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Images of the Hunter in American Life and Literature

by

Lynda Wolfe Coupe

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.

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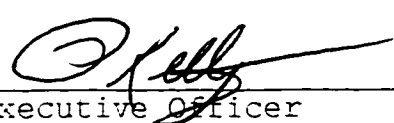
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Abstract

Images of the Hunter in American Life and Literature

by

Lynda Wolfe Coupe

Adviser: Professor William P. Kelly

Representations of the hunter appear in a variety of American literary texts and cultural contexts. This figure evolves throughout American history, reflecting the initial rebellion against European aristocracy and then the growing independent spirit of the new nation. The hunter's power derives from the skill to survive, and what is more, to thrive in the vast American landscape. He blazes the trail that makes settlement possible, but the hunter is a liminal figure, one who traverses opposing worlds of wilderness and civilization. He participates in both but does not completely belong to either, making him at once privileged and marginal.

As the nation grows, permutations of the hunter figure suggest shifts in the locus of power. Specifically, over time he represents the power to create the new nation, to develop it, to expand its power across the continent and the globe, to transcend degenerate forces that threaten it, and ultimately the

power for any American, male or female, to reinvent and define his/her identity. The hunter's practical skills, as well as his mythic connotations and the language used to describe him, all contribute to a changing concept of power.

I examine pairs of representative hunters from American literature and culture and how they reflect American concerns with landscape and identity, as well as gender and race. First, I consider Pocahontas and John Smith as metaphorical parents of the hunter figure. I then argue that Daniel Boone and Natty Bumppo embody the amalgamation of Indian and European into a distinctly American hunter. Next, I look at Theodore Roosevelt and William "Buffalo Bill" Cody as models of America's growing domestic and international power. I then argue that Isaac McCaslin from William Faulkner's "The Bear" and Ernest Hemingway overcome degenerate forces in the culture that threaten the individual. Finally, I see Thomas McGuane and Ayla from Auel's "The Clan of the Cave Bear" as figures that find the strength to redefine their identity through hunting. The pairs reflect oppositions of high/low, fictive/real, writer/figure, myth/history within American culture. They appear as actors in the unfolding events of their historical periods and/or as representations of American power in art and culture.

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A great deal has been written lately about attaining the Ph.D. in English, and especially about the merits of writing the dissertation. No one can possibly know what it is like unless he has been through it. There are so many people to whom I owe a great debt for supporting me through this process. First of all, I do not believe that I would have been able to finish graduate school and write the dissertation if I did not work for Pace University. I want to thank Bob Klaeger for keeping me employed in the Literature and Communications Department for twelve years as an adjunct. My supervisor and friend, Michael Gillen, has been a wonderful mentor from whom I have learned invaluable administrative skills in our efforts to help freshmen adjust to college life. The kindness of my friends has meant much to me. Rebecca Martin and Joe Franco assured me that completing the dissertation and the degree was indeed possible. Betty Cherico took me to dinner after I passed the orals. I am also grateful to Ruth Anne Thompson, Priscilla Denby, Ann Rodier, and Grace LaMacchia-Paris for their support.

I have to thank my advisor at CUNY, Bill Kelly, for his indefatigable editing of my draft and his kind but rigorous comments. I also wish to thank my committee, Joan Richardson and David Reynolds. Robert

Tilton and Jean Auel were very kind to address my questions either over the phone or by letter, and their work has been invaluable, as has that of Richard Slotkin, John Mack Faragher, Joel Williamson, James Mellow, Jane Tompkins, and Thomas McGuane. Most of all, my family and friends have been infinitely patient, and though they didn't always understand what in the world I was doing, they nonetheless had faith in me. My sisters, Susan Reif and Gail Adams, have had more faith in me than I have had in myself, and my brother, Walt Adams, has kept me laughing. I am just sorry my father, Donald Adams, did not live to see the outcome of this struggle because I am the eldest and only one of my father's many children to graduate from college and graduate school.

Finally, I have to thank my mother, Evelyn Wolfe, and my husband, John Coupe. My mother has been my inspiration. Her lifelong love of learning and her professionalism as an RN have served as a model that kept me going when obstacles seemed insurmountable. She has quietly and calmly persevered through personal and health crises, and continues to do so even now. My husband is my own Daniel Boone; it is he who generated my topic. Hunting and fishing with him has immersed me in the life of the woods, where I have experienced the moments of clarity and self-knowledge that I describe in my discussion of hunter figures.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, John Coupe; my mother, Evelyn Wolfe; and the memory of my father, Donald Adams.

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Introduction

Images of the Hunter in American Life and Literature

The mythology of a nation is the intelligible mask of that enigma called the "national character." Through myths the psychology and world view of our cultural ancestors are transmitted to modern descendants, in such a way and with such power that our perception of contemporary reality and our ability to function in the world are directly...affected.
(Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence* 3)

Several studies have tried to capture the nature of the American experience, using a single metaphor or system of symbols.¹ Many notable efforts have centered around the use of myth to explain conceptions of the "American character."² This study does not try to define the American experience in terms of a single, unifying myth. Rather it seeks to examine a cluster of images of the hunter. I argue that the hunter hero provides a focus for reading important issues in the culture across the span of American time.

I examine representations of the hunter figure in a variety of literary texts. Initially, the hunter reflects American rebellion against the power of European aristocracy. Gradually, the hunter redefines the term "aristocracy" to accommodate American concerns with landscape, identity, and race and gender. By the end of the nineteenth century, "individualism," in the form of personal independence and initiative, replaces "aristocracy," that is, the hereditary claim to

authority, as the basis of power in America. The hunter's power derives from his special place in the culture. The hunter is a liminal figure, one who traverses opposing worlds, able to participate in both, and yet, not fully belonging to either. He is at once privileged and marginal. The hunter's practical skills, as well as his mythic connotations and the language used to describe him, all contribute to this changing concept of power.

This study is organized chronologically, using pairs of representative figures from American literature, history, and popular culture. The pairs include: Pocahontas and John Smith; Daniel Boone and Nathaniel Bumppo from James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*; Theodore Roosevelt and William "Buffalo Bill" Cody; William Faulkner's Ike McCaslin from "The Bear" and Ernest Hemingway; and Thomas McGuane, the author and screenwriter, and Ayla from Jean Auel's *The Clan of the Cave Bear*.

The figures are all hunters, with the exception of Pocahontas and John Smith, who are "mythic compatriots"³ and "parents" of the American hunter. The pairs reflect oppositions of high/low, fictive/real, writer/figure, myth/history within the culture. They appear as actors in the unfolding events of their historical periods and/or as representations of American power in art and culture. For many of the

figures, they are simultaneously "actor" and artistic or cultural "representation."

In Chapter One, I suggest that John Smith and Pocahontas are metaphorical progenitors of the American hunter figure, who emerges, in the new Republic, as Daniel Boone. This hunter figure then evolves across the span of American time, serving as a barometer to gauge the social concerns of the nation. The rescue of Smith by Pocahontas functions as a creation myth and an important founding moment. The rescue unites them in the popular imagination. Smith and Pocahontas represent the power to create a new, distinctly American identity that subverts European notions of aristocracy. I will discuss "myth" and "aristocracy" as they apply to the role of the hunter, as well as how they provide insight for examining the relationship between Pocahontas and Smith.

I also discuss Pocahontas as a dual mother figure. She is at once symbolic mother to the hunter and literal mother, whose "descendants...became the 'nobility' of the Old Dominion," as Robert Tilton puts it (4). Her dual role reflects the tension between an ideal of racial amalgamation and a fear of miscegenation. This tension, in turn, establishes a borderline that the hunter crosses, one of many borderlines he crosses between different worlds. Thus, his primary characteristic is liminality. Pocahontas

and Smith bestow traits on the hunter figure from their cultures as well as from their own experience. That they crossed the barriers between their cultures and lived in each other's worlds is their primary legacy.

Chapter Two focuses on Daniel Boone as the first American hunter hero and Natty Bumppo as his literary reflection. Together they embody power to develop the new nation. Their roles as hunter/scouts and settlers of the frontier become a model for American independence. Simultaneously, they reject the European conception of aristocracy as inherited power. Their power results from individual prowess. Their ability to survive, and what is more important, to flourish in the wilderness, inspires the settlers' confidence in them and in what they represent. They are symbols of American independence. During their "lifetimes" America becomes a nation. As separate colonies united into one country, the American hunter figure amalgamated Indian and European traits into one figure. Boone is the first exemplar of this figure, followed by his literary image, Bumppo.

We must understand the contemporary connotations of "wilderness" to appreciate the hunter's complex relationship with nature and the landscape. The Puritans believed that a corresponding "inner wilderness" accompanied the physical wilderness in America. The land held both promise and peril. On one

hand, the land was rich and abundant; on the other, it was vast and savage. The Indians were not just unpredictable or dangerous neighbors, they were devils incarnate. The Puritans viewed the Indians' "natural" lifestyle as an invitation to damnation. Hunters who could go into the forest and successfully procure game were admirable, but, they were spiritually suspect because they were able to enter an "alien" world. Boone's and Bumpo's identities are founded upon their role as hunter. These two hunters negotiate literal and figurative borderlines that are barriers for those less able to adapt. But frequently, they cross between conflicting "worlds" as a result.

Chapter Three treats Theodore Roosevelt and William "Buffalo Bill" Cody as figures of physical and political expansion and control. Both Buffalo Bill and TR are hunters and cowboys. The hunter/cowboy figure becomes a metaphor for domestic and foreign power during their lifetimes. Buffalo Bill and TR are examples of the hunter/cowboy's independence and self-reliance. Individuality as a source of power replaces the last vestiges of European aristocracy. I look at race and gender when discussing TR's view of the hunter/warrior ideal and to a lesser degree when treating Cody's Wild West show. The discussion is relevant because TR's hunter/warrior ideal is founded in Teutonic mythology, not the amalgamation of Euro-

American and Native American. His views on race and gender are intricately tied to this hunter/warrior myth. Cody's views on race and gender become especially important when we look at how he organized his Wild West show. He constantly revised portions of the "exhibit," as he termed it. I examine his views and how they influenced his hiring practices and his treatment of the performers.

With the growth of the nation as a world power came the closing of the frontier and the exploitation of its natural resources. TR's conservation efforts and Cody's Wild West show can be interpreted as ways of mitigating the ravaging effects of American expansion and excess. I look at TR and Cody as hunter figures, representing American expansion and control in light of Manifest Destiny. And I look at the opposing images of them as conservationist and preservationist of a way of life which had all but disappeared, or some might say had never existed

Chapter Four examines the figures of William Faulkner's Isaac McCaslin and Ernest Hemingway, who represent the power to transcend degenerate forces in the culture through immersion in nature. Faulkner and Hemingway were part of the lost generation that had seen "the war to end all wars." Part of the legacy of war for Hemingway was dealing with his physical and spiritual wounds. The solace of hunting and fishing as

a healing force is evident in his life and his art. Hemingway and his fictional characters leave the "civilized" world behind and escape into the natural world to "convalesce." The Nick Adams stories, especially "Big Two-Hearted River," are the most familiar examples of this trope, but, the pattern is repeated in several Hemingway works, including the autobiographical *Green Hills of Africa*. For Hemingway, hunting and fishing test the sportsman's skill and provide opportunities to gain self-knowledge. Hemingway as hunter is more than a metaphor; his identity is inextricably linked with hunting.

Faulkner's voice chronicles the decay of the aristocratic Old South. The corrupt world of his fiction inscribes the culture in which he lived. His character, Ike McCaslin, is able to establish his identity as a hunter, whose legacy is not the estate of his father but his "education" from the racially mixed Sam Fathers and "Old Ben," the bear he hunts. He also immerses himself in the natural world, and is at least temporarily, freed from those who would impose their standards on him. The deeper he journeys into the woods, and the farther behind he leaves the civilized world, the more self-knowledge he gains.

Both Faulkner and Hemingway depict corrupt worlds which threaten and often overcome the individual. Yet, accompanying this cynical view is a nostalgia for a

simpler life and time. Through hunting their characters return to the uncorrupted values of the natural world. Crossing from the modern world into the world of nature provides an escape from degeneracy. But even more important, it provides a way to find spiritual renewal and transcendence.

Chapter Five examines Thomas McGuane and Jean Auel's protagonist, Ayla, from her *Earth's Children* series. I argue that these figures suggest the power to reinvent oneself in the face of postmodern concern with personal identity. Power in America is again revised in the latter part of the century to include not only those who have money and influence, but also those who gain power through individual initiative.

In his personal life and in his writing, McGuane uses hunting as a touchstone for developing a personal moral code. In *The Sporting Club*, he creates a picaresque world that illustrates the moral bankruptcy of the rich and privileged. His protagonist, Quinn, is torn between following the traditional, but corrupt, old guard of the club, or following Stanton, the spoiled, incredibly rich, "bad boy," who seeks to destroy it. The only positive model he has is Olson, the club's caretaker. Olson is an ideal sportsman, but he is fired shortly after the book begins. Quinn's predicament between equally unacceptable options reflects McGuane's own situation. McGuane is a scholar

who wrote screenplays to support his art, and at one point, he was all but destroyed by Hollywood as a result. He finally found balance in Montana, where he now writes, ranches, rides cutting horses, and hunts and fishes.

Jean Auel's character, Ayla, embodies the increasingly powerful women's movement of the last two decades. Ayla is a Cro-Magnon child adopted by a Neanderthal tribe, the Clan of the Cave Bear. She is physically and mentally different from those in her society. As a result, she suffers ostracism of the cruelest kind. She is beaten, raped, and separated from her young son, when she is cast out of the Clan to wander alone. However, she teaches herself to hunt, which is strictly forbidden for women of the Clan. Hunting is for Ayla the one thing that gives her power over her environment and a sense of self-worth. At the end of the novel, she resolves to find her own people and knows she will be able to survive. The social and literary rebel and the "new" woman are recent examples of American individuality. McGuane and Ayla find themselves through hunting which gives them the insight and confidence to redirect their lives. Like other American hunters before them, they cross many borders, literal and figurative.

In the course of this study, I examine rhetorical as well as mythic approaches to the significance of the

hunter, for as Philip Fisher³ has pointed out, rhetoric "reveals interests and exclusions....location of words, formulas, images, and ideological units of meaning within politics. Rhetoric is the place where language is engaged in cultural work, and such work can be done on, with, or in spite of one or another social group" (vii). Fisher has traced a shift in emphasis among Americanists from myth to rhetoric.

Myth is a fixed, satisfying, and stable story used again and again to normalize our account of social life. By means of myth, novelty is tamed by being seen as the repetition or, at most, the variation, of a known and valued pattern....giving it familiarity while using it to reaffirm the culture's longstanding interpretation of itself....Rhetorics are...part of what is uncertain or potential in culture. (vii)

Images that recur in the hunting motif are especially important. For the American hunter, his solitary nature is reinforced by picturing him, isolated from others. He is immersed in nature, and happy to be there; but, he is, nonetheless, alone.

Isolation is a proving ground for testing the hunter's merit. It is also an important pattern in mythical portrayals of hunters, reinforced by the language of the hunt, which is usually singular. The hunter looks for "sign," of one or many animals. A "sign," rhetorically, is a unit of meaning. It may be an utterance or some other single entity that

communicates. The hunter speaks of the hunting "trail," though that trail may actually be several trails. The hunter conventionally hunts one animal and kills one animal at a time. The seriousness and specialness of the occasion is underscored by use of the singular. Even group hunting among primitive peoples concentrated on cooperatively harvesting one large animal. Hunting recognizes the individual, the hunter, and the hunted.

This recognition of the individual is the underlying principle of the American experience. The hunter figure is an amalgamation of Indian and European cultures, and this makes him original. But, above all, he is a liminal character. He crosses borders of landscape and race and consequently establishes a national and personal identity. Most recently, the hunter in America is a symbol and a sign of crossing gender boundaries. The power to subvert social authority, to develop, to expand and control, to transcend degenerate forces, and to reinvent oneself, resides in the individual. Power, finally, is self-knowledge.

Notes
Introduction

¹Among the major studies are Richard Slotkin's trilogy: *Regeneration Through Violence; The Fatal Environment; and Gunfighter Nation*. Also of interest are *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* by Henry Nash Smith, R.W.B. Lewis's *American Adam*, Arthur K. Moore's *The Frontier Mind*, and Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind*.

²Especially Slotkin and H.N. Smith.

³Philip Fisher in his "Introduction" to *The New American Studies: Essays from Representations*.

Chapter One

Pocahontas and John Smith:

Metaphorical Parents of the American Hunter Figure

...and with cudgels raised they were about to aim their blows, when Pocahontas, the daughter of Powhatan, when she could not prevail upon her father with ardent entreaties, rushed at Smith like a mad woman and, embracing his head with her arms, asked to receive in his stead the blows aimed at his head. Touched by respect for the king's daughter, the executioners put down their clubs, and, when Pocahontas could not be removed by pleas, they granted John Smith his life, but on condition that he become one of Powhatan's servants and that he make for Powhatan's use hatchets, bells, glass beads, and copper, and that he teach them the art of making and measuring gunpowder. (Wharton 72)

After some six weeks (actually, more than four) fattening amongst those Savage Courtiers, at the minute of my execution she hazarded the beating out of her brains to save mine; and not only that, but so prevailed with her father, that I was safely conducted to Jamestown; where I found about eight and thirty miserable, poor and sick creatures, to keep possession of all those large territories of Virginia. Such was the weakness of this poor Commonwealth, as had the Savages not fed us, we directly had starved. And this relief, most gracious Queen, was commonly brought us by this Lady Pocahontas. (Smith, Letter to Queen Anne, in Barbour 330)¹

It is as a rescuer that Pocahontas is best known, and much of the mythology that has been built up around her continues to be associated with this crucial founding moment in American history. (Tilton iv)

John Smith and Pocahontas represent an ideal amalgamation of European and Native American. Even though this ideal was never realized, the connection between Smith and Pocahontas has remained fixed in the American imagination over centuries. Robert Tilton argues convincingly that the rescue story is the basis for the appeal of these figures, and it acts as a

creation myth for America. I maintain that the pair incorporates traits from European and Indian cultures essential to the hunter hero that comes to symbolize American independence.

The Rescue

The rescue of Smith by Pocahontas is part of the larger history of the initial settlement at Jamestown, Virginia in 1606-1607. Henry Wharton describes Smith's involvement in the Virginia colony in his laudatory *Life of John Smith* (1685), translated from the Latin by Laura Polanyi Striker²:

For about that time a colony was being settled in Virginia by the English. But because of factionalism, carelessness, and over confidence among the settlers, the colony had run into very bad times, and instead of being prosperous, the savagery of the barbarians had betrayed many of them and reduced the rest to poverty. Nor indeed could they easily hope for better times, since with the exception of a few leaders nobody wanted to lend a hand in affairs so perilous and despicable (as they were considered at the time), save for some who had escaped the gallows or had completely squandered their inheritance in brothels and inns. At last, as the colony was about to expire, John Smith was sent in order to remedy the situation. However, he was not given complete authority but was appointed one of the leaders who was to serve as a council with the Governor. (Wharton 64)

Many of those whom Smith found in the struggling colony would not work even to save their own lives; they seemed incapable or unwilling to do what was necessary to survive. Wharton describes the problems Smith encountered and the treachery that jealousy of Smith inspired.

The Governor and the greater part of the leaders....spread slander about Smith here and there among the sailors and the soldiers, cast suspicions upon him, accused him of having ambitions to become king, and, as their boldness increased, deprived him even of the membership in the Council with which he had been entrusted. Smith laughed at their insinuations, despised their insults, and rejected as unworthy the idea of going to the law against these stupid prattlers....But before long the shortsighted supply policy of these wretches had created a food shortage and caused the provisions to fail; and yet neither the Governor nor any of his train dared to lead the soldiers outside the fort to look for grain: so great was the fear that Indian savagery and deceit aroused in the English and so great was the Indians' hate of the English. Therefore, whether the enemies of Smith liked it or not, they had to entrust him with the administration of the affairs, lest they were to perish with hunger and pay for their envy by their own death.
(64-65)

Although Wharton's style is dramatic in relating this series of events, the basic facts of the situation have been substantiated by others.³ Smith's reputation as a hero prior to the Pocahontas incident is important because it sets the stage for the events which unfold. Smith is pictured as a practical and courageous leader

who takes on the task of saving the floundering colony in methodical way.

John Smith's first actions upon entering his office were to start work on the fortifications and barracks, to set up engines of war, and to provide in every way for the well-being and safety of the settlers. The Governor still retained his old authority, only the responsibility for the military affairs was delegated to Smith. To placate the most disgraceful fears of the nobles, Smith left with them for their protection forty-four of the fifty armed colonists. He was content with six soldiers, and with them he undertook his foray through the savage and hostile territories to get grain from the Indians. The savages laughed at this insane boldness and, sure that the English would anyhow soon perish, gently proffered Smith a handful of grain. But they at once regretted their scoffing when a shower of bullets came their way. The Indians quickly took up their arms, and with clubs, arrows, and shields they formed a battle line. A religious idol of horrible appearance was carried before their ranks. They marched forward, screeching and yelling, until they had reached the range for shooting their arrows. Smith and his men repaid the arrows with bullets, and their superior effects were matched by their higher morale. When the standard bearer of the Indians was killed, the deity had fallen to the ground and with it the morale of the worshippers collapsed. Once their idol had fallen, the savages were afraid to continue a fight which their god had forsaken, and they threw themselves down lest they appear braver than their god. The English seized the idol and returned it to the Indians in exchange for a very great amount of grain. (65-66)

These preliminary adventures are important for several reasons. Despite conflicting views of Smith,

no one has denied that he acted bravely in the New World. He was fighting the jealousy, laziness, and incompetence of those who, although more highly born, were less able to cope with the problems they encountered. Wharton strongly suggests the aspersions cast on Smith's reputation by the "gentlemen" in his party were not based so much on his failings but on his status as a commoner.⁴

Smith had to function in a situation where traditional European values, that emphasized the privileges of aristocracy, were unworkable. First, the settlers were physically removed from English political and social influences. Also, the talents needed to survive in the New World were in opposition to the complacent aristocratic assumptions about labor. What the colonial setting required were self-reliance and common sense. These traits were foregrounded by the necessities of wilderness living and would eventually make the hunter figure an appropriate representation of that experience. In the wilderness, physical self-reliance and independence also fostered mental self-reliance and independence. Smith developed confidence as a result of his abilities which in turn endowed him with a new form of power. He was especially critical of the cowardly acts of those who considered themselves his betters.

When Smith returned to the fort, he found the governor and others planning to desert Virginia and sail for England. Writing in the third person, since he included materials he acquired from others along with his own adventures and observations, Smith describes this incident in the third book of his *Historie of Virginia*:

Smith perceiving (not withstanding their late miserie) not any regarded but from hand to mouth (the company being well recovered) caused the Pinnance to be provided with things fitting provision for the yeare following; but in the interim he made 3. or 4. journies and discovered the people of the Chickahamania: yet what he carefully provided the rest carelessly spent. Wingfield and Kendall living in disgrace, seeing all things at randome in the absence of Smith, the companies dislike of their Presidents weaknes, and their small love to Martins never mending sicknes, strengthened themselves with the sailers, and other confederates to regaine their former credit and authority, or at least such meanes aboard the Pinnance, (being fitted to saile as Smith had appointed for trade) to alter her course and goe to England. Smith unexpectedly returning had the plot discovered to him, much trouble he had to prevent it, till with store of sakre and musket shot he forced them stay or sinke in the river, which action cost the life of captaine Kendall. (Smith 94-95)

Smith prevailed and in the spring he went in quest of the sources of the Chickahominy River. When he was prevented from sailing farther upstream by overhanging foliage, he led a small party to explore the interior of the province. He and his men, who included two

Christian Indians, encountered and battled a large group of 300 Indians, led by Opechancanough, brother of Powhatan and King of the Pamunkey. Smith conducted himself with audacity. At one point, he tied one of his Indian allies to him as a shield. His other Indian ally had fled, and the two other Englishmen were killed. He was finally wounded, captured, and transported to Powhatan, the Emperor. Along the way, he impressed the Indians by presenting his watch to Opechancanough and lecturing on "the movement of the heavens, the measurement of time, and the alternation of days and nights" (Wharton 70).

Eventually, Smith was brought to Powhatan, and it was at this point that his famous rescue occurred. According to Smith's account, Powhatan's favorite daughter, the princess Pocahontas (which means "playful" or "lively"), saved him from death by physically placing herself between him and the poised clubs of her tribe members. Again writing in the third person, Smith describes the event in *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624):

At last they brought him to Meronocomo, where was Powhatan their Emperor. Here more then two hundred of those grim Courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster; till Powhatan and his trayne had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of

Rarowcun skinnes, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 yeares, and along on each side of the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red; many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of Birds; but every one with something: and a great chayne of white beads about their necks. At his entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout. The Queene of Appamatuck was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a Towell to dry them: having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan: then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, Pocahontas the Kings dearest daughter, when no intraty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: Wherat the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him aswell of all occupations as themselves. (Smith 101)

What has been remembered from Smith's account is the rescue scene. Other significant information is not as well known. Pocahontas was, for example, a young girl of perhaps twelve years old and Smith was twenty-seven. In 1612, she was held captive in Jamestown--the taking of captives by Indians and whites was a political tool used by both. While in captivity, she converted to Christianity and was christened Rebecca. She subsequently married and had a son by John Rolfe, the English planter. After her marriage to Rolfe, she

traveled to England, where she was presented at court to King James I and Queen Anne as princess in her own right. The historical facts, however, have not endured in the culture like the rescue story.⁵ The rescue itself presents a problem of interpretation.⁶ There is an alternative explanation to Smith's belief that execution was imminent, and that Pocahontas rescued him from certain death. The actions of the Powhatans and Pocahontas may have been rites in an elaborate adoption ceremony, which Smith did not understand was taking place. The "death" of Smith (as a white man) and his "rebirth" (as an Indian) by virtue of Pocahontas's "sacrifice" may have been staged to initiate him into the tribe. But, whatever the circumstances of the rescue may have been, it acquired an enduring enduring fame. The figures of Smith and Pocahontas became inextricably linked in the popular imagination.

Robert Tilton and several other critics hold the view that portrayals of this incident during the colonial period may have been attempts to rally anti-monarchical sentiment.⁷ If indeed Pocahontas did defy her king/father with impunity, her example teaches a dangerous lesson. If the monarch/father is unjust, he can and should be challenged. Viewed retrospectively from the time of the American Revolution, the story becomes quite powerful. Tilton sees a correspondence between the "myths" of George Washington and the cherry

tree and the rescue of Smith by Pocahontas in that both narratives involve "an incident from the youth of the protagonist that in some way explains or predicts the adult actions of Washington and Pocahontas" (101-102).

He elaborates:

Each is a story of bravery in the face of a potentially overpowering adversary. And, most importantly, at the heart of each is a defiance of patriarchal power, a fearlessness of the consequences of such defiance, and an appeal to honesty as the key to unlock an expression of paternal love....In the end she [Pocahontas] must act, and it is her disregard for herself, both in terms of the fact that she could be killed by those aiming at Smith, as well as that she was clearly going against the wishes of her father, which actually brings about Powhatan's display of love for his daughter....It would not have been lost on those who rebelled against their king that the Pocahontas narrative, which contains the first important event in the history of the Anglo-American settlements, turns on an act of rebellion against a father and a king, and reinforces the idea that such actions often have positive results. In her response to the danger faced by Smith, as in Washington's response to his father, an act of youthful defiance in an apparent moment of crisis is proven to be justified. (101-102)

This view has two interesting implications.

First, the figure of Pocahontas as a rebellious woman inspires admiration rather than resentment. Second, the connection is made between Washington and Pocahontas as icons and appropriate role models who were nevertheless rebellious characters. Additionally, the liminal position of youth between childhood and

adulthood figures significantly here. As a metaphor of transition, it has obvious resonances for the new nation itself. The appeal of Smith's rescue over hundreds of years suggests that the story speaks in an enduring fashion to the American psyche.

In his *A True Relation of such occurrences and accidents of noate as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting of that Collony* (1608), John Smith casts himself as the father not only of Jamestown but also of his own image. Smith's self-portrait is unabashedly heroic. Smith was not unduly burdened by modesty, of course, but the fulsome descriptions of his exploits in America may have been a form of self-defense. His leadership was often questioned and challenged. The need to justify what he did would have been very much on his mind. His enemies were everywhere and sought constantly to discredit him. Smith spent a great deal of time with the Indians, unlike most of the other early settlers, therefore, he may have been suspect. He did develop a respect for the natural way of life which ensured survival in the wilderness.

Seeing Smith as the "other" in his society becomes especially interesting when considering the nature of the American hunter figure. The hunter is relied upon but not fully accepted as a member of the "civilized" society. When Smith went into the wilderness to find food for the colony and was captured and eventually

"accepted" by the Powhatans, he became even more alien to those he left behind.

Smith, the Indians, and Hunting

Smith describes the hunting habits of the Indians in detail and with obvious admiration. He shows how this skill is necessary for the "industry" of the tribe, explains the methods of hunting in a company, and describes the disposition of the various portions of harvested game. And he makes reference to his own captivity by a large hunting party in a swamp along the Chickahominy River.

In their hunting and fishing they take extreame paines; yet it being their ordinary exercise from their infancy, they esteeme it a pleasure and are very proud to be expert therein. And by their continuall ranging, and travell, they know all the advantages and places most frequented with Deere, Beasts, Fish, Foule, Roots, and Berries. At their huntings they leave their habitations, and reduce themselves into companies, as the Tartars doe, and goe to the most desert places with their families, where they spend their time in hunting and fowling up towards the mountains, by the heads of their rivers, where there is plentie of game. For betwixt the rivers, the grounds are so narrowe, that little cometh here which they devoure not. It is a marvell they can so directly passe these deserts, some 3 or 4 dayes journey without habitation. Their hunting houses are like unto Arbours covered with Mats. These their women beare after them, with Corne, Acornes, Morters, and all bag and baggage

they use. When they come to the place of exercise, every man doth his best to show his dexteritie, for by their excellling in those qualities, they get their wives. Fortie yards will they shoot levell, or very neare the marke, and 120 is their best at Random. At their huntings in the deserts they are commonly two or three hundred together. Having found Deere, they environ them with many fires, & betwixt the fires they place themselves. And some take their stands in the midsts. The Deere being thus feared by the fires, and their voyces, they chase them so long within that circle, that many times they kill 6, 8, 10, or 15 at a hunting. They use also to drive them into some poynt of land, when they find that advantage; and so force them into the river, where with their boats they have Ambuscadoes to kill them. When they have shot a Deere by land, they follow him like bloud-hounds by the bloud, and staine, and oftentimes so take them. Hares, Partridges, Turkeys, or Egges, fat or leane, young or old, they devoure all they can catch in their power. In one of these huntings they found me in the discovery of the head of the river of Chickasamania, where they slew my men, and tooke me prisoner in a Bogmire, where I saw those exercises, and gathered these Observations. (66-67)

The cooperation among tribe members to carry out the hunting activity, the distribution of work to process the various products of the hunt with the accompanying division of labor, emphasizes the status of the hunter/warrior. Smith's emphasis is on the skill required by the various tribe members, and he is particularly interested in the details of stalking deer.

Smith continues his narrative of hunting methods in the *Historie*:

One Salvage hunting alone, useth the skinne of a Deere slit on one side, and so put on his arme, through the neck, so that his hand comes to the head which is stuffed, and the hornes, head, eyes, eares, and every part as artificially counterfeited as they can devise. Thus shrowding his body in the skinne by stalking, he approacheth the Deere, creeping on the ground from one tree to another. If the Deere chance to find fault, or stand at gaze, he turneth the head with his hand to his best advantage to seeme like a Deere, also gazing and licking himselfe. So watching his best advantage to approach, having shot him, he chaseth him by his bloud and staine till he get him. (67-68)

Here the Indian hunter immerses himself in the animal world and even dresses as the animal, identifying with his prey. A recent article in *Sports Afield*, "The Spirit of Hunting: What Native Americans Knew," describes the Indian perception of the animal and human worlds as joined (Kerasote 52-60). Man is not seen as superior to his fellow creatures. They are all inhabitants of the same "family." Animals and men are "brothers" who are necessary for each other's survival. Men need to understand the habits of their brother creatures and appreciate their "sacrifice" in the hunt. The practice of preserving the head and horns of deer was originally a salute to the animal, not the hunter. The hunter took only what he needed and thus a balance was maintained. The pride of a hunter was not based on individual prowess or competition, but rather on being able to participate in

the process. To be a hunter was a grave responsibility and an honor. Man was part of the cycle of nature, not in charge of it. Dangerous animals could hunt the human hunter. Man was part of the food chain. Techniques for pursuing game, killing it, and processing it represented important aspects of the Indian culture and way of life. They were at once practical and symbolic.

Smith observed both group and single hunting techniques and noted the contributions by different members of the tribe. He carefully notes the uses to which the animals are put and how bows and arrows and knives are made.

For fishing, hunting, and warres they use much their bow and arrowes. They bring their bowes to the forme of ours by the scraping of a shell. Their arrowes are made some of straight young sprigs, which they head with bone, some 2 or 3 ynches long. These they use made of Reeds. These are peece with wood, headed with splinters of christall, or some sharp stone, the spurres of a Turkey, or the bill of some bird. For his knife he hath the splinter of a Reed to cut his feathers in forme. With this knife also, he will joynt a Deere, or any beast, shape his shooes, buskins, mantels, &c. To make the noch of his arrowe he hath the tooth of a Beaver, set in a sticke, wherewith he grateth it by degrees. His arrowe head he quickly maketh with a little bone, which he ever weareth at his bracer, of any splint of a stone, or glasse in the forme of a heart, and these they glew to the end of their arrowes. With the sinewes of Deere, and the tops of deer's hornes boyled to a jelly, they make a glew that will not dissolve in cold water. (65)

There is no indication that Smith adopted the methods of the Indians, but he was certainly aware of the useful aspects of much of their craft.

Pocahontas & Smith after the Rescue

Frances Mossiker thoroughly reviews the research on the figure of Pocahontas in history and fiction. She sees Pocahontas as a catalyst in establishing the first settlement in America. After the rescue, Pocahontas was instrumental in saving the struggling colony. She visited Jamestown herself, bringing supplies. When this was not possible because her father objected, she helped Smith arrange trade with other branches of her tribe. Such trade was crucial for survival because the colonists had not adapted to the New World's demands. Smith realized the value of the princess's practical and political significance for the colony's future. Aside from Smith and a few others, the English settlers refused to see the necessity of adopting Indian methods for hunting and farming. Their stubborn attachment to European notions almost destroyed the colony. Along with peacefully negotiating with the Indians, it was crucial to adopt aspects of their lifestyle and husbandry for settlement.

The Virginia colony's first harsh years illustrate two important lessons. First, the colonists had to learn the practical skills necessary for thriving in their new environment; skills they could learn from the Indians. Second, they had to understand, if not accept, aspects of Indian culture which could make cohabitation possible. Pocahontas and Smith were the first to cross the cultural barriers which separated Indian from European. The American hunter figure is heir to this legacy of crossing cultures. Smith's captivity exemplifies the European immersed in Indian culture. Although this immersion was not voluntary, it provided him with insight that served him well in later dealings with the Indians. Pocahontas crossed cultures several times in her short life and provides an even more dramatic example of liminality.

Pocahontas represents the ideal of the hunter/warrior in her role as princess of a hunting people. She also reflects the Indian's connection to the world of nature because the hunter/warrior is mythically joined to the earth and its life forms. The Indian hunter considers himself part of nature and his hunting represents his participation in the cycle of life and death. Unlike the European view of man as apart from the animals and having dominion over them, Indian cosmology locates man as interdependent, not superior to other creatures.

A number of components come together to form the traits of the American hunter figure. He emerges from a combination of the Indian hunter/warrior embodied in Pocahontas and her people and the European adventurer/settler embodied in Smith. But, the key to seeing Smith and Pocahontas as parent figures for the hunter lies in their crossing into each other's worlds. Smith and Pocahontas survived and flourished as a result of crossing barriers, while others struggled or perished by remaining static and separate. They are the first who make the transition and adapt in both Anglo and Indian worlds. Their mobility surely undergrids their enduring place in the American imagination. The central event that links Smith and Pocahontas is the rescue episode which marks the inception of their relationship.

Once Smith was "saved," he still had to negotiate the treacherous politics of the colony. Jamestown was in a precarious position. Smith was careful not to let the Indians know that permanent settlement, let alone expansion, was the purpose of the crown. After the rescue and Pocahontas's help to the settlers, relations between the Indians and the English took several turns for the worse. Smith was also still contending with malcontents who sought to undermine him. Although Powhatan suspected Smith's and the English's true intent was to settle and displace his people,

Pocahontas remained loyal to Smith. According to Philip Barbour, when Powhatan planned an attack on Smith's life, "Pocahontas, ever loyal to Smith and the English, slipped through the night to tell him of the plot. When she stole away, refusing any sort of reward (for Powhatan would kill her if he knew), Smith did not see her again until many years later, when they met in London" (*Three Worlds* 250). Smith had ambitions beyond Jamestown. He wanted an appointment to some important post in New England, and his connection to Pocahontas could prove inconvenient. He writes that his feelings for her were "brotherly" or "fatherly," indicates that she might characterize hers for him quite differently. After their last meeting when she warned him of treachery, he allowed her to think him dead. Her subsequent marriage to Rolfe may have been possible only because she held this belief.

Philip Barbour discusses the meeting of Pocahontas and Smith in England years after the rescue. According to Smith, he wrote to Queen Anne upon the visit of Pocahontas to London and praised her. Barbour comments:

Smith's first step when he heard of Pocahontas's arrival in London was to address a "little book," a formal epistle or memorial, to Queen Anne, through which he "made her qualities known to the Queen's most excellent Majesty and her court." Whether or not the surviving abstract of this even in part is verbatim is unimportant. Its spirit

shows that John Smith cherished a sincere brotherly, if not fatherly, affection for the daughter of Powhatan, and wished to tell the Queen to how great an extent Jamestown was in her debt. (329)

Barbour goes on to point out that Smith offered some useful insight to the monarch in suggesting the vital role Pocahontas might yet play in Great Britain's success in the New World.

After further details of how, and how often, Pocahontas interceded for the colony and helped preserve it, Smith goes on to suggest that through Pocahontas the kingdom of Great Britain may "rightly have a Kingdom" in Virginia, but that, spurned, she might forget her love for England and Christianity. With the Queen's aid, he added, Pocahontas could well be able to bring about what "Your Majesty and all the King's honest subjects most earnestly desire." (330)

If through marriage to an Englishman, Pocahontas could bring about peaceful relations between the settlers and the Indians, Great Britain could then profit from the alliance. Smith was only too aware of the delicate hold the settlers had in the colony of Virginia. But, he may not have been aware of his supposed death on Pocahontas' belief. When Pocahontas saw Smith again in England she

was visibly disturbed when [he]...arrived, turned aside from her guests, and remained silent for so long that Smith, as he puts it, repented "to himself to have writ she...could speak English." Rolfe and Smith and the others then left her for awhile, "as not seeming well contented," but an hour or two

or three later returned, to find her in a more talkative mood. (Barbour 331)

Barbour cites a conversation between Smith and Pocahontas which appears in Smith's *Historie* and takes place at the time of their meeting. Smith's account follows:

But not long after, she began to talke, and remembered mee well what courtesies shee had done: saying, You did promise Powhatan what was yours should bee his, and he the like to you; you called him father being in his land a stranger, and by the same reason so must I doe you: which though I would have excused, I durst not allow of that title, because she was a Kings daughter; with a well set countenance she said, Were you not afraid to come into my fathers Countrie, and caused feare in him and all his people (but mee) and feare you here I should call you father; I tell you then I will, and you shall call mee childe, and so I will bee for ever and ever your Countrieman. They did tell us alwaies you were dead, and I knew no other till I came to Plimoth; yet Powhatan did command Uttamatomakkin to seeke you, and know the truth, because your Countriemen lie much. (Smith 238-239)

This interview, recounted in his *Historie of Virginia*, reveals Pocahontas as an articulate and intelligent young woman. Her comment on the veracity of Englishmen is particularly pointed, considering Smith's deceiving her about his death. Even though this is dialogue reconstructed by Smith, he seems unaware of the barbs she is flinging him. She reminds him of his coming into her father's country and "caus[ing] feare in him and all his people (but mee)." Smith had called

Powhatan "father being in his land a stranger," and Pocahontas says she will call Smith "father," too, since she is now in his country. But, he quickly declines the appellation, giving the reason that she is a king's daughter. The verbal sparring in this scene clearly shows Pocahontas to advantage. Shortly after this interview, Pocahontas was about to sail back to America when she took ill and died at Gravesend, where she was buried. She was about twenty-one or twenty-two years old, and was survived by her husband, John Rolfe, and their son, Thomas. Pocahontas negotiated vastly different cultures at a time when her gender and youth would have posed insurmountable barriers. That she was able to cross between these worlds and flourish is testament to her legend.

Pocahontas as Mother

To my knowledge, no one has yet paired Pocahontas and Smith as metaphorical progenitors of the American hero. However, Pocahontas has been read as the mother figure by several critics. Philip Young, Vachel Lindsay, Mary Dearborn, and Frances Mossiker are only a few of those who have discussed "our mother, Pocahontas." And there are numerous references to Smith as the "American Aeneas." These important allusions underline the mythic aspect of the Pocahontas-Smith

relationship as parents and founders. Further, Pocahontas as mother figure comes from the wilderness. She "crosses over" into the world of civilized Christianity but still retains her tie to the natural world.

Robert Tilton's recent book, *Pocahontas, The Evolution of an American Narrative*, was originally his dissertation, entitled "American Lavinia: The Pocahontas Narrative in Ante-bellum America." I refer to the dissertation because its title is more relevant to Smith's and Pocahontas's roles as parent figures. Tilton addresses the issue of amalgamation in the colonial period. He explains his title and sees a connection between the Roman and American founding "myths."

Lavinia was the princess of Latium who married the foreign invader Aeneas more than a millennium before the foretold glory of the civilization of their descendants. Her race survived the war between two nations, and was merged with the Trojans to form the Roman people. Aeneas and Lavinia came to be looked upon as the founders of their race, and the literal ancestors of much of the Roman nobility. Pocahontas, the princess of Virginia, also married an invader and helped to found an empire. Her husband, however...was not the "Aeneas of the New World," John Smith. Nevertheless, the descendants of her marriage to John Rolfe became the "nobility" of the Old Dominion, and their marriage brought a time of peace between the Indians and the settlers, much as the marriage of Aeneas and Lavinia marked the end of the hostilities between their respective peoples. (4)

The parallel is helpful in providing a context for thinking about the narrative of Pocahontas. Although it would be ideal to see Smith and Pocahontas as marriage partners after the occasion of the rescue, the American Lavinia's story works out differently from the Roman Lavinia's, and the reasons for this difference are quite important. Tilton continues:

However, while Anglo-Americans often hypothesized about a peaceful merging with the Indians and the creation of one people, Pocahontas's race was not given the opportunity granted to the Latins to join with their conquerors, and their survival to this day owes little to the efforts of the European invaders. On a figurative level, however, as one can argue that as Lavinia was the "mother" of the Roman Empire, so the princess of Virginia is for all Americans, as Vachel Lindsay put it, "Our mother, Pocahontas." (4)

Amalgamation presented the possibility of resolving a number of problems. The access to land could most easily be accomplished by marriage between European settlers and Indian inhabitants, although attitudes toward ownership and land usage were perceived quite differently by Indian and white. However, once the initial connection could be made through marriage, the chances of land inheritance over a period of time would make redistribution and further settlement more palatable for everyone. Once a people comprised of both Indian and European bloodlines

evolved into a blended whole, the spectre of warring over land rights could be exorcized.

In reality, however, the possibility of amalgamation remained an elusive ideal, circumscribed by issues of both race and gender. The union of a European male and an Indian female was for example far more acceptable than the opposite combination. Others have discussed this bias, and Tilton skillfully summarizes these views.

While Pocahontas was already beginning to take on a mythic significance by the end of the eighteenth century based on the rescue of Smith and her aid to the Jamestown colony, it was also important during the colonial era to remember her as an actual, flesh-and-blood woman, who, as Europeans saw it, had turned her back on her people and her "title," had married an Englishman and produced a son, and whose descendants were highly visible members of the colonial Southern aristocracy. Their marriage came to be as a model that, to the detriment of both the White and Red races, had not been followed during the earliest years of the British colonial enterprise and was interpreted as a proof that a merging of the two cultures was, or least had been, possible. If this aspect of her narrative had been re-enacted on a larger scale, then perhaps the continual animosity between races, which appeared in the eighteenth century to be an unavoidable legacy, might have been avoided. When contemporary historians theorized about the missed opportunity, they generally invoked Pocahontas and John Rolfe, which Bernard W. Sheehan calls "the great archetype of Indian-white conjugal union." (19-20)

Despite the attraction of interracial marriage and its promise of amalgamation, the fear of miscegenation predominated. Indeed, the racial anxieties of the colonists were firmly in place before they left England. Of course, there are notable exceptions to this rule. The Southern aristocracy's claims to descendance from the Pocahontas-Rolfe marriage is the most striking example. All the more "striking" perhaps because it is unique in a country which has traditionally embraced the "melting pot" as a central metaphor. One reason, Tilton argues, why the story of the rescue of John Smith has survived and predominated over the story of the courtship and marriage of Pocahontas and John Rolfe is that the rescue is a much less threatening narrative for those who fear miscegenation.

Another explanation the rescue story's appeal is that it provided a satisfactory way to deal with the potentiality of American culture. It resolved miscegenation: it satisfied the appeal of amalgamation, but avoided the threatening reality of consummation. It still satisfies the American conflict between rebelling against authority and the need for tradition. Pocahontas as metaphorical mother of the American hunter operates in two ways. First, many hunters who inhabited the frontier were racially mixed progeny of European men and Indian women. The

reverse was also true but not as prevalent. Second, even if not racially mixed, hunters were culturally amalgamated. This amalgamation was reflected in their commerce with the Indians, their lifestyle, and their style of dress. This hunter incorporated the traits needed to survive and flourish during the colonial period and new Republic. This American figure shares a common heritage with other mythic hunters and several similarities with his European counterparts. But, the American hunter is unique to the American landscape, both literal and mental. His ability to negotiate cultural chasms becomes the trait that distinguishes this American hunter figure.

Daniel Boone is the first hunter that embodies this figure. Tilton addresses Richard Slotkin's view of Boone's importance. Slotkin argues that the image of Daniel Boone lies in its easy adjustment to meet certain basic needs of the people of frontier America. The flexibility of this image is the key to its strength and endurance. Tilton links this flexible image to the figure of Pocahontas:

A body of texts that is similar to the Daniel Boone material in their pervasiveness and ability to express multiple, and at times contradictory agendas, are the various literary and visual incarnations of Pocahontas, the prototypical Indian princess. Her act of bravery in saving the life of Captain John Smith was recast and retold more often than any other American historical incident during the colonial and ante-bellum

periods. The Pocahontas narrative provided a flexible discourse that came to be used to address a number of racial, cultural, and gender-related issues....these texts...account for the cultural usefulness, and hence, the pervasiveness, of this most popular of American tales. (1-2)

The Pocahontas narrative that "address[ed] a number of racial, cultural, and gender-related issues" is as relevant today as it was "during the colonial and ante-bellum periods." Its "cultural usefulness" is indeed the the key to its pervasiveness. I see Pocahontas not only as mother figure, but what is more, as a model of female power and self-determination. This power is usually found only in goddess figures, and Pocahontas is such a goddess figure. Her mythic aspects have been discussed by many, and Frances Mossiker addresses her role in relieving racial anxiety.

Mossiker implies that Pocahontas is a mythic figure largely because she embodies the ideal of amalgamation of the races through marriage, which the Europeans saw as the only possibility for redeeming the fearful "savage." She is the prime example of the romantic "noble savage": royal, dignified, athletic, one with nature. At the same time, she is the Christian convert: intelligent, able to speak English and adopt European manners, a paragon accepted by King James I and Queen Anne at court.

Although the England Pocahontas visited was closer to the Renaissance than the Enlightenment, she prefigures the noble savage. Her royalty as a princess was apparently so thoroughly accepted by the court of King James I and the King himself, that she was admitted to audience with the King and Queen Anne; while her husband, a mere middle-class farmer, was excluded. Mossiker also indicates that King James was highly displeased with Rolfe for having married so far above him.

Tilton points out that James's displeasure could have stemmed from fear of a rival claim for himself or his son by Rolfe as husband of the princess of Virginia:

Beverley presents King James as being angry when he heard that the commoner John Rolfe had had the audacity to marry the Lady Rebecca, Princess of Virginia. Of course he was offended that this was a corruption of the royal blood of America, but beneath this lay a different fear. Rolfe found himself in a dangerous position because it was believed that he, or actually his son, could possibly assume the title to the new lands through the "royal" Indian side of the family. Nothing comes of this of course--Rolfe does not claim Virginia for his son, nor does the king, "upon a more perfect Representation of the Matter," choose to press charges--but this interesting anecdote is appropriated and enhanced by later recorders of Virginia, colonial, and ultimately United States history. (29-30)

Tilton's comments about Rolfe have several implications. Class distinctions were much more than social snobbery. Nobility and the lines of inheritance determined land ownership and entitlements. Claims to royalty carried political power. Therefore, the threat of a prior claim, such as one for Rolfe based on his "royal" marriage to Pocahontas, was conceivably a threat to the English monarchy's claim to Virginia. What is more, Rolfe's situation has implications for Smith. A commoner, no matter how talented, could not ascend to noble status unless through marriage. And then, the elevation in rank would usually pertain only to offspring. The aristocracy was a closed and self-protective group, with long tradition dictating their rights and privileges. Wharton stresses that notions about aristocracy shaped the contemporary view of Smith. Wharton's translator, Laura Polanyi Striker, comments that he believed Smith's commoner status was the main reason for Smith's derision. Wharton also saw a connection to the apostles and their humble origins as significant: the corruption of wealth and position overshadowed the accomplishments of the individual. The nobility was unable to appreciate the merits of one not of their class. Further, they were threatened by the very idea that a commoner could outstrip them.

In effect, the hunter in America redefines the nature of aristocracy. In Smith's case, his

association with Pocahontas, who is princess of the "savage" world, a world of hunters and warriors, places him in a position between European nobility and "savage" nobility. He functions in both worlds, but he is fully embraced by neither. Smith hunts, but he is not known as a hunter; Pocahontas is the princess of a hunting people, but she is not known as a hunter either. Rather, these figures are combined in the popular imagination and can be viewed as progenitors of the figure who emerges as the American hunter figure.

In Virginia, Rolfe was considered something of a martyr for having taken the responsibility of amalgamating with the Indian to ensure peace. Rolfe himself wrote a lengthy letter to Governor Thomas Dale in the form of an apology, explaining his motives for wanting to marry Pocahontas, and history has taken a dim view of his sanctimonious attitude toward his bride. He apologizes for loving her and writes that he has suffered and prayed over the matter to determine whether or not he has experienced lust or true love, and only after great moral self-examination in the Puritan tradition has he decided that it is indeed God's will driving him to such action:

Lett therefore this my well advised
ptestacon, wch here I make betweene God and
my owne Conscience be suffifient
wyttnes...(noe waye leade soe farr foorth as
mans weaknes may pmytt, wth the vnbridled
desire for Carnall affection) for the good of

the Plantacon, the honor of or Countrie, for
 the glorye of God, for myne owne salvacon,
 and for the Cnvertinge to the true knowledge
 of God and Iesus Christ and vnbeleivinge
 Creature, namely Pocahuntas To Whome my hart
 and best thoughts are and have byn a longe
 tyme soe intangled & in thrallled in soe
 intricate a Laborinth that I was even
 awearied to vnwnde my selfe thereout.
 (Mossiker Appendix C 345)

Mossiker concludes that Pocahontas could not have known about the letter. That Pocahontas was viewed so differently in America and England illustrates opposing connotations of the Indian princess. As American royalty and possible vehicle for British claim to American land, she is aligned with European aristocracy. In this persona, too, she is mythic mother figure to the hunter. As an Indian girl who marries a Euro-American farmer, she is a racial and religious threat to the settlers. A century would pass before Southern "aristocrats" happily traced their lineage to Princess Pocahontas.

In her book *Pocahontas's Daughters*, Mary Dearborn uses the figure of Pocahontas as a springboard to explore the subject of female ethnic writers. She stresses the "silence" of American ethnic women, and sees Pocahontas as the first. In fact, Pocahontas did not leave any written record of her experience. She has been written about, however, and portrayed by many in ways that reflect their own agendas. Smith is, of course, the most notable. He recounts what she said,

but there is no word directly from the princess herself. She does speak, though, in other ways. Her actions provide a text which has several interpretations, but stands as her direct utterance. She inspired the love of her father; rescued Smith; helped the colonists; converted to Christianity; married Rolfe and bore a son; traveled to England; impressed the court. Yet, her position in the worlds she traveled between was precarious once she met Smith. She left her own people to become the "other" in Anglo-European Virginia. The "otherness" in American society is embodied in Pocahontas, this first female ethnic figure.

"Otherness" is another condition that links Pocahontas and Smith. Smith was the "other" in his culture because of his status as commoner and his commerce with the Indians and Pocahontas. Race and gender concerns today have their seeds in the original colonial experience, and issues of race and gender are intricately tied in with that of identity. The evolution of an American identity also begins in the colonial period and follows from the discussion of landscape, particularly the landscape's mythic and aristocratic connotations.

Myth, Aristocracy, and the Hunter

In terms of the mythic aspects of the hunter figure, the most useful work for my purpose is Richard Slotkin's critical trilogy, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1660-1860* (1973); *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* (1985); and *Gunfighter Nation, The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth Century America* (1992). In these seminal studies, Slotkin argues that "the reigning American frontier myth is the tale of a superior...man... securing his own regeneration, and often that of the nation, through violent conflict. In these books, the frontier myth...serves as a sort of American creation story, played out in endless variations" (Pascoe 20). Slotkin is concerned with the frontier in broad swaths. His argument has to do with the formation of an American myth and symbol, and he looks at the frontier as a massive, coherent subject. My purpose is to focus on the liminal hunter and how he rebels against, redefines, and ultimately replaces aristocracy with the ideal of individuality in American culture. Of central importance are concerns with the landscape, national identity, and gender/racial issues.

