DUAL TEXTS IN THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN NOVEL

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English

by

Michael D. DuBose

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The dissertation of Michael D. DuBose was approved* by the following:

James L. W. West III  
Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of English  
Director, Penn State Center for the History of the Book  
Dissertation Adviser  
Chair of Dissertation Committee

Sandra Spanier  
Professor of English  
General Editor, Hemingway Letters Project

Hester Blum  
Associate Professor of English  
Interim Associate Director, Institute for the Arts and Humanities

William Blair  
College of the Liberal Arts Research Professor  
Director of the Richards Civil War Era Center

Mark Morrison  
Department Head  
Professor of English and IST

*Signatures are on file in the Graduate School.
Abstract

My dissertation examines the publication of and issues related to single stories that exist in more than one version—what I term “dual texts.” This phenomenon occurs across the literary landscape, but has gone relatively uninvestigated with regard to the twentieth century. My analysis looks at major writers and texts with unique composition histories and concludes with a discussion of e-reader technology and the challenges facing textual stability in the future. This dissertation uses textual analysis and the principles related to scholarly editing as its chief methodological strategy. Dual texts are put into play by a variety of agents, from editors (commercial and scholarly) and literary executors to the authors themselves. This project analyzes the major differences between dual texts and investigates the reasoning behind their production.
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Introduction

Single texts have existed in multiple versions since readers first began to conceptualize the possibility of a single text. Manuscript culture itself presupposes the circulation of multiple copies of a text; human fallibility and/or creativity necessitates that variations will occur in the acts of transcription, exchange, and repeated transcription. Eventually, a single piece of literature evolves into multiple pieces, and one text becomes multiple texts. The scholarly editor’s challenge originally was to filter, emend, and (re)create that original, single authorial creation that would serve as the foundational text.

The editor’s ability to achieve the ideal text depends on the existence, availability, and quality of the materials at hand. In some cases, as with sacred texts, the sensitivity and scarcity of documents leaves projects perpetually ongoing. In other disciplines, such as performance, it is nearly impossible to recreate the original presentation of a piece. No matter how comprehensive the evidence, one cannot account for the taste of a conductor, director, or performer let alone the historical contexts of time and place. As authorship has developed into a marketable profession, so too have the number and availability of manuscripts and pre-publication documents. More documents require more editorial judgment and thus more interpretation. When so many issues must be resolved subjectively, disagreements are inevitable.

Even accepted “final” scholarly editions might be improved or changed as new minds tackle old problems. The fate of few texts is ever finally sealed. Editorial philosophy and social expectations change from one generation to the next; scholarly editions will reflect these changes. One could hardly have expected that Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn* would be edited to exclude the word “nigger” in the twenty-first century, yet a scholar has recently done just that (Kakutani C1). This edition has met with fierce resistance, but how will it be regarded in fifty
more years? A hundred? What parts of the canon will future societies deem unacceptable? Every generation will feature an editor who presents a newer and further “improved” text. The cycle continues as scholars aspire to editorial perfection. Multiple texts begin to be more and more ubiquitous.

Occasionally, even mainstream America can be drawn into issues related to textuality. In the vitriolic, drawn-out campaign for the Republican Presidential Nomination, dual texts became a point of contention between Rick Perry and Mitt Romney. Perry accused Romney of changing his 2010 book, *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness*, between the hardback and paperback editions. In a September 2011 debate, Perry charged that the first edition of Romney’s book argued for individual health insurance mandates (as were legislated during Romney’s tenure as Massachusetts governor) for the entire country. President Obama had cited the insurance policies put into place under Romney as part of the model for his own health insurance legislation. For a collection of primary candidates battling for the Republican base, Obama’s statement became a lightning rod for criticism of the Romney campaign. Perry, desperate to gain traction in the contest, made the changes in Romney’s book a principal element of his political strategy.

The crux of Perry’s argument lies in an eleven-word revision in chapter seven, titled “The Massachusetts Model.” In the original edition, the offending (to Perry) sentence reads: “We can accomplish the same thing for everyone in the country, and it can be done without letting government take over health care.” The revised sentence sounds more generic: “And it was done without government taking over health care” (“Says that Romney . . .”). Perry’s attack, of course, relied on taking this sentence out of context and weighing it against remarks from politicians that were unrelated to Romney’s positions. For Perry, the changed text made the books exceptionally
different; Romney’s political ambitions were secondary to his policy positions. There was now undeniable proof in the form of a dual text.

Perry’s claims forced the press covering the Republican Primary to act the part of the textual scholar. A Pulitzer Prize-winning project from the Tampa Bay Times, Politifact.com, concluded: “Perry's right that Romney's comments about health care were edited between editions,” but disagreed with Perry about the import of the differences. “Perry exaggerates by making it sound as though Romney had advocated his state's plan as national health care policy. . . . That's not what Romney wrote. We rule Perry's claim Mostly False” (“Says that Romney . . .”). The attention called to No Apology caused other reporters to make a comparison of the two texts. Writing for the Boston Phoenix, David S. Bernstein traced the additions and excisions Romney made to his book between editions. He discovered Romney certainly tried harder in the second text to firmly articulate his disapproval of Obama’s health care legislation. Even if Perry was wrong (or “Mostly False”), the accusation drew attention to No Apology and to what Romney (at least at the time of publication) thought about policy and what he feared that his first version did not make clear. The now-likely Republican nominee appears to have thought he needed to shore up his conservative, anti-Obama credentials in the paperback version of the book.

This example will ultimately become a footnote in the long history of American political theater. The issue does show, however, that there can be serious consequences to altering texts once they are in the public sphere. For Rick Perry and his supporters, every anxiety circulating around Mitt Romney’s presidential aspirations could be captured in this one moment of perceived textual duplicity. In the political climate of the 2012 Republican Primary, there was certainly a chance that Perry could have captured the Republican base with this attack if he had
been more deft in his delivery; however, Perry’s own fumbling performances in the primary debates became the bigger story as the race went on. The question of whether or not a case of dual textuality would swing the political fate of the United States was mostly left unresolved.

In literature, though, we can play out these questions and develop answers to them. Sometimes one text does not supersede the established edition, nor does the editor imagine that it should. Conversely, the “perfected” edition may not have the caché, cultural or literary, to overtake the version established in readers’ minds. Even further, two texts of the same narrative can exist side by side, different enough to be considered separately. These dual texts can occupy the same time and place and even individual bookshelf. They might also have a much larger impact on the world outside of literary criticism, as the example above indicates. This is where my project begins.

In this dissertation, I will examine dual versions of American novels of the twentieth century to discover the circumstances that led to the duality of the texts and the additional insights a dual text gives into the creative act of the writer or into the process and intention of the editor. To this end, I have selected works from throughout the twentieth century and across the literary landscape. Each example will provide a particular situation that facilitates the creation of dual texts: the scholarly editor creating a text that has heretofore not existed or reshaping a text to better capture the author’s intention, and commercial and scholarly editors working with posthumous materials to craft unreleased fiction. Likewise, I will also examine authors who endeavored, while still alive, to change work already released into the literary world: for the reshaping of certain particulars decades after initial publication, to present “final” authorial versions, and to try to create cohesion between past and future works.
The New York Edition of the Novels and Tales of Henry James, published by Scribner’s in New York and Macmillan in London between 1907 and 1909, might be the best-known example of dual textuality in American and British literature. James took four years to select, edit, and significantly revise the texts he considered central to his oeuvre. He also wrote introductions, and prefaces, and collaborated with early photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn on frontispieces for the volumes. The volumes of the New York Edition were significantly different from their previously published versions—new texts for a new century. They show James trying to rebrand and rewrite his own literary legacy, even selecting the title of the selected works to market himself as a more American author: “I should particularly like to call it the New York Edition if that may pass for a general title of sufficient dignity and distinctness. My feeling about the matter is that it refers the whole enterprise explicitly to my native city—to which I have had no great opportunity of rendering that sort of homage” (Horne “Revisitings”). When discussing dual texts, one must acknowledge James’ endeavor with the New York Edition as one of the first and most intensive examples.

However, I am not taking up James and the New York Edition in this dissertation for two reasons. First, James and the New York Edition seem to me products of the nineteenth century and the texts that comprise the selection were originally published in the nineteenth century (even if the edition appeared in the first decade of the twentieth). I have focused this dissertation instead on American novels of the twentieth century; James status as an American writer, even with his decision to invoke the place of his birth with the title of the New York Edition, is more unstable than the other authors in this study. Second, the New York Edition has been analyzed at length by scholars more familiar with James and his career than I am, including Michael Anesko and Philip Horne (among many others). These scholars do provide a useful strategy for dealing
with the analysis of dual texts. Their focus on publication history, bibliographic coding, and the influence of the market provide useful directions for my own analysis of dual textuality. Even if James is not treated directly in this dissertation, the critics who have engaged the dual-text issues of the New York Edition have informed my own analysis.

The dissertation will conclude with a chapter discussing the future of textual stability. As reading technologies change, advance, and increase in number, literary studies will adapt to scenarios in which “single” texts are no longer relevant or appropriate. To help illustrate my point, I will examine a medium that constantly advances in both the production and archiving of texts: the movies. The cinema industry has dealt with the issues of textual stability since its inception, and I believe that we can predict the major issues facing literary texts in the coming years by looking at some instructive examples from motion pictures. While scholars and experts alike have lamented the death of print before, the increased and ever-increasing digitization of all aspects of life indicate, perhaps for the first time, a real challenge to print’s control over the written word. It therefore behooves scholars, textual and otherwise, to begin outlining theoretical and practical ways to interpret, discuss, and edit works that do not conform to traditionally published forms.

The study of competing and multiple versions of a text has had a long history within the field of poetry. Whitman treated his *Leaves of Grass* as a lifetime project, with the first edition published in 1855 and the final, “death-bed edition” appearing in 1891–92. Whitman’s first edition included a modest twelve poems, but his final vision of the book contains nearly 400 individual poems, not to mention the changed bibliographic codes from one edition to another. Within the twentieth century, Marianne Moore put her poem “Poetry” through multiple revisions, some more drastic than others, resulting in a constellation of texts that speak to both
Moore’s changing attitude toward her craft and to each other. There are also examples of editors working after the author’s death. The poems in the first edition of Sylvia Plath’s *Ariel* were selected and organized by Ted Hughes, whose relationship with Plath fueled much of the creative force behind the book. Later editors took exception to Hughes’ choices and edited the book to reflect what appeared to be Plath’s intentions at the time of her death.¹ Readers will find a very different tone and narrative arc in the later book, even if many of the poems are the same. Critics and scholars alike have taken the time to analyze these and similar dual texts within poetry. One such scholar is Jack Stillinger.

In his *Coleridge and Textual Stability: The Multiple Versions of the Major Poems*, Stillinger argues for conceptualizing versions of works through “textual pluralism”:

> . . . textual pluralism, is based on the idea that each version of a work embodies a separate authorial intention that is not necessarily the same as the authorial intention in any other version of the same work. The three theories are also relatable to the story of the Three Bears. If we could imagine a textual theorist named Goldilocks, the latest-test theory might be judged to be too old-fashioned, stuffy, and mechanical a way to treat a literary work; the earliest-test theory might be judged to be too radical, too leveling, and above all too impractical; and the third of the theories, allowing for textual pluralism, might be judged to “just right.” (119)

Stillinger goes on to point out that textual versions are “ubiquitous” in our literary culture: “If one considers such traditionally extratextual matters as book and magazine design, format, typography, illustration, and numerous aspects of context . . . the possibilities for variation are endless, even when the actual words of a text . . . remain the same” (121).²
I agree with Stillinger’s premise about textual plurality as it has to do with poetry. Poems are self-contained works of literature that, by tradition, alter as their context changes (either in location or performance or as the author’s and audience’s needs change). Stillinger shows how Coleridge created multiple versions of his work as he “repurposed” the poems. To capture the full breadth of possible meaning, poetry must be examined with respect to each of these instances; each version is a separate and discrete literary act. Stillinger sees this as leading to a textual instability in Coleridge’s work, but finds that the creation of a constellation of meaning for individual poems was a part of Coleridge’s literary project. The “best text” philosophy of textual editing does not account for these separate occasions; traditional scholarly editing determines meaning only after multiple texts have been collapsed into one, definitive version. For Stillinger, this process strips much of the complexity away from Coleridge’s art.

Allan Chavkin relies on Stillinger’s concept of textual plurality for his analysis of the first two versions of Louise Erdrich’s Love Medicine (taken up in Chapter IV). However, the idea of textual plurality, while excellent for works of verse, does not adequately treat the issue of novels in multiple forms. Mainly, the problem rests with the length of the work and the internal cohesion inherent to narrative. Changes echo throughout a longer text. A reader or critic has little trouble understanding the range of meaning that a single poem, with multiple versions, produces. The works are short enough to analyze minute changes through different contexts while keeping the platonic form of the poem implicit in readers’ minds. With a novel, however, changes ripple through hundreds of pages and, at some level, inflect meaning on every page. An alteration to a character, for example, informs, explains, justifies, and otherwise influences the behavior of that character throughout the text. When multiple revisions are made between versions, treating the two texts as simply echoes of each other fails to accommodate the ripples that spread through the
text to create new readings. Even small changes can grow in importance as the narrative progresses.\textsuperscript{5} What is instead created is a discrete text that is separate from previous versions—not simply a variation on a theme. In other words, a dual text.

My study of dual textuality investigates the differences between stories that emerge from a single manuscript, but that, for whatever reason, have undergone alteration to create separate versions that can no longer be comfortably considered as the same work. These texts have become literary artifacts worthy of discussion as distinct and individual works of art—not just as variations on some standard, accepted conception of the work (as textual plurality would have us do). The examples I am considering for this dissertation are diverse in both author and genre, but uniform in that they are longer pieces of fiction from the twentieth century. I examine well-known writers and works as well as a less studied work that stands just outside the purview of standard literary criticism. My intention is to show that dual texts occur across the literary spectrum and for reasons commercial, artistic and scholarly—sometimes all three. My methodology will be direct textual analysis supplemented with the letters, interviews, and archival materials available for each author or editor. The fundamental challenge: identifying the differences between two texts and determining what difference the differences make—those that are related to the text proper as well as the myriad bibliographic codes that shift from text to text. This style of criticism is rooted in concrete scholarship. As long as the words on the pages stay the same and composition/publication histories remain stable, the work completed in this project will not become obsolete.

My goal is to trace why, when, and how dual texts emerge and what can be learned about a work or author from the relationships between the two texts. In the case of posthumous work, what can we learn about the uses and purposes of a literary afterlife and about those who craft it?
That Ernest Hemingway’s continuing popularity, both commercial and academic, has much to do with his posthumously published works is a telling example. In promoting an author who has published new work in every decade since the 1920s—but who died in 1961—Hemingway’s literary executors have had a significant influence on how his reputation has developed over the last fifty years. Likewise, it is no surprise that a commercially developed book (*True at First Light*) and a scholarly one (*Under Kilimanjaro*) can emerge from the same manuscript. That there are over a hundred pages of difference between these two texts is even more provocative. One discovers that the book Hemingway’s executors published is very different from the one that scholars discovered and published from the manuscript of the text.

This dissertation will ultimately act as a casebook examining the different ways in which a dual text can develop and how dual texts can advance criticism of authors and works that either have not invited much analysis or have been so thoroughly interpreted as to appear immune to further exegesis. I will examine these works as both separate literary pieces worthy of analysis and in conversation with their more (or less) established counterparts. Worth mentioning, however, is that this project will not attempt to justify the existence of dual texts; for better or worse, they are with us. Scholars gain nothing by refusing to engage them. I take it for granted these works deserve literary attention. By examining authors and works both canonical and not, and by analyzing textual stability in other mediums, this dissertation will open methods of discussing novels already in circulation, those that are on the horizon, and those that will appear in the future. Furthermore, this project will prove a useful resource for scholars studying some of the principal texts and authors of twentieth-century American literature.

Dual texts are put into play by one of two parties: an author or an editor. Chapters I and II will treat dual texts created by editors, scholarly and commercial, after the writer’s death. These
are the examples most open to analysis since they emerge from the opinions, decisions, and judgments of people other than the creator of the manuscript. Do we read a text of this kind as authentically the writer’s own? The answer to this question often depends on the manuscript, the editor, and the purpose of the text created. The more unfinished or unwieldy the manuscript, the more editorial work it requires and the further it moves from authorial control. Likewise, a manuscript fairly far along in the composition process would need less editorial preparation. The first two chapters examine authors whose literary afterlife owes much to the editors of their posthumous works.

Chapter I will take up the case of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *Trimalchio* and *The Great Gatsby*. *Trimalchio*, an early version of Fitzgerald’s famous Jazz-Age novel, was released in 2000 as part of the Cambridge Edition of the Works of F. Scott Fitzgerald. For the purpose of this project, this dual text illustrates the use and purpose of a text created by and intended for other scholars.

James L. W. West III, the general editor of the Cambridge Edition and of *Trimalchio*, includes textual apparatus, composition history, notes, and appendices that provide a context for this version of the Gatsby story. West writes in the introduction that *Trimalchio* is “different enough from *Gatsby* to deserve publication on its own” and is given “not only for comparison with *The Great Gatsby* but for interpretation as a separate and distinct work of art” (*Trimalchio* xix). This chapter will do that, investigating the differences between the two texts and offering conclusions about the significance of Fitzgerald’s changes from one text to the other. Specifically, this chapter will focus upon revisions Fitzgerald made to the two central characters of the story: Nick Carraway and Jay Gatsby. These two characters have been critical touchstones for decades, with scholars debating Nick’s reliability and Gatsby’s identity. By tracing the changes that Fitzgerald made to these two characters, I intend to expand this debate to include *Trimalchio*. In doing so, I
will show how dual texts can bring new insights to conversations that have reached a critical impasse.

The second chapter will examine Ernest Hemingway’s *True at First Light* and *Under Kilimanjaro*. These two texts were published respectively by commercial and academic presses decades after Hemingway’s death. Both emerge from the same manuscript—Hemingway’s “African Book”—and both have very different stated aims. Hemingway scholars are familiar with the editorial controversies surrounding the writer’s posthumous works, especially *The Garden of Eden* and, more recently, *A Moveable Feast*. The case of the African Book is different in that we have the heir-produced, commercial text and the carefully edited, scholarly one. The two texts have each received attention, but there has been little consideration of the texts in comparison to one another. This is a significant oversight. Chapter II will put these dual texts in conversation. Principally, this comparison will yield insights into the promotion and conservation of an author’s literary afterlife. Usually, posthumous texts emerge from work done by either an heir/executor or an academic editor. This case is unique in that both heir and editor have created remarkably dissimilar texts based on a single manuscript. Comparing *True at First Light* to the longer *Under Kilimanjaro* shows what a dual text can reveal about literary executorships, the commercial market, and the shaping of an author’s posthumous career.

Hemingway’s son, Patrick Hemingway, promotes a less racially provocative representation of his father’s experience in Africa; instead, the narrative of *True at First Light* focuses on Ernest and Mary Hemingway’s pursuit of a lion that has become a problem to the area the safari takes place in. *Under Kilimanjaro*, however, reproduces the text of the African Book more fully and, in consequence, we see Hemingway take an interest in transforming his own racial identity. Specifically, Hemingway seeks to overcome his own race to become an
African warrior wise-man. The critical discussion over Hemingway’s relationship to race has intensified over the last ten years, but few critics have recognized the profound shift in Hemingway’s attitudes toward the color line that are represented in *Under Kilimanjaro*. A comparison between the dual texts of the African Book reveals these attitudes.

In Chapters III and IV, I treat cases in which an author’s own revision, expansion, or restoration has led to the development of a dual text. The cases under examination here are perhaps more complicated in that we have authors acting as editors of their own work. However, this difference allows a thorough investigation into the conditions that produce dual texts. Writers have taken the opportunity to revise their work as those opportunities have arisen. Often, the more successful the author, the more influence and control he or she has on the work.

Chapters III and IV exemplify a unique situation in which the author was impelled to change an existing book, resulting in the creation of a dual text. These include the author’s attempt to update previous work to reflect a more mature style, to present the text as it was originally envisioned, and to shape texts into a collection that reflects the author’s artistic intention. I recognize that there are additional reasons an author might endeavor to change already-published material, but I see these examples as being representative of the chief causes for author-developed dual texts.

Chapter III will focus on Kay Boyle’s third novel, *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately*. Originally published in 1933, this novel has undergone little critical examination for most of its existence. Recently *Gentlemen* has resurfaced as a “lost gay novel” (Slide 31–34). (That description is a noteworthy improvement from Phillip Leininger’s remark on *Gentlemen* in *The Oxford Companion to American Literature* as simply a book “about perverts.”) Boyle’s novel, though, does have a provocative textual history that makes it a fine example for discussion in this
project. As the editor writes in the reissued edition of *Gentlemen* (on the last page of the book), “Boyle felt an urgent need to rewrite this early novel and give it a ‘second life.’” The editor adds that Boyle thought it necessary to “clarify the themes she felt were obscured by her youthful tendencies to overwrite” (*Gentlemen* [1991] 228). The issues of age and maturity of the writer seem to be at stake in Boyle’s revisions. She was in her early thirties when the first edition of *Gentlemen* was published and nearly ninety when she began revising the book. The gap in years is fascinatingly suggestive. How much connection is there between the young author beginning her career and the professional writer in the twilight of her life? This chapter will take up this question and address the rewriting, revisions, and other changes Boyle made to her novel. The dual texts of *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately* offer an example of an author re-engaging with a single text decades after its original publication from a very different personal and historical context.

In Chapter IV of this dissertation I examine Louise Erdrich’s *Love Medicine*, an example perhaps better described as a triple text. Erdrich’s *Love Medicine* appeared in 1984 and was expanded into a new edition in 1993. In 2009, Erdrich released another version of the novel titled *Love Medicine: Newly Restored Version*. (*The Red Convertible*, a collection that includes some of the stories that appear in *Love Medicine* in their original form, adds an additional level of textuality that contributes one more wrinkle to the full spectrum of meaning in *Love Medicine*). *Love Medicine* is a fractured novel in the same tradition as *Winesburg, Ohio, Cane, In Our Time*, and *The House on Mango Street*. Each story can be read independently, but they work in conjunction to create an overarching narrative. Erdrich has long been known for the interconnectedness of these stories: her characters share place, history—sometimes spouses. Therefore, changes within a single story can ripple out and affect meaning throughout the whole
novel. Likewise, the addition of entirely new material necessarily alters the context of the original stories. Remarkably little work has been done to compare these three versions of *Love Medicine*, a novel that has already entered the canon of ethnic American literature. In much the same way that an examination of *Trimalchio* adds insights into Fitzgerald’s vision for *Gatsby*, paying attention to how Erdrich altered her stories for *Love Medicine* provides a glimpse into the process of turning short stories into a novel and adapting a novel to fit a changing life and career. This example demonstrates how an author might continually update work as her artistic vision changes. No editor meddled with Erdrich’s work, and there is no great distance from one edition to the other. Instead, Erdrich’s own understanding of *Love Medicine* changed, and she expanded the novel accordingly.

The final chapter and conclusion of this dissertation will move the examination of dual texts into a broader context—e-books. Digital texts have achieved an unprecedented share of the book market. Hardbacks and paperbacks both are being outsold by e-books. For the first time since the invention of movable type, texts are facing an adaptation in reading medium. Other artistic forms have been facing such change almost since their inception. The movie industry has dealt with issues similar to dual texts since its beginnings. As movie-making and archiving technology have multiplied, so too have movie versions. This chapter will discuss how dual textuality functions in a digital context, both in a traditional manner (with an examination of James Jones’ *From Here to Eternity: The Restored Edition*) and in a more bleeding-edge example (Stephen King’s *11/22/1963*). Each of these examples showcases the uses of e-books with regard to dual textuality and gives an indication of where these issues might be leading.

To help illustrate the issues facing textual stability with the advance in reading technology—both now and in the future—this chapter will also take up a movie, the sci-fi epic
Star Wars, and discuss the changes its creator, George Lucas, has put his text through. For example, what version of the story are we referring when we talk about Star Wars? The original 1977 theatrical release? The 1997 Special Edition? The 2004 DVD? Perhaps we gesture toward an edition on the horizon, as in the upcoming Blu-ray and 3D releases. Or do we go backwards in time, to the 1976 novelization credited to George Lucas and released five months before the film? Each of these “editions” of Star Wars is different from the others, and each is the effort of George Lucas to perfect his vision of the Star Wars saga. Fans bemoan some changes while celebrating others; they buy the new releases either way. Lucas alters his films as cinema and entertainment technologies advance, maintaining that each edition is a step toward the definitive Star Wars experience. As the owner of the Star Wars franchise, Lucas determines what constitutes that definitive edition—and when (if ever) it has been realized.

I believe the story of Star Wars and its creator offers an instructive example for understanding the future of traditional texts. This chapter will discuss how, as technology continues to shape our reading and working experience, it will necessarily shape our texts and thus our notions of textual editing. Today, one can experience a bestseller in a number of textual mediums, from traditional print to audiobook to e-book. If the story is popular enough, this could further extend to movies, television, and drama. I believe that as reading technology becomes more advanced and widespread, critics, scholars and general readers will face a situation not unlike that of Star Wars: technological advances will seriously undermine or preclude textual stability. Emerging technology will invite (or even require) the reworking and re-releasing of texts for different audiences and purposes. The conclusion of this dissertation will show that as technology redefines the way we read, the literary marketplace will more closely resemble that of the movie industry, with a multiplicity of texts all under the umbrella of creator control.
I. From “Absolution” through *Trimalchio* to The Great Gatsby: Dual Textuality and Reconception

F. Scott Fitzgerald had high hopes for the novel that would eventually become *The Great Gatsby*. In May 1924, Fitzgerald wrote a tongue-in-cheek letter to his friend Thomas Boyd joking that he wanted to “write a novel better than any novel ever written in America and become par excellence the best second-rater in the world” (*Correspondence* 141). To Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribners, Fitzgerald wrote more seriously that his third novel would draw upon the “sustained imagination of a sincere yet radiant world” and be “something extraordinary and beautiful and simple + intricately patterned” (*Correspondence* 112). The ever-encouraging Perkins responded that he did not doubt the book would be “very like the best American novel” (*Dear Scott/Dear Max* 70, 77). When the manuscript eventually arrived on his desk in October 1924, Perkins was even more enthusiastic:

> I think the novel is a wonder . . . . it has vitality to an extraordinary degree, and *glamour*, and a great deal of underlying thought of unusual quality. It has a kind of mystic atmosphere at times that you infused into parts of “Paradise” and have not since used. It is a marvelous fusion, into a unity of presentation, of the extraordinary incongruities of life today. As far as sheer writing, it’s astonishing. (*Dear Scott/Dear Max* 82)

Considering the cultural and literary significance the book has taken on, it is easy to assume the two men are discussing the completed version of *The Great Gatsby*. The novel Perkins was writing about, however, was *Trimalchio*. Fitzgerald turned *Trimalchio* into *Gatsby* through careful and detailed revision through the winter of 1924–25, making sentence-level changes as well as adding and subtracting whole scenes and passages. Most of these changes fall
into two categories: those dealing with Jay Gatsby and those dealing with Nick Carraway. Fitzgerald did little to alter the rest of the characters; Tom, Myrtle, Daisy, and the others remain relatively fixed between the two versions. In January and February of 1925, Fitzgerald mailed off the revised galleys that would turn *Trimalchio* into *The Great Gatsby* (West xvii). Readers would have to wait nearly seventy-five years for *Trimalchio* to be released as a novel.

Since 2000, *Trimalchio* has been available in the Cambridge Edition of the Works of F. Scott Fitzgerald as a single, coherent narrative, different enough from *The Great Gatsby* to have been published itself rather than as an early draft of the more famous novel. James L. W. West III, in his introduction to the edition, states that *Trimalchio* is being “put into play, not only for comparison with *The Great Gatsby* but for interpretation as a separate and distinct work of art” (xix). In this chapter I will do both, examining the revisions Fitzgerald made to the two most important characters in the story (Gatsby and Nick) and extending the discussion to include “Absolution,” a short story that can be seen as a kind of prologue to *Trimalchio* and *Gatsby*. The two novels are an excellent example of a dual text put into play by a scholar for scholars. In tracing Fitzgerald’s revisions, readers see how the author’s own attitudes toward his characters changes; while determining an author’s intention is always difficult, a clue to how Fitzgerald intended the text to be read can be found through a comparison of these two texts.

In the first section of this chapter, I will examine the adjustments Fitzgerald made in revealing Gatsby’s history and constructing Nick Carraway’s narrative voice. In *Trimalchio*, Fitzgerald reveals Gatsby’s early history in a single passage that comes near the end of the book. The context of the section makes the revelation confessional in nature, with Nick acting as the priest. For *Gatsby*, Fitzgerald divided the passage detailing Gatsby’s past in two, moving Gatsby’s account of his early life with Dan Cody to chapter six and giving the narration there to
Nick. This changes the narrative dynamic of the novel. In *Gatsby*, Nick takes possession of a significant portion of Gatsby’s past earlier in the story, and, as a result, gains more narrative authority over the entire novel.

The second section of this chapter deals with the revision to Nick Carraway’s narration. In *Trimalchio*, Nick has serious problems with narrative reliability. He cannot be honest with himself, with the characters around him, or with the reader. Considering how Nick shapes, frames, and creates the reader’s relationship with Jay Gatsby, the story needs a narrative voice capable of both sincerity and honesty. Fitzgerald therefore took special care to create a narrator better able to tell Gatsby’s story, and Nick’s narrative unreliability in *Trimalchio* is recast into narrative subjectivity in *Gatsby*. Because Nick and Gatsby are inextricably intertwined, a change to one character necessarily affects the other. This examination details some of these changes, from single-word revisions to entire reimaginings.

**Jay Gatsby’s Confession**

On November 24, 1924, six days after his effusive congratulations to Fitzgerald on his novel, Maxwell Perkins wrote a letter that has since become a central document in tracing the development of *Trimalchio* into *Gatsby*. Perkins began the letter with yet more praise: “It is an extraordinary book, suggestive of all sorts of thoughts and moods.” He promised to make “only two actual criticisms,” both having to do with the presentation of Jay Gatsby. The first centered on Gatsby’s appearance. Perkins believed the other characters “palpable and vital”—he would recognize Tom Buchanan on sight if he were to encounter him on the street. But to Perkins Gatsby seemed “vague.” He suggested that Fitzgerald might add some physical characteristics congruent with the “old sport” phrase that Gatsby uses. The other criticism concerned Gatsby’s history. In *Trimalchio*, Fitzgerald withholds the story of Gatsby’s past until nearly the end of the
novel. Perkins believed the “total lack of an explanation through so large a part of the story” to be “a defect.” Fitzgerald listened. In a letter written at the beginning of December 1924, he thanked Perkins for his comments, adding that he thought all the criticisms valid and that he knew how to “fix” the problems (*Dear Scott/Dear Max* 82–85).

In *Trimalchio*, Fitzgerald relates the bulk of Gatsby’s past in a seven-page section that appears in chapter eight. Gatsby tells Nick, following the encounter with Tom and the death of Myrtle Wilson, that he will reveal “everything”: “The whole story. I’ve never told it to anyone before—not even Daisy. But I haven’t told many lies about it, either” (*Trimalchio* 117). Up to this point in the novel, Gatsby has been a shadowy, indistinct figure—“A Mr. Nobody from Nowhere”—variously described by other characters as a German spy, a killer, a bootlegger, an Oxford man, and a war hero, any and none of which appear to be credible. Gatsby shows Nick his war medals and a picture of him “loafing” in Trinity Quad at Oxford, but also introduces him to the gambler Meyer Wolfsheim. Is Gatsby a hero or a hoodlum? Heir to a fortune or merely a slick bootlegger? Gatsby himself is sensitive to the rumors swirling around him: “I’m empty, and I guess people feel it,” he says in *Trimalchio*. “That must be why they keep making up things about me, so I won’t be so empty” (*Trimalchio* 117).

By the time Gatsby discovers his “emptiness” it is too late. Myrtle is dead, Daisy has slipped away, and Tom has given Gatsby’s name to a murder-minded George Wilson. Perhaps Gatsby realizes his time is running out and chooses this moment to confess to Nick. Even the moments leading up to Gatsby's revelation have the solemnity of a confessional. Nick and Gatsby move through the house looking for cigarettes, pushing aside curtains “that were like pavilions” in a house that had before “never seemed so enormous” (*Trimalchio* 116). It takes very little imagining to see Gatsby’s mansion here not as a carnival palace but as a cathedral.
Gatsby starts the story by telling about his “sponsor” Dan Cody. He recalls for Nick the moment when Jimmy Gatz “sprang from his platonic conception of himself” and became Jay Gatsby, “a son of God” (Trimalchio 117). Gatsby travels the globe with Cody as “steward, secretary, mate, skipper and . . . jailor.” He joins the military, meets and falls for Daisy Fay, “does well in the war,” and eventually loses his golden girl to Tom Buchanan (Trimalchio 117–24). As Gatsby finishes his tale, the sun rises on Long Island. The two men have breakfast and Nick heads into the city for work. Five hours later, Gatsby is dead, floating in circles on his yellow raft.

The confession scene is important for two reasons. The first is that the scene echoes the religious overtones that were removed from the novel. Fitzgerald wrote Perkins in June 1922 to say that his next novel would be set in the “middle west and New York of 1885 and involve a catholic element” (Dear Scott/Dear Max 61). The Catholic element that Fitzgerald intended is generally believed to have been lost when he cut the prologue from the novel and recast it into “Absolution,” an explicitly Catholic story published in the summer of 1924. Some critics assert that the story “fleshes out the mysterious past” of Jay Gatsby, but I am unwilling to allow that the character is the same person under different names (Allen 94). Fitzgerald published the story separately from any novel and necessarily revised it to be a text that stood on its own. Rudolph Miller, the young protagonist of “Absolution,” and Jay Gatsby may be cut from the same imaginative cloth, but their differences outweigh most of their similarities. The structure and framing of the “Absolution” confessional, however, does seem to be echoed at the end of Trimalchio.
The principal anxiety in “Absolution” revolves around the confessional experience of Rudolph. He makes three confessions in the story, the first of which involves a series of childhood indiscretions, sins that amount to little more than “brags.” But two sins in particular have relevance to Trimalchio: Rudolph confesses to not believing he is the son of his parents (a belief he claims stems from “just pride”) and to the sin “of dirty words and immodest thoughts and desires” (“Absolution” 139–40). Unfortunately, Rudolph ends this first confession by announcing to the priest that he tells no lies. As someone who “habitually and instinctively” lies, Rudolph immediately realizes he has committed another “terrible sin”: he has told a lie in confession. In the second confession, Rudolph further impeaches himself, but he decides to atone for all his sins in the third and final confession that ends the story, a scene that might be described as the telling of “everything.”

Ryan LaHurd sees Rudolph’s problems in “Absolution” stemming not from a “bad confession,” but from “his fantastic and romantic stance toward life.” “Rudolph’s desire to make his life shine like a perfect fiction of knights and ladies,” writes LaHurd, “leads him to lie twice in the confessional and find refuge in a private corner of his soul which remains ’hidden from God’” (112). Rudolph’s sins (of not believing he is the son of his parents, of immodest thoughts) and his attempt to atone for them through a final confession support LaHurd’s interpretation that Rudolph’s true problems emanate from an overdeveloped fantasy life. All of the same might be said of Jay Gatsby.

Gatsby’s confession to Nick in Trimalchio involves issues of identity, sexual anxiety, and the overinflated sense of chivalry and fantasy that lies beneath both men. Gatsby’s first revelation is of his “real” name, James Gatz, and his true parentage. Like Rudolph, Jimmy Gatz has committed the prideful sin of believing he is too good for his lineage. He has invented the
persona Jay Gatsby and has disavowed his “needy and obscure” parents (Trimalchio 117). Gatsby’s love of Daisy springs from an ancient concept of chivalry—the love of a soldier or knight for his golden girl or fair lady. Gatsby’s dream ultimately fails when Daisy cannot reciprocate his chivalric love; his dream is reduced to “immodest thoughts and desires” when she will have him only as a lover in the context of her marriage to Tom. Gatsby’s hope for repeating the past to create his ideal future is doomed from the beginning.

Confession works better for Jay Gatsby than it does for Rudolph Miller. Rudolph never receives the absolution he seeks since his final confession ends with the priest, Father Schwartz, going through something that resembles a mental breakdown. Gatsby, however, receives as close to an absolution as is possible for him; Nick, after the confession is over and as he is leaving Gatsby’s mansion, shouts this blessing: “They’re a rotten crowd . . . You’re worth the whole damn bunch put together.” Gatsby responds with a “radiant smile” (Trimalchio 124). Gatsby’s confession to Nick succeeds (where Rudolph’s fails), and he dies purified and “absolved.” If Fitzgerald’s letter to Jamieson is taken as a guide, and “Absolution” is read as a kind of ur-prologue to Trimalchio, the confessions create a unity between Jay Gatsby’s beginning and his end. The absolution which should have come in youth finally comes in adulthood, but only after Gatsby has dedicated his life to a doomed dream.

Fitzgerald, however, revised this scene for The Great Gatsby and stripped it of its confessional quality. This leads to an alteration in the narrative construction of Gatsby. The confessional passage is one of only a few in Trimalchio in which Jay Gatsby speaks for himself. Nick’s narration frames the reader’s relationship to the other characters in both Trimalchio and Gatsby (a point I discuss at length later), but during Gatsby’s confession in Trimalchio, Nick’s role as mediator is marginalized. It is Gatsby who tells his story, chooses when to begin it,
decides in what order it should proceed, and selects what information to include. Nowhere in this
passage does Nick make the imaginative leaps that typify his narrative when he lacks knowledge
of the thoughts of other characters. Gatsby is speaking even if Nick is “writing.” In *Trimalchio*,
the revelation of Gatsby’s past life is late in coming, but we believe it because it is presented to
us by the character himself. For once Nick listens and does not judge—at least not immediately.

In order to reveal more about the title character earlier in *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald
transferred the first half of his confession narrative (dealing with his change from Gatz to Gatsby
and his time with Dan Cody) to chapter six and further eliminated the context of confession from
chapter eight by removing Gatsby’s preamble (about never before having told “everything”). By
placing this portion of Gatsby’s past life toward the middle of *Gatsby*, Fitzgerald brings the
character’s history into focus much earlier in that novel than in *Trimalchio*. These revisions also
strip Gatsby of narrative authority and re-ascribe it to Nick. For example, in *Trimalchio* Nick
relates Gatsby’s experience with Dan Cody as it is given to him; in *Gatsby*, by contrast, this
section is given to the reader “out-of-time,” or from a point out of context with the rest of
Gatsby’s past. Nick, not Gatsby, selects the point in the narrative at which to reveal this history:

> He told me all this very much later, but I’ve put it down here with the idea of exploding
those first wild rumors about his antecedents, which weren’t even faintly true. Moreover
he told it to me at a time of confusion, when I had reached the point of believing
everything and nothing about him. So I take advantage of this short halt, while Gatsby, so
to speak, caught his breath, to clear this set of misconceptions away. (*Gatsby* 79)

The second half of Gatsby’s life (his meeting, loving, and losing Daisy) remains in chapter eight.
However, without the first half of the history and Gatsby’s remark about telling “everything,”
this passage loses its confessional quality. In *Trimalchio*, Gatsby has a powerful need to unburden himself of the past. In *Gatsby*, that need has vanished. Gatsby’s past becomes Nick’s reconstruction of it; it is Nick’s story as much as Gatsby’s own.

By relocating the revelation of Gatsby’s past, Fitzgerald cedes narrative control to Nick. Gatsby does not speak for himself or confess his own history. Instead, Nick intercedes for Gatsby, positioning the history where he thinks it will be most useful, not where Gatsby actually delivers it. Likewise, the confession that Gatsby gives to Nick in chapter eight of *Trimalchio* suggests that he has achieved self-awareness and self-recognition. Nick’s point in the revised text is very different. Gatsby lacks such traits of introspection and self-interrogation. For the character to stay consistent, Gatsby must have that singularity of purpose until the very end. Only then can “the holocaust be complete” and the tragedy of Gatsby’s story be realized (*Gatsby* 126).

**Nick Carraway’s Narration**

One character whom Perkins was strangely silent about in his letters is Nick Carraway. Nor did Fitzgerald remark on his narrator in his correspondence. Considering both Nick’s importance and the heavy revision that his character underwent, these silences seem odd. One must assume that among the “1000 minor corrections . . . & several large ones which you didn’t mention” Fitzgerald became dissatisfied with the voice of Nick Carraway in *Trimalchio* (*Dear Scott/Dear Max* 85). Many critics have agreed with that assessment—but in *The Great Gatsby*.

