INNER VOICES: NARRATED MONOLOGUE AND NARRATIVE VOICE IN JANE AUSTEN, GEORGE ELIOT, AND VIRGINIA WOOLF

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2007

UMI Number: 3245090

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the
Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the
dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

INNER VOICES: NARRATED MONOLOGUE AND NARRATIVE VOICE IN JANE AUSTEN, GEORGE ELIOT, AND VIRGINIA WOOLF

by

RACHEL PROVENZANO OBERMAN

Advisor: Professor Rachel Brownstein

Through the extended use of “narrated monologue,” a term coined by Dorrit Cohn to describe the third-person narrative rendering of a character’s thoughts, Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Virginia Woolf construct narrative voices that dip in and out of their characters’ minds, fusing a character’s subjectivity to the narrator’s omniscience. My dissertation will establish a trajectory of development of the use of narrated monologue from Austen to Woolf (whom I address in my Epilogue) in order to show how one of the hallmarks of the modernist novel, access to consciousness, actually goes back to the early 19th century.

Emma, *Persuasion*, *Mill on the Floss,* and *Middlemarch* represent works in which, at the height of their powers, Austen and Eliot use narrated monologue to tell stories in which the heroine’s voice develops in the direction of the narrative voice. They construct heroines (and readers) that learn to emulate narrative skills, most importantly, the ability to imagine another’s consciousness. The eponymous heroine of *Emma* learns that she is not the center of consciousness for the Highbury universe; she expands her consciousness to make room for other voices, as we see in the repeated use of the quoted language of others within Emma’s narrated monologues. *Persuasion*’s Anne Elliot, on

the other hand, is unable to speak up for herself, but perpetually absorbing the thoughts of others; she is so aware of other people's claims that she stays silent about her own. Whereas for Emma Woodhouse "development" means an expansion of consciousness to include other voices, for Anne Eliot "development" means escape from consciousness into speech. While *Mill on the Floss* ends with the tragedy of Maggie's blocked development toward the linguistic flexibility of the narrative voice, *Middlemarch* depicts Dorothea's ethical development toward the narrative voice: Dorothea learns to imagine another's consciousness. My Epilogue moves ahead to Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The Waves*, where we find a more fragmented relationship between narrative voice and figural consciousness. The dissolution of a knowable narrative voice in Woolf's novels begs the question of how readers make meaning without the guidance of the narrative voice, and what changes when they do.

My first and most obvious debt of gratitude goes to my extraordinary advisor, Rachel Brownstein, for her many years of keen advice and steady support. She is an inspiring professor and a model advisor and I am grateful to have known her in both roles.

My project grew out of a stimulating narrative theory seminar that I took with Anne Humpherys in 1999. I am thankful to her for introducing me to the study of narrators, and for agreeing to be on my dissertation committee. I also thank Talia Schaffer for her valuable insights and for graciously agreeing to be on my dissertation committee at a late date. I thank the Lane Cooper Fund for generous financial support for a year of writing.

I owe a large debt of gratitude to Dorrit Cohn, whose seminal work on narrated monologue, in *Transparent Minds* and *The Distinction of Fiction*, is my most direct source of intellectual inspiration.

I would like to thank my mom and my sisters for years of moral support. To my father, who offered years of love and encouragement and did not live to see the final product, I owe a debt of gratitude I cannot express.

I would like to thank my daughters, Emma, Jane, Lily, and Thea, for their love and patience over years of writing.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Theodore, my greatest friend, without whom this project would not have been possible.

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Introduction

> *She* would notice her; she would improve her; she would detach her from her bad acquaintance, and introduce her into good society; she would inform her opinions and her manners. It would be an interesting, and certainly a very kind undertaking: highly becoming her own situation in life, her leisure, and powers. (*Emma* 24)

How does a third-person narrator dip into the verbatim thoughts of a character without surrendering control of how the reader perceives those thoughts? Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Virginia Woolf use a third-person narrator to explore the contents of their characters' consciousnesses. Through their extended use of the technique of "narrated monologue," a term coined by Dorrit Cohn to describe the third-person narrative rendering of a character's unspoken (mental) discourse, Austen, Eliot, and Woolf construct narrative voices that dip in and out of their characters' thoughts, fusing a character's subjectivity to the narrator's omniscience and creating a bivocality that expands the reader's perspective. Narrated monologue retains but reshapes the meaning-making role of the narrative voice, fusing it to the voice of a character's consciousness and allowing both voices to interact and to define themselves through and against one another. The trajectory of development of the use of narrated monologue from Austen (the first to use the technique extensively) to Woolf (who uses the technique extensively but in a different way) shows that one of the alleged hallmarks of the modernist novel, access to consciousness, actually goes back to the early 19th century.

Eliot read Austen's novels and experimented with narrative techniques she learned from them; both create narrative voices that interact with the heroine's consciousness to construct narratively an alternate model of social relations. The heroine's voice, rather than standing on its own, is always heard and judged in the company of the narrative voice. Through this technique, Austen and Eliot construct heroines (and readers) that develop in the direction of the narrative voice and learn to emulate narrative skills, most importantly, the narrator's ability to imaginatively enter another's consciousness. Their use of narrated monologue models the imaginative leap to another's consciousness that teaches readers to become aware of what another's consciousness might sound like, constructing readers who learn to see the world as a narrator would, as a vast arena of monologues to be narrated.

Emma, *Persuasion*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and *Middlemarch* represent works in which, at the height of their powers, Austen and Eliot use narrated monologue to tell stories in which the development of the heroine toward the fluency of the narrative voice casts narrative fluency as a crucial developmental goal. In *Emma*, the heroine's voice comes to resemble the narrator's in its ability to allow other voices to enter and inform her consciousness. Emma Woodhouse, articulate and confident, learns that she is not the center of consciousness for the Highbury universe; she expands her consciousness to make room for other voices, as we see in the repeated use of the quoted language of others within Emma's narrated monologues. *Persuasion*'s Anne Elliot, on the other hand, is trapped in the realm of pure consciousness, unable to speak up for herself, but perpetually absorbing the thoughts of those around her; she is so aware of other people's claims and demands that she stays silent about her own. Whereas for Emma Woodhouse "development" means an expansion of consciousness to include other voices, for Anne Eliot "development" means escape from the realm of pure consciousness into speech. In *Emma* narrated monologue provides a model for moral growth: there is a connection between the ability to incorporate others' words and points of view into individual consciousness and the level of moral development reached. In *Persuasion*, narrated monologue represents an interval on the road to articulation: consciousness is not a final resting place for Anne Eliot, but an active, motivating force.

In *Middlemarch*, Dorothea develops the ability to imagine consciousnesses other than her own; her learned ability to imagine another's perspective resembles the narrator's ability to depict a character's thoughts in narrated monologue. While *The Mill on the Floss* ends with the tragedy of Maggie's blocked development toward the linguistic fluency of the narrative voice,[1] *Middlemarch* depicts Dorothea's ethical development toward the narrative voice. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, published in 1925, Woolf breaks with Austen and Eliot by moving away from the intimate union of the voices that characterizes the earlier use of the technique. Woolf 's narrative voice dips in and out of her heroine's consciousness with neither the sympathy nor the irony that characterizes the relationship between the two voices in Austen and Eliot; the relationship between the narrative voice and Mrs. Dalloway's is fragmented and detached. This shift toward the independence of the heroine's voice from the narrative voice in *Mrs. Dalloway* is taken even further in *The Waves*, published in 1931, in which the narrative voice and the characters' consciousnesses are grammatically separate and the consciousnesses of the six characters that the novel depicts (without choosing a heroine) are unmediated.

I choose to pair Austen and Eliot because Austen is the first writer to use the technique extensively and Eliot marks the beginning of the psychological novel, in which techniques that establish interiority play a key role. Both construct narrative voices that interact with those of their heroines in revealing but easily overlooked ways. In focusing on the novels of Austen and Eliot, I hope to call attention to the role of women writers in constructing a narrative voice that interacts with the heroine's voice. The narrative voice and the heroine's voice are grammatically fused in narrated monologue. As Cohn points out, the fusion of the two voices creates a relationship: "But no matter how 'impersonal' the tone of the text that surrounds them, narrated monologues themselves tend to commit the narrator to attitudes of sympathy or irony. Precisely because they cast the language of a subjective mind into the grammar of objective narration, they amplify emotional notes, but also throw into ironic relief all false notes struck by a figural mind." (*Transparent Minds* 117) By fusing the narrative voice to the heroine's voice, Austen and Eliot construct a social reality within which the two voices interact and define themselves. Narrated monologue not only introduces the first-person spirit to third-person narration but it also fuses the two, creating a hybrid voice and a union of the narrator's objective viewpoint with the character's subjectivity. Narrated monologue, by fusing two voices which otherwise would remain separate, embeds a character's thoughts in a narrative context that both shelters and subtly negotiates it. Of course, nineteenth-century British male novelists such as Dickens and Trollope use narrated monologue, too, but they do so less extensively, and without using the narrative voice as an implied role model for the protagonist in the manner of Austen and Eliot. My focus on the relationship between the narrative voice and the heroine's voice calls attention to an overlooked form of development within the novels of Austen and Eliot, the development of the heroine's voice toward the narrative voice.

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[1] Of course, *The Mill* ends with the further tragedy of Maggie's drowning in a massive flood. Maggie's blocked linguistic development connects to her untimely death because

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her inability to imitate the heterogeneity of the narrative voice denies her any escape from

In *Emma*, the narrator is a sisterly figure toward whose complex irony the character moves. *Persuasion* is narrated by a voice so close to the heroine's that it is frequently difficult to distinguish one from the other; the relationship between narrator and heroine here involves sympathetic fusion. In *The Mill on the Floss*, the relationship is more parental; the narrative voice serves as a linguistic role model whose astonishing polyvocality eludes the heroine, augmenting the reader's sense of her pathos. *Middlemarch* depicts Dorothea's ethical development toward the narrative voice; Dorothea develops the ability to imagine another's consciousness. Woolf's use of narrated monologue in *Mrs. Dalloway* represents a shift away from the narrative voice as role model. Woolf uses narrated monologue to demonstrate the gaps between characters' consciousnesses but neither her narrative voice nor her heroine attempts to forge connections between one consciousness and another. This distinction in the way Woolf uses the technique reflects a break with the teaching role of the narrative voice that Austen and Eliot take for granted.

I prefer Dorrit Cohn's term "narrated monologue" to the more general "free indirect discourse" because the latter term includes both the narration of a character's silent thought and the analogous rendering of spoken discourse while Cohn's term excludes the realm of narrated spoken discourse. In *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*, Cohn points out that "in a literary—rather than a strictly linguistic—perspective, the narration of silent thoughts presents problems that are quite separate, and far more intricate and interesting than those presented by its more vocal twin. 'Narrated discourse' involves neither the ambiguity

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the confines of her existence, and dooms her to her brother's grasp in death as in life.

concerning the actual-potential status of language that characterizes the narrated monologue, nor the difficulties of recognizing it within its narrative context." (109-10) Cohn sums up the practical advantage of her term: "By implying the correspondence to a (potential) quoted monologue, the more specific name pinpoints a more specific 'thing.' " (*Trans. Minds* 110) Cohn sees narrated monologue as an intriguing example of the fusion of two voices, the narrator's and the character's, kept separate in quoted monologue and psycho-narration. Cohn describes quoted monologue as the technique by which the narrator directly quotes the thoughts of the figural consciousness being narrated. Psycho-narration, on the other hand, retains the presence of the narrative voice, using narrative language to describe the mental condition of the figural consciousness. Cohn provides the following schema to demonstrate how the same thought would be represented by the three techniques (*Trans. Minds* 104-5):

quoted monologue	*narrated monologue*	*psycho-narration*
(He thought:) I am late	He was late	He knew he was late
(He thought:) I was late	He had been late	He knew he had been late
(He thought:) I will be late	He would be late	He knew he would be late

Cohn points out that thought-phrases are frequently interrogative and she provides a schema for thought-questions as well (*Trans. Minds* 105):

quoted monologue	narrated monologue	psycho-narration
(He thought:) Am I late?	Was he late?	He wondered if he was late.

What difference does it make if an author chooses narrated monologue rather than psycho-narration or quoted monologue? Narrated monologue gives access to the verbatim thoughts of the figural consciousness, but instead of allowing the character's mental language to stand alone, as in quoted monologue, the narrative voice remains present, with the ability to fuse in sympathy to the character's thoughts or to distance itself through irony from it. Psycho-narration, on the other hand, summarizes the psychological condition of the figural consciousness without providing a transcript of the character's mental language. Does choosing the technique of narrated monologue commit the narrator to a sympathetic relationship to the figural consciousness? Narrated monologue is an ideal vehicle for sympathy between narrator and figural consciousness but the technique can also be used ironically; frequently, narrated monologue allows the narrator to move back and forth between sympathy and irony, creating a complex relationship characterized by both intimacy and distance. In *Persuasion* the relationship of narrator to heroine is marked by deep sympathy, but in *Emma*, the relationship between narrator and heroine is marked by irony as well as sympathy.

An example from Austen's *Emma* demonstrates the bivocality inherent in narrated monologue; we hear Emma's voice, but we also hear the narrator's ironic stance judging that voice. The passage describes Emma's thoughts as she first forms her plans for Harriet: "*She* would notice her; she would improve her; she would detach her from her bad acquaintance, and introduce her into good society; she would inform her opinions and her manners. It would be an interesting, and certainly a very kind undertaking: highly becoming her own situation in life, her leisure, and powers." (24) Dorrit Cohn suggests a simple "litmus test" for distinguishing narrated monologue from other types of narration, and offers the following definition of the technique:

> It may be most succinctly defined as the technique for rendering a character's thought in his own idiom while maintaining the third person

> reference and the basic tense of narration. This definition implies that a simple transposition of grammatical person and tense will 'translate' a narrated into an interior monologue. Such translations can actually be applied as a kind of litmus test to confirm the validity of a reader's apprehension that a narrative sentence belongs to a character's rather than to a narrator's, mental domain. (*Trans. Minds* 101)

Using Cohn's "litmus test," we can identify Emma's narrated monologue by "translating" it from the third-person/conditional narrative tense to the first-person future tense of Emma's mental planning process: "I will notice her; I will improve her…." Although the narrator politely refrains from comment while she gives Emma her say, the reader suspects that Emma is overvaluing herself more than a little in calling it a "very kind undertaking," particularly when the rest of the sentence emphasizes herself as a beneficiary of her own kindness: "highly becoming her own situation in life, her leisure, and powers." The third-person pronoun of the narrative voice lends a certain weight to Emma's judgment, because it makes it sound as if the narrator, not merely Emma, is speaking, yet once the reader gets to know the narrator through the ongoing narrative commentary she provides outside the realm of narrated monologue, the narrator's ironic stance towards some of Emma's words becomes evident. The narrative voice judges Emma with both irony and affection, as we see in passages of straightforward narration, as where Emma is accorded the mixed praise of having "the real good-will of a mind delighted with its own ideas." (25) To Emma, her *real* good will is self-evident: how could anyone so amply blessed as she *not* have good intentions? Yet the narrator's description of Emma's good will as *real* proclaims its legitimacy too emphatically and thus casts doubt, alerting the reader to take note of the heroine's *real* flaw, the complacency of "a mind delighted with its own ideas." The constant movement between Emma's thoughts and the narrator's judgment creates a bivocality that becomes less audible as Emma's voice develops in the direction of the narrative voice over the course of the novel.

In *The Rise of the Novel*, Ian Watt describes Austen's place in novel history as unifier of the "objective" and "subjective" realms, represented by Fielding and Richardson, respectively: "Jane Austen's novels, in short, must be seen as the most successful solutions of the two general narrative problems for which Richardson and Fielding had provided only partial answers. She was able to combine into a harmonious unity the advantages both of realism of presentation and realism of assessment, of the internal and of the external approaches to character." (297) In *Fictions of Authority*, Susan Lanser, however, sees Austen's use of free indirect discourse as a diminishment of her authorial voice. Lanser laments the gradual diminishment of Austen's authorial voice after *Northanger Abbey*.[2] She depicts Austen's shift from the authorial voice as a movement away from moral and intellectual authority. My work focuses on the use of narrated monologue to provide access to interiority without lessening the power of the narrative voice. I argue that even without an authorial narrator, Austen's narrative voice speaks her mind; in fact, her effaced, subtle narrative voice actually conveys more authority because it acknowledges complexities and creates a reader who enjoys and trusts the narrative voice without feeling manipulated by it. The reader learns from Austen's narrative voice without even knowing s/he is listening to it. In Eliot's novels, on the other hand, the narrative voice is less effaced and passages of narrated monologue alternate with passages in which the narrator speaks clearly and authorially.

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[2] Lanser's work is addressed more fully in my *Persuasion* chapter, pages 73-5.

While Austen's narrative statements are difficult to attribute to an authorial narrator, Eliot's are more easily separated from their novelistic context. Leah Price's *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel* explores the anthologization of the sayings and mottoes of Eliot's narrative voice: "Ever since Radcliffe, the anthology had entered the novel; but only with Eliot did the novel enter the anthology." (197) Price points out the ease with which Eliot's narrative statements were plucked from their novelistic context and made to stand on their own in anthologies of wit and wisdom. While Austen effaces her narrative voice without diminishing the narrator's control over the reader's impressions, Eliot uses the same narrative techniques and retains a strong authorial voice in her novels.

Narrated monologue creates a triangulated relationship between narrator, character, and reader. When I discuss the narrator's relationship to the heroine, I do not mean that the character in a story is aware of the narrator but that the reader's perceptions about the heroine are shaped by the narrator's relationship to the heroine and that narrated monologue provides a crucial record of that relationship. Cohn describes narrated monologue as a unique blending of first- and third- person narration: "In her narrated monologues Austen seems precisely to cast the spirit of epistolary fiction into the mold of third-person narration…. Most Victorian novelists, notably Eliot and Meredith, continued to use narrated monologues in this fashion, without altogether banishing the authorial tone from their novels as a whole." (*Trans. Minds* 113) The shift toward banishing the authorial tone begins with Henry James and becomes a hallmark of modernist use of the technique.

In her 2003 dissertation, “Novelistic Knowledge: Free Indirect Discourse and the Representation of Interior Life in the Novels of Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Henry James,” Brooke Nadell emphasizes the role of free indirect discourse in redefining *sensibility* as the awareness of another’s “interior life” rather than as an expression of individual suffering. Nadell explores Austen’s treatment of the interior life in *Sense and Sensibility*: “The potential of the loving family circle of the Dashwood women is in a redemptive expansion of community rather than a narrowing exclusivity. But this community depends on its members’ willingness and ability to imagine the interior lives of others, that is, on the redefinition of sensibility as the perception of what is hidden, instead of the expression of one heart’s suffering.” (66) Nadell is right to question Marilyn Butler’s conclusion that Austen rejects subjective perceptions of characters and privileges the objective narrator. In *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*, Marilyn Butler sees Austen as rejecting the subjectivity of individualism: “The key virtues are prudence and concern for the evidence; the vices are romanticism, self-indulgence, conceit, and, for Jane Austen, other subtle variations upon the broad anti-jacobin target of individualism… the heroine’s ethical choices no longer solely affect her private happiness in life, but are subtly interlinked with the stability and well-being of her society.” (122) Butler never questions the validity of the romantic idea that a heroine’s ethical choices “solely affect her private happiness,” but without *rejecting* private happiness Austen’s narrative voice embeds the heroine’s voice in a narrative context that questions the possibility of a truly *private* existence: Austen’s heroine’s are always already embedded in a narrative relationship that is integral to the heroine’s identity.

Critics such as D.A. Miller and John Bender express suspicion of third-person narration in general as a form of "policing," with the third-person narrator acting as a sinister power resembling a "panopticon" (Jeremy Bentham's 1791 design for prison architecture in which the prison guard sees all of the prison cells while remaining unseen by the prisoners).[3] Dorrit Cohn responds to Foucault-derived approaches that use the image of the panopticon to stigmatize third-person techniques for presenting consciousness in fiction:

> Optical imagery has traditionally pervaded the language of critics and theorists of fiction: window and mirror, microscope and telescope, lens and x-ray, perspective and focalization, reflection and transparency. Recently, in the wake of Michel Foucault, a further trope has been added to this series: the panopticon and its derivatives: panopticism, panoptic vision, panoptical narration. However, unlike the more standard ocular images that are as a rule used descriptively and neutrally to characterize norms and types of novelistic representation, the panoptic conceit is powerfully charged with negative meaning and is invariably contextualized in ideological interpretations that cast a peculiarly hostile light on the novel as a genre and on its practitioners. (*Distinction of Fiction* 163)

Cohn points out the sloppiness of this ideological attack on the novel: "Incomparable differences are left yawning below: between the nature of political and artistic power, real and fictional worlds, and ocular vision enhanced by empirical observation and the uniquely privileged and entirely unreal vision that generic convention grants to 'omniscient' novelistic narrators." (*Distinction* 165) In *The Novel and the Police*, Miller is wary of free indirect discourse because it makes the narrative voice less conspicuous and thus hides (and secures) its power while seeming (*shamming*, Miller would say) to yield to figural narration.[4] Miller depicts the omniscient narrator as a panoptical prison guard peering into characters' minds and colonizing their consciousnesses.

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[3] Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* introduces the concept of "the disciplinary society" in which every social institution is modeled on the panopticon's "faceless gaze," with "thousands of eyes posted everywhere." (214)

In *Imagining the Penitentiary*, Bender makes a similar argument that the shift to a penitentiary system modeled on the panopticon resembles the shift to third-person modes of presenting consciousness in fiction: "This idea stands, then, at the heart of my argument: the form prisons took when they were remade in correspondence to and collaboration with the period's new systems of political and moral consciousness was narrative form of a distinctively novelistic kind that I associate with early realist fiction." (34) To see "panoptical narration" as a form of policing, as if it were a punitive or imperialistic act to depict consciousness through a third-person narrator, is to distort the ethical imperative of third-person depiction of consciousness, which is that the awareness of another's consciousness is the basis of morality.[5] Narrated monologue and free indirect discourse are the source of the narrator's power to depict imaginatively that which is unknowable outside of the fictional realm: the contents of another's consciousness.[6] Panoptic conspiracy theorists[7] are right in so far as they correctly identify free indirect discourse as somehow integral to the novel as a genre; they are wrong, however, in seeing the narrative technique as a mode of social repression. The ability to depict imaginatively another's consciousness that the novel as a genre constructs in its readers is not repressing but expanding: readers of novels learn to stretch the limits of individual consciousness in the direction of another's consciousness. The narrative voice is continually forcing the reader to consider multiple points of view, pointing out each character's perceptual limits and imaginatively depicting for the reader what other consciousnesses sound like. Narrated monologue challenges the conventional boundary between one consciousness and another by fusing two voices together and forcing the reader to consider each in relation to the other. In narrated monologue, the narrative voice models the leap from one consciousness to another and constructs a reader's ability to imagine another's consciousness. By fusing the narrative voice to one consciousness after another, the narrator constructs a reader able to transcend the limits of individual consciousness and to gain imaginative entry to consciousnesses unlike our own.

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[4] Franz Stanzel introduces the term *figural narration (*which Henry James calls *central consciousness*) to refer to the mode of narration in which events of the novel are focalized through a character rather than an authorial narrator.

[5] Eliot, as the English translator of Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*, takes his idea that consciousness of another's consciousness is the basis of all morality and translates it into narrative technique, an idea I will discuss more fully in my chapter on *Middlemarch*.

[6] In *The Distinction of Fiction*, Dorrit Cohn describes access to consciousnesses other than the third-person narrator's as a generic mark of fiction.

In Chapter One, I argue that the narrator of Austen's *Emma* serves as a sisterly figure, "coaching" the heroine, with the heroine's voice growing more like the narrative voice as part of the heroine's development. Emma's narrated monologues create a constant movement between sympathy and irony, identification and distance, yet by the novel's end, Emma's voice becomes more difficult to distinguish from the narrative voice. What Emma learns over the course of the novel is that consciousness is not an isolated condition; it is made up of other people's voices that she ultimately learns to incorporate into her own. Before the Box Hill picnic, Emma's narrated monologues contain only her own thoughts; at the picnic, she first incorporates another's voice into her thoughts. Emma's newfound ability to replay another's words within her

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[7] For more on the connection between the panopticon and the novel, see Selzer's *Henry*

consciousness allows her to reflect differently on her role with regard to Harriet Smith. Emma's consciousness at the novel's start is entirely dominated by her own self-satisfied voice. What the narrative voice suggests, with its constant movement in and out of others' voices through narrated monologue and free indirect discourse, is that an evolved consciousness can never be entirely separate but is made up of many voices. In this way, there is a connection between the ability to recognize and incorporate another's words and the level of ethical development reached.

Chapter Two explores the effacement of the narrative voice in Austen's *Persuasion* and the sympathetic fusion to the heroine's voice. Anne Elliot is trapped in consciousness, unable to utter a word throughout most of the novel. We have access to her thoughts through narrated monologue, quoted monologue and psycho-narration but it isn't until the novel's climactic scene that the reader begins to hear Anne speak. Compared to other Austen heroines, Anne does not mature as her story proceeds; she is as clear-headed and perceptive at the novel's start as she is at its conclusion. Yet, because the novel conveys the history of Anne's progress from unspoken thought (narrated monologue) to speech, a definite linguistic development takes place. If she does not grow she nonetheless learns to speak, and it is the gap between thought and speech that narrated monologue dramatizes so powerfully.

In Chapter Three, I compare the heterogeneity of Eliot's narrative voice to the limited range of the heroine's voice. Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Eliot (in)fuses her narrative voice with the languages of contending religious, scientific, and philosophical discourses, such that her narrative voice becomes a dialogue between various ideas and

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James and the Art of the Novel and Davis's *Resisting Novels*.

viewpoints. The heteroglossic narrative voice, unheard by Maggie, shapes the reader's sense of the paucity of the options open to Maggie. Maggie is forced to choose between the clashing languages that shape her consciousness, rather than to accept the various languages in all their incongruity. She must choose one of the languages; the narrator, on the other hand, has it all.

Chapter Four relates Eliot's translation of Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* to the ethical mission (and narrative technique) of *Middlemarch*. Dorothea develops the ability to imagine consciousnesses other than her own; her learned ability to imagine another's perspective resembles the narrator's ability to depict a character's thoughts in narrated monologue. Eliot's Feuerbachian faith that being conscious of another's consciousness is an objective good is evident both in Dorothea's learned ability to imagine another person's perspective and in Eliot's extensive use of narrated monologue throughout *Middlemarch*. As the English-language translator of Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*, Eliot translates into narrative technique Feuerbach's idea that to be conscious of another's consciousness is the basis of all morality. By fusing her narrative voice to the consciousness of one character after another, Eliot models the Feuerbachian leap.

My Epilogue moves forward in time to Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The Waves*, where we find a more fragmented relationship between the narrative voice and the figural consciousness. Woolf's narrative voice depicts the consciousnesses of multiple characters without privileging one consciousness over another and without adding narrative comment or judgment. The dissolution of a knowable narrative voice in

Woolf’s novels begs the question of how readers make meaning without the guidance of the narrative voice, and what changes when they do.

Chapter Two: Austen's *Emma* – Development Toward the Narrative Voice

As Wayne Booth points out in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, the narrator uses Emma as the focalizing center to reduce emotional but not moral and intellectual distance: "The solution to the problem of maintaining sympathy despite almost crippling faults was primarily to use the heroine herself as a kind of narrator, though in third person, reporting on her own experience." (245) Booth contends that narrative irony, combined with the sustained inside view of Emma, enables the reader to see clearly Emma's faults but love her anyway and desire her reform. Booth's point that the sustained inside view the reader has of Emma creates affection and interest is well taken; another factor that reduces emotional distance, however, is the close relationship of Emma's voice to the narrator's.

In Austen's *Emma*, the narrative voice has a sisterly, supportive but corrective relationship to the heroine; the narrator fuses her voice to the heroine's in both sympathy and irony through the extended use of narrated monologue (the third-person rendering of a character's thoughts) and free indirect discourse (the third-person rendering of a character's thoughts and speech). Emma's consciousness in the first half of the novel is depicted through both quoted and narrated monologue, but as the novel progresses, the voice of Emma's consciousness becomes more and more intertwined with the narrative voice. Emma's voice also begins to resemble the narrative voice in its ability to mix with another's consciousness in that her later narrated monologues contain not only her own reflections, but also the consciousness of other characters' reflections. Critics have traditionally emphasized the didactic role of Knightley as Emma's agent of reform, but I suggest that it is Emma's movement toward the mixing of consciousnesses manifested in the narrative voice that represents the true story of development.

Austen's narrative voice varies from novel to novel and it always sounds like the voice of the heroine. *Pride and Prejudice*'s narrative voice is as lively and bantering as Elizabeth Bennet's, while *Mansfield Park*'s is as serious and sober as Fanny Price's. In *Persuasion*, the narrative voice is nearly as effaced and repressed as Anne Eliot's. The resemblance of the narrative voice to the heroine in Austen's novels forms the basis for a unique relationship between the two voices. Unlike Eliot's narrative voice, which always remains distinct from the voice of the heroine, Austen's narrative voice is often difficult to distinguish from her heroine's. This creates a close rapport between the voices that helps to shape the reader's relationship both to the narrator and to the heroine. The strong identification that the reader feels for Austen's heroines is a direct result of this likeness to the narrative voice, for it is the narrative voice which teaches the reader by example how to form judgments about the characters and events it describes. For example, the witty, ironic narrative voice of *Pride and Prejudice* teaches the reader to value those same qualities in Elizabeth, but it would be hard for the reader of *Mansfield Park*, accustomed to the less playful, more earnest manner of the narrative voice in that novel, to trust the high-spirited Mary Crawford (who, in some ways, resembles livelier Austen heroines, such as Elizabeth, that we are taught to value in novels with a livelier narrative voice). I will begin by demonstrating how this resemblance between narrative voice and heroine works in two of Austen's early novels in order to set the stage for my study of the relationship between the narrator's and the heroine's voice in *Emma*.

Like her narrator, Elizabeth Bennet has "a lively, playful disposition, which delight[s] in anything ridiculous." (13) Elizabeth's reaction to the fuss surrounding Lady Catherine's arrival at Hunsford Parsonage reflects the narrator's technique of ironic deflation: " 'And is this all?' cried Elizabeth. 'I expected at least that the pigs were got into the garden, and here is nothing but Lady Catherine and her daughter!' " (132) The juxtaposition of the image of the pig with the image of Lady Catherine is a comic union of high and low and creates a tone of mock seriousness that is frequently shared by the narrator. The narrator's mock serious tone is similarly palpable in the description of Charlotte Lucas's reception of Mr. Collins as her lover, although here the absurd mixes with the pathetic: "Miss Lucas perceived him from an upper window as he walked towards the house, and instantly set out to meet him accidentally in the lane. But little had she dared to hope that so much love and eloquence awaited her there." (102) The *instantly* calls the reader's attention to and undermines the *accidentally*: we have a would-be romantic scene undermined by feminine clear-sightedness and masculine absurdity. The scene ends with Miss Lucas sitting through a dull, lengthy proposal that must have tried her patience in spite of her hurry to receive it: "But little had she dared to hope that so much love and eloquence awaited her there."

As in the above passage, the narrator frequently makes upbeat-sounding statements that are undercut by the ugly reality the narrator is exposing. On first reading, these statements seem jovial and cheerful: "It was an animating subject, and Mrs. Bennet seemed incapable of fatigue while enumerating the advantages of the match." (83) Mrs. Bennet's *animation* is here contrasted with her listeners' implied weariness at having to endure her endless bragging. Mrs. Bennet's animation and energy are compared with comic effect to the fatigue and boredom she is unwittingly occasioning in others; the passage describes Mrs. Bennet's condition from her own point of view at the same time as it calls the reader's attention to the shallowness of that point of view.

Elizabeth and the narrator have a shared tendency to seek out the absurd, not only in everyday occurrences but also in more serious moments, as we see in the narrator's description of the wedding day of Jane and Elizabeth: "Happy for all her maternal feelings was the day on which Mrs. Bennet got rid of her two most deserving daughters. With what delighted pride she afterwards visited Mrs. Bingley and talked of Mrs. Darcy may be guessed." (310) The grammatical inversion of subject and predicate in the opening sentence give a graceful, solemn feeling to Mrs. Bennet's gratified vanity at *getting rid of* her daughters in so enviable a manner. The contrasting diction of the graceful tone of the passage with the ugly honesty of the *got rid of* is another example of the narrator's deflationary use of the mock heroic tone. It is her *pride* (which, the passage suggests, is, like her vanity, the primary maternal feeling gratified by the event) that is *delighted* and, because we have heard Mrs. Bennet slight Elizabeth repeatedly in favor of Lydia, the narrator's description of Jane and Elizabeth as *her two most deserving daughters* is meant to underscore Mrs. Bennet's deficient sense of their true value. The narrator's suggestion at the end of the second sentence that Mrs. Bennet's conduct *may be guessed* by the reader allows the narrator to politely refrain from a direct description of Mrs. Bennet's bad behavior and to encourage the reader to do the dirty work.

Elizabeth shares in the double-voicedness of the narrator's irony, delivering harsh judgments in a graceful manner. Both Elizabeth and the narrator use words which suggest something simple on the surface, but which contain other meanings more subtle and harsh. Besides their shared sense of irony, the narrator and Elizabeth have similar tastes and a common vocabulary. Their language and their manners are alike, and if the narrator were a character in the story, it is safe to guess she would be very much like

Elizabeth. Like Mr. Bennet savoring every word of Mr. Collins's letters, the narrator and Elizabeth enjoy the inconsistencies of those around them but, unlike Mr. Bennet, they are not absurd themselves. Even when Elizabeth is wrong, she retains her dignity; the narrative voice never condescends to her.