Landscape is an essential element in the American experience, especially the concept of wilderness.

Wilderness represents both the literal and figurative stages for the drama of American exploration and development. The hunter's identity grows out of his relationship to the land he traverses. Like an epic hero, the hunter journeys through the physical landscape and gains knowledge and skill. He is tested and proves himself worthy, and this process establishes his identity. Identity is also a product of race and gender.

The hunter figure emerges in American history and literature, precisely when Americans are most preoccupied with their own landscape. Unlike the Spanish who came to the Americas for conquest and trade with little intention of permanent settlement, the English sought to establish colonies. The settlers who hunted had to adopt many of the skills of the Native American. The figure who becomes the "American hunter."

The hunter figure becomes virtually the only "comfortable" amalgamation of the two peoples. The settlers had conflicting loyalties between England and America. They were not ready for the demands that the physical landscape presented: the severe weather; the intimidating topography of forests and mountains; the uncooperative inhabitants, who were surprisingly reluctant to have their land wrested from them. Only through adaptation did settlers progress from mere

survival to gaining a foothold in the New World and ultimately to thriving in it. The hunter is the first to make the transition, and it is especially instructive to look at the hunter in America in contrast to his European counterpart.

The Spanish philosopher, Jose Ortega y Gasset, in his *Meditations on Hunting* (1942), offers insights on the relationship of the hunter to the land, drawing some interesting conclusions about the nature of aristocracy and the central role of land ownership. Hunting is emblematic of aristocracy. In European society, Gasset argues, it is the nobility and landed gentry who determine hunting rights, with the emphasis on sport rather than subsistence.

Once we have underlined the almost universally privileged nature of the sport of hunting, it becomes clear to what extent...[it is] a deep and permanent yearning in the human condition. It is as if we had poked a trigeminal nerve. From all the revolutionary periods, there leaps into view the lower classes' fierce hatred of the upper classes because the latter had limited hunting--an indication of the enormous appetite which the lower classes had for the occupation....In all revolutions, the first thing that the "people" have done was to jump over the fences of the preserves or tear them down, and in the name of social justice pursue the hare and the partridge. (30)

In addition to providing a physical setting for the hunter, the landscape is a symbol of power. Those who impose limitations on the landscape wield social power.

As America grew, land rights were defined to fit circumstances in the New World. Three factors came into play: the granting of land by monarchs who were far removed in physical distance and direct experience, the presence of native inhabitants whose conception of land rights was quite different from European notions of "ownership," and the vastness and variety of the terrain. Although not unscathed, the hunter negotiated the land itself and its accompanying ownership issues. He succeeded in the New World and emerged as a new type,⁹ developing skills and attitudes needed to meet the special demands of the American wilderness. The basis for his ability to cross these literal and political borders was his intimate tie to the natural environment. Hunting allowed him to move through the landscape, feeding himself and making sometimes making a profit.

The key role of landscape in the American experience is treated in Jane Tompkins' recent work, *West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns*. She sees the rekindling of interest in the western as significantly tied to physical landscape. She argues that the landscape is the "Genesis" of almost any western, particularly well-illustrated by desert locations in film, "we have the sense of being present at a moment before time began" (70). In her view, emptiness represents another repeating American motif.

Attention to landscape emphasizes the creation, or more exactly, the conscious recreation of a world in order to begin again, to find a fresh setting for action. Physical movement through the landscape from Europe to America, from the East to the West, from stasis to mobility is a pattern in American culture. Tompkins' point about the western landscape can be expanded easily to embrace the entire process of settling the frontier.

The relative ease of mobility is again an American distinction. Pocahontas's and Smith's cultural mobility may further account for their endurance in the American imagination. In effect, they established a precedent for movement between landscapes, both literal and figurative. Philip Fisher comments that "a...unifying force [within American society is] mobility itself," (xiii) since moving from place to place interrupts the notion of tradition within any ethnic ghetto. Specific identification with any group depends upon that group's remaining intact, passing on the culture from generation to generation. Even one move geographically tends toward the "melting pot" (xiii).

A basis of American national identity is that other identities are left behind when the individual moves. What is striking when examining the hunter figure is that he defines who he is largely through his

ability to move through the landscape, interacting with it and those who inhabit it. He does not leave part of his identity behind, but rather enhances and reinforces it. The hunter redefines the European notion of aristocracy from Gasset's inheritor of land with the "privilege" of hunting to one who "inherits" the land through his prowess in negotiating it, harvesting its animals, and forming a relationship with the land which transcends the proprietary. The hunter and the land are linked; the hunter is part of the land and the land is a part of the hunter.

Parallels to mythic hunters, especially those who are in transition or are transformed or who come to grief as a result of transgressing taboos are applicable in a discussion of liminality.¹⁰ In his essay, "The Black Hunter and the Origin of the Athenian Ephebia," Pierre Vidal-Naquet discusses the liminal quality of young men in the Athenian Ephebia--a two year period of military service, described by Aristotle (106). The Ephebia served on the "frontier" before taking up the responsibilities of marriage and full citizenship. Vidal-Naquet sees the position of these young men as marginal, poised between opposing forces in society. He bases his premise on the myth of the Black Hunter.

There are several versions and interpretations of this myth, but in general, it has to do with a contest

between Melanthos (the black one) and Xanthos (the fair one) to settle a dispute which arose during a festival, the Apaturia. Melanthos wins by means of a trick and eventually becomes King of Athens.

The myth is known from many texts dating from the fifth century B.C.....The scene is the frontier between Athens and Boeotia: an *eschatia*, a mountainous area that is the "end" of a city's territory....They were the terrain of hunters and shepherds, frontier zones constantly in dispute....A conflict broke out between the Athenians and the Boeotians....The Boeotian king was Xanthos (or Xanthios, or Xanthias), which means "the fair one." The Athenian king was Thymoites, the last of the descendants of Theseus. It was agreed to settle the dispute by means of a duel, a *monomachia*. But Thymoites stood down...because he was too old. Another warrior came forward and according to some versions [was] promised the succession in return. His name was Melanthos (or Melanthios), "the black one." So the Black One was to fight the Fair One. (109-110)

The key to the incident as Vidal-Naquet sees it is the deception or trick which Melanthos uses to defeat Xanthos.

As they were fighting, Melanthos suddenly cried out, "Xanthos, you do not play according to the rules (*synthekai*)--there is someone at your side!"--and as Xanthos looked round in surprise, Melanthos took his chance and killed him. The sources differ over details of what happened....Most mention an intervention by the nocturnal Dionysus of the black goatskin....Afterward, the victor Melanthos became king of Athens....In every source, the Apaturia is explained by paronomastic etymology. The festival is supposed to commemorate this *apate* (wile, deception), whether the inspiration of the

deception is ascribed to Dionysus, to Zeus, or even to Melanthos himself. (110)

Vidal-Naquet explores the significance of the trick. Connotations of hunting permeated Greek society, and hunting was crucially connected to the Ephebia. He looks particularly at three aspects of the myth: the idea of the frontier, the trick itself, and the stress on blackness.

...hunting is linked fundamentally with the *argos* in Greece, the land that lies beyond the cultivated area, that is, with the *eschatai*, the borderlands of Greek cities. Plato calls his ephebe, the person who defends the frontier area, an *agronomos* (*Laws* 6.760e-61a). More generally, hunting was so normal for heroes, whom the ephebes emulated, that F. Orth remarked that "heroes are hunters and hunters heroes." In a sense, hunting is on the side of the wild, the "raw," of night, and the skills employed in the Spartan *krypteia* [which is like the Ephebia] were those of hunting. (117)

In several ways the motif surrounding the Black Hunter in the classical world can be likened to the figure of the American hunter, essentially in the liminal quality which defines him. Both are part of the world of the frontier; both are associated with certain dualities, on the one hand admirable (cleverness), on the other questionable (wiliness); both are discussed in ambiguous language, references to "darkness" or "blackness" abound. Finally, both are

associated with transitional conditions, the Athenian Ephebia or the early hunters in colonial America. However, the distinguishing factor for the American hunter is his flexible nature which ensures his survival and defines his persona. Hunters who do not follow the strictures of the established order in the classical world most often meet with disaster. Also, unlike the classic hero or European hunter, the American hunter is rarely a member of the aristocracy or landed gentry. His power comes from his personal skill rather than from the will of the gods or the accident of heredity.

Vidal-Naquet describes various types of hunting and ascribes positive characteristics to mature, socialized hunters who use "manly" weapons, like spears. These individuals hunt in groups by the light of day. He ascribes negative characteristics to solitary, adolescent hunters who pursue game at night, using nets and snares. It is as if youth connotes not only the transitional phase of the hunter, but the negative pole of oppositions between dark/light, youth/age, solitary/social, cowardly/brave.

To take Vidal-Naquet's observations a step further, we can link the hunter figure and his country. European hunting was an aristocratic and highly organized activity, while American hunting was an independent, individualistic one. The hunter figure

who emerges from the colonial period reflects the transition of America from British colony to new Republic. Daniel Boone and his fictional counterpart, Natty Bumppo, embody the power to throw off aristocratic authority and develop this new nation.

Notes Chapter One

¹Smith, Letter to Queen Anne, in Barbour 330.

²Laura Polanyi Striker has translated the original Latin manuscript, "Vita Johannis Fabricii Militis Angli," The Life of John Smith: English Soldier, handwritten by Henry Wharton in 1685. Ms. Striker obtained permission from the Archbishop of Canterbury to microfilm the manuscript, which resides in Lambeth Library in London; she brought a microfilm copy to America in the 1950's, and it is available today at the Forty-second Street branch of the New York Public Library. Copies made from the microfilm are not good quality, but the film can be studied more effectively on a viewer in the library. To my knowledge, there is no printed copy of the Latin manuscript.

³Wharton emphasizes the negative influence of Smith's status as a commoner on public opinion. According to Striker, the defense of Smith by Wharton is based on Wharton's religious conviction that humble origins are reflective of the apostles' and Jesus's examples. The corrupt gentry is largely responsible for the defamation of Smith. The jealousy and fear which spurred betrayal and denial of Jesus, Wharton sees as the passions which motivated attacks on Smith by those referring to themselves as "gentlemen" in Smith's company.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Robert Tilton cites a number of portrayals of the Rescue in drama, pictorial representations, and in the other arts in Ante-Bellum America.

⁶Philip Barbour, Frances Mossiker, and Robert Tilton as well as others offer possible explanations for Smith's rescue by Pocahontas, which would not have been obvious to Smith. There is also the possibility that Smith may have been aware of such explanations, but did not articulate them in his writing, especially in light of the fact that he did not mention the rescue in his initial account of his adventures.

⁷See Tilton's chapter, "The Pocahontas Narrative in Post-Revolution America," 71-114 for the full discussion.

⁸See Laura Polanyi Striker's "Captain John Smith in Seventeenth-Century Literature" in Henry Wharton's *The Life of John Smith*, 3-31.

⁹See Slotkin *Regeneration Through Violence*, Chapter 8, "A Gallery of Types," 223-367.

¹⁰See *The Black Hunter* by Pierre Vidal-Naquet, 106-128.

Chapter Two

Boone and Bumpo: The Emerging Hunter Figure

This account of my adventures will inform the reader of the most remarkable events of this country.--I now live in peace and safety, enjoying the sweets of liberty, and the bounties of Providence, with my fellow-sufferers, in this delightful country, which I have seen purchased with a vast expense of blood and treasure, delighting in the prospect of its being, in a short time, one of the most opulent and powerful states on the continent of North-America; which, with the love and gratitude of my countrymen, I esteem a sufficient reward for my toil and dangers. (Daniel Boon Kentucke 81-82)

...The general Boon, back-woodsman of Kentucky,
Was happiest amongst mortals anywhere;
For killing nothing but a bear or buck, he
Enjoy'd the lonely, vigorous, harmless days
Of his old age in wilds of deepest maze.

Crime came not near him--she is not a child
Of solitude; Health shrank not from him--for
Her home is in the rarely trodden wild,
Where if men seek her not, death be more
Their choice than life, forgive them, as beguiled
By habit to what their own hearts abhor--
In cities caged. The present case in point I
Cite is, that Boon lived hunting up to ninety;
(Byron *Don Juan* Canto 8 LXI-LXII)

On the human imagination events produce the effects of time. Thus, he who has traveled far and seen much is apt to fancy that he has lived long, and the history that most abounds in important incidents soonest assumes the aspect of antiquity. In no other way can we account for the venerable air that is already gathering around American annals.
(Cooper *The Deerslayer* 9)

Daniel Boone and James Fenimore Cooper's character, Natty Bumpo, embody the rugged individualism so central to American self-fashioning.

Boone and Bumpo's "lifetimes" cover the period from colony to nation. They reflect a movement in American culture away from inherited power toward individual prowess. The basis for Boone's and Bumpo's power lies in the hunter's ability to negotiate the landscape and to lead others across the continent.

Here, I will look first at Boone and the link between his life/legend and the national destiny, then at how his role as hunter underscores this identification, and finally, at his correspondence with Natty Bumpo. Again, my concerns involve landscape, identity, gender, and race. There are numerous commentaries on these texts which provide insights on their mythic and rhetorical aspects. Some of the most helpful commentaries are provided by Slotkin, Faragher, Kelly, Barnett, and Lawlor.¹

Boone and the National Destiny

John Mack Faragher's recent biography of Daniel Boone addresses the problems of sorting fact from folklore in Boone's life. Faragher concludes that "the facts come inextricably entwined with the legend," and furthermore, "the folklore evidence offers more than simply an opportunity to reconstruct the facts of his life" (xvi). The first composite American hunter and hero² is a model of possibility. He provides a series

of bridges between opposing forces in the culture during the colonial period and the new republic.

Boone as hunter provides a bridge first between the old world and the new. From adolescence,

...the young hunter [Daniel] entered a mixed cultural world. On woodland thoroughfares the hunters of many nations met, and over a smoke of kinnikinnick, a pungent mixture of dried bark and leaves, they traded news and information....It was in these circles that young Boone found his forest teachers. There were backwoods hunters descended from European colonists....whom the Delawares called nittappi, or friends. There were Indians of many ethnic varieties who also called friend this young hunter with the respected name of Boone. These men of the forest frontier instructed Daniel in a way of life that combined elements of both cultures and bridges many of the differences between Indian and European....This way of life was centered on hunting. (Faragher 19-20)

The original interaction between Indian and European seen in the model of Pocahontas and John Smith entered a new phase with Boone. He combined the Indian's ability to survive in the wilderness with the white man's desire for settlement and ownership. The hunter in America was quite different from the hunter in Europe primarily because the landscape seemed limitless.

The term "wilderness" connotes a number of images. The physical wilderness and its accompanying motif of an "inner wilderness"³ has been discussed especially in regard to the Puritan experience in the New World. The

New World was seen by the Puritans as a "New Eden"⁴ which held the opportunity for a "New Adam"⁵ to perfect himself spiritually and prosper in the "Virgin Land."⁶ The Puritans are most closely associated with the concept that the outer physical landscape reflects an inner emotional or spiritual landscape. However, this relationship between the individual and his environment is repeated throughout the American experience and is exemplified in the figure of the hunter.

Perhaps, the very traits which enable the hunter to set a foot in each of two worlds deny him a full life in either. There may be an ease in traversing these worlds, but the liminal figure must be dynamic and cannot remain fixed for a long period of time. The hunter is the agent of change, the tool of transition, and therefore, incapable of stasis. Also, the worlds he traverses are in opposition, and he who negotiates them is constantly placed in the line of fire. He may pause, but he does not take up permanent residence. This restiveness is reflected both outwardly, by physical movement, and inwardly, by contemplation.

Numerous studies have addressed the subject of wilderness, including Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*, R.W.B. Lewis's *American Adam*, Arthur K. Moore's *The Frontier Mind*, Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind*, David E. Shi's *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High*

Thinking, and recently, Max Oelschlaeger's *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*, to name only a few. These works treat the importance of the concept of wilderness, and consider its initial and continuing effects upon American life and literature. In his preface to the third edition of his book, Nash says:

...wilderness was the basic ingredient of American civilization. From the raw materials of the physical wilderness Americans built a civilization; with the idea or symbol of wilderness they sought to give that civilization identity and meaning....From the perspective of intellectual history...appreciation of wilderness is nothing less than revolutionary. Ancient biases against the wilderness are deeply rooted in human psychology and in the human compulsion to understand, order, and transform the environment in the interest of survival, and later, of success. Wilderness was the unknown, the disordered, the uncontrolled. A large portion of the energies of early civilizations was directed at defeating the wilderness in nature and controlling it in human nature. Americans knew these imperatives firsthand: the European colonists reexperienced in America their old, insecure relationships to wilderness. (xi-xii)

Nash argues that American national identity is inextricably tied to wilderness, and because the hunter is linked to the environment, I maintain he is an appropriate lens through which to examine national identity. The hunter's identity resides in his relationship with the landscape. He is part of nature

and hunts to survive. But, his skill does more than allow him to eat. Hunting is a way of life and integrates survival with spiritual development. The hunter's lifestyle in the wilderness challenges him to explore his inner world as well. Indeed, the connection to an "inner wilderness" is reinforced by his physical experience. Especially for those who are unable to cope with the harshness of the topography and weather, the experience raises questions of purpose and often self-doubt. For those who are able to cope, and further, to meet the challenge of the new land and excel, there is a coinciding self-confidence.

The first figure to represent the American hunter hero, one who embodies both the physical and spiritual aspects of wilderness life, is Daniel Boone. The historical Boone and his legendary recreations provide an important model of the hunter. Stories, ranging from truth, half-truth, and surmise to outright tall tale are interwoven with the facts. But, there is something more significant than extricating fact from fiction in the accounts of Boone. Faragher comments:

The record of Daniel Boone largely consists of the stories of humble American men and women, written out laboriously with blunt pencils on scraps of paper, or told aloud in backwoods cabins or around campfires and taken down verbatim by antiquarian collectors. The materials for Boone's biography not only document the life of an American frontier hero but reveal the thoughts and feelings of the diverse peoples

of the frontier....The things people choose to say about Boone provide clues to their own concerns. Backcountry Americans celebrated Boone as one of their own. He was hero, but a hero of a new, democratic type, a man who did not tower above the people but rather exemplified their longings and, yes, their limitations. People may say what they please, as Simon Kenton put it, but why do they say the things they do? (xvi)

The reason "they say the things they do" comes from a need to define themselves and their world in terms which are reaffirming and reassuring. Daniel Boone was at once larger than life, and yet, approachable. He was a hero, but he was also a neighbor. Faragher captures this quality in his biography and resolves the confusion in Boone lore by presenting various accounts of Boone with commentary, indicating sources and degrees of reliability. His treatment has the advantage of inclusion; when he says, "The things people choose to say about Boone provide clues to their own concerns," he captures the elusive essence of Boone. He is a reflection of the diverse people of the frontier and their equally diverse concerns. His liminality as hunter hero invites this flexibility.

In his review of Faragher's work, David Herbert Donald, "whose ancestors immigrated to Kentucky with Daniel Boone" (*New York Times Book Review* 11)⁸, summarizes the problem with Boone's images.

There must have been two Daniel Boones. One was the illiterate pioneer, clad in a

coonskin cap, who led the first white settlers across the Appalachians into Kentucky in 1775. There he made a name for himself as the greatest Indian fighter of his age, and he fended off the attack of the Shawnee Indians on the first white settlement at Boonesboro. But when another white family moved within 70 miles of his Kentucky home, Boone called to his wife, Rebecca: "Old woman, we must move, they are crowding us." He spent the last of his lonely and unhappy life on the frontier in Missouri. The other Daniel Boone was the advance agent of Richard Henderson, the greatest land speculator of the late colonial period, and he led immigrants into Kentucky so that his boss could profit from selling off tracts of his vast holdings. To protect his own interests, this Boone conspired with the Shawnee Indians against the white settlers; he became the adopted son of an Indian chief, Blackfish, and took the name Sheltolee, or Big Turtle. During the Revolution he helped the British, and after the war he was tried for treason. Bitter at being exposed, he fled to the Missouri frontier. Both are wrong in general, and they are wrong in detail. For....instance, Boone's level of literacy was "the equal of most men of his times," and he often took his favorite book, Swift's "Gulliver's Travels," to read by his lonely fire in the wilderness. Like most frontier hunters, Boone despised fur caps and wore a broadbrimmed hat. Boone was not in Henderson's employ when he made his first explorations of Kentucky. Mr. Faragher presents a portrait of Boone that is more convincing and far more interesting than either of the caricatures. (11)

Boone is so pervasive a presence in American lore precisely because his image is so capacious. He is a composite of the often disparate elements of frontier life in America and as such is, quite literally, the quintessential "American."

The label, "American," was and is still problematic. Americans questioned their national identity before there was a nation. In *Letters from an American Farmer*, Crèvecoeur asks, "What is an American?" Americans (and non-Americans for that matter) have been trying to answer this question ever since. Ludwig Lewisohn addresses the problem of the questioner first,

But Crèvecoeur was after all a Frenchman, with the strong social instinct of his race....What is an American? His answer is delightful literature, but fanciful sociology....As a matter of fact, the hardworking colonial farmer, cut off from the refining and subduing influences of an older civilization, was probably no very delectable type, however worthy and one fears that Professor Wedell is right in declaring that Crèvecoeur's American is no more human than some ideal savage of Voltaire. But in this fact lies much of...its value as a human document of the age of Revolution. (xix-xx)

Crèvecoeur's question and Lewisohn's reaction are instructive for examining the hunter's image. The question and reaction center around two things: the farmer as exemplary American; and how the reality of the farmer's life compares with the ideal. Not only is there disparity between the ideal farmer and his real-life counterpart, but the farmer and the hunter are often juxtaposed in American history. The relationship between the two is most often one of opposition. The farmer, no matter how "rough," becomes domesticated as

the hunter never can. Even in later refinements of the hunter figure seen, for example, in Cody, Roosevelt, Hemingway, and Faulkner, an element of wildness remains. The hunter paves the way for the farmer, yet the hunter who tries to be a farmer is an anomaly. Boone is an example of this dynamic. He establishes homestead after homestead, only to leave it to the care of his family for long periods of time, even years, while he hunts and scouts new territory. He and other early hunters make settlement possible but are personally unable to enjoy the life they secure for others. Yet the merit of the settled life is never in question as an ideal--they just do not seem capable of partaking in it. We see this also in Cooper's character, Natty Bumppo, who embodies the American movement west. He helps create a world he cannot inhabit because it rejects him. But Boone is perceived as both farmer and hunter, while Bumppo is not. Boone's image is more flexible than Bumppo's because Boone's has been created by many forces. Bumppo is the fictional creation of only one author.

Richard Slotkin points out that John Filson's version of the Boone myth was infinitely adaptable. Boone's fame is directly attributable to John Filson, a thirty-year-old schoolmaster, who was according to Faragher very much an Icabod Crane figure. Filson taught school during the Revolutionary War and

afterward began speculating in land. The original source from which the Boone legend grew is Filson's *The Discovery, Settlement, And present State of Kentucke: And An Essay towards the Topography, and Natural History of that important Country: To which is added, An Appendix, Containing, I. The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boon, one of the first Settlers, comprehending every important Occurrence in the political History of that Province*. There are three other appendices, but the Boone material is the most famous. Looking at what historians call "Filson's Boone," the section of the account in which Boone supposedly tells his own story, reveals how this narrative forms the basis for the Boone legend.⁸

The power of Filson's myth lay, not in an ability to alter existing conceptions of the frontier drastically and suddenly, but in the ease with which it could be assimilated to such preconceptions and made to adjust to new fashions, conceptions, and ideological requirements....the Boone narrative captured public attention, [and] it became a barometer of developments in cultural history. In each case, the image of Boone was made to serve as the embodiment of local values or cultural assumptions and as the vicarious resolver of the dilemmas that preoccupied that culture. In the development of these variant images of Boone we can trace the emergence of American national consciousness, the process of cultural differentiation that finally divided the Euro-Americans from the Europeans. (*Regeneration* 313)

Robert Tilton expands this point and applies it to Pocahontas. Perhaps, we can conclude that "a body of texts" will be pervasive if they have the "ability to express multiple, and at times contradictory agendas" (Tilton 1). This is another basis for viewing Pocahontas as the metaphorical matriarch of Boone. Many of the same forces which make Pocahontas so intriguing are also active in the creation of Boone's figure. "Contradictory agendas" pervade issues of land ownership, national identity, and race and gender throughout the colonial and early republic periods. Pocahontas is a multi-valient figure. In one sense, she was the mythic mother figure from the pagan world of the wilderness. Fear of racial amalgamation with the savage was mixed with admiration for the beautiful Indian princess rescuer. She crossed the cultural barriers between Indian and European, pagan and Christian, loyalty to her father and loyalty to her husband. She was superior because she was royal, but she was inferior because she was non-white and female. Boone was white and male, but he was the son of English tradespeople. He spent extensive time in the wilderness, lived with the Indians, and was adopted by them. That alliance, however, did not prevent him from becoming a military leader and an advocate of American expansion.

In her essay, "Dancing Through the Minefield: Some Observations on the Theory, Practice, and Politics of a Feminist Literary Criticism," Annette Kolodny makes the point that when we view the past we cannot divorce ourselves from the present, and in effect, we recreate the past to explain and fit the context of the present. She argues that "the choices we make in the present inevitably alter our sense of the past that led to them....the further removed the author is from us, so too must be her or his systems of knowledge and belief, points of view, and structures of vision" (Richter 280). This observation is even more apt when applied to figures in the past. If we expand the concepts of "reading" and "text" to mean deciphering and interpreting information or signs, Kolodny's observations become even more pertinent.

What we have really come to mean when we speak of competence in reading historical texts, therefore, is the ability to translate (or perhaps transform?) the text's ciphers into more current and recognizable shapes. But we never really reconstruct the past in its own terms....The only "perennial feature" to which our ability to read and reread texts written in previous centuries testifies is our inventiveness--in the sense that all of literary history is a fiction which we daily re-create as we reread it. (280)

In the case of Boone, where the greatest number of texts are written about him rather than by him, he is recreated endlessly to fit the needs of the present

reader--whenever that "present" happens to be. Pocahontas and Boone are still familiar figures today, and their stories are still being recreated in popular culture.

In his own time, Boone's family and religious experience fostered attitudes that enabled him to communicate with the Indians. His family's religious background was Quaker. The Quakers were the one religious sect that had good relations with the Indians. He naturally took to life in the woods and easily formed relationships with Indian and backwoods hunters. But, he was associated with farming as well as hunting. As a member of a large immediate and extended family, he embodies domesticity as well as adventure. He was one of eleven children, and he and his wife Rebecca had seven of their own. His dual identities linked him to both Indian and Euro-American cultures and raised questions of his loyalty to each. He was at once a self-sufficient loner and a valued member of the community.

By his fiftieth birthday, Boone had acquired an international reputation. He had been a leader in the struggle against the Indians as they tried to defend their hunting grounds, and he had been appointed Lieutenant Colonial of Militia by Virginia and elected to the state assembly. He became what might be termed an "American aristocrat." He was a formal part of

government, and therefore, part of the power structure. His hunting skill had led to his being a key figure in land acquisition, especially Kentucky.

In the first section of Filson's work, Boone introduces himself and Kentucky:

The settling of this region deserves a place in history. Most of the memorable events I have myself been exercised in; and, for the satisfaction of the adventures, and scenes of life from my first movement to this country until this day. (Boone in Filson's *Kentucke* 50)

He goes on to describe the scene, referring to the landscape, the activity, number and variety of wildlife.

We found everywhere abundance of wild beasts of all sorts, through this vast forest. The buffaloes were more frequent than I have seen cattle in the settlements, browsing on the leaves of the cane, or cropping the herbage on those extensive plains, fearless, because ignorant, of the violence of man. Sometimes we saw hundreds in a drive, and the numbers about the salt springs were amazing. In this forest, the habitation of the beasts of every kind natural to America, we practiced hunting with great success until the twenty-second day of December following. (51)

Richard Slotkin sees *Kentucke* as Filson's attempt to create a viable market for land sale and development. Filson employed Boone's adventures as a vehicle for speaking to prospective settlers. He carefully organized and orchestrated a powerful

document of propaganda designed to influence people to settle in Kentucky. There were, however, problems with writing an inspirational tract that would not mislead the public about the hardships involved in settlement.

In 1784 John Filson, a schoolmaster turned surveyor and land speculator, returned from two years in Kentucky. In Wilmington, the metropolis of his home state of Delaware, he published *The Discovery Settlement and Present State of Kentucke*, an elaborate real-estate promotion brochure designed to sell farm lands in the Dark and Bloody Ground to easterners and Europeans. Sales resistance was likely to be high. The Revolution had just ended, and the bloody Indian wars which had decimated the Kentucky settlements were still sputtering out in petty raids and secret murders. Thus Filson faced the classic problem of writers about the frontier....how to portray the promise of the frontier without destroying his own credibility by glossing over the obviously perilous realities of the pioneer's situation. (Slotkin 268)

Filson began to tour the country, looking for "prominent men" (Faragher 3) to interview for his book to inspire emigrants to face the hardship of life on the frontier. Filson was extremely persistent in his quest. Those reluctant to be interviewed claimed that the only way to get rid of him was to give in and talk to him. Filson interviewed several Kentuckians including Boone:

It was also a particularly auspicious time for Filson to meet Boone, attempting to settle into a position earned by years of struggle. Boone lived north of the Kentucky

River in a crowded log cabin with his wife, children, and several cousins as well as a married daughter and her family; it was understandable if he looked forward to the opportunity for retreats to Filson's rooms, where he reflected on his Kentucky adventures for a sympathetic listener. (3)

As Boone told his stories, Filson saw the potential for more than the "compleat guide" he had originally planned. "Filson structured Boone's narrative to read like an epic" (Farragher 3-4). Each episode of Boone's journey into Kentucky contains danger and time for reflection. He crosses mountains, has numerous adventures, faces death. He returns home determined to lead his family and a party into the wilderness to found a new settlement. There are further adventures and setbacks. One of his sons is killed and his daughters are kidnapped by Indians. He himself is captured by Indians and escapes. After Indian attacks, including a massacre, and "after General Clark rages across the Ohio with his army, destroying the native towns, are the Indians finally 'made sensible of our superiority'"(5). After the Revolution, Boone reflects on his endeavor and the narrative ends. As Farragher writes, "Filson also told Boone's story as romantic myth. In so doing he demonstrated his thorough familiarity with the perennials of colonial American literature--narratives of Indian warfare and captivity and journals of spiritual revelation and growth"(5).

Kentucke also "roughly follows" the form of the Puritan sermon, where

...narrative passages are set within a logical framework as circumstantial demonstrations of the truth of the author's thesis. But where the Puritan form relies on a carefully articulated process of abstract logic to convince the reader, Filson's book relies on a narrative-like movement of images resolving themselves into a dramatic unity. Boone's initiation into the wilderness becomes the reader's own experience, as each chapter of the book carries him deeper into the wilderness, into a more intimate knowledge of the life of the pioneer and the Indian. This quality of narrative unity helps to give the Boone narrative its aura of myth by making it easier for the reader (and the prospective settler) to identify with Boone and to accept Boone's adventures [as] archetypal of the frontier experience. Because he was so careful in working out the context in which the Boone narrative was set, Filson was able (in the narrative itself) to concentrate wholly on the drama of Boone's character development and the enriching of his wisdom and sensibilities. Thus later writers were able to take the Boone narrative out of its original context and use Boone's character to sanctify their own visions of the West, and the Boone myth was able to grow and change with the development of American culture. (Slotkin 272)

Slotkin also comments that where the Puritan sermon begins with a biblical text, Filson "takes the map of Kentucky for his text." The Puritan sermon "exfoliates" the meaning of the biblical text, and Filson plans to develop the meaning inherent in the land. "The map itself is watermarked with a plowshare and the words 'Work & be Rich'" (272). The necessity

of settling Kentucky was almost a moral duty, which would benefit both the landscape and the settler alike. "One of the major themes of Filson's Boone narrative is, in fact, the ability of the wilderness to redeem man..." (270).

In Filson, Boone is portrayed as a contemplative man, a natural philosopher who reflects upon his experiences. One effect of these contemplative sections is to provide an intellectual and philosophical link between Boone's development and that of the nation. Through Filson's careful treatment, Boone's journey into the wilds of Kentucky becomes a rationale for Manifest Destiny. Physical action is followed by mental reflection, which is followed by more physical action and reflection. With each "cycle" of physical and mental action, Boone learns more about himself and reaffirms his, and by implication, the nation's goals. The movement through Kentucky by Boone becomes a blueprint of westward expansion.

Probably the most famous passage of *Kentucke* involves Boone's viewing the territory from "a commanding ridge" (55). His brother has returned to the settlement for much needed supplies, and he is alone, lacking even the company of a horse or a dog. He has spent the time since his brother's departure brooding on the absence of his wife and family. It is

--

a moment of revelation for himself and for the future of America.

One day I undertook a tour through the country, and the diversity and beauties of nature I met with in this charming season, expelled every gloomy and vexacious thought. Just at the close of day the gentle gales retired and left the place to the disposal of a profound calm. Not a breeze shook the most tremulous leaf. I had gained the summit of a commanding ridge, and, looking round with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains, the beauteous tracts below. On the other hand, I surveyed the famous river Ohio that rolled in silent dignity, making the western boundary of Kentucke with inconceivable grandeur. At a vast distance I beheld the mountains lift their venerable brows, and penetrate the clouds. All things were still. (Daniel Boon Kentucke 54-55)

Boone goes on to describe roasting the loin of a buck he has killed and how he is able to lie down and sleep peacefully until the next morning. His skill as hunter allows him the freedom to roam where he will because he can provide for himself. His philosophical nature can be exercised because his basic wants are supplied.

He continues his tour for several days and finally returns to his camp to find that Indians have visited but not disturbed it. He further reflects that he has been in constant danger, and were he a man who was "tormented with fear," he would have suffered terribly. However, he is not of that mind and is able to deal with the threat of howling wolves and countless other

dangers and remain quite content. Boone further reflects:

Thus I was surrounded with plenty in the midst of want. I was happy in the midst of dangers and inconveniences. In such a diversity it was impossible I should be disposed to melancholy. No populous city, with all the varieties of commerce and stately structures, could afford so much pleasure to my mind, as the beauties of nature I found here. (56)

After this contemplative section, the narrative moves rapidly forward. His brother returns in July, and they proceed to the Cumberland river and name the "different waters" along the way. He finally returns to his home and family and prepares to lead them west. Eventually Boone's family and other families come to Kentucky, establishing a pattern of westward expansion. Boone's experience is template; he serves as a focus, forthright and accessible.

For Slotkin, "Filson's tale...dramatize[s] convincingly the interdependence of Boone's destiny, the historical mission of the American people, and the destiny appointed for the wilderness by natural law and divine Providence" (Slotkin 269). Slotkin points to Boone as "the archetypal hero of the American frontier, [and] the Boone narrative, in fact, constituted the first nationally viable statement of a myth of the frontier" (268-269). Davy Crockett, whose name is often linked with Boone's,⁹ may be "King of the Wild

Frontier,"¹⁰ according to the popular song, but Boone came first.

In her essay, "The Fictions of Daniel Boone" Mary Lawlor traces "the history of Daniel Boone [which] is the history of a cultural figure and a literary character whose claim to authenticity is one of its most dominant components" (Lawlor 29). She examines several rhetorical aspects of representations of Boone found in Filson, Hall, Flint, and Cooper and argues that "the close analysis of his ideal authenticity dissolves into a demonstration of the rhetoric in which certain classical American notions of subjectivity exist" (29).

In Filson, Lawlor also sees the connection between the development of the country and Boone's life. She writes, "In about 1782, Filson went to Kentucky where he met Boone and heard the story of Kentucky's history, which was largely Boone's history" (31). She points out that Filson called attention to the "rustic quality" of Boone's speech while "not exactly claim[ing] that Boone was himself illiterate." She sees in Filson a stress on the naturalness of Boone, "a quality as little designed as the history that emerges from and with him" (31). She observes that

Generating the wilderness that generates him, Boone becomes the quintessential figure of the West, imaging the whole field of its possibilities in his presence or in the

simple sound of his name....Boone thus provides a representative image for the already-functioning modality of the hybrid American self: Land, money, and biography inextricably entwined in each other's meaning. (33)

So the landscape, Boone's rustic speech, and the figure of Boone as "seen" or "imaged" by Filson are all part of Kentucky, which is part of the nation and the "hybrid American self." Defining the "self" is part of the larger issue of identity and the American character. And, conflict is often central in such discussions.

William Kelly has examined the Leatherstocking Tales as a series in which tension between American originality and a search for origins which bind characters to the past are unresolved. Anxiety about being too late in a new country accompanies a preoccupation with recreating the American self. As soon as one realizes the value of a particular event, it is over. By the time the frontier is opened, whichever frontier that happens to be, its unique potentiality is violated. Lawlor comments that

Such fear of being too late, of course, imagines its own starting point, the true Boone story, as an object of the writer's desire crouched on a distant horizon. While all the Boone Tales, including Filson's, seem to be fueled to some degree by such anxious interest, it is in the early nineteenth-century narratives that articulations of Boone become interesting for their varying ways of distributing rhetorical stress and

tension in the incessant wish to settle the question of the real. (33)

What is "real" or authentic does not necessarily have anything to do with verifiable "facts." In fact, the "truth" becomes almost totally subjective when looking at Boone narratives. Meaning is derived from the needs that the narratives fulfill rather than from any objective content. As with Pocahontas, the story or stories are created and recreated by others, not by the historical figure. The extant Boone material, written in his own hand, is very small. A number of dictated "autobiographies," exist along with testimony of witnesses to certain events, and other second and third-hand accounts of episodes from Boone's life. The character of such material is valuable in its contribution to a legend which is as various as it is pervasive. Consistently apparent is the construction of meaning from these sources, according to the writer's desire and the need his narrative is created to meet. Boone's changing image is yet another example of Kolodney's point that we recreate historical and legendary materials to satisfy the needs of the present.

In James Hall's *Letters from the West* (1828), for example, Boone is portrayed "as a solitary individual, and exemplary instance of the 'backwoodsman'; and this type is itself understood to subsume and magnify

several traits of what Hall attempts to articulate as the 'national character'" (Lawlor 33). Furthermore, the rhetorical aspects of Hall's work underline the mythic aspects which connect Boone's character with the country.

Hall's letter 4 assumes "national character" as the ultimate reality of personality in the United States, shared by all but expresses differently from region to region....This cameleonlike ability to adapt to unfamiliar conditions is accompanied by a certain duplicity....The versatility that marks American character permits it to slide from local to national identity....Boone is as movable as the Kentucky border....A stable national character is evidently an object of Hall's desire, something that continuously elicits and eludes his writing, in the manner that Boone dodges definition as he floats among national, regional, and individual representation; and his model versatility lends him the protean slip by which he eventually comes to be known....Stephen Fender's observation that "in Hall...the West brought out a deep unease about the validity of metaphors," points to this preoccupation with the propriety of writing....Boone, functioning in Hall's work as a trope more than as a presence...thus becomes implicitly suspect...at the same time that he is supposed to be authenticity itself. (34-35)

Lawlor points out that in letter 16 of Hall's work, Boone as backwoodsman is the solitary figure who "faces the interior, dark spaces of the continent"; he seems to seek out places which have been avoided by others "during a period of postrevolutionary prosperity." Hall emphasizes the deprivation Boone experienced and

attributes his suffering to his "self-imposed exclusion from the lively commercial activities of the population, and in this sense the notion of sacrifice is quite literal." Here, the word "Kentucky" is reduced to its original meaning of "Bloody Ground" (35-36).

Lawlor sees the wilderness as a sort of underworld akin to that "of the classical narratives where the hero descends into the world of the dead" (36). The idea of crossing borders from one world into another is thus reinforced. In Hall, Boone as the American hunter travels from civilization into the wilderness, assuming the rites of sacrifice and death. His journey is directed toward the good of the emerging American people. He is the ideal leader, the noble heart that seeks to inspire those who will follow. He must cross the border of the unknown and face danger.

This notion is also reminiscent of the borderline between the frontier and civilization where the young Athenian Ephebe were posted. The myth of the Black Hunter carries connotations of doubt and duplicity. The oppositions of youth/age, frontier/civilization, West/East, black/white are present in the language. Boone is contrasted with the inhabitants of the civilized East. As Lawlor argues, "Thus the metaphor system of interiority, darkness, danger, and death by which the forest is represented in Hall functions as

part of an economic activity of the same order as that conducted by the prosperous citizens whose eastern trade serves the quicker returns that Boone is apparently denied" (37).

In Timothy Flint's widely read *Biographical Memoire of Daniel Boone* (1833), the figure of Boone is very much the same character as Natty Bumppo of Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, which Flint had read. He had also read Filson's Boone. In contrast to Hall's portrayal, which depicted Boone's service as painful and self-sacrificial, Flint places Boone in a "paradisiacal wilderness" which nurtures him and depicts him as a "naming Adam." He is "like Cooper's Leatherstocking, the avant-garde of civilization that will make the unknown land submit to its progress" (Lawlor 37).

Justification for progress is found in nature itself. In Flint, one can read a pre-Darwinian version of "survival of the fittest," where the superior Boone overcomes adversity and ushers in progress in his very person. In this view, nature is a commissioner of Boone's actions, delegating him political authority. Lawlor points out that Flint's narration "speaks as the mind of culture and of the law--the symbolic order that takes nature for its own expression" (38). Boone functions alone in the wilderness, a model of innocence but linked to the national destiny. As a hunter, he

not only moves through the forest successfully, he blazes trails for others.

Lawlor discusses the place of marking and erasing in "reading" the wilderness. Boone's ability to read signs in nature and especially the language of "Indian passages" is crucial to his success in the forest. Flint emphasizes "Boone's negotiation of woodland trails [which] involves as much if not more attention to erasing and placing his own marks as it does to deciphering those of others. Thus Boone appears conscious of being read, or at least of others reading indications of his presence, and attempts to make himself as elusive as we find him in Hall, except that in Flint the attempt is overt and the elusive traces literal" (38).

What Lawlor doesn't say is reading signs in the forest has to do initially and finally with hunting. The reading of animal sign is essential to survival because one needs such skill to locate game. Even the deadly game of Indian and white settler tracking one another is based on skills learned in the hunt. This tracking process becomes metaphoric on several levels. Discussions of Boone frequently employ the terminology of hunting. Moreover, a hunting motif is active in the Boone narratives and in the literature and writings that grow from it. Boone's source of power is hunting

and hunting becomes emblematic of life in the wilderness.

Oppositions found in the Boone material highlight extremes and borderlines between extremes. Lines of demarcation denote actual borders. Indeed, a study could be made of all the surveying accounts found in the Boone narratives. Borderlines impact Boone's life throughout his career as surveyor and scout and indicate his liminality in other arenas. The ambivalence of literal and figurative borders and the crossing of borders are concerns of the hunter figure.

Boone as Hunter

From the time Boone was fifteen, he was known "as one of the best hunters in the Pennsylvania countryside of his birth" (Faragher 9). Boone's love for the woods and for hunting began even earlier. Faragher tells us that "in his old age Boone repeated tales of his Pennsylvania childhood" (11). These remembrances reveal a touching closeness to his mother. He was one of eleven children, and in the summers he would go with his mother to tend the cows in open pasture.

By the time Daniel was ten years old the couple had purchased several dozen acres of grassland a few miles north of the homestead, where they grazed their milk cows. In one of Boone's fondest memories, he and his mother drive the herd to this distant pasture, where

there were cow pens and a small dairy house. From his tenth or eleventh year, mother and son would spend each "grass season" together there, he tending the stock while she milks and churns during the day, then at night listening to her sing the old Welsh songs before the open fire. He fashions a sharp wooden shaft, which he calls his herdsman's club, and with it becomes proficient at killing small game for their supper. The scene has a dreamlike quality--Daniel assuming the role of his mother's provider--and all the markings of an early adolescent fantasy. While it was a Welsh custom for the wife and mother to do her dairy work out at the pasture, she surely would have taken some of her younger children along. It seems scarcely possible that she would leave behind Boone's brother Squire Jr., still a nursing babe in the summer of 1745, or her youngest daughter, Hannah, born in August of 1746. But this was the way Boone remembered it. (Faragher 14-15)

Although his mother returned home to store her butter and cheese, Boone remained in the pasture, and there he developed a love of solitude. Having ten siblings at home might explain the deep family feeling balanced by a strong need for privacy. In his adult life, Boone repeated this pattern; his devotion to family was offset by frequent absence. For him, these departures took the form of questing in the wilderness. In a sense, Boone's leaving his family in one place--he leaves his father and siblings at their farm--is a way of establishing a new level of family intimacy in another place--he grows closer to his mother in the woodland setting. The world of the woods is associated with fond memories, grounded in hunting.

As he looked back from the vantage of old age, he recalled those summers as the point when his life's course had been determined. His "love for the wilderness and hunter's life," he reminisced, began with "being a herdsman and thus being so much in the woods." (Faragher 14-15)

When Boone reached the age of twelve, his father gave him his first gun, and he soon became an excellent marksman. His father was a weaver by trade, and his family had come from England and settled in Pennsylvania. The family was Quaker, and although they were at odds with their sect at times, the influence of the Society of Friends had a lasting influence on Boone, particularly in terms of his empathy for Native Americans. The Quakers historically had had peaceful relations with their Indian neighbors, and Boone would have been comfortable with the notion of brotherhood with them. In fact, his grandfather opened his home to Indians caught in conflicts with settlers.

Grandfather Boone enjoyed a reputation among the Indians for befriending natives. During the conflict of 1728 he led the rescue of two Indian girls held by a group of settlers who harbored lustful and murderous intentions. Indian hunters and diplomats passing along the path knew they could find food, drink, and a place to sleep at the Boone homestead; when Sassoonan, known as "king" of the Schuylkill Delawares, stopped for a time at the Boone place on his way to Philadelphia, with his retinue of twenty-five men, women, and children in 1736, the visit was important enough to record. There were other occasions, too, when Indians were an obvious presence in the area. In the

winter of 1742, for example, Moravian missionaries held religious services for a large party of Delawares in an Oley barn, and a number of Indians were baptized. As a child, Daniel had numerous opportunities to see and meet the native peoples of many tribes, and discussion of their visits was surely a common subject around the tables of his kinfolk. (Faragher 19)

Later in his life Boone was adopted by an Indian chief and his wife during one of his captivities, and though his son and brother were killed and his daughter kidnapped by Indians, his fondness for this "family," was never compromised.

Boone's predisposition toward the Indian way of life may have had its roots in his relationship with his mother. Indian mothers often instructed their very young sons with bow and arrows. Although Boone's mother is not described as a hunter, she was responsible for his link to nature and the life of the woods. Like Pocahontas, she is the source of both comfort and adventure.

The early description of his mother's singing before the open fire paints an intriguing picture. In the cosmos of the Native Americans, songs and dances, which were expressions of their spiritual world, were performed in their forest home. Nature and the earth were associated with the nurturing mother principal, and all beings and objects were imbued with spirits. Boone's ease with the forest world throughout his

lifetime reinforces his image as a "son" of the wilderness.

Once again, the basis for Boone's "citizenship" in the forest is hunting. That he is nurtured by the wilderness and associates it with both his birth and adoptive mothers is important, but his ability to hunt enables him to live in the wilderness. Boone developed his hunting skills without the instruction of his father who was an emigrant weaver. "Most emigrants to America came without any hunting traditions, for in most European countries hunting had been reserved for the nobility, so the hunting way of life that developed in the backwoods depended on Indian knowledge and skill" (Faragher 20). Of course, the central issue in any discussion of hunting rights is land and who "owns" it or may use it.

Boone's relationship with the land is again fraught with oppositions. The Indian view of the land was centered around use rather than ownership. Boone held conventional European attitudes toward ownership, but also realized that in the American landscape, other operative principles existed. His immersion in Indian culture would give him some understanding of the Native American view, and the landscape itself in America was quite different from the limited land available for hunting in Europe. Furthermore, the land itself with

its often fearful topography presented a challenge for any one to negotiate.

Boone's skill allowed him to explore the land. A recurrent theme in *Kentucke* is his joy in the landscape, where others fear and dread it. In *Kentucke*, the genesis of many of Boone's adventures is a hunting expedition. Hunting becomes the reason for crossing borders. It is Boone's "passport." He regarded hunting as his occupation from the time he completed his first long hunt.

[The] "long hunt" [was] an extended expedition of several weeks or months, usually undertaken in the fall and early winter. Long hunting was entirely derived from the patterns of woodland Indian culture. Details about Boone's first long hunt came from descendants in the Miller family, who remembered it because Henry [who accompanied Boone and was his lifelong friend from boyhood] later looked back on it as one of the major turning points of his life....After his first long hunt in 1750 he [Boone] became a professional hunter, and until his last years, when he grew too weak to leave his house, seldom did he ever miss a fall hunt. In North Carolina hunting became, as Boone once put it, his "business of life." (Faragher 28,31)

Boone's physical appearance has been variously portrayed. His "business of life" involves practicality above all else. Although Boone pictured in buckskin with a coonskin cap on his head is a popular image, it is inaccurate.

Indian and white hunters tended to mingle their style of dress, especially when they had commerce together. Faragher describes the outfit of the hunter. The details and the associations which accompany the items of dress are enlightening.

Hunters from both cultures dressed in a composite of European and Indian styles. Moccasins were of deerskin but made and patched with European awls. The hunting shirt was a loose frock that reached halfway down the thighs and overlapped by as much as a foot or more in front, sometimes fitted with a fringed cape used to cover the head. It was generally made of linsey or linen, sometimes of dressed deerskin, but this material had the disadvantage of being cold and uncomfortable in wet weather. In the front folds of the shirt hunters kept small rations of provisions. From the leather belt that pulled the shirt tight, they hung their powder horns, bullet pouch, knife, and tomahawk. Many Americans wore breeches or drawers, but as they moved further west they took to the Indian breechclout, a length of cloth about a yard long and nine inches wide that passed between the legs, under a cloth belt, with folds hanging front and back. Long leggings stretching to above the knee were supported by garter straps. Beaver hats were de rigueur on the eastern frontier of the eighteenth century, and although west of the Appalachians some men wore fur caps, Boone always despised them and kept his hat. Like Indian men, American hunters let their hair grow long and dressed it with bear grease, plaiting it into braids or knots. In time of war or for ritual occasions, Indian warriors might shave or pluck their scalps, leaving only a lock of hair, which they greased to stand upright or to which they attached deerskin ornaments or feathers. They painted their bodies with vermilion. American backwoodsmen heading into battle frequently adopted a similar style of

ornamentation. The frontier American was "proud of his Indian-like dress;" wrote a preacher in western Pennsylvania. In breechclout and leggings, their thighs and hips exposed naked to the world, he had seen them strut down village streets and even into churches, which, he added, "did not add much to the devotion of the young ladies." Boone adopted these styles as a youth in Pennsylvania, and they remained his through the whole of his long life. (20-21)

Boone is described as powerfully built and about five feet eight inches tall, "with broad shoulders and chest, strong arms, and thick legs." He weighed about 175 pounds, had a "high forehead and heavy brow, prominent cheekbones, a tight mouth, [and] a long and slender nose." Faragher tells us, Boone had his father's "penetrating blue eyes and fair, ruddy complexion but his mother's dark hair, which he always kept plaited and clubbed in Indian fashion" (30-31).

Many of these physical details are reproduced in Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales. Natty Bumppo's hunting shirt of buckskin and his moccasins are frequently described as is Chingachgook's calico shirt. The hairstyles of the Indians are also repeatedly brought to the reader's attention in connection with tribal or individual identity.

Beneath the physical details of dress is this issue of identity. Faragher tells us that "American frontiersmen....were often characterized by their contemporaries as hybrid Indians" (22), and that

hybridization was an internal condition as well an external expression. Faragher comments that "there were Americans, Boone among them, who moved quite far in the Indian direction of seeing things" (23). This comment reflects the distinction between those who were connected to both Indian and white worlds and those who resided exclusively in one world or the other. In truth, it was probably not possible to be untouched in some way by the opposing world. However, the hybrid hunter whether mostly Indian or mostly white resided squarely on the borderline.

One type of hunting Boone pursued underscores his liminality. Who hunted, what one hunted, and how one hunted had significant implications: whether one hunted alone or with a group, for subsistence or sport or market. During the course of his lifetime, Daniel Boone hunted small game, deer, bear, buffalo, and trapped beaver, otter, and muskrat. The stages of his life are reflected in his hunting and trapping habits. Small game hunting and trapping were activities usually associated with youth or old age, while big game was the pursuit in manhood.

Again "The Black Hunter" comes to mind with its mythic connections between youth and forms of hunting. Hunting at night as a youthful and covert activity is linked with duplicity and doubt. Hunting during the day is an overt activity which signifies forthrightness and

social adjustment. That youth hunts alone and in darkness is negative in the mythic world of the Black Hunter. But, in American culture, the lonely hunter, especially in the case of Boone, is a positive figure. Independence and self-sufficiency are desirable traits. One admires the strength of character which allows the exceptional loner to prevail. These distinctions between European and American aspects of hunting individuate the American hunter. Distinctions between male and female hunters in America are important, too.

Though not stressed in most sources, women did their fair share of subsistence hunting while their menfolk were off on more glamorous adventures, usually hunting and trapping for profit. Daniel's wife, Rebecca Bryan Boone, was left alone consistently for long periods of time (once for two years), as were many women who were married to professional hunters.

Needing fresh meat for the stew pot, many was the time that Rebecca herself hunted small game in the woods near the house. In the nineteenth century men along the Yadkin still told of the time she rode north to a salt lick on Deep Creek, her gun loaded with buckshot, and "fired a gun from nearly the top of a tree and killed 7 deer and her mare that she rode there." It was an improbable tale, and coupled with a male barb about the dead horse, yet the story testified to the strength and determination of an able and intelligent woman...(Faragher 50)

Hunting has historically been a pre-eminently male activity, associated with masculinity, the role of provider, and a test of physical and intellectual skill.