At the end of chapter three in *The Great Gatsby*, Nick Carraway tells the reader that he is himself “one of the few honest people he has ever known” (*Gatsby* 48). Critics have struggled with this assertion ever since. Readers are inclined to believe him—after all, he provides the only access into the narrative, and if one is to appreciate Jay Gatsby’s story (or Nick’s rendering of
that story), what Nick says must at least be generally believable. But the critics who have written about the narrator of *The Great Gatsby* are by no means in accord about Nick’s being even passably believable. For more than fifty years, critics arguing for and against Nick Carraway’s narration have traded barbs over the unassuming narrator’s reliability. Both sides are occupied with a central question: Can we believe Nick? Some say yes, locating Nick as the “hero-narrator” of the story, a character who speaks not with pride but “candor”; for them Nick occupies that nebulous and contentious space within the novel known as the moral center (Thale 73, Hanzo 63). In a stirring endorsement, Joan Allen calls Nick “the righteous priest, the confessor and censor, who upholds the established order” (Allen 105).

Other critics disagree and are often quite stinging in their censure: Nick is “blind” to the “real” plot of *Gatsby*, a hypocrite, and, in a particularly cutting series of descriptions by R. W. Stallman, a “defunct arch-priest,” a “prig with holier-than-thou airs,” and, finally, an “arch-prig” (Lockridge 178, Stallman 7). Perhaps Scott Donaldson is closest to the truth by arguing that an unreliable narrator is the only voice capable of telling Jay Gatsby’s story, and that Nick’s subjectivity strengthens the novel (98). But even Donaldson begins his excellent discussion of Nick with the declaration that the narrator “is a snob” (98). It is remarkable that one character should generate such disparate interpretations, with the same passages often quoted as evidence. As Richard Lehan points out, “it is unlikely that another critical discussion can resolve such firm disagreement” (99).

The debate, however, goes on. In the recent *Approaches to Teaching Fitzgerald’s “The Great Gatsby,”* James Phelan writes about the narrator with an eye toward rhetorical theory. According to Phelan, Fitzgerald uses Nick Carraway as an omniscient narrator when he needs to relate information out-of-time (for example, to relate what transpires in Wilson’s garage after
Myrtle’s death, or to explain what Daisy felt while Gatsby was away at war), as a narrator whose narration is secondary to his character (such as when Nick is arranging Gatsby’s funeral and asks Wolfsheim to attend), and as a stand-in for Fitzgerald himself (as in the conclusion of the novel) (Phelan 106–7). Phelan states that Fitzgerald shows “the deficiencies of Nick the character without also showing Nick the narrator’s awareness of those deficiencies” (107). “In these instances,” Phelan writes, “Nick is an unreliable reader and evaluator of himself” (107). For evidence, Phelan points to the end of chapter three and Nick’s assertion of his own honesty. How is that honesty to be read in the context of Nick and Jordan’s budding romance, even though Nick is “[tangled]” with another woman? For Phelan, this is a case where Nick “the character’s lack of self-knowledge . . . extends to his role as narrator” (107).

*The Great Gatsby* has been well-mined for this topic, and the conversation now resides wholly in the realm of interpretation, reinterpretation, and re-reinterpretation: critics have been unable to reach any kind of consensus about Nick in *The Great Gatsby*—though perhaps there has been a steady push to see Nick as more unreliable rather than less (Phelan 106). *Trimalchio*, though, is a nearly untouched text. Its narrator has not undergone the same kinds of critical scrutiny. Looking to this earlier version of *The Great Gatsby* makes it possible to push the conversation about Nick’s narration into a fresh direction.

The character of Nick Carraway that Fitzgerald originally envisioned in *Trimalchio* is in many ways different from the one we find in *The Great Gatsby*. Nick’s narration in *Trimalchio* is marked by a tendency to mask his true attitudes toward the characters around him, by naïveté about his environment, and by an overall inconstancy. One senses that Nick is incapable of being honest with himself, let alone with the characters around him. Despite his claim in both novels to be one of the most honest people he knows, Nick is a far more unreliable narrator, in every
negative sense, in *Trimalchio* than in *Gatsby*. In fact, the scathing criticism Stallman levels against the Nick of *The Great Gatsby* would be more nearly appropriate for the narrator of *Trimalchio*. This is an important point considering Nick is the only voice capable of articulating the action. The story, after all, is about a criminal who schemes to have an affair with a married woman—not exactly the stuff of romantic heroism. Who besides Nick can tell this story? Gatsby, whom Jerome Thale has argued is too “grotesque” for readers to comprehend without the assistance of Nick? (73). Jordan Baker, who is “incurably dishonest”? (*Trimalchio* 49, *Gatsby* 47). Tom Buchanan? Nick occupies that special place of what Malcolm Cowley calls double-vision: he is both a participant in the action and far enough removed from it to attempt objectivity (31). The Nick of *Trimalchio* falls short of this objective, ideal narrator. Fitzgerald took special care to reshape this inconsistent and contradictory character into the balanced and believable narrator of *The Great Gatsby*.

To help frame my reading of the changes Fitzgerald made to Nick, I refer to the very first modification between the two texts. In the opening chapter of *Trimalchio*, Nick describes his family as “substantial, well-to-do people”; Fitzgerald revised this passage in *Gatsby* to read “prominent, well-to-do people” (*Trimalchio* 6, *Gatsby* 3). There would seem to be little difference between these two words, but there is a difference, and it informs the narrative revision between the two novels. In *Trimalchio* the narrator is from a substantial family, a family that bases its social position in the community on wealth and material possessions. In comparison, “prominent” undercuts the notion of material wealth and replaces it with peer judgment. The Carraways can make themselves substantial—they can accumulate wealth, use it, and generate more of it. But they cannot make themselves prominent; that is a distinction granted only by the community in which they live. “Substantial” makes Nick a rich kid of sorts, but
“prominent” makes him a child from a “good” family, a family that serves as a cornerstone of civic life. Throughout Trimalchio, Nick’s behavior reflects this early description of his family as “substantial” and colors his narrative voice. Indeed, the narrator tends to have more in common with Tom Buchanan. In a book that so depends on narrative voice to determine meaning, Nick should have more social distinction from the “villain” of the story.

In chapter three of Trimalchio and Gatsby’s first party, this similarity becomes clearer. Nick meets up with a collection of guests who affect what Fitzgerald describes as the “Oxford mush-mouth accent” and who represent the “staid nobility of the country-side—West Egg condescending to East Egg”9 (West Egg also being the neighborhood of Tom Buchanan) (Trimalchio 37–38). One faux-Oxonian, an acquaintance of Nick’s from New Haven, remarks that he is entering his son at Eton and Groton, but will “prob’ly” send him to “Andovah” so he will not turn out a “snob.” Nick replies that he should send his son to a New York public high school, a suggestion the man finds laughable (Trimalchio 38). Fitzgerald aligns the mush-mouth men with Tom Buchanan. They behave the way Tom will later in the book, condescending to everyone at the party and refusing to move outside their circle, physically or socially. Nick participates in their shallow banter and appears to be comfortable, if annoyed, with their company. It is only Jordan Baker’s refusal to participate in their mocking that leads Nick away. Jordan, not Nick, emerges from this first party as the more observant and fluid character: she rebukes the mush-mouts for their behavior, conspires with the ever-fluttering girls in yellow, and points out to Nick the cosmopolitan make-up of the party. Nick is the wide-eyed tyro to Jordan’s world-weary tutor; she breaks him out of the “staid” and static company of the gentry and introduces him to the less pretentious and more interesting guests of the party—and to Gatsby himself. Nick’s single observation of note is a gauche description of “Jazz History of the
World”: Nick loses himself in the changing motifs and key changes, twice in one paragraph describing the music as “weird.” Because he cannot account for its strangeness, he resolves that the music “must have been low brow stuff” (Trimalchio 42).

In crafting *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald excised the mush-mouths, their snide comments, the prep-school talk, the faux accents, and, most important, Nick’s affiliation with it all. Their presence is only suggested later in the line “East Egg condescending to West Egg” (Gatsby 37). Removing these characters allows Nick to narrate unencumbered by their social prejudices. It also lessens Jordan Baker’s role as guide. Fitzgerald recasts Nick’s naïveté into keen observation; he no longer needs Jordan’s prompting to see the make-up of the party. The music is no longer a distraction. In *Trimalchio*, Fitzgerald implicitly aligns Nick with the Oxford mush-mouths, and Jordan moves him out of his “comfort zone.” In *Gatsby*, Fitzgerald makes the narrator more clearly his own man, unattached to any single social group at the party.

This independence comes from a change in the relationship between Nick and Jordan, especially in this third chapter. In *Trimalchio*, Fitzgerald situates Jordan as a love interest. The two are more clearly attracted to one another, stealing away for brief moments of intimacy throughout the party. This leads to one of the most glaring narrative inconsistencies in the earlier novel. After his first encounter with Jay Gatsby, Nick brushes away the exotic rumors surrounding his host and decides that he rather likes him. However, when one of Gatsby’s servants whisks Jordan away toward the end of the evening, a wholly new side of the narrator emerges: Nick Carraway, jealous suitor. With no narrative explanation, Nick changes his mind about Gatsby and reasserts the earlier rumors about him:

> I was determined to wait until Jordan Baker emerged from her private interview with Gatsby. If he could inspire such sinister rumors I owed her that much protection for
her courtesy of the evening. Once more I walked into the garden. Standing under the white plum tree were the movie director and the star, their faces touching except for a pale thin ray of moonlight between. It occurred to me that he had been very slowly bending toward her all evening to attain this proximity, and even while I watched I saw him stoop one ultimate degree and kiss at her cheek.

As I went in, Jordan Baker, just going out the front door, turned and waved goodnight. (Trimalchio 44)\textsuperscript{11}

Earlier in the chapter, Nick describes the stories swirling around Gatsby as “romantic speculation.” When confronted with Gatsby as possible rival, however, these same stories become “sinister rumors” (Trimalchio 37). Nick resolves to offer “protection” to Jordan from Gatsby’s possibly disreputable intentions. The director’s posturing for a moment of intimacy impels Nick to make his way inside. Has Gatsby been angling for a similar moment of intimacy with Jordan?

The jealous panic that makes Nick wait and then search for Jordan reveals his true feelings—and shows that Nick’s honesty has limits. This moment of inconsistency complicates the rest of the narration and undermines Nick’s description of his own honesty at the end of the chapter. The reader of Trimalchio cannot help but recognize that the Nick has a serious problem with self-awareness. This leads to difficulty in interpreting the last line of the chapter: does Nick’s inconsistency lead to a reevaluation of his earlier and future claims? Or is this simply a snag in the narration? Nick articulates the story from a point after the summer of 1922; does this mean he still has not reconciled his emotions with his actions? This moment raises more questions than it answers.
Fitzgerald removed the whole business for *The Great Gatsby* and replaced it with more of Nick’s observations about the party. Instead of waiting impatiently for Jordan and then moving to find her, Nick watches the party wind down, witnessing a drama of bickering couples and melancholy, inebriated women. Only as Nick himself is preparing to leave does he reconnect with Jordan. She explains her meeting with Gatsby as leading to an “amazing” revelation that she promises to share later. Nowhere in this recast passage does Nick behave like a jealous suitor or otherwise compromise his aura of narrative reliability. By removing this section from *Gatsby*, Fitzgerald preserves Nick’s voice in the novel and makes the claim of honesty at the end of the chapter seem more sincere and believable.

Through the rest of *Trimalchio*, Nick’s issues with honesty persist. In chapter four, Nick masks his feelings from the characters around him while ostensibly telling the “truth” to the reader. During the car ride to New York, Gatsby alludes to the “amazing” story he told Jordan in their private meeting:

“You’ll hear about it this afternoon.”

“At lunch?”

“No, this afternoon. I happened to find out that you’re taking Miss Baker to tea.”

“Do you mean you’re in love with Miss Baker?”

“No, old sport, I’m not. But she’s kindly consented to tell you the story.”

This annoyed me. I hadn’t asked Jordan to tea in order to discuss Jay Gatsby. The man had his nerve, and for a moment I was sorry I’d ever set foot on his overpopulated lawn.

“But what business is it of mine, Mr. Gatsby?” (*Trimalchio* 56)
There is a jarring disconnection when one compares Nick’s narration to his stated response. Gatsby is imposing on Nick’s meeting with Jordan; Nick feels understandably annoyed. However, he does not declare his feelings to Gatsby and instead asks a neutral question. Nick is only two years younger than Gatsby, riding in a car with him on the way to lunch. They are involved in a personal discussion. Nick’s use of formality rings of light condescension since it keeps the two men at a distance while suggesting a title of respect. Nick’s inner voice indicates, however, that he feels no respect—in his private thoughts, Mr. Gatsby is “Gatsby.” The same emotional inconsistency Nick exhibited during Jordan’s meeting with Gatsby in the previous chapter reappears. Gatsby attempts to assuage Nick during lunch later in the day, commenting “I’m afraid I made you a little angry this morning.” Nick replies, “Not at all, Mr. Gatsby. Though I don’t understand why your request has to come through Miss Baker” (Trimalchio 59). Nick fails again to deliver an answer emotionally or intellectually truthful, even when Gatsby gives him a chance to do so. Had Gatsby not given him an opportunity to be honest, one could not fault Nick for his silence. But with a first-person narrator, narrative credibility relies at least partly on emotional honesty, and Nick’s refusal to be honest about his dissatisfaction poses a problem. Had Nick come to terms with Gatsby’s request and put his annoyance aside, no one could fault him for his silence. First-person narrators are always subject to accusations of unreliability—subjectivity is one of the strengths of the form—but Nick’s pettiness distracts from his story. If Nick distracts the reader, Gatsby’s story (the one we want to read) goes out of focus.

Fitzgerald appears to have recognized the instability of this section and revised it accordingly. In Gatsby, the two men’s conversation in the car happens in almost exactly the same way, except that Nick’s question does not occur and Nick responds to Gatsby’s imposition only with silence, at least indicating Nick’s annoyance. Likewise, when Gatsby attempts to
apologize at lunch, Nick speaks more honestly and replies “I don’t like mysteries…. And I don’t understand why you won’t come out frankly and tell me what you want. Why has it all got to come through Miss Baker?” (Gatsby 57).

The meeting between Jordan and Gatsby has to do with Daisy Buchanan, and it is through Daisy and Gatsby’s affair that the other major defect in Nick’s narration in Trimalchio appears: He is far more culpable for the relationship here than he is in The Great Gatsby. Everyone familiar with Gatsby recalls that Nick facilitates the encounter between Daisy and Jay Gatsby at his home. This scene remains basically the same in both texts. But in The Great Gatsby, after their “chance” meeting at Nick’s home, the affair moves away from Nick. He is no longer needed. Gatsby fires his household staff, brings in more confidential (if less presentable) people from Wolfsheim, and Daisy now comes to Gatsby’s house when she pleases. In Trimalchio, however, Nick’s part in the affair plays out over a longer period. For example, during Gatsby’s second party Daisy asks Nick for a favor:

“Listen, Nick—” She was back beside me. “Would you mind if we went over and sat on the steps of your bungalow or whatever it is?”

“You and Tom?”

“No, Jay and me.”

She never saw any humor except her own—not always that.

“It’s so noisy here,” she explained, “and I have this ear drum, you see. I thought if we sat on your steps I’d get all—What’s that girl yelling about?”

“She’s tight and she has hysterics.”
“Oh! . . . Well, we want to sit on your steps.” She hesitated. “If Tom starts paging me around the garden you’ll come and tell us won’t you. I wouldn’t want him to think I was bad.”

She winked solemnly and I began to laugh as she went back toward the house.

(Trimalchio 83–84)

Nick obliges Daisy, and when Tom does start asking where she is, he stalls in order to buy time for the couple. Nick’s little joke and his laugh show that he thinks the affair is some game in which he is playing a minor part; however, by taking a more central role in Trimalchio, Nick moves from facilitator to conspirator. When he安排 for Gatsby and Daisy to meet in his home the first time, there is plausible deniability. By allowing the couple to use his home a second time, and by running interference against Tom, Nick is no longer as disinterested an observer as his narration would indicate. Acting as Daisy and Gatsby’s pander moves Nick into morally questionable behavior. The narrator has a come a long way from the first chapter and his impulse to “telephone immediately for the police” when he learns of Tom’s liaison with Myrtle Wilson. Nick has embraced the same moral apathy of the other characters in the novel and become a participant in their affairs (Trimalchio 17).

A participant, that is, only for as long as the game is fun. In the Plaza Hotel confrontation, Nick and Jordan get up to avoid being audience to the fight: “Human sympathy has its curious limits and we were repelled by their self-absorption, appalled by their conflicting desires” (Trimalchio 104). Nick’s philosophizing about the nature of human sympathy is overly transparent—Nick and Jordan are simply trying to justify their flight from a mess they helped to create. In response to their attempt to leave, Nick notices that “Daisy’s eyes . . . seemed to say: ‘You have a certain responsibility for all this too’” (Trimalchio 104). Nick and Jordan sit down,
their decision to stay an admission of guilt in the unfolding drama. For Nick to be effective in dealing with his fellow characters, he must be able to exist both as actor in and as chronicler of the action of the novel; drifting too far on either side compromises his appearance of neutrality in telling the story, and in *Trimalchio* Nick is clearly too far on one side in this affair. If Nick does not engage enough in the happenings of the novel, his narrative authority is sacrificed—he does not have the knowledge to tell the story accurately. Allowing Nick to become too entangled with the surrounding characters, however, equally undermines the credibility of his narration—the distance required to report accurately and objectively on the action is lost. In the case of Gatsby and Daisy’s affair, in *Trimalchio*, the narrative distance necessary for Nick to be at least passably objective is unavailable. That Nick sees his own responsibility in Daisy’s eyes is an acknowledgment that he has become too entangled in the matter.

The narrator of *The Great Gatsby*, however, does not appear to bear the same level of responsibility as his *Trimalchio* counterpart. The initial meeting between Gatsby and Daisy is the same in both texts, except that Fitzgerald cut Nick’s making his home available to the couple at the second party. In the hotel confrontation, Daisy’s eyes do not keep Nick and Jordan from leaving. It is Gatsby and Tom’s “competitive firmness” that keeps them there (*Gatsby* 102). Fitzgerald must have seen that the closer Nick got to the affair, the more untenable his position became. Does he support Gatsby? Tom? Daisy? He should support them all, but as narrator his position demands that he support no one, that he be witness to (but not participant in) the action of the novel. Fitzgerald hedges by removing Nick’s more overt involvement in the affair and Daisy’s damning gaze. By doing so, Fitzgerald again prevents Nick’s credibility from being impaired and his narration compromised. While Nick can never be truly objective, Fitzgerald limits his subjectivity in the narration enough for the reader to more or less independently judge
the other characters in the novel. This is a tragic story, and the reader must be shown the tragedy rather than told it through the narrator.

The Nick of *Trimalchio* refuses to be honest with himself, the characters around him, or the reader. When he claims to be one of the “few honest people he has ever known,” he calls forth a long list of concerns about his ability to tell the story with any credibility. It is important to note that Nick narrates from a point after the action of the novel has been completed, after he has been able to meditate and reflect on what happened during that fateful summer. That he is still incapable of dealing sincerely with his own actions shows that he is unable to understand his experience or relate it truthfully. The narrator of *Trimalchio* lacks self-awareness, personal insight, and understanding. Or perhaps he possesses these qualities and chooses duplicity over honesty.

The Nick of *Trimalchio* condescends to the characters around him, misleads the reader, and otherwise behaves badly. In a novel where the narrative voice is central to meaning and interpretation, this is a problem. During revision, Fitzgerald changed his approach to Nick. In *Gatsby*, Nick deals more honestly with reader, characters, and himself; the inconsistencies that are found in *Trimalchio* are collapsed into a uniform narrative honesty, and Nick becomes a person capable of relating Gatsby’s history with depth and understanding.

There are still issues of unreliability in *The Great Gatsby*. The prolonged, nuanced, and spirited critical conversation about Nick’s narration would not have happened if the book were told by a machine. But those moments of unreliability have more to do with Nick’s subjectivity as a character than with narrative instability. Nick in *The Great Gatsby* is unreliable because he has opinions and judgments. Any story told by a first-person narrator is at some level unreliable; that is a fundamental feature of human nature and one Fitzgerald uses to great effect. But most
first-person narrators must be at least generally consistent and credible when they relate another’s story. That is the underlying issue with the voice of *Trimalchio*: issues of integrity, self-awareness, and inconsistency keep Nick from being believable. His own petty jealousies and prejudices distract from Gatsby’s story. Fitzgerald took pains to revise the narrative voice, suggesting that these issues of unreliability were not lost on him. By examining *Trimalchio* and *The Great Gatsby* side by side as two complete, coherent narratives, we can see how far he came in improving Nick’s narration of the story. Though he may tend to be judgmental, the Nick of *The Great Gatsby* possesses the narrative credibility to relate Jay Gatsby’s tale—something the narrator of *Trimalchio* does not have.

**Conclusion**

The most important changes Fitzgerald made to his story have to do with Gatsby and Nick. In *Trimalchio*, Gatsby unburdens himself of his past, narrating the details of his life without the shadow of his invented self clouding the truth. He tells Nick “everything,” confessing his past and the sins of pride that led Jimmy Gatz of Minnesota to become Jay Gatsby of East Egg. Gatsby in *Trimalchio* appears to come to a self-awareness that has eluded him throughout the story; as Nick tells Gatsby he is “worth the whole bunch,” Gatsby flashes that brilliant smile, perhaps indicating he can finally see past the green light that has blinded him for so long. But Fitzgerald revised the story so that Gatsby loses the confession scene and remains the doomed dreamer he has been throughout the novel. Gatsby dedicates his last moments to thinking about Daisy, their meeting, their love, and the brief moment of happiness that led him to the house across the water from the Buchanans’ dock. By ending the book this way, Fitzgerald makes it a more tragic story: Gatsby dies unaware of the impossibility of his dreams, still trying to construct ways by which to repeat that past even as Wilson’s pistol shots ring out.
Nick wants to believe that Gatsby had achieved understanding in those final moments in the pool, that he saw “a new world, material without being real” (Gatsby 126). But these are the wishes of a sympathetic storyteller, a storyteller that Fitzgerald made sympathetic, less “priggish” even as he complicated our feelings toward Gatsby, the object of Nick’s narration. The new Nick becomes the confessor that Gatsby ultimately needs but fails to take advantage of. If eliminating the confession scene at the end of Trimalchio made Gatsby more tragic and gave more narrative control to Nick, it also necessitated the reworking of Nick’s narrative voice from an inconsistent unreliability to steady subjectivity. Fitzgerald’s revision transforms the narrator’s unreliability from the negative to the literary sense. In The Great Gatsby, Nick is no longer ensnared in issues of ethics, integrity, and moral apathy. In one of the journal entries published in The Crack-Up, Fitzgerald writes “To record one must be unwary,” a remark that exactly describes the narrator of Gatsby (Crack-Up 202). Nick is unafraid to make judgments and refuses to hide behind bland objectivity. This rejection of narrative caution has made him a target for critics. This is a mistake: Nick is believable enough for readers to accept his version of the story but sensitive enough to make it a story of universal human significance. After all, at the heart of Trimalchio and The Great Gatsby is a bootlegger orchestrating an extramarital affair with a long-lost flame; a completely “reliable” narrator could never tell such a story. Nick in Gatsby may have issues of reliability but not issues of honesty.

In a story as carefully organized and planned as this, every revision is important. With characters like Jay Gatsby and Nick Carraway, this is especially true. Examining the nature of the revisions Fitzgerald made to these two characters, we can better discern his intentions for Gatsby. Fitzgerald took special care to make his title character the eternal doomed dreamer who even today still captures the attention of readers and critics. Fitzgerald turned a pliable snob into...
the moral center of a novel. The critical conversation may never come to a consensus about Nick’s narration, but recognizing the changes Fitzgerald made between Trimalchio and Gatsby will help to move the debate about these characters in a new direction and give critics a new angle from which to discuss them.

A comparison between these dual texts has never been performed. Little scholarship at all has been done on Trimalchio. By putting Trimalchio and The Great Gatsby into conversation, we not only see the quality of Fitzgerald’s revisions, but also have an idea about how Fitzgerald intended these characters to read. Nick’s voice in Trimalchio lacks depth, humility, and self-awareness. Fitzgerald recognized the importance of Nick’s voice in relating the story to the reader and altered his narrator to better tell that story. Nick is not a distraction in The Great Gatsby, but rather a window in which he and the reader look into the lives of Gatsby, Daisy, and Tom. This is the principal difference between the two novels. In Trimalchio, Nick is too interested in his own life to dedicate the narrative completely to Gatsby. Fitzgerald rightly reduced the material relating to Nick’s life to make the story of Jay Gatsby, Nick’s story, too.

We must conceptualize Nick’s reliability in the context of this difference. Fitzgerald rewrote Nick to be a reliable narrator with the ability to relate to the reader and to the characters of the novel. Likewise, Fitzgerald had Nick take on more of Gatsby’s story. Critics have not taken into account how Nick narrates Trimalchio. But had they compared the two texts, the significance of Fitzgerald’s revision to Nick’s voice would be clear. In this case, an analysis of the dual textuality of Fitzgerald’s signature work shows that without his revising of the narrator, the story loses its dramatic effect. In Trimalchio, Nick is a spoiled rich kid on the periphery of a much more interesting story; in The Great Gatsby, Nick is a one-man Greek chorus, actor, and the readers’ sympathetic companion to the tragedy unfolding before them. With the narrator
carrying that much influence in the text, Fitzgerald recrafted him with an eye toward narrative reliability.
II. True at First Light and Under Kilimanjaro: The African Book in Two Parts

Since his death in 1961, two dozen books have been published under Ernest Hemingway’s name—ten more than he published during his own lifetime. Most of these volumes have been compilations of fiction and journalism, short-story collections, and editions of letters. They are mostly reprints or work collected in a new format. A handful of these, however, are full-length literary productions significant to Hemingway’s oeuvre and to the American canon—unpublished in the author’s lifetime. The two most visible examples are A Moveable Feast and The Garden of Eden; both texts were purported to be nearly complete at the time of Hemingway’s death, but a comparison between published text and manuscript reveals the heavy-handed editing that went into producing these volumes. As a result, Hemingway’s posthumous work is an excellent place to discuss how dual texts are created and function.

A Moveable Feast is perhaps the best-known example of dual texts in Hemingway’s body of work. Scribner’s published Hemingway’s memoir of 1920s Paris three years after the author’s death. In a note detailing the composition history of the book, Mary Hemingway writes that her husband “finished the book in the spring of 1960” (“Note,” MF). The most important part of this introductory material, buried in the middle of the paragraph in the middle of a sentence, is, of course, the word finished. In a New York Times article that accompanied the publication of the book, Mary Hemingway states that she “went over the book and gave it the same hard-headed editing I would have done if I had been copying from Ernest’s original typing and script . . . . I put in or removed commas, checked spelling, sometimes but rarely cut out repetitious words or phrases which I felt sure were accidental.” She unequivocally states: “No one added any word to the book”1 (M. Hemingway). As scholars discovered later, Mary Hemingway did much more than simply address accidentals and correct spelling; she went so far as to ask Hemingway’s last
editor at Scribners whether he thought the latest draft “an improvement over the original”\(^2\) (Burwell 151).

In *A Moveable Feast: The Restored Edition*, published in 2009, Seán Hemingway, the author’s grandson, attempts to recast the text to better capture Hemingway’s final intention. He states in his introduction, “Readers of this edition have the full text to consider as Hemingway wrote it”; the changes Mary Hemingway made “served her own personal relationship with the writer as his fourth and final wife, rather than the interests of the book or of the author” (*MF: RE* 9). Scribner’s made the intriguing decision to leave both versions of *Feast* in print, ensuring that readers will have options when they select a book. Thus we have the crux of what makes dual texts fascinating: two volumes, two editorial agendas, both deriving from one manuscript. The earlier book has become one of Hemingway’s more celebrated works and a classic of literary autobiography; the other brings to light editorial interference and promises the text as Hemingway intended it. Mary Hemingway’s *Feast* has gathered fifty years of readers and is firmly established in American literary culture; Seán Hemingway’s comes to a new generation of Hemingway readers and aims undo the textual alterations of its predecessor. Both make claims as to the authority of their text and both claims are equally dubious. *Ernest* Hemingway, the writer, did not see the work to publication, leaving issues of authorial intention unresolved and un-resolvable.

Posthumously published works must always involve issues of dual textuality. Whether it be similar to the *Moveable Feast* example above, where two texts exist, one in specific response to the other, or in the case of a printed text’s difference in comparison to the manuscript (as is the case with *The Garden of Eden*\(^3\)), the disconnect between deceased writer and posthumous editor precludes the possibility of a stable, problem-free text. Without the author’s approval,
acceptance, or acknowledgment of a book’s publication, any claims about intention are difficult to support. Manuscripts must be prepared for publication and, as a result, will always be different from the published product. Since in the case of posthumous publication the author is not a participant in that process, these differences will be critically examined and often challenged. These challenges can result in a dual text being produced, as is true with *A Moveable Feast* and, though less well-known, with the “African Book.”

**Context of the “African Book”**

In late 1952, Ernest Hemingway began plans for a second African safari. He likely felt a trip to the African plain would be a respite from the frequent interruptions by friends, media, scholars, and well-wishers. *The Old Man and the Sea* was an international sensation, and Hemingway’s life had become more of a fishbowl existence than ever before. In a letter to Bernard Berenson, Hemingway wrote that he had worked hard in Cuba, but was eager to “get up in the hills” of Africa where he “might be some help” (*SL* 792). *Look* magazine was interested in the safari and offered $15,000 for expenses and $10,000 for an article. Hemingway, this time without a patron for his trip, signed the contract and began preparations for a return to Africa.

Kenyan tourism officials were happy to have the author. The Mau Mau Rebellion that had swept through Africa had been a public relations nightmare. Accounts of atrocities committed by the group appeared regularly in media outlets across the globe, and even that attention misrepresented the situation in Africa (Burwell 136, Reynolds 266). A visit from Ernest Hemingway, and the accompanying publicity from a high-profile article, the officials hoped, would convince other wealthy Americans that Africa was safe for tourists (Baker *Life* 516). The Southern Game Reserve was even opened in order to provide ideal hunting for Hemingway and his party. Accompanied by Philip Percival, the “white hunter” from his trip in the 1930s, and
with a range plentiful with game, Hemingway and Kenyan officials were optimistic about the safari.

The Game Department in Nairobi went so far as to allow a young game warden, Denis Zaphiro, to act as an additional white hunter for the party. Zaphiro, who would become G.C. in the “African Book” (short for “gincrazed”), saw the value of Hemingway’s presence in Africa; he successfully argued to his superiors that Hemingway should be made an honorary game warden so that he could become involved with the operations of the reserve (Burwell 136). Hemingway embraced the responsibility with characteristic enthusiasm. The bulk of the “African Book” details the author’s experience in the game warden role, from taking care of “problem lions” and acting as a mzee (warrior wise-man) to taking a native wife. Hemingway even began training to kill a lion with a spear. Behavior of this sort would have been unacceptable during the first safari of 1933–34, but an older Hemingway was comfortable testing racial and social boundaries during his second African experience.

The Hemingways and their party found the safari a space far removed from the pressures of professional authorship. Even the need to collect trophies that had defined the earlier trip to Africa was absent; Hemingway was much more content to watch, photograph and manage “his” game reserve. Zaphiro recalled that Hemingway preferred to familiarize himself with the animals rather than hunt them (Reynolds FY 268–69). The safari gave the author responsibility for the lives (both human and animal) around him; Hemingway’s enthusiasm for these challenges comes to the surface of his correspondence. In a letter to Harvey Breit, Hemingway sounds ebullient about Africa, writing “It is like knowing every day you are going to pitch in big league ball” (SL 826).
Hemingway’s idyllic Africa would not last, however. On 23 January 1954, Hemingway and his wife took off in a single-engine Cessna to survey the Congo. The trip was Hemingway’s Christmas gift to his wife, who had wanted to see the region before they left the continent. In attempting to avoid a flock of birds, the pilot accidentally clipped a telegraph wire, forcing the plane down. The crash landing left the party bruised and stranded, but there were no serious injuries. After hitching a boat ride the next day, Hemingway and his wife boarded a “rescue” plane that caught fire on takeoff. Mary escaped through a window, but Hemingway had to force the door open with a head-butt (Reynolds FY 272–74).

There were no casualties from either crash, and the Hemingways’ successful escape made international headlines. But the second plane crash had definitely left a mark on the author. He not only suffered a serious concussion, but, as Reynolds notes,

> Behind his left ear, the scalp was torn and clear fluid was leaking from the wound; one of his kidneys was badly hurt, his overworked liver damaged, his shoulder dislocated, his lower intestine collapsed, and he suffered temporary loss of hearing in his left ear and vision in his left eye. In the midnight toilet bowl he could all too clearly see the bloody urine. Later X rays would reveal two crushed lumbar vertebrae. (274)

Hemingway’s Edenic paradise exploded with the ruptured fuel tank of the second crash; he had survived, but the costs of that survival would be realized only years later.

Hemingway had ventured to Africa to avoid the problems of fame. On the African plain, biographers and scholars could not easily reach him; media requests were all but nonexistent; the Hollywood crowd could not interrupt his work. For a while, Hemingway was successful in his efforts, but in the aftermath of his plane crashes and miraculous survival, it would be impossible
to escape the spotlight again. To complicate matters, Hemingway was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in October 1954. The author wrote to Buck Lanham from Cuba that “too many people know we live here and we have had too much publicity and people come like to see the elephant in the zoo” (SL 841). The elephant, taken out of African freedom and put into popular captivity, is an image the author would have found all too fitting.

Even with the distractions, Hemingway found time to begin and work on the African Book manuscript. Starting in early fall 1954, he worked steadily over the next sixteen months, updating his correspondents regularly on his progress. By November 1955—a little over a year after he started—Hemingway had composed nearly 700 pages (Reynolds 290). When the author stopped writing in February 1957 to assist in the production of Leland Heyward’s movie version of *The Old Man and the Sea*, the manuscript numbered 856 pages and 200,000 words (Reynolds 294).

Hemingway made plans for another safari in the fall of 1956 to gather material to finish the manuscript. Returning to Africa would allow him to review and collect the final details necessary for finishing the project. However, international disputes closed the Suez Canal, and Hemingway’s own health problems made the trip impossible (Burwell 147). Instead, Hemingway would end up in Paris at the Ritz Hotel. There, the discovery of his lost trunks and their treasures would spark the author to begin the sketches of his youth in the 1920s, a period before fame and success had taken their toll. The author’s artistic interests at this point shifted from thinking about his life as is to life as it was. The African Book is about Hemingway’s flirtation with a role other than that of the successful celebrity author. The Paris sketches that became *A Moveable Feast* are about authorship before success or celebrity arrived. Both works are the creative result of an author uneasy with what life had become; looking sideways (to
Africa) and backward (to Paris) allowed Hemingway at least an imaginative space to live outside “the zoo.” He would work on the Paris sketches for the rest of his life but would never return to the African Book.

Publication History of the African Book

Hemingway took his own life in 1961, leaving behind the manuscripts, fragments, and letters that would make up his posthumous works. From February 1956 onward, Hemingway made no attempt to complete the African Book. It was left in Cuba wrapped in cellophane when he left the country to seek medical treatment in the United States. Hemingway even believed it lost—along with his other manuscripts—with the Cuban revolution (Reynolds 354). However, Mary Hemingway made an agreement with the Castro government that allowed for the retrieval of some of her and her husband’s belongings and in August 1961 she and Valerie Danby Smith left for the island (Burwell 9–10, HIW 504–09). Through negotiations, politicking, and general schmoozing, Mary Hemingway managed to procure a shrimp boat to ferry her and her husband’s belongings from Cuba to Tampa, Florida. The little boat (no bigger than Hemingway’s Pilar) was the last U. S. ship cleared to leave Cuba. Mary retrieved valuable paintings and decorations, household items important to her, and the “reams of unfinished manuscript” in the Hemingways’ Cuban bank vault (HIW 485). In exchange, Mary agreed to deed their home, Finca Vigía, to the Cuban government to establish a museum in honor of her husband.

The African Book would remain untouched for nearly ten years. Then, in December 1971, Sports Illustrated published the first of two installments under the title “African Journal.” In his introduction to these installments, Sports Illustrated editor Ray Cave calls Hemingway’s African Book an “extraordinary work of nonfiction” in which “major passages approach or equal Hemingway’s prose at its finest” (40). Mary Hemingway tempers Cave’s assessment by calling
the manuscript “fictionalized fact,” but both she and Cave see the book as principally a work of truth, if occasionally embellished. Cave acknowledges that the manuscript is a rough draft but defends the decision to publish from it under the premise that Hemingway revised as he worked and was “probably satisfied with most of the text”: “Thus finished draft would be closer than rough draft as a description of any given section” (41). Cave adds this caveat: “rough draft describes the work as a whole, for it is unstructured, undisciplined, and, of course, has no ending” (41).

*Sports Illustrated* subtitled one of the two excerpts “Miss Mary's Lion” (and published it in two parts) and the other “Imperiled Flanks.” The first selection relates the central conflict within the manuscript, Mary Hemingway's drawn-out pursuit of a “problem lion.” “Imperiled Flanks” takes up the narrative after Mary has killed her lion and left the camp for a stay in Nairobi. Hemingway misses his wife but enjoys the opportunity to explore his “native” side. Cave states that the text is presented exactly as it appears in the manuscript; he further states, however, that in addition to censoring profanity to conform to the magazine's editorial policy, he made “normal” spelling and punctuation changes. That is not to say the magazine did not incorporate nontextual additions. One of the most interesting features of the magazine's presentation is the accompanying illustrations by Jack Brusca. The images represent stylized portraits of people and animals mentioned in the text. Cave makes a point of mentioning that these, too, “are completely faithful to the original situation.” Brusca worked exclusively from photos taken by the Hemingways during the safari (41).

Before its appearance in *Sports Illustrated*, the African Book manuscript had been read by only a half dozen people (Cave 41). Now the public had its first opportunity to read one of the last projects Hemingway worked on before his death. Publication in *Sports Illustrated* would
have a lasting influence on how the African Book would be understood. The text was presented as a nonfiction journal that dealt primarily with game management. This narrative would have been a perfect fit for the magazine's readership. At his death, Hemingway was just as famous for being a sportsman as he was for his writing. However, this excerpt, while representing some of the best prose in the manuscript, simplifies Hemingway's overall project in the African Book. As “Big Two-Hearted River” is about more than just fly-fishing—though it does capture the sport beautifully—the African Book is more than just a shooting adventure.

Until 1999, the *Sports Illustrated* excerpts were the only selections from the African Book to be published. In that year Scribner’s published *True at First Light*, a book-length treatment of the manuscript edited by Hemingway’s son, Patrick. In 1997, the Hemingway estate and the Hemingway Foundation, in conjunction with Patrick Hemingway, agreed to a two-part plan of publication: the trade text, *True at First Light*, would be released in 1999, and an academic treatment of the text would be released later. This marked the first attempt to publish the manuscript in something close to its entirety, though it is heavily abridged (*First Light* is only about 100,000 words—half the length of the African Book manuscript). Patrick Hemingway admits in his introduction that “only Hemingway himself could have licked his unfinished draft into the *Ursus horribilis* it might have been” and that his editorial effort “is a child’s teddy bear” (*TAFL* 11). Patrick Hemingway is being modest, however. His editorial effort, while not without flaws, does present some of the complexities of the African Book that the *Sports Illustrated* selections failed to capture. Patrick Hemingway also refutes Cave’s assertion that the African Book was the author’s safari journal.

The academic text, *Under Kilimanjaro*, was released in 2005 by Kent State University Press. Its editors, Hemingway scholars Robert Fleming and Robert Lewis, state in their
introduction that the manuscript “deserves as complete and faithful publication as possible without editorial distortion, speculation, or textually unsupported attempts at improvement”\(^\text{10}\) \((\text{UK } ix)\). They further state in \textit{Under Kilimanjaro} that they have come “as close as we could . . . to what we think its author might have hoped to publish” \((\text{UK } ix)\). By this they mean they left the text as close to Hemingway's hand as possible, only correcting—as had Cave in \textit{Sports Illustrated} and Patrick Hemingway before them—the spelling, grammar, and factual inconsistencies that Hemingway would have expected his publishers to catch. Lewis and Fleming adopted conservative editorial principles in their approach to the African Book. They only filled in gaps in the manuscript when they felt they had enough information to warrant a change; in other cases, when the manuscript was unclear and evidence did not support an emendation, the editors used an extended dash to indicate illegibility (for example, “w——”). Likewise, while they excised passages Hemingway had marked for deletion in the reading text, they retained these passages in appendices (and did the same with significant marginalia). The editors, echoing Patrick Hemingway's decision in \textit{First Light}, also included a glossary and list of characters. There is little else in the way of editorial commentary. The editors present \textit{Under Kilimanjaro} without the apparatus typical of academic editions: there are no footnotes, emendation tables, facsimiles, or interpretations. Lewis and Fleming, however, could not resist adding one noteworthy piece of punctuation. Hemingway's manuscript ends midsentence with the preposition “in,” and the editors deleted this word and supplied a period “to give some sense of closure” \((\text{UK } 456)\). (This “textually unsupported improvement” would seem to go against the editorial policy Lewis and Fleming outline in the introduction.)