In *Mansfield Park*, the narrative voice is much more serious and restrained. In the following passage, the narrator politely refrains from violating Fanny's privacy: "It would not be fair to enquire into a young lady's exact estimate of her own perfections." (330) There is very little free indirect discourse or narrated monologue until the final pages of the second volume; it is as if the narrator politely refrains from violating Fanny's privacy. When we finally hear Fanny's feelings about Edmund in Chapter 27, after feeling the simmering tension for many previous chapters, Fanny's immediate resolution is to overcome her agitation through "fervent prayers for his happiness" and the narrator similarly represses any urge to exploit the dramatic potential of Fanny's situation by dwelling on it. In fact, it is the tone of restraint that increases the reader's sense of the drama of Fanny's situation: the narrator's and Fanny's repressed tone create a quiet urgency, a sad poignancy in that, until the fairy tale-like reversal in which Edmund drops Mary Crawford and turns to Fanny as a lover, the reader senses that no one will speak Fanny's pain as loudly or clearly as it deserves to be expressed. The sudden reversal of her fortunes at the novel's end does have a tacked-on feel to the reader, as if so much fulfillment after so much restraint is hard to accept, and it is the narrator's restraint as much as Fanny's that creates this disjunction.

In *Emma*, the narrative voice is charming, high-spirited, and occasionally misleading, much like the eponymous heroine's voice, and narrative passages such as the following sound as pleasant and worldly as Emma's own voice: "It may be possible to do without dancing entirely. Instances have been known of young people passing many, many months successively, without being at any ball of any description, and no material injury accrue either to body or mind;—but when a beginning is made—when the felicities of rapid motion have once been, though slightly, felt—it must be a very heavy set that does not ask for more." (230) There is a shared vocabulary between the narrative voice and Emma's; compare the following passage of Emma's narrated monologue to the narrator's opening description of Emma as one who "seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence": "How was it to be endured?… if Harriet were to be the chosen, the first, the dearest, the friend, the wife to whom he looked for all the best blessings of existence." (396) The two voices often use evocative and vaguely menacing language as we see in the narrator's description of the moral risks of Emma's situation: "The real evils indeed of Emma's situation…The danger, however was at present so unperceived…." (7) Emma's description of her situation in a narrated monologue later in the novel uses similar vocabulary: "If a separation of two months should not have cooled him, there were dangers and evils before her." (295)

Through narrated monologue and free indirect discourse, the narrator moves in and out of all of the major characters' minds and voices. These techniques allow the narrative voice to move deftly from the idiom of one character to that of another, creating relationships between the narrative voice and the voices of the characters with which it has temporarily fused. These relationships are peripheral to that of the narrative voice and the heroine, which is the central bond that the narrative voice creates and maintains.

In the following passage, the narrator moves, through free indirect discourse, from Mr. Woodhouse to Emma and back to Mr. Woodhouse.

> Poor man!—it was at first a considerable shock to him, and he tried earnestly to dissuade her from it. She was reminded, more than once, of her having always said she would never marry, and assured that it would be a great deal better for her to remain single; and told of poor Isabella, and poor Miss Taylor. (435-36)

The opening "Poor man!" is a delightful example of the mixing of languages that characterizes free indirect discourse, for the narrator here echoes Mr. Woodhouse's "poor Isabella" and "poor Miss Taylor," appellations we hear Mr. Woodhouse use again later in the passage. The narrator uses Mr. Woodhouse's own phrase, but in an ironic tone which turns it into a bit of fun at his expense, and it is this slight difference that makes the repetition of this by now familiar phrase so perfect here. As the passage progresses, the narrator's voice mixes more and more with the language of Mr. Woodhouse, as we hear in the protest, "it would be a great deal better for her to remain single" and in the sad examples of "poor Isabella, and poor Miss Taylor." Where Mr. Woodhouse is the subject of free indirect discourse, the narrator's ironic stance is clear: his selfish effort to assure Emma that "it would be a great deal better for her to remain single," and his perverse insistence on the tragedy of "poor Isabella" and "poor Miss Taylor" mark him as a clear object of narrative irony.

Where uncomplicated characters like Mr. Woodhouse and Miss Bates are the subject of free indirect discourse, the narrator's ironic stance is always simple and clear, as we see in the free indirect discourse of Miss Bates in the following passage: "after a pretty long speech from Miss Bates, which few persons listened to, she also *found it possible to accept dear Miss Woodhouse's most obliging invitation.*" (323; my emphasis)

The sentence begins in the straightforward narrative voice, but the words I have italicized are pure Miss Bates, and the narrator is certainly having some gentle fun at her expense. Another type of free indirect discourse can be seen in the following example, in which italicization is used by the narrator as shorthand to condense a character's broad psychological issues into a small grammatical space: " 'Well, sir,' cried Mr. Weston, 'as I took Miss Taylor away, it is incumbent on me to supply her place, if I can; and I will step to Mrs. Goddard in a moment, if you wish it.' But the idea of any thing to be done in a *moment*, was increasing, not lessening Mr. Woodhouse's agitation." (196; original emphasis) The italicization of *moment* allows the reader to feel the word's effects on Mr. Woodhouse's worried nerves, to hear the anxious hurry of the word as he himself heard it but, because the italicized word stands out so clearly as not belonging to the narrator, the reader knows to smile rather than to feel sympathy for Mr. Woodhouse's harried condition. The italics here serve as an economical way of packing an entire story into one word but they also separate the voice of the narrator from that of the character. It is not only the narrator's distancing irony but also the difference in tone, style, and vocabulary between the voice of the narrator and those of characters like Mr. Woodhouse and Miss Bates that creates a comic distance uncomplicated by the sympathy we feel for Emma.

The following passage displays clear but playful narrative irony: "It is remarkable that Emma, in the many, very many, points of view in which she was now beginning to consider Donwell Abbey, was never struck with any sense of injury to her nephew Henry, whose rights as heir expectant had formerly been so tenaciously regarded." (420) There are moments, however, when it is unclear whose opinion is being given, Emma's or the narrator's, and this subtly undermines the reader's confidence in the objective value of statements that appear to emanate from Emma's point of view but are given in the third-person, past tense of the narrative voice. An example is the final sentence of the following passage, which I have italicized: "Not more than five couple could be mustered; but the rarity and the suddenness of it made it very delightful, and she found herself well matched in a partner. *They were a couple worth looking at*." (214; my emphasis) The archaic usage of *couple* in the first sentence (singular rather than plural) calls attention to the repeated use of the word in the final sentence of the passage and to the possible second meaning of the word in Emma's mind: "*They were a couple worth looking at*." Is this an objective statement given by the narrative voice, or is it the narrated monologue of Emma's self-satisfied thoughts, translatable into the interior monologue, "we are a couple worth looking at"? It is more interesting to see it as narrated monologue than as a straightforward narrative statement because hearing the two voices together allows the reader to hear more clearly the narrator's judgment of Emma's smug complacency.

Here is another example of the difficulty in distinguishing between the heroine's and the narrator's voice; I have italicized the part of the passage with which I am now concerned: "Mr. Knightley, always so kind, so feeling, so truly considerate for everybody, would never deserve to be less worshipped than now; *and it really was too much to hope even of Harriet, that she could be in love with more than* ***three*** *men in one year*." (421; my emphasis) The passage makes most sense when read as a narrated monologue of Emma's thoughts regarding Harriet's romantic hopes regarding Knightley, but because Emma's voice is fused with the narrator's rather than made to stand alone, as in quoted or interior monologue, the harshness of the italicized thoughts is somehow softened: after all, Emma is not uttering these words entirely on her own; the narrative voice lends some authority to an unsympathetic but not unfair sentiment.

Casey Finch's and Peter Bowen's "'The Tittle-Tattle of Highbury': Gossip and the Free Indirect Style in *Emma,*" contends that gossip, like the novel's narrator, has a feminine (gossipy) voice whose authority is naturalized but impossible to pin down. Like D.A. Miller in *The Novel and the Police*, Finch and Bowen regard with suspicion third-person narrative techniques for rendering consciousness. They make the case that gossip is a secret mechanism of control, communicated and naturalized by the free indirect style: "The very force of free indirect style is the force of gossip. Both function as forms par excellence of surveillance and both serve ultimately to locate the subject—characterological or political—within a seemingly benign but ultimately coercive narrative or social matrix. It is no coincidence that the first great novelist of gossip should also be the first great technician of the free indirect style." (3-4) Yet Finch and Bowen rest their case on the assumption that the narrative voice of *Emma* is, like your average gossiper, uncertain of her information: "What is most strikingly absent from a novel like *Emma* is the overtly acknowledged presence of a narrator at all, the explicit identification of the narration's source and purpose. For the narrator of *Emma* is not simply unidentified; she is also like any gossiper to some degree uncertain of the very source of her information." (5-6) In support of the narrator's uncertainty, they cite the opening description: "Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her." If the narrator had a definite source of authority, Finch and Bowen suggest, she would not tell us how Emma *seemed* but what she *was*. And yet, it is in this very place that the narrative voices separates herself from the gossipy voice of the community. The *seemed to* alerts the reader that the narrative voice is reporting not her own impressions but how Emma appears to the community and the careful reader infers that the community overrates the untried, indulged Emma. If Emma has lived almost "twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her," Emma's comfortable existence rests not on her intrinsic worth but on her pampered position.

Finch and Bowen frequently conflate the narrative voice with the voice of gossip but I see the narrative voice of *Emma* as more tied to the voice of its heroine, which demurs from the communal voice in important ways. For example, the communal voice of gossip admires Mrs. Elton, respects her husband, and does *not* suspect any secret with regard to Jane Fairfax. The narrative voice, while it disseminates the communal voice through free indirect discourse, does not give the voice of gossip any weight on these important matters; in fact, the communal voice is repeatedly shown to be unreliable. Finch and Bowen note the scene where the community makes its first judgments regarding Mrs. Elton: "Mrs. Elton was first seen at church: but though devotion might be interrupted, curiosity could not be satisfied by a bride in a pew, and it must be left for the visits in form which were then to be paid, to settle whether she were very pretty indeed, or only rather pretty, or not pretty at all." (*Emma* 251) Oddly, Finch and Bowen do not notice that the unnamed, communal voice here is mocked as trivial and ultimately wrong-headed in its methods of evaluating Mrs. Elton. They see the communal voice's obsession with attractiveness as reinforcing the novel's patriarchal marriage system, in which female attractiveness is the primary criterion. Yet although Mrs. Elton is attractive, Mr. Elton's decision to marry her is not endorsed by the narrator (or by Emma), so that the equivalence Finch and Bowen draw between the communal voice of gossip and the narrative voice does not hold up under scrutiny.

The two—narrative voice and communal voice—may sometimes occupy the same grammatical space, but to read them as interchangeable is to miss half of the conversation: the narrator is not repeating rumors to enforce social codes; she is talking back to the communal voice to assert power over it. The problem with their reading of a narrative technique as a form of social control is that it overlooks the fact that the narrative voice is frequently at odds with the communal voice. To interpret the opening sentence of *Pride and Prejudice*, which voices the communal expectation that a rich bachelor will soon marry, as the narrator's way of reinforcing patriarchal expectations regarding marriage, for example, would be to distort its true meaning; the narrator here playfully undermines the communal voice at the same time as she articulates it. This double-voicedness, in fact, is what helps the reader to locate and to recognize the narrative voice.

Finch and Bowen sometimes confound communal expectations with novelistic expectations, as when they suggest that the claim of Emma's neighbors that they always knew that Miss Woodhouse and Mr. Knightley would marry be taken at face value. In fact, if anyone truly does foresee whom Emma will marry, it is the reader, not the residents of Highbury. The reader, conditioned by novelistic expectations that sometimes do and sometimes do not enforce the broader community's social agenda, can guess that Miss Woodhouse and Mr. Knightley will marry; the narrative voice enforces certain novelistic expectations, but while Finch and Bowen see *Emma*'s narrator as a hegemonic enforcer of social control, it is more likely, albeit less dramatic, that the narrator is the creator of a fictional world that both enforces and undermines the social controls it embodies. After all, if the voice of gossip were naturalized and given authority by the gossipy narrative voice, then why is gossip so consistently proven wrong? Emma's gossip about Jane's Irish lover is completely debunked and dismissed; Mrs. Weston's theory about Jane Fairfax and Mr. Knightley is also wrong. Frank and Emma are for a time the extended object of communal gossip, but the communal voice is duped again: Frank is secretly engaged to Jane Fairfax and Emma is not even interested in him. When the narrator tells us that the Highbury community believes that it always knew things would turn out this way, she is further undermining the reliability of a communal voice that she has frequently depicted as shallow and self-deluded. If Emma had married Frank, or Mr. Knightley had married Jane Fairfax, the citizens of Highbury would have been equally quick to assert their powers of prevision. If Highbury quickly convinces itself that it always knew that Emma and Mr. Knightley would marry, the reader knows better.

Where Finch and Bowen make much of the notion that the narrator of *Emma* is hard to perceive because she is everywhere and nowhere,[8] Penny Gay in *Jane Austen and the Theatre* hears Austen's narrative voice speaking to her audience loudly and clearly: "Like Cowley's epilogue-speaker, Austen looks from the stage of her public art at her society, the consumers of that art which mirrors themselves… Austen's 'I' is a voice as conscious as that of the actress who usually spoke a play's epilogue." (23- 4) Gay highlights the "ironic steadiness of Austen's gaze at her society" and sees Austen's narrator as gazing directly at the audience, delivering the moral. This argument works better for Austen's earlier, more authorially narrated works such as *Northanger Abbey* and *Mansfield Park* but it is hard to see how it applies to *Emma* or *Persuasion* (indeed, Gay shifts gears in her *Emma* and *Persuasion* chapters, making a more general claim that these novels engage theatrical elements and themes). While Finch and Bowen exaggerate the difficulties of locating the narrative voice, Gay notes a conscious narratorial 'I' in the early novels but overlooks the changes that occur in Austen's narrative voice over the course of her novelistic career.

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[8] In *Speakerless Sentences*, Ann Banfield makes a related argument that "represented speech and thought" (her term for free indirect discourse) "is not subordinated to the communicative function" and contains "speakerless sentences." (70) She maintains that because speaker and point of view conflict, we are outside of Chatman's communication model in which communication flows from narrator to reader.

Patricia Meyer Spacks claims in "Women and Boredom: The Two Emmas" that Emma Woodhouse is as bored as Emma Bovary, but I question whether an active and imaginative character who never notices that she is bored can be declared bored by an outside observer. In the beginning of the article, Spacks admits that "Emma Woodhouse fails to understand that she is bored." (194) She then cites the scene where Emma goes to the door to watch old women and dogs go by as evidence of Emma's boredom. Spacks contends that "the impoverished scene may generate a moment of pity for its witness" but why should the reader *pity* someone who is so content with her own lot? Look at the ending of the passage that Spacks cites: "she [Emma] knew she had no reason to complain, and was amused enough; quite enough still to stand at the door. A mind lively and at ease, can do with seeing nothing; and can see nothing that does not answer." Spacks identifies this part of the passage as Emma's untrustworthy free indirect discourse; she believes that even if Emma *thinks* she can do with seeing nothing, it is because she is self-delusional: "the sentence records Emma's characteristic compensatory self-congratulation." (196) Later in the article, Spacks undermines her own argument: "In Flaubert's novel ennui seems a wellnigh universal disease. Only those without sufficient perception to realize their condition fail to suffer it." (203) In the world of Flaubert's novel, then, you are not subject to ennui unless you perceive that you are, but in the world of Austen's novel, it would seem, even ignorance is no safeguard.

Yet there is another important, more obvious way in which Flaubert's novel engages Austen's, in its sustained inside view of the heroine and in the challenges that narrated monologue poses with regard to identifying whose voice is speaking. An understanding of the technique of narrated monologue helps the reader to separate the voice of the narrator from that of the character whose consciousness is being narrated. Would Flaubert have been put on trial for *Madame Bovary* had the prosecutor understood the technique of narrated monologue?[9] After all, it was Emma Bovary's narrated monologues that caused the uproar, not the narrator's authorial statements. Dorrit Cohn contends that even if a false understanding of the boundary between author and character does not normally have legal consequences, it nonetheless contributes regularly to misreadings of literary texts: "The critic who suggested that the trial against Flaubert for *Madame Bovary* would not have taken place if the prosecutor had recognized that the 'immoralities' it contained were Emma's narrated monologues rather than Flaubert's authorial statements may have overstated his case. But there is no doubt that this kind of confusion is responsible for innumerable misreadings—including some in print—of works that employ the technique." (106-7)

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[9] The connection between narrated monologue and the misreading of *Madame Bovary* is mentioned as a possible factor leading to the trial of Flaubert in Cohn's *Transparent Minds* 106-7. Cohn credits Eugen Lerch and Hans Robert Jauss for their work in this area. In *Distinction of Fiction*, Cohn cites Dominic LaCapra's *Madame Bovary on Trial* as another source for the relationship between narrative technique and Flaubert's trial.

In *Emma*, as well, there are crucial moments where the similarity between the narrator's and Emma's voice is puzzling for the reader, and could lead to misreadings if the question of which voice is speaking were overlooked. The importance of separating the two voices can be seen in the following passage, the first sentence of which I have italicized: "*It was rather too late in the day to set about being simpleminded and ignorant*; but she left her with every previous resolution confirmed of being humble and discreet, and repressing imagination all the rest of her life." (134; my emphasis) There is an ungenerous harshness in the italicized statement, but, seen as part of Emma's narrated monologue, rather than as the narrator's own sarcastic comment, it forms a comic beginning to Emma's attempt at self-reform.

A similar confusion of voices is possible in the final sentence of the following passage, which I have again italicized: "Such was the blood of gentility which Emma had formerly been so ready to vouch for!—It was likely to be as untainted, perhaps, as the blood of many a gentleman: but what a connexion had she been preparing for Mr. Knightley—or for the Churchills—or even for Mr. Elton—*The stain of illegitimacy, unbleached by nobility or wealth, would have been a stain indeed.*" (451; my emphasis) To whose voice does the italicized statement belong? Is it part of the narrated monologue to which the rest of the passage belongs, or does the narrative voice speak in the final sentence? Read as the narration of Emma's thoughts, the prejudice can be viewed as part of Emma's larger recognition of the errors of her own conduct, but read as the narrator's statement, the sentence has an ugly, intolerant sound. I do not suggest that the narrator necessarily disagrees with Emma's assessment; I merely propose, based on the pompous formulation of the statement, that it is Emma's voice we are hearing.

The narrative voice is frequently joined to Emma's voice and it is through the persistent use of free indirect discourse and narrated monologue that the narrator, by using Emma's own thoughts and language, allows much of the story to be told in Emma's own words. For example, rather than hearing the narrator's judgment on why Mr. Elton offers his riddle to Emma instead of to Harriet, we get Emma's own interpretation, and it takes a very attentive reader to realize that Emma's interpretation has no narrative authority: "The speech was more to Emma than to Harriet, which Emma could understand. There was deep consciousness about him, and he found it easier to meet her eye than her friend's." (69) Emma's extended and frequent narrated monologues set the reader up to make some of the same mistakes Emma does, as when she believes Frank Churchill to be falling in love with her: "Emma divined what every body present must be thinking. She was his object, and every body must perceive it." (205) Although it is true that others *are* drawing the same conclusion that Emma draws, there is the hidden engagement of Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax that neither Emma nor the reader knows about.

The use of narrated monologue misleads the reader on many occasions and increases the reader's identification with Emma's situation. The following passage is in the third-person past tense of the narrative voice, but is focalized from Emma's viewpoint, and the word "improvidently" is not the narrator's but Emma's own adverb to describe Frank's posture with regard to Jane: "He was gone immediately; and Emma soon saw him standing before Miss Fairfax, and talking to her; but as to its effect on the young lady, as he had *improvidently* placed himself exactly between them, exactly in front of Miss Fairfax, she could absolutely distinguish nothing." (207; my emphasis) Because this passage is rendered in the narrative voice, it makes it difficult for the reader to see Frank's blocking of Emma's view of Miss Fairfax as intentional and contributes to the reader's ready acceptance of Emma's perspective.

When Emma sees Jane's emotional reaction to the gift of the pianoforte, she believes it to be a gift from a secret lover, the husband of Jane's friend. Emma is right on the first count but wrong on the second, but Emma's acute observations on the first count mislead the reader into accepting her judgment on the second: "That she [Jane] was not immediately ready, Emma did suspect to arise from the state of her nerves; she had not yet possessed the instrument long enough to touch it without emotion; she must reason herself into the power of performance." (224) A few pages later, after witnessing Jane's blush and a smile of secret delight, Emma's narrated monologue concludes, "This amiable, upright, perfect Jane Fairfax was apparently cherishing very reprehensible feelings." (226) Because Emma's conclusion is again partly true, the reader has little ability to see her error, and the narrator voice, by fusing with Emma's, tricks the reader into believing that Emma's assumptions carry narrative weight. Frank's farewell visit to Emma deepens her and the reader's misreading of Frank: "He stopt again, rose again, and seemed quite embarrassed.—He was more in love with her than Emma had supposed; and who can say how it might have ended, if his father had not made his appearance?" (243) Yet, because the reader is also the privileged recipient of the narrator's irony toward Emma, s/he is not permitted to feel great distress when Emma is wrong, or to place too much confidence in her resolutions of better conduct ever after. Emma's narrated monologues create a constant movement between sympathy and irony, identification and distance, yet by the end, Emma's voice becomes more difficult to distinguish from the narrative voice which surrounds it: her voice has become more like the narrator's and it is harder to separate the two.

At times, Emma's narrated monologues resemble interior monologues, adding to the effacement of the narrative voice. In the following passage, the third person narrative pronoun is scarcely palpable except in the first and third sentence: "She could see nothing but evil in it. It would be a great disappointment to Mr. John Knightley; consequently to Isabella. A real injury to the children—a most mortifying change, and material loss to them all; —a very great deduction from her father's daily comfort—and, as to herself, she could not at all endure the idea of Jane Fairfax at Donwell Abbey. A Mrs. Knightley for them all to give way to!—No—Mr. Knightley must never marry. Little Henry must remain the heir of Donwell." (212) The partial effacing of the third-person pronoun as seen above and in other passages in the novel leads to a perception of direct readerly contact with Emma's consciousness, but it also lessens the reader's awareness of the narrator's role in narrating Emma's consciousness overall. Occasionally, the narrator reminds the reader that a perception is being focalized through Emma, as in the following passage: "Mr. Elton had retreated into the card-room, looking (Emma trusted) very foolish." (307) In this case, however, the parenthetical reminder does not undermine the validity of Emma's perception; it merely calls our attention to the fact that it is Emma's head we're inside at the moment.

More often, however, and in cases where Emma's perceptions are less trustworthy, the narrator does not call attention to the fact that it is Emma's voice we are listening to, as in the following passage, where Emma interprets Harriet's lack of emotional response to the mention of Frank Churchill (whom Emma supposes to be Harriet's love interest) as proof of Harriet's self-control, rather than of her lack of interest: "Emma looked at Harriet while the point was under consideration; she behaved very well, and betrayed no emotion." (339) Because Emma's reading of Harriet is given in the third-person narrative voice, the reader accepts it without question, forgetting that the narrator may not ultimately endorse Emma's reading of people and events. At the picnic at Box Hill, Emma sees Harriet's dullness as connected to Frank's: "While he was so dull, it was no wonder that Harriet should be dull likewise, and they were both insufferable." (344-45) The reader is continually encouraged to accept Emma's subjective perceptions as objective narrative statements.

We frequently have the sense that Emma is telling her own story, but it is the narrator to whom we owe the depiction of Emma's consciousness, and the narrator is telling a larger story than the one Emma tells. Emma tells the story of her perceptions as they occur to her at the time; the narrator is telling the story of the gradual growth of Emma's consciousness. Emma's voice, confident and witty, is also smug and conventional at the novel's start. The passages of narrated monologue from the novel's start contain the self-assured language characteristic of Emma's first plans for Harriet: "She would notice her; she would improve her." (24) Emma's development toward the narrative voice can be seen in the evolution of Emma's voice over the course of the novel.

What Emma learns over the course of the novel is that consciousness is not isolated; it is made up of other people's voices that she must learn to incorporate into her own. Before the Box Hill picnic, Emma's narrated monologues contain only her own thoughts; at the picnic, she first incorporates another's voice into her thoughts, the collective voice of Highbury gossip. In a lighthearted narrated monologue, she imagines how others would describe her behavior with regard to Frank Churchill: " 'Mr. Frank Churchill and Miss Woodhouse flirted together excessively.' They were laying themselves open to that very phrase—and to having it sent off in a letter to Maple Grove by one lady, to Ireland by another." (345) At the Box Hill picnic, Emma starts to see herself from the point of view of other characters' consciousnesses and, although in this instance Emma does not take seriously the gossipy voice she imagines, her later reflections are not nearly as dismissive of the quoted speech that they contain.

The next example of quoted speech within narrated monologue occurs a few pages later, in a much more serious tone, because here it is not the imagined voice of Highbury gossip but Mr. Knightley's remonstrance that she replays in her thoughts. Her development toward a fuller moral consciousness begins when she sees how she looks from the outside looking in: "She was most forcibly struck. The truth of his representation there was no denying. She felt it at her heart. How could she have been so brutal, so cruel to Miss Bates!—How could she have exposed herself to such ill opinion in any one she valued!" (352) Emma's narrated monologues take on a much more urgent tone through the incorporation of Mr. Knightley's remembered quoted speech: "As a daughter, she hoped she was not without a heart. She hoped no one could have said to her, 'How could you be so unfeeling to your father?—I must, I will tell you truths while I can.' Miss Bates should never again—no, never! If attention, in future, could do away the past, she might hope to be forgiven. She had been often remiss, her conscience told her so; remiss, perhaps, more in thought than fact; scornful, ungracious. But it should be so no more. In the warmth of true contrition, she would call upon her the very next morning, and it should be the beginning, on her side of a regular, equal, kindly intercourse." (353) It is Emma's newfound ability to replay another's words within her consciousness that allows her to reflect differently on her role with regard to Harriet Smith: "Poor Harriet! To be a second time the dupe of her misconceptions and flattery. Mr. Knightley had spoken prophetically, when he once said, 'Emma, you have been no friend to Harriet Smith.'—She was afraid she had done her nothing but disservice." (377) Once she begins to hear Mr. Knightley's voice in her reflections, her view of herself and of her relationship to others begins to change.

To point out the presence of Knightley's words within Emma's narrated monologues may seem like just another way of emphasizing his didactic role, but it matters not so much whose voice she is replaying, as that she has gained the ability to incorporate others' voices into her consciousness at all. As is evident in the narrated monologue already discussed in which Emma forms her plans for Harriet Smith, Emma's consciousness at the novel's start is entirely dominated by her own self-satisfied voice. What the narrative voice suggests, with its constant movement in and out of others' voices through narrated monologue and free indirect discourse, is that an evolved consciousness can never be entirely separate but is made up of many voices.

In this way, there is a connection between the ability to recognize and incorporate other people's words into one's thoughts and the level of moral development reached.

Mrs. Elton, on the one hand, is conscious of only one voice, that of her own social set: “all her notions were drawn from one set of people, and one style of living.” (253) What Emma comes to recognize in replaying Knightley’s words is the role that other voices play in the formation of a fuller, more inclusive consciousness, for the replaying of his words leads her to rethink her role with regard to Miss Bates, Jane Fairfax and Harriet. It is when she begins to recognize that she is not the center of consciousness for the Highbury universe, but one of many consciousnesses with comparably valid claims for recognition, that she is able to modify and expand her own consciousness to make room for other voices.

Emma’s voice becomes more difficult to distinguish from the narrator’s by the novel’s end because they have grown more alike and the narrator’s distancing irony is less evident: “The joy, the gratitude, the exquisite delight of her sensations may be imagined. The sole grievance and alloy thus removed in the prospect of Harriet’s welfare, she was really in danger of becoming too happy for security.—What had she to wish for?… Serious she was, very serious in her thankfulness, and in her resolutions; and yet there was no preventing a laugh, sometimes in the very midst of them. She must laugh at such a close! Such an end to the doleful disappointment of five weeks back! Such a heart—such a Harriet!” (445) The Emma we see at the end of the novel is not sad or chastened; she is not smaller, but larger. Emma’s laughter in the midst of her serious resolutions for better conduct ever after is not so much judged as shared by the narrator. After all, it has been the narrator’s technique all along to seek out and enjoy absurdities while moving in and out of characters’ consciousnesses in order to show how unintelligible our own motives and actions frequently look from the outside.

As Emma's incorporation of quoted speech into her consciousness suggests, development is not about what happens in the isolated realm of an individual's thoughts; it is about learning to view others' consciousnesses as (in)forming integral parts of our own. I see free indirect discourse and narrated monologue as "dialogic" in Bakhtin's sense of the word in *The Dialogic Imagination*: "Within the arena of almost every utterance an intense interaction and struggle between one's own and another's word is being waged, a process in which they oppose or dialogically interanimate each other." (354) It is this interaction between "one's own and another's word" that the narrative technique that Austen introduced allows the reader to experience in a new and dramatic way: no longer can voices be separated into discrete entities. Narrated monologue complicates the project of dividing characters' voices from the narrative voice; it challenges the notion of the third-person narrator as detachable from the characters it depicts.

Feminist critics have long argued that a heroine's "development" takes place not in her isolated consciousness but in dialogic relationship to her social context. I see narrated monologue as a *formal* reflection of the notion of development as a dialogic process. Whereas critics like Mary Poovey and Susan Fraiman point to thematic counternarratives that contest the dominant narrative of female development by embedding it in *social* contexts, I am interested in the ways that Austen and Eliot imbed their characters in *narrative* contexts. My focus on the narrator's fusion with the heroine's voice in narrated monologue complicates the notion of an entirely individual self-transformation and it does so not thematically, but formally. Austen's introduction of narrative techniques such as free indirect discourse and narrated monologue reflects formally the idea that a heroine's development is an ongoing process of learning what to absorb and what to resist in the voices of those around her, in particular, the narrative voice.

Ultimately, it is not only Emma who learns; the reader, too, learns from the narrative voice. The didactic relationship between narrator and reader parallels the relationship between narrator and heroine. The reader is subtly trained to develop the trait that Emma lacks, the ability to see beyond her own mental confines. The reader is repeatedly exposed to narrated monologues of characters' thoughts but is then, through the narrator's intervention, forced to qualify the objective value and accuracy of a character's perspective; in this way, the reader is forced to qualify the objective truth of a given character's perspective but is trained to value the act of imaginative entry into another's consciousness. As the narrator suggests, "Seldom, very seldom, does complete truth belong to any human disclosure; seldom can it happen that something is not a little disguised, or a little mistaken." (404) Austen's reader is trained to internalize the role of the narrator by learning to see the world as a vast arena of unspoken interior monologues to be mediated.

In conversation with Emma, Knightley makes an interesting point about the difference between the second and third-person pronouns, a point that adds something to our understanding of third-person modes of narrating consciousness. He is discussing the possible reasons for Jane Fairfax's friendship with Mrs. Elton: "Another thing must be taken into consideration too—Mrs. Elton does not talk *to* Miss Fairfax as she speaks *of* her. We all know the difference between the pronouns he or she and thou, the plainest-spoken amongst us; we all feel the influence of a something beyond common civility in our personal intercourse with each other—a something more early implanted. We cannot give any body the disagreeable hints that we may have been very full of the hour before. We feel things differently." (266) What Knightley is suggesting with regard to the distinction between Mrs. Elton's direct treatment *of* Jane Fairfax as compared to Mrs. Elton's haughty manner of talking *about* her could easily be applied to the distinction between the first- and third-person modes of narrating consciousness. The third-person narrator can talk *about* characters as freely as Mrs. Elton; sheltered by the third-person pronoun, the narrator is unrestrained by conventions of civility. Yet, because it is sheltered by the third-person pronoun, the narrative voice, unlike Mrs. Elton's, can cut sharply without being rude; it can say unkind things without being unkind.

The identification of Emma's voice with the narrator's creates a counterbalancing sympathy on the reader's part even in the face of strong narrative irony; the narrative voice can sound as arch and flippant as Emma's and this increases the reader's appreciation for those same qualities in Emma. Take for example, the following passage: "The hair was curled, and the maid sent away, and Emma sat down to think and be miserable.—It was a wretched business, indeed!—Such an overthrow of every thing she had been wishing for!—Such a development of every thing most unwelcome!—Such a blow for Harriet!—That was the worst of all. Every part of it brought pain and humiliation, of some sort or other; but, compared with the evil to Harriet, all was light; and she would gladly have submitted to feel yet more mistaken—more in error—more disgraced by mis-judgment, than she actually was, could the effects of her blunders have been confined to herself." (127) The narrator's opening sentence undermines Emma's weighty ponderings but, because the narrative voice sounds here as flippant as Emma's, the reader does not feel the weighty disapproval that a more serious, sermonizing narrative voice would convey: "The hair was curled, and the maid sent away, and Emma sat down to think and be miserable." Even at her emotional low-points, Emma does not forget to look good, and the narrator's playful tone teases but does not condemn Emma's attention to her curls at such a moment.