That women hunted, have always hunted, but have not been recorded as doing so is broadly suggestive. Annette Kolodny addresses the subject of women in the wilderness and considers their absence from the literature and history of the American frontier. Her comments about Mary Jemison and Rebecca Bryan Boone are particularly germane here. Mary Jemison dictated her life's story to James Everett Seaver, the resultant text, *The Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison*, became the bestseller of 1824 (81). Although Kolodny discusses the alterations which Seaver no doubt made to the oral history of Jemison, what nonetheless comes through any censorious efforts is the woman's ability to live happily in the wilderness. She married twice, both times to Indian husbands. She was subsequently, single parent to seven children. She was able to successfully settle on the Gardau Flats of the Genesee River and build a house with only her children's help. Thereafter, she consistently brought in a corn crop and flourished in her chosen home. She lived to old age with her children and grandchildren settling nearby. Furthermore, she had white families as tenant farmers to whom she rented land to till (76-79).

Kolodny wryly comments that when Richard Slotkin refers to Seaver's *Life*, he conveniently ignores Jemison's gender as significant to her accomplishment.

Richard Slotkin has observed that, "wittingly or unwittingly," Seaver designed this closing to imitate contemporary popular images of a patriarchal Daniel Boone, "seated," at the end of his life, "in the midst of his happy brood of unspoiled 'children of the woods.'" It is an astute observation--except that, once again, Slotkin ignores the crucial fact of gender. A comfortable and secure life "in my own house, and on my own land" (*MJ*, p. 143) bespoke the reward for surmounting wilderness hardships that had previously been accorded to men--but never to a woman--in American literary history. As such, Jemison's *Life* was "revolutionary" not for the generic alterations Slotkin cites, but because it represented the first text in American literature to move a real-world white woman beyond the traditional captivity pattern to something approaching the willing wilderness accommodations of a Daniel Boone. With that switch in gender, moreover, the nature of the accommodation also changed. For, Jemison, the baggage of familial and communal domesticity began to enter the wilderness preserve of the male hunter-adventurers. (80)

That a woman would want to enter the world of the "wilderness preserve of the male hunter-adventurers," and perhaps more significantly, that a woman could do so involved the crossing of very significant borders indeed.

In general, the narratives about white male hunters take the form of a human lover engaging the landscape as the beloved entity. The language used to

describe the hunter and his relationship with the land is erotic and uses metaphors and other specifically sexual imagery. The vocabulary includes references to the land as female and "virgin"; the hunter in the wilderness is said to be in "her embrace"; the condition of the land is "uncontaminated" with no hint of "violation" (Kolodny *The Land Before Her* 3). Although there were women in the frontier wilderness who adapted to the landscape, women engaging the wilderness was perceived as inappropriate and/or unthinkable.

In accounts of Boone's life, Rebecca Bryan Boone appears as an appendage to her husband. It is obvious, however, that she is an important "presence," if only by implication. In Filson, Boone gives her credit for being able to move the family back to her father's house when Daniel is away from the family for two years and believed dead. Timothy Flint writes that Boone's young son was the leader of the party that removed the family. But Boone himself clearly stated that Rebecca led through its long and difficult journey. The existence and simultaneous absence of Rebecca Boone implies she accomplished many exceptional things, but has not been given credit for them. Many women must have hunted during the settling of the frontier, yet this fact is consistently omitted. Hunting connotes

masculinity and power. Who hunts remains a culturally defining question.

Who hunted in America during the colonial and early republican periods is a key to understanding the dynamics of the time. First, the Indian hunted, and controversy over use and ownership of Indian hunting grounds was a major factor in the evolution of relations between Indians and settlers. The arrangements made between the French and the Indians, the British and the Indians, and the Americans and the Indians were highly problematic. Boone's experience is emblematic of these major conflicts. In the French and Indian Wars, Boone sided with the British, against the French. As the settlers became alienated from England, Boone tried to remain neutral in the escalating conflict. His wife's people, the Bryans, were loyalist in sympathy, and he was not anxious to be in the forefront of rebellion against the crown. However, by the time he had founded Boonesborough (1775), rescued his kidnapped daughter and her friends from the Shawnee (1776), and was wounded (1777), he became aware of the delicate balance of the new country.

A copy of the Declaration of Independence had reached Boonesborough in August of 1776, but the struggle for America was far from over. Two years later, in 1778, Boone was captured along with a number of other men as they were on a salt making expedition.

Boone had to negotiate with the Indians and the British to try to save his settlement from destruction. There are various accounts and interpretations of this incident. However, the result was that he was charged with treason. His acquittal followed, but the spectre of uncertainty regarding his character was never fully erased during his lifetime.

The subsequent struggles for control of the land repeated the pattern of whites encroaching on traditional Indian hunting grounds, fierce but ultimately futile resistance by the Indians, and their further removal to locations where the process began again. Boone understood the feeling of the Indian for the land, but his notions of ownership were aligned with those of the white settlers. The excesses of market hunting, which would soon decimate the buffalo herds, were already marked in Kentucky, where plentiful game was an invitation to slaughter. Even before his Kentucky days, Boone was hunting on the Yadkin, where

The country of the Upper Yadkin teemed with game. Bears were so numerous, it was said, that a hunter could lay by two or three thousand pounds of bear bacon in a season. The tale was told in the Forks that nearby Bear Creek had taken its name from the season Boone killed ninety-nine bears along its waters. The deer were so plentiful that an ordinary hunter could kill four or five a day, and it was said that Boone and a companion once took thirty between sunup and sundown near the head of the Yadkin. Deer were best when they were "in the red," during

summer or early fall, before they acquired their blue winter coats. The deerskin trade was an important part of the regional economy. In 1753 over thirty thousand skins were exported from North Carolina, and thousands more were used within the colony for the manufacture of leggings, breeches, and moccasins. A "buck" was the standard of the trade, and by 1750 the term had already become a synonym for its monetary equivalent, the widely circulating Spanish peso, known by its German name of "thaler," or dollar. (Faragher 31-32)

This passage points up that the plentiful game was viewed as inexhaustible and that the economy was linked to wildlife in the American landscape in actuality and in metaphor.

The "buck" is simultaneously the animal, its own processed skin, and its monetary value. The close connections between the environment and the people who inhabit it are emphasized by the accompanying reflection in the language. "During the nineteenth century, in the local parlance of the Kentucky mountains, 'a Boone' was another name for a good hunter" (Faragher 54). "Boone" is synonymous with a powerful cluster of images. His figure as hunter is at the heart of this power. The literary expression of the Boone legend and lore is most comprehensively dealt with in *The Leatherstocking Tales* of James Fenimore Cooper.

Natty Bumppo, Literary Reflection of Boone

The protagonist of Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* is a literary reflection of Daniel Boone. A number of studies of the Tales and their main character have centered on issues of American national identity and the iconic nature of Natty Bumppo, since his first appearance in *The Pioneers* (1823). Bumppo's figure is not perfectly analogous with Boone's because Boone's is more complex and flexible than his. Bumppo's relationship with the changing landscape, his own identity and by implication the nation's, and his attitudes toward gender and race do mirror Boone's in important ways, however. Furthermore, Cooper's manipulation of *time* and *language* underscores Bumppo's status as an American.

Time

In the first paragraph of *The Deerslayer* Cooper ponders time's role in providing a framework for experience:

On the human imagination events produce the effects of time. Thus, he who has traveled far and seen much is apt to fancy that he has lived long, and the history that most abounds in important incidents soonest assumes the aspect of antiquity. In no other way can we account for the venerable air that is already gathering around American annals. When the mind reverts to the earliest days of colonial history, the period seems remote and

obscure...yet, four lives of ordinary duration would suffice to transmit, from mouth to mouth...all that civilized man has achieved within the limits of the republic....Thus, what seems venerable by an accumulation of changes is reduced to familiarity when we come seriously to consider it solely in connection with time. (*The Deerslayer* 9)

Here, Cooper manipulates time in several ways. He emphasizes that time is skewed by individual human experience and the life of nations. It can seem longer or shorter than it really is. It is distorted by one's perception. When many events happen in a short space of time, they seem to occur over a longer period. But, time also restores a sense of balance, as the last sentence of the paragraph suggests: "What seems venerable by an accumulation of changes is reduced to familiarity when we come seriously to consider it solely in connection with time." Cooper suggests that experience can deceive. The "accumulation of changes" are not in themselves trustworthy unless we know how to view them properly.

William Kelly argues that, "Myth is history's antithesis" (159). Historic time and mythic conception are opposing forces in the *Leatherstocking Tales*. Kelly sees the Tales as "a point of cultural reference and a source of national identity" (vii). He points out that critics and cultural historians have converted the five Tales into a single myth, thereby reducing

their complexity and "denaturing" them. "This reshaping of the series is particularly ironic," Kelly argues, "because the tales represent Cooper's ardent attempt to conceptualize rather than transcend America's history. Across the five volumes of the series, Cooper addresses his culture's relation to the past and struggles to achieve a coherent sense of historical form" (vii-viii). Time is a key ingredient because Cooper must constantly reshape it to accommodate his needs over the course of the Tales, which cover a significant period of time. What is more, Cooper begins near the end of his protagonist's "life" and recreates his character's past and future. Cooper's temporal manipulations suggest the hunter figure's ability to transcend limits.

Kelly shows Cooper is driven by a mutually exclusive "desire for autonomy and a yearning for context." The "historiographic paradigm Cooper constructs and continually revises in the Tales," Kelly tells us, "suggests [Cooper's] attraction to flight from temporal restriction" (viii). Cooper was at once arguing for American originality and trying to establish some link with the past. The tension between these opposing desires is evident throughout the Tales. And this tension is once again the basis for seeing the hunter on the borderline. The nature of the borderlines which the hunter crosses is contradictory.

Kelly discusses numerous contradictions which reveal a failure to reconcile the "origin versus originality" issue. However, he argues that a progression of Cooper's vision takes place over the course of the Tales.

"Wary of both radical originality and subservient dependence, Cooper begins the Tales by depicting America as both free from and bound to the past. In *The Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans*, he is able to sustain that contradictory perspective by offering an illusory synthesis that purports to reconcile freedom and restraint" (Kelly viii). In these first two novels, Cooper's "double vision" serves to heighten the reader's sense of how the culture responded to "the burden of the past." The "reformulation of that paradigm" by Cooper "as the series progresses" reveals a reshaping of "his historiographic and narrative strategies" to deal with the "logical inconsistencies inherent in his...conception of America's growth." This reshaping of the initial paradigm involves freeing the Tales from mythic readings and restoring "their historiographic dimension," specifically confronting "the limits of history" (viii-ix). I don't think that freeing the Tales from mythic readings is necessary. That they invite multiple interpretations is stimulating rather than limiting. Cooper's fascination with aspects of

time and his rebellion against any limitations imposed by it are illustrated by his integration of events in Leatherstocking's life.

Restrictions of time abound in American literature. Establishing legitimacy through longevity pervades Cooper and many other writers from Washington Irving to the present. In a new country, establishing a sense of the ancient, and therefore a claim to legitimacy, is a difficult task. Equally difficult is capturing the elusive spirit of a particular time which has passed. However, both the ancient and the timely are a focus in the Tales.

Much of the problem with looking at Cooper's first two Leatherstocking novels is confronting a schizophrenic perspective, one desperate for historical context while simultaneously too late to experience the imagined pristine world of the past. The Tales are complicated chronologically. The order in which they were written and published, *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Prairie* (1827), *The Pathfinder* (1840), and *The Deerslayer* (1841), differs significantly from the chronological lifetime of their hero, Natty Bumppo. Natty's "lifetime" is portrayed in *Deerslayer* (1740), which covers his early twenties; *Mohicans* (1757), his mid-thirties; *Pathfinder* (1759), his late thirties; *Pioneers* (1793), his early seventies and *Prairie* (1805), his early eighties.

Looking at the Tales according to the chronological "life" of Natty Bumppo instead of the publication order offers two advantages. First, Cooper's vision of the series can be seen more fully because *The Deerslayer* is the last book written, and second, it deals with the earliest stage of Bumppo's "life." Cooper implies that a character's meaning can only be determined in retrospect after knowing his ultimate outcome. Bumppo's "lifetime" reinforces Annette Kolodny's point that "the choices we make in the present inevitably alter our sense of the past that led to them" ("Minefield 278).

Kolodny discusses *The Deerslayer* and its relation to the other Tales which make up the series. She looks at Natty Bumppo's development over the course of the five volumes:

At the end of January 1841, Cooper informed his publisher that he had begun "a new tale, in which Leatherstocking would appear as a young man." "It struck me," he explained, "that having written so much about this character, a work of this sort was wanting to fill up his history. In the last book he is called the Pathfinder, and was in love: in this he is called the Deerslayer, and is beloved." Cooper's search for the substance and meaning of his character's identity was coming to an end. (*The Lay of the Land* 109)

Furthermore, Cooper's diction is important. In particular, Cooper "names" Bumppo at different stages in his development. These names are significant and

describe Natty's role at specific times in his life. He is "Deerslayer" in the first stage of his life because he has only slain animals, never man. When he finally kills a man, he is dubbed "Hawkeye" by the very man he kills. Overall, he is "Leatherstocking." Cooper introduces as such in *Pioneers*, then "recreates" Natty over the course of the series, supplying him with appropriate and transitional names. As with Boone, defining Natty Bumppo as a "hunter" provides the crucial definition of his character.

Language

Louise K. Barnett in her chapter, "Speech in the Wilderness: The Ideal Discourse of *The Deerslayer*," examines the work as a novel "shaped by issues of speech" (Barnett in Heyne 19). She discusses the nature of speech in the novel and the relationship between speech and silence. Although she examines all of the main characters in the novel, she focuses on Natty Bumppo. "In...*The Deerslayer*," she writes, "language is envisioned as adequate to the needs of speakers. The ever-present dialectic between speech and silence is represented only in terms of intentionality: that is, when characters speak they are able to express themselves eloquently, but they may choose silence as the preferable course" (19). Natty

chooses silence at a critical point in the novel, and before this critical point he establishes himself as a man whose words are to be marked and pondered.

When he does speak, Natty Bumppo defines himself as a hunter first and foremost. During the course of *The Deerslayer*, he becomes a warrior as well, but his initial and his enduring identity is that of hunter. Cooper's narration reinforces this definition, literally referring to Bumppo only as "Deerslayer" or "the hunter" throughout the novel. Natty "soliloquizes" using the metaphor of the hunt. Bumppo comments, for instance, that there is "little manhood in killing a doe" (13). Hurry Harry's character is labeled "reckless" when he misses a buck at the beginning of the book, and Deerslayer upbraids him for his hasty shot. Several discussions take place where the habits of deer are used as examples of particular behavior, and frequent comparisons and contrasts between hunting and warfare are drawn to emphasize the experience of Bumppo. After all, the subtitle of *The Deerslayer* is *The First Warpath*. That Bumppo proves to be a valiant warrior is not surprising, though he has voiced his own concern at his lack of experience in war.

Natty's private life is examined as well. Natty's celibacy is admirable since it indicates his restraint, but his refusal to mate is unnatural in the natural

world he inhabits. He is a reflection of the untapped potential of the landscape. As with a virgin forest, the land is untouched, holding the allure of beauty and the promise of fertility, but its uncultivated aspect is in conflict with the national interest in development and "civilization." Natty is "pure" but this purity may not be virtue but sterility or a refusal to grow up. Virginity is desirable because it connotes purity, but it is useless if it remains too long intact. Ironically, virginity is a state associated with the female rather than the male. The land is usually referred to in female terms. The role of hunter in America is usually thought of as male, and the hunter's relationship with the land is often portrayed in sexual terms.

The virgin hunter in the mythological world is most strikingly portrayed as female, exemplified by the huntress Artemis (Greek) or Diana (Roman). She is desirable because she is beautiful (and perhaps because she is dangerous to mortals); yet she is untouchable because she is immortal, and no mere human has any power over her. The consequence for any male who violates her chaste state, even by viewing her, is gruesome death. She is notorious for changing her would-be violators into deer, which are then torn apart by their own hunting dogs in the chase or shot with

arrows by ignorant humans who are unaware of the true nature of their prey.

The story of Actaeon is a prime example. As a young hunter he spies on Artemis and sees her bathing. He cannot keep silent and snickers as he observes the goddess. Furious, Artemis transforms him into a stag, and he is destroyed by his dogs. Despite this pitiless aspect of Artemis, she is also and simultaneously the goddess of childbirth, baby animals, and the moon, and the twin sister of Apollo, the sun. Nicole Loraux argues that Artemis "paradoxically clad in the garb of the huntress, is the most eroticized of the three [virgin goddesses; the other two are Hestia and Athena] and perhaps also the most terrifying for those under her protection: women die in childbed suddenly from her shafts, and hunters keen on living must forbear to gaze on the beautiful body of the naked goddess in her bath--as Actaeon learned to his peril" (24).

Natty Bumppo, by contrast, is all too human; but, he maintains his chaste state. He is an anomaly--at once a strong, talented young hunter with a certain primitive appeal yet innocent of the baser vices of humanity, though not ignorant of the forces in the world he has chosen to inhabit. In *The Deerslayer*, he rejects marriage through silence: Judith Hutter reveals her desire to marry him and any civil word of his would indicate compliance. Celibacy can be viewed as *not*

acting, not marrying, and in this sense, silence can be viewed as not acting, not speaking. In not speaking, Natty maintains his celibate state. His is a rather passive celibacy in contrast to the fierce and overtly destructive chastity of Artemis.

The two figures do have in common a proprietary relationship with the forest. They may not mate as the humans and animals who inhabit this setting do, but they protect those within their domain and participate in the other cyclical aspects of the woods. They hunt; they are skillful in their craft to the point where they seem almost magical, and they are in harmony with the environment. In a sense both Artemis and Natty Bumppo are virgin parents to those they protect in the forest. Artemis is, after all, the assigned goddess of childbirth and baby animals, and Bumppo acts as instructor and father to younger men in his older years; in his younger years, he is the emblem of correct standards and behavior. The maternity and paternity of these two figures is reminiscent of the clerical appellations of "mother" and "father." In fact as Barnett points out, Bumppo is called a Moravian by Hurry Harry for his "frequent citing of the Moravian missionaries and his adherence to their teachings." (20).

The forest of *The Deerslayer* is an untouched wilderness "not the howling desert of the Puritan

imagination,...but a nurturing presence whose pristine existence is superior to any other environment" (20). Bumpo has chosen to live in and identify with his woodland environment, yet he is the spokesman for conventional social hierarchy. Judith Hutter, whom Bumpo rejects as a suitable marriage partner, is doomed by her nature and family history. Her mother had children out of wedlock because she chose someone above her on the social scale. She then married below her social level. The clear implication is that Judith will go astray because her mother did. Her mother's primary error was violating the boundaries of her social class. Barnet argues that "Deerslayer's commentary on such violations of hierarchy asserts the superiority of rigidly maintained class distinctions" (20). She further comments that "nothing is suitable that is out of character...is simply...the principle that governs *The Deerslayer's* perfect economy" (20).

Adherence to class distinction reveals an acceptance of society's standards, which is expressed in speech. Strict observance of social order and class lines would seem more appropriate in a European setting than in the American wilderness. But, Deerslayer is in an America still tied to Britain. The perspective is skewed with the British portrayed as unattractively as the French. The point for Cooper is establishing the sterling character of Bumpo. Natty backs up his

words with action, and though he has proven himself in prior Tales, he is largely untried in this book.

Barnett sees in *The Deerslayer* a "commitment to speech, more than action" because it is "a public commitment to the values of the word and an ultimate test of character in which a man's word literally becomes his bond." Further, she says, it "invoke[s] a central conflict of the American experience--the tension between wilderness and individual freedom," and what is more, she stresses "the pastoral is the ideal genre for Cooper's acute sense of these polarities." While the pastoral is the "ideal genre" for exploring the polarities between the wilderness and individual freedom, she argues that "the text as romance explores the familiar issue of identity. Who the characters are is finally the novel's greatest preoccupation, and it is constantly revealed first through speech and only later through some other form of behavior" (19-20). And although language is capable of corruption, Barnett sees Cooper as confident that language has the power to "achieve an ideal discourse." (20)

According to Barnett, the way ideal discourse is achieved is through categorizing and the authorial voice. Categorizing people, situations, and events defines them. The main character creates categories and definitions in this novel. Bumpo is at once categorizing and defining and is himself categorized

and defined through language. Barnett sees the keyword of the novel's discourse as "nature," and the keyword of its metadiscourse as "truth" (21). I see the primary consideration of Natty Bumppo as *hunter* underlying both.

Bumppo is the touchstone of what is right, although he is not perfect, and through his speech or silence he is able to order the world of *The Deerslayer*. This novel is the culmination of Cooper's vision; in it he has reconstructed Bumppo's youth. *The Deerslayer* is both the first and last of *The Leatherstocking Tales*. The appellation of "Deerslayer" refers to Natty's skill as a hunter, while it also refers to his not having killed a fellow human creature. This point is emphasized in the beginning of the novel as he talks with Hurry Harry.

"'Tis true, the Delawares call me Deerslayer, but it's not so much because I'm pretty fatal with the venison as because that while I kill so many bucks and does, I've never yet taken the life of a fellow creatur'. They say their traditions do not tell of another who had shed so much blood of animals that had not shed the blood of man." (*Deerslayer* 36)

Natty was also formerly Straight-tongue. Natty says of himself early in the novel that "...you will find me as plain-dealing in deeds as I am in words" (20-21). His rifle is called Killdeer, indicating its primary function. The other titles or appellations for

Natty are all associated with his skills as hunter and woodsman, with the exception of his family name, "Bumppo." Hetty Hutter asks him to recite all his names, because in her simplicity, she believes they will reveal what he is really like. The occasion also provides Cooper with an opportunity to have Natty list his pedigree.

"Tell me *all* your names," repeated the girl earnestly, for her mind was too simple to separate things from professions, and she *did* attach importance to a name; I want to know what to think of you."

"Well, sartain; I've no objection, and you shall hear them all. In the first place, then, I'm Christian, and white-born, like yourself, and my parents had a name that came down from father to son, as is a part of their gifts. My father was called Bumppo; I was named after him, of course, the given name being Nathaniel, or Natty, as most people saw fit to tarm it." (59)

Natty goes on to explain the provenance of his various names. Though "'Bumppo has no lofty sound,...yet men have bumped through the world with it.'" He further elaborates that Straight-tongue came from the Delawares when they found out Natty "'was not given to lying.'" "'After a while they found out that I was quick of foot, and then they called me the *Pigeon*, which, you know, has a swift wing and flies in a direct line.'"

Cooper's humor is evident when he has Natty explain his least appealing name. "'From carrying

messages, and striking blind trails, I got, at last, to following the hunters, when it was thought I was quicker and surer at finding the game than most lads, and then they called me the *Lap-ear*, as, they said, I partook of the sagacity of a hound.'" To which Hetty responds, "'That's not so pretty...I hope you didn't keep *that* name long.'" He then goes on to explain the name which becomes the novel's title, *Deerslayer*. "'Not after I was rich enough to buy a rifle,' returned the other, betraying a little pride through his usually quiet and subdued manner; 'then it was seen I could keep a wigwam in ven'son; in time, I got the name of *Deerslayer*, which is that I now bear; homely as some think it, who set more valie on the scalp of a fellow mortal than on the horns of a buck'" (59-60).

Deerslayer, though perhaps "homely" according to Natty, seems a particularly appropriate title for the work that culminates Cooper's vision. Natty's discussion with Hetty reveals a gently mocking attitude, while not diminishing the importance of naming and its influence in "reading" character. The emphasis is self-conscious and underscores again the role of language, specifically categorizing and defining through naming.

The most important naming takes place when Natty is rebaptized Hawk-eye by the warrior he meets on shore. They have a lengthy discussion over ownership

of a canoe, which ends in a life and death battle. The incident happens less than a quarter of the way through the novel. Cooper deems it necessary to show the reader that Natty is already worthy of the title, Hawk-eye, even at this preliminary stage of his development. He kills his first fellow creature, but only after repeated attempts to forestall the inevitable. Ultimately, he must be true to his "gifts" and survive in his environment.¹¹

Along with his inherent goodness, Cooper stresses Natty's sound judgement. Those around him are flawed, but although he is young, he is serious, not reckless. Hurry Harry is reckless in his attitudes toward the law and the Indians, and he compounds his flaw through his rash behavior. Judith is reckless with her person; her reputation is sullied because she is unable to control her "gift" of beauty. Hetty is not reckless in the sense that she knowingly does wrong; but, her mental weakness yields a flawed view of reality. She is pious, but she is dangerous because of her simplicity. Hutter, very much like Harry, is lawless. He has decided to create his own world, a flawed god whose kingdom is doomed. Nature will recapture his castle and ark.

The reader is carried through Cooper's exploration of acceptable and unacceptable alternatives by Natty Bumppo, and Cooper's voice becomes Bumppo's voice.

Cooper's speaking through Natty explains why many of the passages involving dialogue take on the characteristics of narrative. Rather than an exchange between characters, the dialog is transformed into a philosophic discourse. Many critics, most notably Mark Twain, have mocked the long-winded, awkward speeches of Bumppo.¹² Cooper conveys his own ideas by putting them into Natty's mouth and thus establishes the philosophical nature of the character.

In *Beneath the American Renaissance*, David Reynolds discusses subversive humor and language, specifically in regard to the Crockett almanacs. His point is that language illuminates a mind set.

American humor of the antebellum period is commonly divided into two camps. Constance Rourke has made a distinction between subtle, low-key Yankee humor and grotesque, macabre backwoods humor. Similarly, Walter Blair and Hamlin Hill differentiate between what they may call "reputable humor" and "subversive humor." Reputable humor...was conservative and restrained, harking back to the smooth wit and polished periods of Goldsmith and Addison. It championed a moral and predictable universe and upheld decorum and a rigid social hierarchy....Subversive humor...reveled in disorder, violence, amorality. It featured a dynamic rascal who flouted decency and the law and who embodies the dark view of man as a wily being who relies on cunning to survive in an unpredictable, inscrutable universe.

Although Cooper aligns himself with the reputable and polished school of humor in his narrative, he does draw

Hurry Harry and Thomas Hutter as rascals who violate the decorum of society and the law. Natty Bumppo is no drawing room dandy, but his moral fiber is never in question. The farthest he strays from righteous behavior in *The Deerslayer* is when he shoots a bird to test his gun, and he is immediately aware of his transgression. Even when he does kill another human being, he does so in self defense. Natty does not murder his Indian enemy; he is in a life and death struggle. Even then, he kills his enemy with great reluctance.

Throughout the Tales, Cooper's descriptions of Natty and comments about the nature of time reinforce Bumppo's role as noble hunter. In creating a past for Natty, Cooper was restricted by what the reader already knew about the character. Cooper recreates the historical period from 1740 to 1805 through Natty. To truly understand this American hunter's life at each stage of his development, and to understand Cooper's vision, we need to examine Natty's "life" chronologically. His concern with the landscape, his identity, and his attitudes toward gender and race are best studied from the perspective Cooper creates, or more accurately, recreates. Cooper's depicts Natty in a changing worlds. As he crosses the ever-moving borderlines between civilization and wilderness, Natty brings the reader with him. Examining the Tales

individually and in the order of Bumpo's "lifetime" provides a useful framework for a comprehensive exploration of Cooper's vision.

The Deerslayer or The First Warpath

The Deerslayer establishes Natty's identity as the prototypical American hunter. He is simultaneously an original and a composite. His literary persona is Cooper's creation, but he is based upon the figure of Daniel Boone. The character of Bumpo develops over the course of the five Tales, and Cooper culminates his creation with *Deerslayer*. Physically, Bumpo is not handsome, but he is unconventionally attractive. He stands in sharp contrast with his companion, Hurry Harry, on both a physical and a spiritual plane. The surface beauties of Harry (and Judith Hutter, as well) are foils for inner flaws. Bumpo's innate goodness and talent are even more striking as a result.

The landscape of *The Deerslayer* is at once Edenic and primitive, reinforcing a motif of oppositions and extremes. The capacity of the setting to be either heaven or hell depends largely upon each character's moral state. Cooper's characters frequently discuss the nature of heaven and consider the possibility of segregated heavens for those of different dispositions and races. The Happy Hunting Grounds of the Indians

appeals to Natty, although his affirmation of his white heritage and "gifts" never waivers. He leaves it to God to figure out the details. What such discussions point up is the close association of human nature and environment.

Natty emerges from the forest at the beginning of *The Deerslayer* dressed in deerskins with a guileless expression on his face; he is "between the skirts of civilized society and the boundless forests" (13). The forest and the lake are two worlds which will be central settings in the novel and which will be frequently opposed to one another. When Harry and the Hutterers are on land, they are in peril; when the Indians venture onto the lake they also face danger. Deerslayer is able to move between the lake and the land because he has the advantage of superior skills and a personal philosophy which allow him to adapt to changing circumstances. Cooper reinforces Natty's ability to adapt and survive by contrasting him with the other characters.

Harry's racial prejudice toward the Indians denies him harmony in the environment. His egotism denies him harmony in his love life. He will never be the woodsman that Deerslayer is. And though he is captivated by Judith's physical charms, he is haunted by her reputation. Judith is intelligent and good-hearted, but she is vain. She has compromised her

happiness by consorting with garrison officers, and her reputation is sullied. When Deerslayer meets her, she is already lost. Even life in the woods with its capacity for redemption cannot recapture her lost innocence.

Hetty Hutter is another character whom Cooper contrasts with Natty. She is unable to adapt because of her mental flaw. This flaw also seals her fate, while it affords her certain advantages when she is in the Indian camp. Hetty is regarded by the Indians as holy, and she has the simplicity and sincerity of a child. Her failing is her lack of judgment, but her purity is never questioned. She can create a perfect world in her mind, but the other significant white characters--Harry, Judith, Hutter--cannot.

As for Chingachgook and Hist, they are in harmony with their world and with one another. Hist is the nearest thing to perfect womanhood in the book. She is simple and childlike, but is clearly intended by Cooper as a portrait of an ideal Indian maiden. Chingachgook is described as an "Apollo of the wilderness" (226). He is the ideal mate for Hist, physically and spiritually beautiful. They are a royal couple.

The world of *The Deerslayer* emphasizes "first" experiences. This is the first time Deerslayer has seen a lake. It is the first warpath for Natty and Chingachgook. They are looking for adventure, and they

are looking to establish themselves. Cooper constantly reminds the reader of these "firsts." This attention to initial experience underscores the emerging identity of the characters. Individual identity is self-consciously addressed in the novel's character portraits. Characters identify themselves and others largely through racial and gender references.

Natty's constant allusion to "red" and "white gifts" is probably the most striking example of Cooper's sense of racial identity. Natty's identity as a hunter means he is an amalgamation of Indian and Euro-American characteristics. He is close to the hunter/warrior tradition of the Indians because he has lived with them. However, he is profoundly aware of his hereditary connection with the white world. His constant references to what is "white" and what is "red" are attempts to anchor an identity. The word "gift" within the shifting boundaries of the wilderness becomes a heavily freighted term. When Cooper has Natty explain the gory practice of scalping, for example, he rationalizes that it is acceptable for Indians to engage in the practice because it part of their gifts, while it is unacceptable for whites because it violates theirs. Natty defines "gifts" near the end of the *Deerslayer*, when he is speaking to Judith about what constitutes someone's "nature" as opposed to his "gifts."

"A natur' is the creatur' itself; its wishes, wants, idees, and feelin's, as all are born in him. This natur' never can be changed in the main, though it may undergo some increase or lessening. Now, gifts come of sarcumstances. Thus if you put a man in a town, he gets town gifts; in a settlement, settlement gifts; in a forest, gifts of the woods....All these increase and strengthen until they get to fortify natur', as it might be, and excuse a thousand acts and idees. Still, the creatur' is the same at the bottom, just as a man who is clad in regimentals is the same as a man that is clad in skins....Herein lies the apology for gifts, seein' that you expect different conduct from one in silks and satins from one in homespun, though the Lord, who didn't make the dresses but who made the creatur's [sic] themselves, looks only at his own work. (425)

Behavior based on race seems a preoccupation of Cooper's and his views are expressed through Natty. Accordingly, "nature" is what one is born with; "gifts" are the culture's contribution to such predispositions. How appropriate the culture's dictate's are for the person, however, is based upon the society into which one is born. Of course, one might argue that if white and red live together, their gifts would blend.

Like race, gender references are important in *The Deerslayer* because they define the characters' identity. When Cooper describes women, he generally does so in a sentimental fashion. They are "the gentler sex," have a "meek demeanor," and are "inherently feminine." But, the more interesting descriptions, made without much narratorial comment are

those where gender roles deviate from the expected norm. Two examples of Judith's talent and strength, for example, are described but not developed. First, when Judith and Hetty are paddling the canoe, they outmaneuver and outrun the attacking Indian warriors. Cooper does explain that the girls have been raised in the woods, so they have such talent. Second, we learn that Judith can shoot a rifle and has actually killed deer.

Judith, in the main, was a girl of great personal spirit, and her habits prevented her from feeling any of the terror that is apt to come over her sex at the report of firearms. She had discharged many a rifle and had even been known to kill a deer, under circumstances that were favorable to the effort. (410)

These details make Judith much more appealing and worthy of consideration than Cooper's endless bewailing of her lost innocence. Cooper creates Judith as a flawed hunter. She is flawed for two reasons, both of which are gender related. She is female, and she is unchaste. If we contrast her with Natty, who is the perfect hunter, the ideal he represents is male and celibate. Judith cannot alter her sex or her experience; therefore, she can never hope to be the female complement to Natty. Cooper limits Judith's development based on the contemporary culture's mores. Cooper constructs the world of *The Deerslayer* so that

Natty is only one able to negotiate its boundaries. Judith, especially, would be a more interesting character if Cooper did not limit her. What is significant, though, is that he ascribed attributes to her which are potentially comparable with Natty's at all.

Hetty Hutter, Judith's flawed, simple-minded sister, is able to paddle about the lake in a canoe by herself and wander the woods with impunity. Cooper accounts for this capacity by noting Indian tolerance for the mentally ill. That someone so impaired is simultaneously so competent in a wild, natural setting is significant. Perhaps, her ability to survive in nature indicates Cooper's romantic notion of a benevolent cosmos for the innocent. Hetty is even able to interact with the animal world with impunity, as evidenced when she encounters a family of bears. We are also told in an off-handed manner that she has raised bear cubs and wants to embrace the playful animals when she encounters them on the way to the Indian camp.

In the episode where Hist and Hetty meet in the woods, Hist does not notice that there is anything wrong with Hetty. Cooper's sentimentality again evident here is subverted by Hist's actions. Her role is, like Hetty's and Judith's, far from passive. She and Hetty both demonstrate great mobility in traversing

the landscape. But, Cooper seems most interested in her physical delicacy. Despite Cooper's chauvinistic flourishes, the three women, Judith, Hetty, and Hist, are remarkably active, especially within the context of this most talkative of the Leatherstocking Tales. They are, in a sense, hunter figures themselves: Judith hunts; Hetty plays with bears; and Hist is an Indian princess. Cooper is often contradictory in his portrayals. On one hand, he has the three women running about the forest, paddling canoes, plotting to save the lives of their men; and on the other, he dwells on the physical, mental, and moral limitations of these same women. However, the unusual treatment of gender roles in the action sequences is testament to the possibility of female power.

The world of nature unites disparate forces in *The Deerslayer*, despite Cooper's efforts to carefully define what belongs to the natural world and the civilized world. The Indian and white worlds are united through the friendship of Natty and Chingachgook. Gender roles are blurred in the forest and on the lake. Natty as hunter sets a standard for behavior. He represents the best aspects of both worlds, while the other characters embody negative forces in their societies. Chingachgook and Hist are the only characters who serve as models, but they are limited to the Indian world.

Natty is a hybrid of both Indian and white worlds, and so, his identity is complicated. The one clear definition of Natty's identity is that of hunter. Slotkin says that "Deerslayer is portrayed as a man consciously seeking to create his own character through his deeds as a hunter" (*Regeneration* 498). Tension exists between amalgamating and delineating cultures, with Natty on the borderline. He rejects marriage; he distinguishes constantly between what is "red" and what is "white"; and he keeps moving. The basic nature of the American hunter is, in the final analysis, solitary.

The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757

In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Chingachgook loses his only son, Uncas. The trope of the hunter as solitary in the American landscape is reinforced by looking at the Tales in both chronological and publication order; *Mohicans* is second in both. Its focus is the action, not the diction of its characters.

Bumppo is at the peak of his powers, and his Indian counterpart, Chingachgook, also enjoys the dignity of middle-age and fatherhood. Uncas, the last of the Mohican line, is in the flower of young manhood, an emblem of of Indian perfection. As the biological son of Chingachgook and the spiritual son of Hawkeye,

he amalgamates the white and red races. In his relationship with Cora Munro, the mulatto daughter of Col. Munro, he amalgamates three races. The amalgamation never comes to fruition because the culture and Cooper cannot allow anything so radical. But, the possibility itself remains intriguing. Though unconsummated, their relationship is more provocative than if a resolution were attempted. The potentiality of amalgamation is attractive, while its actuality is problematic. Therefore, the suspended hope for such a resolution satisfies the desire for racial harmony, and the culturally threatening realities of interracial marriage are avoided. There is not a great deal of time to ponder anything in *Mohicans* because action predominates. Battles, kidnappings, and rescues come in quick succession, and Natty is the organizing agent for this action.

In *Mohicans*, Natty Bumppo is Hawkeye, the appellation ascribed to him by the dying warrior in *The Deerslayer*. Both mythologically and rhetorically, naming is a significant process, reflecting the scope of Cooper's vision. In *Deerslayer*, the origin of the name Hawkeye is explained; the way Natty comes to own Killdeer, his long rifle, is recounted; his celibacy is framed by the many speeches about the nature of his relationship with the woods. All names are predicated upon his being the solitary American hunter. His life

is reconstructed throughout the publication order of the series. The chronological order then underscores this development.

In chronological time, 1757, the landscape is sublime and dangerous. In the "Preface," Cooper compares the setting with the present day:

In point of fact, the country which is the scene of the following tale has undergone little change, since the historical events alluded to had place [sic], as almost any other district of equal extent within the whole limits of the United States. There are fashionable and well-attended watering places at and near the spring where Hawk-eye halted to drink, and roads traverse the forests where he and his friends were compelled to journey without even a path. Glenn's has a large village; and while William Henry, and even a fortress of later date, are only to be traced as ruins, there is another village on the shores of the Horican. But, beyond this, the enterprise and energy of a people who have done much in other places have done little here. The whole wilderness, in which the latter incidents of the legend occurred, is nearly a wilderness still, though the Red Man has entirely deserted this part of the state. Of all the tribes named in these pages, there exist only a few half-civilized beings of the Oneidas, on the reservations of their people in New York. The rest have disappeared, either from the regions in which their fathers dwelt, or altogether from the earth. (vii-viii)

Cooper dates this preface 1850, almost a hundred years from the tale's setting. It is the third year of the war between England and France "for the possession of a country that neither was destined to retain"(13); it is

the time of Washington, "a Virginia boy, whose riper fame has since diffused itself"(14); it is the time when the Royal Americans of the 60th Regiment wear red coats.

Naming locations is important as well as naming characters. Lake George is the "Horican" for the tribe called "Les Horicans" and Lac du Saint Sacrement. One of Cooper's footnotes explains the word "Horican" means "tail of the lake," referring to Lake Champlain.

As each nation of the Indians had either its language or its dialect, they usually gave different names to the same places, though nearly all of their appellations were descriptive of the object. Thus, a literal translation of the name of this beautiful sheet of water, used by the tribe that dwelt on its banks, would be "The Tail of the Lake." Lake George, as it is vulgarly, and now indeed legally called, forms a sort of tail to Lake Champlain, when viewed on the map. Hence the name. (12)

Names reflect the nature of the object or person named. Here, Natty is Hawkeye. His appellation as "hunter" has been established, but his role as warrior will become pre-eminent during the course of the novel. Names also reflect the characters' histories and change to reflect the condition of the characters. In reading the names (and shapes) on the map, as with Filson's map of Kentucky, the text becomes a scripture in need of explication.

The Last of the Mohicans, is named for Uncas, a hunter and a warrior. Uncas is also mythically "the tortoise," a totemic sign of royalty in his tribe. When the young Uncas is to be killed by a branch of this ancestral tribe, he reveals the blue tattoo of the tortoise, signifying his claim as their leader. What such an allusion connotes is a heritage of power. But in Cooper, such a heritage of power is limited. Uncas dies valiently, but young. He represents the unrealized potential of the hunter to cross all borders, including race.

Identity is examined in this work largely through race. The process of racial amalgamation is addressed by the characters of Uncas and Cora. Although their relationship remains inchoate, it is, nonetheless, significant. We also find out what Natty and Chingachgook mean to one another as a result of the deaths of these two young people. Their relationship and identities are reinforced through their mutual grief.

Natty's famous description of himself as "a man without a cross" inscribes his identity and is based on his hunter status, living on the borderline between the Indian and white worlds. His insistence on his being without a cross springs from his desire to anchor his identity in a world of radical flux. He is not limited by the dictates of Christian doctrine, which rejects

the pagan's natural world. Neither is his bloodline "crossed" by Indian blood. Slotkin comments on Natty's self description:

He wishes to remain (what he calls himself at several points in the cycle of the novels) a "man without a cross." To him this means in part a man without a crossing of Indian blood in his ancestry and with no desire to cross bloods in the future. It also implies his desire to preserve his pristine innocence: he is a man without a cross of sin to bear, a man exempted from the fall, a new Adam. Yet he is also, implicitly, a man beyond the pale of Christianity, a man without the Cross to guide him. (*Regeneration* 505)

Although he is "a man beyond the pale of Christianity, a man without the Cross to guide him," he does accept the basic teachings of Christianity in that he loves his fellow man. But, he is not limited by arbitrary restrictions of form in religious observance. He is able to pick and choose what form the practice of his own natural religion will take.

Uncas and Cora, and Heyward and Alice provide the useful contrast against which Natty may be defined. The rescue from captivity in the wilderness has thrown the two couples together. The resolution of the book, with Uncas and Cora dying, Heyward and Alice marrying, and Natty and Chingachgook uniting in friendship and sorrow, reaffirm the unbudgeable character of the gulf that separates nations and races. Natty and Chingachgook survive to hunt together and go on with

their lives, but their "son" and their future is dead.

What is and what is not racially appropriate is underscored by the novel's setting. Cooper writes that white voices are inappropriate in the woods; they are "out of pitch" (*Mohicans* 238). The ongoing, comic description of David Gamut, the psalmster whose profession is absurd in the context of the wilderness, continually points up the futility of civilization's trappings. His pitch pipe, his bursting into song, his physical clownishness are constant reminders of the conflict between European civilization and its organized religion and the primitive forces of nature and Natty's natural religion. The serious business of the hunter/warriors is in sharp contrast to the frivolous occupations of the civilized world.

Cooper explores relationships between the internal and the external conditions of characters. He points up how inner and outer worlds mirror one another. He also juxtaposes characters to further illuminate their natures. For example, Uncas and Magua are both fierce warriors externally; internally, Magua is degenerate in several ways. He has been banished by his tribe; flogged and humiliated by Munro for his drinking. He is the antithesis of Uncas, bent on revenge for his disgrace. He seeks to exact it through the slaughter or dishonor of Munro's daughters. Uncas, on the other hand, is spiritually pure as well as physically

godlike. Cooper shows us the demonic face of the hunter/warrior to reinforce the power, danger, and potential of the figure.

Physical landscape in *Mohicans* reflects the mental landscape of the characters. The treachery and nobility in the setting always underline action in the plot. Fog, waterfalls, raging rivers are hazardous but sublime features of the landscape. These obstacles are features of the physical setting that must be negotiated. The hunter with his skills to survive in the natural world is the perfect guide. But, Magua is a perversion of the hunter figure. At the beginning of the novel, he deliberately leads the party with Heyward and Munro's daughters astray. When the party links up with Natty, Uncas, and Chingachgook, it is going the wrong way to the fort. Magua is able to divert them because they do not know the territory, nor are they able to judge the true character of Magua until he betrays them. Direction is a problem for the English throughout *Mohicans*. They are strangers to the external landscape of the forest, and they cannot navigate its unfamiliar twists and turns. More importantly, they cannot judge the true nature of the inner world of other people.

Natty and his friends are able to assist them but only to a limited degree, since the numbers of the enemy party are superior. A sense of helplessness

underlines the two major captivities in *Mohicans* and numerous other episodes. At some point or other, every character is captive one or more times. The scenes of captivity and hiding take place in various locations: in the forest, two Indian camps, behind falls, in ruins, in caves, even in a beaver hut. In a sense, occupying the fort is also a type of captivity. After the initial rescue, Natty's party must find their way through the fog, through the French, into the fort. Even Natty has difficulty in navigating the deceptive landscape. It is unclear where one really is in the fog and who is near--friend or foe. The hunters' presence and absence become crucial for the well-being of the other characters and their ability to make their way through the landscape.

Who and what one really is becomes the ultimate question. According to Cooper, the answer lies in two factors, ancestry and inclination. The landscape is the place where both are explored. Cora and Uncas show who they are when confronted with life and death situations. Cora protects her sister, Alice, who is younger and less able to cope with the hardships of their adventures. Cora keeps her head while in captivity and remembers to leave a trail so they can be rescued from their captors. Cooper frequently refers to her nobility and dignity of bearing. She speaks up when she has an idea and is practical and cool, much

like Natty in a crisis. That she is racially mixed is an insurmountable problem for Cooper because her marriage to Uncas would be too radical for cultural norms. He resolves the problem through her heroic death. While she lives, however, she influences the plot through decisive actions. The pale and fainting Alice seems far less worthy of notice.

Uncas is noble in both bearing and ancestry. His deeds speak for themselves. In the revelation scene, where he is about to be killed by Tamenund's warriors, the action rises to a dramatic pitch as the tortoise tattoo is revealed on his chest. The reference raises echoes of Daniel Boone, who was named "Sheltowee" or "Big Turtle" by the Shawnee. Uncas and Cora reach a romantic resolution in death which they could not have done, alive. Cooper would never allow a racially mixed couple to be living examples of amalgamation. He has the freedom in their deaths to unite them without any negative or even uncomfortable consequences. The mourning Indian maidens romantically link the two and will tell stories of them, though we are told that the romantic notion is just the fancy of young girls. The space devoted to the funeral of Cora argues for its appeal despite any disclaimers by Cooper. The elaborate description and emotional pitch of his diction subvert protestations that linking Cora and Uncas is unimportant.

The unity of the surviving hunter/warriors, Natty and Chingachgook, in the aftermath of Uncas's funeral is conveyed through an emotional exchange on the last page of the book. Chingachgook speaks to the assembly of mourners:

"Why do my brothers mourn!" he said, regarding the dark race of dejected warriors by whom he was environed. "Why do my daughters weep! That a young man has gone to the happy hunting grounds; that a chief has filled his time with honor? He was good: he was dutiful; he was brave. Who can deny it? The Manitto had need of such a warrior, and he has called him away. As for me, the son and the father of Uncas, I am a blazed pine, in a clearing of palefaces. My race has gone from the shores of the salt lake, and the hills of the Delawares. But who can say that the serpent of his tribe has forgotten his wisdom? I am alone-" (414)

To which Natty replies:

"No, no," cried Hawk-eye, who had been gazing with a yearning look at the rigid features of his friend, with something like his own self-command, but whose philosophy could endure no longer. "No, Sagamore, not alone. The gifts of our colors may be different, but God has so placed us as to journey in the same path. I have no kin, and may I also say, like you, no people. He was your son, and a redskin by nature; and it may be that your blood was nearer--but if ever I forget the lad who has so often fought at my side in war, and slept at my side in peace, may He who made us all, whatever may be our color or our gifts, forget me! The boy has left us for a time; but, Sagamore, you are not alone." (414)

The two men, described as "intrepid woodsmen" then grasp hands and bow "their heads together, while

scalding tears fell to their feet, watering the grave of Uncas like drops of falling rain" (414).

The two hunters, red and white, are then married in their grief. But, it is a union which cannot change the essentially solitary nature of each of their lives. The impossibility of conquering such a hostile world is reinforced in this scene. The only way of living in this world, or rather in this conflict of worlds, is by carefully walking the borderline between them, stepping into one world or the other only as necessity dictates. Those living within the two worlds are separated but learn about each other through Natty.

Years passed away before the traditional tale of the white maiden, and of the young warrior of the Mohicans, ceased to beguile the long and nights and tedious marches, or to animate their youthful and brave with the desire for vengeance. Neither were the secondary actors in these momentous incidents forgotten. Through the medium of the scout, who served for years afterward as a link between and civilized life, they learned, in answer to their inquiries, that the "Gray Head"[Munro] was speedily gathered to his fathers--borne down, as was erroneously believed, by his military misfortunes; and that the Open Hand had conveyed his surviving daughter far into the settlements of the palefaces, where her tears had at last ceased to flow, and had been succeeded by the bright smiles which were better suited to her joyous nature. (412-413)

The location of Natty between the Indian and "civilized" worlds and his role as a "link" is a partial resolution of his preoccupation with identity.

The borders themselves may change, but his definition as scout and hunter remain fixed. The movement is westward since the borders remove to the west over the course of his "lifetime." In *The Pathfinder*, he is chronologically only a few years away from the adventures of 1757.

The Pathfinder or The Inland Sea

Natty as Pathfinder is a hunter and forest scout. His talents have earned him his latest name; but ironically, he is left for long periods of time on the trackless water. Natty is out of his element in many settings in this volume. For the first time, he falls in love. Though he is unsuccessful in his courtship, the threat that domestic influence will mitigate his status as frontiersman makes Natty vulnerable.

The title, *The Pathfinder*, becomes ironic. Correctly reading the signs in his world has earned Natty his appellation, and he misreads so many things throughout the story. The reader sees him struggle with several unknown languages. He certainly does not understand the language of love; he has great difficulty translating the seafaring jargon of Cap, Mabel's uncle; and he is removed from his beloved woods to flounder on the inland sea.

The focus in *Pathfinder* also contributes to a diminishing of Natty's stature. At certain points, he is absent from the scene altogether. Even when he is in the woods, we often do not see him. The plot often proceeds without his physical presence. As in the other Tales, especially *Mohicans*, location underscores action and sheds insight on character. Much of the landscape in *Pathfinder* is physically and emotionally strange to Bumppo. His skills as hunter do not help him on the inland sea, and his ability to read signs in the forest does not help him read the language of love. What is Cooper's purpose in letting Pathfinder lose his way? Natty crosses borders in *Pathfinder* that first challenge, then reinforce who he is. He will not marry, though he comes the closest he will ever come to doing so. He will continue in *Pioneers* to be displaced by civilization. For the time being, the time covered in *Pathfinder*, that is, he will struggle with forces that are alien to him: love, and the "sea."

As the novel opens, four people, two men and two women, come to a break in the forest where a windstorm has piled up trees 30 feet high; the trees have been broken off or completely uprooted. The characters are more specifically described as Mabel Dunham and her maternal uncle, Charles Cap, and the Tuscaroras, Arrowhead and his wife, Dew of June. They come upon the Pathfinder and Chingachgook whose fire they saw

from the trees. As in the other Tales, Natty introduces himself by various names, La Long Carabine, Hawkeye, and Pathfinder. It turns out, the party was in search of Pathfinder since he has been entrusted with escorting Mabel and Cap to her father, Sergeant Dunham, whom Mabel has not seen in years.

Different "paths" are a concern throughout the novel. The topography of the landscape and the human heart are both difficult to traverse. An atmosphere of deception is present; one does not know who to trust. Characters seem to fit into the categories of either "deceivers" or "deceived." Self-deception or misinterpretation figure into this equation as well. How well one knows oneself becomes an important question. Natty thinks he knows himself and his place in the world. Early in the book, Natty converses on one of his favorite subjects, the different inclinations of red and white, specifically Chingachgook and himself.

"The Sarpent, here, has his fashions, and I have mine; yet have we fou't, side by side, these many years, without either's thinking a hard thought consarning the other's ways. I tell him there is but one heaven and one hell, notwithstanding his traditions, though there are many paths to both." (25)

Again, Cooper introduces the idea of different "paths" through Natty's discourse. The various "paths" in *Pathfinder* are not all familiar to Natty. Discussion

ensues about the ocean and the forest, of being in nature or being in town. The purifying nature of water and the superior aspect of the water to the land is reinforced by Cap, as he replies to Natty's observations:

"That is rational, and he [Chingachgook] is bound to believe you, though I fancy most of the roads to the last [hell] are on dry land. The sea is what my poor sister, Bridget, used to call a 'purifying place,' and one is out of the way of temptation when out of sight of land. I doubt if as much can be said in favor of your lakes, up hereaway." (25)

To which Natty answers, "That the towns and settlements lead to sin, I will allow; but our lakes are bordered by the forests, and one is every day called upon to worship God in such a temple" (25). Natty is part of the forest and part of nature. In every other volume of the series, he is in his proper place. *Pathfinder* is an anomaly because here Natty is placed in situations where he is uncomfortable. Cooper defines Natty in this volume by what he is not. Overall, the effect is to reestablish his proper place in the natural world. No one in this book is comfortable or safe outside his/her element. Cap is suspicious of any life except that of the sailor; Mabel is uncomfortable out of the settlement; Jasper Western, the young freshwater sailor is rendered powerless when not sailing the Scud

on Lake Ontario; and of course, Pathfinder is reduced to dependence upon others when not in the forest.

Other characters are dislocated as well. The numerous Scotsmen, including Dunham, are soldiers fighting for Britian, which does not hold their primary loyalty. Not only are they outside Scotland, they are fighting the French and Indians in America. Their accents pervade the garrison. Lundie, the commanding officer, longs for his fiancée and the life he could have across the sea. He foolishly trusts Mr. Muir, who is a double agent and who causes the main mischief in the book. Arrowhead, as Muir's Indian counterpart in treachery, acts to sabotage the expedition on the lake, and later on the island, where the secret base of the British is located. Jasper is maligned because he speaks French. Despite his constant proofs of competence and loyalty, he is easily undermined by Muir with the acquiescence of the others, including Natty.

