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ILLUSION AND REALITY: ANALYTIC
TEACHING MATERIALS FOR EIGHT
CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES

BY

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A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree Master of Science in Language Skills,
Department of English, South Dakota State
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and Mechanic Arts

December, 1958

ILLUSION AND REALITY: ANALYTIC
TEACHING MATERIALS FOR EIGHT
CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES

This thesis is approved as a creditable, independent investigation by a candidate for the degree, Master of Science, and acceptable as meeting the thesis requirements for this degree; but without implying that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

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S. J. D.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The basic purpose of this thesis is to present original teaching materials for eight thematically related short stories and to report on the use of those materials in an upper level freshman English course. The stories used were carefully selected as to theme, each involving an individual's conflict between illusion and reality, specifically in the modern world. The fact that very little substantial critical material was available on any of the stories was also considered. The students on whom this experiment was tried attempted, through careful study, to seek out similar or dissimilar treatments of illusion and reality through an examination of the situations present in the stories.

The stories used were: Conrad Aiken's "Silent Snow, Secret Snow"; Carson McCuller's "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud."; Katharine Anne Porter's "That Tree"; and William Saroyan's "Going Home";¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams"; Mary McCarthy's "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment";

¹ Phillip Van Doren Stern, Modern American Short Stories, Pocket Books, Inc. : New York, 1958.

J.D. Salinger's "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut"; and Jean Stafford's "A Country Love Story".²

The stories were assigned two at a time over a period of six class sessions. Those stories with the most obvious parallels were assigned together: "Silent Snow, Secret Snow" and "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment"; "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut" and "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud."; "Going Home" and "Winter Dreams"; "That Tree" and "A Country Love Story".

The students were given two study questions with each story as it was assigned. These study questions were centered around the theme or dominating idea and were designed to cause the student to think carefully about the story's content and draw out for himself (through his answers) the core of the author's meaning. These questions were to be written out, brought to class, and handed in before discussion.

The questions for discussion in class were designed to encourage the student to consider the work intelligently in order that he might talk constructively about the stories. They were not designed with one right answer in mind, but rather to explore the many possibilities of interpretation and to further stimulate the students to find, through

²Robert Penn Warren and Robert Erskine, Short Story Masterpieces, Dell Publishing Co.: New York, 1954. (a pocket book edition)

discussion, the meanings of the stories without the teacher merely dictating interpretations to them.

Through having to write out provocative study questions on the stories before coming to class, the students had begun to think seriously about the literature and were therefore prepared to participate actively in class and further search out the answers. The students also wrote themes chosen from a selected list of topics pertaining to the stories.

Chapter One is a critical analysis of each story separately in terms of theme, title, characterization, plot, and symbolism. Chapter Two discusses some of the many possibilities of parallels and contrasts in teaching interpretations of the main reality themes of these stories. Chapter Three contains specific teaching materials, and Chapter Four contains a summary and conclusion. The selected annotated bibliography is followed by four appendices to conclude the thesis.

All the questions and interpretations of this thesis attempt to guide the students into seeing deeply into the stories read, searching for intricate similarities of theme--particularly, the idea of man's problem of reality versus illusion in the modern world.

CHAPTER II

CRITICAL ANALYSES OF EIGHT MODERN SHORT STORIES

"Silent Snow, Secret Snow"

This story is not intended to be a realistic, scientifically valid portrayal of the onset of schizophrenia. It is instead a work of art which subjectively portrays what the author thinks might go through the mind of a young boy with schizophrenic tendencies.

The central character is, of course, the boy Paul himself. The entire focus and attention of the plot falls on him as it is the story of his mental struggle. He is a schizophrenic type surrounded by normal types, such as his classmates, his parents, and his school teacher. Although there is some evidence that life is not beautiful around Paul, but rather dull and ugly, and that perhaps his father is sometimes unreasonably harsh with him ("the voice was the well-known 'punishment' voice, resonant and cruel." Stern, p. 160), no actual physical cruelty is done to Paul and there seems to be no basis for his psychological withdrawal other than his own personal choice. Paul chooses unreality over reality. The retreat from the objective world into a subjective, personal universe by a schizophrenic young boy, then, is the story's focusing idea.