Hemingway’s literary executors (the Hemingway Foundation, which owns the domestic copyrights, and the Hemingway Foreign Rights Trust, which controls the international rights) put
into play two versions of the African Book manuscript: a heavily shaped trade text, *True at First Light*, and an academic, scholarly treatment, *Under Kilimanjaro*. *First Light* is available through a commercial press, Scribner’s, and *Under Kilimanjaro* is published by Kent State University Press. In their physical appearance and the bibliographic coding, these texts appear to be unrelated except for their shared subject matter—Hemingway’s 1954 safari. Only by reading the introductions would a reader understand that the two books are based on the same unfinished manuscript. Neither text has superseded the other as the definitive African Book treatment; both volumes coexist on library, bookstore, and readers' shelves. *True at First Light* and *Under Kilimanjaro* demonstrate the issues that make dual texts so provocative. What are the differences between these two texts? What text was produced by each editorial philosophy? What “story” do readers get depending on what text they pick up? My analysis takes up these questions and attempts to reconcile the two different texts with Hemingway’s artistic aims.

**What Was Hemingway Trying to Produce?**

In examining the different textual constructions that derive from the African Book, one thing is clear: none of the editors knew exactly how to frame Hemingway’s work. Cave states in his *Sports Illustrated* introduction that the African Book is nonfiction; he dubs the manuscript the “African Journal” (40). By using “journal” in their working title for the manuscript, and referring to the text as a journal throughout, Cave and *Sports Illustrated* reinforce their claim of the African Book’s nonfictiveness; likewise, readers of the magazine would have expected a sports feature, not sports quasi-fiction.11 The editors at *Sports Illustrated* were invested in framing the African Book as a “true account,” even though the excerpts selected did not conform to any traditional sense of a written “journal.”
Patrick Hemingway recognized that this was an ill-fitting description of his father’s work. In his introduction to *True at First Light*, he states that the African Book “is certainly not a journal” and that *First Light* is “a fiction” half the length of the manuscript (*TAFL* 9). Referring to *First Light* as a fiction deepens the confusion about how to classify the African Book. Is Patrick Hemingway’s text a fiction, or is the manuscript? Are they both fictions? Complicating this question is the fact that Patrick Hemingway subtitled *True at First Light* “A Fictional Memoir.” This attempt to categorize the work invites readers to approach the text from two opposing perspectives. But it also fails to capture a true sense of the manuscript. The African Book is a memoir, and it does use novelistic tools to create the story, but subtitling the work as “fictional” implies “imagined” or “invented”—which the African Book is not.

Lewis and Fleming in *Under Kilimanjaro* instead directly compare the manuscript to Hemingway’s previous safari book, *Green Hills of Africa*. The comparison to *Green Hills* is irresistible, because Hemingway himself harkens back to his previous safari throughout the text. Lewis and Fleming suggest that we read the introduction from *Green Hills* to inform our understanding of Hemingway’s project. In the foreword to that book, Hemingway writes that he 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.” Lewis and Fleming see *Under Kilimanjaro* as an extension of this project; they write, “Hemingway, as he had done in the 1930s, based his narrative for the most part on actual events. . . . But as in his earlier ‘true’ book, Hemingway also introduced fictional elements to improve and shape the story of day-to-day life in Africa into a pastoral romance” (*UK* xi).

The African Book has thus been described by its various editors as journal, fiction-memoir, and nonfiction pastoral romance. It is not possible to know exactly how Hemingway
would have framed his work, nor how the text would have finally appeared under his authority. His letters from the period during which he was making the most progress on the manuscript, however, do provide some insight into his thinking. In a letter to his lawyer Alfred Rice in which he complains about his taxes, Hemingway asserts that the expenses he incurred in his first safari, both financial and physical, had resulted in some of his most commercially and artistically profitable work—*Green Hills*, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” and “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber.” The personal experience of Africa made these works possible.\(^{12}\) He assures Rice that the latest trip to Africa has given him “really wonderful stuff to write”: “I have a diamond mine if people will let me alone and let me dig the stones out of the blue mud and then cut and polish them” (*SL* 833). If given enough time, Hemingway claims, his new African work will “make more money for the Government than any Texas oilman” (*SL* 833).

In a fascinating letter to Bernard Berenson written two months later, Hemingway outlines the difficulties of producing prose and reveals some of the ideas he was entertaining while in the midst of the African Book. Hemingway states that “prose . . . is possibly the roughest trade of all in writing . . . . You have the sheet of blank paper, the pencil, and the obligation to invent truer than things can be true” (*SL* 837). He continues:

> You have to take what is not palpable and make it completely palpable and also have it seem normal . . . so that it can become a part of the experience of the person who reads it. Obviously, this is impossible and that is probably why it is considered to be valuable when you are able to do it. (*SL* 837)

Hemingway used the “truer than true” motif throughout his life to describe the best fiction writing and what he was trying to achieve in his own work. We can extend this understanding of
prose beyond just fiction into Hemingway’s experimentation with nonfiction. *Green Hills of Africa* is one of the first instances of the nonfiction novel in twentieth-century American letters, yet few critics have considered it in the context of that genre. With Hemingway’s own insistence on the necessity of personal experience in creating powerful fiction, we can infer, especially given the foreword to *Green Hills*, that Hemingway used elements of fiction to “cut and polish” his true account of Africa, both in *Green Hills* and the African Book.

An additional statement Hemingway makes in his letter to Berenson is that “Publicity, admiration, adulation, or simply being fashionable are all worthless and are extremely harmful if one is susceptible to them” (*SL* 837). Hemingway’s views on celebrity must be tempered by his own careful cultivation of his public image; he did not necessarily mind being a public figure until he lost control of his own narrative. When he left for his second safari, biographers and scholars such as Charles Fenton, Carlos Baker, and Philip Young were investigating Hemingway’s life and art and the relationship between the two. Hemingway alternately stated that a relationship between the two did not exist or that it was a mysterious part of his creative process not to be dissected. He saw Africa as a place where he could avoid his inquisitors. He must also have felt that in writing the African Book he was still participating in (and perhaps even creating) that escape.

Hemingway understood his second safari to have been a creative catalyst that would lead to new, powerful work. When he finally sat down to dig the stones out of the blue mud of his experience, he also appears to have been thinking about the relationship between craft and truth and the challenges of celebrity. Hemingway was likely conscious of the genre-bending nature of his manuscript and may have been actively experimenting with the line between truth and fiction—but not with regard to events, places, and chronology. Hemingway reserved his creative
license for the development of character, specifically his own. Cave in *Sports Illustrated* identifies one of the themes in the manuscript as the “Africanization” of Hemingway (40). This description goes to the heart of Hemingway’s artistic project in the African Book. The African Book is nonfiction, but the author’s crafting of his own self-image—his “Africanizing” of himself—is where the line between truth and fantasy comes closest to blurring.

Cave sees Hemingway’s other four other themes in the manuscript as hunting, age and wisdom, the rights of Africans with regard to British colonial rule, and religion (40–41). Burwell says further that these themes are inseparable: “They are the objectification of Hemingway’s concern with the circumstances of his personal life and his status as writer” (138). Burwell correctly sees Hemingway’s project “as a way of exploring alternatives to the life in which he was judged . . . only as a writer” (136). However, what Cave, Burwell, and the rest of the editors of the African Book do not call attention to is an additional theme: Hemingway’s attempt to fashion a self-identity not only separate from writing, but also from his race. This goes beyond Cave’s assertion of “Africanization” into something more akin to “tribalization.” Hemingway used the African Book as a chance to explore a new racial identity, one that became entangled with his writing persona. *Under Kilimanjaro* demonstrates this, while *True at First Light* shifts the narrative away from Hemingway’s interest in race and back toward a meditation of his craft.

**Under Kilimanjaro, True at First Light, and the Writer at Fifty-Five**

Hemingway used his longer nonfiction to discuss topics of deep interest to him. Behind these detailed examinations of bullfighting, hunting, and youth, however, there is a secondary conversation concerning the craft of writing. *Death in the Afternoon* is as much about toreadors as it is about tragedy, art, and the writer (it is here that Hemingway's famous “ice-berg” dictum first appears). *Green Hills of Africa* recounts Hemingway's trophy hunt on the African plain, but
implicitly relates the experience to the competition among writers to produce the best work—
even when other writers might not know that there is a competition. *A Moveable Feast* (both the
original and the 2009 restored edition) details Hemingway's youth, apprenticeship, and love in
Paris but is also a book about work and how best to perform it, regardless of age, location, or
cultural milieu. The African Book, too, contains a message about writing. That message changes
between *True at First Light* and *Under Kilimanjaro*. Broadly, the African Book's lessons on
writing have to do with the writer's relationship with the world—with his readers, subject matter,
critics, and craft. The fundamental difference between *First Light* and *Under Kilimanjaro* is how
the editors decided to frame Hemingway's attitude toward critical opinion. Hemingway
recognized the power that critics wielded over individual books and entire literary careers.
However, as Hemingway became world famous, the apparatus of criticism and assessment
expanded beyond the professional reviewer to include biographers, scholars, and regular readers.

Throughout his career, Hemingway’s relationship with professional critics was mercurial.
He referred to Edmund Wilson as one of the few writers who produced “intelligent criticism”—
but also at one point described Wilson’s criticism as “second rate gospels written by someone
who is out on parole” (*SL* 793, 557). Hemingway was even rougher on H. L. Mencken, whom he
called simply “that shit” in a letter to Harold Loeb (*SL* 143). Hemingway appreciated “good”
reviews and cultivated relationships with critics who could advance his career; likewise, he
disparaged negative reviews and reviewers as ignorant, impotent, or unread. While he
understood that criticism was important in developing a readership, and appreciated the
reviewers who recognized the central themes and conflicts he was writing about, he never
embraced professional critics as true components of the artistic process.¹³ “Criticism is a joke,”
Hemingway wrote; “the critics do not know their ass from a hole in the ground” (*SL* 417).
The issue with academic scholars was more complicated. Charles Fenton, Philip Young, and Carlos Baker—who would all become foundational scholars in Hemingway studies—faced an author who was determined to keep them from digging around in his life but who was also interested in developing intelligent readers (perhaps, as Reynolds suggests, because Hemingway craved “intellectual conversation”) (Reynolds 241). Hemingway offered first to buy Baker out from his project (a critical assessment of his work to date), but eventually provided important information (Reynolds 239). Likewise, Hemingway was initially receptive to Fenton, but then became wary, advising him to drop his inquiry altogether (Reynolds 253). With Young, Hemingway was especially worried and resistant, going so far as to threaten to prohibit Young from quoting from his work. Hemingway’s vacillating reaction to scholarly interest is understandable. Positive scholarly interest could elevate the long-term importance of his work. But fostering a scholarly conversation also meant allowing access to the artistic mechanism that Hemingway valued above all else. Would academic dissection ruin his ability to create? While Hemingway’s correspondence is often dismissive about the scholars he dealt with, he nevertheless communicated with them and assisted in their research (eventually relenting even in Young’s case).

Criticism, professional and scholarly, was at the forefront of Hemingway’s mind as he planned his second safari. Reviewers had panned his long-awaited 1950 novel Across the River and into the Trees, and Hemingway blamed them for the book’s failure to find an audience. While in 1952 The Old Man and the Sea was a critical and commercial success (published first in Life magazine on September 1 and then six days later released as a clothbound novel by Scribner’s), Hemingway still believed that there was a backlash being planned, perhaps even led by a “good” reviewer like Edmund Wilson (SL 783). The seclusion of Africa shielded
Hemingway from critics and scholars alike, but a particular moment from the Africa experience, a letter from a reader, would provoke Hemingway enough to provide a significant difference between the authorial personae that emerge from the editing of Under Kilimanjaro and True at First Light.

In both narratives, Mary departs the camp for a visit to Nairobi, leaving Hemingway alone in the camp to catch up on his correspondence and “maybe . . . write something too” (TAFL 225). Hemingway opens letters that have arrived with the plan that took Mary and remarks that they “are fairly dull” and make him glad to be in Africa. However, one letter “carefully forwarded” by his publishers, from a woman in Iowa, is a scathing attack of Across the River and into the Trees. In the letter, she slams Hemingway with all the vitriol and condescension of the most affected Victorian. She admits that she has not read The Old Man and the Sea, but that her brother, “who is mature,” has assured her that the book is no more emotionally mature than Into the Trees. In order to justify her reading to Hemingway, she attaches a blurb from the Des Moines Register and Tribune in which Hemingway is dismissed as “the most over-rated writer of our time” (TAFL 227–29).

In editing True at First Light, Patrick Hemingway introduces into the text of Ernest Hemingway’s narrative the letter and blurb in their entirety. (Hemingway chose only to summarize the contents of the letter in his manuscript.) In a text created out of excision, this addition, the largest by Patrick Hemingway in the whole of the book, is noteworthy. The inclusion of the letter—with name, date, and location attached—right in the middle of Hemingway’s prose cannot but affect the reader’s perception of the author’s purpose in mentioning this anecdote. In True at First Light, the presence of the letter provides a specific context for Hemingway’s annoyance and exasperation with a “regular” reader and with the
condescending blurb she forwards from her regional paper. Hemingway skewers the Iowa woman and her “mature” brother in one of the most biting passages of the book:

It was enjoyable to sit in the empty mess tent alone with my correspondence and imagine the emotionally mature brother grimacing perhaps in the kitchen over a snack from the Frigidaire, or seated in front of the TV set watching Mary Martin as Peter Pan and I thought how kind it was for this lady from Iowa to write me and how pleasant it would be to have her emotionally mature grimacing brother shaking his head here now at this moment. (TAFL 229)

The Iowa critic ends her screed with a request for Hemingway to write “SOMETHING that is worthwhile” before he dies, a request Hemingway counters in this fashion: “I thought the hell with this stupid Iowa bitch writing letters to people she does not know about things she knows nothing about” (TAFL 230).

With the letter and column supplied in Patrick Hemingway’s editing of First Light, one reads Hemingway’s response as specifically directed at the letter writer: her criticism is ridiculous, the columnist is foolish, and Hemingway’s retort is appropriate. Though Patrick Hemingway subtitles First Light a “Fictional Memoir,” he nonetheless provides evidence that locates the letter, writer, and response in a real time and place. In giving the reader “proof” of the exchange, however, Patrick Hemingway limits the valence of Hemingway’s comments to this particular instance of failed understanding and puerile criticism—a limitation Hemingway likely did not intend. Hemingway writes in Under Kilimanjaro that “modesty prevents me from quoting all of her letter . . . . I had bored her greatly in a book that she had never read and I knew that was no mean feat even in the area where she and the grimacer lived” (307). The context of
the passage suggests that the author had a larger target in mind when he engaged the “Iowa bitch” in manuscript—and later, perhaps, in print (UK 307–08). She is an unspecified Midwestern reader who sends along an equally unspecified newspaper clipping. For Hemingway, it would seem, Iowa, its readers, and its newspapers represented the crudest, loudest, and most intellectually stunted criticism America had to offer. One understands why Hemingway loves Africa, its unstated rules, its fellowship, and perhaps most of all, its illiterate Natives. The American alternative is intolerable. He compares the two places and deduces that even if they might be similar in some way, the concerns of Africa require one’s mind to be sharp while those of Iowa leave one crazed by inactivity: Hemingway sees “the grimacer” seated among the cornstalks his hands uncontrollable in the night as he heard the growth of the stems of the mealies. In the shamba we had mealies that grew as tall as tall as corn grows in the Middle West. But nobody heard it grow in the night because the nights were cool and the corn grew in the afternoon, and at night, even if it had grown at night, you could not have heard it for the talking of the hyenas and the jackals and the lions when they were hunting and the noise the leopard made. (UK 307)

The entire construct of the Midwestern American ideal is indicted here as soft, making those that live there soft-minded. Africa, by comparison, requires vigilance and alertness. One cannot afford to spend the night listening to corn grow.

In Under Kilimanjaro, immediately after Hemingway's meditation on his Midwestern critics, the author takes a plane ride in order to move a herd of elephants away from a village where they might wreak havoc. While the herd moves, Hemingway and the pilot notice one elephant in particular:
There was one old bull apart from the others who had a young bull with him. This old bull had very heavy tusks and, from the air, everything about him looked enormous. He had been standing under a tree when we first saw him and he did not move off when the others moved. When we came back for him he spread his ears out very wide and raised up his trunk . . . . This time I had a very good look at his ivory since he raised it directly toward the aircraft as we came in. It looked almost too heavy for him to lift it without effort. (UK 303)

But the elephant does lift his tusks, challenging the airplane and refusing to be moved at any pace other than his own. This is one of the central images of Under Kilimanjaro, and an image that Hemingway, as author and character, takes time to consider. It is also one left out of First Light by Patrick Hemingway.

After returning to camp and reading his correspondence from Iowa and elsewhere, Hemingway asks one of his native guides about the elephant. The guide is familiar with the animal and advises Hemingway to take out a license and kill it. Hemingway wonders aloud if the animal might be killed in the course of game control, but the guide answers that the elephant is much too smart to make stupid mistakes and that he has been hunted and wounded many times. Hemingway decides that, as an official of the game department, he cannot hunt the elephant. As the author lies down to sleep, he thinks further about the elephant, and his reason for not pursing him becomes clearer:

In the night I thought about the elephant and his contempt for the Cessna and about the long time he had lived with so many people against him and seeking to kill him for his two wonderful teeth that were now only a great disadvantage to him and a deadly load for
him to carry . . . Lying in the cot, unable to sleep, with the balsam needle pillow under the base of my neck and the sheet and blanket friendly against the cold night I tried to remember what it was that had brought me into such close connection with the tusks so that if I never saw them again I would always possess them and I knew finally in the night that it was the rain on them and the slow terrible effort the elephant made to lift them high into the air and against the aircraft.\(^\text{14}\) (UK 312)

Hemingway sees his own situation reflected in the elephant's condition. Burwell believes that the “elephant signifies the burden his reputation has become to the aging, unproductive writer”\(^\text{15}\) (140). I think Burwell is incorrect to suggest that the elephant represents unproductivity (Hemingway had just produced a worldwide bestseller in \textit{The Old Man and the Sea}), but do think she comes close to the mark in relating the tusks to reputation and achievement. The elephant has become long in the tooth by surviving and outsmarting his predators and has lived to be admired and envied for his ivory. Having lived so long, the elephant is now a permanent target; he has only his wits, pride, and impressive ivory tusks with which to defend himself. For a writer who makes a habit of symbolizing his craft, one does not have to take an analytical leap to read him as the elephant and the tusks as the impressive (though heavy) burden of honor and success.

In \textit{Under Kilimanjaro}, we can see Hemingway locating the Iowa critic between the two elephant passages quoted above. The context of this placement expands Hemingway's response beyond his Midwestern critic to include everyone who proverbially “hunts the elephant.” The disparaging assessment of Hemingway's career and the admiration of the elephant are linked together by their proximity. The elephant assumes symbolic importance beyond its appearance in the specific time and place referenced in the book. In the same way, without the text of the letter
presented, the “Iowa bitch's” disapproval comes to represent a great swath of the critical machine that fails to read Hemingway's work intelligently; thus, in *Under Kilimanjaro*, Hemingway's reply likewise includes the critics he believed had misread his work since the beginning of his career. When Hemingway asserts that he has “already done [worthwhile writing] and . . . will do it again many times,” the reader of *Under Kilimanjaro* sees that this declaration is not so much directed toward Iowa as it is toward critics everywhere.

By removing the elephant references from *True at First Light*, and inserting the letter and column in their entirety, Patrick Hemingway removed the possibility of this larger symbolic reading from his version of the African Book. Rather than using an unnamed woman to represent an entire profession that fails to grasp his work, as he had in the unabridged manuscript of *Under Kilimanjaro*, the Hemingway of *True at First Light* responds specifically to Mrs. G. S. Held of Guthrie Center, Iowa (postmark July 27, 1953) (TAFL 228). Readers have her letter, her attached column, and even her name and location. Hemingway's response cannot be to anyone other than this woman, as readers lack any reason to expand the author's comments beyond this particular instance. While Patrick Hemingway likely intended the letter to provide a moment of authenticity to his father's narrative—which, in a sense, it does—the unintended effect is to lessen Hemingway's stinging censure of the critics who, he believed, had misread his work. This exemplifies how an editorial “improvement” in a dual text can skew the author's original purpose. Patrick Hemingway's addition does provide an interesting literary artifact to read against Hemingway's African Book, but without examining both texts, a reader would fail to understand the full breadth of Hemingway's intention as it can be surmised from the manuscript he actually left.

**Hemingway and Race, in and out of Africa**
In the first decades of Hemingway scholarship, the issue of race was not a major component of the critical conversation. Hemingway’s fiction, especially the novels, tended to marginalize minority characters, keeping them on the periphery of the action. Scholars followed suit. However, as Hemingway studies have developed, critics have taken up the complex representation of race in Hemingway’s work. Starting with Toni Morrison’s analysis of To Have and Have Not and The Garden of Eden in Playing in the Dark, and continuing through the last twenty years, the conversation about the use and function of race in Hemingway’s work has become more nuanced and comprehensive.  

Morrison’s chapter on Hemingway in Playing in the Dark takes the author to task for failing to fully develop his black characters. In her analysis of To Have and Have Not, Morrison sees Hemingway as denying Wesley—alternately referred to as “the nigger” by Harry Morgan and the third-person narrator—a voice: “The black character either does not speak . . . or speaks in very legislated and manipulated terms” (Morrison 71). Morrison believes “the logic of the narrative’s discrimination prevents a verbal initiative of importance to Harry’s business coming from this nameless, sexless, nationless Africanist presence” (73). When Wesley does speak, it is not to assert any sort of agency, but rather to emphasize the traits of Harry Morgan, who is able to function while “shot” worse than the first mate. For Morrison, “[Harry and Marie] solicit our admiration by the comparison that is struck between their claims to fully embodied humanity and a discredited Africanism. The voice of the text is complicit in these formulations: Africanism becomes not only a means of displaying authority, but, in fact, constitutes its source” (80).

While Morrison’s analysis does seem to suggest racist inclination on Hemingway’s part, she acknowledges that it would be “irresponsible and unjustified to invest Hemingway with the thoughts of his characters . . . . An author is not personally accountable for the acts of his fictive
characters, although he is responsible for them” (86). Morrison writes that she does not believe Hemingway is a racist, and her analysis of The Garden of Eden shows that Hemingway’s use of race is more complex than it appears in To Have and Have Not. In Eden, “whiteness . . . is a deficiency,” something to be transgressed to achieve a state beyond white, heteronormative social expectations. “That story,” Morrison writes, “Is marked and stressed in its forbiddeness. Its voluptuous illegality is enforced by the associations constantly made between darkness and desire, darkness and irrationality, darkness and the thrill of evil” (87).

The inner (David’s narrative of Africa in his youth) and outer (the relationship between David Bourne and Catherine) stories of Africa in The Garden of Eden are where Hemingway stages his two conceptions of race. Catherine is “both black and white, both male and female” and is thus exotic, dangerous, and erotic. The inner Africa or David’s imagination is innocent, stable, and firmly within the control of white hegemony. Catherine destroys David’s (inner) narrative.

She thinks it boring, irrelevant. David ought to be writing about her instead. The reader is made to understand and be repelled by her selfish narcissism. But in fact she is right. At least Hemingway thinks she is, for the story we are reading and the one he has written is about her. The African story David is struggling to write . . . is an old, familiar myth, Africa-as-Eden before and after its fall, where, as in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” one goes to “work the fat off [one’s] soul.” (Morrison 89)

Morrison shows that Hemingway’s interest in Africanism goes beyond the troubling representation in To Have and Have Not. The attraction to Africa as a place of race and gender
collapse would stay with Hemingway and become a central theme of the African Book years later.

The most recent work to enter the conversation on Hemingway and race is Marc Dudley’s *Hemingway, Race, and Art*. Dudley builds on Morrison’s analysis by examining the evolution of Hemingway’s artistic treatment of the color line, from the early short stories and Nick Adams’ interactions with the Natives in Michigan, to Hemingway as character in *Under Kilimanjaro*. Dudley argues that in the early fiction, Hemingway undermines traditional conceptions of the “Great White Man”; Dudley shows that Hemingway recognizes that the line separating “white from red is illusory at best” (12). Hemingway moves the color line between whites and Indians throughout the Michigan stories, letting Nick explore each side. In later short stories, Hemingway shifts the color line from a division between red and white to one between white and black. Dudley argues that in “The Battler” and “The Light of the World” boxing becomes the subtext for Hemingway’s analysis of the meaning of race: the significance of color fades with each smash Bug delivers to calm Ad down. Dudley also writes that in “The Porter” “violence of the strategic and controlled variety could easily undo the knot in the black man’s noose, and this fear played on the white imagination” (18).

In the signature work that emerges from Hemingway’s first African safari, Dudley argues that Hemingway takes a step backward with regard to his conception of race. In *Green Hills of Africa*, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro, and “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,” the color line that moved so fluidly in Hemingway’s earlier fiction becomes fixed. The continent is seen in terms of black and white. Dudley states, “In Africa, alongside each grotesque moment is always the promise of white renewal, the possibility of being made whole again. What remains are the spectacle of race, the marked divide, and ultimately a resplendent whiteness. While the
essentially “great” white man invariably falls short time and again at home, in Africa, Hemingway shows us, he can redeem himself” (113). The Africa of Green Hills is especially a space where established racial protocol governs the social interactions between white and black characters.

Dudley conflates True at First Light and Under Kilimanjaro into a single text—a position I flatly disagree with and that this chapter argues against doing. However, he does show that Hemingway’s use of the color line becomes transgressive again after his experience in the second safari:

Geographic (and psychic) distance and age (and wisdom?) allowed Hemingway’s imagination to roam freely across the color line the second time around. The author, for a fleeting moment, becomes the Native. In True at First Light/Under Kilimanjaro, Hemingway inverts his interrogative model somewhat, working hard to initially reduce and eliminate disparity, to build a narrative of equality, not inequity. These moments show us an artist deconstructing, if not altogether erasing, the color line and racial typology. However, Hemingway’s liberal moments are fleeting and his reversion to colonial discourse works to subvert any new world he creates. (144–45).

Dudley ultimately sees Hemingway as exploring the greatest white privilege available to him in Africa: he temporarily breaks down the racial barriers between himself and the Natives around him to experience an Africanist fantasy. While Miss Mary is away, Ernest plays. But Dudley sees this fantasy as concluding when Mary returns to the text after her trip in Nairobi: “Mary’s return, the couple’s embrace, and Hemingway’s visceral response all mark the temporal
Wakamba’s formal return to the white race . . . . It demonstrates for the final time the fluidity of racial conception and the power inherent in white privilege” (157).

Morrison and Dudley, respectively the first significant and the most recent critics of Hemingway and race, both recognize Hemingway’s deep interest in thwarting the codes of racial identity in Africa. Dudley adapts Morrison’s concepts in investigating the role of race in the African Book. However, Dudley sees Hemingway’s attempt to “go native” as an elaborate fantasy: a “long weekend” where Hemingway prods and pokes the color line to live briefly as the Other he has so long been interested in.17 White privilege affords Hemingway this fantasy: he takes it, he leaves it. I think for much of the African Book, this is true. But such an interpretation suggests that Hemingway—the author and character—did not take this experience seriously. I think the evidence is to the contrary. Hemingway is not role-playing and not taking a brief sojourn to see how “the Other side” lives. Rather, he is deadly serious about his attempt to enter the Wakamba tribe. When he ultimately fails to achieve a meaningful relationship with the Natives around him, there is a genuine and bitter disappointment.

The Tribalization of Ernest Hemingway

Coupled with Hemingway's desire to escape scholars, biographers, critics, and disgruntled readers, were fantasies of leaving the vocation of writing altogether to become a warrior-wise man (mzee) in Africa. Hemingway's biographers have mostly glossed over this aspect of the second safari; the writer's behavior is described as everything from “an elaborate fantasy” to the more harmless belief that “boys will be boys” (Reynolds 270, Baker 517). Burwell is right to say that biographers have failed to take Hemingway's behavior in Africa seriously (Burwell 136). In True at First Light Hemingway shows an interest in racial identity akin to what Cave called Hemingway's “Africanization.” Comparing First Light to Under
Kilimanjaro, however, reveals that Hemingway's written experience goes beyond Africanization to something more racially complicated. “Tribalization” captures not only Hemingway's interest in Africa as writer, hunter, and game manager, but also his desire to shed his writing persona entirely and become a member of the Wakamba tribe with whom he interacted with during the second safari.

Hemingway’s previous Africa work treats the natives as a function of the safari. They guide, carry, feed, and assist the hunters, but with few exceptions they undergo little character development. M'Cola, Hemingway’s gun bearer in Green Hills, is a memorable character, but is still a minor figure within the book. Hemingway reserves the most development for Pop (Philip Percival), the white hunter who conducts the safari. In “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” the African natives are likewise background figures. Hemingway’s treatments of Africa—before he began work on the African Book—are focused on the white characters’ reactions to each other and their situation in the context of the excitement, danger, and the leisurely pace of a safari.

This approach changes with the African Book. Hemingway’s frequent refrain in both True at First Light and Under Kilimanjaro is that everything is different from the first safari. The conventions and expectations that determined earlier behavior no longer have the same relevance. Both texts generally begin with the white hunter popularized in Green Hills, Pop, leaving the camp and placing Hemingway in charge (the beginning of Under Kilimanjaro is slightly different and is discussed below). At the opening of True at First Light, the writer asks for some general advice on issues relating to the safari, and Pop tells the writer that he has good judgment and shrugs off his concerns. Pop leaves Hemingway with a parting blessing “in the classic formula”: “Now it is all yours” (TAFL 16). Left alone as the primary authority in the area,
Hemingway begins immediately to assert a new understanding compared to his previous trip to Africa:

It was always they. They were the people, the watu. Once they had been boys. They still were to Pop. But he had either known them all when they were boys in age or had known their fathers when their fathers were children. Twenty years ago I had called them boys too and neither they nor I had any thought that I had no right to. Now no one would have minded if I had used the word. But the way things were now you did not do it. Everyone had his duties and everyone had a name. Not to know a name was both impolite and a sign of sloppiness. There were special names too of all sorts and shortening of names and friendly and unfriendly nicknames. Pop still cursed them in English or in Swahili and they loved it. I had no right to curse them and I never did. *(TAFL 16–17)*

Patrick Hemingway begins *First Light* with Pop’s departure from the safari camp. *Under Kilimanjaro* begins instead with a one-page description of Keiti, Pop’s assistant. It is Keiti, a native and a professional servant to a white hunter, who begins Hemingway’s African Book and possesses the traits of the code hero that years before had been ascribed to Pop in *Green Hills* *(UK 1–2)*. This example is representative of the chief difference between Patrick Hemingway’s text and *Under Kilimanjaro*. Hemingway’s interest in racial identity and change is muted in *First Light*. By contrast, *Under Kilimanjaro* begins with a detailed encomium of a native character where Patrick Hemingway begins his text with Pop. This difference, minor at first glance, is indicative of how Patrick Hemingway chose to edit his father’s work. When Hemingway’s interest in race and race complexity became serious—even radical—the author’s son chose to excise (and thus reshape) the narrative.
A central theme within *Under Kilimanjaro* that is toned down within *First Light*, is Hemingway’s belief that he is different from the other white characters. The conflict between them (white hunters, safari tourists, colonial government authorities) and us (Hemingway, the Wakamba tribe he desires to be part of, and African natives generally) becomes more fully defined as the narrative advances. Throughout the hunt for Mary’s lion, Hemingway’s racial interests take a backseat to the task at hand. The only gesture to a tribal identity is a mildly comic explanation to the safari outfit concerning Mary’s desire to kill a lion: it is requirement of her tribe (of the land of Minnesota) that she slay the lion by “the birthday of the Baby Jesus” or she must commit ritual suicide. (Luckily, Mary completes her mission of killing the lion.) However, as Mary’s narrative resolves itself, *True at First Light* ends (this being the signature plot of that text). In *Under Kilimanjaro* she retreats into the background as Hemingway’s tribal exploration begins to take on more importance.

This exploration is best represented through Debba, Hemingway’s native “fiancée.” The native Wakamba girl who is the object of Hemingway’s fascination has generally not received serious critical attention. Denis Zaphiro called her a “slovenly-looking brat” and dismissed the notion that Hemingway was genuinely interested in her as anything other than a curiosity (Reynolds 270). Mary likewise remarked to her husband that the girl needed a bath if he intended to pursue her (Baker 517). But in *Under Kilimanjaro*, Debba emerges as the central element in Hemingway’s tribal fantasy. Through her, Hemingway hopes to invent a persona beyond that of professional public writer. Debba also holds the key to Hemingway’s intent to differentiate himself racially from the other white characters.

In *True at First Light*, Patrick Hemingway’s editorial choices have the effect of representing his father’s relationship to the *shamba* (farm/village), and thus to Debba, as one
primarily of utility and benevolence. As the acting game warden of the area, Hemingway is responsible for safeguarding the settlement from marauding lions, leopards, and wayward elephants. His interactions with Debba are then framed in Hemingway’s role as “Papa,” the fatherly mentor and protector of young men and women. Hemingway can be flirtatious and affectionate but is ultimately platonic. In *Under Kilimanjaro*, Hemingway’s frequent meditations on Debba begin to undermine such a comfortable categorization of their relationship. Hemingway wonders how he can incorporate the native girl more into his life, takes her hunting (and finds it significantly easier than hunting with Mary), and only half-jokes with the other Wakamba natives about taking her as his wife.

Debba is the perfect companion for a man who has grown frustrated with the task of professional authorship: she cannot read and knows him in no role other than as white hunter. She is all gesture, touch, and expression. She never chastises the author or calls him to task for his failings, and she has no professional aspirations beyond being a “good wife.” That Debba and Hemingway do not share a language makes the phrases they do share all the more significant. For example, Hemingway teaches her the phrase Spanish *No hay remedio* (“There is no remedy”), and it becomes a password between the two to represent their relationship. Hemingway’s courtship also provides him an entry to the Wakamba tribe and allows him a plausible justification for leaving behind his status as *bwana* (white hunter), game scout, game ranger, or any other title representing the reach of colonial authority. A relationship with Debba serves as proof of his tribal membership and deracination; with her, he believes he is no longer white, but as African as the tribesmen serving the safari.

Hemingway describes Mary in nearly opposite terms in *Under Kilimanjaro*. Her moods are mercurial, she has trouble being comfortable in the safari camp, and she spends her time
writing and discussing writing. Mary even implies that her respect for her husband is based on his role as writer, not on the more important—at least in the author’s view—work he is doing on behalf of the Game Department. Hemingway states that while she is gone to Nairobi he will “run a nice clean joint.” She replies, “Why don’t you write something so I’ll be really proud” (UK 291).

Mary is specifically coded as white. Like G.C., she still operates from a point of white privilege even if she, too, has been “Africanized” to a certain extent. Her own interest in a native, one of G.C.’s expert game scouts, is tainted with objectification; he is a physical specimen,19 but her interest is only as an amusement carried on against G. C. and Hemingway. Mary says she is going to the ngoma (tribal dance celebration) with “Mr. Chungo of the Game Scouts Department”: “I am in love with Mr. Chungo and he is my hero” (UK 238). However, G. C. begins to become frustrated with Mary’s behavior and demands that she cease the discussion. Hemingway playfully scolds Mary, but Mary’s reaction to their tone shows that there is a difference between a white man and white woman discussing Africans as sexual partners: “Don’t you both look so sinister. I made it all up about Mr. Chungo. Someone has to make jokes here sometimes besides Papa and his pagans and you and Papa and your night wildness and wickedness” (UK 239). As a white woman, Mary remains, along with G.C., an outsider to Hemingway’s tribal configuration. They are part of the safari culture while Hemingway believes himself only to be “passing” in that culture. In Under Kilimanjaro his true nature is that of his tribal brothers and his fiancée.

Hemingway’s intention to bed Debba, however, comes to naught in both True at First Light or Under Kilimanjaro.20 While Mary is in Nairobi recovering from dysentery and purchasing gifts for Christmas (the Birthday of the Baby Jesus), Hemingway invites Debba and
her mother over to the camp. Hemingway intends to take Debba to his tent, but is stopped by Keiti, Pop’s faithful servant. He tells Hemingway that “he has no right to take the girl violently” (a claim Hemingway rejects) and that taking Debba “could make trouble” (UK 354). Hemingway states that Keiti “killed it in the name of his loyalty to the bwanas, to the tribe, and to the Moslem religion” (UK 354). Hemingway understood himself to be beyond the status of mere bwana, a member of the tribe, and exempt from religious rules that were brought to Africa by colonizers. Was the talk of brotherhood, tribe, exclusivity, and the rest merely that—talk? Hemingway expresses disappointment in the rebuff: “This was the beginning of the end of the day in my life which offered the most chances of happiness” (UK 355).

Hemingway’s intention to go native starts to unravel after his failed attempt to “officially” consummate his relationship with Debba. (Hemingway does intimate that the two had had sex together before, without the knowledge of tribe elders.) One of the other guides suggests that Hemingway do as he pleases, but the author recognizes that the door has closed. Hemingway shifts pronouns from “we” to “they.” He goes out into the night to hunt with a spear, but the behavior reads rather pathetically. Instead of intending to kill an animal, Hemingway wanders around anxiously hoping no targets will appear. The spear symbolizes authority and sexual virility, but Hemingway would rather not use it; his frustration at being denied Debba is indicated in the halfhearted night-hunting performance. In a chapter omitted from First Light, Hemingway thanks Keiti for interfering, and Keiti in turn offers to go spear hunting with Hemingway at night. The forgiveness signals Hemingway’s understanding that a relationship with Debba was ultimately impossible. (The author does take the opportunity to inform Keiti as to why it would have been perfectly acceptable for him to take Debba, his already having made “the necessary visits and presents” [UK 380].) Keiti’s offer to go spear hunting is likewise a
gesture to preserve Hemingway’s tribal role-playing. Hemingway imagines with the younger natives a paradise (the Happy Hunting Grounds) where “no white man . . . nor missionaries nor settlers” can enter, but the charm of the exercise has worn off (UK 370). The sincerity of the natives in making Hemingway feel like a member of the tribe is gone; the author’s attempt to maintain a familiar relationship with the natives likewise fades.

Hemingway’s own recognition that in being denied Debba he had been denied happiness shows the author understood he could never really abandon his old life for a new, African one. For the rest of the narrative, the “tribal” customs Hemingway took seriously earlier lose their importance; the author simply acknowledges them out of respect for what might have been or to tweak Mary for her dislike of them. In *Under Kilimanjaro* the end of Hemingway’s tribal fantasy comes as the author begins to reminisce about his life Paris as a young man. Perhaps consciously Hemingway is trading one fantasy for another. *True at First Light*, of course, limits Hemingway’s racial fantasy and never engages this one of youth. Patrick Hemingway’s editorial excisions do not allow his father to truly explore “going tribal.” The author’s relationship with Debba in *First Light* lacks the seriousness of the bond in *Under Kilimanjaro*. In Patrick Hemingway’s shaping of the narrative, his father’s racial fantasy seems much more imaginative, primarily a respite from the troubles of professional authorship. But the longer version of the African Book details Hemingway’s serious interest in shedding his identity as a white man in order to become a Wakamba elder with Debba as his bride. Patrick Hemingway does make significant progress in presenting a fuller narrative over the *Sports Illustrated* excerpts, but in creating a commercial text of the African Book, he decided that much of the racial conflict could be dispensed with. Comparing *First Light* to *Under Kilimanjaro* reveals just how much was lost in the more extensive reworking of the unpublished manuscript Ernest Hemingway left behind.
Conclusion

Double texts illuminate one another. This is most assuredly the case with *True at First Light* and *Under Kilimanjaro*. The texts are very different but emerge from the same manuscript. The words belong to Ernest Hemingway, but their order and framing are the work of editors. Patrick Hemingway created a trade text that was a substantial improvement over the magazine texts of the 1970s. Fleming and Lewis present as comprehensive a version of the African Book as readers are ever likely to have. Each narrative emphasizes different parts of Hemingway’s manuscript. *True at First Light* is a streamlined story that tries to tell Hemingway’s experience, but at the cost of important subplots. *Under Kilimanjaro* presents a full text, one that gives readers additional insights into Hemingway’s overall artistic vision, though it, too, is flawed because it lacks the narrative thrust of Patrick Hemingway’s text. Each contains some of Hemingway’s best writing and most powerful images, but one wonders how the text finally would have appeared had the author seen the manuscript through to publication.

Absent the author’s final touch, the Hemingway Foundation chose instead to create dual texts. The reasons for this are likely political, financial, and scholarly. An unintended consequence is closer reading of the author’s work—an accidental case of textual scholarship. With two texts, the committed Hemingway reader, critic, or scholar must engage with both versions. Patrick Hemingway admits to omitting nearly 100,000 words from his father’s manuscript to create *First Light*. What passages were favored over others and why? *Under Kilimanjaro* proposes to make these questions moot by presenting a more nearly complete version of the African Book. If *First Light* were to cease publication and become a discrete literary artifact, this purpose would be accomplished, but that is not the case. Both *True at First
Light and Under Kilimanjaro have remained in print and co-exist with each other within the corpus of Hemingway’s work.