In this atmosphere of deception, the issue of identity becomes problematic, and self-deception becomes the biggest issue of all. Natty deceives himself when he trusts Dunham's evaluation of the real state of emotional affairs with Mabel. His wonderful heart betrays him, and he makes many mistakes. In addition, he does not see the true nature of circumstances because he is blinded by love.

Natty is touched by Mabel's loveliness. Her main advantage for Natty and for Cooper seems to be her flawlessness. She is one of a long line of motherless females in the Tales; but, she does not have their disadvantages. Her own father is a lifelong friend and father figure to Natty. Dunham selects Natty for Mabel. Mabel is nineteen or twenty and Natty is almost forty. However, Pathfinder is described as "in the flower of his strength and activity" (*Pathfinder* 35).

He is only old contrasted with Mabel and Jasper. Natty's inability to see the true nature of Mabel's emotions is understandable up to the point where he actually asks her to marry him. But, after her initial rejection, his renewal of hope upon the urging of Dunham seems absurd. That he does not learn by experience here is in direct opposition to his life's pattern. His talents for hunting and life in the woods have been enriched by experience. In the realm of love, Natty has no "gifts" for negotiating the territory of the heart. As a hunter, he can learn about the "rules" of nature. This education does not transfer to the world of human emotions. He has a discussion with Mabel about the British soldiers' inability to learn from experience when it comes to warfare in America.

"Exper'ence makes them but little wiser; and they wheel, and platoon, and battalion it

about, but here in the forest, just as they did in their parks at home, of which they are so fond of talking. One redskin has more cunning in his natur' than a whole rijiment from the other side of the water--that is, what I call cunning in the woods." (49)

They cannot learn what they need to overcome the nature of the foe. They do what they have done. British soldiers will defeat the French and Indians, but the colonial Americans will defeat both adversaries, foreign and domestic. Unfortunately, Natty does not learn from the experience of Mabel's rejection, either. We see how inept he is when he cannot apply to himself the lesson he sees in the mistakes of others.

Learning to read the environs of one's physical and emotional world correctly becomes an overriding consideration in *Pathfinder*. To survive, one must find one's element and reside within it. Natty returns to the familiar territory of the forest and his solitude, excepting the company of Chingachgook. The other characters variously resolve their crises and find life solutions for good or ill.

In the final analysis, only Natty reaffirms the life he has always known and will continue to live. Even Mabel and Jasper relinquish the Scud and the lake upon the advice of Cap. That the American hunter is a solitary figure when viewed by others is a cliché. The striking sense in *Pathfinder* is that for the first time, Natty experiences loneliness. At the beginning

of *Pathfinder*, Natty is in control of his environment. During the course of the book, he is deceived by experience and dislocation. In the end, he is more formidable because he has traversed the treacherous emotional landscape.

Pathfinder was accustomed to solitude, but, when the Scud had actually disappeared, he was almost overcome with a sense of his loneliness. Never before had he been conscious of his isolated condition in the world, for his feelings had gradually been accustoming themselves to the blandishments and wants of social life, particularly as the last were connected to domestic affections. Now, all had vanished, as it might be, in one moment, and he was left equally without companions and hope. Even Chingachgook had left him, though it was but temporarily; still, his presence was missed at the precise instant which might be termed the most critical of our hero's life. (422)

Natty takes care of June for a month, while she mourns at Arrowhead's grave. He brings her to Mabel on his one and only visit to the young couple before they go to New York. They are never to speak with him again. He resolves to try to think of Mabel as daughter or sister, but is left solitary with only memories of his love.

Years later, Mabel sees him at a distance when she is in the company of her own sons.

Thrice Mabel received valuable presents of furs, at intervals of years, and her feelings told her whence they came, though no name accompanied the gift. Later in life, still, when the mother of several youths, she had

occasion to visit the interior, and found herself on the banks of the Mohawk, accompanied by her sons, the eldest of whom was capable of being her protector. On that occasion she observed a man in a singular guise, watching her in the distance with an intentness that induced her to inquire into his pursuits and character. She was told he was the most renowned hunter of that portion of the State--it was after the Revolution--a being of great purity of character, and of as marked peculiarities, and he was known in that region of the country by the name of Leatherstocking. Further than this Mrs. Western could not ascertain, though the distant glimpse and singular deportment of this unknown hunter gave her a sleepless night and cast a shade of melancholy over her still lovely face that lasted many a day.
(428)

The figure that so intrigues Mabel at the end of *The Pathfinder* is more familiar to the reader than the unsure, displaced Natty evident in the earlier pages. When she is older, Mabel seems more in tune with Natty at a distance than she did when she was the object of his affection in her full bloom of youth. He never desires anyone other than Mabel, regardless of the order in which we read the Tales. At the end, Natty again knows himself and so do we.

He is the hunter, even more resolved that hunting is his only true path. Perhaps, he has crossed one border too many, and must retreat further into the world of the woods for balance.

***The Pioneers or The Sources of the Susquehanna: A
Descriptive Tale***

In *The Pioneers*, Natty Bumppo is in his seventies. As a hunter, he comes into conflict with man's law when his view of land rights differs from society's. He not only crosses borders between wilderness and civilization, between the world of the woods and that of the town, he crosses the line between nature's law and man's. He is also on the borderline between the past and the future. Judge Temple may be the mitigating figure in the novel between the freedom of the "old day" and the potential excess of the new, but Natty will have to move on to a new frontier. Cooper may portray the development of New York State as desirable and inevitable, but Natty, the hunter can no longer stay on the land where his tenure predates that of its current owner's. As with Boone, the merits of the settled life are not questioned, but Natty like Boone, will not be able to live that life. *The Pioneers* begins with Cooper's description and prediction for the area where the Tale takes place.

The area "near the center of the State of New York," Cooper tells us, will become in a few years :

...beautiful and thriving
villages...interspersed along the margins of
the small lakes, or situated at those points
of the streams...most favorable to

manufacturing; and neat and comfortable farms, with every indication of wealth about them...scattered profusely through the vales and even to the mountaintops. (*Pioneers* 13).

This view is important because it pictures what will come to pass shortly after the the time of the tale. Bumppo's lifetime is nearly at an end, although *Pioneers* is the first novel Cooper wrote. Robert E. Spiller sees the subtitle, *A Descriptive Tale*, as significant because he argues that "Cooper's primary purpose...was realism rather than romance, description rather than action, moral and social significance rather than adventure" (*Pioneers* "Afterward" 438).

In one sense, *The Pioneers* begins Cooper's vision; it constructs all the Tales. We are viewing the main character near the end of his lifetime. We cannot think that Cooper ever forgets who Natty becomes in time, no matter how romantically he recreates his youth. Slotkin sees a mythic connection between the Arthurian legend and Natty's character in *Deerslayer* and *Mohicans* (*Regeneration* 501).

In the "lifetime" of Natty Bumppo, there are important details to keep track of, regarding who, what, and where he would have been previously. Historically, culturally, and socially Cooper must "track" him in the American landscape. Placing the narrative in chronological time, it is 1793. The autobiographical elements in *Pioneers* are helpful in

exploring the development and limits of character, especially in regard to Natty. Spiller points out:

James Cooper...was four years and three months old on the frosty Christmas Eve with which *The Pioneers* opens. He was probably at home in bed when his father, Judge William Cooper (or Temple), encountered Natty and his friends, Indian John and young Oliver Edwards, and the latter suffered the accident that sets the tone and theme of the novel....there are two Nathaniel Shipmans who contend for the honor of being the original of Natty Bumppo; and equivalents of many of the events and places of the novel are recorded in *The Chronicles of Cooperstown*, which Cooper wrote and his neighbors the Phinneys published in 1838. (438-439)

That Cooper was working with actual people whom he then fictionalized explains the realistic quality in *Pioneers*. Cooper develops the hunter hero Natty from the historical human Natty, which accounts for the more romantic treatment of the character in the other novels.

What is true of Natty is not true of Chingachgook, since the Indian is more removed in origin, as he is not based on someone Cooper knew. Spiller writes:

The lone Indian Chingachgook, or Mohegan as he is called in this novel, was a creature of Cooper's imagination, based probably on his reading of the accounts of missionaries rather than on firsthand experience; but such untamed hunters and trappers as Natty were not uncommon. (439)

The chronological "lifetime" of the characters thematically underscores the poignancy of growing old

in a young country. That the virulent Deerslayer becomes a toothless, humiliated Natty Bumppo, and the noble young warrior Chingachgook becomes a Christianized but drunken Indian John are commentaries indeed on the price of "progress." Natty and Chingachgook are old, but they still have the values and instincts of hunter/warriors. They still regard the land in the same way they always have.

The landscape becomes civilized, tamed from the time of *Pathfinder* to *The Pioneers*. The description of "beautiful thriving villages" as appealing and proper to the order of things is juxtaposed with the price of such progress. Who owns the land and how ownership is determined drives the plot in this novel. Cooper's background is significant here, too. Spiller continues:

The rapid growth and prosperity of Cooperstown even then owed its vitality to the unique land theory of its founder. William Cooper has described in his *Guide in the Wilderness* just how and why he sold rather than rented his small tracts to the settlers. Other holders of patents had wrested their property rights from the Indians by seizure or barter and had held them by royal patent from the King of England....society depended upon property, and family status upon primogeniture, as rigidly as in England....This was an aristocratic civilization....Jefferson and his fellows had substituted the words "pursuit of happiness" for the Lockian "property" in the Declaration of Independence, and the Federalist Judge Cooper

brought this concept with him as the founding principle of his colony. (440)

The way in which the novel implements this concept shows

The three theories of the relationship of property rights to social stability--the Tory view held by young Oliver, the democratic view held by Judge Temple, and the view of primitive rights held by Indian John....They also remain with him [Cooper] as an unsolved social and political problem and as the theme of all his serious writing. The central conflict in this novel between Judge Temple and Leatherstocking is based on this difference in social theory, and the reconciliation of the Judge with young Oliver is testimony to Cooper's fundamentally conservative leanings....This is what he means when he tells us that *The Pioneers* is a study of the principles rather than the facts of the frontier. (440)

Of course, Cooper was a Democrat, not a Federalist like his father. The characters who have power in *The Pioneers* try to displace Natty, all except Oliver Edwards, whom we learn is really Oliver Effingham. Because he is also part of the natural world, he seems like a younger, better educated version of Natty. Kelly points out that like Uncas in *Mohicans*, Oliver in a sense is one of Natty's "sons" (6).

Nature is the ultimate proving ground for who is righteous and who is not. Oliver is aligned with the power of former British claims to land, but he is also an American amalgamation of Indian and European culture. He lives with Natty and Chingachgook in the

forest which proves his worthiness to inherit the land. This claim as inhabitant is as important as his claim by heredity. His relationship with Elizabeth is a romantic flourish that echoes the relationships of *Deerslayer*, *Mohicans* and *Pathfinder*. These relationships are yet to come in real time. However, Cooper recreates a background that makes sense, chronologically and emotionally. *The Pioneers* is the reference point, no matter how one looks at the series. In this novel, Cooper establishes the borderlines that Natty as hunter will cross, physically, temporally, and metaphorically.

The Prairie: A Tale

In *The Prairie*, Natty Bumppo is an old man in his eighties. He now lives in a forest of grass, and his occupation as hunter has become modified to that of trapper. Daniel Boone, too, in his eighties resorted to this humbler aspect of pursuit to accommodate the bodily limitations of age. Cooper dwells on Natty's bodily decay, and we are conscious of his delicate hold on life. He seems in defiance of time, and he is as surprised as the reader and the other characters in the novel at his longevity. In one way, time has diminished him; in another it has released him from the boundaries of human existence.

Henry Nash Smith has commented that

An analysis of the structure of *The Prairie* reveals that Cooper works from one to another of a series of visual images conceived as if they were paintings lacking the dimension of time. These moments of stasis are interlarded with spurts of violent action (pursuit, capture, the buffalo stampede, the prairie fire, the fight between Sioux and Pawnees, the single combat of Mahtoree and Hard-Heart on the sand of the island in the river) and with the long debates between Leatherstocking and Obed Bat, or among the parliamentary orators of the Sioux council. Several tableaux in *The Prairie* are among the most effective passages in Cooper. (Smith "Introduction" *Prairie* ix)

Again, time is an important component in Cooper's creation of physical and mental landscape. To be set in time and place, and yet simultaneously timeless, suspended in a series of imagistic tableaux may seem contradictory. However, the drama and symbolism of Natty's "life" not only make such a thing possible, but appropriate. Particularly since Natty's experience is a reflection of the American frontiersman's experience, and as such the country's, there is no contradiction. The ablest hunter in the person of Natty Bumppo, however, is no longer at the peak of his powers. Natty's command over the landscape is diminished in one way and transcendent in another.

A striking aspect of the hunting motif in *The Prairie* is the presence of predators, both animal and human. Natty has always been in control of his hunting

skills. He has been able to hunt for food, and when necessary, for protection. Now he can no longer control the forces of nature that have previously challenged but not overwhelmed him. Cooper makes reference to prowling wolves and bears, as if danger can never be ignored even in the twilight of life. Natty is at risk as he never has been before. His definition as "hunter" is now modified to "trapper." This change of occupation connotes his relegation to a more passive stage of life. The nature of the characters that he will encounter from the human world are a threat also because of his great age. Those he would have avoided or despised before are now forces to contend with, and his powers to resist them are limited.

On the first evening after Natty has met the Bush family, Natty's dog, Hector, is uneasy and growls at the unseen presence in the darkness, and Natty urges him to indicate the nature of the "visitor." At first, the young woman, Ellen Wade, niece of Ishmael Bush, emerges from the night and chats with Natty. She is there to meet Paul Hover, the bee hunter, whose subsequent appearance Hector also heralds. A third indication of Hector's vigilance reveals that Indians are about to invade, and the only recourse is hiding.

The captivity and rescue scenerios are utilized once again as in the other Tales, but with several

differences. Previously, Natty was the active force for resistance to the forces of evil. Now, instead of facing evil head-on as he used to do, he must avoid or avert it. In many respects, Natty is beyond the struggles of other mortals in *The Prairie*. Though physically less powerful, he is spiritually more perfect than ever. And because of the symbolic nature of Cooper's tableaux, the measure of his stature moves from the physical realm to the mythic.

The opposition in the novel is between good and bad--whites and Indians both have their range of good and evil characters. This opposition reflects the state of not only Natty's life, but that of the nation. This is Natty's last frontier; he has always been in the advance guard of progress (Kelly 89). However, he is still on the margins of opposing worlds and their extremes. He crosses the ultimate border in this novel, the border between life and death. This border, when finally crossed, does not permit recrossing. Perhaps, this is why Natty seems removed to its peripheries of Cooper's plot. Natty gives the work perspective, the end of his life indicates a "sense of closure" and "epitomizes the history of the American people." The novel in this context is a "self-conscious work of review" for the Tales and a "survey of the variety of American experience" (Kelly 90-92).

As Jane Tompkins suggests, the setting of vacant landscape provides the scene for a genesis⁹; the creation of a world and the implied ending of that same world. The physical setting or location also implies an accompanying mental landscape which reflects the culture's concerns. Kelly comments that

One of Cooper's primary concerns in both *The Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans* is the location of a cultural genesis. By designating points of national departure, he erects a fictive barrier against the past and validates his claims for American "originality." Cooper does not, however, simply privilege a moment in time from which the course of national development has followed but conceives beginnings which also imply endings....The origins which Cooper identifies in these novels are not, in other words, discrete events but temporal brackets which suggest the totality of the nation's formative experience. Cooper has, then, in the first two Leatherstocking Tales, disarmed both the intrusive power of the past and the revisionary potential of the future. he gains thereby a resultant mastery of time and becomes, quite literally, the author of his culture. Because his beginnings are closed temporal circuits, America's origins, as Cooper imagines them in these novels, are at once the source of rupture and continuity, of freedom and restraint. (85-86)

Cooper manipulates time, for thematic purposes and stylistic emphasis. We are located in time, and yet, it is a location which acts to reinforce meaning. The complication arises from the contradictory nature of the meaning. According to Kelly, the struggle of America is to reconcile a yearning for legitimacy by

referral to and identification with the European traditions of the past and an insistence upon originality and independence from that past. The emblematic nature of all of Cooper's characters reflect such concerns.

The conflict between characters underlines the idea of extremes and the range and margins of those extremes. Natty and Middleton act as mitigating forces, providing a rational alternative for the disparate forces battling for preeminence. Kelly points out that "Ishmael and his family are ideas clumsily masquerading as characters [although] Ishmael himself is one of Cooper's most memorable creation...[represents] the embodiment of two centuries of American anxiety about the frontier" (95).

The complexity of that anxiety can be realized only through examination of the characters and what they embody. The frontier is a place to escape from the past, but it holds dangers of its own. In one sense, Inez represents the tyranny of the Old World since she is Spanish and Catholic. However, she is carried away by the Bush clan as a prisoner to the prairie, which is part of the Louisiana Purchase, a token that the power is shifting from the Old World to America. She is the victim of independence and lawlessness, represented by the Bush family. Both forces are evil

in their extremes, and both forces are active in the development of the American nation.

In their less virulent forms, they are desirable forces--tradition and independence. The careful balance of the two qualities are positive attributes of character, for a person or a nation. However, in their aberrations, they are forces which tend toward chaos. In his younger days, Natty would have been able to actively intervene by virtue of his skills as a hunter/warrior. That he is too old at this point in American time to employ his skills implies that this representation of the hunter needs to evolve to deal with the changing landscape. A border between chaos and order is always present in some form in Cooper's Tales.

It is interesting that in this novel, tradition and independence are acting upon one another directly. The resolution through the characters in *The Prairie* is satisfactory in this sense; metaphorically, it is not quite so comfortable. Does the struggling of the two extremes, two wrongs, make one right? The swing of the pendulum ideally ends up in the middle, but at what price on both extensions of its route? Natty Bumppo, as hunter/hero and permutation of Daniel Boone, frames the Tales and the American experience in his "lifetime." His liminal position on the borders of the evolving frontier is uniquely appropriate as a

signification of cultural issues and concerns. He encounters the "variety of American experience" in the other characters he meets and through them explores aspects of race and gender. His interaction with the landscape and its inhabitants results in self-knowledge that further establishes his identity. The Leatherstocking Tales may constitute a discrete unit in American literature and history, but the liminal figure of the hunter continues to evolve.

Both Daniel Boone and Natty Bumppo serve as a gauge of cultural history, and the hunter/warrior trope is significant for an understanding of early nineteenth century American culture. The hunter at this time represents the development of the nation across the continent. This emerging American hero integrates the disparate elements of Indian and Euro-American cultures within his persona. His flexible image makes him an appropriate representative of the multiple and often conflicting segments in contemporary American society.

Notes Chapter Two

¹Helpful commentaries on myth and rhetoric are provided by Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1975); John Mack Faragher, *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer* (New York: Holt, 1992); William P. Kelly, *Plotting America's Past: Fenimore Cooper and the Leatherstocking Tales* (S. Ill. UP, 1984); Louise K. Barnett, "Speech in the Wilderness: The Ideal Discourse of *The Deerslayer*," *Desert, Margin, Garden, Range: Literature on the American Frontier*, ed. Eric Heyne (New York: Twayne, 1992) 19-28; "Mary Lawlor, "The Fictions of Daniel Boone," in Heyne 29-43.

²Daniel Boone as a composite figure is discussed throughout John Mack Faragher's biography of Boone, and the idea of Boone as a flexible entity resolves many problems. Boone scholarship has tended to portray Boone in various positive or negative terms; Faragher includes all the Boone material he finds, especially conflicting versions of the same incidents to offer possibilities of interpretations. Faragher also postulates on the needs fulfilled by portraying Boone in particular ways by different sources.

³See Edmund S. Morgan *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Northrop*.

⁴See R.W.B. Lewis *American Adam*.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶See Henry Nash Smith *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*.

⁷David Herbert Donald, "An Easy Man to Crowd," rev. of *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer*, by John Mack Faragher, *New York Times Book Review* 17 Jan. 1993: 17-18.

⁸John Mack Faragher, Richard Slotkin, and Mary Lawlor all discuss the importance of John Filson's portrayal of Boone in establishing his legend. Various reworkings of the legend yield different impressions, but "Filson's Boone" forms the foundation figure upon

which the following portrayals build. Lawlor's chapter in Heyne points out the differences in portrayals of Boone by John Filson, James Hall, Timothy Flint, as well as James Fenimore Cooper's Natty Bumppo character.

⁹Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett are linked most notably by the Boone and Crockett Club, founded by Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge in 1887.

¹⁰"Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier," is the catch-phrase from the theme song to the popular Walt Disney television series of the 1950s.

¹¹Yvor Winder discusses naming in *The Deerslayer* in his essay in *In Defense of Reason* (Chicago, 1974).

¹²Mark Twain satirizes Cooper in two essays: "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses," and "Fenimore Cooper's Further Literary Offenses." Both essays can be found in Mark Twain: *Collected Tales, Sketches, Speeches, & Essays, 1891-1910*, ed. Louis J. Budd (New York: Library of America, 1992) 180-200.

¹³Jane Tompkins, *West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns* (New York: Oxford UP, 1994) 70. Tompkins quotes *The Virginian* by Owen Wister: "'A world of crystal light [as it says in *The Virginian*], a land without evil, a space across which Noah and Adam might come straight from Genesis.'" She discusses how the landscape of the western is used, particularly in film, to create a world appropriate for the action to unfold. She likens the literal starkness of the western landscape to the Old Testament description of creation.

Chapter Three

Teddy Roosevelt and Buffalo Bill: From Sustenance to Slaughter, From Excess to Conservation

An experienced hunter is rarely rash, and never heedless; he will not, when alone, follow a wounded bear into a thicket, if by exercise of patience, skill, and knowledge of the game's habits he can avoid the necessity; but it is idle to talk of the feat as something which ought in no case to be attempted. While danger ought never to be needlessly incurred, it is yet true that the keenest zest in sport comes from its presence, and from the consequent exercise of the qualities necessary to overcome it. The most thrilling moments of an American hunter's life are those in which, with every sense on the alert, and with nerves strung to the highest point, he is following alone into the heart of its forest fastness the fresh and bloody footprints of an angered grizzly; and no other triumph of American hunting can compare with the victory to be gained. (Theodore Roosevelt "Hunting the Grizzly" 266-267)

...leaving my saddle and bridle with the wagons, we rode to the windward of the buffaloes, as usual, and when within a few hundred yards of them we dashed into the herd. I soon had thirteen laid out on the ground, the last one of which I had driven down close to the wagons, where the ladies were. It frightened some of the tender creatures to see the buffalo coming at full speed directly toward them; but when he had got within fifty yards of one of the wagons, I shot him dead in his tracks. This made my sixty-ninth buffalo, and finished my third and last run, Comstock having killed forty-six. (William F. Cody Autobiography 173-174)

Teddy Roosevelt's life was a grizzly hunt; or more accurately, one grizzly hunt after another. William Cody's was a buffalo hunt. Theodore Roosevelt and William "Buffalo Bill" Cody are figures who suggest physical and political expansion across America and the globe. With TR and Buffalo Bill, the hunter becomes a metaphor for domestic and foreign power.

Both Buffalo Bill and TR are hunters and cowboys. The term "cowboy" may be somewhat problematic since as David H. Katzive points out, "Buffalo Bill was never himself a cowboy--a hired hand employed to wrangle cattle" (Lamar 57). However, terminology aside, Buffalo Bill and Teddy Roosevelt are the very essence of cowboys. Katzive also says that "cowboy" refers to a range of figures, including "the hero of Wild West stories, rodeo performer, movie actor, singer, dude ranch wrangler, Wild West performer, Mexican vaquero in Texas, rough rider, bad man of the Plains and even Southwestern rancher. And then, of course, there is also the real cowboy who works on a ranch with real cattle" (57). Buffalo Bill and TR contributed to the concept of the "cowboy," conferring aspects of their own personalities on the figure, which endure even today. They elevated the cowboy from a plebian/hunter/workman figure to a hunter/warrior/gentleman figure.

Furthermore, TR's efforts as conservationist of natural resources and Cody's as preservationist of the Indian way of life through his Wild West exhibition (it was never called a "show")¹, were attempts to mitigate the ravaging effects of American expansion and excess on the frontier. Though their efforts at conservation and preservation were imperfect, and many of their

actions directly contradictory of their supposed aims, those attempts were motivated by good intentions.

Both Roosevelt and Cody were representative America hunters. Roosevelt traveled abroad and became known as a prodigious big game hunter. The powerful image of the hunter/cowboy made an imprint upon the American imagination and upon the rest of the world. TR became the "cowboy president" and America the "cowboy of nations."

With the closing of the frontier², the continent was no longer limitless, and this realization sparked concern for preserving the nation's natural resources. After the 1850's, the prowess of the hunter had been redirected from wrestling nourishment from the wilderness to slaughtering the buffalo herds. This action deprived the Indian of livelihood and heritage. Richard Slotkin argues:

Roosevelt "naturalizes" force and violence by representing it chiefly through stories of his big-game hunts. By helping to exterminate the buffalo, Roosevelt indirectly plays a role in the warfare that would subjugate the Indians. The hunting chapters also follow a program of hierarchical and historical stages as Roosevelt stalks and kills ever more dangerous quarry, from deer at the bottom, through grizzly bear and panther near the top. The "most dangerous game" is a man himself; Roosevelt figures a man-hunter in the episodes dealing with his term as deputy sheriff. This pattern follows the pattern laid down by Cooper in *Deerslayer*, one of Roosevelt's favorite books; as in *Deerslayer*, the stages of

hunting function as preparation for the higher function of the warrior. But Roosevelt would not complete his quest until the Cuban war gave him the chance to "get his Spaniard." (*Gunfighter Nation* 41)

The motif of slaughter and excess can be viewed as an expression of the desire for power and a vehicle for control over enemies. As embodied in Teddy Roosevelt, the hunter figure represents both domestic and foreign control. Initially, the figure of the hunter as embodied in Cody represents domestic control, but this image expands. After Buffalo Bill's "Wild West" completed its first European tour in 1887, Cody, too, represented American influence in the world of foreign affairs. In addition, the evolution of these figures into "Wild West" showman and conservationist represents for Americans an attempt by TR and Cody to recreate a mythic connection with the American past. Ironically, both men had major roles in destroying the buffalo herds and displacing the Indians. Once the "frontier life" was gone forever, they became its biggest advocates. Whether this perception of frontier life was ever real in the first place is another matter. Longing for the "good old days" seems contradictory when TR and Cody were instrumental in bringing them to an end. However, what remains important is that evocation of hunter images by Roosevelt and Cody acted to legitimize and consolidate American claims to

domestic and world power. Slotkin discusses TR and Cody and Manifest Destiny:

Both Cody and Roosevelt can be seen as figures that embody the concept of Manifest Destiny. Although Manifest Destiny was the rationalization for involvement in the Spanish American War in 1898, it was also an important concept for the growing American confidence and optimism of the age....Many of the elements of the "Frontier Thesis" put forward by Turner and Roosevelt already belonged to the complex of traditional ideas accumulated around the idea of the "Frontier" since colonial times, including the concept of pioneering as a defining national mission, a "Manifest Destiny," and the vision of the westward settlements as a refuge from tyranny and corruption, a safety valve for metropolitan discontents, a land of golden opportunity for enterprising individualists, and an inexhaustible reservoir of natural wealth on which a future of limitless prosperity could be based. (*Gunfighter Nation* 30)

In July of 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner presented his essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Chicago at the American Historical Association conference, convened in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition. The conference and the exposition were attended by both Turner and Buffalo Bill. Though they did not meet, both represented views of westward expansion that shaped the American national identity. Richard White comments:

Americans have never had much use for
history, but we do like

anniversaries....Turner..was in Chicago to deliver an academic paper....The occasion for the exposition was a slightly belated celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Western Hemisphere....Although public anniversaries often have educational pretensions, they are primarily popular entertainments; it is the combination of the popular and educational that makes the figurative meeting of Buffalo Bill and Turner at the Columbian Exposition so suggestive....The two master narrators of American westering had come together at the hreatest of American celebrations with compelling stories to tell. (7-9)

Roosevelt's view of frontier settlement corresponded with Buffalo Bill's, which characterized the process as violent. Turner's view depicted a benign march of pioneers, filling up an empty West. However, Turner and Roosevelt shared "a concern that the passing of the agrarian frontier marked the beginning of crisis in American history" (Slotkin *Gunfighter Nation* 30).

Richard Slotkin also points out that

Turner's and Roosevelt's Frontier Theses differ from earlier versions in their theoretical self-consciousness: the deliberation with which they attempt to systematize earlier traditions and to create a historical account with the explanatory authority of scientific demonstration. And their impulse for this undertaking arose from their sense of crisis, that the closure of the Frontier, and the bonanza economy its existence had fostered, was no longer a prospect but an accomplished fact. (30)

Slotkin rejects as premature Turner's conclusion that the frontier was closed. He cites the fact that "more

public land would be taken up and brought into production between 1890 and 1920 than during the supposed heyday of the western frontier in the decades that followed passage of the Homestead Act (1862)" (30). However, development and production of land and resources are different from an untapped expanse of continent with no limit in sight.

Slotkin's comment that the "closure of the old agrarian/artisanal /entrepreneurial frontier coincided with a crisis in American social and political history...and ...were...causally linked" (31) certainly seems accurate. He goes on to associate Turner's vision of American development with the yeoman farmer tradition and Roosevelt with the hunter/warrior (32-62).

...While Turner locates the crucial dynamism in a democratic collectivity, Roosevelt locates it in successive classes of heroes emerging from the strife of races to earn a neo-aristocratic right to rule....It was this suggestion of a potentially aristocratic character lurking under the hunter's buckskins that attracted Roosevelt to the figure. In the works of Cooper and his imitators this association had a schematic form, in the repeated plot-formula of an alliance between an "old hunter" of plebeian origins and a well-born natural aristocrat--the son of a British nobleman (*The Pioneers*), a Virginia planter and soldier (*Last of the Mohicans*), or a professional military man (*The Prairie*)....they also gave greater prominence to a hybrid form of frontier hero in which characteristics of hunter and soldier-aristocrat were combined. (35)

Roosevelt's self-image emerged from an "intuitive identification with the Frontier" (36). He escaped to ranching, big-game hunting, and serving as Deputy Sheriff after the unexpected deaths of his wife and mother. For a period of two years, he pursued these activities in the wilderness. Then while he waited to re-enter politics, he published "numerous articles on the West, three books recounting his adventures as a hunter and a rancher, a biography of expansionist Senator Thomas Hart Benton, and the seven volumes of *The Winning of the West*" (36).

Roosevelt was imaginatively engaged by the literary mythology of the Frontier, especially Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales, and he favored historians like Francis Parkman, who portrayed history in Cooperian terms as a real-life "romance" in which heroes representing national virtues test and vindicate the "character" of their people in "savage war." While Turner went east to think about frontier economics, Roosevelt went west to his Dakota cattle ranch to escape personal grief and disappointment by living out his Hawkeye fantasies as a frontier hunter. (The ranch itself was more of an agribusiness, complete with absentee owner, than a yeoman's freehold such as Turner knew and praised.) (33)

Roosevelt's formation of the Boone and Crockett Club, his identification with hunter/pioneer figures of the past, and his commitment to "the strenuous life" were expressions of his return to nature. He returned to the wilderness as a way of regenerating his personal

power. He saw his own experiences in the West as linked with historical precedents, thus giving him and his views the blessing of the past. The Boone and Crockett Club, which he co-founded with Henry Cabot Lodge, was a place to enjoy the company of other "gentleman hunters" and foster conservative politics (36-37). This image of the gentleman hunter contrasts with that of the yeoman farmer's that Turner's frontier depicts.

Turner assigned to farmers the leading role in the historical legend of American development. But the literary mythology preferred by Roosevelt offered a different historical protagonist and a different historical scenario. The primary agent of American expansion in this literature is "the man who knows Indians." Consequently, Roosevelt's pantheon of heroes included both the fictional Hawkeye and historical figures like Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett, Robert Rogers of the Rangers, Kit Carson, Sam Houston, and even Andrew Jackson. In this preferences were shared by the readers of American nineteenth-century popular fiction, for in the romances and dime novels the farmer was a secondary figure while the hunter/Indian-fighter was at the center of action. (33)

Roosevelt believed that the closing of the frontier was a significant issue for the country. His commitment to the landscape was based on personal experience and political beliefs. Where he got his ideas and how he developed them into a personal philosophy are questions with complex answers. In his

essay, "Theodore Roosevelt: Image and Ideology," Edward N. Saveth sees TR's father as his inspiration. He also points out that the family's money made possible TR's personal, political, and philosophical inclinations. Saveth comments:

Roosevelt was as close to being an aristocrat as anyone in a nation which was traditionally anti-aristocratic; he was a relatively rich man at a time when men of wealth were under increasing scrutiny. He was a man of family in an environment which changed so rapidly that the rigidities of family culture could be a liability....He was an educated man, a cultivated man when education and cultivation were frequently identified with snobbery and femininity....Roosevelt disassociated himself from what the public disliked and distrusted about the man of family and the cultivated man....[he] built into his image positive elements of activism and masculinity....The strenuous life began with...[his] childhood struggle against illness, spurred by his father's injunction "to make his body."...Father and ancestry provided Roosevelt with a somatic relationship to the American past; the equivalent of a proprietary interest in the affairs of the Republic. In turn, Roosevelt believed, as he once said, that the people had "a proprietary interest in him." (129-131)

Although TR tried to distance himself from identification with the "snobbery" of the rich, he subscribed to a view of race and class that privileged the "Anglo-Saxon" race. He constructed a philosophy based on Teutonic mythology's concept of the hunter/warrior.³

Slotkin also addresses how TR's choice in literary works sheds light on his philosophy of race. _

The significance of...[his] literary taste becomes clear when we look at "hunter" and "farmer" as figures in a myth/ideological scenario. In its traditional form, the Myth of the Frontier emphasizes the necessary linkage between two themes as the basis for spiritual and secular regeneration, taking up the "free" or "virgin land" of the wilderness, and defeating the savage natives in a war of races. The "virgin land" theme symbolically addresses the economic aspects of ideological concern, while the "race war" or "savage war" theme addresses political concerns (the use of force, the right of conquest). While a novelist or historian privileges one theme (or figure) at the expense of the other, the harmony of the original formula is broken, and two alternative versions of the myth--two different readings of historical dynamics--appear. (*Gunfighter Nation* 33-34)

Roosevelt extended his role as a hunter to domestic and world affairs. The underlying implications of race and class distinctions also become manifest in Roosevelt's use and extension of hunting metaphors into his political life. Saveth discusses TR's evaluation of himself and cites an example where TR met with a group of Austrian aristocracy. Two very important ideas are brought together in Saveth's comments: TR and his attitude toward aristocracy, and how he translates this view of the hunter as an "American type."

In 1909, during his post-presidential tour of Europe, Roosevelt was received by a group of Austrain aristocrats to whom he attempted to

define his status in the context of the American and Austrian social structure....Roosevelt had no objection to aristocracy and kingship in Europe, adding that they had no place in America....[he] related that "even the extremely aristocratic Austrians seemed eager to see me, just because I did represent something new to them. They regarded me as a characteristically American type, which had nothing in common with the conventional American millionaire; to them it was interesting to meet a man who was certainly a democrat--a real, not a sham democrat--both politically and socially, who was yet a gentleman...." He was all the more acceptable, Roosevelt continued, because of his reputation as a soldier and big-game hunter and because he had attacked while president "the big financial interests, and because I frankly looked down on mere moneyed men...who...had nothing but their wealth behind them....Men who had done these things, they could understand; and they also understand men who did things that their own bourgeois class did; but what puzzled them was to find the two characters combined."
(144-145)

That TR, the soldier/big-game hunter, "attacked" the "big financial interests" portrays him as the hunter/warrior figure, a figure of great power. And furthermore, the power to control the powerful resides in this perfect "American type." He embodies the sources of American power, which come from his relationship with the landscape. Both TR and Buffalo Bill are permutations of the hunter/warrior "type." Slotkin sees Roosevelt as representing the aristocratic "gentleman hunter," while William "Buffalo Bill" Cody represents the "archetype of the American frontier

hero" (*Gunfighter Nation* 75). Cody achieved "gentleman" status through his association with the military later in his career, especially after the demise of Custer. During the latter part of his career, Cody attempted to reintegrate the American Indian's way of life into the mythology of the frontier. The hunter as personified in the figure of Buffalo Bill was the avenue for reliving, reworking, and redefining relations with Native Americans. Reworking the relationship between Indians and cowboy/settlers was Cody's way of "preserving" the Indian way of life that he had been instrumental in ending.

Both in America and abroad the the "Wild West" mirrored the political events unfolding at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. The "Wild West" was a product of Cody's successful stage experience, where he played himself in a series of melodramas. From 1872 to 1876, he starred in plays about his adventures, and returned in between engagements to scout and guide on the Great Plains. In 1876, Gen. George Custer and his men were killed at the Little Big Horn by the Sioux and Cheyenne Indians. Buffalo Bill said goodbye to the theater and swore that he would get "the first scalp" for Custer. At War Bonnet Creek, he killed and scalped Yellow Hand of the Cheyennes. He later wore a theatrical Mexican outfit

that he could display in his exhibitions. Cody's performances on the stage provided the perfect preparation for the "Wild West" to follow.

Beginning in 1883, Buffalo Bill's "Wild West" ran for over thirty years. The "exhibition" evolved over the decades in response to current events in America and abroad. At first, the show was primarily a rodeo, with riding and roping events, shooting displays and contests, races of various sorts, and parades. Cody then added spectacles based on reenactments from history, like Custer's Last Stand and his killing of Yellow Hand; also Indian war dances, scenes from the Pony Express, the attack on the Deadwood stagecoach, a buffalo hunt, and various other battle reenactments. The condensed recreations or "Epochs" of American history portrayed in Cody's tableaux sections consciously manipulated images of people and The West for the audience. Cody distorted and sensationalized what the audience saw to entertain them, but more importantly to promote his own agenda. He created a personal image that grew with the show, and he created an image of America as the "Wild West."

Both American and foreign audiences were "educated" about the American West through these scenes. The impressions they left on the public's imagination were profound. The "Wild West" was a financial success, and what is more, a vehicle for

education and propaganda about America's growing global power.

In the simplest terms, Roosevelt and Cody as hunter figures bridged the era from humble backwoodsman to military conqueror. A number of stages can be traced in the evolution of hunting in America. The first was from sustenance hunting to market hunting and slaughter of the buffalo herds and the Native American people who relied upon them. The next was from the excess of unrestrained capitalism on a continent seemingly limitless in natural resources and industrial potential to a recognition of need to preserve and conserve these resources and control the forces that would exploit them. Finally, the need to reconcile the power of conscience with the power of control may be behind Roosevelt's and Cody's actions. They affirmed their personal philosophies through crusades to save the landscape and recreate a way of life which had gone, or some might say, had never existed.

Roosevelt and Race

In his book, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*, Thomas Dyer explores TR's attitude toward race as "a cogent way to bring order, regularity, and consistency to human differences" (21). Dyer explains that the present day definition of race is quite

different from that at turn of the century. According to Dyer, at least five different aspects of race were operative in the anthropological and cultural discourse of the time: 1) a broad designation, any human group that possessed social, physical, or cultural traits in common; 2) a national label, "the French race"; 3) an extension of a national label, meaning those with close ties of family or nationality; 4) color; 5) representative ethnic divisions of mankind. TR's fundamental assumptions about race were built on these definitions, which were tantamount to a belief system³.

Roosevelt subscribed to a combination of Lamarckianism and Teutonism. Jean Lamarck⁴, a French naturalist, argued that species survived by adapting physically to their environments. This theory was especially attractive to TR because it suited his conception of an "American race" which had been and was continually evolving, nurtured by the wilderness landscape. The hunter's relationship with his environment is congruent with TR's concept of the landscape nurturing the "American race." The close connection between the American hunter, who is the perfect model of this race, and the landscape is reinforced by TR's terminology. TR incorporates language which describes nature and animal species into his discussions on race. Such language was a kind of "jargon in which he often expressed...[his] ideas.

This entails attention to language as the raw material of ideas and observations of change or special emphasis in language which may offer clues to change in ideation....Roosevelt's ideas must be regarded as active elements of his experience rather than as passive reflectors of a 'climate of opinion'" (Dyer xii).

TR argued that Americans were a different race from their European progenitors. They had evolved into a new "breed" by inhabiting the American landscape. This new land had shaped a new man, and for that matter, a new woman. The basis of this American race, however, was descent from Teutonic "stock" with "strains" of other northern and western European "blood." From boyhood through his years at Harvard and Columbia, Roosevelt was influenced by popular, literary, and "scientific" notions that the "white races," were destined to govern and rule the world. The figure of the hunter/warrior was the root of such a "breed." Following Lamarck, TR refined this theory to include a process, incorporating a special evolution for Americans. They were destined to rise above their European ancestors precisely because of challenging North American landscape.

The frontiersman was TR's ideal. The Kentucky frontier furnished an especially dramatic example of

landscape spawning American character that appealed to Roosevelt. Dyer comments that

[Nathaniel Southgate] Shaler...wrote a chronicle of the Kentucky frontier and several other works of historical scholarship which contained a number of themes attractive to TR. In these books and in his scientific treatises, he emphasized the importance of "character" in "social evolution," posited the development of an American "race," and stressed that the best representative of the American "type" could be found in his native Kentucky and in New England. (6)

Shaler⁵ was a Harvard professor, a geologist, historian, and naturalist who greatly influenced TR. Dyer argues that "Shaler's personal background, as well as his intellectual interests, bore sharp similarities to Roosevelt's. He was a dedicated Unionist with deep ties to the South, whose mother, like TR's, had come from a prominent southern family" (6). Also like TR, Shaler "developed interests in paleontology and zoology and became a disciple of Jean Lamarck" (6). However, unlike Shaler, TR was not an apologist for slavery. "Probably the greatest difference between the points of view of the two men lay in Roosevelt's less overtly hostile attitude toward blacks and his rejection of the justifiability of lynching, a method of social control which his mentor did not condemn outright" (7).

Clearly Roosevelt felt that "the English Speaking peoples," were superior, though over his lifetime, his view of race altered. His initial model for the

American hunter/warrior was the Teutonic hunter/warrior. As TR embraced it, the hunter/warrior model was a metaphor for power. TR's model was grounded in the primitive and highly mythological white hunter/warrior figure. The evolution of that figure he saw in racial terms. Richard Slotkin discusses TR's views:

As civilization develops and becomes more complex, primitive race/classes give way to superior forms. Thus the tribal Indian hunter gives way to "The old race of Rocky Mountain hunters and trappers, of reckless, dauntless Indian fighters...archetypes of freedom"--a race that is "now fast dying out," to be replaced by more advanced types like the cowboy, the rancher, and the farmer. The cowboys are the nearest in spirit to the hunter-race and are therefore "much better fellows and pleasanter companions than small farmers or agricultural laborers; nor are the mechanics and workmen of the great city to be mentioned in the same breath." Roosevelt ignores the racial and ethnic diversity that actually characterized cowboys during this era and represents the whole class as essentially Anglo-Saxon. Unlike the workmen of the cities, Roosevelt's cowhands are uncontaminated by alien influences, immune to the poison of labor unionism, and (as Roosevelt tells it) eager for a vigilante neck-tie party to lynch the Haymarket anarchists. But they cannot be pure archetypes of freedom, because they are hired hands, "hard-working, faithful fellows." (Slotkin *Gunfighter Nation* 39)

Later in his life, TR admired the warrior figures of other cultures. He especially admired the Japanese, an admiration which transcended his racial views, though

he was never able to shed the effects of his "racial education."⁶

For TR class was closely aligned with race. He conceived of class as part of the definition of "race."

...in his earlier works Roosevelt insists on the importance of class differences and characterizes them in almost racial terms. He identifies the competition of race-like classes as the force that drives civilization upward through its several stages. At each stage, the demands of the historical moment foster the emergence and triumph of a distinctive biosocial "character" or "type." The type is identified by its distinctive social attributes, which suggest that it is effectively a class or cultural entity, but Roosevelt assumes that its differences must be rooted in "blood" or heredity and that it is genetically transmissible to future generations. (38)

When TR writes about "Frontier Types" in *Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail*, he refers to "the old race of Rocky Mountain hunters and trappers." He is using the term "race" in one of its broader senses, though he does refer to nationality and ethnic background as well.

The Old race of Rocy Mountain hunters and trappers, of reckless, dauntless Indian fighters, is now fast dying out. Yet here and there these restless wanderers of the untrodden wilderness still linger, in wooded fastnesses so inaccessible that the miners have not yet explored them, in mountain valleys so far off that no ranchman has yet driven his herds thither. To this day many of them wear the fringed tunic or hunting-shirt, made of buckskin or homespun, and belted in at the waist,--the most picturesque and distinctively national dress ever worn in America. It was the dress in which Daniel

Boone was clad when he first passed through the trackless forests of the Alleghanies and penetrated the heart of Kentucky, to enjoy such hunting as no man of his race had ever had before; it was the dress worn by grim old Davy Crockett when he fell at the Alamo. The wild soldiery of the backwoods wore it when they marched to victory over Ferguson and Parkenham, at King's Mountain and New Orleans; when they conquered the French towns of the Illionois; and when they won at the cost of Red Eagle's warriors the bloody triumph of the horseshoe Bend. (81)

TR's tone is reverent and inspirational in this passage. It is a history lesson, history according to Roosevelt, initiated ostensibly by a discussion of the hunters' dress. He continues, "these old-time hunters have been the forerunners of the white advance throughout all our Western land" (81). He moves from the old-time hunters to the trappers, then to the cowboys. An evolution then takes place where the "best of the cowboys" succeed and become the upper-class ranchers, who then evolve into political movers and shakers. Class evolution is simply a refinement of this process.

As stage succeeds stage and class succeeds class, those who do not form part of the newly empowered elite are either destroyed or subordinated. Roosevelt's West is a Darwinian arena in which "races" representing different phases or principles of social organization contend for mastery. Mexicans and White hunters displace Indians; Texan cowboys displace hunters and Mexicans and are subordinated by the most efficient Texans--who in turn bow to the superior managerial skill of eastern capitalists. But even these

new classes will go the way of Boone and Crockett when different conditions and superior forms of organization appear. The lesson Roosevelt draws from his historical fable is that no class or race can stay the march of history, and that those who seek to do so are the foes of progress. Thus he links his own class of gentleman-ranchers to the vanished Indians of Cooper's romances and pronounces a stern epitaph prophetic of his later trust-busting. (39)

Thomas Dyer draws a distinction between TR's conception of evolution and Darwinism. He insists that Roosevelt was not taken with the theory of Social Darwinism, or the "tooth and claw" aspects of natural selection.

Competition of the tooth-and-claw variety, a key element in popular Darwinism, did not provide Roosevelt a satisfactory explanation of progress. There should be a "certain amount" of competition, he argued, "a certain amount of stress and strain, but...if this competition becomes too severe the race goes down and not up." Furthermore, he added, "the race existing under the severest stress as regards this competition often fails to go ahead as fast even in population as does the race where the competition is less severe." Thus, in a time when fears of race suicide were already present in his mind, he placed a low premium on struggle and natural selection as agents of progress. (Dyer 32)

Roosevelt felt that evolution did not "necessarily ensure progress" (Dyer 33). Rather, he believed in a "general forward movement." He would not take for granted that everyone was bound to progress or that evolutionary advancement was "foreordained" (33).

Just as he questioned the Darwinian notion of progress, Roosevelt also continued to doubt various other aspects of Darwinian theory, differentiating, for example, between Darwinism and evolution, and correctly observing that the two were often confounded. Natural selection continued to draw his skepticism with respect to its applications to society and the natural scientific validity of the concept itself. (33)

TR saw parallels between human society and nature. In his lecture at Oxford in 1910, "Biological Analogies in History," he draws an analogy

between conflict in the natural domain and conflict between White North Americans of European stock and the indigenous peoples of South America long isolated from the flow of European history....In this sense it appeared that Roosevelt generally did wish to stress the superior strengths of the northern races and the weaknesses of the tropical groups. Similarly, reference to the inability of northern types to persist in the environment of the Southern Hemisphere alluded to the commonly held belief that northern races could not long endure in the tropics, an interpretation reinforced by other allusions to unhealthy tropical conditions later in the essay. More importantly, however, Roosevelt employed the organic analogy to explain his theory of the spread of "civilization" by the higher races and to reveal the primordial mechanics which characterized that process (35-36).

Roosevelt became obsessed with the idea that decadence of the white race would contribute to its extinction. Since racial superiority could be developed, so it could be diminished. The love of luxury, loss of the fighting instinct, and refusal to

"breed" were factors which threatened race suicide. TR saw examples of what he considered this tendency in the French and in the "old stock" New Englanders, whose birth rates were greatly reduced. TR saw the census of 1890 as evidence of this decline, and he preached that the future of the "American race" depended upon doing one's duty to "work, fight, and breed." In the domestic arena, the responsibility of women became primarily to produce offspring. Birth control, working outside the home, and refusal to marry or have fewer than four children were acts tantamount to treason. The development of the new American "race" of hunter/warrior aristocrats would be threatened if women did not do their part.

Roosevelt and Women

Roosevelt's conception of womanhood was a romantic middle and upper-class view. He stressed that as keeper of the family and preserver of the race woman deserved recognition. She was invaluable for her social and racial functions. TR's views on the role of women in society can be traced to his Harvard days. His undergraduate thesis of 1880 on "Practicability of Equalizing Men and Woman Before the Law" presaged his later concerns about feminism. As Dyer argues, Roosevelt

...thought woman's function as childbearer a great injustice of nature since she belonged to the weakest half of the human race....duty demanded she fulfill her function and that man from gratitude treat her as an equal partner....the "higher and nobler the race is, the more nearly the marriage relation becomes a partnership on equal terms....equality consisting not in performance of the same duties but in admirable performance of utterly different duties...in mutual forbearance and respect."
(151)

On one hand, mutual respect and dignity belong within the marriage relationship, but the responsibility for bearing and raising children is woman's domain. The exhortation to "work, fight, and breed" breaks down into gender roles which delegate "work and fight" to men and "work at home and breed" to women.

Issues such as marriage, birth control, and health were not questions of individual conscience and choice, but potential threats to the perpetuation of the "English-speaking race." TR saw the reluctance of the "best people" to breed as race suicide. The traits of the hunter/warrior were dissipated when the race became overly civilized. Thus it was important to society to engage in the "strenuous life."

As Dyer characterizes it, TR employed language in his speech and writing that was "heavily sexual and stressed potency, virility, need for healthy and vigorous sexual instinct....[it was] plausible that an

awareness of his own advancing age and debilitated condition may have lead him to translate personal physical concerns into an obsession about the possible loss of national and racial potency" (167). TR viewed preservation of the family as a paramount concern, and he wanted to bring the "whole question of marriage and divorce under federal authority to safeguard the nation's home life" (154).

In *African Game Trails*, TR recounts his extensive hunting trips on safari in the year preceding his 1910 Oxford address. During his hunts, Roosevelt found validation for his theories on race, gender roles, and political power. The hunting experience and the metaphor of the hunt provided a framework for his personal philosophy.

The house at which we were staying stood on the beautiful Kitanga hills....It is a dry country, and we saw it in the second year of a drought; yet I believe it to be a country of high promise for settlers of the white race. In many ways it reminds one rather curiously of the great plains of the West, where they slope upward to the foot-hills of the Rockies. It is a white man's country. Although under the equator, the altitude is so high that the nights are cool, and the region as a whole is very healthy. I saw many children, of the Boer immigrants, of English settlers, even of American missionaries, and they looked sound and well....All the settlers I met treated me with the same large and thoughtful courtesy--and what fine fellows they were! And their wives even finer. (*African Game Trails* 38, 46)

Roosevelt goes on to discuss the Boers and compare their heritage to segments of the American population:

...I met other Boers while out hunting-- Erasmus, Botha, Joubert, Meyer. They were descendants of the Voortrekkers with the same names who led the hard-fighting farmers northward from the Cape seventy years ago; and were kinsfolk of the men who since then have made these names honorably known throughout the world. There must of course be many Boers who have gone backward under the stress of a hard and semi-savage life; just as in our communities of the frontier, the backwoods, and the lonely mountains, there are shiftless "poor whites" and "mean whites," mingled with the sturdy men and women who have laid deep the foundations of our national greatness. But personally I happened not to come across these shiftless "mean white" Boers. Those that I met, both men and women, were of as good a type as any one could wish for in his own countrymen or could admire in another nationality. They fulfilled the three prime requisites for any race: they worked hard, they could fight hard at need, and they had plenty of children. These are the three essential qualities in any and every nation; they are by no means all-sufficient in themselves, and there is need that many others should be added to them; but the lack of any one of them is fatal, and cannot be made good by the presence of any other set of attributes.
(47-48)

He had experienced the same validation of his views in his years on his Dakota ranch. He saw a parallel between the nation's progress and his own. He also connected his personal life and experience with his view of history. Slotkin notes:

As Roosevelt reflected on his western experiences in these books and connected them

with historical antecedents....He began to see himself as the representative man of his class, embodying its essential energies and latent virtues. Roosevelt characteristically projected his personal psychology into public affairs, equating his own early struggle with physical debility with his country's rise to power. But his new identification with the Myth of the Frontier gave a larger shape to this tendency. He began to see his own ranching and hunting experience as a model for regenerating the lost manliness and vigor of his class. (*Gunfighter Nation* 37)

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TR was obsessed with manliness, vigor, fertility. His identification with the "Teutonic" tribes of his ancestors, predisposed such a "strain" as his own to succeed in the challenging landscape. Heredity and environment fostered development of this "race." It was the duty of this "race," especially the upper classes to continue to "work, fight, and breed" in order to avoid "race decadence" which might ultimately result in "race suicide."