The basic conflict in the story is that of the boy with himself. Because of this, all the subjective events (such as the dreams of the silent snow, secret snow) are framed in objective ones. That is, while Paul dreams of how the first morning of his psychological changes found him not hearing the postman come around the corner, he is in the schoolroom listening to his teacher. The events of the objective, or real world are framed in parentheses to show Paul's divorcement from them. This shows Paul's two selves: the one that goes to school and behaves somewhat normally and the one that lives in the world of the silent snow.

Paul also has a conflict with his parents, however. They are eager for him to be normal and encourage him in his school work and interests. There is indication that the father has resorted to harsh methods only after Paul has begun his schizophrenic change in a vain attempt to bully him back to reality.

The climax of the story comes when the mother, representative of reality, enters Paul's room when he finally loses all contact with the objective world. He jerks himself back to consciousness with difficulty, and then denounces her ("Mother! Mother! Go away, I hate you!" Stern, p. 162), thereby making his final change into a subjective world. Following these words, the change that the reader has been prepared for all along takes place.

The title of the story is a symbolic one, since it mentions the most obvious symbol of the boy's protracted psychological change: the deafening snow which fills his secret world as he retreats from reality. Paul's private world of illusion is covered with a white blanket of this silent snow, secret snow. Snow is something that covers the real world and hides it from view. Therefore, it is an appropriate symbol for Paul's sliding from the real world into the unreal one which waits for him behind the duties of life. This snow of Paul's grows heavier each day, muffling the sounds of everyday events, hiding the ugliness of the world.

There is also the postman, who stands symbolically for Paul's retreat into schizophrenia. Each day, as Paul listens for the postman's footsteps, they begin at a farther point along the route. Each day the steps become softer, more muffled, also. "And while the rhythm of them was the same, it now said a new thing--it said peace, it said remoteness, it said cold, it said sleep" (Stern, p. 145).

There are the children that are Paul's classmates, his parents, his school teacher--all symbols of reality. The conversations in the classroom are closed in parentheses, and these parentheses become a kind of artificial or mechanical symbol of Paul's retreat. At this time, however, he is still able to reconcile his two worlds. When Miss Buell calls on him, although he has been day-dreaming and not listening

to her, he is able to recite without trouble, answering her correctly. This also serves to show that Paul has no difficulties to speak of which are driving him to retreat. He does so by choice.

The detailed description in the third section of the actual world as Paul walks home after school is also symbolic. The actual world, without the beautiful silent, secret snow, is ugly. (at least to Paul) It is hum-drum, bare and uncovered, repulsive. The reader is aware of why Paul wants to escape into the lovely, snow-filled world.

The examination of Paul by the doctor is another symbol of reality, in which actual objective analysis is given to Paul's problem and nothing is revealed as physically wrong with him. His problem, then, is mental.

Finally, Paul's mother as she enters his room when he makes his final withdrawal (which he has been forced hurriedly into by the confusion he finds himself in at the doctor's questions) is a symbol of love. She is the boy's mother, who has cared for him and worried over him. She represents the real world and all its attachments. By renouncing her and the love which ties him to her and the real world, Paul renounces by choice the objective world for his subjective one of silent snow, secret snow.