An investigation looking at how these two texts differ is necessary. I have shown two provocative differences between these two texts and discussed the relevance of these differences. Hemingway’s attempt to engage critics has been a topic of critical conversation for decades; the differences between the two versions of the African Book speak to this conversation. Likewise, Hemingway’s treatment of race has always been a subject of inquiry. The most important theme to emerge from the African Book is Hemingway’s interest in native identity. The fact that this theme is treated differently in First Light and Under Kilimanjaro requires further critical examination. With True at First Light only half the length of Under Kilimanjaro, though, there are other avenues for study that can also be explored. All difference between dual texts merit such close attention.
III. *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately* and the Artist as a Young and Old Woman

Kay Boyle has a remarkable publishing record. She worked in nearly every literary genre, from experimental fiction to children’s books, and a new title of hers appeared in every decade from the 1930s through 2001. Boyle’s career is a barometer of the twentieth-century American writer, from expatriate to professor, from the “plain reader be damned” to the need to find an audience in order to make a living. Boyle, like another professional author before her, F. Scott Fitzgerald, died in harness. In the last years of her life, she was at work on a book of poetry (*The Collected Poems of Kay Boyle*), a novel (*Winter Night*), and a revision of a book from early in her career, *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately*.

Boyle began *Gentlemen* (named for a verse from an Ernest Walsh poem) in the late 1920s and published the novel in 1933. Although it was her third novel, it was completed before *Year Before Last* (1931) and would have followed *Plagued by the Nightingale* if not for Boyle’s worry about the quality of the book (Mellen 157, Spanier 72). This anxiety stayed with Boyle throughout her lifetime, and she took up revising *Gentlemen* in the early 1990s in order to correct the “youthful excesses” of her first effort (Mellen 4). In a note placed on the last, unnumbered page of the revised book, the editor states, “Kay Boyle long felt an urgent need to rewrite this early novel and give it a ‘second life’” and “after two years of revision and clarifying the themes she felt were obscured by her youthful tendencies to overwrite, she read the final typescript and gave it her blessing” (*Gentlemen* [1991] 228). Thus we have an example of a dual text created not by scholarly editors or commercial interests, but by the author herself.

The provocative and critical element in this dual text, however, is the almost literal lifetime between the first and revised versions of the novel. Boyle came back to *Gentlemen* sixty years after she wrote it. For a writer who claimed not to read her own works after she ushered
them into the published record, this seems a particularly interesting case for both Boyle scholarship and in studying cases of dual textuality. How different an artist and a writer is Boyle in the twilight of her career as compared with her emerging voice in the late 1920s and 1930s? Should we consider her the same writer? Would she want us to? What about this novel compelled Boyle to revisit a moment six decades in her past? Though Boyle claims her principal reason for reengaging Gentlemen is to revise the bad stylistic habits of her youth, what is the nature of the “second life” being given to this novel?

The devil, of course, is in the details, and Boyle’s revised version of Gentlemen, I Address You Privately is as much about correcting youthful mistakes as it is about correcting readings and reshaping characters—two levels of change that go beyond mere stylistic adjustment. The editorial note quoted above and Boyle’s stated aims in reworking Gentlemen are simple-sounding pretenses. The project itself was more serious and thoroughgoing. Boyle certainly undoes some of her tendencies toward overwriting, but in changing even single words in long passages, Boyle necessarily changes the context and tone of those passages. The alterations ripple through the novel. Boyle also took the opportunity to revise her main characters, changing them to be more in control of their narrative (Munday), more sympathetic (Leonie), and less manipulative (Ayton) than they had been. These revisions as a whole should be put into the context of Boyle’s sixty years of life experience between the texts. As she came to a more nuanced understanding of her craft, she likely also began to see her earlier characters with greater maturity. Gentlemen has long been considered a square peg in the round hole of Boyle’s early writing career; her revisions attempt to address this criticism.

Gentlemen is a particularly appropriate text for Boyle to reconsider. Besides her stated stylistic concerns, there are social, commercial, and literary factors that distinguish Gentlemen
from Boyle’s other early novels. Audiences would have been more receptive to the subject of homosexual desire in the early 1990s than the early 1930s. Boyle also did not draw extensively from her own life in writing Gentlemen (though there are certainly some autobiographical moments within the book). This is important to consider because Boyle saw her early novels as a record of her past. To alter a text you understand as both fiction and life-writing causes problems that altering a work of invention avoids.\(^5\) Boyle can change characters, descriptions, and readings of Gentlemen and not alter her autobiography; this kind of revision would be difficult to do in works that drew much material from her own life, such as her novels Plagued by the Nightingale and Year Before Last. Gentlemen is perfectly situated in Boyle’s oeuvre for revision and makes an excellent example of the way in which dual text can function for an author.

**Context and Composition History of Gentlemen, I Address You Privately**

In Being Geniuses Together, Kay Boyle describes the two years she lived in Le Havre as full of love and artistic growth; but she recalls, almost with despair, the financial limitations, harsh landscape, and poor weather that typified her life there. For Boyle, Le Havre is a gray seascape punctuated with moments of brilliance; a moment of levity and laughter in a cafe undercut by reality when the couple realizes they “squandered a fortune on cider and carfare” (BGT 140). Boyle writes letters to family and friends, but can only send a few because of postage costs. She resolves to create a window in her windowless apartment, and she collects sea glass in lieu of paint, even though she must dodge “drowned cats” and “tangled nests of seaweed with glaucous pods that exploded under one’s foot” (BGT 143). It was in this environment that Boyle started her second novel, Plagued by the Nightingale, concerning the barely fictionalized family of her French husband Richard Brault and with an American heroine modeled on Boyle herself.
In the midst of composing this novel, Boyle stopped and began work on what would become *Gentlemen*. “Because all the details of Le Havre and the sea, and Harfleur and the land, were clamoring in my mind,” Boyle writes, “I did not want to have wiped from memory the things I had borne witness to, and things I had learned in this unhappy town” (*BGT* 149). Boyle was no doubt referring to the economic and social privation she encountered in Le Havre, from a gossiping neighbor who had no qualms about raising chickens which she would calmly drown in a glass of water to the fishermen who shot seagulls from the pier for no discernible reason (*BGT* 150). In *Being Geniuses Together*, Boyle recalls that one neighbor, “Madame Sweet-as-Hay,” was a competent and frugal homemaker, but struggled with a husband who wasted his regular paycheck on drink. In another anecdote, Boyle tells how the landlady takes out her frustrations over her husband’s love affairs by locking her maid in the attic.

Boyle’s own experience in the region was often as grim as that of her neighbors. She was regularly ill and overworked. The first residence she shared with her husband when they arrived in Le Havre in 1923 was filthy and lacked electricity and plumbing; for a woman used to modern conveniences, the primitive condition of their apartment must have been a shock. Boyle labored to make a home out of a hovel, but she suffered from poor emotional and physical health. Nothing came easy. For example, to save a few francs in food, Boyle and her husband would harvest mussels, but mussels that had clung to the copper cables of a buoy or ship were poisonous (Mellen 66, *BGT* 140). The constant upkeep necessary to make the place habitable left Boyle exhausted and with little time to write. It is no surprise that the couple fled the apartment without completely settling their bill. Boyle’s time at the “rue des Jardins” was not wasted, though: her experience there would inform the character of Leonie in *Gentlemen*.
The couple’s second residence in Le Havre was more tolerable for Boyle. It included electricity, though still no indoor plumbing. Meals, however, were taken in an adjacent restaurant, which opened her afternoons for writing. While physical conditions improved, Boyle’s emotional health did not. After a servant bearing gifts from her husband’s family saw the deplorable state of the couple’s second apartment, Boyle wept:

I began crying for everything in the world . . . for the great hopes we had for our life in France that had come to nothing in the end. I cried like the weakest woman in the world for the shirts and the underwear and the bed linen that would never be entirely white again; and then I flung a bucketful of boulets into the black and evil stove, and I watched smoke as opaque and green as phlegm ooze from every fissure of its rusty armour. After a while the hideousness of my own face and of everything around me made me stop crying, and I went out into the autumn dark to the pump for water, and began all over again . . . . (BGT 123)

In Being Geniuses Together, Boyle describes herself as a member of the “proletariat.” Her experience in France certainly moved her beyond the simple “expatriate” status of many of her American contemporaries. When the couple moved to Harfleur in 1924, Boyle even took up gardening and sold her produce at the village market. Considering the milieu she was living in, it is no surprise that she could not concentrate on the autobiographical novel concerning her husband’s family in Brittany and instead began what would become Gentlemen. The novel does not have the autobiographical subject matter that typifies Boyle’s early novels, but her experience from 1924 to 1926 in Le Havre and Harfleur does add true-to-life depth and authenticity.
Boyle worked on *Gentlemen* through the rest of the 1920s and finished it in the early 1930s. She rewrote the novel multiple times but never quite captured the energy and organization that marked her other fiction of this period (Mellen 171). Her publisher Harrison Smith advised against releasing the book as he thought it might harm her reputation. Though it angered Boyle to have her work delayed, she rather suspected that her publisher was right and decided instead to publish a newer work, *Year Before Last* (Mellen 157, Spanier 67, 72–73). Boyle herself acknowledged the problems with *Gentlemen*, writing to her friend Bob Brown that the novel “is too over-written, out written, inside out written.” She added, “I’ve gone over and over and over and over and over and over it, drunk, sober, married and single, for that past six and a half years” (Spanier 68). Boyle promised *Year Before Last* would be better than *Gentlemen*, and she succeeded in producing a superior work that serves as a more appropriate follow-up to *Plagued by the Nightingale*.

*Gentlemen, I Address You Privately* would come out in 1933 to mixed and negative reviews, some attacking the technical flaws in the book (criticism not unfounded) and others attacking the controversial subject matter of homosexual love—perhaps a signal of the times more than a reflection on the aesthetic quality of the novel (Mellen 171–73, Spanier 68). The novel was a commercial disappointment, but this failure should not be placed solely onto Boyle’s shoulders. Flaws of the novel were compounded by the choice of subject, a matter that has more to do with the cultural context in which the novel appeared than with the novel itself. When the central relationship of the book is described as “perverse” and/or “perverted,” the critical distance necessary to evaluate the book’s quality is absent.6

The text of *Gentlemen* would stay untouched for nearly sixty years. In the intervening decades, Boyle would go on to become the classic example of the working writer, living off the
product of her pen or on teaching appointments. Boyle’s work, especially her early novels and experimental short stories, would move in and out of critical conversations and scholarly discussions. And though Boyle would have only one commercial “hit” in her lifetime (Avalanche), her name was never far from conversations on contemporary American letters. Gentlemen, though, never received much attention of any kind after its initial publication.

Boyle returned to the novel near the end of her life. While she claimed only to want to correct her tendency to overwrite, her revisions range from stylistic changes to a complete rewriting of the text. Most of her revisions, though, are somewhere in between the two extremes. Boyle did take time to address overwritten passages, but she also reframed the three central characters. In the revised text, Munday and Leonie gain more control over their narratives; conversely, Ayton wields less influence over the other two. This goes beyond stylistic revision but does not amount to a complete rewriting. Boyle’s changes, however, do lead to substantially different readings when the two texts are compared.

Why did Boyle return to a novel sixty years in her past? What was it about Gentlemen that made it worth the author’s attention during the twilight of her career? One impetus is simply artistic excellence. She admitted to excessive rewrites of the novel during its original composition, and critics agree that it is flawed. Her reworking of the material is one example of why an author creates a dual text on her own: simply to get the story right. In revising Gentlemen, Boyle returns to a text of her youth as a mature writer, a lifetime of practice and experience behind her. Not only can she correct the flaws in the text (her youthful tendency toward overwriting, for example), but she can also bring to bear the lessons of craft she has learned in the intervening decades. Likewise, revision allows Boyle to adjust and rectify readings contrary to her intention. (This is the case with the end of Gentlemen, a topic I will take up later.)
There are also practical concerns in reworking *Gentlemen*. Principally, Boyle likely had a reasonable expectation that the novel would find a wider and more sympathetic audience in the early 1990s than it did in the early 1930s. The cultural taboo on homosexuality had tempered considerably in America, especially in Boyle’s adopted city of San Francisco, and the novel would not have to contend with critics whose reviews included derisive comments on the “perversion” of the central relationship. Likewise, Capra Press, out of Santa Barbara, was an independent publisher with a catalogue of progressive authors. Noah Young, the editor, took *Gentlemen* as a worthy book to “revive,” perhaps believing that Boyle’s name would be enough to give it an audience. That Boyle wished to do more than just revive the book, but revise it, too, could conceivably make that audience larger (Mellen 525).

A larger audience meant greater commercial opportunity. Boyle was not a stranger to mining old work for commercial purposes. Her children’s book *The Youngest Camel* originally came out in 1939. In a financial pinch twenty years later, she put out *The Youngest Camel: Reconsidered and Rewritten* for a thousand dollars (Mellen 398). Boyle made a living with her pen, and part of doing that successfully is selling your work as many times as the market will bear. Even if money was not the primary purpose for Boyle’s “reconsidering and rewriting” *Gentlemen*, the realities of a professional writer, and the potential audience that could be receptive to the text, should not be disregarded. The commercial viability of the text at that moment in time allowed Boyle the opportunity to revise.

Boyle would not live to see *Gentlemen* brought out again, though the editor’s note in the revised version says she did give her blessing to the typescript. Had she lived until the republication, she would have seen the book find a more pleasant critical reception its second time out. In the *New York Times*, Lauren Belfer writes that even if Boyle’s representation of
Ayton is “still vague, this new version offers not only a more explicit rendering of erotic emotion, but also a more profound confrontation of Munday’s anguish” (25). Whether the audience will ever materialize for the revised version of *Gentlemen*, the novel does offer an appropriate bookend to Boyle’s career. She took a flawed novel from the early years of her profession and revised it for a new generation of readers. There is something fitting about Boyle’s desire to reconnect with her past and rework a novel she never got quite right. And her second effort is most certainly a better one. But only in comparing the two versions of *Gentlemen* can one appreciate the careful re-crafting and precise editing in Boyle’s revision.

**Critical Context of *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately***

The silence surrounding this novel is rather perplexing; Boyle took up a subject that was still taboo when the novel first appeared, but one would think her early engagement with homosexual desire might make the novel a candidate for GLBT or Queer Theory studies. Even though Joan Mellen in her biography of Boyle is too sympathetic in her reading of *Gentlemen* as “one of the most sensitive and sympathetic” novels ever written on homosexuality, one might still expect this line of criticism to generate a more energetic inquiry. Perhaps because of Boyle’s status as a heterosexual woman and/or because her narrative of gay love details the psychological experience of desire rather than the physical description of such a relationship, *Gentlemen* has not received much attention in the context of gay literature. Anthony Slide in *Lost Gay Novels* calls Boyle herself a “footnote in twentieth-century American literature” and criticizes the characters in *Gentlemen* as unbelievable (31–33). Slide, however, does credit Boyle for being a friend to gays and lesbians in her work.

In *Playing the Game: The Homosexual Novel in America*, Roger Austen writes briefly (a half page) on *Gentlemen*. He gives a stronger indication of why GLBT criticism has failed to
more fully engage the novel. Austen writes that from a “gay perspective the novel is weakened by the prevailing sense of secondhandedness that prevents Ayton and Munday from becoming believable, red-blooded lovers” (81). Austen adds that Munday and Ayton’s conversations “reflect more what a straight woman might imagine than what two gay men would actually say to one another” (81). Austen’s suggestion that Boyle’s gender prevents her from crafting authentic gay characters is sexist and hard to prove. (If Austen had first come to the novel without knowledge of its author, would he have deduced Boyle’s gender?) However, Austen’s position does indicate that Boyle’s status as a heterosexual woman might have affected the critical attention *Gentlemen* has received as a “gay” novel.

Within Boyle studies more specifically, the lack of critical engagement with *Gentlemen* makes even less sense. Besides Sandra Spanier’s excellent analysis in *Artist and Activist* (which I will take up later), critics have either made only passing references to the novel or disregarded it entirely. For example, in a fine article in a collection called *Kay Boyle for the Twenty-First Century,* Alexa Weik takes up the topic of cosmopolitanism in Boyle’s early novels. Weik quotes Martha Nussbaum for her working concept of cosmopolitan literature, saying it features “people who, by the virtue of their outsider status, can tell truths about the political community, its justice and injustice, its embraces and its failures to embrace” (153). Weik adds that the “overwhelming majority of Boyle’s fiction does take an outsider’s interest in the interaction of the individual and the social, as well as in the achievements and failures of specific political communities, and it certainly opens its readers to a world of Others” (153). Weik’s analysis takes up the earliest novels of Boyle’s career, from *Process to Death of a Man,* but excludes *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately.* Weik justifies this exclusion because the novel is
“concerned with homosexual love, is generally agreed to be less autobiographical than her other early novels and does not present a female heroine” (154).

If ever a text in Kay Boyle’s oeuvre might be considered cosmopolitan, a novel featuring an American ex-priest educated in England, trained in music, living in rural France, exploring homosexual desires with a well-traveled sailor, and living with an urban woman bristling at her rustic life, might be it. How many more “Others” can one novel encapsulate?

Weik’s failure to address Gentlemen shows why Boyle scholars may have not taken up the novel more generally: it fails to meet the established expectations of the author’s work. Gentlemen does not relive or recount a specific conflict from Boyle’s past. Nor does the novel feature a strong female perspective. Besides the non-autobiography and non-heroine nature of Gentlemen, Boyle’s choice of subject is homosexuality. While the author has never blanched at gay themes, this is her most extended treatment of the subject. This issue itself might be the most important one in differentiating the novel from the other paradigms of Boyle scholarship; where does Gentlemen fit? Boyle fails to take up her regular tropes in Gentlemen, and critics have avoided it for the same reason.

One scholar who has offered a more in-depth look at Gentlemen is Sandra Spanier. In Artist and Activist, Spanier situates the novel in context with Boyle’s other work, though she acknowledges that the characters’ tangled relationships obfuscate the novel’s theme: the lack of “meaningful understanding” between characters leaves them unable to connect to each other (and I would add to themselves) (68). She writes that Gentlemen, “while a flawed work, continues several major threads that run through the body of Kay Boyle’s fiction: a concern for the gaps in understanding that separate human beings, an almost religious belief in love as humanity’s only
salvation, and an interest in universalizing particular experience through allegory and myth” (72).

Spanier shows that the seeds for disappointment between Munday and his lover, Ayton, are sown early in the novel. The two characters “perceive their relationship very differently”; “Munday will always be the selfless, devoted partner while Ayton casually engages the affection of many others” (Spanier 68). However, the two characters fall in love precisely because Ayton leads Munday into believing that he is ready to “settle down”:

“I want to be saved,” Ayton cried out, and he fell on his knees before him. “I can’t be damned forever, I’m not an evil man,” he said. “I have to be saved, Munday, and it’s only you that can save me. I want to be by you always, I want to live my life with you.”

“How many times have you said that before?” said Munday, and his voice was wrung small and strange in his throat.

“But never to you!” cried Ayton.

“No, never to me,” said Munday in torment. “But now you have said this to me, Ayton, now you have said those words to me.” (Gentlemen 97)

Munday reasons that he and Ayton are of the same mind regarding their future and carries on under that impression. He realizes only at the end of the novel, when Ayton has abandoned him (and Leonie) and stolen his piano, that Ayton’s devotion was never as steadfast as his own.

Spanier also sees the end of the novel as fundamentally positive. Though Ayton leaves a brokenhearted Munday and a pregnant Leonie in the wake of his departure, Spanier writes that the two “have been made whole and strong through their connection with him” (70). Spanier continues that Ayton “has saved” Munday and Leonie; the two characters “are left with rich
possibilities for a new life with each other” (70). Ayton is a force of nature and a mythological, allegorical presence—Boyle’s appropriation of the same elements that inform Eliot’s *The Waste Land*. Spanier also sees Boyle as aligning Munday with Christ and Leonie with the Virgin, though she acknowledges that “it is difficult or impossible to sort the references into any consistent symbolic pattern” (71–72). Ayton blows out of town like the wind, but not without leaving the final gift of love to Munday and Leonie both, represented in the closing scene by Leonie’s unborn child and Munday’s laughter—

“. . . but you must have known,” she said, “that it isn’t Quespelle’s child.”

Munday sat down his glass on the table.

“But whose?” he said. For a moment there was no glimmer, there was not a shred of light cast on his bewildered, dark ignoring. “But whose child then?” he repeated. And in some part of his mind Ayton’s voice began in explanation, the “oi” and the “ing” of the Cockney voice imploring. “Whose child?” he said, but now the light was shining bright as summer, and when Leonie opened her mouth he said:

“No, no, don’t say it!” and he suddenly began to laugh. (*Gentlemen* 311)

Spanier’s analysis of *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately* is perceptive and textually supported. She tries to put into context a novel that her contemporaries prefer to ignore. But the original version of the novel supports additional interpretations, especially in the closing scene. Specifically, Ayton deserves more censure for his (revealed) behavior at the end of the novel, and Munday’s state of mind “as he suddenly begins to laugh” needs further exploration. These two topics become intertwined as we try to make sense of Boyle’s end project.
If we read Ayton as simply an uncontainable spirit and see the ending of the novel as ultimately hopeful, *Gentlemen* (born out of Boyle’s misery in Le Havre and Harfleur) is a fundamentally positive narrative that even hints at a heterosexual future between Munday and Leonie. There is a danger to seeing Ayton as simply a bisexual cupid who empowers Munday and Leonie, directs them toward a future with one another, and then flies away. This reading strips Munday and Leonie of any agency in their relationships with Ayton and undercuts any commentary Boyle had about the nature of homosexual desire. (Making the “solution” to *Gentlemen* a heterosexual relationship could even be offensive to some readers.) Instead, we should take a more detailed view of the way Boyle codes the relationship between Munday and Ayton and the significance of explicitly revealing Ayton and Leonie’s affair only in the closing moments of the novel. I will take up both of these subjects in the next section.

*Gentlemen* is the least analyzed of Boyle’s early novels and perhaps her least contextualized novel overall. This is not without reason. The novel is hard to categorize and conforms to neither GLBT nor Boyle tropes. Even if the novel fits in both categories, its “otherness” keeps critics from trying to contextualize it. However, there are some provocative themes within the text, and Boyle’s own interest in the book at the dawn and twilight of career should be enough to earn *Gentlemen* more critical attention. Unfortunately, with notable exceptions, this attention has not materialized. In the following sections, I will attempt to add depth to the critical conversation that has stalled on *Gentlemen*, and to demonstrate how Boyle herself appeared to understand the instability of the novel. Her revised version confronts common criticisms and engages them. In this way, Boyle indicates her own understanding of the novel and creates a more stable reading.

*Gentlemen and the Artist as a Young Woman*
The principal interest in *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately* is the relationship among the three central characters. Munday provides the reader with access to the narrative, and as he discovers his sexual identity with Ayton his growth provides the forward-thrust to the plot. Leonie serves as Munday’s foil and, obliquely, as his antagonist—her love for Ayton makes them implicit rivals. Boyle explores the complexities of these characters’ relationships specifically and more generally through comparison to the other relationships that occur throughout the novel.

Munday’s character is a study in mind and logic versus heart and emotion. He struggles to reconcile his emotional needs (with Ayton) with his training as a priest. At the start of the novel, Munday searches for a value system to replace the one he left behind. Boyle shows that Munday’s life had always been quietly secular and that his fellow priests wondered about the books he read (*Gentlemen* 20). Munday reveals that his departure from the Church was instigated by his performing secular music of his own composition during a service. Munday resolves to exchange Catholicism for art and make a living teaching piano and writing his own compositions. His break with the Church, however, is not an easy one: Munday “could never bring himself to believe that he had been sent away” (*Gentlemen* 19).

Had the decision been mutual, Munday could point to his freedom as a matter of choice and growth. Instead, he finds himself in France an outcast, “sent away” from the priesthood. Munday is in a fragile state. His interior values are still structured around Catholic doctrine, even as he acknowledges a physical and intellectual break with the Church. For example, Munday’s break is complicated by his admiration for the Virgin and the implied expectation that he will begin his new life as a heterosexual. As he contemplates his “escape,” he sees the whole world new and himself—even the hair on his head—as miraculous. However, he believes that the
world will be restored “touch by touch.” As he listens to a storm rage outside his room, “he touched the thought of women in his shy unbridled mind . . . women, how he liked the look of them” (Gentlemen 10–11). What follows is an abstract description of Munday’s attitude toward women that invokes art, the Virgin, and religion. Notably absent from this contemplation is desire. Munday’s appreciation of women truly is limited to “the look of them”; he sees the opposite sex aesthetically instead of sexually.

It is while Munday contemplates women and their relationship to art, religion and the Virgin that Ayton enters his life. Ayton, a sailor and the brother of one of Munday’s piano students, is on shore leave in Le Havre. Having paced around in the storm while mustering the courage to call on Munday, Ayton is a shivering, soaked mess when he finally makes the ex-priest’s acquaintance. Ayton confesses that his purpose is not simply to listen to Munday playing the piano, but that he has trouble and has no friend in the country: “‘It’s queer, I don’t doubt, to come to a stranger for help,’ he said, ‘but I couldn’t turn to a woman. . . . A man must stay to himself, away from them . . . if wants to be anything at all’” (Gentlemen 18). Ayton ignores Munday’s questions about the nature of his trouble and continues to complain of women’s inability to understand or respect “the thing that sends men out.” Munday, called to relieve those in need, and faced with a disheveled, distraught, and seemingly desperate man, of course offers his hand to Ayton:

. . . it fell gently on Ayton’s shoulder. “Well, then, how can I help you?” he said, cajoling him to speak even as the Church wooed men to revelation. But the priestly gesture which his blood recalled and made had set Ayton to shaking in his skin.

“Are you ill?” Munday cried out to him.

“Yes,” breathed the little man. “Yes, that is it.” (Gentlemen 21)
Ayton is shaking with desire, the mere touch of the ex-priest enough to make him shudder. In this first scene, Boyle does not make explicit any deception on Ayton’s part, but there is a suggestion that Ayton’s need is too urgent, his condition too desperate, and his reaction to Munday’s touch too telling; his appearance and purpose are perfectly calculated to gain Munday’s sympathy. Munday believes Ayton to be a kindred spirit: they are two friendless men who share a love for the weather, land, and sea. The reality is that Ayton is (successfully) seducing Munday. His desire to fulfill his priestly duties, fragile already in his reluctant freedom, and his general loneliness, leave Munday susceptible to Ayton’s charms. When the sailor tells him “if you mate with a shark, you’re safer than spliced with a woman,” Boyle suggests the nature of their relationship. Munday offers his hand to Ayton, but it is he who is in Ayton’s grasp.

Ayton is often coded through innocence, youth, and feminine features, prompting Munday to “take care” of him as the narrative progresses. Ayton’s rash, impetuous actions, from his decision to jump ship and steal belongings from its captain to risky self-indulgent behavior, often exasperate Munday, who tries to protect him. When one of the lesbian prostitutes Ayton keeps company with explains Ayton’s theft of the captain’s uniform, Munday is enraged and determined to end his relationship with the sailor: “Ayton . . . I’ll skin you. . . . I’ll stretch your hide on bark for three days in the sun to prove there’s nothing worth keeping at all. . . . I’ll sell you cheap to anyone who’ll give me two sous for you” (Gentlemen 138). But as Ayton explains that he stole the uniform in order to be presentable for their new life together, Munday’s anger quickly dissolves. How great is the theft “of a few medals shining”? (Gentlemen 141). Munday forgives Ayton and decides to tie his fate to him no matter what the risks.
Ayton’s apparent helplessness, however, is another form of manipulation. The brief backstory we get on Ayton, from his trouble in Panama to his escape from Hong Kong, shows he is if anything a survivor. Ayton is quite capable of taking care of himself, reckless behavior and all, without Munday’s sheltering hand. The desire to be needed, however, is exactly what the ex-priest wants from this relationship. Munday exchanges his Catholic doctrine for Ayton because he is provided with purpose (the protection of the lost sailor) and a physical and emotional relationship, even if a fraught one. Munday is anxious about satisfying his homosexual desire; before he and Ayton consummate their relationship, Munday accuses Ayton of living “an abomination” and trying to “fasten” the same sin on him (Gentlemen 94). After the two have sex, Munday is still fixated on the sinful nature of his behavior, even if he has accepted it: “Abomination, he said in himself, but his heart was brimming still with wonder; abomination and sin, he repeated, seeking to give them meaning, but the glamour remained undefiled” (Gentlemen 101). Munday justifies the relationship because of the emotional connection it provides and because Ayton has invented a dependence on him.

A more honest indication of the nature of their relationship can be found in Ayton’s control of the couple’s intimacy. One understands that Munday is sexually inexperienced—he has spent his life in the priesthood—but this does not explain his complete self-effacement and lack of agency when it comes to sex. From the first encounter forward, Munday “[follows] blindly” Ayton’s lead and entirely submits to him. The relationship is unequal; Munday’s attachment to Ayton is invented; the physical connection, where one might see genuine affection represented, is dominated by Ayton. Boyle represents a classic case of codependence. Ayton plays upon Munday’s needs and expectations for his own ends while Munday ignores his own life to care for Ayton. Once the two begin their relationship in earnest, Munday mostly abandons
his own goals to turn his emotional and physical energy toward Ayton’s needs. Gone is any talk of Munday’s musical career. Boyle hides the true nature of this relationship in Munday’s enthusiastic embrace for his and Ayton’s love. (Ayton’s own declarations of affection only further convince Munday, and the reader, of the couple’s authenticity.) Boyle waits until the closing pages of the novel to reveal Ayton’s duplicity and Munday’s unhealthy codependence—and their startling consequences.

Those consequences involve Ayton’s secret affair with Leonie and her resulting pregnancy. Leonie is one of the vaguest and most complicated characters in *Gentlemen*. Like Munday, she is attempting to make a life in an unfamiliar environment—in her case, as the wife of a shiftless squatter farmer named Quespelle. She married under false pretenses and the couple has fled the city to try farming. Quespelle, lazy and egotistical, inflates his station and possessions with unearned value. Leonie is the opposite: competent, hardworking, humble, and beautiful. Her actions keep the farm from failing even if she is learning how to be a peasant farmer on the job. If readers are looking for an autobiographical representation in this novel, Leonie might most resemble Kay Boyle. Boyle was an urbanite accustomed to modern conveniences, but she was forced to live in primitive conditions and even began a garden to sell vegetables at the local market. Leonie’s life bears many similarities to Boyle’s during her time in Le Havre/Harfleur.

In the second chapter of the novel, Boyle presents Quespelle first as a curiosity, an example of the region’s desperation. Ayton and Munday are walking through the countryside when they spot the squatter’s cabin. Ayton remarks that the farmer—Quespelle—is “not a man of spirit”: “He’s just seized hold of a piece of the country, and that’s no way to be. I wouldn’t want to own any part of the land. That’s a woman’s kind of greed” (*Gentlemen* 28). Ayton and
Munday talk with Quespelle, and he boasts of his farm as if he “was lord of the soil.” Boyle presents Quespelle in this passage as an object of ridicule: he is vain, petty, and naïve.

Quespelle is a caricature of ineffectual men who live off the labor of others. This becomes clear when Ayton, Munday, and their companions visit the farm later in the novel and Quespelle wants to show off his technique for killing rabbits. Taking a large female, he clips the animal behind the neck and the rabbit passes out—to all appearances dead. However, when Quespelle begins to skin the rabbit, Munday realizes that the animal was only stunned, and it screams in pain. The party is shocked by the scene, but Quespelle refuses to believe that the animal lived through his first “deft” stroke: “They always die at once . . . if you know where to strike them. The muscles always move for a little while afterwards like that” (*Gentlemen* 78). Up to this point, Boyle has presented Quespelle’s as foolish and harmless; here, though, his clownish behavior reveals a streak of petty cruelty. There are echoes of Boyle’s outrage over the fishermen shooting gulls in her description of Quespelle’s actions.14

Boyle uses this moment to introduce her proxy in the novel, Leonie, who is horrified by her husband’s actions. While the other characters are struck silent by Quespelle’s botched slaughter of the rabbit, Leonie gives a voice to their disgust:

> . . . another woman had come in amongst them, calling out in agitation, like a word of fury sprung to their own stricken lips. On her bare arms the soil was drying off, caking and cracking on her flesh, and her skirt and hands were richly stained with soil.

> “Quespelle, you should never have killed that one!” she said in angry grief. Her blue eyes were shining in her copper face. “She was going to have her little ones. Didn’t you see the bracelet I put around her paw?” (*Gentlemen* 78–79)
Leonie is angry, sad, and exasperated with Quespelle’s decision to kill the rabbit for two reasons: practically, the animal is about to give birth, and is thus valuable as livestock; personally, she is devastated by the meaningless cessation of the future mother’s life cycle. Leonie is tender about the rabbit’s impending litter; she gives it a bracelet, marks it as special, and genders it as “her.” (Compare this diction to a more standard terminology of “tagged” or “marked.”) The comparison is irresistible: Quespelle, the “farmer,” wastes time and livestock to impress his visitors, but only succeeds in being cruel. Leonie is the true professional, “richly stained” by work and angry with her husband for his callous ignorance.

The other characters are intrigued by her: Ayton’s prostitute companion, Blanca, is taken with her beauty; Ayton calls her Rapunzel; Munday sees her as having “nothing to do with modern women” (Gentlemen 79–80). Leonie is attractive, out-of-time, and even mythological. The diversity of responses from Blanca, Munday, and Ayton indicate the weight Boyle intends Leonie to shoulder in this narrative. She is a woman, thrown into the equation of male desire with Ayton and Munday, but also something of a fertility goddess. Boyle separates the characters into two groups based on their responses to Leonie: those who see her as something more than peasant’s wife (Munday, Ayton, Blanca) and those who are blind to her true nature (Quespelle, Blanca’s companions).

In order to avoid the authorities, Munday and Ayton eventually move onto the farm and begin working alongside Quespelle and Leonie. The two men understand the situation to be temporary, and when the statute of limitations has lapsed on Ayton’s crimes, they will move to Italy. Munday imagines Italy as a place to flee the harsh winter of his former life: “in such a place and climate a mistake once made would come to be a natural thing, and any shame on it would melt like the high snows dissolving” (Gentlemen 57). In the meantime, the two decide to
improve the squatter’s farm. They work alongside Leonie and Quespelle to prepare new land for cultivation. Ayton is industrious and virile on the farm, but he is lonely for the cafes and social life of the city. From this point forward in the novel, there is a tension between Munday and Leonie, both of whom see the farm as a refuge, and Ayton, who longs to be on the move again.

The other major tension that propels the novel forward revolves around Leonie’s love for Ayton. While the reader certainly recognizes the nature of the relationship between Ayton and Munday, Boyle indicates that the two men must be exceptionally good at disguising their intimacy on the farm. Leonie more than once remarks that Ayton must have a girl somewhere or that he might be with Blanca or one of her friends (all of whom are lesbians). Ayton and Munday present themselves as close friends, and, at least for Leonie, as unattached close friends. Sensing a change in Leonie’s behavior, Munday tries to draw from her the reason for her unhappiness:

“How are you lost?” he said.

“I don’t want to be saved,” she whispered to him. “Not from the thoughts I have all day in my head, and for the things I want, dresses and pretty shoes. I want them to be real. I don’t want to be any more without them.”

“What kind of thoughts?” said Munday, and he sat still, as a priest in the confessional might have sat luring the shameful thoughts from her head. But her hand was in his and he could feel the voluptuous cushions of her fingers.

“Tell me,” he said, “tell me.”

The strange burning weight of this woman lay against him, and he breathed the furtive breath from her mouth that sighed across his face.

“Thoughts,” she said, “possessing me. It’s all Ayton. Ayton. It’s the most terrible thing in my life.” (Gentlemen 179)
The reader, like Munday, sympathizes with Leonie’s feelings, but pities her, too. Leonie is trapped in a loveless marriage, sacrificing the best years of her life to manual labor on a subsistence farm. She is in love with a gay man who is in a relationship with the main character. Boyle sets the reader up to expect disappointment for Leonie.

From the revelation of Leonie’s feelings forward, Munday’s attitude toward her fluctuates between sympathy and wariness. Munday wonders how Leonie will cope when he and Ayton leave the farm. Their presence has restored an enthusiasm for life in her, and Munday thinks it cruel to simply abandon her with Quespelle. But he is also conscious that Leonie is trying to attract Ayton, and whether or not Munday is willing to admit a discomfort with her actions, his behavior shows at least an implicit anxiety. Leonie tries to convince Munday that he and Ayton should not leave for Italy but should stay on the farm with her; throughout the scene, Munday struggles to find a balance between his status as friend and romantic rival. Her reason is transparent: she’s in love with Ayton and she sees Munday as the key to keeping him on the farm. The tensions between the two rises to the surface as the chapter closes: Leonie asks Munday to pick up lipstick for her at the market, but he responds, “Lipstick wouldn’t suit you.”

“Oh yes,” said Leonie. “I know. It would suit me very well.” She came down the step and so close to him that he might have put his arms about her. But she had no thought for him, thinking of how her mouth would be. “For when we go out at night, I’ll need it then,” she said. (Gentlemen 241)

In this brief confrontation, there does not appear to be much at stake, but the disagreement reveals the conflict that had been growing in intensity between Munday and Leonie. Both characters have reason to distrust the motives of the other regarding Ayton. Leonie’s affection
for the sailor still appears to be misguided and doomed, but the tension has broken into open conflict and sets up the conclusion of the novel.

Ayton’s desire to escape the farm crystallizes when authorities order Quespelle to leave the property. When Ayton becomes cagey around the police, they ask him and Munday for their papers, and Ayton gives them a passport belonging to another man. Knowing it is only a matter of time before the police return, the two men resolve to leave the farm and set out for Italy. Munday will stay at the farm in the evenings, and Ayton will move back to the city until they have the opportunity to leave the region safely. The next morning, Quespelle, Ayton, and Munday leave for the market. Feeling exposed in the public square, Ayton heads for Munday’s apartment, where the two plan to meet up later. Ayton looks as if he will speak, does not, and disappears into the crowd.

Munday’s anxiety about Ayton grows throughout the morning until he arrives at his apartment. There he finds the windows thrown wide open, but instead of Ayton waiting for him, the key is with the concierge and Munday’s piano is gone—sold to pay for Ayton and his prostitute friends’ move to Italy. Munday wanders around the city, “gravely, slowly, like a man feeling his way through sleep” (Gentlemen 304). Ayton’s departure drives Munday to a state of shock and “bewilderment”; he searches haphazardly for the sailor throughout the city, but is distracted by the sun and the sea and by places he and Ayton frequented. Munday finds his way to the brothel where Ayton met the prostitutes and discovers that they have left “with a roll of money as thick as your fist” (Gentlemen 307).

Munday returns to the country and finds the farm is in a state of upheaval. Leonie and Quespelle are packing or selling everything they can in preparation for the move off the property. Leonie tries to convince Munday to stay with her and Quespelle, but Munday listens to Leonie in
a daze, hearing her voice but unable to concentrate on what she is saying. Leonie tells Munday about her affair with Ayton and says that she has “stopped believing in him” (*Gentlemen* 310). While Leonie does not elaborate, she suggests that she began to recognize her relationship with Ayton was inauthentic. Leonie has done what Munday could not: she has seen through Ayton’s charm and cockney accent to the self-serving manipulator beneath.

Munday has listened and not heard. When he tells Leonie that she, her pregnancy, and Qespelle have nothing to do with him, Boyle reveals the information that alters the entire preceding narrative:

> “Ah, no!” Leonie cried. She jumped to her feet and stood alive and astonished beside him. There was a new look on her face. “You don’t believe that, do you?” she said. “You must have known. Ayton would never let me say it but now he’s gone I can speak as I please. But you must have known,” she said, “that it isn’t Qespelle’s child.” (*Gentlemen* 311).

Munday ends the novel in manic laughter. He realizes that Ayton is the father of the unborn child. This laughter illustrates the mental anguish Munday experiences as the novel comes to a close; in only a handful of pages, Munday’s life has unraveled again. He has gone from being in a stable relationship to being robbed and abandoned; he has learned that Ayton carried on an affair while he was dismissive of Leonie’s interest; and now he has discovered that the exclusivity and love that justified his relationship with Ayton was a lie. Soon, there will be living proof that Ayton’s homosexual desire was, at best, only part of his identity or, worse, a façade. Munday’s laughter could very well signal a mental breakdown.
Boyle ends *Gentlemen* with a scene that requires the reader to reevaluate the entire narrative. Up to the final pages, the novel has been an exploration of homosexual desire and the embrace of natural love. Munday overcomes the homophobia instilled during his training as a priest by finding love with Ayton. When he struggles to rationalize the “abomination” of his intimacy, he comes to realize that connecting fully with another justifies the relationship. The desire that fires Munday’s transformation fizzles, however, when he discovers Ayton’s duplicity. Leonie at least achieves her desire to have a child; Munday is robbed, spiritually and practically, by Ayton. While the novel possibly indicates a platonic future between Munday and Leonie, this is a far cry from the homosexual desire celebrated through most of the novel. Boyle appears to disavow this desire at the close of the narrative. Surely Munday is worse off at the end of the novel than at the beginning; the self-knowledge Munday has realized over the course of the narrative dissolves in the manic laughter that concludes the text.