However bizarre the race suicide notion may seem today, its effect on Roosevelt leaves no doubt as to the seriousness with which Progressive Era Americans regarded the idea of racial self-destruction and indeed the idea of race itself. (Dyer 168)

The special role of women as "perpetuators of the race" (150) places them in the untenable position of responsibility for the future of the "race" with no recourse but acquiescence. TR exhorted both men and women to marry early and raise large families. The excuse that frequent childbearing was a health risk for

many women and life-threatening for some, only brought forth his response that women must be like soldiers.

Hamlin Garland's suggestion that multiple childbearing could destroy women physically did not impress Roosevelt, who replied that while he did not wish "to see a woman worn down and perhaps killed by too much maternity" his comparison of woman's role to that of a soldier still applied. "If the women flinch from breeding," he argued, "the deserved death of the race takes place even quicker." Like the soldier who fled in the face of enemy fire, the woman who "flinched" at having children earned Roosevelt's everlasting contempt and opprobrium. (Dyer 153)

In a sense, the woman had to be a passive hunter/warrior, facing the trials of physical danger without recourse to the weapons afforded a male. By extrapolation, the more children a woman had, the more worthy she was. The woman who could not have children was to be pitied; the woman who did not want to bear children was a "race criminal."

The man or woman who deliberately avoids marriage and has a heart so cold as to know no passion and a brain so shallow and selfish as to dislike having children, is in effect a criminal against the race and should be an object of contemptuous abhorrence by all healthy people. (TR in Dyer 152)

"Domestic control" becomes a loaded term indeed. The center of power is the home, and by implication the nation is its reflection. At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries America was an

emerging world power. TR's personality and philosophy were emblematic of America's developing role in world affairs.

According to TR, the home is the bedrock of national greatness. During his address to the National Congress of Mothers which met in Washington in 1905, he lectured on the duties of men and especially those of women. Here, he revealed the intensity of his feelings about the role of women in the society.

...the nation is in a bad way if there is no real home, if the family is not of the right kind; if the man is not a good husband and father, if he is brutal or cowardly or selfish, if the woman has lost her sense of duty, if she is sunk in vapid self-indulgence or has let her nature be twisted so that she prefers a sterile pseudo-intellectuality to that great and beautiful development of character which comes only to those who know the fullness of duty done, or effort made and self-sacrifice undergone....the average woman is a good wife, a good mother, able and willing to bear, and to bring up as they should be brought up, healthy children, sound in body, mind, and character, and numerous enough so that the race shall increase and not decrease. (TR in DiNunzio 314)

Although TR believed that marriage could be a full partnership between a man and a woman, he nonetheless believed that the primary duty for women was motherhood. He was far ahead of his time in many of the attitudes he held about the *possibility* of women's following careers and positions traditionally held by men. In his essay "The Parasite Woman: The Only

Indispensable Citizen," TR is open to a wide range of careers that women might wish to pursue.

It is entirely right that any woman should be allowed to make any career for herself of which she is capable, whether or not it is a career followed by a man. She has the same right to be a lawyer, a doctor, a farmer, or a storekeeper that the man has to be a poet, an explorer, a politician, or a painter. There are women whose peculiar circumstances or whose peculiar attributes render it advisable that they should follow one of the professions just named, just as there are men who can do most good to their fellows by following one of the careers above indicated for men. More than this. It is indispensable that such careers shall be open to women and that certain women shall follow them, if the women of a country, and therefore if the country itself, expect any development. In just the same way, it is indispensable that some men shall be explorer, artists, sculptors, literary men, politicians, if the country is to have its full life. Some of the best farmers are women, just as some of the best exploring work and scientific work has been done by women. There is a real need for a certain number of women doctors and women lawyers. Whether a writer or a painter or a singer is a man or a woman makes not the slightest difference, provided that the work he or she does is good. (324)

After TR makes these statements, he goes on to say that not only does he "admit" all this; he "insists upon it" as long as the "primary work" of the "average" or the "exceptional" man or woman is "home-making" and "home-keeping."

He then elaborates on that "primary work" of men and women. The "average" man needs to earn a

livelihood that will support a wife and family. The basic jobs necessary for the advancement of a country and a society must be done well. The exceptional individual then has an arena in which to excell. If a person wishes to devote himself to public service and does non-remunerative work, then that person should be able to finance these activities. TR had the luxury of a family fortune to underwrite his own political career, for example. He fully realized that public service was exceptional. TR also commented:

Now, this also applies to women. Exceptional women--like Julia Ward Howe or Harriet Beecher Stowe or Mrs. Homer--are admirable wives and mothers, admirable keepers of the home, and yet workers of genius outside the home. Such types, of course, are rare whether among men or women. There are also exceptional--and less happy, and normally less useful--women whose great service to the state and community is rendered outside the home, and who have no family life; just as is true of exceptional--and normally less happy and less useful--men. But exactly as it is true that no nation will prosper unless the average man is a home-maker; that is, unless at some business or trade or profession, he earns enough to make a home for himself and his wife and children, and is a good husband and father; so no nation can exist at all unless the average woman is the home-keeper, the good wife, and unless she is the mother of a sufficient number of healthy children to insure the race going forward and not backward. The indispensable work for the community is the work of the wife and the mother. It is the most honorable work. It is literally and exactly the vital work, the work which of course must be done by the average woman or the whole nation goes down with a crash. (325)

That Roosevelt could at once stress the importance of woman's role in society and at the same time deny her the status of his ideal hunter/warrior is ironic. He likens her to a soldier who must suffer for her race, as he points out in his views on the rigors of childbirth. Yet he assigns her additional restrictions when working outside what he considers her proscribed role.

Roosevelt does address the responsibility of men in this scheme, but his implicit message is women may be afforded the opportunity to work outside the home, based upon a theoretical right to equality. Exercising this right will be--with a few exceptions--impossible. The ideas of health and care-taking are present throughout TR's writing and speeches. The health of the individual, the family, and the nation are inter-related and dependent on the woman's energies. Physical health is connected to moral health, and this linkage is nowhere as evident as in TR's speeches and writing, which stress strength, vigor, aggressiveness. His obsession with the "breeding" of the "right type" of American "stock" is tied in with his attitudes toward women and their crucial roles as wives and mothers of the hunter/warrior figure.

Cowboys and Conservation

Photographs of TR in his Rough Rider's outfit and later in his hunting "costume" portray a "vigorous, manly" figure. His self-creation had begun in childhood when he determined to build his frail body by boxing, riding, and shooting. From his *Autobiography*, it is clear that TR struggled with his physical disabilities. He cites an incident from childhood where he met two boys while traveling alone. They overcame him easily, and though they did not hurt him, when TR tried to fight back, he could not touch them. As a result of this encounter, he resolved to develop his athletic ability. It took him three years to learn to box, and then he was the lightest of lightweights, but he managed to beat someone in the ring.

Having been a sickly child, with no natural bodily prowess, and having lived much at home, I was at first quite unable to hold my own when thrown into contact with other boys of rougher antecedents....Then an incident happened that did me real good. Having an attack of asthma, I was sent off by myself to Moosehead Lake. On the stagecoach thither I encountered a couple of other boys who were about my own age, but very much more competent and also more mischievous. I have no doubt they were good-hearted boys, but they were boys! They found that I was a foreordained and predestined victim, and industriously proceeded to make life miserable for me. The worst feature was that when I finally tried to fight them I

discovered that either one singly could not only handle me with easy contempt, but handle me so as not to hurt me much and yet prevent my doing any damage whatever in return. (TR *Autobiography* 27-28)

Roosevelt's narrative voice illustrates a detachment from his youthful self. He is not sentimental about his disability; he ascribes no blame to his tormentors; but, he clearly establishes the need for physical development if he is not be the "foreordained and predestined victim."

He goes on to describe his determination to improve his skill.

The experience taught me what probably no amount of good advice could have taught me. I made up my mind that I must try to learn so that I would not again be put in such a helpless position; and having become quickly and bitterly conscious that I did not have the natural prowess to hold my own, I decided that I would try to supply its place by training. Accordingly, with my father's hearty approval, I started to learn to box. I was a painfully slow and awkward pupil, and certainly worked two or three years before I made any perceptible improvement whatever. My first boxing-master was John Long, an ex-prizefighter....On one occasion, to excite interest among his patrons, he held a series of "championship" matches for the different weights, the prizes being, at least in my own class, pewter mugs of a value, I should suppose, approximating fifty cents. Neither he nor I had any idea I could do anything, but I was entered in the lightweight contest, in which it happened that I was pitted in succession against a couple of reedy striplings who were even worse than I was. Equally to their surprise and to my own, and to John Long's, I won, and the pewter mug became one of my prized possessions. (28)

He next resolved to learn to ride, and this activity was also a struggle. His poor eyesight accounted for much of his clumsiness. Once he tried to learn to shoot, he realized that others were hitting targets he couldn't even see. When he got his "spectacles" he improved, but someone who wore glasses was regarded as less than virile.

These early examples of TR's stubborn resolve to succeed show his self-discipline. While he ostensibly understood the nature of an individual's struggle with personal adversity, precisely because he had succeeded, he was less patient with others who did not persevere. But, of course, when TR wanted to learn to box, his father could employ an instructor for him. Similarly, when he wanted to ride and shoot, his family had the finances to provide for his training. Roosevelt's personal experience and education formed the basis for his view of the world. He viewed life from the superior vantage point of the upper class. His identification with the ideal of a hunter/warrior/cowboy figure extended to his country. He believed the American nation deserved a place in international affairs because it was destined to rule lesser peoples and nations.

For TR, the hunting metaphor applied to domestic and foreign affairs. The hunter/warrior/cowboy becomes an emblem of expanding power and influence under TR's

administration. His idea of a new American "type" exuded individuality, masculinity, robustness, and bravado. And Roosevelt illustrated this type himself, most notably in his role as Rough Rider. As president, Roosevelt did not have time to hunt as he did in his youth. But, his time with the Rough Riders illustrates his consistent attachment to the hunter/warrior figure. When he temporarily took leave from politics to fight the "Spaniard," this figure represented his personal ideal on an intellectual and mythic level. The bravado of the hunter/warrior/cowboy showed a "superior" American coercing the landscape of the American continent, and by extension, the world. The American landscape had made the man; now, the man could remake the landscape.

Both Roosevelt and Cody were profoundly influenced by Frederick Jackson Turner's essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." In their book, *The Frontier in American Culture*, Richard White and Patricia Nelson Limerick address the impact of William Cody's Wild West and Frederick Jackson Turner's essay on the frontier in American history. In his introduction to the White and Limerick essays James R. Grossman's comments: "Cowboys, Indians, log cabins, wagon trains. These and other images associated with stories of the frontier maintain a constant presence in our lives" (1). He goes on to say:

In 1893 the Colombian Exposition brought to Chicago two men, each of whom told a story about the American frontier and the American West....an unlikely duo--a University of Wisconsin history professor, Frederick Jackson Turner, and the most flamboyant showman in late-nineteenth-century America, "Buffalo Bill" Cody. The stories differed in genre, tone, and content. Nevertheless, we have paired them here, just as they were paired in Chicago in 1893, because they invariably exist in relation to each other--whether separate or entangled. (1)

Grossman tells us that Turner's story was "presented in the form of historical scholarship," and for all its later influence, was heard by "relatively few" at the Chicago exhibition. Its substance was a "sweeping explanation" of settlement of "free" land which "framed...the evolution of a uniquely democratic, individualistic, and progressive American character." Turner's version was appealing and spread "through... classroom, ...journalism, and...popular histories" as a notion that the "West was something we settled, rather than conquered" (1). Cody's story emphasized the violent nature of wresting the land from the Indians, portraying vast scenes of conflict and slaughter. Both versions of the frontier have become part of American culture. That there is "agreement on the fact of [its] significance but not of its content" makes the story, or rather stories, of the frontier has several implications. Roosevelt's view of the frontier is more

closely aligned with Cody's version, especially in terms of tribal displacement. While Turner marginalized Indians and stressed the settlement of "vacant land," the frontier of Cody and Roosevelt was a battlefield. Rather than vacant land, the West of TR and Cody is filled with warring tribes that must be conquered. This conquest is ultimately tied to hunting the buffalo.

The buffalo is emblematic of the Indian way of life. It provided food, clothing, and various other practical and symbolic necessities for Indian life on the Plains. Destruction of the buffalo signaled the frontier's transformation into "civilized" space. The mixed emotions accompanying this transformation are reflected in Roosevelt's essay, "The Lordly Buffalo" from his book, *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman* (1885).

Gone forever are the mighty herds of the lordly buffalo. A few solitary individuals and small bands are still to be found scattered here and there in the wilder parts of the plains; and, though most of these will be very soon destroyed, others will for some years fight off their doom and lead a precarious existence either in remote and almost desert portions of the country near the Mexican frontier, or else in the wildest and most inaccessible fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains; but the great herds, that for the first three-quarters of this century formed the distinguishing and characteristic feature of the Western plains, have vanished forever. (TR in DiNunzio 242)

TR's sense of admiration for the animal is obvious, but equally apparent and more important for gauging the temper of the time, is the tone of resolution and certainty of the buffalo's demise. Later in the essay, extermination of the buffalo is justified as prerequisite for national development.

While the slaughter of the buffalo has been in places needless and brutal, and while it is greatly to be regretted that the species is likely to become extinct, and while, moreover, from a purely selfish standpoint, many, including myself, would rather see it continue to exist as the chief feature in the life of the Western wilderness; yet, on the other hand, it must be remembered that its continued existence in any numbers was absolutely incompatible with anything but a very sparse settlement of the country; and that its destruction was the condition precedent upon the advance of white civilization in the West, and was a positive boon to the more thrifty and industrious frontiersmen. Where the buffalo were plenty, they ate up all the grass that could have supported cattle....Above all, the extermination of the buffalo was the only way of solving the Indian question. As long as this large animal of the chase existed, the Indians simply could not be kept on reservations, and always had an ample supply of meat on hand to support them in the event of war; and its disappearance was the only method of forcing them to at least partially abandon their savage mode of life. From the standpoint of humanity at large, the extermination of the buffalo has been a blessing. (245)

We need not ask, a blessing for whom? The desire to preserve the buffalo is characterized as selfish. Roosevelt applies the epithet to himself, as if he

needs to purge such sentimentality and stress more noble motives such as development and progress. TR's practical tone when he advocates exterminating the buffalo to displace the Indian emphasizes the foregone conclusion that the Indian must be displaced. There is some regret about the buffalo, but none for the Native American.

Roosevelt describes his buffalo hunt with excitement. He emphasizes that the reason for conservation of the wilderness and its species is mainly to ensure preservation of hunting lands. These hunting lands are for the sportsman, not the sustenance of the Indian. The relationship between hunter and land changes in the process and privileges the aristocratic hunter/sportsman over the native inhabitant's need for food and clothing. The formation of hunting and sporting clubs provided the hunter/sportsman with places to pursue game. These clubs also provided a bridge between the American landscape and European aristocratic tradition. The Boone and Crockett Club, for example, represents several things simultaneously:

For Roosevelt and his fellow clubmen, the ritual veneration of archetypal frontiersmen like Boone and Crockett was an American equivalent of the Victorian gentleman's playing at medieval chivalry. But their choice of ancestors, and the rituals through which they affirmed their connection, reflected the ideological needs of a

distinctly American gentry. For by identifying with these ancestors, who were plebeian in their origins, these new aristocrats sought to affirm an organic and legitimating connection between their own privileged state of wealth, power, and knowledge and an original "democracy" in which such privilege was unknown. (Slotkin *Gunfighter Nation* 37-38)

The hunter figure evolves from provider to sportsman, integrating the plebeian frontiersman/warrior with the privileged and powerful ruling class.

Roosevelt was not only the founder of the Boone and Crockett Club; in the autobiographical hunting tales and histories he published between 1885 and 1895, he was the author of its myths of origin. His first two books--*Hunting Trips of a Ranchman* (1885) and *Ranch Life and Hunting Trail* (1888)--were similar in structure and subject matter. They reflect his initial responses to his rediscovery of the frontier and his rapid assimilation of his experience to a systematic historiographical scenario. His opening chapters identify the grand theme of frontier history as an American recapitulation of the "stages of civilization." He uses the history of the West to illustrate first the succession of savages by civilized races and then the succession of different classes or subdivisions of the White or Anglo-Saxon race that represent progressively higher stages of development. He presents his personal development as typical of the experience of the latest, most civilized, and most self-conscious of these successor-classes. Thus he makes his own history the fulfillment of the larger historical processes he has invoked. (38)

TR avidly enjoyed and pursued hunting as a physical activity. Hunting also served as a paradigm

for his beliefs about race, politics, and power. Under TR conservation became a domestic blessing, while serving as a boon to the upper class in America.

Roosevelt's hunting also has a "class" character. He insists that he is not a "game butcher" who hunts animals for profit or subsistence. Like the fictional Hawkeye, he sees himself as a man at odds with the sordidness of trade, who kills only for simple need or to complete a ritual test of manhood. This is clearly an aristocrat's and a sportsman's approach to hunting. Roosevelt's plebeian hunter-heroes, Boone and especially Crockett, were certainly game-butchers by Roosevelt's definition. But Roosevelt is only interested in Boone and Crockett as putative ancestors for his own developing hero-persona and for the new aristocracy he sought to represent. In his last hunting book, *The Wilderness Hunter* (1893), Roosevelt symbolizes history itself as a series of great "hunts" in which a succession of representative hunter-heroes and political leaders carry the nation from colony to world power. The sequence begins with Daniel Boone, the "archetype" of the hunter, and continues on through Crockett and Houston to Buffalo Bill and the officer-gentlemen of the Plains cavalry (Custer, Sheridan). The stages of our political development are marked by the careers of three hunter-presidents, Washington, Jackson, and Lincoln. And from the prominence given to Roosevelt's own exploits, it is clear that he himself is eligible to cap both the game-killing and political sequences. (41-42)

TR and Cody are American hunters who embody American exceptionality. They, like the frontier, represent a flexible construct which accommodates individual needs, while remaining capable of expansion, even to a mythic level. Especially in his writing,

Roosevelt develops a personal mythology, linking his own role and character to the historical and natural forces he saw at work in frontier history. In *The Winning of the West* he attempts a more systematic study of his "myth of origins," designed to provide an authoritative rationale for the hegemony of the new elites. Like Parkman's histories, *The Winning of the West* treats the Indian wars as the central matter of American history. His account begins where Parkman's ends, with the Anglo-American settlement of the trans-Allegheny region after the last of the French and Indian Wars. As originally designed, Roosevelt's history would have dealt with the Indian wars of the revolutionary and early national periods and would have ended with the opening of the trans-Mississippi frontier. (42)

Here, the word "West" connotes the American frontier, and the West is a relative term, depending upon the stage of development of the nation at any given time. Within the lifetimes and spheres of influence of Roosevelt and Cody, the West defined the end of an era, as well as the end of expansion across the continent.

Buffalo Bill and the Wild West

Buffalo Bill is primarily responsible for creating the image of the American hunter/cowboy. Furthermore, his Wild West show disseminated images of the cowboy and the American West throughout the world. There were many versions of the cowboy. But, the sustained presence of Buffalo Bill, especially in his three

decades as Wild West showman, overshadowed other figures. William Frederick Cody was born February 26, 1846, in Scott County, Iowa, and he died on January 10, 1917, in Denver, Colorado. His father, Isaac Cody, died in 1857, when William was eleven years old. The family had moved to Kansas in 1854, where he attended several sessions of the country schools organized by his father. After his father's death, William Cody went to work as a mounted messenger for a wagon-freight firm. This firm, later known as Russell, Majors, and Waddell, backed the Pony Express. By his late teens Cody had become a talented hunter, horse wrangler, and Indian fighter.

He served in the Civil War in the 7th Kansas Cavalry, and after the war, worked for the U.S. Army as a civilian scout and dispatch bearer out of Fort Ellsworth in Kansas. Cody acquired his name, Buffalo Bill, during 1867-1868 when he hunted buffalo to feed the workers constructing the Kansas Pacific Railroad. He carried dispatches through hostile Indian territory for General Philip H. Sheridan. Afterward, he became chief of scouts for the 5th U.S. Cavalry, where he served for over four years. During his career as a scout, Cody engaged in sixteen Indian fights. In 1872, he was awarded the Medal of Honor, but it was revoked in 1916 on grounds that scouts were technically

civilians. In 1989, the Medal was posthumously restored by the U.S. Army.

In 1869, Ned Buntline, whose pen name was E.Z.C. Judson, wrote the dime novel that launched Buffalo Bill's career as folk hero. The novel was later dramatized, and Buntline convinced Cody to star in the production. He left Buntline after a year, but Cody continued his role as actor for eleven seasons. This acting experience led to his final role as showman. In 1883, Buffalo Bill organized his "Wild West" exhibition. Over the years, it included riding, roping, sharp shooting, a buffalo hunt, capture of the Deadwood stagecoach, a Pony Express ride, and other action-packed entertainment. The "cowboy fun" portion of the show was the basis for the rodeo. The "Rough Riders of the World" were horsemen from other countries, who displayed their riding skills in national costume. The show also reflected domestic and world events. The charge up San Juan Hill was reenacted as well as Custer's Last Stand. Cody took The Wild West to London in 1887 for Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebration. The Queen saw the four hour spectacle three times, and it became an international success. Stars of the show included Annie Oakley, Buck Taylor, Johnny Baker, and Sitting Bull. The show's greatest success in the U.S. was in 1893 at the Chicago World's Fair.

Buffalo Bill's Image

Before Buffalo Bill's "Wild West," William Cody lead a truly adventurous life. In trying to explain Cody's tremendous appeal, it becomes important to look at the accounts of his life. Like Boone, the stories about Buffalo Bill range from factual to pure fancy. Also like Boone, his image is flexible and contains contradictory elements. For example, his relationship with the Indians was adversarial in his scouting days, yet benevolent in his showman days. Although some of the most popular attractions of his show were reenactments of battles between Indians and settlers or soldiers, Cody also featured Indian ceremonies and vignettes from daily life.

The best source of his early life is Cody's autobiography, published in 1879 when he was thirty-four years old. This volume has been suspect for many reasons. One question concerns the true authorship of the biography. Another problem concerns several inaccuracies, including Cody's citing the wrong year for his own birth.⁸ But, Don Russell in his foreward to the reissued edition (1978)⁹ argues for both its accuracy and for Cody's authorship.

Strange as it may seem to the skeptical,
internal evidence suggests...[Cody's]

Autobiography, was actually written by William F. Cody. Who but Cody would have mentioned his brief and unrecorded involvement with Chandler's jayhawkers and horse thieves? Who but Cody would have admitted that he volunteered for Civil War service while so drunk that he didn't know what he was doing? What ghostwriter would have omitted so many of Cody's real claims to distinction while including less credible episodes? (Russell Introduction vii)

Russell also points out that contrary to popular belief, Cody was not illiterate. He may not have been proficient "in spelling, and grammar, and...[his] penmanship was not up to nineteenth-century Spencerian standards, but...[he] could tell a story and a copy editor could make it passable" (viii). There were more elaborate editions of the *Autobiography*, but the first edition is for the most part as close to the truth as one will get.

Russell discusses criticism that the prose style varies in different parts of the book. He explains that many stories had already been published of Buffalo Bill's adventures, and Cody simply incorporated them. It was less trouble to include an episode as written than it was to correct it (xviii). The passages where the tone becomes melodramatic are usually the work of others. Another problem is Cody's imperfect memory of dates. "Will...badly foul[s] up the chronological sequences. If we knew when Cody killed his first

Indian, we might yet find the newspaper account of it" (xv).

Again, the relevance for this discussion centers on Cody's flexible image. What he wrote and what was written about him testifies to the power of this image. And the source of this power derives from his role as hunter. Cody's accuracy regarding his life and exploits indicates some revealing characteristics. Cody recounts numerous exploits in his capacity as Indian fighter or hunter, which may seem exaggerated, but in most cases records bear out their truth. He also does not recount many things to his credit.

Cody is credited with fourteen expeditions against Indians and fifteen Indian fights. That might not seem many to those exposed to the ideas of Indian fighting sponsored by movies and television, but a computer applied to the Indian wars shows that the average soldier of the period could expect one fight for each five-year enlistment. Cody did not exaggerate in telling of his services as scout; on the contrary, he leaves out much that is to his credit....[for] the Indian fight of April 26, 1872...he was awarded the Medal of Honor. (His name was stricken from the rolls in 1916 not because of any question regarding the action for which it was awarded, but because he "was neither an officer nor an enlisted man" as the law required. He was a civilian employee.) (xvi)

Cody was not unduly modest, but he was probably too busy living his life to bother about all the significant details. In his storytelling, he might make mistakes. If these details happened to be more

interesting than the true ones, he was apt to leave them in for entertainment value.

However, external evidence points to the veracity of the *Autobiography*. For example, Cody's career as army scout may seem sensationalized, but monthly records were kept by the quartermaster and the scouts were named in the reports. Russell says that "because...[the scouts] were civilian employees, [they were] hired for their knowledge of the local terrain and of Indian ways and trails....Cody was employed continuously from September 1868 through November 1872. No one has come up with a record of a scout being employed for a longer term than that" (xv-xvi).

Another point of contention in the Buffalo Bill legend stems from his name. Russell writes, "It might be pointed out that all the buffalo he killed were eaten; he had no part in the hide hunting that threatened the animal with extinction" (xvii). However, the pattern of excess is more damning in itself than the explanation of actual events is vindicating. In James B. Trefethen's *An American Crusade for Wildlife*, he describes the buffalo hunting in clearly accusatory terms for all involved.

Although a few professional hunters operated alone, most were members of teams with a larger complement of skimmers who doubled as wagoners....The most common method of procuring buffalo was to intercept an approaching herd from a strategic position

and kill all animals that came within range of their powerful single-shot Sharps, Remington, or Springfield rifles....with the development of the self-contained metallic cartridge, a hunter could loose twenty shots a minute, even when armed with a singl-shot rifle.

Other hunters preferred the more strenuous and exciting method of coursing, in which the animals were killed at close range with pistols or carbines. This was the favorite technique of the most famous of the buffalo killers, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody.

Cody obtained a contract in 1867 to supply the Kansas Pacific Railway with fresh meat. In the next eighteen months, by his own account, he killed 4,280 buffalo. Competing on a wager with another hunter, he slaughtered sixty-nine in a single day; his adversary managed a score of only forty-six.
(14)

The facts of the slaughter are undeniably brutal, and the emotionally charged language underscores them. That Buffalo Bill is referred to as the "most famous of all the buffalo killers"-- "killer," not "hunter"-- and his actions are described by the verb, "slaughtered," not "shot"--expresses Trefethen's view very clearly.

Cody relates the same information himself, but the narrative of his exploits conveys excitement, not bloodthirstiness. The actions are appalling, especially to latter twentieth century sensibilities. But, the perspective for viewing Cody should be adjusted to accommodate his being a man of his time.

His *Autobiography* depicts the same information, but the tone is considerably different.

It was about this time that the end of the Kansas Pacific track was in the heart of buffalo country, and the company was employing about twelve hundred men in the construction of the road. As the Indians were very troublesome, it was difficult to obtain fresh meat for the workmen, and the company therefore concluded to engage the services of hunters to kill buffaloes....It was at this time that the very appropriate name of "Buffalo Bill," was conferred upon me by the road-hands. It has stuck to me ever since, and I have never been ashamed of it.

During my engagement as hunter for the company--a period of less than eighteen months--I killed 4,280 buffaloes; and I had many exciting adventures with the Indians, as well as hair-breadth escapes, some of which are well worth relating. (161-162)

Cody's power as a hunter ensures that workers building the railroad will eat. Therefore, the railroad will get built; the country will grow; Buffalo Bill builds America. Cody's occupation is hunter, and his job is dangerous. He must hunt with one eye always watching for Indian attacks. So, volume is important when shooting the buffalo. He must kill quickly and get the game back to camp to feed the waiting hungry men. He cites the figure of buffalo killed, 4,280 in less than eighteen months. The tally indicates what he has been able to provide.

Even when Cody recounts the contest between himself and Billy Comstock, where Cody kills sixty-nine and Comstock forty-six buffaloes in one day, the emphasis is not on the slaughter but on the ceremonies accompanying the event. The details of the scene are important because they provide the context within which Cody acts. Many borders are apparent: the borders between the vast plains and civilized space and the borders between the people and animals that inhabit them. Cody's skill allows him to cross these borders.

Shortly after the adventures mentioned in the preceding chapter, I had my celebrated buffalo hunt with Billy Comstock, a noted scout, guide, and interpreter, who was then chief of scouts at Fort Wallace, Kansas. Comstock had the reputation, for a long time, of being a most successful buffalo hunter, and the officers in particular, who had seen him kill buffaloes, were desirous of backing him in a match against me....We were to hunt one day of eight hours, beginning at eight o'clock in the morning, and closing at four o'clock in the afternoon. The wager was five hundred dollars a side, and the man who should kill the greater number of buffaloes from on horseback was to be declared the winner. (171)

This is no random killing spree, but a command performance--commanded, that is, by other influential people. It is as if the event has been organized and Cody is drafted to perform; he complies, it seems, almost out of politeness. Details of the circumstances leading to the contest are elaborate. Public interest

in the event and participation by a large number of people force Cody to comply. He agrees to do the thing he always does, hunt, but with more restrictions for the edification of his audience. The spectators who watch the contest for once cross the border that the hunter crosses, from the civilized world to the edge of the frontier. This performance illustrates the hunter's importance for providing enormous quantities of food. Cody as the best of the hunters then embodies the most powerful symbol of control over the landscape, and therefore, the nation.

The actual hunt includes referees and three different chases. Finally, when it is clear that Buffalo Bill will win easily, he performs the third run bareback to make the spectacle more interesting for the crowd. The description could as well be one of a fox hunt or a football game. Cody does not try to gloss over the graphic details; if anything, he is scrupulously objective.

At last the time came to begin the match. Comstock and I dashed into a herd, followed by the referees. The buffaloes separated; Comstock took the left bunch and I the right. My great forte in killing buffaloes from horseback was to get them circling by riding my horse at the head of the herd, shooting the leaders, thus crowding their followers to the left, till they would finally circle round and round.

On this morning the buffaloes were very accommodating, and I soon had them running

ina beautiful circle, when I dropped them thick and fast, until I had killed thirty-eight; which finished my run.

Comstock began shooting at the right of the herd, which he was chasing, and they kept straight on. He succeeded, however, in killing twenty-three, but they were scattered over a distance of three miles, while mine lay close together. I had "nursed" my buffaloes, as a billiard-player does the balls when he makes a big run. (172-173)

Cody has studied the behavior of the buffaloes and uses this knowledge to predict how they will act. He can then dispatch them efficiently. He tells us how they are "accommodating." Of course, he deploys a strategy he has used before. He is the consummate professional. He describes each of the three runs of the contest. In between the forays, the spectators provide champagne, and by the third run, he proposes bareback riding for the final sortie to entertain the crowd. He finishes spectacularly by driving the last buffalo near the crowd, and as the women scream, he drops his sixty-ninth animal (173-174). Cody's account of the contest emphasizes specific hunting tactics, the detailed action in each run, and finally some self-deprecating humor that indicates his bravado in bareback riding may have been related to the champagne.

Passages about Cody's buffalo hunting exploits can be portrayed as exciting adventure or senseless slaughter. He represents power over life and death on

many levels. The chord that he strikes has to do with an image of authority. As hunter, he kills to provide food which will sustain life. He is a scout who knows the Indians and their habits and can negotiate space, where others are lost. He survives and ensures the survival of others.

Buffalo Bill's exploits as hunter and Indian fighter raise questions about his actual relationship with the Indians. In his essay, "The Indians," Vine Deloria discusses Cody's roles in this regard at three different stages of his career. First, Cody was a scout and hunting guide, then a showman, and finally a legend, "the fictional, primarily ahistorical character who is invoked to symbolize ideologies that he might not have approved had he been able to choose how he would be remembered" (47). The early stage of Cody's experience, according to Deloria

was not radically different from other young men growing up on the frontier and having survival as a first priority. One of the better Pony Express riders, Cody took his chances in traveling across lands that were not his or his country's while covering his routes. That Indians did chase and often kill Pony Express riders is historical fact, but no sense of personal animosity existed between the riders and the Indians. While Indians might take great pains to destroy telegraph wires railroad tracks, systematic harrassment of Pony Express riders was not common. Perhaps the Indians saw in the young couriers the same strength and determination considered admirable in their warrior traditions. (47-48)

Cody was also a civilian scout for the army. Apparently, he evidenced none of the racism and arrogance of many regular army officers. Although he did not deny his role as Indian fighter, he would not say how many Indians he had killed. He further emphasized that he never killed an Indian who was not trying to kill him (56). He never participated in treaty negotiations between the government and the Indians.

Cody was no fool when it came to understanding government policy and his noted absence at great treaty sessions indicates that he regarded his own personal integrity as beyond price. His record, where promises made to the Indians are concerned, is much stronger than that of such revered figures as Father DeSmet, Bishop Whipple or Bishop Hare, or a succession of American Presidents. We can conclude that he never knowingly placed himself in a position where he would have to lie to the Indians. This should be remembered in any appraisal of Buffalo Bill--because he certainly had the opportunities to do so had he taken that path. (51)

As a hunter Cody respected the Indians' skills as hunters. Later in his "Wild West," Cody sought to portray various scenes from Indian life. He respected the Native American way of life--their relationship with the land and the animals that inhabited it. Inherently, he felt it was important to educate the public and preserve such pieces of the vanishing frontier. These "scenes" were more accurate portrayals

of the reality than the wildly sensationalized battles and reenactments of daring exploits. They included firebuilding and other domestic crafts of the tribes.

Deloria tells us that as a legend Cody "presents a much more difficult subject to examine" (55). The literary Buffalo Bill was someone created by Easterners, most of whom had never visited the West and "who committed to paper fantasies and stereotypes that no self-respecting, experienced Westerner would have tolerated for a moment" (55). Cody's inability to supplant this image was due to its powerful grasp on the public imagination.

Once Cody became a character in this literature he was the victim of a public demand that proved nearly insatiable. Exploits that were technically impossible became commonplace in his literary existence. To deny his superhuman powers would have been to call down the wrath of a gullible public. So Cody was stuck with a public image that grew more reactionary yet abstractly sublime as the years passed. Frightened at the changes that large industry was making in their lives, Americans sought in Cody and other mythical Western heroes assurance that frontier virtues were capable of transcending the determinism of historical and natural processes. This transformation of the Western hero from historical personage to a quasi-religious-political testimony to American values probably forced Cody to use increasingly melodramatic plot in his shows. (55)

Deloria also points out the difficulty in evaluating Cody and his relationship with the Indians because of

the "long heritage of dime novels and movies that have driven stereotypes deep into the collective American psyche." However, what does come through clearly is that Buffalo Bill "was truly a man of his times" (56). He knew what stirred the public and was able to translate his ideas into actions. He had been through the adventures that others only read about, so he could speak with authority about them. He was a hero in tangible form, much as Daniel Boone was. The later denunciations of Cody are another testament to the strong feelings he aroused.

Howard R. Lamar in "The Cowboys" writes that it has become the fashion to deride Buffalo Bill as a talented showman who exploited his featured players. This view does not do justice to his career as hunter, scout, and guide, "nor does it show an understanding of Cody's uncanny sense of American popular history" (57). The cowboy's evolution paralleled America's. The hunter who became the mounted frontiersman or ranger is the basis for the figure of the cowboy. The cowboy's image is multi-faceted as well. Lamar identifies three types of cowboy: historical, fictional, and folklore cowboy. The historic cowboy, the one based on the ranger, emerged after the Civil War. Along with the range of cowboy types who emerged were "Black Americans many of them ex-slaves, [who] eventually made up one-seventh of the cowboy population" (58).

The Wild West or rodeo cowboy crossed the ethnic barrier to include black rodeo stars, such as Bill Pickett, who made biting a steer's lips to make him immobile famous. Mexican-American horsemen also performed in Cody's show, and later he added Argentine gauchos and Russian cossacks. Over the next five decades, generations of performers in Cody's and other Wild West shows achieved fame and glorified the cowboy image. What was so important was that anyone, of any race, could identify with the figure. Then, in 1887, Cody opened his show in London and the cowboy became a popular international figure as well. For the Europeans, writes Ray Allen Billington, the cowboy became the symbol of the American frontiersman. (61)

The occupation of cowboy required skills celebrated in the rodeo and later in Buffalo Bill's "Wild West." Although plebian in origins, the cowboy evolved into a figure elevated by association and metaphor. The dime novels and show business employ figurative language which illustrate how the cowboy figure becomes "American royalty."

Just as the open range cattle business was hitting its stride, and the rodeo was emerging as an American sport, Buffalo Bill Cody encountered show business. In 1869 Edward Z.C. Judson, a journalist who used the trade name Ned Buntline, set out west to interview Major Frank North, a frontier scout. It is said that Buntline hoped North could become a dime-novel hero; the publishing house of Beadle had begun in 1860 to exploit frontier and adventure themes in these novels with tremendous success. Whatever the facts may be, Buntline spotted Cody as someone who might be a more appropriate frontier figure. The result was an exaggerated story, entitled *Buffalo Bill*,

the King of Bordermen, that appeared in New York in December 1869. (59)

The title of "King" at once places special emphasis on the Cody's talents and his worth. The plebian cowboy/borderman image is juxtaposed with royalty in a seeming oxymoron. The special context of the American western landscape makes possible the amalgamation of two opposing terms. The word "borderman" becomes especially meaningful, considering the liminal quality of the hunter/cowboy/aristocrat.

The border between fantasy and reality, between real life and show business is emblematic of Buffalo Bill's life and career. Starting in 1872, Cody acted in melodramas for eleven years. As a result of his success in these plays, he was able to purchase his own ranch. "The historic encounter between Cody and the cowboy finally came when Cody's success on the stage and his summer job as hunter and guide for parties touring the Plains enabled him to purchase a ranch at North Platte, Nebraska" (60). The technical definition of "cowboy"--"a hired hand employed to wrangle cattle"--is not as important as the concept of cowboy, which embraces many images.

The plurality of definitions is, in fact, essential when dealing with the powerful forces that shaped the contemporary popular imagination. For example, "when Annie Oakley joined the ["Wild West"]

show in 1884, she was quickly considered a Westerner--though she was raised in Ohio--for she rode a horse and was a spectacular sharp shooter" (60). "Little Miss Sure Shot" had been responsible for providing meat for the family stewpot from the time she was a youngster. That she was from Ohio was not as important as her shooting skill and her association with the American West.

Leslie A. Fiedler discusses the "confusion between reality and illusion, history and myth" that surrounds Buffalo Bill. The "Wild West" echoed real life, and real life was then influenced by the "show" of the West. One example is the case of Sitting Bull's horse.

...Sitting Bull, joined the show for one season, and when he left, he took with him two presents from Buffalo Bill: a size eight Stetson and a dancing horse he particularly admired. Indeed, even as he was gunned down in a tragicomedy of errors by a fellow tribesman who was trying to prevent his arrest, that horse, taking the shot for his customary cue, went into his customary dance. And who was to say that he was wrong, that what happened was not, in some sense, a part of Buffalo Bill's ongoing mythological show. (Fiedler 87-88)

Again, the overlapping of show and reality illustrates crossing borders. The borders delineate worlds simultaneously joined and divided by common circumstances, events, and people. Buffalo Bill and

Teddy Roosevelt traversed many borders as hunter/cowboys.

The analogy is not too farfetched to say that just as Cody used the cowboy to rescue the beleaguered stagecoach, Roosevelt used him to rescue Cuba from supposed Spanish tyranny. In effect, Roosevelt made the cowboy, once seen as a frontier badman, an upholder of the law and a public servant as well. The image was apotheosized when Roosevelt became McKinley's Vice-Presidential running mate in 1900 and President in 1901. Buffalo Bill did not hesitate to include in the Wild West show an episode featuring Roosevelt's Rough Riders, once they had become national heroes. Some of Cody's Rough Riders were actually veterans from Roosevelt's troop. (Lamar 65)

Lamar underscores the connection between show and reality. The hunter/cowboy who dominated the landscape embodied the country's emerging military dominance.

The Meaning of Buffalo Bill

In her recent book, *West of Everthing* (1992), Jane Tompkins recounts her experience at the Buffalo Bill Museum:

The video at the entrance to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center says that Buffalo Bill was the most famous American of his time, that by 1900 more than a billion words had been written about him, and that he had a progressive vision of the West....Strangely enough, it was as a progressive civic leader that Bill Cody wanted to be remembered. "I don't want to die," the video at the entrance quotes him as saying, "and have people say--oh, there goes another old showman....I would

like people to say--this is a man who opened Wyoming to the best of civilization." "The best of civilization." This was the phrase that rang in my head as I moved through the museum, which is one of the most disturbing places I have ever visited. It is also a wonderful place....Among other things, the museum is admirable for its effort to combat prevailing stereotypes about the "winning of the West," a phrase it self-consciously places in quotation marks. There are placards declaring that all history is a matter of interpretation, and that the American West is a source of myth. (Tompkins 179-180)

Tompkins' account of her visit underscores the theme of her book--that portrayals in the Western have shaped American attitudes toward "death, women, the use of language, the landscape, cattle and horses..."¹⁰ The Western genre, whether rendered in print or film, derives many elements directly from Buffalo Bill and his Wild West show. Buffalo Bill is himself an icon of the West. And the basis of his image is that of hunter; afterall, hunting buffalo is how he got his name.

Tompkins stresses the integral relationship between the buffalo as prey, and the hunter.

In the literature about Buffalo Bill you read that he was a conservationist, that if it were not for the buffalo in his Wild West shows the species would probably have become extinct. (In the seventeenth century 40 million buffalo roamed North America; by 1900 all the wild buffalo had been killed except for one herd in northern Alberta.) That the man who gained fame as a buffalo hunter should have been an advocate for conservation

of the buffalo is not an anomaly but typical of the period. (186-187)

Buffalo Bill was very much a man of this period. Movement westward represented the growing power of the nation, and development took the form of changing the landscape in the name of "progress." And Cody was largely responsible for changing the West that he loved. His roles as hunter, guide, scout, and Indian fighter were instrumental in bringing about such change. Once he and others had "succeeded" in slaughtering the buffalo herds and displacing the Indians, the West became a romantic remnant of itself. But, like TR, Cody did not question the necessity of this transformation. What became important for Cody was to capture the experience of the West, its essence, and present it to the public. Even though the Wild West was a sensationalized representation of Cody's experience, it deeply touched its audiences over the thirty years of its existence. Further, it has left a legacy of images of the West that linger today. If Cody preserved buffalo by employing them in his show after he and those who emulated him had brought about their near extinction, it was perfectly logical that hunters did the most for conservation. Whether the hunter hunts for sustenance or sport, the need to conserve game is crucial. Once the railroads were built, the buffalo diminished, and the Indian

displaced, the hunter evolved into the sportsman. The sportsman is the "aristocrat" of hunters, which mirrors the situation in Europe. Once land is limited, game is limited. Once game is limited, only the privileged pursue it.

The men who did the most to preserve America's natural wilderness and its wildlife were big-game hunters. The Boone and Crockett Club, founded by Theodore Roosevelt, George Bird Grinnell, and Owen Wister, [as well as Henry Cabot Lodge] turns out to have been one of the earliest organizations to devote itself to environmental protection in the United States....The combination big-game hunter and conservationist suggests that these men had no interest in preserving the animals for the animals' sake but simply wanted to ensure the chance to exercise their sporting pleasure. But I think this view is too simple; something further is involved here. The men who hunted game animals had a kind of love for them and a kind of love for nature that led them to want to preserve the animals they also desired to kill. That is, the desire to kill animals was in some way related to a desire to see them live. It is not an accident, in this connection, that Roosevelt, Wister, and Remington all went west originally for their health. Their devotion to the West, their connection to it, their love for it are rooted in their need to reanimate their own lives. The preservation of nature, in other words, becomes for them symbolic of their own survival. (187)

To love the animal that you kill is not a strange idea for a hunter. It is inherent in the experience. This was true for the Native American hunter, and it was equally true of Cody. However, the Indian saw man as part of nature, and as part of nature, the hunting

and killing of game was a sacred ritual and a necessary one. One proceeded with a respect for the prey and was grateful when the prey was sacrificed to ensure the life of the hunter and the tribe. The hunter was responsible for maintaining a balance between his own needs and the lives of his prey. This relationship was violated by the market hunters who killed indiscriminately to supply large numbers of railroad workers. Ironically, Cody's career links him to both the Native American tradition and the market hunters.

Trophy collecting also illustrates the relationship between hunter and prey, as well as preserving the animal in other ways. Tompkins comments:

We are not, in essence, different from Roosevelt or Remington or Buffalo Bill, who killed animals when they were abundant in the Wild West of the 1880s. If in doing so those men were practicing the ancient art of absorbing the life of an animal into their own through the act of killing it, realizing themselves through the destruction of another life, then we are not so different from them, as visitors to the museum, we stand beside the bones and skins and nails of beings that were once alive, or stare fixedly at their painted images. Indeed our visit is only a safer form of the same enterprise as theirs. (188-189)

Here, the relationship between the visitor and the museum parallels the relationship between the hunter and his prey. Cody and TR both "absorbed" the lives of

their prey in a sense because their personas were inextricably linked to their prowess as hunters, best illustrated by their nicknames. Cody is "Buffalo Bill," and the "Teddy" bear is named for TR. That hunters reaffirm their lives by absorbing others' (in one form or another) was and is a belief in many cultures. The point can be expanded. Aren't we all partly a result of what we "take in": what we see, what we do, and what we think about?

Tompkins cites some of the phrases used to describe Cody. She starts with those that describe his physical looks and skill, his handsomeness, grace, demeanor. She describes his generosity, his flamboyance, his bravery. She mentions his negative traits, but in anything but a pejorative tone: "He liked people, drank a lot, gave big parties, gave lots of presents, and is reputed to have been a womanizer" (196). She discusses his hair and his uncanny resemblance to Gen. George Custer, which he fostered and capitalized upon. Finally, she tries to pin down the quality that connected him to others.

What made Buffalo Bill so irresistible? Why is he still so appealing, even now, when we've lost, supposedly, all the illusions that once supported his popularity? There's a poster for one of his shows when he was traveling in France that gives a clue to what it is that makes him so profoundly attractive a figure. The poster consists of a huge buffalo galloping across the plains, and against the buffalo's hump, in the center of

his hump, is a cutout circle that shows the head of Buffalo Bill, white-mustachioed and bearded now, in his famous hat, and beneath, in large red letters, are the words "Je viens." (197)

She explains that "Je viens" are the words of a savior. She associates Buffalo Bill with a religious figure within the Christian tradition. The savior will be able to help us and do something for us that we cannot do for ourselves. She links this to childish desires for "glamour, fame, bigness, adventure, romance" (198).

More than this, he appeals to the child in us, the part of us that we would like to experience again without the strictures of the adult world that we had in our "real" childhood--fun without boundaries, discipline, and limits. The American cowboy/hunter as "childlike" has both positive and negative connotations. The cowboy/hunter is appropriate as the young country's emblem. This figure connotes strength, daring, adventure. But, the same figure also connotes wildness, bravado, and danger. Fascination with the West was stirred by Cody's Wild West's tours in America and abroad. Cody crossed and recrossed the borders of reality within the context of his show. Cody was a symbol himself; he symbolized the multivalent entity that was the American West.

Notes Chapter Three

¹Buffalo Bill's Wild West was never called a "show" by those associated with it, but rather an "exhibition." Cody stressed the educational character of the endeavor, though the showmanship was evident in all aspects of the production. The Wild West ran from 1883 to 1916 and was a financial success. It toured Europe as well as the United States. Cody sought to recreate the frontier in scenes, especially those depicting Indian life. On one hand, Cody exploited the commercial aspects of his enterprise, adapting portions of his performance to current affairs, while on the other, he sought to educate the public about places and people from the Old West which could only be visited through his presentations. In 1887, the Wild West was presented as part of the American exhibition at Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebration.

²Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962). The Exhibition was a joint project of the Brooklyn Museum; The Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute; and The Buffalo Bill Historical Center. It was sponsored by Philip Morris, Inc. and The Seven-Up Co.

³I will examine the relation between his racial beliefs and his public and private life in the following section, "Roosevelt and Race."

⁴For a discussion of TR's theories of race, see Thomas G. Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana S UP, 1980) 21-44, especially 29-30.

⁵For a discussion of Jean Lamarck and Lamarckianism, see Dyer, 6-7, 37-44.

⁶Dyer 6-7, 9.

⁷Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Atheneum, 1992) 38-39.

⁸Don Russell, foreward, *The Life of Hon. William F. Cody*, by William F. Cody (Lincoln : U of Nebraska, 1978) xi.

⁹Russell vii.

¹⁰Susan A. Hallgarth, "Across the Great Divide," rev. of *West Of Everything*, by Jane Tompkins, *Women's Rev Books* July 1992: 17.

Chapter Four

Ike McCaslin and Ernest Hemingway:

Nostalgia and Degeneration

It was of the men, not white nor black nor red, but men, hunters with the will and hardihood to endure and the humility and skill to survive, and the dogs and the bear and deer juxtaposed and relieved against it, ordered and compelled by and within the wilderness in the ancient and unremitting contest by the ancient and immitigable rules which voided all regrets and brooked no quarter, the voices quiet and weighty and deliberate for retrospection and recollection and exact remembering, while he squatted in the blazing firelight as Tennie's Jim squatted, who stirred only to put more wood on the fire and to pass the bottle from one glass to another. Because the bottle was always present, so that after it seemed to him that those fierce instants of heart and brain and courage and wiliness and speed were concentrated and distilled into that brown liquor which not women, not boys and children, but only hunters drank, drinking not of the blood they had spilled but some condensation of the wild immortal spirit, drinking it moderately, humbly even, not with the pagan's base hope of acquiring the virtues and cunning and strength and speed, but in salute to them. (Faulkner "The Bear" 63)

I was beginning to feel strong again...and it was a pleasure to walk in the easy rolling country, simply to walk, and to be able to hunt, not knowing what we might see and free to shoot the meat we needed....I loved the country so that I was happy as you are after you have been with a woman that you really love....So if you have loved some woman and some country you are very fortunate and, if you die afterwards it makes no difference. Now, being in Africa, I was hungry for more of it, the changes of the seasons, the rains with no need to travel, the discomforts that you paid to make it real, the names of the trees, of the small animals, and all the birds, to know the language and have the time to be in it and to move slowly. I had loved the country all my life; the country was better than the people. I could only care about people a very few at a time. (Hemingway *Green Hills of Africa* 51, 72-73)

After World War I figures of the hunter and the hunt come to represent attempts to recapture a simpler, more pristine world. Hunter figures like William

Faulkner's Ike McCaslin in "The Bear" and Ernest Hemingway in his life and his fiction seek personal definition and a system of values which can only be found away from the modern world. The "wild" worlds of the woods and the jungle are sites where moments of clarity and self-realization take place. Between World War I and World War II, the hunter as deployed by both Faulkner and Hemingway is a nostalgic figure who bridges the gap between the troubled present and an idealized past.

In Faulkner's work, Ike McCaslin suggests the possibility of reconciling the wrongs of the past through immersion in nature and participation in the hunting ritual. He relies on Sam Fathers, who acts as his spiritual father, to advise him in the ways of the wilderness. Part Native American and part Black, Fathers amalgamates the marginalized elements of American culture in his character. He is a dignified and uncorrupted man who steers Ike toward self-knowledge. Ike does not know that his family, too, is racially mixed.

Miscegenation and incest permeate Faulkner's work through several generations, as if these issues were not the idiosyncrasies of a particular family, but rather an integral aspect of American history. In such an atmosphere, establishing identity becomes crucial. Faulkner's world is marked by a sense of overwhelming

doubt because the conventional paths to self-knowledge, even such simple information as family history, have been obscured. The key to identity shifts from one's relationship to others to one's sense of self. The test for Ike, which takes place in pristine nature, and which yields genuine self-knowledge, is the hunt.

Ike's test takes several years. The truth of the hunt is perhaps the closest thing to an antidote for the corruption with which Ike lives. The hunting trip into the woods by a boy, then an adolescent, and finally, a young man, is a journey into the simpler world of the American past. Irving Howe has commented that:

"The Bear" [is] both a beautiful account of a hunt and a symbolic fable concerning the moral growth of Isaac McCaslin....Like many of Faulkner's stories, "The Bear" turns to the past. It turns to a vision of American life not yet soiled by greed or commerce, nor tainted by the anxieties of social existence and the sordidness of urban life....In magnified volume but steady pitch, it records the secret voice of a society yearning for its innocent past and regretting its very existence. (1017)

Isaac McCaslin is an ideal figure who offsets the web of corruption and dissolution so prevalent in Faulkner. He suggests the possibility of negotiating worlds which hold both promise and peril.

In the life and work of Ernest Hemingway, a similar motif is apparent. Hemingway's self-representation as a hunter as well as his fictional portrayal of hunters and sportsmen, such as Nick Adams, are set against a larger world whose values are corrupt and unreliable. Like "The Bear," *Green Hills of Africa* effects moral judgments through its descriptions of hunting. "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" rework Hemingway's African experience to interrogate questions of identity. Hemingway is concerned with a "code" for living in a world wounded by "the war to end all wars." Mark Schorer comments that Hemingway uses the imagery of "wounding" to describe the effects of the war (951), much as Faulkner draws on the Civil War and World War I to provide a syntax for his work (Howe 1009-1024). Hunting provides a bridge for moving between the grim reality of both authors' personal worlds and a nostalgic ideal world. It is more than an enjoyable activity; it is a ceremony of purification.

This "pageant-rite" stirs a rich association of memories for anyone acquainted with American Literature. For the idea of a pastoral retreat to the Eden of the wilderness where men can again find the rhythmic harmonies of the natural world, in contrast to the frenzy and corruption of social life, is a recurrent and profoundly-embraced theme in American fiction. It can be found in the Leatherstocking tales of Cooper, the picaresque narratives of Mark Twain, the novels of Melville--where the sea

replaces the forest--and some of Hemingway's stories. (1024)

"The Bear," *Green Hills of Africa*, Hemingway's short stories, and *The Old Man and the Sea*, use the hunt as a test of the individual's worth. Of course, modern society suffers by comparison with the wilderness, and the hunter figure who crosses the border between the two rarely finds peace.