"Cruel and Barbarous Treatment"

Characters, particularly the character of the woman herself, are all important in this story. A strong character sketch of a woman who is empty and self-dramatic is clearly drawn. Her struggle away from boredom into self-recognition in her society is central. She represents a certain type of society woman who has forced all reality out of her life through her own empty dreams and self-dramatization. Even such momentous events as marriage and divorce have no significance except as attention-getting devices with which she relieves her boredom. Her shallow character is made subtly apparent to the reader through the device of her own thoughts during a train-ride west. Even though the story is told from her viewpoint, the author skillfully works the events of her narrative so that the reader does not sympathize with this main character. The woman is a "type", but she is the only one of her kind prominent in her particular group. Others in her society obviously see her for what she is and are not impressed by her. It is possible that her idle, rather wealthy life might have caused her to be what she is; but since others in her circle are not similar, one feels that the woman has lost touch with reality, caught up in a phony, meaningless world, due to her own character and choice. The title of the story shows ironically the woman's emptiness. It repeats the words that are famous

grounds for divorce, and one assumes that she will sue her husband on these grounds, although she is oblivious to how cruel and barbarous her treatment of him and his feelings has been.

The wronged husband is presented as a decent, if bewildered man. Learning about him even through his wife's words, we can see him as a man attempting to love his wife and do his best by her. His reaction to the reconciliation scene presents a perfect contrast to his wife's. It is after that the husband realizes her true character. "Looking at him again, she thought he was watching her with an expression which declared: I have found you out: now I know what you are like. For the first time she felt him utterly alienated" (Warren and Erskine, p. 330).

The other friends of the husband and wife act as a sort of background for their drama to be enacted against. The author injects the true sentiments of the woman's friends toward her affairs by allowing even the woman herself to doubt their approval and interest. "Was it possible that she sensed in these luncheon companions, her dearest friends, a certain reserve, a certain unexpressed judgement?" (Warren and Erskine, p. 326). Since the reader assumes she did sense this disapproval, this serves as evidence that the society around the woman, though perhaps somewhat vacuous, still is made up of normal humans who see her for what she

is. For this reason, she is marked as a type who has shoved reality out of her life by her own weakness.

The Young Man with whom she has the affair is the other third of the story's principle triangle. He is a weak, spineless creature that she is able to direct as if she were the director of a play. He performs the function in her drama that she wants him to perform.

Many of the conflicts of the story are phony ones; that is, they are those which the woman has manufactured herself to dramatize her life. These conflicts are those which include her situation with the Young Man, her reconciliation scene with her husband, her entire marriage and divorce.

A true conflict exists between the woman and her husband after he sees her for what she is. After this discovery, he renounces her and what she stands for.

The main conflict is that of the woman with her society as she tries to force herself dramatically on other, less colorful people. She seeks self-recognition through contrived situations. In this way, she seeks to cope (childishly) with the boredom of everyday living. At the story's end, the woman also momentarily has a conflict with herself as she almost sees her future clearly. This conflict dissolves with her reasoning, or rationalizing, it away.

The climax of the story comes directly at the end when the reader sees the woman artificially planning her next drama for the new western audience. Here it is apparent that the woman has learned nothing from her experience, but will continue on in the same pattern.

The woman herself, who is nameless, is a symbol of a certain type of modern woman who has lost touch with old values and has turned to self-dramatization as her sole pleasure. That is why she requires no name.

There is the symbol of the triangle of the woman, the Young Man, and the husband, which is a ludicrous one. It is not the true love triangle, as the woman is not sincere in her feelings for either man. Therefore, the triangle is a caricature of a triangle.

The artificial lake in the park by which they stand for their "reconciliation" scene is an obvious symbol for the situation they find themselves in. Although the husband, in his honesty, interprets the event as a true reconciliation in which he would be willing to forgive with no questions asked, the woman has no such intention. To her, the scene means a kind of cheap "absolution" and simple renunciation on the part of her husband. She plays the entire thing as a scene from a play, an artificial event.

The mechanical use of capital letters on such expressions as "Young Man", "Public Appearance", "Woman with

a Secret", "What People Will Say", etc. become a symbolic device to show the woman's tendencies to see things and situations only as meaningless, dramatic incidents of an unreal and theatrical nature. It also illustrates her romanticism, as all the capitalized groups of words are typical romantic clichés of the day.

