, had the potential to renew "The art of making beautifully all kinds of ordinary things, carts, gates, fences, boats, bowls, and so forth, let alone houses and public buildings, unconsciously and without effort" ("Revival"). Morris' was an industrial rather than a cultural response, but as the ideal of craftsmanship evolved into the twentieth century, it came to represent an alternative to the mass production of goods and culture, especially as these became less distinguishable.

Ruskin and Morris advocated craft and hand-work in order to imbue labor with a sense of joy and creativity, and they believed in turn that this would restore beauty to the world. The ideal of hand-making has resurfaced repeatedly since then as an antidote to the anonymity and homogeneity of mass produced goods and the drudgery of mass manufacture. If, like Bloomsbury's politics, the craftsman ideal could go either way, it is worth asking which elements of it were most adaptable throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Recurring themes of humility and industry in the work of Ruskin and Morris, for instance, can explain how the craftsman ideal progressed into the twentieth century with its radical politics stripped away. While Ruskin and Morris leveraged these values in order to democratize art, and chip away at distinctions between art, craft, and labor, it would take Fry and Lewis to turn the craftsman ideal into a modern capitalist alternative. All four men advanced the idea that creativity can make work seem less like toil—a principle that capitalism would eventually co-opt from socialism.

For instance, notions of creativity and design as fundamental to the labor of art inflect Ruskin's ideas and eventually re-emerge in twentieth century business. The key terms Ruskin repeatedly invokes in his essays on craft and art are "truth," and "tenderness". The former is the

central pillar of his theory of art, the importance of organic form in all art. In other words, Ruskin saw "love of nature" and the artist's fidelity to the organic matter of the tangible world as the necessary condition for any kind of art ("Conventional Art" 42). However, as he asserts in an 1858 lecture on "The Deteriorative Power of Conventional Art Over Nations" nature alone, presented without interpretation, is not art. There is another fundamental element, he argues, and that is "the gift of design," the operation of the human intellect and emotion on the raw material of nature. Therefore, the basic condition of all art is "*the visible operation of human intellect in the presentation of truth*" (43, emphasis in original). Decoupled, Ruskin suggests, neither of these components suffice. Nature without design is merely nature, whereas design without nature can result in what Ruskin sees as a dangerously immoral formalism.

Ruskin's invocation of "tenderness" of temperament as a component of artistic labor is a precondition for the perfect art he desires. He emphasizes humility and industry as primary principles of creative work, uniting the two ideals toward an ideal artistic disposition of complete submission to the work. In an 1857 lecture for an audience of architects, he states that the qualities that "chiefly distinguished great artists from feeble artists [are] first, their sensibility and tenderness; secondly, their imagination; and thirdly, their industry" (113). His preference for mildly tempered artists resurfaces frequently, as in an 1859 lecture on "The Unity of Art" which celebrates the artist Sir Joshua Reynolds for an acquaintance's comparison of Reynolds to a lamb, and lauds William Hunt for his "simplicity of aim, and intensity of power and success," all of which go into "that man's *unpretending labour*" (76, emphasis mine). The artist, he suggests, can choose to work in two different ways: "On a dark and dangerous side are set, the pride which delights in self-contemplation…and, on the other side, [the artist] is bowed down every hour in deepest humility" (50). He associates prideful work with the sin of formalism, "the indolence

which rests in unquestioned forms" (50). Despite his anti-formalism and his insistence on the primacy of the task over the personality of the artist, the seeds of the contradiction that would take root in Fry's modernism are contained in Ruskin's theory of truth and tenderness. No matter how humble and true to the work the artist may be, he is still a special type of individual, distinct from the rest of the populace.

Ruskin's theory of labor casts him as both a predecessor and opponent of the modernists who would adopt some of his ideals. Fry and his colleagues, for instance, would push natural forms toward abstraction, but their anonymity as artists working for the Omega renders them humble and industrious in a Ruskinian collective spirit. Lewis' ultimate break toward radical formalism and individualism serves as a final rejection of Ruskin's morality and collective politics. The potential for dilution in Ruskin's politics can be located in what Morag Shiach identifies as his historically contradictory status. Shiach notes that "throughout his writings there is a fascinating and often productive tension between an almost visceral sensitivity to new social and cultural movements and forces and a determined clinging to institutions, relationships, and concepts that seem to enable the perception of order" (41). He therefore offers little in terms of solutions to bring about social justice, and remains committed to the organizational hierarchies of his day. In his invocation of "truth" and "tenderness," he both reinforces social stratification and encourages deference to the social order, as his inclinations toward order and institutional hierarchy counter socialist principles (established in Karl Marx's work and developed in Morris') that call for the synthesis of all art and labor.

Morris' adaptation of Ruskin's ideas represents a partial departure from the reliance on social centralization to which Ruskin clung (Shiach 43, Reed 184). Inspired by Ruskin and later by Marx, Morris developed more comprehensive aesthetic, political, and entrepreneurial ideas

that similarly advocated humility in labor and the total merger of art and everyday life. For Morris, not only should work be humbly performed, but the artist also should not be a specialized professional, nor should any manner of work be more artistic than another, any product less imaginative. In the 1884 Lecture "At a Picture Show" Morris laments the low status of everyday objects in comparison to what is generally held to be fine art: "now-a-days, you know, people talk about, and advertise art pottery, art furniture, art fire-grates, and the like, giving us clearly to understand by such words, that it is unusual for pottery, furniture and fire-grates to have anything to do with art, that there is, as I began by saying, a divorce between art and common life" ("Picture"). Morris seeks to dismantle the traditional meaning of "art" in favor of an all-encompassing artisanal production that imbues the whole world with beauty and encompasses all labor. In the essay "Art and Labor" he expands his concept of a totalizing artistic aesthetic world, and redefines "art" as "beauty produced by the labour of man both mental and bodily, the expression of the interest man takes in the life of man upon the earth with all its surroundings, in other words the human pleasure of life" ("Art and Labour").[15] Morris put these ideas into practice in his own work, as he synthesized his writing, design, and entrepreneurial work. His most important contribution to modernist enterprise stems from this synthesis of theory and practice, art and craft. Had Morris not criticized the supremacy of art and promoted he centrality of craft, projects like Omega might have been unthinkable.

The correlation of Morris' eclectic artistic practice with Fry's forays into painting, criticism, enterprise, and design—and Lewis' similarly diverse modes of expression—suggests that these men operated in conscious lineage with Morris. Fry worked briefly with C.R. Ashbee, a major figure of the Arts and Crafts movement, and this biographical detail along with Fry's

[15] Cited from here on as "A&L"

design writings reveal Fry's "arts and crafts roots, not only in his concern for architecture and design but in his belief that the objects of daily life reveal and perpetuate the social and moral conditions of their creation" (Smith 169). As Fry's own entrepreneurial practices evolved, however, the unity of art and life that in Morris' work bears the most resemblance to Marx's idea of species-being came to mean in Fry's life and work something more like entrepreneurial "multi-tasking." Morris' politics (after 1884 at least) were intensely socialist, whereas Fry remained skeptical of socialism throughout his career in spite of his qualms with capitalism. Morris, in "At a Picture Show," argued that industrial capitalism was responsible for imposing false divisions between art, labor, and industry, as a natural offshoot of the basic inequalities inherent to capitalism:

> We have divided the world into rich and poor: we have decreed that, as near as could be, there should be two classes of people, one to toil and suffer, one to spend and enjoy; the poor are to be ill-fed, coarsely clad, dirty, wretchedly housed, over-worked, uncertain of their livelihood from day to day, they are to talk coarsely and ungrammatically, to think unconsecutively and illogically, to be uneducated, unrefined, bigoted, ignorant and dishonest; the rich on the other hand are privileged to feed themselves to repletion, to be clad in delicate raiment, to be spotlessly clean at all hours of the day, to live in gorgeous houses, to do no work or little work and to be paid the more the less they do, to talk daintily a tongue of their own, to be carefully and lengthily educated, to think according to the rules of logic… If this be the case what wonder that there is this severance between artists and non-artists: the artists have been annexed by the rich and are their hangers on,

> their lackeys, their toy-makers: what wonder that they can no longer talk a language understanded [sic] by the people? ("Picture Show")

His unrelenting account of divisions between rich and poor in this lecture dramatizes the need for an egalitarian model of artistic autonomy as a precondition for a socialist society. Rather than educating the poor through art (as the exhibition that occasioned his lecture sought to do), everyone should have the resources to create without submitting to the whims of the rich.

Rather than merely showing art to the poor, Morris insists on a turn to socialism. Under the current system, Morris argues, the workman has no hope of aesthetic appreciation or production: "the poor man can have no art that is none of the beauty of life: his work will not produce it, and he has neither money to buy it with or leisure and education, that is to say refinement to relish it" ("A&L"). In order to resolve the issues of inequality and mindless toil that have brought this unfortunate condition about, Morris argues, certain conditions of labor must be attained for all workmen:

> First he must claim to live in a pleasant house and a pleasant place… Second the workman must be well-educated…and not according to the amount of money which their parents happen to possess: less education [than] this means class education which is a monstrous oppression of the poor by the rich. Third the workman must have due leisure… which further implies that there must be no idlers, and that the duration of the day's work must be legally limited. You will see I daresay that what these three claims really mean is refinement of life for all; what is called the life of a gentleman for all. ("Art and Labor")

For Morris, in other words, none of the changes he seeks can come to pass in any manner of completion without equal distribution of resources. The craftsman's utopia he imagines is fundamentally tied to economic equality.

The insistent socialism of Morris' teachings suggests that as the "craftsman ideal" carried over into twentieth-century projects, anyone upholding such principles should leverage them in the name of economic equality. Peter Smith's "Attractive Labour and Social Change: William Morris Now," for instance, argues that Morris' "relevance to the twenty-first century may be reducible to this: he could see beyond the meanness of the lives of most people on earth. His reflection on the abundance of the world and its unequal levels of distribution is still felt by many today" (149). Morris' utopian fantasy novel *News from Nowhere* even imagines a twenty-first century in which such meanness and inequality no longer prevail. In *News*, a nameless narrator wakes up the morning after a meeting of his socialist society to find himself magically transported to the twenty-first century. In this future, there is no money form; labor is evenly traded; the design aesthetic is a hybrid of medieval, romantic, and modern; ecological purity has obtained; and the built and natural environment is altogether more beautiful than at any time in past history. When it comes to the political structure within which resources should be redistributed, however, Morris is trickier to pin down. Reed, for instance, asserts: "Morris, like Ruskin, proposed utopias—benevolent hegemonies, designed down to the dress of their happy inhabitants" (184). But in the utopia Morris depicts in *News*, he imagines a society of collective self-governance, in which laws and politics no longer serve any purpose. His emphasis on aesthetics over logistics renders this vision transferable, but also adaptable—potentially for capitalistic ends.

Morris took what he perceived as a first step toward the unification of art and labor with his design enterprise, and Fry's project deliberately drew on some of Morris' teachings. Therefore, the next section will explore the consistencies and departures between the business model and labor practices of Morris and Co., the Omega Workshops, and the Rebel Art Centre, in order to reflect on the combined legacy of these enterprises in the century to come.

III. Omega Workshops and Collective, Anonymous Labor.

When it comes to assessing Roger Fry's creative and intellectual debt to John Ruskin and William Morris, critical consensus is elusive. In Christopher Reed's assessment, Fry's essays on architecture and interior design reveal him to be "very much a product" of an era in which "Aestheticism and the Arts and Crafts harmonized as voices of dissent from the prevailing ethos of industrial capitalism" (167). Reed's introduction to Fry's essays is focused on restoring his connection to the social consciousness of Arts and Crafts in spite of "commentators anxious to distance Ruskin's and Morris' socialist legacy from a bourgeois hegemony they see as embodied in modernism and therefore personified in Fry" (169). The stereotype of Bloomsbury as a typically "highbrow" instance of modernism has been questioned in recent decades, but Omega and Fry have not seen the kind of critical reassessment that others have, even as studies of modernist engagements with mass culture have proliferated.

The absence of Fry and Omega from "new" modernist studies is lamentable because he (like Morris) offers a rare instance of avant-garde theory put into business practice. While the Woolfs' Hogarth Press has received some attention, neither Omega nor Fry have garnered much interest since the 1980s. Even the seminal text on Omega, Isabelle Anscombe's 1981 book *Omega and After: Bloomsbury and the Decorative Arts*, is dismissive of the enterprise and Fry's Arts and Crafts legacy. She distances Fry from Morris politically and aesthetically, and claims that "Roger rejected the kind of socialism which many of the English designers had espoused" (31). Asncombe also cites the hostility of Arts and Crafts figures such as C.R. Ashbee (who briefly worked with Fry in the 1890s) toward Omega as evidence of aesthetic divergence. According to Anscombe, "Ashbee's friends considered the Omega 'too awful, simply a crime against beauty'" (31). Fry's goals for the Omega can appear shallow and self-centered, partly

thanks to the above divisions. Omega for Anscombe "had two aims, to promote English Post-Impressionism and, as Quentin Bell later put it, to provide 'jobs for the boys'" (31-32).[16] In fact the relationship between Fry and the Arts and Crafts movement is one of both legacy and rejection, the synthesis of which occurs by way of Fry's entrepreneurialism.

My analysis of Fry's business and labor practices in this section will highlight his adaptation of Morris' concept of an egalitarian and liberating workshop environment, which translates the humility of "unpretending labour" into creative anonymity and replaces the idea that all men are artists with the idea that artists can elevate ordinary labor through craft enterprise. That Fry borrows strategically from his predecessors is, to my mind, no reason to dismiss him politically and aesthetically. Instead his skepticism toward both socialism and capitalism drives him toward an autonomous ethic of collective enterprise more in spirit with modernist principles. Fry neither rejected nor imitated Morris' entrepreneurial theories and practices, but rather reinvented them. He adapted ideas for his design workshop from Morris along with the basic tenet that artists and craftsmen should not perform separate roles in producing our aesthetic world, yet he shied away from Morris' social activism. Fry's insistence on Omega artists' anonymity was at odds with his assertions that artists were inherently different from other kinds of workers. This contrast provokes Lewis' break toward individualism, which completes the translation of the craftsman ideal from socialist utopia (Morris) into collective enterprise (Fry) and finally (in the hands of Lewis) into a theory of cultural totalitarianism inspired in part by Hollywood management structures. Handicraft's centrality as a foremost alternative to the labor and aesthetics of mass production unites all three, and holds revolutionary

[16] Anscombe, an art historian, exemplifies a general tendency in that field to emphasize aesthetic over social factors. The revered design writer Niklaus Pevsner, for example, states: "what was entirely unheard of in the products of Fry's workshop was their appearance, their aesthetic, not their social aspect" (45). Fry's writings on commerce and his plans for the Omega suggest that this outlook is imbalanced.

potential. What lies on the other side of such revolutions, however, is alternately socialist, capitalist, or fascist.

One of Fry's earliest statements on Omega's simultaneous indebtedness to and rejection of Morris' ideas appears in a fundraising letter Fry wrote in 1912 to Bernard Shaw. Fry either felt that the Arts and Crafts movement had floundered or that its products had never been socially valuable, having spawned nothing but imitation: "Since the complete decadence of the Morris movement nothing has been done in England but pastiche and more or less unscrupulous imitation of old work. There is no reason whatever why people should not return to the more normal custom of employing contemporary artists to design their furniture and hangings, if only the artists can produce vital and original work" ("Fundraising Letter" 196). It is unclear exactly what he means by the "decadence of the Morris movement" and "the more normal custom" of employing artists for interior design, an ambiguity that signals Omega's refusal from the beginning to categorize its workers as specifically artists or artisans. If the "custom" Fry refers to is the patronage system, he glosses over the fact that what he is doing is quite different from patronage. Rather than commissioning a single artist to, say, decorate a wall with a mural, "the Omega brought together many young English artists interested in the work of French Post-Impressionists and gave them both a meeting place and a means of livelihood at a time when patronage was scarce. The artists decorated and designed fabrics, furniture, pottery, and many smaller items which were sold from premises in Fitzroy Square, giving them a small but regular income" as Anscombe recounts (9). The Omega business model was based in collaborative labor, support for the artistic community, and consumer-oriented design. The latter tenets are much more Fry's than Morris', and represent Fry's adaptation of Morris' principles for the purpose of competing with mass-manufacture in a consumer market.

Fry achieves this revision by privileging practice over theory, action over reflection. For instance, he discusses the Omega in matter-of fact terms rather than as a lofty, idealistic project. In the fundraising letter, he informs Shaw that he has already pinned down the 33 Fitzroy Square location and that "by letting a flat at the top of this I can secure the whole of this for about £120 a year" (196). After he factors in materials, salaries, and other expenses, he calculates that "the total expenses of running this workshop will be about £600 or £700 a year," and he therefore figures he needs about £2000 to get it off the ground (197). He plans to protect the Workshop's intellectual property, and notes: "All of the products of the workshop will be signed by a registered trademark. This will ensure the exclusiveness of our designs, an important point in view of the inevitable commercial imitation which follows upon the success of any new ideas" (197). Virginia Woolf's account of the Omega reveals that Fry's practicality marked an attempt to prove his seriousness in the face of ridicule from the traditional business community. Fry spent a lot of his time dealing with "business men," Woolf recalls, and "he met with very serious opposition in that quarter. Quoting Arnold Bennett, she claims that "English firms… 'roared with laughter at [Fry's] suggestion that they should do business together'" and that "When he produced his designs they would not take them" (196). While laughing Fry out of the room, however, some were quick to copy Omega's work: "Emasculated versions of the original Omega ideas appeared in the furniture shops and were more acceptable to the ordinary person than the original" (196). Primarily known as an artist and critic (then and now), Fry went to a great deal of trouble to demonstrate that he was a responsible businessman, not a throwback to the idealism of the prior century.[17]

[17] Interestingly, Morris' status in the views of twentieth-century critics has suffered from the inverse of this issue. According to Peter Smith, "The reputation of Morris as a craftworker has perhaps worked against his authority as a social theorist and political strategist" (143). The two accounts suggest that while the dynamic can shift either way,

At first glance, then, Omega may not appear to have been founded in the same spirit of social change that Morris and his colleagues shared and sought to unite with their design theories in the founding of Morris and Co. It was, however, meant as a practical execution of theories Fry held about the place of artists in society that were not all that distant from Morris's. The key difference between their theories of art and labor is that Fry wants to give artists the chance to compete in the crafts market, whereas Morris ultimately wants to do away with not only the special status of artists, but also competition and markets themselves. In "The Artist as Decorator," Fry criticizes the "rigid distinction between picture making and applied art" which he dates back to the renaissance, and points out that "in the nineteenth century it became a fixed social and caste distinction. The man who painted anything within the four sides of a gilt frame might be, indeed probably was, a 'gentleman'—the man who painted a wall or the panels of a door or carved the lettering of a tombstone could not be a gentleman" (207). It's not as though Fry is railing against inequality here, but there is shared sentiment between his arguments and Morris' assertion in "At a Picture Show" that "you think of an artist as a man working at his picture or image day in day out, disconnected with all other life but the carrying through of his piece of uselessness, as you would, if you said what you thought, most probably think it… That is not what I mean by an artist at all, when I say we must all be artists" ("Picture Show"). Morris worked to elevate the everyday workman to a level of greater artistry by training unskilled workers as professional designers. Morris wanted art to be "made by the people for the people as a joy for the maker and the user" (Morris qtd. in Boris 7). In order to do so, as his demand that "we must all be artists" suggests, Morris insisted on learning trade skills himself and hiring

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making things and ideas were often assumed to be incompatible, and those who sought to do both could face an uphill battle.

"unskilled enthusiasts" such as "boys from a nearby orphanage" and "relatives (mostly women) of friends and workers" (Boris 9).

In theory, the difference between training ordinary workmen as artists and putting artists to the task of design work might seem minor, but in practice it is the central compromise of Omega. Reed's assessment of Fry's social intentions in founding Omega positions Fry somewhere between Morris' socialism and Oscar Wilde's aestheticism. Reed is careful to reject critical stereotypes of Wilde's apolitical aestheticism and to instead suggest that Wilde's politics were those of the social outsider, whereas Morris' meant to encompass a whole society (183-4). Hence Fry's business practices are consistent with Wilde's belief in the artist as a separate entity from the everyday laborer, and Morris' idea that the merger of art into all ordinary areas of life could transform the world. In his preface to the 1914 Omega Workshops catalogue, for instance, Fry stated the philosophy behind the products in the catalogue as such: "The artist is the man who creates not only for need but for joy, and in the long run mankind will not be content without sharing that joy through the possession of real works of art, however humble and unpretentious as they may be" (201).[18] Fry's contrast to Morris lies, as Reed suggests, in the fact that "the Arts and Crafts emphasis on skilled technique is here dismissed in favor of Romantic notions of creative genius" (183). Such notions both diminished the egalitarian impulses of the enterprise and undermined its policy of anonymity.

Fry's enterprise should therefore be seen as an attempt to earn fine artists a place in the workforce without altering the economic regime, as Morris sought to do. Omega's anonymity

[18] In contrast to his fundraising letter, Fry's prospectus (it has been suggested) overly favors the social theory behind the enterprise. Judith Collins writes: "Fry's pamphlet was an exposition of the ideology of the Omega, and very didactic in tone; it probably did not expand the market for Omega products. Vanessa Bell remarked: 'I can't make any criticisms on your prospectus, only that I thought you ought to ask people to come to the showrooms more plainly" (*Omega* 53-4).

policy is representative of this contrast between social ideals and practical business concerns. Fry's plan affirmed the special status of fine art as opposed to decoration, in that he did not allow artists to make Omega work their only job. According to Anscombe, "The artists were not allowed to work at the Omega more than three and a half days a week, so that they would not be distracted from their more serious work, and for this they were paid 30*s* per week or 7*s*. 6*d* per day" (27).[19] Work produced for the Omega was collective and anonymous, a rule that Richard Cork suggests was meant to encourage experimentation: "Fry … insisted from the outset that a strict rule of anonymity should reign at the Omega. Although each product was usually designed by a single artist, none of them was permitted to sign his or her work. The Omega stamp (Ω) was applied instead, like a certificate signifying fundamental agreement with the principles animating the enterprise as a whole" (132). What these "fundamental principles" really meant, however, can be read in several ways. For Cork, they embody aesthetic experimentation. Therefore he surmises "Fry thought that anonymity would provide the Workshop's members with a sense of liberation, allowing them to try experimental styles they might have been unwilling to attempt under their own names" (132). In this case anonymity empowers artists to take creative risks, but contradicts Fry's own and many of the artists' belief in their special vocational status.

Anscombe's explanation of the Omega's anonymity policy is that it fostered collaboration and the free exchange of ideas. However, as her account suggests, collaboration, creative risk-taking, and cooperation served the needs of the business itself as much as those of the artists. "All the work at the Omega was sold anonymously," Anscombe notes, "which guaranteed that no one artist would be sought after or earn more than the others" (26). In this

[19] I have not had much luck finding a reliable calculation of how much this sum might be comparable to today, but a cursory search suggests it would have been worth around £100 today, or about $170.

sense, artistic anonymity mutually fosters an egalitarian workplace environment, in which (hypothetically a least) all work and pay are equal. It also helps the business' bottom line, by ensuring that one artist's salary won't drive up the others, and keeps the cost low for consumers by omitting the symbolic value of artistic prestige from the products. Finally, the most practical function of the policy is that it ensures placement of the Omega stamp on products, allowing Fry to protect the intellectual value of the Workshop's designs from imitators. The convergence of socialist principles of equality and entrepreneurial agendas (including reduction of labor costs and brand dominance) in Omega demonstrates the surprising compatibility of Morris' socialism with twentieth century management styles. The anonymity policy was not necessarily deceptive, but it generated tension between collective and individual labor and artistry and ultimately provoked Lewis' departure (over the assignment of credit for Omega work). Lewis' discomfort with anonymous labor led him to develop his subsequent revision of the craftsman ideal into Hollywood-style proto-fascistic cultural managerialism, in opposition to both Fry's model and the mass cultural management structures of the day.

All told, Omega's labor practices—anonymous production, collective design, and the limitations of artists' labor—spoke both to Fry's ideals and realities. These practices promoted the health of the enterprise and for most artists didn't create a sense of exploitation. For a time, Fry was able to assert (contrary to Morris' beliefs) that artists were a special type of individual, while preventing individual acclaim for their decorative work. The working environment and consumer aesthetics of the Omega sustained its ability to circumvent the above contradictions, as I will discuss in the section that follows.

IV. Fun in the Omega Workplace, and for the Consumer

In keeping with John Ruskin and William Morris' postulate that joy in the act of work begets beauty in its product, Roger Fry described the Omega Workshops in the catalogue preface quoted earlier as "a group of artists who are working with the object of allowing free play to the delight in creation in the making of objects for common life" (201). The phrase "free play" and the word "fun" appear often in critical and historical accounts the Omega and its products. Unlike the terms Ruskin and Morris used, which were weighted with religious and social moral connotations ('fulfillment', 'beauty', etc.), "fun" and "free play" resonate with the hedonism with which Bloomsbury is often associated, a facet of the group that often generates accusations of political ineffectuality. The language that Fry, Virginia Woolf, and others used to describe the environment and products of the Omega suggests that both embraced a lighthearted, fresh, and spontaneous aesthetic. This section examines the evolution of Omega's workplace culture and its aesthetics of modernist consumer goods as alternatives to mass produced decor. I find that the "spirit of fun" in Omega work and products represents a re-interpretation of Arts and Crafts philosophy through the lens of Oscar Wilde's aestheticism, performing a lasting shift in the language of labor conditions that substitutes alternative modes of consumption and production within capitalism for the utopian socialism Morris wanted (Fry qtd. in Woolf 194).

Although Wilde's social and aesthetic philosophies, as Christopher Reed argues, are often misinterpreted as "a rejection of Arts and Crafts' political commitment in favor of a contrary stance of apolitical elitism," they in fact held much in common with the ideals of both Morris and Fry—for instance, the notion that the aesthetic environment of labor conditions the life of the laborer and his products (for better or for worse) (183). More importantly for Reed, Wilde's work proposed a different model of socio-political opposition than that of Morris. Based

on critics who celebrate Wilde's embrace of outsider identities as an expression of queer identity, Reed asserts that what we should see in the comparison of Wilde and Morris is "not a split between the political and the apolitical, but rather two models of social critique that can be schematized as Utopia versus subculture" (184). The outcome of Omega's synthesis of utopia and subculture is twofold: first, the labor of production and consumption merge, and second, labor is redefined as leisure. Therefore, I read Omega's attempt to de-alienate labor as less oriented toward utopian socialism than toward alternative capitalism.

Like Morris' workshop, Omega's environment constructed a physical space of creative and material production that was meant to be less alienated than work that took place on the factory floor. Morris' Merton Abbey workshop (situated about an hour away from London), "seemed like an ideal factory," as Eileen Boris concludes from firsthand accounts of the place (9). Merton Abbey was "set within a garden," and as Morris' biographer recalls "the long low buildings with the clear rushing little stream running between them, and the wooden outside staircases leading to their upper story, have nothing about them to suggest the modern factory" (qtd. in Boris 9). Boris cites business manager George Wardle on the interior space of Merton—an environment that was "altogether delightful," having "a spacious ground floor, well lighted, for the carpet looms, and over it, a 'shop' for the block printers" (qtd. in Boris 90). The natural setting and practical, yet pleasant interior reflect Morris' advocacy of humble work in accordance with organic principles of life and form.

Woolf's biography of Fry conveys a journalist's impressions of the Omega workroom as similarly guided by simplicity: "a great white work-room, where one artist was at work on a ceiling, [and] another was painting what appeared to be 'a very large raccoon with very flexible joints' for the walls of a nursery" (195). Edward Wolfe, the "last artist to join the Omega," found

the workshop to be "an extremely colourful and creatively exciting place, with an atmosphere that encouraged the artist to pick up and decorate whatever came to hand. The keynote of the Workshops was spontaneity. The artists could relax after their more serious painting and experiment with any ideas they had for decorative schemes" (qtd. in Anscombe 36). Richard Cork observes that the environment of the Omega fostered the collective spirit that Fry desired and enabled anonymous production. He observes that "the Omega's designs never suggest that a sense of irksome financial obligation impelled them to attend. On the contrary: as the Omega's spirited letterhead indicates, a holiday spirit animates most of the products" (132). The letterhead design, if it has any thematic content beyond the careful balance of textual and figure-drawing designs and the centrality of the Omega symbol, it is that of relaxation and leisure, as conveyed by the abstract patterns of reclining bodies that appear therein (fig. 1.1).

The showrooms also encouraged a lighthearted temper in consumers, as reported in the *Daily News and Leader* in August 1913. Cork presents the reporter's impression: "One reporter, who realized that Fry was trying to bring a 'spirit of fun into our sedate homes,' was impressed at once. 'The show-rooms of the Omega Workshop [*sic*] have a curiously exhilarating effect… the cool grey walls make an effective background for many fine flashes of colour'" (135). Regarding the showroom, Cork observes "diversity was the principle adopted in this clamorous space, where almost a bewildering range of idioms could be seen enlivening furniture, hangings, and wall surfaces alike" (135). The visual variety to which Cork refers is evident in press photographs of the showroom, and may very well have generated the exhilaration the reporter felt (fig. 1.2). It is also likely that the visual variety of works in progress provided inspiration to the Omega artists. As images of the workroom suggest, the walls were hung with Omega designs and the shelves stacked with Fry's pottery. The close connection of spaces of work and

consumption, in this case, imply that the labor of consumption, in the Omega context, was also meant to be enjoyable.

As the earlier anecdote about Fry's train cabin suggests, he tended to describe the impact of designed environments in terms of pain and pleasure. The aesthetics of work and consumption for Fry therefore resemble the sensuality of aestheticism more than Morris' idea of utilitarian beauty that elevated the quality of work and everyday life. The Omega approach follows similar logic to that stated by Wilde in his lecture "The Decorative Art in America": "I cannot impress the point too frequently," he proclaims, "that beautiful and rational designs are necessary in all work" (283). "Designs" and "work" operate as abstract terms, in that the former might mean the environment in which things are made or the plan for making them, and the latter could either mean creative labor itself or its outputs. The rational design of one's workspace is necessary for the labor within to be rational, or the beauty of a workman's design—his mental labor—amounts to beauty in the product of his labor. Wilde synthesizes environment, labor (physical and mental), and product in a statement that amounts to a theory of individualized expression through alternative production.

Fry establishes a similar dynamic in Omega. Speaking to an interviewer who visited the Omega showroom in 1913, Fry reportedly quipped: "It is time… that the spirit of fun was introduced into furniture and into fabrics. We have suffered too long from the dull and the stupidly serious" (qtd. in Woolf 194). The aesthetic of fun in Omega's consumer objects was that of abstraction rather than adherence to natural principles as Ruskin and Morris prescribed. The Omega artists represented natural forms in the sweeping patterns of line and color typical of French Post-Impressionism. Christopher Reed imagines that "Surrounded by the furniture, the knickknacks, and the painted fabrics and murals that went on sale when the Omega opened in

July 1913, shoppers could imagine they had stepped into a painting by Matisse or Picasso" (179) (fig. 1.3). Fry's faith in abstraction, Cork suggests, was similarly a driving force behind the pre-Omega Grafton group exhibition. Many of the artists included there went on to the Omega and wanted to experiment with pure form in their canvas paintings and interior designs. As Fry wrote in that exhibition's catalogue, "all art depends on cutting off the practical responses to sensations of ordinary life, thereby setting free a pure and as it were disembodied functioning of the spirit" (qtd. in Cork 125). Such formalism flies against the spirit of organic unity espoused by Ruskin and Morris. Its application in the context of a decorative arts workshop, however, reconciles modernist formalism with the craftsman ideal.

At the time, Fry's theory of pure design was upsetting to many in the fine art world, but as Cork points out it might have been welcomed when applied to interior design: "the degree of abstraction Fry found in the modern art he admired could readily be transposed from a canvas to a curtain or a wallpaper, surfaces which were not expected to represent an illusion of life anyway" (125). The idea that the level of acceptable abstraction in art corresponds to the decorative function dates back at least to Ruskin, who stated regarding "the various forms of inferior decorative art, that the lower the place and the office of the thing, the less of natural or perfect form you should have in it; a zigzag or a chequer is thus better, because a more consistent ornament for a cup or platter than a landscape or portrait is" ("Modern Manufacture" 82). Following this principle, Fry was able to transform the shock of abstraction that accompanied early viewers' experiences of avant-garde painting into 'fun' in consumer decorative goods, and ultimately (if they purchased) the consumer's delight in decoration of their own home.

In theory, then, amusement in the labor of production appears on the surface of the object produced for consumption, which in turn lightens the labor of consumption and home decoration.

That Omega succeeded in navigating the first step of this process is evident in a *London Times* review that Anscombe cites: "what pleases us most about all the work of these artists is its gaiety. They seem to have worked, not sadly or conscientiously upon some artistic principle, but because they enjoyed doing so" (27). In order to ensure that this delight finds its way into consumption and home decoration, Cork speculates, the Omega arranged objects in the showroom in a jaunty and haphazard manner. "Exuberance bursts out above the chair," he describes, "in the ecstatic arabesques of a plate with painted overglaze" (138). Cork speculates that the showroom's arrangement was meant to stimulate the consumer's participation in their own interior design schemes: "The exact opposite of a purist or doctrinaire enterprise, the Omega would never have wanted to create an environment which intimidated its occupants so severely that they felt afraid to personalize it with alterations and additions of their own" (138). However, this attitude of spontaneity had its downsides. Anscombe points to a 1914 letter from Vanessa Bell to Fry in order to exemplify some of the extremes to which the Omega's carefree style of enterprise could be taken. Regarding a painted bench purchased the previous fall by a friend of Woolf's, Bell writes: "Madge said that the seat she bought has been much admired but being out of doors in the frost, all the paint has come off! I said I thought we could probably send her a pot of the right color with directions how to paint it again" (qtd. in Anscombe 39). Bell's solution is to pass along the designs and DIY spirit of the workroom to the consumer, collapsing work, leisure, production, and consumption into a fun and fulfilling experience of creative expression.

The anecdote above signals the fine line that Omega artists straddled between imaginative, free-spirited, and spontaneous production and shoddy workmanship. The lack of expertise needed for Omega labor is also what justifies Fry's departure from the arts and crafts ideal of unified design, manufacture, and user experience. In other words, Ruskin and Morris

fought to reconnect mental and material labor and sync both with user experience, whereas Fry used a variety of internal and external labor sources to construct a decentralized alternative enterprise. Whereas the Arts and Crafts philosophy insists on a coherent and stable workshop community and staff, there is nothing to suggest that Fry wanted to employ solely in-house artisans and experts. Given that professionals of that manner would have required full employment and better pay, such a strategy would not have benefitted the business. Simpler objects such as pottery and textiles were made in-house, but for more complex tasks such as furniture making, Fry turned to professional craftsmen such as John Joseph Kallenborn, who had a nearby shop (Gerstein 73). For the production of Omega goods, as Collins notes, "Although many of the more important Omega Commissions, the marquetry furniture, for instance, went out to professional workshops, the more mundane tasks were carried out at Fitzroy Square" (*Crafts Council* 16). These involved two tiers of casual workers: "the professional and domestic workshop hands and caretakers, whose presence at Omega was more or less fortuitous… and the more artistic Omega Staff and helpers, the Slade girls or 'Cropheads' as Virginia Woolf christened them" (*Crafts Council* 16). Omega artists often decorated objects that had been assembled elsewhere, but presented their work as less alienated than mass production. In other words, artistry and "free play" come to replace the communitarian values of Morris' model, as the new antidote for industrial alienation.

Accounts of the poor execution of Omega designs suggest that the atmosphere of amateurism and spontaneity Fry cultivated appeared to others as frivolity and carelessness. As Lewis recalls in *Rude Assignment*:

> It was idle to suppose that half a dozen artists could cope with all—or indeed any—of the problems of waxing, lacquering, polishing, painting, and varnishing

> of furniture—chairs, tables, cabinets, and so forth—or the hand-painting of textiles which the plan involved. Naturally the chairs we sold stuck to the seats of people's trousers; when they took up an Omega candlestick they could not put it down again, they held it in an involuntary vice-like grip. It was glued to them and they to it (124).

Lewis, admittedly, maintained a generally unfriendly view of Omega for life, which probably inflects these remarks. Niklaus Pevsner, a more neutral critic, points to Omega's lack of in-house artisanal workers (an asset Morris and Co. leveraged toward the production of quality goods) as the source of the problem. Whereas "Morris had Philip Webb and later George Jack, an architect and a cabinet maker… Fry had nobody to take their place," and therefore "customers complained that veneers flaked off. They also complained of unsatisfactory workmanship in other things made on the premises" (48). Fry justified the erratic quality of the goods' decoration under the rubric of "fun." The general tone of whimsy that justifies haste and instability in Omega labor finds its way into Judith Collins' account of the Omega work environment: "Spontaneity and enterprise were part of Fry's ideology at the Omega; works were not to be long labours, meticulous, bright, and polished—but free, bright, and summery. A great deal of preliminary sketching and forward planning was not regarded as necessary, decisions were to be made during the act of creation, and serendipity ruled" (*Omega* 51). Fry's motive of "free play" disguises instability as flexibility, and uses the notion of spontaneity in enterprise to lower consumer expectations. Omega's long-term legacy is to spark the evocation of spontaneity as an economic mantra and to justify exploitation as leisure—more work, in short, equals more fun. In another step toward this transition, Lewis would reshape Bloomsbury free-spiritedness into satiric

humor, as a step toward his confrontation with the culture industry. First, however, he would need to re-invent himself—a process the next section will describe.

V "The Ideal Home Rumpus" and Lewis' Self-Reinvention

As I discussed earlier, Roger Fry's theories about artistic autonomy were at odds with his collective labor practices, and this dissonance (in part) provoked Wyndham Lewis' noisy departure from the Omega. Contrasting accounts of this 'rumpus' suggest that the split between Lewis and Fry was either provoked by Fry's underhanded business practices, or was a shrewd career move that Lewis orchestrated in order to publicize himself as the new *enfant terrible* of the English art world. At its core, the 'facts' of the controversy are the same in each account, while the stories told vary according to rhetoric. The quarrel occurred after Fry and Lewis had worked together since 1911, and Lewis was one of the original Omega artists. As the project developed, however, Lewis grew dissatisfied with the light and airy Omega aesthetic and the workshop's policy of anonymity, which Lewis believed was intended to glorify Fry's business at its artists' expense. Lewis and three others announced their departure from Omega in 1913 with a "Round Robin" letter that accused Fry of stealing commissions, and the rebel faction set out to found "Vorticism," a movement based in a harder machine aesthetic that took a more brash and provocative tone than the Omega. Ultimately, what is important about Lewis' split with Fry and the Omega is that it marks a transition in avant-garde business and labor practices between Fry's playful, collective entrepreneurial venture and the belligerent individualism of Lewis' short-lived design enterprise, The Rebel Art Centre, and his Vorticist journal *Blast*.

Lewis, along with Frederick Etchells, Cuthbert Hamilton, and Edward Wadsworth, circulated their "Round Robin" letter to various press outlets and friends of the Omega in October of 1913. The main issue it raises stems from Omega's decoration of a "Post-

Impressionist" room for the *Daily Mail*'s "Ideal Home Exhibition." The letter asserts "that the Direction of the Omega Workshops" (meaning Fry) "secured the decoration of the 'Post-Impressionist' room at the Ideal Home Exhibition by a shabby trick, and at the expense of one of their members—Mr. Wyndham Lewis, and an outside artist—Mr. Spencer Gore" (*Letters* 48). The letter reports that Gore was contacted by the *Mail* before Fry or Lewis, with the invitation to work on the show and the request to include the other two men. Gore left a message at the Omega when neither Fry nor Lewis was present, and when Fry spoke to Lewis about the show, Fry told Lewis the Omega had secured the commission. Lewis expressed interest in painting a wall, and Fry said the walls would be unpainted and asked Lewis to carve a mantelpiece. Lewis spent some time on holiday in Europe, and when he returned he found that other Omega artists were working on designs for wall murals for the exhibition. Unrelated to this event, there was evidence that Fry had intercepted requests for Lewis' and Etchells' work from another curator organizing a Post-Impressionist exhibition (*Letters* 48-49).

The letter went on to attack the Omega's aesthetic principles at length and indulged in some name calling at Fry's expense. However, Virginia Woolf recalls Fry's response as "strangely calm," as a letter Fry addressed shortly thereafter to Duncan Grant demonstrates. Thanking Grant for "all the bother you have gone through in fighting my battles," his only comment on the matter is regarding Etchells, about whom "I personally find it a little hard to think that he could turn… so completely against me after having been so very friendly and without ever listening to me" (193). Woolf observes that Fry, although encouraged by some to pursue a libel suit, declined to take any action or even comment publicly. Trivializing the whole affair as a "storm in a tea-cup," Woolf believed "publishing correspondence would only advertise the gentlemen, who, he sometimes suspected, rather enjoyed advertisement" (194).

Although there is some tendency amongst Lewis scholars to vilify Fry as Lewis himself did, Woolf's recollection, along with several critical accounts, suggests that Fry never questioned the "facts" of Lewis' accusations, only their relevance.[20] Buried in the collective enterprise of the Omega, the prestige of individual exhibition and control over a commission may simply have not seemed important at the moment. Regardless of his motives, Fry was not swayed much by the event. As Judith Collins surmises, "the general consensus of opinion about the outcome of the Ideal Home Rumpus is that Fry triumphed, in his stance of feigned unconcern, and Lewis suffered. But Fry suffered too, in the sudden disappearance of five Omega employees—well over half his workforce" (*Omega* 54). Lewis, in a way, also triumphed. Anscombe reads his departure as a "preface to his future activities" and reasons "if he had meekly seceded from the Omega he could not have convincingly set himself up as a rebel" (34). Moreover, as Cork suggests, Lewis' primary goal was to launch his own enterprise and spurn the anonymity and collectivity of Fry's project. Lewis and his cohort, Cork observes, "were anxious to define themselves in contradistinction to the Omega" partly because "they had resented their anonymous status at workshops where Fry was the only participant ever to be acknowledged by name, and partly too because Lewis's desire to carry out ambitious interior schemes on his own would always have been thwarted by the collective basis of the Omega's activities" (191). In Lewis' enterprises, personal recognition was central to the mission, specifically recognition of Lewis himself.

The Rebel Art Centre, in practice, could not help but bring attention to Lewis himself because it was largely a solitary venture. His backer, Kate Lechmere, participated in decoration

[20] The editorial note that accompanies the "Round Robin" in Lewis' collected letters, for example, assumes that Fry stole the commission and characterizes him as either incompetent or mean-spirited: "The immediate cause of trouble was an Ideal Home Exhibition for which Lewis and his friend Spencer Gore were invited to participate in the decorating of a room. Before the invitation reached Lewis, Fry—out of negligence or ill will—appropriated the commission for the Omega" (Rose 47). The assignation of blame in this case is toward Fry, but the details are virtually the same as those that defend him.

of the space itself but her working relationship with Lewis didn't endure for personal reasons. The Centre was established in the spring of 1914 in a house Lechmere had rented on Ormond Street (Rose 59-60). In addition to acting as competitor against the Omega, Rebel Arts intended to resemble a community center for artists, writers, and designers, where lectures would be given and classes held, and decorative goods produced and sold. However, as Lewis himself remembers in his 1950 autobiography, the Rebel Art Centre largely involved "prospectuses—for lectures that were never delivered, and classes that were never held, as the war intervened" (125). W.K. Rose, however, suggests that with or without the war, "Lewis was not in any case suited to serve long as the director of such a venture" (*Letters* 60). As Lewis himself admitted, "I am not a business man" (*Letters* 61). Therefore the promise of the Centre's original prospectus was never really fulfilled. The idea, however, was to take subscriptions for access to a space where "metal-workers, craftsmen or painters can bring their work… and go on with it, if this atmosphere is congenial to them, without indifference or anything but the satisfaction of knowing that something is being done around them, and that an attempt is being made here to revive and sanify [*sic*] the art-instinct in this country" (qtd. in Cork 199). With Lewis on hand as an expert five days a week, the idea for the Centre resembles co-working spaces that today provide an office-like environment to freelance and consulting laborers more than the workshop-to-showroom model of the Omega.

In the end, neither enterprise endured long. Fry, in light of mounting tensions in his complicated friendship with Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant—and after tirelessly multi-tasking to keep the Omega alive during the War, finally closed the business down in 1919. Despite his incompetence in business, the individualism and rebellion Lewis channeled into Rebel Arts and his comments on interior design found their way into a literary vision in which, according to

Steven Brezezinski, "the artist has the potential to become a manager of information and people as well as a high-minded stylist" (64). Lewis's Vorticist aesthetic has more in common with major modernist currents of the coming decades than does Fry's Post-Impressionism, as does his idea of the artist as an expert individual who makes art for the people but from a position of superiority. In so doing he blends the logic of the creative entrepreneurial amateur with that of the PMC expert. Lewis reshapes the egalitarian ideal of Arts and Crafts, which Fry had already compromised in his attempt to merge artistic exploration, design, and anonymous production into a new, managerial hierarchy. As Michael Schwartz explains, PMC power was established through assertion of expertise: "by appropriating the role of 'expert,' the PMC was able to create a pervasive and persuasive rhetoric of 'thinking' as opposed to 'unthinking,' and 'scientific' as supposed to 'instinctive' or 'unskilled" (10). But in Lewis' bad business practices and Omega's shoddy products, 'unthinking' is embraced as impulsive freedom. The synthesis of expertise and play, in the end, enables the rise of a new creative-managerial economy, where to lead is to act without reflection, to create without planning. In the next section, I will explore the aesthetics of this managerial modernism as it appeared in the Lewis' first magazine enterprise, *Blast*.

VI. *Blast*, Rebel Art, and the Dictatorship of the "Lucky Individual"

Whereas Roger Fry's project relied on the rhetoric of "fun," Wyndham Lewis's *Blast* introduces elements of satirical rebellion and popular propaganda into a modernist consumer product. Instead of the gaiety Omega was meant to invoke, Lewis tends more toward an aggressive sense of humor that he wields as a rhetorical weapon. In *Blast*, humor is no longer fun, it is antagonistic. The fact that his magazine was designed to look like a piece of mass culture, I contend, positions his consumer goods at the forefront of the culture industry. Lewis' design techniques resemble disruptive innovations in media industries, meant to spur mass

culture in a particular direction. Thus Lewis positions himself as an expert agent of change within and against both avant-garde formations and cultural industry. He presents his brand of humor as an alternative to the fun and free play of Omega, invoking modes of parody and slapstick based in mass cultural arenas of print design and Hollywood comedy. The difference between fun and humor is key to Lewis' transformation of the craftsman ideal into a position of individualistic creative authority. Fun is egalitarian, whereas humor is authoritative. Fun speaks to a collective spirit or activity, but humor depends on the relative ignorance of its audience, who can only "get the joke" once clued in by the teller. In the fun workplace nobody knows more than anyone else, and consumers labor alongside producers. In Lewis' vision, the individual producer of parody must know more than the consumer of humor for the joke to work, placing the humorist (in theory) atop the cultural hierarchy.

In order to set himself up as a cutting-edge cultural authority, Lewis marked out the aesthetics of his modernist media product as sharply opposed to the lighthearted Omega aesthetic, which he saw as weak, feminine, and rooted in the Victorian world of the Aesthete. His projects, he wanted to show, marked the first true break with the nineteenth century. Therefore he railed, in his "Round Robin" letter, against what he saw as the Omega's "tendencies in Art": "The Idol is still Prettiness, with its mid-Victorian languish of the neck, and its skin is 'greenery-yallery', despite the Post-What-Not fashionableness of its draperies" (*Letters* 49).[21] By positioning his projects and products as more serious and hard-edged, and embracing machine-inspired and popular aesthetics from print advertising, he lent his own alternative consumer products a pseudo-popular tone. Under scrutiny, however, offerings like *Blast* in which Lewis

[21] The use of "greenery-yallery" is meant to indicate adherence to the principles of Aestheticism. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the term as: "Of, relating to, or affecting the colours green and yellow, in accordance with the style or fashion of the late 19th cent. Aesthetic Movement; (hence) typical of this movement; affected" ("greenery-yallery, adj.").

repurposes popular rhetoric toward modernist ends, are dismissive of "the people" in favor of the "individual"—an attitude that accelerated throughout his work toward a radical individualist politics that foretold his flirtations with fascism.

Lewis' row with Fry and Omega and subsequent publication of the "Round Robin" mark a turning point in his career, a launching pad from which he could craft his "enemy" persona. The turning point corresponds to a change in his rhetoric from polite to aggressive humor, as Paul Edwards suggests in his Foreword to the 2009 reprint of *Blast 1*. In reference to the "Round Robin" Edwards notes "[The letter's] tone makes it a prototype for some of the more aggressive parts of the manifestos in *Blast*. In his published writings up to this date there had been nothing to compare with such incandescent rhetoric; indeed, the tone of most of them had been comic, ironic, and genial" (vi). This is not to say that *Blast* is devoid of humor or joylessly aggressive. Rather it combines humor and antagonism in an irreverent visual satire of popular mass media forms such as advertising and cinema. Beginning with *Blast*, as Michael North suggests, "Lewis produced a lifelong series of manifestos that were simultaneously for and against humor" (115). When, in one of the magazine's many manifestos, Lewis states "We only want Humour if it has fought like tragedy," he redirects the function of humor away from Omega's sense of fun and play, and toward a confrontational style that could attack both the popular and alternative trends with which it was in competition (17).

Much of the magazine's humor lies in its attempts to imitate mass print media in its graphic design and violate readers' expectations of its design through various textual and visual strategies. The opening manifestos, for instance, are numbered according to a mysterious scheme that is not justified to the reader. The table of contents lists "Manifesto I" and "Manifesto II" twice, in the first instance indented under the heading "Great Preliminary Vortex" (fig. 1.4). The

first manifesto numbers sub-sections one through six, and then for no apparent reason begins again at one. The second manifesto numbers its subsections from one to seven without starting over, but switches from Arabic to Roman numerals. In doing so, *Blast* mimics and subverts the visual rhetoric of advertising and newsprint, and satires both. Julian Murphet interprets this and other visual strategies in *Blast* as part of an overall campaign to sever ties between traditional art forms and set painting apart from "the representational codes of a now invalidated poetry and [tie] its fortunes to the timely rhetoric of abstraction, provocation, and revolt, in order to become the premier medium of the moment" (124). In light of Lewis' increasing tendency to favor painting and writing equally, however, it is hard to imagine why he might have wanted such a thing.[22] More likely, Lewis meant to target mass media, not poetry, with its jests. *Blast* was therefore an avant-garde instance of the kind of satire that exists today in instances such as *The Colbert Report* and *Daily Show*, programs that generate comedy not only through their written content but in their subversion of viewers' expectations of the news show format and, by extension, the medium of television.

Put another way, Lewis stages his satiric attack within the magazine's material form as well as its' literary and artistic content. As Murphet acknowledges, *Blast* was originally published "in a material form that is itself entirely consistent with cheap newsprint, albeit with a ludicrously small print-run that associates its destiny more objectively with little magazines and rare limited editions" (124). Murphet takes the magazine's reference to popular print culture as evidence of "literature's desire to be a 'thing'," but in my interpretation the "affinity and consubstantiality with newsprint, posters, advertisement, and graphic design" that for Murphet

[22] In *Rude Assignment*, Lewis identifies the split with Omega as a turning point at which he began to be actively involved in both painting and writing simultaneously: "It was at this point (circa Autumn 1913) that I began again to do a great deal of writing, most of it merely the journalism entailed by propaganda… Then the war came, and that ended a chapter of my career as a writer and artist" (126).

demonstrates literature's desires serves more as evidence of Lewis' desire to produce an item in competition—not affinity—with popular print forms (141). Where Murphet sees "cinematic writing" in *Blast I*'s "Advertisement" piece, I think it is also crucial to call attention to the fact that the content of this piece bears little to no resemblance to an actual advertisement, and performs a similar reversal of design expectations as the numbering of the manifestos (141). Its cinematic properties allow Lewis to position his product in common with both print and cinematic popular media, in keeping with his simultaneous acceptance and rejection of Hollywood cinema, with which I will deal directly in the next section of this chapter.

Blast therefore marks Lewis' first foray into the aesthetics of popular and mass-produced culture and sets his modernist parody of consumer design apart from Morris and Omega. *Blast* emphatically embraces machine-based production, rather than the ideal of hand-making that was central to the previous movements. What Lewis hoped to accomplish, in Edwards' view, was nothing less than "the equivalent of a visual revolution, and the adaptation of the forms of popular culture and ephemeral advertisement found in *Blast*'s more adventurous layouts was crucial to this" (viii). It is worth adding to Edwards' observation that the revolution in question rejects Arts and Crafts and Omega ideals, and enters into competition with popular culture for authority over the mass public. Edwards implies this distinction when he asserts "As a material object *Blast* is the antithesis of the book as art-object in the tradition of fine printing, design, and binding that derived from the example of William Morris and culminated in the book production of the aesthetic movement" (ix). Lewis positions Vorticism in opposition to aestheticism (which he accuses of elitism) and subsequently claims popular status for his own project.

The popular alternative that Lewis offers in *Blast*, however, is not entirely democratic so much as it is proto-fascistic in its hyper-individualism. In doing so, it seeks to elevate the artist

into a position of superiority over a non-artist populace that cannot see beyond their historical and social circumstances, as he states in "Long Live the Vortex!":

> *Blast* will be popular, essentially. It will not appeal to any particular class, but to the fundamental and popular instincts in every class and description of people, TO THE INDIVIDUAL. The moment a man feels or realizes himself as an artist, he ceases to belong to any milieu or time. *Blast* is created for this fundamental, timeless artist in everyone ("Long").