"The Bear"

The search for identity underscores Ike's hunt, and Faulkner uses nature as the setting for this search. In his book, *William Faulkner and Southern History* (1993), Joel Williamson examines the family history of the Falkners¹ and pursues their relation to Southern history in general. He traces the family from the "Colonel," writer William Faulkner's great-grandfather, and draws parallels between fictional characters and Faulkner family members. Such correlations have been made previously, but the degree to which such parallels exist is more clearly established in Williamson's work than in previous analyses. What is especially relevant to this story is Faulkner's grandfather's shadow family. According to Williamson, William Falkner had inherited five slaves through his first wife, Holland, who "probably died of

tuberculosis" in 1849 (22). He remarried in 1851, but he and his second wife, Elizabeth Houston Vance, had a troubled household. Williamson comments:

The Falkner household in Ripley in the decade after 1851 was slightly unusual in that the mother and father at first conceived and then bore children less frequently than was common. But the household was very unusual in another respect. In 1850 all of the slaves in the yard were black; in 1860 they were all mulatto....The circumstances suggest that William Falkner in 1860 was working some special agenda with his slaves. We now know what that agenda was....a man who reared a mulatto family in the servant's quarters at the very same time that he maintained a white family in the main house, in effect, [had]...two wives simultaneously. Ironically, the mulatto family sometimes mirrored the white family not only woman for woman, but child for child, and, because it lived in the very shadow of the white family, might well be called the "shadow family." (23-25)

This history is important because its fictional reflection in Ike's family underscores the action Ike takes at the end of the story, when he rejects his legacy. Ike's rejection of his inheritance results from his finding that the black members of his family have been denied their heritage. He spurns white privilege because he has discovered who he is through the hunt for the bear. He has established his identity and understands the importance of integrity.

The hunt in "The Bear" illustrates how landscape, identity, and race contribute to Ike's journey to self-

knowledge. Faulkner's plot unfolds over the course of several years. The much shorter, earlier version of the story, published in the *Saturday Evening Post*², is organized chronologically. The longer, later version begins when Ike is sixteen, and unfolds through flashbacks. The two versions give vastly different impressions of Ike's experience. In the shorter version, the action develops in a straight-forward fashion. Ike joins the hunt when he is ten, although he has felt connected to it for years by the stories of his elders. The story ends with his choosing not to shoot the bear and his discussion of that choice with his father, who reads to him from Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn."³

The longer version introduces Ike at sixteen, with flashbacks to earlier times. The disorienting effect of Faulkner's temporal manipulation underscores Ike's feelings and his situation. He must learn who he is through the semi-annual hunting trips; but these are excursions into the unknown. Ike must learn to navigate the morass of the forest, which he does with increasing ease and skill. He must also navigate the emotional morass of familial deceit. Both lessons are learned through his pursuit of the bear, Old Ben. Ike faces many dangers in his hunt. But, he overcomes them and discovers his place in the world.

Ironically, neither Ike nor Sam Fathers, the two most skillful hunters kill Old Ben. Instead Ben's throat is slit by the simple Boon Hogganbeck in a gory fray, leaving bear, dogs, and men dead, wounded, and dying. Ike has come close enough to the old bear to kill him, but has chosen not to. Faulkner emphasizes the hunt's larger context by stressing Ike's affinity to the bear. Hunting is not just about killing; it is about the balance between life and death. Further, it is about the way one lives and dies. Ike's not killing the bear becomes the subject of discussion when he and his cousin meet to clear up family affairs after his father's death.

Ike has inherited his father's estate, and as he and his cousin, McCaslin Carothers, are discussing the family business, McCaslin refers to Keats. This reference cited by Ike's father in the earlier version of the story, now comes from the mouth of his cousin.⁴ The setting is the old office where they have been looking into the ledgers kept by their fathers, ledgers which chronicle decades of miscegenation, incest, and despair. In this scene, Ike rejects his father's legacy of wealth and guilt, and he tries to explain how he feels to McCaslin. In Ike's view, his family has usurped the land and the labor of others, first from the Indians who "owned" it, then from the Blacks whose labor paid for it.

Faulkner's style in this fourth section of "The Bear" is reminiscent of James Joyce. The section is difficult to read because so many things are unclear. The histories of Ike's family and of the South in general are interwoven with references to people and events that the reader must sort through. Faulkner uses a combination of Ike's, McCaslin's, and the narrator's voices to comment on fragments of the ledgers. These ledgers, kept as business records, chronicle the travesties of the past in their accounts of goods and people, bought and sold. The passages purposefully begin with small letters, not capitals, with minimal indication of who is "speaking"⁵ in the exchange between Ike and his cousin. The reader experiences frustration because the details are too complex to figure out without more information and a clearer explanation of what has occurred in the family history. What becomes clear is that Ike cannot undo the injustice of the past; he can only reject profiting from it. Faulkner powerfully conveys Ike's frustration at his inability to articulate his feelings to McCaslin who can not comprehend Ike's views. McCaslin would have cherished the inheritance that Ike rejects. What McCaslin can understand is Ike's relationship to the bear and why he didn't shoot him. Both actions of Ike's, his not killing the bear and his not accepting a corrupt legacy, reflect his personal code of behavior.

In the *Post* version, the emphasis is on Ike as a character who fits into a larger framework:

He was ten. But it had already begun, long before the day when at last he wrote his age in two figures and he saw for the first time the camp where his father and Major de Spain and old General Compson and the others spent two weeks each November and two weeks again each June. He had already inherited then, without ever having seen it, the tremendous bear with one trap-ruined foot which, in an area almost a hundred miles deep, had earned itself a name, a definite designation like a living man. (52)

Faulkner accomplishes several things in this paragraph.

"He was ten" points up the youth of the boy who has inherited an overwhelming, spiritual legacy in the bear. The setting, hunting season, is framed as a repetitive cycle, and the different episodes in the story reflect the seasons, the corporeal time of men. The bear itself, or rather himself--we are immediately told he has a specific identity--is flawed with a "trap-ruined" foot. The creature of nature is still at large, but he has been marked by a mechanical device that continues to identify him. The idea that he has been marred by man makes the bear an object of both sympathy and admiration. He seems magical in his ability to allude capture. But he is not imaginary; there is tangible proof of his existence. Ike is tied to the bear because he has heard stories about him from

his earliest moments. The bear's reputation has become part of Ike's legacy.

He had listened to it for years: the long legend of corncribs rifled, of shotes and grown pigs and even calves carried bodily into the woods and devoured, of traps and deadfalls overthrown and dogs mangled and slain, and shotgun and even rifle charges delivered at point-blank range and with no more effect than so many peas blown through a tube by a boy--a corridor of wreckage and destruction beginning back before he was born, through which sped, not fast but rather with the ruthless and irresistible deliberation of a locomotive, the shaggy tremendous shape. (52)

This catalog of destruction and power, the very concreteness of Faulkner's images, contrast with the ten-year-old boy. That such an inheritance comes to a small boy suggests that on one level, we are dealing with a fairytale or a parable. Juxtaposing Ike and Old Ben also suggests a David and Goliath relationship. The religious association underscores Ike's experience, which takes place in the natural world. But although the meetings between Ike and Old Ben occur within the framework of the hunt, their relationship is not simply a case of hunter and hunted.

The longer version of "The Bear," begins not with the simple statement, "He was ten," but rather with a summary of the story's background. This history builds to the point where the action begins:

There was a man and a dog too this time. Two beasts, counting Old Ben, the bear, and two men, counting Boon Hogganbeck, in whom some of the same blood ran which ran in Sam Fathers, even though Boon's was a plebeian strain of it and only Sam and Old Ben and the mongrel Lion were taintless and incorruptible. (5)

Ike develops his skill as a hunter over the course of the story. The second paragraph of this version tells us, "He was sixteen. For six years now he had been a man's hunter" (6). The longer story is more difficult to understand initially, but it is a more fulsome and darker account of Ike's development and the world he lives in. Both versions emphasize several legacies from the other hunters. Most notably Ike receives guidance from Sam Fathers. Like the Indian hunter, Ike is spiritually joined to his prey. Ike's relationship with the bear links him to Ben personally and mythically through his special "knowledge."

It ran in his knowledge before he ever saw it. It looked and towered in his dreams before he even saw the unaxed woods where it left its crooked print, shaggy, red-eyed, not malevolent but just big--too big for the dogs which tried to bay it, for the horses which tried to ride it down, for the men and the bullets they fired into it, too big for the very country which was its constricting scope. He seemed to see it entire with a child's complete divination before he ever laid eyes on either--the doomed wilderness whose edges were being constantly and punily gnawed at by men with axes and plows who feared it because it was wilderness, men myriad and nameless even to one another in

the land where the old bear had earned a name, through which ran not even a mortal animal but an anachronism, indomitable and invincible, out of an old dead time, a phantom, epitome and apotheosis of the old wild life at which the puny humans swarmed and hacked in a fury of abhorrence and fear, like pygmies about the ankles of a drowsy elephant: the old bear solitary, indomitable and alone, widowed, childless, and absolved of mortality--old Priam reft of his old wife and having outlived all his sons. (52-53)

Ike feels a connection to the bear; it is a primal, unconscious connection, evidenced in dreams. To emphasize this dream-like state, which pervades much of the story, Faulkner reverses the expected order of things. In his descriptions, humans are diminished to insect-like status. The bear and the wilderness loom as great forces, but ironically, they are threatened by the "gnawing" of the "progress" attackers. The relationship between Ike and Ben is noble; the encroaching "progress" of those who cut down the "unaxed" portions of the remaining wilderness is venial by contrast. The onslaught of "myriad and nameless" men with axes are "pygmies about the ankles of...[an] elephant." Faulkner compares Old Ben to Priam, "an anachronism, indomitable and invincible, out of an old dead time...epitome and apotheosis of the old wild life." The bear is magnificent and ancient. Faulkner's references to the bear and to Sam Fathers as figures of royalty is also indicative of their worth. What is good and what is true are illustrated through

Ike's experiences and his perspective. Ike questions the expected order of things. *What is nobility? What is an inheritance?* These questions are most often answered in the negative. Faulkner illustrates for the reader what nobility and inheritance are *not*.

By emphasizing Ike's age throughout the story, Faulkner foregrounds each stage of his physical and spiritual development. Before the age of ten, Ike had not expected to see the bear brought back in the wagon after the hunt. "To the boy, at seven, eight, and nine, they were not going into the Big Bottom to hunt bear and deer, but to keep yearly rendezvous with the bear they did not even intend to kill. Two weeks later they would return, with no trophy, no head and skin" (53). When he finally joins the hunt, Ike's connection to the bear becomes more concrete. He hears the dogs twice in the first two weeks he is in camp. He has a sense of something going by, but it is unseen and undefinable. The presence was "a murmur, sourceless, echoing through the wet woods" tied in with the voices of the dogs. "He had raised and cocked the gun as Sam told him and stood motionless again while the uproar, the invisible course, swept up and past and faded..." (53). Sam tells him, "it was just a deer." This experience prepares him to understand what is going on around him and is the first step toward self-knowledge. With Sam's help, Ike will come to realize that he is

part of the bear's, and by extrapolation, nature's world. Each foray into the woods reveals more clearly the connection between Ike and the bear.

Then on the tenth morning he heard the dogs again. And he readied the too-long, too-heavy gun as Sam had taught him, before Sam even spoke. But this time it was no deer, no ringing chorus of dogs running strong on a free scent, but a moiling yapping an octave too high, with something more than indecision and even abjectness in it, not even moving very fast, taking a long time to pass completely out of hearing, leaving then somewhere in the echo, thin, slightly hysterical, abject, almost grieving, with no sense of a fleeting, unseen, smoke-colored, grass-eating shape ahead of it, and Sam, who had taught him first of all to cock the gun and take position where he could see everywhere and then never move again, had himself moved up beside him; he could hear Sam breathing at his shoulder, and could see the arched curve of the old man's inhaling nostrils. (54)

Sam shares the revelation that the bear has come to check on who is in camp this year and to identify any newcomers. The bear has come to see Ike and to test him.

"Hah," Sam said. "Not even running. Walking." "Old Ben!" the boy said. "But up here!" he cried. "Way up here!" "He do it every year," Sam said. "Once. Maybe to see who in camp this time, if he can shoot or not. Whether we got the dog yet that can bay and hold him. He'll take them to the river, then he'll send them back home. We may as well go back too; see how they look when they come back to camp." (54)

When they return to camp, the hunting dogs are under the kitchen, and there is a smell, the "effluvium of something more than dog" (54). The last hound comes in at noon and has a torn ear and claw marks. In the afternoon, Sam takes Ike deep into the woods, "himself on the one-eyed mule which did not mind the smell of blood nor, as they told him, of bear, and with Sam on the other one, they rode for more than three hours through the rapid, shortening winter day." They do not follow any path that Ike can see; they see claw marks on a dead log and the two-toed paw print. Ike suddenly realizes that what he smelled under the porch when he "peered under the kitchen where the dogs huddled" was the scent of bear. Sam explains that Old Ben will pick someone to run over if he gets "hemmed up...he will pick out you."

"How?" the boy said. "How will he know--" He ceased. "You mean he already knows me, that I ain't never been here before, ain't had time to find out yet whether I"--He ceased again, looking at Sam, the old man whose face revealed nothing until it smiled. He said humbly, not even amazed. "It was me

he was watching. I don't reckon he did need to come but once." (55)

Ike is placed on stand by Sam Fathers and he waits, seeing and hearing nothing, but tasting something "that taint as of brass" (56) in his saliva, and realizing that the woodpecker's tapping had ceased and begun again while he stood. When Sam returns, he knows Ike has not seen the bear but he has been near.

So I must see him, he thought. I must look at him. Otherwise, it seemed to him that it would go on like this forever, as it had gone on with his father and Major de Spain, who was older than his father, and even with old General Compson, who had been old enough to be a brigade commander in 1865. Otherwise, it would go on so forever, next time and next time, after and after and after. It seemed to him that he could never see the two of them, himself and the bear, shadowy in the limbo from which time emerged, becoming time; the old bear absolved of mortality and himself partaking, sharing a little of it, enough of it. And he knew now what he had smelled in the huddled dogs and tasted in his saliva. He recognized fear. So I will have to see him, he thought, without dread or even hope. I will have to look at him. (57)

Ike realizes that he must see the bear or "...it would go on like this forever," as it had with the other men. This is a defining moment for the boy. He knows that he is linked to the other men of the camp by the experience of hunting the bear and that he will establish his own identity by seeing Old Ben. This event must happen to confirm the reality of what he feels. "It seemed to him that he could never see the

two of them, himself and the bear, shadowy in the limbo from which time emerged, becoming time; the old bear absolved of mortality and himself partaking, sharing a little of it, enough of it." In other words, Ike cannot picture himself and the bear within a framework of real time and experience. Although Ike has seen the clawed log, the two-toed paw print, the evidence of a wounded dog, he has not yet seen Ben himself. Once Ike is able to see Ben, he will begin to know himself.

The next year passes, and it is again June. Ike is eleven. He pretends he is hunting squirrels. "Or that is, his father and the others believed he was hunting squirrels. Until the third day, he thought that Sam Fathers believed that too" (57). Coming back into camp, Ike passes Sam Fathers. Sam is not fooled by the ruse, and he tells Ike that the gun is what prevents him from seeing Ben. He also reassures Ike that being "scared" is natural and something he can't help. He cautions Ike not to be "afraid," because the bear can smell fear. To be "scared" shows the appropriate respect for the bear and the danger that meeting him will entail. "Scared" indicates the excitement natural to the occasion. Conversely, to be "afraid," connotes the inability to function in the situation. That Old Ben can "smell fear" means that one can no longer function. Ike takes a compass, a stick for snakes, and a watch with him.

He left the camp before daylight, long before Uncle Ash would wake in his quilts on the kitchen floor and start the fire for breakfast. He had only the compass and a stick for snakes. He could go almost a mile before he would begin to need the compass in his invisible hand, while the secret night sounds, fallen still at his movements, scurried again and then ceased for good, and the owls ceased and gave over to the waking of day birds, and he could see the compass. Then he went fast yet still quietly; he was becoming better and better as a woodsman, still without having realized it. (58-59)

Ike has improved his skill in the woods; he is willing to accept nature on her own terms and grows more adept within her precincts: "He had left the gun; of his own will and relinquishment he had accepted not a gambit, not a choice, but a condition in which not only the bear's heretofore inviolable anonymity but all the old rules and balances of hunter and hunted had been abrogated" (59). Part of the hunter's skill lies in being intimately attuned with nature--to such a degree that he can set aside the tools of hunting and learn from the hunted.

He would not even be afraid, not even in the moment when the fear would take him completely--blood, skin, bowels, bones, memory from the long time before it became his memory--all save that thin, clear lucidity which alone differed him from this bear and from all the other bear and deer he would ever kill in the humility and pride of his skill and endurance, to which Sam had spoken when he leaned in the twilight on the lot fence yesterday. (59)

Ike travels far into the woods, and by noon he is beyond any borders he has known previously, "farther into the new and alien country than he had ever been" (59). He uses the compass and the "old, heavy, biscuit-thick silver watch which had belonged to his grandfather" (59). After nine hours, he knows he has traveled "far enough." He makes two circles and finally sees the fresh paw print which fills with water even as he watches.

As he looked up the wilderness coalesced, solidified--the glade, the tree he sought, the bush, the watch and the compass glinting where the ray of sunshine touched them. Then he saw the bear. It did not emerge, appear; it was just there, immobile, solid, fixed in the hot dappling of the green and windless noon, not as big as he had dreamed it, but as big as he had expected it, bigger, dimensionless, against the dappled obscurity, looking at him where he sat on the log and looked back at it. (60)

Ike's journey toward the bear has taken years. To see the bear, he has learned to understand his relationship with nature. The bear is also a part of himself. It has pervaded his psyche since his early childhood. At the onset of Faulkner's tale, Ike heard the stories and dreamed about the bear. Then, he hunted the bear and sensed him but did not see him. Now, he sees the bear.

When Ike actually sees the bear, the encounter is a simple one; he remains seated on the log where he has stopped, and the bear and he look at one another "while his quiet breathing inhaled and exhaled three times." The bear has moved across the glade and stops to regard him over his shoulder. "Then it was gone. It didn't walk into the woods, the undergrowth. It faded, sank back into the wilderness as he had watched a fish, a huge old bass, sink and vanish into the dark depths of its pool without even any movement of its fins" (60).

This meeting, so long anticipated, is remarkable for its lack of incident. Faulkner's comparison of the bear to an old bass makes the bear seem benign. Ike's seeking the bear without a gun, compass, watch, or stick is beyond "catch and release" in fishing; it is going to the pond without a pole. The bear and the fish are old, admirable, and mysterious. They reenter their respective worlds of woods and water seemingly without movement or effort; they both "sink" into their environments and disappear.

In the later version of the story, Faulkner introduces several new incidents--the most notable of which is the episode with Lion. Lion is a huge, wild dog, trapped and "tamed" by Sam Fathers and assigned to the care of Boon. When Ike is thirteen and has truly joined the hunters, he can comprehend the importance and significance of Lion. Lion is the "the dog" that

Sam has been waiting for to pursue and bring down Old Ben. Ike is near the end of his "novitiate to the true wilderness" (9). He has killed his first buck with a rifle and has felt the hunter's humility, a sense of his own fragility in the timeless woods (12). He has had "hot blood" from his kill smeared on his face by Sam Fathers in recognition of his accomplishment and as a mark of connection to his prey. He has eaten "strange meat" which is "cooked by men who were hunters first and cooks afterward," and he has slept "as hunters sleep" (9).

The sequence of time in the next part of the story is foggy and purposely fragmented. We are told that the following November Ike kills a bear, though it is not Old Ben. In the same paragraph where we learn that Ike has been given his own gun; we are also told that he'll have it until he's seventy. Here Faulkner looks ahead to the end of Ike's life to frame what he does as a young man. Showing us that Ike, too, will grow old is way of connecting him to Old Ben and the mortality of the other characters and animals in the story. This is not simply an account of a bear hunt.

This time Lion jumped Old Ben more than five miles from the river and bayed and held him and this time the hounds went in, in a sort of desperate emulation. The boy heard them; he was that near. He heard Boon whooping; he heard the two shots when General Compson delivered both barrels, one containing five buckshot, the other a single ball, into the

bear from as close as he could force his unmanageable horse. He heard the dogs when the bear broke free again. He was running now; panting, stumbling, his lungs bursting, he reached the place where General Compson had fired and where Old Ben had killed two of the hounds. He saw the blood from General Compson's shots, but he could go no further. He stopped, leaning against a tree for his breathing to ease and his heart to slow, hearing the sound of the dogs as it faded on and died away. (31)

Faulkner emphasizes the inexorable quality of the hunt and makes it a touchstone for man's experience. Every hunt ends, whether the hunter kills his prey or not. The mortality of human beings is reinforced by the mortality of animals. No animal lives forever; no man lives forever. It is part of the same cycle of nature, inescapable, no matter how any one hunt may resolve itself. It is foolish to "mourn" because it is useless. The best one can do, according to Faulkner who attributes the sentiment to Ike, is to feel privileged to have participated in the experience.

The resolution of the story should come with the death of Old Ben, and it does in the *Post* version. But, in the longer version, Ben's death occurs at the midpoint. The change in structure between the two versions of the story serves a thematic purpose. The later, more developed version stresses Ike's goodness as a young adult. In an attempt to break the cycle of duplicity that enslaves him and his "shadow" relatives, Ike renounces his "legacy." The ways in which

landscape, identity, and race are entwined become clear to Ike precisely because of this "legacy" as hunter and child of nature. He rejects perpetrating more injustices to keep the land:

then he was twenty-one. He could say it, himself and his cousin juxtaposed not against the wilderness but against the tamed land which was to have been his heritage, the land which old Carothers McCaslin his grandfather had bought with white man's money from the wild men whose grandfathers without guns had hunted it, and tamed and ordered or believed he had tamed and ordered it for the reason that the human beings he held in bondage and in the power of life and death had removed the forest from it and in their sweat scratched the surface to a depth of perhaps fourteen inches in order to grow something out of it which had not been there before and which could be translated back into the money he who believed he had bought it had had to pay to get it and hold it and a reasonable profit too: and for which reason old Carothers McCaslin, knowing better, could raise his children, his descendants and heirs to believe the land was his to hold and bequeath since the strong and ruthless man has a cynical foreknowledge of his own vanity and pride and strength and a contempt for all his get: just as, knowing better, Major de Spain and his fragment of that wilderness which was bigger and older than any recorded deed; just as, knowing better, old Thomas Sutpen, from whom Major de Spain had had his fragment for money: just as Ikkemotubbe, the Chickasaw chief, from whom Thomas Sutpen had had the fragment for money or rum or whatever it was, knew in his turn that not even a fragment of it had been his to relinquish or sell (*The Faulkner Reader* "The Bear" 298)

The land was the habitat of the Native Americans, where they hunted and conducted their lives. With the coming

of the white men the land became corrupted. Slaves were forced to clear land and plant crops. The McCaslin's Black relatives were defined in terms of ownership and profit.

Ike's renunciation of land and money is particularly significant since he alone carries the McCaslin surname. He is the surviving white, male heir. His cousin cannot fathom why Ike should refuse something so precious.

'Relinquish,' McCaslin said. "Relinquish. You, the direct male descendant of him who saw the opportunity and took it, bought the land, got the land no matter how, held it to bequeath, no matter how, out of the old grant, the first patent, when it was a wilderness of wild beasts and wilder men, and cleared it, translated it into something to bequeath to his children, worthy of bequeathment for his descendants' ease and security and pride and to perpetuate his name and accomplishments. Not only the male descendant but the only and last descendant in the male line and in the third generation, while I am not only four generations from old Carothers, I derived through a woman and the very McCaslin in my name is mine only by sufferance and courtesy and my grandmother's pride in what that man accomplished whose legacy and monument you think you can repudiate.' (Faulkner Reader "The Bear" 299)

Ike replies to his cousin in one of the more straightforward exchanges of this section:

'I can't repudiate it. It was never mine to repudiate. It was never Father's and Uncle Buddy's to bequest me to repudiate because it was never grandfather's to bequeath them to bequeath me to repudiate because it was never

old Ikkemotubbe's to sell to Grandfather for bequeathment and repudiation. Because it was never Ikkemotubbe's fathers' fathers' to bequeath Ikkemotubbe to sell Grandfather or any man because on the instant when Ikkemotubbe discovered, realised, that he could sell it for money, on that instant it ceased to have been his forever, father to father to father, and the man who bought it bought nothing.' (*The Faulkner Reader* "The Bear" 299)

Ike's repetition has two effects. It clarifies the McCaslin genealogy and establishes his own innocence. His inheritance is worth nothing, at least in his view. Ike's is the moral voice that contrasts with the corrupt voices of the past and the deceived voices of the present. McCaslin questions Ike's conclusion:

'Bought nothing?' and he[sic]

'Bought nothing. Because He told in the Book how He created the earth, made it and looked at it and said it was all right, and then He made man. He made the earth first and peopled it with dumb creatures, and then He created man to be his overseer on the earth and to hold suzerainty over the earth and the animals on it in His name, not to hold for himself and his descendants inviolable title forever, generation after generation, to the oblongs and squares of the earth, but to hold the earth mutual and intact in the communal anonymity of brotherhood, and all the fee He asked was pity and humility and sufferance and endurance and the sweat of his face for bread. And I know what you are going to say,' he said: 'That nevertheless Grandfather--' (*The Faulkner Reader* "The Bear" 299-300)

The argument goes on. Faulkner uses biblical references as well as comparing the Old World and the new. The history of the American South is, of course, the larger part of Faulkner's vision of the McCaslin's history; his works are peopled with endless variations of the South's fall from Eden. The exchange between Ike and his cousin progresses from discussion of the land's violation to the violation of humanity.

'And let me say it. Dispossessed of Eden. Dispossessed of Canaan, and those who dispossessed him dispossessed him dispossessed, and the five hundred years of absentee landlords in the Roman Bagnios, and the thousand years of wild men from the northern woods who dispossessed them and devoured their ravished substance in turn and again and then snarled in what you call the old world's worthless twilight over the old world's gnawed bones, blasphemous in His name until He used a simple egg to discover to them a new world where a nation of people could be founded in humility and pity and sufferance and pride of one to another. And Grandfather did own the land nevertheless and notwithstanding because He permitted it, not impotent and not condoning and not blind because He ordered and watched it....Maybe He saw that only by voiding the land for a time of Ikkemotubbe's blood and substituting it for another blood, could He accomplish His purpose. Maybe he already knew what the other blood would be, maybe it was more than justice that only the white man's blood was available and capable to raise the white man's curse (*The Faulkner Reader* "The Bear" 300-301)

Ike has difficulty articulating his feelings, and this difficulty, as well as the web of deceit in which his

family is tangled, both reflected in Faulkner's style in section four. It is often hard to know exactly who is speaking, but the more passionate and repetitive speeches seem to be Ike's.

"What is truth?" becomes the ultimate question for Ike and for Faulkner. McCaslin asks, "If truth is one thing to me and another thing to you, how will we choose which is truth? [Ike answers] You dont need to choose. The heart already knows" (301). The truth has been obscured for generations in the family ledgers, which pose an almost demonic contrast to the Book of Truth. The ledgers reveal a truth which makes Ike refuse the inheritance they record. Ike has discovered that his revered grandfather raped his own child, the daughter of his black shadow wife, and this daughter had a child. Reflecting on the outcomes of the past, Ike realizes that

'we have never been free--' and it was in McCaslin's eyes too, he had only to look at McCaslin's eyes and it was there, that summer twilight seven years ago, almost a week after they had returned from the camp before he discovered that Sam Fathers had told McCaslin: an old bear, fierce and ruthless not just to stay alive but ruthless with the fierce pride of liberty and freedom (*The Faulkner Reader* "The Bear" 326)

Faulkner contrasts the simple purity of the bear and Sam Fathers with the complex corruption of the McCaslin family. These contrasts underscore Ike's

position since he must live in both worlds. He rejects his hereditary family and turns to Old Ben and Sam, his chosen "family" from whom he learns the important lesson of how to live his life. Furthermore, the bear and Sam Fathers are like one another. The bear is compared to Priam, ancient and childless, and Sam is "an old man, son of a Negro slave and an Indian king, inheritor on the one hand of...a people who had learned humility through suffering and...pride through the endurance...and on the other side...a people even longer in the land...yet who now existed there only in the solitary brotherhood of an old and childless Negro's alien blood and the wild and invincible spirit of an old bear" (327). Ike is "a boy who wished to learn humility and pride in order to become skillful and worthy in the woods" (327). However, he fears he cannot be properly humble, and at the same time, proud of his skill because he learns so well and so fast. Ike has seen the abuses of power, and while he appreciates the power his hunting and woodcraft give him, he realizes the necessity of controlling himself. Sam Fathers teaches him to follow the examples of the old bear and a little mongrel dog, even though Sam could not articulate concepts like humility and pride. Yet, McCaslin who quotes Keats and understands why Ike doesn't shoot Old Ben cannot understand why he rejects the family legacy.

That Faulkner has Ike's cousin, McCaslin Carothers, quote the passage from Keats' "Grecian Urn" provides an unexpected twist. McCaslin recalls Ike's chance to kill the great bear.

'And you didn't shoot,' McCaslin said. 'How close were you?'

'I dont know,' he said. 'There was a big wood tick just inside of his hind leg. I saw that. But I didn't have the gun then.'

'But you didn't shoot when you had the gun,' McCaslin said. 'Why?' But McCaslin didn't wait, rising and crossing the room, across the pelt of the bear he had killed two years ago and the bigger one McCaslin had killed before he was born, to the bookcase beneath the mounted head of his first buck, and returned with the book and sat down again and opened it. 'Listen,' he said. He read the five stanzas aloud and closed the book on his finger and looked up. 'All right,' he said. 'Listen,' and read again, but only one stanza this time and closed the book and laid it on the table. 'She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,' McCaslin said: 'Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair.'

'He's talking about a girl,' he said.

'He had to talk about something,' McCaslin said. Then he said, 'He was talking about truth. Truth is one. It doesn't change. It covers all things which touch the heart--honor and pride and pity and justice and courage and love. Do you see now?' He didn't know. Somehow it had seemed simpler than that, simpler than somebody talking in a book about a young man and a girl he would never need to grieve over because he could never approach any nearer and would never have to get any further away. He had heard

about an old bear and finally got big enough to hunt it and he hunted it four years and at last met it with a gun in his hands and he didn't shoot.' (328)

The defining moment for Ike takes place during the hunt. As hunter he chooses not to kill. Hunting is not about killing, just as living is not about dying. However, both hunting and living are sometimes about managing death. In "The Bear," the rites of passage from childhood to adulthood involve Ike's symbolic death and rebirth, and these rites use hunting as a metaphor for the experience. Ike lays to rest one phase of life for another. Sam Father's smearing blood on Ike's face after his first kill symbolizes this process. That Ike will lose his wife, never have a child, and never have more than a few possessions in a long life does not matter. He has broken the McCaslin family's inheritance of deceit and despair.

Green Hills of Africa, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," and "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber"

Hemingway uses hunting episodes in his work both as a framework for his personal reflections and as vehicle to develop his characters. As in Faulkner, the hunter figure internalizes the landscape that he traverses, and the natural world becomes inextricably

linked to his identity. Hemingway treats many forms of natural landscape in *Green Hills of Africa*, in his stories, and in *The Old Man and the Sea*. In the "Foreward" to *Green Hills*, he writes:

Unlike many novels, none of the characters or incidents in this book is imaginary. Any one not finding sufficient love interest is at liberty, while reading it, to insert whatever love interest he or she may have at the time. The writer has attempted to write an absolutely true book to see whether the shape of a country and the pattern of a month's action can, if truly presented, compete with a work of the imagination.

In his recent biography, James Mellow points out that *Green Hills of Africa*

...was indeed a book about landscape, though Hemingway referred to it in more magical or mystical terms as "country," equating it with the love of a woman, an old equation popular among poets and patriots. But Hemingway took it further, making it a trope for sexual intercourse. He described it in passionate terms. "I loved the country so that I was happy as you are after you have been with a woman that you really love...and you want more and more, to have, and be, and live in, to possess now again for always, for that long, sudden-ended always; making time stand still, sometimes so very still that afterwards you wait to hear it move." (Mellow 437)

Hemingway speaks here of "being happy," but this happiness is fleeting because things change so quickly. He may be submerged in the world of the

jungle, but the threat of the outside world is barely kept at bay.

According to Mellow, Hemingway's denial of a love interest in the "Foreward," can be accounted for because the landscape is his love interest. In *Green Hills*, the notion of possessing, owning the land, is juxtaposed with the visiting hunter's temporary affair with the landscape. Hemingway's attention to setting, the beauty of the land and its animals, the passing of precious time, stresses the corporeal and temporal nature of life. The human hunter's vulnerability also comes through in his emphasis on time and place.

In *Green Hills*, Hemingway downplays his recurrent amebic dysentery, though he does discuss physical suffering. He relates to his prey, and he has made the commitment to a clean kill so that he will not wound an animal to suffer and die.

The day of watching the camel flies working under the horse's tail, having had them myself, gave me more horror than anything I could remember except one time in a hospital with my right arm broken off short between the elbow and the shoulder, the back of the hand having hung down against my back, the points of the bone having cut up the flesh of the biceps until it finally rotted, swelled, burst, and sloughed off in pus. Alone with the pain in the night in the fifth week of not sleeping I thought suddenly how a bull elk must feel if you break a shoulder and he gets away and in that night I lay and felt it all, the whole thing as it would happen from the shock of the bullet to the end of the business and, being a little out of my head,

thought perhaps what I was going through was a punishment for all hunters. Then, getting well, decided if it was a punishment I had paid it and at least I knew what I was doing. I did nothing that had not been done to me. I had been shot and I had been crippled and gotten away. I expected, always, to be killed by one thing or another and I, truly, did not mind that anymore. Since I still loved to hunt I resolved that I would only shoot as long as I could kill cleanly and as soon as I lost that ability I would stop. (147-148)

Accidents in hunting are part of the danger of the activity. Wounding an animal, another hunter, or oneself can happen even when exercising the greatest care. Hemingway's preoccupation with wounding is generally attributed to his experience as an ambulance driver in Italy; however, as a hunter he was throughout his life subject to accidents--a circumstance which may account for his portrayal of suffering as the malignant joke of fate.

In "Kilimanjaro," a slight scratch ultimately kills the story's protagonist, Harry. Because it is so slight he doesn't take proper care of it. It blossoms hellishly into gangrene, which finally takes his life. Harry and his wife, Helen, have been on safari in Africa. Harry hopes to regenerate his dissipating powers by hunting. The scratch, an absurdly insignificant injury, combined with other seemingly innocuous circumstances proves devastating. At first Harry doesn't treat the scratch at all. When he does

treat it, the carbolic is diluted. Then, the lorry breaks down. Next, the plane is late. None of these events by itself would be particularly important, but each exacerbates his condition. The combination of circumstances proves inevitably fatal. Hemingway uses the setting of Africa, the summit of Kilimanjaro, to underscore the operations of a malignant fate.

Kilimanjaro is a snow covered mountain 19,710 feet high, and is said to be the highest mountain in Africa. Its western summit is called the Masai "Ngaje Ngai," the House of God. Close to the western summit there is the dried and frozen carcass of a leopard. No one has explained what the leopard was seeking at that altitude. ("Kilimanjaro" 52)

The meaning of the leopard is never addressed in the story. It simply acts as the exemplar of fickle destiny. It signifies the powerlessness of mortal creatures in the wake of nature's sweeping force. In the most general sense, Hemingway suggests we are not masters of our fate.

Harry blames his wife, Helen, for his downfall, for making things too comfortable for him with her money. He also acknowledges the unfairness of this view. He vacillates between accepting responsibility for his own failings and holding her accountable for his problems. Their marriage is adversarial at its heart. Harry cannot draw strength from his

relationship with his wife, and he cannot draw strength from satisfaction in his professional life.

In his dying hours, Harry regrets wasting his writing talent. He has come to Africa to put his life and art into perspective and to start anew. But he has found only death.

....You were equipped with good insides so that you did not go to pieces that way, the way most of them had....But, in yourself, you said that you would write about these people; about the very rich....But, he would never do it, because each day of not writing, of comfort, of being that which he despised, dulled his ability and softened his will to work so that, finally, he did no work at all....Africa was where he had been happiest in the good time of his life, so he had come out here to start again. They had made this safari with the minimum of comfort....That in some way he could work the fat off his soul the way a fighter went into the mountains to work and train in order to burn it out of his body. (59-60)

Harry was supposed to "work the fat off his soul" and regain spiritual purity. But he never gets the chance to reform. He is a writer who hasn't written and now will never be able to write. He is a hunter on safari, but it is his wife who hunts and who survives.

He heard a shot beyond the hill. She shot well this good, this rich bitch, this kindly caretaker and destroyer of his talent. Nonsense. He had destroyed his talent himself. Why should he blame this woman because she kept him well? He had destroyed his talent by not using it, by betrayals of himself and what he believed in, by drinking so much that he blunted the edge of his

perceptions, by laziness, by sloth, and by snobbery, by pride and by prejudice, by hook and by crook. (60)

That Hemingway's life and career in some ways parallels Harry's is no coincidence, although by no means is he Harry. Perhaps, he feared he could be Harry and exorcised such a demon in writing the story. Harry's continuing reflection might be Hemingway's:

What was his talent anyway? It was a talent all right but instead of using it, he had traded on it. It was never what he had done, but what he could do. And he had chosen to make his living with something else instead of a pen or a pencil. It was strange, too, wasn't it, that when he fell in love with another woman, that woman should always have more money than the last one? But he no longer was in love, when he was only lying, as to this woman, now, who had the most money of all, who had all the money there was, who had had a husband and children, who had taken lovers and been dissatisfied with them, and who loved him dearly as a writer, as a man, as a companion and as a proud possession; it was strange that when he did not love her at all and was lying, that he should be able to give her more for her money than when he had really loved. (60-61)

Helen's characteristics are also Hemingway's. The reversal of conventional male/female roles is significant. According to Mellow, Hemingway was fascinated by role reversals. In the human hunting world, the male predominates; in the animal world, females are often the dominant predators. Hemingway reverses the expected order of things in his African stories. Predatory females in his fiction are cited by

Mellow and others as evidence that Hemingway deeply resented domineering women. His mother was such a woman, and he felt he had to rebel against her. In her biography of Hadley Richardson, Hemingway's first wife, Gioia Diliberto describes his attraction to Hadley as evidence of this rebellion. Hadley's passivity was the opposite of his mother, Grace's, aggressiveness.

That Ernest all his life feared domination by women and that this fear was a powerful motivation have long been recognized by Hemingway readers. Ernest was determined not to marry a woman like his mother, Grace, that "bitch, who had to rule everything, have it all her own way," as he put it." (xi)

Hemingway expresses his fascination with and fear of strong women in another hunting story, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber." Here, too, Hemingway stresses the vulnerability of the hunter. Macomber is on safari with his wife, Margot. They have hired a white hunter named Wilson to guide them. Francis is a well-known sportsman and has accumulated many trophies. He is anxious to hunt lion, buffalo, and rhino, but, when he hears the roar of a lion close to camp, it disturbs and unnerves him. The following day he wounds a lion and reluctantly follows it into the bush, and then only after Wilson convinces him of the necessity of finishing the lion. Wilson does offer to take care of the lion and let Macomber off the hook, but Macomber feels he must participate. The upshot is that Macomber

bolts when the lion charges. Wilson and, what is worse, Margot see him run. Wilson is willing to let it go, but Margot is relentless about his cowardess. When Macomber subsequently wounds a buffalo, he has an opportunity to redeem himself. He is anxious to pursue the beast because he has overcome his fear and is elated by the "rebirth" of his courage. But as Macomber faces down the charging buffalo, he is shot by Margot who claims to have been shooting at the animal to save her husband's life. Although it is debatable whether Margot's shot is accidental or not, she proves to be the more deadly hunter. Macomber is in danger not when he loses his courage but when he finds it -- "For the first time in his life he really felt wholly without fear in a stronger form that he is at risk" (26).

Macomber has gone after the buffalo because he needs to reclaim his pride. Wilson is moved by Macomber and wryly remarks that "Worst one can do is kill you." He quotes Shakespeare, "'By my troth, I care not; a man can die but once; we owe God a death and let it go which way it will he that dies this year is quit for the the next.'" The narration then reveals Wilson's inner feelings, "He was very embarrassed, having brought out this thing he had lived by, but he had seen men come of age before and it always moved him. It was not a matter of their twenty-first

birthday" (32). Frances Macomber is thirty-five, but in Wilson's eyes, he has just become a man. Wilson is a "professional hunter" (26) with a code that is unspoken but nonetheless his guide.

The setting for Macomber's revelation is Africa, and the occasion is the hunt. Again, it is Wilson's perspective that provides the framework for examination.

It had taken a strange chance of hunting, a sudden precipitation into action without opportunity for worrying beforehand, to bring this about with Macomber, but regardless of how it happened it had most certainly happened. Look at the beggar now....it's that some of them stay little boys so long....Sometimes all their lives. Their figures stay boyish when they're fifty. The great American boy-men. Damned strange people. But he liked this Macomber now. Damned strange fellow. Probably meant the end of cuckoldry too. Well, that would be a damned good thing....Beggar had probably been afraid all his life. Don't know what started it. But over now. Hadn't had time to be afraid with the buff. That and being angry too. Motor car too. Motor cars made it familiar. Be a damn fire eater now. He'd seen it in the war work the same way. More of a change than any loss of virginity. Fear gone like an operation. Something else grew in its place. Main thing a man had. Made him into a man. Women knew it too. No bloody fear. (33)

Hemingway uses the hunt as the test of Macomber's manhood. He is stripped of his title as sportsman when he faces the lion and runs. He agonizes over his fear, and the other characters react to his struggle in ways

which are self-revelatory. Of course, the irony is that Frances Macomber loses his life as a result of losing his fear. "The Short Happy Life of Frances Macomber" is an ironic title.

Perhaps, the greatest irony is Macomber's ignorance of the Somali proverb, "a brave man is frightened three times by a lion; when he first sees his track, when he first hears him roar and when he first confronts him" ("Happy Life" 11). The fear of the lion is a crisis for Macomber, and he triumphs over his fear, a fear he does not understand. That this fear is somehow universal is pointed out by the citing of the proverb--afterall, the proverb is about "a brave man," not a coward. But bravery is not enough, indeed, bravery is finally Macomber's undoing.

His portrayal of Margot as a deadly hunter who kills her husband reveals Hemingway's own fears regarding the danger in human alliances. The hunter-prey relationship between man and animal is benign in contrast to the malignant human male-female relationship. Man and nature seem in accord. Frances finds his identity in the hunt, and its danger is surmountable and enobling. What Frances and Hemingway cannot overcome is the danger of "love."

Both "Kilimanjaro" and "Happy Life" utilize Hemingway's experiences in Africa. The stories parallel settings and incidents in *Green Hills*. In

Green Hills, Hemingway maintains that if one serves "society, democracy, and the other things quite young, and declining any further enlistment make yourself responsible only to yourself, you exchange the pleasant, comforting stench of comrades for something you can never feel in any other way than by yourself" (148). He maintains that writing well transcends worldly recognition or compensation. He equates this feeling of satisfaction with that of an explorer who discovers new lands.

In *Green Hills*, Hemingway is searching for an original aesthetic accomplishment. He wants to create prose that is more poetic than poetry. His removal from the literary, "civilized," world is an attempt to see his art more clearly from a distance. His safari in Africa might seem the farthest thing from the life he led in Spain, Italy, and France, but he constantly reflects on other times and places from his African perspective. He is at once totally involved in the hunt and aware of the greater world and its limitations.

Nick Adams and "Big Two-Hearted River," Parts I & II

Green Hills, "Kilimanjaro," and "Happy Life" are the Hemingway works most obviously connected with hunting. They are also evidence of the creative genius

that Hemingway possessed and harbingers of the degenerate forces to which he eventually succumbed. However, the Nick Adams stories, written earlier in his life and career, offer more compelling evidence of Hemingway's search for personal redemption through aesthetic achievement. Here again the figures of the hunter and the hunt enact a crucial metaphoric function.

For Hemingway, hunting and fishing expeditions were a release from the tensions in the rest of his life. He immersed himself in nature to escape family pressures and reinforce his personal worth, as he constantly needed to reaffirm that he had power over his life. The whole drama of life and death fascinated him, and especially his passion for bullfighting shows a need to formalize the ritual aspects of death in order to cope with them. Ritual itself becomes a motif, traceable throughout his work.

In "Big Two-Hearted River," Hemingway develops the main character, Nick Adams, largely by narrating Nick's ritualistic actions. Nick's actions give rise to reflections that reveal the inner life of his character. Mellow discusses Hemingway's use of ritual in this story:

Out of the country near Seney, with his ritual need for order and the mundane details of bait and gear, the lore of fishing, Hemingway would create the setting and the

action for one of his most famous and audacious stories, "Big Two-Hearted River," about a young man, Nick Adams, "coming home beat to the wide from a war." Nick goes off into the woods, sets up camp, and, in solitude, fishes the stream. He has a dire need to leave everything behind him, "the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs. It was all back of him." It was a story in which Hemingway deliberately set out to test his mettle as a writer and one in which he proved a critical theory that the best stories were those in which what the writer omitted was as important as what the writer put in. He was determined to show that in Hemingway country, there would be no need for a message. Hemingway's own explication of "Big Two-Hearted River" in the essay "The Art of the Short Story" remains the best: "So the war, all mention of the war, anything about the war, is omitted. The river was the Fox River, by Seney, Michigan, not the Big Two-Hearted. The change was made purposely, not from ignorance nor carelessness but because Big Two-Hearted River is poetry." (101-102)

Hemingway's use of ritual connects his own aesthetic and natural worlds. He was already at ease in nature, but he was still developing his writing. What he knew so well from his hunting and fishing experiences, he portrayed in "Two-Hearted River." Repetition and ritual are inherent in the world of the woods, which is based upon cycles. Man in nature must pay attention to details to survive. One way to assure that important details will be observed is through rituals that imbue repetitive acts with meaning. Although "Big Two-Hearted River" is a fishing, not a hunting story, it

includes all the elements of the hunt. In a larger sense, of course, fishing is hunting.

Nick Adams' relation to Hemingway parallels Ike McCaslin and Faulkner. Nick and Ike are young; they are skillful; they are well intentioned; and they represent the idealistic aspect of both authors' youthful natures. They struggle with corrupt forces around them in the "civilized" world, and are more at home in the natural world, where they regain their lost strength. The natural world also provides the setting for their physical and emotional growth. They are linked inextricably to nature, which never fails them.

As "Big Two-Hearted River" opens, Nick sees the ruin of the town of Seney.

There was no town, nothing but the rails and the burned-over country. The thirteen saloons that had lined the one street of Seney had not left a trace. The foundations of the Mansion House hotel stuck up above the ground. The stone was chipped and split by the fire. It was all that was left of the town of Seney. Even the surface had been burned off the ground. (209)

The town is gone, its houses scattered, but the river remains. Nick peers into its waters and sees the trout keeping themselves steady in the current. "As he watched them they changed their positions by quick angles, only to hold steady in the fast water again. Nick watched them a long time" (209).

In Part I of the story, Nick arrives at the charred town of Seney, walks to where the country is not burned, and camps for the night. In Part II, he awakens the next morning, catches grasshoppers for bait, makes his breakfast, cleans up camp, and fishes. He takes comfort in the rituals he performs. Through these rituals, he is able to feel happy, and experiences and reaffirms what is "good." Nick's feelings are reflected in the landscape. All is dead and burned when he disembarks from the train, an objective correlative for his inner state. The first signs of life are in the river, the trout. "Nick's heart tightened as the trout moved. He felt all the old feeling" (210). Hemingway implies that Nick has not been able, or not allowed himself, to feel anything for a long time. It does not matter what the "old feeling" was as long as he is able to feel it again. "Nick walked back up the ties to where his pack lay in the cinders beside the railway track. He was happy" (210). The pack is heavy, and he struggles with it, but he is eager to be off, to "leave the burned town behind in the heat....His muscles ached and the day was hot, but Nick felt happy. He felt he had left everything behind, the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs. It was all back of him" (210).

Nick is determined to get as far as he can before dark, and he is constantly looking for signs that will

tell him the country ahead of him is as it should be.

"It could not all be burned. He knew that" (211). He looks into the distance.

...The burned country stopped off at the left with the range of hills. On ahead islands of dark pine trees rose out of the plain. Far off to the left was the line of the river....There was nothing but the pine plain ahead of him, until the far blue hills that marked the Lake Superior height of land. He could hardly see them, faint and far away in the heat-light over the plain. If he looked too steadily they were gone. But if he only half-looked they were there, the far-off hills of the height of land. (211)

Like hope, the great hills are elusive if one focuses on them too intently. Nick must have faith that they are there, but must concentrate on more immediate concerns. From the distant hills, he turns his attention to the ground and sees a grasshopper, black from living in the charred earth. All the hoppers are black. He has stopped to rest and smoke a cigarette. "Now, as he watched the black hopper that was nibbling at the wool of his sock with its fourway lip, he realized that they had all turned black from living in the burned-over land. He realized the fire must have come the year before, but the grasshoppers were all black now. He wondered how long they would stay that way" (211-212).

...Two hundred yards down the hillside the fire line stopped. Then it was sweet fern, growing ankle high, to walk through, and

clumps of jack pines; a long undulating country with frequent rises and descents, sandy underfoot and the country was alive again. (212)

He is finally able to rest and falls asleep once he reaches the country that is not burned. He can not rest until he leaves behind the ruins. He wakes stiff and cramped, and the dew sets in quickly after the heat of the day. He looks down the river and sees the trout rising to catch insects on the surface of the water; some jump into the air.

Nick then sets up his camp, and he does so methodically, undrescoring the ritual aspect of his actions. Unpacking and rearranging his gear, setting up his tent, making his supper, eating, reflecting upon friendships of the past, cleaning up, and finally sleeping are all described in detail. One task after another, one stage after another, must be completed in precise order before the next stage begins. He is hungry, but he will not, cannot, prepare dinner until his camp is made.

He was very hungry and he wanted to make his camp before he cooked....[Nick makes his camp, step by step, finally pitching the tent] It smelled pleasantly of canvas. Already there was something mysterious and homelike. Nick was happy as he crawled inside the tent. He had not been unhappy all day. This was different though. Now things were done. There had been this to do. Now it was done. It had been a hard trip. He was very tired. That was done. He had made his camp. He was there, in the good place.

He was in his home where he had made it. Now he was hungry. (214-215)

Hemingway captures Nick's mental state by recounting the minute details of setting up the camp. His repetition of the word "done" is like a checklist which Nick needs to go through to establish his security. The very simplicity of the mundane, the ordinary, the matter-of-fact provides a kind of stability unattainable in the outside world. Even the detail with which Hemingway describes canned goods takes on significance. Nick brings pork and beans and spaghetti to cook for supper; furthermore, he mixes it together in the frying pan and sops it up with four slices of bread.

"I've got a right to eat this kind of stuff, if I'm willing to carry it," Nick said. His voice sounded strange in the darkening woods. He did not speak again.

He started a fire with some chunks of pine he got with the ax from a stump. Over the fire he stuck a wire grill, pushing the four legs down into the ground with his boot. Nick put the frying pan on the grill over the flames. He was hungrier. The beans and spaghetti warmed. Nick stirred them and mixed them together. They began to bubble, making little bubbles that rose with difficulty to the surface. There was a good smell. (215)

The details are simple, yet idiosyncratic. Hemingway focuses on each step Nick performs, and this intensity of focus transports the reader to the camp site. The

site's atmosphere is ripe for reflection, and Nick falls into a reverie.

Two things contribute to his mood. The hot food reminds Nick of his friend Hopkins and the old crowd with whom he used to fish. He is now alone with his rituals and his thoughts, or rather his lack of thought. He concentrates on the moment and the next task. The odd meal serves to point up Nick's independence and competence. He is able to camp alone, having planned each stage of his trip, even to the canned food which would appeal to an eight-year-old. Once his practical needs are met, his emotional needs can be addressed. He has chosen to make this journey of spiritual renewal. The emphasis on the "the good place," "the good smell," reinforces the consciousness of his actions as positive steps toward healing we know not what sort of wound. Hemingway emphasizes nature's power to heal Nick; at the same time, he uses the physical landscape as a reflection of Nick's inner world.

Nick's ability to sleep once he approaches the untouched part of the river is significant. First, he sleeps in the afternoon once he is above the fire line. Then, he is able to sleep at the end of Part I after dinner and the recollection of his former friends.

Out through the front of the tent he watched the glow of the fire, when the night wind

blew on it. It was a quiet night. The swamp was perfectly quiet. Nick stretched under the blanket comfortably. A mosquito hummed close to his ear. Nick sat up and lit a match. The mosquito was on the canvas, over his head. Nick moved the match quickly up to it. The mosquito made a satisfactory hiss in the flame. The match went out. Nick lay down again under the blanket. He turned on his side and shut his eyes. He was sleepy. He felt sleep coming. He curled up under the blanket and went to sleep. (218)

For Nick, sleep is the test of genuine healing. Nick sleeps at the close of Part I and awakens in Part II to a new day in which he will continue his ritualized healing process and pursue the hunt. Nick crawls out of the tent with its mosquito netting to dress and start the morning rituals before his pursuit of game.

"He was excited by the early morning and the river. He was really too hurried to eat breakfast, but he knew he must. He built a little fire and put on the coffee pot" (221). The river is Nick's anchor throughout the story. He first goes to it when he debarks the train. He looks for it as he makes his way across the burned terrain into the "good" area. He camps by it, and he goes to it in the morning even before fishing.