There is throughout the story, also, the background symbol of the stage or theatre. The woman is constantly seeing herself from afar off, as if she were an actress in a play. "She was perhaps acting out a sort of hypnotic trance, a ritual whose meaning had not yet been revealed to her, a ritual which required that, first of all, the Husband be eliminated from the cast of characters." (Warren and Brakine, p. 335)

"Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut"

This story, strong in characterization presented implicitly through dialogue and action, has for its central figure, Eloise, a pitiful figure of a woman who fears the reality of self and seeks escape from it. This escape is almost effective, but not quite, since something prevents her from totally blinding herself. Having managed to marry fairly well financially, Eloise has become a lazy, selfish, unkind woman who talks with a hardness and slang that are unbecoming in a female of her age and income bracket. She

has become a heavy drinker, who runs her husband, his relatives, and all her friends into the ground without a qualm. Eloise also plays the fool: "She extended both index fingers, gun-muzzle style, and said, 'Don't nobody move. I got the whole damn place surrounded.'" (Warren and Erskine, p. 411) Her totally unsympathetic attitude toward a former college instructor who died tragically of cancer causes Mary Jane to say, "Eloise, you're getting as hard as nails." (Warren and Erskine, p. 411) This is the first indication that Eloise may not always have been the unpleasant woman she now is. Finally, at the story's end, we see another element of her personality, the remnants of what she once was as a young girl.

Eloise's friend, Mary Jane, is also a rather unsavory woman of questionable attitudes. She succumbs easily to the warmth and alcohol of the household and only feebly protests that she should leave. She is a paler copy of Eloise actually, and is more spineless and less interesting.

The only other character of importance in the story is Eloise's daughter, Ramona. She is an ugly little girl with an eye disease which forces her to wear thick glasses. She is a strange, secretive child, who obviously feels unloved and unwanted. She has no friends but an imaginary playmate.

Eloise's husband Lew, though he does not appear in the story except on the other end of a telephone call, is a materialistic type, obviously successful, possessing an easy ability to get ahead. He is thoroughly irksome to Eloise, who resents his materialism and the fact that he is the kind of person who inquires only what Walt's rank was when she tries to tell him about her former lover.

The main conflict of the story is that of Eloise, and Mary Jane, too, with society. The war has had a demoralizing effect on them and their surroundings from which they have not recovered. They were probably two naive, unsophisticated girls who went away to college and came under corrupting influences, due to the times and the war, which they have not been able to shake off.

Eloise also has a conflict with herself over her former love of Walt, who was apparently a sort of lovable, kind, ne'er-do-well soldier whom she was very much in love with in an inexperienced way. Her telling of the incident in which she twisted her ankle and Walt sympathetically said "poor Uncle Wiggly" in a gesture of affection toward her and injuries in general is both pitiful and revealing.

Eloise and her husband Lew are involved in a conflict in that their marriage is merely a financial convenience, without love or mutual understanding or interest, probably contracted hastily during the war years. Their conversation

on the telephone shows their complete lack of love and respect for one another.

Eloise has a great conflict with reality. She does not wish to face what she is, but clings to the fact that she was once, at least, a nice girl. Something prevents her fooling herself on this matter very effectively, however.

There is also an underlying conflict between the mother and her daughter. The daughter is a disappointment to Eloise and no love exists between them. Therefore, they are almost always in disagreement, defiance, and misunderstanding.

The climax of the story comes at the end when Eloise suddenly, in a moment of remorse, holds her little girl's glasses to her cheeks and cries, "Poor old Uncle Wiggly". (Warren and Erskine, p. 423) Here for the first time she shows sympathy, tenderness, and love for her daughter. She awakens Mary Jane and says, "You remember our freshman year, and I had that brown and yellow dress I bought in Boise, and Miriam Ball told me nobody wore those kind of dresses in New York, and I cried all night" Eloise shook Mary Jane's arm, 'I was a nice girl', she pleaded, 'wasn't I?' (warren and Erskine, p. 424) Here the reader learns that Eloise is more sensitive than she first appeared.

Furthermore, she is aware of her own degeneration and tries to reassure herself that she was once, at least, a nice girl.