In other words, the revolution staged in the pages of *Blast* is deliberately not geared toward resolving economic inequality so much as promoting hierarchies of expertise. The exceptional individual to whom *Blast* is addressed can come from any class position, according to Lewis: "Popular art does not mean the art of the poor people, as it is usually supposed to. It means the art of individuals…it is nothing to do with 'the people'" ("Long"). He presents this model in opposition to the trends that he 'blasts' in terms that implicate Omega: "Imperturbable, endless prettiness./ Large empty cliques, higher up./ Bad air for the individual… the Brittanic aesthete/ Cream of the snobbish earth/ Snobbery (disease of femininity)" (16). By asserting a popular individualism that rejects collective political action, Lewis' new direction is consistent with the "protofascism" that Fredric Jameson identifies in his later writings (some of which directly admired Hitler, though Jameson's argument is based more on narrative formal elements of Lewis' novel *The Apes of God*). Lewis' proto-fascism, according to Jameson, consists of "a reaction to and defense against… Marxism;…the implacable critique of the various middle class ideologies;… a critique of capitalism… displaced and inflected in the direction of… petty bourgeois ideology;… [and] practical embodiment in a mass ideological party" (*Fables* 15). *Blast*'s misplaced critiques of bourgeois ideology, I want to suggest, fit well not only with a mass

ideological party but also with the figure of the professional culture manager, a position Lewis admired and imitated in his principles of graphic and interior design (Brezezinski 28).[23] This is not to say that fascism is equivalent to PMC ideology, but the two share faith in the expert management of culture by a few professionals who are charged with the determination of what the masses should consume culturally. Lewis' career-long interest in design and built environments as expressive of the individual personality is a key component of his protofascistic political ideology in that it removes agency in design from the hands of the "crowd" and places it in the control of the exceptional individual.

Over the course of the decade, Lewis proceeded to build a more robust theory of the exceptional individual in order to develop arguments about who should control mass culture. For instance, in *The Caliph's Design*, a series of essays on art and design published in 1919, Lewis endorses cultural totalitarianism. The collection takes its name from a parable of Lewis' invention: the Caliph of Baghdad awakes one morning, looks down upon his city, takes up pen and paper, and completely redesigns it. He then calls in his chief engineer Mahmud and leading architect Hassan, and commands them to execute the wholesale reconstruction of the city by ten o'clock the next morning. The Caliph threatens to behead them if they fail, so of course they find a way to achieve the impossible. The parable exemplifies, for Lewis, the kind of autocratic authority he would like to have over architects (and, potentially, other cultural workers). "The parable of the Caliph's design," he muses, "describes the state of mind which must be that of

[23] In his magazine work, Lewis aims to co-opt the aesthetics of mass culture and subvert its democratic social implications. Steven Brezezinski identifies a similarly hierarchical class philosophy in Lewis' work, in light of the "cinematic" elements of Lewis' novel Tarr and his conflicted statements on the cinema, and specifically Chaplin: "He enjoyed Chaplin's Keystone and Essanay shorts, but wanted to keep his aesthetic example (and by extension the nascent cultural industry more generally) from spilling over into a widespread political obsession with social equality and radical democracy" (29). In other words, if Chaplin represents the democratization of culture via popular media and holds the potential to bring about a more egalitarian society, Lewis combats this popular trend by adopting its aesthetics toward his own program of avant-garde cultural hegemony.

every healthy and active artist living in the midst of the blasphemous stupidity… that surrounds us to-day. But alas! Although like the Caliph, a vorticist, I have not the power of life and death over the Mahmuds and Hasans of this city" (33). Ideally, the tale suggests, artists like Lewis should exercise autocratic control over the professional designers who make their world. He presents a political-professional theory of cultural management that extends the logic of the "crowd" and the "individual" he juxtaposes in *Blast*. For Lewis, as far as his thinking has developed at the time of writing *The Caliph's Design*, the crowd is not a collection of people but rather a type of man who "can only live through others, outside himself. He, in a sense, *is* the houses, the railings, the bunting or absence of bunting" (30). The "lucky individual," in contrast, sees beyond the existing built environment, and tends toward the Vorticist abstraction of visual art (33). The "lucky individual" as abstract avant-garde artist, therefore, is most qualified to dictate the design of homes, cities, and everything within.

When, in later decades, Lewis' authoritarian ideas of interior and urban design come into competition with new mass cultural trends in "modern" architecture, he treats the general public with unprecedented disdain. In the 1934 essay "Plain Home-builder: Where is your Vorticist?" he snarls at "those modernist interiors (such as those advertised in the luxury-magazine)—those interiors obviously designed for a particularly puritan athlete of robotic tastes, with an itch for the rigours of the anchorite, and a sentimental passage for *metal* as opposed to *wood*, and a super-Victorian conviction that cleanliness is next to godliness" (255).[24] It behooves Lewis to

[24] Rebel Arts, despite its brief existence, was thought to have the potential to implement Lewis' ideas of home design in actual practice. A *Vanity Fair* correspondent in 1914 proclaimed that "behind [the Rebel Art Centre] there is a real future—the coming of individuality in the house, when every home will be the representation of the owner, giving taste full scope to expand, instead of crushing it out of power" (qtd in Cork 202). A home that represents the individual, Lewis suggests in a later interview, is a crucial component of life for the modern professional—one that was absent from the domestic built environment at the time. Lewis imagines the modern man at work in his office as "very alert, combative, and capable of straight, hard, thinking" (qtd in Cork 202). But at home in his suburban villa, surrounded by "pictures no doubt of green meadows, mill-wheels, [and] dairy or other maids," he becomes "an

make the counterintuitive association between 1930s modern interior design and Victorianism, because (just as he had decades before) he wants to be seen as the enemy of Victorian and mass culture alike. His ultimate target, however, is the bourgeois individual who inhabits this environment. Regarding the sterility of the modern 'ideal' home, he offers that "it is far better to have *nothing* on the walls than vulgar and trivial things; and it must always be remembered that the average athlete—or tennis-girl turned wife, or golfing-motorist become home-builder—possesses no taste at all, and should if possible be restrained from buying those coloured prints of Bonzos he naturally favors and putting them on his walls" (255). In terms of who should restrain the Bonzo, Lewis suggests that "he should put himself in the hands of a competent modernist designer, and cubist-bungalow architect, and allow them to *ration* him, very strictly indeed, in the matter of everything barring strict necessities—tables, chairs, lamps and bookshelves for the detritus of his 'mystery' literature, and to be the trash-boxes for his Crime-Club sequences" (255). In a recurring fantasy of control, the professional (cubist) designer dominates the amateur sporty-bourgeois. Lewis enacts a final rejection of any collective ethos he might have adopted from Omega, but insists—beginning with *Blast*, later in *The Caliph's Design*, and finally in "Plain Home Builder"—that the artist who practices avant-garde abstraction is the only "genius" whose cultural direction should be taken. In short, Lewis himself, and perhaps his aesthetic and political allies, should run the culture industries.

Lewis' ideas about cultural control are not confined to modern home design, but at points touch upon almost every conceivable element of built interior and exterior environments. The manner in which he presents his critiques of his surroundings also announces a shift in avant-

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invalid bag of mediocre nerves, a silly child" (qtd. in Cork 202). If not for the War and his lack of entrepreneurial talent, Lewis might have come to work on the kind of interiors that would develop throughout the century in order to foster an ever-increasing spillover of labor time into leisure time.

garde attitudes toward the cinema between Fry's approach and Lewis'. Although they both write 'cinematically' from time to time (as do many modernist writers in the period of early cinema), Fry was dismissive of the medium, whereas Lewis accepted its influence and importance.[25] He placed himself in a position of avant-garde competition with Hollywood, and aligned more, in his own writing, with a cinematic style in the tradition of avant-garde cinematic experiments such as the animated shorts of fellow modernists such as Man Ray and Hans Richter. For example, in *The Caliph's Design*, his critique of English décor takes a fragmented form unlike Fry's more continuous vision of the train car discussed earlier. He asks:

> What is this ugliness, banality, and squalor…? Exactly what set of circumstances, what lassitude of mind… make[s] the designs on match boxes (or the jokes on the back of some), the knife handles, sepulchral enclosures, serviette-rings, most posters, ornamented Menu cards, the scenery in our Musical spectacles, chapter-headings and tail-pieces, brooches, bangles, embossments on watches, clocks, carving-knives, cruets, pendants in Asprey's, in Dobson's, in Hancock's windows in Bond street; in fact, every stich and scrap of art-work that indefatigably spreads its blight all over a modern city…? (28).

Compared to Fry's presentation of the décor of the train car, what Lewis provides here is a displaced visual assault of décor details that, in its absence of narrative and continuity, whisks the reader from one decontextualized moment to another. From a domestic scene, perspective suddenly shifts to the musical theatre, and then out onto the street in front of a department store window. Not only does Lewis' tirade have more in common with the avant-garde cinema than

[25] See Maggie Humm's *Modernist Women and Visual Cultures: Virginia Woolf, Vanessa Bell, Photography, and Cinema*, Susan McCabe's *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry and Film*, and David Trotter's *Cinema and Modernism*, on the tendencies in Woolf, Stein, and Joyce to incorporate formal strategies that appear to be inspired by the cinema in their literary work.

Fry's contextualized narrative of the author's eye travelling over the details of a single room, it also asserts Lewis' cultural scope as ranging well beyond his fields of painting, literature, and design, into the realm of new media. As the next section will suggest, when Hollywood cinema factored into Lewis' critique of built environments, he presented himself as in competition for cultural control over the mind of the 'fool', casting his own managerial/authoritarian stance as an alternative to the collective, democratic potential of a mass media 'of the people'.

VII: Hollywood Flirtations: the Beginnings of Professionalized Modernism.

By tracing Morris', Fry's and Lewis' ideas about design, labor, and cultural authority to a burgeoning new media industry, I hope to show a correspondence between the demise of collective and amateur modes of production in the failure of Omega, and the modernist adoption of elements of mass-media professionalism, which (like PMC culture) favors individualistic expertise over anarchic collectivism. The commencement of such exchanges marks the beginning of Hollywood-modernist competition for dominance over a mass audience. Whereas Fry was dismissive of cinema, Lewis' attitude was one of guarded acceptance and reluctant competition. As the careers of these two men wore on, Hollywood's labor practices became the primary model of professionally managed, hierarchically organized creative labor.[26] The collectively authored model of the Omega was briefly viable as an alternative to mainstream design, but culturally incompatible with a world of corporate creative industries. Lewis, on the other hand, at least imagined his projects as placing artists in viable competition with mass

[26] Mark Garrett Cooper addresses this phenomenon in a U.S. context, asserting that Hollywood promoted both the hierarchical organization of professional culture industries and the need for expert organization of society to a national audience: "To address the nation through movies presupposed not just a particular sort of film, but an increasingly complex division of labor and the escalating participation of finance capital… The rapid rise of the Hollywood studios…was a process whereby diverse viewers came to appreciate a certain kind of movie as capable of representing the nation to itself, while filmmakers and financiers developed institutions capable of mass producing that kind of movie for a profit" (3). Considering the early global reach of Hollywood product, it stands to reason that this image is relevant in England as well.

cultural industries, and he therefore marks an ongoing trend over the first half of the twentieth century that progressively brought modernism in closer contact with Hollywood, and vice versa.

Although Fry's general definition of art was generous and democratic enough to acknowledge popular media, he did not see at that time any hope of cinema offering any social or aesthetic value. That Fry was not a high art purist is clear based on his Omega endeavor alone, in that he wishes art to function in the making of consumer goods and high culture alike. In his 1916 essay "Art in a Socialism," he defines "*art* in its widest sense… [as] any work done upon useful objects which is over and above what is necessary for their use. And of any work done upon objects which subserve no practical function" (173, original emphasis). The definition encompasses "any ornamental work put upon buildings or upon ironwork, patterns of wallpapers, carpets, textiles, all but what is strictly necessary in dress, all pictures, all the adornment of advertisements, the cinematograph, all theatrical writing and performing, all music, all literature that has no practical end in view" (173-4). In the same essay, however, he draws a clear distinction between "serious art" that fulfills spiritual need for the artist and the possessor, and thee vast majority of commercial art, the purposes of which Fry boils down to "diversion" or "prestige" (173-5). The former motive, he argues, always governs cinema, and therefore "so far the cinema has not begun to do anything or dream of anything which would make its professors refractory to our purely social sense" (174). For Fry, all film production is (at least for the time being) bad art.

Lewis, on the other hand, formulated a much more complicated relationship to film (and Hollywood specifically) throughout his career. As William Wees recounts, Lewis regularly attended Chaplin shorts along with the 'riff-raff' instead of basking in the elevated artistic atmosphere of the Omega: "Rather than an Omega 'evening' for wealthy customers and patrons,

Lewis would choose, unhesitatingly, an afternoon in a little flea-pit cinema at the bottom of Charlotte Street, where children went for tuppence to see, among other things, Charlie Chaplin one-reelers… One of Lewis's favorite Chaplin characters was the artist, whose every movement was programmed according to the stereotype of the nineteenth century *artiste*" (147). In this scenario, Lewis sympathizes with Hollywood at the expense of the aestheticism he reviled. Yet, as Michael North suggests, Lewis seemed alternately drawn to and repelled by the endearing antics of Chaplin's performances. These "seemed to incite in him not sympathy but disgust, and some of his most extreme thunderations [in the 1918 novel *Tarr*] are aimed at the *worship of the ridiculous*" (113, emphasis in original). Throughout his career, Lewis refused to affiliate himself with either Hollywood or high art, as both North and Steven Brezezinski assert. North cites Lewis' respect for Walt Disney and his stated disgust with Chaplin as evidence of Lewis' complicated relationship with comedy: "throughout his career, and not just at the beginning, the joke was both an attraction and a difficulty for Lewis, a focus of uneasiness and inconsistency in a body of work notorious for the stark harshness of its opinions" (114). As I discussed earlier, Lewis rejected the Omega ethos of free-spiritedness in favor of his personal brand of prickly satire, and North's connection of Lewis' humor with Hollywood and Chaplin suggest that they shaped his views on comedy.

For Brezezinski, Lewis' relationship with Chaplin and Hollywood is one of political, corporate and aesthetic ambivalence. On one hand, he argues, Lewis relied on early Hollywood for inspiration: "In the stories and sketches in *The Wild Body*, as well as in the novel *Tarr*, we find Lewis compulsively yoking the form of Chaplinesque slapstick, with its jerky and semi-autonomous short scenes, to the more serious content of melodrama" (26). However, Brezezinski sees *Tarr* as an allegory of "Lewis' fraught dependence on the mass cultural forms by which he

was ostensibly repulsed; popular culture was both responsible for his writing and threatening to his status as a high modernist" (27). This "complicated rejection/absorption of the mass cultural phenomenon of the cinema" works, for Brezezinski, as a reaction against Chaplin's dual threat as an aesthetic diversion and a potentially transformative socialist figure (27-8). Lewis apparently craved the power of Chaplin's humor, but not the egalitarian world Chaplin promoted. Brezezinski thus sees much of Lewis' work as an attempt to theoretically insert himself into a management structure composed of creative individuals organized in corporate hierarchies (67).

In short, Lewis fancies himself a cultural authority who should manage the kind of 'fools' who (in his thinking) produce and consume cinematic mass culture. Lewis' late essay on "Art in Industry" invokes the need for an expert creative authority in the home design of the Hollywood creative professional. He suggests that the occupant of the 'modern home' is not responsible enough to manage the status endowed by its advanced design. The primary example he provides of an undeserving resident in a modernist home is Delores Del Rio, who "is very rich and dwells in the midst of the home-beautiful, in the approved chromium-plated, vitriolic manner… But the source of the money that enables her to possess this beautiful modernist shell is stagework of so vulgar an order that it may be said without exaggeration that the stage upon which she shines—is intellectually the lowest theatrical medium the world has yet witnessed—and no more abject standards than those of Hollywood is it possible to imagine" (244-5). As he would argue in "Plain Home Builder," inhabitants of the modern home need guidance from real artists to responsibly take advantage of their advanced surroundings.

To make this claim, he likens the home to technologies that could become dangerous the wrong hands: "Just as the motor-car, or radio set, that any fool can learn to handle in an hour or two, it is no indication of intelligence on the part of Mr or Miss Modern, likewise it is with the

'modern home.' I am not criticizing, much less jeering; I am saying there lies the danger –that of allowing other people to supply ready-made the thing with the *cachet*, in this case the *cachet* being equivalent to *power*" (245). As in "Plain Home Builder," inhabitants of modern homes need responsible management. Hollywood, in this case, is his only evidence for an otherwise flimsy hypothesis—after all, the modern home, unlike the automobile, is unlikely to flatten innocent pedestrians. It doesn't even offer the mass communicative power of the radio. The threat Lewis hopes will capture his reader's imagination is that of social and industrial power. If creative workers in Hollywood gain "power" from their possession of a modern home, the "vulgar" and unintelligent will rule the most powerful creative industry of the era. Instead, Lewis suggests, the exceptional individual, as embodied in the modernist artist, should be given absolute control over the rising tide of mass culture and modern design.

Conclusion

From the DIY ethos of late twentieth century punk culture to the resurgence of craft fairs and the rise of the digital marketplace in the twenty-first century, hand-making is now a foremost alternative to mass production and consumption. Whereas for William Morris, socialism was the inevitable outcome of an Arts and Crafts revolution, the craftsman ideal has now come to bolster twenty-first century flexible capitalism. One can now purchase membership in a Morrisian "maker-space" for $200 per month in Pittsburgh, where not only hobbyists, but also ambitious independent entrepreneurs labor to prototype goods that might be sold in the digital marketplace. In the end, the Victorian and Modernist concepts of alternative design enterprises in this chapter may have partially laid the foundation for two major strains of alternative production that govern the twentieth and twenty-first century—subculture and craft work. These categories, as Christopher Reed points out, pitted Oscar Wilde's aestheticism against Morris' utopianism as

competing challenges to late nineteenth century capitalistic norms. Wilde's rejection of the mainstream values of his day was based in personal style, while Morris' were production-based. Roger Fry synthesizes subculture and utopia in Omega, as evidenced by the stylish feminist "cropheads" who (as Collins puts it) "contributed greatly not only to the productivity of the Omega Workshops but also to the ambience, enchanting some customers, antagonizing others" (16). Omega thus resembles contemporary countercultures that rely either on identities to be consumed (as in the case of youth music cultures like punk, hip-hop, or goth), or new modes of DIY production (as in recent proliferation of 'maker' and 'hack' spaces).

Both forms of rebellion, however, have proven inadequate as challenges to a "risk regime" that transfers risk onto the shoulders of individuals rather than collectives. In Fry's policy of anonymity, for instance, the concepts of risk and flexibility in labor take on dual meanings. On the one hand, these attributes imply experimentation and innovation, and contribute to the sense of play in workmanship and consumption on which Omega relied as a core element of its identity as an enterprise. On the other hand, risk and flexibility can generate unreliable products and labor conditions. In so doing, Omega prefigures what Ulrich Beck describes as a "risk society" that would not prevail until the late twentieth century but that has its roots in the nascent Fordist regime of Omega's day. Beck's risk regime carries with it a similar dualism to what I describe above: "The concepts of risk and risk regime have a shimmering ambivalence. At one extreme, risk may be understood as an activation principle that is the glory of human civilization… But at the opposite extreme, risk means a creeping or galloping threat to human civilization and civil spirit, a catastrophic possibility that progress will swing round into barbarism" (71). The flighty customer service evinced in Vanessa Bell's suggestion that a purchaser repaint her bench is less disastrous than Beck's vision, but based in similar principles.

Risk society hinges on the promotion of creativity across industries, in that (as Richard Florida asserts) "creativity—'the ability to create meaningful new forms,' as Webster's dictionary puts it—is now the *decisive* source of competitive advantage. In virtually every industry, from automobiles to fashion, food products, and information technology itself, the winners are those who can create and keep creating" (5). Florida's uncritical celebration of post-Fordist instability almost immediately drew criticism—for instance, his cheery outlook requires us to turn a blind eye to a massive industrial sector of the global economy and implies that low-tier manufacturing labor is less worthy of attention than the 'creative' modes he admires. It also celebrates instability under the guise of a liberating form of flexibility and promotes spontaneous innovation over thoughtful, measured development that minimizes social costs. However, as Sarah Brouillette points out, Florida and his critics hold in common the general premise that "more work has become comparable to artists' work" ("Creative" 1). Brouillette chastises a particular line of criticism based in Italian autonomous Marxism for lamenting the exploitation of creativity without offering any solutions, and suggests that their critique is limited by the fact that "their immaterial producer, her character assumed rather than interpreted, appears largely destitute of any significant history" (1). The exploited ideal of creativity that Florida and others like him admire, I want to speculate in conclusion, has its roots in Morris' credo: "In your daily life and daily work… your chance alone lies of taking hold of art or the pleasure of life, in your becoming all artists: it is only by our all becoming artists that we shall be able to guard that natural birthright" ("Picture Show"). If Florida and his critics alike agree that (to some degree) we have as a society attained this condition, why are we not living in Morris' socialist utopia? Put differently, why does the current regime of capitalist accumulation imitate the society Morris imagined?

Perhaps the transformation of the craftsman ideal from socialist to neoliberal begins with Fry's argument for the inclusion of fine artists in everyday commercial design enterprises in the "Artist as Decorator." Unlike Morris, who saw the potential for artistry in every laborer and every kind of labor, Fry attributes essential characteristics to "the artist" that others don't possess (Reed 183). Here Fry argues for the disadvantages the artist faces in competition with everyday (unthinking, machine-like) craftsman: "His manners are sometimes charming, but usually uncertain—his hours are short and subject to sudden change—he has opinions of his own as to what will be best, not necessarily for the client but for the good of Art in the abstract," and so on (207). These faults, Fry argues, should not rule out the inclusion of the temperamental artist in everyday work. In his favor, "he is a real artist with a feeling for pure design, [and] will have a subtle sense of proportion and of colour harmony which will enable him to make a more definite work of creative art out of an interior" (208). By casting the artist as such, Fry promotes creativity as a special quality that only a certain class of workers might hold, as opposed to Morris' insistence that all men can, and should, be artists. Florida's arguments use vocabulary very similar to Fry's, language that (Brouillette asserts) "fathoms creative expression as an essence of experimentation emanating from an internal and natural source, and that finds one of its models in idealized apprehension of artists' ostensible resistance to routine, to management, to standardization, and to commodification" ("Creative" 1).

Before making the leap into a vocabulary of labor that would not dominate for about seventy years, however, the ideals of the avant-garde enterprises I discuss here had to demonstrate compatibility with the immaterial labor systems that were on the rise at the time, namely scientific management and professional-managerial labor specifically. James Knapp examines the interaction of management discourse in the early twentieth century and modernist

literature, based on their contemporary convergence: "During the early years of the twentieth century, while modernism was beginning its attempt to revolutionize the arts, many kinds of work were undergoing equally great change under the authority of the movement known as scientific management" (5). Scientific management, he argues, could not become dominant without the transference of knowledge to a specialized class of professional managers capable of "appropriating the traditional knowledge which has always been possessed by the workers, thereby initiating a crucial division between knowledge (defined as the proper concern of management and its new servant, science), and practice, the machine-like execution by the workers of plans laid down by others" (5). Fry's goals for the Omega Workshops involved combatting the alienation of management and labor with a flexible, decentralized business model that nevertheless consolidated control, resources and profit in the hands of an individual.

Whereas Fry dabbles in both management and toil, Lewis can ultimately be seen as interested only in management, inspired by what he saw as an irresponsible distribution of cultural power into the hands of irresponsible culture workers like Delores Del Rio. Inspired by his proclivity and distaste for Hollywood output, Lewis (as Brezezinski suggests) "believed that the modern power structure perpetuated itself by substituting the simulated for the real, and by using modern media to befog the minds of the masses, producing an endless cycle of vacant desires in its subjects,"—therefore his work "represents an call for a police force of the immaterial" (35). If the artist were to lead the police force of the immaterial and manage the cultural consumption of a mass public, he would have to assert authority over mass cultural industries such as Hollywood. The artist-policeman Lewis envisions, according to Brezezinski, therefore "has the potential to become a manager of information and people in addition to a high-minded stylist" (64). In Lewis and Fry, both major models of creative and intellectual corporate

labor that have dominated throughout the twentieth and twentieth century—management and flexibility—appear in nascent form in the context of the modernist enterprise.

In fact, Fry performs a synthesis of scientifically managed and flexibly bohemian modes of labor in his 1932 "Scheme for Workshops of Decorative Design in British Industry," a document that could easily pass muster in today's flexible economy. He first notes a challenge to be faced before such a scheme could be executed, which is that artists and manufacturers have incompatible expectations of working conditions. An artist would not "submit himself to the rigid conditions which the manufacture seeks to impose," and the manufacturer would be unwilling to take the risks that artistic attitudes entail. Fry proposes a network of small, dynamic clusters of workers that might help overcome these obstacles (209). First, he envisions a government official whose job it would be to mediate and manage the communication and transactions between manufacturers and designers. This "controller" of design would invite artists to form small groups, "organizing a number of laboratories of design" (210). The dynamic network of these small "laboratories" would then compete for commissions, and "arrange for the execution of trial pieces" (210). As in many scenarios in today's creative economy, a disproportionate amount of risk is placed on the "creative" worker through the practices of consultation and prototyping. Furthermore, to minimize financial outlay, Fry imagines something akin to an internship system:

> The members would be divided into apprenticeships and full members… The older artists are certain to produce a great many more ideas for design than they will have time to carry out themselves, and my idea is that the apprentices should be trained by elaborating such ideas for particular purposes which would be indicated to them, but they should be encouraged also to produce original designs

> of their own, and these might be selected for execution, together with those done by the full members" (210-211).

Compensation in Fry's scheme is entirely contingent: "the apprentices should receive a very small remuneration for the elaboration of ideas given by the artists, with a bonus given wherever a design was chosen for execution. I believe the best plan would be to pay to each laboratory as a whole whatever sums were available from the sale of designs which had been put on the market" (211). If one imagines the "controller" of design as a project manager, the "laboratories" as consulting firms, and the "apprenticeships" as internships, the early ideas behind the "new" economy in which we now labor are visible in Fry's plan.

Fry advanced these values far in advance of the rise of a post-Fordist risk regime that holds them at its core. Mark Hatch's *Maker Manifesto*, an exemplary document of the contemporary culture of flexibility, brings Fry's principles up to date. The *Manifesto* is less a declaration of insurgent principles than it is a marketing piece for Hatch's own small enterprise, Techshop—a national chain of 'maker' spaces that allow users access to fabrication tools and digital technologies for about $150 per month. Hatch includes imperatives like "make," "share," "tool up," "play," and "participate." (1-2). In his elaboration of the "play" principle, he instructs the maker to "be playful with what you are making, and you will be surprised, excited, and proud of what you discover." (26). Hatch shares Omega's disregard for the overall quality of the outcome of his play, as he describes playful events that result in accidental fires and broken equipment. It is not the result that matters, but the transformation of labor into leisure. "There are times I have a hard time distinguishing the difference between work and play," he muses, "I hope you will have the same experience in your work life" (28). Today's maker-spaces might then be imagined as the inheritors of Omega and even Morris' workshop, but in today's context they are

far more complicit with global capitalism. What started as hobbyists' play-areas have come to influence post-Fordist production and higher education, as maker-spaces proliferate in Universities and massive corporations embrace fun and frivolity in the workplace. This chapter has attempted to tell part of the story in which Fry's scheme finally triumphs, just over a century after he opened his first bohemian enterprise.

Chapter 2:

Gertrude Stein's Multi-Media Distribution Machine

I. Introduction

J.P. McEvoy's short story "Money Isn't Everything—Or Is It?" appeared in the July 25, 1936 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. It follows the rise and fall of Hollywood writer Joe Doakes, whose ethical and artistic principles set him at odds with his wife and his employers. At one point, when Joe's wife Pam asks why Joe has 'walked out' with the union in spite of his healthy salary, Joe replies: "Money isn't everything… It's the principle of the thing" (64). Frustrated with Joe's idealism and failure, Pam publishes an "open letter" to him in the *Hollywood Reporter*. She writes, "Well, money isn't everything—or is it? Without money, we couldn't have gotten married, and that meant a lot to me—and still does. Without money we can't have a home or food or clothes, and we can't have children, and even if we have them, we can't raise them and educate them" (64). The letter "creates a sensation," and in the story's final twist of fate, Pam gets her own thousand-dollar a week contract. When it comes to money, it appears the movie business prefers the realists over the idealists.

This tortured tale of creative labor and domestic economy shares many concerns with another author who appears in the same issue of the *Post*—Gertrude Stein. Pam's entrepreneurialism, her attention-grabbing publication of material from her private life in the mass media, her practical economic attitudes and her endorsement of individual accountability find a real-life champion in the expatriate bohemian. Stein's brief article, "Still More About Money," is especially firm on individual accountability. In it she laments, "once unemployment is recognized as unemployment and organized as unemployment nobody starts to work" (32). She goes on to caricature the lifestyle of a typical "Chinaman" sponging off the French

government and concludes that "everybody has got to think about the unemployed getting to be that and is there any way to stop them" (32). The ungenerous attitude of her piece echoes McEvoy's dismissive depiction of progressive politics (Joe is well-meaning but never seems to know what he's talking about) and the two share the same basic thesis: Money matters, but it is much more complicated than it appears to be, especially as it factors into creative work. Stein's refrain in other "money" articles in *SEP*, "is money money or isn't it" could even be taken as a virtual paraphrase for McEvoy's title.[27] Both the fictional Pam and real Stein are professional, creative women on the margins of culture industry. Money may not be everything to them, but it matters. More importantly, both women value individual enterprise over other options available to creative workers for achieving fiscal stability such as collective bargaining and social welfare.

Together, these two treatises on money announce dwindling solidarity amongst creative workers, and point toward accelerating processes of economic abstraction that would transform cultural and financial systems over the course of the century to come. Both also pick up on the major concerns of creative workers and artists at a high point for the American cultural front. This chapter examines modernist attitudes toward changing notions of creative labor, professionalism, and self-styled enterprise in the early decades of the twentieth century and interprets their strategies of production, distribution, networking, promotion, and mass-media circulation as alternatives to the seemingly incompatible ideals of labor solidarity and modernist autonomy. For many modernists, there came a point at which a hierarchically organized culture industry and anarchic bohemian networks could no longer exist as separate realms. Avant-garde

[27] Over the course of several issues in 1936, the *Saturday Evening Post* published a series of Stein's articles on money, entitled "Money," "More About Money," "Still More About Money," "All About Money," and "My Last About Money." Her attitudes might best be characterized as proto-libertarian, in that she criticizes governmental regulation and financial expenditure, and endeavors to declare the eventual decline of all forms of organization over the course of the twentieth century ("Money" 88, "More" 30, "Still" 32, "All" 54, "My Last" 78).

writers and artists who were publicly prominent in this moment often devised successful strategies for navigating between these realms while turning a tidy profit and maintaining control over their public and private identities. Stein was one of these figures, and the strategies she devised laid the groundwork for models of self-enterprise that looked beyond the dominant models of mental and professional labor of her moment.

Also during this period, the rising popularity of mass media in the form of magazines, radio and film popularized a pre-existing (and already growing) culture of fame, celebrity, and stardom. Given the public hunger for information and images of glamorous and interesting people, cultural personalities in Hollywood and Bohemia alike developed strategies for managing their public images (literally and figuratively). I will argue in this chapter that Stein devised three major strategies for manipulation of her public image in response to the challenge of mass mediated celebrity culture, all of which point the way from organized forms of cultural work toward self-driven and chaotic forms of creative labor that dominate post-Fordist culture. First, in her autobiographies and many magazine publications she crafted a distinctive public image based on her authorial, professional, and social dominance of her private space of work and life—27 Rue de Fleurus. Second, she built on existing modernist models of DIY production (Such as the Hogarth Press and the Omega Design Workshop) and developed a self-distribution strategy based on self-publication and distinctive branding. Third, she used her growing expertise in her preferred mass media—magazines and books—to claim the superiority of printed text over other media as both a visual and narrative experience. In doing so, she guaranteed control of her public image by carving out a niche audience amongst consumers of mainstream media.

This chapter will first show how Stein drew upon nineteenth century models of literary celebrity and adapted them to fit the strategies above. I will then describe the three pillars of her

distribution and publicity work in detail, primarily as she presented them in her autobiographies, magazine appearances, and lectures. In conclusion, I will suggest that while this self-constructed image was designed to appeal to a rising professional class whose status was based in knowledge, management, and corporate participation, it also paved the way for what would later be deemed a "creative class" in the next half of the century and beyond. Compared to the professional-managerial class that came before, proponents of an economic model that celebrates creative labor emphasize creativity over knowledge, self-management over corporate participation, and post-Fordist precarity over Fordist stability. I position Stein as a major contributor in a conversation in which the vocabulary of self improvement shifts from nineteenth century notions of 'character' that were associated with morality and inner strength to the twentieth century emphasis on 'personality'—a term more associated with style than substance, with surface rather than depth (Barbas 36).

Warren Susman's "'Personality and Twentieth-Century Culture," identifies a shift in American discourse from 'character' to 'personality' in self-help manuals such as the 1915 Funk and Wagnalls *Mental Efficiency* series, a series of leaflets that target a rising "Professional-Managerial Class" or "PMC" (280). Janice Radway describes the PMC as a "diverse group of technicians, managers, specialists, and professionals" that "performed some kind of intellectual rather than manual labor" (250-251) Richard Ohmann characterizes the PMC by its "conflicted relation to the ruling class" as well as its equally mixed relationship to the working class" (79).[28] For these workers, personality was an important career skill, one which required that "every American was to become a performing self" while also staging a denial of financial interest in success in favor of "a newer definition of what constitutes genuine success in life" (Susman

[28] See Introduction (p. 21) for definition and discussion of the PMC.

281). Stein offers one example of the new ideals of success defined in the self-help books—the genuine, publicized, and mass mediated performance of the domestic and creative self.

This chapter contributes to two prominent streams of contemporary scholarship that explore intersections between modernism and mass culture: one that studies writers' interactions with a variety of media forms, and another that examines their attitudes toward and engagements with marketing, advertising, and public relations.[29] Most scholars approach these elements of artistic production by way of traditional modernist literary texts, although many also ground their interpretations historically, drawing on correspondence and publication histories to supplement textual analysis. Susan McCabe's *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry and Film*, for instance, argues that Stein was interested in, but critical of the mental and embodied fragmentation and hysteria of the cinema. She asserts: "Stein claimed the 'period of cinema' and her place in it as extending back to 1903 when she wrote her epic Making of Americans cinematically without knowing it" (2). Similarly, David Trotter's *Cinema and Modernism* describes shared principles of automatism that run through avant-garde texts and early cinema, but emphasizes historical connections rather than arguing by way of analogy as McCabe does (2-3). In keeping with Trotter's historical-textual approach, this chapter will assume that modernist fragmentation in art and literature undoubtedly has to do with artists' experience of cinema as one of many elements of a fragmented modernity. Stein's made her 'period of cinema' comment, for instance, while on the promotional lecture circuit in 1934. My argument adds to these

[29] For the most part, recent studies on modernism and the new media of its day have focused on the various inspirations the avant-garde took or may have taken from the cinema. Michael North's *Camera Works: Photography and the Twentieth-Century Word* argues that exposure to the cinema opened up utopian possibilities for modernist formal innovation, Susan McCabe's *Cinematic Modernism* argues that they wrote according to a kind of cinematic logic and produced statements about the hysterical body, and David Trotter's *Cinema and Modernism* attributes to the cinema the modernist tension between absence and presence. See also Marcus 2007, and Gunning 1986.

existing perspectives by suggesting the importance of promotion and performance as elements of modernism's encounter with the cinema; Stein's remarks on cinema refer to her status as mass mediated performer and a walking advertisement for her own creative products.

Scholars have also dealt seriously with Stein's forays into self-promotion and advertising. She appears perhaps more often than any other modernist in scholarship on modernist literary publicity. Her work supports the claim behind Kevin Dettmar and Stephen Watt's collection *Marketing Modernisms* that scholars should "both… reconsider the critically suppressed relationship between canonical modernists and the commercial marketplace, and… provide a metacommentary on other exclusionary and political effects" (3). Jani Scandura and Michael Thurston's collection *Modernism Inc.: Body, Memory, Capital* pursues a similar line of inquiry but focuses on "technologies of cultural memory and forgetting, production and consumption, encryptment and disinterment (11).[30] Here too, I want to suggest, studies that isolate the material conditions of literary production from their distribution and circulation miss important opportunities to capture modernist attitudes toward the new mass media of their moment. Aaron Jaffe's *Modernism and the Culture of Celebrity*, for instance, calls attention to "the capacity of certain modernist careers to fix 'masterpieces' in emerging economies of cultural prestige by calling upon a matrix of secondary literary labors" (3). For Jaffe, these labors primarily revolve around the authorial signature, or *imprimatur* of such figures as Wyndham Lewis, T.S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound. However, Jaffe's emphasis on signatures downplays the fact that the mass media boom of the early twentieth century was essential to defining the celebrity status and marketed image of figures like Stein.

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[30] See also Cooper 2004, Mao 1998, Karl 2009, and Leick 2009.

Timothy Galow's "Literary Modernism in the Age of Celebrity" departs from Jaffe's literary confines and argues that modernist celebrity culture conditioned "critical and audience reception of texts" (314). Galow understands literary celebrity as "a complex recursive process that involves authorial actions, the production of specific works, the promotion of texts and their authors, and audience reception" (316). This chapter will follow a similar line of reasoning, but I will differentiate celebrity from stardom by paying attention to the degree of involvement an author had in the entire process of cultural circulation. As David Shumway argues, the professional dimensions of stardom can help critics to distinguish a group of skilled stars from those celebrities who are known simply for being well known (a the condition of celebrity that Daniel Boorstin dismisses as a "pseudo-event") (8). In this sense Stein is more like a star than a celebrity in that she has "achieved success in a skilled field or profession" (Shumway 8). The same can be said of many modernist writers, but public perception of their professional skill often hinged on whether they were read about more than they were read. Stein's early career exemplifies the tension between fame for its own sake and stardom for real achievement. As she comes into greater control of the circulation of her texts and her public image in the 1930s, however, she should be considered according to the contours of media stardom based in the public's perception of skill, success, and expertise.

In the end, Stein's career showcases a model of literary self-promotion based in contemporary mass media and yet adherent to the logic of a rebellious modernism with separate spheres of production and distribution. This contradiction allows her to deny the professional implications of her promotion and distribution even as she makes those labors the subject of her works. It is Stein's participation in promotional and distributive labor (and her valorization of creative and productive labor) that I emphasize here and that sets this chapter apart from other

treatments of Stein's celebrity status. In the end, this facet of her self-promotion is meant to appeal to a niche audience of professionals, and I will speculate that it fit well later in the century with transformations in the structure of capitalist economies through which "creative" labor emerged to supersede the professional-managerial work that was most relevant during the apex of modernist production.

II. From Victorian Bodies to Modernist Stars

Literary celebrity is not an invention of modernism, or even of the twentieth century. As Leo Braudy argues, fame is a phenomenon that predates modernity itself. Braudy holds that fame becomes possible with the circulation of coins in ancient civilizations, develops with the Enlightenment in the public sphere, and radically transforms in the late nineteenth century in light of massive technological and cultural changes. Victorian literary celebrity culture prefigures modernist celebrity, in that both discourses accelerate rapidly as a result of developments in new media and cultural technologies. As Alexis Easley recounts of the Victorian period, "with the proliferation of new media—travel guidebooks, mass-market newspapers, illustrated periodicals, and gossip columns—came a corresponding obsession with the lives, homes, and bodies of literary celebrities" (11). What distinguishes the celebrity discourse surrounding modernist writers from that of their Victorian counterparts is, firstly, the media in which their celebrity images circulated. The existence of radio and television and the star systems that accompany these media radically altered the workings of literary stardom compared to the print-based new media of the late nineteenth century. In keeping with this development, the early twentieth century finds the emphasis on bodily circulation Easley identifies in Victorian celebrity culture eclipsed by the circulation of ideas and images as the foundation of celebrity culture. This shift corresponds with overall cultural trends away from objective and embodied modes of

communication and toward the subjective and disembodied expressions that are characteristic of modernism.

This section will present exemplary instances of Victorian literary celebrity in order to describe the way Gertrude Stein adapted and reinvented Victorian authors' approaches to self-image management. Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, and Oscar Wilde all grappled with identity problems brought on by their celebrity status, and in each case produced partial solutions for these problems from which Stein and other modernists could borrow. Stein, however, was able to control her media image much more deftly than her predecessors. Rather than allowing herself to be depicted by mass media producers, she carefully managed her image through an appeal to intellect and expertise based in her literary authority. Her ability to control her media image in turn brought her into literal and figurative proximity with Hollywood stars and other professional cultural workers. This proximity suggests that her model of image control may have influenced professional culture, while also asserting her model as superior to the industrially managed promotion of star images upon which movie stars depended.

Ninety-two years before Stein remarked of her American lecture tour that "It is very nice being a celebrity a real celebrity who can decide who they want to meet," Dickens reported to a friend from his own American tour that "I wish you could have seen the crowds cheering the inimitable in the streets" (Stein *EA* 4, Dickens qtd. in John 79). Dickens was arguably the most famous literary celebrity of the nineteenth century, and his promotional strategies—especially his American lecture tours and public readings—set the tone for many to come. When he first toured America in 1842, as Juliet John suggests, "the extent of his fame was unrivalled and unprecedented" (79). Based on Dickens' travelogue *American Notes*, John describes Dickens' experience of fame in America as "raw and from the inside," ranging in reaction from "euphoria"

to "claustrophobia" (79). Besieged by fans during the tour, he reports at one point that he fears getting his hair cut, "lest the barber (bribed by admirers) should clip it all off for presents" (qtd. in John 80). From reports such as this John surmises "Dickens' celebrity paranoia was fuelled by his acute sense of himself as a commodity to be exploited in the present" (80). In response to this experience, Dickens crafted a public persona that he could maintain separately from his private sense of self. As Marysa DeMoor recalls, Dickens "saw and understood the market forces and thrived in them…, exulted in constructing discursive selves for himself, narrative alter egos in fiction as in life, and loved to perform them" (3-4). John describes this maneuver as "a conjuring trick involving various projections of himself 'in person' and disguised as 'another man'" (125).

Dickens complemented his performed public personae with an increasingly cloistered private life. When he returned to the U.S. for a second tour, he developed new means of self-isolation. According to John, "he rigidly guarded his personal space," and apparently believed by this time that "you engage with 'the people' only in a professional capacity, and for money" (136). In short, Dickens coped with overwhelming public attention by splitting his personality into a performing public self and an isolated private self. The strategy was successful in his case, and as John remarks it designates Dickens as an exemplary self-publicist, particularly unusual in his ability "to market himself so successfully and ubiquitously over a range of mass media" (127). This manner of public-private compartmentalization, however, only functions successfully for Dickens because the mass media of his day relies primarily on either text-based publications or bodily circulation (in the form of lecture tours and public appearances). As mass media became more image-based, isolating one's private self grew increasingly more difficult. As a result, Victorian celebrities who adopted Dickens' publicity strategies later on, such as Twain and Wilde, strained more to maintain private identities against a celebrity culture hungry for

images of celebrities and insights into their private lives. In the end it is Stein who takes the next leap forward toward a resolution of this dilemma, by taking responsibility for the circulation of her image (in both the figurative and literal sense) and by unapologetically exposing her interior life and interior space to the masses.

Dickens also pioneered techniques of literary promotion through which the name of the author came to function as a kind of brand or trademark. Demoor argues that "Whereas… anonymous books continued to be published and sold throughout the nineteenth century, the name of the author and the identity of the author attached to that name had become the foremost marketing strategy by 1900" (15). Loren Glass's analysis of Twain's late career places Twain at a crucial point in this development of authorial branding, and posits his celebrity as rooted in the signature, home, and body of the author. As Glass recalls, Twain traded heavily on his self-appointed proper name and trademark to incorporate an authorial self ("Trademark" 672). Based on legal actions that Twain took toward the end of his life as well as the formal ambiguities of his autobiography, Glass surmises that his entire project of incorporation is, in a way, an attempt to cheat death, to canonize himself during his lifetime by way of distinctly economic practices ("Trademark" 672). However, Twain's autobiography (the main vehicle for this incorporation) was not only not published during his lifetime, but also failed to connect with audiences. It is notably a turn to subjectivity and abstraction that causes this failure, as Glass notes: "Twain had violated his mass audiences expectations by producing a modernist text" ("Trademark" 677). Stein, in comparison, used mass cultural venues to prepare her audiences' expectations *for* a modernist text. Moreover, as Glass suggests, Twain's promotional strategy was based in the circulation of the "material trace of his own hand,"—in other words, his signature—along with his literary texts ("Trademark" 679-680). Stein's trademark, on the other hand, is an image of a

rose surrounded by her catchphrase—"a rose is a rose is a rose" in text that encircles the image. In short, Twain attempted to sell his work by way of a signature linking the text back to the author's physical body, whereas Stein designed a mass-producible logo that showcased her design sense.

Wilde's publicity, on the other hand, was embodied and illustrated. His image circulated through more visual and physical displays of literary celebrity than Twain's, from the illustrated caricatures of Wilde in newspapers and magazines to his physical appearances during American lecture tours. In fact Wilde prefigures Stein more closely than other Victorians in his attitudes toward publicity, his interest in interior design, his media profile, his physical circulation on a lecture tour, and his ambiguous presentation of gender and sexuality. In spite of their many commonalities, what interests me most in Wilde's case is his attempt to condition his public image through his literary texts, notably *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Although Twain's autobiography does this too, Wilde's novel presents a fully articulated argument that when an artist becomes a public figure, he should be valued in aesthetic terms, not moral terms (Rosner 28). Victoria Rosner implies that if this argument had been convincing enough, the tragic turns of his later life based on public fixation on his private activities might have been avoided. Rosner argues that when Wilde claims *Dorian Gray* as "an essay on decorative art," he makes its protagonist a walking work of art and his portrait the record of his life and thus blurs the boundaries between art and life. Hence Wilde promotes a philosophy of aestheticism under which fine and applied arts should not be subject to ethical considerations (28).

Stein too treats literary texts as a means for conditioning her public image, most notably in her 1933 bestseller *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (*ABT*) and its follow-up *Everybody's Autobiography* (*EA*). Rather than attempting in these texts to convince the public to exclude her

private life from scrutiny, she makes her private life the very subject of the texts. Furthermore, she uses the autobiographies and magazine work to educate readers about her formal strategies, whereas Wilde uses formal strategies to make arguments about the private lives of public artists. Stein also managed the circulation of visual representations of herself and her home carefully. Photographs of Stein and Toklas in their home appeared throughout the original editions of both autobiographies and in many magazines at the peak of her fame. She describes the production of these images often, and takes care to showcase her own role in their production. When discussing Man Ray's photographs of her (one of which appears on the original book jacket of *ABT*), for instance, she writes in *ABT* that "she told him that she liked his photographs of her better than any that had ever been taken except one snapshot [Toklas] had taken of her recently. This seemed to bother Man Ray" (198). Stein at once praises Man Ray's work and belittles his medium. She then foregrounds her own body movements in the production of the photographs and implies a degree of creative control that I suspect Man Ray might have denied.

The anecdote above is representative of Stein's tendency to control the circulation of her photographic image and to condition public reception of these images. Wilde also prototyped this form of literary celebrity in his promotion of fashion and décor as hallmarks of the individual. His stylistic approach garnered him a great deal of publicity and turned him into a visual commodity for whom "visual tokens constituted nearly the entirety of his celebrity," as Jonathan Goldman puts it (22). However, Goldman argues that these elements of Wilde's career contribute to the radical split of self and image Wilde presents in *Dorian Gray*, and that problems with the line between public and private self haunt Wilde throughout his lifetime. A powerful instance of this dynamic is Goldman's depiction of Wilde's image as circulated in popular caricatures of his day. Citing depictions of Wilde eating a lily for breakfast and Orientalized with a ponytail and

Fu Manchu beard, Goldman explains that such "grotesqueries meant to illuminate his corruption, whether pictured in terms of race, sexuality, corpulence, or madness" (31). Unlike Stein, who usurped control over her image whenever possible, Goldman suggests that Wilde "affected to ignore the caricatures" and instead tried to control his image through his literary work. In doing so, Goldman suggests, Wilde rendered both himself and *Dorian Gray* to be "tragic" commodities that the public tended to "read" as degenerate (44). Stein, on the other hand, successfully adapts Wilde's model of celebrity and opens her doors to everyone, invites the attention of reporters and photographers, and in doing so takes control of her public persona in a way that Wilde never could.

It is worth noting that Stein's ability to resolve the kind of identity issues that accompany celebrity and that troubled Dickens, Twain, and Wilde was made possible in part by technological innovations of the twentieth century in the realms of communication and transportation. Curiously, Stein downplays this difference between her moment and Wilde's in a 1936 *Chicago Tribune* review of Lloyd Lewis' *Oscar Wilde Discovers America*. She compares hers and Wilde's lecture tours and concludes that "having just gone all over America it makes everything that happened to Oscar Wilde be real because fifty years after it was still just like that" (4). The only difference she acknowledges between 1882 and 1934 in America is that "It was airplanes instead of trains and good roads instead of bad ones" ("Gertrude Stein Praises" 9). But airplanes and good roads are much more than a minor detail in Stein's project of self-fashioning and in modernist celebrity in general. Along with the new media of radio and film, airplanes and good roads disseminated Stein's image to far more people and more rapidly than Wilde could have imagined. These technologies also de-emphasized the importance of the physical body of the author in the process of image circulation. If (as Glass argues,) Victorian

celebrity is rooted in the physical body of the author, Stein's propensity to be broadcasted, filmed, and flown through the air suggests that modernist celebrity discourse departed from these foundations. Rather than investing in corporeality, Stein's example suggests, modernist celebrities depended on speedy transmission and transportation. In doing so she claimed a degree of technical expertise that might have had the potential to connect modernist literary celebrities with professional-managerial workers at the time.

Airplanes and broadcasting are examples of a wide array of developments in the early twentieth century that fundamentally reshaped public perceptions of literary celebrity. I emphasize transportation and media in Stein's case because both contribute to what Timothy Galow characterizes as "The rapid development of new resources and technologies that have come to be lumped under the general term 'modernity'," a development that "brought many people physically and imaginatively closer together" (314).[31] Raymond Williams argues that modernist self promotion is a direct response to these changes: "Photography, cinema, radio, television, reproduction and recording all make their decisive advances during the period identified as Modernist, and it is in response to these that there arises what in the first instance were formed as defensive cultural groupings, rapidly if partially becoming self-promoting" (*Politics* 33). Stein's self-promotional strategies follow Williams' logic of response and defense in terms of mass media, but it is important to acknowledge her adaptation of Victorian literary celebrity into a new promotional mode that incorporates techniques of twentieth century media stardom.

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[31] P. David Marshall, Marysa Demoor and Jonathan Goldman all corroborate this timing, and Glass adds that while antebellum publicity existed, it was nowhere near as intense as in the twentieth century.

Stein's combination of nineteenth and twentieth century promotional strategies positioned her as a unique celebrity whose success might be seen as more resilient than either of the two alone. In *EA*, for instance, she recounts an incident in which Mary Pickford suggests posing with Stein for a publicity photograph, and then (as Stein puts it) "melts away" at the reality of the situation (7), posing Stein as a threat to mainstream fame. Later, however, Hollywood stars ask her for advice on publicity, shoring up her authority as a superior model of self-marketing. Her secret, Stein reveals, is a "small audience" (283). Niche marketing and self-management, in other words, allow Stein a degree of control over her fame that the Hollywood industrial model of P.R. doesn't permit. Her address to her target audience is also highly pedagogical, and promises a more refined variety of cultural capital than what Hollywood stars offered. When stars like Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks addressed a wide public with advice columns, the impression was likely to be shallow—a new style of dress, makeup tips, the value of exercise (Barbas 49-52). For Stein's readership, décor and style would still have been important, but cultivated. At their core was the idea of the autonomously producing artist, grounded in domestic and intellectual interiority.

The brief exchange that Stein recounts in *EA* between herself and Pickford might be taken as symbolic of the synthesis of literary and cinematic stardom that takes place in this period. I see the encounter as representative of a broader transformation in creative labor through which boundaries between avant-garde and professional culture become increasingly vague. It is no coincidence that Stein the modernist and Pickford the movie star are both at the center of this transformation. Indeed, the two women had more in common than one might initially guess. Samantha Barbas' *Movie Crazy: Fans, Stars, and the Cult of Celebrity* suggests that like Stein, Pickford's stardom is grounded in her ability to straddle tradition and modernity and her

pedagogical address to a mass public. As Barbas notes, Pickford practiced modern consumerism and advocated for progressive feminist politics, but maintained a degree of Victorian prudery in matters of sexuality, drinking and smoking, hairstyle, and fashion (49). Stein and Pickford alike were both late adopters of the short women's hairstyles of the 1920s (Stein in 1926, Pickford in 1928). Both women played instructive roles for a reading public eager to accumulate cultural capital in an increasingly professionalized world in which such capital was increasingly seen as a ticket to success. Barbas recounts: "when [Pickford] lent her name to self help books and advice columns, she assumed another function, that of a teacher. The acknowledged master of self-expression and self-presentation, she shared tips with readers eager to develop their own magnetic charm" (47). Stein is seen as offering cutting-edge cultural knowledge that might complement the surface charms of a Pickford admirer. A 1917 editor's note in *Vanity Fair* calls her "The high priestess of cubist literature" and claims her poetry is "the surest test for the detection of a modern philistine" ("Editor's Note"). Similarities aside, the late 1920s sees Stein's fortunes rise as Pickford's fall. Barbas pinpoints "the rise of… the movie star as an icon of glamour and sexuality" as responsible for the diminishing public appeal of Pickford's chaste, Victorian image (55). Stein, by way of contrast, presents an increasingly revelatory image of her queer life on the cutting edge of the Parisian art scene, a project that culminates in the publication of her autobiographies and subsequent mainstream breakthrough. By producing a public image based in her private and domestic life, Stein established her lasting status as a cultural guru.

Stein's success also stems from the fact that she foregrounds her acts of self-production and takes ownership of her role as a creative producer of that image. Movie stars, in comparison, had to minimize or deny the idea of a public self that was deliberately produced. In early

Hollywood, Barbas suggests, the key to success was not performance but the "ability to act naturally," and to "bare one's soul before the camera" (41). Richard Dyer describes the condition for stardom as a "coherent continuousness within" that "becomes what the star 'really is'" (10). What separates Stein from Hollywood stars is that is that for film stars, there appears to be no mediation, no artifice, no creative work behind what they are paid to produce—whereas for Stein, there is an abundance of creative activity involved in her literary labors. As success stories in American culture, modernist and Hollywood stars offer two related but different models: performing simply being oneself, or performing acts of creativity.