Because we hear so much of Emma's own words and thoughts through the use of narrated monologue, we sympathize with her at the same time as we know that she has caused many of her own problems. It is not so much a matter of *trusting* Emma's interpretations and motivations as of appreciating her steal-the-show prowess. Emma is as powerful, controlling, and entertaining as her narrator; this is why the reader loves her, warts and all. She has none of Anne Elliot's painful earnestness and little of Elizabeth Bennet's seasoned sagacity, but, because we hear so much of Emma's language mixed with the narrator's, because the boundaries between the two are made permeable in a way impossible in quoted discourse, we frequently find ourselves taking Emma's version of reality for our own. In this way, the use of narrated monologue sets the reader up to make some of the same mistakes as Emma does, yet, because the reader is also the privileged recipient of the narrator's irony toward Emma, s/he is not permitted to feel great distress when Emma is wrong. Emma's narrated monologues create a constant movement between sympathy and irony, identification and distance. It is this constant movement that creates the novel's delightful bivocality and it is the presence of narrative irony that maintains the tone of high comedy throughout; even the growth of Emma's moral consciousness is not rendered in a tone of high seriousness.

Austen's narrative voice anticipates the reader's ability to fully share her vision of the world she creates, hence the often remarked upon sense that the narrator is whispering into the reader's ear. When we move on to Eliot, we will note that her narrative voice, in contrast, anticipates *disagreement*; the narratee created by the narrative voice is usually at variance with it. Eliot's narrator, unlike Austen's, never sounds like her heroine. Although Eliot's narrator sympathizes with the heroine, the heroine's voice can never be mistaken for the narrator's. Eliot's narrative voice is older and wiser, more like a parent than a sister. Before we move on to Eliot, let us consider the relationship between narrator and heroine in Austen's posthumous *Persuasion.* Austen's last complete novel again reveals a narrative voice that resembles the heroine's and fuses with it in a sisterly manner, yet here there is little perceivable narrative distance from the heroine and this changes the relationship between narrator and heroine. *Persuasion* experiments with the same narrative techniques but for different effects; in the virtual absence of narrative irony, the relationship of the narrative voice to the heroine's in Austen's last complete novel is even more intimate and more difficult to disentangle.

Chapter Three: Trapped in Consciousness – Narrated Monologue in Austen's *Persuasion*

The fusion of Anne's voice with the narrator's, both within and beyond the confines of narrated monologue, is the distinguishing feature of *Persuasion*. As in other Austen novels, the narrative voice resembles the heroine's, but in her last complete novel, Austen creates a narrative voice that is almost entirely fused with the heroine's and it is difficult to distinguish the two voices. Because the two voices sound so similar, the boundary between the narrative voice and the heroine's is remarkably permeable. The narrative voice is effaced while Anne Elliot's speaking voice is repressed; both voices are intelligent and perceptive and the frequent fusion of the two creates an intense emotional pressure: the reader's strong identification with Anne is a direct result of the likeness of her voice to the narrative voice, for it is the narrative voice that teaches the reader how to judge the characters and events of the novel.

The narrator introduces Anne as cut off from the sympathy of her immediate family: "Anne, with an elegance of mind and sweetness of character, which must have placed her high with any people of real understanding, was nobody with either father or sister: her word had no weight; her convenience was always to give way; she was only Anne." (37) The narrator uses the word *real* (as in Emma's "real good will of a mind delighted with its own ideas") to call attention to the sham authority of Elizabeth's and Sir Walter Elliot's judgment. In this passage, the narrative voice at first sounds calm and content but quickly shifts to a more heavy, serious tone: "[Anne] was nobody with either father or sister: her word had no weight; her convenience was always to give way; she was only Anne." The repeated use of the semicolon to punctuate the point of view of her family creates a parallel structure of brief but distressing statements leading up to the painful final statement, “she was only Anne.” The narrative voice indicts Anne’s father and sister not by openly discussing their bad qualities, but by fusing the narrative voice to their point of view: “her word had no weight; her convenience was always to give way; she was only Anne.” Although grammatically, these words belong to the narrator (third person, past tense), the narrator is expressing not her own viewpoint but that of Anne’s family and this shift absolves the narrator from the burden of any immediate declarations of her own on the subject of Anne’s family (i.e., if anyone of *real* understanding would appreciate Anne and *they* do not, the narrator need say no more). In this way, even when the narrator is clearly giving information, she remains somewhat effaced, allowing other characters’ voices to deliver her message, and not calling attention to herself. The narrator provides access to Anne’s repressed pain through narrated monologues of Anne’s thoughts and through the free indirect discourse of characters from whom the narrative voice is distanced. Because the narrator provides continual access to Anne’s point of view, it is easy to overlook the fact that Anne rarely speaks for herself. Anne’s *thoughts* are expressed continually, but she rarely *speaks* at all.

Each time I reread *Persuasion*, I find myself anxiously wondering how Anne Elliot will ever find the courage to speak to Captain Wentworth, how she will ever be sufficiently sure of his feelings to enable her to express her own. I know full well how the story ends, yet this does not lessen the dramatic tension of her situation. Through Austen’s extensive use of narrated monologue, the reader comes to know intimately the workings of Anne’s mind, the shape of her consciousness. Yet Austen uses the technique not only to communicate Anne’s thoughts, but also to convey a sense of Anne’s imprisonment in the realm of pure consciousness; Anne thinks and feels deeply, but there is in Anne no balance between speech and thought: we know Anne only through her thoughts, for it is not until she finally begins to speak in the last quarter of the novel that we hear her quoted direct discourse to any significant extent. In this way, narrated monologue in the novel serves the function of dramatizing in narrative form the governing theme of Anne's inability to break out of familial and social constraints; long imprisoned in the realm of pure consciousness, her ultimate achievement consists in mustering the strength to speak.

Let us begin by looking at a couple of Anne's narrated monologues. I will italicize the segments of the passage which I can definitively identify as narrated monologue, but I recognize that here, as in most of Anne's narrated monologues, the borders of Anne's monologue are fuzzy and perhaps could be extended to include what I have categorized as psycho-narration:

> *She understood him. He could not forgive her,—but he could not be unfeeling. Though condemning her for the past, and considering it with high and unjust resentment, though perfectly careless of her, and though becoming attached to another, still he could not see her suffer, without the desire of giving her relief. It was a remainder of former sentiment; it was an impulse of pure, though unacknowledged friendship; it was a proof of his own warm and amiable heart,* which she could not contemplate without emotions so compounded of pleasure and pain, that she knew not which prevailed. (113; my emphasis)

The above passage is an example of embedded narrated monologue. Anne's narrated monologue provides a mental transcript of Anne's version of Wentworth's thoughts: (She thought:) he thought, "I cannot forgive her…." The remainder of the narrated monologue contains her perception of his perceptions. The narrator rarely enters Captain Wentworth's consciousness; Anne's perceptions are all we have. Although the reader sees further than Anne in discerning Captain Wentworth's true feelings, this is not because the reader is wiser than Anne, but because the reader is guided by all the narrative expectations that an Austen novel (along with other women-centered non-tragic novels of the period) arouses; the narrator does all she can to prolong reader anxiety and keep the reader from jumping ahead of Anne. The reader sees what Anne does not see not because Anne is dense (she is cautious, not dense) but because the reader is conditioned by expectations of happy marriage in Austen novels, expectations which the narrator, by proceeding at the same pace as Anne, does her best to undermine.

The second narrated monologue I would like to examine provides access to Anne's thought process as she pieces together the evidence and realizes that, indeed, Captain Wentworth does still love her:

> Anne saw nothing, thought nothing of the brilliancy of the room. Her happiness was from within. Her eyes were bright, and her cheeks glowed,—but she knew nothing about it. She was thinking only of the last half hour, and as they passed to their seats, her mind took a hasty range over it. *His choice of subjects, his expressions, and still more his manner and look, had been such as she could see in only one light. His opinion of Louisa Musgrove's inferiority, an opinion which he had seemed solicitous to give, his wonder at Captain Benwick, his feelings as to a first, strong attachment,—sentences begun which he could not finish—his half averted eyes, and more than half expressive glance,—all, all declared that he had a heart returning to her at last; that anger, resentment, avoidance, were no more; and that they were succeeded, not merely by friendship and regard, but by the tenderness of the past; yes, some share of the tenderness of the past. She could not contemplate the change as implying less. —He must love her.* (194-95)

The narrated monologue is initially signaled by the change in tense from the past to the pluperfect ("His choice of subjects, his expressions… had been such…"). The grammar of the narrated monologue provides recognizable clues as well: the multiple clauses and the dashes serve to "speed up" the passage, conveying a sense of Anne's racing heart as she finally pieces together the evidence: He must love her. The use of repetition ("all, all…"; "the tenderness of the past; yes, some share of the tenderness of the past") conveys a sense of the recitations and reiterations of the mental realm. Cohn considers mental verbs to be a feature of psycho-narration, but there are frequently mental verbs in Anne's narrated monologues, for Anne is a character who thinks about thinking, and her narrated monologues serve to dramatize her meta-reflections. The penultimate sentence, "She could not contemplate the change as implying less," despite the presence of a mental verb, makes most sense when translated into the narrated monologue, "I can not contemplate the change as implying less." The passage has gradually moved from the pluperfect to the simple past to the modal; "He must love her" pushes us (and ultimately, Anne) out of the past and toward the future.[10]

Dorrit Cohn explores not only the narrated monologue itself but also its use in conjunction with psycho-narration and quoted monologue. She makes the point that narrated monologue commonly leads into quoted monologue by the same character, which creates the impression of the seeds of the mind's thoughts blossoming forth into speech. In *Persuasion*, however, Anne's narrated monologues are rarely used as a prelude to her quoted words, and this creates the opposite impression of claustrophobic containment. The most standard sequence used by masters of the technique such as Flaubert or Kafka is the triad psycho-narration—narrated monologue—quoted monologue, as seen in the passage Cohn quotes from Flaubert: "He left his friends; he wanted to be alone. His heart was overflowing. Why had she offered him her hand? Was it a thoughtless gesture, or an encouragement? "Come, I must be mad!" (qtd. in

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[10] For more on Austen's use of the modal tense, see Zelda Boyd's "Jane Austen's

Trans. Minds 135) Unlike Austen's imperceptible transitions from narrated monologue to psycho-narration, Flaubert's triads employ clear lines between techniques. This triadic grouping of narrative techniques "wedges" the narrated monologue, "bridging the gap between wordless emotion and emotional words." (*Trans. Minds* 135) It is just this gap, in Austen's *Persuasion*, which remains unbridged, at least until the final pages of the novel. Anne's narrated monologues sometimes start with psycho-narration but they do not end in quoted monologue; they remain in the realm of "wordless emotion."

A character like Sir Walter, on the other hand, dwells in the realm of speech rather than thought and is thus the subject of free indirect discourse rather than narrated monologue. We frequently hear his pompous idiom in the narrator's language but it is his speaking voice rather than his unspoken thoughts we hear. Or, put another way, Sir Walter's equally foolish thought and speech sound the same and thus become interchangeable. The following example of free indirect discourse makes the transition to spoken discourse seen in the standard triadic pattern of narrative techniques, moving from narration to Sir Walter's free indirect discourse to quoted speech: "How Anne's more rigid requisitions might have been taken, is of little consequence. Lady Russell's had no success at all—*could not be put up with—were not to be borne*. 'What! Every comfort of life knocked off! Journeys, London, servants, horses, table, —contractions and restrictions everywhere. To live no longer with the decencies even of a private gentleman! No, he would sooner quit Kellynch-hall at once, than remain in it on such disgraceful terms.' " (43; my emphasis) In Sir Walter the narrator presents to the reader a character with very little consciousness at all: if Anne is all thought and feeling, her

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'Must': The Will and the World."

father is all thoughtless expression. Rimmon-Kennan discusses the role of free indirect discourse in determining the attitude of the implied author to his or her characters:

> The FID hypothesis can assist the reader in reconstructing the implied author's attitude toward the character(s) involved. However, here again a double-edged effect may be noticed. On the one hand, the presence of a narrator as distinct from the character may create an ironic disadvantage. On the other hand, the tinting of the narrator's speech with the character's language or mode of experience may promote an empathetic identification on the part of the reader. (114)

The narrator wastes little time exploring the contents of Sir Walter's shallow consciousness and provides as much of his ludicrous dialogue as possible, but where he is the subject of free indirect discourse, the narrator's ironic stance is clear: "Anne haggard, Mary coarse, every face in the neighbourhood worsting; and the rapid increase of the crow's foot about Lady Russell's temples had long been a distress to him." (38)

The narrator's position toward Sir Walter's absurd vanity is conveyed through the farcical exaggeration of his vocabulary ("haggard," "coarse," "worsting," "distress") which clearly separates the narrator from the character she is narrating. The narrator uses free indirect discourse to mock the petty vanities of Sir Walter's mind: "It had not been possible for him to spend less; he had done nothing but what Sir Walter Elliot was imperiously called on to do." (40) This passage is interesting because although I hear Sir Walter's voice in both sentences, the adverb "imperiously" seems to belong to the narrator; the rest of the passage could be translated into the first-person words of Sir Walter, but the "imperiously" strikes me as a bit over the top, even for Sir Walter; it sounds more like the narrator's mocking joke than Sir Walter's own idiom. The use of the full title *Sir Walter Elliot* rather than the personal pronoun *he* is a further joke at his expense, with its suggestion that even in the realm of private thought, Sir Walter remembers to use his formal title. Such narrative commentary serves to shape our perception of Sir Walter and to separate him from the implied author, who is, in Austen, indistinguishable from the narrator.

In the passages of free indirect discourse quoted above, the respective voices of the narrator and Sir Walter intermingle but remain identifiable. Anne's narrated monologues, on the other hand, fuse her voice with the narrator's almost entirely, and this fusion of voices carries over to passages of straightforward narration as well.

The following sentence, for example, could be read as the narrator's or as Anne's: "She was ashamed of herself, quite ashamed of being so nervous, so overcome by such a trifle." (104) We hear Anne's agitated voice of self-reproach, and could read it as a transcript of her thoughts into narrated monologue, "I am ashamed of myself, quite ashamed of being so nervous, so overcome by such a trifle," but we could also read it as a narratorial description of Anne's condition, because the narrator frequently shares Anne's tone and inflections. It is often difficult to distinguish between Anne and the narrator because their judgments are in such complete accord.

Even passages of straightforward narration become inf(l)ected with Anne's voice, and, in my attempt to locate Anne's voice in narrated monologue, I begin to hear it elsewhere as well. The following passage, for example, cannot be considered narrated monologue because it cannot be transposed into a first-person monologue, but the narrator nonetheless interfuses Anne's version of events with her own: "The evening ended with dancing. On its being proposed, Anne offered her services, as usual, and though her eyes would sometimes fill with tears as she sat at the instrument, she was extremely glad to be employed, and desired nothing in return but to be unobserved." (95)

How do we account for the gap between the narrator's admission that Anne was crying as she played and her simultaneous assertion that Anne was content with piano playing and "desired nothing in return"? Surely Anne's tearful state belies the narrator's assertion of Anne as desiring nothing; the narrator is clearly telling us what *Anne* wants her companions to believe (i.e., that she is perfectly fine just playing the piano and seeks nothing more). Yet the reader is not confused by the intermingling of Anne's voice with the narrator's; we know that Anne suffers and desires in the face of all assertions to the contrary. What we frequently do not know, however, is where to draw the line between the narrator and Anne beyond the boundaries of narrated monologue, for even much of the technically straightforward narration sounds like Anne: it is as if their voices are interfused almost to the point of interchangeability. There is little discernible distance between the narrator's idiom and Anne's; their respective vocabularies are compatible, their judgments in accord. Their points of view are so intertwined that in a sense, Anne's exact words become superfluous; we can *trust* the narrator's representation of them. The narrator comes to serve as Anne's voicepiece, not so much an authority as a peer to Anne, saying all the things Anne silently observes but cannot express. In a way, it is as if the narrator herself speaks for Anne, making all the ironic comments Anne agrees with in spirit, but cannot bring herself to articulate.

It is easy to overlook the fact that Anne rarely speaks in the novel, for her numerous narrated monologues allow us to hear her voice so clearly that we have the impression that she has told the entire story. If we read carefully, however, we notice that, in fact, before the crucial scene of Louisa's accident at Lyme, Anne rarely speaks at all. In the humorous scene in which each member of the Musgrove clan takes Anne aside and speaks his or her mind, we never hear Anne's response to the various parties, only their complaints to her: "As to the management of their children, his theory was much better than his wife's, and his practice not so bad. —'I could manage them very well, if it were not for Mary's interference,'—was what Anne often heard him say, and had a good deal of faith in; but when listening in turn to Mary's reproach of 'Charles spoils the children so that I cannot get them into any order,'—she never had the smallest temptation to say, 'Very true.' " (70-1) Upon first reading the passage readers might be unaware that Anne has not spoken, for we know so clearly what her opinions are, but on rereading the passage we see that it contains a record of what Charles said, what Mary said and what Anne did *not* say. The absence of quoted discourse for Anne builds up suspense, creating a poignant sense of Anne's condition of repressed emotion, of her painful isolation in the midst of her family.

Yet the agreement between Anne's voice and the narrator's does not imply an entirely unironic relationship; the narrated monologues occasionally become the site of conflict between expression and repression in which Anne's thoughts cannot be taken at face value: "She now felt a great inclination to go to the outer door; she wanted to see if it rained. Why was she to suspect herself of another motive? Captain Wentworth must be out of sight. She left her seat, she would go, one half of her should not be always so much wiser than the other half, or always suspecting the other of being worse than it was. She would see if it rained." (185) Through the stubborn reassertion of Anne's claim of interest in the weather in the final sentence, the reader senses that the narrator is playfully poking fun, not so much for knowing more than Anne (for Anne *knows* why she wants to look outside) but for Anne's refusal to acknowledge and avow her true motives.

The double voice of the narrated monologue replicates the double voice of Anne's own consciousness, the ongoing struggle between what she feels and what she is able to say aloud, or even to admit to herself. Anne's verbal eloquence can never match the poignancy of her thoughts and feelings: "How eloquent could Anne Elliot have been, — *how eloquent, at least, were her wishes* on the side of early warm attachment, and a cheerful confidence in futurity, against that over-anxious caution which seems to insult exertion and distrust Providence!" (58; my emphasis) As the humorous passage in which Anne claims interest in the rain demonstrates, Anne has trouble expressing herself even in the privacy of her thoughts. Her tone hovers between plangent suffering and stoic repression:

> If Louisa recovered, it would all be well again. More than former happiness would be restored. There could not be a doubt, to her mind there was none, of what would follow her recovery. A few months hence, and the room now so deserted, occupied but by her silent, pensive self, might be filled again with all that was happy and gay, all that was glowing and bright in prosperous love, all that was most unlike Anne Elliot! (138)

The first sentence of the passage is another of Anne's "repressed" expressions of her true feelings: if Louisa recovered, all would *not* be well again and Anne's happiness would be *destroyed*, not restored. If the reader took the passage at face value, it would be upbeat, but what heavy undercurrents of sadness inform the final sentence.

Cohn emphasizes the ambiguity inherent in the intermingling of narrative voice with the character's mental language: "the narrated monologue is at once a more complex and a more flexible technique for rendering consciousness than the rival techniques. Both its dubious attribution of language to the figural mind, and its fusion of narratorial and figural language charge it with ambiguity, give it a quality of now-you-see-it, now-you-don't that exerts a special fascination." (175) She notes the shared tense (normally, the past tense) of both voices: "By employing the same basic tense for the narrator's reporting language and the character's reflecting language, two normally distinct linguistic currents are made to merge." (173) In the following passage I would like to draw attention to the ways in which Anne's narrated monologue plays both with the traditional past tense used in the technique and with the boundaries between Anne's and the narrator's idiom:

> "It is over! it is over!" she repeated to herself again, and again, in nervous gratitude. "The worst is over!"
>
> Mary talked, but she could not attend. *She had seen him. They had met. They had been once more in the same room!*
>
> Soon, however she began to reason with herself, and try to be feeling less. *Eight years, almost eight years had passed, since all had been given up. How absurd to be resuming the agitation which such an interval had banished into distance and indistinctness! What might not eight years do? Events of every description, changes, alienations, removals,—all, all must be comprised in it; and oblivion of the past—how natural, how certain too! It included nearly a third part of her own life.*
>
> *Alas!* With all her reasonings, she found, that to retentive feelings eight years may be little more than nothing.
>
> *Now, how were his sentiments to be read? Was this like wishing to avoid her?* And the next moment she was hating herself for the folly which asked the question. (85; my emphasis)

The narrator's use of the present continuous ("to be feeling") is a departure from the traditional past tense of narrative which increases the reader's sense of the immediacy of Anne's situation, and creates a sense of just how long these moments feel to Anne. The narrated monologue then uses the present continuous in a parallel manner ("How absurd to be resuming…") augmenting the sense of fusion between the two voices. At the end of the passage, the "Alas!" conveys Anne's feelings, but forms the first word of the final sentence of psycho-narration, signaled by the use of the mental verb, "she found." The demarcation lines between narrator and heroine are so permeable that the thoughts of the one become nearly interchangeable for (and indistinguishable from) the narration of the other.

Cohn takes us beyond the concept of narrated monologue as bivocal: "To speak only of a *dual* presence… seems to me misleading: for the effect of the narrated monologue is precisely to reduce to the greatest possible degree the hiatus between the narrator and the figure existing in all third person narration. But to speak simply of a *single* presence… is even more misleading: for one then risks losing sight of the difference between third- and first- person narration; and before long the protagonists of figural novels become the 'narrators' of their own stories." (112) I find it useful to explicitly state what Cohn suggests but never declares: the narrated monologue is neither dual nor single; it is a new "third" presence, an Anne/narrator entity whose being is not reducible to either of its components. The narrated monologue exists through the participation of both voices, but it is controlled by neither and this is the source of its power in *Persuasion*: it provides access to Anne's consciousness, but without her consent or control. Narrated monologue lets the reader "into" her consciousness, but it does not let Anne out; it both liberates and imprisons her in the realm of consciousness.

In the final third of the novel, Anne finally breaks out of the realm of consciousness and begins to speak. All at once, at the scene of Louisa's accident, she verbally takes command of the situation, issuing directions to all and tending to Captain Wentworth as well: " 'Go to him, go to him,' cried Anne, 'for heaven's sake go to him. I can support her myself. Leave me, and go to him. Rub her hands, rub her temples; here are salts,—take them, take them.' " (130) Suddenly, Anne is the acknowledged leader in a crisis that paralyzes Captain Wentworth: " 'Anne, Anne,' cried Charles, 'what is to be done next? What, in heaven's name, is to be done next?' Captain Wentworth's eyes were also turned towards her. 'Had not she better be carried to the inn? Yes, I am sure, carry her gently to the inn.' 'Yes, yes, to the inn,' repeated Captain Wentworth…." (131) Significantly, Anne's speech here begins with internal dialogue: "Had not she better be carried to the Inn? Yes, I am sure…." Anne's coming to speech at Louisa's accident shows surprising self-assurance but is nonetheless marked grammatically by the use of the subjunctive and of the negative. It is as if she unconsciously finds strength in the "fall" of her rival, but senses that her newfound verbal strength is temporary, that her leadership role is not secure.

Contingency has opened up new possibilities for Anne, but new misunderstandings begin to spring up which remain beyond her power to dispel, i.e., Mary's refusal to let Anne stay which Anne fears will be misconstrued by Captain Wentworth as her own desire to leave. Anne ultimately finds power in the very forces of opposition which once silenced her: "as to the power of addressing him she felt all over courage if the opportunity occurred. Elizabeth had turned from him, Lady Russell overlooked him; her nerves were strengthened by these circumstances." (189) To the modern reader, Anne's conversations with Captain Wentworth at the concert may seem timid, but it is there that the two first talk to each other directly about themselves and their actual words matter less than the simple fact that they are speaking. After the concert, we hear more of Anne's quoted discourse, culminating, of course, in her dramatic conversation with Captain Harville, after which point the two lovers speak freely.

The alternative ending of the canceled chapter suggests that Austen's intention was to keep the two lovers from meeting directly, to increase the dramatic tension by sustaining the emphasis on the heroine's point of view. As A. Walton Litz points out in *Jane Austen: A Study of her Artistic Achievement*, "the final version sustains the internal point-of-view, allowing us to follow the turns of Anne's mind, while the shorter draft had threatened to break this psychological consistency and collapse into straight summary." (160) The canceled chapter brings Anne and Captain Wentworth together (at the instigation of Admiral Croft) for an awkward conversation about the rumor regarding Anne and Mr. Elliot but the revised ending preserves the role of *indirection*. Anne and Captain Harville discuss their respective views on the relationship between the sexes while Captain Wentworth pretends to be otherwise occupied with a business letter but is actually eavesdropping and drawing his own conclusions. He does not approach Anne directly but by a written proposal that she reads, another indirection that sustains the emphasis on the heroine's point of view and on her silence.

In *Romance, Language, and Education in Jane Austen's Novels*, Laura Mooneyham discusses the linguistic barrier that exists between Anne and Wentworth: "Only activity, and specifically linguistic activity, can reunite Anne with Wentworth. Anne's difficulties are primarily difficulties of language." (156) Mooneyham describes the role of indirection in this novel of overheard conversations and letters read and reread; she emphasizes Anne's ultimate triumph over indirection through her active verbal role in reuniting with Wentworth. Mooneyham rightly points out that the revised ending emphasizes Anne's verbal attractions for Wentworth, who listens spellbound to her compelling conversation with Captain Harville. Of course, Anne's verbal influence over Wentworth even here is exercised *indirectly*, in another overheard conversation, but this only highlights the dramatic importance of the reversal of position for Anne from listener to speaker: "Anne's proficiency and linguistic power enable her to communicate to her love without overstepping the boundaries of society's limits. Since only indirect communication is allowed in the world of *Persuasion*, Anne must learn to use language's potential for communicating hidden meanings, and her mastery of this skill is her primary achievement." (Mooneyham 174) My study of the function of narrated monologue in *Persuasion* supports Mooneyham's emphasis on the linguistic barrier between Anne and Wentworth. This linguistic barrier is depicted in the gap between thought and speech that narrated monologue represents. Narrated monologue gives the reader access to Anne's thoughts in the absence of her spoken words; Wentworth, on the other hand, first needs to hear her speak in order to penetrate her thoughts.

In "Straight Talk in *Persuasion*" Tara Ghoshal Wallace contrasts the indirect communications that characterize the novel with the straight-talking narrator: "I suggest that the uncertainties in *Persuasion* gesture toward a risky and aggressive narrative mode: Austen wants, I believe, to return herself to the text, to reach beyond art to an open engagement with the reader. To do so, she deliberately writes out (not encodes) her personal ambivalences about fat or ugly women, sailors, lower classes (remember the mob at Lyme, gathered to 'enjoy the sight of a dead young lady, nay two dead young ladies, for it proved twice as fine as the first report'), the virtuous heroine, and especially, the author who effortlessly controls viewpoint and voice." (116) Wallace sees a closeness between author and reader emerging in Austen's last complete novel: "*Persuasion* disavows some of Austen's habitual narrative practices, making room for a voice that may or may not be more romantic, but is certainly more apt to question cool certainty and narrative distance. In *Persuasion*, I suggest, Austen takes away the code book that had allowed readers to interpret, in familiar ways, the subtleties of her text, forcing us to acknowledge our own bemusement and to engage not with a disembodied narrative voice, but with a flesh-and-blood author." (99) While I agree that the careful reader can point to places where the implied author reveals her opinions, such as the distaste for the fat Mrs. Musgrove's super-sized sighs, I do not agree with Wallace that the flesh-and-blood author engages the reader of *Persuasion*. Austen's authorial voice in her final complete novel is effaced, audible at rare moments, and then quietly fused to Anne's consciousness again.

When Wallace discusses narrative distance, she makes no distinction between *trusting* the narrator and knowing the narrator *personally*. While the reader trusts Austen's reliable narrator, the narrator remains almost entirely effaced throughout the novel. The narrative voice never speaks in the first person and it rarely calls attention to itself. The persistent use of narrated monologue would make overtly authorial statements seem awkward and out of place. Novels narrated figurally, as opposed to authorially, necessarily marginalize the author's presence in order to emphasize the consciousness of the character through whom the novel is focalized. Where Wallace perceives the flesh-and-blood author engaging the reader, I see a reliable but mostly unknowable narrator.

In fact, it is *because* the narrative voice of *Persuasion* is disembodied that the passage about Mrs. Musgrove's fat emotions catches the reader's attention so completely. All of a sudden, a personal distaste for large women expressing large emotions is offered: "Personal size and mental sorrow have certainly no necessary proportions. A large bulky figure has as good a right to be in deep affliction, as the most graceful set of limbs in the world. But, fair or not fair, there are unbecoming conjunctions, which reason will patronize in vain—which taste cannot tolerate, —which ridicule will seize." (92) Even in a passage such as this where a personal opinion is openly expressed, the reader cannot be sure whose opinion it is: is it the narrator's opinion, is it Anne's, or is it the shared opinion of the narrator, Anne, and Wentworth? In the previous paragraph, the reader is made aware that Anne sees and comprehends Wentworth's repressed amusement at Mrs. Musgrove's sudden sorrow for her hitherto unmourned son: "There was a momentary expression in Captain Wentworth's face at this speech, a certain glance of his bright eye, and curl of his handsome mouth, which convinced Anne, that instead of sharing in Mrs. Musgrove's kind wishes, as to her son, he had probably been at some pains to get rid of him; but it was too transient an indulgence of self-amusement to be detected by any who understood him less than herself." (92) Anne understands Wentworth's amused reaction without being offended by it because, presumably, she shares it. The passage discussing Mrs. Musgrove thus describes not only the opinion of the narrator but also of the hero and heroine. This makes it difficult to see this passage as providing access to a distinctly authorial viewpoint. Even when expressing a personal opinion, the narrative voice remains theoretical and impersonal, and it is this abstract quality of the narrative voice that precludes any personal relationship to a flesh-and-blood author.

Julia Prewitt Brown, in *Jane Austen's Novels: Social Change and Literary Form*, also sees in *Persuasion* "sudden, uncontrolled outbursts of the authorial mind." (135) As Anne walks to Mrs. Smith's, Anne reflects on the strength of her feelings for Wentworth and on the regrettable necessity of dampening Mr. Elliot's hopes:

> There was much to regret. How she might have felt, had there been no Captain Wentworth in the case, was not worth enquiry; for there was a Captain Wentworth: and be the conclusion of the present suspense good or bad, her affection would be his for ever. Their union, she believed, could not divide her more from other men, than their final separation. Prettier musings of high-wrought love and eternal constancy, could never have passed along the streets of Bath, than Anne was sporting with from Camden-place to Westgate-buildings. It was almost enough to spread purification and perfume all the way. (200)

The passage Brown cites is indeed one of the few in which the narrator's voice is entirely separate from Anne's, and the passage certainly pokes fun at Anne's high-wrought musings, but Brown's claim that the passage is "directly and passionately hostile" is unconvincing; it is easier to believe that the narrator shifts from her usual sympathetic stance with regard to Anne to a more detached, ironic one than it is to believe that the narrator turns on her suddenly with passionate hostility. Brown sees hostility as an understandable response to Anne's luxury of choosing between two lovers: "Anne is on her way to visit Mrs. Smith, who has no suitors to choose from, no money, and few friends. It seems a grotesque luxury for Anne to insist that, given her choice of suitors, she would only choose Wentworth and love him eternally. The passage is an angry defense of those who have to make do with what they have." (135) Perhaps, but it is more plausible to read the passage as emotionally detached than as emotionally charged. In other words, this is an example not of authorial anger but of narrative irony toward a heroine who is struggling to articulate her intentions within the conventions of the romantic lexicon. The passage pokes fun at Anne's high-minded loyalty and pity toward her respective lovers, but it also *celebrates* her newfound position of strength, for while Anne's articulation of her intention to reject a lover's seemingly rightful claim may seem like a cruel luxury to Brown, for a heroine too easily influenced by other people's claims, it is a basic necessity.

Brown sees passages like this as clumsy instances of authorial intrusion caused by Austen's incomplete mastery of the technique of using Anne as the novel's central intelligence: "Had Jane Austen lived to write more novels, she would have mastered the technique (had she chosen to) and been able to center her intelligence inside a character without either violating the actuality of circumstance or destroying the moral realism that the old narrator had so responsibly maintained. Or, as for example in *Middlemarch* or *Washington Square*, she would have perceived and exploited the connection between fantasy and circumstance, and shown the mind's ability to impose its fantasies on the world." (137) It is odd that Brown here questions Austen's ability in *Persuasion* to depict "the mind's ability to impose its fantasies on the world," for surely this is precisely what the perfume and purification passage is about. The narrator certainly does not mean that Anne literally improves the odor of her surroundings through her romantic musings; Anne's pretty thoughts merely seem *to Anne* to have a purifying effect on her environment. While I agree that the narrator's persistent fusion with the heroine's consciousness throughout the novel makes the few instances of separation between the two voices seem awkward and surprising, both Tara Wallace and Julia Brown overstate the case for authorial intrusion in the novel.

In her book, *In the Meantime: Character and Perception in Jane Austen's Fiction*, Susan Morgan talks about the nature of character in relation to the ability to perceive. Morgan rightly emphasizes Anne's absorbency of other characters' viewpoints as central to her own deep feeling: "Elinor Dashwood has 'strong feelings' which inform her sense.