The strongest symbol in the story is that of "Poor Uncle Wiggly", which, for Eloise, stands for love and kindness, any affection or tenderness. She expresses her long hidden and unused feelings of warmth for her daughter through this expression. Its use in the story's title combines the elements of symbolism and humorous irony, as "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut" has a ludicrous sound which makes light of such a childish figure in the wealthy, suburban world of Connecticut.

Such expressions as "You'd tell Akim Tamiroff" (Warren and Erskine, p. 119) are symbols of the other Eloise: the selfish, unkind woman she has become. She talks in a coarse manner that she has picked up from movies and magazines. Since Eloise is afraid to face the reality of what she actually is, she seeks escape in gossiping, drinking, cursing, and abusing her husband. This assumed language is symbolic of this escape. In her closing speech in which she seeks assurance that once, anyway, she was not like this, her speech is normal.

The name Ramona, a common romantic name, is an ironic symbol for the ugly, undesirable daughter who bears it. She is anything but a beautiful, lovely Ramona.

Ramona's small imaginary playmate, Jimmy Jimmereeno, is a symbol of Ramona's loneliness and isolation. Since she has no friends, she must create some. Since her mother also ignores her, she turns to illusions for love and comfort. Ramona and Eloise are both lonely and isolated, but seem to lack the means with which to communicate to each other and remedy this situation.

Ramona's eye glasses symbolize her pitiful ugliness and sickness when Eloise lifts them to her cheeks and weeps over them. Eloise gives sympathy to Ramona's shortcomings by embracing the glasses whereas before she has only ignored and condemned them.

"A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud"

A man who has evidently been destroyed by the reality of his life, and who, as a result, wanders hopelessly and aimlessly around the country with no home or visible roots, is able to disturb the lives of others for a few moments with what appears to be a superior wisdom. This is essentially the theme of the story.

The unusual title names that part of an unknown man's science of love which brings about the climax of the story, that part which seems for some reason to have a god-like intelligence to it.

The nameless man with the long, pale face, the big nose, and the faded orange hair is the central character. He has a pathetic tale to tell of a life of loneliness and lost love. He relates an unusual story to the boy; and when he finishes, "for the first time, his eyes had a vague and scattered look in them." (Stern, p. 291) It is evident then that the man has been destroyed by his wife's infidelity and his subsequent loneliness. The reality of these situations has killed the normal man he once was. He is mentally unbalanced, and one tends to laugh at him. Yet he also seems to possess a greater wisdom (rather like a Faulkner idiot) which leaves those around him nervous and unsure as to how to treat him.

Leo, the owner of the cafe, presents a startling contrast to the nameless man who wants to love all things. Leo is a stingy and bitter man, hardened to the world. Years of running an all night cafe have taught him lessons that have left him hard and cynical. "The better Leo knew his customers, the stingier he treated them. He nibbled his own bun as though he grudged it to himself." (Stern, p. 287) For this reason, it is particularly significant that at the story's end, even Leo has lost some of his cynical sureness and wonders exactly how he should treat the man. Leo, then, is a symbol of the hard-boiled elements of the world. It is particularly significant that he, too,

becomes unsure as to whether the man is unbalanced or Christ-like. Since he is a cynic, he decides to just keep quiet. "Leo had run a night cafe for fourteen years, and he held himself to be a critic of craziness. There were the town characters and also the transients who roamed in from the night. He knew the manias of all of them. But he did not want to satisfy the questions of the waiting child. He tightened his pale face and was silent." (Stern, p. 292)