**Gentlemen and the Twilight of the Artist’s Career**

Boyle was never satisfied with *Gentlemen*. The novel does contain its share of technical flaws, but the radical thematic shift at the end of the narrative might be the most glaring problem. Boyle backed away from a hopeful ending and left her main character broken and alone. Leonie has a child on the way, and Ayton has escaped to Italy, but Munday has lost everything—even his piano. This does not seem to be the story that Boyle is telling in *Gentlemen*, even if that is how she ends it. It is no surprise, then, that she came back to this early novel in the twilight of her career to give it a “second life” and attempt to redress her treatment of Munday and his relationship with Ayton and Leonie (*Gentlemen* [1991] 228).

Boyle’s revisions to *Gentlemen* are both technical and thematic. She spent time taming her occasionally wild diction and metaphors into more stable language. Boyle is correct in her
self-assessment that she had a tendency towards overwriting in youth, and within the text her figurative language is sometimes contradictory and overly abstract. While Boyle’s early artistic inclination was to let “the plain reader be damned,” she seems to have recognized in her later years that intelligible description was a preferable artistic convention (Spanier 25). While these changes create a more aesthetically pleasing reading experience, they are not among the most noteworthy and alone would not seem to justify the creation of a second text. However, coupled with thematic shifts, these technical improvements increase in importance. Boyle would appear to have recognized that Gentlemen needed both stronger form and content—which does create a dual text.

This shift begins with the very start of the novel. The original version of Gentlemen begins “It was a bitter place he had come to” (Gentlemen 9). The description of Le Havre as “bitter place” frames the narrative negatively from the beginning. Boyle starts her revision with a new paragraph that details and explains the storm from which Ayton emerges. The second sentence begins “It seemed the sea had borne long enough with the great slab of winter cast down upon it, and now it had taken matters to itself” (Gentlemen [1991] 7). Taken symbolically, this sentence situates Munday’s state of mind as the novel opens. Instead of focusing on the “bitter” spirit of the place he has come to, Munday is prepared to throw off the winter of his previous life in the priesthood. He is waiting to be swept into a new life—violently, if necessary: “Now the tidal wave itself must have risen, Munday thought, and he lay on the bed, harking to its presence” (Gentlemen [1991] 7). The tidal wave Munday anticipates turns out to be Ayton.

Boyle’s chief thematic revision in Gentlemen concerns Munday’s relationship with the storm-tossed sailor. Munday’s interactions with Ayton in the original version of Gentlemen are marked by cognitive dissonance and codependence; Ayton compounds the problems by
manipulating Munday’s emotions and dominating their intimacy. Munday and Ayton’s is a textbook dysfunctional relationship. While the reader can expect some emotional confusion from Munday as he shifts from a celibate priest to a gay musician, his self-negation precludes the possibility of a healthy relationship with Ayton (even ignoring Ayton’s own manipulative tendencies). Granted, Boyle always planned an unhappy ending for the couple—Ayton is unfaithful, steals Munday’s piano, and runs to Italy in both texts—but her revisions show that she never intended the experience to be wholly traumatizing for Munday. Many of Boyle’s changes have to do with rehabilitating Munday’s position.

Boyle recasts small details throughout the novel to make Munday a more nearly equal partner with Ayton. Likewise, Boyle revises Munday’s response to his experience with Ayton to be more positive: Munday struggles less with his sexuality and finds intimacy with Ayton empowering. In the first version of the text, after his and Ayton’s first night together, Munday compares his thoughts of Ayton to a “stimulant, a secret, alcohol thing”: “It was there in his confusion, a well of clarity for his unslakable thirst, laving, restoring him, endowing him with a pure virgin power” (Gentlemen 101–02). There is a contradiction here between Munday’s feelings of addiction (“stimulant,” “secret,” “alcohol,” “unslakable”) and rejuvenation (“laving,” “restoring”). The tension indicates Munday’s internal conflict about his relationship. Munday is incapable of reconciling his experiences; there is always an element of shame or secrecy he attaches with sexuality.

In the updated version of the novel, Boyle rewrites this passage to eliminate Munday’s apprehension. After his night with Ayton, Munday states “[Only] when he thought of Ayton did his mind ignite. The fire of it was there, even in his guilt and confusion, consuming the residue of all that had gone before, endowing him with a new manly power” (Gentlemen [1991] 73–74).
Now Munday’s embrace of sexuality is no longer in conflict with his past, but instead obliterates it. The fire of the couple’s passion has burned away any shame the ex-priest might have about his behavior. Boyle also stabilizes her diction: instead of sexual experience leading back into “virgin power,” Munday grows more virile and masculine.

Later, Boyle similarly rewrites a passage to reflect Munday’s growing comfort in his relationship. After visiting a church from his youth, Munday notices his tracks in the sand leading up to the chapel and decides to walk back in the same steps. In the original version of the text:

He walked back beside them, fleeing the chapel, but paying heed to not step where he had stepped before; for those were the prints of a man grown wise in sin, and to walk where he had walked gave him a sense of shame. But touch them he must, for they were as well the print of the man who was himself forever, and he forced his foot into the fresh marks and ground them beneath his heel. (*Gentlemen* 120)

Revised, the passage reads differently, with references to “shame” and “sin” removed:

He walked back beside these prints, fleeing the chapel, but paying heed not to step where he had stepped before. But touch them he must, for they were the prints of a man who was himself, and he forced his feet into the fresh marks in the sand, seeking to efface them by grinding them into oblivion with his heels. (*Gentlemen* [1991] 87–88)

Munday is now less restricted by his past; sexual experience has improved Munday’s life—not complicated it.
Boyle also makes Munday a more nearly equal partner in his relationship with Ayton. When the two men first have sex, in the original version the passage reads “the little man’s face turned up to him in wonder, and he put out his hands to him, whispering in torment, and followed blindly where he led” (Gentlemen 97). Boyle’s use of pronouns here is perhaps deliberately obscure and requires close attention to figure out who leads whom. Munday follows Ayton, but “blindly” erases Munday’s agency in this moment and sets the tone for the two men’s intimacy throughout the rest of the novel. Boyle revised that passage, however, so that Munday does not give up so much control. Ayton likewise seems more suppliant: “He saw the little man’s face turned up to him in homage, in wonder, almost in innocence, and he held out his hands to him and followed where he led” (Gentlemen [1991] 70). While Munday still takes Ayton’s lead, there is not the same desperate plunge that makes the scene troublesome in the earlier version. In the revised text, the two men come to this moment more as equals. The context of the two men’s relationship likewise changes.

When Ayton and Munday take a brief holiday later in the novel, the two men make idle chatter in the dining room before bed. In the original text Munday imagines how the evening will end; he “knew that he would get up and follow Ayton up the open spiral stairway”:

> The door would close behind them and there they would stand... The two strangers who had come there seeking a cigarette, or any other useless thing, would suddenly come face to face and sit down, speechless, but crying out each other’s names, upon the bed together. (Gentlemen 123)

Again, Munday is following Ayton when it comes to intimacy. Likewise, the two men, or at least Munday, cannot face sex as sex; the charade of a chance encounter precipitates intimacy.
This could be another suggestion that Munday is struggling to reconcile his desires with his training. Boyle revised the passage to have the two men climb the spiral stairway together, as equals. When they arrive upstairs, there is no pretense about cigarettes “or any other useless thing”; instead, Boyle writes, “The two men who had climbed this high together would . . . come face to face and whisper each other’s names, and lie down on the bed together” (Gentlemen [1991] 90). Munday follows no one, and “together” is mentioned twice. No one is leading anyone into temptation or otherwise—Ayton and Munday are equals.

Boyle edited out the codependence and cognitive dissonance that typify Munday in the original version of Gentlemen. Munday still occasionally muses on the conflict of his desire with his training, but Boyle reduces the frequency of these moments in the revised text. In the “new” Gentlemen, Munday finds strength and acceptance in his relationship with Ayton. Munday also takes an equal role in the sexual encounters. He is more comfortable in his sexuality, and his relationship with Ayton is healthier for it.

For all the improvement in this relationship, Ayton still has an affair with Leonie. Leonie and Munday’s connection still becomes strained as the two become aware of each other’s interest in Ayton. Munday, at first dismissive of Leonie’s love for Ayton, grows increasingly defensive as the narrative advances. Leonie exacerbates the problem by trying to include Munday in her schemes. The tension comes to a head when Leonie asks Munday to buy her “a stick of rouge” and he refuses. The rivalry is all the more devastating to Munday when he realizes that Leonie had a reason to pursue Ayton; the two have had an affair, and Leonie is pregnant with Ayton’s child. Munday, infatuated with Ayton, believes the sailor to be above Leonie’s advances (or above advancing on Leonie—Boyle is never clear who initiates the affair). He sees his world collapse as he comes to realize Ayton’s duplicity.
In the revised version of *Gentlemen*, Boyle excises some of the negative language that Munday uses in his relation with Leonie. For example, during the lipstick scene in the original text, as Leonie is trying to convince Munday to keep Ayton on the farm, Munday sees that her “neck was tender and bare in her blouse, and her heart was beating without mercy there; but all this soft warm clamour of her flesh seemed bitter and deceptive to him” (*Gentlemen* 239). Munday reacts similarly throughout the latter third of the narrative, interpreting sexual allurement or calculation in many of Leonie’s actions. In the revised text, Boyle removed the phrase after the semicolon and changed the line to read, “Her throat was tender and bare in her blouse, and her heart was pulsing gently there” (*Gentlemen* [1991] 176). The new line shows less desperation on Leonie’s part, and Munday does not feel threatened.

When Leonie does ask Munday for lipstick, Boyle reframes the context of her request so that she is less calculating: “‘You’ll get me a lipstick, won’t you?’ she asked as a child might have put a question to him, a curtain of tears still clinging to her lashes” (*Gentlemen* [1991] 177). Boyle recasts the request as innocent and naïve; Leonie is in love with Ayton, but she does not know how to act on her desires and falls back on stereotypes to inform her behavior. Though Munday still refuses Leonie, and she still insists on needing the makeup, Boyle removes the standoffish context from the exchange. Leonie’s attempts to attract Ayton in the revised version of the novel are less aggressive, and Munday behaves less defensively toward her.

The most provocative change in the novel comes in Boyle’s revision of the last words. In the original version, Boyle’s last image for the reader is of Munday’s crazed laughter. Ayton has been unfaithful, abandoned him, stolen his piano, and left Leonie pregnant. It is catastrophic end to Munday’s brief relationship and a traumatic introduction to life outside the priesthood. No wonder Munday cracks as Leonie tries to explain her pregnancy and her relationship with Ayton.
Munday’s attempt to accept his desires and explore his sexuality has exploded into the unsettling laughter that ends the book. Munday has not grown in the original version of the text. He has been broken.

Boyle was clearly not satisfied with this ending. The changes she made in the narrative leading to the final paragraph suggest her unhappiness with much of the framing of the two men’s relationship. Boyle’s revision to the closing of the novel is the final step in rehabilitating Munday’s experience with Ayton. In the revised *Gentlemen*, Munday is still jarred by Ayton’s actions and still wanders around the city in a daze. His conversation with Leonie when he returns to the farm is little changed. However, when Leonie begins to reveal the father of her baby, instead of cutting her off and laughing, Boyle gives Munday a new line:

“Whose child?” Munday asked again, and now the light was as blinding as a midsummer day, and when Leonie began to speak he cried out, “No, no, don’t say it!” But after a moment or two he was able to speak gently and quietly to her, saying, “We are the two survivors of a ship that foundered and together we must make the long swim back to shore.” (*Gentlemen* [1991] 227)

The Munday at the end of the revised novel is stable and stoic about the end of his relationship with Ayton. He offers comfort to Leonie and, most important, hints at a future for both of them, perhaps even together. The most startling element of the original ending is the absence of hope; Boyle’s revision makes clear that Munday does not see the end of his time with Ayton as the end of life. Munday tells Leonie that it will take time to heal, but that there is a shore to swim back to.
Boyle’s changes improve *Gentlemen*. She stabilizes Munday’s relationships with Ayton and Leonie and makes the themes of desire and growth clearer at the end of the text. Boyle seemed unsure whether she wanted the first version of the novel to be about Munday’s progression into a man comfortable with himself or about the tragedy of his thwarted love. The revisions show Boyle’s dissatisfaction with her first treatment of the main character. In the revised text, Munday is still vulnerable and apprehensive in his new life, but he internalizes his experience into self-knowledge. At the end of the novel he is sad over end of his relationship with Ayton but is prepared to recover. Boyle begins her revised text with Munday imagining what the storm will bring to his door. He anticipates a change. By the end, Munday has ridden the wave and grown through his experience, and though he has “founndered,” the importance of the experience has not been lost. His first relationship has been empowering, passionate, tender, and heartbreaking. The relationship is over, but Boyle indicates that Munday’s story will continue.

Conclusion

The selection of *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately* for revision was natural for Boyle. The book had obvious technical flaws, was thematically uneven, and had an unsatisfactory ending. Perhaps she was too close to her unhappy experience in Le Havre and Harfleur to generate anything but a story that ends with hopeless laughter. Boyle was also working with material that was not autobiographical—and autobiographical sources were a trademark of her early fiction. Not having intimate familiarity with the source material may have contributed to the overwritten passages and the vague, conflicting characterizations within the novel. There is also the fact that Boyle was learning to be a novelist with *Gentlemen*; youthful mistakes are part
of this learning process. Coming back to the novel as a seasoned professional writer, Boyle recognized many of the technical inconsistencies in the text and corrected them.

The issues in *Gentlemen* concerning the representation of desire and the difficulties of relationships needed more than just technical correction. As originally written, the novel offers a troubling picture of homosexual desire. Munday does experience a self-awareness denied him in his previous life as a priest, but his relationship with Ayton is marred by codependence, anxiety, abnegation, and eventually emotional breakdown. He is left traumatized, if not completely broken, by his attempt to identify as a gay man. Boyle leaves little indication that Munday has a healthy sexual future before him at the end of the novel. One can even surmise that Boyle reverses course entirely and believes Munday’s only available relationship is with Leonie. For than three hundred pages, Boyle suggests that a loving relationship is possible for Munday and Ayton. To negate homosexual desire in the last few pages of novel seems out of context with Boyle’s project.

Sixty years later, Boyle revised *Gentlemen* to better represent desire and leave Munday empowered in a life without Ayton but with an understanding of his own sexuality. She removes much of the dysfunction from the two men’s relationship and leaves the reader with a hopeful ending. *Gentlemen* now celebrates desire and personal growth. Munday exchanges the value system of the church (which shamed him for his sexuality) for one that allows him to live as “man who [is] himself” instead of a man “who [is] sin” (*Gentlemen* [1991] 88, *Gentlemen* 120). In her revision, Boyle stays true to her theme and her main character through the unhappy ending of the novel; Munday emerges from his relationship with Ayton a man at peace with his experience and looking toward the future. In the revised text, Boyle does not undermine her own theme.
This particular example demonstrates how a dual text can develop from an author’s own decision to revise previous work. Boyle herself decided to take up *Gentlemen* again because she failed to get the story right the first time. If Boyle had only addressed stylistic and technical matters, *Gentlemen* would not merit a full reconsideration as a separate and distinct text. But her retreatment goes beyond superficial revision to reframe the areas her younger self had hedged on. The “second life” Boyle gives *Gentlemen* is an improved one. The new novel is not a flawless piece of fiction, but it is a significant advance over the earlier version and demonstrates Boyle’s own growth and maturity as a writer.

Along with the artist’s concern about getting the story right, Boyle also must have felt that her novel had never found an appreciative audience. Early critics of *Gentlemen* had as much to say about the novel’s flaws as they did its representation of homosexual desire. Boyle (rightly) surmised that *Gentlemen* would find more receptive readers in the early 1990s than it did earlier. She surely did not expect a runaway best seller. The publication of the book by a progressive, independent press on the west coast, not far from Boyle’s home in San Francisco, was likely also a consideration in reworking the novel.

This example of the dual text offers an intriguing look at the reasons an author might go back into her career and revise a book. Boyle took up *Gentlemen* for artistic motives in addition to practical and financial ones. She shaped a text to better illustrate the themes she originally explored as well as to take advantage of a socially progressive reading public. For textual critics it is important to recognize these texts as two discrete versions of a single story. Boyle was a distinctly different artist at the age of ninety than she was at thirty, and she certainly invokes that aspect of her life in her explanation for giving *Gentlemen* a “second life.” To undo mistakes of youth is to suggest that she has grown beyond them. For Boyle scholars in particular, this dual
text provides an opportunity to look at the author as both an apprentice and a master of her craft. Very rarely do critics have a chance to read a text, generate an interpretation, and have the author return and adjust the text to indicate her own new understanding of its meaning. With Kay Boyle and *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately*, we are afforded such an opportunity.
When Louise Erdrich’s *Love Medicine* was released in 1984, it was an immediate commercial and critical success. The novel was widely and positively reviewed in major newspapers, made the best-seller list, and earned for Erdrich the National Book Critics Circle Award for Best Work of Fiction, the Sue Kaufman Prize for Best First Fiction from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and the Virginia McCormick Scully Award for Best Book of 1984 Dealing with Western Indians. A year later, the young novelist won a Guggenheim fellowship, the *Los Angeles Times Award* for Fiction, an American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation, and the Great Lakes College Association Award for Best First Work of Fiction. In 1982, the opening chapter of *Love Medicine* (the spark that produced the novel), “The World’s Greatest Fisherman,” earned the Nelson Algren Fiction Award; in 1985 “Saint Marie,” the second and perhaps most memorable chapter of the novel, would be included in *Prize Stories: The O. Henry Awards* (Chavkin and Chavkin xxii).

*Love Medicine* seized the attention of influential literati like Philip Roth and Ursula K. Le Guin plus thousands of Native American readers who praised Erdrich’s ability to render their lives. The success of the novel turned the young author into an overnight literary star and made minor celebrities of Erdrich and her collaborator husband, Michael Dorris. Erdrich and Dorris helped promote their own relationship (wife/husband and writer/editor) through frequent interviews; in these interviews, they seem to have struck the perfect balance between artistic and personal companionship, citing each other as their ideal reader and describing a household where love and literary production went hand-in-hand. *Love Medicine* propelled the short-story writer and poet into a full-fledged novelist and the most visible voice of the Native American Renaissance. Erdrich would continue to expand the lives of the characters she created in *Love*

Erdrich’s vision has drawn regular comparisons to William Faulkner and his conception of Yoknapatawpha County. Erdrich herself has admitted in interviews that Faulkner is a great influence on her work: “One absorbs him through the skin. He is just a wonderful storyteller. He is so much of an American writer. I have read him over and over” (Chavkin and Chavkin 38). There are multiple points of comparison critics have made between the two authors. A less obvious, but no less important, comparison is found in how these two authors have put into effect dual texts. In 1946, sixteen years after the initial publication of *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner included an appendix to the novel in the *Viking Portable Faulkner*. This appendix detailed the Compson family’s history both before and after the events of the novel. Faulkner states, “When you read it, you will see how it is the key to the whole book” (Publisher’s Note). The “Note to the Appendix” offers a more tempered view of the addition: “Scholars and critics have frequently treated it as an equal part of the novel, although many consider it to be as separate and distinct from *The Sound and the Fury*” since other stories of the Compson family “are separate and distinct fictional entities” (*Sound and the Fury* 323). Most editions of the novel have not included or referenced the appendix. However, the most recent trade paperback of *The Sound and the Fury* includes the appendix at the back of the book (contrary to Faulkner’s directive that it be placed at the front) in a likely attempt to balance Faulkner’s wishes with critical and readerly interests. The appendix strongly colors how one reads the characters in the novel: the revelation of Caddy’s affair with a Nazi officer in German-controlled Paris during
World War II is particularly jarring. No doubt some readers wish they could unread the Compson appendix.

Like Faulkner, Erdrich has been unable to leave her greatest literary achievement alone. In 1993, Erdrich released *Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version*, which included four new chapters and a second part to “The Beads.” Besides these major additions, Erdrich also took the opportunity to make revisions in nearly every chapter of the novel, most of them relatively minor, but some substantial. The 1993 version of the novel was the established and accepted critical text for scholars and readers for the rest of the 1990s and most of the first decade of the twenty-first century; much of the scholarly work on *Love Medicine* comes from readings of this text. In 2009, Erdrich released yet another version of the novel called *Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition*. In this new text, Erdrich removes two of the four stories added to the 1993 version (“The Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck”). The full text of “The Tomahawk Factory” is preserved, however, in the “P. S.” section of the text, which includes resources and information for readers interested in learning more about the book and author. “Lyman’s Luck” is gone entirely. Also in 2009, Erdrich released the short-story collection *The Red Convertible*, which includes the first published versions of five of the fourteen stories that make up the 1984 *Love Medicine*. In the twenty-six years since the novel originally appeared, three different versions of the text have been available to readers. Each version reads differently from the others and each version was put into play by the author herself.

The multiple versions of *Love Medicine* are an example of not just a dual text, but a triple text. If the stories in *The Red Convertible* are also considered, five chapters in *Love Medicine* exist in four separate contexts—arguably quadruple texts. And in contrast with previous examples in this study, Erdrich alone (except for perhaps Michael Dorris) participated in the
creation of these multiple versions (unlike Fitzgerald and Hemingway) and no great span of time separated their release (as with Boyle). The overwhelmingly positive critical response to Love Medicine indicates the novel wasn’t “broke.” I would further add that Erdrich was not financially pressed to publish; her output is remarkable not only for its quality but its quantity. Being an author canonized in her own working lifetime, Erdrich is assured of healthy sales for her work already in the marketplace. She has continued to produce commercially successful fiction.

The context that produced the dual and triple texts of Love Medicine is different from the other cases in this analysis. Erdrich was not financially compelled to revise (though there is certainly a windfall resulting from the novel’s continued commercial viability), nor did the novel suffer from any obvious artistic flaws. Editors, heirs, and their influence on Erdrich’s work are still decades away. Erdrich must have been motivated by an artistic interest that went beyond the novel to encompass the entire Love Medicine tetralogy. In the “revised and expanded” version of the text, Erdrich stabilizes the novel’s relationship to Tracks, The Beet Queen, and The Bingo Palace, superimposing an order upon the series that was of course not evident in the first edition. Some things are lost in this exercise, but the novel now conforms better to Erdrich’s developing vision.

The other major purpose in expanding Love Medicine emerges from the criticism of other Native writers that her novel was not politically engaged. Erdrich initially disagreed and argued that the political commentary was there—it just was not polemical. However, two of the stories added to the novel (“The Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck”) are explicitly political if still not polemical. These stories provide a political subtext that is, if not absent, at least obfuscated in the first version of Love Medicine. The expanded version of the text has been the preferred source for scholarly criticism, making the later and more developed political narrative
an important element to readings of the novel. Allan Chavkin is the only critic so far to specifically engage the differences between the first and second versions of Love Medicine, and he analyzes the reasons and effects of Erdrich’s politicization of the book.

The importance of the changes between the novels might have been considered generally catalogued with Chavkin’s article except that Erdrich released the book yet again as “Newly Revised.” The 2009 edition drastically alters the political nature of the novel with the removal of “Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck.” This Love Medicine is distinct from the other two and strikes a balance between them. But if scholars assumed the expanded second version was definitive, what of the third? What readings are available to the reader in this third Love Medicine and what readings have been rendered obsolete? How does the scholarly conversation around this novel change? And why did Erdrich choose to alter her first and perhaps most widely read novel yet again? While the issues of dual textuality between the first and second versions of Love Medicine are provocative and deserve critical attention (Chavkin did not address everything), the third text raises even more questions and destabilizes much of our understanding of the text. That all three have been produced under Erdrich’s authority complicates the matter even further. This analysis will attempt to untangle some of these issues.

Context and Composition

To tell the story of Love Medicine’s composition is to tell the story of Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris’s relationship. The image of husband-and-wife collaborators begins with the construction of the novel in the early 1980s and continues through the expanded edition in 1993. However, this collaborative relationship ends abruptly with the 2009 version of the novel. We may never know the depth and scope of this collaboration; the couple seemed as invested in promoting this ideal as in promoting the work. After all, only one novel (The Crown of
"Columbus" published during the couple’s relationship bears both their names—the most explicit public admission of collaboration. In interviews (both together and separately), the couple assured audiences that each influenced the other’s work. *Love Medicine* appears to be the best example of the two working on a project from inception to publication.

Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris met at Dartmouth College in the early 1970s. She was a scholarship student and member of the first coeducational class at the school, and he was the newly appointed head of the Native American studies department. The two worked together for the first time on a story that Erdrich illustrated and Dorris wrote; Dorris would remember later that Erdrich’s drawings were “bold, quirky, better than my text” (Dorris 116). Erdrich would leave Dartmouth after graduation and live the life of a struggling writer, working minimum-wage jobs as she practiced her craft (at this point, poetry) and gathered material for her future fiction. Erdrich returned to Dartmouth to give a reading, and Dorris was struck by the power of her verse (Dorris 118). The two struck up a correspondence and began to trade manuscripts. Erdrich was offered a position as writer-in-residence at Dartmouth in January 1981, and the couple married in the fall of that year.

To pay for renovations on their home, Erdrich and Dorris collaborated on short stories under the pseudonym “Milou North.” These stories were published in *Redbook* and the British magazine *Woman*. Dorris’s take on these stories is that they were entertainments, not “terribly deep” but “uplifting” (Chavkin and Chavkin 37, 115). It is telling that *Woman* usually advertised the stories as “tender.” The couple would collaborate more seriously when a family member notified Dorris about the Nelson Algren fiction contest being promoted by *Chicago* magazine. With only two weeks before the submission deadline and a houseful of holiday company, Erdrich and Dorris managed to generate and submit “The World’s Greatest Fisherman.” Out of
some two thousand entries, the story won the $5,000 prize and spotlighted the couple’s collaboration. Dorris later told Erdrich that he saw her short stories as being interrelated and “Fishermen” as being really the beginning of a novel (Chavkin and Chavkin 83). When later asked to recount the origin of the book, Erdrich was unequivocal about Dorris’s importance in the germination of the text: “Love Medicine wouldn’t have become a novel if Michael hadn’t pointed out that it was a novel and I should finish it (Chavkin and Chavkin 238). The success of “The World’s Greatest Fisherman” was a watershed moment in Native American literature. It became the foundational story and first chapter of Love Medicine.

Over the next eighteen months, Erdrich and Dorris fleshed out the characters, their backstory, and their relationships to one another. Erdrich also revised earlier stories published elsewhere to integrate them into the narrative she was constructing with Dorris. “Saint Marie” gave them the most problems. Erdrich rewrote the story multiple times at Dorris’s urging, revising the story from a parody of Heart of Darkness to a fairy tale and experimenting with various narrators (Chavkin and Chavkin xii, 251). Dorris described his role as both conceptual and editorial. He believed that his influence extended throughout Love Medicine:

The only part of that I was not involved with was the writing of the drafts . . . . We talked about the plots, the characterization, the conceptualization, the order, all that stuff, and then, as a draft or part of a draft is finished, Louise gives it to me, and I read it, and make suggestions and comments or reinforcements, as the case may be. (Chavkin and Chavkin 5)

When the novel failed to find a publisher after the first round of submissions, Dorris even took over as Erdrich’s agent and printed up stationery: “The Michael Dorris Agency was
phenomenally successful . . . It had two offers for the book in a matter of weeks” (Chavkin and Chavkin 162). Erdrich acknowledged Dorris’s influence when *Love Medicine* finally appeared in 1984, writing in the dedication that he “gave his own ideas, experiences, and devoted attention . . . This book is dedicated to him because he is so much a part of it” (*LM* v).

When *Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version* was released in 1993, Dorris and Erdrich were careful to avoid the word “revision” in describing the text. Dorris is explicit: “Louise is expanding *Love Medicine* . . . That isn’t so much a revision as it is including things that weren’t there before” (Chavkin and Chavkin 186). Erdrich echoes this sentiment and describes the new chapters as “additions”; likewise, she “clarifies” instead of revises (Chavkin and Chavkin 225, 234). The choice to deemphasize revision in the novel is telling. Erdrich and Dorris intimate that the added stories were always present in the novel’s mythos; in the new version, Erdrich simply casts a wider eye on the community presented in *Love Medicine* and thus expands the text. Adding chapters to a novel and revising those included in the original published version are complicated rhetorical moves. An author invites critics to find fault in both texts and to challenge their decisions. What needed revision? Why? Was the novel originally censored by the publisher? What necessitated alteration to the text? For *Love Medicine*, which found an overwhelmingly positive critical reception in its first version, this concern seems especially relevant.

Reviewers and audiences, however, did not seem terribly interested by Erdrich’s changes to the novel. The “New and Expanded” *Love Medicine* drew only a fraction of the attention paid to the original version. Erdrich and Dorris’s nonchalance about the new version certainly gave critics and readers no reason to be apprehensive about the book. But the addition of four new narratives, not to mention major revision to one story and smaller revisions throughout, begs for
a close investigation about the significance of the changes. Only one critic has made this analysis (to be discussed in the next section); Erdrich scholars seem to take the 1993 version as simply a perfected text (and not a remarkably different one, at that). In *A Readers Guide to the Novels of Louise Erdrich*, the editors gloss over issues of dual textuality by assuring readers there “is no question that Erdrich intended the revised and expanded 1993 edition of *Love Medicine* to be definitive, and our guide accordingly uses this version as its standard text” (18). Erdrich herself refuses to make such an absolute statement: “The original will go out of print, but of course there are always libraries . . . . I don’t think of the books as definitive, finished, or correct, and leave them for the reader to experience (Chavkin and Chavkin 247). When asked in a 1993 interview why she hates the process of “finishing anything,” Erdrich responded: “Because I don’t want to die, I hate death, and living things keep growing. I hope I live long enough to cultivate a civilized attitude about the end of things, because I’m very immature, now, about letting go of what I love” (Chavkin and Chavkin 245).

In 2009, Erdrich released a third version of her novel titled *Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition*. This text incorporates the additions to the 1993 edition, including “The Island,” “Resurrection,” “The Tomahawk Factory,” and “Lyman’s Luck.” Erdrich removed the latter two stories from the text proper but left “Tomahawk Factory” as a “rather loosely attached” text in the resources section of the book (*LM: NRE P.S.* 6). Erdrich glosses over the changes made to the other two stories, admitting only that she “worked over a few small sections that were added in 1995”*4* (*LM: NRE P.S.* 6). As before, Erdrich’s de-emphasis of her own revisions belies compelling and important changes. The vague ending of “Resurrection,” for example, has been understood by some to indicate a violent, sad death for Gordie Kashpaw; Erdrich changes the ending to suggest instead a Christ-like return from the dead. The “Newly Revised Edition” has
undergone no interrogation until now. One wonders how aware readers, and even Erdrich scholars, are of this 2009 version.

In the twenty-five years since the first publication of Love Medicine, Erdrich has demonstrated—more than once—that her inability to “finish” is not a creative foible meant to entertain interviewers. Instead it is a working artistic philosophy. For Erdrich, her work—the characters, their stories, their fates—is never complete. And since it appears Erdrich has yet to “cultivate a civilized attitude about the end of things,” readers who enjoy Love Medicine and scholars interested in issues of textuality may have still more revised versions of the novel to appreciate. Certainly the wide appeal of the novel and Erdrich’s own commercial success make the re-releases viable for her publisher. As long as Erdrich keeps working toward a perfect version of Love Medicine, and as long as her audience stays interested in (re)purchasing the book, the publisher will inevitably keep printing the novel. In the future, we may be discussing a “deathbed” edition of Love Medicine.

These multiple versions of Love Medicine do not result from authorial inconsistency or creative schizophrenia. Erdrich’s organic understanding of her work also does not entirely account for the three versions. In the following sections, I will show that Erdrich’s changes are specifically calculated to address concerns raised by critics or to correct—through “clarifying”—any possible misreading of the text. This is especially true for the “New and Expanded Version.” The putting into play of the third, “Newly Revised Edition,” however, adds its own wrinkle by hedging between the first and second versions of the novel. With a multiplicity of texts, Erdrich can address a variety of angles—political, artistic, personal—without declaring a definitive edition of the novel. The first version of Love Medicine is the “community” novel, the second the “political,” and the third a hybrid text situated between them. Each text fulfills a purpose for
Erdrich, and each provides a different reading experience for her audience. *Love Medicine* is not just “not finished”—it has been constantly adapted to Erdrich’s (and her audience’s) changing contexts.

**Love Medicine: A Novel and Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version**

The first edition of *Love Medicine* was heralded as a significant moment in Native American literary history. Here finally was a powerful and sincere voice not only articulating the contemporary Native experience, but charting that experience across the twentieth century in the manner of an American epic: the Native American Faulkner. The novel dealt with a locality, its people, and their relationships. The experimental, fractured form of the novel emphasized the intricacy and closeness of the characters’ lives without providing signposts to indicate their connections; they understood their history with one another, even if the narrative jumped backward or forward in time by decades.

This is part of Erdrich’s experiment: readers are never given access to a community, but they are not of that community and must work to understand how the characters are situated with one another. In an interview, Erdrich herself acknowledges that this is a challenge: “Our idea . . . was that it would be like stepping into the community for anyone. It didn’t make it easy for the reader, it’s true. But stepping into another culture or another community is never easy” (Chavkin and Chavkin 119). The reader is always on the periphery of the narrative, and, even if the characters know their stories (and an indication of the excellence of Erdrich’s craft is that they do), the reader must parse it all through all the gossip and unreliable narration—the form by which community knowledge is usually generated and transferred. Erdrich and Dorris admit that they decided against including a character genealogy at the front of the text in order to force readers to piece together the relationships themselves⁵ (Chavkin and Chavkin 119). Part of this
strategy means focusing on the people and their conflicts with one another and not necessarily presenting them in a unified way.

There are few non-Natives for the characters of *Love Medicine* to rally against or with whom to move into conflict. The action of the novel never moves beyond the Dakotas; when it does, the characters are usually trying to find their way back to the reservation. This was a conscious decision on the part of Erdrich and Dorris. In an interview the couple gave with Laura Coltelli, Dorris states that various drafts had the characters going to Washington or otherwise leaving the reservation, but that “Louise wrote the book to have it all centered in a community in which the outside world in not very present or very relevant in some respect. This is a world . . . encompassed by that community, and it isn’t so much about discrimination or wealth . . . but rather . . . how a community deals with itself and with members of itself” (Chavkin and Chavkin 24). These characters are not stereotypes meant to promote an ideology. They are a community, complete with all the foibles and shortcomings that typify realistic representation rather than caricature.

This very notion of community became a point of critical debate for the novel. This portrait of reservation life during the twentieth century lacks conflict with the one major element believed to be intrinsic to the Native experience: whites. There are white characters in the novel, but like the reader, they are always on the fringes of the community. The marginal status of whites in *Love Medicine* means there is little in the way of contact—negative or otherwise—between them and the Native characters central to the text. Without white characters (or the institutions that represent them), the opportunity for explicit political commentary is absent. Erdrich, who has always maintained that there is indeed a political element to *Love Medicine*, wanted to be more subtle with her political commentary. The Catholic Church becomes the chief
vehicle through which Erdrich criticizes mainstream white power. Even then, the Church as an institution is never faulted directly for its negative impact on reservation life. Sister Leopolda, the villain of *Love Medicine* (if there is one), is more an independent agent than a representative of a particular faith. Erdrich’s characters in fact respect the Church as a fixture of their community, even if they are mostly apathetic about its presence.

Erdrich’s characters are also not idealized as paragons of Native identity. Alcohol is a constant danger to the community, and various characters succumb to it over the course of the novel. The women struggle with their relationships and sexual promiscuity, the men with gambling and the stresses of fatherhood. Some characters are abusive, and some are self-destructive. Many of the scenes are troubling in their implications and heartbreaking in their tragedy. Throughout *Love Medicine*, Erdrich never flinches from representing her characters in their humanity. This is a novel about a community, and like all communities it is flawed. Accurate portrayals like this elevate literature beyond simple entertainment into important and worthwhile art and commentary. The first edition of *Love Medicine* challenges Erdrich’s audience to see beyond her characters’ problems to the universal human struggle.

Some readers and critics, unfortunately, saw Erdrich’s characters as feeding into negative Native American stereotypes. When asked about reactions and interpretations contrary to the reading she hoped for, Erdrich responded, “I like the unexpected, and certainly can’t predict the reactions, positive or negative, of other people. I don’t really intend people to have reactions anyway, or interpretations. I’m wholly selfish about the work and write it for the characters on the page” (Chavkin and Chavkin 233). Erdrich’s dismissal of others’ interpretations of her work, of course, does not necessarily undo critical perceptions. As David Stirrup correctly points out, “The problem is not so much whether Erdrich claims to be representative; it is the fact that this is
how she is popularly portrayed” (197). For example, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn believes that mixed-blood writers always “pander and confirm” dominant expectations of mainstream audiences; Leslie Marmon Silko sees Erdrich’s work as apolitical and more concerned with “obsessive play with form and language” (Stirrup 201). Even though Erdrich has repeatedly claimed not to pay attention to reviews, the multiple versions of Love Medicine indicate that she has some understanding of the conversation revolving around her book. Her changes to the novel further suggest that that conversation has shaped the way she has revised the novel.

The one critic to take up the revisions between Love Medicine: A Novel and Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version is Allan Chavkin. In his “Vision and Revision in Louise Erdrich’s Love Medicine,” Chavkin writes that a range of “critical problems” occur when new chapters are added to a novel (85). In a series of questions that frame his analysis of the changes to Love Medicine (and echo the questions I have raised in my overall project), Chavkin asks:

Which version reveals Erdrich’s “real intentions”? Which version of Love Medicine is “definitive”? Which version is the better work of art? Why did Erdrich decide to substantially change a novel that was so highly regarded by both critics and the public? What constitutes Love Medicine, a work with a complicated textual history that includes publication of parts of the book, sometimes in different forms, in periodicals before incorporation in the novel? (Chavkin 86)

To answer these questions, Chavkin relies on Jack Stillinger’s concept of “textual pluralism.” This theory, as I discussed in the introduction, posits that each version of a text is a unique literary moment with its own authorial intention and rhetorical purpose. To quote Stillinger again, “A work is constituted by all known versions of a work.” Critics and readers should not
rely on a “best” or “authoritative” text, but should try to account for them all (Stillinger 132). In other words, there exists a constellation of texts worthy of analysis, not a single, “definitive” one that renders the rest irrelevant.

In his analysis, Chavkin finds that Erdrich’s revised Love Medicine is “more effective than the 1984 book in conveying its political ideology” (90). Though Erdrich maintained, as I mentioned above, that her work was political, just not polemical, Chavkin writes that “for those whose first concern is more for political intent rather than art, Erdrich’s subtle writing lacks force and commitment” (90). Reviewers in major outlets, together with other influential Native writers, misread or misunderstand significant moments in the novel, including the depth of Erdrich’s political engagement (Chavkin 93). Chavkin sees the 1993 version of the novel as incorporating a “powerful political vision . . . absent in the original novel”:

The new vision includes four interdependent objectives: (1) to argue for the importance of preserving American Indian culture and resisting complete assimilation into the dominant white culture; (2) to undermine the popular stereotypes of American Indians; (3) to promulgate a feminism that is in accord with traditional American Indian culture . . . and (4) to present a more affirmative vision than the one in the 1984 Love Medicine, which for some readers reinforced the notion that the situation of American Indians today is hopeless, and to suggest that there are possible political solutions to the dire problems confronting American Indians. (Chavkin 93–94)

To prove his thesis, Chavkin provides an excellent close reading of the major additions to the novel, though he acknowledges his “analysis is not intended to be exhaustive but to describe the major changes and reveal the ideology behind them” (94).
In the conclusion of “Vision and Revision,” Chavkin states that Erdrich recognized the fact that the first version of her novel was too pessimistic and did not offer enough in the way of solutions for the problems facing Native Americans. “All of this changes,” Chavkin writes, “in the more affirmative 1993 edition of the novel, where the ‘Indianness’ of the book and especially of the need to return to one’s heritage are underscored” (112). Chavkin ends the article by gesturing back toward Stillinger’s textual plurality and the need to see neither text as definitive. Each version is “unique, embodying Erdrich’s ‘real intentions’ at the time she composed that version of the novel” (Chavkin 112). Readers and critics may decide which text they find the superior work of art based on their own aesthetic preferences. But for scholars, Chavkin sees both texts as components of a single project. These texts should be considered together when determining the work’s meaning. Whichever text the audience deems the better work is a matter of taste and ultimately a secondary concern.

