

C

cacophony

utilization of jarring, discordant words or patterns of words.

“The smooth, soft, sound of breaking glass”: aside from being a completely and deliberately inaccurate description (see **irony**), the ‘eak’ of ‘break’ and the ‘gl’ of ‘glass’ provide harsh, hard sounds in what had been a smoothly flowing stream of sounds, serving to add emphasis to the sarcastic discordance of the definition.

That the word ‘cacophony’ is itself cacophonous has been taken advantage of by poet Sylvia Plath in her “Blackberrying” as she refers to the cacophonous sound of overhead crows. Cacophony can be used, as in the Plath poem, to darken a piece’s atmosphere or add a sense of conflict to the tone. Harsh sounds may “creak across the soul” (Emily Dickinson’s “I felt a funeral ...”) just as they creak across the consciousness of the reader.

captivity narrative (Indian captivity narrative)

an account written by or about a European who has been captured by indigenous North American inhabitants, captivity narratives were among the early pieces of New England literature. Mary Rowlandson’s captivity narrative, an autobiographical account from King Phillip’s War, is a standard of the genre. She writes of the horrible behavior of the Indians, the privations she endured during her time of captivity, how her Puritan deity gave her the strength to survive, and of her eventual ransom. Other early captivity narratives include a number of second-hand accounts written by Cotton Mather as well as first person accounts, all involving the capture and redemption of New Englanders. Those accounts, like Rowlandson’s, emphasize the terrors and torment endured by the captives and how religious faith allowed the captives to survive.

Later captivity narratives sometimes offered a very different story. Mary Jemison’s narrative of her capture and life among the Seneca, an oral account dictated to James E. Seaver in the early nineteenth century, speaks of virtuous behavior of the Indians and the satisfactions of a life passed among them. She spoke of a society of particular honor, one in which no one ever lied.

It is safe to say that neither the horrified accounts of the New England captives nor the ‘noble savage’ depictions offered in later accounts provide a balanced picture of the behavior of North American natives, though other sources (Thomas Morton’s *Manners and Customs of the Indians* and Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on Virginia*) suggest that the latter picture was generally more accurate than the former. History reflects that many captives, especially women, were reluctant to return to the ‘civilized’ world, as more than a few found that life among the Indians was less arduous and more pleasant than life in American frontier communities. Jemison, for example, spoke of the communal farming undertaken by the Indian women, leaving them to share in gardening, childcare, and domestic chores – offering both companionship and help as was not available to the lone frontier wife.

Similar narratives have been produced from those early colonial beginnings past the turn of the twentieth century, when the geographical closing of the American

frontier brought an end to the ‘captured by Indians’ experience, the setting of the captures moving from New England to the Appalachians, the Badlands, and finally to the American southwest. Movies of the golden age of westerns (1930’s-1950’s) offered numerous recreations of those stories. John Ford’s “The Searchers” starring John Wayne and released in 1956, was a high-quality movie offering a negative portrait of the capturing Indians. The satiric revisionist western “Little Big Man” (1970) offered the Indians as the only figures of integrity in a corrupt world as Jack Crabbe found a freedom in his ‘captivity’ unavailable in the ‘civilized’ world.

caricature

a picture or description drawn broadly, emphasizing and usually overstating and exaggerating major characteristics; the intention is to create an image that is both absurdly humorous and ‘true’ to the essence of the person or thing described. Mark Twain's depiction of the Grangerford parlor in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* emphasizes every attempt at pretentiousness by its owners; the crockery fruit, unread books, and bad paintings reflecting their preposterous vision of themselves as civilized and aristocratic. The senior Grangerford likewise appears a perfect caricature of the plantation novel autocrat, always standing tall and perfect in his white linen suit, though his fiefdom is little more than a sizable backwoods farm. The absurd toasting to the patriarch each morning reminds readers that he imagines himself a medieval lord and considers his sons as his valiant knights.

The caricature is a standard of visual art, caricaturizing reducing the humanity of the portrayed. Carl Sandberg rails against the use of caricature to create stereotypes in his poem “Halstad Street Car,” as he reaches for the humanity of the tired working people slumped in the car.

castrati

one who has been castrated before adolescent change of voice in order to preserve his high-pitched juvenile singing voice. Operations to produce castrati were performed relatively often for ecclesiastical choirs in the Middle Ages. The Pardoner in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, described as likely ‘a gelding or a mare,’ may very well have been a castrati who fell on hard times in adulthood, leaving a festering resentment of his sexual condition and a cynical desire to take revenge on the Church by using its message for his avaricious purpose. His beardless face and high-pitched voice make it apparent that he is something other than a physically normal male. The Pardoner’s claims of having women in every town would reflect his need to cover up physical status and the reference to testicles in Harry Baily’s threat to the Pardoner would remind Chaucer’s audience of the missing organs.

catharsis

based on Aristotle's idea that action in a drama serves to “purge” the viewer, releasing anger and other undesirable emotions from the viewer's soul. The purifying effects of drama as described by Aristotle are rather more sophisticated than the psychologically invalid notion, often repeated, that viewing or imagining intense action serves as a substitute for potentially undesirable outlets for anger. Catharsis, instead, should serve to bring enlightenment or understanding.

A viewer watching a professional wrestling exhibition would, according to the cruder notions, discharge anger from his system by screaming for one wrestler to “tear ...[the other]...limb from limb.” This is neither valid nor true to Aristotle. However, Arthur Miller offers a genuine purging effect of tragedy in his claim that the resolution of his *Death of a Salesman* brings a sense of realization and justice to the audience. At the end of the play the audience provides the “attention” that Linda insists Willy deserves; Charley, noting the hard lot of the salesman, provides Willy with the wisp of respect that even the “Low-man” deserves; Biff replaces Willy’s flawed and corrupt dream with his modest real one. There is no crowd of mourners; the false dream of popularity has been put to rest. Thus the audience views the purging of Willy’s false passion and, for a moment, can imagine a world made right. That is close to the ‘cleansing’ Aristotle advocates.

Catharsis is a major element in much modern popular drama. Detective shows (*Castle, Bones, etc.*) generally end each episode with a ‘world set right’ resolution, as some balance in the world is restored after the criminal is brought to justice. The pseudo-legal series *Boston Legal* ended most of its episodes with a two-person Greek chorus, as the fictional Denny Crane and Alan Shore would sum up some key element of the episode over a glass of scotch.

cause (cause & effect; causal analysis)

an event that significantly contributes to the occurrence of a second event.