The other important character in the story is the paper boy. He is, of course, the opposite of Leo: young, inexperienced, innocent. Being unsure of himself, he is afraid to answer the man, laugh at him, or evaluate his advice at all. He wants to do the right thing about the man, the thing that the others in the cafe will accept. If they laugh, he wants to laugh; if they believe, he wants to believe. He becomes symbolic of the innocent elements of the world: thus we see the man's effect on the two extremes of Leo and the boy. It is significant that the man picks the innocent boy to tell his story to rather than Leo. In a way, it is an attempt at initiation, at schooling the boy to a lesson in life. But the story is not essentially an initiation story, as the boy is not the central character and is not properly "initiated"; that is, he does not learn the lesson taught. The end of the story finds him only able to venture one remark that he feels

will be safe: "He sure had done a lot of traveling." (Stern, p. 292)

The orange haired man is the most symbolic character. Although he has not been able to cope with reality (his wife's desertion) and make a new life for himself, he still has a peculiar intuitive or mystical quality often given by writers to the insane: a superior insight, a truer understanding, because of his divorcement from the smallness of everyday living.

This man with the unusual science of love once had a terrible conflict with himself and his society, but by the time of the story, the conflict no longer exists; he has been defeated. "I am a person who feels many things. All my life one thing after another has impressed me. Moonlight. The leg of a pretty girl. One thing after another. But the point is that when I had enjoyed anything there was a peculiar sensation as though it was laying around loose in me. Nothing seemed to finish itself up or fit in the other things...I was a man who had never loved." (Stern, p. 287)

This utter loneliness and dejection he once felt was temporarily relieved by the love of a woman. "I met her at a filling station and we were married within three days. And do you know what it was like? I just can't tell you. All I had ever felt was gathered together around

this woman. Nothing lay around loose in me anymore but was finished up by her." (Stern, p. 287) He continues: "This woman was something like an assembly line for my soul. I run these little pieces of myself through her and I come out complete." (Stern, p. 287)

When he lost his woman, another conflict set in: a mental one. But that, too, has been lost by the story's opening, since he has been defeated. Now he is a man without conflict (except for the superficial one of being often laughed at by his fellow men), as he has lost the battles one by one.

The story also presents a temporary conflict with the man against those in the cafe. They listen to him, but sneer and make fun of him even though they are left ultimately doubting what their attitudes really should be.

Leo also faces a personal conflict during the story when his cynical shell of protection is momentarily pierced by the man's science of love. He then becomes tense, and in a sudden burst of anger balls up a dish towel and throws it hard against the floor, screaming, "Shut up! Shut up!" thus revealing a sudden tension, perhaps the tension of too much truth, that mounts in him. The boy has a similar conflict with himself as to what to believe, but his is not as significant as Leo's since he is just a boy.

The climax of the story comes at the announcement of

the man's science of love. It is here that he suddenly changes in the eyes of his listeners. For the first time, they grow quiet and thoughtful, wondering exactly what they should think.

The man himself seems to be the symbol of something unknown, some greater wisdom, perhaps afforded only to these women or men whom society deem outcasts or misfits. His appearance is unique, and he lends an air of mystery to the common little streetcar cafe at once. The paper boy notices something in the air as soon as he enters: "But this morning Leo did not look into his face and none of the men were talking." (Stern, p. 283) He is a combination of a mystical wizard and a hopeless mental case.

The man's science of love...particularly expressed in the title of the story, "a tree, a rock, a cloud"...is symbolic of other unknown things that people caught in the mundanities of life are apt to overlook. Speaking of love, the man says: "Without science, with nothing to go by, they undertake the most dangerous and sacred experience in God's earth. They fall in love with a woman...They start at the wrong end of love. They begin at the climax... Do you know how men should love?" (Stern, p. 290) It is his answer: "A tree. A rock. A cloud." (Stern, p. 291), that forms the central symbol of the story.

"Winter Dreams"

The pity and poignancy of an aging man's realization that, although his dreams of youth have been shattered, he cannot even care, is the central theme of the story. The destructiveness of time is illustrated.