Chavkin’s investigation of the differences between the first two versions of Love Medicine is excellent in its scope and finding. However, in using Stillinger’s ideas of textual plurality, Chavkin softens the impact of Erdrich’s revision of the novel. Textual plurality suggests a plane of continuity marked by levels of difference but essentially a stable narrative. In the context of poetry, where Stillinger employs this idea, this way of understanding versions and variations is usually appropriate. As discussed in the introduction, verse is self-contained and its narrative is normally limited to the single poem. The different publication contexts of a single poem can produce a multiplicity of versions based on the requirements of the venue and intentions of the author; the idea of textual plurality can be useful for this situation. But rarely does the revision (or a series of revisions) to a poem alter the reading experience markedly, especially in the context of poetry collected in a book or other larger work.
In a novel, even an experimental one like *Love Medicine*, character revisions and chapter additions ripple throughout the text and influence the way one understands the entire narrative. For this reason, I prefer the idea of a dual text rather than textual plurality. Erdrich has not put into play subtle variations that create a constellation of meanings as Coleridge did in some of Stillinger’s examples of textual pluralism. Rather, she created two significantly different texts that serve two purposes. As Chavkin points out, the 1993 version of *Love Medicine* is politicized either to address the criticism from other Native writers or to remedy Erdrich’s own dissatisfaction with the text. If this were the only change to the novel—even though it is clearly significant—then Chavkin’s suggestion that *Love Medicine* be read through the lens of textual plurality would likely hold up. The added political element distracts from the “community novel” that Erdrich originally meant to write, but this element does not constitute a radical revision to the novel.

The revisions, however, went beyond providing political moments in the text. They encompassed sentence-level changes as well as expanded character histories leading to total character recasting. With such a comprehensive revision, the second (and third) editions of *Love Medicine* both move beyond textual pluralism into dual (and triple) textuality. The breadth of changes goes beyond the scope of Stillinger’s concept, though I agree that each text has a particular authorial intention and unique rhetorical purpose behind it. But in attempting to see the multiple versions of *Love Medicine* as variations on a theme, Chavkin fails to consider how completely Erdrich altered major aspects of the novel. *Love Medicine: A Novel* and *Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version* certainly share a title, but the novels do different things.

This is most clearly seen in the characters of Lulu Lamartine and her son Lyman. In the original version of the novel, Lulu is a free spirit, ungoverned by traditional gender or social
conventions. Erdrich favors a naturalistic and sexually liberated representation for Lulu, and this makes her a morally ambiguous character. (This is especially true when readers compare Lulu to Marie Kashpaw, the other central female character and Lulu’s chief rival.) Lulu’s son Lyman is featured in some sequences in *Love Medicine*, but is significant mainly because he is a witness to his brother’s suicide (in “The Red Convertible” chapter). Once that narrative is concluded, he is only mentioned in an aside by Lulu. (She states that Lyman goes on to moderate success in the construction business.) For the 1993 version of the novel, Erdrich added a significant backstory for Lulu in an attempt to justify the character’s behavior. Lyman is completely rewritten from a background character into one of the central figures of the novel.

**Marie, Lulu, and Lyman**

In the 1984 version, Lulu does not have a story told from her perspective until the second-to-last narrative of the novel. Lulu exists for most of the book from the perspectives of other characters: her various lovers (Nector Kashpaw, Harry Lamartine) or her rival Marie Kashpaw (Nector’s wife). We are given various descriptions of Lulu, from “she went with anybody in the bushes” (by Marie) and “golden . . . electric” (by Nector) to “a flirt” though “tongues less kind had more indicting things to say” (by Bev Lamartine) (*LM* 125, 97, 76). Perhaps the most telling description of Lulu’s relationship with her community can be found in “Lulu’s Boys,” which mentions the diverse parentage of Lulu’s brood:

> Why did each of the boys currently shooting milk jugs out front of Henry’s house look so different? There were eight of them. Some of them even had her maiden name. The three oldest were Nanapushes. The next oldest were Morrisseys who took the name Lamartine, and then there were other assorted younger Lamartines who didn’t look like one another,
either. Red hair and blond abounded; there was some brown. The black hair on the seven-
year-old at least matched his mother’s. This boy was named Henry Junior, and he had
been born approximately nine months after Henry Senior’s death.⁶ (LM 76–77)

The last line of this quote, from Henry Senior’s brother Bev, is telling since Bev and Lulu were
intimate the day of his brother’s funeral.

Bev’s descriptions of Lulu perhaps shed the most light on the character as envisioned by
Erdrich in the 1984 version of the novel. Lulu is coy, beautiful, and brutally honest. She appears
to drop and pick up men on a whim. Bev, his visit to Lulu a pretense for taking Henry Junior
(who he believes is his son), warns himself against her “slack, ambitionless, but mindlessly
powerful female clutches” (LM 83). However, instead of taking the boy and moving back to his
home in St. Paul with his white girlfriend, “he lay down in her arms”: “whirling blackness swept
through him, and there was nothing else to do” (LM 88). The two are married shortly thereafter.
Tellingly, Lulu had been in a long-term, serious affair with Nector Kashpaw (Marie’s husband)
up until the moment Bev came to visit her. Nector had made the decision to leave his wife and
marry Lulu, but Bev’s arrival undoes his plan. Stricken, he burns down Lulu’s house.

However, Lulu’s relationship with Nector (and rivalry with Marie) begins again when all
three are living in the old folks’ home on the reservation. In the narrative from which the novel
takes its title, Marie and her adopted grandson Lipsha practice “love medicine” to break Lulu’s
hold over an increasingly distant Nector, who is suffering from Alzheimer’s. The ceremony
ultimately fails when Nector chokes and dies on the blessed goose hearts Marie gave him as part
of the love medicine. Erdrich leaves the question unresolved as to whether the ceremony loosens
Lulu’s hold over Nector, but the narrative does set up the chapter in which Lulu tells her own
story. “Love Medicine” shows the extreme consequences of Lulu and Nector’s relationship. The reader’s opinion of Lulu reaches its nadir at the end of the chapter.

Directly after “Love Medicine” is “The Good Tears,” the only narrative in Love Medicine: A Novel told from Lulu’s point of view. The first line indicates that Lulu is not apologetic for her decisions—“No one ever understood my wild and secret ways”—and Lulu’s last spoken line of the chapter shows she never will be sorry—“the truth is I have no regrets” (LM 216, 235). In this chapter, Erdrich provides a defense of sorts for Lulu’s behavior, but supplies no apologies. She explains that Lulu’s affections are not given disingenuously, but that her love encompasses everything around her, including the men she encounters. In Lulu’s youth, she encountered a dead man in the woods who becomes a macabre interest and eventually even a sexual curiosity to her. In her maturity, she stops the building of a tomahawk factory by threatening to reveal the paternity of her children. She is a morally relative community force; she alienates those around her even as she represents a strain of Native culture quickly disappearing from the reservation. Lulu remarks to the reader that “she goes through life like a breeze”: “I try to greet the world without a grudge. I can beat the devil himself at cards because I play for the sheer amusement. I never worry half as much as other people. Things pass by” (LM 220). She distrusts the “yellow-bearded Chinooks” (changed to “yellow-bearded government surveyors” in the 1993 version), who devise new and more detailed ways of counting and measuring: “I say that every time they counted us they knew the precise number to get rid of” (LM 221).

Lulu’s position within the tribe is an inconvenient reminder of community responsibility and lost cultural understanding. She appears to be a man-eater ungoverned by traditional social mores. She is also the most easily misread character in the novel. Erdrich’s subtlety in explaining Lulu’s story opens the character up to various stereotypes and to a general confusion about her
role in the community. Is she a problem for those living on the reservation? Does her backstory justify her character? The reader’s natural sympathies lie with Marie; because Lulu is an unapologetic rival for Nector’s affections, it is easy to fault her. She may believe herself beyond the judgment of the reservation, but she is not beyond the judgment of the reader. Complex characters in ethnic texts are lighting rods for critics and readers alike. Erdrich appears to have recognized that Lulu needed more work.

Many of Erdrich’s additions to Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version have to do with Lulu Lamartine and with providing more explanation and backstory to justify her behavior. She is prominently featured, along with Marie Kashpaw, in the “The Tomahawk Factory”; “The Island” is a second story (on par with “St. Marie” in both placement within the novel and in purpose) told from Lulu’s perspective. In each of these stories, Erdrich adds depth to Lulu’s personality and rehabilitates her from the negative stereotypes that dog her character in the first edition of the novel. As Chavkin shows in his analysis, there is a political reasoning behind Erdrich’s changes; the two stories mentioned here are parts of that effort. However, character changes are just as important as the politicization of Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version.

In “The Island,” Erdrich situates Lulu’s voice near the beginning of Love Medicine as well as at the end. Readers have her perspective, along with those of Nector and Marie, from the beginning of the novel. This in itself is a significant decision by Erdrich. In the earlier version of the novel, the reader waits over two hundred pages, and every other characters’ opinions and descriptions of Lulu, before getting Lulu herself. In the 1993 book, Lulu’s voice is placed, along with the voices of the other principal characters, at the front of the novel; every comment leveled against her is now read with the benefit of Lulu’s own voice echoing through the text. Readers
do not have to wait for “The Good Tears” to reconcile their understandings of Lulu with the other characters’ perspectives.

“The Island” takes place in the novel’s chronology immediately after Lulu leaves the government school. Like the first line of “The Good Tears,” the story begins with a declaration that goes to the heart of Lulu’s character: “I never knew the curve of my mother’s arms. I still wanted to anchor myself against her. But she had tore herself away from the run of my life like a riverbank. She had vanished, a great surrounding shore, leaving me to spill out alone” (*LM: NEV* 68). If the other characters—or the reader—never understood Lulu’s “wild and secret ways,” Erdrich gives a clear indication that the absence of Lulu’s mother informs the character’s behavior. The lack of a female caregiver leaves Lulu desperate for models. Her father (figure), Nanapush, is indulgent with Lulu, but his wife, Rushes Bear, resents Lulu’s presence in the couple’s home. From an early age, Lulu gravitates toward men as the women in her life are gone (her mother), abusive (Rushes Bear), or competitive (Marie). The combative relationship Lulu has with the women in her community, and the almost exclusively male world she chooses to occupy with her sons and lovers, can be traced back to this early experience in her youth.

The bulk of this narrative then describes Lulu’s interaction with Moses Pillager, with whom she has her first relationship and child (Gerry). Moses is the most primitive character in *Love Medicine*. He lives on an island in the middle of a lake with nothing but animals for company. Erdrich codes him with a number of Native tropes: he was saved from illness when his mother pretended he was dead and sang his death songs; he speaks exclusively in the old language; he subsists off the land; he is a mystical Indian. Lulu adopts his habits while she lives with Moses. The scene is out of time: the couple lives in a way more reminiscent of the 1800s—a period before contact with whites or the existence of reservations—than of the 1930s, when the
narrative occurs. For a novel that takes place in the twentieth century and charts the progress of a "modern" reservation community, Erdrich’s choice to harken back to a character like Moses Pillager and a period long past, and to include him in the early years of Lulu’s life, shows readers that this character is formed in the crucible of a very traditional Native fire. Lulu is different from every other character in the novel in part because of her relationship with Moses, a representative of the Old Way of Native culture. Lulu remarks that her moral relativism is directly related to her time on the island: “Nothing would look the same after loving Moses Pillager. Right and wrong were shades of meaning, not sides of a coin” (*LM: NEV* 76).

Likewise, Lulu’s time on the island shapes her attitude toward men. She states that desire is “dissolved” into her blood: “I want to grind men’s bones to drink in my night tea. I want to enter them the way their hot shadows fold into their bodies in full sunlight. I want to be their food, their harmful drink, to taste men like stilled jam at the back of my tongue” (*LM: NEV* 82). Lulu’s attraction to men is as much genuine affection (as she posits in “The Good Tears”) as a desire to consume and intoxicate. Erdrich shows that Lulu’s experience on the island, with Moses and his cats that are “sleek and without mercy, avid, falling hungry,” shapes her understanding of right and wrong and her conception of how desire should function in life. For Lulu, life and desire go hand-in-hand with the “shades of meaning” of right and wrong. No other character in the novel displays such a nontraditional (read: non-Western) worldview.

Erdrich gestures at this past for Lulu in the first edition of the novel, but Lulu can simply be misread as a promiscuous Indian, rather than a complex product of her troubled past. With her voice placed earlier in the text, and her formative experiences likewise explained to the reader earlier, Lulu can no longer be explained away with stereotypes. Erdrich perhaps always had “The Island” in her mind, and maybe even had the narrative on paper, but including this story in the
1993 version of the text allows readers access to Lulu’s past and makes for a deeper reading of the text as whole.  

Erdrich’s other addition to Lulu’s story is “The Tomahawk Factory.” This narrative explains what happened to Lulu, Marie, Lipsha, and Lyman after the events of “The Good Tears” and “The Red Convertible.” According to Chavkin, “The Tomahawk Factory” (and, by extension, “Lyman’s Luck”) shows Erdrich at her most political in *Love Medicine* (Chavkin 107). The tomahawk factory that Nector tried to set up in “The Good Tears”—and that Lulu stopped with her paternity threats—comes to fruition under the guidance of Lulu and Nector’s illegitimate son Lyman. Lulu has reinvented herself as a Native rights advocate with Marie Kashpaw at her side. With Nector dead, the two women form an unlikely friendship and alliance. Lyman has inherited his father’s leadership role in the tribe and represents the force of progress and economic advancement for the reservation; Lipsha, the adopted son of Nector and Marie, has the medicine touch and thus the admiration of Lulu and her cohort. The narrative is about two bastard sons, each inheriting something from their father figure, and two mothers uneasily united by the death of their shared lover. If “The Tomahawk Factory” is Erdrich at her most political, it is also Erdrich in her most deft treatment of how community, family, and culture can explode into conflict.

The relationship between Lulu and Marie is probably the most confounding for readers. The two characters feud for the attention for Nector Kashpaw for the majority of the novel. Since “The Island” and Lulu’s discovery that Marie and Nector “went” together, Lulu has harbored strong feelings toward the “fish-skinned” Lazarre. When Nector and Lulu begin their affair later, Marie cannot refer to Lulu except as “the Lamartine.” Their relationship thaws at the end of “The Good Tears” when it is Marie who volunteers to help an increasingly blind Lulu with her
eyedrops. Lulu declares she has no regrets. Marie, putting the drops in, responds that “somebody had to put the tears into her eyes” (*LM: NEV* 297). The comment is transformative for Lulu, who for the first time “saw exactly how another woman felt”: “it gave me deep comfort . . . . It gave me the knowledge that whatever had happened the night before, and in the past, would finally be over once my bandages came off” (*LM: NEV* 297).

The two women strike up a tenuous friendship and alliance to work on behalf of community. To this end, both try to stop Lyman’s tomahawk factory. Lyman sees the factory as an economic boon to the reservation and does not recognize (or perhaps understand) that the mass production of “authentic” Native artifacts is an offensive prospect to Lulu, Marie, and Lipsha. When Lulu declares that their people have always been natural artists, Lyman refuses to support the project: “I can’t draw . . . . Neither can you, Mom. You’re no artist” (*LM: NEV* 304). Though Marie and Lulu fail to stop construction on the factory, Lyman recognizes that for the operation to work, it requires their support, at least at the beginning. But, like the two women’s relationship—“they argued unceasingly about the past, and didn’t agree on the present either”—their place in the factory required careful balance or the enterprise would collapse: “Their statures had to be completely equal . . . . Their positions, at the beading table, which overlooked the entire workplace, had to be precisely measured. They each needed territory to control” (*LM: NEV* 311).

The two women manage to keep the factory in operation, even as Lyman must lay off employees and the market for authentic Chippewa tobacco pouches, deer calls, and moccasins dries up. While the two women banter and complain and argue with one another, one topic is off limits: Nector. When Lyman’s patience with his mother’s machinations wears thin, and he takes his frustration out on Marie, Lyman realizes his grave mistake: “I felt the balance of the whole
operation totter with her, away from me. The factory was both light and momentous now, a house of twigs” (LM: NEV 316). When Marie’s offhand comment to Lulu escalates into an argument over Nector, the factory employees slow down and eventually stop working to watch the drama unfold. Lulu pours her light green beads into Marie’s bowl of yellow beads, causing the other woman to yell—like a “windigo”—and in a moment of petty anger Lyman’s tomahawk factory explodes (LM: NEV 317).

“The Tomahawk Factory” provides a moment of levity in a novel that takes up a number of dark themes, from alcoholism to child abuse. But the story also reveals some of the most significant development in Lulu and her son Lyman. In the 1984 version, Lulu is a lone wolf. She takes men, leaves them, and is beholden to no one but her children. Though the end of “The Good Tears” leaves the reader hoping that Lulu will develop a relationship with Marie, the nature of that possibility is vague. Will Lulu and Marie develop a mutual respect for each other? Will they forgive each other? Erdrich leaves this open for interpretation. But the evidence we have of the characters suggests that the best hope would be for the two women simply to stop hating each other. Lulu is a survivor, and Erdrich defines most of her relationships in the novel through conflict. Comparatively, Marie, if terse with others, is a wellspring of compassion for those around her.

“The Tomahawk Factory” shows Lulu, if still wolfish (Lyman is sure he recognizes his mother’s “wolf smile” as the workers begin to tear the factory apart), is at least socially engaged with the community. More important, she is engaged on a personal level with Marie. Yes, Erdrich presents the relationship as fragile; but when the two women simultaneously break into laughter in the middle of an argument, the reader can see that there is a genuine connection between them. This version of Lulu would seem completely out of place in the 1984 text. The
rehabilitation that started with “The Island” finds its end with Lulu and Marie’s friendship. The feminine connection Lulu craves in her youth is realized, and in a sense she is made more nearly whole. The relationship Erdrich only hints at in the 1984 text, at the end of “The Good Tears,” is here fully explored and detailed. There is some mystery about seeing Lulu and Marie interact with each other as “friends,” but providing this relationship completes Lulu’s transformation from “wolf” to “wolf mother.”

One can see this narrative foreshadowed in the 1984 text, but Erdrich only gestures and hints at it. Lulu’s story is most assuredly part of the submerged meaning in Love Medicine: A Novel. In the 1993 version of the book, Erdrich describes explicitly the reasons for Lulu’s behavior and her role within the community. Lyman Lamartine is one of the vehicles through which Erdrich reveals Lulu’s character. Her interactions with him indicate her expectations for Native progress and show how community and family dynamics are often the same within reservation culture. However, to use Lyman in this way, Erdrich was required to reinvent him from one text to the next.

In the 1984 version, Lyman is a secondary character whose purpose is to tell the story of his older brother, Henry Junior. (“The Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck” were added to the 1993 version.) He is more a function of narrative than a character in his own right. As soon as his purpose is fulfilled, Erdrich explains him out of the text in “The Good Tears”:

For a while after Henry Junior, Lyman was affected. He had always been carefree, a lover of nice things and ironed clothes like myself, with the golden touch for money from his father. He got morose. He could not snap out of it but slowly improved his outlook by working. He became a contractor, hired on his brothers, and in that way supported us all.

(LM 228)
This is the first of two descriptions of Lyman’s character outside of “The Red Convertible” (the narrative detailing the death of Henry Junior). Erdrich does not give Lyman the development that she does Lipsha or Albertine, the other two characters of Lyman’s generation with narratives in Love Medicine. Rather, Lyman serves to show the effect of one generation’s trauma on the next. Henry Junior suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder after returning from Vietnam and eventually commits suicide. Lyman is witness to his brother’s suicide and suffers himself from the experience. Lulu acknowledges that he “was never quite the same after Henry”; Erdrich likewise marks his voice with an ever-present melancholy (LM 233). In the 1984 text, Lyman never recovers from his brother’s death, just as his brother never recovers from Vietnam.

Erdrich suggests that trauma can be passed down the bloodlines like any other trait. Lyman is closest to his brother and most sensitive to the change in him when he returns to the reservation. Henry Junior’s death creates an absence in Lyman’s life and leaves him in perpetual sorrow. Erdrich hints that, as with his mother Lulu, a lack of stable role models is part of Lyman’s difficulty. When Lyman tells his mother about Nector’s death, he also asks about their past relationship. Before Lulu prepares a suitable answer, though, Lyman begs off and is silent again. Lulu, in a moment that forecasts her own expanded story in the 1993 version, observes, “Of course, he did know that Kashpaw was his father. What he really meant was there was nothing to be done about it anymore. I felt the loss. I wanted to hold my son in my lap and let him cry. Even blind, a mother knows when her boy is holding in a painful silence” (LM 233). Lyman is without Henry Junior and has never been able to acknowledge his own biological father. Now Nector is dead and so is the opportunity to develop a relationship with him.

Besides “The Red Convertible,” Erdrich devotes only the two passages noted here to shaping Lyman’s story. He is one of the more tragic characters of Love Medicine: A Novel
because his narrative is both limited and unremittingly dark. The other troubled characters have brief moments in which they achieve at least some positive connection with one another, but Lyman is unique in his inability to connect. By rewriting the passages concerning Lyman in “The Good Tears” and adding “The Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck,” Erdrich reinvents Lyman’s narrative to make him a more central and less morose voice within the text.

In the 1993 version of “The Good Tears,” Lyman is still gloomy, but he no longer finds comfort in work as he did in the 1984 version. In fact, all references to his running a construction business are removed. Instead, Erdrich writes that Lyman “went down lower, lower, to where nobody could drag him up. He stayed alone in the oldest shack where he could party all he liked” (LM: NEV 289). The word “party” suggests Lyman tries to lose himself in the distractions of alcohol and drugs—not that he pursues social entertainment. Regarding Lyman, the rest of “The Good Tears” remains basically the same with one exception. When Lyman asks Lulu about Nector in the 1984 text, Lyman asks his mother: “‘He was your boyfriend once, wasn’t he?’” (LM 233). In the 1993 text, Lyman is more direct in his question: “‘He was my dad, wasn’t he?’” (LM: NEV 294). These changes set up the character as he will appear in the “The Tomahawk Factory,” which begins with Lyman suffering in the aftermath of his brother’s death. He is “lower” in “a place [he] didn’t move from” (LM: NEV 299).

The beginning of “The Tomahawk Factory” takes up Lyman’s story in the aftermath of his brother’s death. He states that the boy who left with Henry Junior is not the one who returned. The narrative seems to be heading toward the same tone as the 1984 text, leaving little hope of a recovery for Lyman. However, a mistaken letter from the I.R.S. motivates Lyman to get his affairs in order—“Uncle Sam taketh away and Uncle Sam giveth. He took Henry. But then he went and gave life back to me” (LM: NEV 299). With his life back together, Lyman
follows in his biological father’s footsteps and takes a political position within the reservation. In doing so, Lyman becomes one of the more complex characters of the 1993 *Love Medicine*. He has struggled with loss and substance abuse, hit rock bottom, but found a calling in the same path as his father—with the help of government bureaucracy (the I.R.S. and the Bureau of Indian Affairs). This puts him in conflict with his mother, Lipsha, with Marie, and, in a larger sense, with the reservation community. Lyman does not have any objection to commercializing his culture if that means providing jobs and economic prosperity.

Through Lyman, Erdrich represents the difficulties of the contemporary Native leader. Lyman struggles with reconciling his identity and culture, with his responsibility to the community. He is torn between contemporary Indian issues and the “Traditionals,” the “Back-to-the-Buffalo types” which Lulu, Marie, and Lipsha represent in the 1993 text (*LM: NEV* 303). His best model, Nector, has been lost to him as a father but still exists as a specter on the reservation. Nector began the factory project, and Lyman has completed it, overcoming his mother where his father could not. Lyman even bases his plans on Nector’s original vision, saying: “I ran things the way I thought Nector Kashpaw would have. . . . I took pleasure in carrying out old ideas that surfaced in the dusty file trunks of the tribal offices” (*LM: NEV* 309). For Lipsha, the tomahawk factory becomes as much about connecting with a father he was never allowed to know as it is about providing a financial boon to the reservation.

The intermingling of political engagement (for both Lyman and the “Traditionals”) with personal identity and growth is a part of the 1993 text that Chavkin does not necessarily recognize, but it is vital to understanding Erdrich’s conception of political engagement. This is how she avoids making her books “polemical.” Characters who are functions of their politics are hollow and lack depth; by exhibiting how politics relates to the deeper emotional needs of her
characters, Erdrich keeps her characters from turning into talking-points. Their political motivations are propelled by a need for identity, purpose, and connection.

When the tomahawk factory fails spectacularly, Lyman is doubly crushed. The factory promised professional success and gave Lyman a connection to the male role model who had eluded him since his brother’s death. For Lulu, Lipsha and Marie, the end of the factory and its production of “false value” artifacts is a victory for the community. But Lyman sees the defeat as an explicitly personal one that reveals his shortcomings as a tribal leader, businessman, son, and man. His failure is complete. Had the narrative ended here, Lyman’s story would have descended again into the dark, “low” place that begins “The Tomahawk Factory.” However, Erdrich ends the story, as she does repeatedly throughout the 1993 text, on a note of redemption and hope.

After the factory disaster and the destruction of his office, Lyman goes to a bar where he finds many of his former employees, including Marie. He eventually finds himself alone with her and apologizes for his rudeness earlier in the day. In the most explicit indication that the factory was as much about the community as it was about his emotional needs, Lyman asks Marie if his father ever talked about him. Marie responds not with words but with an expression, frowning and reaching out her hand to Lyman. He understands the gesture:

She was going to say that her husband, my father, would have been proud or, better yet, jealous of what I’d attempted, that he would have understood the failure of this worthwhile project. She was going to tell me that change came about in slow measure and although my pain was bitter, it was not unnatural and therefore I could absorb it the way earth drinks in rain . . . . Marie Kashpaw was going to say that I was of the outer and inner, and though I whirled in the homeless suites and catered lunches of convention life I
could come back, make my way down the narrow roads. She was going to tell me that I had a place. \(LM: NEV\ 323\)

Lyman has found the validation and acceptance he was looking for in the arms of Marie Kashpaw; Marie has learned to accept and help not only Lulu, but the living, breathing proof of her husband’s infidelity with her. It is a tender scene that rescues Lyman from the darkness he has been edging toward.

Erdrich reinforces the idea that Lyman has grown into himself and his role with the reservation community—inner and outer—in the afterword of “The Tomahawk Factory,” a chapter entitled “Lyman’s Luck.” Lyman is seen cleaning up the debris of the tomahawk factory. He begins to envision a new venture taking over the space—an Indian casino. Lyman realizes that for true economic success to happen on the reservation, he cannot commercialize his culture. Rather, the reservation will “take money from retired white people who had farmed Indian hunting grounds, worked Indian jobs, lived high while their neighbors lived low, looked down or never noticed who was starving, who was lost” \(LM: NEV\ 327\). Lyman, cynical and sardonic, sees his community’s future, “and it was based on greed and luck” \(LM: NEV\ 328\).

“Lyman’s Luck,” the shortest narrative in the 1993 text, not only shows Lyman’s change in tactics on the reservation, but also sets up his role in \textit{The Bingo Palace}, the novel that was coming out at the same time as \textit{Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version}. Erdrich took the opportunity in her revision of \textit{Love Medicine} to provide continuity between texts. Lyman is a primary voice in \textit{The Bingo Palace}; and the original \textit{Love Medicine} does not sufficiently flesh out his character for that purpose. The backstory here in the 1993 text, and particularly in “Lyman’s Luck,” forecasts the themes central to \textit{The Bingo Palace}. Perhaps because it is so transparent in its intention, this chapter also seems the most awkwardly placed of Erdrich’s 1993
additions to the novel. The other additions give significant wrinkles to the characters that inhabit
the text; through the expanded history, Erdrich sheds light on the motivations and causes of her
characters’ behavior. “Luck” does not offer much in the way of character advancement for
Lyman. He is the same person whom we see at the end of “The Tomahawk Factory,” but he now
has a new scheme in mind. The narrative is a “Coming Attraction” preview rather than an
integral element of Love Medicine. For a novel so carefully organized and assembled, Erdrich’s
decision to include “Lyman’s Luck” is perhaps a misstep.

If Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version had only added a political element to the
novel, perhaps with just “The Tomahawk Factory,” Chavkin’s theory of textual pluralism would
have been an excellent way of conceptualizing Erdrich’s changes. However, the alterations to
currency go far beyond the addition of a political subtext. Lulu and Marie are revealed in much
more detail and are given clearer motivations for their actions. Erdrich completely reinvents
Lyman’s character from one version to the next, setting up his appearance in a later volume of
the Dakota tetralogy. These changes make Love Medicine: A Novel and Love Medicine: New and
Expanded Version genuinely dual texts.

The 1993 version of the novel is more politically engaged and addresses criticisms
generated by the first edition of the text. Love Medicine was an immediate commercial and
critical success for mainstream readers and reviewers alike. In the 1993 version, by contrast,
Erdrich seems interested in making the novel palatable to a narrower group—other Native
writers and readers. She reframes her characters to be less stereotypical and more emotionally
complex and adds issues of tribal policy, leadership, and bureaucracy to the stories. The white
man, only obliquely mentioned in the original text, figures more directly in the 1993 version of
the novel. Taken as a whole, these changes make for a substantially different novel geared
toward a more specific audience. It is no surprise, then, that for critical work scholars have primarily used the 1993 text rather than the first edition. It is a second text put into play to placate their concerns and better jibe with the interests of the Native American literary community. Erdrich does not see one text as supplanting the other, even though one text may go out of print (scholars have not necessarily taken Erdrich’s directive to heart, though). Instead, we have two texts. Love Medicine: A Novel was a highly successful and profitable *story of* a Native American community written for a general audience. By comparison, Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version is a Native American *story* geared toward a narrower audience, though certainly available to readers of the original.


As if the issues surrounding the first two versions of Love Medicine were not complex enough, and as they continue to pose problems when we try to conceptualize the novel, Erdrich made the scholars’ and general readers’ tasks exponentially more difficult by putting forth a third version of the book in 2009—*Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition*. The most significant changes to this text are the removal of “The Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck.” However, Erdrich also took the opportunity to revise passages of the novel she added to the 1993 version of the text. To my knowledge, these revisions have not undergone critical analysis. Most of the revisions are minor: she alters the spelling of Native words and changes small details to smooth inconsistencies or gaps in the plot. However, there are a handful of revisions that do change meaning in the text—for example, bringing a dead character back to life. Erdrich’s third effort with Love Medicine has created an issue of triple textuality.

Comparing the three texts, one to the other, reveals that Erdrich’s changes do not extend back to Love Medicine: A Novel. The passages revised are limited to the added sections in the
1993 version (part 2 of “The Beads,” “The Island,” “Resurrection,” “The Tomahawk Factory,” and “Lyman’s Luck”). Whatever changes Erdrich made between the original text and the 1993 version (outside the added narratives) remain consistent between the 1993 and 2009 texts. According to Erdrich, she “worked over a few sections” for the 2009 text, but this dismissive comment belies the importance of the revisions she made to some of her central characters. With Lyman’s texts removed from the latest version of Love Medicine, these changes are limited to Lulu and Marie. The revisions are not elaborate or extreme, but they do add a dimension to each character that ripples throughout the text.

In “The Island,” Erdrich changed Lulu’s revelation men and desire. She rearranges the placement of text and deletes one of the more provocative lines from “The Island.” In the 1993 text, the paragraph in question reads as follows:

I was not immune and I would not leave undamaged. To this day, I still hurt. I must have rolled in the bed of wild rose, for the tiny thorns—small, yellow—pierced my skin. Their poison is desire and it dissolved in my blood. The cats made me one of them—sleek and without mercy, avid, falling hungry upon the defenseless body. I want to grind men’s bones to drink in my night tea. I want to enter them the way their hot shadows fold into their bodies in full sunlight. I want to be their food, their harmful drink, to taste men like stilled jam at the back of my tongue. (LM:NEV 82)

In the 2009 version, Erdrich moves the sentence “To this day, I still hurt” from the top of the paragraph to its own separate paragraph before the page break that ends the section. Put there, the line reads more powerfully. By believing in so forceful a way, she feels pain. For a passage
that seems threatening and atavistic in its situating of desire, re-inscribing “pain” as the consequence adds a vulnerability and melancholy to Lulu that does not exist in the 1993 version.

Erdrich also removed entirely the line “to taste men like stilled jam at the back of my tongue.” Along with the image of grinding men’s bones to drink in her tea, this line explicitly casts Lulu as a man-eater. In the context of the rest of the paragraph, there is an unsettling relationship between desire, sex, and predation. While these words suggest Lulu’s moral relativism, it is difficult to accept a central character who acts as sexual predator, even if men willingly submit to her. Erdrich softens this image by taking out one of the two passages about consuming men for pleasure. While the paragraph is still charged, it is less provocative. There are also obvious sexual connotations in the line, and perhaps Erdrich found that image too forward for Lulu’s revised character.

These revisions are relatively minor. But this passage is one of the important moments for establishing Lulu’s character, and any change to it alters the way the character will be read. The movement of the “pain” sentence suggests that even if Lulu is set in her conviction concerning men and desire, she acknowledges the emotional and physical toll that such a belief brings. Buried in the second sentence of the paragraph, the line does not carry the same weight. At the end of the passage, given its own space, the line reflects Lulu’s own self-judgment. Likewise, removing the “stilled jam” line makes Lulu less atavistic (admittedly, not by much) and is part of Erdrich’s continuing rehabilitation of Lulu’s character in the second and now third versions of the novel.

In the second part of “The Beads,” Erdrich makes some similarly small adjustments that echo throughout the text for Marie. The first part of “The Beads” tells the story of June Kashpaw’s decision to leave her adopted mother, Marie. The second part (added to the 1993
version) relates the difficult birth of Marie’s last son. Erdrich’s revisions in this chapter deal only with the second part, and there are two sets of changes between the 1993 and the 2009 texts that bear significantly on how the text reads. One is a brief exchange of dialogue between Nector and Marie about going to the hospital. The other is the childbirth scene, in which Erdrich eliminates much of Marie’s pain-induced fantasy.

When it becomes clear that Marie cannot deliver her baby by herself, one of the children sends for her husband, Nector, who at this point is deep in his affair with Lulu. Nector seems more inconvenienced than concerned about his wife’s condition. When he suggests that she be taken to a hospital, Marie refuses. Nector responds, “You’re scared. . . Scared the white doctors will make fun of you” (LM: NRE 98). Tellingly, Marie does not disagree with him. It is clear throughout the novel that Marie is fiercely proud, determined, and independent. She is a master at harvesting, selling, and conserving her resources to keep her family afloat. In the 1993 version, Marie is only worried about the costs associated with having the child in a hospital: “The only thing that wouldn’t cost money, I thought to comfort myself, was this baby, as long as she wasn’t registered, as long as I did not have to go the hospital, as long as I could have her in the house, she was free” (LM: NEV 97). Nector’s statement and Marie’s tacit agreement reveal something about her character heretofore hidden.

Marie, for all she has accomplished in the reservation community, still feels shame for her station when she is put into a white context such as the hospital. Marie, being light skinned, has always acknowledged that she is racially different from her community.12 The corollary to that sentiment, feeling inadequate in the face of whites, was an aspect of Marie’s character Erdrich left unexplored in the previous two versions of the novel. Marie’s political turn in the American Indian Movement makes more sense when there is evidence of anxiety toward whites.
Even with the removal of “The Tomahawk Factory,” this insight helps to situate Marie more firmly in the Native/reservation “us” versus the bureaucratic/white “them” that the 1993 text moves toward.

The other major change in the second half of “The Beads” has to do with the actual delivery of Marie’s child. In the 1993 version of the novel, one of the turning points for Marie’s character is the difficult experience she undergoes giving birth. At one point during labor, she is mortal danger with only Rushes Bear (Nector’s mother) and Fleur Pillager, a medicine woman, there to help. In an altered mental state, she imagines getting up from her bed and making dinner for the three of them, communing with them in a space comfortable and free from judgment. When Marie comes back from the pain-induced fantasy, she has come through the delivery of a boy.

In the 2009 version of the novel, Erdrich removes the dream sequence. Her reasons are not entirely clear. The dream sequence puts Marie in touch with her earliest memories of life; her recollection of the old language gives her something to concentrate on during the most dangerous moments of labor. This moment shows Marie strongly in touch with her past and with the power of female community. The narrative here functions for Marie the same way that “The Island” functions for Lulu. Without this dream, however, the story loses an important aspect of Marie’s character. Dream sequences are always difficult to derive meaning from, and perhaps Erdrich wanted to eliminate an abstraction from a novel that includes very little in the way of “magical Indian” material. However, for this reader, this revision undermines Marie’s character.

By coupling the change in the dream with Marie’s fear of ridicule at the hospital, the character that emerges from the second part of “The Beads” seems to take a step backward. Erdrich’s point may be to make Marie more vulnerable and less in control of her life. But the rest
of the novel does not bear this out. Instead, like “Lyman’s Luck,” this is an example of where Erdrich’s habit of revising perhaps fails her. The dream sequence shows Marie coming to terms with an Indian past she has been wary of embracing; on the heels of revealing Marie’s anxiety about the white doctors, this could have been a moment of powerful self-fulfillment. Marie still has an experience with Rushes Bear and Fleur Pillager that exemplifies the importance of female community, but this experience would have doubled in significance if combined with Marie’s finding comfort in her Native past.

The incongruity of Marie’s weakness in part 2 of “The Beads” becomes clearer when Erdrich rewrites the end of “Resurrection.” In the 1993 text, this narrative details the tragic final hours of Marie’s firstborn son Gordie. With the death of his on-again-off-again wife June Kashpaw that begins the novel, Gordie begins seriously to abuse alcohol. Most of this narrative is related in “Crown of Thorns,” one of the few stories that remains unchanged through all three versions. Erdrich added “Resurrection” as a kind of coda to “Thorns.” In it, Gordie arrives at his mother’s home in a drunken state, sobers up, and then begins begging for a drink. When Marie refuses him, he drinks Lysol and poisons himself. While in a stupor, Gordie recalls his marriage to June and their unhappy honeymoon in Minnesota. The narrative is a powerful representation of a mother dealing with the harsh realities of substance abuse and an examination of what drives people to kill their emotions in alcohol.

Marie is sure that if she allows Gordie to leave, he will certainly die. She sets up a chair in front of the only door to her house, prepares a lamp, and sits down with an axe to guard the exit. In “Flesh and Blood,” Marie slowly breaks Nector’s addiction to alcohol by behaving in much the same way. The reader expects that this is the beginning of Gordie’s cure and that Marie will save him from himself. The story, however, ends on a more tragic note:
She was wide awake, more alert than she had ever been. Her brain was humming in the dark, her head was full of nails. Gordie was her firstborn. He had lain in her body in the tender fifteenth summer of her life. Now she could sense him gliding back and forth, faster, faster, like a fox chasing its own death down a hole. Forward, back, diving. She knew when he caught the rat. She felt the walls open. He connected, his heart quit, he went right through with a blast like heat. Still, she sat firm in her chair and did not let go of the ax handle. *(LM: NEV 275).*

Gordie’s heart fails him and he dies. Marie’s refusal to leave her post is a strikingly tragic image of a mother powerless to help her son. The title also seems misleading; who is resurrected? For what purpose? Coming as this story does before “The Tomahawk Factory” in the 1993 version of the novel, one might suppose Marie is resurrected to fight the evils facing Native Americans on the reservation. This would help explain her political agency later in the book. But the singular image of Marie guarding the door while her son succumbs to alcohol poisoning is one the darkest of the novel.

If one describes *Love Medicine* as a hopeless novel, this is the narrative that serves as proof. Erdrich likely recognized this and revised the end of “Resurrection” to better satisfy readers’ expectations and perhaps rescue the novel from charges that it shows no possibility of redemption for those living on the reservation. In the revised ending, Gordie drinks Lysol as before, but does not die:

She was wide awake. Her brain was humming in the dark. Gordie was her firstborn. He had lain in her body in the tender fifteenth summer of her life. She had let him out in pain. She would kill him if he got out this time. He was gliding back and forth, faster,
faster, like a fox chasing its own death down a hole. On the third day he would rise though, she thought. He would rise and walk. She sat firm in her chair and did not let go of the ax. (LM: NRE 271)

Here, Marie believes she will succeed in drying Gordie out. Instead of ending on a hopeless note, the narrative now reflects a steely determination to see Gordie’s detox through to the end, even if that means the use of force to keep him inside. There is no question now as to who the title refers to: Gordie may be dying, and may die yet, but he is not dead at the close of this story. The will Marie used to see her husband though his alcoholism in “Flesh and Blood” is put to the test again. There is undoubtedly a sense of hope at the end of the story.

Erdrich leaves a rather large, perhaps unanswerable question in the wake of her revisions to “Resurrection.” What does it mean to have a character die in one text but live in another? Erdrich may even be having fun at the readers’ expense, “resurrecting” a character believed dead in a story called “Resurrection.” The character most affected by Gordie’s life or death is Marie. In the 1993 narrative, in which Gordie dies, the text is followed by “The Tomahawk Factory,” which shows Marie as politically active and engaged in the life and wellbeing of the reservation. One can conclude that her son’s death has sparked her to engage with her community on a deeper level. Part of her motivation to reach out to Lyman at the end of that story might stem from the loss of her own son. Perhaps it is fortunate that Erdrich removed “Tomahawk Factory” from the 2009 edition of the text; in doing so, she did not have to reimagine her fictional community.