Scientific ‘cause’: “heating ice breaks down its crystalline structure, *causing* it to collapse into liquid water.” Historical example: “William Wordsworth’s acceptance of the title Poet Laureate *caused* Robert Browning to compose ‘The Lost Leader.’”

Scientifically, there are a number of criteria by which an event is determined to ‘cause’ another (the other being termed the ‘effect’):

- correlation: when A occurs, B follows (when I place a pan of water above a flame, the water becomes warmer, eventually reaching the boiling point; under properly controlled conditions this always happens; thus the events are strongly correlated);
- order in time: cause must precede effect;
- proximity in time: events are more generally attributed as causes of those events which immediately follow than more distant events;
- presence of a mechanism or logical connection: we are more likely to accept events as causes if there appears a plausible connection between the cause and effect; in the pure sciences this may take the form of a correlation of laboratory data and real world data.

As real world events all have many causes, some closely correlated to the event and others whose connection is tenuous or obscure, a causal analysis tends to focus on closely related events, looks for high correlation, and attempts to provide plausible connections. A cause which meets all the criteria would be accepted as a significant cause. Correlation without discernible connections would indicate either coincidence or insufficient understanding of the phenomena.

The concept of cause is also a bit different when reference is being made to human events (or literary items) than scientific actions. Heat causes (renders inevitable) reactions between certain volatile chemicals; however, a human action would motivate, rather than render inevitable, a specific human action (Browning could, after all, have written a nasty letter to Wordsworth rather than writing a poem).

ensorship (of literary items)

the prevention of printing or dissemination of literary compositions (poems, essays, or stories) in their original forms by legal authorities. In broad application, one may refer to the actions of any public or civic authority (including a library or a school board) in banning a book from its shelves or restricting access; in narrow application, one would refer to efforts by agents of the state (prosecutors, customs officials, officials of the mail service) to prevent dissemination or to prosecute writers, publishers, or printers.

Prior to approximately the beginning of the nineteenth century, most censorship in the English-speaking world (England and its colonies including the early United States) was directed at politically or religiously ‘offensive’ materials rather than sexually explicit materials, though stage plays could be, and were, closed for ‘indecenty’ from the Elizabethan period forward. Plays and theatres were subject to licensing, a reason Henry Fielding turned from playwriting to that new form of prose fiction, the novel.

The United States prides itself on ‘freedom of the press,’ though political speech was assaulted at the federal level by the Alien and Sedition Acts in the Adams presidency (before 1800!) and laws of the individual states regarding blasphemy and the like were not called into question for their conflict with Constitutional guarantees until, probably, the twentieth century. The English experienced more overt restrictions, as both rigorous slander and libel laws and sedition laws were enforced. For example, printing the works of Thomas Paine was a criminal offense in early nineteenth century England.

Focus turned to ‘morality’ in Victorian England as well as puritanical America in the nineteenth century. The scatological jokes and sexual innuendo that peppered English literature from Chaucer through the Restoration theatre were deemed ‘unfit fare’ for women and children. An incredible amount of pornography, including the viciously sadistic, was easily available from the proper ‘private’ sources in Victorian London, but overt sexual references disappeared from popular publications – and force of law moved to keep such material out of ‘innocent’ hands. Richard Burton could still publish his annotated *Arabian Nights*, but as a private, limited-subscription publication, not one for public sale. In the American states, the anti-indecenty movement was much stronger, as the city of Boston garnered a reputation by banning many and sundry perfectly respectable books.

The twentieth century brought the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. Customs Office into the arena of book-banning (and other forms of censorship). It also brought legal challenges. Margaret Sanger was repeatedly arrested for ‘obscenity’ for disseminating birth control information. James Joyce’s *Ulysses* was banned from import and from American publication (a ban that was successfully

challenged in court by Random House in the 1930's). *Ulysses* was also, initially, banned in its home Britain, and was first published in France. Allen Ginsberg's poem *Howl* made the American best-seller lists in the 1950's after the ban on its publication by U.S. Customs authorities resulted in a highly publicized trial and the book's exoneration.

The Scopes trial of the 1920's, when a biology teacher was put on trial for teaching Charles Darwin's theory of evolution in a public school, provides one example of the censorship of ideas (not sex) that survived into the twentieth century.

Political censors of the 1950's, such as those associated with the anti-Communist witchhunt of the Red Scare, used commercial pressures as much as legal prosecution to achieve their ends. The ideas offered in Hollywood and in print were limited by the blacklisting of authors who were non-cooperative or were alleged to have Communist associations. Dalton Trumbo, author of the anti-war novel *Johnny Got His Gun*, was among those blacklisted by the film industry as a result of Congressional pressure.

The changing American political climate of the later mid-twentieth century brought an end to almost all censorship. Federal appeals courts and the U.S. Supreme Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren struck down a host of censorship laws as incompatible with the guarantees of the First Amendment. From the 1970's forward, a serious literary work could contain almost any language or form of descriptions without the author or publisher needing fear legal consequences; cheap paperbacks which could have no possible appeal beyond the 'prurient interest' survived the enfeebled censorship laws (at least if purchasers were restricted to adults).

In the years since 1970, there have been increasing efforts toward censorship of visual materials (particularly materials involving minors). The rationale for such restrictions is difficult to argue with, though enforcement of such laws has sometimes been arbitrary and simultaneously inflexible and capricious. Literary materials -- words -- have generally been exempt from such restrictions. Censorship pressures have increased, however, regarding materials for selected audiences. Active lobbying organizations have set about compromising the quality of primary and secondary education by forcing the elimination of material they deem 'controversial' (material that challenges the doctrinaire ignorance of the lobbying group). Arizona has passed state laws designed to deliberately destroy the multi-cultural programs developed for the many Hispanic and American Indian children who live in some of their school districts, banning works by many Hispanic-American authors. Texas authorities regularly demand what they term 'objective' history books -- history books that, for example, do not mention that each of the first four American presidents were deists in terms of religious practice. Presumably, the words of Thomas Jefferson, those of revolutionary Thomas Paine, and selected words of Presidents John Adams and George Washington would be banned from Texas classrooms.