The main character is Dexter Green, the typical Fitzgerald hero who rises into the world of wealth. He is driven to the top by the dictation of his "winter dreams" in which he feels himself unlimited. After he has reached his own goal, however, comes the discovery that reality and time have destroyed the dream that has kept him going all those years. "For the first time in years tears were streaming down his face. But they were for himself now... He wanted to care and he could not care. For he had gone away and he could never go back anymore. The gates were closed, the sun was gone down, and there was no beauty but the grey beauty of steel that withstands all time. Even the grief he could have borne was left behind in the country of illusion, of youth, of the richness of life, where his winter dreams had flourished." (Warren and Erskine, p. 206)

The only other character of any major importance is Judy Jones, a wealthy, beautiful, magnetic girl, who is always effortlessly at ease in a kind of hard-boiled,

virgin way. She is a flesh and blood character in the story only while she is young and chasing Dexter. After that, she becomes just a memory as Dexter holds her eternally youthful in his image, resigned to the fact that he will never have her. "He loved her, and he would love her until the day he was too old for loving--but he could not have her."

(Warren and Brskine, p. 203) Time and reality later fade Judy into a shapeless matron, without charm, without guile.

Dexter Green has a conflict with reality in that he does not allow for time's habit of changing people and fading beauties. He has closed his mind off to such things, but when faced with the truth of the situation, is left hopelessly sad for his own sake rather than Judy's. It is a far greater loss for him to have had reality shatter his "winter dreams" than it is to have learned that it has also shattered Judy's looks.

There is, also, a conflict between Judy and Dexter in their youthful years. Judy looks on Dexter as a handsome and intelligent conquest; she easily, without a moment's hesitation, alters the course of his life on a whim. Dexter actually molds his life to a certain pattern because of the influence Judy has had on him.

Dexter is also involved in a conflict with his society. He is a middle class boy striving toward a richer plateau. He works hard, builds up his business in order to achieve

that world of wealth that glitters just beyond his reach as a boy.

The climax of the story comes just at the end when Dexter suddenly realizes that reality has finally caught up with him in the form of old age. The winter dreams of his youth are dead and gone simply because he has become rational with age. He sees that reality has caught up with Judy, too; he is accidentally able to learn that she is no longer a youthful vamp, but an aging housewife. "The dream was gone. Something had been taken from him. In a sort of panic he pushed the palms of his hands into his eyes and tried to bring up a picture of the waters lapping on Sherry Island and the moonlit veranda, and gingham on the golf-links and the dry sun and the gold color of her neck's soft down. And her mouth damp to his kisses and her eyes plaintive with melancholy and her freshness like new fine linen in the morning. Why, these things were no longer in the world! They had existed and they existed no longer.!" (Warren and Erskine, p. 206)

The outstanding dominating symbol is that of Dexter's "winter dreams" themselves. As a youth, he is raised to a kind of ecstatic triumph by the cold winter months and is able to dream magnificent futures of power and happiness for himself without a qualm of doubt. These fantasies are the winter dreams of the story's title.

These winter dreams represent Dexter's confidence and ambition as a youth. They have a kind of sixth sense, a nose for the way to get ahead, and they guide Dexter throughout his youthful years. "As so frequently would be the case in the future, Dexter was unconsciously dictated to by his winter dreams." (Warren and Erskine, p. 186)

Judy Jones herself is a living symbol of Dexter's winter dreams. She represents all that was gay, glamorous, exciting in youth. "But do not get the impression, because his winter dreams happened to be concerned at first with misings on the rich, that there was anything merely snobbish in the boy. He wanted not association with glittering things and glittering people--he wanted the glittering things themselves." (Warren and Erskine, p. 187) Judy is a living example of one of these things.

When Dexter discovers that Judy is now just another colorless housewife, he realizes that the Judy who is his girl, that pride-filled young thing that was the living manifestation of his winter dreams, is gone.

Originally, Dexter had welcomed the chance to return to Judy and be dictated to by his winter dreams again. It had been a relief to him to know that he was still capable of that kind of youthful passion. The end of the story brings into focus to him the fact that he cannot let

his dreams dictate any longer because they represent youth and ambition, which he no longer possesses.