Fanny Price, for all her timidity, has the acute feelings to struggle toward understanding. But it is in *Persuasion*, in the character of Anne Elliot, that the interdependence of lucid vision and deep emotion is most thoroughly and most intensely sustained. For Anne's character—and through Anne, the ways of seeing others' characters—is the subject of *Persuasion*. What are people like and how can we come to know them?" (175) Morgan contends that Austen offers Anne as a model of correct seeing. Unlike other Austen heroines, Anne undergoes no moment of revelation in which she looks back with horror on her former self, and Morgan connects Anne's superiority to other Austen heroines to her ability to perceive *small* changes in herself and others: "It is through the constant play and replay of feelings, through modifications over time, that Anne comes to understand her feelings and we, like Anne, can know another's character." (196) I am interested here in the leap that Morgan makes from the heroine's ways of seeing to the reader's. I, too, see the reader as learning from Anne Elliot a new way to see. Anne's openness, her ability to absorb and to understand others' viewpoints, even those that she disdains, makes her a model of a more fully integrated perception.

Morgan emphasizes "openness to influence" as essential to perception: "Nonetheless, the openness to influence is essential to right thinking and right feeling in Austen's fiction. It is the ability to be moved by a landscape, by a person, by an event." (197) To see Anne as a model of right thinking and right feeling is not only to appreciate Anne's own perceptions (as revealed in her narrated monologues) but also her ability to perceive the thoughts of others, to imagine their own internal monologues. With the exception of Wentworth, whose thoughts Anne frequently misreads, Anne repeatedly guesses correctly the thoughts of those around her. She knows that Mary wants to leave her sick son but needs to be made to feel that it is not selfish to do so. She understands that Captain Benwick protests his broken heart too loudly and will soon recover. She perceives that *something* is not right with Mr. Elliot's sudden renewal of contact with her family. It is as if her own enlarged consciousness contains space for the correctly perceived consciousnesses of others as well. Anne Elliot need not undergo a great moment of revelation because her expansive consciousness is already and always open to *minor* influences and changes; Emma Woodhouse must learn to expand her consciousness to create the space for other characters' consciousnesses that Anne Elliot has from the beginning.

The question remains, however, of how so perceptive a heroine could fail to see the true feelings of the man she loves. Captain Wentworth's mind remains opaque to Anne throughout most of the novel, and Anne's blindness to his growing interest in her may seem surprising in the face of her overall ability to see correctly. When Wentworth first returns to her life, however, she is right to perceive that he is not interested in renewing his romance with her. As Wentworth's feelings for Anne return, the reader senses that Anne *does* notice, although she does not admit it, even to herself. I see this not as Anne's failure to see but as an example of Anne's integration of perception and imagination: Anne's perception of Wentworth's feelings toward her is always qualified by her understanding that things may go wrong after all: he may marry Louisa, he may be scared off by Mr. Elliot's attentions to her, he may not love her *enough* to ally himself with a family he disdains. Anne's inability to admit that she notices changes in Wentworth's behavior to her is suspect in the face of her subtle observations of everyone else in her life. As when Anne stubbornly insists to herself that she is merely going to the door to see if it is raining (when she is really looking for Wentworth), her inability to admit that Wentworth is returning to her indicates not a lack of perception so much as willful self-defense.

Adela Pinch, in *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen*, also emphasizes openness to influence as something that the reader learns from Anne Elliot's example: "*Persuasion* explores what it feels like to be a reader. It does so by connecting this feeling to what the presence of other people feels like. It explores, that is, the influence reading can have on one's mind by comparing it to the influence of one person's mind over another's." (139) This openness to influence, particularly for a woman in Anne Elliot's day, is not without its cost, as Anne's seven wasted years suggest. Pinch sees Anne's "acute awareness of others" as evinced by her susceptibility to persuasion. Ultimately, though, Pinch sees Anne as cut off from the outside world by her excessive inward absorption: "I'm interested in the way in which Austen's representation of Anne's innerness takes the form of an *inward*ness that oddly seems only penetrated from the outside with difficulty." (152; her emphasis) She sees the reader as learning from Anne to inhabit an "autonomy of mind" that serves "as a form of resistance to unwanted pressures and constricts mental space as a realm of freedom or autonomy." (163) In other words, she sees Anne as a good reader, absorbed in her own mental realm and impervious to the outside world.

While I agree with Pinch that Anne's inwardness provides mental liberty from the social constraints of her life, I see the novel not so much reinforcing the barrier between internal consciousness and the outside world as complicating it. The novel's dramatic tension derives from Anne's *imprisonment* in the realm of consciousness and the momentum of the plot is toward speech, not thought. I do not see the reader as learning *autonomy* of mind from Anne; after all, if Anne had learned the lesson of autonomy, she would have expressed regret for listening to Lady Russell. Instead, it is the porous quality of Anne's consciousness that the reader learns to appreciate through the extended use of narrated monologue in the novel. Just as the narrator (and, consequently, the reader) penetrates Anne's consciousness, Anne is open to the thoughts of other characters. Anne's inwardness is the source of her perceptive power. She can imagine how other people think and feel because she has spent so much of her life listening and observing. Her power to absorb generates her power to perceive. Emma Woodhouse misconstrues the motives of those around her because she has not learned to absorb but only to imagine. To be sure, imagination plays an important role in Anne's ability to guess the motives of those around her; the difference between Emma and Anne lies not in Anne's *lack* of imagination but in her integration of imagination and perception.

Anne's openness to other people's feelings and influence is certainly an important theme in the novel. It is a theme that Roger Michell's film version of the novel highlights in an interesting way. Anne Elliot thinks and absorbs a lot although she says little throughout most of the novel and Michell faces the challenge of translating Anne's full consciousness onto the screen without a narrator. What he does is understated but effective: he shows Anne observing watchfully and listening with painful consciousness as other characters talk to her and to each other. Although we cannot hear her precise thoughts as we can in the novel, we are made aware of the strong presence of Anne's consciousness absorbing and reacting to external influences.

Compared to other Austen heroines, Anne does not “mature” as her story proceeds; she is as clear-headed and perceptive at the novel’s start as she is at its conclusion. In fact, she tells us in her final conversation with Captain Wentworth, she now knows she was perfectly right to have followed Lady Russell’s advice. This is difficult for the modern reader to swallow but it is a clear demonstration of Anne’s refusal to change. Yet if she does not “grow” she nonetheless learns to speak, and it is the gap between thought and speech that narrated monologue dramatizes so powerfully in the novel. Cohn makes a general comment about narrated monologue, unrelated to any particular work, which provides a good summary of what I am suggesting is the thematic function of narrated monologue in *Persuasion*: “By leaving the relationship between words and thoughts latent, the narrated monologue casts a peculiarly penumbral light on the figural consciousness, *suspending it on the threshold of verbalization* in a manner that cannot be achieved by direct quotation.” (103; my emphasis) *Persuasion* provides not a history of Anne’s growth but the pre-history of her speech; for Anne Elliot, long imprisoned in the realm of pure consciousness, perhaps this is (r)evolution enough.

In *Emma*, the heroine’s voice comes to resemble the narrator’s in its ability to allow other voices to enter and inform individual consciousness. Emma Woodhouse, articulate and confident, learns that she is not the center of consciousness for the Highbury Universe and she accordingly expands her consciousness to make room for other voices. Anne Elliot, on the other hand, is trapped in the realm of consciousness, unable to speak up for herself, but perpetually absorbing the thoughts of those around her; she is so aware of other people’s claims and demands that she stays silent with regard to her own. The narrative voice of *Persuasion* provides access to Anne’s consciousness throughout the novel, articulating Anne's pain long before Anne leaves the realm of pure consciousness. The sympathetic presence of the narrative voice in countless narrated monologues throughout the novel not only establishes Anne's true worth to the reader but also suggests that the gap between thought and speech is not easily bridged. Anne, *suspended on the threshold of verbalization* throughout the novel, is ultimately pushed into the realm of speech. For Anne, "development" means escape from the realm of consciousness into speech. For Emma, "development" means an expansion of consciousness to include other voices. In *Emma*, narrated monologue provides a narrative model for moral growth: there is a connection between the ability to incorporate others' words and points of view into individual consciousness and the level of moral development reached. In *Persuasion*, narrated monologue represents the halfway house on the road to articulation: consciousness is not a final resting place for Austen's heroines, but an active, motivating force.

In *Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development*, Susan Fraiman argues that a heroine's "development" takes place in dialogic relationship to her social context. Fraiman critiques Jerome Buckley's *Season of Youth* for its view of development in the (male) bildungsroman as taking place in the isolated consciousness of the protagonist. She focuses on the ways that women writers imbed their characters in social contexts in thematic ways. I am interested in the ways that Austen and Eliot imbed their characters in *narrative* contexts and in how the narrator's fusion with the character's voice (as in narrated monologue) complicates the notion of an entirely individual self that transforms itself not thematically, but *formally*. In *Erotic Faith: Being in Love from Jane Austen to D.H. Lawrence*, Robert M. Polhemus suggests that erotic love expresses "the vital longing never to have been and never to be separate." (191) This longing *not* to be separate would appear to clash with the high value placed on the individual in the bildungsroman, but it is these contrary longings that unite in narrated monologue: two voices, fused but separate. Through the fusion of the narrative voice with the heroine's, Austen complicates the notion of an entirely individual self that transforms itself. Her creation of a narrative voice that is intimately intertwined with the heroine's consciousness and her use of the narrator as linguistic role model undermine the conventional understanding of individual consciousness as a private, autonomous space. In Austen's novels, the heroine's identity is inextricably intertwined with the narrative voice; the heroine's own voice develops in the context and in the direction of the narrative voice.

Whereas Austen creates a distinct narrator to accompany the particular heroine of each novel, George Eliot's narrative voice never sounds like the heroine's. In *The Country and the City*, Raymond Williams discusses the break between the language of narrator and heroine that characterizes Eliot's narrative voice as opposed to Austen's: "What Austen then lacks in full social reference it gains in an available unity of language; in Eliot, there is a new kind of break in the texture of the novel, an evident failure of continuity between the necessary language of the novelist and the recorded language of many of the characters. Whereas the idiom of the novelist, in Jane Austen, is connected with the idiom of her characters, in George Eliot a disconnection is the most evident fact and the novelist herself is most acutely aware of this." (169) Williams is interested in the class distinctions that the disconnection between the narrative voice and the characters' idiom allows in Eliot's novels, whereas Austen's narrative voice is characterized by a controlled unity of language. Within the *controlled unity* of Austen's novels, however, internal dialogue with other voices can be heard. What we hear in Austen's narrative voice is different voices rather than different languages. The language of the narrative voice resembles the heroine's and the fusion of the narrative voice to the heroine's is more complete.

In this way, I challenge Susan Lanser's assertion in *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice* that Austen's narrative voice becomes progressively more muffled and equivocal after the blatant authoriality of *Northanger Abbey*. Lanser laments the gradual diminishment of Austen's authorial voice after *Northanger Abbey*. She contends that Crosby's failure to publish *Northanger Abbey* in Austen's lifetime is attributable to the novel's outspoken authorial voice and that Austen's decision to experiment with a more effaced narrative voice in subsequent novels is attributable to her frustration with Crosby's inaction: "I am speculating that the fate of *Northanger Abbey*, which would have reinforced the new conservative climate, may have led Austen not to write different stories but to write them differently, changing the shape and scope of her narrative voices." (72) Lanser clearly sees Austen's shift from the authorial voice as a movement away from moral and intellectual authority, but while Austen's effaced narrator may be difficult to pin down, she does not disappear.

I challenge Lanser's assertion that as Austen experiments more with free indirect discourse, her narrative voice becomes less openly in dialogue with "the world's wife" and its maxims; on the contrary, free indirect discourse provides the means for her not only to imbed more of the world's maxims but also to undermine them through the rebuffing narrative voice in which they are imbedded. Throughout her novelistic career, Austen uses free indirect discourse to fuse her narrative voice with the maxims and opinions of “the world’s wife,” dialogizing conventional thought by undermining it as she incorporates it, as we see in the famous opening of *Pride and Prejudice*: “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.” The narrator cites this “universal truth” only to undermine it through her mocking narrative relationship to Mrs. Bennet’s connivances and through the demaximizing nature of the narrative voice itself.[11] In other words, Austen’s narrative voice creates a dialogue with conventional “wisdom” by incorporating its voice into her own and then deflating it.

Oddly, Lanser celebrates the “doubleness” of Austen’s irony at the same time as she laments Austen’s increasing narrative “indirection”: “the narrator of *Northanger Abbey* lacks any reverence for a male tradition per se and positions herself in the female-centered space whose absence Austen had protested at thirteen, when she complained that *The Loiterer*, the journal her brothers created at Oxford, carried too many stories by and about men. As she put it with marvelous doubleness in her letter to James Stanier Clarke, Jane Austen spoke only the ‘mother tongue.’ ’’ (70-1) Why is *doubleness* celebrated, while *indirection* is lamented? Isn’t irony an *indirect* expression of a counternarrative within a dominant narrative? It is difficult to prove that Austen loses moral and intellectual authority as her experimentation with narrative technique evolves. The “marvelous doubleness” that Lanser celebrates gains rather than loses power as Austen’s narrator expands her ability to fuse her voice to the voices of her characters in narrated monologue and free indirect discourse. Austen’s experimentation with third-person techniques of rendering consciousness does not silence the narrative voice; it *creates* a marvelous doubleness, to use Lanser's own words, in which two voices speak simultaneously and compellingly.

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[11] *In Subject to Change: Reading Feminist Writing*, Nancy Miller defines demaximization

In *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, Leah Price connects Austen's anti-didacticism to her disdain for the increasingly popular anthologies culled from the works of popular poets and moralists. Price sees Austen as reacting against the anthologizing (and abridging) tendency of her literary day and she cites as evidence Austen's complaint that critics take novelists less seriously than "the man who collects and publishes in a volume some dozen lines of Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the Spectator, and a chapter from Sterne." (75-6) The increased use of free indirect discourse over the course of Austen's novelistic career certainly impedes the anthologization of statements by her narrative voice; even when Austen's narrative voice conveys what seem at first reading to be generalizing maxims, these maxims are commonly undermined by the rebuffing narrative voice in which they are embedded. While Austen's effaced and bivocal narrative voice can be contextualized as a reaction against the anthology's didacticism, Eliot's eclectic and openly didactic narrative voice can be contextualized by the journalistic discourse to which she was a frequent contributor. By Eliot's day, journals were more widely read and generalist contributors like herself submitted articles on a variety of subjects (science, history, art, philosophy, etc.) in which they were not professionally involved. Her own participation in journalistic discourse informs the rich, heteroglot narrative voice of her novels in historically significant and suggestive ways: her narrative voice, like the journalistic discourse of her day, shows the broad range of a

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as "a chafing against the 'unsatisfactory reality' contained in the maxim."(45)

generalist with many fields of expertise. The ease with which Eliot's narrative voice shifts among disciplines shows an intellectual range peculiar to the journalistic discourse of her historical moment.

Eliot's narrative voice is composed of diverse and clashing languages and can never be mistaken for the heroine's voice. In *The Mill on the Floss*, Eliot (in)fuses her narrative voice with the languages of contending religious, scientific, and philosophical discourses, such that her narrative voice becomes a dialogue between various ideas and viewpoints. The relationship of the narrative voice to the heroine's voice in Eliot's novels is not sisterly and supportive; the heroine's voice does not come to resemble the narrative voice but remains distanced from it. In *The Mill on the Floss*, the relationship between narrator and heroine is more parental; the narrative voice serves as a linguistic role model whose astonishing polyvocality eludes the heroine, augmenting the reader's sense of her pathos.

Chapter Four: *Mill on the Floss* – Narrative Voice as Role Model

As far back as Richardson's *Pamela*, we can hear the many contending languages that make up the heroine's voice. Looking closely at a passage from *Pamela* shows how many languages an (unnarrated) epistolary novel can incorporate into a character's voice.

> O my exulting heart! how it throbs in my bosom, as if it would reproach me for so lately upbraiding it for giving way to the love of so dear a gentleman!—But take care thou art not too credulous neither, O fond believer! Things that we wish, are apt to gain a too ready credence with us. This sham-marriage is not yet cleared up: Mrs. Jewkes, the vile Mrs. Jewkes! may yet instigate the mind of this master: His pride of heart, and pride of condition, may again take place: And a man that could in so *little* a space, first love me, then hate, then banish me his house, and send me away disgracefully; and now send for me again, in such affectionate terms, may *still* waver, may *still* deceive thee. Therefore will I not acquit thee yet, O credulous, fluttering, throbbing mischief! that art so ready to believe what thou wishest! And I charge thee to keep better guard than thou hast lately done, and lead me not to follow too implicitly thy flattering and desirable impulses. Thus foolishly dialogued I with my heart; and yet, all the time, this heart is Pamela. (263-64)

Pamela's long-wished-for journey home to her parents has just been interrupted by a letter from Mr. B declaring his love and exhorting her to return to him immediately. The above paragraph shows the many languages that characterize and complicate Pamela's voice. We hear the language of chivalric romance in the first line: "O my exulting heart! how it throbs in my bosom…." Yet her passionate confession demonstrates the tension between romantic love and the precautionary admonition not too yield to it: "But take care thou art not too credulous neither, O fond believer!" As Pamela announces overtly at the end of the passage, she is conducting an internal debate, and it is remarkable to see how many different viewpoints are allowed to enter the discussion. She first plays the role of the passionate lover, then assumes the voice of common morality, as evident in her sudden transition to the first-person plural: "Things that we wish, are apt to gain a too ready credence with us." In Pamela's anxiety about a sham-marriage and in her denouncing of "the vile Mrs. Jewkes," we hear the language of intrigue and melodrama. Pamela then resumes the first-person singular when she recounts the history of Mr. B's vacillations, from imprisoning her to banishing her to calling her back again, but the second person pronoun to which she next turns reminds us that the entire passage is an apostrophe addressed to her own overwrought heart: "Therefore will I not acquit thee yet, O credulous, fluttering, throbbing mischief!" The language of *this* sentence is a curious mixture of legal and sexual terms, beginning with the formal non-acquittal of her heart, but ending in an utterly unrestrained, unmistakably sexual "fluttering" and "throbbing." The whole passage demonstrates the contending forces that strive for ascendancy beneath the self-approving, self-assured surface of *Pamela*.

In a similar way, Eliot's narrative voice in *Mill on the Floss* incorporates first the language of one genre and then another, without any identifiable transitions between discourses. The following passage is a remarkable pastiche of discourses and genres:

> Journeying down the Rhone on a summer's day, you have perhaps felt the sunshine made dreary by those ruined villages which stud the banks in certain parts of its course, telling how the swift river once rose, like an angry, destroying god sweeping down the feeble generations whose breath is in their nostrils and making their dwellings a desolation. Strange contrast, you may have thought, between the effect produced on us by these dismal remnants of commonplace houses, which in their best days were but the sign of a sordid life, belonging in all its details to our own vulgar era—and the effect produced by those ruins on the castled Rhine which have crumbled and mellowed into such harmony with the green and rocky steeps, that they seem to have a natural fitness, like the mountain pine: nay, even in the day when they were built they must have had this fitness, as if they had been raised by an earth-born race who had inherited from their mighty parent a sublime instinct of form. (361)

The passage begins in the tone of an impressionistic travel narrative but, by the middle of the first sentence, it shifts to the language of mythology ("like an angry destroying god…") and ends (as the footnote in my edition informs me) in a biblical allusion from

Genesis (“whose breath is in their nostrils”). The simile (“the swift river once rose, like an angry destroying god…”) calls to mind biblical floods of the Old and New Testaments and it personifies and foreshadows the novel’s finale. In the second sentence, the narrator speaks a more realistic language: “these dismal remnants of commonplace houses, which in their best days were but the sign of a sordid life, belonging in all its details to our own vulgar era….” The address to the reader (“our own vulgar era”) ascribes a nostalgia for a romantic past that the narrator contrasts with the dismal ordinariness of the reader’s era but, although the use of the first-person plural pronoun presumes common ground between narrator and reader, the passage comes at the end of the novel, when the reader has already formed an emotional attachment to the “sordid life” of “commonplace houses” that undermines the validity of dismissing the everyday in favor of a romanticized past. Here, too, the language shifts mid-sentence, this time to that of Gothic romance intermingled with that of the natural historian: “those ruins on the castled Rhine which have crumbled and mellowed into such harmony with the green and rocky steeps, that they seem to have a natural fitness, like the mountain pine.” The phrase *natural fitness* recalls and reconfigures Darwinian terms like *natural selection* and *survival of the fittest*.[12] But the Darwinian discourse is dialogized by the fact that the scene it is used to describe is not developing but fading away; the passage describes not evolutionary progress but degenerative collapse. The passage ends with a startling return to the language of mythology: “as if they had been raised by an earth-born race who had inherited from their mighty parent a sublime instinct of form.” The mythical genesis story with which the passage ends contains within it the Lamarckian language that claimed that parental personality traits, or "instincts," could be passed on to the next generation ("an earth-born race who had inherited from their mighty parent a sublime instinct of form"). Eliot's narrative "style" thus cannot be divorced from social discourse, because it is through the contending discourses of her narrative voice that her "style" emerges.

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[12] Darwin’s *Origin of Species* was published in 1859, a year before *The Mill on the Floss*.

If we make use of Bakhtin's position that in any novelistic discourse various languages confront and jostle each other, we begin to hear and to appreciate the many voices that comprise Eliot's narrative voice in *The Mill on the Floss*. Eliot fuses her narrative voice with the languages of contending religious, scientific, and philosophical discourses, such that her narrative voice becomes a dialogue between various ideas and viewpoints. Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia is useful in understanding the multiple linguistic discourses that compose Eliot's uniquely hybrid narrative voice. Bakhtin coins the term *heteroglossia* to describe the diversity of social speech types and voices that he sees as a defining mark of the novel genre:

> The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized. The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour (each day has its own slogan, its own vocabulary, its own emphases)—this internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite for the novel as a genre. (262)

Bakhtin is interested in the dialogized relationship that exists among the various speech types and voices of the novel genre: "Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized)." (262-63) Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia strongly informs my discussion of Eliot's narrative voice.

While Austen's narrative voice in *Emma* and *Persuasion* is smooth and effaced, Eliot's narrative voice in *The Mill on the Floss* shifts perpetually among contending linguistic discourses, sounding now like a natural historian, now like a poet, priest or psychologist. Austen's narrative voice varies in tone and, of course, fuses with the voices of various characters in free indirect discourse, but it does not shift its own vocabulary or its field of linguistic reference. Eliot's narrative voice, on the other hand, shifts discourses suddenly, often within the course of a single sentence, and this shift can be off-putting to some readers, who find it difficult to enjoy a narrative voice whose hybridity they do not recognize as humanly achievable. The heteroglossia of the narrative voice, in which various discourses and genres compose the voice of the third-person narrator, is similar to but not the same as free indirect discourse. The contending discourses of Eliot's heteroglossic narrative voice are identifiable by abstract nouns rather than by characters' names, as in free indirect discourse. The heteroglossia of Eliot's narrative voice is a unique extension of the technique of free indirect discourse in that it is the result of the fusion of multiple discourses to the narrative voice, but the linguistic fusion that takes place within Eliot's narrative voice is anonymous and impersonal compared to the fusion with particular characters' voices that takes place in free indirect discourse. The heteroglossia of jostling discourses allows Eliot's narrative voice to evolve from the conversational human voice of Austen's narrator to the inimitable superhuman voice of *Mill on the Floss*.

Why is Bakhtin more useful in the study of Eliot's narrative voice than in the study of Austen's? Certainly, Bakhtin's premise that heteroglossia is the mark of the novel applies to Austen as well. Bakhtin's *Dialogic Imagination* distinguishes between poetry and the novel through the marked presence of heteroglossia in the latter: "in the majority of poetic genres, the unity of the language system and the unity (and uniqueness) of the poet's individuality as reflected in his language and speech, which is directly realized in this unity, are indispensable prerequisites of poetic style. The novel, however, not only does not require these conditions but (as we have said) even makes of the internal stratification of language, of its social heteroglossia and the variety of individual voices in it, the prerequisite for authentic novelistic prose." (264) Austen's narrative voice is certainly marked by the stratification of the numerous voices with which it fuses and by the linguistic diversity of the personalities and professions (sailor, lady, baronet, soldier, clergyman, etc.) of the characters to whom the narrative voice is joined in free indirect discourse. Yet, Austen's narrative voice is generally smooth, less prone to sudden shifts in its own vocabulary.[13] Austen's smooth, effaced narrative voice resembles the gentlemanly tone of Addison and the London coffeehouse, while Eliot's eclectic narrative voice reflects the cultural shift in her lifetime toward more heterogeneous journalistic discourse.

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[13] The narrator's description of Knightley's prose could easily apply to the narrator's own style: "it was in plain, unaffected, gentlemanlike English, such as Mr. Knightley used even to the woman he was in love with." (*Emma* 419)

Rick Rylance's *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880* explores the presence in mid-century Britain of a newly emergent intellectual generalism. He identifies the 1850s cultural milieu of George Eliot and George Henry Lewes as uniquely open and interdisciplinary both in its psychological concepts and its journalistic discourse:

> By contrast, the high-Victorian psychology of the years 1850-80 was a more open discourse, more spaciously framed in its address to common issues, and with an audience crossing wide disciplinary interests. Economists, imaginative writers, philosophers, clerics, literary critics, policy-makers, as well as biomedical scientists contributed to its formation. It was an unshapely, accommodating, contested, emergent, energetic discipline, filled with dispute and without settled lines of theory or protocols for investigation. The role played by the great generalist periodicals of the Victorian period is crucial in this, and the broad audience for psychology perceived the issues it raised as matters of common, not specialized, intellectual and cultural concern. (7)

In other words, in comparison to the uniformly gentlemanly tone of generalist periodicals earlier in the century, and to the narrowly specialized tone of increasingly professionalized periodicals by the end of the century, the journalistic discourse that Eliot herself participated in allowed non-specialists to speak confidently in the discourses of various professions.

Eliot's heteroglossic narrative voice sounds a bit foreign to ears accustomed to today's stricter separation of the sciences from the arts, the result of increased specialization. Rylance makes the point that the field of psychology, once fair game for generalists to engage in, has become segregated from other sciences, and from philosophy, religion, and literature. His point about the Victorian era as a historical moment in which generalists were intellectually engaged in multiple disciplines implicitly supports my view of Eliot's heteroglossic narrative voice as related to her role as journalist. Eliot's narrative voice is bold in its perpetual shifting among discourses and ambitious in its goal of understanding and explaining the interactions of science, religion, psychology, history, and anything else worth mentioning. A recent *New York Times* article by John Horgan laments the loss of generalist ambitions among today's physicists; Horgan's point is that unlike Albert Einstein, who spoke freely and authoritatively on issues unrelated to physics, today's scientists focus narrowly on their individual fields of expertise without feeling the need or the authority to engage other disciplines or issues: "But neither Crick nor any other modern biologist has approached Einstein's extra-scientific reputation. Einstein took advantage of his fame to speak out on nuclear weapons, nuclear power, militarism, and other vital issues through lectures, essays, interviews, petitions and letters to world leaders. When he spoke, people listened." ("Einstein Has Left the Building," *New York Times*, Jan. 1, 2006) Horgan's lament that increased specialization has led physicists to exclude extra-scientific issues engages similar issues (albeit a different timeframe) as Rylance's work on the effects of increased specialization within Victorian psychology. Although Rylance warns against too much nostalgia with regard to the old days (due to the far greater complexity of scientific knowledge today), he nonetheless strikes a plangent note in looking back at the more ambitious intellectual scope that high Victorian interdisciplinarity allowed: "Yet there is also a spirit of ambition and an eagerness of enquiry that is laudable in these old nineteenth-century quarrels, and an admirable effort (from my own particular position) to understand the world and people in material ways without leaving behind their humanity or their distinctive qualities as living, cultured beings." (325)

Eliot’s narrative voice is more literary than human, in that we do not hear voices that sound like it in ordinary experience and hence, we can never completely forget that we are in a literary world. Eliot’s narrative voice does not whisper knowingly in the reader’s ear as Austen’s does; Eliot’s narrator is certainly not our intellectual peer. The heteroglossic narrative voice is of course unheard by Maggie but its richness shapes the reader’s sense of the paucity of the options open to Maggie. Unlike Austen’s narrative voice, which serves as a *reachable* linguistic role model for her heroines, Eliot’s narrative voice would sound completely foreign to Maggie. The narrative voice of *The Mill on the Floss* represents a linguistic flexibility that Maggie is unable to imitate because she does not even know that it is possible. In Austen’s *Emma* and *Persuasion*, as we have seen, the voice of the narrator is similar to and frequently fused with that of the heroine, and the reader’s allegiance, therefore, is to both. Even in direct addresses to the reader that claim common ground, as in the “our own vulgar era” example in which the narrative voice undermines the disgust for the “commonplace” through the story she tells of an ordinary, flawed household, the narrative voice maintains moral distance from the reader. In Eliot’s novels, the reader’s primary emotional allegiance is to the heroine, who is almost always separable from the narrator, even in passages where the two voices are fused.

Narrated monologue allows more voices to enter the narrative realm, giving freer range to heteroglossia. Bakhtin describes but does not name free indirect speech:

> A character in a novel always has, as we have said, a zone of his own, his own sphere of influence on the authorial context surrounding him, a sphere that extends—and often quite far—beyond the boundaries of the direct discourse allotted to him. The area occupied by an important character’s voice must in any event be broader than his direct and “actual” words. This zone surrounding the important characters of the novel is

> stylistically profoundly idiosyncratic: the most varied hybrid constructions hold sway in it, and it is always, to one degree or another, dialogized; inside this area a dialogue is played out between the author and his characters—not a dramatic dialogue broken up into statement-and-response, but that special type of novelistic dialogue that realizes itself within the boundaries of constructions that externally resemble monologues. The potential for such dialogue is one of the most fundamental privileges of novelistic prose, a privilege available neither to dramatic nor to purely poetic genres. (320)

The *dialogue* Bakhtin here describes sounds like the fusion of the narrator's voice with the character's that occurs in free indirect discourse or its subset, narrated monologue. Bakhtin would probably take issue with Cohn's use of the word *monologue* to describe what he clearly sees as a dialogue but Cohn, too, emphasizes the presence of two voices, hence the seemingly oxymoronic phrase *narrated monologue*. David Lodge looks at the role of the "free indirect style" in Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia, but there has been scant critical attention given to this fertile intersection.[14] Bakhtin's description of heteroglossia sometimes sounds like a description of free indirect discourse: "Heteroglossia, once incorporated into the novel (whatever the forms for its incorporation), is another's speech in another's language, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. Such speech constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse. It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author." (324) Perhaps the most significant function of free indirect discourse is its role in putting different voices onto the pages of a novel but, of course, quoted speech (or, in the case of narrated monologue, quoted monologue) could accomplish this goal in a more direct manner. What is it about the *indirection* of free indirect discourse and narrated monologue that adds to the usefulness and power of these narrative techniques?

Rick Rylance explores the psychological implications of the 'first-person/third-person' problem in classical philosophy:

> In reporting or analyzing psychological events, should we take the primarily introspective stance of the experiencing individual using the natural language of that person's experience ('I felt…')? Or should we strive for a purportedly more objective ('scientific'), and certainly more distanced, account by an uninvolved observer who adopts a 'third-person' stance ('the results of thalamic microstimulation correlate closely with observed behaviour…')? If we take the latter stance, there is the possibility (some would say likelihood) that the 'third-person' perspective arrogates a vocabulary and address so chilly and alien to the person whose experiences are being described that he or she can barely recognize what occurred as his or her own. (41)

This problem of classical philosophy was under discussion in the discourse of Victorian psychology and it remains under discussion in contemporary psychological discourse: "One of today's leading clinical neurologists, V.S. Ramachandran, writes that the 'need to reconcile the first-person and the third-person accounts of the universe (the 'I' view versus the 'he' or 'it' view) is the single most important unsolved problem in science.' " (qtd. in *Vict. Psych.* 42) The narrative technique Eliot chooses certainly engages this philosophical question. The grammatical fusion of the subjective and objective perspectives in narrated monologue suggests that the apparent impasse is not unbridgeable. Narrated monologue questions and resolves, at least grammatically, the dichotomy between the first and the third-person perspectives, and this is an important part of Eliot's broader ethical project, to which I will return in my chapter on

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[14] See Lodge, 22-3, 33-40, 126-28. Clark and Holquist also discuss free indirect speech and Bakhtin using the term "reported speech," 233-36.

Middlemarch, of stretching the boundaries of subjective experience through sympathy with other perspectives.

By looking at narrated monologue in the context of Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia, I hope to move beyond the notion of stylistics as "private craftsmanship" to explore the ways in which Eliot's heteroglossic narrative voice cannot be divorced from social discourse, because it is the contending social discourses of her narrative voice that compose her "style." Bakhtin states, "the study of verbal art can and must overcome the divorce between an abstract 'formal' approach and an equally abstract 'ideological' approach. Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon—social throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning." (259) Bakhtin criticizes "the stylistics of genre" as an effort to merge style and language in a way which privileges the "individual and period-bound overtones of a style" at the expense of its "basic social tone": "it [the stylistics of genre] has become bogged down in stylistic trivia; it is not able to sense behind the individual and period-bound shifts the great and anonymous destinies of artistic discourse itself." (259) Bakhtin sees novelistic discourse as an arena of continuous struggle in which various interests clash and intersect in language.

His description of "the novelistic plot" calls to mind the mixing of discourses that characterizes Eliot's narrative voice (and narrated monologue as well): "In a word, the novelistic plot serves to represent speaking persons and their ideological worlds. What is realized in the novel is the process of coming to know one's own language as it is perceived in someone else's language, coming to know one's own horizon within someone else's horizon." (365) Bakhtin's discussion of the prose writer's tendency to "ventriloquate" relates to the linguistic mixing between one's own and another's language: "a prose writer… can make use of language without wholly giving himself up to it, he may treat it as semi-alien or completely alien to himself, while compelling language ultimately to serve all his own intentions. The author does not speak in a given language (from which he distances himself to a greater or lesser degree), but he speaks, as it were, through language, a language that has somehow more or less materialized, become objectivized, that he merely ventriloquates." (299) Bakhtin's work on novelistic discourse is a useful way of bridging the apparent gap between cultural and aesthetic issues.