I therefore want to suggest that Stein should be thought of as a model for professional and creative workers who were concerned with image crafting, a model whose self-promotion hybridizes literary celebrity and media stardom. After all, she possesses the "defining characteristics of stardom" that David Shumway describes in *Rock Star: the Making of Musical Icons from Elvis to Springsteen*: the criterion of professional achievement detailed earlier, as well as the conditions in which "the star is the object of imagined personal relationships by fans; the star has persona that represented more than an individual personality, but works as a widely understood culturally specific sign or icon; that persona is consistent and well-developed; and finally and most subjectively, a star has the degree of personal attractiveness that we call 'star quality'" (8-9). Stein's appeal is physical and charismatic, but not sexual, as Carl Van Vechten describes her: "massive in physique, a Rabelaisian woman with a splendid thoughtful face; mind dominating her matter" (qtd. in Leick 47). This physical display of her mental life differentiates Stein's "star quality" from the kind possessed by movie stars. As Shumway suggests, "stars are defined by attractiveness, usually experienced as sexual, but that *may be a more general*

personal magnetism" (15, emphasis mine). That Stein's physicality is mentally rather than sexually conditioned further establishes her bond with the PMC.

To envision Stein in this way requires some rethinking of both literary production and stardom. The latter concept is generally thought to provide everyday people with illusions of individuality necessary for their complicity with a homogenizing system of capitalist production. Braudy describes fame as not "an extreme *expression* of individuality so much as… the *appearance* of individuality, the more and more baroque costumes people assume in order to distinguish themselves in a more crowded, corporate, and collective world" (7-8, italics in original). Richard Schickel and Joshua Gamson argue that celebrity creates false intimacy and degrades the Enlightenment ideal of the public sphere.[32] Dyer suggests that as discourses of stardom create false intimacy and degrade the quality of real social relations, they also help audiences, cultural workers, and literary modernists alike to form stable identities in a fragmented modernity (9). Stein's mode of stardom suggests another social function specific to literary stardom that has special relevance for the PMC. She combines a display of "success in a skilled field or profession" with an appeal to intellectual authority (Shumway 8). She promoted an image of her creative career as self-managed and autonomous, in the production of literary works as well as distribution, marketing, and promotion. Stein's public image therefore bears more resemblance to the kind of "expert professionalism" that is uniquely characteristic of the ideals of early twentieth-century industry than many movie stars (Brint and Proctor 464).

According to Steven Brint and Kristopher Proctor, the rise of expertise entailed a move away from a "social trustee" model and toward a mode of professionalism that "emphasized the

[32] Gamson adds that ideas of celebrity "are built on major American fault lines" (11-12). Schickel's vision of celebrity is somewhat more hysterical, in the ideas of fame for him "are both deliberately and accidentally employed to enhance in the individual audience member a confusion of the realms (between public life and private life, between those matters of the mind that are best approached objectively and those that are best approached subjectively)" (9).

instrumental effectiveness of specialized, theoretically grounded knowledge" as opposed to "collegial organization, ethical standards, or service in the public interest" (464). When Stein acts as advisor to the stars on the topic of celebrity, advises them on the notion of the "small audience," and goes on to publicly self-manage her mass mediated image, she attains a level of expertise beyond those stars she advises (*EA* 284). It is even imaginable that she forecasts post-Fordist developments in the realms of niche marketing and contract labor. It is certain, in any event, that she layers creativity and media savvy onto the existing model of professional expertise, and in doing so foreshadows a general trend in capitalist labor models away from skill and knowledge and toward creativity and personality. Because she tended to ground her creativity and personality in spaces of domesticity and modern transportation, the next section will chart Stein's establishment of creative interiority in the space of the well designed home, as well as the rhetorical maneuvers she executes in order to take that image of domestic creativity on the road, and eventually into the air.

III. Objects, Rooms, and the Creative Professional

In her earliest work, Gertrude Stein exhibits a preoccupation with domestic spaces, details, and objects. The three categories she uses to structure her early prose poem *Tender Buttons*—"objects," "food," and "rooms"—designate major preoccupations in her early career that continue to surface throughout nearly all of her writings. In her first mainstream magazine publication, "Have You Attacked Mary. He Giggled," Stein assembles fragments of domestic life and snippets of mundane conversation that amount to an overall sense of warmth and exchange. One ambiguous line—"can you find me in a home" could very well be Stein's motto for her life and art, as rooted as it appears to readers to be in the scene of domestic creativity (55). Notable exceptions arise in the form of wartime auto travels and the boat, train, car, and air

travel that she encounters during her 1934 lecture tour. In the end, mobile spaces provide her with additional opportunities to transfer the scene of domestic production and interior decoration to mobile spaces, in which she creates images of radically flexible and mobile, yet still somehow domestic creative production.

This section will argue that Stein's carefully crafted scenes of domestic design and artistic production helped her manage her image as it circulated in textual and photographic form. Across the pages of widely circulated magazines and her two autobiographies, domestic images of Stein and Toklas inform and condition the meaning of their proximate texts, ultimately casting the home as an ideal work-space for creative professionals and figuring Stein as a consummate interior designer—she curates the spaces that in turn create her, and foster her creativity. I will also discuss the way spaces of modern transportation and transmission threaten this stability, and how Stein addresses this threat by reasserting her domestic principles on mobile spaces in very public and personal ways.

Like the synthesis of media management and Victorian literary celebrity I described in the previous section, Stein's portrayal of domestic creativity updates literary tradition by way of mass media and in doing so boosts her appeal for professional and creative workers. Although the ideal media for Stein's promotion of her domestic image are magazines and books, the theory of professional appeal from which Stein borrows has much to do with the way Hollywood studios generated star personas by placing them in carefully crafted domestic scenarios. As Simon Dixon argues in "Ambiguous Ecologies: Domestic Stardom's *Mise-En-Scene*," the image of the Hollywood star was heavily produced by way of domestic environments. From Errol Flynn's model galleons to Tom Mix's cowboy paraphernalia, the objects surrounding a star in his home emphasize the kind of on and off-screen consistency of personality outlined by

Samantha Barbas and Richard Dyer in the previous section. As a result, Dixon suggests, "the star's expensive home… now seems a fragile, temporary setting, intended less to shelter and comfort than to stylize" (82). This dynamic appears to destabilize any sense of private identity for the star and renders her fragile and ephemeral.

Whereas the Hollywood star's image was studio-made, however, Stein's image was self-crafted by way of text, photography, interior design, and curatorial skill. Indeed, as Dixon points out, curation was one of the few interior motifs that could restore a sense of agency and integrity to a seemingly overproduced domestic celebrity image. Based on photographs of Edward G. Robinson with his collection of modern paintings, Dixon contrasts Robinson to Francesco Alberoni's characterization of Hollywood stars as a "powerless elite" and argues that "when pictured as a proud owner of a major painting, a star is able to reverse this power relationship: the model becomes the collector and is thereby able to buy back the integrity that was lost in the invasion of his or her privacy" (93). Images of domestic stardom, in turn, contributed to the array of visual and narrative cues Hollywood movies and surrounding cultural texts offered in support of an increasingly professional-managerial system of organization. Hollywood was foremost in establishing the creative professional expert as the lynchpin of modern industry, both in the inner workings of studios and, as Mark Garret Cooper argues, in the social-spatial hierarchy of films and their attendant publicity campaigns (5). In the Hollywood love story, Cooper argues, success or failure of the couple depends on an arrangement of spaces dictated by an external narrating agent. As a result, Cooper suggests:

> The Hollywood love story posed a question of authority and answered it… This narrative form provided a clear, reproducible, and readily adaptable means of demonstrating who belonged where. In the process, it demonstrated that national

> supervision and arrangement would require an expertise no one person could possess… In this way, movies fundamentally revised the traditional categories of American national culture and legitimated a rising professional class. (5)

What all of this has to do with Stein is, as I will argue, that she too was associated with an image of space, expertise, and social hierarchy (in the context of a very different love story) similar to what Cooper describes here. In the way she described herself, her partner, and her surroundings—as well as in the images that accompanied her descriptions—domestic space and the objects it contains appear as generative. The "objects, food, and rooms" that make up Stein's life are not only generative of her creative production, but also of the kind of business bravura required for Toklas and Stein to start up their own publishing label, and later on to promote an image of domestic authorship outside of the home, in the spaces of modern transportation. Stein therefore adapts the Hollywood model of domestic self-promotion to add elements of creativity and avant-garde authorial expertise, and promotes counter-institutional spaces as ideal for developing these qualities. Given the importance of creativity and mobility in labor markets well past Stein's era, I believe the way she constructed these images is well worth consideration.

As opposed to the "question of authority" that preoccupies the Hollywood love story, for Stein the persistent questions that occupy her work are those of interiority and exteriority. Stein scholars are usually interested in the way these concepts condition the psychological and formal strategies in her writing (Curnutt 293). I don't dismiss the importance of figurative interior and exterior life in Stein's writing, but I want to suggest that these ideas should also be taken literally in her work. Throughout her career, Stein constructed an ongoing conversation between her inner and outer mental life and the interior and exterior spaces in which she existed. In *ABT*, "Toklas" notes that *Tender Buttons* marked "the beginning, as Gertrude Stein would say, of mixing the

outside with the inside. Hitherto she had been concerned with seriousness and the inside of things, in these studies she began to describe the inside as seen from the outside" (156). Her 1934 *Vanity Fair* piece "And Now" proceeds to reject the "outside" after she suffered from writer's block as a result of her lecture tour, but confirms that the "mixing" of inside and outside continues to preoccupy Stein until at least the mid-1930s. In "Inside and Outside: Gertrude Stein on Identity, Celebrity, and Authenticity," Kirk Curnutt uses Stein's comments on celebrity and identity to describe the "ways in which she employed the inside/outside trope to authenticate her fame and win credibility" (293). He frames this tension as a personal struggle, in which "she repeatedly describes the 'confusion' that occurs when the outer self is mistaken for the inner 'I,' and she insists that an emphatic act of self-possession is the lone remedy for this crisis" (293). Although some of Curnutt's references acknowledge the importance of her home as a "sign of identity, a projection of personality," few studies have analyzed the deliberate positioning Stein performs within her autobiographies of the self and the home as an integrated entity, especially as these ideas circulate alongside images of Stein in her home (and often at work) that frequently appeared in magazines and in the books themselves (Kennedy qtd. in Curnutt 294). Paul K. Aklon's "Visual Rhetoric in the *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*" addressed the subject forty years ago, and argues that through the photographic inserts in *ABT*, "public time categories of past, present, and future are called into doubt because they don't neatly correspond to or provide much help in sorting out the reader's order of involvement with the book" (850). The photos, Aklon suggests, perform a modernist formal maneuver in their interrogation of temporal perception. Wanda Corn and Tirza True Latimer's extensive study of Stein's visual world briefly discusses the inserts as well, but not in depth.

The paintings that adorn the walls of 27 rue de Fleurus perform a crucial function in Stein's assertion of self-home identity, as Stein catalogues her purchase and use of modern art in *ABT* and in widely circulated photographs of Stein and Toklas in their home. The primary function of these narrative and visual cues is to establish Stein as a tastemaker in the artistic and literary scene of her moment. In *ABT*, she presents 27 Fleurus as a counter-institutional space, recounting that whereas Matisse "showed in every autumn salon and every independent," Picasso's work "could really only be seen at 27 rue de Fleurus" (65). In spite of her many quarrels with Picasso, Stein rarely wavers from the position that Picasso's paintings marked the modern break in visual representation that she also attributes to herself in the literary field. Unlike stuffy, traditional salons in which Matisse exhibits, Stein's home is the only place to see the real revolution in modern painting as it happens (as she suggests). Photographs of Stein in her home repeatedly confirm the association of her writing with the rebel salon in which she works. A well-known photograph of Stein and Toklas taken by Man Ray in 1922 frames the pair seated in low chairs in the bottom half of the frame. Stein's paintings occupy the entire top half of the frame, dwarfing the human subjects (fig. 2.1). The sheer volume of photographs of interiors of Stein's home along with magazine articles and as book inserts in *ABT* and *EA* testifies to the importance not only of the paintings themselves, but also of their arrangement as interior décor. Photographs of Stein in her home might therefore be taken as an assertion of the importance of interior design that stabilizes and elevates her artistic legitimacy.

In *ABT* Stein portrays 27 rue de Fleurus as a multi-use domestic space of production and circulation, as well as exchange within networks. Curation, it appears, is the skill that makes or breaks the artist—she produces her environment, and in turn it helps her produce. Even as the photograph above shows the importance of modern painting in this dynamic, *ABT* posits

everyday objects as equally central to the interior design of creative space. When Stein imagines Toklas' first impression of the atelier, she describes the room as it was in 1907 in intricate detail, from the "big renaissance table, on it a lovely inkstand, and at one end of it notebooks neatly arranged" to the "horseshoe nails and pebbles and little pipe cigarette holders… which turned out to be accumulations from the pockets of Picasso and Gertrude Stein" (9). All of this, as Stein makes clear with repeated reminders, is meant to lead up to "the pictures" that "completely covered the white-washed walls right up to the top of the very high ceiling" (9). The passage immediately establishes Stein's affiliation with Picasso, the importance of the pictures on her wall, and the centrality of the space of production. Later in the autobiography the reproductive value of the paintings becomes more apparent, in that their presence is crucial to the process of creative production. For instance, when Stein purchases her first Cezanne and brings it home, Toklas (as voiced by Stein) notes "it was an important picture because looking at this picture Gertrude Stein wrote Three Lives" (34).[33] In other words, providing patronage to others and decorating one's own creative environment with the accumulations of this patronage is essential to the creative process.

Throughout *ABT* Stein emphasizes the importance of interior design to creative production, as Alisa Karl confirms in her discussion of generative consumption in the *Autobiography*. The images that originally accompanied this narrative, however, have been given very little attention and when read as in dialogue with the text, they suggest a narrative in which Stein, Toklas, and the products of their enterprise gradually move from interior to exterior settings while maintaining the domestic authority established in the scene above and in the

[33] Alissa Karl notes the way this exchange picks up on a contemporary ethos of consumerism in which the implication in *ABT* that "it is 'necessary' to buy art because such purchases generate the conditions of further creative production" can be generalized to the idea that "consumption is generative" (87-88)

ubiquitous photographs of the interior of 27 Fleurus that circulated in the press. These images also reveal two modern economic innovations as central to this move: the establishment of Stein and Toklas' collaborative marketing enterprise, and their incorporation of Fordist consumerism (literally, they buy a Ford car) into an existing repertoire of avant-garde curatorial consumerism. The photographic insert facing the title page begins this process with an image titled "Alice B. Toklas at the Door," attributed to Man Ray. In it, Stein is seated at the long table where she writes, immersed in her work and surrounded by the objects of her trade—pen, ink, candles, and books. Alice stands literally on the threshold between Stein and the outside world. Unlike Stein, she acknowledges the camera, thus setting up the arrangement in which Toklas acts as liaison between Stein and the press, between Stein and the world outside (Fig. 2.2)

I find the entrepreneurial interventions of these images to be as compelling as their formal modernism, as they visually reinforce Stein's arrival on the world stage as she emerges from the space of her domestic enterprise and embraces modern technology and transportation, as would any professional on the cutting edge. The photographic inserts in the first edition of *ABT* suggest a narrative in which Stein, Toklas, and the products of their enterprise move from interior to exterior settings while maintaining domestic authority. The early inserts focus on 27 Rue Fleurus, as their titles indicate: "Gertrude Stein in front of the atelier door"; "Room with oil lamp"; "Room with Bonheur de Vivre and Cézanne"; and "Room with gas." As the book marches into the new century with the couple, they appear in a variety of European exteriors, in such snapshots as: "Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas in front of St. Mark's, Venice"; "Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas in front of Joffre's Birthplace"; and "Bernard Fay and Gertrude Stein at Bilignin" (*ABT* inserts 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 14). The literal move from interior to exterior space occurs within the text as well, as the chapters of *ABT* transport the scene from

Paris interiors to the countryside and city streets of various European destinations. The "Joffre's Birthplace" photograph in particular accentuates Toklas and Stein's authority as modern women who take the initiative, in that it visually demonstrates the importance of their Ford car in constructing this image. In it, The Ford sits parked on the street, tented with white fabric that displays a red cross (and suggests the couple's war work). Stein is at the wheel, and Toklas stands behind the opened passenger door (Fig. 2.3). As in "Alice B. Toklas at the door," Stein holds the tools and Alice stands at the threshold, together forming an entrepreneurial pair as producer and distributor/PR director.

Whereas Alkon emphasizes the inserts' interrogation of temporal linearity, Corn and Latimer argue that the photographs are meant to reinforce the centrality of the Stein-Toklas partnership (212). As promotional material, these images display Stein's creative work as adaptable to domestic and mobile settings. As a progressive visual narrative, they invoke the division of labor between Stein and Toklas, demonstrate their technological modernity, and emphasize their mobility. Stein's tools in the frontispiece are pen, fountain and paper, but in the photo of Joffre's birthplace, it's her Ford automobile. For Alkon, the Joffre's Birthplace insert shows "Gertrude caught up in the events of public time, and alludes to disparate eras: the war, the nineteenth century of Joffre's youth, and the years intervening," but it more directly reinforces Stein's self-presentation as an innovator in the American tradition (864). As Karl's discussion of Stein's American automotive brand loyalty suggests, the Ford "underscores the American origins of Stein's determination, ingenuity, and success," and demonstrates "what it means to be a risk-taking entrepreneur, innovative modernist, a progress-driven American—or, really, any combination of the three" (100). The placement of Stein and Toklas in relation to the

car shows them additionally to be partners in enterprise—the author-producer at the helm, and the distributor-publicist at the threshold.

These photographs in particular illustrate the modes of enterprise and consumption that Stein took on as part of her image in order to thwart the threats to her cultural authority posed by mass culture and ordinary commodity exchange. The automobile plays a crucial role in *ABT* by helping Stein to demonstrate the couple's self-initiative when faced with challenges. When Stein and Toklas "decided to get into the war," they ordered a Ford truck from America and began to perform relief work, with Stein at the wheel and Toklas prepared to "do the rest" (168). Accounts of the couple as they deal with the challenges of early automobiles, Stein's uneven driving skills, and spotty French countryside terrain are some of the book's most entertaining moments.[34] Beyond their amusement value, Stein's remarks about the Ford and its successor situate her in more direct engagement with American consumerism and entrepreneurialism than do the 27 rue de Fleurus scenarios. Stein doesn't merely venture out and leave her work behind, though. Crucial to her gradual penetration of the mass market, when she embraces modern transportation and American innovation, she takes her writing with her.

Before this move becomes possible, the car must take on aspects of the home. Upon purchasing a second Ford, decoration becomes important in the car just as it was in the home. Not unlike Stein's "use" of the Cezanne to write *Three Lives*, the car "was called Godiva because she had come naked into the world and each of our friends gave us something with which to bedeck her" (191). Shortly thereafter Stein enters a period of great literary productivity during

[34] For instance, "Toklas" recalls getting caught in the snow: "I was sure that we were on the wrong road and wanted to turn back. Wrong or right, said Gertrude Stein, we are going on. She could not back the car very successfully and indeed I may say even to this day when she can drive any kind of a car anywhere she still does not back a car very well. She goes forward admirably, she does not go backward successfully. The only violent discussions that we have had in connection with her driving a car have been on the subject of backing" (173).

which "she was particularly fond… of working in the automobile while it stood in the crowded streets" (206). Her establishment of Godiva as creative workspace therefore doesn't detract from her entrepreneurial status, because Godiva also allows her to demonstrate expertise. While trying to resolve a bureaucratic tangle, for instance, a senator's secretary who seemed capable of a little proverbial wheel-greasing was along for a ride in Godiva, when "the way in which Gertrude Stein made her way through Paris traffic with the ease and indifference of a chauffeur, and was at the same time a well known author impressed her immensely" (206). Needless to say, the bureaucratic issue evaporated. Hence Stein establishes Godiva as both a space of authorial integrity and American ingenuity.

Having mastered the modern space and technology of the automobile, Stein moves on in her lecture tour to confront the airplane. In doing so, she continues to assert her domestic creativity and American ingenuity (a trope with which she often self-identified).[35] In "I Came and Here I Am," Stein gives the readers of *Hearst's International Cosmopolitan* an account of her impressions of America. She recalls no hesitation when she and Toklas make their first flight, and recounts "once more as always we were doing what had never done before and never would have done, and it was natural, just as natural as breathing, to do everything that we had never done" (167). Not only does she assert her adaptability, she also integrates her creative work into the scene and posits a special bias toward writers in the airplane's design by remarking that "in the first place airplanes were made for writers because it is so easy and so comfortable to

[35] For instance, on the topic (presumably) of literary expatriates she writes in a1930 issue of *Creative Art*: "Those who are saying that they should stay at home mean that as America has done something that is as it has created the twentieth century and we who were and are Americans have all through the nineteenth century created the twentieth century for all those who are in the twentieth century… and the generation living as contemporaries they on the contrary are occupying themselves to continue America by being outside of America" (129). Stein includes herself here in a sweeping narrative of American invention which posits separation from the audience she invents for. One can only "create" the American twentieth century from a different century or from another country.

write in them and you cannot talk so why not write" (167). She even suggests that the mobile scene of production is superior to the merely domestic, but also inherently connected to it. "I like the little bumps it gives," she writes, "otherwise there would be no difference between it and being at home, and the difference between it and being home is so great that it is nice that there are the little differences just those little differences of little bumps" (168).[36] From 27 Rue de Fleurus to Godiva to the airplane, Stein establishes her flexibility and mobility in increasingly advanced spaces of modernity.

The editorial framing of Stein's work in popular magazines often supported Stein's image as a modern go-getter. The *Hearst's* editors juxtapose her article with illustrations of her favorite experiences in modern America—an airplane, skyscrapers, traffic lights, and cars lined up at an intersection (18). The top half of the page on which "I Came and Here I Am" begins features a photo collage with three images: Stein, Toklas and an unidentified man (probably Carl Van Vechten) standing next to an airplane, an areal shot of a cityscape, and a promotional still of Stein seated at an NBC radio microphone. The captions, excerpted from her article, highlight her openness to new media (in spite of her lack of experience with radio and film). Adjacent to the NBC photograph, the caption reads: "It is difficult to believe but I had never heard a broadcast. They said would I and I of course said I would. I never say no, not in America" (19). Stein reports amusement and delight each time she is recorded, filmed, or photographed.

The experience of hearing and seeing herself, on the other hand, upsets her. When she sees herself in a newsreel, she compares it to "the shock of a slightly mixed-up feeling are you or are you not one" that she gets upon seeing her name in print (167). This experience is more

[36] The abundance of commas in this excerpt (a distinctly un-Stein-like element) is the work of *Hearst'* editorial staff, as they announce in the pre-article blurb (18).

extreme, as marked by the change in pronoun: "imagine what it is [seeing *one's* name in print] compared to never having heard *anybody's* voice speaking while a picture is doing something" (167, my emphasis). Scholars usually attribute Stein's writer's block immediately following the tour to her U.S. popularity in general, but given the contrast in tone between the shocking moments in which she experiences recorded images of herself and all the other elements of modernity she enjoys, it stands to reason that when Stein sees herself in a newsreel it represents a moment shat she can't immediately control by imposing her own rules of creativity and interior design on a mobile space.[37]

Having ventured forth in automobiles and airplanes only to experience a rupture in her stable sense of space and creativity at the moment of media transmission, it makes sense that Stein requires a return to 27 rue de Fleurus to re-center her creative energies and establish them once again in the home. "And Now" narrates this return as a literal transition from exterior to interior space: "I write the way I used to write, I wander around. I come home and I write, I write in one copy-book and I copy what I write into one copy-book and I write and I write…I have come back the way I used to write and this is because now everything that is happening is once more happening inside, there is no use in the outside, if you see the outside you see just what you look at and that is no longer interesting, everybody says so or at least everybody acts so and they are right because now there is no use in looking at anything" (35). This process pulls the world of enterprise and literary labor back into the home.

[37] Timothy Galow, for instance, highlights Stein's need to reassert her artistic autonomy after the tour. In "And Now," he argues, "she claims to have suffered a bout of writer's block after becoming a best-selling author. While these statements might, at first glance, support a reading of Stein as a stereotypical anti-market modernist, this interpretation becomes problematic when the larger context is taken into account… In the process of proving she can be both a commercial and a critical success, Stein reasserts the existence of these two separate fields of value and suggests the conflict between them" (324).

The interior of her home, however, is no longer isolated from the lives of more ordinary creative workers and cultural industries, once Stein has come in contact with the technologies of transportation and communication that fuel mass communications. As Sara Blair argues, "Stein's key insight is an understanding of the changing space of home—the private world of love and ritual, the sphere of bourgeois women's self-assertion and of working women's labor—as intimately linked with other metropolitan sites of production, marketing, and display" (419). In other words, after their initial step onto the world stage and into the realms of modern transportation and mass communication, the conditions of Stein and Toklas' literary and domestic labor are permanently altered. When Stein takes to the air, whether flown or broadcasted, it becomes clear to her and her readers that creative production is of no consequence without the modern forms of transmission that modernists often dismissed as belonging solely to the realm of mass culture. For Stein, the modernist response to mass culture required assertion of her authority over these technologies, which she accomplishes by demonstrating the power of the written word in the media that represented her most to her advantage—magazines (as I will detail in section V). Before this kind of widespread self-promotion would become possible, however, Stein had to develop a mode of distribution outside of the dismissive and often hostile institutional culture of the mainstream press.

The photos of Alice on thresholds in *ABT* dramatize the process she and Stein developed in order to disrupt existing hierarchies of publication and distribution. The narrative of that particular work, however, has much more to tell about modernist enterprises of self-distribution. The next section will therefore read *ABT* as a narrative of enterprise that culminates in its own publication and the launch of a small distribution enterprise, the "Plain Edition" publishing label.

IV. From Flexible Production to DIY Distribution

A letter from an enthusiastic reader printed in the August 1933 issue of *The Atlantic* captures the transformation of Stein's public image post-*ABT* from public joke to beloved American literary authority. Titled "On Understanding a Stein," It begins by citing a limerick from a popular magazine:

> There's a notable family named Stein;
>
> There's Gert, and there's Ep, and there's Ein:
>
> Gert's poems are punk,
>
> Ep's statues are junk –
>
> Can't make head nor tail out of Ein (20).

Having once sympathized with the limerick, the reader continues, she now sees the error of her ways. "Years Ago," writes Anna Work Shawkey, "I puckered my brows over [Stein's] poetry and racked my brains over *Tender Buttons* and *The Making of Americans*. But now I understand. It isn't Gertrude Stein who is out of step—it is I" (20). As Bryce Conrad argues, the text of *ABT* is itself partially responsible for the fact that readers like Shawkey can now make sense of Stein's earlier work (or at least claim to want to) (224). Throughout the text, Stein repeatedly explains the formal principles behind her previous works in order to demystify them for readers. In her first autobiography, Stein "endeavored to explain the difficult struggles underlying the creation of texts such as *Three Lives*, *Tender Buttons*, and *The Making of Americans*… hoping to bring readers to works that had not fared well in the market place," as Conrad suggests (224).

I argue in this section that *ABT* is a work of self-advertisement and also much more: a narrative of cultural enterprise, one that both demonstrates and describes novel and alternative approaches to distribution and marketing. I posit that after Stein was stymied for much of her

career by unsympathetic publishers and the mockery of journalists, she set out in *ABT* to not only explain and advertise her writing as Conrad depicts, but also to champion the DIY publishing and branding Toklas had taken up, and to argue for elimination of unimaginative middlemen in creative industries, from art dealers to publishers. Taken together, these statements amount to the pillars of a DIY distribution strategy that may have had special relevance for professional-managerial readers of *The Atlantic*, where *ABT* was first published. Parody was the prevalent approach in mass magazines at the time to boosting accessibility to modernist texts, as Daniel Tracy suggests (44). In *ABT*, and in the pages of the magazines themselves, Stein offered alternatives to parody that she hoped would legitimately inform readers as to the meanings of her more difficult texts.

In other words, Stein's version of modernist enterprise involves not only advertising experimental works within more popular texts, but also advertising her own promotional and distributive enterprises. Although there have been many excellent studies of the complex and symbiotic exchange between modernist literature and advertising, little attention has been paid to the way modernist texts promote their entrepreneurial innovations. Studies such as Jennifer Wicke's *Advertising Fictions: Literature, Advertisement, and Social Reading* and Mark Morrisson's *The Public Face of Modernism: Little Magazines, Audiences and Reception* convincingly argue for the mutual exchange and development of modernism and advertising, but don't carry the argument much further than to establish that, contrary to the tradition of the "great divide," these discourses do have something to do with each other.[38] Stein shows that

[38] Wicke argues for reading "advertising as a language and literature in its own right—as a preeminent discourse of modern culture" (1). Morrisson argues that "Many modernists found the energies of promotional culture too attractive to ignore, especially when it came to advertising and publication techniques" (6). Neither takes up the advertising practices of modernist texts, though Conrad does.

through clever branding, stubborn persistence, self-publication, and a slew of other activities that fill the pages of *ABT*, the modernist text can compete with advertising on its own terrain in the pages of mass-circulated magazines, and offer an alternative and superior form of cultural capital.

Parody was one of the pervasive responses to Stein's work prior to (and after as well, to some degree) the publication of *ABT* (67). In 1914, As Karen Leick recounts, Kenneth L. Roberts published a series of poems in *Life* called "Cubist Poems—After Gertrude Stein" that according to Leick "had very little in common" with Stein's style and "were full of onomatopoeia that seemed to refer to nothing in particular" (59). In *ABT* Stein attempts to spin this sort of mockery and dismissal more to her advantage, when "Toklas" recalls that Stein "always consoles herself that the newspapers are always interested. They always say, she says, that my writing is appalling but they always quote it and what is more, they quote it correctly, and those they say they admire they do not quote…My sentences do get under their skin, only they do not know that they do, she has often said" (70). Stein's tactic of turning bad press to her advantage is one of many promotional techniques in *ABT* that culminate in climactic moments of DIY branding, marketing, networking, and distribution.

Stein portrays cultural gatekeepers as merely invested in interfering with what would otherwise be a productive exchange between avant-garde artists and a mass public. She often butts heads with unimaginative publishers who insist that her style would be unintelligible to average readers. When an agent from the Grafton press calls at 27 rue de Fleurus after Stein's submission of *Three Lives* for publication, she writes: "You see, he said slightly hesitant, the director of the Grafton Press is under the impression that perhaps your knowledge of english. But I am an american, said Gertrude Stein indignantly. Yes yes I understand that perfectly now, he

said, but perhaps you have not had much experience in writing" (68). Stein's eventual vindication is shown immediately after the anecdote, as she recalls the director's later acknowledgment of *Three Lives*' positive reviews (68). Contrary to the opinion of editors and publishers, She sees her writing accessible to anyone, and rejects the notion that she writes for elites. As "Toklas" recalls, "[Gertrude Stein] has a horror of what she calls intellectual people. It has always been rather ridiculous that she who is good friends with all the world can know them and they can know her, has always been the admired of the precious" (70). The misunderstanding, as Stein insists, lies not in the readers themselves or in her refusal (until *ABT* itself) to capitulate to commonly held assumptions of their lack of mental flexibility. "One writes for oneself and strangers," she explains, "but without any adventurous publishers how can one come in contact with these strangers" (240). As if to prove her superior sense of the public's taste, she fills *ABT* with anecdotes that demonstrate her superior sense of her audience's tastes.

Magazine editors do not fare much better in the *Autobiography*. Stein's correspondence with Ellery Sedgwick, editor of *The Atlantic*, suggests that her troubles with editors and publishers convinced her of the need to better inform her readers as to how her work should be read. Although *The Atlantic* eventually serialized *ABT* and proved an excellent promotional vehicle, prior to this Stein and Sedgwick carried on an epistolary dialogue for fourteen years that began as combative, endured a period of embitterment on both sides, and after a surprisingly pedagogical turn (and mutual interest in a charitable cause) ultimately achieved personal and literary harmony. Although she recalls in *ABT* that the first response Sedgwick sent to one of her literary submissions was "long and rather argumentative," it was in fact only a few lines: "Your poems, I am sorry to say, would be a puzzle picture to our readers. All who have not the key must find them baffling, and—alack! That key is known to very, very few" (110). Upon Stein's

insistence in reply that her work was meant for a general audience, Sedgwick elaborated on what seemed to him to be a misunderstanding. Her letter "seems to show me that you misjudge our public. Here there is no group of *literati* or *illuminati* or *cognoscenti* or *illustrimi* of any kind, who could agree on interpretations of your poetry" (111). Stein went on to insist on her accessibility, and they butted heads for several years. Eventually, the tone of the correspondence grew warmer. In 1927, in another rejection letter, he writes "You have taken a friendly interest in my training, and as an example of adult education it is an experiment worth trying!" (124). Although Stein did not write again for five years, and then only to attempt another submission (rather than to educate Sedgwick), the entirety of *ABT* might be seen as a response to Sedgwick's plea, evidence that he had taught her something about her audience after all.

In order to bypass unimaginative publishers and editors, Stein constructed a DIY distribution apparatus. Inspired by a few Parisian art dealers whose success involved taking chances on avant-garde work and by her social connections to other modernist small enterprises of distribution like the Hogarth Press and Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Co., Stein and Toklas ultimately launch their own press. After numerous rejections and inspired by Beach and Woolf, Stein concludes the book with Toklas' establishment of an in-house publishing label, complete with branding and design elements. Frustrated with American publishers, she suggests they should be more like French art dealers: "There are many Paris picture dealers who like adventure in their business, there are no publishers in America who like adventure in theirs" (241). Unlike the publishers, the art dealers "make their money as they can and they keep on buying something for which there is no present sale and they do so persistently until they create its public" (242). This observation motivates "Toklas," as Stein narrates leading into the book's conclusion: "I now myself began to think about publishing the work of Gertrude Stein. I asked her to invent a

name for my edition and she said, call it Plain edition. And Plain edition it is…All I knew about what I would have to do was that I would have to get the book printed and then get it distributed, that is sold" (242). To the problem of unimaginative publishers, Toklas responds with the solution of independent enterprise.

In her accounts of the Plain Edition enterprise, Stein-as-Toklas presents the organizational structure of the business in such a way as to shield Stein from the potential loss of authenticity that might accompany the non-productive labor of printing, advertising, and selling. As Toklas emerges as a quintessential self-motivated, self-taught entrepreneur, Stein is able to celebrate their business plan without appearing to know too much about the gritty work of selling oneself. Alice knows very little about this business at first, and reports that "all I knew about what I would have to do was that I would have to get the book printed and then to get it distributed, that is sold" (242). She consults Stein's literary agent William Bradley, who advises her to "subscribe to the Publishers' Weekly," a decision that helps her "to learn about my new business" (242). She consults other friends and colleagues about design and advertising decisions, but is firm throughout her discussion of the enterprise as to the division between her role and Stein's. In response to Stein's teasing remark that Toklas should write her autobiography, Stein-as-Toklas remarks: "I am a pretty good housekeeper and a pretty good needlewoman and a pretty good editor and a pretty good vet for dogs and I have to do them all at once and I found it difficulty to add being a pretty good author" (251). The final revelation of the book's conceit confirms that *ABT*, like the work of distribution and promotion, is attributed to Alice because of its marketability. Up to this point, Stein the author has refused to write something so mainstream as an autobiography, and uses the Plain Edition enterprise and Alice's

services to publish more difficult, experimental works such as *Lucy Church Amiably* and *Operas and Plays*.

Other remarks on the business, however, show it to be a more loosely collaborative effort, more akin to a twenty-first century startup than the rigidly structured media businesses of the 1930s. Gabrielle Dean's archival research in "Make it Plain: Stein and Toklas Publish the Plan Edition" reveals a flurry of social interactions that preceded and pervaded the project. Dean's analysis of the project suggests that Stein may have been motivated to downplay some of these elements because they reveal flaws in her entrepreneurial approach. Stein and Toklas were disappointed in early collaborations with Harry Horwood, an independent publishing agent, as well as Georges Hugnet and Georges Maratiers, whose work with her on contemporaneous projects served as inspiration for her self-publication (16). These and many other points of collaboration surrounding the Plain edition project amount, in Dean's view, to a "story of Stein's inability to separate social networks from business arrangements, friendship from *affaires*, in the milieu of her French connections" (16). This flaw, Dean asserts, riddled the enterprise with "painful experiences," but ultimately culminated in the writing and publication of *ABT*. Stein's omission of so much collaborative work potentially serves to cover up the business's flaws and promote the efficiency of the project's entrepreneurial duo, fictitious as it may have been.

Moreover, the rigid division of labor portrayed in *ABT* belies Stein's involvement in design and promotion of the Edition. Sarah Stone, for instance, notes that the Plain Edition allowed Stein to "make creative decisions about what her books would look like, how many copies to print, and where to distribute them… [and] used the occasion of self-publication as an opportunity to extend her poetics to the book's cover, title page, front matter, and advertising materials (Stone)" Her level of participation in such decisions suggests not only that she was as

creative a marketer as she was an author, but also that her Plain Edition experience prepared her for decisions about photographic arrangement that she might have made with future publishers. John Kevin Young calls attention to the Plain Edition's incorporation of 27 Rue de Fleurus as part of its entrepreneurial identity, and argues that it allows both Stein and Toklas "to control the means of production for what would ultimately be a joint authorial image" (147). But their shared involvement in all aspects of the operation was no mere image, as Dean asserts: "While Toklas… probably did do most of the research and administrative work related to distribution, it is clear that many editorial tasks were undertaken by both of them in dialogue or in turn: the selection of materials, book design, copyediting, and proofreading" (147).

The Plain Edition therefore resembles the intentional disorganization of a post-Fordist enterprise more than it does a miniature version of the Fordist publishing houses of its own time. In *ABT* the Plain Edition appears as an alternative media enterprise within the context of existing industrial organization, but in reality it looked beyond these models. It is, as Dean asserts, representative of a 1920s bohemian small press, in which the division of labor is shared and social, as it often is in the late capitalist startup. In this world of small presses "tasks overlap and some job categories bleed into other job categories. In avant-garde Paris of the 1920s and 1930s, where money was in short supply and ambition was ubiquitous, there was one job category that could absorb a variety of specializations…the category of friend" (17). As with the 'sharing economy' of contingent labor that has become popular in recent years, the job category of friend is disposable, precarious, and haphazard in its compensation.

That Stein advertises enterprise as well as authorship further advances her connection with professional creative workers, while also suggesting that selling oneself was a more viable career move for a "genius" than working with traditional hierarchies of creative management.

Her research for Plain Edition distribution shows that not only did she compete with mainstream Hollywood culture workers for an audience, she also sought them as an audience and as supporters for her business. In a 1931 letter to Van Vechten, she asks for help in securing an American audience for the Plain Edition, and specifically targets Hollywood: "will you Carl make out some lists for us of people all kinds of people Hollywood all the other places they might subscribe," she pleads (235). And so Van Vechten did, as his response includes the names and addresses of silent film stars Lillian Tashman and Aileen Pringle (238). With her newfound post-*ABT* fame, this proximity posed a threat of cheapening Stein's cultural value, especially as corporate media took control of her publicity. To maintain her appearance as a more authentic, self-produced culture worker than a Hollywood star, she would have to clearly assert her modernity, mobility, and expertise.

Stein also integrates self-promotional strategies into the text of *ABT* that perform and acknowledge the kind of branding strategies necessary for successful self-distribution. The text frequently repeats Stein's full name throughout, whereas it refers to men by last name and women often by first names only. As Jonathan Goldman suggests, this gesture places Stein at the center of and in control of the social network that is so foundational to her self-promotion, and demonstrates her ability to use the text to value and devalue others' names (84).[39] It is also, however, consistent with the keen sense of branding that Stein attributes to Toklas throughout. As "Toklas" points out regarding the "device of a rose is a rose is a rose, it was I who found it in one of Gertrude Stein's manuscripts and insisted upon putting it as a device on the letter paper, on the table linen, and anywhere that she would permit that I would put it" (138). The circular

[39] Goldman argues that "In examining the value of the name, Stein ultimately undermines the stability of the name's referentiality, thereby insisting that value be dependent on the system. She thus contrasts the celebrity name with that of the author, which is designated as the repository of cultural value" (84). This is consistent with her other methods of imposing authorial authenticity on systems of celebrity and self-promotion.

design referred to here appears as well on a wax seal once owned by the pair, and on the cover of many first editions of Stein's work, notably *ABT* itself (fig. 2.4). Stein and Toklas understand the value of a reproducible design in the management of a creative public image.

The final key to Stein and Toklas' distribution strategy is the simultaneous appeal to legitimacy through secondary reports of her importance in the development of art and her appeal to the everyday worker. The former sets her up as an authority in her field and an extraordinary individual, whereas the latter suggests she is just like everyone else. Stein often cites her critical praise and reminds readers of her own centrality in the Paris art scene. For instance, to add credibility to her well-known quip to Hemingway— "remarks are not literature"— 'Toklas' explains "She understands very well the basis of creation and therefore her advice and criticism is invaluable to all her friends" (77). At the same time, she is just like the everyday worker, as Sherwood Anderson implies in his introduction to "A Portrait of Jo Davidson" in the January 1933 *Vanity Fair* (reprinted from the Spring 1922 issue of the *Little Review*). According to Anderson, Stein has "foregone the privilege of writing the great American novel, uplifting our English speaking stage and wearing the bays of the great poets to go live among the swaggering bullying street-corner words, the honest working, money-saving words and all the other forgotten and neglected citizens of this half forgotten city" (48). He imagines Stein's words (if not the author herself) as getting their hands dirty along with the ordinary American.

The quality of being both ordinary and extraordinary is a fundamental condition of celebrity, and as the letter I cited earlier suggests, the story of this celebrity contained enormous instructive value for the everyday American reader. Stein's self-advertisement is therefore consistent with her literary celebrity, which (as discussed earlier) showcases her cultural expertise. That she advertises enterprise as well as literature further advances her connection

with professional creative workers, while also suggesting that selling oneself was a more viable career move for a "genius" than working with traditional hierarchies of creative management. Her successful breakthrough, however, generates new challenges, particularly in terms of controlling her identity in media formats with which she was unfamiliar. The next section will therefore address her methods of asserting control over her own media image, a feat she accomplished by idealizing the written word and her chosen media, books and magazines.

V. "Attack Back": Methods of Media Manipulation

When *ABT* became a best seller in 1933, Gertrude Stein's desire to break through to a mass audience was finally fulfilled and a whole new set of challenges arose. Particularly during and after her lecture tour, control over the "Gertrude Stein" brand included managing her media image as it appeared in magazines, photographs, and newsreels, as well as on the radio and in person. Compared to the circulation of her written work that characterized her mass-media profile prior to 1933, the proliferation of her image in new and unfamiliar media forms had the potential to be upsetting for Stein, particularly if she found herself in the position of receiving (rather than engineering) that image. Given her lifelong preoccupation with interior and exterior identity, this section describes how Stein protected her image and her sense of identity in response to the threatened loss of control posed by mass media. Her solution can be described as a general critique of mass media that excuses only her preferred platform, magazines. The two major pillars of this media critique are her advocacy of the written word as superior to visual and auditory experience—even going so far as to highlight the written word as a visual experience; and her use of a characteristic narrative maneuver through which Stein casts herself in a position of authorship even when she is the subject being filmed or recorded.

Her second autobiography and many post-1934 magazine articles register her anxiety at finding herself to be the recipient of her own press. When in *EA* she first reports seeing her name in lights, she is unsettled: "we saw an electric sign moving around a building and it said Gertrude Stein has come and that was upsetting… on the whole it is natural enough but to see your name is always upsetting. Of course it has happened to me pretty often and I like it to happen just as often but always it does give me a little shock of recognition and non-recognition" (*EA* 175). Stein had long been concerned with the circulation of her name in the press. As early as the 1910s, as described in *ABT,* "I [Toklas] asked her to let me subscribe to Romeike's clipping bureau, the advertisement for Romeike in the San Francisco Argonaut having been one of the great romances of my childhood" (112). Romeike's was a prominent clipping service in this period, a forerunner of Google alerts today. Performers, writers, and artists paid Romeike's staff to pore through stacks of newspapers and magazines and send whatever clippings contained their name. The service would have allowed Toklas to track the valuations and devaluations of the brand "Gertrude Stein" and the product "Three Lives" as it circulated.

Until the 1930s, however, news media tended to be less than forgiving in their treatment of Stein's work. As Karen Leick recounts, reports and reactions to Stein circulated widely in the press in the 1910s and 1920s, and these responses ranged from parody, to dismissal, to suspicion of a hoax on the part of the author, to occasional respect and praise (25). Her comments on news media throughout her career suggest that exposure to this press made a lasting impression. As general policy over the entire course of her career, she takes the opportunity when possible to point out the flaws of print media over which she has little control.

At first, newspaper parodies and negative commentary toward her work discouraged and annoyed her. Magazines eventually emerged as a potential venue in which she could spin

negative press to her advantage. For instance, in December 1917, at Stein's suggestion *Life* magazine agreed to print her poetry as a point of contrast to a series of parodies of *Tender Buttons* (Leick 60). Her poem "Relief Work in France" henceforth appeared in what *Life* refers to as "the style of type in which Miss Stein's verses usually appear" (Leick 60):

> THE ADVANCE
>
> IS COMING TO A VILLAGE WE ASK THEM CAN THEY COME TO SEE
>
> US. WE MEAN NEAR ENOUGH TO TALK;
>
> AND WE ASK THEM HOW DO WE GET THERE.
>
> THIS IS NOT FANCIFUL. (qtd. in Leick 60)[40]

Compared to *Life*'s parodies, "Relief work in France" suggests real and intimate moments between people that the mash-up of nonsense, slang, and onomatopoeia of *Life*'s phony Steinian poem "Theodore Roosevelt" lacks:

> There is a something a something and everything a tumultuousness.
>
> I am I am slam bang slametty bang bang boom!
>
> Wallop, wallop, wallop!
>
> Zowie! (Roberts qtd. in Leick 59).

In comparison, Stein's contribution offers a level of interpersonal exchange and everyday intimacy that Roberts' parody misses entirely, in that it forgoes meaning altogether. "The Peace Conference" therefore presents a similar critique of news media to one that Stein details years later in the 1935 lecture series *Narration*: "what the newspaper really has to say [is] that

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[40] It should also be noted that the choppy and unpunctuated (even for Stein) style of this particular poem is reminiscent of telegraphed messages, which supports Mark Goble's assertion that modernists were excited about the new forms intimacy inherent in modern new media and communications technology. Goble argues "modernism itself desired communication and the many forms it took, not just as a response to the power of media technologies in the twentieth century but as a way of insisting that this power was already modernism's own" (3).

everything that has happened has happened on that day but really this is not true because everything that has happened on that day on the newspaper day has really happened the day before and that makes all the trouble that there is with the newspaper as it is and in every way they try to destroy this day the day between the day before and the day the newspaper day" (36). In short, Stein describes news media as an entity that destroys the intimacy and experience of everyday life.

Whereas news media destroy intimacy, Stein's intimate and personal brand of literature often appeared in magazines in arrangements that suggest the primacy of written text and privileges literary authorship over visual production. When Stein's "A Portrait of Jo Davidson appeared in 1923 in *Vanity Fair*, her text undermined boundaries between editorial, literary, and photographic content (Fig. 2.5). After the title, the first page contains five page elements: an editor's introduction, three photographs, and Stein's text. Each of these page elements is a portrait of some kind. The editorial introduction is itself two portraits, including an in-depth description of Stein's life in Paris and concluding with Anderson's paean to her "oddly new intimate" words (48). The photographs feature three "portraits" of Stein: at top, Davidson's sculpture of her (shown in a photograph of Stein sitting for the sculpture in Davidson's studio, as he works on it); at center, a bust of Stein by Jaques Lipschitz; and at the bottom, Picasso's famed portrait of Stein (48). The photograph of Davidson's studio has similar hallmarks to the ubiquitous photos of 27 rue de Fleurus, in that it situates live figures, art, interior architecture, and interior design in such a way as to idealize the multi-use domestic space of the modern artist. The images promote Stein's domestic authorship while also placing editorial and photography (not to mention the artworks contained within) in the service of her text, in spite of the fact that formally it resembles a portrait less than any other element on the page.

The editorial content in the "Jo Davidson" layout also bolsters her celebrity image. The magazine claims that "Picasso has brought out in her, much more than the other two artists, the strange and almost mythic turn of mind which produces her extraordinary writings" and thus asserts her genius and autonomy (48). Stein's "portrait" further demonstrates these qualities, in that it undermines previously held associations with any particular media. In it, the line (repeated twice) "how do you do industrially" calls attention to the threat of self-exchange to personal communication and signals her refusal to be circulated in the mass media in such a manner as to empty her of content the way news does with everyday life. Its opening lines might be taken as a mission statement: Stein's declaration of the text's purpose as it appears in mass mediated form. They read: "To be back, to attack back. Attack back. What do you mean by attack back. To be back to be back to attack back" (48). Whereas news discourse tries to destroy the social bonds of everyday and ordinary life, Stein attacks back in mass magazines to assert those bonds, to promote the domestic scene of production as a space of autonomous intellectual labor, and to argue for the primacy of text and literary authorship over other forms of communication.

Throughout Stein's work, she challenges readers' assumptions about the purpose of text and the experience of reading. In *ABT*, for instance, she associates tone with sound and meaning with sight, and implies the superiority of the latter as a communicative form. Asked why she doesn't read French, she explains "you see I feel with my eyes and it does not make any difference to me what language I hear, I don't hear a language, I hear tones of voice and rhythms, but with my eyes I see words and sentences and there is for me only one language and that is english [sic]" (70). She also takes care to clear up misunderstandings regarding the difference between what she says and what she writes. In an anecdote in *EA* that describes a Berkeley luncheon, for instance, she quips: "the only thing I remember is their asking why I do

not write the way that I talk and I said to them if they had invited Keats for lunch and they asked him an ordinary question would they expect him to answer with the Ode to a Nightingale" (292). Her writing is rendered distinct from the ordinary scene of communication, and this distinction works against prevailing stereotypes of her 1930s career as (in *Atlantic* editor Ellery Sedgwick's words) "the time… when the real Miss Stein would pierce the smoke-screen with which she has always so mischievously surrounded herself" ("Stein & Atlantic" 126). The "real" Stein, she often insists, is the one she presents in her own words, not anyone else's.

During the 1934 lecture tour, Stein came to realize the importance of writing to her sense of self in light of the demands placed on her for appearance and speech in lectures, broadcasts, and newsreels. In "And Now," she writes of the consequences of these demands: "When the success began and it was a success I got completely lost. You know the nursery rhyme, I am I because my little dog knows me. Well you see I did not know myself, I lost my personality… because so many people did know me" (35). Notably, the tour prompts the mass production of her voice, which in turn poses the main threat to her stability and her creative production. During the tour, Stein managed this threat as best she could. When possible, she took the opportunity to write her public appearances in advance rather than performing off the cuff. In the January 1935 *Hearst's Cosmopolitan* piece "I Came and Here I Am," she describes her preparation for a 1934 NBC radio interview. She agrees to the interview, has her photograph taken in the studio, and then "we went in to training. I liked that. I wrote out answers to questions, and questions to answers" (168). The ensuing account of the broadcast is ecstatic: "It was… as if you were saying what you were saying and you knew, you really knew, not by what you know but by what you felt, that everybody was listening. It was a very wonderful thing to do, I almost stopped and said it, I was so filled with it" (168). Her triumph in this case is clear from the power dynamics of the

resulting interview. When reporter William Lundell questions the intelligibility of her writing in "A Portrait of Carl Van Vechten" Stein nevertheless has the last laugh. Lundell suggests that the Portrait's resemblance to Van Vechten might be "hard for normal Americans to see", and Stein's response brings the interview to a close: "What is a normal American?" She asks, and answers: "There are lots quite normal who do see. And how. But after all you must enjoy my writing and if you enjoy it you understand it. If you did not enjoy it why do you make such a fuss about it? There is the real answer" (97). Not only does Stein get the upper hand in a medium she herself has barely experienced, but she also demonstrates one of her classic maneuvers of self-promotion—the ability to spin criticisms, insults, parodies, and dismissals in her favor. Her assertion of literary value and her rhetorical deftness thus form the pillars of her promotional strategy for broadcasting, as they allow her to promote herself and deny her own complicity with promotional media all in one gesture.

Therefore, contrary to Sarah Wilson's claim in "Gertrude Stein and the Radio" that "Stein's pursuit of [a] utopian vision of radio marks her as a thinker of her time, to be numbered among the radio boosters," I prefer to cast Stein's vision of mass media as less inclusive and utopian than it is opportunistic (275). She even goes so far in *EA* as to suggest that her labor in this format is worth as much as an advertisement: "I talked over the radio once, they never seem to want to pay you for doing that unless it is advertising, so I talked once naturally nobody wanted to pay me for advertising, there is something very funny about that" (198). When she compares her work with advertising, she levels distinctions between literary and radio work, between production and promotion, and between artistic and commercial labor and consequentially claims authority over it all.

Stein carried the strategies for controlling her mass-mediated public image over from print and broadcast into film as well, but her relationship with cinema was more complex. Compared to other new media, she was more open to the possibilities of the form and its influence on her writing. As Susan McCabe argues, Stein unconsciously reproduced the cinema in textual form, and Mark Goble argues that Stein "self-consciously [situates] her popular writing—with all its still palpable difficulty and opacity and aspiration to materiality and noise—in a world that she describes as cinematic for all the ways in which it permits Stein herself to register the effects of stardom and celebrity" (89). Her lecture "Portraits and Repetition" praises the cinema for its capacity to solve narrative problems that literature cannot. She claims that literary portraits cannot capture the essence of a person over different moments in time because "you see that there are two things and not one and if one wants to make one portrait of someone and not two you can see that one can be bothered by this thing" (*Lectures* 176). However, "the cinema has offered a solution of this thing… by a continuously moving picture" (*Lectures* 176).[41] In other words, cinema captures the continuity of a person's existence over time. Her attitude toward the mainstream movie business, however, was similarly dismissive to her stance on radio. She and Toklas practically never attend the cinema and at the time of her own newsreel performance she reports that she "never had seen a talking cinema" ("I Came" 19). Furthermore, the *EA* scenes in which she counsels celebrities on publicity strategies reveal her superior attitude toward her own promotional business model. Therefore Goble's assertion that Stein's art "depends on Hollywood" might capture her approach to film better if it also too into account the ways in which Hollywood depended on her (89).

[41] Similar sentiments come through in *ABT* when Stein contemplates the death of the novel and suggests (in keeping with much of future film theory) that cinema is responsible (194). Also, the fact that Stein wrote several pieces for *Last Operas and Plays* that she considered to be film scripts even though they bear little resemblance to the genre testifies for her keen enthusiasm.