A river, for instance, runs through many of Hemingway's major stories and his most important novels. Generally, in such Hemingway fictions, the river serves as a cleansing baptism, an absolution for past sins, a healing experience, a rite of escape from the outside world as the Big Two-Hearted

is for Nick in the story of that name....
(Mellow 125)

Nick goes in search of bait, and finds grasshoppers. In contrast to the ones he saw earlier, these hoppers are not sooty. Nick is glad that he has caught the hoppers early because once the grass dries they will be hard to catch. "He had rolled the log back and knew he could get hoppers there every morning" (222). The implication is that he will be camping there for some time. The grasshoppers are an emblem of a lost innocence. Children catch grasshoppers; only a child, a professional fisherman, or a naturalist would be so aware of the insects and their habits.

Nick next makes his breakfast of buckwheat cakes; he makes an extra flapjack with applebutter and two onion sandwiches to take for his lunch; he drinks his coffee and cleans up camp. "It was a good camp" (223). He then starts to organize his fishing gear. Again he has planned ahead and prepared his gut leaders by wrapping them in damp cloth that he had wet from the watercooler on the train. The tough gut is softened and ready to use. He prepares his fly rod, leader, hook. "It was a small hook; very thin and springy. Nick took it from his hook book, sitting with the rod across his lap. He tested the knot and the spring of the rod by pulling the line taut. It was a good feeling. He was careful no to let the hook bite into

.

his finger" (223). Nick has prepared for the fishing trip well in advance. Again, his practicality and attention to detail stress his determination. He works with nature and brings to the world of the woods those things which allow him autonomy; he plans to spend a long time fishing the river because he needs this time for his recovery.

He starts down to the stream; he has his rod, bottle of grasshoppers, a flour sack for the fish. The healing process has begun already; Nick's meticulous preparations coalesce in the portrait he presents: "Nick felt awkward and professionally happy with all his equipment hanging from him. The grasshopper bottle swung against his chest. In his shirt the breast pockets bulged against him with the lunch and his fly book" (223). He steps into the stream and the cold water is a shock; the current sucks against his legs; he loses a grasshopper in the water, and it is immediately eaten by a trout. He baits his hook, lets out his line, and gets a bite.

There was a tug on the line. Nick pulled against the taut line. It was his first strike. Holding the now living rod across the current, he brought in the line with his left hand. The rod bent in jerks, the trout pumping against the current. Nick knew it was a small one. He lifted his rod straight up in the air. It bowed with the pull. (224)

Nick releases the small trout, being careful to wet his hand first before touching it so the delicate mucus will not be disturbed. The fisherman/hunter cooperates with nature by knowing about his prey and respecting its life, not taking what is too small or too young. Nick does not like to fish with other men on the river if they are not of his party. He has seen the destructive ways of the ignorant fishermen: "Years before when he had fished crowded streams, with fly fishermen ahead of him and behind him, Nick had again and again come on dead trout, furry with white fungus, drifted against a rock, or floating belly up in some pool" (225).

Nick's emotions rise to the surface as he hooks a very large trout.

His mouth dry, his heart down, Nick reeled in. He had never seen so big a trout. There was a heaviness, a power not to be held, and then the bulk of him, as he jumped. He looked as broad as a salmon.

Nick's hand was shaky. He reeled in slowly. The thrill had been too much. He felt, vaguely, a little sick, as though it would be better to sit down.

The leader had broken where the hook was tied to it. Nick took it in his hand. He thought of the trout somewhere on the bottom, holding himself steady over the gravel, far down below the light, under the logs, with the hook in his jaw. Nick knew the trout's teeth would cut through the snell of the hook. The hook would imbed itself in his jaw. He'd bet

the trout was angry. Anything that size would be angry....He went and sat down on the logs. He didn't want to rush his sensations any. (226-227)

The majesty of the escaped trout is evident in the tone of the story. Hemingway's descriptions of animals in the hunter-prey relationship emphasize man's vulnerable position in the scheme of things. Nick projects his own reaction onto the fish. Once again, Hemingway shows Nick's close relationship with nature and its creatures. Whether or not fish feel emotion is beside the point; that Nick believes they do is important. His identification with the trout describes Nick's spiritual life. He draws solace from placing himself within the life of the woods. Envisioning the struggles of other creatures gives him a sense of perspective, of being part of the larger world. The larger world of nature is also an ordered world. And Nick has dedicated himself to order.

When Nick loses the big trout, it takes awhile for him to recover, but "slowly the disappointment left him" (227). He rebaits and catches "one good trout. He did not care about getting many trout" (228). Nick's knowledge of the habits of the fish at different times of day further illustrates his intimate knowledge of his environment. The river narrows and becomes a swamp, and Nick reflects on the possibility of fishing there after he catches his second trout. "Nick did not

want to go in there now. He felt a reaction against wading with the water deepening up under his armpits, to hook a big trout in places impossible to land them....the fishing would be tragic" (231). His hesitation to proceed further is based upon a disturbing association. It is sinister precisely because it is amorphous. "In the swamp fishing was a tragic adventure. Nick did not want it. He did not want to go down the stream any further today" (231). Hemingway's use of the word, "tragic," is another indication that Nick's mental state is precarious. Although we are not told why, the charged language of Hemingway's descriptions of the swamp point to unnamed dangers for Nick. The reference to tragedy also points to forces beyond human control in the greater scheme of things.

The metaphor of the swamp in "Big Two-Hearted River" connotes a mysterious place, physically and emotionally dangerous to negotiate, unlike the river which Nick seems to know and understand completely. The river leads into the swamp, but Nick will choose to stay where he is.

Ahead the river narrowed and went into a swamp. The river became smooth and deep and the swamp looked solid with cedar trees, their trunks close together, their branches solid. It would be impossible to walk through a swamp like that. The branches grew so low. You would have to keep almost level with the ground to move at all. You could

not crash through the branches. That must be why the animals that lived in swamps were built the way they were, Nick thought. (231)

The swamp is the place that Nick will not go at this point in his life, though there is an indication that he will face it one day: "There were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp" (232). This is the last line of the published story.

James Mellow discusses the contrast between the earlier and published versions of the story. Mellow sees the point where Nick loses the big trout as the climax of the story.

In the first type-script version...Hemingway had ended the story with an eleven-page rumination, written in the stream-of-consciousness vein, comprising the thoughts of Nick Adams, aspiring writer--a hint left stranded when Hemingway cut his original ending and wrote a new one. The differences between the two versions are instructive. In the early version, Nick Adams the writer heads back to his tent in the pine woods, intent on writing the story that becomes "Big Two-Hearted River." The last lines of the original story read: "He went on up the trail to the camp. He was holding something in his head." (Mellow 273-274)

In early versions of "Big Two-Hearted River," parallels between Nick and Hemingway are striking. Mellow comments that "in the earliest manuscript fragment, Hemingway had begun the story as a first-person narrative in which he was traveling with two companions, Jock and Al--Jock Pentecast and Al Walker,

who had made the expedition with him to the Fox River in the summer of 1919. In another manuscript version, Helen, Nick's wife, was originally Hadley" (Mellow 274). Mellow also points out that the the eleven pages of reflection were deleted after Gertrude Stein "read his fishing story and what she referred to as his 'little story of meditations' on writers and writing, and told him, 'Hemingway, remarks are not literature'" (276). The changes Hemingway made are significant. Nick is a solitary figure in the published story; he only reflects on the immediate environment. The narration offers no insights into personal matters. Everything is suggested; nothing is stated.

In both story and personal account, Hemingway shows himself negotiating the borderline between nature's world and man's world. Although Nick and Hemingway have functioned in society, they need the healing power of nature to regain perspective. The activities of fishing or hunting are essential; they do not just take walks in the woods. Although nature provides the setting for renewal, hunting and fishing are the vehicles for physical action and spiritual reflection.

The Old Man and the Sea

While "Big Two-Hearted River" and *Green Hills* emphasize immersion in nature as a source of solace and renewal, *The Old Man and the Sea* uses nature as a touchstone for judging character. Santiago is an old man negotiating the borderline at life's end. He is alone in his everyday struggle to live except for the loyalty of a boy who cares for him.

Lately Santiago considers himself unlucky. A malignant fate has beset him.

He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish. In the first forty days a boy had been with him. But after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally *salao*, which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week. (9)

The boy remains loyal to the old man because "the old man had taught him to fish and the boy loved him" (10). Hemingway stresses the old man's humility, which is reminiscent of Ike McCaslin's. Humility and skill grow out of Ike's and Santiago's harmony with their environment. Santiago "was too simple to wonder when he had attained humility. But he knew he had attained it and he knew it was not disgraceful and it carried no loss of true pride" (13-14). Santiago's age and Ike's

youth provide a contrasting range of experience. But, both characters are humble in the natural world. For Santiago, the sea is feminine in much the same way as the country is for Hemingway in *Green Hills*.

He [Santiago] always thought of the sea as *la mar* which is what people call her in Spanish when they love her. Sometimes those who love her say bad things of her but they are always said as though she were a woman. Some of the younger fishermen, those who used buoys as floats for their lines and had motorboats, bought when the the shark livers had brought much money, spoke of her as *el mar* which is masculine. They spoke of her as a contestant or a place or even an enemy. But the old man always thought of her as feminine and as something that gave or withheld great favours, and if she did wild or wicked things it was because she could not help them. The moon affects her as it does a woman, he thought. (29-30)

Santiago does not desire sexual love because of his advanced age. His wife is dead and he no longer dreams of women, only of lions on the beach.

He no longer dreamed of storms, nor of women, nor of great occurrences, nor of great fish, nor fights, nor contests of strength, nor of his wife. He only dreamed of places now and of lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he loved the boy. He never dreamed about the boy. (25)

The lions in Santiago's dreams are benign. They come from Santiago's past. He tells the boy, "'When I was your age I was before the mast on a square rigged ship that ran to Africa and I have seen lions on the beach

in the evening'" (22). The boy has obviously heard about the old man's adventures before, "'I know. You told me.'" Baseball is another love of Santiago's; he asks the boy, "'Should we talk about Africa or about baseball?'" (22). This is the night before the old man catches his great fish. Santiago's discussion with the boy is about bait, and whether his eighty-fifth day will be lucky, about great ball players and managers, and about youth and age. The simple conversation between Santiago and the boy contrasts with the extraordinary struggle which will take place the next day. As in "Big Two-Hearted River," the attention to mundane details creates a sense of the ordinary, while reinforcing the ritual aspect of preparing for the hunt. When the old man falls asleep, he travels back to Africa.

However, before the old man falls asleep, he and the boy also discuss Santiago's strength. The boy tells him,

...."There are many good fishermen and some great ones. But there is only you.

"Thank you. You make me happy. I hope no fish will come along so great that he will prove us wrong."

In the morning the old man "simply woke, looked out the open door at the moon and unrolled the trousers and put

them on. He urinated outside the shack and then went up the road to wake the boy" (25).

Hemingway stresses the subsistence level of the old man's life. He may lean on the boy to walk, yet he carries his mast with its furled sail to his skiff. The image of man carrying his cross is inescapably etched by this description. Hemingway's iconography contrasts with Cooper's. Natty Bumppo insists that he is a man "without a cross," while Santiago is a man unaware he carries one. These hunters, however, are more similar than different. The common bond among all hunters is their relationship with their environment. The heart of this relationship is that they identify with the creatures they hunt. Another feature common to all hunters is their solitary life.

Other fishermen surround Santiago as he sails out alone before dawn. "There were other boats from the other beaches going out to sea and the old man heard the dip and push of their oars even though he could not see them now the moon was below the hills" (27). Each boat goes its own way. "They spread apart after they were out of the mouth of the harbour and each headed for the part of the ocean where he hoped to find fish." Santiago has fresh bait; he knows that this is a special day, and he will go far out to sea.

Hemingway emphasizes the connection between hunter and hunted as a symbiotic, and even egalitarian

relationship. The old man sees the flying fish and the birds. The cycle of nature, of hunters and hunted, and he feels himself part of the cycle. He empathizes with the other creatures around him.

He was very fond of the flying fish as they were his principal friends on the ocean. He felt sorry for the birds, especially the small delicate dark terns that were always flying and looking and almost never finding, and he thought, the birds have a harder life than we do except for the robber birds and the heavy strong ones. Why did they make the birds so delicate and fine as those sea swallows when the ocean can be so cruel? She is kind and very beautiful. But she can be so cruel and it comes so suddenly and such birds that fly, dipping and hunting, with their small sad voices are made too delicately for the sea. (29)

Even the small birds are hunters. They have a hard lot in life, and Santaigo is especially in tune with them because he is a small hunter among larger predators. He and the small birds hunt on the vast ocean to survive, again reinforcing the hunter's union with other creatures. Hemingway accomplishes two things in this passage.

The great depths in which the old man fishes are another a measure of his worth. By going far out to sea and fishing bottomless waters, he crosses the borders between the ordinary and exceptional. He goes beyond his normal range, certainly beyond the normal expectations for his age and delicate physical

condition. He reaches beyond the border for the other fishermen as well, all of whom are younger and stronger than he. Finally, numerous references to depth reinforce a burial motif, a motif remarkable for its intensity.

Before it was really light he had his baits out and was drifting with the current. One bait was down forty fathoms. The second was at seventy-five and the third and fourth were down in the blue water at one hundred and one hundred and twenty-five fathoms. Each bait hung head down with the shank of the hook inside the bait fish, tied and sewed solid and all the projecting part of the hook, the curve and the point, was covered with fresh sardines. Each sardine was hooked through both eyes so that they made a half-garland on the projecting steel. There was no part of the hook that a great fish could feel which was not sweet smelling and good tasting. (30-31)

A fathom is six feet; the depths that Santiago has his baits set are six times the numbers cited. The depth of the water dramatizes the old man's struggle. His lines "as thick around as a big pencil, were looped onto a green-sapped stick so that any pull or touch on the bait would make the stick dip and each line had two forty-fathom coils which could be made fast to the other square coils so that, if it were necessary, a fish could take out over three hundred fathoms of line" (31).

The old man is physically diminished by the grand scale of nature, yet he possesses spirit and simple

courage. He watches the rising sun, and the birds, and the flying fish, and he thinks, "My big fish must be somewhere" (35). He seems aware that some extraordinary thing will happen.

Now is the time to think of only one thing. That which I was born for. There might be a big one around that school, he thought. I picked up only a straggler from the albacore that were feeding. But they are working far out and fast. Everything that shows on the surface today travels very fast and to the north-east. Can that be the time of day? Or is it some sign of weather that I do not know? (40)

That this is a special day is reinforced several times before Santiago hooks the great fish. The action begins subtly at first.

This time it was a tentative pull, not solid nor heavy, and he knew exactly what it was. One hundred fathoms down a marlin was eating the sardines that covered the point and the shank of the hook where the hand-forged hook projected from the head of the small tuna. (41)

Hemingway builds upon the moment with simple, but detailed description, and then, stream of consciousness of Santiago's thoughts.

The old man held the line delicately, and softly, with his left hand, unleashed it from the stick. Now he could let it run through his fingers without the fish feeling any tension.

This far out, he must be huge in this month, he thought. Eat them, fish. Eat them.

Please eat them. How fresh they are and you down there in six hundred feet in that cold water in the dark. Make another turn in the dark and come back and eat them. (41-42)

He can sense the fish far below him in the depths of the ocean because he is atuned to his prey; he has spent a lifetime on the sea studying the creatures he hunts. As he pictures the action taking place below the surface, he urges fate to take a hand and bend to his will. He utters this forceful request and prayer, rolled into one. He tries to will the fish onto the hook.

"Come on," the old man said aloud. "Make another turn. Just smell them. Aren't they lovely? Eat them good now and then there is the tuna. Hard and cold and lovely. Don't be shy, fish. Eat them."

He waited with the line between his thumb and his finger, watching it and the other lines at the same time for the fish might have swum up or down. Then came the same delicate pulling touch again. (42-43)

We are privy to the old man's thoughts and wishes and moment to moment experience. Santiago has strived all his life to catch a great fish.

Much like Ike in "The Bear," Santiago wants to see the force that he is pitted against and with which he is strangely united. Also, like Ike, the old man wants to see his prey to make him real. To truly understand the prey, the hunter has to see it to experience it,

and to join it as part of the cycle of nature. "I wish I could see him. I wish I could see him only once to know what I have against me" (46).

The fish drags him on into the night, farther out to sea. He wishes once again that he had the boy with him. He wonders how the baseball teams did, and he wishes he had a radio. But, he is alone except for the pair of porpoises that swim around his boat while it is still night.

No one should be alone in their old age, he thought. But it is unavoidable....During the night two porpoises came around the boat and he could hear them rolling and blowing. He could tell the difference between the blowing noise the male made and the sighing blow of the female...."They are good," he said. "They play and make jokes and love one another. They are our brothers like the flying fish." Then he began to pity the great fish that he had hooked. (48)

Hemingway repeatedly draws connections between the old man and the other creatures. Santiago is human, but not ruler of the beasts, just another creature who admires his "brothers." He even pities the prey he must capture and harvest to live himself. His humanity makes him an excellent fisherman, and his humility makes him admirable.

Santiago wonders about the great fish he has hooked.

He is wonderful and strange and who knows how old he is, he thought. Never have I had such

a strong fish nor one who acted so strangely. Perhaps he is too wise to jump. He could ruin me by jumping or by a wild rush. But perhaps he has been hooked many times before and knows that this is how he should make his fight. He cannot know that it is only one man against him, nor that it is an old man. But what a great fish he is and what will he bring in the market if the flesh is good. He took the bait like a male and he pulls like a male and his fight has no panic in it. I wonder if he has any plans or if he is just as desperate as I am? (48-49)

Sex and age transcend species here. Santiago feels a kinship with his prey based on age, "who knows how old he is."

He recalls a time when he caught a female fish and the male stayed with her to try to help her. The recollection is poignant. Yet, though he experienced the sadness of the female marlin's fight and the loyalty of the male, releasing her was never an option, "we begged her pardon and butchered her promptly." Santiago like other fishermen is part of the food chain, and sympathy for his prey never dissolves into sentiment.

Santiago never asks nature to be different from the way it is. His spirituality grows from the immutability of nature. His humility does not allow him to question; life and death are inevitable, and so is the struggle between the two. The only choice in the matter is how best to pursue the struggle.

His [the fish's] choice had been to stay in the deep water far out beyond all snares and traps and treacheries. My choice was to go there to find him beyond all people. Beyond all people in the world. Now we are joined together and have been since noon. And no one to help either one of us.

Perhaps I should not have been a fisherman, he thought. But that was the thing that I was born for. I must surely remember to eat the tuna after it gets light. (50)

As the struggle goes on, Santiago talks to the fish. "'Fish,' he said softly, aloud, 'I'll stay with you until I am dead'" (53). He wants to see the fish jump but cannot induce him to do so. "'Fish,' he said, 'I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends'" (54).

Santiago speaks to the things around him, which underscores his loneliness. He even talks to his own hand, "'How do you feel, hand?' he asked the cramped hand that was almost as stiff as rigor mortis. 'I'll eat some more for you'" (58-59). He keeps wishing the boy were there, and frequently wishes aloud. In a strange way, his loneliness links him to the other creatures in his world. The fish is alone, the bird is alone. Their loneliness provides a powerful bond.

Santiago's desire both to conquer the fish and to feed him is a contradiction only in the modern world. Kinship with one's prey is an ancient concept in the hunting world and has mythic overtones. The motif of

eating and devouring to gain or retain power is present in many ancient cultures. Chronos swallows his children whole, and Grendal gruesomely devours warriors in *Beowulf*. Various cannibalistic practices involve eating all or parts of one's enemies to imbibe their strength and valor. Eating connotes both honoring and conquering one's opponents. Initiation rites of passage for hunters and warriors often involve smearing the blood of the prey or enemy on the conqueror. This act signifies a communion between conqueror and conquered. Additionally it signifies incorporation of the conquered's physical and spiritual self. Although usually associated with the young hunter/warrior's experience, Santiago's situation echoes such an initiation ceremony. He is undergoing the battle of his life, yet he approaches it from the standpoint of age, not youth.

The old man's simplicity is one of the most complex aspects of the novel. The "wise old man" is a familiar type, the natural philosopher in tune with nature and with himself. However, even though he is wise, Santiago's physical body constantly reminds him of his dangerous situation. His body may betray him because he is old. His hand is cramped from the abuse it has taken tending the lines. As he desperately tries to relax the cramp, the great fish decides to jump.

This is Santiago's first sight of the fish. This fish is beyond anything that he has ever seen. Comparing the marlin's size with the skiff points up the size of the task ahead. He hopes that being a man will help him because other creatures "are not as intelligent as we who kill them; although they are more noble and more able" (63). He reflects on the other great fish he has seen, but he was never alone when he'd seen them, and not one was as big as this one. However, he still has a cramped hand that betrays him, "There are three things that are brothers: the fish and my two hands" (64).

He evaluates the situation once more and tries to understand what is happening and what is likely to happen.

I wonder why he jumped, the old man thought. He jumped almost as though to show me how big he was. I know now, anyway, he thought. I wish I could show him what sort of man I am. But then he would see the cramped hand. Let him think I am more man than I am and I will be so. I wish I was the fish, he thought, with everything he has against only my will and my intelligence. (64)

Hemingway uses simple, concrete details in his physical descriptions which then revolve the philosophical thoughts of Santiago. Once again, he reflects on how he loves the fish, but must kill it.

"The fish is my friend too," he said aloud.
"I have never seen or heard of such a fish.

But I must kill him. I am glad we do not have to try to kill the stars."

I do not understand these things, he thought. But it is good that we do not have to try to kill the sun or the moon or the stars. It is enough to live on the sea and kill our true brothers. (75)

Hemingway deals with the limits of time and space, the organization of the universe, and man's place in it. Santiago is a primitive man. His life is like the hunter/gatherer leading a subsistence living. He practices a primitive natural religion where his food source, the animals, are his brothers. He is grateful to his brothers for feeding him and realizes the creatures are more noble than those they feed. At the same time, the whimsical thought that man might challenge the heavenly bodies has mythic echoes. Associating mythic elements and instances of natural religion with Santiago seems more in tune with his world than the intermittent Catholicism that he mechanically observes.

Santiago's philosophical thoughts then yield to practical considerations. He hasn't slept since he put out to sea two days before. He prepares to eat the fish he caught earlier, and then plans to sleep a little. He dreams of the lions, and then the line runs out quickly, badly cutting his hand as he awakens. He

cannot see the fish, but hears him jump more than a dozen times.

For much of the story, the fish is an unseen, unknown force, and the old man can only guess at his size. When Santiago finally sees the fish, his first impression is one of disbelief.

"No," he said. "He can't be that big."

But he was that big and at the end of this circle he came to the surface only thirty yards away and the man saw his tail out of water. It was higher than a big scythe blade and a very pale lavender above the dark blue water. It raked back and as the fish swam below the surface the old man could see his huge bulk and the purple stripes that banded him. His dorsal fin was down and his huge pectorals were spread wide. (90)

The perspective is reinforced by the companion fish which swim with the giant marlin.

On this circle the old man could see the fish's eye and the two gray sucking fish that swam around him. Sometimes they attached themselves to him. Sometimes they darted off. Sometimes they would swim easily in his shadow. They were each over three feet long and when they swam fast they lashed their whole bodies like eels. (90)

The sucking fish are portrayed as parasitic courtiers to the noble marlin. They live in his shadow derive sustenance for their lives from his. They are like eels, serpentine echoes of evil, the worms of the sea. The degenerate forces which challenge the great fish

and Santiago are gross and ugly compared to their nobility. The marlin and Santiago are brother adversaries, but there is an inherent dignity in their struggle. The old man can see the great fish's eye, which further personalizes the battle. He sweats from the sun and the effort he must exert as he looks to place the harpoon to finish the big fish.

Both Santiago and the fish are ready to expire; however, Santiago is able to move the fish onto his side for a moment, and it is a victory to feel him move. The old man feels faint and fears he will not be able to endure. "'Fish,' the old man said. 'Fish, you are going to have to die anyway. Do you have to kill me too?'" (92). The last words are strangely reminiscent of Helen's in "Kilimanjaro," when her husband, Harry, is dying and they quarrel even as his life expires. Like Faulkner, Hemingway, contrasts valiant men and creatures and the forces which seek to destroy them. It is perfectly sensible to see the old man as more closely related to the great fish than he is to many venial human beings. Especially in the environment where they contend, their kinship transcends their enmity.

The killing blow, when it comes, is sure and strong.

The old man dropped the line and put his foot on it and lifted the harpoon as high as he

could and drove it down with all his strength, and more strength he had just summoned, into the fish's side just below the great chest fin that rose high in the air to the altitude of the man's chest. he felt the iron go in and he leaned on it and drove it further and then pushed all his weight after it.

The fish came alive, with his death in him, and rose out of the water showing all his great length and width and all his power and his beauty. He seemed to hang in the air above the old man in the skiff. Then he fell into the water with a crash that sent spray over the old man and over all of the skiff. (93-94)

Hemingway does not gloss over the details of Santiago's kill. The result of the struggle is death in all its raw reality. The blow from the harpoon kills the fish, and the old man sees it floating on the waves, discoloring the water with its red blood. And Santiago is still in danger of joining the marlin in death. "'Keep my head clear,' he said against the wood of the bow. 'I am a tired old man. But I have killed the fish that was my brother and now I must do the slave work'" (95). The fish is too big to get into the skiff, so as to lash him securely alongside. He wants to feel and touch the fish because he thinks he felt its heart beat when he harpooned it. The eye that he looked into before has now turned to an unresponsive mirror. The color of the fish has changed with death.

Ironically, now the old man and his great marlin are hunted by other fish. It is an hour before the first huge shark hits them. The sharks represent fickle, senseless destruction. The old man tries to defend the fish, but it is a losing battle. The mutilation of the marlin is brutally described, and the helplessness of the old man to combat the army of sharks is particularly poignant. He fights valiantly, but he cannot stop their onslaught. He regrets subjecting the great fish to this terrible ignominy. He feels responsible, but he is proud that he is able to kill the first gigantic shark that attacks.

He knows there will be more assaults and that without his harpoon, they will be impossible to fight off. His only solace is to think about baseball and the great DiMaggio; he wonders if Joe would have approved of his swing when he hit the shark in the head.

The old man thinks that perhaps killing the fish was a sin. He feels confused when he contemplates the intricacies of sin and nature. He feels certain that he was meant to be a fisherman. He feels comforted that DiMaggio's father was a fisherman, that there is an order to things. "Besides, he thought, everthing kills everything else in some way. Fishing kills me exactly as it keeps me alive. The boy keeps me alive, he thought. I must not deceive myself too much" (106).

Santiago is an ideal man in a corrupt universe. He mitigates some of the evil in a degenerate world by living in it. Perhaps, he is as much a hero as DiMaggio.

He resolves to struggle with the sharks, "'fight them until I die'" (115). He finally sails into the harbor when everyone is asleep, and there is no one to help him. The great fish is little more than bone in places, a skeleton of what it was. He unsteps the mast and prepares to carry it on his shoulder. He carries the mast up the hill and stumbles, having to sit down at least five times before he reaches his shack. When he reaches his shack, he leans the mast against the wall and sleeps "face down on the newspapers with his arms out straight and the palms of his hands up" (122). Of course, his hands are wounded, and when the boy comes into the shack and sees the old man, he is moved to tears. The boy tells the people in the village not to disturb Santiago; he brings the old man coffee and tells him he will care for him and that when he is well he will fish with him again. At the very end, the old man falls asleep and dreams of the lions, while the boy watches. His great fish is a pile of bones on the beach that the tourists mistake for a shark.

Manolin, cries without shame for the old man. Clearly, he shares Santiago's moral strength. Santiago's regret is that he went "too far out" to

successfully bring in the great fish. But his venturing was the very thing that allowed him to catch the fish. The hunter always tries to assess what he did wrong and to relive the hunt to learn and plan for the future. When he sleeps, he dreams as he did at the beginning of the lions on the beach of the African coast. The novel ends as it begins, completing a cycle of experience. The important difference at the end, though, is that Santiago has achieved his life's work and confirmed his place in his world.

In *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway casts the weakest of men as among the strongest. When Santiago hunts and slays the great fish, he crosses the border between the possible and the impossible. The act itself is what matters. That the great fish is ravaged by the sharks is a brutal metaphor of modern life. The fish may be nothing but a skeleton at the end of the novel, but this does not negate Santiago's feat. The old man accomplishes the impossible through his practical skills and indomitable spirit. He is a good man, the perfect hunter, who overcomes his own limitations to pursue and harvest his prey.

Both Faulkner and Hemingway portray the hunter figure confronting degenerate forces in his life and in the culture. The hunter's strength to brave such forces stems from knowing his place in his environment. Through immersion in nature, he gains this knowledge,

and thus, is able to overcome his own flaws that might limit or destroy him. Negotiating the borders of his opposing worlds, the hunter not only battles the darkness in himself and society, but he finds the power to transcend them.

Notes

Chapter Four

¹Joel Williamson, *William Faulkner and Southern History* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993) 180. Williamson discusses Faulkner's possible motives for adding the "u" to the Falkner family name, which was done when he enlisted in the Royal Air Force in Canada.

Rejected by the American military, William Falkner in the spring of 1918 was maturing a plan to get into the war by enlisting in the flying service of an allied nation. He succeeded. On June 27, 1918, the Oxford Eagle ran a notice in its "Personal and Local" column: "Mr. William Falkner who has been spending a few months in New York is visiting his parents Mr. and Mrs. Murry Falkner. He has joined the English Royal Flying Corps and leaves the eighth of July for Toronto, Canada, where he will train."

Actually, Billy had enlisted in the Royal Air Force, not the Royal Flying Corps. The name had recently been changed, but Billy preferred to give out the earlier, more romantic sounding version. Also, he had not spent a few months in New York. Apparently, he had gone to New Haven in early April. Thirty years later Phil recalled that he got Bill a job in a Winchester arms factory while they both attempted, futilely, to join the allied armies by passing themselves off as Canadians. Then an English friend who dined with them at the Commons at Yale taught them to "talk like Englishmen" while they plotted to pass as citizens of that nation. In late June, Bill went down to New York and succeeded in enlisting in the Royal Air Force. Probably it was this phase in his life that Bill began to develop for himself a full-blown British, perhaps even an Oxonian persona. He somehow managed to convey the impression to some people that he was an Englishman who had been studying in the United States and now wanted to enlist in the cause of his country. He was in the process of creating that character, perhaps, when he first added a "u" to the spelling of his family name. Later, he would insist that the alteration meant nothing, but rather clearly the "u" gave him a significant distance from his family and from his own previous self. Certainly he used it while in the service in Canada. Out of Mississippi, it seems, he could begin anew. Even though he relished the role of Englishman, such elaborate ruses were probably not really necessary. With the life expectancy of a novice British flyer on the Western Front at about three weeks, Billy apparently had no real difficulty getting into the military as a pilot candidate.

²see Frances Lee Utley, Lynn Z. Bloom, and Arthur F. Kinney, eds., *Bear, Man, and God: Seven Approaches*

to William Faulkner's "The Bear" (New York, 1964); also see Stephen B. Oates, *William Faulkner, The Man and the Artist* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988) 184. Oates comments that Faulkner's writing of the Saturday Evening Post version of the story was driven by a need for money.

With the summer came a creative breakthrough. Never mind how terrible things were in the outside world (the Germans launched a massive invasion of Russia, relations between Japan and the United States were increasingly tense). His recent retreat into the big woods, and his memories of Old Reel Foot, inspired a chorus of Yoknapatawpha voices, some of which he had heard before and written down in previous stories. But now they came together in a long and magnificent new tale called "The Bear." Because of his accursed need for money, he wrote a version for the magazines, entreating Ober to sell it anywhere for anything he could get; Ober finally got \$1,000 for it from the Post. Meanwhile Faulkner wrote a much longer version of "The Bear," which he incorporated into *Go Down, Moses* as its showpiece story and one of the triumphs of his art.

³The scene between Ike and his father in the version published in *The Saturday Evening Post* [reprinted in Utley, et al. above] depicts Ike's not shooting Old Ben as an affirmation of life and the bond between Ike and the bear. It is a "neat" ending to the story when Ike's father reads the passage from Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" to frame the episode and put it into perspective. The dialogue also takes place immediately after Ike's encounter with the bear, which gives the impression of a timely resolution and interpretation of Ike's actions.

⁴In the longer version of "The Bear," the discussion of Ike's not shooting the bear takes place between Ike and his cousin, McCaslin Carothers. The older cousin is the one who quotes Keats, and it is many years after the incident and comes up in their argument about Ike's rejection of his inheritance. Williamson ascribes the quoting of Keats to Ike, but examination of the passage, though confusing because it ambiguously ascribes "he said" until the pronoun reference has no hope of finding the antecedent, indicates that McCaslin has the intellectual prowess to quote the poet, while Ike would not have been so well read.

⁵Who is "speaking" seems purposely obscured because the style at this point is like stream of consciousness writing. It stylistically reflects the obfuscation and emotional pitch of the family history it relates.

Chapter Five

Thomas McGuane and Ayla: The Cowboy and the Cave Girl

Olson came in. Thin, intelligent Jack Olson, native of this Northern country....Olson was a serious sportsman, with rigid and admirable ideas of sporting demeanor....Quinn knew Olson's study of problems natural to the taking of trout and bringing grouse to the gun had made him so knowing a woodsman that many of the members whose forebears had formed the association resented him. Quinn had seen their reproachful glimpses of Olson's old Heddon rod as they unloaded the two hundred-dollar magic wands from fitted leather cases. They didn't like the way he shot his brace of partridge out of their woods on his day off and they didn't like the way he did it over a scruffy working Springer when all their professionally trained Llewellyns, Weimaraners, German Shorthairs, Labradors, Chesapeakes, Goldens and Wirehaired Pointing Griffins ran deer, flushed birds two miles from the gun or collapsed from overeating....What they didn't like was Olson's primacy in the blood sports. They wanted to be the heroes and Olson made them look like buffoons when accident forced comparison. In short, they wanted to kill as he killed without the hard-earned ritual that made it sane. For Olson, hunting and fishing were forms of husbandry because he guaranteed the life of the country himself. (McGuane *The Sporting Club* 55-62)

She looked at the dead animal at her feet and let the club fall from her hand. Awareness of the implications of her deed came slowly. I killed a hyena, she said to herself as the impact hit her. I killed a hyena with my sling. Not a small animal, a hyena, an animal that could kill me. Does that mean I'm a hunter now? Really a hunter? It wasn't exultation she felt, not the excitement of a first kill or even the satisfaction of overcoming a powerful beast. It was something deeper, more humbling. It was the knowledge that she had overcome herself. It came as a spiritual revelation, a mystical insight; and with a reverence deeply felt, she spoke to the spirit of her totem in the ancient formal language of the Clan. (Auel *The Clan of the Cave Bear* 208)

Two late twentieth-century permutations of the hunter figure are writer Thomas McGuane and Jean Auel's character, Ayla, from *The Clan of the Cave Bear*. They illustrate the power to reinvent oneself and move

freely within American society. Landscape, identity, as well as gender and race remain intricately connected with this evolving figure. As in previous epochs, the hunter negotiates chasms between civilization and wilderness, achieves self-knowledge, and transcends bias through immersion in nature. McGuane uses hunting as a touchstone for developing a personal moral code. Auel expresses concerns with gender and racial empowerment through Ayla's development as a hunter. Ayla's life is a metaphor for female and minority empowerment over the last two decades.

Both McGuane and Ayla are outcasts who struggle to find a place where creativity and personal growth are possible. This territory is at once literal space and mental landscape. One figure inhabits the twentieth century American West, and the other prehistoric Europe. These differences in setting make the figures' parallel experiences even more compelling. Both seek and find their true selves through hunting.

That Thomas McGuane is an author and a hunter inevitably provides comparisons with Faulkner and Hemingway, but as Dexter Westrum suggests, such comparisons are "perhaps-too-facile" (3). However, Westrum does comment that McGuane is inextricably linked with these writers.

His work follows a direct line from the great
writers of our past, his romantic

protagonists continually embodying the American frontier and transcendental traditions as they confront the often-frustrating realities of modern-day existence in quest of life's infinite possibilities.
(ix)

Westrum sees McGuane expanding a "code," that becomes a personal model for life. McGuane's life on his Montana ranch echoes Teddy Roosevelt's life on his Dakota ranch. TR first found refuge there from the problems of the world and then a way of life that he adopted and extended into a personal metaphor. The Dakota period revitalized his self-confidence, and he returned to New York and politics. McGuane escaped from the financially rewarding but spiritually debilitating world of Hollywood to find renewal in ranching and hunting. He now writes screenplays for movies mainly to finance his literary career. His use of the picaresque to convey his message, and his treatment of stereotypical and unreal characters is decidedly unsentimental. McGuane's use of stereotypes, and characters Joyce Carol Oates has dubbed "unreal," opens space for social critique.

The Sporting Club and other works, such as *The Bushwhacked Piano*, *Ninety-two in the Shade*, and *Panama* mirror his personal experience. His protagonists are reflections of McGuane's persona. How to live a meaningful life in a chaotic and corrupt world is the subject of his art; his writing is therapeutic and

echoes Nick Adams's position in Hemingway's story, "Fathers and Sons." Nick thinks that if he can write about his father, he will be able to exorcise the bad memories, putting things into balance again. It is as if the ability to represent life carries the power to fully live it.

Like other hunter figures, McGuane is a man on the border. He lives between the corruptions of Hollywood, where he must earn a living as a writer, and the spiritually pristine but stark Montana wilderness, where he hunts and ranches and lives his cowboy life. As a hunter he reaffirms his identity and the personal code of integrity he lives by.

Ayla, the female protagonist of Jean Auel's *Earth's Children* series, suggests much the same dynamic as McGuane. She, too, is searching for a place in her society, where she can claim an identity. Since Ayla lives in prehistoric times, the concern of the books is in a sense "unreal." But, her position in her society inscribes serious racial and gender issues of the 1970s-1990s. In the first book of Auel's series, *The Clan of the Cave Bear*, Ayla is a female of a different species, adopted by a tribe that cannot appreciate her unique gifts. She is ostracized for her difference, but she manages to teach herself to hunt, which has both practical and symbolic implications. She ensures her own physical survival, and gains a sense of self-

worth. Her ability to live through and then escape the beatings and rape of her childhood testifies to her strength of will. She gains this strength from hunting.

Ayla exemplifies the "new" woman of twentieth century America, while McGuane continues the tradition of the hunter/cowboy earlier exemplified by figures like Cody and Roosevelt. Further, McGuane incorporates elements of Faulkner's and Hemingway's hunter figures because he, like they, find an antidote to the corruptions of the modern world through hunting. I look first at Thomas McGuane.

Thomas McGuane as the American Hunter/Cowboy

Like Ernest Hemingway, Thomas McGuane is both author and hunter figure. The rugged life he leads on his Montana ranch helps him cope with the modern world. Also, like Hemingway and Faulkner, he uses the hunting metaphor to develop characters in his fiction. Dexter Westrum comments that McGuane "maintains his vision of life and writes with a secure knowledge of the American canon" (ix). He argues that

Along with his love of outlandishly good talk came a feeling of being perpetually on the outside. McGuane feels that the Irish are outsiders in their own country because the English have owned everything for so long. In Massachusetts his family continued to feel

like aliens in a Yankee Protestant world. When his parents moved to the Midwest, they felt not like midwesterners but like Catholics. McGuane sees this situation providing a useful consciousness: afterall, "the vantage point of most authentic modern fiction is dislocation." McGuane's protagonists have continued to be out of step with the mainstream, usually because of natural and honest tendencies toward the unconventional. (2)

McGuane's sense of alienation makes him identify with his Irish forebears in their struggle with the English. The American predisposition to resist authority and sympathize with the downtrodden comes out clearly here. But, the concept of "outsider" goes far beyond any specific, identifiable difference. In his novels, McGuane's commentary on modern life employs biting satire; his characters and plots are designed to stimulate and viscerally arrest. His message, however, is conventional, stressing moral values which transcend the cynicism of the age.

McGuane's first novel, *The Sporting Club*, illustrates McGuane's "style as message" at an early stage of his work. An anomaly in his repertoire, *Sporting Club*, was written in six weeks in contrast to his other novels which took long periods of time and required massive revisions. McGuane had desperately wanted to publish since his graduate school days. His friendship with other writers who published before him put him at a great disadvantage, at least in his mind.

He wanted to devote his life to his art but did not receive the recognition he needed to be taken seriously. Westrum describes the circumstances surrounding the publication *The Sporting Club*.

McGuane wrote the first version of *The Bushwacked Piano* at Yale; he called it *Fire Season*." When William Styron came to campus for a reading, McGuane and Hjortsberg sought him out. In the spirit of Sherwood Anderson's famous beneficence toward a young William Faulkner, Styron agreed to take their novels to Random House if he himself did not have to read them. They went around in dire fear of hearing the "dreaded thump at the bottom of the stairs" when the manuscripts were returned. Styron's editor, Robert Loomis, did indeed turn both novels down but sent encouraging letters....After Yale, the McGuanes spent roughly a year in Italy and Spain. Ostensibly McGuane was tracing Hemingway's footsteps, developing his own moveable feast, fishing, and attending bullfights....In 1966 McGuane returned to the United States to accept a Wallace Stegner Fellowship for a year at Stanford....Even though he completed another novel at Stanford, the fellowship came to an end with McGuane still unpublished....He had trained as a writer, and so with no apparent options he prepared in just six weeks the manuscript that was to become *The Sporting Club*. He mailed the book to Jim Harrison and then went alone to Mexico to contemplate his future.

Camped on a beach, McGuane was aroused from his sleeping bag one morning by a fellow who appeared to be a Mexican police officer wearing a gun: "I thought, my God, this guy is going to shoot me." Instead, the man turned out to be the local telegraph operator who had been seeking McGuane so that he could congratulate him on having his book accepted. "The guy was just as excited as I was, and we went off to celebrate," McGuane recalls.

Harrison had in the meantime delivered the manuscript to Simon and Schuster, and McGuane's life as a published writer began.
(6-8)

Stylistically, many passages in *The Sporting Club* echo Hemingway, but with a twist. One striking example is McGuane's attention to detail and to graphic images. The connection is especially apparent when James Quinn, one of the main characters of *Sporting Club*, is fishing.

When the mayfly hatch was finished and the fish had quit feeding, he had five good trout. On the way back to his cottage, he paused four times to open the wicker creel and look in at the trout he had put in wet ferns and arranged in a hierarchy of magnitude. (26)

He liked to see trout in a porcelain sink. He liked to see them on a newspaper almost as well, though not as much as the sink. It wasn't the same with game birds. A grouse bleeding on the newspaper could be disturbing, for example; while in the sink, it had the quality of rare foodstuff. Quinn picked up the largest fish, gripped it under the gill plates and opened it with his pen knife from the vent all the way up to the point of the lower jaw, detaching the gills there and at the base of the skull and pulling the entrails away in a piece. In the middle was the whitish translucent stomach and its dark contents showed through. Quinn split it carefully, spreading the insides with the blade of his knife on the porcelain: hundreds of undigested nymphs. The second, smaller trout contained the same plus a bright minnow and a few red ants, some of which had eaten into the stomach lining. There was one brown honeybee in the third. Quinn removed the dark blood along the spine of each fish because it made the meat bitter,

rinsed them, wrapped them in wax paper and put them in the icebox. (47-48)

If there is any doubt about McGuane's satiric intent in the first passage, where Quinn looks at the "five good trout" "four times" and arranges them "in wet ferns" "in a hierarchy of magnitude," there's no mistaking the fun he has with Hemingway's style in the second passage, as he describes the fish's stomach contents. Quinn's idiosyncrasies parody the rituals of Nick Adams, where the details of catching and cleaning fish are described in sacramental tones. At the same time, however, McGuane demonstrates Quinn's genuine respect for nature. The style may ridicule Hemingway's flourishes, or it may ridicule those who think that Hemingway's style is flawless. But, it does not ridicule the feeling for nature that Hemingway evinces.

James Quinn contrasts sharply with the other characters in *Sporting Club*. Yet, his character also contains aspects of their personalities, and he is the closest thing to a protagonist in the novel. Most notably Quinn identifies with Jack, the Sporting Club's manager. Olson is the ideal hunter and sportsman. The club has taken property from his family, but he cares about the club's preservation. He has the land and its animals' welfare at heart, and he respects nature and its gifts. Olson is skillful and sensitive, the perfect hunter and fisherman, taking only what he

needs. McGuane places Quinn and Olson in opposition to the Centennial Club members with their pathetic skills and inflated egos. He also contrasts these two characters with the spoiled, perpetually juvenile Vernor Stanton, whose self-destructive impulses affect all those around him.

Quinn and Stanton are old friends/adversaries. Since boyhood they have had a relationship which is hard to characterize as friendship. Quinn has been victimized by Stanton throughout his life. They have been bad boys together, or rather, Stanton has brought out Quinn's badboy tendencies since childhood. Quinn identifies with Stanton's rebellious streak, which he admires because Stanton defies the hypocritical status quo, but they are no longer boys, and Stanton refuses to grow up. Quinn has taken over his father's factory and made a success of it to everyone's surprise. He likes to work and feels responsible to the company and its employees. He has his mail forwarded to the club and telephones the office to supervise the factory as best he can while he's away. Quinn still feels bound to Stanton on several fronts, but he realizes Stanton's shortcomings. Further, Stanton no longer attracts Quinn and others because he cannot accept change.

The book treats the destruction of the Centennial Club, the oldest sporting club in Michigan. Picaresque characters and situations provide a picture of the

darker aspects of contemporary American society. At the same time, McGuane longs for meaning and fulfillment. Ethics involving work, love, and respect for the environment are juxtaposed with the inherent corruption of accumulated and hereditary wealth and power. And McGuane uses the hunting metaphor to explore these areas.

The title, *The Sporting Club*, connotes upper middle class American decency and tradition, as well as an acceptable level of New World snobbishness. The club's location in Michigan adds another Hemingwayesque touch. Hemingway was born and grew up in Michigan, where he had his first hunting and fishing experiences. The Michigan setting suits plot development as well as character development. Hunting and fishing are stressed as manly pursuits. On the other hand, dressing for dinner and the club's other socially elite practices overlap with country club standards. McGuane stresses the dichotomy between the club's ostensible ideals and its corrupt practices. More important he historicizes that gap.

At the climax of the novel, a time capsule is unearthed and a 100 year old photograph is recovered. When the time capsule is opened, it reveals a photograph of the founding fathers engaged in an orgy. The details of the photo reveal that the club members are not only engaged in sex with each other, but with

animals as well. The caption at the top of the picture reads, "Dearest Children of the Twentieth Century, Do you Take Such Pleasures as Your Ancestors?" (202). As if the discovery of the photo isn't bad enough, the club members cast off all sense of decorum and begin their own orgy. In this scene McGuane breaks down the last of the club's pretensions, reverence for the past. The literal destruction of the club is simultaneously taking place. Earl Olive and his gang are busy tearing things down and blowing things up with Stanton's assistance.

Olive is captured and tied up, and Quinn tries to save him because he sees the members have become as crazed as Olive in their efforts to subdue him. Quinn is captured and tied also. Stanton takes to his machine gun to rescue Olive and Quinn. Finally, the police arrive and Quinn is cooperative in explaining what has happened as the police pore over the photograph. Such outrageous action eliminates any semblance of verisimilitude. This isn't a "real" story. However, it does illustrate McGuane's real concern with living a moral life. His portrayal of those who abuse their power is merciless and bespeaks his depth of feeling. He uses the metaphor of sport to express his passion.

For McGuane hunting is sport, not a subsistence activity. But, he plays endlessly with the concept of hunting as search. Every important character in the

novel is searching, hunting for something. In the broadest sense, each of them is searching for meaning. *Who one is and what one is* are the underlying questions McGuane explores in *The Sporting Club*.

The reviews of *The Sporting Club* were mixed. Some critics saw reflections of Fitzgerald and *The Great Gatsby*.¹ Others found the plot and characters uninteresting and McGuane's style unsuccessful.² All of them pointed up McGuane's stylistic and thematic links to Hemingway and Faulkner. These reviews center largely on McGuane's character development, with references to "class" as a key ingredient. Class and heredity are preoccupations of the clubs' members, but class and heredity do not guarantee their claim to the title "hunter."

"Class" is used as a way to treat the hierarchical range of characters in the novel, and several critics focus on this idea in their comments. The terms "aristocrat" and "class" are often used interchangeably and both are applied to the work and to its author. In one *Best Sellers* review, Stanton is referred to as "the wealthy aristocrat [who] invites his rich co-members to annihilate everything" (O'Hara 28)³. Another review by Andre Deutsch in *TLS* begins, "Since this is a novel about the American ruling class, it is in our own interests to note some of their reactions to Europe" (927)⁴. One member of the club has converted to

Catholicism and is distressed at the passing of Pius XII, the "aristocratical Pope." The same review raises some other points about the type of hunting that requires the lower class to beat the bushes for game, while the ruling class shoots, often to the peril of the beaters.

But two of the better type, Stanton and Quinn, find this kind of hunting insupportable, insufficiently chivalric and aristocratical....We are introduced to the Centennial Club, founded in 1868 by lumber barons, with membership handed down from father to son; the members in 1968 are very wealthy men, industrialists and the like, spending their summer holidays posing as hunters and pioneers in acres of virgin land: proud of their history, they intend to open a "time capsule" buried by the founders in 1868....Gradually, as the plot becomes less plausible and the language grows more extravagant and Joycean, we are made aware that some kind of parable about America is being offered....The club's historian Spengler...researches into the founders' ill deeds, their techniques of exploitation and expropriation, their failure to become aristocrats....Partly it is an exposure of gentlemanly pretensions, the fraudulence of claims to superiority founded on inheritance....The time capsule is dug up and found to contain a filthy photograph of the club founders, committing sexual indecencies....If it's genuine, no wonder their children failed to become aristocrats....Thomas McGuane has control over his wild narrative, holding it between naturalism and fantasy, with language that is enjoyably surprising but rarely forced. (927)

Deutsch's remarks reinforce how McGuane portrays corruption in America and the language he employs.

Like Faulkner in "The Bear," McGuane defines what is genuine through showing what is not genuine. Inherited wealth and power are the least reliable ways of judging who is moral. One is reminded of Ike's legacy from his father, which he rejects when he finds out the truth of his ancestors' crimes. In *The Sporting Club*, the telling photograph reveals the degenerate nature of the club's founders. In both instances, the past speaks to the present and deflates any pretense that tradition or inheritance implies moral authority.

Like Faulkner, McGuane uses language to create an appropriate tone for his message. Deutsch points out that McGuane's choice of character names have significant literary and historical allusions, but that understanding the novel does not depend on decoding McGuane's references.

Since "Spengler" is so direct a literary reference, the same may be true of other characters. "Stanton" is a name well known in American history. Possibly some kind of cryptogram is in operation like that of Julian Gloag in his recent "masterpiece", [sic] *Maundy*. But even if there is such a code to be broken, *The Sporting Club* is strong enough to stand without it, making many kinds of sense without the reader needing to know the author's key. (927)

McGuane's education and reading would rule out his use of these names as coincidental. That Deutsch has previously used the term "Joycean" to characterize

McGuane's language also reinforces comparisons with Faulkner. That McGuane makes "many kinds of sense without the reader needing to know the author's key" seems accurate. But, the reader has to have his own key. I see McGuane's use the concept of "sportsman" as the key to reading character in the novel. He draws on the style of other American authors like Faulkner and Hemingway to provide resonance for what his themes. Again, the good hunter/sportsman is the good man. The hunter/sportsman who violates the order in nature reveals his own degeneracy.

Other reviews draw comparisons with Faulkner, Hemingway, and Fitzgerald. Sara Blackburn writes:

In the way it sets about conveying its vision of American life, this tight, funny, elusive, and aristocratic novel reminds one of *The Great Gatsby*. Set at an upper-class hunting and fishing club in Michigan, it describes the close and sadistic friendship between two rich young men whose exasperation with each other is mitigated by their common contempt for their marvelously stuffy club members. When the club's centennial celebration reveals the real nature of its revered founders, the hell which has preceded the events recedes a bit, and for a moment the real nature of the two heroes' relationship is also clarified. Contained within this hard, wry, thoughtful tale, is a good deal of beautiful writing about hunting and fishing. Mr. McGuane is one of the most original and interesting young novelists to have appeared in a long time. (475)

Blackburn focuses on the nature of McGuane's characters, particularly the relationship between Quinn

and Stanton. She characterizes the novel itself as aristocratic. But McGuane's treatment of the socially pretentious is quite different from Fitzgerald's in *Gatsby*. McGuane's broad strokes in *Sporting Club* made the novel a target for commentary which termed it a "para-novel, the put-on novel, the sub- or pseudo-novel" (4) by Joyce Carol Oates.

Oates characterizes Stanton as "the American aristocrat."

"The Sporting Club," a first novel, owes a great deal to Bellow, to the talky, impatient, mad Henderson who would be king": its American aristocrat, by necessity a millionaire, by necessity also dissociated from his family and his class, is a man named Stanton who is either a lovable rogue, though somewhat sadistic, or a terrible bore.... "The Sporting Club" brings together two old friends, the brooding and unpredictable Stanton, and the more reliable, more ordinary, more conscientious Quinn, who admires and loathes Stanton. Quinn, a businessman who enjoys business, is Stanton's natural and enthusiastic antagonist; Stanton, who does not work but...mainly drinks and "swarms,"...The [other] characters are mainly high-toned sportsmen and their wives, descendants of the club's original members, and a colorful crew of Snopesian troublemakers who, at Stanton's invitation, proceed to annihilate the club.... Old admirations for Faulkner's similar gambles by way of tall tales and outrageous events may partly mitigate the growing awareness of a kind of comic-strip robustness. (4-5)

The reference to the Snopes-likes characters present in *Sporting Club* is yet another connection between

Faulkner and McGuane. Earl Olive is the most Snopesean of the novel's characters. He is antithetical to any notion of aristocracy. Faulkner's Snopes clan is not only repulsive on a personal level, they are destructive to the community that they prey upon. For instance, in "Barn Burning," the inevitable tool of revenge for the father is setting barns afire. He does this in retaliation for wrongs committed either real or imagined toward him and his family. Yet, the horror of the act remains indefensible no matter what the provocation. Olive and his entourage are a less grim but no less destructive bunch. Christopher Lehmann-Haupt refers to Earl Olive as "a low-life Snopesian redneck" and characterizes the conflict between Olive's crew and the club's members as "class warfare" (35). He also comments that "It's true, as the flap copy of his book advertises, that Thomas McGuane writes about men in wildlife nearly as well as Hemingway did. He can also stage the interplay of obscure symbolism as intricately as Thomas Pynchon can" (35).