Other disputes over the use of literature in public schools have ranged from concerns with *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (for Huck's continual use of a racial slur -- a dreadful six-letter racial slur which was spoken with impunity by

white Americans on into the 1950's), to concerns that the Harry Potter series contained instruction in witchcraft (welcome to the silly season; the Harry Potter series has nothing to do with contemporary neo-Pagan witchcraft), to angry northwestern school districts banning Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax* because of the lead creature's concern for the trees. Judy Blume's realistic depictions of childhood have been pulled from school libraries. Public libraries have been assailed for allowing J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* to be checked out by adolescents.

changeling

from faerie lore: when an infant or a female is kidnapped by the faeries, a 'changeling' or double is left in the person's place. The double may be some physical object that has been brought to life by magic, and can be expected to fade and die after a short time. The rural Irish often ascribed 'failure to thrive' in infants to faerie kidnappings. Alternatively, the changeling may itself be a faerie; if so, the replacement child is likely to be mischievous to the point of amorality. William Butler Yeats described a horrific murder of a rural woman by her husband and family after they developed the notion that she had been kidnapped by the faeries and that they were taking action, not against her person, but against a changeling. She died as they attempted to torture the faerie into revealing itself. Susanna Clark's novel *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell* includes the kidnapping of Strange's wife by 'the man with the thistle-down hair,' and offers the details by which the faerie creates a changeling to substitute for Mrs. Strange by exhuming a rotting log.

classification

the establishment of a system of organization based on clear and consistent criteria. Underlying classification is our ability to claim "A is the same as B"; "A is like C"; and "A is not like D." Using those criteria we can lump A, B, and C in the same category, placing A and B, but not C in the same subcategory and placing D in an entirely different category. Classification, like so much of our system of reason, relies on our ability to construct analogies, in this case allowing us to reach the new conclusion that "C is like, but not identical to, B."

Despite the claims of deconstructionist philosophers, classification does **not** correspond to the actions of the deconstructionist-quoted Jorge Luis Borges character who, listing ducks, offered mallards, farm ducks, wooden ducks, and paper ducks. Classification instead relies on the creation of consistent criteria (example: wild ducks / domestic ducks; subset of domestic ducks: good egg producers / good cooking ducks) and the placing of items (like the varieties of ducks) into their categories. Thus, ring-necked ducks, wood ducks, and mallards would be found in the 'wild duck' category but wooden ducks, being artistic renderings, would not be found in the list at all.

cliché

1) a term or image so overused that its connotations and metaphoric significance have become boringly obvious.

The western movie hero "riding off into the sunset" is a cliché based on the archetypal images of west and the setting sun and offering the suggestion of separation as a 'little death.' Through overuse and inappropriate use, the emotionally powerful image has been reduced to empty sentimentality.

2) a phrase or homily offered as a substitute for thought, reasoning, or honest observation.

Flannery O'Connor peppers the language of her characters with clichés, with Mrs. Hopewell of "Good Country People" providing her finest examples. Mrs. Hopewell refers to the story's demonic bible salesman as "the salt of the earth" in a brief (3 line) paragraph that includes no less than five clichéd renderings of 'reality.' The salesman's clichéd response, "You said a mouthful," perfectly blends aptness and sarcasm.

climax

the moment of resolving action in a narrative piece; the 'moment of decision' or 'moment of realization' for its characters.

The climax of Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" is that moment when Brown tells Faith to "look to heaven." The rest, the resolution, draws out the implications of the climax. The climax of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* occurs as Willy Loman experiences his one moment of epiphany, realizing that his son does love him, just before he runs to his car to successfully kill himself. The climactic moments of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* begin when Frodo, at the brink of the volcano, places the ring on his finger and continue through that scene (a metaphoric moral wrestling match) until Gollum plunges into the volcanic flames. Much action (structurally, too much, perhaps) follows Tolkien's climax. *The Lord of the Rings* example serves as a reminder that novels, with their many scenes, contain many little climaxes. The earlier slaying of the Nazgul carries the emotional import of a climax; the later "Scouring of the Shire," while less moving, must include its own structural climax. Neither, however, is in danger of being mistaken for the event that resolves the book's central theme.

close reading

presently refers to any close textual analysis of a work (similar to exegesis), and in that context is required of almost all contemporary students of literature; alternatives such as impressionistic readings (what is the 'feel,' 'tone,' or 'message' offered by the whole work without close analysis of parts and techniques) are strongly out of favor. The term derives from the critical ideas of the **New Critics** who sought to study literature by focusing almost entirely on structural and technical elements of the work.

A close reading of Robert Frost's "Birches" would include analysis of the individual images, such as the prism-like qualities of the shattered ice, the bent trees with their 'hair' thrown forward, the lone boy on the scene, the notion of the 'pathless wood,' and the extent of the climb 'toward heaven.' A New Critic's reading would not include generalizations based on social context or the author's literary personality (such as "Robert Frost regularly created very lonely scenes") which more historically-oriented critics would incorporate into their close reading of the poem.

codex

a number of sheets of parchment, paper, or the like bound together as a sequence of pages in a chosen order: a book, but **not** an e-book and not a scroll. The codex form has a number of properties not shared with a strictly linear reading device (e-book or scroll), in that one can easily mark, compare, or access notes on multiple

pages. Scrolls, in contrast, are strictly linear, as can be attested by anyone who has observed a rabbi seeking a particular passage in the Torah; e-books require electronic ‘searching’ to move from connection to connection. The potential intellectual effect of moving from the codex form to e-books is presently being considered – will it prove detrimental to **close reading**? I might, rather casually, wonder if working with electronic data rather than print contributed to that famous climate change report error in which it was reported that the Himalayan glaciers might melt by 2030 (rather than 2300), as it is much easier to lose physical context in an electronic document than an ordered print document.

comedy

an upbeat stage play with a happy ending, one in which actions may be divorced from real consequences (often the case with **farce**) or in which all problems are resolved in a positive ending.

Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a particularly effective farce, featuring upside-down standards, social conventions reduced to word-play, bizarre premises (the infant checked as baggage), and a happy ending absent real consequences (Algie should, by the standards of the day, be off to debtor's prison rather than in a position to marry Cecily; as for Cecily, a realist sees her enduring mid-life poverty after Algie squanders her entire vast fortune). In William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the rivalry of the two lovers is resolved by the comic intervention of fairy-folk, rather than by duels, death, or suicide; a similar premise in *Romeo and Juliet* produces tragedy rather than magical resolution.

communal living (as Transcendentalist experiments)

the forming of self-regulated, self-sufficient communities was not brand new in the nineteenth century, but historians can find a serious flowering of such experiments in the period immediately following the beginnings of the English Industrial Revolution. Some were direct responses to the Industrial Revolution, as men like Robert Owen noted that the new industrial world was both dehumanizing and physically debilitating for its workers and decided there must be a better way. Owen and his son established a number of industrial communities, where the workers shared fully in both the production and the rewards of the community. All eventually failed.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, in “The American Scholar,” referred to that which reduces a human being to a tool, catching the sense of spiritual destruction carried by the world of industry; Henry David Thoreau referred to its physical toll in *Walden*, as he noted the cost of the railroad in lives. Transcendentalist experiments may be seen as attempts to overcome this dehumanization.

Transcendentalist communal experiments attempted to combine the practical and spiritual elements of communal living, the Transcendentalist Brook Farm Commune offering a world in which all members could devote time to both scholarly efforts and day-to-day labor. Members proved too eager to spend their time thinking and not nearly eager enough to share in the work, causing the leaders to import ideas on scheduling and obligations from Frenchman Charles Fourier's scheme to create self-sufficient ‘phalanxes,’ communities organized rather as optimally sized anthills. Members objected and Brook Farm eventually

failed, having provided Nathaniel Hawthorne (a visitor there) fodder for his *Blythedale Romance*.

Other Transcendentalist utopian ventures included Bronson Alcott's Fruitland Commune, an experiment whose brief existence rested on the unremitting toil of Alcott's wife and daughters, who worked while Alcott and his friends thought. The Alcotts, at Mrs. Alcott's insistence, retreated to town and Bronson Alcott retreated to his study, continuing to devote himself to high thoughts while daughter Louisa May Alcott supported the family through her writing.

The communal experiments from this period which did achieve success were the more precisely religious ones, as the Shaker community thrived until its last adherents died out (a doctrine of celibacy guaranteed that the community would prove transitory). The Shakers provided fine jellies and jams, among other things, to New England tables for some years and built wonderful, lasting furniture. The Transcendentalist experiments produced only castles in the air, for the Transcendentalists were very good at ignoring Thoreau's advice regarding building foundations under such castles (*Walden*).

comparison & contrast

one of the standard tools of essay construction, the comparison & contrast claim is developed by establishing significant differences between like items or establishing significant similarities between apparently unlike items.

All fully-developed comparison & contrast essays work by a premise / exception model. The premise is a general claim ("Cows and horses are domestic grazing animals") with the exception serving to give the essay detail and significance ("However, while the cow is kept merely as a source of meat and milk, the intelligent horse is kept in a rich symbiotic relationship with its owner, offering companionship as well as accomplishing work"). Unlikely similarities as well as measured differences can be used to establish a significant claim:

"A picture of a male bird standing on the Antarctic ice in its feathery tuxedo, surrounded by thousands of its kind and holding an egg between its feet, hardly leads one to think of John Lennon. However, John Lennon spent much of the five years before his death 'keeping a nest,' as he took the role of primary caregiver for his infant son."

conceit

a device heavily used in Neo-Classical poetry and related to personification, the conceit may be defined as giving human or divine characteristics to an intellectual concept.

Phillis Wheatley's poem "On Imagination" speaks of imagination as though Imagination were a goddess.

concrete poetry

poetry in which the physical placement of the words (white space; shapes and patterns; words running down the page; etc.) is considered a more important poetic element than is the content.

"In this poem
The first letters vertically
Spell 'its.'"

Much alleged poetry following this technique stands as gimmickry and nonsense, rather like the piece above. However, line construction augments the reading of much free verse poetry and **visual poetry** can beautifully integrate content with physical form.

e.e. cummings's untitled "[A Leaf Falls in Loneliness]" is a delightful example of concrete poetry, as the poem captures some of the visual elements of the falling leaf, uses the physical construction to emphasize various renderings of the element 'one,' and creates a sense of action through the unfolding of the poem down the page.

confessional poetry

One of the poetic fashions of the latter half of the twentieth century, confessional poetry is, by definition, highly introspective. The poetry centers on the perceptions and perspective, or 'intelligence,' of the writer. Such poetry includes personal confession, personal judgment (external or internal), personal apprehension and interpretation of events, and a focus on the self as the measure of all things.

Robert Lowell's later poems, those from the various editions of *Notebook*, exhibit 'confessional' form in all its excesses. His earlier poems, such as "Quaker Graveyard at Nantucket" from *Lord Weary's Castle*, demonstrate the form's emotional power. While often traditional in form, James Merrill's poetry is high in confessional elements. Elizabeth Bishop's poetry shares the personal and introspective elements of confessional poetry, but carries little of its egocentrism. Sylvia Plath's tendency to hyperbole and emotional excess in her poetry can be accounted for in that the poetry describes her inner landscape rather than claiming to offer any sort of objective portrait of the world. Plath's bleak, pained psyche is richly depicted in poems like "Blackberrying."

connotation

the emotional and associational 'baggage' a word carries; the elements of tone, atmosphere, and judgment conveyed in the choice of a term.

A 'hobo' is a homeless person who rides trains (association with hopping freights in the Great Depression). A 'troll' is a contemporary homeless person the speaker chooses to dehumanize. The three terms in the example (hobo, homeless, troll) range in connotations from a negative softened and blurred by nostalgia, to the dispassionately clinical (though 'homeless' has, as such words do, grown negative connotations with use), to a deliberately hostile bit of contemporary slang.