In *EA*, she claims authorship over her photographic image and performance for the press, even as she is clearly the subject of publicity rather than its creator. When a photographer visits her to do a photographic "layout" during her tour, she recalls:

> A layout, I said yes he said what is that I said oh he said it is four or five pictures of you doing anything. All right I said what do you want me to do. Why he said there is your airplane bag suppose you unpack it, oh I said Miss Toklas always does that oh no I could not do that, well he said there is the telephone suppose you telephone well I said yes but I never do Miss Toklas always does that, well he said what can you do, well I said I can put my hat on and I can take it off and I like water I can drink a glass of water all right he said do that and he photographed while I did that and the next morning there was the layout and *I had done it*. (219, emphasis mine)

At first Stein's claim of responsibility for the layout seems absurd and perhaps unfair to the photographer, in light of her deliberate refusal to perform anything other than seemingly insignificant actions. She also refuses in this scene to perform any inauthentic actions, which suggests both an adherence to naturalism and a deliberate performance of her position of author and head of household, the person for whom the work of everyday life has already been done so that she may create. She repositions her photographic performance in terms of her approach to writing when she tries to take ownership her everyday actions by calling attention to the inherently performative and inauthentic nature of their reproduction.

I want to further suggest that Stein manipulates media over which she has less mastery by shifting the conversation back onto the terrain of the forms of communication she knows best. Stein cannot "attack back" at the cinema from within (as she does with print media), so her

denial of medium specificity in this case involves subordinating the cinema to other spheres she knows better, namely design and self-promotion. Throughout her career, in her own texts and in photos of her at home, Stein had established herself as a foremost curator and designer of interior spaces that were ideal for creative production (Karl 87). In America, she delights that "that they do the best designing and use the best material in the cheapest thing, the square books and the old Ford car" (*EA* 232). She refers here to miniature books sold as trinkets, and then proceeds to link the trinkets to Hollywood, reducing the entire film industry to the significance of a novelty item: "Well Lascaux did think the cheapest thing made of the costliest material was romantic… it is romantic. Perhaps Hollywood too is that thing" (232). Weighing in as a design expert rather than a curious admirer of the medium (as she did in the aforementioned lecture), she cheapens the industry without minimizing the potential of the medium.

She leverages her portrayal of her encounters with stars toward similar ends, but asserts her publicity expertise rather than her design skill. When dining with Dashiell Hammett, Charlie Chaplin, Anita Loos and Rouben Mamoulian, she reports that something "seemed to worry them… and at last I found out what was bothering them they wanted to know how I had succeeded in getting so much publicity, I said by having a small audience, if you have a big audience you have no publicity…" (*EA* 283-4). Stein may come off as facetious here, given her earlier claims of wide public appeal, but these contradictions can also represent the development of her publicity strategy as she comes more and more to compare herself with other culture workers. Long before niche marketing would take hold in Hollywood, Stein offered an update to their method of selling personality. The major difference between Stein's celebrity and theirs is what each creative worker sells—Stein sells her creative self, and the Hollywood stars sell the performance that appears not to be a performance at all, the star 'being herself'. More

importantly, Stein positions herself here between professional-managerial and avant-garde models of creative labor. Weighing in as a skilled expert and typifying the mental labor of the former group, she adds strategies of self-management and niche marketing to the current Hollywood model, and advances her model as not only more successful, but also more liberating.

As Stein herself notes elsewhere in *EA*, "Jo Davidson always said one should sell one's personality and I always said insofar as that personality expressed itself in work" (50). It is significant that she does not write "the work" here, making personality the expression of both the labors of creativity and their output. In the end, there are at least two ways to understand her self-promotion as creative: first, she innovates new ways of selling herself; and second, she promotes her own creativity. As Barbas suggests, "by the 1920s, stars were more than just actors. To many Americans, they had become models of selfhood. They seemed the perfect embodiments of charm, style, and most of all personality, an *important individual trait seen as crucial for success*" (35-6, emphasis mine). If Stein's self-promoted creativity was also envisioned as "an important individual trait seen as crucial for success" then the early ideas for a widespread system of labor based on creativity and personality may have been germinating even in the heyday of Fordism.

Conclusion

Gertrude Stein developed her theories of creative self-promotion and multi-media management in the 1930s, a decade that also saw the "emergence of modern mental labor" (Denning 96). The rising importance of mental labor signaled the ascent of the PMC, a "new class" devoted to managing workers, running institutions, and creating culture. Janice Radway highlights the special position of these professionals as "engaged specifically to address, to educate, to socialize, and to organize those whose labor was necessary to the fast-changing social

formation" and suggests that class privilege didn't guarantee political and radical progress (250-1). Radway claims that creative and professional workers "served the organizations that employed them by educating workers of various sorts to think, to behave, and to desire in a way that was congruent with the interests of corporate capital" (251). In short, the ambiguous class position of the PMC does not determine its political value, but it does suggest its influence, particularly in the realm of cultural and consumer education.

The media platforms in which Stein promoted her authorial image and her model of creativity played a crucial role in the cultural instruction of professionals at this time. As Faye Hammill asserts of mass-market magazines: "they encouraged readers to distinguish themselves as culturally literate and socially aware by dropping the right names, and such strategies constituted a resistance to the forms of celebrity available through mass popularity, as opposed to serious artistic or public achievement" (12). When *Vanity Fair*'s editors warned its readers in the 1917 introduction to "Have They Attacked Mary. He Giggled" that rejecting Stein might render them a philistine, they also pointed those readers toward serious appreciation of her work. Compared to the instructive role that Mary Pickford's homemaking tips may have played in readers' lifestyles, the cultural instruction Stein offered had more intellectual content and may therefore have been better suited to a specifically professional audience. Her model of creative production, media management, and enterprising distribution would have reached a class of workers that then grew in importance over the course of the century as Western economic accumulation came to rely more on the production of ideas than goods. Stein's participation in media cultures also levels the distinction between creative workers and bohemian artists. This bohemianism would later become an important point of identification for creative workers who

came to justify their exploitation under neoliberal systems of flexible accumulation in the name of artistic sacrifice.[42]

Prior to this development, the kind of interaction between modernism and Hollywood that Stein represents in this chapter had a unique impact on the way each group may have imagined their positions as cultural workers. In the case of the PMC, as Steven Brint and Kristopher Proctor argue, maintaining class position meant navigating a "tension between self-restraint and self-expression" (464). In other words, PMC laborers sought to maintain the kind of behavioral profile that legitimated their authority, but also to fuel consumption by molding unique and expressive identities by way of consumer and cultural goods. Mass cultural institutions such as Hollywood and Broadway played fundamental roles in shaping the broader social consciousness of the PMC's role and their idea of their own function (Schwartz 2). They also, as Cooper suggests, effected "a structural change in the categories of public, private, and mass" that placed professionals in control of the mass public by endowing them with qualities of objectivity and stability embodied in the omniscient vantage point of the classical Hollywood cinema. Stein's insistence on the re-assertion of her private, subjective, and creative vantage point in the realm of mass media modifies this structure further, with potential ramifications for the future of creative labor. Her bohemian variety of professionalism retained the authority that Cooper assigns to the PMC, but established authority through subjectivity and creativity rather than expertise and knowledge. Her self-driven and niche-oriented modes of promotion and distribution might therefore be imagined as a cultural link between Fordist and post-Fordist labor

[42] Luc Boltanki and Ève Chiapello's *The New Spirit of Capitalism* provides a detailed account of the socio-economic transformations of the twentieth century. Mark Banks describes "a 'neo-Foucauldian approach" to labor from the late twentieth century until now "that identifies cultural work as a vehicle for the application of managerial (and thus capitalistic) authority… exercised through workers' own apparent willingness to act as dutiful 'enterprise subjects'" (5).

models. In short, she helps to reshape the ideals of professional labor, turning them away from content and toward form.

Since the 1990s, several lines of intellectual inquiry have developed that examine the peculiarities of mental labor, the post-Fordist economy, and the prevalence of socio-economic precarity. In the loose categories of sociology, cultural geography, cultural studies, and autonomist Marxist theory (among other) many scholars have traced workers' perceptions of their own creativity and autonomy back to their willingness to sacrifice economic compensation, geographical stability, and the guarantee of flexible employment. Creativity and bohemianism are recurring themes across disciplinary projects on this topic. Richard Lloyd's *Neo Bohemia: Art and Commerce in the Post-Industrial City*, for instance, reflects upon his subjects' rejection of 'organization man' corporate culture of the 1950s and suggests: "rejecting such labor in the 2000s is a gesture very different from what it was in the 1950s, since to a large extent it doesn't exist anymore. In this broader context, the bohemian disposition that makes 'living on the edge' a supreme virtue is in fact quite adaptive to labor realities" (241). Andrew Ross's "The Mental Labor Problem" asserts a similar state of affairs: "artistic and academic traditions… no longer on the margins of society, in Bohemia and the Ivory Tower… are providing a rationale for the latest model of labor exploitation in core sectors of the new industrial order, and pioneering the workplace of tomorrow" (2). Stein's contributions to an earlier professional culture suggest that the image of the modernist artist she constructed and sold to the public may have made a significant contribution to the culture of creative professional work that preceded the conditions that Lloyd and Ross find today.

Indeed, Stein never put much faith in the social and economic hierarchies of Fordism. The *Saturday Evening Post* money articles seem to indicate as much—her take on

unemployment is representative of her overall disdain for social welfare and hierarchical management. And as her attitudes toward her own promotional and literary enterprises suggests, she was far from an 'organization man'. In fact, her article "My Last About Money," seems to predict the decline of organizational structures, as well as a few other quintessentially neoliberal shifts:

> What are they going to try next, what does the twenty-first century want to do about it? They certainly will not want to be organized, the twentieth century is seeing the end of that, perhaps as the virgin lands will by that time be pretty well used up. And also by that time everybody will have been as quickly everywhere as anybody can be, perhaps they will begin looking for liberty again and individually amusing themselves again and old-fashioned or dirt farming. (78)

This passage describes some elements of twenty-first century American culture and economy remarkably well. She predicts the decline of the labor movement ("They certainly will not want to be organized") and ecological crisis ("the virgin lands will by that time be pretty well used up"). Her article suggests how flexible and mobile trends in labor were prepared to supersede the protections of organized labor ("everybody will have been as quickly everywhere as everybody can be") and the way these conditions could be justified through misconceptions of personal autonomy ("they will begin looking for liberty again") as well as misguided returns to artisanal and traditional ways of life common in neo-bohemian urban enclaves. Instead of "dirt farming," the new urban creative class (in its most caricatured depictions) has taken up the production of artisanal mayonnaise and rooftop sea-salt production.

Stein's emphasis on individual agency and the decline of organization have now reappeared in a "contemporary "enterprise culture" which entails "a policy and public language

based on the primacy of individual needs, choice and market competition, and a refusal of the necessity of state intervention" (Banks 47). Her public bravado and self-promotion resonate with Mark Banks' depiction of post-Fordist enterprise, which "can encompass traditional "enterprises"—business endeavors that involve high risk and reward and trade on creativity and innovation—as well as "enterprises of the self," in which workers continually enhance their own value and self-exploit in the name of creativity" (52). In order to think this way, contemporary capitalism requires that we embrace every possible opportunity to frame work as not work at all, but a separate and noble creative endeavor—just as Stein had to do in order to protect her mediated authorial image.

After all, Stein promoted her own image by narrating and displaying publicly her methods of creative production, circulation, and promotion, while simultaneously insisting that what she did was not work. The twenty-first century descendent of this particular contradiction can be found in the workplace mentality of the contemporary 'fast company' that tries to divorce these categories of mental, mobile, and technological labor from the world of ordinary industrial labor. Similar denials of intellectual labor as labor appear across economic and cultural life today, and it is important—especially in the context of unprecedented corporate dominance of academic, scientific, and legislative spheres—to take into account a century-long legacy of self-enterprise, the beginnings of which this chapter has attempted to sketch.

Chapter 3:

Failure Begins with You! F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nathanael West, and Ben Hecht in Hollywood

I. Introduction

When F. Scott Fitzgerald and Nathanael West died within a day of each other in December 1940, their literary legacies were by no means guaranteed. Fitzgerald, who was tagged in one obituary as a "writer who expressed post-World War spirit," was washed up, only relevant in the glittering, boozy context of the Jazz Age he personified ("Death Takes" 2). West, whose writing was beloved by coteries of intellectuals and fellow writers, was barely known beyond these circles. The *Variety* article that reported West's death was primarily concerned with whether his sister-in law's Broadway play, *My Sister Eileen* (which was based on West's wife) would open on time. Only as an aside does it mention that "Deceased, 27, and her husband, Nathaniel (sic) West, 36, author and well-known Hollywood scenarist were killed near El Centro, Cal" ("Show Goes On" 1940). His literary efforts register only as an afterthought to Eileen's role as the inspiration for a Broadway play. West's *The Day of the Locust* and Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon* (which was unfinished at the time of his death) would not be reappraised as groundbreaking Hollywood novels until decades later.

Both Fitzgerald and West turned to Hollywood in the late 1930s as a source of income in light of their failure to find a wide literary readership (recently in Fitzgerald's case, chronically in West's). They were each at pivotal career points, at which success in novel or film writing was uncertain. West had never written for the movies, and his avant-garde fiction had few translatable qualities. Fitzgerald had attempted to work in Hollywood twice before (in 1927 and 1931), and had succeed only in spending more money than he earned (Bruccoli 259, 327). Yet upon their deaths, both were referred to in the press as writers and screenwriters equally. Their

literary legacies would be cemented decades later, as part of the post-war institutionalization of modernism. For a writer such as West, who made only a few thousand dollars from literature and had seen all four of his novels fail to reach a popular audience, the semi-regular inclusion of *The Day of the Locust* on University reading lists and the reissue of his works demonstrates an outsized posthumous legacy. His film work, like Fitzgerald's, has received practically no attention whatsoever.

Critical emphasis on these writers' literary careers over their film work stems in part from their self-presentation of literary art as incompatible with cultural industries, a tactic they used to maintain cultural legitimacy while working in Hollywood. To maintain respect as prominent authors, in other words, they either dismissed their film writing as hack-work (in West's case) or resisted the collaborative and routinized mechanisms of the studio system (in Fitzgerald's case). This dynamic also worked inversely, as in the case of screenwriter-novelist Ben Hecht, who was hailed as one of the greatest screenwriters of classical Hollywood while his literary work was forgotten. As biographer William MacAdams puts it, "If Hecht hadn't decided to write for the movies, he would have been no more than a footnote to the literature of the teens and twenties" (101). These writers, who developed their literary sensibilities within the modernist coteries of Paris, Chicago, and New York, could not afford to succeed in Hollywood. They may have needed the money, but to maintain cultural capital they had to assert professional failure. Over the decades, Fitzgerald's novels came to be revered, and his failure as a screenwriter pitied. Hecht's legacy inverts Fitzgerald's, whereas West's films seldom merit a footnote in the copious critical work on his four novels. All three careers represent tendencies among artists in 1930s America to distance industrial and literary labor, even as such boundaries disintegrated.

This chapter examines the problems modernist writers faced while freelancing in Hollywood. To maintain literary legitimacy, the appearance of failure in culture industries was often helpful. Fitzgerald, West, and Hecht promoted this dynamic of failure in their fiction, and invented labor models capable of permitting the kind of autonomy a literary writer deserved. The results of their aesthetic and industrial innovations were mixed. Fitzgerald went to Hollywood late in his career, mostly failed at writing for the movies but was still well compensated. He died there, and eventually became a literary legend. Hecht, now considered an unparalleled screenwriter, thought of his film work as a scam and longed for his books to be admired. West was never a great success while alive, but made a moderate living in Hollywood and got consistent work on B films while his fiction garnered a small but loyal following. All three did not entirely consider themselves to be ordinary workers or elite artists bending to an inferior medium. This chapter attempts to explain how the dynamics of success and failure in the lives, work, and output of Hollywood modernists shaped their legacies, national perceptions of art and labor, creative industries, and the modernist canon. These writers explored perceptions of failure and success in their Hollywood fiction and career tactics in attempts to navigate gray areas between modernism, artistry and industrial cultural production. For purposes of public and critical perception, it was important to them to assert boundaries between art and hack-work that were less defined than they claimed.

I mean to contest critical assessments of Hollywood writers that romanticize failure in the culture industry and consequently naturalize a vision of modernist labor as autonomous from—and incompatible with—work in cultural industries. The conclusion I draw instead from their Hollywood labor is that the "Hollywood-as-destroyer" myth often affirmed in critical and biographical treatments of these writers was largely self-constructed through their literature,

which portrays the modernist worker as a tragic hero whose cultural talent is too iconoclastic for industry-as-usual. Fitzgerald's, Hecht's and West's depictions of failed artists in Hollywood suggested that Hollywood labor was incompatible with legitimate artistry, and that such failures were a matter of individual mental and bodily failure rather than a result of structural conditions. Fitzgerald's and West's Hollywood fiction demonstrate this claim most dramatically, whereas Hecht's career is more a cautionary tale in which Hollywood success damages literary legitimacy. These writers' Hollywood work provoked aesthetic and industrial innovations that predicted post-Fordist trends and offered flexible means of weathering impending Hollywood industrial crises. The first three sections of the chapter detail their presentation of art-industry incompatibility: first in the fictional depiction of failure as personal and desirable in contrast to the structural failure of the Depression, as seen in West's *A Cool Million*, and second in Fitzgerald's short fiction, which positioned collaborative studio work as destructive and potentially fatal. West's and Hecht's Hollywood fiction in the third section warns readers of the dangers of industrial failure in mechanized work, up to and including the bodily failures of illness, death, and mechanization. Two discussions of labor tactics follow these readings: one that places affective labor at the core of cultural industry, and another that offers semi-autonomous, small-scale contracting operations as an alternative to rigid Fordist structures. Ultimately, these iterations of failure and success in Hollywood were symptomatic of trends in which responsibility for economic success and failure was increasingly placed on the shoulders of individuals, while their labor innovations were predictive of patterns to come.

Those who pass judgment on these writers' ostensible failures often frame them in terms of self-mismanagement. Critics and biographers tend to associate creative and professional failures with authors' alleged mishandling of textual form, careers, and even bodies. Despite

Hecht's acclaim as a screenwriter, for instance, MacAdams deems Hecht's literature a failure because he is an author who cannot control his own texts, who "couldn't surmount his intelligence to develop a natural style" but could "spin plots when he had to work within a restricted form, namely the theatre and the movies" (66). In other words, Hecht cannot handle the autonomy of literary labor, but succeeds as a cog in a machine. Numerous accounts insinuate that Fitzgerald self-sabotaged his career and destroyed his health, impressions that arise mainly from gossip media, as well as Fitzgerald's "Crack Up" series of confessional essays, published in *Esquire* in 1936. The stereotype of the self-sabotaging author held sway for decades afterward, and contributed to the amplification of several side effects, including growing resistance to labor solidarity and the glorification of self-sacrifice for art.

Such stereotypes have roots in critical attitudes toward Hollywood such as Edmund Wilson's assertion in *The Boys in the Back Room: Notes on California Novelists* that Hollywood undermined literary careers. Despite his scorn for Hollywood, Wilson implicates West and Fitzgerald personally in what he sees as their Hollywood failures. In Wilson's view, "both West and Fitzgerald were writers of a conscience and with natural gifts rare enough in America or anywhere; and their failure to get the best out of their best years may certainly be laid partly to Hollywood, with its already appalling record of talent depraved and wasted" (72). While Hollywood figures prominently in their ostensible decline, it is only "partly" a factor, and the failure is ultimately "theirs." Moreover, as the equivocal phrase "failure to get their best" suggests, Wilson's condemnation of Hollywood is at odds with critical assessments of the Hollywood literature in question. *The Day of the Locust* may not have found popular success, but the intelligentsia embraced it; and *The Last Tycoon*, which Wilson had seen as a work in progress, promised to be in that critic's opinion "the best novel ever devoted to Hollywood" (71).

Wilson's condemnation of Hollywood held sway for decades, until Tom Dardis' 1976 *Some Time in the Sun* suggested a more open assessment of these authors' Hollywood years. He credits Hollywood for the literary inspiration it lent to Fitzgerald and West, and claims that "Working as a screenwriter in Hollywood in those last years restored a great many things to Fitzgerald, not the least of which was the slow but eventual return of his talent" (12). Regarding West, Dardis posits "of all the writers in this book he did the most to transform his working experiences in Hollywood to his own advantage as an artist" (13). Since Dardis, studies from Richard Fine, Mark Eaton, and Tom Cerasulo have provided additional texture and historical depth to the benefits of the Hollywood-modernism encounter, but haven't progressed far past the dispute with "the myth of Hollywood as a malevolent entity that feeds on the brains of artists" (Cerasulo 1).[43]

Despite various attempts to dispel what Fine calls the "Hollywood-as-destroyer legend," its ongoing prevalence fuels perceptions of those whom cultural industries exploit as tragic heroes. Fine's *West of Eden: Writers in Hollywood 1928-1940* argues that "it was Eastern critics and intellectuals, more than the writers themselves, who fanned the flames" of the destroyer legend, the basic gist of which is "that working in the film studios dried up a writer's creativity or absorbed it in the sponge of a decadent and wasteful society" (3). Although the caricature of Hollywood-as-destroyer has not been earnestly defended for many decades, contemporary critics are still compelled to contest it. Mark Eaton's 2009 "What Price Hollywood? Modern American Writers and the Movies," for instance, argues "iconoclastically" that "Hollywood was in an important sense the underwriter of serious literature. For although writers often—and understandably—disparaged the movies as an inferior art form, Hollywood fascinated even as it

[43] Biographers (especially Fitzgerald's) have also fueled the myth as well. Cerasulo cites Fitzgerald biographers Arthur Mizener and Aaron Latham in particular. Mizener and Latham will not be discussed in detail in this chapter, however, as the bulk of scholarship on Fitzgerald has run counter to their accounts since the 1970s and much of their material has been deemed to be apocryphal (Dardis 5).

disgusted these writers, and its influence was by no means entirely negative" (472). Eaton cautiously acknowledges the gradual restoration of Fitzgerald's reputation, West's unprecedented breakthrough with *The Day of the Locust*, and Hecht's scriptwriting fame, but he is still compelled to acknowledge the Hollywood-as-destroyer myth, despite its frequent dismissals.

Perceptions of these Hollywood writers' failure in industry, whether real or imagined, arise in part from their affiliations with modernism. While are not as stereotypically modernist as Gertrude Stein or T.S. Eliot, Fitzgerald, West, and Hecht had significant social and literary relationships with such figures, and if not entirely modernist they were certainly influenced by the trends of the moment that would come to be called modernism. Each spent their early career in an avant-garde milieu—Paris for Fitzgerald, Chicago for Hecht, and Greenwich Village for West. Their shared interest in failure is thus related to a more general modernist trend. Gavin Jones, Charles Blaine Sumner, and M.A. Klug find the American failure to be a core component of the modernist text because it attempts to stress the importance of the individualized subject in spite of the homogenizing effects of mass society, but its formal tendencies toward fragmentation and discontinuity necessitate textual failure.[44] In short, the successful modernist text fails to make meaning from American failure. Klug, for instance, observes that West's novels demonstrate that "America was suffering a collective failure of feeling," and while they prompt the question of how this condition has come about, West is "primarily concerned with dramatizing the condition rather than explaining it" (29). Sumner's dissertation claims that

[44] Klug also argues that in West's novels "the energy of defiance seeps away in the recognition that rebellion, even rebellion in the name of a purely destructive madness, is itself a cliché, a literary gesture with its own tradition and its own audience," and therefore "West could only prove the failure of art by failing at it" (20). Both seem to imply that the author's responsibility is to address the social, economic, and existential problems they raised, arranging characters and plots much in the way a manager organizes employees and resources to address a problem.

"having sharpened the contours of a capitalist culture nourished by forces which try to resist it, [modernist] authors cannot offer any definitive or positive solutions for the problems they raise. Instead, they foreground the failure to realize their own ideals" (abstract 1-2). Jones, in *Failure and the American Writer: A Literary History* posits success or failure to manage literary form as the key to assessment of national and literary achievement, as "failure comes most to life in an author's struggle with craft, in the difficult process of finding form and technique" (15). These assessments often turn the author into a textual manager and evaluate his performance according to his ability (or lack thereof) to keep track of plot threads and character inventory, much as one might assess an accountant on the fastidiousness of her bookkeeping.

Failure for Hollywood modernists, however, was not solely a matter of literary craft, but a condition of laboring in cultural industries that they shared with lesser known cultural workers, and members of the PMC. The relationship between modernist and professional-managerial labor was contradictory and conflicted (as discussed in the introduction to this dissertation). Although, as Marc McGurl points out, these two groups shared experiences and perspectives in their roles as mental laborers, PMC labor was defined by the technocratic expertise it used to guide society, whereas modernist creative labor drew more upon creativity and personality (15). Michael Schwartz's *Broadway and Corporate Capitalism: The Rise of the Professional-Managerial Class, 1900-1920* identifies mainstream culture industries (specifically Broadway, in his analysis) as pivotal in the establishment of PMC identity. As Schwartz asserts, this identity is based in scientific and technical expertise: "while the occupational net is wide, these 'experts' can all be said to owe their existence of their positions—the demand for their expertise—to the boom in technology and science, the increasing centralization of business and industry, and the need to address the issues of the poor and immigrants that marked the early twentieth century"

(7). Schwartz's general thesis, however, points to the importance of cultural expertise in the establishment of this identity, in that Broadway theatre and the PMC mutually influenced each other's development (2). In an appeal to a growing PMC audience, Broadway theatre affirmed their importance by offering "stories of numerous 'actors' and 'players' engaging and confronting one another on various 'fields'" (11). While Schwartz is right to highlight Broadway as the leading influence between 1900 and 1920, other culture industries—Hollywood especially—performed this role in the decades to follow.

When modernists competed with cultural industries, they demonstrated alternative modes of expertise. Instead of competing directly with PMC experts for public attention and social authority, they sought to establish prestige in their own terms. Stein, for instance, conducted self-promotion that took place at enough of a remove from Hollywood that she could assert alternative expertise based in creativity and artistry. The authors I discuss in this chapter, however, were too immersed for such an assertion to work. Instead, they crafted an image of the failed Hollywood professional whose talent is his demise, or, in Hecht's case, failed to attain literary legitimacy while flaunting his Hollywood professional savvy. Their assertion of expertise, as Thomas Strychacz suggests, aligned them with discourses of professionalism, but was ironically grounded in the act of failure itself. By his account, professionals and modernists were "supposedly expert guides to new and disorienting social structures," but "were themselves subject to widespread fears of a 'weightless' existence" (14). The difference between the two groups is that whereas PMC experts tried to succeed as "expert guides," modernists often instead tried to capture the experience of failure in attempts to navigate "new and disorienting" systems.

Ultimately, Hollywood modernists' characterizations of failure and the actual labor solutions they charted can be likened to current tendencies to celebrate failure as sign of

creativity. The title of a recent talk delivered at Carnegie Mellon University as part of an "Entrepreneurs Speaker Series" in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (because humanists, like all other members of today's higher educational communities, should be entrepreneurs too), speaks to a new vision of failure as a valuable asset in today's labor market. The talk, titled "I Never Learned to Spell Success," details the setbacks of Microsoft VP Javier Soltero's climb "to the top of the technology industry" and touts the value of failure, while subtly sneering at those in humanistic fields, with our tiresome insistence on correct spelling (Rea). Beyond the immediate context of the University, a darker side of this tendency lies in its capacity to justify the ongoing dismemberment of labor rights that is endemic to neoliberalism, and to downplay workers' more ordinary needs (fair compensation, for instance) in favor of creative self fulfillment. Today, in other words, the aura of failure that Hollywood modernists and their chroniclers promoted lives on as a justification for contingency in Post-Fordist labor.

II. Losers Win: Modernist Failure in Context.

When David Brooks' *Bobos In Paradise* hit shelves in 2000, it signaled the twenty-first century revival of failure as a cultural asset. Brooks hails "Bobos" or "Bourgeois Bohemians," as a "new establishment" that will colonize urban communities and "make life more interesting, diverse, and edifying" (11). He interprets Pierre Bourdieu's work on fields of cultural production as "a dazzling array of strategies intellectuals use to get ahead" (152). These, he reasons, are important skills for the "Bobo Intellectual" who "reconciles the quest for knowledge with the quest for a summer house" (153). In this cutthroat world of power-hungry intellectuals, "often the 'loser wins' rule applies. Those who most vociferously and publicly renounce material success win prestige and honor that can be converted into lucre" (152). This 'loser wins' principle in Bourdieu's work, however, applies to artists and intellectuals who operate largely

autonomously from the sphere of economic production and seek prestige in the form of cultural capital because their labor doesn't operate according to the economic logic of most markets. Brooks' Bobos are not isolated artists and are more akin to members of Richard Florida's "creative class," graphic designers and professional bloggers who make today's cities more colorful. It remains to be understood, then, how 'losing' to win—embracing failure as means of accruing cultural capital—became a pervasive career strategy in recent decades. Hollywood modernists were among the first to explore failure as a career tactic as they tried to balance employment in mass industry with literary success. In keeping with the culture of the Great Depression in general, this involved individual mental and physical internalization of economic failure. What sets creative workers apart from those who also experienced failure in this period is their vision of failure as a mark of artistry. Its economic disadvantages were offset, in other words, by boosted cultural legitimacy. Through memoir and satire, Fitzgerald and West documented the personal sting of Depression-era failure as well as its potential benefits even prior to their Hollywood stints. Such depictions drew upon a more general redirection of economic responsibility that was afoot at the time away from national economic regimes, and onto individual workers.

Although success and failure had long been rendered in individualistic terms in American culture, the 1930s represented a transformative moment in which these ideas were dissociated from Puritanical values of character and work ethic, and reimagined in a consumerist context. Rita Barnard's *The Great Depression and the Culture of Abundance* and Morris Dickstein's *Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression* both track Depression-era Americans' tendency to envision the national and fiscal crisis they faced as personal. Barnard's argument demonstrates that Depression-era America became a society of consumption despite

"the painful national experience of scarcity and suffering, and despite the emphasis of a good portion of the decade's literary work on labor and production" (3). One answer she provides is the simultaneous existence of Puritan and consumerist cultural values: "though consumption may indeed… have emerged by the thirties as a 'strategic element' for the economy, many Americans still based their sense of self on a work ethic—and still do" (19). Dickstein similarly argues that Depression-era American culture was defined by contrasting visions of the harsh realities of ordinary lives and the escapism and fantasy of consumer culture. The psychological depression that afflicted many Depression-era Americans revealed "a tendency for people to turn the crisis inward, to blame themselves, to target their own shortcomings and failures, not those of the system" (*Dancing* 223). In this era, one could escape this inner turmoil by consuming mass culture or goods rather than through Puritanical diligence.

1930s America, in other words, generated conflicting visions of American culture as either a nation in collapse or a consumerist playground, founded on creativity and personality or on toil and character. Dickstein notes the visibility of collapse in photographed masses of poor people, whose images "showed that capitalism was doomed, that the American system had failed, including many of its cherished ideas: unbridled individualism, self-reliance, the entrepreneurial spirit, [and the] the promise of prosperity and social mobility" (*Dancing* xxi). Yet rather than collapsing, as Warren Susman argues, a "culture of abundance" based in mass consumption and communication emerged that implored individual consumers to take responsibility for the crisis.[45] The simultaneous currency of the Puritan work ethic and the

[45] Susman argues that "one of the fundamental conflicts of twentieth-century America is between two cultures—an older culture, often loosely labeled Puritan-republican, producer-capitalist culture, and a newly emerging culture of abundance." He attributes this development to "a series of exceptional inventions that, coupled with new sources of energy, made possible the amazingly rapid movement of people, goods, services, and ideas" (xx). During the Depression, "everywhere there was a new emphasis on buying, spending, and consuming. Advertising became not

"culture of abundance" shaped American's perceived roles as individuals failing in a national context. As Barnard recounts, "In the years preceding the New Deal the countless descriptions of the emotional suffering of the jobless, the personal feelings of shame and inadequacy, and especially phenomena such as 'Depression impotence' suggest the extent to which people had internalized the moral strictures of a puritan-capitalist ethos" (19). If the "puritan-capitalist" ethos told people to feel personally responsible for the failing economy, the "culture of abundance" dictated a solution in which hard work was one factor among many other more affective forms of labor and consumption, like "personality" and "positive thinking."[46] Depression era failure, in other words, became a matter of both ordinary and affective labor. These changing connotations of failure signaled a broader process at work in America, as Scott Sandage recounts in *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America*. Prior to the late nineteenth century, he notes, failure was mainly relevant in business. "Failure," he observes, "conjures such vivid pictures of lost souls that it is hard to imagine a time, before the Civil War, when the word commonly meant 'breaking in business'—going broke" (2). Its associations with personal collapse and "lost souls," Sandage remarks, began to take hold in the early decades of the twentieth century and became dominant in the 1930s.

The duality of 1930s failure as expressed in Hollywood modernists' work marks a turning point in American literary narratives of failure. In the decades preceding the 1930s, progressive realist and naturalist authors offered counter-narratives to Alger-esque imperatives

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only a new economic force but also a vision of the way culture worked: the products of the culture became advertisements of the culture itself" (xiv)

[46] See Chapter 2, Introduction for additional discussion of Susman's arguments about character and personality. In short, the early decades of the twentieth century saw a shift in terminology from 'character'—a term that implies work and morality—to 'personality,' a term that implies affect and consumerism. Barbara Ehrenreich describes American culture as dominated by an ideology of 'positive thinking' as a "quintessentially American activity, associated in our minds with both individual and national success, but… driven by a terrible insecurity" (6).

toward success that dominated American culture. Writers like William Dean Howells and Upton Sinclair, for instance, situated individual narratives of decline in detailed depictions of the destructive systems of American capitalism. Fitzgerald and West's narratives depart from the more realist works above to depict the mental and physical manifestations of failure on the individual. In 1936, a year before his final foray into Hollywood writing, Fitzgerald hit new lows financially, mentally and physically. He published three autobiographical essays in *Esquire*— "The Crack-Up," "Handle with Care," and "Pasting it Together"— that expressed his feelings of failure. He meant them to be cathartic and honest, but John Dos Passos and Ernest Hemingway criticized them as shameful displays of self-pity (Bruccoli 405). Throughout the three essays Fitzgerald collapses boundaries between mental, physical, and financial failure, recalling that "for two years of my life I had been a [sic] drawing on resources that I did not possess… I had been mortgaging myself spiritually up to the hilt" ("Crack-Up" 41). By describing his physical and spiritual resources in financial terms, Fitzgerald demonstrates Sandage's assertion that "failure had become what it remains in the new millennium: the most damning incarnation of the connection between achievement and personal identity. 'I feel like a failure.'" (4-5).[47]

In "The Crack-Up," for instance, Fitzgerald is simultaneously compelled to destroy and preserve himself. In the years during which he recalls "mortgaging" himself, he recalls that "in order to preserve something—an inner hush maybe, maybe not—I had weaned myself from all the things I used to love" (41). Although he considers himself "a mediocre caretaker of most of the things left in my hands, even of my talent," his impulse toward self-preservation frequently works in contrast to self-subversion. In "The Crack-Up," he notes "I slept on the heart side now

[47] That failure is presented here as a figure of speech—a metaphor made literal—suggests its special relevance in the literary-cultural realm and the need to move beyond the historical figures of failure that Sandage presents.

because I knew that the sooner I could tire that out, even a little, the sooner would come that blessed hour of a nightmare which, like a catharsis, would enable me to better meet the new day" (164). In light of his later death by heart attack, this statement reads as a self-destructive threat. Yet by the end of his confessional catharsis, in "Handle with Care," he resolves to preserve at least his professional self: "I must continue to be a writer because that was my only way of life, but I would cease any attempts to be a person—to be kind, just, or generous" (39). For the professional writer to live, Fitzgerald implies, the human soul must die. This sacrifice for professional survival establishes a crucial link between tragic death and critical legacy.

West's 1931 parody of Horatio Alger narratives *A Cool Million* similarly details the manifestation of failure as physical deterioration, and satirizes the tendency for such bodily deterioration to act as an asset in selling one's creative labor. The novel presents a tale of young Lem Pitkin, who comes from nothing, goes out to "seek [his] fortune," and is systematically destroyed in doing so (73). Pitkin's failure enacts an early instance of systematic failure rendered in bodily terms. Early in the novel, before setting out on his journey, he is brutally beaten by a local bully who also rapes his sweetheart, Betty. Throughout the book, he continues to be periodically brutalized, and leaves body parts behind at nearly every step. When thrown in jail for a petty theft he didn't commit, the warden removes all of his teeth under the justification that "teeth are often a source of infection and it pays to be on the safe side" (90). He loses his eye in a chivalrous accident, has his hand broken in a communist conspiracy-driven kidnapping, gets his leg caught in a bear trap while trying to save Betty from another rape, and eventually loses that leg to amputation. He is scalped by a mob of Native Americans in a case of mistaken identity, shot during a riot, and shot again (fatally) during a political rally. At each juncture except the

last, he stoically presses forward and replaces the missing part with a prosthetic, as the novel demonstrates the absurdity of attempting upward mobility during the Depression.

In the late stages of this progression, Lem's deformities are shown to be professional assets as a creative worker, in a bizarre distortion of the "loser wins" scenario that artists manipulate to bolster their cultural capital. Having lost track of his few friends and allies, Lem seeks employment in New York City. When Mr. Gates (an employment agency proprietor) informs Lem that he has found a position with a vaudeville act, he notes that the boy narrowly edged out a man who attempted to gouge his eye out upon hearing of the job's call for a one-eyed man. Gates remarks "I told Riley that you also had a wooden leg, wore a toupee and store teeth, and he wouldn't think of hiring anybody but you" (172). Lem's role in the act, it turns out, is to serve as the butt of successive jokes, and to be brutally beaten after each—all of which West presents as a play within the novel that parodies the parody of the novel itself. The goal of the beatings, West notes, is "to knock off [Lem's] toupee or to knock out his teeth or eye," after which Lem "bent over and with sober dignity and took from the box at his feet, which contained a large assortment of false hair, teeth, and eyes, whatever he needed to replace the things that had been knocked out" (174). Once the show concludes, Lem is responsible for purchasing more newspapers for the other players to roll up and beat him with. Having been ravaged for pay and forced to re-assemble himself, the culture worker supplies the tools for his future exploitation.

The 'loser wins' principle that writers like West imported into Hollywood in the 1930s has longevity because it mitigates contradictory visions of success and failure that have characterized American life and labor ever since. Contrasting Puritan and consumerist values remain, in the twenty-first century, at the core of national narratives of work, health, and politics, as Barbara Ehrenreich's *Bright Sided: How the Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking Has*

Undermined America reveals. Positive thinking, Ehrenreich claims, has now come to be seen as a precondition for success, and as a universal solution to such problems as cancer and poverty. Yet, as it did in the 1930s, the mandate to think positively is accompanied by a dour, Calvinist sense of personal responsibility:

> If optimism is the key to material success, and if you can achieve an optimistic outlook through the discipline of positive thinking, then there is no excuse for failure. The flip side of positivity is thus a harsh insistence on personal responsibility: if your business fails or your job is eliminated, it must be because you didn't try hard enough, didn't believe firmly enough in the inevitability of your success. As the economy has brought more layoffs and financial turbulence to the middle class, the promoters of positive thinking have increasingly emphasized this negative judgment: to be disappointed, resentful, or downcast is to be a "victim" and a "whiner". (8)

One major implication of Ehrenreich's work is that criticism of the structural conditions at work in physical, financial, or mental failure comes to be seen as a refusal to thrive. In part this explains why the internalized failure that Hecht, Fitzgerald, West and others presented was often in unwitting opposition to an organized labor movement that (except in the case of Hecht) they enthusiastically endorsed. If all one must do to be a successful worker is have the right attitude, and if to be a failure further meant to be a great artist, American industry truly cannot fail its workers. They can only fail themselves, and often in doing so win creative laurels.

III. A "Pitiful and Precarious Escape": Professional Failure Made Fatal.

The modernist-Hollywood encounter was part of a larger process at work since the 1930s in which social crises are rendered as matters of personal mismanagement, carried out in the

body of the worker and expressed in the cultural product he generates. To be a good capitalist worker, one must wisely manage one's physical and mental resources. To be a successful modern writer, one must manage the formal composition of texts to represent a transformative period, yet also be attentive to the subjective experiences of readers. Hollywood, with its famously excessive lifestyles and rigid narrative structures, was conducive to neither effective personal management nor sensitive literary composition. Therefore, some Hollywood modernists portrayed valuable professional skills such as collaboration as undesirable, and rendered artistic incompatibility with the studio system as potentially fatal. In doing so, modernists in Hollywood reimagined personal failure as noble, in contrast to the ugly structural failures of the Depression. Their representations of (often bodily) internalized failure served to set them apart from traditional laborers and allowed them to put forth new models of self-exploitation. In their lives and in many of their texts, such physical demise of the creative worker appears as a tragedy that surrounds their legacy with an aura of unbridled creativity.

In other words, these writers constructed narratives of wasted talent, early death, and posthumous fame that often played out in their own lives and in posthumous criticism of their work, and which suggest a causal relationship between failure and creativity that might otherwise be counterintuitive. It is now practically a cliché that the works of brilliant creative minds who squandered their talent and died young hold an aura of brilliance that is not present in the consistent output of long-lived and prolific artists. It should make sense that sustained, successful output generates more significant achievements, but the career and late works of a writer like Fitzgerald suggest that the link between tragic failure and legacy is more of an authorial and critical construct. Critics and biographers often juxtapose remarks like those of story editor Samuel Marx, who called Fitzgerald (as quoted in Richard Fine's *West of Eden*) "Hollywood's

most celebrated catastrophe" with his literary achievement in *The Last Tycoon*, which for Fine "confirms… his undiminished power as a writer" (6). These accounts typically stop short of asserting direct correlations between Fitzgerald's failure in creative industry, his untimely and somewhat self-induced death, and the establishment of his literary legacy, but the persistent implication of such a correlation can be traced back to Fitzgerald's own juxtapositions of tragic failure and death with creative brilliance, in his biographical and fiction writing.

Fitzgerald is typically portrayed either as a self-destructive creative genius or an unwitting victim of structural and historical changes. Two articles on Fitzgerald's thematic preoccupation—William Troy's "Scott Fitzgerald—the Authority of Failure" and Morris Dickstein's "The Authority of Failure," exemplify these tendencies in their explanation of Fitzgerald's career woes in the 1930s. In regards to the persistent association of failure with Fitzgerald's name, Troy argues that "he brought most of it on himself by daring to make failure the consistent theme of his work from first to last" (Troy). While Troy's assessment of Fitzgerald's exaggerated reputation for failure is helpful in terms of questioning such stereotypes, he evokes the language of blame (brought it… on himself) and genius ("daring to…") that recurs in Fitzgerald criticism. This kind of narrative elides the historical and social conditions that stood behind both his career troubles and his interest in failure. Dickstein's article, on the other hand, anchors Fitzgerald's "Authority of Failure" in such conditions. In the 1930s, "he became the poet of failure and decline rather than of youthful, romantic inspiration" because his associations with the excesses of the Jazz Age were out of sync with the harsh realities of the moment ("Authority" 75). As a result, Fitzgerald's changing fortunes were those of the ordinary American, and as an artist he suffers the same economic consequences as everyone else. Even Dickstein's more contextualized argument, however, relies on an

assumption that artistic labor is removed from other forms when he refers to the "eerie parallels between [Fitzgerald's] own change of fortunes and the fate of Americans at large" ("Authority" 74). Such parallels need not be "eerie" at all, but rather concrete, if we acknowledge literature as a form of labor that is not entirely removed from others.

The root of an artist's success or failure in Hollywood often lay in his ability (or lack thereof) to adhere to the collaborative demands of the industry. As screenwriter Clifford Howard remarked of the nascent studio system of 1910s Hollywood, "literary creation is solo work; cinema producing is collaborative, composite, multifarious, and vastly intricate." For that reason, while "many writers are called to Hollywood … few are chosen. And the elect are content to become and remain, but individual cogs in the giant machinery of picture making" (qtd. in Regev 102). Fitzgerald was notoriously ill-suited to collaborative work, a shortcoming that impeded him in Hollywood and provoked dramatic renderings in his fiction of the fatal implications of collaboration. When paired with Fred Paramore on the scripting of *Three Comrades*, for instance, Fitzgerald first assumed that Paramore would be his subordinate, and then all but refused to work with the seasoned professional upon discovering their equal status (Bruccoli 432-433). Fitzgerald's distaste for collaboration can be seen in his 1936 article "Pasting it together," in which he posits that Hollywood has eclipsed the novel:

> I saw that the novel, which at my maturity was the strongest and supplest medium for conveying thought and emotion from one human being to another, was becoming subordinated to a mechanical and communal art that, whether in the hands of Hollywood merchants or Russian idealists, was capable of reflecting only the tritest thought, the most obvious emotion. It was an art in which words

> were subordinate to images, where personality was worn down to the inevitable low gear of collaboration. (182)

The dramatic fatalism of this piece carries over into his fiction, in which he implicates the collaborative structure of Hollywood labor in the death of temperamental and talented artists, and suggests by extension that such failure and death is the mark of the truly autonomous talent.

The Stories "Crazy Sunday" and "Last Kiss," for instance, dramatize the tragic failure of the artist at the hands of a brutal and inhuman system of Hollywood production. "Crazy Sunday" is based on a social blunder he committed during his second Hollywood trip, at a party of Irving Thalberg's. As biographer Matthew Bruccoli recounts, during a Sunday afternoon party Fitzgerald "after a number of drinks performed his humorous song 'Dog' with a piano accompaniment by Ramon Navarro and was booed by John Gilbert and Lupe Velez" (322). He was promptly escorted home, and to his relief received a kindly worded telegram the next day from Thalberg's wife, Norma Shearer. The fictionalized version of this event invents a love triangle between writer Joel Coles, director Miles Calman, and his wife Stella. It is the first of several Hollywood narratives in which Fitzgerald features a Thalberg-like figure who is worn down by the stresses of the Hollywood system and dies tragically (although in this case, and in his plans for *The Last Tycoon*, the death is accidental and unrelated to the industry in any practical sense). After Coles' Sunday afternoon embarrassment and the receipt of a telegram identical to Shearer's real life version, Coles and Stella strike up a flirtation, which as the story progresses nearly escalates into an affair. He simultaneously develops a friendship with Calman, who feels helpless when confronted with his wife's extramarital desires. As Coles and Stella are about to consummate the affair, Stella realizes she loves her husband, but immediately following

this realization news of Calman's death in an airplane crash arrives over the phone. Coles' desire for Stella cedes to his shock and despair at the loss of a great creative mind, and the tale ends.

Here, as with many of his Hollywood narratives, Fitzgerald blames the rigors of Hollywood labor for the artist's deterioration and demise. The title emphasizes Sunday as the Hollywood worker's one day of respite from the brutal and impersonal work of Hollywood production. The other six days of the work week consist of "sets and sequences, the struggles of rival ingenuities in the conference rooms, the interminable waits under the crane that swung the microphone, the hundred miles a day by automobiles to and fro across Hollywood county, the ceaseless compromise, the clash and strain of many personalities fighting for their lives" (209). Both Coles and Calman are temperamentally unfit for the stresses of "rival ingenuities," ceaseless compromise," and "many personalities fighting." Coles, who unlike Fitzgerald himself writes scripts that are well received, "referred to himself modestly as a hack but really did not think of it that way" (209). Calman rises above as "the only director on the lot who refused to work under a supervisor and was responsible to the money men alone. Their resistance to collaboration is the key to their success, reversing Fitzgerald's own experiences.

Fitzgerald implies that Calman's personal ineffectuality is a result of the pressures of Hollywood, and Coles' sense of tragedy at Calman's death makes the latter out to be a sensitive artistic temperament devoured by an impersonal industry, much in the way Edmund Wilson would depict Fitzgerald's death ten years later. In an allusion to Thalberg's poor health, Coles observes Calman's diminished state after a "four-hour wrangle" during which "three men and a woman paced the carpet in turn, suggesting or condemning, speaking sharply or persuasively, confidently or despairingly" (215). In the conference's wake, Coles notes that Calman "was tired—not with the exaltation of fatigue but life-tired, with his lids sagging and his beard

prominent over the blue shadows near his mouth" (215). Later, when Calman sends a telegram from Kansas to tell Stella he loves her even though he is fully aware of her scheduled rendezvous with Coles, Stella remarks "He's so very weak" (218). And despite the accidental nature of Calman's death, Coles associates it with the destructive clash of artist and industry: "[Miles] was the only American-born director with both an interesting temperament and an artistic conscience. Meshed in an industry, he had paid with his ruined nerves for having no resilience, no healthy cynicism, no refuge—only a pitiful and precarious escape" (219). It reads as though Calman himself crashed the plane. In a pattern that would recur in critical laments over Fitzgerald's and West's deaths, the posthumous image of the creative genius is cemented in his untimely death, recast as physical and mental mismanagement, and situated in the creative worker's inability or refusal to fully acclimate to the system.

The uncooperative figure of creative genius in Fitzgerald's "Last Kiss," written toward the end of his third Hollywood venture, is an English actress named Pamela Knighton. In Fitzgerald's typical fashion, an observer narrates the demise of a tragic figure. In this case the onlooker is to a degree the engineer of Knighton's demise and death. Jim Leonard is described in the *Colliers* blurb as a "successful young movie producer," who tries to "make the beautiful English girl a star" but ultimately is "powerless to help her" (17). Fitzgerald's story shows less sympathy for these characters than the blurb implies, however. Jim is a cold, calculating climber who muses philosophically about the older producers he edges out of the industry and ruins Pamela's career out of spite. Pamela is a highbrow snob who is dismissive of Americans in general and Hollywood production specifically and expects accommodations for these prejudices in her work. In Pamela and Jim's initial encounter, he is attracted to her but resentful. Frustrated with her sexual unavailability (she is engaged to an Englishman) and wounded by her anti-

Americanism, he avoids finding her the roles he promised. After witnessing her performance in an under-attended radical avant-garde play, he decides to give her a break. On set, however, she quarrels with director Bob Griffin, who tells her "There's an American way and an English way" (43). Pamela snaps back that there is "a nice way and a silly way," and Jim is left to sort out the mess. He confronts her at her home, but she will not capitulate and offers only that "Hollywood is not a very civilized place" (44). Insulted one too many times, he blacklists her, only to discover months later that she has died of pneumonia, penniless and alone.

As in "Crazy Sunday," which was written nine years earlier, "Last Kiss" implicates Hollywood as the enemy of all that is beautiful, artistic, and creative. At this point in Fitzgerald's career, however, the hope for success without collaboration that Calman represents before his death is virtually gone. In its place, Pamela's demise evokes the utter necessity of collaboration and the dangers of elitism, even as Fitzgerald himself apparently could not bring himself to abide by these lessons. Pamela's failure and death demonstrate that creative workers must capitulate and perform roles they might consider inferior to their talents, or face obscurity and even death. Her intransigence and demise, however, serve to re-assert the existence of solid boundaries between artists, managers, and grunts in creative industries. Even as these distinctions were questioned by the stalwart collaborative efforts of writers like Hecht and West, Fitzgerald in his final fictional effort upheld the special status of creative artists and asserted their ultimate incompatibility with industry.

Throughout "Last Kiss," Pamela's elitism clashes with Jim's calculated professionalism and Bob Griffin's pragmatic conformity. When Pamela and Jim first meet, she offers backhanded compliments like "oh, I like Americans all right—the civilized ones," and "you're the most civilized American I've ever met" (34). When Jim finds no roles for her, Pamela cuts at

his pride with jabs like "I didn't realize you were just a sort of supervisor. I thought you had more power," a remark that denigrates professional managerial work and reaffirms creative artistry. Bob Griffin, on the other hand, is a paragon of cooperation. Jim hires Bob because "smoothness is the fourth dimension of this business and Bob has forgotten the word "I." People of three times his talent—producers and troupers and directors—go down the sink because they can't forget it" (43). Pamela is clearly the latter type, and when Jim implores her to cooperate with Bob, she insists Jim fire Bob instead of her—"you're his boss, aren't you?" she says. Jim's reply—"making pictures is a joint matter"—is telling of the degree to which he identifies with the system itself. When Jim subsequently destroys her career, Fitzgerald narrates the process as though Jim operates as an extension of unseen studio forces:

> For she had lost it when Jim turned and went out. It was weeks before she knew how it happened. She received her salary for some months—Jim saw to that—but she never set foot on that lot again. Nor on any other. She was placed quietly on that black list that is not written down but that functions at Backgammon games after dinner, or on the way to the races. (44)

The passive construction of this passage reinforces the story's typecasting of the failed tragic artist, the humble, cooperative worker, and the executive whose power ironically robs him of agency and makes him a puppet of the studio. If one of these is more to blame for Pamela's failure and death than the others, however, it is Pamela herself rather than Bob and Jim, who are agents of an impersonal system. In keeping with the depression psychology cited earlier, the individual is personally accountable for professional failure.

Although Fitzgerald's work provides some of the most intense instances of fatal career failures that cement artistic legitimacy, he is not the only chronicler of this dynamic. Hecht's

1944 novel *I Hate Actors!*, for instance, sacrifices the lives of three creative workers in the production of its film-within-the-novel, *Sons of Destiny*. Although the deaths are eventually revealed to be the murderous work of a British yogi and faith healer who is obsessed with his actress daughter's sexual purity, each victim's failure is also partially shown to be his own fault. Each victim carries out on-set flirtations or liaisons with the girl during the film's production, and prioritizes their carnal desires over the success of the film. From Fitzgerald himself to critics who later canonize his work and West's, the physical failures symbolized in their deaths as well as in their characters' frequent bodily malfunctions contribute to their modernist legitimacy. That these failures are credited to each authors' capacity to manage his own mind, body, or text can be seen in everything from accounts that blame West's own death to his legacy of bad driving to the critical obsession with Fitzgerald's drinking habits that preoccupies Fitzgerald scholars.[48] Hecht, on the other hand, is typically viewed as a shrewd manager of his bodily and mental resources.

These principles would factor in the mid-twentieth century formation of an American canon which, as Richard Ohmann asserts, expresses a collective sense of personal responsibility for structural failures. In Ohmann's account, "myth, ideology, and experience assured the professional-managerial worker that no real barriers would prevent personal satisfaction, so it was easy to nourish the suspicion that any perceived lack was one's own fault… for the people who wrote, read, promoted, and preserved fiction, social contradictions were easily displaced into images of personal illness" (83). The result that Ohmann identifies in mid-century American

[48] A few of the chapter titles from Bruccoli's biography of Fitzgerald show the degree of importance placed on his alcohol consumption, from "Alcohol and the Failure of the Vegetable" to "The Drunkard's Holiday," and "Montgomery and Hollywood: Relapse" (Bruccoli). Joe Woodward's biography of West dwells on his reputation as a driver when explaining the accident that killed West and his wife: "West should have stopped at that intersection and turned left, but he didn't. A notoriously bad driver, West was easily distracted by conversation and daydream. After the accident, many of West's friends recalled numerous near misses on the open road. One friend spoke about narrowly missing a group of school children crossing a street; another mentioned a wrong turn that ended with the car precariously dangling over the edge of a bridge" (ch. 2).

literature is a characterization of illness (mental or physical) as an inability to appropriately assume a role as a productive adult (83). As an extreme form of failure, illness in a capitalist society boils down to the inability to work, and the ultimate exclusion from that society (Harvey 106). Yet thanks in part to modernist writers and their successors, such radical failure begins to formulate critiques of capitalistic norms. Across pre-and post-war texts that formed the mid-century canon, illness and madness manifest as both rebellion against norms of mature conformity and failure to thrive in a society where there is no excuse not to. These themes have now come to influence the twentieth century workplace, in which rebellion against maturity keeps a business 'agile' and failure is an individual matter of self-will, unrelated to socio-economic structures.