While critics usually note divisions in Eliot's narrative voice, it is more useful to my work to consider "fusions" rather than divisions. Roger Ebbatson, in his study of Eliot's novel, describes a split in the narrative voice, such that the anonymous narrator seems to speak two distinct languages:

> we might usefully go on to distinguish two narrators in the text: one an 'impersonal' narrator/historian, and the second an authorial 'second self' who uses 'I' and 'me' in speaking to us as readers, and enunciating truths about life. There is of course no hard and fast division between the two voices we may hear in the narrative thread, but the social historian is more evident for instance in the introductory analysis of the Dodsons, and the 'second self' in such interjections as "Do not think too hardly of Philip." (35-6)

The voice of the social historian is didactic and, for the most part, unemotional, committed to broad social analysis: "When uncultured minds, confined to a narrow range of personal experience, are under the pressure of continued misfortune, their inward life is apt to become a perpetually repeated round of sad and bitter thoughts: the same words, the same scenes are revolved over and over again, the same mood accompanies them—

the end of the year finds them as much what they were at the beginning as if they were machines set to a recurrent series of movements." (372) Ebbatson contrasts the impersonal voice of the social historian with the authorial 'second self' heard in the first-person statements of the narrative voice. What Ebbatson misses is the multiple languages (the *internal stratification*, Bakhtin would say) fused within the social historian voice and the 'personal' voice. The passage he cites, in fact, combines the discourse of Arnoldian ideology ("When uncultured minds, confined to a narrow range…") with the discourse of psychology and the analysis of obsessive disorders ("the same words, the same scenes are revolved over and over again, the same mood accompanies them") and the Utilitarianism metaphor of the final phrase ("as if they were machines set to a recurrent series of movements"). The narrative voice of *The Mill* does shift between the personal and the impersonal but there are many more useful linguistic modes and discourses within the narrative voice than Ebbatson's simple division would suggest.

Even when the narrator clearly speaks in the first person, the personal voice is not unitary or irreducible but is still composed of multiple languages. Bakhtin argues that "Even in those places where the author's voice seems at first glance to be unitary and consistent, direct and unmediatedly intentional, beneath that smooth single-languaged surface we can nevertheless uncover prose's three-dimensionality, its profound speech diversity, which enters the project of style and is its determining factor." (315) In other words, the narrator's *personal* voice is a hybrid mix of languages, not reducible to a unitary authorial personality. In the novel's opening description of the Floss and Dorlcote Mill, where the narrator speaks in the first person, the personal voice shifts from description of the landscape to the poetic personification of the river's movement ("A wide plain, where the broadening Floss hurries on between its green banks to the sea") to the sensual ("I am in love with moistness"). Hence, categories such as *personal* and *impersonal* are of limited usefulness in describing the perpetual fusing of discourses that characterizes Eliot's narrative voice.

In the second chapter of *The Mill*, the narrator fluently moves without transition between metaphors of farming and art in order to explain a psychological shift that occurs from childhood to adulthood: "But milk and mildness are not the best things for keeping, and when they turn only a little sour they may disagree with young stomachs seriously. I have often wondered whether those early Madonnas of Raphael, with the blond faces and somewhat stupid expression, kept their placidity undisturbed when their strong-limbed strong-willed boys got a little too old to do without clothing." (62) The sudden shift from an impersonal metaphor suitable for an anthology of wise sayings ("But milk and mildness are not the best things for keeping…") to the personal voice ("I have often wondered…") is accomplished without comment or transition. Eliot's narrative voice, even when it speaks in the first person, is a hybrid mix of languages and genres; it can change its tone and its metaphors as easily as does the impersonal third-person narrative voice. The milk metaphor of simple mechanical change, for example, is dialogized by the more abstract behavioral change the passage traces from *Madonnas* to *strong-limbed strong-willed boys*. Souring milk and aging Madonnas offer two very different versions of change; note, too, that we begin with Madonnas and then change gender and that, although the original mild temperaments may sour, they evolve toward wisdom (i.e., they lose their *stupid expression*). The movement from naïve Madonna to willful, clothed boys calls to mind the biblical story of the fall fused with the New Testament image of the Madonna. The narrative voice here mixes religious imagery and ideology of original sin with mechanistic explanations of change; the contesting metaphors relate to ideological debates in Eliot's day over child development and the relationship of behavioral change to broader theories of evolutionary change.

The shift from the impersonal language of the social historian to the personal voice may occur imperceptibly between chapters or paragraphs or it can be abrupt and awkward, as in the following passage where it occurs without transition between the first and second sentences: "The conduct that issues from a moral conflict has often so close a resemblance to vice, that the distinction escapes all outward judgments, founded on a mere comparison of actions. It is clear to you, I hope, that Stephen was not a hypocrite." (552) The back-and-forth movement between the impersonal and the personal narrators is a mark of the overall fluency of a narrative voice that is constantly shifting its tone, language and metaphors.

What we hear in Eliot's narrative voice in *The Mill* is the conspicuous coexistence of clashing genres that refuse to stay separate. Bakhtin sees the contending languages of various genres as existing in dialogue with each other in novelistic discourse, where the mix of generic strands is a distinctive mark.

> The novel, and artistic prose in general, has the closest genetic, family relationship to rhetorical forms. And throughout the entire development of the novel, its intimate interaction (both peaceful and hostile) with living rhetorical genres (journalistic, moral, philosophical and others) has never ceased; this interaction was perhaps no less intense than was the novel's interaction with the artistic genres (epic, dramatic, lyric). (269)

Like the personal voice, which at first sounds unitary but is actually hybrid and varying, the third-person voice of Eliot's social historian narrator is actually a fluent mix of many genres:

> But good society, floated on gossamer wings of light irony, is of very expensive production; requiring nothing less than a wide and arduous national life condensed in unfragrant deafening factories, cramping itself in mines, sweating at furnaces, grinding, hammering, weaving under more or less oppression of carbonic acid—or else, spread over sheepwalks, and scattered in lonely houses and huts on the clayey or chalky cornlands, where the rainy days look dreary. (385)

We hear in the passage above the languages of poetry, economics, realism, and oratory. The passage begins with the daintily metaphoric "gossamer wings of light irony" but shifts abruptly to the language of economic analysis, pointing out the high price of these "gossamer wings," "requiring nothing less than a wide and arduous national life…." The list that follows ("condensed in unfragrant deafening factories, cramping itself in mines, sweating at furnaces, grinding, hammering, weaving under more or less oppression of carbonic acid") is Dickensian in its dramatic depiction of the harsh working conditions that accompanied industrialization. In the space of one (long) sentence, the narrator has moved from metaphor to cost/benefit economic analysis to highly emotional Dickensian rhetoric.

At significant moments, the narrative voice itself incorporates (but distances itself from) the voice of public opinion, without demarcating the borders between the narrator's language and that of "the world's wife": "It was soon known throughout St. Ogg's that Miss Tulliver was come back: she had not, then, eloped in order to be married to Mr. Stephen Guest—at all events, Mr. Stephen Guest had not married her—which came to the same thing, so far as her culpability was concerned. We judge others according to results; how else?" (619) This passage opens a new chapter but begins not with the narrator's words, but with the words of "the world's wife," for the narrator never refers to Maggie as "Miss Tulliver" nor would the narrator belittle Maggie's conflicting motivations with the dismissive "she had not, then, eloped in order to be married to Mr. Stephen Guest—at all events, Mr. Stephen Guest had not married her—which came to the same thing." The passage is remarkable in its suggestion that public opinion has a recognizable language of its own (as in the communal voice in *Emma*, discussed in Chapter Two) and in the ironic fusion of the voice of public opinion to the narrative voice. The seamless transition back to the authorial voice in the third sentence ("We judge others according to results; how else?") draws us in to share the guilt so that we cannot look on with smug superiority; the use of the first-person plural pronoun here is not sincere: the narrative voice judges differently.

In *Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and The Novel of Development*, Susan Fraiman argues that the bildungsroman and, particularly, the female bildungsroman, "establish[es] character interactively." Fraiman contends that in Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Maggie develops dialogically: "The very structuring of the work as a series of colloquies, intimacies, disputes, suggests not a lone figure pushing past a painted backdrop, but a girl hedged in, defined at every point, by a specific cultural conversation…. Above and beyond its critique of the traditional bildungsroman, *The Mill on the Floss* may, in its very dialogic form, offer to reformulate development as a matter of social context and conflict." (140) Although Fraiman does not discuss Bakhtin's notion of novelistic discourse as inherently dialogic, she seems to be making a related point about the bildungsroman in general: "But *The Mill on the Floss* is more than its struggles between brother and sister. It is also… a competition of narratives, referring less to the apprenticeship of a central figure than to a drama of dissonant ideas about just what formation is or should be. In rephrasing the genre, I have been recommending a shift away from character altogether—and especially from that Ur-character, Wilhelm Meister—and a turning of critical attention to those discourses of development at war in a given text." (140)

Fraiman sees Jerome Buckley's *Season of Youth* as both invoking and constructing the Romantic ideal of "emphatic individualism": "the protagonist's constitution by social and economic factors is precisely what Buckley's canon and approach function to obscure… His conclusion—that the *Bildungsheld* from Wilhelm Meister to Stephen Dedalus 'brings his own inner resources of sensitivity to confront a hostile and insensitive environment'—reveals the book's attraction to heroes developing not in, but in spite of their social contexts, not shaped by cultural pressures so much as bravely withstanding and transcending them." (137) Similarly, Fraiman faults David Miles's 1974 article, "The Picaro's Journey to the Confessional: The Changing Image of the Hero in the German Bildungsroman" as "articulat[ing] a privatized notion of the Bildungsroman, to the point of suggesting that development takes place wholly in the twentieth-century hero's head." (139) In contrast to Miles's view of development as taking place in a "private" mental space, narrated monologue suggests that mental space cannot be privatized.

Surprisingly, Fraiman's chapter on *The Mill* fails to mention a passage from the novel that supports her argument, a passage where the narrative voice explicitly discusses development as a matter of context rather than "character":

> But you have known Maggie a long while, and need to be told, not her characteristics, but her history, which is hardly to be predicted even from the completest knowledge of characteristics. For the tragedy of our lives is not entirely from within. "Character"—says Novalis, in one of his questionable aphorisms—"character is destiny." But not the whole of our destiny. Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, was speculative and irresolute, and

> we have a great tragedy in consequence. But if his father had lived to a good old age, and his uncle had died an early death, we can conceive Hamlet's having married Ophelia and got through life with a reputation of sanity notwithstanding many soliloquies, and some moody sarcasms towards the fair daughter of Polonius, to say nothing of the frankest incivility to his father-in-law. (514)

In other words, Eliot's narrator informs us, "character" alone does not direct or determine an individual's history, nor does a literary character develop solely within his or her private consciousness: development always takes place in a broader social context. Fraiman's point about the heroine's development in an embattled social context can be used to explore Eliot's heteroglossic narrative voice. Eliot's narrative voice contextualizes numerous contending discourses; even her personal voice is composed of "fusions" from other discourses. The narrator's direct address to the reader ("But you have known Maggie a long while…") sounds intimate but is immediately interrupted by the distanced moral dictum, "For the tragedy of our lives is not entirely from within." Eliot's narrative voice then incorporates an aphorism of Novalis ("Character is destiny") and immediately undermines its worth ("But not the whole of our destiny") by alluding to Hamlet. Yet the Hamlet she discusses is not Shakespeare's "speculative and irresolute" prince but a happily married, sane albeit moody version of Hamlet. She interjects her own point of view onto both Novalis's aphorism and Shakespeare's play, using her rewriting of the latter to undermine the former. Fraiman notes the contending discourses that exist for Maggie at the thematic level; my work makes a related point not only about the contending discourses of Eliot's narrative voice but also about the embattled discourses of Maggie's own consciousness. Fraiman focuses on how warring *themes* exist in dialogue in *The Mill*; I am interested in the contending discourses of the narrative voice and in how this dialogism relates to the contending discourses of Maggie's own consciousness.

In contrast to the resemblance between the narrative voice and the heroine's voice in Austen, in Eliot, the heroine's voice sounds entirely unlike the narrative voice. The narrator's voice, although it fuses with Maggie's in narrated monologue, usually remains distinct from Maggie's, producing an interesting mix of Maggie's intensely emotional language with the narrator's calmly metaphoric, balanced prose: "Maggie was silent. If it were *not* wrong—if she were once convinced of that, and need no longer beat and struggle against this current, soft and yet strong as the summer stream!" (569) What interests me in this passage is the fusion of Maggie's urgent thoughts ("If it were *not* wrong—if she were once convinced of that…") with the balanced poetry of the narrator's language ("soft and yet strong as the summer stream") which could not possibly belong to Maggie in her agitated emotional condition.

Eliot's narrative voice sometimes shifts to the didactic, second-person tutorial language heard clearly in the following authorial commentary on Philip, in which the narrator directly addresses the reader: "You can hardly help blaming him severely. He was four or five years older than Maggie, and had a full consciousness of his feeling towards her to aid him in foreseeing the character his contemplated interviews with her would bear in the opinion of a third person. But you must not suppose that he was capable of a gross selfishness…." (403) Through her frequent direct addresses to the reader, Eliot's narrator anticipates what the reader may need help in understanding, as if in dialogue with the reader. She seems to demonstrate Bakhtin's claim that "every word is directed toward an *answer* and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates." (280) Eliot's narrator is in dialogue both with the reader and, for the reader's benefit, with Maggie, but the fact that Maggie feels constantly forced to choose sides rather than to enlarge her vocabulary to accommodate contradictory ideas and languages creates a poignant impasse between the narrative voice and Maggie's. The heroine's linguistic development toward the narrative voice (unlike Emma Woodhouse's or Anne Elliot's) is obstructed and unrealizable by Maggie.

Maggie's language frequently jars with the narrator's, as in the following passage, in which Maggie's narrated monologue (which I have italicized) clashes oddly with the narrative voice by which it is immediately followed: "For *if Tom had laughed at her of course everyone else would: and if she had only let her hair alone, she could have sat with Tom and Lucy and had the apricot pudding and the custard!* What could she do but sob? She sat as helpless and despairing among her black locks as Ajax among the slaughtered sheep." (122; my emphasis) Maggie's grief is thus contextualized within the narrator's sympathetic yet distancing language. The narrator validates Maggie's extreme emotions by allowing us to hear Maggie's voice, rather than simply describing Maggie's feelings in the narrator's own idiom, but the abrupt shift to the narrative voice also distances the reader from Maggie's voice by using language which sounds mock-epic: "She sat as helpless and despairing among her black locks as Ajax among the slaughtered sheep."

Now that we have looked at the narrative context by which Maggie's voice is dialogized, let us turn to the social context with which it is in dialogue as well. Frequently, Maggie's internal conflicts are depicted through the narrated monologue of the warring voices in Maggie's head, mixed with the narrator's own language, as in the following passage, where the voice prompting her to see Philip makes "sweet music" which is interrupted by the "urgent monotonous warning" of conscience to renounce him. For clarity's sake, I have italicized the portions of the passage that are Maggie's free indirect discourse. The first italicized section represents the voice of duty, the second represents the voice of public opinion as internalized by Maggie and the third represents the voice of sympathy, but of course these are broad divisions, within which other fusions take place:

> *perhaps she might really help him to find contentment, as she had found it.* The voice that said this made sweet music to Maggie; but athwart it there came an urgent monotonous warning from another voice which she had been learning to obey—the warning that *such interviews implied secrecy, implied doing something she would dread to be discovered in, something that, if discovered, must cause anger and pain*, and that the admission of anything so near doubleness would act as a spiritual blight. Yet the music would swell out again, like chimes borne onward by a recurrent breeze… *It was very cruel for Philip, that he should be shrunk from because of an unjustifiable vindictiveness towards his father—poor Philip, whom some people would shrink from only because he was deformed.* (399; my emphasis)

Between the sections of narrated monologue, the narrator's voice interrupts Maggie's thoughts to announce that the voice inside Maggie's head is about to change ("The voice that said this made sweet music to Maggie; but athwart it there came an urgent monotonous warning from another voice…Yet the music would swell out again, like chimes"). In the above passage, we hear Maggie's internal conflict, represented in terms of a debate between various voices. My point here is not so much to *analyze* the languages of Maggie's consciousness as to point out that, like the narrative voice, Maggie's consciousness is rife with contending discourses. The competing voices in her head converse obsessively but Maggie's consciousness, unlike the narrative voice, contains an antagonistic heteroglossia in which contending discourses cannot coexist peacefully in opposition. In the narrative voice, competing discourses coexist without violence in the same sentence; Maggie's mind, however, is a less accommodating space. Maggie is forced to choose between the clashing languages that shape her consciousness, rather than to accept the various languages in all their incongruity. She must choose one of the languages that shape her consciousness; the narrator, on the other hand, has it all.

Rick Rylance contextualizes the subject of moral choice in the psychological debates of Eliot's day and sees Eliot's depiction of free will as existing somewhere between the two extremes of the idealists, who see free will as fully under conscious control and the Utilitarians, who view moral choice as a mechanistic response to vibrations in the nervous system: "Like her psycho-physiological friends, George Eliot could not accept that ethics were a simple enactment of ideal principles standing outside the determining context of choice. Her work is an enquiry into how a life of moral integrity might be lived in the exacting, complexly determined circumstances of post-Utilitarian Britain." (*Vict. Psych.* 74) Rylance describes the ongoing Victorian debate with regard to the role of consciousness. David Hartley, a physiological psychologist of the 1860s and 70s who was championed by Huxley, Lewes, and Mill, promoted the role of associationism in consciousness:

> He imagined the nervous system as a network of "solid capillamenta"—cords or fibres—that transmit vibrations along their surface to the white medullary substance of the brain, which somehow translates them into sensations and ideas. In the reverse direction, the same network enables the execution of motor tasks through a system of "diminutive vibrations" called by Hartley "vibratiuncles." These are copied from the primary system, which is derived, in the tradition of post-Lockean philosophy and the association of ideas, from environmental stimulation…. Hartley's system implies strict homogeneity of structure and function across not just the physical system but the mental also, and it proposes a vanishingly small role for consciousness. (*Vict. Psych.* 85)

In highlighting the role of consciousness, Eliot distances herself from mechanistic theories at the other end of the ideological spectrum that treat the mind as a passive receptor of vibrations.

Maggie's consciousness is certainly at the emotional center of Eliot's novel, but her depiction of consciousness is not only at odds with Hartley's system but also with the more conventional view of character promulgated in the self-help literature of the popular writer of Eliot's day, Samuel Smiles.[15] Eliot's portrayal of the conflicting forces that shape Maggie's character complicates and contradicts Smiles's confident view of character as shaped by will-power. Rylance sees Eliot's psychological views as closer to that of the Victorian physician, Sir Henry Holland, whose interest in different states of consciousness gives a more complicated view of the interrelationships of memory, reverie and will, and whose view of the border between sane and insane is flexible rather than stable. More relevant to Eliot's depiction of Maggie's embattled, war-torn consciousness, however, is the work of the mid-century psychologist Alexander Bain: "Bain's underlying conception is that intelligence, will, and the other higher faculties are born from, and find their principle of growth and change in, turbulent difficulty. They grow by materially dialectical, and not by ideally teleological, activity." (197) Bain's combat model of growth and change calls to mind Maggie's warring consciousness. The discourse of Victorian psychology suggests a historical background not only for Eliot's heteroglossic narrative voice in *The Mill* but also for the embattled condition of its heroine's consciousness.

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[15] Samuel Smiles wrote *Self-H*elp (1859) and *Character* (1871), books of popular instruction that put forth "the moral order embodied in the individual" as the basis of civil security. (qtd. in *Vict. Psych* 132-33)

Narrated monologue gives Maggie's words a context, positioning her voice within the narrative voice. Like *Emma* and *Persuasion*, *The Mill on the Floss* reflects formally its thematic concern with development as a dialogic process. Maggie is perpetually caught between various social discourses, forced to select which of the contending internalized social voices she will choose, in a very Bakhtinian manner. Bakhtin's description of consciousness as a linguistic battle between contending discourses sounds a lot like Maggie's process of development. Bakhtin contends that

> Consciousness finds itself inevitably facing the necessity of *having to choose a language*. With each literary-verbal performance, consciousness must actively orient itself amidst heteroglossia, it must move in and occupy a position for itself within it, it chooses, in other words, a "language." Only by remaining in a closed environment, one without writing or thought, completely off the maps of socio-ideological becoming, could a man fail to sense this activity of selecting a language and rest assured in the inviolability of his own language, the conviction that his language is predetermined. (295; original emphasis)

Likewise, Maggie's development is depicted as a process of deciding which language she will choose among the conflicting social and cultural voices she has internalized. In this way, narrated monologue, through the ongoing dialogue it creates between narrator and character, provides a model of Maggie's development as a dialogic process. I am not suggesting that development as dialogic is essentially feminine (for certainly, male development takes place in a social context as well) or that only female bildungsromans use narrated monologue (for certainly, Joyce and others experiment with the technique). Rather, I am calling attention to the significant role Eliot played in developing the technique and in using it to reflect formally her thematic concern with female development as a dialogic process carried out between a heroine and her social and narrative contexts.

Chapter Five: *Middlemarch* – More Development toward the Narrative Voice

In *Middlemarch*, Dorothea develops the ability to imagine consciousnesses other than her own; her learned ability to imagine another's perspective resembles the narrator's ability to depict a character's thoughts in narrated monologue. While *The Mill on the Floss* ends with the tragedy of Maggie's blocked development toward the linguistic fluency of the narrative voice, *Middlemarch* depicts Dorothea's ethical development toward the narrative voice. Eliot's Feurbachian faith that being conscious of another's consciousness is an objective good is evident both in Dorothea's learned ability to imagine another person's perspective and in Eliot's extensive use of narrated monologue throughout *Middlemarch*. As the English-language translator of Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*, Eliot translates into narrative technique Feuerbach's idea that to be conscious of another's consciousness is the basis of all morality. By fusing her narrative voice to the consciousness of one character after another, Eliot models the Feuerbachian leap.

As in *The Mill on the Floss*, the narrative voice in *Middlemarch* is frequently characterized by its use of various discourses and by the extensive use of narrated monologue, in which the narrative voice fuses with a given character's voice. Through narrated monologue, the 'omniscient' narrative voice fuses with multiple subjectivities in a superhuman union of the objective and subjective realms. The philosophical problem of the impasse between "first-" and "third- person" narrative is resolved, grammatically, in the fusion of both perspectives that narrated monologue represents. Yet the technique of narrated monologue does not so much elide as explore the issue of whose language is being used to describe a given experience. Similarly, the shifting of discourses within the narrative voice (outside of narrated monologue) raises the issue of whose language is being used. The narrative voice of *Middlemarch* brings the discourses of history, mythology, science, psychology, and other disciplines and professions into novelistic discourse.

The narrative voice of George Eliot is often idiomatically unconventional; real people do not talk like this. Eliot's narrative voice contains and comprehends diverse discourses and this linguistic omniscience generates authority: the radical heteroglossia of Eliot's narrative voice makes her sound less like a human narrator than a prophet on a divine linguistic and ethical mission. This shifting of discourses is the source of Eliot's moral authority; her narrative voice speaks with the combined authority of every profession and discipline whose language she co-opts. As Rylance makes clear in *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880*, disciplines were not so sharply delineated in George Eliot's time as they are now, and Eliot could employ the discourses of various disciplines with intellectual and moral authority. The shifting between discourses characterizes the narrative description of Dorothea's wedding trip:

> The weight of unintelligible Rome might lie easily on bright nymphs to whom it formed a background for the brilliant picnic of Anglo-foreign society, but Dorothea had no such defence against deep impressions. Ruins and basilicas, palaces and colossi, set in the midst of a sordid present, where all that was living and warm-blooded seemed sunk in the deep degeneracy of a superstition divorced from reverence; the dimmer but yet eager titanic life gazing and struggling on walls and ceilings; the long vistas of white forms whose marble eyes seemed to hold the monotonous light of an alien world—all this vast wreck of ambitious ideals, sensuous and spiritual, mixed confusedly with the signs of breathing forgetfulness and degradation, at first jarred her as with an electric shock and then urged themselves on her with that ache belonging to a glut of confused ideas which check the flow of emotion. (191)

The narrator moves from the discourse of the social historian exploring the relationship of past and present ("The weight of unintelligible Rome…") to the discourse of Greek mythology ("bright nymphs to whom it formed a background for the brilliant picnic") to a British tourist's perspective on "Anglo-foreign society." The narrator describes Roman ruins as the peculiar remains of a past that cannot be assimilated, using the discourses of archeology and evolution: "Ruins and basilicas, palaces and colossi, set in the midst of a sordid present, where all that was living and warm-blooded seemed sunk in… deep degeneracy." The imagery calls to mind a de-evolutionary image of the human race sinking back into the mud, with people and ruins decomposing side by side. The narrative voice turns now to the discourse of sociology in its characterization of "a superstition divorced from reverence." The Darwinian discourse of the struggle for survival can be heard in the description of historical and religious figures immortalized in art: "the dimmer but yet eager titanic life gazing and struggling on walls and ceilings." By evoking the mythological figures of the Titans, the narrative voice suggests a clash of civilizations: the Titans were pre-Hellenic nature deities, crushed by the new pantheon of Zeus. The spiritually inspired art on the walls of the churches has been similarly superseded by the *deep degeneracy* of the *sordid present*. The *deep degeneracy* is focalized through Dorothea's Protestant moralist sensibility; the narrative description of "a superstition divorced from reverence" is consonant with Dorothea's Protestant view of the Catholic past. The clash between pagan and Christian civilizations depicted in religious art reflects the clash between sensually charged Roman Catholic art and the asceticism of its Protestant observer, Dorothea, to whom the statues' eyes shine like *aliens*.

Dorothea's reaction to the visual collisions of Rome is described in the discourse of associationism, a Victorian psychological theory derived from Locke that describes feelings as the result of sensory and perceptual stimulation: Dorothea is "jarred…as with an electric shock" by visual collisions that she cannot process. These collisions overwhelm and pain her "with that ache belonging to a glut of confused ideas which check the flow of emotion." Rick Rylance describes the theory of associationism: "The simplest explanation was that the structures of the mind replicate the structures of the experienced environment. For example, ideas occur in the sequence they do because those are the actual sequences in phenomena, and important ideas are given their importance by the frequency of their recurrence." (*Vict. Psych.* 57) The discourse of associationist theory is evident as the passage continues:

> Forms both pale and glowing took possession of her young sense and fixed themselves in her memory even when she was not thinking of them, preparing strange associations which remained through her after-years. Our moods are apt to bring with them images which succeed each other like the magic-lantern pictures of a doze; and in certain states of dull forlornness Dorothea all her life continued to see the vastness of St. Peter's, the huge bronze canopy, the excited intention in the attitudes and garments of the prophets and evangelists in the mosaics above, and the red drapery which was being hung for Christmas spreading itself everywhere like a disease of the retina. (191)

This passage depicts Dorothea's consciousness as ruled by "the magic-lantern pictures of a doze." Dorothea's consciousness is described as a passive receptor of images that create moods. The relationship between idea and emotion that is suggested in the "glut of confused ideas which check the flow of emotion" is further explored in the description of Dorothea as acted upon by visual stimuli that "took possession of her young sense and fixed themselves in her memory even when she was not thinking of them." This passage is marked by its Wordsworthian description of how memories take hold, and by its use of associationist ideology, according to which, external stimuli determine perceptions. The narrative voice here uses the discourse of associationism to explore how feelings that begin in sensations shape a character's perceptions and point of view: "Our moods are apt to bring with them images which succeed each other like the magic-lantern pictures of a doze; and in certain states of dull forlornness Dorothea all her life continued to see the vastness of St. Peter's…."

The description of the religious art and the red holiday drapery "spreading itself everywhere like a disease of the retina" employs the medicalized discourse of disease and contagion. Robert A. Greenberg's "Plexuses and Ganglia: Scientific Allusion in *Middlemarch*" explores the medical and scientific background that Eliot consciously worked into her treatment of Lydgate and into the discourse of the novel as a whole. Eliot was keenly aware of the scientific contributions of Vesalius and Bichat, among others, and of Lydgate's scientific contemporary, Pierre-Charles Louis, "whom Lydgate had known during his studies in Paris and to whose 'new book on Fever' he had given intense study." (Greenberg 41) The "disease of the retina" reference in the above passage demonstrates the ease with which Eliot weaves scientific allusions into her narrative voice, allowing scientific discourse a place among other discourses. Yet this inclusion also implies competition and collision between discourses, foreshadowing Lydgate's struggle with all of the other interests (political, economic, religious, social, etc.) present in Middlemarch. Like the narrative voice, Lydgate participates in scientific developments but for him, the relationship of scientific discourse to other discourses is fraught with danger.

Rylance describes the professional antagonism that existed in Eliot's day between *associationists*, who have an essentially materialist view of consciousness and *faculty psychologists*, who view consciousness as unitary and transcendent. Eliot, rather than choose between the discourse of associationism and that of faculty psychology, employs both without privileging either. The narrative voice shifts from the ideology of associationism to that of faculty psychology, in which consciousness is equated with soul: "Not that this inward amazement of Dorothea's was anything very exceptional: many souls in their young nudity are tumbled out among incongruities and left to 'find their feet' among them, while their elders go about their business." (191) The image of souls *finding their feet* is surprisingly playful in an otherwise somber passage. The source of the quotation is unclear, as the idiom is a common one; the quotation of a common idiom has a distancing effect that calls attention to its incongruity. Associationists did not address the possibility of naked souls; the narrative voice here shifts toward the opposing discourse of faculty psychology with its equating of consciousness to soul. The metaphor of walking souls returns at the end of the paragraph: "As it is, the quickest of us walk about well wadded with stupidity." The turn from Lockean to Wordsworthian discourse, from philosophy to poetry, is startling. Dorothea experiences the visual collisions of Rome as an assault on her senses; the narrative voice, on the other hand, shifts between disparate discourses with ease. The disparate discourses of the narrative voice echo the heroine's experience of collision but not her traumatized response.

The technique of narrated monologue is characterized by the grammatical fusion of the objective and subjective realms. Narrated monologue not only introduces the first-person spirit to third-person narration but it also fuses the two together, creating a hybrid new voice and a union of the narrator's objective viewpoint with the character's subjectivity. The union of the (subjective) self with an (objective) ideal is an overriding theme of *Middlemarch*, primarily in the character of Dorothea, but also in the character of Lydgate, whose ideal is medical progress. The objective ideal that Dorothea ultimately finds is very different from the one she envisions before her marriage. The novel begins with the story of St. Theresa seeking martyrdom for her religious faith. Theresa's religious zeal is represented in terms of escape from the confines of the subjective realm, release from the prison of self: "Her flame quickly burned up that light fuel, and fed from within, soared after some illimitable satisfaction, some object which would never justify weariness, which would reconcile self-despair with the rapturous consciousness of life beyond self." (7)

The union of the self with an objective ideal is more complicated for "later-born Theresas," but the longing remains:

> Many Theresas have been born who found for themselves no epic life wherein there was a constant unfolding of far-resonant action; perhaps only a life of mistakes, the offspring of a certain spiritual grandeur ill-matched with the meanness of opportunity; perhaps a tragic failure which found no sacred poet and sank unwept into oblivion. With dim lights and tangled circumstance they tried to shape their thought and deed in noble agreement; but after all, to common eyes their struggles seemed mere inconsistency and formlessness; for these later-born Theresas were helped by no coherent social faith and order which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul. Their ardour alternated between a vague ideal and the common yearning of womanhood…. (7-8)

Dorothea's lack of adaptation to her surroundings is repeatedly represented not only through Darwinian metaphor,[16] but also by religious imagery that depicts her as a saintly (pre-Reformation) transplant out of place in her Protestant surroundings: "A young lady of some birth and fortune who knelt suddenly down on a brick floor by the side of a sick labourer and prayed fervidly as if she thought herself living in the time of the Apostles—who had strange whims of fasting like a papist and of sitting up at night to read old theological books!" (11) Her longing for an objective ideal is a repeated refrain throughout the opening chapters of the novel: "Her mind was theoretic and yearned by its nature after some lofty conception of the world which might frankly include the parish of Tipton and her own rule of conduct there." (10) "All Dorothea's passion was transfused through a mind struggling towards an ideal life." (45) The narrator describes Dorothea's idealism in pre-Reformation imagery to emphasize her sense of displacement; like the great saints of the past, she yearns for a principle outside of herself to which she can devote all her passionate energy.

When we first meet Dorothea, she is compared to the Virgin Mary. She stands out, the narrator tells us, like a fine biblical quotation thrown into an ordinary paragraph of your morning's newspaper: "Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty which seems to be thrown into relief by poor dress. Her hand and wrist were so finely formed that she could wear sleeves not less bare of style than those in which the blessed Virgin appeared to Italian painters; and her profile as well as her stature and bearing seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, which by the side of provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the Bible—or from one of our elder poets—in a paragraph of today's newspaper." (9) The positioning of Dorothea as a biblical quotation in an otherwise ordinary news article reflects the broader issue of linguistic heteroglossia; she is a biblical or poetic passage easily separable from the quotidian prose by which she is surrounded. Just as the Virgin Mary is described as *appearing* (as in a religious vision) to Italian painters, Dorothea's dress, manners, profile and stature contribute to the sense that she appears suddenly and surprisingly in a world that was not expecting her.