In T.C. Boyle's "Greasy Lake," the narrator's continuing use of dehumanizing slang to describe the couple the boys attack (the young lady is a 'fox,' the young man a 'bad character' whose collapse into unconsciousness is described in a stream of clichés) creates the context for his behavior, suggesting he adopts the language as part of putting on an act. The connotations reveal the narrator's deeper concerns -- his act and image rather than an honest response to his actions. His contrition is called into question as the reader asks if the narrator is recoiling only at the potential punishment for his actions, rather than their consequences on others.

consonance

the repetition of consonant sounds within a line of poetry, often used with final or final important consonants. “when the world is puddle-wonderful” in e.e. cummings’s “in Just-,” features ‘d’s that punctuate a pattern of alliterative ‘w’s, like the poem’s imaginary running children jumping into or over puddles.

counter-culture (post-Beat)

the Beat Generation may be said to have inspired the generation which followed, “the generation of the ‘60s” in American popular culture and the arts. The Jack Kerouac fascination with jazz improvisation had much influence on the rock’n’roll of the late 60’s, as music combined ‘jamming’ innovation with traditional patterns derived from folk music and the Blues. In ‘rock’ music, lyrics and chord progressions derived from the Blues, Appalachian folk music, and bluegrass music were wedded to loud, electronically amplified sound. Pop culture was turned on its head with acid (LSD) influenced art and ‘underground comics’ featuring scurrilous themes and graphic sexual and scatological depictions from such artists as Robert Crumb. A “be here now” theme, spreading from the “Summer of Love” explosion in 1967 in San Francisco, briefly exerted its influence throughout the United States, creating what was termed the counter-culture among young, maturing Americans.

The movement included such elements as casual marijuana use; experimentation with hallucinogenic drugs such as LSD; “free love,” with acceptance of temporary partnerships, casual affairs, and open promiscuity; increased acceptance of non-traditional love affairs; experiments in communal living; and a pseudo-Thoreauian rejection of structured employment and life-style.

However, the post-Beat period did not produce a generation of fine literary artists. Outside the venue of music, in which a range of innovative and technically proficient artists flourished, the counter-culture proved not to be a fertile venue for artistic depth. The best poetry of the movement went into song lyrics (Joni Mitchell, Robert Hunter, Bob Dylan). Richard Farina produced an interesting novel, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up to Me*, then died in a motorcycle accident celebrating its publication. Beat influenced Ken Kesey wrote the acclaimed *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, with its Neal Cassady inspired protagonist, Randal Patrick McMurphy. His second novel, *Sometimes a Great Notion*, a Faulknerian northwest saga, was of mixed quality; after far too many LSD trips, Kesey never wrote anything of comparable quality to those two efforts. Literature went elsewhere: post-modern novels (Thomas Pynchon); confessional poetry (Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath), social protest verse; feminist writings (in some directions a reaction to the male-centered Beat culture and to the male-irresponsibility extolled by the “be here now” ethos).

couplet

two line closed form

“And in the Strand I met a man
Whose hat was in his hand.”

-- a mock couplet composed by Samuel Johnson, as he noted that a trivial idea remains trivial even when expressed in ‘high’ verse.

D

dactyl

a poetic foot consisting of a heavy stress followed by two light accents

decadents (or aesthetes)

a loosely defined group of late nineteenth century British writers who were influenced by philosopher Walter Pater's injunction to "burn with a hard, gemlike flame" and by French notions of "art for art's sake." The Epicurean (the philosophy, not the commitment to food tasting) elements of the movement tended to be based on Pater's novel *Marius the Epicure*, as Marius works to maintain his equilibrium in the disorderly world of the Caesars.

The ultimate frivolity of human pursuits is exemplified in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Gray's intellectual dabbling while under the influence of Lord Henry's 'yellow book.' Gray dabbles, passionately yet without deep intent, in a range of pursuits and pseudo-scholarly endeavors – all feeding his desire but none producing significant ends. Gray, under the tutelage of Lord Henry, sees life as a mere search for entertainment, behaving as a more sophisticated precursor of the 20th century bumper-sticker mentality, "The One Who Dies with the Most Toys Wins."

Representatives of the Decadent movement include artist and writer Aubrey Beardsley (publisher of the serial *Yellow Book*, obviously named from the Wilde's fictional 'evil book'), a range of minor poets and short story writers including Lionel Johnson ("The Dark Angel") and Ernest Dowson ("The Dying of Francis Donne"), as well as playwright Oscar Wilde. Wilde's suggestion that art is art precisely because it does not mirror reality, his public behavior which would now be characterized as 'performance art,' and his scandalous personal lifestyle all epitomize the cultural values of the movement.

deduction

reasoning which uses general rules or 'laws' to predict individual events. The basic standard model of deductive reasoning is the **sylogism**. A more real and elaborate example of deductive reasoning might be:

Other factors being equal, the tide will run higher at Full Moon than at quarter moon. Therefore, without direct observation, I can claim tides were higher April 9, 2009 than April 2, 2009. This claim can be empirically reinforced by past measures and theoretically validated by noting that the moon's gravitation is augmented by the sun's pull on the earth at New Moon and Full Moon while the forces are at cross-purposes at the quarter moons. If given an accurate calendar I could, by the same means, predict tidal heights for 2015, 2085, or even 3795.

Likewise and more simply, based on the sum of many observed instances and Newton's Laws of Motion, I can deduce that if I drop an object it will accelerate toward the center of the earth at a rate of 32 feet per second per second.

definition

a description of a term in sufficient detail to allow understanding of the appropriate or agreed-upon use of that term.

A definition normally begins with classification (a sheep is a herbivorous mammal), followed by details differentiating the item referred to from other members of its class (domestic herd animal, kept for meat, its fur or 'wool' utilized in producing woven garments, etc.), and ending with examples of the term being used in context ("Eighteenth century Scottish farmers quite often kept sheep, and the family spun and wove their own woolen garments.")

Deism

the belief that a creator deity has set up the universe in the fashion of a clockmaker building a clock -- once complete the universe is allowed to run its course, rather than having the deity intervene in the manner of a mechanic tinkering with a faulty machine. The deity of deists is often characterized as a 'clockmaker God' (the capital 'G' because the standard deistic image is based on the monotheistic, Christian, deity).