V: Misfit Style and Feelings of Misgiving

Stanley Rose's Bookshop, situated on Hollywood Boulevard a few doors down from Musso and Frank Grill and across from the headquarters of the Screen Writer's guild, acted as an informal community center, reading room, and speakeasy for Hollywood writers. In these two establishments, much of the unofficial labor of the Hollywood scriptwriter took place in the form of eating, drinking, socializing, and merely being present. These activities served several purposes: first, the establishment of the literary exile/Hollywood writer as more than a mere drone, a cultural expert who did more than grind out structure and dialogue; second, a point of organization and exchange that fostered growing solidarity amongst this relatively new type of worker; and third, an informal setting for discussion of literature and craft in which these writers could begin to develop hybrid styles of popular Hollywood modernism suited to express the strange settings, tasks, and characters that populated Tinseltown. As modernists in Hollywood, many were estranged from both the industry that employed them and the literary community they

left behind. This state of cultural exile ultimately provokes aesthetic and personal crises for Hollywood modernists. On one hand, authors lose faith in modernist form; on the other, they register the dangers of routinized culture work in literature through tales of bodily malfunction. This section reads such responses in Ben Hecht's and Nathanael West's fiction, in which anxious representations of automated bodies express concerns about artistic professionalization, as cinema robs ordinary people of bodily control and transforms them into grotesque automatons.

Many of these writers were refugees from ailing cultural markets on the east coast and in the Midwest or from escalating political tensions in Europe, and shared the formal and practical challenges of working in the culture industry with West, and Hecht, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Tendencies toward modernist form and radical politics united many Hollywood writers, who often found themselves at odds with the studio system.[49] Many of them, like William Faulkner and Bertolt Brecht, are perceived as paragons of modernism. Others, like Dorothy Parker and hard-boiled writers like Raymond Chandler, James L. Cain, and Dashiell Hammett were not typical modernists, but aspired to loftier artistic goals than the stereotypical Hollywood output, and followed a modern literary custom of formally inventive, adventurous storytelling.

Many of these writers adapted easily to dual identities. Faulkner has long been perceived as one of America's greatest novelists, and was hailed throughout the remainder of the century—and especially during the Cold War—as an example of the advanced state of American culture.

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[49] The critics, biographers, and historians who cover West, Fitzgerald, and Hecht's Hollywood years often associate them (either thematically or socially) with a wide array of other modernists, intellectuals, artists, hard-boiled writers, and European émigrés. Mark Eaton's "What Price Hollywood? Modern American Writers and the Movies" covers not only West and Fitzgerald but also Carl Van Vechten, John Dos Passos, Horace McCoy, and John O'Hara. Tom Cerasulo's collective literary biography of Hollywood writers looks specifically to Dorothy Parker and Budd Schulberg in addition to West and Fitzgerald to depict the life and work of Hollywood scribes. Saverio Giovacchini's *Hollywood Modernism: Film and Politics in the Age of the New Deal* is concerned with writers like Hecht as well as with Hollywood émigrés of all stripes from Germany and New York—Billy Wilder, Bertolt Brecht, John Huston, John Howard Lawson, to name a few. Tom Dardis' collective literary biography *Some Time in the Sun* puts the careers of West and Fitzgerald in conversation with those of Faulkner, Aldous Huxley, and James Agee.

He also met with success as a Hollywood screenwriter and received credit for dozens of classical Hollywood films. Faulkner-penned literary adaptations such as *To Have and Have Not* (1944) and *The Big Sleep* (1946) remain some of the most widely admired works of the classical era (Fine *West of* 8-12). Parker, who is perhaps taken less seriously as a literary writer than others, was well respected in her time as a poet, dramatist, and all-around wit. She was also enormously successful in Hollywood, where she earned generous paychecks and screen credits for films like *A Star is Born* (1937), *The Little Foxes* (1941), and *Saboteur* (1942) (Cerasulo 10). Faulkner and Parker were in their formal and industrial tendencies adaptable to Hollywood structures of production, yet able to separate such labors from their literary careers. Hecht, West, and Fitzgerald, on the other hand, fit uncomfortably within the strictures of both modernism and Hollywood labor, which is why they are interesting. Their misfit tendencies prompt them to establish forward-thinking aesthetic and industrial patterns, capable of outlasting the classical studio system.

In short, the misfit status of these men as both modernists and Hollywood workers forced them to construct new roles for themselves in both spheres. All three saw literary production as doomed to fail from the outset, and registered this mistrust stylistically. West's alleged abdication in *The Day of the Locust* exemplifies the misfit style of an out-of place modernist, who appears to take a passive role in narrative construction, and seemingly allows his characters, directed by an unseen mechanistic impulse, to self-destruct. Taken to extremes, however, such a pattern also expresses anxiety toward mechanized, routinized labor, as these texts write failure onto the body of the subject in deliberately cinematic ways. The feeling of misgiving that characterizes their misfit modernism is based in a fundamental mistrust of the public, which spurs characters into obsessive cinematic performances that perpetually miss the mark. The

worst of these result in total bodily failures such as Homer Simpson's automatism in West's *The Day of the Locust*. These works represent Hollywood-specific mutations in modernist style. They generally nod to Jesse Matz's catalogue of modernist stylistic hallmarks (skepticism towards stability of perception; varying points of view; expressions of subjective truth; the use of stream-of-consciousness narrative techniques and other ways of representing consciousness; attention to fragmented identities, temporal experience, and moral ambiguity; sexual explicitness; and attempts at radical autonomy (aesthetic and political) that necessitate apolitical status) (215-226). However, the alleged purpose of these techniques cited by Daniel J. Singal "to restore a sense of order to human experience under the often chaotic conditions of twentieth-century existence" is superseded by the tendency to show what can happen when one capitulates to the mechanized workings of monopoly capital (8).

Although Hecht was associated with the "Chicago School" of American modernism, he made little impact. In most critical accounts, his style is too decadent, too closely aligned with his life, or too nihilistic (MacAdams 282). Such traits are, of course, endemic to modernism, so the critical reaction to them in Hecht's work suggests that he either takes them too far or uses them imitatively. William MacAdams' assessments of Hecht's style presents a catalogue of his failures to achieve the avant-garde feats of his peers. Hecht's first novel *Erik Dorn* is "muddied by too little action and too much clinical psychologizing" (59). His second novel *Gargoyles* is unabashedly derivative of Sinclair Lewis' *Babbitt*, and consists of "a plot that already was nothing much more than padding for an idea that he didn't originate" (65). By the time Hecht writes his autobiography *A Child of the Century* in 1964, MacAdams claims, Hecht "had spent his career ceaselessly reworking the same material" (281). Nelson Algren's 1964 introduction to the re-release of *Erik Dorn* explains Hecht's failure as an act of weak faith: "It wasn't splendor

that was lacking in Hecht," he writes, "It wasn't gas he ran out of, and surely it wasn't brass. It was belief" (Qtd. in Mac Adams 282). In the end it is not lack of content or action that gets Hecht booted from the modernist pantheon, as many successful modernist novels eschew plot for form and psychology as Hecht's do. Rather it is the pervasive sense that the author himself lacks faith in his own artistic originality, or even in the existence of such a thing in the first place.

The article "Farewell My Bluebell," published in the 1929 final issue of *The Little Review* confirms Hecht's mistrust of literary autonomy. There he credits *The Little Review* circle with his formal experimentation during the teens and twenties, while making light of his own artistic pretentions: "I saw my name in print for the first time in The Little Review in 1914 or 15 and became willy nilly, forthwith and kiss my royal gepeck traeger a Modernist" (7). He then presents his modernist influences as both productive and artistically pointless: "It has taken me sixteen years to drag myself out from under the spell of my early Wisconsonian philosophy. I do not regard these sixteen years as wasted. I have not become a ham like Sherwood Anderson. I mean a ham artist. I have not become any kind of Artist" (7). West's career exhibits a similarly conflicted relation to the idea of autonomous art and the need to connect with an audience. Late to the game of modernist literary production, West discovers that the world of avant-garde art is nearly as institutionalized and prone to conformity as Hollywood. In a letter to Fitzgerald that West appended to a proof of *the Day of the Locust* in 1939, he muses:

> Somehow or other I seem to have slipped in between all the 'schools.' My books meet no needs except my own, their circulation is practically private and I'm lucky to be published. And yet, I only have a desire to remedy all that before sitting down to write, once begun I do it my way. I forget the broad sweep, the big canvas, the shot-gun adjectives, the important people, the significant ideas, the

> lessons to be taught, the epic Thomas Wolfe, the realistic James Farrell—and go on making what one critic called 'private and unfunny jokes'. (Woodward 198)

West's depiction of his writing process positions him as a truly autonomous artist, and yet the desire to fit into a "school" suggests that by the time West arrived on the literary scene in the 1930s, literary modernism had attained a manner of professional legitimacy that may not have been as restrictive as the Hollywood hierarchies, but still presented significant bars to entry.

Both West and Hecht appear to experience what M.A. Klug identifies as a "feeling of misgiving" that predicts their failure, in that they understand the act of literary composition as doomed to fall short from the outset. Of West Klug writes that he "began with the conviction that the modern artist was necessarily trapped in a conflict of the intellect and the emotions that must finally cut him off from his own internal sources of inspiration as well as from his audience" (17). West's literature is thus doomed in its moment, unable to conform to professionalized modernism yet unable to connect under the terms of his own vision. Yet out of this conflict, he invents a literary mode that is a product of and a gesture beyond modernism and mass culture, but too much of its moment to be dubbed early postmodernism. In West's work more than perhaps any other, critics find challenges in categorizing his style.[50] Trying to do so is not part of this chapter's agenda, but I do want to assert a common element of West's and Hecht's misfit

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[50] West has thus proved resistant to critical categories since his revival in the 1960s. This resistance probably has a great deal to do with the persistence of critical interest in his work, in spite of its small scope (four rather slim novels and a handful of short stories). His work as a semi-modernist drawn to forms of "parody and burlesque" (as Klug suggests) has broad appeal for critics who want to interrogate the modernism-mass-culture divide, a critically prominent practice since Jameson's and Andreas Huyssen's interventions (in 1979 and 1986 respectively). West's version of modernism has been dubbed "monstrous," for instance, in its sensational depiction of lethal, frenzied mobs (Rogers 369). Martin Rogers and Stephanie Sarver link this tendency to contemporary Hollywood horror, and particularly James Whale's 1931 *Frankenstein.* West's inclination to scenes of mass violence was also influenced by the paintings of George Grosz, a German expressionist whose canvases often depicted grotesque scenes of raging mobs. The range of these influences indicates West's odd modernist positioning between popular and avant-garde culture. Indeed, Rita Barnard argues that West has been misread as a high modernist due to pervasive interpretations that interpret his work as a "battle between art and the cheap clichés and disorder of mass culture, a battle in which art emerges victorious" (10). Instead, she argues, he was equally disdainful of both categories.

modernism. Each authors' literature dramatizes the alienation embedded in the Hollywood experience, both for creative workers in a homogenizing labor system and for the audience they want to reach.

One of West's most direct expressions of this disdain appears in a short piece titled "The Dear Public" that appeared in the satirical magazine *Americana* (for which West was also an editor). In a first-person narrative that is too fragmented to directly indicate autobiography or fiction, West identifies his audience as "smart, sophisticated, yet hardboiled, art-loving frequenters of the little-theaters" (29). He discloses his true regard for them, and for his own art, when he writes: "Someday I will obtain my revenge by writing a play for one of their art theatres" (29). At the end of this play, "in case the audience should misunderstand and align itself on the side of the artist, the ceiling of the theatre shall be made to open and cover the occupants with tons of loose excrement" (29). Afterwards he suggests, they may "gather in the customary charming groups and discuss the play," and asserts the utter impossibility of mutual understanding between artist and audience under the terms of avant-garde autonomy (29).

Much like the deteriorative process detailed earlier in regards to *A Cool Million*, in *Locust* the process of self-mismanagement plays out across the bodies of its characters. West's Hollywood novel, however, forms an explicit link to the dehumanizing tendencies of Hollywood labor and the unnatural affective movements of onscreen performance. Its characters exhibit a variety of affectations and malfunctions that suggest Hollywood work and life has caused them to lose control over their bodies. Homer Simpson experiences radical alienation from his own hands; Faye Greener, aspiring actress and romantic interest of both Tod and Homer, appears at all times to be delivering a bad film performance; and Harry Greener, her father, has failed at a life of clowning but still behaves like a broken marionette. Moving beyond the general

personalization of external failures that *Cool Million* maps onto the body of the protagonist, the bodily failures in *Locust* take on an explicitly cinematic form: the close-up severs body parts from their owners as with Homer's hands; the performance detaches consciousness from affectation as with Faye's overacted persona; and rapidly changing entertainment industries reject performing subjects who have become so routinized that they cannot end their performance in any manner except death, as Harry demonstrates.

Homer's alienation from his hands is one aspect of his character's many difficulties controlling his own body, which might be read either as symptomatic of the movie viewer's simultaneous sense of identification and alienation from the bodies onscreen, or as generally indicative of the alienation of Hollywood life. Homer at first appears to Tod as "the kind of person who comes to Hollywood to die" but before he dies he is already alienated from his body (41). When West describes Homer waking up, for instance: "He lay stretched out on the bed, collecting his senses and testing the different parts of his body. Every part was awake but his hands. They still slept. He was not surprised. They demanded special attention, had always demanded it. When he had been a child, he used to stick pins into them and once had even thrust them into a fire. Now he used only cold water" (47-8). In the first of several descriptions of Homer as semi-robotic, he is alienated from his hands as well as his body: "He got out of bed in sections, like a poorly made automaton, and carried his hands into the bathroom. He turned on the cold water. When the basin was full, he plunged his hands in up to the wrists. They lay quietly on the bottom like a pair of strange aquatic animals. When they were thoroughly chilled and began to crawl about, he lifted them out and hid them in a towel" (48). The act of hiding his hands suggests Homer's shame over their disproportionate size and unruliness, and reinforces the psychological internalization of bodily malfunction. The unnatural aspects of cinematic

performance resurface in the body's ultimate failure as technology. In the book's closing scenes, just before his death, Homer appears to be fully automated, but unhinged from any system in which he could mechanically function. He is at one point a "steel spring which has been freed of its function within a machine" and is "striving to attain the shape of its original coil," and in the final minutes before his death at the hands of an angry mob "a badly made automaton... his features set in a rigid, mechanical grin" (211, 225).

Faye and Harry, on the other hand, are both caught in perpetual performances that somehow miss the mark. In Faye's only film role, "she had only one line to speak, 'Oh, Mr. Smith!' and spoke it badly" (19). In the photographic still Tod keeps of her, "she was supposed to look drunk and she did, but not with alcohol. She lay stretched out on the divan with her arms and legs spread, as though welcoming a lover… She was supposed to look inviting, but the invitation wasn't to pleasure" (19). When Harry and Faye first encounter Homer, Harry launches into an elaborate clowning routine in an attempt to sell Homer shoe polish. West explains Harry's persistent performance as a defense mechanism: "when Harry had first begun his stage career, he had probably restricted his clowning to the boards, but now he clowned continuously. It was his sole method of defense. Most people, he had discovered, won't go out of their way to punish a clown" (37). When he performs for Homer, however, it goes badly. At first he pantomimes a bit and Homer understands "that this was meant to amuse, so he laughed" (63). When he begins to spiral physically, however, the performance does too. Homer asks him to stop but "Harry couldn't stop. He was really sick… He jumped to his feet and began doing Harry Greener, poor Harry, honest Harry, well-meaning, humble, deserving, a good husband, a model father, a faithful Christian, a loyal friend" (65). As he performs his social positions, it is unclear whether the performance is killing or saving him.

As audience for Harry and later Faye, Homer is befuddled. He doesn't "appreciate the performance in the least" and is "terrified," but Harry collapses before Homer can call the police as planned. Faye enters the scene shortly thereafter, and Homer is equally perplexed by her "odd mannerism and artificial voice" (70). While her subsequent performance for Homer manages to eventually provoke the intended desire, West portrays it as so formalized that it loses meaning:

> Still holding her hair, she turned at the waist without moving her legs, so that her snug dress twisted even tighter and Homer could see her dainty, arched ribs and little, dimpled belly. This elaborate gesture, like all her others, was so completely meaningless, almost formal, that she seemed a dancer rather than an affected actress. (70)

These passages speak to the difficulties of conveying meaning through art or performance that preoccupy this novel and much of West's fiction. In this case, however, the characters' proximity to Hollywood and their failure to achieve success within its strictures seems to render both performers and audience as broken machines, unable to control or contain their bodies.

Similar motifs appear in Hecht's short story "The Movie Maniac," published over two decades earlier in *The Smart Set* in November 1917. Here Hecht is less concerned with cinematic perspective than he is with the effect of immersion in and professional identification with film performance. Its protagonist, Wilbur Omar Brown, begins the narrative as an uncreative, ordinary copy-reader for a Chicago newspaper, but his promotion to film critic transforms him into a grotesque pantomime of Hollywood affect. Hecht describes him at first as an "unoriginal" and "unimaginative creature" but "a reliable and competent workman" (44). When promoted to "moving picture critic," however, he experiences "in less than fifteen minutes a swift, radiant growth of power in his soul, of ability, genius" (45). Tasked now with creative labor, the story

goes on to explain, Brown's limited intellectual capacity becomes dangerous, as he is now required to observe and comment intently on the movies, rather than experiencing them with the passive distance of an ordinary spectator (45). The result is a complete loss of self-identity. Within a few weeks, "Slowly, imperceptibly, William Omar Brown faded out of existence, leaving behind in this same slow and imperceptible way an automatic gesticulator… day by day this strange eradication of a personality increased" (47). Like the characters in *Locust,* Brown loses control over his body as a result of the cinematic encounter, and becomes "a theatricalism" whose physical actions resemble the machinery and performance of the cinema: "His eyes flashed, his head turned abruptly from side to side… Strange, inexplicable emotions contorted his face. His walk was a study in absolute artifice… His gestures were the ludicrous exaggeration of the movies" (47).

Although "Movie Maniac" predates Hecht's Hollywood work by about ten years, his concerns about the cinema as a point of self-loss and an inducement to automatism appear across his fiction and film work throughout his career. The Broadway and Hollywood-based couple at the center of *Twentieth Century* (1934), a film Hecht scripted based on his Broadway play, display the exaggeration and artifice of creative workers in cultural industries to which Brown succumbs in "Movie Maniac." *Twentieth Century*'s characters obsessively over-perform for one another, but cannot interrelate at a human level. At one point the Broadway-turned-Hollywood starlet Lily laments "We're not people, we're lithographs." Similarly, the heroine of *His Girl Friday* (1940) (a Hecht-scripted play twice adapted for Hollywood) repeatedly complains that she just "wants to be a human being" and attain the "good life," but the narrative forecloses on this possibility and sends her back into the arms of her editor and ex-husband, and demonstrates that for the successful creative worker to find fulfillment and humanity outside of their chosen

industry, is not only impossible, but undesirable. The comedy of these filmic examples, however, renders their critique of such tendencies less pointedly than in "Move Maniac."

Each of the writers discussed in this chapter occupy troublesome positions in terms of both modernism and mass culture.[51] Their careers and work therefore bring into question not only the opposition between these two fields but modernism's ostensible opposition to other literary modes such as naturalism and realism. Their misfit modernism cannot fit neatly into any of these fields, and their inability to find an audience appears in their texts as inextricable from the automating tendencies of Hollywood cinema. West's style picks up on popular and avant-garde tropes, for instance, while at the same time exhibiting radical skepticism of both. Although many critics have labeled him as a proto-postmodernist,[52] it is not my goal here to slap yet another unsatisfactory label on West's work. Rather I want to suggest that the challenges he offers to literary scholars and the difficulties he experiences in having "slipped between all the schools" position him in the end as an outsider and innovator in the literary field as well as in Hollywood. Even as he labored in that medium as a low-tier screenwriting grunt working on

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[51] Critical assessments of Fitzgerald's relationship with modernism and naturalism, for instance, identify him as affiliated with both, but also often have trouble distinguishing these forms from one another. Ronald Berman's *Translating Modernism* associates modernism with what he considers the highest forms of realism, and locates Fitzgerald somewhere between the European modernism of Picasso and Cezanne, and a mode of social realism that many critics thought should deliver a complete picture of the social fabric of America, complete with moral commentary (5-7). Therefore he notes, "those social critics who instructed Fitzgerald to imagine his social world managed to ignore his authoritative depiction of it in terms of the daily perception of sound, sight, and form" (7). Fitzgerald alternates modes by necessity while weaving them into his own distinctive literary style, at once a hybrid and entirely his own.

[52] Mathew Roberts' "Bonfire of the Avant-Garde: Cultural Rage and Readerly Complicity in The Day of the Locust" situates *Locust* in an uncomfortable formal space between modernism and postmodernism: "Certainly Locust is a programmatically non-modernist text in the sense that it seeks to confound, or to bring into crisis, a "modernist" response to the cultural predicament it portrays. Yet the mechanism through which West solicits the reader's critique-through-complicity differs importantly—in both its structure and its ultimate aim—from that which we have come to associate with the postmodern text" (81). Philip Brian Harper's *Framing the Margins: The Social Logic of Postmodern Culture* argues that West's characters in general represent "the sort of noncentralized, dispersed attack upon a structurally totalizing system of power that poststructuralism prescribes as a mode of resistance to the repressive forces of our era," and that his work "suggests that the fragmented nature of the postmodern subject has an analogue in the psychic experiences of the marginalized populations that wage such resistance" (54).

formulaic B pictures, a few of the pictures to which he contributed display a surprisingly modernist sensibility, and share with his literature an oppressive sense of self-inflicted downward mobility.

Misfit style, in other words, is not only a matter of literary production. These writers' interventions in Hollywood also initiated integration of avant-garde techniques into the classical Hollywood style. The result is that, at the height of classical studio production, the variously ideologically opposed modes of modernism and Hollywood illusionism merge in Hollywood to create what Saverio Giovacchini deems "democratic modernism." (2). For those modernists who navigated the modernist-Hollywood encounter, "going Hollywood and lobbying for a more realistic cinema hardly meant abandoning the modernist project. Hollywood's cinema promised the construction of a democratic modernism: a common language, able to promote modernity while maintaining a commitment to democracy as well as the political and intellectual engagement of the masses" (5). As formal aberrations in the literary field and professional misfits in Hollywood, they were able to create spaces in which new literary and labor models could be developed. These models each presented, in different ways, alternatives to existing Fordist models of professional expertise and hierarchical management.

V. Writers vs. Authors: The Affective Alternative to Solidarity.

As Hollywood writers who were accustomed to autonomy, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ben Hecht, and Nathanael West had to either adapt to systems of hierarchical and collaborative creative production or adapt these systems to their needs. Caught between the ideals of autonomous literary production and the demand for collective labor and advocacy, they were representative of writers from Eastern and Midwestern literary circles who were poorly positioned in relation to an ever-growing movement to unionize. By the mid 1930s, other cultural

industries like Broadway were so crippled that writers had few options for financial support beyond film studios, while Hollywood's content demands were so high that for writers to cut off the supply would be devastating. Although Hollywood labor movements would generate great gains during this period, the way many writers navigated conflicting identifications as workers and artists presented alternatives to both existing exploitative structures and union advocacy, through which the artists could maintain distance from ordinary labor by presenting their work as more social, passive, and creative than traditional labor forms. These writers mapped out complex patterns of labor identification in which workers negotiated collective and individual labor identities, as well as industrial and artistic modes of production. In fiction and in practice, three alternatives to studio-system labor emerged: the establishment of affective modes within studio labor practices (which could also register as passive resistance), collective bargaining through unions, and semi-independent production. The remainder of this chapter details the affective and semi-autonomous models, which threatened to undermine labor organization in this period and long after, and which continue to clash with collective labor politics today. Whereas Fitzgerald's Pat Hobby epitomizes the affective schemer who struggles to identify politically with his fellows, Hecht's actual business schemes will demonstrate practical alternatives to Taylorized labor that are still in play today, in cultural industries and beyond.

Writers in Hollywood significantly influenced developing models of mass cultural labor in this period, as some of the most stringent labor advocates in cultural industries, and as workers whose role in the Fordist hierarchy was more flexible and anomalous than others. In the 1930s, Hollywood writers were at once freelance inventors, designer-engineers, and sources of cultural capital needed for product differentiation. As inventors, they often had to come up with an idea and sell it to the studio before they were given a contract. As engineer-designers, they created the

blueprint for a film's production. According to Janet Staiger, from 1916 on "The scenario department assured a constant supply of plots and standardized blueprints for production; the continuity script facilitated interchangeability; the scenario staff divided its labor with some writers contributing plot ideas and others producing the complex script; [and] product differentiation through advertising famous writers or stories induced consumption of the films" (43). In spite of (or perhaps because of) their ambiguous status, writers were subject to a precarious and inconsistent structure of employment. Although the average salary for writers in the 1930s appears lavish for the time at (as Fine reports) $1000 per week, the pay scale was not evenly distributed and the work was not consistent ("The Writer" 391).[53] Despite attractive figures, the writing profession in Hollywood was a risky endeavor long before the ascendance of the flexibility and instability that characterizes creative labor today.

Several accounts, of which Ronnie Regev's dissertation "It's a Creative Business: The Ideas, Practices, and Interaction that Made the Hollywood Film Industry" is the most comprehensive, demonstrate a mutual transformation of literary writers and the Hollywood industry that institutes enduring labor patterns. Regarding the 1930s influx of writers and playwrights in Hollywood, Regev asserts: "confronted with a highly rationalized division of labor, these people, who were used to working solo, learned how to square their artistic ego with an industry ruled by cooperation. Along the way they carved a new place for writing in the movie world while improving the status and reputation of the latter in the greater realm of art and entertainment" (86). The elements of flexibility, semi-autonomy, and personal responsibility for

[53] Regev details the odd combination of precarity and stability that conditioned Hollywood writing labor: "In reality, as late as 1938, payrolls at major studios suggested that forty percent of employed writers earned a weekly salary of less than $250, with only around twelve percent exceeding $1,000. On top of that many of them were not employed for fifty-two full weeks out of the year" (88). Although workers organized and fought for stable pay scales and structures at the time, the arbitrariness and instability of the Hollywood writer's pay structure and employment schedules fit better with the twenty-first century casualization of labor than with Fordist tendencies toward negotiated stability.

institutional success and failure that undergirded their creative efforts would come to dominate in post-War Hollywood as it restructured in the wake of the Paramount decision, the rise of television, the baby boom, and other factors.[54]

While their solutions differed, most Hollywood writers in the 1930s were dissatisfied with their labor conditions, and more politically engaged than many other cultural professionals. As Regev recounts, "Screenwriters… came from all parts of the political spectrum, and were divided on the issue of collective bargaining, yet almost all of them believed they were underappreciated, inadequately compensated, and treated as 'second-class citizens' (28)." West was an active participant in the fight to establish SWG, and Fitzgerald was sympathetic (though not actively), but Hecht was indifferent to movements for political solidarity. The Guild's early fight for survival was contentious, and its members' ability to reconcile their professional and artistic identities would be pivotal. Formed in April 1933, it sought to combat precarious working conditions, arbitrary salaries, and the disproportionate control studios held over rights, credit and content (Cerasulo 72). The situation was delicate, as both the studios and writers were vulnerable in the shifting landscape of the 1930s entertainment industry. Throughout the decade, SWG leaders were engaged in ongoing battles with powerful studios whose executives sought to undermine union membership through the formation of a conservative in-house counter-

[54] Thomas Schatz identifies several historical conditions that prompt the decline of Hollywood studios' power in the 1940s: "The industry's box-office decline in the late 1940s was spurred by various developments at home and overseas. On the home front, the millions of returning servicemen who had fueled record box-office revenues in 1946 soon began marrying and starting families in the suburbs, far from the industry's vital downtown theaters. With 'suburban migration and the 'baby boom' came commercial television and other shifts in patterns of media consumption, as moviegoing ceased to be a ritual necessity for most Americans." Moreover, the end of this decade saw "three crucial setbacks" for the industry: "a motion picture trade war with Britain"; "the infamous Hollywood blacklist"; and "the momentous *Paramount* decree, an antitrust ruling which forced the major studios to divorce their all-important theater chains" (4).

organization, the "Screen Playwrights" (Cerasulo 91).[55] When, in 1937, "the supreme court declared the Wagner Act unconstitutional, which meant that collective bargaining was necessary and that house unions, such as the Screen Playwrights, were forbidden" the Screen Playwrights argued in response that "that writers were artists, not workers, and therefore not eligible to unionize under the Wagner Act" (91). For the Guild to survive, then, it was imperative that screenwriters reconcile their professional and creative identities.

West and Hecht were able to devise unique collaborative labor models in order to navigate their roles as artists and workers. West viewed his work in B-level studios like Republic as no more romantic than the hotel work he previously used to subsidize his literary efforts. Upon attaining his first job in Hollywood, West reports: "There's no fooling here. All the writers sit in cells in a row and the minute a typewriter stops someone pokes his head in the door to see if you are thinking. Otherwise, it's like the hotel business" (Qtd. in Woodward ch. 17). West's methods for coping with the contradictions of Hollywood labor fall somewhere between the creative ambition of Ivy-league trained painter Tod in *The Day of the Locust* and the painful ordinariness of his romantic rival Homer of the same novel, who "came from a little town near Des Moines, Iowa called Waynesville, where he had worked for twenty years in a hotel" (43). The novel, however, affirms Tod's ability to maintain his art while employed as a Hollywood worker when it asserts: "'The Burning of Los Angeles,' a picture he was soon to paint, definitely

[55] A major victory for SWG writers came in 1935, when an alliance was struck with the Authors' League of America and the Dramatists' Guild that would embargo the sale of new stories to the studios if SWG writers went on strike. But, as Cerasulo indicates, this power was short lived: "only days later, the illusion of unity crumbled when sixty members announced that they were defecting to form their own union, Screen Playwrights" (91). This new union, it turns out, was a right-wing pro-studio house union, and its members were paid off by executives with long term contracts in order to undermine SWG (Cerasulo 91). See also Regev 125-129, Balio 82-85.

proved he had talent" (5). Boundaries, West implies, are crucial the maintenance of stable professional and artistic identities.

Fitzgerald's "Pat Hobby" stories demonstrate at length the degree to which success for the Hollywood writer meant careful maintenance of distinctions between artistry and toil that simultaneously promote affective labor models. Hobby's failures and humiliations as a seasoned Hollywood 'hack' played out across seventeen stories published between January 1940 and May 1941 in *Esquire*. He has few artistic pretensions, but resists the actual labor of creative production and seeks instead to be compensated for wandering around the studio lot, socializing in the commissary, serving as the studio bosses' mole amongst other writers, and finagling screen credits on scripts to which he has only added a few words. The Hobby stories confirm Tom Cerasulo's assertion that contrary to critics who view the fiction of Hollywood writers as "revenge tracts," they truly should be seen as "sites of negotiation" (7). While Cerasulo generally indicates their desire to "come to terms" with Hollywood as an aesthetic and industrial process of reconciliation, I interpret their navigation of labor roles as more complicated than the one-way act of "coming to terms," and rather as assertions of modernist labor models on existing studio structures, attempts to improve their lots as individuals rather than as part of a guild.

The Hobby stories ultimately demonstrate the flexibility of the writer's status in Hollywood hierarchies, the unstable conditions that accompany such flexibility, and the importance of affective labor in negotiating these roles. Although successful navigation of the artist-worker divide is out of reach for Fitzgerald's 'hack' hero, one key to success in creative industries is mastering what Michael Hardt calls "the affective labor of human contact and interaction" (95). In 1930s Hollywood, such affective labors ranged from participation in canteen lunch-table conversation to setting up romances, to accessorizing one's wardrobe properly and

gaining lot entrance whether under contract or not. Such labors pervade Fitzgerald's Hollywood tales as well as more celebrated Hollywood narratives such as *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), and are often more important in managing careers than the productive labor of plot and dialogue creation. In other words, Hobby's true professional goals—screen credit, studio lot access, and enough money to 'look the part'—predict the ascent of affective labor over the course of the twentieth century, as team-building, social media management, and all manners of communicative products and practices came to dominate contemporary labor.

The creative worker in Hobby's world ultimately holds himself up as personally responsible for providing himself with assurances for which labor movements were simultaneously fighting: credit for labor, space in which to perform it, and the fair compensation required in order to maintain professional appearances. "Teamed with Genius," published in April 1940, follows a trajectory that is typical of many Hobby stories, in which an 'author' is pitted against a 'hack,' and the work of plotting one's own life is highlighted over the labor of screenwriting. A downtrodden alcoholic screenwriter, perpetually broke and unemployed after fifteen years working for the studios, Hobby gets a minor break and a bit of work on the studio lot. Either determined or unable to actually produce anything, he attempts to claim credit and compensation for work he has not performed (in some tales it's the work of other writers, and in others it is material that does not exist). In most cases he is caught and his scam revealed, but the studio heads do not think enough of him to fire him or even refuse compensation. More often than not, Pat nurses his wounded dignity with gin purchased with the fruits of his so-called labor.

In "Teamed," Pat is called in to work on a script with British playwright René Wilcox, who has never written for the screen before. Hobby attempts to collaborate with Wilcox, who is uncooperative and stereotypically temperamental as the 'artist' figure of the pair. While neither

man appears to do any actual work, the story details their efforts toward social manipulation for credit, pay, and glory. Throughout, the actual labor of production is shown to be a last resort. Upon learning of Wilcox's inexperience in screenwriting, for instance, Hobby muses that "while this increased Pat's chance for screen credit he badly needed, it meant that he might have to do some work. The very thought made him thirsty" (44). Wilcox also rarely appears to work, and sets the tone for their partnership when he quietly slips out of their first meeting while Pat is in mid-sentence ("what kind of collaborating can a man do if he walks out?" Pat exclaims…) (44). The ensuing "collaboration" proceeds as follows (Katherine Hodge is the secretary assigned to Wilcox whom Hobby appropriates, and *Ballet Shoes* is the treatment they have been tasked with scripting):

> Pat lay on his couch while miss Katherine Hodge read the script of *Ballet Shoes* aloud to him. About midway in the second sequence he fell asleep with his new hat on his chest.
>
> Except for the hat, that was the identical position in which he found René the next day at eleven. And it was that way for three straight days—one was asleep or else the other—and sometimes both. (44, 195)

When Wilcox stops showing up entirely, Hobby attempts to write the film himself with the assistance of "Benzedrine and great drafts of coffee," but ultimately fails and disappears on a twenty four-hour bender. When Hobby returns, Wilcox suddenly resurfaces with a finished script. Hobby's exclamation—"*What?* Have you been *working?*" is telling not only of his sense of betrayal but ultimately of the violation of an unspoken professional pact, through which non-production is upheld in creative workers' solidarity.

Throughout the Hobby stories, it gradually becomes clear that what Pat is really producing is a series of alternative narratives of his own life that combat the fact of his failure. Here and elsewhere, this act of self-crafting plays out as a scheme that Hobby invents to take credit for work he hasn't done. After Wilcox finishes the script alone and Hobby's chances for much-needed screen credit dwindle, Pat is "struck by his first original idea since he had been on the job" (195). The product of his original idea is a forged letter from the British consulate to Wilcox that reports the deaths of Wilcox's two brothers on the battlefield. His attitude towards the scheme is representative of his tendency to invest great personal interest and energy in deceptions that allow him to avoid real labor. When he reflects upon the unremarkable, two-sentence letter, Pat reportedly is "proud of it—there was a ring of factual sincerity in it too often missing from his work" (195). The authentic labor of social deception is shown here in contrast to the insincere "work" of screenwriting.

Pat's actual value as a worker, the story ultimately demonstrates, is not his output but his aesthetic and social presence. When he is first put on salary, for instance, studio chief Jack Berners loans him a few dollars and says "first of all, get a new hat. You used to be quite a boy around the secretaries in the old days. Don't give up at forty-nine!" (44). Berners implies that Hobby's shoddy attire is unsuitable, and that part of his value is in his ability to look polished and flirt with secretaries. The hat becomes a recurring theme, as it rests on Pat's chest while he sleeps through the workday and is forgotten in Berners' office at Hobby's ultimate moment of humiliation. As the story's denouement suggests, the hat is representative of its owner's overall value to the studio as an artifact and a social agent. After Hobby's scheme is revealed, he gets put on contract again thanks to an unlikely plot twist. Wilcox, who is now a rising star in the studio system, demands Hobby's reinstatement: "Must have Mike Hobby (sic), Wilcox demands

of Berners over the phone, "grateful to him. Had a quarrel with a certain young lady just before he came, but today Hobby brought us back together. Besides I want to write a play about him" (197). Berners orders his secretary to find Hobby at the bar across the street and explains "we're putting him on salary again but we'll be sorry" (197). Before she leaves, Berners exclaims in the story's final line: "Oh! Take him his hat. He forgot his hat" (197). Hobby is responsible for reuniting a couple, serving as subject matter for dramatic writing, and maintaining the appearance of a non-failure—everything but the production of scripts.

Wilcox's success in "Teamed" revises the outcome of the experience in Fitzgerald's career that inspired it—his failed collaboration with seasoned Hollywood vet Fred Paramore on the screenplay for *Three Comrades* (1938). In 1937, Fitzgerald was assigned to work on the screen adaptation of Erich Maria Remarque's wartime romance while under a six-month, $1000 per week contract with MGM. According to Cerasulo, he wrote to his daughter Scottie that he meant to "keep my hand on the wheel from the start—find out the key man among the bosses and the most malleable among the collaborators—then fight the rest tooth and nail until, in fact or in effect, I'm alone on the picture. That's the only way I can do my best work" (qtd. in Cerasulo 96). His intentions were frustrated when, after he finished a draft of the script, producer Joseph Mankiewicz paired Fitzgerald with Paramore for rewrites and revisions. As Cerasulo recounts, "Fitzgerald thought Paramore would be working beneath him to help with technical language and form; Paramore wanted to make extensive content revisions. Fitzgerald grew furious that the Hollywood hack dared to think himself his creative equal" (97). Contrary to the outcome of "Teamed with Genius," however, the artist did not come out on top over the hack. Once the script passed through Paramore's revisions and extensive rewrites by Mankiewicz

himself, only about a third of Fitzgerald's content remained (Bruccoli 434). He received what would be his only screen credit, but was embittered by the experience.

The Pat Hobby version of a failed collaboration between a literary "genius" and a Hollywood hack might then be taken as his attempt to rewrite his own career, just as Hobby perpetually tries to write his. Yet the story, told from the point of view of the failed hack, creates a complicated set of identifications. Fitzgerald the author controls the hack whom he cannot control in real life, yet the only work in which the hack finds fulfillment is the life-crafting work of scams and affect. The literary figure within the story succeeds as author and screenwriter, a feat that Fitzgerald has found out of his reach, but is also a comic stereotype. Divided identifications between the artist and worker multiply, and signal the overall difficulties of self-identification in Hollywood. The main threat of hack work to the writer's reputation is that he no longer knows who he is, or where his loyalties lie.

Like "Teamed with Genius," "Pat Hobby and Orson Welles" dramatizes the difficulties writers faced in navigating their roles as artists and hacks, but more poignantly demonstrates the costs. As Hobby blunders into an accidental impersonation of Welles, he resents the modernist Welles' for having disrupted the studio hierarchies that used to sustainably employ him. He also can't identify with ordinary workers, and having assumed Welles' identity (however briefly) he experiences a traumatic sense of self-loss. The situation that prompts this entire narrative is a classic Hobby dilemma—he can't get onto the lot. Throughout the cycle, Fitzgerald repeatedly emphasizes that presence on the studio lot is more important to Pat than the actual labor of writing, which he can no longer effectively perform. When he finds himself barred he associates the industrial changes that have rendered him irrelevant with Welles, who has been the talk of the lot all morning. Hobby is reminded of a Charlie Chaplin scene in which a man is forced off a

streetcar each time another boards, and muses "Welles was in; Hobby was out. Never before had the studio been barred to Pat though Welles was on another lot it seemed as if his large body, pushing in brashly from nowhere, had edged Pat out the gate" (38). His bodily emphasis in this case speaks to the importance of physical presence in Hollywood labor as well as Pat's confusion about what exactly his role as a writer entails.

As the tale unfolds, Hobby resists identification with both Welles' avant-garde tendencies and the ordinary labor of studio grunts. Welles' radical aesthetic innovations, it seems, have eliminated the middle ground between ordinary labor and impresario creativity that Pat still hopes to occupy. He doesn't directly associate Welles with avant-gardism, as it is unlikely Pat would be familiar with the term (and if he was would probably reject it as snobbery). While critics like Michael Denning associate Welles with modernist tendencies toward multi-faceted production and distanciation (Denning calls Welles "The American Brecht"), Pat's idea of Welles associates the *auteur*'s radical politics and aesthetics with expensive technological change (Denning 362). Speaking of Welles with an old executive whom Pat finally cajoles into smuggling him onto the lot, Pat muses: "I wouldn't be surprised if he was so radical that had to have all new equipment and start all over again like you did with sound in 1928" (198). That he shares trepidation with the executive over this possibility exemplifies one element of the identity crisis he is about to face. As Fitzgerald narrates, "Pat's psychology was, oddly, that of the masters" (198). Yet he is clearly not one of them—nor is he like Welles, or able to empathize with ordinary workers like extras. When a hair stylist friend from whom Pat wants to borrow money asks to use him as a model for a phony beard, he snaps, "I'm a writer, not a ham" (199).

When Pat is mistaken repeatedly for Welles due to physical resemblance, then, he is jarred. In keeping with Depression-era tendencies to personalize failure, moreover, the shock is

understood as self-induced. Misidentified as Welles by others, "he began to feel a loss of identity… Now to lose one's identity is a careless thing in any case. But to lose it to an enemy, or at least to one who has become a scapegoat for our misfortunes—that is a hardship. Pat was *not* Orson" (198, original emphasis). When Pat capitulates to his stylist friend Jeff's whims and accepts a fake beard (which, crucially, is glued on so he cannot remove it immediately), the crisis escalates as Jeff drives him around the lot as Orson Welles. Confronted with the blank stares of celebrity onlookers, Pat grumbles "You'd think I was the only beard on the lot," To which Jeff replies "You can sympathize with Orson Welles" (199). Pat retorts "To hell with him" at this abhorrent suggestion, and the scene is cut short with news that the executive to which Pat had spoken earlier has suffered a heart attack (probably induced by the prospect of Welles' techno-radicalism) (199). Pat flees to the local bar, and in the end disappears into the working masses. He finds "three extras with beards" standing at the bar and merges "into their corporate whiskers" (199). The story ends as he buys "every muff" a drink in a rare (for Pat) moment of labor solidarity. Fitzgerald's story envisions loss of identity to avant-garde aesthetic, technical, or political radicalism as the ultimate squandering of resources, which in this case renders Hobby to be no more than a corporate whisker.

The pathos of Hobby's Hollywood failures lies in Fitzgerald's presentation of the loyal worker who is increasingly shut out by the invasion of modernist artists like Welles and Wilcox. Ironically, Fitzgerald is the invading modernist and the agent who dictates Hobby the hack's fate, and rewrites his Hollywood failure as a triumph over his own character. At the same time, both Hobby and Fitzgerald seem to have more success in the construction of imagined life trajectories than they do in the production of usable material for films. Fitzgerald was not alone in expressing these ironies, either. Hecht frequently acknowledges the emphasis on non-production

in favor of social interaction and professional scheming that characterizes the writer's day on the studio lot. In *I Hate Actors!*, for instance he describes a typical day:

> A Hollywood day is the quickest of all time phenomena. Before you can get around to doing fifteen minutes of honest work—it's gone. A second breakfast in the studio commissary in company with a group of literary beachcombers (earning two thousand a week and dreaming sadly of a better life), a little game of gin rummy with a pigeon who fancies himself a Cagliostro of the cards, a chat in the corridor with a scrivener who is having producer trouble (one is never tired of listening to tales of producer-idiocy), a small bet placed on a horse; a shave, shine, and confab with an admirer who thinks you are the only able man in the studio and wishes you would do something beautiful to raise the standard of the movies—and it's time for lunch.
>
> Lunch kills the afternoon. Lunch at the Writers' Table, seating twenty-four, taps the most serious side of your talents, involving, as it does, debates on international policy, military strategy, memoirs on Hollywood frustration, astonishing side-lights on sex, plus a dice game. It being impossible to work after you have had a third cocktail, lost your morning horse bets and a fifty dollar bill on the dice, and exhausted yourself, to boot, proving why Russians are better (or worse) than the English, you go back to your office and put in a telephone call for New York, and look over a line of ties, handkerchiefs, and mufflers a Mr. Schultz is allowed to peddle inside of the studio gates. (182)

Hecht catalogues the non-productive activities of the Hollywood worker exhaustively here, and it is telling that the most serious of his talents are put to use in mealtime conversation. In response to these difficult conditions—for in spite of their leisurely tendencies the writer must struggle to actually produce—Hecht invents an early version of telecommuting: "I seldom 'went to work' but clung to my hotel chamber in pajamas and slippers. My so-called employers, not seeing me at the studio… imagined me honestly a-toil somewhere—a fine healthy illusion" (182-183).

In his avoidance of studio distraction, Hecht's stand-in narrator therefore is unlikely to actually work. However, for these men the realities of maintaining literary careers alongside their screenwriting duties meant they had to work twice as hard in many cases as those whose work was limited to one field or another. Not only were these dualities impediments to the goals of organizations like the SWG, they were also predictive of models that would develop over the course of the century. The worker who sells corporate creativity during the day in an environment of pseudo-leisure while working into the night to advance her personal creative goals is more pervasive in the post-Fordist flexible economy that it was in 1930s Hollywood. Although these ironies were common experiences for many Hollywood writers, the modernist leanings of Hecht, Fitzgerald, and West left them dissatisfied with the standard adaptations to studio life that other writers performed. All three were also stylistic oddballs in the American modernist pantheon. Their anomalous positions as modernists and professionals were the impetus for their innovation in each field. In the end, their formal and business models came to fuel the celebration of bohemian creativity in contemporary industries.

VI. "Experiments in Hack Work" Hollywood Modernist Labor Innovations.

Ben Hecht made no secret of his low opinion of typical Hollywood studio output and labor models. In a February 1932 issue of the little magazine *Contact* (which was published by

Nathanael West and William Carlos Williams), he published a scathing poem about Hollywood, which included such verses as "Come flicker forth you squawking hams/ You pasteboard hearts and candied woes/ You gibbering little diagrams/ Of silly plot and infant prose" (35). Throughout his career, Hecht repeatedly lamented the sorry state of popular cinema. In 1934, he and Charlie MacArthur would briefly form a semi-independent studio division aimed toward the production of more sophisticated cinematic output. In the meantime, Hecht sought to gradually distance himself from the studios while still reaping their financial rewards and, where he could, enhancing their cultural value. It was pivotal, in term of Hecht's unique ability to sustain an alternative production model, that he devise new modes of writing outside of the studio hierarchy but nevertheless in a collaborative setting. "His Ballad of the Talkies," from which the above verse is taken, reveals the frustration he experienced leading up to this endeavor, and following its failure. However, the alternatives he presented to existing models of Hollywood writing—namely the independent "writing factory" and the writer-producer-director model of studio-financed 'dependies'—broke new ground aesthetically and industrially, and would have a lasting impact on creative industries that is still felt today. The model Hecht devised in order to maintain the appearance of artistic legitimacy and autonomy represents perhaps the most unconventional technique at work here—semi-autonomous studio production. As successful studio writers, Hecht and his creative partner Charlie Lederer were capable of diverging from studio structures to write, direct, and produce in settings removed from the studios. While these failed to boost their literary authenticity or to elevate the status of writers in Hollywood, their resemblance to models that would not to arise until decades later is remarkable.

Hecht invented the writing factory model in response to the challenges of balancing mass-cultural and literary production demands (while presumably reserving time for drinking gin

and playing Backgammon). In 1929, when Hecht published "Farewell My Bluebell" in the final issue of the *Little Review*, he was still relatively new to Hollywood but already cynical about his work there and in every other creative industry he had tried. As if to answer complaints of the magazine's avant-garde readership and community, he wrote: "I have earned a living by spending an average of two months a year by writing tripe for the lower class popular magazines; before that by running around without rubbers as a newspaper man; and of late by inventing a unique kind of swill for the movies. I am regarded in Hollywood as a great scenario writer. I have also spent much time getting up huge financial schemes designed to makes [sic] me a millionaire. So far all these schemes have failed. All this extra-literary activity I regard as honest whore-mongering" (7). Because his film work had so far failed to make him a millionaire, he could not finance enough time off during the rest of the year to focus on literature. Hecht was a hard worker, but not prepared for the rigors of working for the studios by day and toward his own ends at night. Therefore, he devised a plan to form his own independent "writing factory" beyond the studio walls. The result was that he could take on multiple projects at once, rake in the cash, and after a flurry of collaborative production settle down at his farmhouse in Nyack, NY for months to work on a novel.

Hecht was a year past the "Bluebell" piece and into his dual Hollywood-Broadway mass-cultural production career when he found himself overcommitted. He had accepted advances from two different Broadway producers at once, and was nearly finished (in collaboration with MacArthur) with one of them (the Broadway production farce *Twentieth Century*, which he would later sell again in Hollywood). He and MacArthur then promised a film script to Sam Goldwyn on a whim, as MacAdams recounts:

> In New York… they met Sam Goldwyn in an elevator in the Pierre Hotel, where Hecht, unwilling or unable to stop himself from bamboozling a Hollywood mogul, launched into a movie plot for MacArthur's amusement, making it up as he went along. Goldwyn said he'd buy the story for $10,000 and the script for an additional $125,000, so Hecht and MacArthur decided to finish [*Twentieth Century*] in Hollywood. But, before leaving for California, Hecht wanted to find someone to write the Goldwyn movie for them. (122)

Hecht recruited a young writer named John Lee Mahin and promised him two hundred dollars a week. "We're going to have a story factory," Hecht announced, "you'll do a movie while we finish our play" (qtd. in MacAdams 123). They all settled into a seventy-five acre avocado ranch near L.A., and began to produce material for stage and screen. Although MacAdams likens the scheme to the career of Alexandre Dumas, nothing quite like what Hecht was doing had happened in the development of mass-cultural production (MacAdams 144-5). When Hecht created the independent writing factory, he not only invented a new way of writing for Hollywood but also created a system capable of producing what are now considered landmark films in the development of the classical Hollywood narrative (*Scarface* [1932], for instance). There were certainly flaws in this model, among them Hecht's limited capacity as a supervisor. Regarding his work on *The Unholy Garden* (1931) Mahin recalled "You couldn't write for Ben Hecht… I made a little stab here and there but I didn't know anything about picture form. Ben said, 'just write the story,' but I didn't know what he wanted" (132). That the film, which Hecht took over and dictated in two days, was in its author's own words "one of the worst flops ever

turned out by a studio," was not a problem. Hecht had been able to overcommit and reap the benefits, the potential black mark of the flop erased by the extraordinary success of *Scarface*.

Hecht soon grew to be unsatisfied with this strategy. While it allowed him to reap the benefits of Hollywood work with minimal effort, he could not entirely relinquish the desire to create a more sophisticated, mature cinematic product. The writing factory model, however, granted him no power over what happened to his scripts once they went into production. Even before handing over the material, writers were unable violate the expectations of the executives. Therefore, "in almost every case, writers attempted to gain *control*, either directly or indirectly, over the scripting process and, in some cases, over the actual production itself," as Fine asserts (*West of* 141, emphasis in original). Hecht and MacArthur took the later route in 1934, when "after [the] screen adaptation of their play, *The Twentieth Century*, had proved enormously popular, Paramount offered the team a multi-picture deal… to produce, write, and direct four movies at Paramount's [Astoria] Long Island Facility under the general supervision of Walter Wanger" (Fine *West of* 151). Even though he was technically a studio boss, Wanger was an ideal executive for the Astoria experiment; a "literate college-educated executive who promised to keep out of their way," and the deal gave them a chance to make their own films, "far removed from the front office" (Fine *West of* 151). Having pioneered the independent writing factory model, Hecht and West would attempt to pioneer an indie division model. The Astoria project was short-lived, lasting only a few years, but as both Fine and MacAdams assert, it made a lasting impact on the status of writers in the studio system as it proved that sophisticated films could be made under alternative models of studio production, and could still find favor with critics and audiences with about the same degree of consistency as standard Hollywood fare.

The Astoria films set out to demonstrate similar principles to those that would come to unite the American Independent film movement of the 1980s and 1990s, prior to its near-total absorption into major Hollywood studios in the 2000s. The films Hecht and Lederer made there—*Crime Without Passion* (1934), *Once in a Blue Moon* (1935), *The Scoundrel* (1935), and *Soak the Rich* (1936), were uneven in quality and reception, but they proved that films could cost far less than was typical in Hollywood, with minimal studio control, largely unknown actors, and without expensive sets and excessive planning. Martha Sleeper, a lead actress in *the Scoundrel*, praised the filmmakers' spontaneity in an *LA Times* article:

> The way they work is the most astonishing thing. You go right out on the set without rehearsal. The camera grinds and you go into your scene, fresh as your own first impression. Of course, if it doesn't turn out well, there's a retake, but that doesn't happen often. Charlie and Ben give you enormous confidence, too, because they believe in you so thoroughly, once they decide on you. They rely greatly on Lee Garmes, who is a cameraman, but a sort of magician, too. I remember for one of my most important scenes Charlie and Ben weren't even there! (qtd. in Von Blon 15)

While they were at work on Astoria films, Hecht and MacArthur took aggressive measures to cut the films' budgets wherever possible. *Crime Without Passion*, MacAdams reports, had a budget of $150,000, which was "an impossibly small amount for a Hollywood film, but one that Hecht was determined not to exceed, convinced as he was that it was possible to make good movies for far less money than the studios deemed necessary" (170). The result was a new, alternative aesthetic. Instead of lavish sets and high-priced stars, Hecht-MacArthur productions relied on

camera tricks, amateur actors and crewmen, and ambitious storytelling to craft films that (to some audiences) were as appealing, if not more so, than big budget prestige pictures.