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[16] For more on George Eliot and Darwin, see Gillian Beer's *Darwin's Plots*, George Levine's *Darwin and the Novelists*, and Sally Shuttleworth's *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science*.

When she meets Mr. Casaubon, she believes she has found the answer to her yearning. Marriage to a wise scholar seems like "spiritual communion": "Here was a man who could understand the higher inward life and with whom there could be some spiritual communion; nay, who could illuminate principle with the widest knowledge: a man whose learning almost amounted to a proof of whatever he believed!" (24) Mr. Casaubon is repeatedly connected by imagery and theme to pre-Reformation Christianity. The pamphlets he has published are about the early Church; he spends their honeymoon combing through Vatican files and viewing Roman Catholic art and cathedrals. In one narrative passage, Dorothea is described as "kissing his unfashionable shoe-ties as if he were a Protestant Pope." (51) Mrs. Cadwallader laments that Dorothea has rejected a sensible man like Sir James: "But now I wish her joy of her hair shirt," (61) a reference to the Catholic practice of corporal penance. Dorothea's disillusionment in her marriage is described as a relinquishing of the ideal of spiritual communion: "The clear heights where she expected to walk in full communion had become difficult to see even in her imagination; the delicious repose of the soul on a complete superior had been shaken into uneasy effort and alarmed with dim presentiment." (267) The thematic tension between

Protestantism and Catholicism recalls the broader theme of the relationship between the subjective and objective realms. Whereas Protestantism emphasizes individual conscience as a guide to religious truth, Catholicism posits objective moral truths. The tension between the subjective and objective realms is evident thematically, in the repeated references to Catholic rites and traditions in an otherwise Protestant framework, and grammatically, in the novel's narrative technique, which explores the grammatical union of the first and third persons. In *Middlemarch*, the third-person (objective) narrator fuses perpetually with the (subjective) consciousnesses of various characters. The 'omniscient' narrative voice fuses with multiple subjectivities in a superhuman union of the objective and subjective realms. Yet the technique of narrated monologue does not so much elide as explore the issue of whose perspective (and whose language) is being used to describe a given experience.

Sometimes the narrator uses the character's own words to describe a character's viewpoint, as in the following description of Rosamond's thoughts: "Hence it seemed desirable that Lydgate should by and by get some first-rate position elsewhere than in Middlemarch; and this could hardly be difficult in the case of a man who had a titled uncle and could make discoveries." (346) Mrs. Lemon's protégée studiously avoids colloquialisms but her mental language is less formal than her actual speech in her casually expressed hope "that Lydgate should by and by get some first-rate position". Rosamond meditates on the value of "a titled uncle" and exposes her vague grasp of her husband's work ("[he] could make discoveries"). The narrated monologue is revealing because it tells us not only what she thinks but shows the actual mental language she uses. Outside of narrated monologue, however, the narrative voice describes a character's mental condition using metaphors the character would not necessarily use, as in the description of Lydgate's anticipated enjoyment of his wife's presence as "such help as our thoughts get from the summer sky and the flower-fringed meadows." (347) The narrative voice often uses its own vocabulary and metaphors to describe Mr. Casaubon's limitations: "These minor monumental productions were always exciting to Mr. Casaubon; digestion was made difficult by the interference of citations or by the rivalry of dialectical phrases ringing against each other in his brain." (274) Mr. Casaubon would neither refer to his writing as "minor monumental productions" nor to his work as "digestion." The language here is curiously concrete, with citations digested like food and words at war in the brain. By describing Mr. Casaubon's work in terms of obstructed biological functions the narrator distances the reader from Mr. Casaubon's lofty view of his work and also foreshadows the physical toll that his studies take on his bodily health. Similarly, the narrative description a few pages later of Mr. Casaubon's changing consciousness with regard to his marriage uses the narrator's distanced but straightforward language rather than the circumlocutions of Mr. Casaubon's oversensitive ego: "Instead of getting a soft fence against the cold, shadowy, unapplausive audience of his life, had he only given it a more substantial presence?" (199) The narrator's metaphors give access to Mr. Casaubon's unconscious anxieties, reaching beneath conscious thought to reveal fears he does not fully admit to himself.

The border between Casaubon's language and the narrator's is made even more clear by the parenthetical addendum in the following passage: "But he had come at last to create a trust for himself out of Dorothea's nature; she could do what she resolved to do; and he willingly imagined her toiling under the fetters of a promise to erect a tomb with his name on it. (Not that Mr. Casaubon called the future volumes a tomb; he called them the *Key to All Mythologies*.)" (479) As in the ringing brain and blocked stomach passage, language here is given weight and physical presence. His work is a tomb engraved with his name and the name of his heavy but empty book; "the fetters of a promise" burdens her with the heavy weight of empty toil. She must erect this tomb engraved with heavy names while knowing that the tomb is actually empty. The physical presence of the language here communicates the weight of Dorothea's despair at the thought of editing her husband's work. Dorothea's early ideal of a husband as teacher of new languages has taken a deadly turn: the same citations and phrases which have obstructed her husband's mental and physical digestion seem ready to bury her alive.

The issue of whose voice controls the narrated monologue is addressed by critics such as D.A. Miller and John Bender,[17] who express suspicion of third-person narration of consciousness in general as a form of "policing." Many modernists anticipate Miller's and Bender's suspicion of third-person narrators as colonizers of the consciousnesses they represent. In "*Daniel Deronda*: A Conversation," Henry James explores, in a dialogue between three fictional characters, Theodora, Pulcheria, and Constantius, the modernist objections to Eliot's narrative voice: "I found it protracted, pretentious, pedantic," Pulcheria complains. (302) The modernist aversion to preachy narrators can be summed up in her later complaint: "But what can be drearier than a novel in which the function of the hero… is to give didactic advice…." (310) Like the hero of *Daniel Deronda*, Eliot's narrative voice is often accused of maintaining moral superiority over her characters, of judging them continually and, the suggestion is, unfairly. Constantius makes the Jamesian point that Eliot is overly concerned with ideas and that the strong critical spirit of her novels is at odds with her art:

> She strikes me as a person who certainly has naturally a taste for general considerations, but who has fallen upon an age and a circle which have compelled her to give them an exaggerated attention…. If she had fallen upon an age of enthusiastic assent to old articles of faith, it seems to me possible that she would have had a more perfect, a more consistent and graceful development that she actually had. If she had cast herself into such a current—her genius being equal—it might have carried her to splendid distances. But she has chosen to go into criticism, and to the critics she addresses her work; I mean the critics of the universe. Instead of feeling life itself, it is "views" upon life that she tries to feel. (312-13)

James objects to the intrusion of "ideas" into the artistic realm and the modernist undervaluing of Eliot as artist is rooted in James's complaint about artistic purity being incompatible with a preachy narrator.

Eliot's narrative voice *is* morally and educationally superior. Her narrator lectures the reader on art, history, science, psychology, and on how we should feel about the characters she creates. And D.A. Miller has a point: she does judge her characters, and retain a discernable moral distance from them, even from Dorothea. In *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, Leah Price explores the excerpting into anthology-form of the wisdoms and witticisms of Eliot's narrative voice and its damaging effect on Eliot's literary reputation:

> I end with the novels of George Eliot, more ruthlessly excerpted than any since: chopped into anthology-pieces, recycled as calendar decorations, used to test army officers, deployed in a Zionist tract, plastered onto billboards, and quarried for epigraphs to a socialist treatise and even an abridgment of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*…. Punctuated with chapter mottoes attributed or misattributed to other authors and studded with atemporal generalizations so self-contained as to be universally applicable, her last novels bear the traces of being written for—and against—the anthologies in which she expected to be repackaged in turn. (9-10)

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[17] For a discussion of the novel's relationship to the panopticon, see my Introduction, pages 12-14.

Price points out that Alexander Main's *Sayings*, a book of mottoes from Eliot's writings first published in 1873, ignored the fusion of the narrative voice with characters' voices in free indirect discourse in order to attribute the sayings he culls from Eliot's novels to the author alone: "Main's insensitivity to free indirect discourse allows him to pad out these sections by misattributing to the 'propria persona' statements that the novels themselves locate in the perspective of a character. Thus, Main's saying that 'People are so ridiculous with their illusions, carrying their fool's caps unawares, thinking their own lies opaque while everybody else's are transparent' misquotes a passage that originally read: '[Mary] sat tonight revolving, as she was wont, the scenes of the day, her lips often curling with amusement at the oddities to which her fancy added fresh drollery: people were so ridiculous with their illusions, carrying their fool's caps unawares, thinking their own lies opaque while everybody else's were transparent.' " (108) By turning Mary's thoughts into timeless truths, Main eliminates Mary's bemused enjoyment of the illusions she has witnessed ("her lips often curling with amusement at the oddities to which her fancy added fresh drollery") and offers the anthology reader the humorless, more condemning narrative statement.[18]

Main's anthologization of Eliot's novels and his reduction of her narrative voice to quotable maxims unwittingly contributed to the decline of his idol's literary reputation: "Main's anthologies make visible the same kind of abstraction that 'Silly Novels by Lady Novelists' criticizes." (Price 126) In that essay, Eliot derides novels of the "oracular species" "intended to expound the writer's religious, philosophical or moral theories."

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[18] Eliot encouraged Main, unsuccessfully, to take mottoes not from her novels but from the chapter epigraphs in each of her last three novels, *Felix Holt*, *Middlemarch*, and *Daniel Deronda*, most of which come from her unpublished notebooks. (Price 115-16)

("Silly Novels," 442, qtd. in Price 126) Yet many readers of Eliot today, who read the wisdoms and witticisms of her narrative voice not in anthologies but in their novelistic contexts, also view her as preachy and moralistic.

But why should Eliot's moral authority be so suspect, even to those who are not apprehensive about the irregularities of her personal life? Susan Lanser laments the loss of authority in women writers who shy away from authorial narrators and, although I think she is wrong to equate authority with authoriality, her assumption that moral authority is worth having is valid. To assume that there is something shady about a narrator with moral authority is to deny the possibility that Eliot's moral authority is real, not shammed. The sermons she weaves into narrative passages are part of her artistic achievement, not opposed to it. The shifting between discourses that occurs in her narrative passages is what prevents her sermons from being reductive or monologic. Her moral authority is connected to her heteroglossia: Eliot's ability to juggle multiple discourses, to hold the discourse of science briefly but seriously on the page before tossing it up and catching that of religion, then history, then science, in an endless and earnest competition of discourses that coexist without transition imparts to the reader the awe of prophetic revelation in a secular but not wholly unreligious manner. Just as there is a religious element to Eliot's narrative project of Feuerbachian sympathy, there is a religious element to her art, a prophetic role from which she does not shy away, a moral authority she confidently claims. By composing passages characterized by the balanced tensions of contending discourses, Eliot co-opts extra-literary discourses into the literary realm and claims for herself the combined authority of every discourse she makes use of. James suggests that Eliot's ideas are somehow at odds with her art but it is not possible to separate her art from her ideas: Eliot's literary style is characterized by the discourses of which it is composed.

Another complaint is that Eliot, rather than allow the reader to perceive a character and judge for him or herself, controls the reader's allegiance by dictating where a character stands in relation to the narrative voice. If the reader knows already that the narrator is admiring or mocking or disdainful, then the reader is treated like a child, unable to make his or her own decisions about whom to like or dislike. Yet few readers of *Middlemarch* can honestly say they are treated like children,[19] and to object to her third-person narrator's treatment of her characters' motivations is to miss Eliot's overall project. Without the narrator's help, the reader would never perceive the careful nuances of character that are necessary to Eliot's project of imagining another's consciousness as distinct from your own. Again and again, Eliot depicts characters that project their own needs and desires onto others and it is only the narrator's constant help that prevents the reader from doing the same. Eliot's point is that the awareness of another's consciousness requires an imaginative leap beyond the borders of one's own consciousness and it is this leap that she models for the reader. By modeling the imaginative leap into a character's consciousness, the narrator constructs a reader who can stretch the limits of the subjective to guess at the contents of another's mind. Eliot's ethical project is intimately connected with her narrator's descriptions and judgments of characters and to suggest that the narrator is too controlling is to miss part of the novel's plot, the story of the gradual struggle toward awareness of another's consciousness.

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[19] Virginia Woolf called *Middlemarch* "one of the few English novels for grownup people." (*Common Reader* 168)

Miller claims to support Bakhtin's theory, but he certainly appears to misunderstand Bakhtin's central point that *dialogism* is the mark of the novel genre:

> The panopticism of the novel thus coincides with what Mikhail Bakhtin has called its "monologism": the working of an implied master-voice whose accents have already unified the world in a single interpretative center. Accordingly, in the monological novel, "every struggle of two voices for possession of and dominance in the world in which they appear is decided in advance—it is a sham struggle." Yet to speak of sham struggles is also to imply the necessity for shamming them. The master-voice of monologism never simply soliloquizes. It continually needs to confirm its authority by qualifying, canceling, endorsing, subsuming all the other voices it lets speak. No doubt the need stands behind the great prominence the nineteenth-century novel gives to *style indirect libre*, in which, respeaking a character's thoughts or speeches, the narration simultaneously subverts their authority and secures its own. (*Novel and the Police* 25)

At the heart of Miller's phrase "sham struggle" lies a protest against the narrator's ultimate control of characters' voices that *seem* to have authority, but to criticize a narrative technique for allowing the narrator to depict consciousnesses other than his or her own is to object to a basic convention of fiction. Dorrit Cohn's *Distinction of Fiction* discusses three signposts of fiction: fiction is non-referential (it cannot be verified as historically accurate), it has a narrator who is distinct from the author, and it provides access to the consciousness of the characters it describes. In other words, the non-referentiality of narrated monologue (in that it can't be verified as accurate because we cannot know what anyone else is thinking) and the access to consciousness depicted by a narrator who is not the same as the author are defining 'signposts' of fiction; to mistrust access to consciousness by an omniscient narrator is to doubt a basic convention of fiction, for it is only in fiction that the content of other people's consciousness can be depicted at all. Whereas Miller sees the "struggle of two voices for possession of and dominance in the world in which they appear" as "a sham struggle" in the monological novel, Bakhtin would characterize this same struggle as genuine, unavoidable and dialogic.

Middlemarch can be read as an ideological power struggle between voices, but this struggle is not elided; it is on display. The parroting of Mr. Brooke's voice at the rally demonstrates the claiming of another's words in a political power struggle. Like the narrative voice, the voice in the crowd co-opts another's language: "there had arisen, apparently in the air, like the note of the cuckoo, a parrot-like, Punch-voiced echo of his words…. The most innocent echo has an impish mockery in it when it follows a gravely persistent speaker, and this echo was not at all innocent; if it did not follow with the precision of a natural echo, it had a wicked choice of the words it overtook. By the time it said, 'The Baltic, now,' the laugh which had been running through the audience became a general shout." (490) There is no way to control this voice: "Mr. Bulstrode asked, reprehensively, what the new police was doing; but a voice could not well be collared." (490) Mr. Brooke's frustrated humiliation is then described in terms of the retelling of the experience in the newspaper. The ideological power struggle between voices is evident in his fear of how newspaper discourse will depict the rally: "The frustration would have been less exasperating if it had been less gamesome and boyish: a serious assault of which the newspaper reporter 'can aver that it endangered the learned gentleman's ribs,' or can respectfully bear witness to 'the soles of that gentleman's boots having been visible above the railing,' had perhaps more consolations attached to it." (492) Here the projected discourse of newspapers is ventriloquized in Mr. Brooke's anxiety about how the press will depict him. The struggle between voices is underscored by the manifest power of the mocking voice in the crowd and by Mr. Brooke's subsequent anxiety regarding what the mocking newspaper will say.

Eliot's use of narrated monologue in *Middlemarch* is directly related to her Feuerbachian project of creating a consciousness of other consciousnesses. In *The Essence of Christianity*, George Eliot translates Feuerbach's belief that man must look outward at other men rather than inward at his own soul. According to Feuerbach, "the consciousness of the moral law, or right, of propriety, of truth itself, is indissolubly united with my consciousness of another than myself." (158) In other words, Feuerbach believes that being conscious of another's consciousness is the basis of all morality and Eliot, the translator of his works into English, also translates his philosophy into narrative technique in her own novels, particularly in *Middlemarch*, whose ethical project is directly related to its narrative technique. If Feuerbach says man must be conscious of another's consciousness, the expansive use of narrated monologue in *Middlemarch* shows us how this goal might be reached. Feuerbach claims, in fact, that for the subjective consciousness another's consciousness provides a moral rule, an "objective conscience" (a seeming oxymoron in that conscience is usually considered subjective, and this calls to mind again the fusion of the subjective and objective realms in narrated monologue):

> Between me and another human being—and this other is the representative of the species, even though he is only one, for he supplies to me the want of many others, has for me a universal significance, is the deputy of mankind, in whose name he speaks to me, an isolated individual, so that, when united only with one, I have a participated, a human life;—between me and another human being there is an essential, qualitative distinction. The other is my *thou*,—the relation being reciprocal,—my *alter ego*, man objective to me, the revelation of my own nature, the eye seeing itself. In another I first have the consciousness of humanity; through him I first learn, I first feel, that I am a man: in my love for him it is first clear to me that he belongs to me and I to him, that we two cannot be without each other, that only community constitutes

> humanity. But morally, also, there is a qualitative, critical distinction between the *I* and *thou*. My fellow-man is my objective conscience; he makes my failings a reproach to me; even when he does not expressly mention them, he is my personified feeling of shame. The consciousness of the moral law, or right, of propriety, of truth itself, is indissolubly united with my consciousness of another than myself. (*Essence* 158)

In this way, Feuerbach suggests that the *union* of one's consciousness with another's represents an objective moral good. The union Feuerbach describes becomes the philosophical basis for Eliot's use of narrated monologue to depict awareness of others' consciousnesses as an objective good.

Feuerbach believes that man creates God in his own image by projecting the human qualities he most values in other men onto God: "Only that which is apart from my own being is capable of being doubted by me. How then can I doubt of God, who is my being? To doubt of God is to doubt of myself." (*Essence* 20) In an essay on the poet Edward Young, Eliot criticizes Young's depiction of God as a mere projection of the poet: "The God of the 'Night Thoughts' is simply Young himself, writ large." (*Essays* 378) The omniscient, third-person narrator of Austen's novels often seems to be a projection of the highest human qualities as perceived by the author, and the characters of her novels are judged by how they measure up to the narrative voice. In Eliot's novels, however, a Feuerbachian resistance to projecting human qualities onto the narrator can be felt. The heteroglossia of Eliot's narrator's language is unconventional and unconversational and would sound unfamiliar to most of her characters. Eliot's narrator is not so much a projection of attainable human qualities as a testament to the "otherness" of the narrative realm.

Like the narrative voice, Eliot's characters face the challenge of recognizing "otherness"; ethical development in Eliot means learning to see the "equivalent centre of self" (*Middlemarch* 208) in others. As Feuerbach sees the tendency to project human emotions onto the divine as a source of error, so Eliot depicts a similar source of confusion in the projection of one character's needs and desires onto another character: "Dorothea by this time had looked deep into the ungauged reservoir of Mr. Casaubon's mind, seeing reflected there in vague labyrinthine extension every quality she herself brought, had opened much of her own experience to him, and had understood from him the scope of his great work, also of attractively labyrinthine extent. For he had been as instructive as Milton's 'affable archangel'…." (25) Much of the irony of Dorothea's narrated monologue lies in her almost willed blindness to what is actually before her: an empty pit which she sees as an *ungauged reservoir*, a confused mess of ideas, which she sees as *attractively labyrinthine*. Dorothea brings to her relationship with Casaubon all of her own needs and projections: "Dorothea's faith supplied all that Mr. Casaubon's words seemed to leave unsaid; what believer sees a disturbing omission or infelicity? The text, whether of prophet or of poet, expands for whatever we can put into it, and even his bad grammar is sublime." (51)

There is narrative irony in Dorothea's initial blindness to Mr. Casaubon's intellectual deficiencies coupled with her clearsightedness with regard to Mr. Brooke's: "If that learned man would only talk, instead of allowing himself to be talked to by Mr. Brooke, who was just then informing him that the Reformation either meant something or it did not; that he himself was a Protestant to the core but that Catholicism was a fact; and as to refusing an acre of your ground for a Romanist chapel, all men needed the bridle of religion, which, properly speaking, was the dread of a hereafter." (21) The narrated monologue belongs to Dorothea, as the opening praise of Mr. Casaubon makes clear, and its humor resides in her impatient mental recitation of her uncle's meandering discourse; her narrated monologue contains within it the free indirect discourse of her uncle's words to Mr. Casaubon combined with her reaction to both men. The parodic abbreviation of Mr. Brooke's proposition "that the Reformation either meant something or it did not; that he himself was a Protestant to the core but that Catholicism was a fact; and as to refusing an acre of your ground for a Romanist chapel, all men needed the bridle of religion, which, properly speaking, was the dread of a hereafter" demonstrates his conversational habit of, as he would put it, *pulling up* to prevent *going too far* in the way of ideas. Dorothea's narrated monologue reveals her inflated regard for her future husband ("If that learned man would only talk") as well as her impatience at her uncle's habitual digressions, as exposed in the mystifications of his windy, winding logic. The narrative voice expounds, "But how little we know what would make paradise for our neighbours! We judge from our own desires, and our neighbours themselves are not always open enough even to throw out a hint of theirs." (505) If subjective consciousness is not stretched by the awareness of another's consciousness, in other words, other people become mere projections of one's own emotions.

Rosamond, like Dorothea, projects her own need for a distinguished stranger onto the first available candidate:

> Yet this result, which she took to be a mutual impression, called falling in love, was just what Rosamond had contemplated beforehand. Ever since that important new arrival in Middlemarch she had woven a little future, of which something like this scene was the necessary beginning. Strangers, whether wrecked and clinging to a raft or duly escorted and accompanied by portmanteaus, have always had a circumstantial fascination for the virgin mind, against which native merit has urged itself in vain. And a stranger was absolutely necessary to Rosamond's social romance, which had always turned on a lover and bridegroom who was not a Middlemarcher and who had no connexions at all like her own: of

> late, indeed, the construction seemed to demand that he should somehow be related to a baronet. (117)[20]

Her own romantic fantasy involves a distinguished stranger falling in love with her and when she meets Lydgate, she projects that emotional longing onto him just as Lydgate projects his own needs and desires onto his view of Rosamond: "Lydgate thought that after all his wild mistakes and absurd credulity he had found perfect womanhood, felt as if already breathed upon by exquisite wedded affection such as would be bestowed by an accomplished creature who venerated his high musings and momentous labours and would never interfere with them, who would create order in the home and accounts with still magic, yet keep her fingers ready to touch the lute and transform life into romance at any moment, who was instructed to the true womanly limit and not a hair's-breadth beyond—docile, therefore, and ready to carry out behests which came from beyond that limit." (343) Rosamond's brother, Fred, projects his own longing for an inheritance onto his uncle's need for an heir: "Fred fancied that he saw to the bottom of his uncle Featherstone's soul, though in reality half what he saw there was no more than the reflex of his own inclinations. The difficult task of knowing another soul is not for young gentlemen whose consciousness is chiefly made up of their own wishes." (119) The psycho-narration that describes Fred's thinking disillusions the reader of any faith in his hopes by openly stating the distance between illusion and reality: "Fred fancied… but in reality…." The narrator is helping the reader to acknowledge the distance between one's own point of view and another's. The distance between the narrative voice and the character's voice does require that the narrative voice retain a certain superiority.

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[20] Eliot's depiction of characters projecting their romantic fantasies onto one another recalls Austen's parody of this same tendency in the heroine of *Northanger Abbey*.

In each of these instances, the psycho-narration that describes the delusive reasoning of the character in question is marked by the parodic presence of the narrative voice, heard in the distancing statement that Rosamond "took" their meeting "to be a mutual impression called falling in love." The narrative voice also alerts the reader to the fact that although Rosamond perceives that her lover will fall in love with her spontaneously and without any effort on her part, it is nonetheless an event she "had contemplated beforehand" and is eager to arrange. By providing access to Lydgate's self-centered premarital musings the narrative voice distances itself from his perspective as well. He reflects confidently on the "exquisite wedded affection such as would be bestowed by an accomplished creature who venerated his high musings and momentous labours and would never interfere with them." (343) The use of "creature" to describe Rosamond suggests the darker side of Lydgate's idealization of her; although her pedestal may seem high, he thinks of her as hardly having a separate consciousness at all. He sees her as standing beneath him, looking up to "venerat[e] his high musings and momentous labours." If ethical development in *Middlemarch* means learning to see an "equivalent centre of self" in other people, it also means learning to view that "centre" as more than a projection of one's own desires. The ethical thrust is toward acknowledging that "centres of self" may be *equivalent* but they are in no way *the same*.

Rylance sees *Middlemarch* as demonstrating Eliot's grand argument that the limits of subjective consciousness can be stretched by the effort of sympathy with the differences that exist in the consciousness of others. Rylance makes the point that Lewes, too, was engaged in related arguments regarding the cultural and historical limits of subjectivity in his major final work, *Problems of Life and Mind*, which he was working on as Eliot wrote *Middlemarch*. Rylance makes an interesting connection between Eliot's view of ethical action and Lewes's view of perception.

> Lewes concludes that knowledge is in fact driven by need: "we only see what interests us." It is thus related not only to historical and cultural conditions, but also to the psychological conditions of the human participants in any act of knowledge creation. This too is a key idea in George Eliot's thinking, where it is given a particular ethical turn. Ethical action in Eliot's fiction consists of the conscious realization of limitation, of either perception, culture, or a whole personality. The important initial step…is to become conscious of the limitations of one's own views. If we turn round Lewes's proposition, we can see its ethical bearing. If we see primarily only what interests us, perhaps our interests will become larger if we see more, and a "growing good" (as Eliot has it) will ensue. (*Vict. Psych.* 259-60)

Rylance describes Eliot's emphasis on sympathy as a way to transcend the historical, cultural and temperamental limits of subjectivity: "We are limited as biological beings, and by the era and location of our birth. Our culture feeds us with obstinacies, blindnesses, and prejudices of many kinds. But by emotions that excite us beyond ourselves… and by acts of historical comparison and comprehension, the limitations of our own understandings can be overcome sufficiently. And, because understanding can become sufficient, we can begin to understand beyond ourselves." (141) Rylance is right to draw our attention to Lewes's work and its influence and relationship to Eliot's but I would add that Feuerbach's influence on both of them is evident here. According to Feuerbach, one man's consciousness of another's consciousness makes him aware of the limitations of the subjective realm: "An object, a true object, is given me only when a being that affects me is present, when my own activity—if I proceed from the standpoint of the thinker—finds its limit, its resistant, in the activity of another being." (qtd. in *Essence,* Intro., xiii) Narrated monologue challenges the conventional boundary between one consciousness and another by fusing two voices together and forcing the reader to consider each in relation to the other.

The narrative voice is continually forcing the reader to consider multiple points of view. In the episode at Dagley's farm, in which Mr. Brooke confronts Mr. Dagley about his son's alleged poaching, the reader is presented with the points of view of the narrator, Mr. Brooke, Mr. and Mrs. Dagley, and the two narratees described as watching the incident. At other key moments, the implied reader is forced to consider alternate points of view:

> One morning, some weeks after her arrival at Lowick, Dorothea—but why always Dorothea? Was her point of view the only possible one with regard to this marriage? I protest against all our interest, all our effort at understanding being given to the young skins that look blooming in spite of trouble; for these too will get faded and will know the older and more eating griefs which we are helping to neglect. In spite of the blinking eyes and white moles objectionable to Celia and the want of muscular curve which was morally painful to Sir James, Mr. Casaubon had an intense consciousness within him and was spiritually a-hungered like the rest of us. (271-72)

Yet, despite the narrator's emphasis that Mr. Casaubon is as spiritually hungry as the rest of us, the ethical movement of *Middlemarch* is toward recognizing difference rather than universality. The narrator continually reminds us of the limits of individual perception by depicting the same event from multiple perspectives: "But brother Jonah, sister Martha, and all the needy exiles held a different point of view. Probabilities are as various as the faces to be seen at will in fretwork or paperhangings: every form is there from Jupiter to Judy, if you only look with creative inclination." (296) The narrator points out each character's perceptive limits and continually shows the reader how things look from other perspectives.

In relation to Lydgate's character, the narrator explores the limits of understanding another's point of view, using the discourse of scientific experimentation Lydgate himself would use in his medical studies, as well as the discourse of theatre: "The particular faults from which these delicate generalities are distilled have distinguishable physiognomies, diction, accent, and grimaces, filling up parts in various dramas. Our vanities differ as our noses do, all conceit is not the same conceit, but varies in correspondence with the minutiae of mental make in which one of us differs from another." (148) The use of scientific discourse implies that the study of another's consciousness is analytical; if one wants to understand what another is thinking, one must explore "the minutiae of mental make in which one of us differs from another." Lydgate's inability to study Rosamond with objectivity implicitly undermines the success of applying the scientific method to the study of another's character but it also suggests that objective analysis is possible: "The particular faults from which these delicate generalities are distilled have distinguishable physiognomies, diction, accent, and grimaces." The narrative voice teaches the reader to stretch the subjective realm by constructing a reader's ability to imagine what another's consciousness might sound like.

The narrative voice of *Middlemarch* at points offers an instructional breakdown of its own technique, citing a character's words in quotation marks within the narrative voice, as if to call the reader's attention to the presence of others' voices within the narrative voice. For example, in the passage below, the narrator cites Mrs. Vincy's words in the description of her anxieties about Mary Garth: "And since Mary had been keeping Mr. Featherstone's house, Mrs. Vincy's want of liking for the Garths had been converted into something more positive by alarm lest Fred should engage himself to this plain girl whose parents 'lived in such a small way.' " (226) In passages like this, the narrator quotes other voices rather than fusing them inconspicuously to the narrative voice, to emphasize the limitations of an individual's point of view within the narrator's broader perspective, and to model for the reader the narrator's technique of incorporating other points of view into its own. In the next passage, the reader sees how Fred's (quoted) words to his father fuel his father's anger and the reader also sees how the narrative voice brings in outside voices. With regard to Mr. Vincy's disappointment in Fred's disinclination to be a clergyman, the narrative voice quotes Fred's words again: "Mr. Vincy had sworn that if he had anything more of that sort to put up with, Fred should turn out and get his living how he could; and he had never yet quite recovered his good-humoured tone to his son, who had especially enraged him by saying at this stage of things that he did not want to be a clergyman and would rather not 'go on with that.' " (228)

In some instances, the narrative quoting of character's words serves a distancing function, but in other instances, it is difficult to see why some words of free indirect discourse are in quotes while others are not, as in the following passage describing Mrs. Vincy's distress at Fred's illness: "She thought it 'very ill usage on the part of Mr. Wrench, who had attended their house so many years in preference to Mr. Peacock, though Mr. Peacock was equally a friend.' Why Mr. Wrench should neglect her children more than others, she could not for the life of her understand." (254) The quotes seem unnecessary, especially because the second sentence of the passage clearly also belongs to Mrs. Vincy but is not quoted. The narrative voice does this so often that it begins to also feel like it is done for our edification, as if we are being shown how free indirect discourse functions, how outside languages are brought into the narrative voice. The narrator's description of Fred's disappointment after the reading of Featherstone's will provides another example of narrative quoting: "It was 'rather hard lines' that while he was smarting under this disappointment he should be treated as if he could have helped it. But he went away silently, and his mother pleaded for him." (333)

Similarly, when the narrator describes Lydgate's pre-nuptial musings, quotes are used to separate his voice from the narrator's: "Certainly, being in love and being expected continually by someone who always turned out to be prettier than memory could represent her to be did interfere with the diligent use of spare hours which might serve some 'plodding fellow of a German' to make the great, imminent discovery." (339) The passages in which the voices of various characters are quoted within the narrative voice serve to make the passages in which voices are fused to the narrative voice without grammatical notation more readily understood. After repeatedly observing the narrator's technique of quoting various characters, the fused speech becomes easily identifiable, as in the following passage that is focalized from multiple perspectives: "But Jane and Martha sank under the rush of questions and began to cry…whereas Mrs. Waule's mind was entirely flooded with the sense of being an own sister and getting little, while somebody else was to have much." (327) We do not need quotation marks to hear Mrs. Waule's voice in the complaint of being an "own sister and getting little, while somebody else was to have much." The reader understands that the narrative voice is composed of other voices and knows, not instinctively but due to the subtle training of the narrative voice, where the quotation marks belong.