Deism was popular among the intelligentsia during the Enlightenment. Prominent American writers who were Deists include Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Paine. Franklin's autobiography includes his account of his dissatisfaction with the sermons of his Presbyterian minister, as he found the man narrow in focus, more concerned with the values of a 'good Presbyterian' than the truly important values -- those of a good human being. Jefferson, as an intellectual study, annotated a Bible, marking out the portions he did not believe (all the miracle stories) while leaving the ethical injunctions, which he believed in and supported, intact. While Franklin and Jefferson would have, by their own standards, considered themselves, respectively, a good enough Presbyterian and a good Episcopalian, Thomas Paine vigorously rejected fealty to any individual church or religion (see his *Age of Reason*). Paine described all organized religions as irrational and as instruments of repression, and held to a belief in a creator God outside the range of formal worship. European Deists include Voltaire and most of the French Philosophes.

denotation

that which is 'pointed to' by a term; the meaning of a term without regard to the connotative baggage.

A denotative definition is incomplete in that a table may be just a table, but a wall is never just a wall. 'Walling in,' 'walling out' and Herman Melville's "Bartleby, the Scriviner" inevitably interfere with the denotations of that word (see **connotation**). Meanwhile tramp, hobo, bum, troll and homeless person can all hold the same denotative meaning, and all be attached to those who share the fate of Lars Eighner (author of "Dumpster Diving"), though some of the terms are far more demeaning than others.

descriptive

that which offers an account of the situation that exists; regarding a dictionary or language usage guide, the one which is constructed by the principles of examining the language and recording what is actually written or spoken. In practice, a dictionary is compiled by examination of the written language; theoretically, since the evolution of recording media, the spoken language is open to examination. Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* was, and all good English language dictionaries are, compiled by this method. Johnson's method was, in very general terms: to read

everything; record instances of use of each word; and to produce a definition after examining the use of the word in context. Contemporary dictionaries, including that history of the language the *Oxford English Dictionary*, use a similar methodology.

Contemporary language and usage guides, from the standard Strunk *Elements of Style* to Lynne Truss's eccentric *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*, are compiled by a mixture of descriptive and **prescriptive** principles. Older usage guides (pre-1960's) were prescriptive and claimed authority to 'correct' use of the language.

detective story (who-done-it)

a mystery story in which the protagonist is confronted with an insoluble crime and, using his/her superior powers of logic, provides the necessary and accurate solution. The detective often 'unmasks' the villain and provides the logical explanation of the crime in the final paragraphs of the story.

Edgar Allen Poe is often credited with creating the genre with his "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Purloined Letter." More contemporary examples of the genre include the Earle Stanley Gardner's "Perry Mason" series and the TV shows, starring Raymond Burr, based on his character. Such current TV series as "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" employ some of the logical or 'scientific' plot development techniques, but generally do not employ the formal 'unmasking' at the conclusion of the piece and often substitute melodrama for logic in the unfolding of their plots. The "Perry Mason" writers also tended to cheat, as Mason acquires some concrete knowledge not available to the viewer, heightening the surprise as he exonerates his client and unmasks the 'real killer' in a courtroom scene. The courtroom scenes do include a formal recounting of the evidence as it provokes – or forces – a confession from the real culprit. [While not tragedy in form, the courtroom resolution does offer Aristotelian **catharsis**, as judgment is offered and the world set right: the accused is set free; the judge orders the arrest of the real killer; all is made right with the world.]

deus ex machina ("god out of a machine")

the resolution of a plot through the intervention of an outside agent; a resolution which cannot be justified from within the context of the piece. The term dates from the Ancient Greek theatre, where an actor portraying a god would be lowered onto the stage by crane to provide a proper resolution to the action.

Foreshadowing reduces the sense of improbability associated with the deus ex machina, ill-timing, overuse of coincidence, and other violations of the causal chain but may not eliminate it. The deity rendered visible by the deus ex machina is the writer, his fleshy hand appearing like a beached whale on the stage of his creation.

"And there they were. The madman pointed his weapon. And ... ZAP --- a bolt of lightning fried him on the spot."(That is a real 'deus' for that deus ex machina, as lightning is the weapon of Zeus, supreme among the Greek gods.)

The journey segment of the classic movie "Stagecoach" climaxes with a cavalry rescue: the Indians are approaching, the coach driver is wounded, and the passengers are down to their last bullets. Behold! From out-of-nowhere the cavalry appears! The god behind the script has extended his hand, saving the

characters from massacre. Meanwhile, a last well-aimed Indian bullet has saved the new mother from a ‘mercy killing’ at the hands of the gambler passenger. That last Indian bullet serves as an ironic imposition of justice, a moment of random ‘divine’ intervention that serves to restore order to the world – the Greeks would have approved; those demanding ‘reality’ in artistic pieces would not.

dialect

refers to imitation of or incorporation of non-standard speech patterns in a work; a piece may employ a regional dialect (one spoken in a particular geographic area), an ethnic dialect (one spoken by a particular racial or ethnic group), or a cultural dialect (one spoken by a particular class of people).

Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is written (or pretends to be written) in Huck's Polk County dialect; As Walter Blair notes, the book, like most successful books written in dialect, does not attempt to capture the genuine Polk County speech patterns throughout, but includes just enough variation from standard English to allow the readers to believe they are hearing Huck's language. Exact renderings of dialect are difficult to read and are less convincing to the reader than the pseudo-dialect found in most fiction. Twain's phonetic rendering of Jim's “shet de do” (shut the door), offered without the benefit of Jim's actual voice, appears almost incomprehensible gibberish. It is Twain's less acute efforts that produce an effective dialect voice.

However, the very ungrammatical paragraphs with which Twain opens the book serves to create an ‘authentic’ Huck Finn voice, a voice that is maintained in the reader's mind even as Huck becomes less ungrammatical and (inexplicably) more intellectually acute as the book goes on.

didactic

containing an overt moral or lesson; written for the purposes of instruction. While some writers from the eighteenth century and earlier proudly wrote didactic verse, many from those periods and almost all major poets from the nineteenth century forward would gleefully rise from the grave to strangle any critic accusing them of writing didactic verse.