The slap-dash methods of the Astoria productions allowed Hecht and MacArthur to cast themselves as rebels in the world of creative labor, able to achieve control over their own working schedules and conditions as well as their creative output on their own terms, without working in solidarity with other writers and artists beyond their immediate clique. The details of their production of *Crime Without Passion* demonstrate the renegade sensibility of their production techniques, as MacAdams details them. In addition to hiring virtually unknown actors for major roles, "when they needed chorus girls for a nightclub scene, they phoned Jack and Charlie's and had them pile eighteen girls in cabs and send them over to Astoria" (171). They borrowed an orchestra from a Harlem nightspot for the afternoon; hired a Broadway set designer and then let him go after he produced sketches; had Garmes make rolling backdrops from the sketches (in addition to his camera and substitute director duties); and Hecht and MacArthur appeared in several scenes as extras and bit players, both "to save money and amuse themselves" (171-172). In spite of these short cuts, the Astoria films' reception indicates that many saw them as not mere aesthetically valuable, and rather as cinematic breakthroughs.

Of the four, *Crime Without Passion* and *The Scoundrel* produced the most enthusiastic responses from critics and audiences alike, who praised these films for their fresh and intelligent narratives and groundbreaking aesthetics. Of *Crime*, *New York Times* Critic Mordaunt Hall raved, "This production… bristles with imaginative ideas and clever dialogue" (X3). "Stunning" was the exhortation of the *LA Times* regarding *the Scoundrel* (Schuer A1, 28 April 1935). Critics also remarked on the films' appeal to a select audience, as in Edwin Schallert's *LA Times* review of *Crime*, which it dubs a "very continental type of thriller"—the term "continental" presumably

used to convey the film's refinement and sophistication (13). Schallert also remarks: "It is not the popular type of picture, but it will be favored by all those who are interested in productions that are off the beaten track," a sentiment echoed by *Chicago Tribune* writer Mae Tineé's remark that "those who like it will like it immensely" (13, 11). Reviewers cite the films' visual experiments and psychologically tense narratives, most notably a double-exposure technique that allows the protagonist to split into dual personalities and speak to himself, and what Schuer calls its "'stream-of consciousness' narration" (Schuer A1, 9 Sept 1934). These two attributes of the first Astoria film are in some sense effects of its budget shortcuts and the total control of writers; the special effects, on the one hand, were Garmes' method for drawing attention away from low-budget settings and production design. And the subjective, psychological narrative is Hecht's expression of literary sensibilities in film form. His fiction frequently dealt with the frailties of human consciousness, and the film itself was based on his own short story.

The film version of *Crime Without Passion*, like Hecht's short story, depicts the deterioration of a modern professional's grasp on reality. More importantly, it visually portrays the process of self-undoing that surfaces frequently in Depression-era literature and is especially acute in Hollywood fictions like the Pat Hobby Stories detailed earlier. As a narrative of failure, it is more akin to Depression-era literature of downward mobility than to mainstream Hollywood escapism. Its central character Lee Gentry is initially introduced as a star defense lawyer whose outstanding record is the product of a heartless worldview and planted evidence. Having lost romantic interest in a young burlesque dancer, Gentry attempts to split with her. The ensuing quarrel turns physical, and the girl is presumed to be dead. At the moment of her apparent demise, Gentry appears to split into two versions of himself—one that performs the frenzied work of covering up the crime, and a projected self (accomplished through double-exposure)

who calmly instructs the other. While one Gentry performs the labor of scheming, the other benefits from a seemingly objective position that allows him to register contingencies and act accordingly.

Although he carefully doctors the crime scene and manages to get away without being observed, however, it is when he looks to the cinema for an alibi that his plan begins to unravel. He walks into a theater mid-way through a film, and while there engages with staff and fellow patrons in order to leave the impression of his presence as though he had been there for the entire showing, thus placing him at the theater at the time of the girl's death. Later on, at the nightclub where the murdered girl performs, a former flame tells Gentry that she saw him entering the theater halfway through the show, and ruins his alibi. In a moment of confusion, he shoots and kills a former romantic rival in the presence of the entire nightclub audience, this time committing a crime that he can't cover up. To make matters worse, the woman he initially thought dead appears on stage, having recovered from the injury that had rendered her unconscious and bloody. As he awaits indictment, the projected self appears again and tries to convince him to commit suicide, but the literal self is shown to be too weak. The film visually presents Gentry in duplicate, failing first in the act of self-preservation, and then in the act of self-destruction.

The Astoria films presented an alternative aesthetic to a niche audience using inventive production models that threatened existing Hollywood hierarchies. The same *LA Times* article that deems *The Scoundrel* "stunning" muses that "Hollywood's great may loudly proclaim their indifference to what the rest of the world is doing—but you don't need to pay any attention. Hecht and MacArthur, the "Katzenjammer Kids," have got them worried—and why not? The Writer Coming Into His Own is page-one news" (Schuer A1, 28 April 1935). Another *LA Times*

article calls them "rebels" for leaving Hollywood to "make much finer pictures away from this production center" ("Will Screen" 5). Therefore, not unlike the studio-indie model that is now prevalent, the Astoria films offered alternatives to a select audience of elite viewers while lowering costs and allowing content to remain under the writer's control from the ground up. The model was unsustainable because, according to Fine, while their films made modest profits they "had been unable to produce the enormous box office hit that would have insured the success of their experiment. Only such a hit could have overcome Paramount's reflexive reluctance to give up control and authority" (*West of* 153). Because of the project's short life and ultimate demise, MacAdams concludes that it did little to address the plight of writers in the studio system at the time. In the end, he observes that "The Astoria films didn't advance the freedom of the scriptwriter in the Hollywood factory system but to many they admirably demonstrated that excellent movies, not restricted by Hollywood's predigested plots, could be made to appeal to more literate segments of the filmgoing populace" (180).

It should be noted, however, that while such literary appeal was Hecht's objective, the advancement of other writers was not. He may have been interested in advancing his own position, but he took issue much more with the quality of Hollywood films than writers' labor conditions. In one interview, he remarked, "I never could understand why authors are always yowling against Hollywood. It's the only institution that hasn't treated them like galley slaves" (Qtd. in Sennwald X4). In the end, the Hecht-MacArthur Astoria productions presented a dual threat (if only for a few years) to executives and labor leaders alike. In a struggle between workers and corporate bosses, Hecht and Macarthur appeared as mavericks with an alternative mode of production and an advanced aesthetic to boot. In coming decades, similar models of unit-based semi-independent production models would become one of the primary innovations to

keep Hollywood afloat amongst the storm of political, legal, and social upheavals the industry would confront after the next World War. Whether one looks to Hecht's and Lederers' early experiments in independence, later models of semi-independent production, or the boutique divisions that now mine festivals and new creative talent within major studios, one tendency unites them. In each iteration, the appearance of self-fulfillment and expression serves as a substitute for traditionally valued labor rights such as fair compensation and stable employment. That such developments initially emerged from the contributions of Hollywood modernists suggests that they did not fail, but rather succeeded in mounting innovations that, for better or for worse, would break new ground for future disruptors.

Conclusion:

Above all, Ben Hecht's, Nathanael West's, and F. Scott Fitzgerald's inability to fully contribute to rising labor solidarity among creative laborers in this period stems from their insistence on modernist autonomy, which they express through tales of characters who internalize structural contradictions as personal failures. In other words, they sought to portray the plight of the Hollywood worker, but assigning blame for his failure anywhere within industrial or national economic systems would mean removing his autonomy and rendering him a mere worker. The literary expression of their contradictory situation presents two scenarios of self-mismanagement, both of which carry over into critical perceptions of the period. In the first, the modernist author or artist fails because he is a poor manager of his text and formal composition. Early modernist experimentation is reframed as failure, and the process of creation is equated to management (or lack thereof).

In the second scenario, the failed creative worker is the agent of his own destruction because he cannot manage his reproductive capacity, which is ultimately contained in his body

and mind. Steven Brint and Christopher Proctor describe this element of professional life as "a tension between self-restraint and self-expression," which required careful management for the successful professional worker: "Middle-class respectability required self-discipline in activities related to professional training, work, community life, and family social reproduction, but it allowed self-expression and pleasure seeking in activities related to consumption" (464). When self-expression was a matter of production, however, as in the case of the writer, restraint in matters of pleasure-seeking was difficult to attain (as Fitzgerald's legendary habits demonstrate) and in many cases debauchery was a mark of distinction. Therefore, much of the literature and screenwriting these Hollywood writers produced shows characters performing both types of self-management, and uses distinctions between textual and mental or bodily mismanagement to cast characters as either professionals or artists. In doing so, these narratives of Hollywood life and labor assert boundaries between artists' and workers' roles, and obscure the real sources of exploitation embedded in incipient systems of creative labor in Hollywood at the time.

From this point on, creative and professional-managerial labor would become less and less distinguishable, and the onus placed on both to responsibly manage texts and workers would become increasingly undermined by the bohemian ideal of losing to win which culminates in the rise of David Brooks' Bobo. As Thomas Strychacz argues, "the kind of text we usually call modernist was shaped profoundly by a convergence of professional discourse and the rise of mass culture. In this respect, modernist texts are historically related to the processes governing the establishment of authoritative discourses in American society" (5). The establishment of authoritative discourses is, as Richard Ohmann suggests, one of the primary duties of the PMC (83). If Strychacz is correct, then modernists and professionals alike were charged with the establishment of expertise and professionalism that could maintain healthy Fordist enterprises.

But Hollywood modernist literature, as this chapter has shown, often takes an unexpected course in its assertion of failure itself as a type of expertise, a mark of creativity capable of enhancing a worker's flexibility. Further, as Fordist structures deteriorate, modernist creative laborers' failure appears as more and more heroic until it is a staple of late twentieth and early twenty-first century labor, which also is more creative than ever before. In the end, the 'loser wins' principle is effectively a no-win scenario. Contrary to Brooks' dreamy vision of summer houses and enlightened gentrification, what self-induced failure really accomplishes over the course of the twentieth century and into the new one is an attack on labor solidarity and the rise of bohemian enterprise as a means of exploitation across sectors.

In other words, the self-exploitation that appears in the work of Hollywood modernists has become a crucial component of the twenty-first century economy. Produced in the fusion of (on the one hand) the incentive to fail creatively as necessitated by bohemian networks of cultural capital and (on the other hand) the critical and professional mandate to be a good self-manager, ideas of bohemian failure justify not only increasing exploitation in the name of creativity abut also innovation without reflection. In Andrew Ross' "The Mental Labor Problem," for instance, he writes "Indeed, and largely because of artists' traditions of self-sacrifice [the cruel indifferences of the market] often appears to spur them on in ways that would be regarded as self-destructive in any other sector" (6). At the same time, other sectors are diminishing in importance, now that (as Ross also acknowledges): "the percentage of employees identified as artists, in national labor statistics, is higher than ever… [and] the principle of the cultural discount is more and more utilized on a semi-industrial scale in sections of the knowledge industries" (7). The outcome across numerous sectors, as Mark Banks puts it, is that workers experience a "double-edged character of 'self-enterprise' [that]… can reinforce

discourses of 'self-blaming' amongst 'failing' entrepreneurs and workers, and potentially disaggregate collective forms of organizing and representation" (11).

Therefore, the writers I highlight in this chapter are central in explaining how failure has taken on new meaning under twenty-first century global capitalism. Hegemonic systems of exploitation today operate according to similar logics of rebellion and cultural capital as do the incentives to self-exploit in the workplace. Judith (Jack) Halberstam's *Queer Failure*, for instance, seeks to subvert contemporary capitalist norms through "ways of being and knowing that stand outside of conventional understandings of success" (2). He argues that "success in a heteronormative, capitalist society equates too easily to specific forms of reproductive maturity combined with wealth accumulation" (2). As an alternative, we should consider that "failing, losing, forgetting, unmaking, undoing, unbecoming, not knowing, may in fact offer more creative, more cooperative, more surprising ways of being in the world" (2). Although he asserts that this vision and the book as a whole "dismantles the logics of success and failure with which we currently live," I have tried to show that Fitzgerald, Hecht, and West were dismantling these logics more than eighty years ago. Whether queer or modernist (or both), the gesture of failure in intellectual and industrial labor is often an alternative to dominant structures that does not fully oppose. To bring new purpose to the study of failure in American literature and culture, perhaps it makes sense to remember collective, rather than individual, modes of failure as resistance such strikes, slowdowns, and sabotage.

Chapter 4:

Orson Welles on the Margins of Global Hollywood

I. Introduction

Gregory Arkadin is partial to fables. Invented and performed by Orson Welles, the wealthy, corrupt industrialist of *Mr. Arkadin* (also known as *Confidential Report*, 1955) is at his most expansive when regaling admirers at a lavish party. In one such scene, he recounts a tale of a scorpion and a frog:

> The scorpion wanted to cross a river, so he asked the frog to carry him. 'No,' said the frog, 'no thank you. If I let you on my back you might sting me, and the sting of a scorpion is death.' 'Now where,' asks the scorpion, 'is the logic of that?' (As scorpions always try to be logical). 'If I sting you, you will die, and I will drown.' So the frog was convinced and allowed the scorpion on his back. But just in the middle of the river he felt a terrible pain and realized that, after all, the scorpion had stung him. 'Logic!' cried the dying frog as he started under, bearing the scorpion down with him. 'There is no logic in this.' 'I know, said the scorpion, but I can't help it. It's my character'.

As J. Hoberman notes in an essay on the 2006 Criterion release of the film, this story is often interpreted as Welles' own analogy for his relationship with the Hollywood industry, as it "has been taken by virtually all commentators to be Welles's true confession" ("Welles Amazed"). Welles, in other words, cannot help but cajole producers into funding his projects, nor resist undermining them. I find the analogy more plausible in reverse, however—throughout his career, Welles repeatedly placed his work in the hands of producers only to be fatally "stung" as studios and distributors radically recut. Welles, in fact, could never truly identify as either frog or

scorpion. Like the frog, he did not trust studios and distributors entirely, but mistakenly assumed they shared his artistic interests. Like the scorpion, he repeatedly acted impulsively without regard for their mutual fate.

Arkadin itself was an extreme instance of such mutual sabotage, as evidenced by its two release titles and at least four circulated versions (Jonathan Rosenbaum counts seven, although these include two "pretexts" and a novelistic adaptation of the film). This pattern occurred in the post-production of nearly every film Welles directed after *Citizen Kane* (1941), and would continue throughout his career, from RKO's notorious butchering of *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942) to Universal's controversial reshoots, soundtrack changes, and recuts on *Touch of Evil* (1958). These instances reconcile poorly with industrial shifts in this period away from rigid studio control, and toward more independent and international production models, which could have empowered independent artists like Welles. *Arkadin,* for instance, was financed by multiple investors, filmed in at least three countries, and overseen in production by few other than writer-director-*auteur* Welles, but is known as his most mangled final release.

Arakdin's production was representative of postwar modes of foreign and decentralized production that studios and independent artists alike devised to address a cluster of political and industrial crises. In 1948, Hollywood studios faced a major court ruling that demanded divestiture of their theater holdings, as well as a rapidly diminishing audience in the wake of suburban migration and the rise of television. In response, the studios increasingly relied on modes of independent production that farmed out material to outside production units while retaining some control over financing and content, as well as "runaway production" tactics that sent film productions overseas in search of cheap labor and entry into weakened foreign markets. In Barry Langford's account, this period saw "the dismantling of the old centralized production

machinery and its replacement by a ramified, globally dispersed congeries of interrelated and often short-lived freelance entities on the one hand and titanic diversified multimedia conglomerates on the other" (12). In the decades following WWII, runaway and independent productions created opportunities for artists to exploit unconventional opportunities, but also enabled studios to undermine labor stability. As film industries in the U.S. and Europe reorganized between 1945 and 1960, studios and artists sought creative and economic advantages through similar means, as they devised mobile and flexible production strategies.

Many of Welles' films in this period allegorize the instability and opportunity of the postwar film industry as narratives of conspiracy, in which detectives, artists, and other professionals must make sense of unseen systems at work across borders and in distant nations in order to assemble a story that is true to their experience of events. In his films *the Lady From Shanghai* (1947), *Mr. Arkadin* (1955), *Touch of Evil* (1958), and *The Trial* (1962), borders, waterways, roads, and airways operate as spaces of corruption and conspiracy. These spaces were also pivotal sites of transformation for film workers, whose careers were often impacted by postwar political and economic turmoil. Welles' films offer allegorical depictions of this history from the perspective of the creative laborer, and ultimately reveal that postwar "Hollywood" adopted decentralized, global, on-demand, and flexible characteristics of a post-Fordist economic model about twenty years before the wholesale ascendency of post-Fordism in the 1970s. In the midst of this transformation, studios and artists each devised modes of international and independent production in attempts to shift the balance of power in their favor. The studio version was constructed to circumvent foreign protections and domestic labor constraints, while the independent artist's version sought more radical forms of autonomy in order to make films

capable of critiquing a rapidly changing industry that was becoming more global, opaque, and decentralized than ever before.

Runaway and independent production in the late 1940s and 1950s were elements of an industry in transformation, the unsettling conditions of which register in many films of the period. Welles' allegories of crime and corruption, for instance, unfold across national borders, in labyrinthine corridors, on ships and airplanes, and in dark, unmarked alleys, as his subjects and audience are placed in positions of anxious ignorance. Such trends speak to a general Cold-War state of anxiety and myopia, as filmgoers and makers alike struggled to reckon with the events of the Holocaust and atom bomb, as well as the dual ideological specters of witch-hunts at home and a nuclear threat abroad. They also express creative workers' failed attempts to locate themselves as laborers, legal subjects, and citizens in the decades following WWII. Welles' use of allegory marks an attempt to represent an opaque system, and to mask critiques of his backers in abstraction. Allegory's purpose, as Rita Copeland and Peter T. Struck assert, is to act as both an "interpretive process, which moves from what is already visible to transcendent referents," and a "compositional process, which seeks to express imagistically what is otherwise abstract or invisible" (6). Whether a deliberate construction on Welles' part or an interpretive process that benefits from historical hindsight, allegory renders these films into potent statements on the dangers and opportunities that the postwar film industry presented to its workers. *The Lady from Shanghai* and *Mr. Arkadin* allude to the instability instigated by global commerce and the potential for independent workers like Welles to innovate through international production. The border noir of *Touch of Evil* similarly follows cops and detectives as they attempt to navigate corrupted systems through frequent and disorienting border crossings, and pits conspiracy against potential new forms of solidarity and hybridity. These films capture experiences of

cognitive failure in relation to international and decentralized industry that were specific to Welles' position as an creative worker in a transitional period of the Hollywood industry, and predictive of late-century tendencies to destabilize creative labor.

Welles is a key figure in the industrial and aesthetic transformations of postwar Hollywood because although his methods of independent, international filmmaking proved unreliable at the time, they modeled the kind of autonomously financed and institutionally unbound filmmaking that would spark the indie boom of the 1980s and 1990s, and revealed the power of flexible, mobile labor to both empower and victimize workers across industries. As a whole, his films express anxieties about corruption, globalization, and networked information provoked by the anti-Communist investigations of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and resulting blacklists, international and runaway film production, the fragmentation of the Hollywood studio system and the increasing vulnerability of its workers. Welles' reliance on allegory renders the structural issues at hand as moral, personal, and sexual dilemmas, but also marks an attempt to map new postwar political and economic networks.[56] My exclusive focus on Welles in this chapter stems from his unusual position in the film industry as an artist who was initially allowed unprecedented freedom, who was then almost immediately rejected because of the liberties he took with that freedom, and who for the rest of his career worked

[56] Several critics and biographers have noted Welles' interest in myth, fable, and allegory. Francois Truffaut writes in his introduction to Andre Bazin's account of Welles' career, "what has always interested Orson Welles isn't psychology or thrillers or the romances and adventure stories that have been made since the cinema began; no, what interests him are stories in the form of tales, fables, allegories. Orson Welles, all of whose films implicitly begin with 'once upon a time…' would be the best director to film the Arabian nights" (22). It is also frequently noted that his allegories carry a remarkable sense of real-world accountability. Michael Denning's analysis of Welles' political allegory notes that he channels his fascination with magic, hypnosis, and spellbinding into "Allegories of fascism" (365). James Naremore, meanwhile, sees Welles' allegories as meditations on personal and social morality: "however angst ridden and fatalistic Welles's stories may be, however irrational and sexually charged his images may become, he continues to insist, both inside the fiction and outside, that his characters are morally responsible agents in a society of their own creation" (*Magic World* 234).

independently or in cautious collaboration with Hollywood studios. A multi-faceted artist with strong inclinations toward parable and allegory, his postwar films often use these devices to explore the global and industrial networks of an industry in upheaval.

The period from the end of WWII through the mid-1960s was decisive in Hollywood history, as the American film industry underwent massive reorganization in response to a cluster of crises that rendered the classical economic model obsolete. Since its consolidation in the 1910s, the studio model had been based on efficiency and scale. Re-use of materials and sets, long-term contract labor, a stockpile of continuity scripts, and a streamlined process of divided labor ensured that product could be generated efficiently and in large quantities.[57] Vertically integrated corporate structures ensured the sale of studio product, as five of the eight major studios had near-total control over production, distribution and exhibition. But such rigid corporate structures were poorly suited to withstand the legal, social, and technological upheavals that threatened to bankrupt studios in the years immediately following WWII. A series of legal rulings that culminated in the 1948 "Paramount Decree" required the studios to divest of their theater holdings and discontinue numerous unfair business practices, while audiences abandoned cities for suburbs, and film for the new medium of television. Peter Lev summarizes the problems facing Hollywood in the late 1940s and 1950s in *Transforming the screen: 1950-1959*:

> Television broadcasting was rapidly becoming the dominant entertainment medium in The United States. The Paramount antitrust consent decree requiring separate ownership for production companies and theater chains had gone into

[57] The classical studio model is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Also see Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson's *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*.

> effect on 1 January 1950. Large numbers of young men and women were marrying, having children, and moving to the suburbs, which affected the viability of downtown first-run movie theaters. Foreign revenues were endangered by protectionist tactics including quota systems, high taxes, and blocked funds. Finally, the morality and patriotism of Hollywood films and filmmakers were under attack from government, religious, and citizens' groups" (7).

Among other responses to these crises, the Hollywood elite sought to differentiate their product from television through the use of exotic locations, initiating a tactic known within the industry as "runaway production" that also allowed them to minimize labor costs by hiring foreign workers. They also sought to re-distribute financial risks through the use of independent production units made up of workers not contracted to the studio.

Independent production in the 1940s and 1950s bore little resemblance to the type of production the term refers to today, in which a small company or individuals self-finance (often with help from investors) a production which is later picked up for distribution, usually at a film festival. In the earlier version, a studio would hire an independent production team to produce a "package," which typically included a script, director, and stars that the studio would supply. Such arrangements allowed them to cut costs and minimize risk, while also enhancing product differentiation. As studios reorganized, they came to rely increasingly on this model. As Drew Casper's *Postwar Hollywood: 1946-1962* reports, "In 1949, 20 percent of 234 major studio films were independently produced. By 1957, of the 291 releases, 58 percent were indies" (48). United Artists, a studio that had long based its business in independent production furnishes a useful example: "To attract an independent with a 'package' (a script and perhaps bankable star and director), UA honchos Arthur B. Krim and Robert G. Benjamin offered full financing…for a

standard distribution fee of 30 percent of the box-office 'nut' (box-office gross minus exhibitor's fee) in the USA, Canada, and England" (48). Once the deal was signed, studio and independent unit "agreed on story, casting, director, and budget over which, once set, the company kept a tight control" (49). Afterwards, the independent unit was largely left alone. While this system allowed for a wider range of personal expression, it still concentrated power in the hands of a few key players, and did not tend to empower truly controversial figures such as Welles.

Compared to independent production, runaway filmmaking offered a more dramatic means of shoring up studio power at the expense of foreign industry and domestic labor. According to Casper, "runaway production was, primarily, a matter of sound economic sense. Studio dismantling and cheaper production costs put Hollywood on the go. Foreign crews, not enmeshed in restrictive union practices, actually worked anywhere from 20 to 50 percent below US scale, and materials were less costly" (50). Runaway and independent production were a natural fit, as "independents found it easier to raise money when runaway production was part of the package," and geographic distance from the studio allowed greater autonomy (51). Workers like Welles, who for political, personal, and creative reasons elected to live abroad in this period, did not benefit as directly from runaway production as they may have hoped, in that studios still controlled production. Welles, for instance, was often employed as an actor in international co-productions such as *The Third Man* (Carol Reed, 1949), but was not trusted to helm such studio-financed material. He was, however, able to fund his own projects using his own money from such acting work. His career and films in this period therefore depict the period from the perspective of an artist in industrial exile, whose experience exemplifies that of the worker whose position in a newly reorganizing industry is ambiguous and unstable.

Trends toward international and independent filmmaking during these years appeared to bolster the autonomy of creative workers, and for some this was truly the case. For the most part, however, independent iconoclasts like Welles fell victim to a restructured global industry that favored talent agents and powerful independent producers. Simultaneously, the reliable craftsmen whose work upheld the classical system saw their employment undermined in the wake of HUAC, the blacklists, runaway production and competition from television. Regarding runaway production, for instance, Peter Lev cites a 1957 report sponsored by the Hollywood AFL film Council which "found that 314 features had been made abroad by Hollywood companies between 1949 and 1956, with 55 for the most recent year," and adds that "this translated to unemployment or under employment for thousands of Hollywood-based workers" (149-150). Anti-Communist investigations into Hollywood personnel further weakened organized labor and "added to the woes of an industry already laying off workers in response to declining audiences in foreign markets," yet the investigations "were seen by film executives is a mixed blessing, [and] the blacklist was, at least in part, 'good business' for the studios, enabling them to regain control over the entertainment marketplace after the economic and other 'shocks' after the war" (Lev 71). For workers who faced increasing instability, the source of these upheavals was difficult to detect, and the restructuring industry had an air of deception.

Filmmakers who sought to critique and examine such developments faced tense political and economic conditions, and often favored allegorical modes of expression. From the claustrophobia and intrigue of film noir to the symbolically rich statements of genre films like *High Noon* (1952) and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), rare instances of critique and skepticism in an otherwise conformist and superficially cheerful period often relied on allegory. The constraints of postwar repression necessitated allegory because of its potential to represent

the unrepresentable and call into question the reliability of representation itself. If, as Copeland and Struck suggest (summarizing Paul De Man), allegory is "the paradigmatic instance of rhetoric and rhetorical language… the sign whose meaning cannot be fixed but is continually deferred, both calling for and resisting interpretation," then Welles' postwar allegories—like others that appeared between 1945 and the early 1960s—call attention to the difficulties of fixing meaning amidst the social, political, and economic obfuscations of Cold War culture.

Welles' biographers dispute whether he was to blame for his later films' failure to fulfill the promise of *Citizen Kane* (1941), as so many of his later works were either never completed or ruined by ham-handed studio recuts. I am here concerned here, however, with his explorations of corrupt and conspiratorial political and industrial systems—which he certainly experienced, regardless of whatever errors he may have committed.[58] His self-exile in Europe from 1947 to 1958 (whether provoked by his own mistakes, his personal life, political persecution, or disillusionment with Hollywood) placed him in a unique position to represent marginalized subjects of unseen conspiracies. Like many other Cold War filmmakers, Welles' attempts at creative expression faced three main sources of resistance, each of which he renders as conspiracy in film form: a hostile political environment in the U.S. driven by anti-communist spectacle, but secretive in its inner workings; new systems of runaway and international film production; and a newly reorganized U.S. film industry that was less monopolistic but nevertheless consolidated power at the top. Rather than simply falling victim to the hidden

[58] Until recently, biographical studies of Welles tended to evaluate his degree of responsibility for his unfinished and botched films, with biographers such as David Thompson and Charles Higham offering pseudo-psychological reflections on Welles' lost projects and underperforming films. Joseph McBride, on the other hand, heads up a biographical trend toward defending Welles, positing him (as does Michael Denning) as a victim of a system within which he refused to compromise artistically, morally, and politically. Others, like Simon Callow and Patrick McGilligan, take more observational position. This chapter bypasses this particular issue in light of the extended analysis of Hollywood failure I have undertaken in Chapter 3. I assume here that if nothing else, Welles' allegories of postwar Hollywood are successful in that they are so persistently legible in the films with which this chapter is concerned.

workings of conspiracy, however, Welles' protagonists regain control as they construct narratives to explain the secret systems that have been deployed to undermine them.

As semi-independent and runaway production models were on the rise in Hollywood from 1945 though the 1950s, Welles worked as an outsider to cultivate an aesthetic and a mode of production that more closely resembles the idea of the twenty-first century rebel capitalist than did the independent units that studios hired at the time to reduce overhead. For André Bazin, Welles is a heroic "experimenter… after the fashion of the great polymath inventors of the quattrocento" (134). According to Bazin, Welles is most inspirational "when we see him travel across the earth, as they traveled across Europe, begging for patronage, passing from one port to another inquests of that artist's Holy Grail which exists only in the possibility of creating" (134). Bazin's vision of unrestrained and heroic international independence and experimentation, however, falls as short of reality as it often does today for creative workers and beyond in the flexible economy. After the end of WWII, Welles did not work abroad and without studio support solely in the name of creative freedom, but because he had no other choice. While he initially hoped for creative autonomy, his experience fell short. Given the ongoing tendency in the creative economy for instability and crisis to resurface as flexibility and opportunity, the remainder of this chapter will examine the ways in which Welles' postwar films depict the experience of creative workers in an internationally networked and purposefully disorganized creative economy.

II. Hollywood Shakeups: Opportunity and Exploitation.

In the context of labor conflicts, wartime politics, and industrial transformation, Welles' career suggests that Hollywood was already moving toward flexible, international, and contingent economic patterns in the 1940s. The postwar legal, political, and economic problems

that spurred this transition began to gain momentum in the 1930s and throughout WWII, as management and labor formulated responses to problems that were to bear down on them in peacetime. The result was two ongoing trends: social and political alienation of workers between and within fields, and development of independent and international filmmaking tactics along parallel trajectories for those at the center and the margins of the industry. As in many of Welles films, in other words, the 1940s and 1950s saw increasing mistrust among workers and employers, which culminated in competing strategies for control over the narratives that shaped their lives, and sometimes sealed their fates. Sources of destabilization in the workforce in the decades following WWII were often difficult for workers to determine, from the collusion of studio chiefs and congressmen that fueled the blacklist to the disruption of production models that accompanied independent and runaway production.

Hollywood's postwar troubles began to brew in the late 1930s. Anti-trust legislation against the studios began in 1938. Rulings in 1940 and 1946 established new constraints on oligopolistic practices such as price fixing and clearances (timed release schedules that granted studio exhibitors first rights to 'A' pictures), but did not force studios to divest of any of their vertically integrated business components (Casper 39). A landmark May 3rd, 1948 ruling on *The United States vs. Paramount Pictures*, according to Drew Casper, was the result of an appeal of the 1946 ruling, and handed down additional consequences: "it nixed competitive bidding, 'conditional' block booking (the selling of blocks of pictures with strings attached), cross-licensing, and joint ownership of theaters… [and] ordered divorcement of one of their enterprises (which came down to relinquishing their theater circuits) and divestiture (the sale of their theater holdings) (41). Of all of these, divestment would prove the most damaging, as studios lost control over exhibition in a market that was already losing audiences. Television, which had

publicly debuted in 1939 with the NBC broadcast of the Word's Fair, had picked up momentum as a new medium, but had seen production suspended during the War as manufacturers turned attention to military goods (Schatz 422-429). After soldiers returned, started families, and began to settle in suburbs, the new technology posed a serious threat. The studios had never been as entirely Fordist as manufacturing industries, but they similarly relied on scale and efficiency. The Fordist model, however, did not suffice when deprived of monopolistic advantages. New, more flexible and mobile modes of studio filmmaking were needed.

In light of these changes, creative workers were positioned to capitalize. Whereas the decrees loosened the studios' grip on talent, the incipient television industry offered new opportunities. Empowerment of the labor force was clearly not an outcome the studios desired, however, so executives structured their independent and runaway production tactics to favor the already-powerful, in part by assuring that only they knew exactly how and where new production networks functioned. The postwar shift toward independent production, Barry Langford recounts, "was both in keeping with trends that had been underway since the 1940s and readily coincided with the plans of top talent in the postwar period" (24). So-called independent production at the time tended to profit "prestigious boutique outfits headed by former studio moguls like David O. Selznik and Samuel Goldwyn" as well as the studios themselves (Langford 16). The strategy of incorporation, for instance, allowed powerful stars (often newly released from studio contracts as talent became more contingently employed) to finance their own production under the tax shelter of an often-temporary corporation (Langford 24). Independent production was also incredibly risky, given the level of investment and unpredictability of markets. That the two films *The Paradine Case* (1947) and *Portrait of Jenny* (1948) could

effectively end David O. Selznick's career, as Langford asserts, speaks to the inaccessibility of such a model to all but the wealthy and powerful (Langford 24-25).

Runaway production was similarly engineered to shore up studio profits by circumventing European quotas and restrictions, and hiring cheap foreign labor, which destabilized the domestic labor force. As executives cut deals with foreign studios, studios saw several benefits. As Langford details, "costume epics could be filmed abroad, enabling studios to work around quota systems imposed by foreign governments to protect domestic film production, by investing in overseas production facilities and filming with local crews" (35). The costume epic was a means of compensating for diminishing theater attendance and offering visual incentives that television could not. Runaway production also helped to cut labor costs, "given the lower wages paid to often highly skilled technicians" (35). The other side of this coin, however, was ongoing labor destabilization at home. In the case of a set of negotiations between the Screen Actors Guild and the studios, as Peter Lev recounts, when SAG fought for better television compensation, "the studios threatened to counteract a strike by moving all productions abroad" (214). While these practices enhanced the national diversity and aesthetic sophistication of Hollywood product, such innovations came at the expense of workers' stability.

Postwar Hollywood therefore presented artists like Welles with a precarious employment situation that appeared to loosen creative constraints at the expense of stability. Lev's history demonstrates this duality as he initially depicts 1950s Hollywood employment conditions as "surprisingly positive" due to a rise in television employment, and then acknowledges instability: "the move away from the studio system entailed a more uncertain employment situation…in the 1950s, with independent production and a new emphasis on shooting films abroad, neither studios nor employees could count on a steady flow of production work" (212-213). Aside from

Lev's brief account of musicians' and actors' deteriorating labor conditions, it is difficult to find focused accounts of creative workers' experience of such conditions, but comprehensive histories such as Lev's effectively portray the broad and immediate effect of industrial reorganization on labor:

> A studio could be reduced to management, accounting, sales, advertising, and publicity departments, plus a skeleton crew to maintain the physical facilities. In practice, this happened gradually, over a period of years or even decades. The process of cutting permanent staff can be highlighted by some estimates from the film daily yearbook. In 1945 the major studios have 804 actors under contract, in 1950 the number had decreased to 474, and in 1955 to 209. As for writers, there were 490 under contract at the major studios in 1945, 147 in 1950, and only 67 in 1955. In the same period, the members of craft unions were also moving from year-round contracts to free-lance work, but with far less publicity (26).

Such losses disproportionately impacted the creative class within the studio—writers, directors, and actors, although 'stars' were quick to recover.

Overall, the rise of postwar independent production stratified and undermined the Hollywood labor force. As Lev reports, "Those most in demand could require princely salaries plus a percentage of the profits… however, profit participation meant nothing if the film was not successful, and those stars invested in their own projects could actually take the loss" (26). Even for power players in Hollywood who could leverage their reputation and demand autonomy, in other words, each production was potentially a career-ending gamble. For the ordinary craftsman, the scenario was bleaker: "for marginally employed actors and other creative types the end of the studio contract meant uncertainty, likely periods of unemployment, and possibly

the search for a new career" (26). Welles was neither a Hollywood power player, primed for semi-independent success, nor was he a seasoned craftsman whose skills might be better suited to television. To him, the reinvented industry might have appeared to be as corrupt and nonsensical as the conspiracies at the heart of many of his films.

Runaway and independent production also contributed to the marginalization of Hollywood radicals and liberals who were subject to the political persecution that marred the immediate postwar period and continued throughout the 1950s. As with television and anti-trust legislation, clouds had gathered for several years prior to October 1947, when HUAC held notorious hearings in Hollywood in order to (ostensibly) discover a secret plan to embed Communist propaganda in Hollywood films. In 1938, a "Special Committee on Un-American Activities" chaired by Texas senator Martin Dies set sights on the Federal Theatre Project, ultimately shutting the FTP down under the charge that it was run by Communists (it mostly was, but their radical agenda was not as sinister as Dies suspected, nor was it illegal at the time to be a Communist theatre worker). When the House removed funding for the Project in 1939, progressive theater and film workers became established targets. Welles, for instance, was an integral member of the FTP in the preceding years and a primary champion of the tendencies for which it was defunded: "progressive content… employment of blacks… congeniality to radical trade union activity, and [a] tendency to harbor 'intellectuals' and 'propagandizers'" (Ceplair and Englund 155).

In its earliest form, Hollywood witch-hunting served to fragment the ranks of Hollywood labor. Producers and talent, for instance, had often been at odds since talent guilds were established early 1930s, but had worked to achieve enough trust to mutually benefit. The 1940s and 1950s, however, saw countless instances in which producers either stood by as careers were

ruined, or colluded in their destruction. When Dies called Hollywood "a hotbed of Communism" in 1940 and served SWG president Sheridan Gibney with a list of "subversives," producers had no comment. Some executives set examples in the persecution of radicals, as when Walt Disney produced anti-Communist propaganda in response to striking animators that inspired California legislator Jack Tenney to launch another round of investigations in 1941. The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals (MPAPAI) was Disney's "red-baiting producers group," as Michael Denning refers to it, and would play a major role in the instantiation of blacklists and greylists in 1947 (403). HUAC, in short, thrived on enmity between producers and talent, and between those who named names and those who did not.

At its peak during hearings in 1947 and 1953, Hollywood's anti-Communist frenzy both caused and was abetted by the dissolution of professional and social bonds. The naming of names was enabled by mistrust that spread widely amongst workers, and could not have had serious implications without executives' betrayal of workers. In 1947, as Brian Neve reports, the right-wing Motion Picture Alliance suspected left-leaning filmmakers of implanting Communist propaganda in Hollywood film, and initiated a congressional investigation (65-66). Formal hearings in October 1947 led to the imprisonment of ten "hostile witnesses" for contempt of court, and on November 24th five studio chiefs signed what would come to be known as the "Waldorf statement," which stated that not only would they not rehire the "Hollywood Ten" until "such time as he is acquitted or has person himself of content and cleared under oath that he is not a communist," but also included a general commitment not to hire anyone associated with communist organizations (Neve 66-67). The Waldorf Statement instituted a blacklist that would prevent any called under the auspices of communist affiliation to testify in front of the HUAC from working in the Hollywood industry unless they cooperated fully with the Committee during

hearings (Neve 67). As management aligned with HUAC as 'friendly' witnesses, those characterized as 'unfriendly' and later blacklisted overwhelmingly hailed from the ranks of Hollywood's most progressive, politically active profession—screenwriters. Ceplair and Englund's account confirms: "No matter which activists we discuss—the subpoenaed, the blacklisted—the screenwriters constituted the absolute majority. Fifty-eight per cent of the film people subpoenaed by HUAC were screenwriters; 57 per cent of those blacklisted were screenwriters; 58 per cent of those who cooperated with HUAC were also screenwriters" (126). Others classified as "talent" were largely aligned with the screenwriters, but actors, directors, and writers alike when called were as likely to name names as they were to take the fifth. Many workers complied and many resisted; some fled to Europe, some were jailed, and others quietly faded away. Amidst such an atmosphere of betrayal and uncertainty, it would have been difficult for any creative laborer to know where he stood in the system as a whole.

The atmosphere of disorientation and suspicion that so many HUAC-era films maintain, therefore, might be attributed to the difficulties many filmmakers faced in navigating political, and industrial terrain for which the contours had been clear just a few years earlier. HUAC not only disintegrated social and professional bonds; it also subjected those it investigated to proceedings that had dire consequences, despite their ambiguous legal and professional standing. The processes of blacklisting and greylisting were amongst the most opaque and mystified of these. While the "blacklist" referred to a set of names of workers who refused to cooperate with HUAC, "greylisted" workers might have had no interaction with HUAC, yet their appearance in private publications such as *Red Channels*, *Counterattack*, and *Confidential Notebook* rendered them unable to work. A secretive, privately run system behooved witch-hunters because, as Ceplair and Englund note, HUAC's reach was "ultimately limited both by its enabling

legislation, which sanctioned only the persecution of communists and egregious fellow travelers, not liberals, and by the minimal procedural formalities and decorum required by HUAC's status as a committee of the U.S. Congress" (386). Precisely because a HUAC hearing did not hold the punitive power of a court of law, it exercised power through private networks.

These processes were as diffuse and illegible to their victims as they were complete and centralized for those in power: "[blacklisting] seemed to many sufferers to be an ailment which had no origin, diagnosis, or treatment. One simply stopped hearing the telephone ring" (Ceplair and Englund 388). "Clearance" entailed writing a letter that answered five set questions about party membership and named names.[59] Once complete, "the letter was sent to several anointed clearing agents—Roy Brewer, George Sokolovsky, Vincent Hartnett…, or James O'Niell" (Ceplair and Englund 394). At that point, the suspected subversive would either be allowed to return to work, or required to write more letters (Ceplair and Englund 394). For greylisted artists, who could not reappear before the committee because they had never been called, "a letter or affidavit was composed (often under lawyer Martin Gang's direction) answering all the 'charges' and promising answers to any subsequent accusations" (Ceplair and Englund 392). Then, as Ceplair and Englund attest, "Gang would see to it that *informal, but effective* word of the client's responsibility went out to the studios, via the good offices of Roy Brewer or some other renowned reactionary of the Motion Picture Alliance such as Ward Bond" (392, emphasis mine). The "informal effectiveness" of such processes and the behind-the-scenes diffusion of information on which the "smear-and-clear" processes rested show that in the heyday of the blacklist, a decentralized and privately controlled information network was in place that robbed

[59] Ceplair and Englund list the questions as follows: "1) Is this charge accurate? 2) Why did you join the listed organizations? 3) Who invited you to join them? 4) Whom did you invite to join? 5) Did you resign? When?" (393). The themes of recantation, implication, and repudiation are consistent with the overall tenor of HUAC.

workers not only of their agency in the process, but their ability to comprehend the processes that dictated their fates.

Welles, who identified more liberal than radical, suffered consequences of HUAC and the blacklists indirectly. Joseph McBride links Welles' appearance on at least one of these lists to his European exile: "the clearest evidence of Welles's continued blacklisting or grey listing after his departure for Europe was his inclusion with 150 other show business figures in the infamous 1950 'bible' of the blacklist, *Red Channels*" (101). As an active advocate against racial violence and persecution over the course of the 1930s and 1940s, Welles was (as McBride puts it) faced with a "growing chorus of innuendos that he was a dangerous subversive" (95). He publicly and passionately denied Communist leanings, but was a compassionate and progressive liberal, devoted to racial equality, international solidarity, and free expression. The timing of his departure in late November 1947 (around the time of the signing of the Waldorf statement) also supports McBride's assertion that "no doubt if Welles had stayed in Hollywood he would have been called in HUAC's far more extensive second round of Hollywood hearings in 1951, when the blacklist was greatly expanded. But he could see the handwriting on the wall in 1947 and decided to leave town in late November" (97).

Although McBride attributes more impetus to the HUAC proceedings for Welles' relocation than most Welles biographers, he makes a strong enough case to link Welles' postwar films to the experience of a progressive Hollywood worker during HUAC's heyday. Welles was a supporter of the Committee for the First Amendment, a "short-lived coalition of Hollywood liberals and leftists formed to defend constitutional right and fight political oppression, " and would have witnessed the decline of socially motivated filmmaking in Hollywood in the wake of the HUAC hearings (McBride 94). In a "producer-dominated studio system with its 'pure

entertainment' ethic," where "the deepening association in the public mind of the American Communist Party with a Soviet Union that was now a key international enemy of the United States," the days of the 1930s socially conscious filmmaker were numbered (Neve 68). Such filmmaking in the 1930s embraced realist aesthetic traditions, whereas Welles and others in the decades after WWII turned to allegorical critique.

Like many filmmakers who took up residence in Europe at this time, Welles was not positioned to participate in Hollywood's global expansion. He was not officially blacklisted, but the factors that had sent him abroad in the first place seem to have led both Welles and the Hollywood elite to the conclusion that they should no longer work together. Instead, he made attempts at individual independence that offered alternatives to the studios' tactics. Like *Arkadin*, for instance, *Othello* (Welles, 1952) was the product of multiple sources of investment and years of off-and-on production. As Frank Brady reports, "all of Orson's money, 'every penny' as he once noted, from his film acting and other residual income, went to it; various angels, investors, altruists, and almsgivers were approached by Orson and occasionally could be counted upon to tome up with *some* money, seemingly from scene to scene, to keep the cameras rolling" (432). Production of *Othello*, as McBride puts it, "took the better part of four years" and involved "frantic attempts to cut corners and reassemble the cast from everywhere in Europe" as it filmed in Venice and Morocco (*Orson* 121). Unfortunately for Welles, such arrangements were not embraced for their innovative spirit as they might be today, but rather had mixed results and amounted to a chaotic decade for the filmmaker. He spent the end of the 1940s and most of the 1950s acting and chasing money around Europe and the U.K. to finance *Othello* and *Mr. Arkadin*, his only directorial efforts during this time. Between bouts of on-and-off-again production for *Othello*, Welles went to Vienna and London to act in *The Third Man*, worked with

Charles Lederer on a never-used script for a French film, acted in *Prince of Foxes* (1951) in Italy, staged the plays *The Blessed and the Damned* and *The Unthinking Lobster* in France, and then took them on the road in Germany (Bogdanovich/Welles 402-403). He returned briefly to the U.S. to perform in a television version of *King Lear* in 1953, and then returned to Europe to make *Mr. Arkadin*. Peter Bogdanovich's timeline reports that for *Arkadin* "shooting progresse[d] over eight months in Munich, Paris, and Rome; after concluding in Spain, [Welles] returne[d] to Paris for dubbing and then to Rome for cutting" (415). After missing producer Louis Dolivet's deadline, however, Welles was barred from the editing room and another editor took over. The subsequent cut (the form in which the film was released) strung Welles' flashback structure into an awkward linear arrangement.

For the next few years, Welles appeared on stage and television across Europe and the U.K. He returned to the U.S. in 1957 to make *Touch of Evil*, but was shut out of that film's post-production as well, and went on to Mexico to film the never-to-be-completed *Don Quixote*. He acted in a few more U.S. films and returned to Europe in 1959. *The Trial* took him to Paris, Zagreb, and Rome, and he continued to work on film, theater, and television projects in Europe and the U.K. until his final return to the U.S. in 1970, where he worked (with occasional international forays) until his death in 1985 (Bogdanovich/Welles 403-453). For McBride, Welles' initial international period from 1947 to 1957 marks a period of creative reinvention and confirms his legitimacy as an utterly independent artist. He states that although Welles "completed only two feature films as a director, *Othello* and *Mr. Arkadin*… he involved a freer, more European-style while solidifying his role as an independent film maker *avant la lettre*" (*What* 111). Yet "from Hollywood's and the public's point of view, Welles might just as well have quit directing movies after he departed for Europe, since his subsequent career as a

filmmaker seems so obscure" (99). As Welles himself reported, "I thought I could find freedom making pictures in Europe. But it was a terrible struggle to raise the money. I haven't had freedom since my first picture" (Mosby 2). In short, the veneer of autonomy in independent foreign production masked the dominance of studios abroad, which continued to shun Welles and other resistant filmmakers. As the films I will address later demonstrate, the unpredictable conditions of international filmmaking appear in the works themselves initially as opportunity and are later revealed to consolidate power, much like Hollywood's nascent flexible and global production methods.

Ultimately, between about 1945 and 1960 Hollywood's re-organization provoked moguls and outsiders alike to invent new means of independent and global production in the mid-twentieth-century film industry, long before the Post-Fordist dominance of such modes of decentralized production. Allen J. Scott's comparison of classical and post-classical Hollywood labor reveals the extremity of this shift. In the 1920s and 1930s, he states, "workers functioned for the most part as permanent company employees with a regular wage or salary. This state of affairs obtained, moreover, for workers of all gradations, from the blue-collar manual workers at the bottom of the job ladder to the stars at the pinnacle" (117). By the 1950s, however, "the majority of workers now assumed temporary or freelance status, being taken on by production companies as limited-term employees or operating on a commission basis, and moving irregularly from job to job depending on the fluctuations of productive activity" (117). That four of the films Welles made in this period critique these very conditions is significant, especially in the possibilities he sees for workers to retaliate. Often, his characters reclaim agency by controlling the narrative and re-mapping their world. In *Lady*, Michael O'Hara (Welles) transforms from dupe to all-knowing narrator (in theory) after the narrative is resolved;

Arkadin's Guy Van Stratten (Robert Arden) closes the narrative by reporting his version of events first to his nemesis' daughter; and in *Touch of Evil*, Mike Vargas (Charlton Heston) records the corrupt Hank Quinlan's (Welles) confession, technologically wresting possession of the real story from he who would attempt to conceal it. As allegorical attempts to reclaim knowledge of the postwar film economy, these resolutions presage both the kind of conspiracy narrative that often alluded to the newly globalized economy in the 1970s, as well as autonomous modes of post-Fordist labor in which casual employment hinges on one's own ability to tell one's story (as in internet crowdfunding, for instance).

Section III: Foreign Intrigue: Welles' Studio Conflicts Imagined as Conspiracy.

Second perhaps only to *Arkadin*, *The Lady from Shanghai* is often considered to be Welles' most inscrutable narrative. Columbia pictures head Harry Cohn, who personally oversaw its production, reportedly exclaimed "I'll give a thousand dollars to anyone who can explain the story to me!" upon seeing the rough cut (McBride *Orson* 105-106). As Joseph McBride gently remarks, "lucidity is not one of the film's virtues" (106). While McBride offers the concession that "Welles' devil-may-care attitude toward the plot is one of the foremost pleasures of the film," such comments are characteristic of the amusement that critics and biographers find in Welles' most beautiful disasters. Yet the impenetrable narratives of films like *Lady* may have more serious implications in the context of the postwar film industry. The frustration one encounters when trying to piece together the plots of *Lady* and *Arkadin* speaks to the frustration Welles must have felt as he tried to realize his creative visions. *Lady* in particular can be read in the context of Welles' experience as a creative worker in an industry rife with labor conflicts and political tension, following betrayals he suffered at the hands of RKO on *Ambersons* and *It's All True*. Welles' most opaque films do not merely show him to be a zany and uncontrolled genius.

Rather they offer allegorical depictions of one creative worker's experience in an industry plagued by crisis, in which knowledge of such an industry is barely accessible. Welles is an exemplary case of an artist who felt the effects of upheavals leading up to and including Hollywood's postwar reorganization, as financial and political flare-ups increasingly pushed him toward the margins. As Hollywood began to look beyond Fordism, Welles responded with conspiracy narratives prescient of those that would later characterize postmodern anxiety in the 1970s.

Welles, in other words, made several films between 1945 and 1962 that are on the one hand representative of his "popular modernism" (Michael Denning's term), but on the other also suggest early trends toward what Fredric Jameson calls the "conspiratorial text," a narrative that allegorizes the postmodern challenges of cognitively mapping a system too vast and complex to apprehend in its totality. Such a text, according to Jameson, may be

> taken to constitute an unconscious, collective effort trying to figure out where we are and what landscapes and forces confront us in a late twentieth century whose abominations are heightened by their concealment and their bureaucratic personality. Conspiracy film takes a wild stab at the heart of all that, in a situation in which it is the intent and the gesture that counts. Nothing's gained by having been persuaded of the definitive verisimilitude of this or that conspiratorial hypothesis: but in the intent to hypothesize, and the desire called cognitive mapping — therein lies the beginning of wisdom (*Geopolitical* 3).

Jameson's conspiracy film is a distinctly postmodern phenomenon, whereas films like *The Lady from Shanghai* and *The Trial*, released in 1947 and 1962, bookend a transitional period between the dominance of a centralized, referentially stable modernist ontology and a postmodernist,

diffused, non-referential system. They allegorize the collusion of Hollywood studios and government officials to undermine labor in the name of patriotism, at a particularly dynamic juncture of American history and aesthetics. Welles shared Kafka's commitment to the modernist aesthetic, yet his *Trial* dramatizes its failure to make sense of an emergent postmodern system. These films suggest that 1940s and 1950s Hollywood marks a transitional period between Fordist/Modernist and post-Fordist/postmodernist aesthetic and economic regimes, or at least suggests that the break between these regimes is not as dramatic as some assert. Welles' labor tactics and conspiracy allegories might therefore be taken as early and influential responses to now-dominant modes of production.

The Lady from Shanghai, Mr. Arkadin, *Touch of Evil*, and *the Trial* all invoke confusion and resist straightforward constructions of plot and space, as they allude to Welles' (and many other workers') experience of an industry that radically altered and relocated lives and careers. In *The Lady from Shanghai* and the *Trial*, conspiracies destroy characters by way of hidden means and within disjointed spaces. The conspiracies in these films feature a set of professional and creative laborers in various epistemological positions within a corrupt system. These workers are repeatedly victimized by an entrenched institutional figure, thus allegorizing their real-life counterparts' exploitation at the hands of powerful players in Hollywood and the American political system. In *Lady*, corrupt lawyers frame an aspiring novelist; Detectives in *Mr. Arkadin* and *Touch of Evil*—one amateur and one professional—must reveal the corrupt dealings of an international mogul in one case and career cop in the other. And in *The Trial*, a mysterious advocate stands in the way of clerical worker Joseph K.'s (Anthony Perkins) access to information about his case, hindering the conspiracy victim rather than aiding him. Their attempts to navigate an un-navigable system suggest on the one hand the increasing opacity of

American politics and creative industries, while also demonstrating models of autonomous resistance ready to be incorporated into mainstream creative labor models later in the century.