Like the reader, Dorothea learns the lessons of the narrative voice. The narrative voice repeatedly models for the reader the stretching of the limits of subjectivity and ultimately Dorothea learns to "see" from outside her own perspective. She comes to perceive other people's consciousnesses as separate from her own. She also learns to see herself from the outside, as in the scene in which she first gazes at Aunt Julia's portrait and then perceives the portrait to be gazing at her, much like the famous scene at Pemberley where Elizabeth Bennet fixes the eyes of Mr. Darcy's portrait on her own. For Dorothea, however, the result of this gaze is not the beginning of romantic love but of sympathetic communion with other people's suffering:

> it was the miniature of Mr. Casaubon's aunt Julia, who had made the unfortunate marriage, of Will Ladislaw's grandmother. Dorothea could fancy that it was alive now—the delicate woman's face which yet had a headstrong look, a peculiarity difficult to interpret. Was it only her friends who thought her marriage unfortunate? Or did she herself find it out to be a mistake, and taste the salt bitterness of her tears in the merciful silence of the night? What breadths of experience Dorothea seemed to have passed over since she first looked at this miniature! She felt a new companionship with it, as if it had an ear for her and could see how she was looking at it. Here was a woman who had known some difficulty about marriage. Nay, the colours deepened, the lips and chin seemed to get larger, the hair and eyes seemed to be sending out light, the face was masculine and beamed on her with that full gaze which tells her on whom it falls that she is too interesting for the slightest movement of her eyelid to pass unnoticed and uninterpreted. The vivid presentation came like a pleasant glow to Dorothea; she felt herself smiling, and turning from the miniature, sat down and looked up as if she were again talking to a figure in front of her. But the smile disappeared as she went on meditating, and at last she said aloud, "Oh, it was cruel to speak so! How sad—how dreadful!" (268-69)

Her immediate impulse upon turning from the miniature is to regret that she may have caused pain to Mr. Casaubon, who may also be as sad in his marriage as Aunt Julia was in her own. Dorothea stretches the limits of her own subjectivity to discover a changed view of her own relationship to her husband:

> But Dorothea remembered it to the last with the vividness with which we all remember epochs in our experience when some dear expectation dies or some new motive is born. Today she had begun to see that she had been under a wild illusion in expecting a response to her feeling from Mr. Casaubon, and she had felt the waking of a presentiment that there might be a sad consciousness in his life which made as great a need on his side as on her own. We are all of us born in moral stupidity, taking the world as an udder to feed our supreme selves: Dorothea had early begun to emerge from that stupidity, but yet it had been easier to her to imagine how she would devote herself to Mr. Casaubon and become wise and strong in his strength and wisdom than to conceive with that distinctness which is no longer reflection but feeling—an idea wrought back to the directness of sense, like the solidity of objects—that he had an equivalent centre of self whence the lights and shadows must always fall with a certain difference. (208)

She learns to see him as having his own "equivalent centre of self" rather than as a projection of her own desires and disappointments; this may not improve their marriage but it does stretch her subjective perception in the direction of another's consciousness.

The characters to whom the narrative voice is most sympathetic are those who, like the narrator, are able to imagine the shape of another's consciousness; in this category belongs not only Dorothea but also Mary Garth, who is described as an observer: "let all those pass and fix your eyes on some small plump, brownish person of firm but quiet carriage who looks about her but does not suppose that anybody is looking at her." (396) Will Ladislaw is also described as gifted in this area: "An Italian with white mice! On the contrary, he was a creature who entered into everyone's feelings and could take the pressure of their thought instead of urging his own with iron resistance." (482) Of course, having sympathetic insight into other people does not mean you see correctly. Will and Dorothea are continually misreading each other's reactions, as in the following passage:

> Will spoke at random; he was merely venting his petulance; it was a little too exasperating to have his grandmother's portrait offered him at that

> moment. But to Dorothea's feelings his words had a peculiar sting. She rose and said with a touch of indignation as well as hauteur, "You are much the happier of us two, Mr. Ladislaw, to have nothing." Will was startled. Whatever the words might be, the tone seemed like a dismissal; and quitting his leaning posture, he walked a little way towards her. Their eyes met, but with a strange, questioning gravity. Something was keeping their minds aloof, and each was left to conjecture what was in the other. Will had really never thought of himself as having a claim of inheritance on the property which was held by Dorothea and would have required a narrative to make him understand her present feeling. (527)

What the narrative voice reveals with regard to Lydgate and Rosamond applies to Will and Dorothea, too: "Between him and her indeed there was that total missing of each other's mental track, which is too evidently possible even between persons who are continually thinking of each other." (568)

It is Mr. Casaubon's inability to imagine "equivalent centre[s] of self" in others that prevents the reader from forming an emotional allegiance to him, despite our forced acknowledgement that he has a valid center of consciousness: "His experience was of that pitiable kind which shrinks from pity and fears most of all that it should be known; it was that proud narrow sensitiveness which has not mass enough to spare for transformation into sympathy and quivers threadlike in small currents of self-preoccupation or at best of an egoistic scrupulosity." (273) Mr. Casaubon's greatest deficiency is summed up by Dorothea's inward protest, "He never knows what is in my mind." (415) If he were able to see beyond the limits of his own ego, his blinking eyes and white moles would not be insuperable obstacles to readerly affection; his complete self-preoccupation allows sympathy but prevents affection. Rosamond, likewise, is described by her husband in terms of her "feminine impassibility" (a curious phrase that describes Rosamond's access to others' emotions as cut off by a palpable boundary, as an organism might be impermeable to osmosis): "For the moment he lost the sense of his wound in a sudden speculation about this new form of feminine impassibility revealing itself in the sylphlike frame which he had once interpreted as the sign of a ready, intelligent sensitiveness." (574) After her interview with Will during which Dorothea unexpectedly enters the room, Rosamond's impassibility is noted by the narrative voice: "She knew that Will had received a severe blow, but she had been little used to imagining other people's states of mind except as a material cut into shape by her own wishes." (754) The scene that results between Will and Rosamond is experienced by her as a violent attack, and again uses the language of engraving: "What another nature felt in opposition to her own was being burnt and bitten into her consciousness." (756) It is this violent awakening from impassability that allows her to begin to envision another's consciousness: "it added to Rosamond's impression that Mrs. Casaubon's state of mind must be something quite different from what she had imagined." (769) If the encounter with another's consciousness does not lead to any great moral awakening in Rosamond's case it nonetheless forces her out of herself long enough to recognize another's consciousness and to respond to it.

Dorothea's longing for union with an objective ideal leads ultimately to Will Ladislaw, a journalist with strong linguistic and metaphoric power whose linguistic juggling of discourses resembles the narrator's. Unlike Mr. Casaubon's or Mr. Brooke's stilted citation without assimilation of others' words, Will Ladislaw's voice moves gracefully between subjects and centuries; like the narrator, he has an ability to make comparisons and to absorb differences. The very praise the narrator accords Will highlights the linguistic similarities between the two:

> If Will was not always perfect, this was certainly one of his good days. He described touches of incident among the poor people in Rome only to

> be seen by one who could move about freely; he found himself in agreement with Mr. Casaubon as to the unsound opinions of Middleton concerning the relations of Judaism and Catholicism; and passed easily to a half-enthusiastic, half-playful picture of the enjoyment he got out of the very miscellaneousness of Rome, which made the mind flexible with constant comparison and saved you from seeing the world's ages as a set of boxlike partitions without vital connexion. (208-9)

Will's expertise in many disciplines resembles that of Eliot herself (who was a frequent contributor to journals such as *The Leader* and *The Westminster Review*, of which she was also editor for two years) and Eliot's narrator is similarly concerned with philosophy, history, religion, and science.

Yet, although (and because) Will represents the journalistic ideal of heteroglossia, he is rightly considered an artistic failure as a character. Frank Kermode, in the Afterward to the Penguin edition, expresses his dissatisfaction with the character of Ladislaw: "I do not say that George Eliot has no failures: Ladislaw is one." (818) Will is unsatisfying and unreal compared to other characters and the artistic limitations of his character are related to the fact that he is less the embodiment of a man than of an idea. Will Ladislaw represents for Eliot, and for Dorothea, the linguistic ideal of the journalist as heteroglossic juggler of discourses. Will's "natural" speaking voice, like the narrator's, is a mix of contending discourses and perhaps it is not surprising that the one character whose linguistic heteroglossia resembles the narrator's is not as artistically successful a creation. For the most part, Eliot's narrator respects the "otherness" of the characters represented without expecting them to sound like the narrative voice. The narrative voice is, after all, unattainable and foreign to the realm that Eliot's characters inhabit. It is because Ladislaw is the embodiment of a linguistic ideal that his character seems more symbolic than artistically complete. For Dorothea, even her first marriage united romantic and linguistic expectations: "The really delightful marriage must be that where your husband was a sort of father and could teach you even Hebrew if you wished it." (12-13) Dorothea ultimately obtains her ideal of a husband as teacher of new languages but she first must endure Casaubon's unwitting mockery of that ideal. Casaubon fails as language teacher but Will *will* teach her new languages and her earlier visions of marriage as language immersion are made real.

The following passage is best interpreted as Will's narrated monologue but the second sentence, with its startling biological simile certainly resembles the type of analogies the narrator makes to the natural world: "Would not Mr. Casaubon take her? That sort of thing ought not to be missed; it was quite special, it was a form of life that grew like a small fresh vegetation with its population of insects on huge fossils. Will would be happy to conduct them—not to anything wearisome, only to a few examples." (209) Will's language is filled with comparisons that unite seemingly disparate objects. His goal is to see the world from more than his own particular viewpoint: "I have been seeing a great deal of the German artists here; I traveled from Frankfort with one of them. Some are fine, even brilliant fellows, but I should not like to get into their way of looking at the world entirely from the studio point of view." (203) Will's eclectic interests in painting, theatre, journalism, politics and singing reflect his ability to move freely between disciplines and countries; his voice reflects the narrative voice's heteroglossic fusion of disparate disciplines.

Even in the places where the narrative voice undermines Will, the two voices resemble each other, as in the following example in which the narrative voice finds an apt citation to describe Will's tendency to hyperbole, just as Will has a knack for calling to mind the right source or quotation in every situation: “But he would never lose sight of her; he would watch over her, and she should know that she had one slave in the world. Will had—to use Sir Thomas Browne’s phrase—‘a passionate prodigality’ of statement both to himself and others. The simple truth was that nothing then invited him so strongly as the presence of Dorothea.” (351) Will’s analogies from the natural world resemble those used by the narrative voice. Here is Will’s analogy: “And as to contending for a reform short of that, it is like asking for a bit of an avalanche which has already begun to thunder.” (445) The suspicion with which Will is regarded is a result, in part, of his linguistic facility: “And some oddities of Will’s, more or less poetical, appeared to support Mr. Keck, the editor of the Trumpet, in asserting that Ladislaw, if the truth were known, was not only a Polish emissary but crack-brained, which accounted for the preternatural quickness and glibness of his speech when he got on to a platform—as he did whenever he had an opportunity, speaking with a facility which cast reflections on solid Englishmen generally.” (448) Will’s verbal flexibility is interpreted by others as somehow connected to his foreign origins.

If Will’s voice represents a heteroglossic ideal, however, it remains the voice of a journalist; it is Dorothea who develops ethically in the direction of the narrative voice. Dorothea’s union to the man with the heteroglossic voice has a strong ethical dimension; the linguistic ideal she “marries” necessarily involves her in work that resembles the narrator’s: like the narrative voice, she gains imaginative entry into consciousnesses other than her own. Will Ladislaw’s polyvocal, metaphoric language emulates the linguistic heteroglossia of the narrative voice; the novel is thus narrated by a voice close to that of the man the heroine marries. The doubling of the narrative voice by Dorothea’s romantic object provides a role model for Dorothea to yearn toward in a way that Maggie, unaware of the narrative voice in which she is embedded, has not. The objective ideal that Dorothea finds by the novel's end is different yet related to her early religious yearnings; Feuerbach sees awareness of another's consciousness as contact with the divine: "Man with man—the unity of I and Thou—is God." (qtd. in *Essence*, Intro., xiii) The awareness of another's consciousness becomes an objective good and a way to stretch the perceptive limits of subjectivity. Eliot's godlike omniscient narrator fuses with various discourses and consciousnesses and Feuerbach's ordinary individual makes contact with the divine through awareness of another's consciousness. Dorothea's "diffusive" effect on others is her claim to immortality: "But the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive, for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts, and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs." (811) The novel ends with a curious return to the religious imagery of the opening chapters. Dorothea is described by Lydgate as having "a heart big enough for the Virgin Mary" (746) and by the narrator as having "the pale cheeks and pink eyelids of a *mater dolorosa*." (765) She has found the objective ideal that long eluded her, the escape from the confines of her own subjectivity: "She yearned toward the perfect Right, that it might make a throne within her and rule her errant will." (764) Both grammatically and thematically, the relationship between the subjective and objective realms is stretched and explored; Eliot's narrative technique resolves grammatically, through the fusion of the first and third persons, what *Middlemarch* explores thematically, through Dorothea's discovery of an objective ideal.

Epilogue: Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The Waves*

In Austen's novels, the relationship of the narrator to the heroine is sisterly and sympathetic; in Eliot's the relationship is parental and tutorial. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, published in 1925, the narrative voice is disengaged, dipping into various characters' consciousnesses impartially and without comment, giving little discernible guidance as to how the reader is to perceive the heroine or other characters. In a remarkable break with Austen's and Eliot's use of the technique of narrated monologue, Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* maintains the independence of the narrative voice even in the narrated monologues that fuse that voice with characters' consciousnesses, moving away from the intimate union of voices that characterizes the earlier use of the technique.

Mrs. Dalloway is a multi-figural novel in which the narrator's attention is shared by many characters rather than concentrated on a single heroine. This shift toward a more independent narrative voice is taken even further in *The Waves*, published in 1931, in which the narrative voice and the characters' consciousnesses are grammatically separate and the consciousnesses of the six characters that the novel depicts are unmediated. There are narrative preludes to each (unnumbered, unnamed) chapter that emanate from a third-person narrator, but the narrative voice is entirely impersonal, providing camera-eye[21] descriptions of the sun rising and setting and never alluding to the three men and three women whose thoughts form the body of the novel. In *The Waves*, Woolf moves away from narrated monologue's fusion of voices; no narrative voice intermingles with a character's thoughts or words. The primary narrative technique used is quoted monologue, but there is an oddity to be noted with regard to Woolf's choice of "said" rather than "thought" when quoting a character's consciousness. Perhaps she is suggesting that her characters soliloquize, or that the process of recording mental language translates it to the verbal realm, or that her characters actually speak their thoughts to each other. In any case, her use of "said" makes the novel look like a conversation among six consciousnesses and forces the reader to read each consciousness in relation to the others, making connections and inferences among their unmediated thoughts without a narrator's help. I will trace the path of the shift toward a more independent relationship between the narrative voice and a character's consciousness from *Mrs. Dalloway* to *The Waves.*

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[21] Woolf's narrative preludes in *The Waves* may indeed have been influenced by early 20th century advances in camera technology. The objectivity of the narrative voice makes the chapter preludes sound more like photographic descriptions than literary landscapes. For more on Woof and photography, see Diane Gillespie's "Her Kodak Pointed at his Head" in *The Multiple Muses of Virginia Woolf.*

In the modernist style of showing rather than telling, Woolf's narrator in *Mrs. Dalloway* stands back and allows the language of a character's consciousness to remain unjudged by the narrative voice. Even in the rare passages where the narrative voice is clearly speaking, the narrator is objective and impersonal, as in the following passage:

> Yet rumours were at once in circulation from the middle of Bond Street to Oxford Street on one side, to Atkinson's scent shop on the other, passing invisibly, inaudibly, like a cloud, swift, veil-like upon hills, falling indeed with something of a cloud's sudden sobriety and stillness upon faces which a second before had been utterly disorderly. But now mystery had brushed them with her wing; they had heard the voice of authority; the spirit of religion was abroad with her eyes bandaged tight and her lips gaping wide. But nobody knew whose face had been seen. Was it the Prince of Wales's, the Queen's, the Prime Minister's? Whose face was it? Nobody knew. (20)

The narrator is detached (in that she stays outside of the scene she is describing and does not call attention to the opinions of the narrative voice) yet she infuses the scene with metaphoric meaning: "passing invisibly, inaudibly, like a cloud, swift, veil-like upon hills, falling indeed with something of a cloud's sudden sobriety and stillness upon faces which a second before had been utterly disorderly. But now mystery had brushed them with her wing…." The rumors that a famous person has passed by are described as having their origin in an impersonal force descending from above and this description could apply equally to the narrator, an impersonal voice that comments from a distance yet describes everyday occurrences as if they contained hidden meanings. The narrative voice, like the rumors in the crowd, "pass[es] invisibly, inaudibly, like a cloud… falling indeed with something of a cloud's sudden sobriety and stillness upon faces which a second before had been utterly disorderly." The transformation of the crowd by this "voice of authority" is a temporary condition that soon dissipates as the crowd returns to its everyday activities; likewise, the narrative voice exposes the hidden mystery in ordinary moments but then quiets herself again without revealing what the meaning of that mystery might be.

Time is fluid in *Mrs. Dalloway*; characters' thoughts shift continually between past and present. The use of the present tense indicates *interior*, rather than *narrated* monologue, because the latter technique maintains the past tense of narration. The perpetual shifting between psycho-narration and interior, quoted, and narrated monologue[22] makes the relationship of present to past more complex, because passages that are grammatically present tense frequently turn out to be imbedded in the past tense of psycho-narration. The reader moves from the present tense of Clarissa opening the windows on the morning of her party to her memory of opening those same windows thirty years before: "What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her, when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave: the kiss of a wave: chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen." (3) The parenthetic time marker can be read either as the narrator's statement or as Clarissa's narrated monologue without any change in meaning and the rest of the passage is clearly from Clarissa's point of view, from the unmarked quoted monologue with which the passage opens ("What a lark! What a plunge!") to the psycho-narration or narrated monologue with which it continues ("For so it had always seemed to her, when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now…"). This sentence could be read as psycho-narration because of the presence of the mental verb *to seem*, but it seems more likely to be Clarissa's narrated monologue, because she is a character who thinks about thinking, and reflects on memories. The *so* also helps to locate the reader in Clarissa's consciousness, linking the two sentences together and grounding them in her consciousness. In a sense, it hardly matters whose voice it is, Clarissa's or the narrator's, because the narrator does not add anything to Clarissa's mental words but stays as effaced as possible, maintaining a relationship neither of irony nor of sympathy but of detachment.

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[22] These terms are explained in my Introduction, pages 5-7.

The need for mental space between individuals is a repeated theme of Clarissa's narrated monologues: "For in marriage a little licence, a little independence there must be between people living together day in day out in the same house; which Richard gave her and she him." (10) This mental space is a sign of health in a marriage: "And there is a dignity in people; a solitude; even between husband and wife a gulf; and that one must respect, thought Clarissa, watching him open the door; for one would not part with it oneself, or take it, against his will, from one's husband, without losing one's independence, one's self-respect—something, after all, priceless." (181) She frequently feels removed from the distinguishing aspects of identity and personality: "She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street, this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway." (14) Clarissa's motherhood "could not dispel a virginity preserved through childbirth which clung to her like a sheet." (46) The odd bed image of Clarissa wrapped in sheet-like virginity calls to mind a baby in swaddling clothes and a shrouded corpse; the image is at once protective and morbid. Clarissa has the sensation of being an outside observer of her own life; the emotional isolation she often experiences is replicated by a narrative voice characterized by both respectful detachment and lonely isolation. There is a sense of aloofness that is maintained by the narrative voice, which stays objective and evenhanded in its relationship to Clarissa: "She sliced like a knife through everything; at the same time was outside, looking on. She had a perpetual sense, as she watched the taxi cabs, of being out, out, far out to sea and alone." (11) In this way, the emotional impasse between narrator and character replicates the gap that exists between one character and another.

Yet Clarissa clearly struggles between the opposite poles of detachment and engagement in a way that the narrative voice does not. The narrative voice remains calm and self-contained but Clarissa's emotional dependencies reveal themselves as she prepares for her party: "how much she wanted it—that people should look pleased as she came in." (13) Clarissa has an unruffled calm that belies her true condition; seemingly trivial events trigger strong emotional responses for her: "For the surface agitation of the passing car as it sunk grazed something very profound." (26) Clarissa's internal struggle between emotional detachment and engagement is underscored by the cool objectivity of the narrative voice: "Mrs. Dalloway, coming to the window with her arms full of sweet peas, looked out with her little pink face pursed in enquiry. Every one looked at the motor car. Septimus looked. Boys on bicycles sprang off. Traffic accumulated." (21) Clarissa's need to bring people together for a party, to forge connections between those who would otherwise not meet, is offered to the reader in question form and the narrator leaves Clarissa's question unanswered: "But to go deeper, beneath what people said (and these judgements, how superficial, how fragmentary they are!) in her own mind now, what did it mean to her, this thing she called life? Oh, it was very queer. Here was So-and-so in South Kensington; someone up in Bayswater; and somebody else, say, in Mayfair. And she felt quite continuously a sense of their existence; and she felt what a waste; and she felt what a pity; and she felt if only they could be brought together; so she did it. And it was an offering; to combine, to create; but to whom?" (185) The narrator looks not *at* but *through* Clarissa, never judging her apart from her own thoughts and words. Whereas Austen and Eliot are not shy about imparting morals and meanings in their novels, Woolf leaves the reader to decide what to make of a character's thoughts.

Narrated monologue in *Mrs. Dalloway* frequently reveals Clarissa's internal struggle to maintain a placid surface, as we see in the passage that describes what

Clarissa sees when she purses her lips and gazes at the mirror versus the anxieties and jealousies that lurk beneath the attractive reflection:

> That was her self—pointed; dartlike; definite. That was her self when some effort, some call on her to be her self, drew the parts together, she alone knew how different, how incompatible and composed so for the world only into one centre, one diamond, one woman who sat in her drawing-room and made a meeting-point, a radiancy no doubt in some dull lives, a refuge for the lonely to come to, perhaps; she had helped young people, who were grateful to her; had tried to be the same always, never showing a sign of all the other sides of her—faults, jealousies, vanities, suspicions, like this of Lady Bruton not asking her to lunch; which, she thought (combing her hair finally), is utterly base! (55)

The passage reads at first as if it is spoken by the narrative voice, because of its cool, objective tone ("That was her self—pointed; dartlike; definite"). By the end of the passage, however, Clarissa's voice in the narrated monologue is unmistakable. Her suppressed emotions emerge and the reader hears, without narrative comment, her admission that, despite her apparent calm, Lady Bruton's rudeness in not inviting her to lunch has rankled her deeply: "she had helped young people, who were grateful to her; had tried to be the same always, never showing a sign of all the other sides of her—faults, jealousies, vanities, suspicions, like this of Lady Bruton not asking her to lunch; which, she thought (combing her hair finally), is utterly base!" Clarissa would never admit to anyone that she is bothered by Lady Bruton's omission and the gap between Clarissa's thoughts and speech is left to speak for itself; the reader is meant to observe it and to note the contradiction without help from the narrator as to what to conclude from it.

Clarissa's emotional attachments betray themselves more clearly against the cool objectivity of the narrative voice. The narrative voice reports key moments of a character's consciousness in an understated, neutral manner, as in the description of Septimus's emotional isolation: "Far away he heard her sobbing; he heard it accurately, he noticed it distinctly; he compared it to a piston thumping. But he felt nothing." (136) The psycho-narration of Septimus's experience reports his inability to feel and does not comment upon it. The detachment of the narrative voice creates an atmosphere of understatement against which events and emotions are depicted but not elucidated.

The narrator moves seamlessly from one character's consciousness to another's without forging connections between characters. Austen and Eliot use narrated monologue to demonstrate the gaps between the heroine's consciousness and that of those around her, but they bridge those gaps and depict the heroine's development toward a similar awareness of others' consciousnesses. Woolf uses narrated monologue to demonstrate the gaps between characters' consciousnesses but neither her narrative voice nor her heroine attempts to forge connections between one consciousness and another. This distinction in the way Woolf uses the technique reflects a shift away from the instructive role of the narrative voice in Austen and Eliot in the ethical development of the heroine. Woolf's heroine's voice does not develop in the direction of the narrative voice as Austen's and Eliot's heroines do (or attempt to do); Clarissa neither transcends the limits of her own consciousness nor imitates the narrator's ability to imagine another's consciousness. The narrative voice does not make meaning of Clarissa's consciousness and Clarissa cannot make meaning of the consciousnesses of those around her.

Yet this is not to say that Woolf's narrative voice is definable only by negatives; the value of what I will call *detached reflection* (taken from the narrator's description of Milly Brush as "sunk in these reflections of a detached spirit," 162) is exemplified by the narrative voice and shared, at key moments, by characters: "The compensation of growing old, Peter Walsh thought, coming out of Regent's Park, and holding his hat in hand, was simply this: that the passions remain as strong as ever, but one has gained—at last!—the power which adds the supreme flavour to existence,—the power of taking hold of experience, of turning it round, slowly, in the light." (119) Peter Walsh's description of detached reflection resembles Wordsworth's "emotion recollected in tranquility": "There was a mystery about it. You were given a sharp, acute, uncomfortable grain—the actual meeting; horribly painful as often as not; yet in absence, in the most unlikely places, it would flower out, open, shed its scent, let you touch, taste, look about you, get the whole feel of it and understanding, after years of lying lost." (232) Peter's anxious awareness of his continued need for others is accompanied by palpable relief that he has grown more detached from his own experiences: "the past enriched, and experience, and having cared for one or two people, and so having acquired the power which the young lack, of cutting short, doing what one likes, not caring a rap what people say and coming and going without any very great expectations." (247) The figure of the old woman whom Clarissa observes from her window also embodies the virtue of detachment: "She was going to bed, in the room opposite. It was fascinating to watch her, moving about, that old lady, crossing the room, coming to the window. Could she see her? It was fascinating, with people still laughing and shouting in the drawing-room, to watch that old woman, quite quietly, going to bed." (283) The old lady has watched the world from her window for many years without fearing what she sees. Watching the old lady provides Clarissa with a touchstone of detachment as she compares her own shock at the story of Septimus's suicide with the old lady's disengagement: "There! the old lady had put out her light! the whole house was dark now with this going on, she repeated, and the words came to her, Fear no more the heat of the sun." (283) Clarissa sees the old lady's calm routine as the embodiment of a maxim that she recites to herself in order to enter a more peaceful state of mind.

Woolf allies the concept of detachment to the creation of art in *A Room of One's Own*. She describes detachment from the author's personality and from personal grievances as necessary for great writing:

> The reason perhaps why we know so little of Shakespeare—compared with Donne or Ben Jonson or Milton—is that his grudges and spites and antipathies are hidden from us. We are not held up by some "revelation" which reminds us of the writer. All desire to protest, to preach, to proclaim an injury, to pay off a score, to make the world the witness of some hardship or grievance was fired out of him and consumed. Therefore his poetry flows from him free and unimpeded. If ever a human being got his work expressed completely, it was Shakespeare. If ever a mind was incandescent, unimpeded, I thought, turning again to the bookcase, it was Shakespeare's mind. (*Room of One's Own* 56-67)

Woolf sees Charlotte Bronte's lack of detachment as a great impediment to her writing of *Jane Eyre*: "One might say, I continued, laying the book down beside *Pride and Prejudice*, that the woman who wrote those pages had more genius in her than Jane Austen; but if one reads them over and marks that jerk in them, that indignation, one sees that she will never get her genius expressed whole and entire. Her books will be deformed and twisted. She will write in a rage where she should write calmly. She will write foolishly where she should write wisely. She will write of herself where she should write of her characters." (*Room* 60-70) Woolf believes that Bronte's anger impedes her artistry: "Now, in the passages I have quoted from *Jane Eyre*, it is clear that anger was tampering with the integrity of Charlotte Bronte the novelist. She left her story, to which her entire devotion was due, to attend to some personal grievance. She remembered that she had been starved of her proper due of experience—she had been made to stagnate in a parsonage mending stockings when she wanted to wander free over the world. Her imagination swerved from indignation and we feel it swerve." (*Room* 73) Woolf makes a similar remark on George Eliot's emotional investment in her heroines:

> In accounting for her failure, in so far as it was a failure, one recollects that she never wrote a story until she was thirty-seven, and that by the time she was thirty-seven she had come to think of herself with a mixture of pain and something like resentment. For long she preferred not to think of herself at all. Then, when the first flush of creative energy was exhausted and self-confidence had come to her, she wrote more and more from the personal standpoint, but she did so without the unhesitating abandonment of the young. Her self-consciousness is always marked when her heroines say what she herself would have said. (*Essays*, Vol. 1, 202)

Woolf, as her assessments of Bronte and Eliot suggest, constructs a narrative voice that is calm, unemotional, and impersonal.

The narrator maintains a position of detachment as she shifts back and forth among various characters' consciousnesses without transition, as we see in the following passage, where narrated monologue is separated from quoted speech by parentheses, and the first parentheses contain Clarissa's narrated monologue, the second, Lady Bruton's: "'Oh, perfectly well!' said Clarissa. (Lady Bruton detested illness in the wives of politicians.) 'And there's Peter Walsh!' said Lady Bruton (for she could never think of anything to say to Clarissa; though she liked her. She had lots of fine qualities; but they had nothing in common—she and Clarissa. It might have been better if Richard had married a woman with less charm, who would have helped him more in his work. He had lost his chance of the Cabinet)." (273) The parenthetical placement of their respective unspoken thoughts heightens the reader's awareness of the gaps that conversation cannot acknowledge. In the following passage, the narrator moves without transition from Sally Seton's words to Elizabeth's thoughts of what Willie Titcomb is thinking about her, to Elizabeth's own thoughts, to Peter Walsh's statement about Elizabeth: "And that very handsome, very self-possessed young woman was Elizabeth, over there, by the curtains, in red. (She was like a poplar, she was like a river, she was like a hyacinth, Willie Titcomb was thinking. Oh how much nicer to be in the country and do what she liked! She could hear her poor dog howling, Elizabeth was certain.) She was not a bit like Clarissa, Peter Walsh said." (287) The gap between one character's consciousness and another's is marked but not bridged by the narrative voice.

Peter Walsh describes marriage as a coercive thrusting of another's consciousness onto one's own: "With twice his wits, she had to see things through his eyes—one of the tragedies of married life." (116) He rejoices in the inviolability of his thoughts: "For hours at a time (pray God that one might say these things without being overheard!), for hours and days he never thought of Daisy." (120) Relieved that others cannot know his thoughts, Peter is cut off from others' thoughts as well: "He never knew what people thought. It became more and more difficult for him to concentrate. He became absorbed; he became busied with his own concerns; now surly, now gay; dependent on women, absent-minded, moody, less and less able (so he thought as he shaved) to understand why Clarissa couldn't simply find them a lodging and be nice to Daisy; introduce her." (240) He is painfully limited in his ability to guess Clarissa's thoughts: "she had her reserves; it was a mere sketch, he often felt, that even he, after all these years, could make of Clarissa." (118) Clarissa, too, feels unable to understand another's thoughts and feelings: "she knew nothing about them, only jumped to conclusions, as one does, for what can one know even of the people one lives with every day? she asked. Are we not all prisoners? She had read a wonderful play about a man who scratched on the wall of his cell, and she had felt that was true of life—one scratched on the wall." (294) The ability of one character to perceive another's consciousness is viewed with doubt and this skepticism elucidates the restraint of the narrative voice in bridging the gap between characters' consciousnesses.

Peter Walsh describes the incommunicability of key experiences that would make no sense to another: "Well, I've had my fun; I've had it, he thought, looking up at the swinging baskets of pale geraniums. And it was smashed to atoms—his fun, for it was half made up, as he knew very well; invented, this escapade with the girl; made up, as one makes up the better part of life, he thought—making oneself up; making her up; creating an exquisite amusement, and something more. But odd it was, and quite true; all this one could never share—it smashed to atoms." (81) Septimus's deluded belief in his own ability to perceive another's thoughts increases rather than relieves his isolation: "He would argue with her about killing themselves; and explain how wicked people were; how he could see them making up lies as they passed in the street. He knew all their thoughts, he said; he knew everything. He knew the meaning of the world, he said." (100) The incommunicability of individual consciousness is underscored, and the ability to penetrate another's point of view is cast into doubt.

Peter Walsh, like Septimus Smith, is occasionally overwhelmed by feelings of connection to the lives of others but the experience is ephemeral and, for Peter, a sign of the emotional vulnerability that gets him into scrapes: "It was as if he were sucked up to some very high roof by that rush of emotion and the rest of him, like a white shell-sprinkled beach, left bare. It had been his undoing in Anglo-Indian society—this susceptibility." (230) Peter's ephemeral feelings of connection do not allow him access to another's thoughts; indeed, these feelings tend to occur at moments of contrast, as when the sound of an ambulance rushing by causes vague sensations of excitement and relief at his own position of detached involvement in the greater world. Rezia Smith, too, looks for meaning she cannot find in the confusion of her husband's illness: "Since she was so unhappy, for weeks and weeks now, Rezia had given meanings to things that happened." (125) The emotional isolation of the characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* is unrelieved by the possibility of becoming aware of another's consciousness; in fact, the ability to make meaning of another's thoughts and actions is continually undermined by the narrative voice.

The possibility of understanding another's thoughts and feelings is rendered yet more dubious by Sir William Bradshaw's "reputation (of the utmost importance in dealing with nerve cases) not merely of lightning skill, and almost infallible accuracy in diagnosis but of sympathy; tact; understanding of the human soul." (144) Sir William's "sympathy" is an exercise of his own power rather than an openness to another's point of view. The narrative voice, usually calm and impartial, is uncharacteristically clear in its condemnation of Sir William. His view of "proportion" is allied to England's imperialist project and is related to the projection of one's own image onto others:

> But proportion has a sister, less smiling, more formidable, a Goddess even now engaged—in the heat and sands of India, the mud and swamp of Africa, the purlieus of London, wherever in short the climate or the devil tempts men to fall from the true belief which is her own—is even now engaged in dashing down shrines, smashing idols, and setting up in their place her own stern countenance. Conversion is her name and she feasts on the wills of the weakly, loving to impress, to impose, adoring her own features stamped on the face of the populace. At Hyde Park Corner on a tub she stands preaching; shrouds herself in white and walks penitentially disguised as brotherly love through factories and parliaments; offers help, but desires power; smites out of her way roughly the dissentient, or

> dissatisfied; bestows her blessing on those who, looking upward, catch submissively from her eyes the light of their own. (151)

The moral disgust which the narrative voice shows for Sir William is marked: "Naked, defenceless, the exhausted, the friendless received the impress of Sir William's will. He swooped; he devoured. He shut people up." (154) The traits the narrative voice disdains in Sir William (his power to destroy through "sympathy," his ability to condemn and "convert") shed light on the narrator's preference for detachment and isolation over censure and sympathy.