Aesop's fables are didactic, each with an explicitly stated moral. Samuel Richardson claimed his novel *Pamela* was didactic (“ex-rakes make the best husbands”???!). Samuel Johnson, reinforcing the instructional value of writing, suggested that Shakespeare was, unfortunately, a less effective moral teacher than ideal. Modern writers of allegory Nathaniel Hawthorne and Flannery O'Connor would likely accept a label of ‘didactic’ for their stories, as Hawthorne modeled a playful allegory (“The Celestial Railroad”) on John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and O'Connor made no attempt to disguise her religious intent in her short stories. Most moderns, however, would share Percy Bysshe Shelley's sentiments: “didactic poetry is my abhorrence.” One of the stronger statements of opposition to didactic literature comes in Edgar Allan Poe's “The Poetic Principle,” as he advocates the complete separation of the aesthetic sphere from the moral sphere.

dissonance

conflict of internal elements of a piece or conflict of elements of a piece with the reader's understanding of reality. There is dissonance between Compton's behavior in Ernest Hemingway's “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and the rational

unfolding of a rescue, dissonance which allows the reader to understand s/he is witnessing Harry's death dream or death experience rather than waking reality. Internal dissonance can be seen in Ambrose Bierce's "Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," in which subtle contradictions between the circumstances of Farquhar's escape and observable reality (the swift, shallow stream becomes slow and deep in the 'escape'), contradictions too subtle to fully register with the reader, compound gradually into a surrealistic picture, demonstrating the escape a death-dream by the end of the story.

Dissonance between the boy's impressions of his influential relative's place and the crowd's contempt for the fallen autocrat marks the action of Nathaniel Hawthorne's "My Kinsman Major Molineux," offering a simpler use of the technique.

dissonance (poetic)

related to **cacophony**, dissonance in verse refers to the creation of sound patterns that interrupt, jar, and bring emphasis by forcing words to stand out in the reader's eye. In Carl Sandburg's "Chicago," the flow of a series of long lines is interrupted by the single-word lines "Bareheaded, / Shoveling, / Wrecking, / Planning" in which the sound of the words themselves likewise interrupt the flow before the poem transitions to the alliterative "Building, breaking, rebuilding," then back to the long lines.

Divine Right of Kings

the belief that the king ruled his country through divine injunction, the doctrine was a standard on the European continent up to the time of the French Revolution and was extolled vigorously by England's James I (James I speech to Parliament, March 20, 1609). James I's assertions flew in the face of the Magna Carta (1215) with its assertion of the rights of free Englishmen. According to the claim, each man [use of male referent deliberate] holds his place in the natural hierarchy of order and is so assigned by God. Rebellion against any monarch is a rebellion against God, as the rebel is failing to accept his God-given role in life.

The English traditionally asserted the opposite, well-presented by John Milton in his *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, published shortly after the beheading of Charles I. Milton argued that the king ruled by the consent of the governed, as the servant, rather than the master, of his subjects.

In the tract, written well before John Locke pronounced that "all men are created equal," Milton presents an argument for egalitarianism, the equality of all men under God. In *Paradise Lost*, that Satan sets up his own kingdom and own hierarchy in Pandemonium stands as Milton's literary assertion that all such governing hierarchies are products of the devil and a perversion of Divine order rather than reflective of Divine order.

doppelganger

from the German: one's double, a mirror-image of oneself. In folk belief, one's doppelganger is one's mirror-self, visible to oneself only at some point in the hours before death; thus if one sees one's doppelganger, one is doomed to die. The doppelganger may also, to others, be the **changeling** provided by the faerie folk as a substitute for one who has been taken to the realms beneath the hill. Mrs.

Strange's doppelganger appears shortly before her abduction by the Man with the Thistledown Hair in Susanna Clarke's *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell*. In literature, the doppelganger is generally used to provide an opposite person or opposite force to some central figure. Oscar Wilde uses a painting as the mirror for Dorian Gray's soul in his *A Picture of Dorian Gray*. Robert Louis Stevenson uses a laboratory formula to create his two-sided Jekyll and Hyde, but offers a realistically modeled pair of brothers at the center of his *Master of Ballantre*. Edgar Allen Poe just has two figures (apparently) exist in his "William Wilson," the one the soft voice of conscience, the other the roar of vice with the reader not certain which, prior to the murder of the soft-voiced one, is the 'real' William Wilson.

Elements of the opposite exist whenever sharply dualistic protagonist/antagonist pairings are developed. J.R.R. Tolkien's Gandolf and Sauraman are such a pairing, as the reincarnated Gandolf introduces himself as "Sauraman as he should have been." Sherlock Holmes's one intellectual equal, Dr. Moriarty, serves the same function in the Arthur Conan Doyle stories.

double entendre

an 'innocent' word or phrase whose use masks (or, surreptitiously offers) a second, risqué or obscene, meaning. When Cesario states she is not good with a sword in Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," she is surreptitiously admitted that she lacks a penis (that she is a girl in disguise). Such coarse double entendres are common in Elizabethan theatre; the double entendre as an art form abounds in Restoration theatre, as a 'witty' character is expected to offer a stream of sexual insinuations, only sometimes more subtle than the Elizabethan ones, in the course of dialogue. This line, uttered by Mrs. Marwood in William Congreve's "The Way of the World," couples sex and death in a manner worthy of a seventeenth century poet, "... 'tis an unhappy Circumstance of Life, that Love shou'd ever die before us; and that the Man so often shou'd out-live the Lover." The 'lover' reference is to the condition of a certain element of the male anatomy, an organ whose behavior seems to reflect its own will and 'life.'

dramatic monologue

a monologue (first person statement in the narrative voice) in which the narrator describes his/her self, position, rationale for action, or beliefs; an independent poem done in the style of a stage monologue. As with a stage piece, a dramatic monologue normally creates a background and context discernible within the poem, as Robert Browning's "Fra Lippa Lippi" appears as a reveler speaking to the guards, having been caught sneaking in after a night of dissipation, and his "My Last Duchess" narrator a powerful noble negotiating for a new wife with the potential bride's father.

Browning wrote many dramatic monologues, the best of which include "Andrea Del Sarto" and "Fra Lippa Lippi" from his poems on Renaissance painters. Earlier poems, such as "My Last Duchess" and "Soliloquy from a Spanish Cloister," from his *Madhouse Portraits*, are among the most reprinted.

Edgar Lee Masters's *Spoon River Anthology* poems, in which the inhabitants of the Spoon River cemetery offer their own chosen epitaphs, stand as dramatic monologues and are often adapted for stage presentations.

dystopia (see *utopia*)

an anti-utopia; a piece presenting a vision of the future in which the worst trends and tendencies of the present have been amplified and become culturally dominant.