Welles' association of international production with betrayal and intrigue can be traced to *It's All True*, a never-completed film to which he devoted much of 1941 and 1942, and that he referred to as "the one key disaster in my story'" (qtd. in McBride *What…Happened?* 67). It was a documentary project co-sponsored by Nelson Rockefeller's Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) and RKO, for which Welles was recruited in the name of positive relations and mutual understanding between the U.S. and Central/South American nations. Its production was unplanned and tragedy-ridden. Ultimately, RKO shut the film down and used it as an excuse to slander and fire Welles and the entire Mercury Theater crew. Elements of the *It's All True* debacle hint at conspiracy, from its intermingling of state and corporate interests to the sudden and inexplicable demises of a key actor, the production itself, and Welles' reputation. Whether due to misfortune or corruption, its fate appeared to be dictated through secretive channels of influence that few involved could comprehend.

Although tragedy and deceit tainted *It's All True*, it initially appeared to offer Welles opportunities for unbridled experimentalism and the promotion of racial equality, a cause he cherished. He initially embarked on the project with neither a plan nor specific restrictions from RKO or any of the national governments involved. As Welles recounts in a 1992 documentary, "I was sent to South America by Nelson Rockefeller and Jock Whitney. I was told that it was my patriotic duty to go and spend a million dollars shooting the Carnival in Rio" (*IAT*). The film's wartime urgency allowed for little planning or research, so as narrator Miguel Ferrer notes, "when reporters asked Welles what his Brazilian film would be about, he said 'ask me again in six months'" (*IAT*). Although such ambiguity hampered the film's efficiency and ultimately

allowed the studio to blame Welles for its demise, it also afforded him unprecedented aesthetic and political freedom.

As Welles was apparently free to make whatever film he wanted, he focused his attention more on racial and economic justice than selling pan-Americanism (the goal of Rockefeller and the OCIAA). As McBride asserts, "rather than shooting a frivolous tourist travelogue, as both governments expected, Welles [turned] the film into a sympathetic celebration of minority cultures in protest against their economic and political mistreatment" (*What…Happened?* 69). In his presentation of the plight of rural fisherman, the documentary notes, Welles wanted to carefully explore the systems of economic exploitation under which they labored. These "jangadieros" did not own their boats, but rather rented them in exchange for a portion of their haul. This system, Ferrer narrates, "kept them poor, no matter how hard they worked." Such economic inequality stemmed from and reinforced racial injustice, so Welles tailored the film to address the latter. As Catherine Benamou asserts: "*It's All True* was programmatically designed by Welles to encourage civic unity and intercultural understanding at a time of excess aggression, racial intolerance, and labor unrest at key sites in the hemisphere" (10).[60] As filming ensued, the Brazilian Government and RKO became increasingly worried about the critical viewpoint such a film might take. Such tensions eventually provoked RKO to pull the plug on production and justify firing Welles on the basis of spurious rumors and studio politics.

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[60] Racial justice and solidarity were recurring themes in Welles' life, political interests, and art. In much of his work, he fought against what he called "race hate," encouraged internationalism, and tried to prevent exploitation of the disempowered. He made controversial moves in this regard, such as an all-black casted 1936 production of Macbeth for the Federal Theater Project (See Brady 80-85). Welles wrote about racial injustice as a point of legal amendment as well, as in the essay "Race Hate Must be Outlawed," published in *Free World* in 1944: "we call for action against the cause of riots. Law is the best action, the most decisive. We call for laws then prohibiting what moral judgment already counts as lawlessness" (10). Michael Denning as well as Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund are among many who foreground the political importance of Welles' involvement in the "Sleepy Lagoon" case, in which "Seventeen young Chicanos were arrested in August 1942 for the murder of José Díaz,…severely beaten by the police," and tried in a "Lynch mob atmosphere" (Denning 399). Denning even speculates that this case was the source of Welles' racially charged adaptations to the source material for *Touch of Evil*" (Denning 401)

In retrospect, Welles associated his experience on *It's All True* with the unseemly machinations of U.S. interventionism at the time, as he likens the studio shakeup that precipitated these events to a U.S-backed South American coup. While filming in South America, Welles received word that Atlas corporation chiefs Charles Koerner and Floyd Odlum had acquired a majority share in RKO, and had assumed control of the studio. Within weeks, Rockefeller (arbiter of U.S government support for *It's All True*) and George Schaefer (Welles' in-house champion at RKO) had both resigned. Welles recalls in documentary footage that in a meeting with a local Voodoo priest, "it was my unhappy lot to have to tell him that the filming was off, because I had just received word from Hollywood that the president of the film studio had been removed. That sort of thing happens not only in South American governments, but also in film studios" (*IAT*). Or, as Peter Bogdanovich paraphrases, RKO "did a very South American thing—they changed presidents at night" (*This Is*…163). Geographical distance between Welles and the studio rendered the director powerless to counteract a slander campaign that RKO mounted to justify his firing. These events forced Welles' into an independent career, prompted him to work outside of the studio system for fifteen years, and tainted his long-term legacy. RKO's allegations of Welles' profligate overspending and irresponsibility have (in McBride's view) "persisted until the present day, poisoning even some biographies of Welles, such as those by Frank Brady and David Thompson, as well as Charles Higham's two vitriolically anti-Welles books" (63). In this case, the liberties of international filmmaking came at a price.

The disorientation and betrayal that surrounded *It's All True* inflect *the Lady from Shanghai*, which shares its ocean setting and internationalism with the failed documentary. Produced five years after RKO fired Welles, *Lady* is a tale of utterly alienated characters who seek to destroy one another. It follows Michael O'Hara (Welles), an aspiring novelist and jack-

of-all-trades, as he hires on for a yacht cruise from New York to San Francisco by way of Panama. His employers are Arthur and Elsa Bannister (Everett Sloane and Rita Hayworth), a wealthy defense attorney and his mysterious and beautiful wife, whose dark past and strange worldliness Michael finds irresistible (despite his persistent unease about the situation). Along with Arthur's partner Grisby (Glenn Anders), the Bannisters spend the narrative attempting to rob and murder one another, as each constructs tortuous plots to undo the others and set up Michael as a patsy.

The ocean, which had once served in *It's All True* as a site of liberation and triumph, becomes a place of deceit and peril in *Lady*. A segment titled "Four Men and a Raft" in *It's All True* re-enacts the Jangadieros' ocean journey to Rio to protest their working conditions. One of the real-life Jangadieros, however, drowned during the re-enactment, adding to the film's string of misfortunes. *Lady* similarly transforms water from a site of possibility to a place of peril allegorically, as its characters plan each others' demise on beaches, on open water, and (at one point) in an aquarium. Expanses of water force the characters into constant interaction with one another, heightening tensions. Images of blazing sun, glittering water, and expansive seascapes offer the impression that there is nowhere to hide, despite the existence of manifold secrets. In one scene, as the characters chip away at each other verbally while sipping cocktails on a Mexican beach, Michael conveys his opinion of his employers by way of an anecdote:

> You know, once, off the hump of Brazil, I saw the Ocean so darkened with blood it was black, and the sun fading away over the lip of the sky. We'd put in at Fortaleza, and a few of us had lines out for idle fishing. It was me had the first strike. A shark, it was. Then there was another. And another shark again, till' all about all the sea was made of sharks, and more sharks still, and no water at all.

> My shark had torn himself from the hook, and the scent or maybe the stain it was, and him bleeding his life away, drove the rest of them mad. Then the beasts took to eating each other. In their frenzy, they ate themselves. You could feel the lust of murder like wind stinging your eyes. And you could smell the death reeking up out of the sea. I never saw anything worse, until this little picnic tonight. And you know, there wasn't one of them sharks in the whole crazy pack that survived.

The ocean, in other words, is a place of mutual destruction without reason, of unthinking fatality. True to Michael's tale, the others will ultimately devour themselves, driven to murder each other by greed and mistrust.

The radical alienation of *Lady*'s characters goes beyond their inability to identify and bond with one another, as Welles layers visual and narrative fragmentation to showcase his characters' self-alienation. Their professional and personal betrayals might be traced to the atmosphere of mistrust engendered in the build-up to HUAC, or more generally to the marginal status of many workers who, like Welles, had been expelled from the system that once embraced them. *Lady* critiques these conditions in its vision of fragmented subjects who serve as stand-ins for alienated professionals. It fragments characters through voiceover and visual effects as they are shown to be severed from the economic and political systems they hope to navigate, as well as from each other and themselves. The resulting narrative often seems to defy logic, as agents (like sharks) seem to act without reason or self-interest. As Robert Pippin's "Agency and Fate in *The Lady from Shanghai*" observes, *Lady*'s "characters… take themselves to be deliberating and initiating various deeds [and] come to look somewhat like figures frantically pulling various wires and pushing various buttons that are, unknown to them, not connected (or not as connected) to some moving machine they are riding, on a course completely indifferent to

anything such characters pretend to do (or much more indifferent than the riders believe)" (220). The conspiracy these characters face, in other words, is not only rooted in their plots against one another. The ultimate conspiracy lies beyond the characters' control, placing them in a condition of ignorance similar to that of the postwar Hollywood exile.

In keeping with such imbalances of knowledge, Welles fragments characters into knowledgeable and ignorant parts. Michael's voiceover, for instance, implies that he has written a novel following the events of the film, and its contrast with his diegetic actions effectively generates two Michaels—an informed author and an ignorant character. Narrator Michael knows all the details of the story that diegetic Michael does not. Michael's naiveté is, in fact, a precondition for the narrative to unfold as it does. "If I'd known where it would end," he muses in the film's opening lines, "I'd have never let anything start" (*Lady*). Curiously, his innocence is a consequence of his worldliness. When he asserts his integrity by declaring "I'm independent," Bannister responds, "Of money? Before you start that novel Elsa says you're going to write, you better learn something. You've been traveling around the world too much to find out anything about it" (*Lady*). The real solution to naiveté is not travel, but narrative control. Michael is the only character to survive the film's multiple conspiracies not because he is worldly, but because he is its implied author. Given that his voiceover occurs post-facto, and he is a novelist, one might assume that the tale he unfolds is his novelistic version of events.

Control over the narrative also corrupts, however. Robert Pippin argues that Michael's series of rash, arbitrary, and somewhat inexplicable decisions is evidence that he "has a very great interest, especially with respect to his own self-evaluation, in presenting the story as one about a naïve man deceived by a conniving woman and evil men… innocent" or "stupid" are both more preferable to his political self-image than "just as corrupt as everyone else" (229).

Michael's unreliability is a ruse for his corruption, and suggests that as narrator Michael is more affiliated with conspiratorial power brokers than with the honest, hardworking laborer who appears in the story. As author and player, he is caught in a contradiction: remain (ostensibly) innocent, and fall victim to conspiracy—or become knowledgeable, and complicit with the corrupt, whether they are studio executives, senate witch-hunters, or criminal lawyers and their trophy wives.

The most radical visual fragmentation of the film's central characters occurs in its penultimate scene, which transpires in hall of mirrors. There, Bannister interrupts a final confrontation between Michael and Elsa, as images of all three multiply in a virtuoso visual display of fragmentation and alienation. Such fragmentation suggests that the characters have betrayed themselves and one another to such an extent that to know oneself, or where the boundaries between self and other lie, is a futile endeavor. The standoff results in a shoot-out, but not before Bannister makes a final statement of self-fragmentation. Welles shows Elsa in the central mirror frame, facing the camera with gun raised, and surrounds her with about nine reflections of Bannister. Bannister remarks: "killing you is killing myself. It's the same thing. But you know, I'm pretty tired of both of us" (fig. 4.1) (*Lady*). A hail of bullets follows, metaphorically shattering the illusions responsible for the overall state of alienation that all three characters face, and restoring Michael to a unified whole.

Welles continues to use watery settings to disorient, alienate, and destroy characters in *Arkadin* and *Touch of Evil*. In *Arkadin*, the title character murders Mily (Patricia Medina), (the protagonist's girlfriend) in a cabin on his massive luxury yacht. Welles uses canted angles to accentuate the disorientation of the endangered woman, as a composed Arkadin plies a very intoxicated Mily for information about her ongoing investigation, making sure to fuel her with

additional drinks. As Mily careens about the cabin, the camera moves in a similarly drunken wobble, so that thanks to Mily's state and the choppy seas, no angle in the scene appears to be true. Arkadin remains poised and stable, looming over Mily and the camera at canted angles as she pours out the details he desires (fig. 4.2). A shallow river plays a pivotal role in the final scene of *Touch of Evil*, as protagonist Mike Vargas wades into it in order to secretly record Quinlan's confession. Quinlan, having discovered the plot and shot Menzies (Joseph Calleia), his partner, stumbles down to the river to wash the blood from his hands. There Menzies shoots Quinlan just before dying himself. In both films, water enables transgression, the acquisition of knowledge, and the transfer of power.

Welles' most intense depiction of disorientation in this period, *The Trial*, departs from the thematic preoccupation with water that characterizes previous films, and disorients its protagonist and audience by detaching characters and spaces from their context. *The Trial*, released as the blacklist was fading into irrelevance and runaway and independent production were ascendant, analogizes the plight of workers who cannot apprehend the causes for their ill fortune. Welles' particular treatment of these conditions finds allegorical expression in the perpetual disorientation of both its protagonist and the viewer. Welles' narrative and visual construction of *The Trial* invokes the spatial disorientation of the persecuted subject in reference to the opacity and decentralization of an industry that no longer operated according to prewar rules.

In *The Trial*, blank and dissociated geographical spaces are stitched together roughly in order to generate disorientation and disempower subjects. Its premise is simple: An ordinary mid-tier clerical worker, Josef K. is interrogated out of the blue by police for reasons they do not divulge. As he embarks on a series of attempts to clear his name of this unknown crime, he

becomes subject to various vague judicial processes, during which he is neither able to maintain control over his fate nor determine his ostensible crime. After a series of encounters with family members, officials, alluring women, and the puffy, ineffective "advocate" Hastler (Welles), he is executed without ever divining the root of his fate. Although Kafka's source material is quintessentially modernist, Welles' interpretation of the novel marks an early (albeit failed) attempt to organize postmodern totality as he knits far flung European locations together, and empties national and institutional spaces of meaning in keeping with ongoing tendencies toward cultural homogenization that accompany globalization.

Josef's experience of powerlessness and disorientation is accentuated by Welles' approach to spaces, sets, and transitions, or as Cristina Vatulescu specifies, "the treatment of boundaries and spaces of transit" (55). The film's exterior scenes intermix recognizable cityscapes from Paris, Zagreb, and Rome, and its primary interior locations—the court of Law and the church—are actually the then abandoned Gare D'Orsay (56). While, as Vatulescu notes, such visual globetrotting could be experienced as liberating, in *The Trial* it "appears as a terrible trap, whose only outside is a 'no place'" (56). The spaces Josef K. attempts to navigate appear as decontextualized generic institutional environments: the hearing room, the office, and the advocate's chambers, for instance. Welles decouples spaces by omitting transitional shots and using non-referential exteriors. Frank Brady points to several transitional moments that cut across international borders: "as Josef K. walks out of the Gare D'Orsay in Paris, the next scene cuts to him walking down the steps of the Palazzo di Giustizia, filmed in Rome, to meet his cousin who has been waiting for him. They then stroll together to the entrance of a factory that was shot in Milan" (530). Welles' original goal was to make the film's settings vanish into total abstraction: "in the production as I originally envisaged it, the sets were to gradually disappear.

The number of realistic elements was to gradually diminish, and be seen to diminish by the spectators, until only open-space remained, as if everything had been dissolved away" (qtd. in Naremore *Magic World* 243). By omitting borders and transitional spaces, Welles prevents his protagonist and audience from gaining full understanding of the film's narrative logic and geography.

Welles does not stop at removing sets from their frame of reference, but also decontextualizes characters and distorts visual perspectives. As Brady notes, "Most of the characters have no names; K.'s crime is never specified; [and] there is constant spatial dislocation and synthetic geography" (533). Brady also observes the film's "deep shadows, flat, overbright lighting, disproportion between sight and sound, ceilings so vast as to be cavernous and awe-inspiring or so low as to be claustrophobic, a constantly moving camera, startling, extreme fish-eyed and angled close-ups, a mixture and careful selection of classical music with jazz, single takes that last as long as six minutes each, [and] the use of a dizzying number of shots overall—more than seven hundred in total" (531). The cumulative effect of such techniques is a film that allows only occasional insights into the world it depicts.

These films' depictions of disoriented victims of unseen forces is just one facet of Welles' more general critique of postwar society. More broadly, films like *The Trial* call into question postwar U.S. cultural dominance, and the overall climate of triumphant, universalistic modernization that dominated global industrial expansion in the 1950s and surrounding decades. As Toby Miller observes (with reference to Lucian Pye), "in the 1950s, modernity was designed as a complex imbrication of industrial, economic, social, cultural, and political developments, towards which all peoples of the world were progressively headed… Development necessitated the displacement of 'the particularistic norms' of tradition by 'more universalistic' blends of the

modern, as part of the creation of an 'achievement oriented' society" (29). Such a universalistic, achievement-oriented society, however, assumed the transference of American and European values onto other cultures, as a means of advancement. This "implausibly solipsistic model" was called into question from the 1960s onward as theories of cultural imperialism gained traction (Miller 29). Welles, however, might be seen as a forerunner of such critics, as his films envision internationalism as the enemy of knowledge and a means of disempowerment used against the marginalized. These expressions have more in common with later conspiracy films that, as Jameson argues, emerge decades later in response to political and economic postmodernity. For Jameson, this "configuration of conspiracy" is an attempt "to think a system so vast it cannot be encompassed by the natural and historically developed categories of perception with which human beings normally orient themselves" (*Geopolitical* 1-2). That Welles attempted to rebuild categories of perception to suit a vast and decentralized film industry suggests that culture workers in the 1940s and 1950s were amongst the first to re-situate their labor in an emergent post-Fordist industry.

IV. The Scorpion and the Frog: Orson Welles' Vision of Internationalism

Whereas *The Trial* disallows full understanding of its world and logic, *Mr. Arkadin* offers tentative solutions to the perceived disempowerment and disorientation that characterize the experience of international conspiracy. Like Michael in *Lady*, for *Arkadin*'s protagonist Guy Van Stratten (Welles) to survive and his enemy to perish, he must create and confirm a narrative of events that will prevail over competing versions. Guy initially sets out to investigate wealthy industrialist Gregory Arkadin (Welles) of his own accord (with vague hopes of blackmail), but Arkadin turns the tables when he hires Guy to investigate a past that Arkadin claims he can't remember. The investigation quickly turns perilous and Arkadin proves to be treacherous, as he

trails Guy and murders all who know his criminal past. For Guy to avoid becoming the final victim, he must reach Arkadin's daughter Raina (Paola Maori) and tell her the truth about her father. The crucial skills that Guy needs to cement his version of events (and escape death) are essentially global mobility and flexibility. An ex-soldier, smuggler, con artist, and lazy lothario, Guy is always available for work and equipped with a variety of creative tactics. As the plot unfolds, his ability to take advantage of global transit systems is key to his success.

In other words, the struggle at the heart of *Arkadin* hinges on its characters' relative ability to leverage creativity and achieve rapid mobility, and victory relies on control over narrative legitimacy. In a way, the tale might make more sense if Guy were a writer-director like Welles, rather than an amateur detective, and if Arkadin were a studio chief rather than an industrialist. Guy, like many Welles protagonists, takes on the properties of a storyteller through his detective work. The film's flashback strategy presents much of the action as a visual representation of a story Guy tells informant Jakob Zouk (Akim Tamiroff) in Munich, complete with voiced-over narration. The "confidential report" to which the film's British release title refers is the dossier Arkadin charges Guy with constructing, the narrative of Arkadin's past. But in a betrayal similar to those heaped on Welles himself by studios and producers, his employer turns on him as the scorpion does to the frog. Guy summarizes the duality of his role as a freelancer at one point: "My confidential report is complete now," he reflects, "My original fee for this job was $15,000, and it looks like a little bonus will be tossed in—like a knife in my back" (*Arkadin*). As a freelance contractor in the new international economic context, Guy's position is potentially lucrative but also highly vulnerable.

Thus in *Arkadin*, Welles presents international industry as a source of both opportunity and exploitation. The film suggests both the dangers and possibilities of runaway studio

production and the more iconoclastic, independent model that Welles pioneered. Welles, after all, wanted to gain complete independence from studio production while in Europe. To accomplish this, he cobbled together funds, talent, and resources towards productions over which (in theory) he would have complete control. Such tactics ran counter to studio-controlled foreign and semi-independent productions, the final version of which was ultimately subject to studio approval. To Welles' dismay, however, his independence did not insure his creative vision. In the case of *Arkadin*, it was independent producer Louis Dolivet, rather than a studio head, who barred Welles from post-production and recut the film. Moreover, Dolivet's decision to do so is typically portrayed as having been in the film's best interests, as Welles was progressing so slowly on editing work that it would have otherwise taken a year to release the film after production wrapped (Heylin 273). Although none of the existing versions can truly be claimed as representative of Welles' initial intention, what *Arkadin* offers, in effect, is a fantasy of the creative control that Welles would never realize. The means of exercising such control amount to a suggested plan for independent creative labor based in flexibility and global mobility that differed from the obsolete classical Hollywood model as well as the runaway and independent adaptations of that model that were gaining traction at the time.

Despite his exclusion from studio-funded "runaway" production, Welles was a proponent of internationalism in general. His 1957 essay "The scenario crisis" holds internationalism up as one antidote to what he sees as a decaying culture of cinema. His rhetoric implies, however, that it should empower the individual author rather than the studio. He names "Nationalism" (by which he means something more like industrial isolationism rather than the political chauvinism that the term implies in the context of twentieth century history) as a major factor in the "scenario crisis," and laments: "any film planned for production in different countries is

practically doomed in advance because the author's subconscious mind tells him in advance what difficulties will be met in transporting cameras, technical equipment, and actors to different parts of the world" (131). For Welles, "the cinema, like science, painting and literature, is and should be international and universal in spite of this" (131). The key difference between Welles' vision of internationalism and the studios' lies in his reference to "the author's subconscious mind," which for him should be the primary agent of internationalism rather than the machinery of Hollywood studio production.[61] Therefore, he suggests internationalism as a means of circumventing studio control in production in order to allow such free expression of the author's mind—conscious or subconscious.

International production ultimately contained no inherent tendencies to empower studios or independent auteurs—rather it made foreign locations contested sites of creative labor, on which the balance of power could shift in favor of one or the other. Dualistic tendencies toward empowerment or destruction of the filmmaker and studio alike pervade the production and aesthetics of *Mr. Arkadin*. Welles' status as an itinerant exile in Europe enabled him to transact funding deals with a wide range of sources using innovative strategies. Welles used his mobility as a man-about-Europe, for instance, to drum up funds for the film. According to Brady, his first step was to travel to the Venice Film Festival, where he "entertained, one after another, bright and lesser lights of the film world" (466). Although this initial endeavor failed, Welles in 1954 (in Brady's account) "finally convinced a group of Swiss and Spanish backers to finance the film" (467). He signed on Dolivet, whom McBride describes as a "longtime political activist, a

[61] Welles knew that total independence was currently impossible, as his letter to *The New Statesman* regarding a review of *Touch of Evil* indicates: "[the writer's] typewriter is always available; my camera is not," he muses. "A typewriter needs only paper; the camera uses film, requires subsidiary equipment by the truck-load and several hundreds of technicians. That is always the central fact about the film-maker as opposed to any other artist: he can never afford to own his own tools" (666).

fellow exile from the United states during the blacklist era, and one of Welles's political mentors during the 1940s" (*What…Happened?* 117). Although details of their business arrangement are elusive in accounts of the film's production, one might assume that Dolivet contributed financially as executive producer, given the control he exercised over the film's various re-cuttings. *Arkadin* was one of Welles' most financially autonomous productions, which allowed him to impose an ambitious, European-influenced aesthetic and an unusual narrative structure on the film in production—although he lost control over the final product because of his similarly ambitious experimentalism in post-production.

While these arrangements afforded flexibility, funding for the film was still sparse enough to hinder its production. Along with Welles' itinerant production practices, the need to keep production costs low exacerbated the length and difficulty of the production and accounts for unevenness in the film's aesthetics and performances. As André Bazin recounts, "The making of *Arkadin* was a long laborious matter. The shooting itself lasted seven months (three months for the basics, four for the continuity shots) and took place in France, Spain, and Germany. But the film, begun in 1954, was ready for release only in 1957" (118). More than these factors, however, *Arkadin*'s failure to find an audience is most often attributed to its narrative incomprehensibility. Critics generally characterize *Arkadin*'s narrative and characters as opaque in cause, effect, and motive.[62] Welles' intention was for the narrative to unfold through a series of flashback sequences, but Dolivet feared this structure would be too confusing

[62] James Naremore is representative of many critics in his description of *Arkadin* as "an unusually frenetic and bewildering movie, its labyrinthine plot further obscured by awkward dubbing of the actors' voices, its continuity disturbed by Welles's blithe refusal to obey the laws of classic editing" (221). Perhaps the effect of frenetic bewilderment is why mid-century French critics embraced the film. As Jonathan Rosenbaum recalls, "In 1958 the editorial board of *Cahiérs du Cinema* collectively decided that *Mr. Arkadin*—more precisely, *Confidential Report*, as they knew it—was Welles' greatest film, the one that belonged on their list of the twelve greatest films ever made" (150). Rosenbaum himself offers a more tempered view: "I don't consider *Arkadin* a masterpiece in any of its versions or incarnations. But I find most of it fascinating and much of it beautiful and exciting.

for viewers, and re-organized it in linear order. Bogdanovich asserts that *Arkadin* "has been butchered more than any of his works, and it looks it. Originally told through a complex flashback technique developed and expanded from *Citizen Kane*, the distributors have tried to put it into chronological order, which is somewhat like starting *Kane* with his birth and ending it with his death" (12).[63] A film about "unrepresentable power," as Hoberman calls it, Arkadin was meant to use its unconventional structure to portray the difficulty of representing such power. (Hoberman).

Arkadin's difficulties may be more a result of Welles' internationalism than of the profligate irresponsibility of which he is often accused. In a 1955 interview with *Film Culture*, Welles lamented the same difficulties of international filmmaking that *The Scenario Crisis* had attempted to downplay:

> I was developing the rushes of *Arkadin* in a French lab. Can you imagine that I had to have a special authorization for every piece of film, even if only 20 yards long, that arrived from Spain? The film had to go through the hands of the customs officials, who wasted their time (and ours) by stamping the beginning and end of each and every roll of film or of magnetic sound tape. The operation required two whole days, and the film was in danger of being spoiled by the hot weather we were then having. The same difficulties cropped up when it came to obtaining work permits… (Qtd. in Rosenbaum 153).

[63] My analysis draws primarily from the "complete" version of the film on the 2006 Criterion DVD edition. Similarly to the restored *Touch of Evil*, this version is the result of several scholars' efforts to re-edit the film and realize Welles' original vision.

Welles goes on to lament the delays involved in credentialing his international workers.[64] The contradictory status of these remarks to his promotion of internationalism in "The Scenario Crisis" shows just how contested the terrain of international filmmaking is. The contingencies of internationalism could favor either the filmmaker or the studios, and the outcome was somewhat a matter of chance. However, the filmmaker's ability to navigate the intricacies of such a decentralized system depended greatly on his ability to grasp the totality of that system. Both the narrative and the production history of *Arkadin* show how daunting a task this can be.

Particularly when organized the way Welles intended it, the story that unfolds in *Arkadin* dramatizes the mobility and flexibility of international travel. It opens with a woman's body washed up on a beach, followed by a shot of a small jet in flight. Welles' narration relays a real-life tale of a plane that crashed with no pilot within, and declares the film to be an imaginative retelling of the events leading up to such a crash. These shots introduce thematic concerns with ocean and air travel as both threats and sources of possibility to which the film will repeatedly return. The story moves to Munich, where small-time smuggler Guy has tracked down Zouk, a dying ex-convict whom Van Stratten claims is in danger of being murdered. Frustrated by Zouk's skepticism, Van Stratten begins to recount the events that precipitated his visit. This prompts the first of several flashback sequences that illustrate Guy's story.

The plot unfolds in a dizzying array of international locations as it follows its characters from Naples to Spain at first, as Guy and Mily attempt to infiltrate the Arkadin family (which seems to consist only of Arkadin and Raina). Working under vague notions of financial gain, Guy courts Raina, while Mily joins the ranks of Arkadin's sycophants. All four travel separately

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[64] Welles continues: "My film unit was international: I had a French cameraman, an Italian editor, an English sound engineer, an Irish script girl, a Spanish assistant. Whenever we had to travel anywhere, each of them had to waste an unconscionable amount of time getting special permissions to stay to work…" (Qtd. in Rosenbaum 153).

to Spain, by car in the case of Guy and Raina, and by private plane for Arkadin and (presumably) Mily. This marks the first of several journeys in which Welles is careful to note the different modes of transportation characters use. Such choices, it will be revealed, can seal one's fate. In Spain, Arkadin learns of Guy's illicit intentions and hires the smuggler to investigate his past. Doing so initiates a frenzy of border and water crossings. Guy lists several destinations in voice-over: "Helsinki, Brussels, Belgrade, Beirut, Torino, Trieste, Marseille…" (*Arkadin*). He crisscrosses Europe to interview a collection of eccentric former acquaintances of Arkadin. He is unable to see "Sir Joseph" but speaks to his secretary at a lake house that appears to be in the Alps. He visits "The Professor" (Mischa Auer) at his flea circus in Copenhagen; Junk shop proprietor Burgomil Trebutch (Michael Redgrave) in Amsterdam; and (after a brief look for her in London) Baroness Nagel (Suzanne Flon) in Paris. Mily (briefly back in collaboration with Guy) also tracks down the dashing fence Thaddeus (Peter Van Eyck) in Tangiers during this sequence, and later falls victim to Arkadin's murder spree.

As the conspiracy thickens, Guy's and Arkadin's capacity to traverse great distances and navigate internationally are shown to determine the balance of power. As Guy's journey proceeds to Mexico and Munich, news of his interviewees' suspicious deaths begins to clue him into Arkadin's true motives. As Guy traverses the globe by air, Arkadin is never far behind in his (apparently incredibly fast) private boat. When all who know the truth of Arkadin's past are dead and Guy recognizes the threat to his life, he boards a plane from Munich to Spain, determined to impart what he knows to Raina. Arkadin pursues in his private twin-engine plane, but Guy gets there first. With this knowledge (as Raina's love is all he cares about) Arkadin leaps from the moving aircraft, and the film ends with its crash. As J. Hoberman notes, notes, "the ostensible purpose is to excavate the truth; the underlying premise is to insure that the truth stays lost

forever" (Hoberman). The film's final image of the empty plane flying over the Pyrenees, he infers, is "an early attempt to represent unrepresentable power (Arkadin as Daedalus and Icarus)" (Hoberman). The plane flying unmanned symbolically suggests the unmanned workings of global industry. One's ability to commandeer the controls might be seen then as a key to empowerment in such a globalized context.

As it would in *Touch of Evil* just a few years later, victory in the struggle between a young, marginalized detective and a corrupt figure of authority is a matter of navigating transnational space. Their contest is not merely over survival, but more importantly for the right to represent networks of power and corruption. Arkadin, the tycoon, has amassed great economic and political power through means he would rather were not revealed. So that the truth can remain hidden, he has invented an alternate narrative of his life to explain his power. Guy, as detective, lacks Arkadin's resources and relies on his wit and his adaptability to gain the upper hand. His job is not only to investigate and solve the tale's mystery, but also to present a legitimate version of events that others (most importantly, Raina) will perceive as truthful. Thus Guy, like many of Welles' protagonists, is partly a detective, but in many ways also an author. The detective's job, after all, is to reconstruct a chain of events—that is, to create a narrative. As such, detectives often act as stand-ins for writers and directors, providing voice over and suturing the fragmented reality of the postwar world into a (sometimes) coherent narrative. In some cases, as with Michael in *The Lady from Shanghai* and Joseph Cotten's hapless Holly Martins in *The Third Man*, writers become accidental detectives. The detective's nemesis, the corrupt figure of authority, can only sustain his power if it is unrepresentable. Hence Arthur Bannister, Harry Lime (Welles), Gregory Arkadin, and Hank Quinlan all meet their demise as a result of the writer/detective's revelation of a complete story of their power.

As the owner of a private yacht and jet, Arkadin's power—like that of the Hollywood studios—is rooted in the mobility his wealth affords. As fable, in Naremore's view, the film depicts "a vision of society, a satiric portrait of the world after the war, showing a flotsam of international gypsies living in the ruins of Western civilization" (*Magic World* 221). While Naremore's reading works well for down-and out swindlers like Guy and Mily and for the collection of eccentrics that Guy interviews, Arkadin's wealth and mobility liken him more to a Hollywood mogul, who comingles with other powerful elites rather than "gypsies" and lives amongst the spoils, not the ruins, of Western civilization. As André Bazin asserts, "what is so prodigious about the millionaire Arkadin to the man in the street… [is that] his wealth resides less in possessions than in that most modern of powers, mobility, the ability to be present at practically the same time in every part of the globe" (120). The film's information gaps (whether by Welles' design or results of its multiple re-edits) only serve to accentuate the potential such power of mobility has to disorient the ordinary person. As its characters traverse the globe, their locations are mentioned in passing, if at all.

Like those who dominated postwar studios, Arkadin's power also lies in his reliance on decentralized financial arrangements. One of the statements that Guy uncovers, for instance, speaks to Arkadin's concealment of economic channels. It reads:

> Gregory Arkadin is one of the shrewdest of all adventurers in high finance, and certainly the most unscrupulous. During the last war I had occasion to make inquiries into his past. In another epoch, such a man might have sacked Rome or been hanged as a pirate. Today we must accept him for what he is, a phenomenon of an age of dissolution and crisis. As to his place of origin and the source of his

> first capital, the most painstaking investigation has shown that these are *quite impossible to trace.*

As sources of capital become "impossible to trace," so do networks of power. Arkadin's associations with piracy and criminality show the degree to which the mobility and power held by the kingpins of postwar industry make criminal activity appear legitimate. Whereas Arkadin uses his mobility to launder his past, Hollywood uses it to circumvent the laws of European quotas and American labor.

Arkadin's specific interest in global travel in its various forms suggests that mobility can upset power hierarchies, and work for the oppressed as well as their oppressors. The film's final sequence dramatizes this concept through air travel, and appears to favor public modes of transit over private ones. When Arkadin has killed everyone who knows his past except Guy, Guy flees to the Munich airport, where he purchases the last ticket on a flight to Barcelona. Arkadin's secretary phones the airport and attempts to bully a clerk into giving Guy's reservation to Arkadin, so that the latter might reach Raina first and preserve her loyalty. The secretary indignantly reminds the clerk of Arkadin's power as a "leading shareholder in your airline," but the clerk responds: "I'm sorry sir, but an airline is a public service." The clerk's assertion of equal access to the airline represents a rare moment of resistance to the power of untraceable global finance that Arkadin represents. Similarly, airline passengers at the gate demonstrate mild solidarity with Guy and against Arkadin when the latter appears at the terminal and offers any passenger whatever price they want for a ticket, up to "fifty million Marks." Instead of accepting Arkadin's escalated offer of a billion Marks, the passengers laugh with Guy, and turn their backs on Arkadin to board the plane. In a film that (up to this point) has so little faith in its own

characters, this moment of solidarity is crucial. It shows the potential for resistance to a new world order of unrepresentable financial power in the assurance of public access to services.

The power of equal access is reinforced in the ensuing race between Arkadin and Guy across the ocean, as Arkadin pursues the airliner in his small private plane. Guy's triumph in the film's final scene offers the film's final statement on narrative control. Raina's acceptance of one narrative over the other determines the film's outcome, and is not based in veracity but rather in timing. When Arkadin asks Guy in the Munich airport why Raina should believe his version of events, Guy retorts: "She'll hear my version first." If she believes Arkadin's version, Arkadin is still likely to murder Guy to ensure safekeeping of Arkadin's secrets. If she believes Guy, Arkadin has no reason to live. Power in a globalized economy, in other words, is reliant on whose version of a narrative reaches audiences first, which in turn hinges on the speed of public and private mobility. The vast spaces that separate countries serve to obfuscate or facilitate the spread of information, depending on who controls them. As such, the film re-enacts instances in which Welles lost control over his own stories while out of the country in which they were edited. Unable to place himself in proximity to his films' post-production, those who arrive first control the final product. In the allegorical version, however, the creative worker prevails and his story is cemented as truth.

Power in a period of postwar industrial expansion is thus seen as rooted not in efficiency and corporate hierarchies, as it was in the heyday of Fordism, but rather in the mobility and flexibility that would come to fuel Post-Fordism. In its preoccupation with global travel and fascination with competing modes of transportation, *Arkadin* hints at the mobile economy of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, in which so much business is reliant on the speed with which workers can move from one continent to another. Even as Welles hoped to establish

himself as a truly independent *auteur* by way of similarly international and flexible economic tactics, such plans would not be entirely viable until decades later. Even as moguls like Arkadin held the invisible strings of power for the time being, Welles predicted the demise of these tycoons and the rise of the flexible, mobile independent (albeit contingent) worker as the hero of the next economy.

VII. The Border as Precarious Landscape in *Touch of Evil*

Like *Arkadin*, *Touch of Evil* revolves around international travel, but in a much more localized sense. Set on the U.S.-Mexico border, the film once again pits a young outsider against an older, corrupt insider, this time in the form of police detectives Mike Vargas and Hank Quinlan. This pair also competes to legitimize competing narratives of events, in this case regarding the car-bomb murder of a local judge and Quinlan's subsequent frame job of a young Mexican man for the murder. All the while, the border setting complicates issues of jurisdiction, morality, and justice as those involved cross the national border repeatedly. *Touch of Evil* allegorizes an international power struggle as contingent upon border crossing and authorship, but unlike *Arkadin* the balance of power hinges on a land-based border, and authorship takes the form of recording. Instead of pitting a detective against an industrialist as he does in *Arkadin*, here Welles plays a Mexican detective off of an American one, and, unlike the private entrepreneurs in *Arkadin,* both men in *Touch of Evil* are civil servants. Their struggle is still over a narrative, specifically whose version of the criminal events that drive the film's plot will be accepted. Unlike *Arkadin*, however, *Touch of Evil* links this struggle to issues of shifting jurisdictions, personal transience, and racial inequality that troubled postwar America, while it also identifies progressive potential in racial hybridity, international solidarity, and (true to the spirit of an often-independent film director) the potential of mobile recording technologies.

Welles' entire filmography might be read as an ongoing inquiry into the unreliability of narratives. It is the basis for *Kane* (his first feature film), *F for Fake* (his last), all of the films discussed in this chapter, and many of his others. Whether a reporter, a cop, or a director strives for the most legitimate version of events, their grasp on any version of the story at hand is tenuous, as the truth can slip away or lose all meaning at the slightest turn of events. The fight over whose version of the story is assembled correctly is as much the foundation of Welles' films as it is their fate—as every film after *Kane* was recut, re-shot, and/or re-dubbed against his wishes. *Touch of Evil* is another notorious instance of such revision, although the result was not as extreme as *Arkadin*'s seven versions. While Welles was in Mexico during post-production, the studio added scenes without allowing him the chance to direct them; made changes to the score, and re-organized sequences which Welles intended to intercut. Welles responded with a now-famous fifty-eight page memo, from which only a few of his suggestions were used (Bogdanovich 14).

Despite such conflicts, the basic structure of *Touch of Evil* was somewhat less altered in post-production than many of his other films. The film begins with the accidental proximity of Vargas and his new wife Suzie (Janet Leigh) to the aforementioned car bomb, and then separates the couple for the duration of the film. Vargas becomes suspicious of Quinlan's investigation of the crime, while Suzie is harassed, drugged, kidnapped from a desert motel and framed for sex and drug crimes by the Grandi gang, whom Vargas is prosecuting and with whom Quinlan conspires. In the end, Quinlan's corruption is exposed, Vargas is validated and Suzie exonerated. It is also revealed that the young man Quinlan framed did, in fact, plant the bomb. In its existentially ambiguous ending and throughout, the film raises questions of justice and morality

that seemingly have no answer in a society where rules change and affiliations shift constantly, to the point that characters never truly know what side they are on—geographically and socially.

More so than his other films, the philosophical angst and moody atmospherics of *Touch of Evil* have led to its canonization as a classic film noir. For many critics, it is in fact the final film in the original noir cycle. Not truly a genre or deliberate trend, noir stands for stylistic and thematic elements that arose in many 1940s and 1950s Hollywood films and are important here for their tendency to critique the hypocrisies and anxieties of postwar American culture. Paul Schrader's seminal 1972 essay "Notes on Film Noir" identifies some of the noir "stylistics" that have come to be seen as critical of postwar malaise, Cold-War anxiety, racial tensions, and gender conflicts. Noirs often contain "scenes…lit for night…" "oblique and vertical lines…" "actors and setting…given equal lighting emphasis…" "compositional tension…" "an almost Freudian attachment to water…" "a love of romantic narration…" and "A complex chronological order [that] is frequently used to reinforce the feelings of hopelessness and lost time" (10-11). While some critics identify noir's depiction of marginal, embattled characters in a sinister world as a form of cultural dissent (especially when compared to other cinematic expressions of Cold War culture), they differ as to the degree of noir's critique—for some it is a site of international and radical resistance, whereas in other cases noir simply acknowledges the distress of Cold War subjects in an anxious and oppressive period. As Jonathan Auerbach asserts, while most noir was "not ostensibly concerned with national politics, many of these movies in style and tone dramatized feelings of alienation—A profound sense of dispossession corresponding closely to the Cold War's redefinition of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship" (2). As Kelly Oliver and Benigno Trigo argue, expressions of 1950s malaise also spoke to the interests of a dominant white male demographic that felt threatened by strained gender and race relations in the wake of

their return from foreign fronts. In the late 1940s and 1950s, American hypocrisy was stretched to its limits as women who had been empowered to join the workforce were pushed out, and endemic racism sat in stark contrast to cries for universalism in the wake of the Holocaust. Oliver and Trigo thus interpret noir's bleak, strained aesthetics "as serious condensations and displacements of symptoms of concrete anxieties over race, sex, maternity, and national origin that threaten the very possibility of identity by undermining its boundaries" (xiv). They find noir expressions of anxiety over gender and race relations to be symptomatic of a reactionary tendency to shore up white masculinity, at the expense of other races and genders, and at the expense of the films' political legitimacy.

As Welles intended it, *Touch of Evil* was to take a morally progressive stance on racial equality and international relations. However, he felt that the studio's cuts undermined the depth of the film's meditation on morality, borders, and race relations. They include, for instance, a scene in which Menzies explains his loyalty to his corrupt partner, and a crucial moment at which Vargas struggles with the recording device and expresses his discomfort with the act of recording, as well as several other scenes that explore the complexities of the film's characters in depth and call into question the finality of the "evil" of the title. Welles own take on the cuts was that "they kept all the scenes of violence but cut out all the moral ones" (qtd. in Bogdanovich *Cinema* 14). The studio also reordered sequences through which Welles intended to alternate narratives between Vargas and Quinlan's early investigation of the central crime, and Suzy's escalating endangerment at the hands of the Grandi gang. As Welles indicates in his extended memo, he intended to intensify interest in the separation of the main couple across national borders and within different elements of the narrative by intercutting key scenes, and to use such cuts to create a sense of borderland disconcertion (4). This narrative strategy serves to destabilize

the concept of borders, and in turn advocates internationalism and racial hybridity, as Suzy and Vargas come to represent nations and races whose vulnerability lies in their division. When the studio reorganized theses scenes in hopes of ensuring continuity, they eradicated much of Welles' critique of postwar social conditions of national hostility and discrimination.[65]

Nevertheless, *Touch of Evil* offers a sustained meditation on the validity of borders and the institutions and individuals that draw borders and set rules on either side. Like *Arkadin*, a younger detective and a corrupt older man fight for dominance, but the key factor in this case is not the speed with which they traverse air and water, but rather rules of jurisdiction that change from one side of the border to another. It also suggests that underground networks such as that of the Grandi gang are capable of operating more fluidly across borders than are official institutions, and thus it contests the efficacy of institutions in the postwar national context. Finally, it alludes to issues of transience and racial inequality that had increasingly come to tarnish the cheery façade of postwar America, and that were more visible around liminal spaces such as that of the U.S.-Mexican border than they were in the cul-de-sacs of the booming suburbs. Like *Arkadin*, Welles develops an allegory that imagines international and independent industry as conspiratorial schemes that are difficult for workers to grasp in any kind of totality. *Touch of Evil* also finds possibilities within the conditions it critiques, as the border fosters racial hybridity and solidarity, and allows the detective to begin to remap the disappearing cognitive pathways of the postwar economy.

Immediately following the explosion that sets off the events of the film, issues of jurisdiction seem to proliferate. The crime originates in Mexico, where a bomb is placed in the

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[65] This analysis makes use of both the studio's original release and a restored Criterion version of the film that attempts to execute Welles' original vision. I do not address the minute differences or evaluate the legitimacy, superiority, or authenticity of either version, as that is not a focus of this chapter.

trunk of a car. The renowned opening takes the form of an extended tracking shot that follows the car, Vargas, and Suzy through the streets of a lively town and across the border, where the car explodes, killing its two passengers. These events place Vargas at the scene and in a position to engage with the investigation, but as a Mexican national he has no official power. As he approaches the crime scene, Welles frames the approaching Vargas in medium close-up, in front of a sign that reads "Welcome stranger, to picturesque Los Robles, the Paris of the border." The composition of this frame designates Vargas as the "stranger" of the slogan and alludes to his outsider status (fig. 4.3). When Quinlan comments on Vargas' presence, the D.A. attempts to alleviate tension with: "Oh, I don't think Mr. Vargas claims any jurisdiction." Jurisdiction, it is implied, endows characters with institutional power depending on which side of the border they are on.

Yet regardless of which side of the border one is on, the law of the nation is not static, but rather realized through the actions of individual enforcers on either side—Vargas in Mexico, and Quinlan in the U.S.. Welles demonstrates this by contrasting Quinlan's corrupt tactics and Vargas' adherence to procedure. The former plants dynamite in an apartment to frame a suspect, whereas the latter insists on rigorous investigation. Such malleability in the execution of laws, Susan Mains suggests, is accentuated in the border context. She observes that "While Vargas attempts to represent the law as functioning at a scale beyond the personal… it is at the scale of the local and the individual that enforcement operates. This dislocation of a moral topography—a (social and physical) relief that appears exempt from discipline—reinforces the concept of the border as a precarious landscape" (258). In other words, both men feel the malleability of law more acutely in a landscape where laws change from one side to the other. It is merely their

responses that differ, in that Vargas strives to maintain order, and Quinlan exercises the flexibility of border rules to whatever extent he desires.

Throughout the film, the border is treated more as a concept than a literal place. The checkpoint itself seldom appears after the first shot, even as the action crosses from one side to the other dozens of times. The sequence in which Suzie first encounters the Grandis, for instance, relocates her first from the U.S. to the Mexican side, where she encounters a young man she calls "Pancho," (Valentin de Vargas) (although his annoyance suggests this is not actually his name). When she reluctantly agrees to follow him to a meeting with Uncle Joe Grandi (Akim Tamiroff), she utters an exasperated "across the border again!" (*Touch*). After the meeting, the film reunites her with Vargas in front of their hotel. That the couple is once again in Mexico might not be immediately clear, but the sequence occurs just after a conversation between Quinlan and several other Americans over their right to investigate the crime on the Mexican side. Welles ensures that it is possible—yet difficult—to determine which side of the border the film is on at any time. Often cues conflict, however, as when the soundtrack fluctuates between traditional Latino musical motifs and stereotypical American rock and roll beats. As Jennifer Fay and Justus Nieland suggest, "this film crosses the national border so many times that we cannot keep the localities straight. The border— so essential to America's security state— is at once phantasmagoric and perversely real because, even in this film, it determines legal jurisdiction and the rights of citizens" (174). The border's ambiguity, rather than undermining its power over individual fates, accentuates this power.

While control over above-board institutional power is dependent on jurisdictions and contingent upon border crossings, underground criminal networks function seamlessly across borders. The Grandi family business, for instance, operates on both sides according to its own

rules. The brother against whom Vargas is scheduled to testify works out of Mexico City, whereas Uncle Joe appears to own a hotel just over the border on the U.S. side, as well as the desert hotel in the U.S. where Suzie is framed, and the "Rancho Grandi" strip club on the Mexican side. The Grandis are usually shown to be in control of the scenarios they construct, as Uncle Joe first waylays and threatens Suzie, and later colludes with Quinlan to frame her. Neither nation's laws appear to have much impact on the Grandis' business. Criminality, like the bomb in the trunk of the car in the first scene, crosses borders unseen, and is not subject to jurisdiction. As in *Arkadin*, such a contrast between secretive and public networks alludes to the suspicious nature of rapidly globalizing private enterprises (including Hollywood) that sought to circumvent labor and quota laws by crossing borders and defying local regulations.

As the film associates border crossings with criminality and privatized networks, the effect of such unregulated and unfathomable systems on individuals registers visually and aurally. Welles repeats a visual motif of light/dark fluctuation to emphasize the instability of the transient spaces Mike and Suzie inhabit. In the Mexican hotel room in which Suzie and Mike originally reside, a peeping tom shines a flashlight through her window as she attempts to undress. Suzie and the stranger fight to darken and illuminate the space as Welles establishes a motif of alternation that will repeat visually and aurally. Ensuing scenes in the two Grandi hotels in which Suzie is most endangered are lit for heavy shadow, so that characters repeatedly pass from light, into darkness, and back again, while musical strains fluctuate wildly, piped in through a speaker she cannot control. Such tactics emphasize the precariousness of Suzie's transience, as she and Mike appear to be literally homeless at the moment. Although Vargas presumably has a residence on the Mexican side, all we know of Suzie is that she is an American, and it is not clear where they plan to reside.

Such details, on the one hand, implicitly refer to an experience of forced mobility that film workers faced in the age of HUAC and global Hollywood. On the other hand, these conditions were endemic to many workers across the Americas, and are often found by *noir* critics to express widespread conditions of itinerancy, most pointedly through the themes and stylistic devices of *film noir*.[66] As Fay and Nieland assert, "the condition of homelessness within capitalist democracy is… the malaise of globalization" (140). Unlike the conditions of itinerancy that were provoked by the Great Depression, homelessness in the 1940s and 1950s often was the result of global expansion or political persecution, and domestic or international relocation framed as a personal choice, as much opportunity as upheaval. Homelessness could also be more psychological than literal in this period. Citing Vivian Sobchak, Fay and Nieland offer that social conditions such as "constantly rising prices of food, clothing and other necessities… increasing rent and a nationwide housing shortage… labor disputes, and… fears of a renewed great depression" contributed to "the lived sense of insecurity, instability, and social incoherence Americans experience during the transnational period that began after the war and Roosevelt's death in 1945" (Sobchak qtd. in Fay and Nieland 137). In the 1950s, in other words, the very phenomenon of global expansion that promised to fuel prosperity in postwar society was the root of characters' experience of homelessness. Mike and Suzie are, after all, not truly vagrants, but a respectable middle class couple who are nevertheless transient. They are more representative of

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[66] Scholars have linked the postwar experience of homelessness and itinerancy to both *film noir* and modernity, and shown it to be more of an existential than a material condition, as it was during the depression. Vivian Sobchak's essay "Lounge Time: Post-War Crises and the Chronotope of Film Noir," for instance, argues that postwar Americans often felt homeless in the sense that they were stuck in a transitional moment (165). She finds *noir* to be a powerful expression of such conditions: "within the context of the postwar period's national (and personal) insecurity about the future and it's longing for the purposefulness, unity, and plenitude of the mythologized national past, film noir provided —or so film historians, text, and anecdotal experience has told us—the cinematic time–space in which contemporaneous cultural anxieties found vernacular expression. (qtd. in Fay and Nieland 137)" Fay and Nieland, on the other hand, argue that "the missing conceptual term from Sobchak's analysis… is *modernity*, the experience of the new, capitalist world as uneven processes of disembedding have threatened domestic traditions…the world over" (138).

late twentieth century itinerants than dust bowl migrants, as their mobility promises international opportunities and promotes interracial bonds, but at the expense of constant instability.

The internationalism of *Touch of Evil*, in other words, layers possibility onto critique. If trends toward personal instability and international tensions were problematic effects of mid-century internationalism, the hybridity it promised in relation to race and gender offered a hopeful answer. Such hybridity not only promotes racial solidarity—it transforms subjects into flexible citizens and laborers, as their potential to move amongst social tiers and identity groupings allows for the greater diffusion of cultural ideas. *Touch of* Evil explores hybridity through its three interracial couples. Suzy and Mike's marriage is the most prominent of these, but the others carry significant weight in the film's treatment of race. The points in the film at which Quinlan reconnects with the world-weary Tanya (Marlene Dietrich) on the Mexican side of the border are among his most sympathetic. The marriage of Marcia Linnekar (Joanna Moore) and Manelo Sanchez (Victor Millan) anchors the plot to interracial romance and tension, in that Sanchez's ultimate motive in planting the bomb is an attempt to legitimize his marriage by eliminating the disapproval and financial estrangement of his wife's father. Crucially, all three relationships (despite the now-awkward brown face casting of Heston, Dietrich, and Millan) subvert stereotypical power dynamics. In each relationship, the dominant person carries at least one marker of otherness—Vargas and Tanya are marked as racially other, whereas Marcia Linnekar's whiteness and wealth enable her dominance in the marriage with Sanchez, despite her gender. In keeping with Welles lifelong concerns, racial, international, and gender solidarity contains the potential to disrupt existing power structures.[67]

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[67] Fay and Nieland also read Welles' cross-ethnic casting as an interrogation of ethnic types: "featuring actors cast against 'type,' *Touch of Evil* dispenses with the verisimilitude between actor and character. And, populated with cameos (Zsa Zsa Gábor, Joseph Cotten), the film seemingly eschews the hermeticism of fiction altogether" (174).

Several scholars have read the proliferation of interracial relationships and border crossings in *Touch of Evil* as confirmations or contestations of the kind of Cold War white male-centric anxieties that pervade much of *film noir*.[68] Eric Lott's reading is characteristic in his initial ambivalence and cautious assertion of the film's progressiveness: "Welles demonstrates an awareness in *Touch of Evil* of … film noir's sense of the intimate proximity of racial Others to American national identity and its hysterical (if unconscious) attempts both to use and to exile them in portraits of white corruption" (562). As an allegory of decentralized Hollywood production, however, the film's racial hybridity takes on new meanings. Vargas epitomizes the forced universalism that Miller finds to undergird global expansion in the 1950s, as he is able to move relatively unhindered between nations and social groups, while remaining attuned to his national interests. Were police work a business, Vargas would be the ideal laborer to infiltrate new markets and attain cheap labor and resources. He is also highly exploitable, as his conscience and national protectiveness drive him to work without compensation during his honeymoon. His independence frees him from supervision and allows him to assert his moral authority unhindered, but also is a destabilizing factor that deprives him of resources and support.