Sir William personifies the sinister lust for power that D.A. Miller identifies with the omniscient narrator's ability to reproach and repress; the narrative voice, in her open condemnation of Sir William, is revealing a similar mistrust for those who stand in judgment over others: "Worshipping proportion, Sir William not only prospered himself but made England prosper, secluded her lunatics, forbade childbirth, penalized despair, made it impossible for the unfit to propagate their views until they, too, shared his sense of proportion." (150) Sir William's sinister "sympathy" calls to mind Miller's view of the construction of a "normalized" subject through institutionalized discipline and surveillance: "The Panopticon, where it matters less that the inmates may at any moment be watched than that they know this, only begins to suggest the extent to which disciplinary order relies on a subjectivity that, through a rich array of spiritual management techniques, it compels to endless self-examination." (*Novel and Police* 17) In depicting Sir William, the narrator's normally neutral tone becomes emotionally charged, as we see in the following passage, which begins calmly but ends with marked agitation:

> Sir William had a friend in Surrey where they taught, what Sir William frankly admitted was a difficult art—a sense of proportion. There were, moreover, family affection; honour; courage; and a brilliant career. All of these had in Sir William a resolute champion. If they failed him, he had to support police and the good of society, which, he remarked very quietly, would take care, down in Surrey, that these unsocial impulses, bred more than anything by the lack of good blood, were held in control. And then stole out from her hiding-place and mounted her throne that Goddess whose lust is to override opposition, to stamp indelibly in the sanctuaries of others the image of herself. (154)

Sir William's "sympathy" reveals itself as the ability to control and convert, a power that Woolf consistently avoids in the narrative voice she constructs. Given the narrative description of "sympathy" as a lustful and despotic Goddess stamping her own image on others, Woolf's effaced and neutral narrative voice can be seen to reveal a corresponding disinclination to press its own opinions on readers.

The shift to the authorial voice in depicting Sir William is dramatic and, while Dr. Holmes is condemned as well, it is significant that only Sir William's sinister power to destroy through "sympathy" causes the narrator to speak at length in the authorial voice. The reader's perception of Dr. Holmes, in contrast, is shaped by Septimus's consciousness of him: "[Septimus] was too weak; he could scarcely raise his hand. Besides, now that he was quite alone, condemned, deserted, as those who are about to die are alone, there was a luxury in it, an isolation full of sublimity; a freedom which the attached can never know. Holmes had won of course; the brute with the red nostrils had won." (140) Septimus sees Holmes as a conqueror, reinforcing the narrator's equation of sham sympathy and imperialism by depicting the image of Holmes as a subjugating monster in Septimus's own thoughts. Likewise, Miss Kilman is hated by Clarissa (and vice versa), Hugh Whitbread has his detractors, but none of these characters is discussed in the authorial voice. Miss Kilman is depicted in the language of Clarissa's consciousness: "The cruelest things in the world, she thought, seeing them clumsy, hot, domineering, hypocritical, eavesdropping, jealous, infinitely cruel and unscrupulous, dressed in a mackintosh coat, on the landing; love and religion. Had she ever tried to convert any one herself? Did she not wish everybody merely to be themselves?" (191) Likewise, the reader has access to Miss Kilman's thoughts on Clarissa: "She despised Mrs. Dalloway from the bottom of her heart. She was not serious. She was not good. Her life was a tissue of vanity and deceit." (194) Similarly, the reader has access to Richard's view of Hugh: "Why these people stood that damned insolence he could not conceive. Hugh was becoming an intolerable ass. Richard Dalloway could not stand more than an hour of his society." (173) The reticence of Woolf's narrative voice to speak authorially makes the open condemnation of Sir William all the more remarkable.

There are a few other moments when the narrator expresses an opinion that is separate from the point of view of the character whose consciousness is being narrated, as in the following passage, where the narrative voice dips in and out of Lady Bruton's thoughts but adds her own judgments:

> Hugh was very slow, Lady Bruton thought. He was getting fat, she noticed. Richard always kept himself in the pink of condition. She was getting impatient; the whole of her being was setting positively, undeniably, domineeringly brushing aside all this unnecessary trifling (Peter Walsh and his affairs) upon that subject which engaged her attention…that project for emigrating young people of both sexes born of respectable parents and setting them up with a fair prospect of doing well in Canada. She exaggerated. She had perhaps lost her sense of proportion. Emigration was not to others the obvious remedy, the sublime conception. It was not to them (not to Hugh, or Richard, or even to devoted Miss Brush) the liberator of the pent egotism, which a strong martial woman, well nourished, well descended, of direct impulses, downright feelings, and little introspective power (broad and simple—why could not every one be broad and simple? she asked) feels rise within her, once youth is past, and must eject upon some object—it may be Emigration, it may be Emancipation; but whatever it be, this object round

> which the essence of her soul is daily secreted, becomes invariably prismatic, lustrous, half looking-glass, half precious stone; now carefully hidden in case people should sneer at it; now proudly displayed. Emigration had become, in short, largely Lady Bruton. (164-65)

The passage begins with unmarked quoted monologue ("Hugh was very slow, Lady Bruton thought. He was getting fat, she noticed.") followed by narrated monologue: "Richard always kept himself in the pink of condition." The narrative voice becomes discernible in the description of Lady Bruton: "the whole of her being was setting positively, undeniably, domineeringly brushing aside all this unnecessary trifling." Lady Bruton would surely not describe herself as "domineering" and the pride in her own lack of introspection (her *simplicity*) that she demonstrates later in the passage suggests that, in any case, she does not analyze her motivations. When Lady Bruton describes herself as "broad and simple" the narrative voice uses this description to reveal more than Lady Bruton knows about herself: "a strong martial woman, well nourished, well descended, of direct impulses, downright feelings, and little introspective power (broad and simple—why could not every one be broad and simple? she asked)." The narrative voice's description of Lady Bruton's *broadness* and *simplicity* translates what Lady Bruton considers to be positive traits into more condescending language: "well nourished, well descended…little introspective power." The narrative voice is discernible again in the judgment of Lady Bruton's interest in Emigration as obsessive and egotistical: "this object round which the essence of her soul is daily secreted, becomes invariably prismatic, lustrous, half looking-glass, half precious stone; now carefully hidden in case people should sneer at it; now proudly displayed." The narrator's careful analysis of Lady Bruton's motivations exposes the egotism that Lady Bruton's lack of introspection prevents her from seeing. The passage ends with the narrative statement, "Emigration had become, in short, largely Lady Bruton." The humorous placement of the adjective *short* beside the adverb *largely* (as well as the secondary meaning of the verb *become*: to increase the attractiveness of) demonstrates further ironic distancing from Lady Bruton's pride in her own physique.

Yet Lady Bruton's lack of introspection does not earn her the unanimous disapproval of her friends or of the narrative voice. Because of Sir William's use of the phrase "sense of proportion" to control his patients, there is an equivocality in the description of Lady Bruton as "ha[ving] perhaps lost her sense of proportion." The value of *proportion* is clearly questioned by the narrative voice and Lady Bruton is not condemned for her lack of it. Despite the narrator's analysis of Lady Bruton's weaknesses in the above passage, Lady Bruton is respected by characters whose opinions the reader has no reason to dismiss, including Richard Dalloway and Peter Walsh, whose narrated monologue confers upon her a vague historical significance: "But she derived from the eighteenth century. She was all right." (264) The narrator distances herself from Lady Bruton but does not denounce her. Sir William alone, in his sinister breed of "sympathy," stands unequivocally condemned by the narrative voice.

Even observations that seem to belong to the narrator can, upon close examination, usually be assigned to a character: "Nodding urbanely, the Professor stepped delicately off. 'He knows everything in the whole world about Milton,' said Clarissa. 'Does he indeed?' said Hutton, who would imitate the Professor throughout Hampstead; the Professor on Milton; the Professor on moderation; the Professor stepping delicately off." (269) The first sentence of this passage at first sounds like it is spoken by the narrative voice, but its repetition at the end of the passage suggests that it may have originated in Hutton’s consciousness, for it makes no sense to read Hutton as hearing the narrator’s description. In other words, most of the descriptive content of the novel originates in the consciousnesses of its characters. The depiction of Clarissa, likewise, is through narrated monologues (her own, Peter Walsh’s, Miss Kilmer’s) to which the narrator adds little or nothing. Clarissa’s narrated monologue reveals her own anxieties about what kind of person she is, and the narrative voice makes no comment: “Somehow it was her disaster—her disgrace. It was her punishment to see sink and disappear here a man, there a woman, in this profound darkness, and she forced to stand here in her evening dress. She had schemed; she had pilfered. She was never wholly admirable. She had wanted success. Lady Bexborough and the rest of it. And once she had walked on the terrace at Bourton.” (282) The narrative voice reports Clarissa’s thoughts without adding a word to emphasize or to ease the impression on the reader of Clarissa’s self-blame. This narrative detachment represents a shift away from the intimately fused relationship between the voices of narrator and heroine embedded in the novels of Austen and Eliot.

The detached relationship between narrator and heroine in *Mrs. Dalloway* gives way, in *The Waves*, to a seemingly unnarrated depiction of six consciousnesses. In *The Waves*, the reader has unmediated access to the consciousnesses of three boys and three girls; the reader navigates these consciousnesses without the help of a narrative voice to explain or make meaning. On her first night at school, Rhoda considers, “But here I am nobody. I have no face. This great company, all dressed in brown serge, has robbed me of my identity. We are all callous, unfriended. I will seek out a face, a composed, a monumental face, and will endow it with omniscience, and wear it under my dress like a talisman and then (I promise this) I will find some dingle in a wood where I can display my assortment of curious treasures. I promise myself this. So I will not cry." (33) Rhoda, however, never finds a face "to endow with omniscience;" like the reader, she ventures forth without an omniscient guide.

A repeated theme of various characters' thoughts involves the way that people transform each other through their interactions and through language. Jinny responds instinctively to the attentions of a stranger on a train: "I see him lower his paper. He smiles at my reflection in the tunnel. My body instantly of its own accord puts forth a frill under his gaze." (63)[23] Bernard makes a similar observation later in the novel: "I need eyes on me to draw out these frills and furbelows." (116) Just as the smile of a stranger opens Jinny to another's influence, so can disapproval shut her down: "But behold, looking up, I meet the eyes of a sour woman, who suspects me of rapture. My body shuts in her face, impertinently, like a parasol." (63) Neville ponders a similar self-transformation at the sight of Bernard: "How curiously one is changed by the addition, even at a distance, of a friend. How useful an office one's friends perform when they recall us. Yet how painful to be recalled, to be mitigated, to have one's self adulterated, mixed up, become part of another. As he approaches I become not myself but Neville mixed with somebody—with whom?—with Bernard? Yes, it is Bernard, and it is to Bernard that I shall put the question, Who am I?" (83) The vulnerability of one's consciousness as it makes contact with another's is repeatedly depicted, frequently with anxiety.

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[23] This recalls a similar passage in *Mrs. Dalloway*: "She loved Lords; she loved youth, and Nancy, dressed at enormous expense by the greatest artists in Paris, stood there looking as if her body had merely put forth, of its own accord, a green frill." (270)

The transformative effect of one person's consciousness on another's is echoed in the narrative preludes that introduce each chapter by describing the way that the sun changes the appearance of the earthly objects against which it rises and falls: "The sun fell on cornfields and woods. Rivers became blue, and many-plaited, lawns that sloped down to the water's edge became green as birds' feathers softly ruffling their plumes." (108) Objects take on new emphasis and exaggerated identities under the influence of the sun's rising:

> The sun fell in sharp wedges inside the room. Whatever the light touched became dowered with a fanatical existence. A plate was like a white lake. A knife looked like a dagger of ice. Suddenly tumblers revealed themselves upheld by streaks of light. Tables and chairs rose to the surface as if they had been sunk under water and rose, filmed with red, orange, purple like the bloom on the skin of ripe fruit. The veins on the glaze of the china, the grain of the wood, the fibres of the matting became more and more finely engraved. Everything was without shadow. A jar was so green that the eye seemed sucked up through a funnel by its intensity and stuck to it like a limpet." (110)

Neville's anticipation of Percival's arrival recalls the narrative description of the sun rising: "This is the place to which he is coming. This is the table at which he will sit. Here, incredible as it seems, will be his actual body. This table, these chairs, this metal vase with its three red flowers are about to undergo an extraordinary transformation. Already the room, with its swing-doors, its tables heaped with fruit, with cold joints, wears the wavering, unreal appearance of a place where one waits expecting something to happen. Things quiver as if not yet in being." (118) Percival's arrival is like the sun rising: "But when you come everything changes. The cups and saucers changed when you came in this morning." (178) The presence of the waiter also exerts an influence similar to the sun's rising: "The waiter stops. The diners at the table by the door look. She seems to centre everything; round her tables, lines of doors, windows, ceilings, ray themselves, like rays round the star in the middle of a smashed window-pane. She brings things to a point, to order.[24] Now she sees us, and moves, and all the rays ripple and flow and waver over us, bringing in new tides of sensation. We change. Louis puts his hand to his tie. Neville, who sits waiting with agonized intensity, nervously straightens the forks in front of him. Rhoda sees her with surprise, as if on some far horizon a fire blazed." (120-21) The absence of Percival causes a shadow to fall on the company, as if the sun is setting: "But without Percival there is no solidity. We are silhouettes, hollow phantoms moving mistily without a background." (122) Identity is always altered through interaction with another and this explains the narrator's reluctance to interact with her characters: she allows their consciousnesses to exist independently of hers so that her narrative presence will not distort them in any way.

The reluctance to intermingle the narrative voice with the voice of a character's consciousness marks Woolf's break with Austen and Eliot. Consciousness of another's consciousness, a precursor to sympathy in Austen and Eliot, is represented as potentially distorting in *The Waves*: "Yet how painful to be recalled, to be mitigated, to have one's self adulterated, mixed up, become part of another." (83) Woolf's characters express the pain of another's unsolicited intrusions: "Like a long wave, like a roll of heavy waters, he went over me, his devastating presence—dragging me open, laying bare the pebbles on the shore of my soul. It was humiliating; I was turned to small stones. All semblances were rolled up. 'You are not Byron; you are your self.' To be contracted by another person into a single being—how strange." (89) To be released from the influence of another's consciousness is to be liberated:

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[24] This recalls the passage in *Mrs. Dalloway* that describes Clarissa looking at her

> But now, how comfortable, how reassuring to feel that alien presence removed, that scrutiny darkened and hooded over! How grateful to draw the blinds, and admit no other presence; to feel returning from the dark corners in which they took refuge, those shabby inmates, those familiars, whom, with his superior force, he drove into hiding. The mocking, the observant spirits who, even in the crisis and stab of the moment watched on my behalf, now come flocking home again. With their addition, I am Bernard; I am Byron; I am this, that and the other. They darken the air and enrich me, as of old with their antics, their comments, and cloud the fine simplicity of my moment of emotion. For I am more selves than Neville thinks. We are not as simple as our friends would have us to meet their needs. (89)

The intrusion of another's imagined consciousness of Rhoda's thoughts has a destructive effect on Rhoda's daydream of being a Russian Empress: "'I am your Empress, people.' My attitude is one of defiance. I am fearless. I conquer. But this is a thin dream. This is a papery tree. Miss Lambert blows it down. Even the sight of her vanishing down the corridor blows it to atoms."(56)[25] To be aware of another's consciousness in *The Waves* is to remember with anxiety that others may try to penetrate one's own consciousness as well.

The detached isolation of the narrative voice makes sense in the context of the anxiety that Woolf's characters and narrator express about the suffocation of being with someone, sympathized with, and understood. Neville remarks on the unwelcome effect of Jinny's sympathetic presence, " 'But when you stand in the door,' said Neville, 'you inflict stillness, demanding admiration, and that is a great impediment to the freedom of intercourse. You stand in the door making us notice you.' "(129) The narrator's detachment from the consciousnesses of the characters of *The Waves* is consistent with Woolf's ambivalent view of sympathy as a form of power that can be too easily used to

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reflection in the mirror: "That was her self—pointed; dartlike; definite." (55)

[25] This recalls a passage in *Mrs. Dalloway* in which Clarissa resents the distorting effects of Peter's presence: "It was extraordinary how Peter put her into these states just by

manipulate and convert. Bernard's own reflections validate Neville's sense that sympathy is a sham: "I sympathize effusively; I also sit like a toad in a hole, receiving with perfect coldness whatever comes." (77) Sympathy is repeatedly depicted as a form of power over others: "'But you will never hate me,' said Jinny. 'You will never see me, even across a room full of gilt chairs and ambassadors, without coming to me across the room to seek my sympathy…. My body goes before me, like a lantern down a dark lane, bringing one thing after another out of darkness into a ring of light. I dazzle you; I make you believe that this is all.' " (129) Jinny's sympathy compels others to seek her and she consciously rejoices in her ability to *dazzle* and persuade. In "On Being Ill," which Woolf wrote while writing *The Waves*, Woolf describes relief at being away from another's sympathy: "We do not know our own souls, let alone the souls of others. Human beings do not go hand in hand the whole stretch of the way…. Here we go alone, and like it better so. Always to have sympathy, always to be accompanied, always to be understood, would be intolerable." (*Essays*, Vol. 4, 196) The isolation of Woolf's narrative voice in chapter preludes protects her characters from the intrusions of sympathy and protects her own ability to *go alone*. There is limited interaction between the narrative voice and characters' consciousnesses and this separation is consistent with Woolf's skeptical view of the potentially distorting effects of sympathy.

The relief of being away from the glare of another's consciousness is akin to the softening effects of sunset after a glaring hot day in the sun. As Neville puts it, "I implored day to break into night. I have longed to see the cupboard dwindle, to feel the bed soften, to float suspended, to perceive lengthened trees, lengthened faces, a green

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coming and standing in a corner. He made her see herself; exaggerate. It was idiotic."

bank on a moor and two figures in distress saying good-bye." (205) The dissolving motion of waves contrasts appealingly to the defining but domineering illumination of sun: "We may sink and settle on the waves. The sea will drum in my ears. The white petals will be darkened with sea water. They will float for a moment and then sink. Rolling me over the waves will shoulder me under. Everything falls in a tremendous shower, dissolving me." (206) The narrative prologue similarly describes how the dissolving waves, like the setting sun, darken and transform: "A breeze rose; a shiver ran through the leaves; and thus stirred they lost their brown density and became grey or white as the tree shifted its mass, winked and lost its domed uniformity." (207) Others change us; solitude is welcome because it does not alter others: "Let me now raise my song of glory. Heaven be praised for solitude. Let me be alone. Let me cast and throw away this veil of being, this cloud that changes with the least breath, night and day, and all night and all day. While I sat here I have been changing. I have watched the sky change. I have seen clouds cover the stars, then free the stars, then cover the stars again. Now I look at their changing no more. Now no one sees me and I change no more." (294) The dissolving motion of shadows and waves, like Woolf's narrative voice, collapses the boundaries of individual consciousness and identity, making it impossible to perceive definite borders between them.

In a sense, Woolf's wariness of mixing the narrative voice with the voice of a character's consciousness expresses her sense that identity, because it is altered by its contact with another's consciousness, remains ultimately inexpressible except in terms of the collective consciousness that individuals share. Bernard comments, "I am not one

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(25)

person; I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am—Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda, or Louis: or how to distinguish my life from theirs." (276) One of the differences between Woolf and earlier novelists is that her characters are asking "Who am I?" as Emma, Anne, Maggie, and Dorothea are not. The more modern, more deracinated sense that identity might involve plural selves and interconnectedness with others' identities is a major shift. Because identity changes as one consciousness interacts with another, it is hard to know where one's identity begins and ends: "For this is not one life; nor do I always know if I am man or woman, Bernard or Neville, Louis, Susan, Jinny or Rhoda—so strange is the contact of one with another." (281) The thoughts of one character are frequently in (unspoken) dialogue with another's, as if to suggest that all consciousness is in dialogue without knowing it. Neville reflects with regard to Rhoda, "She looks far away over our heads, beyond India" and Rhoda's thoughts answer Neville's, "Yes, between your shoulders, over your heads, to a landscape." (139) When Rhoda reflects, "There is a dancing and a drumming, like the dancing and the drumming of naked men with assegais," Louis's thoughts seem to answer Rhoda's, "Like the dance of savages…." (140) One character's thoughts continue another's and the boundary between the six consciousnesses is permeable and collapsible.

The overlap of vocabulary and imagery between the narrative voice and the six consciousnesses narrated is remarkable throughout the novel, indicating a collapsing of the boundary between *narrator* and characters that is similar to the collapsed boundary implied by plural selves. Although the narrator and the characters' voices do not often interact grammatically in *The Waves* (because narrated monologue is avoided) the characters often repeat the narrator's imagery of water and sun. Louis compares the motion of the waves to a chained beast stamping ("The bird flies; the flower dances; but I hear always the sullen thud of the waves; and the chained beast stamps on the beach. It stamps and stamps," 58) and the narrative prologue repeats the image: "The waves fell; withdrew and fell again, like the thud of a great beast stamping." (150) *The Waves* depicts a world in which all consciousness is in (unconscious) dialogue; the lack of narrative voice to mediate that dialogue allows each consciousness to seem to construct itself from imagery that overlaps and repeats.

In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf emphasizes the relationship of women writers to each other across literary history and calls attention to Austen and Eliot as her own literary forerunners:

> Thus, towards the end of the eighteenth century a change came about which, if I were rewriting history, I should describe more fully and think of greater importance than the Crusades or the Wars of the Roses. The middle-class woman began to write. For if *Pride and Prejudice* matters, and *Middlemarch* and *Villette* and *Wuthering Heights* matter, then it matters far more than I can prove in an hour's discourse that women generally, and not merely the lonely aristocrat shut up in her country house among her folios and her flatterers, took to writing. Without those forerunners, Jane Austen and the Brontes and George Eliot could no more have written than Shakespeare could have written without Marlowe, or Marlowe without Chaucer, or Chaucer without those forgotten poets who paved the ways and tamed the natural savagery of the tongue. For masterpieces are not single and solitary births; they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common, of thinking by the body of the people, so that the experience of the mass is behind the single voice. Jane Austen should have laid a wreath upon the grave of Fanny Burney, and George Eliot done homage to the robust shade of Eliza Carter—the valiant old woman who tied a bell to her bedstead in order that she might wake early and learn Greek. All women together ought to let flowers fall upon the tomb of Aphra Behn which is, most scandalously but rather appropriately, in Westminster Abbey, for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds. (65-6)

She sees women writers as continuing each other's work: "For books continue each other, in spite of our habit of judging them separately. And I must also consider her—this unknown woman—as the descendant of all those other women whose circumstances I have been glancing at and see what she inherits of their characteristics and restrictions.” (*Room* 80) The relationship of a woman writer to her literary predecessors, though infused with gratitude, should not bind her to the same forms and conventions: “Yet who shall say that even now ‘the novel’ (I give it inverted commas to mark my sense of the words’ inadequacy), who shall say that even this most pliable of all forms is rightly shaped for her use? No doubt we shall find her knocking that into shape for herself when she has the free use of her limbs; and providing some new vehicle, not necessarily in verse, for the poetry in her.” (*Room* 77) Narrated monologue, perhaps, can be seen as one such “new vehicle” introduced by Austen and both inherited and reworked (“knock[ed]… into shape”) by her literary successors.

Woolf’s comments on what Austen might have accomplished had she lived a few more years seem more like a summary of what Austen actually achieved but Woolf’s extensive use of narrated monologue in *Mrs. Dalloway* expresses nonetheless her indebtedness to the narrative technique that Austen originated: “[Austen] would have devised a method, clear and composed as ever, but deeper and more suggestive, for conveying not only what people say, but what they leave unsaid…. She would have been the forerunner of Henry James and of Proust—but enough.” (*Essays*, Vol. 1, 153) Woolf’s emphasis on “what they leave unsaid” represents another shift of *The Waves*, the collapsing of the boundary between mental and spoken language. Rather than differentiate the language of thought from that of speech, *The Waves* collapses the boundary between the two, as in Woolf’s use of “said” rather than “thought” to describe a character’s consciousness. The grammatical mixing of thought and speech in *The Waves* makes it impossible to distinguish between what a character thinks and what a character says, a shift from Austen's clear demarcations. The boundary between narrative voice and figural consciousness is similarly questioned and fragmented and proves as collapsible as grammatical and semantic boundaries.

It is Woolf's sense that women writers must reflect the changes they perceive in human relations through an emotionally detached relationship to the passions of their own literary predecessors. With regard to Mary Carmichael, the woman writer Woolf constructs as her literary successor in *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf explains, "She had nothing like the love of Nature, the fiery imagination, the wild poetry, the brilliant wit, the brooding wisdom of her great predecessors, Lady Winchilsea, Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, Jane Austen and George Eliot…. But, nevertheless, she had certain advantages which women of far greater gift lacked even half a century ago… she need not climb on to the roof and ruin her peace of mind longing for travel, experience and a knowledge of the world and character that were denied her. Fear and hatred were almost gone, or traces of them showed only in a slight exaggeration of the joy of freedom…." (92) The emotional detachment Woolf describes (and struggles to attain in her own writing) allows characters and women writers an independent existence, unmarred by the emotional entanglements of women writers past.

Woolf's desire to free her characters from the personal likes and dislikes of the narrative voice is evident in her equal attention to the consciousnesses of characters other than the heroine. *Mrs. Dalloway*'s eponymous heroine shares the stage democratically with Septimus Smith and others; Woolf's novels are focalized through the minds of multiple characters and this necessarily weakens the relationship of the narrative voice to the heroine's voice by reducing its primacy. Woolf states that women writers need financial independence and privacy; her reluctance in *The Waves* to fuse her narrative voice with characters' voices implies that characters, like writers, need physical and emotional space:

> if we escape a little from the common sitting-room and see human beings not always in their relation to each other but in relation to reality; and the sky, too, and the trees or whatever they may be in themselves; if we look past Milton's bogey, for no human being should shut out the view; if we face the fact, for it is a fact, that there is no arm to cling to, but that we go alone and that our relation is to the world of reality and not only to the world of men and women, then the opportunity will come and the dead poet who was Shakespeare's sister will put on the body which she has so often laid down. (*Room* 113-14)

Ultimately, Woolf's uneasiness with the grammatical fusion of voices that narrated monologue requires may be explained in terms of the greater freedom that women writers of her day enjoyed to withdraw from the common sitting room. Where Austen and Eliot construct narrative voices with close relationships to their heroines, Woolf's narrative voice in *Mrs. Dalloway* treats the heroine the same way she treats her other characters, not because she likes her heroines less than Austen and Eliot do, but because the narrator's relationship to her characters is not what matters in Woolf's novels.

Woolf makes a similar point in "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," where she again expresses the limits of "sympathy" and its tendency to distract the writer from the object of sympathy herself: "With all his powers of observation, which are marvelous, with all his sympathy and humanity, which are great, Mr. Bennett has never once looked at Mrs. Brown in her corner…not one of the Edwardian writers has so much as looked at her. They have looked very powerfully, searchingly, and sympathetically out of the window; at factories, at Utopias, even at the decoration and upholstery of the carriage; but never at her, never at life, never at human nature." (*Essays*, Vol. 1, 330) Woolf implies that writers should give their characters metaphorical rooms of their own and not merely situate them in relation to their own opinions. By extension, she consciously refrains from judging her characters because she does not wish to alter a character's consciousness through contact with the narrative voice.

Woolf's shift away from narrated monologue in *The Waves* also reflects her sense that post-war modernity constitutes a break with the literary conventions of the past. In "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," Woolf describes the effects of the war on human relationships: "in or about December, 1910, human character changed…. All human relations have shifted—those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature." (*Essays*, Vol. 1, 330) Not only have relations between masters and servants (husbands and wives, etc.) changed, but so have relations between narrators and characters. In "War and the Politics of *Jacob's Room*," William Handley suggests that Woolf's narrative methods in *Jacob's Room* relate to her experience of war: "I would argue that the war is central to this aesthetic and ethical ambivalence about knowledge and representation of others. Where the war dehumanizes and leaves vacancies, the narrator wants to give a life and a body to Jacob; but where the war appropriates, the narrator is distanced and even powerless if she is not to reinscribe war's treatment of human beings as objects. The narrator's profound opposition to objectification detaches her from the objects of her aesthetic eye and heightens the consciousness of her own status as a subject…. Woolf's aesthetic project—her need to 'get at' reality differently from the Edwardian novelists, whose treatment of human beings as objectlike is homologous to their uses and abuses by socially hegemonic authority—is a fighting response to the war, to the hierarchical structure, culture, and rigid psychology of a society that pulls itself toward this destructive end." (*Woolf and War* 111) Accordingly, to penetrate Jacob's consciousness would be to dominate and direct him: "Summing up Jacob would be a hegemonic act in its presumed power to speak for him and would suggest a fixed knowledge and control that are entirely counterintuitive to the idea of being an outsider in relation to patriarchal structures." (127) Woolf's narrative detachment resists reproducing hierarchical structures and it also resists participating in propaganda. Handley's description of Woolf's narrator's resistance to propaganda in *Jacob's Room* could easily apply to *Mrs. Dalloway* or to *The Waves*: "Preserving the primacy of art over what Woolf calls 'propaganda' has everything to do with respecting the text as a text and the reader as a free agent. The narrator in *Jacob's Room* desires to know people not in order to tell them what to do or for their use or exchange value, but as ends in themselves. In telling people what to do, a writer unavoidably practices an authoritarian politics that Woolf wants to resist for both the reader's and the writer's sakes." (*Woolf and War* 113) By resisting a didactic or personal relationship to heroine/character and reader, Woolf protects her aesthetic integrity from power structures tainted by war.

In Woolf's narrative voice, the fear of sympathy relates to the fear of objectification. Bernard, the story-teller, also explores the difficulty of fictional representation of consciousness: "But stories that follow people into their private rooms are difficult. I cannot go on with this story. I twiddle a piece of string; I turn over four or five coins in my trouser pocket." (51) The stories he tells his friends, although entertaining, are distorted by his "sympathetic understanding" in a way that recalls Dr. Bradshaw's sinister sympathy in *Mrs. Dalloway*: " 'Bernard's stories amuse me', said Neville, 'at the start. But when they tail off absurdly and he gapes, twiddling a bit of string, I feel my own solitude. He sees every one with blurred edges. Hence I cannot talk to him of Percival. I cannot expose my absurd and violent passion to his sympathetic understanding. I, too, would make a 'story.' " (51) Neville reflects on Bernard's perpetual story-telling: "But what did Bernard feel for the plumber? Did he not only wish to continue the sequence of the story which he never stops telling himself? He began it when he rolled his bread into pellets as a child. One pellet was a man, one was a woman. We are all pellets. We are all phrases in Bernard's story, things he writes down in his notebook under A or B. He tells our story with extraordinary understanding, except of what we most feel. For he does not need us. He is never at our mercy." (70) Woolf's very reluctance to objectify her characters distances her from them emotionally, with the end result that, unlike Austen and Eliot, she has no personal relationship to the consciousnesses she narrates. Her narrative voice is characterized by a reluctance to sympathize and a fear of objectifying that explain her position of respectful detachment and isolation.

The modernist preference for literary open-endedness has much to offer in terms of acknowledging complexity and shunning simple solutions but we have lost as well as gained by the shift. Both Austen and Eliot construct narrative voices that help the reader to make judgments about characters and events but these judgments, controlled by a narrator with a morally complex worldview, enlarge the reader's ability to see things from various characters' points of view. Austen and Eliot use narrated monologue to join a character's subjective consciousness to the omniscient narrative voice that trains the reader to see beyond the confines of any one character's perspective. The reader is repeatedly exposed to narrated monologues of a given character's thoughts but is then, through the narrator's intervention, enabled to see more fully than any one character can see; in this way, narrated monologue constructs a reader that learns to transcend the limits of individual consciousness by imitating the narrative voice in its ability to see various perspectives at once.

From a contemporary standpoint colored by modern and postmodern skepticism regarding conventional omniscient narrators, the intimately fused relationships that Austen and Eliot construct with heroines may seem quaint but outdated. The close relationship between the narrative voice and the heroine's in Austen and Eliot represents a unique moment in literary history in which women writers at the height of their career construct heroines that develop in the direction of their own narrative voices. There is a perhaps a sense of audacity in constructing a heroine that learns to resemble one's own narrative voice and possibly the historical moment in which this could be done without bravado was necessarily brief. Woolf moves away from Austen's and Eliot's use of the technique for the same reason that she steps away from the common sitting room, to detach her art from the tyranny of her own (and other people's) likes and dislikes. This is a bold shift, liberating in the power it gives to the reader to draw his or her own conclusions in a literary world where characters do not fit into neat moral categories, but (intentionally) limiting in the shared inability of narrator, character and reader to make meaning of another's perspective (the narrator sees but does not explain more than a given character sees and understands). The shift away from a narrative voice that participates in the development of the heroine’s voice involves the loss of the narrative voice as role model, and the visionary role of Austen and Eliot in constructing not just the heroine’s but the reader’s ability to develop narrative skills is a debt we owe to their temerity: the reader learns to view the world as a vast arena of consciousnesses to be imagined, of monologues to be narrated.

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