A dystopia may reflect themes of cultural development such as Margaret Atwood's *A Handmaid's Tale* (the American theocracy), George Orwell's *1984* (Cold War forever) or Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (hedonism triumphant). It may present a post-apocalyptic vision like Huxley's *Ape and Essence*, Stephen King's *The Stand*, or one of innumerable bad movies and unreadable novels.

The best such novels offer insight into human nature or the human condition. The dystopic elements of H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*, for example, present the evolution of a 'leisure class' quite effectively, as the above-grounders are reduced to the status of food animals, their dreadful predators being devolved human poor whose ancestors, at some point of necessity, successfully adopted the tactic "eat the rich." Orwell's *1984* and Huxley's *Brave New World* are often paired, the pseudo-puritanism and physical decay of Orwell's world complementing the sterility and hedonism of Huxley's, with both reflecting the collapse of democratic values and personal responsibility. Weaker dystopias offer invitations to gimmickry and fantasy violence rather than deep social commentary.

The dystopia is predominantly, if not originally, a twentieth century literary phenomenon. Its opposite, the utopia, is much older – the first and namesake was Sir Thomas Moore's *Utopia*, a book written before the form of the novel was recognized. However, I can think of no works I would fully characterize as dystopias before the 20th century.

Something happened near the beginning of the 20th century, World War I, that has changed the Western concept of the world. Bravery, however misguided, was believed possible in every war of the 19th century, as the Light Brigade charged valiantly to their end in the Tennyson poem, and most of his audience failed to grasp the irony of the pointless charge.

World War I, however, offered endless death, death at a distance, death with neither bravery nor knowledge, and (its battles extending over five calendar years) war almost without end. World War I offered gas, trench-warfare, and the poetry of Wilfred Owen ("Dulce et Decorum Est"); shrapnel, dismemberment, and American Dalton Trumbo's anti-war novel *Johnny Got His Gun*; the loss of order decried by T.S. Eliot in "The Waste Land" and "The Hollow Men"; the Lost Generation of the inter-war years, with Ernest Hemingway writing war fiction in Gertrude Stein's Paris; and a suggestion that civilization was a fragile thing, a thing about to pass from the earth, exemplified by William Butler Yeats's "Second Coming."

World War II brought more means for destruction, offering great airplanes dropping huge bombs on cities as well as factories, V-2 rockets, tanks to crush infantrymen, and the culminating atomic blasts leveling Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The triumph of technology was ironically "celebrated" in such works as W.H. Auden's anti-war poem "The Shield of Achilles." Its dystopic bare ground, its million marching boots, and its child of a world of war provide a complete picture of civilization made hell in far fewer words than most prose dystopias.

The spectre of nuclear destruction brought the flowering of the apocalyptic novel as Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* offers the fallout from a northern hemisphere nuclear war reaching the last bastion of civilization, Australia, and bringing inevitable death to even that distant land. The human species reaches extinction as the Australian survivors poison themselves to circumvent the inevitable suffering of radiation sickness. In 1962, Stanley Kubrick's outrageous film "Dr. Strangelove" gave its viewers the opportunity to laugh at the 'dirty bomb' and human extinction.

Ecological destruction and disease (usually as brought on by germ warfare) produced fodder for more apocalyptic novels, like American Stephen King's *The Stand*. Apocalyptic elements join dystopic elements in other prophetic novels, like Canadian Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and American Starhawk's *The Fifth Sacred Thing*.

Huxley's *Brave New World*, rather than saying "life is hell" in the fashion of twentieth century absurdist writing, says that "whatever life is, technology gives humanity the ability to reduce life to hell, and we are damned-well doing so just as rapidly and efficiently as we possibly can."

The study of the dystopia must include mention of George Orwell's allegorical *Animal Farm*, as he offers the thesis that Marxist totalitarianism differs not a whit from capitalist-inspired fascism. In their emphasis on the novel's anti-Stalinist text, many critics forget that Orwell suggests that the rest of the world is every bit as befouled as the "Old Boar" (Karl Marx) suggested.

Orwell's other dystopia, *1984*, and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* stand as the models of the genre, pointing to the two paths available to technological man. Orwell's *1984* places power in the hands of a totalitarian elite, one which condemns its citizenry to continual warfare, perpetual obedience, and grubby domestic poverty. The society is a puritanical one, and one obsessed with changing history to maintain the image of its own virtues. [Orwell, it seems, did not realize that old books need not be changed to change the past – people forget and old books go unread.] Orwell's monolithic pseudo-Marxist Western state is forever at war with two other super-powers (likely resembling Marxist Russia and China) who are also at war with each other. The wars consist of rather modest conflicts fought in the Third World, while the grand 'threat' is used to keep the citizenry of the Western power content under its repressive, impoverishing war-government. Orwell's future is the Cold War institutionalized; Cold War forever. Huxley presents precisely the opposite pole of twentieth century 'advancement. There is no war; there is no internal conflict. Dissent in all its forms has been eradicated by breeding more appropriate people (genetic engineering); providing proper 'education' (behavioral conditioning following the psychological principles of B.F. Skinner and the like); providing appropriate drugs (a kind of super-Prosaic called 'soma'); eliminating personal attachments (abundant sex, no deep, painful love); and providing lots of pointless leisure activities. In this perfect paternalistic society everything is good – there is no pain, no dangerous attachments, no excesses of competition, no poverty, nothing.

Huxley's perfect world, as we will note, is designed to be seen as one as nasty as Orwell's dismal one: why? Both worlds preclude independence and individuality.

At the end of *Brave New World*, we should join The Savage in demanding the right to be unhappy, or so Huxley suggests.

Unlike **absurdist** literature, the dystopia holds that better is possible – there is a meaning to the world, a fragile one that is in danger of being lost. If there is nothing, if the world is as Samuel Beckett (“Waiting for Godot,” etc.) drew it, then the *Brave New World* is as good as any other (have fun, life is short) and *1984* is little worse (if there's no point, what does a little suffering matter?). It is only if there is a point to life that dystopias matter. So – is there a point, a point we can assert in the face of soma, sex, and security? That is the question raised by *Brave New World*. It offers the chance to declare the basic human Right to Suffer.