In essence, Vargas' hybridity and mobility show him to be more suited for the freelance and contract work that would come to characterize post-Fordist labor systems, with which

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[68] Donald Pease summarizes long-running debates over border hybridity on *Touch of Evil*. In "Borderline Justice/ States of Emergency: Orson Welles' *Touch of Evil*, he compares Stephen Heath's landmark analysis of the film with Homi Bhabha's critique of Heath. Whereas Heath purports that the film "resolves the tension of law and justice" by making hybridity desirable and uniting the interracial couple in the end, Bhabha contends that "when the unrestrained play of nationalities at work in Touch of Evil gets articulated to the characters' contradictory sexual and racial positionings, their unresolved conflict renders the divergence between law and justice irreconcilable" (as paraphrased in Pease) (Pease 77). Pease also calls attention to Denning's more politicized reading, in order to assert that the body of criticism around *Touch of Evil* "has produced a discourse about the film which claims a knowledge that the film's previous interpreters either would not claim or could not know," therefore reinforcing assumptions of indeterminacy in *noir* criticism. Pease's analysis, which I extend, means to disrupt this pattern.

Hollywood was, at the time, beginning to experiment. His cross-border mobility and racial hybridity make him a more fluid, flexible worker and liken him to others within rapidly changing postwar creative industries. In Donald Pease's interpretation, "extraterritorial privileges become the basis for Vargas's primary relationship to his cultural hybridity. His cross-border expertise has made him a temporary member of multiple communities… He performs multiple roles in multiple contexts wherein he speaks from more than one perspective to more than one community and about more than one reality" (81). Such hybridity can serve diverse purposes, particular in the Cold War context of *Touch of Evil*. In a global context, it enables fluid cultural identities and engenders cultural homogenization, but most importantly for Welles it can subvert oppressive hierarchies. It does this through cultural mimicry, which as Pease (based on his reading of Bhabha) asserts "explains the process whereby Mexican migrant communities negotiated the political violence and the capitalist imperatives of both the U.S. and the Mexican states… through the invention and representation of different cultural alternatives" (84-85). Through mimicry colonial subjects re-appropriated the markers of colonial dominance and turned the tables on colonizers, as "the hybrid condition effected in the colonizers and the colonized thereby reversed the effect of colonial dominance, in that the subaltern knowledge which the colonizer had disavowed 'turned around' on the culturally dominant discourse, thereby dissevering it from the bases for its authority" (85). Just as Welles adopts Hollywood's techniques for his own version of postwar independent and international filmmaking, Vargas co-opts the markers of the police worker and makes them his own, adapting them to a more creative, flexible, and mobile mode of law enforcement.

Vargas' use of the recording device to finalize his version of the narrative showcases his creative and flexible traits as an ideal global worker, and affiliates him with creative laborers like

Welles. As he turns to the technology of a recording device in the final sequence of the film, he reluctantly assumes the role of director over the "true" narrative he seeks to reveal. Desperate for evidence that might prove Quinlan to be corrupt, Vargas arranges to secretly record Quinlan and his partner Pete Menzies as Menzies covertly solicits the truth. Holding a radio receiver tuned to Menzies' concealed wire, Vargas follows the pair as they walk through an oil field and onto a bridge over a shallow river, where he records Quinlan's most damning confessions until Quinlan discovers Vargas' presence. Their final physical struggle occurs in the river below, but unlike the scorpion and the frog, only Quinlan perishes, while Vargas returns to the stable space of land. As Michael Denning argues, this sequence is "one of Welles' most remarkable allegories of the apparatus," a parable that shows Welles to be "as much a victim of the apparatus as its master, crafting his anti-fascist allegories that were, more often than not, recut and reedited by the studios he worked for" (402).[69] Unlike the film itself, however, Vargas' recording stands firm in the end as the accepted narrative of the film's events. Quinlan may be a "victim of the apparatus," but this most likely has less to do with fascism than it has to do with a changing landscape of international and decentralized labor that favors a young hybrid worker over an old, inflexible throwback.

Quinlan, in other words, is a victim of more than just the apparatus. Vargas' recording, after all, would only alter Quinlan's fate if he survived the final sequence, which he does not. Rather he dies at the hands of Menzies, whom he has left for dead, just in time to save Vargas

[69] McBride's analysis of RKO's mistreatment of Welles showcases the power of recording and surveillance as much as *Touch of Evil* does in its final sequence. In regards to a 1942 conversation between Reg Armour and Phil Riesman—two RKO senior managers who worked under soon-to-be-ex-president George Schaefer—in which Riesman is instructed to shut down production of *It's All True*, McBride notes: "The transcript of that telephone conversation, preserved by RKO, is the smoking gun in the studio's mistreatment of Welles. It proves that the RKO management was deliberately deceiving and undermining him in Rio in order to use him as a scapegoat to prevent Schaefer from being deposed. The transcript reveals that Welles was not being told the truth about the budget, while at the same time was being blamed for illusory overruns" (73). McBride's criticism is an instance of criticism imitating art, as yet another recording device offers a more legitimate narrative than the corrupt stories preceding it.

from becoming Quinlan's third victim (having previously strangled Grandi). If Quinlan is the victim of anything, it is a rapidly globalizing system in which his place has become unclear. Just before the final set of confrontations, for instance, Quinlan reflects on the oil fields through which he and Menzies are passing:

> See that oil pump, pumping up money… money. Don't you think I could have been rich? A cop, in my position—what do I have? After thirty years, a little turkey ranch, that's all I got—a couple acres. An honest cop, and then this Mexican comes along, and look at the spot he puts me in! (*Touch*).

Quinlan thinks himself to be the "honest cop," and Vargas the intruder. Planting evidence is Quinlan's outdated mode of authorship, as he can no longer plant the details of the story that allow his self-deception. The degree to which his narrative is grounded in fiction or reality is irrelevant, so long as the outcome is (in his view) morally just. As assistant D.A. Schwartz and Tanya gaze down at his corpse, Schwartz remarks: "Hank was a great detective all right," to which Tanya replies "and a lousy cop" (*Touch*). The exchange suggests that Quinlan is no longer suited for the demands of his rapidly changing world, without entirely explaining why. For Cyrus K. Patell, Quinlan "is a great detective because his famous intuition has helped him solve the most baffling crimes and has enabled him to compile a stunning record of convictions; he is a lousy cop because that record of convictions has been built not on fair judicial procedure, but on planted evidence" (28).[70] If Vargas is, by comparison, a good cop, one might take Patell's

[70] Patell's interpretation links Quinlan, through these statements, to the also outdated figure of the hard-boiled detective, whom he reads as an expression of American individualism (26). For Patell, "the hard-boiled detective is… the result of a clash between mythic individualism and the social facts of modernity and civilization" (26). The detective relies on a "vision of moral sovereignty and authority" and a "feeling of 'mastery'" that resemble the unconventional class position and assertion of expertise that characterized the emergent PMC decades before *Touch of Evil* was released.[70] Patell's explanation of the difference between a "great detective" and a "lousy cop," however, doesn't fully explain what the two roles stand for.

explanation to mean that the ideal has shifted from the intuitive independence of the hard-boiled detective to the institutional representative of social order.

Both Vargas and Van Stratten resemble "social detectives," a term Fredric Jameson uses to describe postmodern detectives who attempts to re-stitch the torn fragment of global postmodernity into a coherent narrative. This narrative must not fall back on old forms, must not plant evidence as Quinlan does, but rather adapt to the new networks and pathways of information of a globalized, technologically-driven world. Based on his study of 1970s conspiracy films, Jameson predicts that "the social detective… will either be an intellectual in the formal sense from the outset, or will gradually find himself/herself occupying the intellectual's structural position by virtue of the premium placed on knowledge with the cognitive by the form itself" (*Geopolitical* 38). This detective, in other words, is deemed such not on the basis of her actual profession, but by way of structural position and cognitive mapping skills. Welles' protagonists succeed according to such postmodern logic, as "the premium placed on knowledge" under postmodernism places detectives and culture workers at the forefront of popular culture and industry, while also placing responsibility for the critique of society on their shoulders. The multi-faceted role of Jameson's social detective helps explain why Vargas is both detective and director, or why Van Stratten is a smuggler-detective hybrid. Jameson suggests that the "more general positioning of the intellectual in the social structure… endows the individual protagonist with collective residence, which transforms policeman or journalist, photographer or even media figure, into a vehicle for judgments on society and relations of it's hidden nature, just as it refocuses the various individual or empirical event and actors into a representative pattern symptomatic of the social order as a whole" (*Geopolitical* 38-39). Civil servants and culture workers, Jameson suggests, are uniquely positioned to tend to the intellectual conscience of

postmodern society, in their capacities as structural geographers and their ability to cognitively map the new society.

In the final moments of *Touch of Evil*, Vargas assumes such a role as responsible critic, as his recording picks up and echoes the words "guilty… guilty… guilty" (*Touch*). Although these words literally implicate Menzies and Quinlan as corrupt, they figuratively implicate the society that created them, and the narrative itself. As Welles wrote in his memo, "the tinny little voice of condemnation was meant to be a general comment on the story itself" (56-57). Ironically, however, the studio removed this—an echo still occurs during the recording, but the playback does not occur. Such alterations show that Welles and Vargas are similarly not inherently empowered to control narratives. They must compete with an institutional figure such as Quinlan, Arkadin, or Universal's Albert Zugsmith, men who have ample access to support and funding that the social detective does not. To do so, they exploit borders, and adapt to new technologies in order to claim a more flexible and creative mode of authorship, which prevails in the fictional realms of the films and in the workplaces of the future.

VIII: Conclusion

In his analysis of *Mr. Arkadin*, James Naremore suggests Welles as one of the precursors for European avant-garde filmmakers who would come to revolutionize filmmaking in the years just after Welles made *Touch of Evil*. *Arkadin*, he argues, is "a Hollywood thriller seen from the vantage point of a European intellectual, foreshadowing the rise of 'personal' art films in the early sixties" (*Magic World* 232). Welles is also a precursor for the New Hollywood films of the 1970s—artful yet commercial films that sought immediate relevance in the political and social fabric of their times, yet remained accessible enough to mainstream audiences. His ongoing importance lies not only in his influence on film style, but also in his mode of production. Welles

was one of the first truly independent auteurs to experiment with autonomous production models. Although these experiments produced mixed results, they still demonstrated the possibility that a motivated individual could gather funds, put together a crew, and shoot a film. It was more difficult, as *Arkadin*'s mishaps indicate, to handle post-production independently. Still, he pioneered his production model on similar values to those cherished in the workplaces of the post-Fordist economy: personal sacrifice, international mobility, and unbridled creativity.

The allegories in all of these films, after all, cast doubt on a seemingly un-navigable system, while also suggesting (most forcefully in the context of oceans, airways, and borders) the potential to swing the pendulum back the other way, to gain the upper hand and chart one's own creative path. Such possibilities both address and depend on the tendency for industries in the midst of reorganization and decentralization toward gaps in power and equality. As Lev's depiction of "princely salaries" for some and chronic unemployment for others suggests, post-Fordism even in its earliest form tended to exacerbate inequality rather than alleviating it. The contemporary version of such uneven consequences can now be found in Silicon Valley, where independent laborers in the so-called sharing economy labor excessively writing Yelp reviews and driving for Uber in service of multi-millionaire tech executives. While such gaps often work against the already disempowered, however, Welles' cinematic allegories of an industry in transformation suggest that the means to seize power are the same means the powerful use to exploit—for instance, the technologies of creativity in *Touch of Evil*, or the public means of mobility offered in *Arkadin*. Whether the values of flexibility, mobility, and creativity that Welles promotes have been too thoroughly subsumed to serve such a purpose, however, remains to be seen.

If the current state of *noir* allegories provides any measure of such possibility, the prospects for social solidarity and cognitive mapping of today's industrial and political networks seem bleak. The recent cult television hit *Hannibal*, for instance, offers an instance of popular avant-garde baroque *noir* on contemporary television. Like Welles' films, it is persistently preoccupied with the malleability of justice, the potency of internationalism, and the dissolution of clear divisions between people and places. Like Welles' films and much classic *noir*, it demonstrates what Paul Schrader calls "an almost Freudian attachment to water" as well as a "complex chronological order [that] is frequently used to reinforce the feelings of hopelessness and lost time" (10-11). Yet the narrative forecloses on any analysis of contemporary power structures, and offers instead an extended existential meditation on personal sacrifice, human 'nature', and death. Despite its compelling imagery and groundbreaking style, this paragon of twenty-first century *noir* fails to offer the political critique of Welles' structural allegories.

Such shortcomings might be symptomatic of the dubious ability of now traditional media of film and television to penetrate the rhizomatic world systems in which we now function. Some have argued that the infiltration of digital networks is now key to such an understanding, but as Alex Galloway suggests such "liberation rhetoric" is as indeterminate as was the rhetoric of "independence" in post-classical Hollywood. Such rhetoric is now, as it was then, "a foil for the real workings of power today" (16). This chapter has not set out to determine where in today's culture a similar "allegory of the apparatus" might be found to those of Welles' films. That his allegories are so concretely located in the courtroom, on the border, and in the ocean, suggests at least that a degree of materiality is necessary to address the complexities of immaterial labor. The conclusion to this dissertation will therefore briefly meditate on twenty-first century modernist tendencies in higher education, the DIY movement, and corporate culture.

Conclusion: The New Modernism

In January 2011, I sat down for lunch in a neighborhood café with a man named Tim Cook to discuss how I might assist in his improbable quest to start a new college. Tim had an idea that worked against the ongoing corporatization of universities, ballooning tuition costs, and the rampant casualization of teaching labor. His new college would minimize its footprint and stick to the business of teaching and learning, through the development of a mobile campus that inhabited underused space in our underpopulated rust belt city. Such minimal infrastructure would allow tuition to be allocated primarily to instruction, in contrast to the ballooning administrative overhead of the corporate university. It would enable a low-cost education capable of diminishing financial barriers to higher education (Tim estimated $5000 per year), and provide stable (if not tenured) jobs for college teachers, for whom long-term, continuous employment was ever more elusive. He also proposed a progressive curriculum that integrated humanities and skill-based learning, through which the school would (for instance) teach organic agriculture alongside literature, or computer science with philosophy. The name he had chosen for this college was the Saxifrage School, after a flower mentioned in the William Carlos Williams poem "A Sort of the Song," in which writing aspires to "reconcile/ the people and the stones" (55). The end of the poem speaks to the revolutionary aims of both Williams' modernism and Cook's college: "Compose. (No ideas/ but in things) Invent!/ Saxifrage is my flower that splits/ the rocks" (55).

Cook's idea excited me enough that I would commit significant time, energy, and thought to the project over the next four years and serve on its board when it cemented non-profit status. As a Ph.D. student in English, I was immersed in the problems Cook sought to address, from widespread contingency in academic labor to the lack of financial diversity I saw in my own

students. I was also inspired by the project's modernist impulses, which sprung from Williams' revolutionary imagery of the rock-breaking flower as metaphor for culture's potential to remake the world, and manifested in the school's itinerancy and organizational anarchism. When, later that year, I met with Cook and a group of similarly inspired people to plan our integration into a Mattress Factory exhibition in collaboration with a visiting artist, that artist's use of the term "disruptive innovation" intrigued me. Having never heard the term before, I was unaware of its origins and it struck me as faithful to the modernist inclinations of our project. I knew that what I was doing there was not necessarily revolutionary, but we hoped to create something capable of placing a small crack on the windshield of neoliberal higher education that might spread until its entire surface shattered.

The "innovation" piece of the phrase troubled me, though, not only for its alignment with trendy business jargon, but because elements of Saxifrage such as its potential to whiten and gentrify underserved urban neighborhoods, its emphasis on flexibility in labor and learning, and (to be blunt) the inclinations toward fixed-gear bicycles, fancy espresso, and interesting facial hair amongst our young, hip, all-white band of volunteers. Saxifrage, in other words, fit comfortably into Richard Florida's creative city, a place where creative workers have the potential to revitalize post-industrial economies. For Florida such cities are borderline utopian, while in reality, as we have seen in the city where this story takes place, this process involves such uncomfortable effects as the demolition of low-income housing to make space for a new Whole Foods. Thus I was embarrassed, but not entirely surprised, to find that "disruptive innovation" was originally coined in a book titled *The Innovators' Dilemma* by Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen in 1997. The term has been gaining popularity in corporate literature ever since the reinvention of Joseph Schumpeter's mid-century celebration of

"creative destruction" as the engine of capitalism, which in its turn was a cheery reversal of Marx's lament that under the turbulent forces of capitalism "all that is solid melts into air" (248). For Christensen, disruptive innovation describes a process through which a new (usually, low-cost, oft-disparaged underdog) product "disrupts" a market, and companies within that market must rapidly adapt or go under. Disruptive innovation mimics, in a corporate setting, the modernist impulse to transform a cultural market with forms so offensive or shocking that it could never be the same, from *Ulysses*, to Duchamp's urinal, to *The Rites of Spring*.

The resurgence of such modernist trends in a popular twenty-first century theory of corporate development suggests that modernism hasn't faded away since the mid-twentieth century due to the aesthetic predominance of an entirely different postmodernism. Rather it has been woven into the economic fabric of western society, its modes of production adopted in small and large-scale business operations, its aesthetics channeled into contemporary workplaces and consumer products. The new modernism I want to delineate here is similar to its predecessor in that it is disorganized and quasi-revolutionary, and favors action and momentum over self-reflection and deliberation. It seeks to transform markets and genres, but (typically) not to tear down the dominant economic regime or to foment political revolution. It is also like the modernism of the early twentieth century in its repudiation of the past, but the new modernism also evidences significant nostalgia for the past, both toward the bohemian life and work-styles of its ancestors and the artisanal craftsmanship of pre-capitalist economies. Under the new modernism, flexible labor and learning (often one and the same in the context of the neoliberal university) are seen as engines of innovation, which for followers of Christensen means the creation of products capable of supplanting other products, regardless of social consequences.

One major difference between early twentieth century avant-garde-ism and late twentieth century disruptive innovation is that of scope. Modernist innovation extends beyond Ezra Pound's dictum "make it new"—which essentially asks for new forms of expression to suit the chaotic world of the modern subject—to encompass new products (the little magazine, the experimental film short, the theater of the absurd) and modes of production (semi-autonomous, mobile, and flexible) distribution (networked, social) and consumption (of ideas and cultural capital rather than merely material goods). Christensen's innovation, by comparison, is mainly limited to products and services, at the expense of ideas, knowledge, and labor models. He and his co-authors define the concept in the policy report *Disrupting College: How Disruptive Innovation Can Deliver Quality and Affordability to Postsecondary Education*:

> Disruptive innovation is the process by which a sector that has previously served only a limited few because its products and services were complicated, expensive, and inaccessible, is transformed into one whose products and services are simple, affordable, and convenient and serves many no matter their wealth or expertise. The new innovation does so by redefining quality in a simple and often disparaged application at first and then gradually improves such that it takes more and more market share over time as it becomes able to tackle more complicated problems. (2)

These innovations, as Christensen & Co. assert, require a "technology enabler" (the invention or use of an emergent technology) and a "business model innovation" (corporate reorganization, which typically entails decentralization) (2-3). Thus the key to disruptive innovation in higher education, for them, is online learning, in that it lowers costs through use of an emergent technology and calls for the organizational decoupling of research and teaching.

As is typical of Christensen's recommendations for disruption, the social consequences of wholesale adoption of online learning platforms in higher education are not a factor, and do not merit mention at all. Such narrowness is symptomatic of a litany of flaws in Christensen's theory, which Jill Lepore catalogues in the 2014 *New Yorker* article "The Disruption Machine: What the Gospel of Innovation Gets Wrong." Disruptive innovation, for Lepore, amounts to "the idea of progress stripped of the aspirations of the Enlightenment, scrubbed clean of the horrors of the twentieth century, and relieved of its critics" ("Disruption Machine"). Before the rise of full-scale industrial capitalism, she notes, figures from Edmund Burke to George Washington understood innovation as dangerous, a thing to be avoided. Her most stinging critique is of Christensen's methods, from his "handpicked case studies," to his "arbitrary definition of success," as well as his use of "dubious" sources and "questionable" logic ("Disruption Machine"). Ironically, disruptive innovation has been insufficiently criticized, Lepore suggests, because those who might critique are impeded by the very institutions Christensen wants to accelerate. The problem, she reasons, is that disruptive innovation is "headlong, while critical inquiry is unhurried, which leads to charges of "fogyism, as if to criticize a theory of change were identical to decrying change" ("Disruption Machine"). Beyond Lepore's critiques, what the modernist roots of disruptive innovation show is that the theory falls short in its inability to address broad forms of innovation at work today beyond structures of production, and in the realms of distribution, and consumption, as well as within less straightforwardly capitalistic scenarios such as higher education.

A quick look around the campus of a private research university in 2016 suggests that what Christensen and his acolytes have contributed to the field has less to do with the adoption of new technological means than with the circulation of a cluster of buzzwords that often

obfuscate the University's mission more than they clarify. On a fence surrounding the massive construction site for our University's new business school (deemed a "quadrangle" that promises to look more like a small campus itself rather than a mere building), banners advertise the attributes of the new building's students: "Leaders. Makers. Entrepreneurs," and massive lettering across several banners declares its core values of "CREATIVITY" and "INNOVATION" (fig. 5.1). The front page of the website for this project announces that it will house "activities that are part of Carnegie Mellon's campus-wide culture of innovation, entrepreneurship and new ventures, including curricula, research, mentoring and partnerships with alumni and stakeholders that support venture capital and seed funding" ("Tepper"). Such language may not be shocking when applied to a business school, but what is strange about the page is its emphasis on "campus-wide collaboration" over the more traditional, stuffy terminology of "business". In the website's description of this seemingly all-encompassing endeavor, the phrase "flexible, collaborative learning environment" appears repeatedly alongside "innovation" and "entrepreneurship," while "business" is used somewhat begrudgingly in reference to the school's name (Tepper School of Business) and its extant programs, which have presumably not yet been renamed in keeping with the innovation craze.

Here, as in many arenas in which such buzzwords are deployed, it is difficult to determine exactly what kind of learning activities fall under the umbrella of flexible collaboration, and how much of students' university education will be devoted to starting businesses and making prototypes rather than learning, contemplating, and generating knowledge for non-commercial purposes. This vagueness is symptomatic of a widespread embrace on the university campus of what I call "makerism," in the form of programs that encourage building and tinkering over reading, writing, and thinking. In these environments, Williams' dictum of

"no ideas/but in things/ Invent!" takes on new life as students are trained to be flexible, collaborative, and mobile workers. Another recent development on this campus entailed the devotion of 5000 square feet of space in the main library to a program called "IDeATe," (Integrative Arts, Technology, and Design Network) which in fact does not identify as a program per say, but rather as a "network." Emblazoned across its main web page are the words "Makers. Creators. Collaborative Innovators" over a photograph of four students who appear to have just finished collaborating flexibly on the innovation of two very small robots, which are at the moment in motion (fig. 5.2). Marketing language for these projects tends to be based in action and practice and is often devoid of self-reflection, hence IDeATe has no mission statement beyond that it "connects diverse strengths across CMU to advance education, research and creative practice in domains that merge technology and arts expertise" ("Integrated"). This marks a slight departure from the bohemian spirit of collaborative enterprise upon which it draws, which in its modernist form was not devoid of the self-reflexivity upon which modernism was founded. Collaborative environments such as the Omega Workshops, Gertrude Stein's salon, and Stanley Rose's bookshop certainly spurred innovation in design, literature, art, and film. But unlike IDeAte, they also generated numerous works of reflection on the social purpose of these spaces (such as *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*) and on the industries they abutted (Such as *The Day of the Locust*).

Admittedly, an elite, technology and arts-oriented private university is not necessarily representative of the degree to which makerism has impacted higher education. Rather I employ the example here because of its extremity. A search of the entire Carnegie Mellon website generates 1,860 hits for the word "maker" and only 1,120 for "thinker" (cmu.edu). Even more prevalent is the word "hackathon" with 2,460 hits. Hackathons have become an explosively

popular trend on this campus in recent years. They are essentially extended, collaborative work sessions during which teams of students sacrifice sleep and nutrition in order to bring an idea to fruition, while subsisting on pizza and caffeine. The end result might be anything from a business plan to a product prototype, or even a song (as in a recent "hack-a-song") competition. The events are competitive and fundamentally entrepreneurial, but also are designed to foster learning and inclusivity. One hackathon here, for instance, is described as "an opportunity for hackers to get together to build or modify software to create something that is useful, interesting or just cool… even if each participant may not know how to do so at the outset" (Spice, "Students"). Such inclusiveness, however, has the added benefit of deepening the free labor pool for the corporate sponsors who often retain rights to the innovations produced at these events.

Hackathons, in other words, are part of a more widespread "entrepreneurship racket" that Avery Wiscomb identifies as a troublesome new mutation in the corporatization of higher education: "on the face of it," Wiscomb argues, "experiential learning opportunities championed by entrepreneurial programs — and indeed much of the entrepreneurial agenda — seem not only practical but also beneficial to students who want to work in these industries. But these experiences are necessarily *more* beneficial to science and tech companies than to students, and we should be asking whether industry or the university should be benefiting from this kind of labor at all" (Wiscomb). Such practices extend beyond hackathons and include the incubation of startups on college campuses, partnerships with large corporations at which students intern, and corporate research partnerships that mine the undergraduate classroom and the graduate research lab for intellectual resources. One problem with such practices as that they import the social myopia of Christensen's theories into the University, an environment that is ostensibly responsible for training thoughtful citizens. As Sarah Brouillette argues, "even as universities

praise results that lead to saleable intellectual properties or have economically instrumental applications, they show little interest in evaluating the social ramifications of a given innovation" ("Academic"). However, some outcomes of such collaborations speak to the contrary, such as an Android app designed to read texts to the deaf in India that was developed in collaboration with the startup Hear to Read. Not all entrepreneurship initiatives are so benevolent, however, and all represent for Wiscomb a "perversion of the values of education, especially when students are paying for the privilege of having their labor appropriated while at university, and many are going deep into debt to do it. Entrepreneurship in higher education masks increasingly exploitative and super-exploitative types of institutional practices" (Wiscomb). Such trends hearken back to modernist tendencies toward self-exploitation in the name of art, but are here performed in the name of creativity and innovation.

The kind of exploitation of free labor that is evident in hackathons and corporate collaborations at the university level extends beyond these environments and is in fact rooted in the idealism of the early years of the World Wide Web, when many Internet pioneers still believed the "net" to be resistant to corporate invasion. Over time, as Tiziana Terranova asserts, the "free labour" of the resistant Web came to be exploited by the telecoms who ran its networks as well as the corporations that sought to trade there. She identifies a "gift economy" that "is itself an important force within the reproduction of the labour force in late capitalism as a whole" (77). The foundations of the gift economy lie in both the creative impulse of modernism and PMC reliance on knowledge as a producer of value. Terranova argues that "the conditions that make free labour an important element of the digital economy are based on a difficult, experimental compromise between the historically rooted cultural and affective desire for creative production… and the current capitalist emphasis on knowledge as the main source of

added value" (77). Many of the artists in this dissertation, however, merged modernist creativity and PMC knowledge-work to gain traction in creative industries, which suggests that this combination might not be as difficult and experimental as Terranova assumes.

Moreover, a more widespread maker movement has gained momentum in recent years, and often appears rooted in nostalgia for the alternative modernist workshops of William Morris, Roger Fry, and others. A proliferation of "maker faires" (essentially crafts conventions that encompass traditional and digital arts and embrace amateurs and professionals) has swept the nation, along with a boom in DIY television shows and the appearance of "maker spaces" across cities. Mark Hatch, owner of the maker-space chain Techshop, lays out the principles of this movement in *The Maker Movement Manifesto*, where he commands the reader to "MAKE. Making is fundamental to what it means to be human. We must make, create, and express ourselves to feel whole. There is something unique about making physical things. These things are like little pieces of us and seem to embody portions of our souls" (1). The design of Hatch's franchises, like the Omega, invites the consumer and producer to tinker and play, in the name of creativity but also typically with intent to sell. His tenets of the maker movement—"Make," "Share," "Give," "Learn," "Tool Up," "Play," "Participate," Support," and "Change" hearken back to both modernist and Arts and Crafts enterprises. In this case, however, the consumer and producer are one and the same, as one must consume a membership in order to produce.

Both the maker movement and the gift economy thus appear to offer new modernist alternatives to laboring in traditional industries, which often in the literature of these movements is denigrated as spiritually inferior. Stability and rootedness are often shown to be symptoms of alienated labor, as new forms of contingency arise to release workers from the confines of permanent employment. A highly visible sector in which such rhetoric prevails has ben deemed

"the gig economy," a sub-sector made up of mobile apps that enable individuals to pick up work of various kinds, from driving to grocery shopping to tutoring, from other individuals. As Sarah Kessler asserts:

> The gig economy… represents a theory of the future of work that's a viable alternative to laboring for corporate America. Instead of selling your soul to the Man, it goes, you are empowered to work for yourself on a project-by-project basis. One day it might be delivering milk, but the next it's building Ikea furniture, driving someone to the airport, hosting a stranger from out of town in your spare bedroom, or teaching a class on a topic in which you're an expert" (Kessler).

As with Terranova's gift economy, such activities appear to have the capacity to empower and liberate individuals from the drudgery of stable employment, and could in some views even revolutionize capitalism itself. Rana Foohar's "How the Gig Economy Could Save Capitalism," for instance, argues that "the platform technologies of the "sharing economy" might offer the possibility of empowering labor in a new way, creating a more inclusive and sustainable capitalism" (Foohar). Paul Mason's *Postcapitalism: A Guide to Our Future* offers a more radical perspective in which the gig economy has the potential to allow individuals to escape from—and potentially overthrow—neoliberal capitalism. He argues that the gig economy

> offers an escape route—but only if these micro-level projects are nurtured, promoted, and protected by a massive change in what governments do. This must in turn be driven by a change in our thinking about technology, ownership, and the work itself. When we create the elements of the new system we should be able to say to ourselves and others: this is no longer my survival mechanism, my bolt-

> hole from the neoliberal world, this is a new way of living in the process of formation (xv).

Critics of the gig economy, however, overwhelmingly point to its capacity to undermine labor stability and consumer safety, as has been argued in dozens of articles that are critical of ride-sharing giant UBER for its unwillingness to regulate employment for its drivers or to rigorously protect its consumers. If the gig economy hearkens back to the casual labor of modernist entrepreneurs and freelancers, however, additional flaws in its logic appear. First, the kind of scenario in which alternative labor practices offer only a "bolt hole" from the dominant economic regime, as Mason puts it, are at least a century old. In other words, modernist enterprise shows time and again that what appear to be revolutionary practices are more like Christensen's disruptions, alternatives that briefly oppose dominant regimes but ultimately inspire their development. Second, there is a difference between owning the means of production and those of distribution, as (for instance) Hollywood modernists learned the hard way. One might own his typewriter, but the story must be filtered through Hollywood to find an audience. Or, one might own a couch and a car, but it is hard to see how that amounts to taking over the digital networks through which companies like Uber and Airbnb operate.

The influence of modernist enterprise can be found not only in the emergent sector of the gig economy, but also in some of the most massive technology firms of the late twentieth and twenty-first century economy. Unlike the economic modernism of disruptive innovation, makerism, and the gig economy, the modernism of Apple and Google is (for instance) both economic and aesthetic. Many observers have noted Apple's reliance on tenets of mid-century modernist design, for instance, particularly in its use of "pure form" to produce sleek objects and retail spaces in which design elements seem to disappear before the consumer's eyes, in much

the same way that Orson Welles intended for the sets of *The Trial*. As Aaron Betsky argued in 2012, Apple "has already done more to bring the notion of clean lines, abstraction, white, and every other surface attribute of Modernism to the masses than any architect or architectural theoretician" (Betsky). Google, with its brightly decorated offices and playful "doodles," however, has more in common with the prewar modernists of this study. As a blog post by Natalia Cerire observes,

> One of Google Search's most famous features, in fact, is an ornament: a fast-rotating (24-hour) decoration on the homepage, usually a drawing or an animated cartoon, or sometimes a game, always topical and never repeated, called a 'doodle.' Google itself describes the doodle feature as 'the fun, surprising, and sometimes spontaneous changes that are made to the Google logo to celebrate holidays, anniversaries, and the lives of famous artists, pioneers, and scientists,' and, I am not making this up, the first one was made to mark Burning Man. (Cecire).

Cecire connects such tendencies toward childishness and play to modernist primitivism, and argues that "the performance of childishness is a key form of modernist primitivism, a way of superseding modern civilization's (supposed) hypercontrol…(which is also, of course, a proxy for other alleged developmental earlinesses—modernists like Stein and William Carlos Williams freely appropriated African-American, Native American, and immigrant positions)" (Cecire). However, I associate Google's childishness more with the rhetoric of fun and free play in labor espoused within the Omega, in Stein's books for children, or in Ben Hecht and Charlie MacArthur's "writing factory".

Apple and Google, for instance, both adapt the rhetoric of flexibility and artistry that modernist entrepreneurs drew upon to describe their labor. A *Forbes Magazine* article devoted to the personality traits that Apple finds to be most desirable in its employees, for instance, cites Steve Jobs' well-known characterization: "They're not fond of rules and they have no respect for the status quo. They are the ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world" (Gallo). Among other traits (such as dissatisfaction with the status quo) the article asserts that Apple, like modernist enterprises, values passion over knowledge. Just as Stein asserted her mode of creative celebrity as superior to the knowledge and expertise valued by the PMC, an Apple manager notes that "knowledge helps, of course, but one Apple recruiting manager told me, "We've learned to value a magnetic personality just as much as proficiency" (Gallo). Google similarly values an undefined quality of "Googleyness," as described in a *Business Insider* article on "13 qualities Google Looks for in Job Candidates." It includes "attributes like enjoying fun (who doesn't), a certain dose of intellectual humility (it's hard to learn if you can't admit that you might be wrong), a strong measure of conscientiousness (we want owners, not employees), comfort with ambiguity (we don't know how our business will evolve, and navigating Google internally requires dealing with a lot of ambiguity), and evidence that you've taken some courageous or interesting paths in your life" (Baer). Before they embodied "Googleyness," these qualities were those of modernist creative workers. The ideal Google worker, it seems, would have share Fry's values of fun, Morris and John Ruskin's humility, the tolerance for the tumult of a capricious industry shared by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Hecht, and Nathanael West, and the adventurous mobility of Welles.

Wyndham Lewis and Stein, however, seem perhaps better suited for Amazon.com, where an employee motto is purported to be "I'm peculiar" (qtd. in Kantor and Streitfield). Such a tag

line could have accompanied Stein across the U.S. on her American tour, whereas Lewis' attitude toward creative labor resonates with an Amazon employee's assertion that "conflict brings about innovation" (qtd. in Kantor and Streitfield). Stein's assertion that what she did was not work, however, would be unwelcome at Amazon, a workplace that exerts extraordinary demands on its workers. Jodi Kantor's and David Streitfield's *New York Times* investigative piece reveals that self-exploitation and conflict are central to the company's model:

> At Amazon, workers are encouraged to tear apart one another's ideas in meetings, toil long and late (emails arrive past midnight, followed by text messages asking why they were not answered), and held to standards that the company boasts are "unreasonably high." The internal phone directory instructs colleagues on how to send secret feedback to one another's bosses. Employees say it is frequently used to sabotage others. (The tool offers sample texts, including this: "I felt concerned about his inflexibility and openly complaining about minor tasks.") (Kantor and Streitfield).

While such grueling labor was not typical of modernist enterprise, the incentive to self-exploit and mutually sabotage can be found across many of the studies I have presented, most prominently in the case of the "Ideal Home Rumpus" fallout between Fry and Lewis. It is also reminiscent of the way innovation produced conflict and turmoil during the heyday of modernism, whether in the performance of Igor Stravinsky's *Rites of Spring* or Welles' *the War of the Worlds*.

Whether one is a disruptor, a maker, a gig-worker, or a "peculiar" Amazonian, the central traits of creativity, flexibility, and mobility endorsed by modernist entrepreneurs and freelancers are highly valued today. The flipside of this economy, of course, is contingency. The flexible,

mobile, creative life requires the twenty-first century creative worker to cope with unprecedented uncertainty and itinerancy. Cultural justifications for this lifestyle have reached a point today at which parody and sincerity are difficult to untangle. A recent *Vice Magazine* article, for instance, announces that "Living out of a van is the new American Dream" (Jagneaux). As author David Jagneaux suggests, intentional homelessness is often preferable to the subsistence living that one ekes out in an economic climate of unprecedented inequality: "You could spend your youth grinding away at your job, paying rent and hating your life, or you could just say fuck it and move into a van," Jagneaux suggests. Testimonials from so-called "vandwellers" suggest that economic stability is spiritually bereft, as in the example of Chris Trenschel and Tamara Murray, who "thought they had the perfect life" including successful careers, permanent housing, and expendable income, but "were dead inside" (qtd. in Jagneaux). Despite such inconveniences as "buying water jugs to urinate in, showering at gyms and rec centers, and just generally struggling to meet daily hygiene necessities," vandwelling for Jagneaux represents a "freer, more adventure-driven lifestyle" that is also ideal for digital workers who can work remotely. The ideal worker today, it seems, wants to be "unburdened by permanent housing" as well as (one might assume) permanent employment.

If contingency, then, is modernism's economic legacy, how might those of us who are invested in the future of higher education address the rise of disruption, makerism, and other forms of bohemian enterprise that have mutated into neoliberal projects? As far as I can tell, "gig" work has not entirely taken hold in higher education, but it seems only a matter of time before the embarrassing ubiquity of adjunct labor is repurposed into desirable flexibility through the use of an app. Regrettably, this was the direction in which the Saxifrage project was headed before it went into "hibernation" in early 2016. At that time, Cook's attention had been

redirected by way of a local grant-making institution toward initiatives that hoped to connect existing educational resources in a given city into learning bundles of a sort, so that instead of attending a single institution to learn about organic agriculture, one might cobble together courses around the city instead. When, at one of our final meetings, I complained that such a model resembled the UBER of higher education, I was asked what was wrong with UBER. While this dissertation has not directly attempted to answer that question, what the bohemian enterprise and its legacy offer in the end is the ability to differentiate between a truly radical, utopian enterprise such as Morris and Co., more ambivalent projects such as Hecht's Astoria Studio and Saxifrage, and the pseudo-revolutionary exploitation of the UBERs of today.

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Wax seal for embossing envelopes reading: "Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose" in a circle around a central rose graphic. Photograph. Yale U. Beineke Library Digital Collections. Web.

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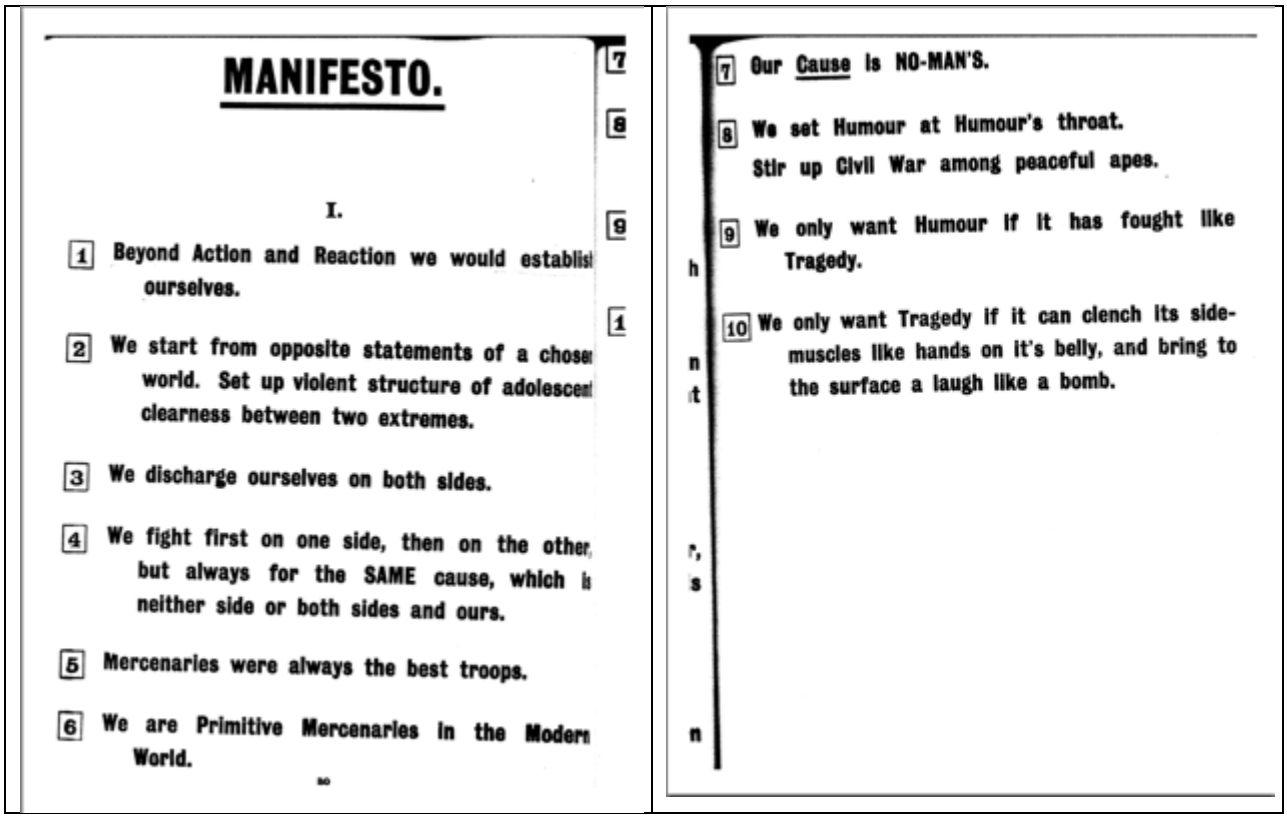
Appendix A

Figure 1.1: Letterhead for the Omega Workshops. E.J Pratt Library, Victoria University. http://library.vicu.utoronto.ca/exhibitions/bloomsbury/omega.htm.

Figure 1.2: The Omega Workshops Upstairs Workroom. Crafts Council Gallery. *The Omega Workshops 1913-1919*.

Figure 1.3: The Omega Workshops Showroom. Cork, Richard. *Art Beyond the Gallery in Early 20th Century England*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1985. Print.



MANIFESTO.

I.

1 Beyond Action and Reaction we would establis ourselves.

2 We start from opposite statements of a chose world. Set up violent structure of adolescen clearness between two extremes.

3 We discharge ourselves on both sides.

4 We fight first on one side, then on the other, but always for the SAME cause, which i neither side or both sides and ours.

5 Mercenaries were always the best troops.

6 We are Primitive Mercenaries in the Modern World.

7 Our Cause is NO-MAN'S.

8 We set Humour at Humour's throat. Stir up Civil War among peaceful apes.

9 We only want Humour if it has fought like Tragedy.

10 We only want Tragedy if it can clench its side-muscles like hands on it's belly, and bring to the surface a laugh like a bomb.

Figure 1.4: *Blast* "Manifesto," part I. Lewis, Wyndham et al. *Blast, Issue 1*. 1914. Berkeley: Gingko Press, 2008. Print.

Appendix B

Figure 2.1, Stein and Toklas photographed in 27 Rue de Fleurus. Yale University Library Beineke Digital Collections.

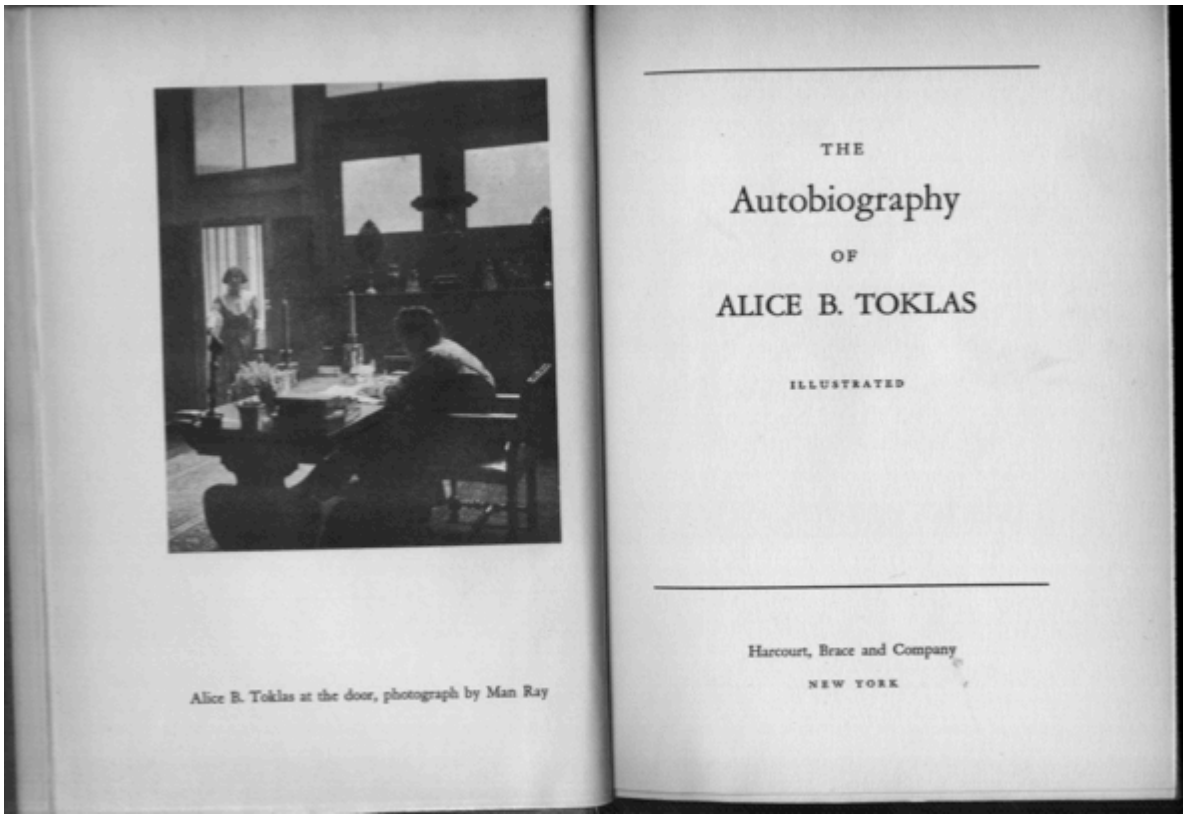


Figure 2.2. Title page insert for 1st ed. of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*

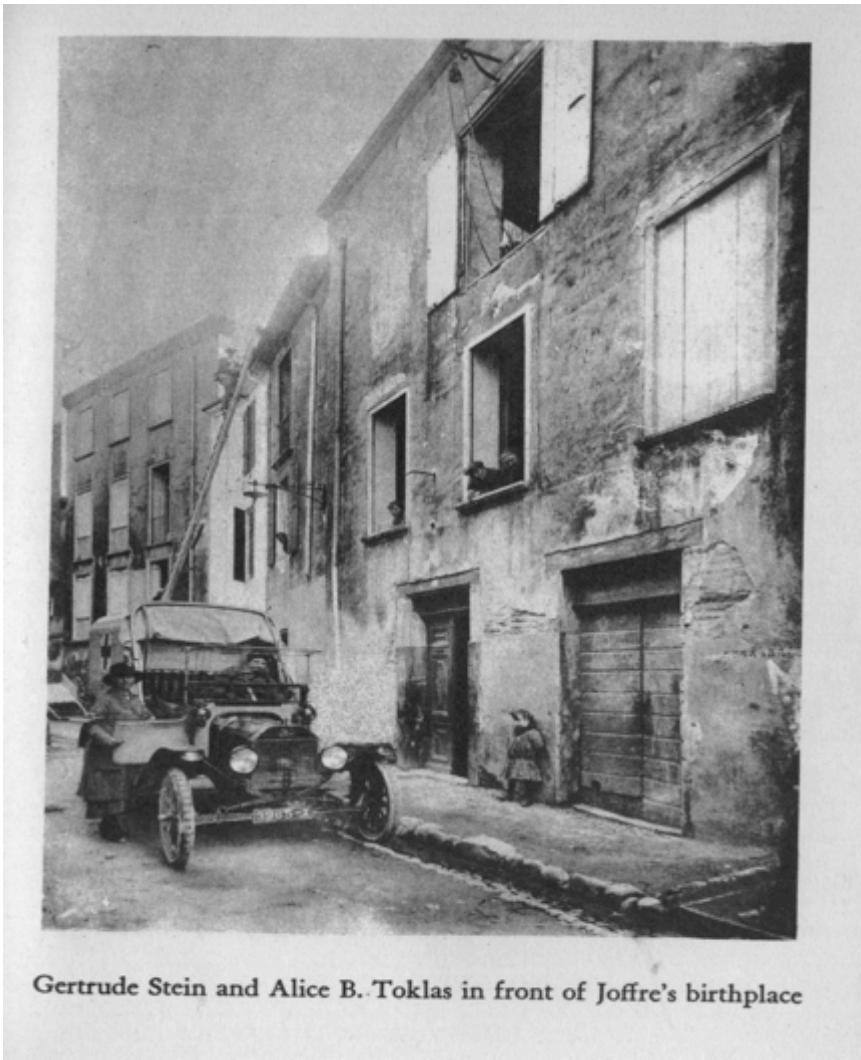


Figure 2.3. Insert #11, 1st ed. of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*

Figure 2.4, wax seal of Stein's "Rose is a rose" 'trademark'. Yale University Library Beineke Digital Collections.

A Portrait of Jo Davidson

An American Revolutionary of Prose Sets Down Her Impressions of an American Sculptor

By GERTRUDE STEIN

MISS Gertrude Stein, an American now living in Paris, began her literary career by writing realistic fiction in a more or less conventional manner. Several years ago, however, she published a book called *Tender Buttons*, with the sub-title "Food, Objects, Room", a literary experiment which at once brought down upon her an enormous amount of ridicule and indignation. Miss Stein had begun to attempt doing in literature what the new school of French painters—Picasso, Matisse, etc., in whom she had become deeply interested—had successfully accomplished in painting. The theory of this movement in the plastic arts has already been made fairly familiar by the writings of such critics as Mr. Clive Bell. The aim of Picasso and Braque was, by splitting the subject up and distorting it, to express the impression it produced more truly than could be done by a literal representation. Miss Stein's mysterious prose sketches were attempts to do the same thing with language. The things in *Tender Buttons* were supposed to be literary still-lifes, with the table, the chair, the vase of flowers, the bowl of apples or whatever, rendered, in their actual effect on the mind by splitting up and distorting them. So, the portrait of Jo Davidson which appears on this page should be regarded as an attempt to do in prose what Picasso's portraits of Buffalo Bill, L'Homme à la mandoline, Femme en Chemise, etc., etc., did in paint.

Whatever one may think of the soundness of Miss Stein's analogy between the plastic arts and literature, one cannot fail to be impressed by the personal rhythms of her prose and the strange values with which she seems to invest ordinary words. Mr. Sherwood Anderson, in an article in *The Little Review* has written perhaps the best appreciation of Mrs. Stein's gift: "She gives words an oddly new, intimate flavor and at the same time makes familiar words seem almost like strangers. . . . For me the work of Gertrude Stein consists in a rebuilding, an entire new recasting of life, in the city of words. Here is one artist who has been ready to accept ridicule, who has even foregone the privilege of writing the great American novel, uplifting our English speaking stage and wearing the bays of the great poets to go live among the little housekeeping words, the swaggering bullying street-corner words, the honest working, money-saving words and all the other forgotten and neglected citizens of the sacred and half forgotten city."

Mr. Jo Davidson is here shown (above) completing his statue of Gertrude Stein. Miss Stein is interested in sculpture by virtue of her the portrait on this page

(Left) A bust of Gertrude Stein by Jacques Lipchitz, the young French sculptor who produces extraordinary effects by a process of simplification

Portrait of Gertrude Stein by Pablo Picasso. Picasso has brought out in her, much more than the other two artists, the strange and almost mystic turn of mind which produces her extraordinary writings

Part I

TO be back, to attack back. Attack back. What do you mean by attack back. To be back to be back to attack back.

What do you mean by, what do you mean by to be clean to be a queen to be mean, what do you mean to mean to be a queen to be clean. What do you mean. What do you mean: What do you mean by readdressing a queen. The address the readdress they readdress in between.

This is what is said of a cardinal a red cardinal a singing cardinal, a singing red cardinal singing them a song. When you believe that black is red, do you believe that black is red.

The story of asunder is not thunder the story of the thunder is not asunder. Do tenderly address and run. The story of do tenderly address and rifh is the story of the son of a son. And how many whites are there.

Not anywhere in there.
What did you say.
What did he say.
What did they say.
What did they say.
They didn't say anything.
And you say.
To play.
To play they say.
Wives of great man.
Wives of a great many men.
Wives a great introduction.
Wives are a great recognition.
There were more husbands than wives in their lives.
Two live too him.

This is the story of Jo Davidson.

Part II

A PART of two.

When I was in the dark or two, how do you do, how do you not do that. How do you do industrially.

I can reasonably be in him.
Be in him.
How do you do industrially.
I can reasonably be in him.
Narrative or along.
I feel no narrative to be or worn.
You don't wear it the same way.
You do not wear it the same way.
You do not wear it on the same day.
You do not wear it the same way.
The same day or guess it to brother it.
A brother who knows about a brother. Who knows about a brother or a brother.

I now count skies. One sky two skies three skies, four skies five skies, six skies, seven skies, more than eight or nine skies. How many skies are less than nine skies. Nine skies need no tree.

A tree makes me hesitate.

Can you dismiss it happens, where does it happen.

How does it happen that you can dismiss Bonds this.

How can it happen that you can dismiss.

Darvin. How can it happen that you have grass in one night. I do favor grass. You mean grass feels your favor. I am in favor of this mess.

Please prepare there.
I do not ask for installation.
And now mention Jo Davidson.
This is the beginning of Part III.

(*Continued on page 90*)

Figure 2.5, Layout for "A Portrait of Jo Davidson." *Vanity Fair* February 1923: 48, 90.

Appendix C

Figure 4.1: Identities fragment and merge in *The Lady from Shanghai*

Figure 4.2: *Mr. Arkadin* as mobile mogul

Figure 4.3: Miguel "Mike" Vargas, stranger on the border in *Touch of Evil*

Appendix D

Figure 5.1: Creativity abounds around the site of the new business school.

Figure 5.2: The flexible, collaborative learning environment.