Other critics such as Granville Hicks were far more negative about McGuane and his novel, "It all winds up," Hicks writes, "with what is no doubt supposed to be a Rabelaisian climax. McGuane writes well, though not so well as some of his admirers think, but much of the book is the sort of thing that, in the old days, bad boys wrote for private circulation among

their classmates. It will probably succeed in paperback" (31). *The Booklist and Subscription Books Bulletin* begins its review with: "A deteriorating plot centers on the fiasco created by a half-insane, bored-with-life millionaire bent on destruction who incites tensions among the membership of an exclusive sporting club during the summer of their centennial celebration" (1060). *Publishers' Weekly* is not quite so harsh when it pronounces the novel "not completely satisfactory" (267), but it does say that McGuane is someone to watch. It also comments: "On one level it's [*The Sporting Club*] a bizarre treatment of the ribald rivalry between two wealthy sportsmen. On another it is an oddly interesting allegory about civilization's lack of progress, a fantastic parable about a world run amok that ends with a scene of almost Breughel-like horror" (267).

The critics also differ concerning the protagonist of the novel. Some see Stanton as the central figure, others Quinn, others Stanton and Quinn. Olson is also central, though he exits the action early book when he is fired as manager of the club. Lehmann-Haupt stresses Olson's importance: "Outdoor sports and sporting clubs are ritualizations of the deadly competition that is America and Western Civilization. Get rid of Jack Olson, who all alone subordinates

blood-lust to the balance of nature, and you invite the holocaust" (35).

I would argue that Quinn is the protagonist of *The Sporting Club*, or the closest thing to a protagonist that McGuane allows. The novel begins with a description of the club from "Blucher's *Annals of the North* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1919)":

Centennial Club (formerly the Shiawasee Rod and Gun Club): Grandest of the original sporting clubs of the Northern Lower Peninsula, founded by the barons of lumbering who logged off the white pine stands of the Saginaw Country. Its charter was written in 1868 while the big timber was being converted to pioneer houses on the treeless prairies of the West. The operations of the Centennial Club are shrouded in well-guarded mystery. Nothing is known of its procedures but that membership is handed from fathers to eldest sons. The vastness of the Centennial land holdings is widely known: they extend from the Pere Marquette to the Manistee. A mounting body of evidence has pointed to the club's large influence in state and local politics. The grounds include many buildings of interest, principally the MAIN LODGE***** which is a distinguished early example of G.K. Truax's "country style" though much modified both by the capricious architectural tastes of early-time lumber barons and by the use of amateur Indian labor. Nearby are some smaller club buildings worth the visitor's attention. These include the GAZEBO**** and a well-constructed TOOL-SHED.* Tours are occasionally arranged during winter months. (*The Sporting Club* 11-12)

The narrator then comments on the entry in Blucher's, indicating that it is misleading because there was never a tour. He also notes that the actual view of

the club would be disappointing because the members are "in favor of roughing it" (12). The wry comment, "Even the tool-shed disappoints," unmistakably sets McGuane's satiric tone.

After this rather cryptic beginning, we see Olson and Quinn driving from the front gate of the club toward the buildings, and the topic of conversation is Stanton. Quinn's dread of Stanton is the first thing communicated to the reader, and Olson reinforces this emotion. Olson tells Quinn that Stanton has a wife and that he has built a dueling gallery in the basement of his cottage. Once Quinn arrives at his own cottage, he decides to visit Stanton. He cuts through the woods, arrives at Stanton's place, and after a few preliminaries, they go to the basement and duel. Quinn loses and discovers that Stanton uses wax bullets. He has a painful red spot over his heart, but he isn't otherwise injured. He is shaken, however. He's also angry but relieved and braces himself for future duels with Stanton, who has taunted him since childhood. The duel is a dangerous game, and it's unclear why Quinn feels compelled to participate. This world of upper class, American sportsmen is alien and bizarre. Dueling, the ultimate gentlemen's contest, occurs early in the novel, setting the scene for increasingly bizarre behavior and events.

Quinn likes his business and is doing well with it. Although it probably wouldn't matter if he weren't because he and Stanton and other club members are millionaires. However, Quinn has very little self-confidence. He does not have Stanton's ruthless disregard for others. Quinn hates his secretary, Mary Beth, but he can't fire her because of his compassion for a fellow human being. He knows this is a "failing" of his in the business world. The one place where Quinn excels is in sport, which is illustrated when he goes fly fishing. He dresses for the occasion, walks to the stream, notes the abundant mayflies, threads his rod, puts on waders, enters the water, then faces upstream and prepares to cast.

He made his false casts carefully, the lengthening line up high on the sunlight and the rod beginning to flex its full length into his hand. With his left hand holding the free line below the reel, he adjusted the tension of the cast so that the bow of line was correct and satisfactory. He finished the cast. The line straightened before him. The fly floated down and touched the water. It glided, then vanished. The line went tight when he lifted the rod. The rod was now bowed toward the straight line that swung out of the pool to the main stream in the middle where it was furrowed and marked with the silver arrows of the suntrack. Quinn held the rod high. He felt the curve of its lose rigidity. The fish broke and so began to lose ground. When it broke again it was splashy and without violence and came slowly to the net. At the net, it bolted once more and swung around behind but a moment later was in hand, a trout of two pounds that Quinn, with his thumb securely under the gill

covers, held first against the trees and then against the sky before he put it in his creel. He rinsed the crushed fly in the water to rid it of slime which would sink it, blew hard on it until its hackles were upright and the false wings of feather stood out from the hook. He began his casting once again. He shortened the timing of his first cast so that the line cracked very slightly like a whip and there was a small cloud of vapor in the air where the fly had been. The fly was now absolutely dry and when it landed on the water it stood high on its sharp hackles and floated the way an insect does.

When the mayfly hatch was finished and the fish had quit feeding, he had five good trout. On the way back to his cottage, he paused four times to open the wicker creel and look at the trout he had put in wet ferns and arranged in a hierarchy of magnitude.
(25-26)

The extended description is detailed in the Hemingway manner. The passage is also a serious description until the very end, just before Quinn encounters Stanton again. The genuine quality of this and other portions of the narrative dealing with true sport provoke the reader as much as the glib and overtly satirical portions. The lack of irreverence, rather than the presence of reverence conveys McGuane's attitude toward man in nature. Man in nature is truly man at his best.

Another serious subject is Quinn's feelings for Janey, who is supposedly Stanton's wife. However, Quinn discovers that she and Stanton are not legally husband and wife. Janey loves, but will not marry,

Stanton. Quinn asks Stanton, "'Why won't she marry you?'" to which Stanton replies, "'Says I'm too mean and crazy. She says she's sorry she loves me and I don't blame her. I think it's bad luck for her too. I'm not domestic'" (46). Quinn feels chivalrous toward Janey. He admires her because she is loyal to Stanton, who treats her poorly in public and lovingly in private. She realizes Stanton's gaping flaws and accepts him, anyway. Quinn would like such a woman but realizes she will not leave Stanton for him. If she would, she would not be the paragon he loves. Quinn is noble in that he aspires to do the right thing, but he is weak when it comes to Stanton. He has always been bullied by him, and he can't seem to shake his influence. Quinn admires the way Stanton defies the hypocritical club members, and serves as his stooge in most of the annoying pranks that Stanton dreams up to aggravate the members.

Quinn suspects Stanton may self-destruct, and this fear is reinforced by Janey in a conversation early in the novel. Quinn empathizes with Janey because underneath the layers of resentment, he is devoted to Stanton himself. "Quinn thought of Janey trying to contain this corrosive silliness and she seemed so much in danger that he thought of himself as the rescuer....'Well, I hope you still like him,' she said. 'Can't you tell I do?'" (51). In a strange way, Quinn

is bound to Stanton and in conflict with him. The presence of Janey clarifies the line that Quinn must walk between friendship and personal interest. Quinn would like to court Janey and reject Stanton and Stanton's hold on him. He would like to act in his own selfish interest; but, he can't. What stops him is his inherent nobility, though he is far from a conventional hero. Quinn is not larger than life, and he does not perform miraculous deeds. His appeal is that he enjoys work and has a sense of honor in matters of friendship and love. And no matter how picaresque the situation, he behaves well. He also shows his inherent decency in his behavior toward Janey and Stanton. But, Quinn best demonstrates his goodness in the natural world.

However, Quinn does balk when he learns that Stanton wants to totally destroy the club. The first step Stanton wants to take is firing Jack Olson. The resentment toward Olson by the members is based on their jealousy and snobbishness. Olson leaves, but he has the vengeful satisfaction of appointing his successor. Earl Olive is his demonic opposite. Olson sought to preserve the club and its lands; Olive seeks to destroy it in the most perverse way he can. Olive seems a cartoon character in a cast of already exaggerated personalities. However, this dehumanizing of characters allows for interpretive freedom. The characters become representatives rather than

individuals. Therefore, the novel has allegorical possibilities, which can be examined at the story's conclusion.

The action builds to the Founders' Day ceremony when the time capsule is opened and the photograph revealed. This is the last action by the members of what is left of the club after Stanton and Olive have created havoc. In the last scene of the novel Quinn visits Stanton, who has purchased the defunct club lands and now resides with Janey and his young male caretakers. Stanton is still rich, but completely crazed. His "features had clarified impressively under madness and loss of weight. He seemed heroic and at one with his illusions" (218). When Quinn and Stanton once again duel, they do not use real pistols but pace off and turn and say "bang, bang." Quinn is left alone in his bed listening to the silence of the house.

The quotation which precedes the opening of the novel is "Whirl is King" from Aristophanes. In other words, chaos rules when all order is absent or has been destroyed. McGuane provokes us to step back and think about the outlandish goings on and the characters who perpetrate the action. If Stanton were completely powerless at the end of the novel, it might lead to a neater interpretation of the whole. But, Stanton buys the club and its grounds and makes sure that Quinn retains his cottage. Stanton's money ensures his

power. Quinn's business declines after his cooperation with the police.

The police, five of them, came up the main entrance the next day. Quinn, the only member there who saw nothing to hide or preserve, was cooperative. He answered all questions with an agreeable and efficient air. He watched the cops press around the photograph, making a blue shrine of their bodies. He felt this hermetic, outlandish thing punctured at last, a century of bad air expiring. The publicity and uproar that followed that year produced a decline in Quinn's business. The feeling was that he had sold his own kind down the river. (217)

Of course, "his own kind" were not the club members or other businessmen, or even his "friend" Stanton. Quinn is alone. Olson, his only possible ally, is long gone; Janey is forever attached to Stanton. Quinn begins the novel in the middle of conflicting forces and ends also in the middle. He will be able to continue his beloved hunting and fishing, but he will be caught between the worlds of commerce and nature.

Like Quinn, McGuane's life has been spent in conflicting worlds. In his book of essays, *An Outside Chance* (1990), he discusses his liminal position. Particularly in his essay, "The Heart of the Game," he demonstrates his position on the edge.

The rear quarters of the antelope came from the smoker so dense and finely grained it should have been sliced as prosciutto. We had edgy, crumbling cheddar from British Columbia and everybody kept an eye on the food and tried to pace themselves. The snow

whirled in the window light and puffed the smoke down the chimney around the cedar flames. I had a stretch of enumerating things: my family, hayfields, saddle horses, friends, thirty-aught-six, French and Russian novels. I had a baby girl, colts coming, and a new roof on the barn. I finished a big corral made of railroad ties and two-by-sixes. I was within eighteen months of my father's death, my sister's death, and the collapse of my marriage. Still, the washouts were repairing; and when a few things had been set aside, not excluding paranoia, some features were left standing, not excluding lovers, children, friends, and saddle horses. In time, it would be clear as a bell. I did want venison again that winter and couldn't help but feel some old ridge-runner had my number on him. (235-236)

Here, as elsewhere, the balancing point in McGuane's life is his reliance on nature. He invokes the figure of writer and naturalist Aldo Leopold as he reveals what is probably the closest thing to his philosophy of life.

Aldo Leopold was a hunter who I am sure abjured freeze-dried vegetables and extrusion burgers. His conscience was clean because this hunter was part of a larger husbandry in which the life of the country was enhanced by his own work. He knew that game populations are not bothered by hunting until they are already precarious and that precarious game populations should not be hunted....A world in which a sacramental portion of food can be taken in the old way--hunting, fishing, farming, and gathering--has as much to do with societal sanity as a day's work for a day's pay. (234)

"The Heart of the Game" is a pregnant title for the essay. The word "game" connotes the literal game

hunted and the game of life, and of course, the two are part of the same game. The description of Aldo Leopold echoes that of Jack Olson, "For Olson, hunting and fishing were forms of husbandry because he guaranteed the life of the country himself" (*Sporting Club* 62). Another resilient echo lies in McGuane's account of why the club's members resented Olsen, "In short, they wanted to kill as he killed without the hard-earned ritual that made it sane."

McGuane comments on the corruptions in modern life through the metaphor of the hunt. Living a moral life in a degenerate world requires striking a balance. The only power the individual has is control over his own conduct, and for McGuane, developing such personal power lies in negotiating the natural world.

Ayla and the American Girl

While Thomas McGuane uses hunting as a touchstone for judging character, Jean Auel uses hunting to illustrate the possibilities of woman's personal power. Both authors use hunting to define an individual's identity. The character Ayla, created by Auel, represents the experience of American women in the latter part of the twentieth century, especially the 1970s-1990s. Auel focuses on the concept of "otherness" in her portrayal of Ayla. Ayla is a Cro-

Magnon woman, adopted by a tribe of Neanderthal hunter/gatherers. This tribe is unable to appreciate her character and potential. Ayla's many qualities set her apart from the other members of her adoptive tribe.

Auel's premise is that Neanderthals had hereditary memories, hence their ability to inherit knowledge learned over the course of the species' history. The Cro-Magnons' more developed frontal lobes enabled them to reason and innovate. That Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon co-existed and mated drives the plot. Paleoanthropologists believe "around 40,000 years ago...Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon had already been coexisting for tens of thousands of years" (Fowler 21)⁵. Such interaction, especially cross-mating, suggests amalgamating disparate forces in different societies. And this concept echoes the early American colonial ideal of peoples united by intermarriage. Amalgamation juxtaposes two questions. Shreeve asks, "What is it exactly that makes us human?" (Fowler 21). Also, within the context of our experience on this continent, what is it exactly that makes us American? Fowler, cites Shreeve's work and addresses the former question.

In the past, paleoanthropologists have tried to place the origins of our humanity in bipedalism, or in toolmaking and cooperative hunting, or in the very capacity to adapt that allowed us to spread across so much of the planet. But each of these adaptations

has in turn been shown as insufficient to have secured the route to where we are now.
(21)

Bipedalism, toolmaking, and cooperative hunting are part of the answer, but not the entire answer. Fowler goes on to say that at the point when Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon had coexisted for tens of thousands of years, and at a point about 35-40,000 years ago

...the archeological record shows a sudden, marked change. A wealth of new tools appear, as do, for the first time, examples of symbolic expression, in the form of the Venus figurines and cave paintings. It is here, most paleoanthropologists now agree, that we first recognize human beings as they are today....Shreeve...proposes that it was the mobility of Cro-Magnon people, a trait not shared by Neanderthals, that allowed them to mate outside the immediate social group, resulting in alliances that laid the groundwork for these cultural innovations.
(21)

Mobility is an enduring characteristic of American culture. Inherent in the freedom of physical movement is a corresponding intellectual freedom. Extending the hunting metaphor, as McGuane does, includes the idea of searching for meaning in life. The physicality of hunting makes the activity particularly apt as a trope. The hunter is one who pursues game for survival, and at the same time, one who searches for a place in life.

In *Clan of the Cave Bear*, Ayla begins her adventures as prey rather than hunter. However, she is

also searching for a place in life because the earth has literally dropped out from under her. She is a child of five when an earthquake strikes. She has been swimming in the nearby river and is separated from her family forever when their dwelling is swallowed by the quake. Ayla runs blindly from the rumbling and follows the stream over the course of several days. Weakened by hunger, exposure, and exhaustion, she wanders from the old growth forest into the steppes where she encounters a herd of aurochs, "the huge reddish brown wild cattle, six feet high at the withers with immense curving horns" (*Clan of the Cave Bear* 8). She tries to avoid a bull aurochs and faces more peril when the immense cave lions stalking the edges of the herd see her. While the lioness hunts an aurochs, the male lion pursues Ayla. When she realizes her plight, the child scrambles along the rock wall and finds a small cave to hide in as the lion attacks.

In her panic, it was only instinct that led her to the small hole near the ground in the face of the cliff. Her side aching, and gasping for breath, she squeezed through an opening barely big enough for her. It was a tiny, shallow cave, not much more than a crack. She twisted around in the cramped space until she was kneeling with her back to the wall, trying to melt into the solid rock behind her.

The cave lion roared his frustration when he reached the hole and found his chase thwarted. The child trembled at the sound

and stared in hypnotized horror as the cat snaked his paw, sharp curved claws outstretched, into the small hole. Unable to get away, she watched the claw come at her and shrieked in pain as it sunk into her left thigh, raking it with four deep parallel gashes. (9)

The portrayal of Ayla as prey, as victim of forces immeasurably more powerful than she, is a central motif throughout the book. The episode where Ayla is clawed becomes important later on. She is marked by the giant cat, and this is a sign of her totem, her symbolic link to the spirit world. Until she is found by the medicine woman of the Clan, she is nameless, referred to in Auel's narrative simply as "the child" and "she." Her position changes very slowly as the story progresses.

Ayla's vulnerability provides tension in the narrative. At first, Ayla is utterly powerless; as she develops skill as a hunter she reverses her position as prey and becomes an almost mythic heroine. She is tall with long, blond hair. These characteristics distinguish her within Clan society, whose members dark, short, and stocky. Ayla's physical beauty and her epic struggle point to her romantic appeal, which accounts, at least to some degree, for the wide popularity of book enjoyed.

The first chapter of *Clan of the Cave Bear* deals with Ayla alone. After the clawing by the lion, she

hovers in the tiny cave for a day and half with the lion pacing back and forth in front of the only opening.

The child remained in the small cramped cave through the day, that night, and most of the following day. The leg swelled and the festering wound was a constant pain, and the small space inside the rough-walled cave had little room to turn or stretch out. She was delirious most of the time from hunger and pain and dreamed terrifying nightmares of earthquakes, and sharp claws, and lonely aching fear. But it wasn't her wound or her hunger or even her painful sunburn that finally drove her from her refuge. It was thirst.

She looked fearfully out of the small opening. Sparse stands of wind-stunted willow and pine near the river cast long shadows of early evening. The child stared at the grass-covered stretch of land and the sparkling water beyond for a long time before gathering up enough courage to move beyond the entrance. She licked cracked lips with a parched tongue as she scanned the terrain. Only the windswept grass moved. The lion pride was gone. The lioness, anxious for her young and uneasy about the unfamiliar scent of the strange creature so near their cave, decided to find a new nursery. (9-10)

Ayla crawls across the terrain to the river, manages to drink enough water to stay alive, then collapses. She has reached the limit of her strength. At the end of the chapter, a carrion bird is circling above.

At this crucial point the Clan comes upon the almost dead child. The hunters in front look at her and pass her by; but Iza, the medicine woman of the

Clan and sister of the leader, Brun, wants to take her with them. Brun is not anxious to take on anything new and strange, especially since they have just lost their home and six of their members, in the earthquake. The Clan, now numbering only twenty, must find a new cave and perform a cave ceremony. Iza is central to that ritual, and if she is upset it might anger the spirits. Brun therefore leaves the decision to Iza, and so begins Ayla's new life. In her narration, Auel creates the internal speech of the various Clan members; they communicate through subtle hand signals and gestures, utilizing only a few guttural sounds.

The society of the Clan is described in detail--to the division of labor and the semi-nomadic wanderings of these hunter/gatherers. Iza is introduced first.

She was just over four and a half feet tall, large boned, stocky, and bow-legged, but walked upright on strong muscular legs and flat bare feet. Her arms, long in proportion to her body, were bowed like her legs. She had a large beaky nose, a prognathous jaw jutting out like a muzzle, and no chin. Her low forehead sloped back into a long, large head, resting on a short, thick neck. At the back of her head was a boney knob, an occipital bun, that emphasized its length.

A soft down of short brown hair, tending to curl, covered her legs and shoulders and ran along the upper spine of her back. It thickened into a head of heavy, long, rather bushy hair. She was already losing her winter pallor to a summer tan. Big, round, intelligent, dark brown eyes were deep set below overhanging brow ridges, and they were

filled with curiosity as she quickened her pace to see what the men had passed by. (11)

Iza is pregnant, but she carries a load which is no less heavy than she would carry at any other time. All the women in the Clan are laden with the belongings of the Clan. Iza is distinguished by her medicine bag, which she carries along with her other burdens. "One bag was particularly distinctive. It was made from an otter hide, obviously so because it had been cured with its waterproof fur, feet, tail, and head left intact" (11).

Ayla's physical appearance immediately contrasts with the Clan members'. She has almost white hair, and a thin body. She is naked when they find her. Brun looks at her, "at the thin young girl with the high forehead, small nose, and strangely flat face. 'Not Clan,' the leader gestured abruptly and turned to walk away" (12). Brun is a larger version of Iza.

The leader of the small clan stared down at the imploring woman. He was much bigger than she, over five feet tall, heavily muscled and powerful, with a deep barrel chest and thick bowed legs. The cast of his features was similar, though more pronounced--heavier superorbital ridges, larger nose. His legs, stomach, chest, and upper back were covered with a coarse brown hair that was not enough to be called a pelt, but not far from it. A bushy beard hid his chinless jutting jaw. His wrap was similar, too, but not as full, cut shorter, and tied differently, with fewer folds and pouches for holding things.

He carried no burdens, only his outer fur wrap, suspended on his back by a wide band of leather wrapped around his sloping forehead, and his weapons. On his right thigh was a scar, blackened like a tattoo, shaped roughly like a **U** with the tops flaring outward, the mark of his totem, the bison. He needed no mark or ornament to identify his leadership. His bearing and the deference of the others made his position clear. (12-13)

Two main schools of thought address the role of Neanderthals in human history. In a review of *The Neandertal Enigma* by James Shreeve, Brenda Fowler notes that:

On one side of the debate over the place of Neanderthals in human evolution are scientists like Chris Stringer of the British Natural History Museum, who argues that the Neanderthals were ultimately outcompeted or driven to extinction by our ancestors *Homo sapiens sapiens*[sic], called Cro-Magnon in Europe. According to Mr. Stringer's "out of Africa" hypothesis, *Homo sapiens* evolved on that continent and then moved into the rest of the world, beginning about 100,000 years ago, replacing all other descendants of *Homo erectus*. Still to be explained is how the replacement occurred.⁶

Recently Shreeve's view has been challenged by a theory of parallel evolution:

Milford Wolpoff of the University of Michigan, who zealously opposes the Stringer theory, is leader of a camp known as the multiregionalists, who hold that since the dispersal of *Homo erectus* at least one million years ago, human populations everywhere have evolved down the same, albeit broad, path. Sufficient gene flow among them prevented them from splintering into a new species. In this view, the Neanderthals were

the European variety of *Homo sapiens*, which ultimately evolved into us.⁵

Computer "morphs," recreations/projections of what the Neanderthals looked like, reconstructed from remains of their skeletons, are a dramatic addition to the information emerging from ongoing study. Great strides have been made since the early 1970s, which refute the older view of Neanderthals as "brutes." The "personalities" of the Neanderthals in *Auel's Clan* reflect the modern view, while reinforcing the element of their foreign appearance. However, in the scientific community, even this foreign appearance is challenged:

Since the first Neanderthal bones were dug up in Germany in 1856, the idea of the Neanderthal has swung from the stooped and stupid brute to a being who would blend in fairly well in a contemporary crowd, at least as long as he kept his mouth shut. (Fowler 21)

Rick Gore describes what he imagines might be a scene in the lives of the cave-dwelling Neanderthals:

Staring into the gloom, I imagine the cave's ancient inhabitants, wrapped in bear skins, huddled near a fire. The haunches of a reindeer roast in the fire. A mother nurses her infant. Children playfully throw pieces of bone into the flames. An old woman tends the wounds of a hunter with an herbal ointment. The strong smells of smoke, unwashed bodies, and rotting carcasses thicken the air.

Flames highlight the Neandertals' faces, accentuating their broad noses and the thick browridges over their eyes. They lack the strong chins and high foreheads of modern humans. Instead their skulls slope back low over their brains. Beneath their eyes, their faces jut forward, making their cheekbones angle to the side rather than facing front, as ours do. (6)

Gore refers to "these early humans" when discussing the Neanderthals, rather than "pre-humans" or "sub-humans." Recent excavations have yielded tools that required great skill to make. Indications are that the Neanderthals hunted in highly organized groups for very large animals. They also cared for the sick and the weak, and "spoke at least a rudimentary language" (6). What is striking is not that portrayals coincide in science and in fiction. But, that desire to establish a link with the Neanderthals as human transcends particular disciplines and theories.

In *Clan*, cooperative hunting appears first in Neanderthal society. In the later volumes by Auel, cooperative hunting also takes place in the "Other," that is, the Cro-Magnon, populations. Hunting is central to the portrayal of the Clan, to the movement of the plot, and to the power of Ayla's character. Ayla must teach herself to hunt, and then hunt alone because she is doing something forbidden. Later, when her secret is out, she becomes "the woman who hunts" and can join the Clan's men in the cooperative effort.

Ayla's struggle throughout the book is grueling. Even at the end of this volume, she is banished to make her way in a daunting landscape. Her "aloneness" is emphasized by the constant danger that surrounds her. Her difference sets her apart, and it sets her up as a model. She contrasts sharply with the rest of the Clan. Not only her looks, but her thinking marks her as foreign. Auel constantly reinforces images of entrapment through descriptions of physical ability and culture. She shows the Clan members in daily life, living in their cave, hunting, gathering, making tools, teaching one another. The way Ayla learns defines her difference.

From the time she is adopted by the Clan, communication is the most dramatic obstacle in her life. In a sense, she is trapped by her very lack of limitations. The tall, blue-eyed blondness of Ayla is repeatedly emphasized in these descriptions--with resulting negative commentary from the critics. "Auel's Neanderthals grunt. They are a good deal more apelike, physically and mentally...and Auel's Cro-Magnon heroine is a typical Aryan--blond, blue-eyed, tall and beautiful" (Mertz 6). When she meets her soul-mate, Jondalar, in *Valley of Horses*, the critics are even more savage. "[Jondalar is] 6 feet 6, with charismatic blue eyes and enough sexual finesse to make Masters and Johnson shout hosannas....Of course, this

golden couple (their blondness is stressed almost ad nauseam) is no ordinary twosome; they are archetypes" (Isaacs 14).

Clan and Valley, as well as the rest of the series so far, have been referred to as "cave operas"--soap operas taking place in the Middle Paleolithic age. Even the severe critics admit the books are fun to read. They combine a wonderful story with scientific information and romantic elements.

For the most part, the reviews have praised Auel's research in anthropology, though they find some reason to challenge her findings. For example, John Pfeiffer comments:

When it comes to certain details about the appearance and cerebral apparatus of the Neanderthals, anthropologists may grumble about "The Clan of the Cave Bear."...Even literary license cannot justify endowing the Neanderthals with brains having "almost no frontal lobes." Also, they were not bow-legged, and it is rather unlikely their vocal chords were less developed than ours, or that such a difference would have seriously affected their ability to communicate verbally.

In the last analysis, however, such points do not really matter. There was a great and subtle gap between the Neanderthals and their successors, people like ourselves, and Mrs. Auel has caught its essence beautifully. She has written an exciting, imaginative and intuitively solid book. She is planning five more prehistoric novels (the series is called "Earth's Children"). I look forward to reading them as I look forward to her own

evolution as a writer and her versions of human evolution. (7, 20)

Pfeiffer's review indicates that Auel has touched a responsive chord. Even if she employs flawed or debatable evidence, Auel's work remains powerful. She graphically portrays the Neanderthals' speech limitations and weaves them into the fabric of her narrative to underscore Ayla's plight.

Clan society is based on strict adherence to gender roles, which are dictated by the needs of the hunter/gatherers. They must migrate seasonally to pursue the food supply. The women gather plants for food and medicine, and the men hunt according to an inflexible hierarchy of age and status. They must be in tune with nature to survive, and even their spiritual lives are driven by their relationship with nature. Individual spirits, represented by animals are believed to guide and protect each Clan member. The influence of these totemic spirits are the Clan's explanation for individual personality traits. Hunters usually have predator totems that guide them in the hunt. That Ayla's spirit is the cave lion, or more accurately, lioness, is unprecedented. Mogur, the Clan's religious man, assigns each member's totem, male and female, during the first year of life. Because she is adopted, Ayla's totem is assigned when she is five. The markings on her leg from the encounter with the

cave lion secure her claim to the powerful totem. In a society ruled by gender roles, Ayla's departures from tradition lead to her ostracization.

When Ayla moves from Neanderthal to Cro-Magnon society, she finds that their central deity, the Mother, is a female god. Jondalar, Ayla's lover, introduces her to this belief system in the second volume of the series, *The Valley of Horses*. This belief system centers around hunting as well. A hunter thanks the Mother for her bounty when he or she kills game. In such a society, the women hunt, too. However, Ayla is still special in this culture because of her skill.

Her own motherhood has been curtailed, also, when she is banished from the Clan, and her son goes with her former people. He is a mixture of the two peoples, but the Clan is the only way of life he has known. Ayla's hunting deprives her of her son. Unlike the lioness who is her totem, Ayla cannot care for a child by herself and hunt. Clearly, Auel alludes to the choice between motherhood and independence women face in any patriarchal society.

Ayla's skills as a hunter are exceptional. She devises a way to use a sling employing two stones instead of one, and her accuracy is deadly. Again, she is portrayed as larger than life, and here too, critics deride her character as implausible.

And no one had ever wielded a sling in rapid-fire fashion, inserting and hurling a second pebble as soon as the first had been released. But Ayla teaches herself that trick, thereby breaking a taboo forbidding women even to touch hunting weapons, and she uses it to kill a hyena in the act of dragging off a baby boy. (Pfeiffer 22)

Ayla's talents are evn more extensive in *Valley of Horses* with commensurate criticism. Susan Isaacs remarks that "it is Ayla, and Ayla alone, who invents oral sex, horseback riding, a new technique for making fire and a better way of dragging the kill back to the cave" (14). She also refers to Jondalar as "the ultimate civilized Cro-Magnon, a well-muscled, artistic, spear-throwing Cary Grant" (14). But, negative commentary aside, the larger consideration is that Auel has succeeded in connecting us to our most ancient past.

Jean M. Auel has created ancestors who do us all credit. She has gone beyond the cliché of leopard-skin-covered, club-wielding grunTERS and presented a panorama of human culture in its infancy. Her characters enjoy celebrations, companionship, sex, travel and good cooking. They care for children and animals. They discuss art and religion. They are very much like us, although generally better behaved. And that's the best part of the book [*Valley*], to look back with Mrs. Auel and savor what we might have been. (14)

From the point where Ayla is adopted by the Clan in the first book, hunting is used as a touchstone of

her difference and independence. Clan society is organized around hunters, and the gender roles reinforce that society's dependence upon maintaining the status quo. With Ayla's introduction into the Clan, the entire society is disturbed and then threatened as a result of her presence. The metaphor of change then becomes primary, for Auel, and its expression is couched in terms of hunting. Ayla is the instrument of the shift from strict observance of gender roles, based on hunting, to innovative applications of hunting which delineate the Clan's decline. Auel emphasizes the Clan's reliance on tradition. Ayla's existence and interaction with the Clan point up its decline. Her ascendance to power points up the limitations, and therefore, the impending doom of the Neanderthals. Auel's message is clear. The Clan is endearing but obsolete. The ideas they embody have been valuable for the time, at least a hundred thousand years of human existence, but that time is passing, The Others, the Cro-Magnons, have emerged.

The Clan has found Ayla because they have been displaced by the same earthquake that destroyed her people. They are the Clan of the Cave Bear, *Ursus*, the gigantic, vegetarian bear. The Clan's legends underscore the integral relationship between the giant cave bear and the way of life of the tribe. The Clan's

spiritual essence, its totem, is tied to the life of this bear. They revere it beyond all other creatures. It, too, will become extinct. Its existence and the Clan's will pass as the climate changes because they cannot adapt.

Their holy man, the Mog-ur, Creb, is a misshapen and scarred old man whose personal totem is also the cave bear. He was clawed and almost died as the result of a cave bear's attack when he was a child. He is the only male of the Clan who cannot hunt, but whose status is the most sacred and respected. He is the antithesis of Ayla physically, but almost her soul mate spiritually. The opposition of their physical attributes is a constant reminder of Ayla's tenuous position in the Clan. It is because Ayla is able to touch Creb emotionally that he protects her and ensures her life with the Clan. She communicates with him on a level more intimate than anyone else in the Clan. She is not awed or repulsed by his appearance.

The left side of his face was hideously scarred and his left eye was missing, but his good right eye sparkled with intelligence, and something more. For all his hobbling, he moved with a grace that came from great wisdom and a sureness of his place within the clan. He was Mog-ur, the most powerful magician, most awesome and revered holy man of all the clans. He was convinced that his wasted body was given to him so that he could take his place as intermediary with the spirit world rather than at the head of his clan. In many ways he had more power than

any leader, and he knew it. Only close relatives remembered his birth name and called him by it. (16)

Creb is the sibling of Iza, the medicine woman, and Brun, the leader of the Clan. Throughout the book, they each have flashes of insight about Ayla's significance. This process begins when they come across the child, as they search for a new cave.

They needed a shelter; but almost more important, their protective totem spirits needed a home, if they hadn't already deserted the clan. They were angry, the earthquake proved that, angry enough to cause the death of six of the clan and destroy their home. If a permanent place for their totemic spirits was not found, they would leave the clan to the mercy of the evil ones that caused illness and chased game away. No one knew why the spirits were angry, not even Mog-ur, though he conducted nightly rituals to appease their wrath and help relieve the clan's anxiety. They were all worried, but none more than Brun. (17)

The spirits are those of the animals they hunt, the animals which sustain life. Usually, the males are guarded by the more powerful animals and the females by the less aggressive ones. The spirits are also the source of life. According to the Clan's theory of reproduction, a woman's totem struggles with that of a male's totem. If his totem defeats hers, she conceives. She does this by swallowing the essence of the man's totem. If she has a particularly strong totem, several males' totems may be required to

overcome hers. Usually, it is the totem of one(s) near her on a regular basis.

There is no connection in the Clan's scheme of things between sexual intercourse and the birth of babies. It is entirely a spiritual process. A girl is first eligible to conceive when her totem struggles for the first time and bleeds to show it is wounded. If her totem is overcome, she no longer struggles and the child grows within her. The strength of a totem is determined by its association with the strength of the animal it represented. Mog-ur's totem is the cave bear itself, the totem for the entire Clan. Creb's personal totem is the roe deer. Since surviving the attack of a cave bear, he has two totems. Every night they are without a new home, it is necessary to call upon the spirits to show them the way.

They all knew what came next, the ceremony never changed; it was the same night after night, but still they anticipated. They were waiting for Mog-ur to call upon the Spirit of Ursus, the Great Cave Bear, his own personal totem and most revered of all the spirits.

Ursus was more than Mog-ur's totem; he was everyone's totem, and more than totem. It was Ursus that made them Clan. He was the supreme spirit, supreme protector. Reverence for the Cave Bear was the common factor that united them, the force that welded all the separate autonomous clans into one people, the Clan of the Cave Bear...."Great Ursus, Protector of the Clan," the magician said with formal signs, "show this clan to a new home as once the Cave Bear showed the Clan to

live in caves and wear fur. Protect your Clan from Ice Mountain, and the Spirit of Granular Snow who begot him, and the Spirit of Blizzards, her mate. This clan would beg the Great Cave Bear to let no evil come while they are homeless. Most honored of all Spirits, your Clan, your people, ask the Spirit of Mighty Ursus to join with them as they make the journey to the beginning." (27-28)

The "journey to the beginning" is a telepathic experience that the hunters of the Clan share, where they visit their origins in a combined racial memory of their own evolution. The Mog-ur who has developed his powers beyond all others, directs the shared memory.

Because they venerated the cave bear, Mog-ur evoked a primordial mammal--the ancestor who spawned both species and a host of others--and merged the unity of their minds with the bear's beginning. Then down through the ages they became in succession each of their progenitors, and sensed those that diverged to other forms. It made them aware of their relationship with all life on the earth, and the reverence it fostered even for the animals they killed and consumed formed the basis of the spiritual kinship with their totems. (29)

The strength and the limitation of the Clan lies in its brain structure. Their brains are "full" and cannot accommodate new knowledge. This limitation makes change very difficult, if not impossible. Their large heads make it hard for the women to give birth, and they are doomed to extinction.

When Ayla joins them, Iza is amazed that she has survived the clawing which clearly shows on her left

leg. No one can understand how she has escaped since the giant beast had to have her in its grasp to do such damage. She is special from the beginning. Iza knows how to treat the infected scratch wounds because she is heir to the healing knowledge of generations of medicine women. She has their memories. Furthermore, the Clan's hereditary memories are sex differentiated. "Women had no more need of hunting lore than men had need of more than rudimentary knowledge of plants. The difference in the brains of men and women was imposed by nature, and only cemented by culture" (36). The division is nature's attempt to limit the size of the brain to prolong the race, "But nature's attempt to save the race from extinction carried with it the elements to defeat its own purpose" (37). The sexes are both essential for day to day living as well as procreation. They cannot learn one another's skills; they haven't the brain capacity to store the necessary knowledge.

As the Clan travels, the men hunt and the women gather. They move from the forest to the plains, where game is easier to find. "Animals were easier to hunt out in the open, easier to see without the cover of forest to hide them, cover the that hid their four-legged hunters as well" (44). Ayla's long, straight legs allow her to move quickly. She explores ahead and discovers the new cave that will become the Clan's

home. They explore the cave and find the bones of a cave bear within. It's the best of all possible omens, and they will be able to move in if the first hunt is successful. Brun decides to make the hunt his son Broud's manhood hunt. Clan's plot consists of one hunt after another. The Clan hunts for a cave. They go on several hunting expeditions. Ayla hunts also. She hunts for her place in Clan society, and she hunts animals. Finally, she must hunt for a new life, alone.

Creb decides upon Ayla's totem and announces it at the cave ceremony. Since Ayla is to be adopted by the tribe Creb asks to form his own hearth with his sibling, Iza, Ayla and Iza's baby when it comes, if it is female. If the baby is male, there will have to be other arrangements because a boy has to be trained by a hunter. Iza's mate was one of those killed during the earthquake and she must now be provided for. Other babies' totems will be announced at the cave ceremony, and Broud's manhood ceremony will be conducted as well. Creb's psychic connection to Ayla is such that he envisions the appropriate totem for her. However, his reasoning mind initially rejects the message sent by his deepest feelings.

Clutching his amulet, he implored the spirit of the Great Bear to bring forth the spirit of the totem that protected the girl born to the Others. This was a true test of his ability, and he wasn't at all sure the message would come through to him. He

concentrated on the child and what little he knew of her. She is fearless, he thought. She had been openly affectionate to him, showing neither fear of him nor of censure of the clan. Rare for a girl; girls usually hid behind their mothers when he was around. She was curious and learned quickly. A picture started to form in his mind, but he pushed it aside. No, that's not right, she's female, that's not a female totem. He cleared his mind and tried again, but the picture returned. He decided to let it play out; perhaps it was leading to something else.

He envisioned a pride of cave lions lazily warming themselves in the hot summer sun of the open steppes. There were two cubs. One was leaping in the tall sere grass, poking her nose curiously into the holes of small rodents and growling in mock attack. It was a she-cub; it was she who would grow into a lioness, the primary hunter of the pride; it was she who would bring her kill to her mate. The cub bounded up to a shaggy-maned male and tried to entice him to play. Fearlessly, she reached up with a paw and batted the adult cat's massive muzzle. It was a gentle touch, almost a caress. The huge lion pushed her down and held her with a heavy paw, then began washing the cub with his long, rough tongue. Cave lions rear their young with affection and discipline, too, he thought, wondering why this scene of feline domestic felicity came to him. (59)

Creb tries to get the vision out of his mind, but it remains before him. He cannot accept that a female could have such a strong totem. Even men did not usually have such a strong spirit. He realizes that she is not Clan, and then he has a flash of insight. She has already been marked by the giant cat. This clear sign links her to the clan memebtrs with powerful

totems. When young men have their manhood ceremonies after their first hunt, they are marked with the sign of their totemic spirits. The Clan's sign for a cave lion is four parallel lines, cut into the skin. Ayla's mark, however, is on her left leg. He also reasons that this is entirely appropriate because she is female. He feels he has been given an undeniable message from the spirit world, and as unlikely as it is, it seems very clear.

Creb identifies with Ayla because he has been marked himself. He was born deformed and then mauled by a cave bear. He understands what it is to be born different and removed from society by forces beyond his control. No one comes near him because of his physical deformity except Ayla and Iza. And, Ayla is the only one overtly affectionate to him. She has reached up and touched his face without reservation, much as the female cub reaches up to the usually fierce lion. He is a deeply spiritual man and has denied his own emotions all his life. The position of magician in his tribe is one he takes very seriously. His prayers to the spirits are sincere pleas to understand what he and the Clan are supposed to do.

Of course! Why hadn't he realized it before? The lion knew it would be difficult for the clan to accept, so he had marked her himself, but so clearly, no one could mistake it. And he marked her with Clan totem marks. The Cave Lion wanted the Clan to know. He wants

her to live with us. Why? The magician was jarred by a feeling of uneasiness, the same feeling he had experienced after the ceremony the day she was found. If he'd had a concept for it, he would have called it a sense of foreboding, yet tinged with a strange unnerving hope.

Mog-ur shook it off. Never had a totem come so strongly to him before; that was what unnerved him, he thought. The Cave Lion is her totem. He chose her, just as Ursus chose me. Mog-ur looked into the dark empty eye sockets of the skull in front of him. With profound acceptance, he marveled at the ways of the spirits, once they were understood. It was all so clear now. He was relieved--and overwhelmed. Why should this small girl have need of such powerful protection? (60)

Creb's interest in Ayla and his sense that she is special is the beginning of her trouble with the Clan, especially the leader's son, Broud. He becomes the instrument of her totem's test, as she views it. He successfully leads the first hunt and his manhood ceremony is a triumph, until it is revealed that Ayla's totem is the Cave Lion. Then, everyone turns their attention to her, attention which Broud needs to feel secure. His jealousy is fostered over several years, and he believes that Ayla is seeking to supplant him. He focuses all his frustrations and blames all his inadequacies on her. He becomes her personal demon. Although she does not intend it, she becomes his.

Ayla embodies female power in a male-dominated society. Auel's work takes the metaphor a step further

and shows Ayla as the future, not simply as a remedy for the past. She is not just Cro-Magnon; she is female Cro-Magnon. Her accomplishments are linked to the evolution of mankind. One of the most dramatic incidents is when she shows that abstractions are natural to her. It is Creb who discovers her facility. It astounds him because he has an inkling of the true significance of her difference. Ayla asks when she will be a woman. Creb realizes that numbers are difficult for the Clan to grasp. He makes slash marks on a stick to indicate how old she is, and then adds more slash marks to indicate how old she might be to give birth. In a flash, Ayla does subtraction which amazes the magician.

"I will be old enough to have a baby in this many years," she gestured with assurance, positive of her deduction. The old magician was rocked to his core. It was unthinkable that a child, a girl child at that, could reason her way to that conclusion so easily. He was almost too overwhelmed to remember to qualify the prediction.

"That is probably the earliest time. It might not be for this many, or possibly this many," he said, striking two more slashes on the stick. "Or, perhaps even more. There is no way of knowing for sure."

Ayla frowned slightly, held up her index finger, then her thumb. "How do I know more years?" she asked.

Creb eyed her suspiciously. They were getting into a realm with which even he had difficulty. (128-129)

He goes on to explain that after one has used up one's own fingers and put them across slash marks, and then used the fingers of another's hands, one must imagine yet another person's hands. Ayla doesn't miss a beat and extrapolates instantly that one then imagines another person and another and another. Creb is, of course, stunned.

The impact was too much. His mind reeled. With difficulty, Creb could count to twenty. Numbers beyond twenty blurred into some indistinct infinity called *many*. He had, on a few rare occasions after deep meditation, caught a bare glimpse of the concept Ayla comprehended with such ease. His nod was almost an afterthought. He had a sudden understanding of the gulf between the mind of this girl and his own, and it shook him. He struggled to compose himself. (128)

This exchange is a precursor of many to come where Ayla's superiority is apparent. Her threat to the Clan is doubly felt because she is Cro-Magnon and female. In the Clan, women are feared if they depart from their habitual roles. Legends have it that at one time, women controlled the magic to intercede with the spirit world. They cannot ever be reminded of that time or the delicate balance which allows the Clan to survive will be disrupted.

Ayla tries to fit into Clan life, but her mind works so differently that she cannot remain unobtrusive even though she desperately seeks acceptance. She loves the legend of Durc, which teaches that one should not deviate from what is preached by tradition. She focuses on the part of the legend where Durc takes the initiative and tries to save the Clan. He travels south even though he has been told to wait for the return of the mog-ur who's gone off to talk to the spirits that control the encroaching glacier. The point of the story is to trust the one in authority because the mog-ur returns and saves the Clan. Durc and his party who have left against orders are never heard from again. Ayla likes to think that Durc found a new home for himself and his followers.

Her desire to be alone is especially disconcerting to people who are dependent upon cooperative living. Ayla loves her adoptive mother and Creb. When Iza gives birth to a daughter, Ayla is delighted with her baby "sister." But, she feels the pressure of constantly suppressing her natural impulses. She yearns to escape the clan's constant scrutiny. This desire leads her to become a hunter. She is out gathering for Iza's medicines and comes across the men practicing with their weapons. This episode will determine her path for the rest of her life. She wants the bark of wild cherry that Iza has sent her to

collect, and the men are practicing near the grove where she must collect it. She should turn around and depart. The taboo against women touching hunting weapons is clear. Women are not even supposed to touch tools that make weapons, let alone witness the men when they practice and have private meetings.

But, Ayla is determined to collect the wild cherry for Iza. She decides to wait until the men leave the area. She is also fascinated by the use of the weapons, and though intimidated, she is not more fearful than curious. She watches the practice with the sling and sees Broud lose his temper after he tries to show off. He pushes an older man, Zoug, and receives a severe reprimand from Brun. The men leave the field after the uncomfortable incident. The discarded sling which had been at the center of the controversy is retrieved by Ayla. She knows it is wrong, but she is drawn to try the weapon. After several attempts, manages to hit the practice post. Although it is mostly luck, she is encouraged. She also rejoices that she can do something Broud cannot.

Ayla's life now begins to become her own. She practices in secret; she learns to make a new sling by watching the artisans among the men. She decides that if she becomes proficient with the sling she will try to hunt. She is more and more by herself and discovers a small cave where she caches several articles. She

develops competence with the sling but does not realize that her new confidence shows in her demeanor. She has always been indefinably different, but now her composure is apparent to everyone, especially Broud. He is driven by his uncontrollable temper to assault Ayla. Ayla's attitude finally sends Broud into a rage. He nearly kills her, and Brun considers disowning him if he ever shows such lack of control again. Broud, of course, blames Ayla for his state, and swears revenge. Outwardly he acquiesces to his father's threat. Once Ayla is aware that Broud will no longer overtly assault her, she engages in a battle of wills to repay him for his tyranny. She oversteps her bounds, though, and once again, Broud is in a position to dominate her.

Ayla interprets Broud's treatment as a sign from her totem that she is to be tested. If found worthy, she will be able to hunt, which she has an inexplicable urge to do. Her resolution helps her endure. In the spring, she decides that her totem has given her the sign to begin her secret occupation. Since she cannot bring her kill back to the Clan, she does not kill animals used as food. She kills predators which steal food from the Clan and present a threat to their well-being.

Ayla increasingly takes comfort in ranging far afield, and her skills as a hunter develop rapidly.

She teaches herself to use two stones in rapid fire, and becomes self-conscious about her craft.

She looked at the dead animal at her feet and let the club fall from her hand. Awareness of the implications of her deed came slowly. I killed a hyena, she said to herself as the impact hit her. I killed a hyena with my sling. Not a small animal, a hyena, an animal that could kill me. Does that mean that I'm a hunter now? Really a hunter? It wasn't exultation she felt, not the excitement of a first kill or even the satisfaction of overcoming a powerful beast. It was something deeper, more humbling. It was the knowledge that she had overcome herself. It came as a spiritual revelation, a mystical insight; and with a reverence deeply felt, she spoke to the spirit of her totem in the ancient formal language of the Clan. (208)

When the Clan makes a trip to the nearby inland sea to fish, Ayla saves a baby girl from drowning. She is the only one who swims, a skill she had learned before she left her old home. It has been another of her peculiarities. But, when she retrieves the child, she distinguishes herself once again. The crucial trial for her comes when she finally reveals her secret, that she hunts.

The Clan is on a mammoth hunt, and Broud's son is dragged away by a hyena. After the successful hunt, Broud has triumphed and shown his bravery. The women have been preparing the meat to transport back to the cave, and scavengers have been skirting the camp. Brac is playing away from the others, and the hyena grabs

him. Again, Ayla springs into action. After the efforts of the others to hurl stones at the beast fail, Ayla flings two stones and has others ready to kill the animal. She kills the hyena immediately and pries the baby's arm from the hyena's jaws.

The Clan is amazed, but they face a dilemma. No woman can touch a weapon, let alone hunt. The penalty is death. Even though she has saved Broud's son, he is most vocal against her. The leader considers all the options. He consults with Creb. After much suspense, she is condemned with a death curse, that is no one will see her. Everyone will regard her as dead, and she will disappear. But, her curse is only temporary. She is condemned for a month, and winter is coming. No one else could survive alone, but Ayla does. She retreats to the cave she found in earlier days when she was practicing with the sling in secret. She can hunt and provide for herself, and she does. To the Clan's surprise, she returns after her month of loneliness and living death.

Ayla's troubles do not end with her miraculous return. She is repeatedly raped and beaten by Broud and gives birth to his son. Finally, she is banished permanently. In the novel's final scene she must leave her son, but she resolves not to die; she will seek her own people.

Ayla does have a moment of solace and vindication when she outfaces Broud at the end. She knows the little children see her, and tells her son she loves him. She asks Brun to protect her son and receives the slightest indication that he understands and agrees. She walks up to Broud.

"I'm not dead, Broud," she gestured defiantly. "I won't die. You can't make me die. You can make me go away, you can take my son from me, but you can't make me die!"

Two emotions vied within Broud, fury and fear. He raised his fist in an overwhelming urge to strike her, then held it there, afraid to touch her. It's a trick, he told himself, it's a spirit's trick. She's dead, he was cursed.

"Hit me, Broud! Go ahead, acknowledge this spirit. Hit me and you'll know I'm not dead."

Broud turned to Brun, to look away from the spirit. He lowered his arm, uncomfortable that he could not make it look natural. He hadn't touched her, but he was afraid just raising his clenched fist had acknowledged her, and he tried to pass the bad luck on to Brun.

"Don't you think I didn't see you, Brun. You answered her when she was talking to you, before she went into the cave. She's a spirit, you'll bring bad luck," he denounced.

"Only on myself, Broud, and what more could I have? But when did you see her talk to me? When did you see her go into the cave? Why did you threaten to strike a spirit? You

still don't understand, do you? You acknowledged her, Broud, she has beaten you. You did everything you could to her, you even cursed her. She's dead, and still she won. She was a woman, and she had more courage than you, Broud, more determination, more self-control. She was more man than you are. Ayla should have been the son of my mate."
(495)

Ayla is surprised at Brun's eulogy, and it is all the solace she is to have because she is dead to the Clan. But, Ayla must struggle on, which she does in the next volume of Auel's series.

In *The Valley of Horses*, she is still alone. She wanders far from the Clan and finds a valley where she spends lonely years. She raises a colt, which she rides. She also adopts a cave lion cub that mauls two men who wander into her territory. One is killed, and she nurses the other back to health, and he becomes her companion. She will finally be united with her own people, but this leads to other adventures and challenges.

Valley begins on the same stark note present in *Clan*. But it shifts once Jondalar enters her world. She has been and will always be defined by what she has suffered and what she has learned. She will also always be between worlds. Ayla has had to be her own world, contain her own universe.

Ayla, like McGuane, has to develop a personal code for conducting her life. When she was unable to meet

the expectations of the Clan, she faced both literal and emotional death. Hunting saved her spiritually and physically. She is able to redefine herself precisely because she hunts, and hunting is the way she finds a new life. Like McGuane, she speaks to the power to survive social constriction and offers another illustration of the provocative character of the hunter figure.

Notes
Chapter Five

¹See Sara Blackburn, rev. of *The Sporting Club*, by Thomas McGuane, *Nation* 14 Apr. 1969: 208.

²See T. O'Hara, rev. of *The Sporting Club*, by Thomas McGuane, *Best Sellers* 15 Apr. 1969: 28.

³*Ibid.*

⁴See Andre Deutsch, "Foundering Fathers," rev. of *The Sporting Club*, by Thomas McGuane *TLS* 2 Aug. 1969: 927.

⁵See Brenda Fowler, "Where Did He Go?" rev. of *The Neandertal Enigma*, by James Shreeve, *NYT Book Rev.* 17 Dec. 1995: 21.

⁶*Ibid.*

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