The removal of “The Tomahawk Factory” stands out as the most significant change to the 2009 version of Love Medicine. “Lyman’s Luck” never quite fit in the text, and with The Bingo Palace now firmly situated within the context of the tetralogy, “Luck” no longer serves a
purpose in the novel. But I would argue that “Tomahawk Factory” has become canonized within *Love Medicine*; much of the scholarship on the novel from 1993 to 2008—fifteen years in which Erdrich was becoming the literary voice of Native America—uses that narrative for analysis. “Tomahawk Factory” contains the most political content of any of the stories, makes Lyman a central voice in the narrative, and represents the most in-depth discussion of the challenges facing the modern reservation. Carrying so much weight, the narrative would seem to have earned a permanent spot within *Love Medicine*.

Erdrich, however, disagrees. In the author’s note at the end of the 2009 version of the novel, she states that she removed the two narratives from the novel proper because she “was surprised to find how thoroughly “The Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck” interrupted the flow of the final quarter” (*LM: NRE P.S.* 5–6). Erdrich chose to leave the narrative “loosely attached” to the resources section because it was one of the first things she wrote “so it seems to belong to *Love Medicine*” (*LM: NRE P.S.* 6). Perhaps Erdrich also recognized that “Tomahawk Factory” had become central to critical readings of the text. Leaving it out would anger instructors the world over.

Erdrich’s statement that she removed “Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck” because they “interrupt the flow” of the end of *Love Medicine* does suggest a way of understanding another one of the narratives: “The Good Tears.” This narrative ends with Lulu and Marie seeming to come to an understanding about their past. Erdrich’s final treatment of these characters in the novel shows them both reaching an understanding about themselves. Lulu finds that she can empathize with another woman; Marie sees that forgiveness opens doors (to Lulu) and closes them (the mourning of Nector). I believe the ending of this narrative asks the reader to decide the type of relationship the two characters will have going forward. In “The Tomahawk
Factory,” Erdrich instead shows how that relationship develops, but she likely recognized that while “The Tomahawk Factory” expands Lulu and Marie’s characters, it robs the end of “The Good Tears” of an important interpretive moment. “Lyman’s Luck” always interrupted the flow; Erdrich was surely right in getting rid of it.

Leaving the story attached, however loosely, is Erdrich’s only option. It has simply become too important to remove from the novel entirely. “The Tomahawk Factory” is a part of the text and not a part; it is a pseudonarrative that Erdrich suggests is part of her novel, but only tangentially. If it really was one of the first things she wrote, it has become a sort of gnostic gospel, there at the beginning (perhaps), but spreading a message that does not quite conform to the other, more holy texts. In the 2009 edition of *Love Medicine*, Erdrich seems to be trying to strike a balance between the simpler 1984 text and the more complex version of 1993. Her triple text reins in the radical alterations of the double text and creates a wholly new eclectic text. If *Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version* is, as the subtitle suggests, defined by the additions to the text, then *Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition* is defined by excisions from it. Erdrich saved “The Tomahawk Factory” from the fate of “Lyman’s Luck,” but will it stay attached in the next revision? Or will the story eventually find its way back into the novel proper?

**Conclusion**

In 2009, Erdrich also published *The Red Convertible: Selected and New Stories, 1978–2008*. This collection brings together stories spanning Erdrich’s career, including the first published versions of five of the fourteen stories that were used in the first edition of *Love Medicine*. For these stories, Erdrich has put into play issues of quadruple textuality. These texts are slightly different from their novelized forms, with name changes and small details rearranged in *Love Medicine*. Erdrich has suggested that the overarching Dakota narrative has been in her
mind from the beginning, but these stories call into question just how and when she decided to reshape characters from one story to appear in another. For Erdrich, perhaps everything she has ever written fits somewhere in the world of *Love Medicine*. She is simply waiting for that story to reveal that it belongs somewhere on the reservation.

In the preface to *Red Convertible*, Erdrich writes about finishing and not finishing short stories. In a statement that goes a long distance toward explaining why there are three versions of *Love Medicine* available in the marketplace, Erdrich writes:

> Every time I write a short story, I am certain that I have come to the end. There is no more. I’m finished. But the stories are rarely finished with me. They gather force and weight and complexity. Set whirling, they exert some centrifugal influence. I never plan stories as novels, but it seems the way that I often (but not always) write novels is to be begin with stories that I have to believe, every time, that I have finished. (*RC* ix)

Erdrich grants agency to the stories, as if they revise themselves or compel her to revise them. If revision is a way of putting off death, as Erdrich has suggested, these texts become living organisms in need of regular care and upkeep—or a new version of the novel every decade or so. No version is more alive than the others, even if the 1984 and 1993 versions of the text have been “retired” and are now available only in libraries and used bookstores. Erdrich understands that her work as never truly complete, and though the stories seem stable in their newest edition, she certainly has left the door open for them to call her back and give them a fresh life.

This artistic philosophy certainly seems to appeal to her audience (the books keep selling, after all) and makes great material for scholarly analysis. Erdrich’s choice to revise is as much about art as it is the business of art. The revisions to *Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version*
are partly about literary development, partly about making the novel more palatable for critics and scholars. Chavkin’s article demonstrates that, with the first revision, Erdrich politicized the novel and attempted to meet the criticisms leveled by other Native authors. The character development of Lulu, Marie, and Lyman was meant to undo and undermine the stereotypes that were being read into her novel. “Lyman’s Luck” now promotes *The Bingo Palace* and more clearly connects *Love Medicine* to Erdrich’s more recent work. Erdrich is not being disingenuous when she states that her revisions are to the “effect” of the stories. A less artistic interest motive is also at work in generating these texts. Erdrich must have wanted to make sure that *Love Medicine* not only fulfilled literary expectations (which the overnight success of the book shows it did), but market and critical expectations as well.

The “Newly Revised Edition” of the novel raises more complex questions than the first, revised version did. *Love Medicine* is firmly placed in the canon. Any Native American literature course is almost obliged to include it or some other novel from the Dakota tetralogy. The novel is highly regarded in scholarly circles and available in nearly every bookstore in the country (as are Faulkner’s own classic texts). Why revise it again and create another level of textual complexity? Perhaps the triple text is a consequence of the intersection of art, business, and the personal life of the author. The first two versions of *Love Medicine* are dedicated to Michael Dorris, who was intrinsic to the development of the text from a single short story into a fully-fledged novel. He marketed the manuscript to publishers and promoted his relationship to Erdrich to the literary press. However, Erdrich and Dorris began divorce proceedings in 1995, and in 1997 Dorris committed suicide in a New Hampshire hotel room. After his death, allegations that Dorris physically abused the couple’s children began to surface. Erdrich herself has never confirmed or denied the allegations; they have remained unproven and untried in a court.16
The dedications in the original and the 1993 versions of *Love Medicine* say that the novel is as much Dorris’s as it is Erdrich’s. Interviews with the couple show that Dorris certainly participated in the creation of the first two versions. The couple described themselves as collaborators, and though Erdrich’s name is on the title page of the book, Dorris is given credit for his involvement. However, in the 2009 *Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition*, the dedication to Dorris has been removed and replaced with a dedication to Erdrich’s brothers, Mark, Louis, and Ralph. The message seems clear. *This* version of the novel was created by Erdrich alone. She cannot wholly remove Dorris’s influence from the novel; at some level she and Dorris will always be in this text. But in excising Dorris’s name from the novel, Erdrich suggests that the purpose of the “newly revised” *Love Medicine* is to put her own mark on the novel from here on. This third version is Erdrich’s attempt to distance herself, and her most important book, from the unhappy ending of her life with Dorris. One wonders who suggested the inclusion of “The Tomahawk Factory” and “Lyman’s Luck” in the 1993 version of the text. Perhaps we will never know beyond doubt.

For Erdrich, each version of *Love Medicine* has accomplished a different purpose and reflected a different period of her life. The first version, stripped down and experimental, gave rise to a whole new strain of American literature and was a considerable success. The 1993 text is more complex, longer, and responds to critical concerns. Erdrich, at work on an American epic in the Dakota tetralogy, revised *Love Medicine* to create continuity between two texts. The 1993 version shows Erdrich trying to solidify herself as the premier voice of Native American literature. The third version seems more personal. Erdrich harkens back to the original version of her novel and removes much of the political element added in 1993 text. She returns *Love*
*Medicine* to the themes of community and family and the intricate relationship between them. And she symbolically banishes Michael Dorris from the novel.

Other than Allan Chavkin, scholars of American literature and Erdrich scholars in particular have mostly failed to take into account the textual complexities of the three versions of *Love Medicine*. The triple texts of *Love Medicine* require attention if we are to teach and analyze this book in a comprehensive way. There is no definitive text; there is no best text. Students and scholars refer to three separate texts when they discuss *Love Medicine*; each text is unique its purpose and can be judged on its own literary merits. Instead of trying to insist on a definitive version, as some Erdrich scholars wish to do, we must be careful to choose our text and be prepared to defend that choice and acknowledge the differences in reading that develop when the other texts are put into the conversation. This no doubt makes discussing *Love Medicine* a challenging endeavor; critics who fail to take into account the textual differences put a time stamp and an expiration date on their work.

My analysis here highlights the signature differences in the *Love Medicine* triple text. It is the first to compare the 2009 version to the other texts. There are major changes that undeniably alter the interpretations of *Love Medicine*. Erdrich might alter the texts still further and give them fresh life. With the ease of change granted through digital publication of e-books, there is every possibility that we could be discussing five or six versions of the novel in the future. Whitman revised *Leaves of Grass* on his deathbed—Erdrich could do the same with *Love Medicine*. Perhaps someday, literary executors and scholarly editors will create an eclectic text and market it as the definitive version of the novel. Until then, we must be attentive and diligent in our treatment of the triple (for now) text of *Love Medicine*. 
V. The Dual Text Reality: E-Books, Reading Technology, and the Digitization of Life

Up to this point, I have concentrated in this study on examples of dual texts in an exclusively print context. Some of these are posthumously published texts put into play by editors and executors; others are created by the authors themselves. What they all have in common is their medium: in every example, dual textuality starts and remains at the print level. Whatever mediation the texts went through from author, editor, heir, or marketplace, they also underwent the traditional publication and distribution processes. Discussion of these texts is still limited to print: *Trimalchio*, *Under Kilimanjaro*, either edition of *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately*, and the first two versions of *Love Medicine* are available only in paper-and-ink form. (However, *The Great Gatsby*, *True at First Light*, and *Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition* are all available in both print and digital forms.) While this observation would have been standard for most of the twentieth century, the discussion of dual textuality now pivots on whether or not digital texts are included in the analysis. The examples cited in this dissertation are anomalies and worth discussing as intriguing and complex literary artifacts. There are many other cases worthy of analysis; perhaps this study will encourage others to engage them. But if we take into account digital texts and the digitizing of print texts already in existence (daily, hourly), there are innumerable occurrences of dual texts across the literary landscape. A lifetime of comparison might not accommodate them all.

Today, we are living in a dual-text reality. As our lives have become increasingly digitized, our texts, permanent and ephemeral, have started to exist in multiple versions. Every major newspaper in the country has an online component that reproduces stories from the print copy—often updated and corrected as reporters gather additional information. Likewise, any story run on television news also runs in a text form on the website of the station or channel—
often without the updates of the live broadcasts. Magazines, movies, radio and television shows, nearly any entertainment or informational product available to consumers today, exists in a dual text at some level. This can be contextual or across different mediums or even in the increasingly “antique” form I have analyzed in this dissertation—print. Viewers likely do not recognize the difference or significance of watching a television show as it runs versus watching a full season of episodes later on DVD. If bibliographic coding helps determine meaning in a traditional text, then altering the context of the viewing experience must do something similar for visual texts. Likewise, a movie edited for time and content for television broadcast automatically alters how meaning is determined. The “edited for time and content” tag has become a standardized feature of the relationship between movies and television. Little theorizing goes into this practice. Dual “texts” like this are put into a play haphazardly and without regard for the consequences.

The book trade is where this phenomenon has received the most attention. The print market, while substantially reduced, is still viable for publishers, and they must keep producing “product” for it. But the market for e-texts is growing exponentially and is now the primary medium for the sale of books in the United States. The popularity of e-reading devices, whether tablet, cellphone, computer, or dedicated e-reader, has spurred the creation of dual texts as a matter of course. To capture both audiences, publishers simultaneously release new titles in both print and digital editions. Occasionally, the success of an exclusively digital text will prompt publishers to release it as a print book, as was the case with Fifty Shades of Grey. The previous examples in this dissertation were discrete cases, but the opportunities opened by a digital marketplace have made dual textuality a normal component of literary production. Any text with a high profile or mass-market appeal will be released in at least two versions.
A change in medium might not appear to be significant at first glance, but there are important implications in placing one narrative across two reading platforms. Audiobooks have been part of literary adaptation for decades and have not radically altered the way texts are consumed. Technological advances have been a regular part of visual media over the last 100 years, likely desensitizing us to the rhetorical effects of such constant change. But reading technology has remained fixed until recently. Words were printed on a surface (page, placard, poster) and distributed to an audience. However, with the rise of the internet and the consumer technology wired to it, the way we access texts—and read them—has changed dramatically over the last ten years. Instead of subscribing to newspapers or magazines, readers are having them transmitted to a tablet or cellphone, or choosing to read them online. The same is true for books. Brick-and-mortar booksellers are worth a fraction of the value of digital wholesalers, who can download a book onto a device wherever internet access exists. Research on the way we read print versus digital texts has shown a physiological difference in the way we absorb information when reading a screen. The change in reading technologies has brought about a change in how we read.

Besides the physical differences between print and e-books, there are also cases of dual textuality similar to the other examples in this dissertation. James Jones’s novel *From Here to Eternity* is available in print and digital versions; the e-book includes passages cut from the manuscript of the novel over sixty years ago. The example with Jones is illustrative of the new problems facing a publishing industry struggling to incorporate digitization into their business models. Likewise, authors (or their estates) are trying to make their work as profitable as possible. Jones’s contract with his publisher for *From Here to Eternity* made no mention of digital rights. Jones’s estate sold the e-book rights to the text in 2010, and the new publisher,
Open Road, restored material excised by the original publisher owing to obscenity concerns. This version of the text (officially titled *From Here to Eternity: The Restored Edition*) is exclusively available in an e-book format—there is no print edition. As backlist authors begin to give new life to their work (and restore, add, or invent new content to include) through e-publishing, dual texts will increase in number and scope.

The technology available to the various e-reading platforms means dual textuality will move beyond issues related to text alone. Stephen King’s *11/22/1963* is an example of using an e-book to take advantage of technology and create a more complex text. In the “enhanced” e-book format, King’s novel contains a thirteen-minute video directed and narrated by himself and a ten-minute audiobook excerpt. The print version of *11/22/1963* has no audio/visual component. While this particular use of the e-reader’s capabilities does not constitute a paradigm shift in itself, it does signal an important change in how authors view the use of technology in otherwise traditional texts. King is no stranger to e-books, but this marks the first instance in which his texts are not identical between platforms: the e-book exhibits a fundamental technological difference compared to the print version. Developers incorporate more technological features into e-readers every day, and King’s multimedia inclusion suggests that authors are beginning to envision the possibilities available to them through e-publication.

When confronted with a change in media formats, most producers, distributors, and manufacturers experience a liminal period during which both the established format and the newer format(s) co-exist. Eventually, as the new format assumes a majority of the market share, the older format is phased out of production. The most recent cases can be found in the shift from VHS tapes to DVD and DVD to Blu-Ray. The DVD to Blu-Ray shift was more complicated since it featured two new technologies vying for the market: HD-DVD and Blu-Ray.
Eventually, producers and distributors chose Blu-Ray over HD-DVD; by the end of 2008, after a lifespan of less than then three years, HD-DVD had lost its market share. Producers and distributors ceased creating and selling the format. Audio formats have had an equally tumultuous history. Within the last forty years, the market has shifted from vinyl records to eight-track, eight-track to cassette, cassette to compact-disk, and compact-disk to digital files.\(^3\)

The major changes in audio and video formats have become generational signifiers to consumers as well as indicators of technological advances in media recording. We expect obsolescence of format as a component of technological progress.

Works of literature, however, have never faced a significant shift in medium. That is, until recently. The construction and manufacture of books have remained relatively fixed for hundreds of years. A book published in the nineteenth century (or the fifteenth century, for that matter) still functions today in the same way as it did at its original printing. The codex is a resilient piece of technology. It has resisted change while nearly every other form of written communication has experienced substantial transformation (or disappearance—few now people write out important information on scrolls). The adaptation of books (for stage, screen, television, radio, etc.) has never been a question of format: books were a separate artistic enterprise from the medium to which they were adapted. There was never any confusion about whether *The Great Gatsby*, a novel, was different from *The Great Gatsby*, a film (or drama, musical, radio play, teleplay, etc.).

Today, print texts are facing a true adaptation of medium as they are translated into digital formats. This shift will be slightly different from the changes that audio and video regularly cycle through. Print and e-books will share the same market space for far longer than did cassette and eight-track tapes. Books have acquired a cultural caché that makes them
valuable as objects unto themselves, and while print’s share of the market will shrink (as it has been doing since e-readers gained widespread acceptance), it will not disappear. The liminal period that defines a shift in format for video and audio will more likely be permanent (or take decades) for print and e-texts: dual textuality will become a normal part of our reading experience. This shift requires analysis from a literary perspective.

In this chapter, I will take up issues of dual textuality as it relates to print and e-books. I will also demonstrate what these current examples (along with examples from other mediums that have addressed issues of format change) show us about how e-books will influence not only dual texts, but our traditional conceptions of textual stability. The increasing digitization of life in the West has forced a new paradigm on the publishing industry. A confluence of publishers, printers, agents, and authors controlled literary production for most of the twentieth century. In the twenty-first century, this established cohort now includes hardware and software developers and competing online retailers. As they wrestle one another for control of the expanding literary marketplace, a primary battleground will be the texts themselves. To maintain a command of our fields, we must not wait to interrogate this process; we must be proactive regarding shifts in the textual landscape—not reactionary.

Adaptability, Usability and the Rise of the E-Book

In the spring of 2009, I was involved in a pilot study through the Penn State English Department that tested the viability of the Sony E-Reader in an academic context. Everyone in the graduate seminar (on digital rhetoric) was assigned an e-reader and asked to use the device as much as possible for our reading, both in and outside of class. The device, unfortunately, was a disaster. By the end of the semester, all but the most dedicated technophiles had given up on the e-reader and returned to printed copies of the reading texts (or read the articles off a computer
screen). At that stage, the Sony E-Reader was not functional as an academic device: the interface was clunky, the pages loaded slowly, and there was no note-taking function. The majority of our texts were .pdfs and were nearly unreadable on the e-reader screen. The class consensus was that the e-reader might be tolerable for pleasure reading of texts specifically coded for it, but for academic use the technological limitations of the e-reader made it a poor substitute for printed text.

In the three years since that study, e-reader developers have boosted reader usability across leisure, work, and academic contexts. I, and a continuously growing segment of the reading public, have purchased e-readers and moved a portion of my reading to the device. More and more students are moving toward e-books and e-textbooks instead of purchasing the print versions. I was wary about an e-reader mediating my own reading and teaching experiences, but Barnes and Noble offers an e-textbook for my class on the Nook platform—a platform I own and use daily. It’s easy and convenient to comply.

Technology firms are finding ways to digitize more and more aspects of our lives, and reading is necessarily part of this process. E-books are booming. In the summer of 2010, Amazon, which owns nearly twenty percent of the book market, announced that e-book sales were outpacing hardbacks nearly two to one. That same year also saw more than one billion dollars in e-book sales—a figure that has increased in the intervening two years. Amazon has become the most visible representative of the e-book movement. No company invests more in making e-books an integral part of our reading experience. The price of their standard Kindle e-reader has dropped regularly every year to its lowest point so far at $79.00. Even cheaper than the actual unit is the software that operates it. Amazon gives away free the Kindle platform on several major mobile devices. Amy Gahran argues that “Kindle's core business model has always
been to sell books, not devices. So a free Kindle seems like a potentially savvy business move” ("Smart to Give Away the Kindle"). A pleasant side effect would be the broadening of e-readership to those who cannot afford the technology otherwise.

This is not the first time those on the bleeding edge of technology have predicted the end of print. The hypertext novel was intended to revolutionize literature, giving authors the power of computer technology and readers unprecedented interaction with text. Had hypertexts lived up to their hype, the issues of format and adaptation facing literature now would have been put into play two decades ago. In an article for Salon.com, Paul LaFarge writes

If you were alive and literate in the 1990s, you may remember the hype with which hypertext was touted as the next big thing: a medium that had the potential to transform storytelling in the post-Gutenberg era, the way the invention of movable type gave rise to the novel. Hypertexts were published, first on diskette, then on CD-ROM, then on the Web . . . . And then . . . nothing happened. (LaFarge)

LaFarge believes that readers have not embraced hypertext novels because of their awkward format and inconsistent quality. What he misses in his analysis is that the hypertext novel's inability to gain an audience is due mostly to a failure of adaptation. The popularity of current e-readers and e-books indicates that people will embrace an advance in reading technology when proper attention is paid to adapting that technology to their reading habits.

Hypertexts have a problem: they offer artistic texts to an audience who reads them in a context unnatural to leisure reading. That is, computer screens. While readers today have been turning to their computers more and more regularly for leisure reading (again, a consequence of the internet), in the early 1990s this was not necessarily the case. Pointing and clicking, linked
text, and scrolling through pages might have been early novelties, but as these actions became increasingly related to labor, the appeal of hypertext art disappeared. Furthermore, backlit computer screens put stress on the eyes; there is an entire style for online writing that utilizes multiple page breaks, bulleted, bold text, etc., to help readers quickly gain information and not tax their sight reading long passages on screen. While the authors of hypertext novels utilized a number of progressive techniques to take advantage of their computer medium, they could not attract mainstream readers to their work.

The writers of hypertext novels failed to account for their audience’s standard reading habits. The e-book, by contrast, has found unprecedented success precisely because it bridges traditional methods of reading to the technology available in consumer electronics. Most effective was the shift from a stationary computer screen (or laptop) to a handheld tablet. E-texts could be read more like books since e-readers were built in a “book-sized” format.6 (Furthermore, e-reader software could be downloaded to computers as well as to smartphones and tablets without dedicated e-reader applications: a book purchased once could be moved to whatever e-reader device the buyer desired.) For devices that function first and foremost as e-readers, “e-ink” eliminates many of the discomfiting features of reading from a screen. People can take their e-books wherever they take their print books; the size, screen, and battery life come together to recreate the standard reading experience and make the transition from print to e-text more agreeable.

There are some issues we still face in fully embracing the e-book. In 2010, Kindle finally upgraded its software to include page numbers on the screen (Gross). This detail goes to the heart of the consumers’ encounter with e-books today. Namely, e-books are print books translated into a digital format. We want e-books to look and behave like their print corollaries
(the popularity of e-books in this country indicates that for the most part developers have been successful in this endeavor). Unfortunately, anything generated and intended for one medium, but translated into a different medium, is imperfect; e-books are no different. This is not simply a technical imperfection; our own social conventions, too, are being tested. The New York Times ran an article on HarperCollins’s decision to allow lending libraries only twenty-six checkouts of an e-book before the license expires (Bosman). Under such an agreement, libraries will be forced to renew their purchase of the e-book in order to keep it on their digital shelf. A book that requires constant financial upkeep will make HarperCollins’ titles cost-prohibitive for libraries. There are many more examples of the traditional publishing system struggling to adapt to the digital marketplace. We are a textual world in transition, with print infrastructure and philosophy coping with a new reading technology. For the foreseeable future, readers will contend with the friction of this transition and its product: dual textuality.

**Technology and Evolving Texts**

Even with all the complications of a changing textual landscape, there does seem to be hope for an entirely new “reading” experience that incorporates many of the electronic possibilities available from the current generation of digital technology. Currently, writers still write for a print format and limit their artistic scope to words on a page. Eventually, they will move beyond the limitations of print and write in the context of a digital format. Of specific relevance to this study is the fact that we are on the cusp of a situation in which literary executors (or the author) will adapt an established print text into an “enhanced e-book.” The textual issues arising out of such a situation will be complicated by the “authority” of the change. An example that seems to illustrate this problem exceptionally well can be found by looking at the issues facing film.
Perhaps the greatest touchstone of American mass culture in the last fifty years is the science-fiction epic *Star Wars*. But to what version of the story are we referring when we talk about *Star Wars*? The original 1977 theatrical release? The 1997 *Star Wars: Special Edition*? The 2004 DVD? Perhaps we gesture toward an edition on the horizon, as in the upcoming Blu-ray and 3D releases. Or do we go backwards in time, to the 1976 novelization credited to George Lucas and released five months before the film? Each of these editions of *Star Wars* is different, and each is an effort by George Lucas to perfect his vision of the Star Wars saga. Fans bemoan some changes while celebrating others; they buy the new releases either way. Lucas alters his films as cinema and entertainment technologies advance, maintaining that each edition is a step toward the definitive *Star Wars* experience. As the owner of the *Star Wars* franchise, Lucas determines what constitutes that definitive edition—and when it has been achieved.

The story of *Star Wars* and its creator offers an instructive example for understanding the future of more traditional texts. As reading technology becomes more advanced and widespread, critics, scholars, and general readers will face a situation not unlike that of *Star Wars*: technological advances will seriously undermine or preclude textual stability. Emerging technology will invite (or even require) the reworking and re-releasing of texts for different audiences and purposes. As technology redefines the way we read, the literary marketplace will more closely resemble that of the movie industry, with a multiplicity of texts all under the umbrella of creator control.

Consider for a moment the types of changes this movie example has undergone. These changes can be divided into two categories—those related to standard technical enhancements and those related to the story itself. The first level of changes are small corrections that most of the audience might not recognize from one version to another: sound remastering, corrections in
the famous text-crawl that begins the film, overall improvements in the film structure that may have been corrupted or flawed in the initial theatrical release. These were the types of changes to which Lucas limited his revision through the 1980s and into the 1990s. Revisions like these are akin to the repair of sentence-level accidentals through scholarly editing. However, some of these changes are more substantive, such as the inclusion of excised dialogue and the redubbing of voices. While the very devoted viewer might catch these changes—and some certainly have—radical alteration to the movie would only come twenty years after the original theatrical run of *Star Wars*.

In 1997 Lucas released *Star Wars: Special Edition*, what the director referred to as the “final cut” of his movie and the film he always intended to make. Some of the changes in this version of the movie are along the same lines as Lucas’s previous edits. However, in this version Lucas does much more than repair accidentals and correct substantives—he changes the story itself. Some of these changes can be traced back to scenes Lucas originally shot but left on the cutting room floor. The best example is a scene between the smuggler Han Solo and gangster Jabba the Hut. While not necessary to the story, the addition of the scene strengthens the film’s connection to the other movies in the trilogy. More important, this addition demonstrates Lucas’s interest in using new technologies—in this case CGI (computer-generated imagery)—to enhance his movie. (The comparison to Erdrich here is irresistible; Lucas’s revision of his best-known work echoes Erdrich’s work on *Love Medicine*.)

However, one of Lucas’s changes in particular goes beyond the inclusion of deleted scenes or enhanced special effects and straight to the issue of textual “meddling.” I am referring to the infamous “Greedo shoots first” scene. In the original version of the movie, one of the heroes escapes a bounty hunter by shooting him underneath a table (presumably before being
killed himself). In the *Special Edition*, the bounty hunter shoots first and misses, but gives cause for the hero to fire back. This change forces a re-examination of Lucas’s editorial philosophy. If *Star Wars: Special Edition* is the film as Lucas always envisioned it, why did he make this alteration twenty years after the movie’s original production? There was no lack of technology that prevented him from realizing this scene during the original shoot. Rather, Lucas retooled the scene to make one of the most iconic heroes in movie history a “better guy.” This alteration smooths the edges of a character who is noteworthy precisely for his edginess. He is not one to wait to be shot at; he takes initiative when survival is at stake; he does it all with unflappable cool. Why, then, did Lucas make the change?

Because he could. As the creator, director, and owner of the film, he was (and still is) free to alter his text in pursuit of a more perfect “edition.” In an interview with *American Cinematographer*, Lucas states that the special edition is the definitive one:

> The other one will be some sort of interesting artifact that people will look at and say, “There was an earlier draft of this.” The same thing happens with plays and earlier drafts of books. In essence, films never get finished, they get abandoned. At some point, you’re dragged off the picture kicking and screaming while somebody says, “Okay, it’s done.” That isn’t really the way it should work.

Occasionally, [you can] go back and get your cut of the video out there. . . . The other versions will disappear. . . . A hundred years from now, the only version of the movie that anyone will remember will be the special edition. . . . I think it’s the director’s prerogative, not the studio’s, to go back and reinvent a movie. (Magdid 70)
This quote is fourteen years old. Since then Lucas has reimagined *Star Wars* for DVD release and has upcoming changes in place for the Blu-Ray and 3-D versions of his movie. The comparison to Erdrich is appropriate. Erdrich faced a backlash about her characters appearing too much like stereotypical drunken and promiscuous Indians. She recast some of her scenes and added material to rehabilitate her characters’ reputations: Lucas has done something similar here, though he has alienated much more of his audience than he has pleased.

As with any beloved text, substantive change will rile some segment of the audience. The “Greedo shoots first” alteration undermines a fundamental trait of one of the three central characters of the *Star Wars* narrative. Lucas perhaps severely misjudged how carefully his audience watched the movie or how this change rippled through not just *Star Wars*, but the rest of the trilogy. In the twenty years between *Star Wars* and *Star Wars: Special Edition*, the movie achieved cultural significance across the world. Even though Lucas made an ostensibly “positive” change to the character (he fires only after being fired on), his decision has led to divisive criticism from fans of the film. What if Fitzgerald’s literary executors revised *The Great Gatsby* to have Jay Gatsby and Wilson die in a shootout instead of a murder/suicide? Gatsby would have died a more courageous death, but readers would be justifiably outraged.

Lucas’s editorial changes always come on the heels of an advance in movie making or archiving technology. As video mediums shifted from VHS to laserdisc to DVD to Blu-Ray, Lucas took the opportunity to make alternations to *Star Wars* and add more and more bonus content for the audience. This has left us with a number of different versions of the movie, in multiple formats, across more than thirty years. Lucas has directed the production of each version, and at the time of its release, each version was Lucas’s final authorial vision of the film—until the next technological development made it obsolete. *Star Wars* has consequently
become an unstable text, existing in a number of forms, each different, each the same, all overseen by the author. With Lucas still maintaining control of the franchise, and given his proclivity toward adapting new technology to his film, I am quite sure he will take advantage of the next revolutionary CGI break through. Lucas, after all, is the only one who can claim to know what movie he was trying to make in 1977.

Lucas and the *Star Wars* example give a possible view of the future and how the next generation of e-books might function. That is, what happens when the translation of print books into e-books ends? What happens when e-books are written—or constructed, produced, divined—as e-books? Lucas has worked in a form where media adaptation has been a regular feature of the industry; for the last hundred years, writers have been working in the same medium under almost the same methods of production and distribution. The most spectacular advance in print culture has been the rise and success of paperbacks. Once writers begin to work within a context of the e-book, what sort of textual artifact will we have on our hands? How will it look? Lucas has maintained control of his text and decided how and when to use technology to improve, expand, and alter his movie. It is his movie, and only he knows when it will be finally and completely finished. Audiences have been tolerant of Lucas’s editorial decisions because they, too, are interested in the final cut of the film—even if the journey to that film is over thirty years and counting.

Authors of the future, writing firmly within the cultural and technological milieu of the e-book, will have creative control similar to that of Lucas (if allowed in their contracts). Furthermore, as reading technologies advance, they might choose to alter their books accordingly—for purposes artistic, financial, or both. There is a long tradition even in the current publishing model of writers selling one piece of work multiple times, with or without changes. A
novel can be serialized, published as a stand-alone text, and reissued with additional material.
Louise Erdrich is an excellent parallel to Lucas. Like him, she acknowledges that her stories are ever-evolving, and her triple text of Love Medicine shows that she is willing put her beliefs into practice.

Imagine if Erdrich had released each of these versions from a website in e-book form. Suppose she added features to Love Medicine to take advantage of emerging e-book technologies—a soundtrack, for example. Or interactive illustrations. Or a voice-over. Or a 3-D image that appeared at certain points in the text. This is, in essence, what Lucas has been doing with Star Wars for thirty years. Reading technologies will allow authors to do the same in the near future. Authors will be able to create a constellation of texts, utilizing different technological features, that all, in some respect, go toward realizing the author’s final vision of the work. In the previous chapter, I showed how Erdrich used each edition of Love Medicine to accomplish a particular goal. If Erdrich could have altered her texts and distributed them digitally, she might have been able to produce a Love Medicine particular to each major character, a work for exclusive reading in the tetralogy, or some master text that incorporated every version of the novel. The texts could be in print form, or digital, or some form in between. There would be dual, triple, quadruple texts as a matter of course.

Such a textual compilation would constitute a franchise of sorts. Over the last twenty years, Star Wars and titles like it have been developing these sorts of texts for their audiences. Lord of the Rings, Twilight, Harry Potter, and The Hunger Games constitute textual empires that include movies, videos, books, and a library of ever-expanding content. Each franchise began as a highly profitable print text. (Excellent production values and cross-media advertising campaigns have blurred the differences between these novels and their movie adaptations.)
current video formats (DVD and Blu-Ray) allow for the inclusion of not only the high-definition movie, but deleted scenes, making-of documentaries, preview trailers, director’s and actors’ commentaries, alternate endings, and many other bonus features. The larger the production, the more content can be included. This has become an industry standard; in fact, audiences expect some level of premium content to be bundled with their DVD/Blu-Ray purchases. One could trace this desire for more and more detailed content to the increased role of digital media in our lives. The same impulse that has given rise to e-books is linked to our desire for easily accessible information. As technological advances in video media have allowed for additional content to be included on a single disk, consumers have demanded that more information be included. The movie alone, the primary text, without special content, hardly justifies ownership.

*Love Medicine*, too, functions as a franchise. The novel sparked the Dakota tetralogy for Erdrich; her regular return to *Love Medicine* could benefit from a “bonus content” treatment. The interviews, the dual and triple texts, the changing covers—all the textual detritus left in the wake of changing a text—would be revealing and provocative and would help the reader develop a more nuanced understanding of the novel. It would be a multi-media apparatus: the next generation of the textual scholar’s emendations table or record of variants. Over the past thirty-five years, *Love Medicine* has evolved. The technology exists to showcase that evolution from the first *Love Medicine: A Novel* to the current *Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition*.

The film industry has adapted technology to evolve movies past their original versions. *Star Wars* has undergone multiple changes as technological advances have made possible the inclusion of deleted scenes and the reimagining of established scenes. Lucas has made (and will continue to make) changes as he sees fit—even if they cause consternation for film’s audience. The film industry has also used the improvements in archiving technology to package extra
content with their movies, changing the way audiences buy and consume films. The ancillary content that was once lost to time, left on the cutting-room floor, or never even made available, is now a standard part of the movie-watching experience. E-books are going to embrace this model. Just as extra content is an incentive for buyers to purchase movies on DVD/Blu-Ray after the film’s theatrical release (what we might consider the “print” version of a film), e-books are going to incorporate a range of additional features to attract buyers to the text. There are already texts in place (Love Medicine) that would benefit from this type of treatment. Movies have evolved with advancements in technology; so, too, will books. We can chart the likely path of the book’s evolution through illustrative examples from the film industry (such as Star Wars). What we find is that new technology gives unprecedented control of a text to the author for as long as that author maintains an interest in the material. Likewise, readers can look forward to exploring additional content in the reading experience.

Making the Old New Again: Open Road Integrated Media and From Here to Eternity

James Jones was one of a handful of post-WWII American writers to find great success in the 1950s. Along with writers like William Styron and Norman Mailer, Jones provided an alternative voice to Hemingway and his imitators. Published in 1951, From Here to Eternity is Jones’s best-known novel, winning the National Book Award and providing the basis for the critically acclaimed movie adaptation of the same name. As Larry McMurtry writes in his first novel Horseman, Pass By “it was about the best book to ever come to our drugstore newsstand, and I kept reading some of the chapters in it over and over” (22). McMurtry seems particularly interested in the scene where “the sergeant got her [Karen] the first time” (22). Jones’s frank treatment of sex and desire not only made for powerful prose, but led to one of the most famous Hollywood love scenes in history, between Burt Lancaster and Deborah Kerr.
*From Here to Eternity*, while often mentioned as one of the best novels of the twentieth century, has never received much critical attention. A check of the Modern Language Association Bibliography shows only ten articles over the last sixty years, and three of those have to do with adapting the movie for Hollywood. Jones’s debut novel has become more of a movie touchstone than a literary one. At over 800 pages, the length of the novel makes it a difficult to teach at the college level. While perhaps being a watershed moment for writers like McMurtry, through the first decade of the twenty-first century *From Here to Eternity* appeared to be relegated to the backlist of American literature.

However, Jones and *From Here to Eternity* reentered popular discussion last year when Kaylie Jones, the author’s daughter and literary executor, announced plans to release a new, e-book edition of the novel through Open Road Integrated Media. Founded in 2009 by Jane Friedman, Open Road is an e-publishing house focused on gathering backlisted authors without e-book clauses in their contracts and acquiring their rights for e-book distribution. Friedman is a forty-year veteran of the publishing industry, having served as CEO of HarperCollins before becoming interested in the e-book trade. Jones’s contract with Scribner’s included no language related to the rights of an e-text, allowing his executor to sell the e-book rights to Open Road.

Open Road’s marketing plan makes it attractive to authors. They offer a 50/50 split in sales profits that has no impact upon existing print agreements with other publishers. Open Road is also interested in promoting texts that have fallen out of the public eye—the backlist is their target product—giving authors (or their heirs) the opportunity to see financial return on texts no longer generating much profit in the print market. The company focuses exclusively on digital content and maintains a low overhead by farming out any spin-off print business to established publishers. Editors, owing to the economic downturn, are inexpensive to employ, further
reducing the costs associated with producing digital editions. On its website, Open Road describes itself as

. . . a digital publisher and multimedia content company. Open Road creates connections between authors and their audiences by marketing its ebooks through a new proprietary online platform, which uses premium video content and social media. Open Road has published ebooks from legendary authors including William Styron, Pat Conroy, Jack Higgins, and Virginia Hamilton, and has launched new e-stars like Mary Glickman. (“About Us”)

Open Road delivers its premium video content online free of charge through its website. The videos include content that introduces authors and texts alike.

In a 2009 New York magazine article on Open Road, Boris Kachka wrote that Friedman will “take a selection of in-print, fairly well-known books and hype them in a new format—complete with documentary clips and trailers. What the Criterion Collection has done for film, she wants to do for publishing” (Kachka). The comparison to the Criterion Collection is a telling one. Since 1984, the Criterion Collection has been “gathering the greatest films from around the world and publishing them in editions that offer the highest technical quality and award-winning, original supplements” (“About Criterion”). Criterion has moved from laserdisc to DVD to Blu-Ray, improving the quality and scope of its releases through each change; it has become the model “scholarly text” of the film industry. Kachka sees the future of the e-book as being tied to a film model. The dual-text possibilities for Open Road are as broad as the backlist of the American publishing industry: most books published before 1991 lack e-text provisions in their
contracts (Kachka). With the low overhead and unique publication opportunities, Open Road’s
catalogue could become one of the most diverse and profitable of the new era of publishing.

The search for backlisted titles worth pursuing has not been without pushback from
traditional publishing houses. In December 2011, HarperCollins, the company Friedman led as
CEO before founding Open Road, sued the e-publisher over its decision to release an e-book of
Jean Craighead George’s *Julie of the Wolves*. HarperCollins originally published the novel in
1971 and claimed they owned rights to the text in “book form,” including in “computer,
computer-stored, mechanical or other electronic means now known or hereafter invented”
(“Harper Charges”). HarperCollins wants Open Road to cease distribution of its version of *Julie
of the Wolves* and to destroy already-sold copies. In a statement summarizing its case, a
HarperCollins spokesman announced:

> HarperCollins Publishers believes in protecting its exclusive rights. Our contract with
Jean Craighead George, the author of *Julie of the Wolves*, grants us the exclusive digital
rights to the book, and Open Road’s e-book edition violates our rights. We intend to take
all appropriate steps to protect our exclusive rights under copyright against infringement,
in this case and in any instances that might occur in the future. (“Harper Charges”)

Open Road maintains that they are not infringing on HarperCollins’ rights to the book,
and George herself has asked to be allowed to fight the charges alongside her e-publisher. In
February 2012, Open Road formally responded to HarperCollins’s charges by stating, “We are
confident that we have secured all necessary eBook rights from the author Jean Craighead
George and that we will prevail. HarperCollins’s claim is nothing but an attempt to seize rights
that were never granted to it and to change the existing law with respect to eBook rights”
(Milliot). George added, “When I signed that contract in 1971, eBooks did not exist so I could not have granted those rights. I am with Open Road all the way” (Trachtenberg). The case is still awaiting trial or settlement.

This case will be a signature moment in determining who controls e-book rights. Are they implied in the contract, as HarperCollins believes? Or are they separate from print rights and retained by the author unless specifically treated in the contract, as Open Road contests? The fundamental question in determining the nature of e-books will be to decide whether HarperCollins’s understanding of “book form” automatically includes e-books. In 2001, Rosetta Books (an e-publishing firm similar to Open Road), won its court case against Random House. Rosetta asserted e-books are separate media from their print counterparts; without language specifically dealing with e-book rights, the author retains control (Peng). However, most author contracts contain noncompetition clauses that prevent the author from releasing a work that directly competes with the text the publisher controls (Peng). Even if e-books are deemed to be “new use” and therefore intrinsically different from print texts, the fact that booksellers like Amazon and Barnes and Noble sell print and e-books side-by-side in the digital marketplace would give publishers a strong case that e-books are in competition with print books. One might also frame this question by asking whether dual texts are in competition with each other. The other examples in this study are not, but backlisted titles that still circulate in the print marketplace are certainly in competition with digital versions.

This brings us back to the example of From Here to Eternity. Besides being an e-book, the Open Road version of Jones’s novel is a restored text unavailable in print. When selecting an e-publisher for her father’s work, Kaylie Jones had also been looking for an opportunity to restore the text of Eternity to its original form. Jones’s debut novel had been extensively
bowdlerized by the Scribner’s editorial team when it was first published. Concerned with obscenity laws, the editors removed much of Jones’ barracks language as well as scenes that described homosexual behavior.

Jones was shocked by the expurgations when he received the edited manuscript. In the afterword to From Here to Eternity: The Restored Edition (the Open Road e-book version), editor George Hendrick details the publication history of the novel and the conflict between Jones and Scribner’s. Like Ernest Hemingway before him, Jones tried to explain that men in the Army said “fuck” and “cunt” as often as they said “chow down” or “latrine” (FHTE: RE 881).

Scribner’s was unmoved and asked that he reduce his coarse language by half and remove scenes that were believed to be too objectionable to escape censure. Jones eventually capitulated to Scribner’s demands, but wrote his editor there, Burroughs Mitchell (who replaced Maxwell Perkins as Jones’s editor when Perkins died in 1947), “I would like you to remember . . . that the things we change in the book for propriety’s sake will, in five years, or ten years, come in someone else’s book anyway . . . and that we will kick ourselves for not having done it” (FHTE: RE 883).

Hendrick reinstated much of the language excised by Scribner’s but left intact the sentences as Jones revised them to remove the offending language. Hendrick also restored whole passages that Scribner’s identified as objectionable. These include the passages relating to homosexuality, masturbation, a wet dream, and a discussion of art between Warden and Mazzioli conducted in blue language. In short, all of the excisions Scribner’s suggested (and that Jones believed were turning his novel into a “Henry Miller ‘limited edition’”), were restored to the text (FHTE: RE 882, 884). Hendrick writes, “James Jones wrote a better novel than the one published by Scribner’s in 1951. Burroughs Mitchell and Horace Manges [Scribner’s lawyer] were too
afraid of a book filled with the language of soldiers to publish *From Here to Eternity* as it was written. It is now restored to its original state plus a few revisions made by Jones himself” (*FHTE: RE* 884).

Open Road’s edition of Jones’s novel repairs, restores, and improves the print text that has been in circulation for more than sixty years. Hendrick acknowledges that “the reading public did not know about the changes made in the text of *From Here to Eternity*” (*FHTE: RE* 882–83). But with the publication of the restored edition, the details of the material expurgated by Scribner’s were advertised across Open Road’s social media outlets and in major newspapers across the country. Open Road has put into a play a text meant to challenge the authority of the existing print text.

This demonstrates a consequence of dual textuality in the context of digital and print editions. When an independent company like Open Road adapts a backlisted text for e-book publication, there has to be a distinguishing feature that sets that text apart from the one already out (and perhaps already on a reader’s bookshelf) to justify its purchase. In making something old new again, Open Road develops premium video content and, in the case of *From Here to Eternity*, issues an improved text to attract readers. Competition has produced a superior text. Most of the backlisted texts selected by Open Road will likely not include provocative textual restorations, but this example does show the possibilities that e-books open up. A scholarly edition of *From Here to Eternity* produced for print would have required considerable intellectual and financial investment. An e-book drastically reduces the costs associated with putting out a new edition.8

Authors who agreed (or were forced to agree)9 to changes in their work—and have retained digital rights to their text—could have recourse for their own “authorized” editions in e-
Publishers and authors could likewise compromise over objectionable material by issuing an e-book that includes material not present in the printed text. The costs associated with print texts make limited-run coterie editions prohibitive, but e-books can be generated and distributed at a fraction of the cost. Thus, the traditional model of the dual text can be put into play more easily and cheaply than ever before. Textual stability might be more vulnerable now, but the trade-off is unprecedented artistic autonomy for writers. Jones saw *From Here to Eternity* corrupted in the earliest stages of the publication process; its publishers have seemed content to leave the text as is. After sixty years and the introduction of a new reading technology, Kaylie Jones’s desire to see her father’s text released as he originally intended was realized. This is one example of the next generation of dual textuality.

**Stephen King and the Future of the E-Book**

Up to this point, this study has examined a traditional conception of dual textuality, whether in print or digital form. The questions have focused primarily on the text itself and why and how that text changes from one version to another. I have demonstrated, however, that the future of books lies along a digital path that has already been explored in a different artistic medium: film. The e-book seems to be headed in the direction of the premium DVD or Blu-Ray, with bonus content, enhanced specifications, and even alternate versions, all contained within one “text.” Advances in technology can allow filmmakers to revise, restore, and even rewrite their texts as they see fit. In the *Star Wars* example, Lucas has put into a play a constellation of texts that all work in the direction of the definitive version of the movie—a point Lucas has labored toward for over thirty years. These same technological advancements have moved consumer electronics from bulky, heavy, luxury items to affordable and necessary components of our work and social lives. While the print industry has remained remarkably resilient in the face
of radically changing times, it, too, has been caught up in the digital wave washing over the world.

The conflicts over digital copyright are beginning to play out in courtrooms and public discourse. As the debate goes on about whether or not “book form” includes e-texts and whether noncompetition clauses are triggered with e-publication, the central questions come back to dual textuality. Are the two versions of a single story in competition, conversation, or collusion with one another? Legal arguments will hinge on each answer. Readers, however, will have to evaluate their reasons for purchasing a text (digital or otherwise) and their expectations of that purchase. Should the print and e-book versions both be bought? Is one necessarily superior to the other? Is the newer version the better version? How will readers react when faced with dual texts?

These questions are predicated on both print and digital books coexisting for a time. Print has stayed relevant and intrinsic to our society; though the e-book’s rise has been meteoric over the last five years, I fail to see e-texts dislodging print completely from society. For e-books to gain and keep their share of the book market, they must keep adapting the technology available to create superior products. Otherwise, they will become novelties that promised much and delivered little (see hypertexts). Ultimately, the fate of e-book’s will be left up to authors. Will they insist on writing in the context of the print industry or will they harness the power available to them through the new reading technology? Going forward from here, this is the most important question that has ever faced those who create, analyze, and enjoy literature. What will our texts look like when authors stop writing books and begin creating e-books? Will literary works be defined by radical dual textuality or will they be conservative, “enhanced” versions of print books?
Stephen King appears to be wondering the same thing. King has long been an anomaly in the publishing world; he has taken horror and fantasy and elevated them beyond their schlocky conventions into something more artistic. He is prolific, having written 50 novels and 400 short stories and sold over 350 million books. King also has a unique copyright agreement with his publishers: he leases out the rights to his book for fifteen years and retains ownership in case he becomes dissatisfied with the publisher (Alter). King was also one of the first major authors to release his work in an e-book format, over twelve years ago.\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Riding the Bullet}, a 16,000-word novella, was released online to readers in March of 2000. At the time, Simon and Schuster spokesperson Adam Rothberg stated his belief that King’s pioneering effort would “[bring] a whole new hope that [e-books] will move from the realm of novelty into the mainstream” (“E-Books King”). King’s first foray into e-publishing was a success: when the text was released, the increased online traffic caused Simon and Schuster’s website to crash. Since the publication of \textit{Riding the Bullet}, e-books have exploded beyond “novelties” into a multi-million dollar industry.

King took the first, conservative steps toward realizing the future of the book in 2000 and continues to do so today with his most recent novel, \textit{11/22/1963}. In this book, King moves outside his fantasy/horror comfort zone to work in genre unfamiliar to him: historical fiction. This is the first novel by King that is built around factual characters and events. The plot has typical King treatment. A disgruntled high school English teacher in 2011 stumbles across a rift in time that allows him to travel back to 1958. Jake Epping, the main character, is charged with stopping the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He confronts the harsh social realities of 1950s America but comes to love both the era and the people in it (though Dallas as a city takes a beating by King—he admits his own enmity in the afterword of the novel). King puts Jake into contact with real-life figures like Lee Harvey Oswald as well as the citizens of the sleepy
fictional Texas town of Jodie. The central theme of King’s novel is how one man rewrites history—and another corrects it. The critical response to *11/22/1963* has been positive, even glowing. King has taken on an epic subject and treated it delicately and seriously, likely generating an entirely new audience uninterested in his standard fantasy/horror fare.

What goes unnoticed in reviews of King’s novel is his progressive use of the e-book. While the novel was released in both print and digital forms, the “enhanced” e-book edition of the text includes a thirteen-minute video written and narrated by King and a ten-minute selection from the audiobook. Both the video and audio appear at the end of the book, after the text. Neither addition changes one’s reading of *11/22/1963*, but both show willingness by King (and King’s publisher) to expand the readers’ horizons beyond the written text. The video especially provides background on the Kennedy assassination and how King’s novel appropriates those events.

King’s video uses archival footage leading up to and in the immediate aftermath of Kennedy’s death. Some of the scenes King uses are the standard ones associated with the assassination: Walter Cronkite’s official confirmation of the president’s death, the motorcade moving through Dallas, Oswald’s murder at the hands of Jack Ruby. But King also gives detailed information on Oswald’s life: his marriage and the child he fathered with an attractive Russian woman, his desire to emigrate to Cuba, and a photo of Oswald posing with the mail-order rifle “that would become the most famous murder weapon in American history” (King 699). King also briefly describes the plot of his novel and his own interest in (re)telling the story of the Kennedy assassination. The video is similar to the premium content Open Road produces for its website (with the notable distinction of being bundled with the text itself).
The audiobook excerpt included as part of the enhanced e-book distills the essence of King’s novel in a ten-minute selection (no small accomplishment for a novel over 800 pages in length). In it, Jake—who has moved into the same apartment as Oswald to keep track of his movements—watches Oswald come home with the rifle he will use to kill Kennedy. Jack wrestles with the how and when of his task and the prospect of preventing the assassination by “stopping [Oswald’s] clock.” Jake has found love, companionship, and purpose in the past, but the charge of altering the course of history is daunting. There are echoes of *Hamlet* in Jake’s interior struggle; he imagines slipping back through the time rift and “leaving well enough alone.” Craig Wasson is the reader for the audiobook adaptation of the novel; his haunted, somber voice inflects the scene with an existential melancholy. Jake perhaps wishes he were without such monumental responsibility, but the clip indicates he will follow through.

The audiobook selection captures the elements that make the novel such a notable literary achievement. There is the surreal voice of a man caught out of his own time, tasked with changing arguably the most significant event of the twentieth century. Lee Harvey Oswald is close; the rifle he will use is sitting in a closet above the main character’s living room. The audio element is great teaser for what the novel promises the reader: the historical, the fantastical, and the human—all in ten minutes. But the audio also performs some interpretive work for the reader. The grave voice of Craig Wasson becomes Jake’s voice (and the characters Jake interacts with). Even if King’s prose determines the tone of the passage, Wasson’s performance adds an interpretive screen that influences the audience. When Wasson throws his voice to read another character, the results can be jarring. Wasson reads Jake’s love interest, Sadie, with a female voice and a twang meant to register a regional dialect. Most readers are likely not hearing a male
falsetto with a bad imitation Texas accent when they imagine Sadie speaking. Unfortunately, I now cannot help but hear Wasson’s voice when I read Sadie’s lines.

King’s video functions as a multimedia introduction to the novel, presenting the historical context of the novel, introducing how and where his fiction fits into the historical setting, and explaining why the subject interests him. The audiobook portion tantalizes the reader with a passage that encapsulates the major themes of King’s novel while also framing the voice of two central characters (one effectively, one poorly). Does the inclusion of this multimedia element at the “back” of the e-book make this a case of dual textuality? Since the reading text remains the same in both the print and digital versions of the text, it would be a stretch to call 11/22/1963 an example of a dual text. However, this introduction is valuable to the reader. It sets the scene and provides a foothold for the reader to a text that is epic in scope and length. Even if the text does not shift between print and e-text, the reader’s framework does. Surely this counts as dual textuality.

In 11/22/1963 King demonstrates how multimedia might be incorporated to put into effect dual textuality. This e-book demonstrates that video and audio have a place in the format; e-books do not have to rely exclusively on text. While a small step in taking advantage of the e-book’s capabilities, it is a step nonetheless. In 2000, when King released Riding the Bullet, a 33-page novella, few recognized the possibility of the e-book market. Now, e-book sales outpace both hardback and paperback. This enhanced e-book version of 11/22/1963 is likewise a small move toward realizing a larger future. King has shown that video and audio can be integrated into the text: now others must continue moving forward. The technological power and versatility of consumer electronics grow more advanced every day. Soon, the e-book will move
beyond adaptation of print texts and become an artistic medium of its own. At that point, the question of dual (or multiple) textuality will be the central issue facing literary scholars.

Conclusion

For most of the twentieth century, textual stability has been taken for granted. Either from the traditional conceptions of scholarly editing, authorial intention, or the lack of alternate media to put into play competing versions, readers have usually had the luxury of a stable text. This stability is what makes dual textuality so fascinating: these are examples in which textual stability has been undermined or challenged. The texts are now incapable of being grafted back together without major editorial interference. Each case examined in this dissertation began as a single manuscript that split into different novels. These dual texts are put into play by editors, authors, and heirs for reasons artistic, scholarly, financial, and personal. For readers to understand the full breadth of these literary projects, they must examine the differences between these dual texts and discuss their significance. This dissertation has done that.

In the last fifteen years, advances in reading technologies have made dual textuality less a literary anomaly and more a condition of reality. While the publishing industry has never experienced a serious change in medium, the hypertext novel was supposed to revolutionize the way texts were written and read. This form, however, never moved beyond the limitations of its physical context. Computer screens are not conducive to leisure reading. Furthermore, there were few hypertext novels that truly matched print texts in literary quality. The novelty of pointing-and-clicking through a text loses its charm when the story fails to interest readers. Hypertext charted a path, however, in showing that texts could be more than the words on the page; reading a novel could be a multimedia experience grounded in text, but incorporating film, sound, and internet connectivity.
The film and music industries regularly upgrade their media and are much more adept at facing technological changes in the recording and preservation of their texts. They have also found ways to improve these texts beyond their first “publication.” For film, moviemakers integrate new technologies into established texts. The example of *Star Wars* is extreme but shows how the film industry can revise its backlist with each new generation of technology. Lucas has retained control of his franchise and can unilaterally decide to make changes when he feels the need; while he has occasionally alienated his audience, Lucas has ensured that his movie remains at the forefront of cinema technology.

*Star Wars* is instructive when one is trying to determine what possibilities await authors and readers in the next decade. As e-publishers make their product more attractive to writers with 50/50 contracts (like Open Road) and hardware developers try to motivate buyers with exclusive distribution rights, authors will be able to negotiate for more and more control over their work. Authors like King and Erdrich could ask for nearly anything if they made the Kindle, the Nook, or any major e-reader, their exclusive digital home. While they likely could not edit their texts daily from a home computer, authors could negotiate for more editorial control over their work. Such control might grant authors the ability to release a series of texts rather than one. Instead of needing to rearrange the whole printing apparatus to put out a paper-and-ink text, a programmer will only need to alter the code in a single computer. Publishing a book, digitally or through print, is an expensive process; the considerable savings of e-publication come only after a text has been bought, edited, and advertised—which all cost money. However, the time it takes to set, print, and distribute a novel through traditional publishing can take a year. An e-book can be e-published and available in a week. Readers will have access to the text anywhere there is an internet connection.
The technology available to writers of e-books is growing more streamlined and advanced every day. HTML5, the most recent programming language for e-publishing, is available free of cost to developers and can be “read” by any major e-reading device. This new language allows for easier integration of multimedia and can even take advantage of global positioning systems to trigger features in an e-book. There are obvious practical applications for travel guides, but the possibility for an author to integrate special location features in the text invites an entirely new level of reader interaction. The more technologically inclined the writer, the more innovative the e-book. E-readers, too, are ready for more e-books. Writing for CNN.com, Amy Gahran reports that “E-book users tend to read more often than people who read only print material . . . . A typical e-book user read 24 books in the past year, compared with the 15 books reported by typical non-e-book users” (“E-Books Spur Reading”).

For scholarly editors, this new textual media and the multiplicity of texts it can produce might be unsettling. Our traditional notions of the “definitive” text are disappearing with every dual, triple, and quadruple text put into the marketplace. All types of media exist in some dual form. For books, dual textuality is now the accepted standard. As e-books become more experimental in their use of technology, the issues of dual textuality between the print and digital forms of a work will require more critical attention. In this chapter, I identified two cases where dual textuality exists in both a traditional sense (From Here to Eternity and From Here to Eternity: Restored Edition) and in more nuanced form (11/22/1963). While these are conservative examples, they gesture toward the future of e-book publishing, the e-book’s relationship to its print counterparts, and the ways and reasons multimedia can be incorporated into a digital text.
In this dissertation I have shown how and why dual texts come into being. I have also proposed different ways of thinking about and analyzing these dual texts to create a larger understanding of the literary projects engaged in by authors, editors, and literary executors. The increased (and increasing) digitization of our lives puts us into contact with dual texts every day. In some sense, with the ubiquity of social media, we live dual-text lives. Our digital lives mostly parallel our off line ones, but occasionally they divest or completely misrepresent “real” life. If these moments were read as texts, an analysis would certainly reveal something about our character. It has been my intention in this dissertation to provide a framework through which that analysis can be modeled.
Notes to the Introduction

1 See Sylvia Plath’s *Ariel: The Restored Edition: A Facsimile of Plath’s Manuscript, Reinstate Her Original Selection and Arrangement* for the restored text.

2 What Stillinger is referring to here is what Jerome McGann calls “bibliographic coding.” McGann argues in *Black Riders: The Visible Language of Modernism* that the material conditions of production can be read as participating in the meaning of the text. McGann’s work has informed my own methods of reading, and his work is an important advance in the field of textual studies. All bibliographic coding, at some level, frames how the reader understands a text. Too often we ignore these signifiers and focus exclusively on the words on the page; we lose important creative decisions made by the author, and we fail to parse out the ways our reading might be directed in a certain direction.

3 Textual plurality accommodates best text editing; the eclectic text created from combining variations of the text is simply an additional text from which to determine meaning.

4 With epic poems and longer form poetry in multiple forms, I would suggest we be cautious in choosing whether to use textual plurality or dual textuality as the guiding principle in reading the texts.

5 See my discussion of the “Greedo Shoots First” revision in Chapter V.

6 *The Garden of Eden* was published in 1986 from an incomplete and complicated manuscript. Scholars are still not in consensus about how to treat this text or how to make the full manuscript available for research. The editors presented *A Moveable Feast* (1964) as nearly completed by Hemingway at the time of his death. A restored edition of the book published in 2009 indicates that Mary Hemingway had more to do with the construction of *A Moveable
Feast than she admitted and had perhaps her own agenda in shaping the text as she did (see the introduction to Chapter II).

Notes to Chapter I

1 The text edited by James L. W. West III and published in the Cambridge Edition of the Works of F. Scott Fitzgerald as Trimalchio originates from two sets of identical galley proofs. Fitzgerald’s marked proofs are housed with his papers at the Princeton University Library; an unmarked set of galley proofs is housed at the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina (West xix). A holograph manuscript also survives at Princeton, but the typescript used by Scribners as setting copy for the galleys is not known to survive. That this typescript is missing does not necessarily mean the loss of changes between the holograph and the galley proofs. Perkins typically did very little line editing for his authors, and “the galleys are probably, in substantive form, very close to the lost typescript, and in any case are as close as the surviving evidence will allow” (West xx). West used the holograph to correct the changes that the typesetters made to bring the text in line with the Scribners house style. For more detailed accounts of the composition history, see West’s introduction to Trimalchio (2000), Bruccoli’s afterword to the facsimile edition of Trimalchio (2000), and Bruccoli’s introduction to the Cambridge edition of The Great Gatsby (1991). Trimalchio is the title character of “Trimalchio’s Feast” in the Satyricon of Petronius. For more information on the relationship between Trimalchio and Petronius, see West’s note in appendix two of Trimalchio (190) and Paul MacKendrick’s “The Great Gatsby and Trimalchio.”
Among other changes, Fitzgerald fleshed out Gatsby’s physical presentation with a description (which has since become famous) of his smile. In *Trimalchio*, the quality of Gatsby’s smile is mentioned only toward the end of the book, but in *Gatsby*, Fitzgerald made the smile a chief part of the character’s makeup. The smile becomes as synonymous with Gatsby as the use of “old sport.”

The story’s protagonist, Rudolph Miller, is eleven years old, four years younger than the age Gatsby chooses as a beginning point for recounting his own history.

Rudolph Miller is manic and oscillates between action and inaction. He does not seem the type of person who would write out a schedule for improving himself or articulating “General Resolves,” as the young Jimmy Gatz does (*Gatsby* 135). One of the principal differences between these two characters is that Rudolph fantasizes about a new life while Jimmy Gatz is determined to put his fantasy into effect, and eventually does.

Rudolph’s statement is similar to Gatsby’s famous comment about Daisy and Tom’s marriage: “it was just personal” (*Gatsby* 119).

Rudolph has an alter ego as well—Blatchford Sarnemington: “When he became Blatchford Sarnemington a suave nobility flowed from him. Blatchford Sarnemington lived in great sweeping triumphs” (“Absolution” 141).

Keith Gandal makes a compelling case for this view in his study on mobilization fiction, *The Gun and the Pen*. Gandal traces Gatsby’s anachronistic notions of chivalry to the character’s experience in the U.S. military. Gatsby surely would have been heavily influenced by his military training.
One of the most provocative passages Fitzgerald cut from *Trimalchio* is a scene in which Gatsby reveals that Daisy had come to his home with bags packed, ready to run away. Gatsby rejects the idea and Nick speculates that “Anyone might have come along in a few years and taken her [Daisy] away from Tom—he [Gatsby] wanted this to have an element of fate about it . . . . Daisy must purify herself by a renunciation of the years between” (90). This is a powerful scene in that it relates that Gatsby’s future with Daisy is impossible; even when he gets what he wants—for Daisy to choose him—he demands a break with Tom that can never be realized. This is perhaps a scene one wishes Fitzgerald would have retained in *The Great Gatsby*. The trailer for Baz Luhrmann’s upcoming movie adaptation of the novel seems to indicate a similar scene will be included in the film.

During revision, Fitzgerald reversed West Egg and East Egg. Tom and Daisy are aligned with the wealth and urban nature of the East, while Gatsby and Nick are products of the “Middle-West.” It makes sense that Fitzgerald would switch the neighborhoods to reflect this East-West difference.

Fitzgerald cut Nick’s description of the “Jazz History of the World” from *Gatsby*. In place of the paragraph Fitzgerald inserts the line “The nature of Mr. Tostoff’s composition eluded me” (*Gatsby* 41). In a letter to Maxwell Perkins, Fitzgerald declared he felt the section about the music “was rotten”; Perkins agreed that it “did jar [him] unfavorably” (*Dear Scott/Dear Max* 90, 92).

Fitzgerald moved this passage to occur during the party at Gatsby’s that Daisy and Tom attend. It is Nick and Daisy, not Nick alone, who notice the actress and her director.

**Notes to Chapter II**
The bulk of the article describes in greater detail than the “Note” in *Feast* Hemingway’s composition of the book, including the author’s reunion with his old papers at the Ritz Hotel in Paris.

Gerry Brenner’s “Are We Going to Hemingway’s *Feast*?” (concerning Mary Hemingway’s changes to the original manuscript) was published in 1982, eighteen years after the publication of *A Moveable Feast*. See also Rose Marie Burwell’s *Hemingway: The Postwar Years and the Posthumous Novels* for additional insights on Mary Hemingway’s changes.

Tom Jenks, an editor at Scribner’s who was assigned the task of turning Hemingway’s unwieldy manuscript into a publishable text, heavily altered the book. Jenks combined characters and storylines and removed large chunks of the plot in order to create a cohesive story.

Gustavus Pfeiffer, the wealthy uncle of Heminway’s second wife Pauline, financed his first safari in 1933–1934.

One of the mysteries of the second safari is whether or not Hemingway actually took any natives to his bed. It is clear that he played out some sort of fantasy about taking a native bride and that his wife was somewhat complicit in the idea. Baker seems to write off the “affair” as a camp joke, and Reynolds also suggests, through Zaphiro, that it was not serious; Burwell states unequivocally that Hemingway “took young Wakamba women to his tent” (Baker 517–18, Reynolds 270, Burwell 136).

Mary Hemingway is quoted in Cave's introduction as saying “He [Ernest Hemingway] might embellish a scene, but he did that with everything in his life. And who is to say what was truly the reality” (40).
Cave believes Hemingway would have expected these changes from any publisher (41). Assessing the expectations of a deceased author always invites skepticism, but Cave did have Mary Hemingway’s blessing to carry on with the changes.

These illustrations were the first images of Hemingway's Wakamba “fiancée” Debba.


The editors’ statement indicates that they are invested in “correcting” the work of the previous editors of the African Book, Ray Cave and Patrick Hemingway. However, the Hemingway Society and Foundation agreed to this two-part publication plan with First Light. It seems they would also implicate those responsible for monitoring Hemingway’s work in their comments.

Sports Illustrated, however, did make a point of publishing a Hemingway short story in 1986 (5 May); titled “An African Betrayal,” the story was excerpted from The Garden of Eden, which was published later that same year.

In the letter to Rice, Hemingway claims that if he had not used an airplane and been “very near dead there would not have been any Snows of Kilimanjaro. What money I can make for them out of this last trip depends entirely on how good shape I can get in and sit on my ass and write” (SL 832).

Hemingway’s highest praise for Wilson, for example, regarded reporting or other artistic efforts, not criticism (SL 363, 374).

The last line here is reminiscent of a phrase Hemingway would use later in A Moveable Feast to much the same effect: “I’ve seen you, beauty, and you belong to me now, whoever you are
waiting for and if I never see you again, I thought. You belong to me and all Paris belongs to me and I belong to this notebook and this pencil” (MF: RE 18).

Burwell also sees the elephant in *The Garden of Eden* as signifying “the powerlessness of the writer as a small boy” (140). The African Book, the elephant narrative in *Garden of Eden*, and Hemingway's own comparison of himself to an elephant in the zoo mentioned above, indicate that he found the elephant image particularly apt for himself.

In the late 1990s, the discussion of Hemingway and race was conducted through the lens of sexual politics. Carl Eby’s *Hemingway’s Fetishism* and Debra Moddelmog’s *Reading Desire* are excellent in tracing how Hemingway’s interest in race is intertwined with a sexual fantasy of merging gender and race into some Other that is white/nonwhite and both male and female. Eby and Moddelmog focus their analysis of race through *The Garden of Eden*, which is certainly the most provocative fiction for this topic. Richard Fantina’s *Ernest Hemingway: Machismo and Masochism* examines the author’s treatment of Africa through a post-colonial paradigm, finding that Hemingway “viewed Africa as a playground to which he had a perfect right” (134). Amy Strong takes a slightly less aggressive stance in *Race and Identity in Ernest Hemingway’s Fiction*. She sees Hemingway as exploring African brotherhood in *Under Kilimanjaro* and shows how the author casts Mary as a foil to his native project: Mary is the American who cannot grasp the essence of Africa. *Hemingway and Africa*, edited by Miriam Mandel, is an excellent resource for historical information on and fresh analysis of Hemingway’s African experience. Erik Nakjavani’s article in that volume on religion in *Under Kilimanjaro* details the complex theological invention that goes into Hemingway’s “new” faith. The religious aspects of *Under Kilimanjaro* have been lightly regarded by
critics, but Nakjavani’s analysis shows how Hemingway’s new faith was essential to the author’s desire to undermine racial difference. In 2012, *Hemingway and the Black Renaissance*, edited by Gary Holcomb and Charles Scruggs, investigates the influence of Hemingway on writers such as Wright, Baldwin, and Ellison and shows how Toomer’s *Cane* influenced *In Our Time*. Since the 1990s, and perhaps prompted by Morrison’s work in *Playing in the Dark*, critics have engaged more and more aspects of Hemingway’s life and work with regard to race, developing a more complete view of the author’s work as a whole.

Dudley writes in summation that “In Africa, white supplants black; in Hemingway’s Africa, white *becomes* black. Clearly, for Papa, all things are possible in Africa. For both the young dreamer and the old man, Africa was a blank slate on which new stories could be written, old ideas and theories could be tested, and myths could be created and perpetuated” (157–58).

Colonel Cantwell’s relationship with Renata is a good corollary for Hemingway and Debba’s relationship in *First Light*. There is mutual attraction and flirtation, and though Renata seems willing to have sex with Cantwell, the two are never fully intimate.


In this scene the text remains constant between both versions; I quote from *Under Kilimanjaro*.

Burwell sees these reminiscences of Hemingway’s youth in Paris as the beginning of the sketches that will become *A Moveable Feast*. 
After the failed consummation in *Under Kilimanjaro,* “The Informer” (a go-between for Hemingway and Debba—and whom Mary refers to a “pimp”) tells the author that his fiancée is “desperate”: “Last night the widow passed the entire night persuading her not to do away with herself” (*UK 365*). This certainly indicates Debba’s intensity about her and the author’s relationship, if the Informer can be believed.

**Notes to Chapter III**

1. For comparison, Ernest Hemingway has a slightly longer record, reaching into the 1920s and continuing into the second decade of the twenty-first century. However, Boyle lived to see almost all of her books in print.

2. “Gentlemen, I address you privately,/ and no woman is within hearing.” This verse is reproduced on the title page of the 1934 Faber and Faber edition of the novel.

3. Sandra Spanier writes in *Artist and Activist* that Boyle “cannot bear to read her books once they are in print” (58).

4. As made in the opening pages of Mellen’s biography (3–4).

5. Principally, in altering life writing, authors open themselves up to criticism about changing the record of the past; Boyle seems comfortable letting those novels represent those moments in her life as they occurred (*BGT 175–76*).


Austen’s intention in Playing the Game “is to pick out the relevant male fiction . . . that has appeared in this country over the past hundred years and place it in simple chronological order, adding bits of background on the author and gay life as it seems to have been lived at the time, plus a sprinkling of reviews from both heterosexual and homosexual critics” (xiv). This itself is a strong volume with fresh scholarship, but it would have been stronger had one of the contributors taken a detailed look at a novel Boyle herself was thinking of as her work was heading toward the twenty-first century.

Ayton demands to write to his sister in England in order to request oak seeds to plant in France. Munday tries to dissuade him by explaining that the authorities will be watching the mail. Ayton is unmoved and eventually has his way.

Quespelle introduces himself as a carpenter, but is unskilled in that profession. He later becomes a wattman, or train conductor, but is unsatisfied with his work and steals from his employer. As a farmer, Quespelle is nothing more than a subsistence grower. When Munday and Ayton move to the farm, their efforts begin to turn the farm around.

Leonie and Quespelle’s marriage is perhaps more a symbolic representation of Boyle’s situation than a literal one. Boyle began to have doubts about her own first marriage during the time she was living in Le Havre and Harfleur; Leonie has all but dissolved her marriage by the end of the novel. While the professional prospects of Boyle’s husband, Richard, never panned out while the two were married, unlike Quespelle, Richard was a supportive and sympathetic to Boyle’s literary career and needs.

Boyle plants the seeds of the novel’s conclusion here also. Munday remarks that Ayton has no patience and that sometimes men are anchored, as he is with his piano. Ayton responds
“bitterly”: “When a man’s hard put . . . then he has no choice. He has to take up his anchor” (Gentlemen 28).

14 Munday complains to the local newspaper editor about the fishermen shooting the birds, but the editor refuses Munday page space to state his views; instead, the editor points to the town’s lack of infrastructure as its most pressing concern: “Time enough for birds . . . twenty years from now. Fifty years. Five hundred years” (Gentlemen 45).

15 While walking to ease his nerves, Ayton recalls to Munday the fate of John Harpy, the man to whom the passport belonged. Harpy was killed in Hong Kong over “trouble in a smoke-shop”; Ayton, as a friend, inherited his money and passport. Ayton behaves strangely while telling Munday the story, and though Boyle never reveals any culpability on Ayton’s part, his bizarre behavior might indicate that he played a role in Harpy’s death (Gentlemen 289).

Notes to Chapter IV

1 Faulkner and Erdrich are concerned with family sagas, the importance of region and place, the power of history, and experimentation with chronology and multiple narrators. Love Medicine, specifically, has addressed many of the same questions of form that Go Down, Moses faced. Are these novels or short-story collections? What is at stake in reading them as one or the other? Both authors have maintained that these texts should be read as novels—experimental in form, perhaps—but still novels. See Chavkin and Chavkin 47 for Erdrich’s response to this question.

2 This volume was edited by Malcolm Cowley, who had a history of promoting dual texts. Cowley also gave readers the 1951 Tender Is the Night; based on Fitzgerald’s marked copy of the novel, Cowley edited the narrative of Tender to function chronologically instead of
through flashbacks (as the novel was originally ordered). While Cowley’s version is an interesting literary artifact, the forthcoming authoritative scholarly text edited by James L.W. West III in the Cambridge Edition of the Works of F. Scott Fitzgerald uses the original organization of *Tender* as its model.

The experimental structure of *Love Medicine* might also reduce the significance of major additions. The narratives are not numbered in the book, either in the table of contents or within the text itself. Beidler and Barton conjecture that this is a significant choice for Erdrich, “perhaps because she thought of the book less as a novel than a collection of interrelated stories” (73). While Erdrich has been consistent in stating that *Love Medicine* is a novel (the first edition of the book is even subtitled “A Novel”), the fact that the narratives can be described as something between chapters and individual short stories makes the addition of new texts a less dramatic rhetorical move. When Erdrich adds four new narratives to an experimental novel constructed from other interrelated stories, one can rationalize her decision as the continuation of the experiment. In a traditional novel, the inclusion of four new chapters in a text already familiar to readers would undoubtedly raise eyebrows.


Erdrich has apparently changed her mind. Current editions of her North Dakota series (*Love Medicine, Tracks, The Beet Queen, The Bingo Palace*) include a hand-drawn family tree at
the front of the text. This textual addition certainly clarifies the relationships among the characters and provides a useful reference. More practically, the chart also serves to superimpose continuity on the text in a way that may have not been clear before. Because *Love Medicine* has faced a debate about whether it is a novel or collection of short stories, the inclusion of the chart might be calculated to strengthen the connections among the narratives. Likewise, the family tree provides an overarching connection among all four novels in the Dakota tetralogy.

6 One of the main comparisons between Lulu Lamartine and Marie Kashpaw is in the way the two women “gather” children. Lulu has a collection of sons and one girl from a variety of different fathers—perhaps none of them the same. Marie’s children are hers and Nector’s, but she also takes in children from those unable to take care of them. Lulu and Marie are both community mothers and care deeply about their children, but Lulu represents motherhood unconnected to social norms while Marie maintains a more traditional way of raising children.

7 There is something of the form of *Trimalchio* here. Readers learn about Gatsby from every other character, reliable or not, before Gatsby himself gives an account of his history at the end of the novel. In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald broke up Gatsby’s history to give the reader access to it earlier in the text.

8 Nanapush reveals to Lulu that Nector, with whom she had been carrying on a romance, has gone “with that Lazarre girl” (Marie) and to “forget” him (*LM: NEV* 71–72).
“The Island” also allows Erdrich to include more overtly Native tropes in a text that avoided them in the 1984 edition. This is the purpose of the story in Chavkin’s reading of the changes between the 1984 and 1993 versions of the text.

Lyman describes in the beginning of “The Tomahawk Factory” that he “stayed drunk or messed up on whatever came through the reservation” (LM: NEV 299).

This is why I subtitled this section with only the second and third versions of the text and not the first.

From the beginning of “Saint Marie”: “I was going up there on the hill with the black robe women. They were not any lighter than me. I was going up there to pray as good as they could. Because I don’t have that much Indian blood” (LM: NRE 43).

This scene echoes the scene in Love Medicine: A Novel where Marie blocks the door all night, armed with an axe handle, to prevent Nector from going out and finding alcohol (LM 118). Erdrich removed the reference to the axe handle in the 1993 version of the text. Unfortunately the scene was not restored in the 2009 version.


Love Medicine: Newly Revised Edition, for example, is the only text available in a digital form (and then only available through Amazon.com).

See Colin Covert’s comprehensive account of the events preceding and following Dorris’s death, published as “The Anguished Life of Michael Dorris.”

Notes to Chapter V
Popular television programs are increasingly taking a more nuanced approach to how commercials capture the audience’s attention. For example, during *Mad Men*, a drama set in the 1960s about an advertising firm in Manhattan, advertisers have tried to harness the show’s period-based atmosphere for their commercials. Outside the context of the show, these commercials lose their relevance. The show and its commercials combine to produce a particular context for the viewer. If one watches the show without commercials, this context is lost.

*Fifty Shades of Gray* by E. L. James originally began as fan fiction (featuring characters from the *Twilight* franchise) published episodically online.

Other minor and ultimately unsuccessful formats have competed for market share (laserdisc for video and mini-disk for music come to mind), but the changes I have identified here are the major format shifts of the latter half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first.

In a spring 2012 English senior seminar at Penn State, the class was brought to a standstill when the students realized too late there was no e-book edition of the text they were assigned for class. Out of a class of eighteen students, more than half were without the text.

See Matthew Kirschenbaum’s *Mechanics: New Media and the Forensic Imagination* and Peter Shillingsburg’s *From Gutenberg to Google* for excellent analysis of new media, hypertexts, and the electronic mediation of print texts. Both scholars are slightly behind the rise of the e-book, but these two works perfectly situate issues facing electronic texts up through the first years of the twenty-first century. They take special notice of the issues that faced (and continue to face) hypertexts. Their work is well-informed (especially
Kirschenbaum’s) on the software and archiving problems that face electronic texts as the medium continues to advance (making obsolete the format in which hypertexts were originally produced).

6 The ubiquity of cellphones and smartphones likely also led to increasing comfort with reading on a small screen. Smartphones can be loaded with software to turn them into functional e-readers.

7 One wonders how Open Road would be able to retroactively destroy copies of the e-book already downloaded and held on customer’s e-reading devices.

8 A limited critical apparatus is included in *From Here to Eternity: Restored Edition*. There is of course, the afterword by Hendrick, but there is also a brief biography of Jones and photos of him from throughout his life. There are no emendations tables and no record of variants. Open Road operates with low overhead; additional editorial work would have increased the production costs of the edition.

9 Or literary executors who feel the texts were originally corrupted.

10 The “Director’s Cut” and “Unrated” version has become ubiquitous in the film industry. While this designation rarely indicates a serious departure from the theatrical run of the film, occasionally there is substantive difference that necessitates an alternative text.

11 In 1999, King also released an exclusive audiobook short story collection, *Blood and Smoke*, with no print equivalent.

12 This is especially true since King has decided his next novel will not have an e-book edition. King says, “I loved the paperbacks I grew up with as a kid, and for that reason, we're going to hold off on e-publishing this one for the time being” (“Stephen King Opt$ to Only Offer”).
When XM and Sirius were attempting to build a subscriber base for satellite radio, they made exclusive contracts with major radio personalities to attract listeners. Howard Stern negotiated for nearly unfettered creative control over his program (and a substantial amount of money to cover production) in his move to Sirius. Stern’s listeners followed him to satellite radio and he in turn received bonuses for surpassing targeted subscription goals. As Amazon’s Kindle, Barnes and Noble’s Nook, and Apple’s iPad continue to battle for the tablet market—and thus the e-reader market—we could see similar exclusive contracts between e-reader companies and authors. Comic book publishers have already begun to work out exclusive contracts: digital versions of Marvel comics will be available only on the Nook platform.
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Michael D. DuBose

Education

PhD, English, The Pennsylvania State University, May 2013
MA, English, The Pennsylvania State University, May 2008
BA, English, The University of Texas at Austin, May 2005

Publications


Conference Presentations