"Long ago, he said, long ago, there was something in me, but that thing is gone. Now that thing is gone, that thing is gone. I cannot cry. I cannot care. That thing will come back no more." (Warren and Erskine, p. 207)

"Going Home"

The young man who is the protagonist of the story is the only clearly drawn character. He is a wanderer who has eternally preserved the dream of myth of "home", the good place where one belongs and finds happiness. This dream of the beautiful valley he grew up in carries him almost unwillingly, and certainly accidentally, back there one day, seeking his dream world, seeking the substantial, solid, prosaic way of life he left behind as a youth, longing to let a little of its dullness rub into his own hectic existence.

The character Tony, the young man's old friend, is somewhat significant as he represents the good things of the valley that actually are as they are remembered. He still slaps his old friend happily on the back and swears at him in Russian. He is not at all changed as old friends usually are.

The young man's family, given slight, yet significant, treatment by the author, represent together the "bad" things

of the valley or the things the young man originally tried to escape there. It is their ignorance, their narrowness, which seemed ugly to him at the time he left them behind that suddenly once again loom up as an unknown force of evil to prevent his entering their lives again. He views them through the window, is torn with remorse over them, particularly his beloved younger brother, but cannot willingly sacrifice his dream to speak to them again.

The story's main conflict, perhaps its only essential one, is that of the young man's dream of home with the reality of home. His footsteps carry him unexpectedly homeward one day in order that he may have the wonderful chance to see his old dream (that of home, his valley) brought back to life again and become a reality. This valley, to him, is "The place I dream about." (Stern, p. 262) The end of the story which brings the man into the position of having to choose between his beloved dream of home and the actual, real way his home is, finds him unwilling to sacrifice his dreams or his new-found freedom for a chance to speak to his family again. The conflict is resolved by the man's choice of the dream over reality.

There is also the conflict, hidden in the backgrounds of the story, of the man with his family and environment as a much younger boy. There is much evidence to his original misery there in the narrowness of the home, a misery which

eventually drove him away from his family, never to return until the story's opening.

There is also a conflict in the valley itself of good and bad elements. Some things are beautiful and comforting there; others are ugly and narrow. The young man's problem is also involved here as the good things did not outweigh the bad to him, so that he was driven out of the valley, away from home.

The climax of the story comes when the man makes the decision not to return home, after all. It becomes more evident to him that he cannot the closer he comes to home: "And now something he had forgotten while he had been away, something real but ugly in that life, had come up swiftly, changing everything, changing the appearance and meaning of the house, the city, the whole valley, making it all ugly and unreal, making him wish to go away and never return." (Stern, p. 267) He is suddenly overcome by grief and runs away from the home and family without speaking, "weeping because there was nothing he could do, not one confounded thing." (Stern, p. 269) Here in the climax of the story he chooses the dream over reality. By running, he is able to preserve a little something for himself; and when he is far enough away from the valley, perhaps the old dream (with only the goodness) will return again. Yet this choice is a pathetic one in that when he chooses the dream

of valley and home as they are not over the reality of home and valley as they are, he also chooses to isolate himself from his people in order to preserve this unreality, the dream. And this isolation itself must be a failure, even. As he runs into the night, reality is ahold of him; and he realizes he can do nothing about it. He grieves at having lost the dream, but runs in the hope that it will not be too late to preserve it.

There are various symbols in the story. The valley itself is a symbol of home, of a quiet life, of youth, of substantial, meaningful living without aimless wandering to the young man. The valley symbolizes simplicity: "The whole valley was in that water, all the clarity, all the genuineness, all the goodness and simplicity and reality." (Stern, p. 264). There is also, then, an ironic type of reality symbolized. It is not truly reality, but his dream of it instead.

There are separate, distinct symbols of the good things in the valley: the water, which he drinks from the old man's garden hose. This water represents the clean, pure memories of his childhood and young adulthood and the fine times he had there. "To taste the water of home, the full cool water of the valley, to have that simple thirst and that solid water with which to quench it, fulfillment, the clarity of life" (Stern, p. 263). The look of his

hometown from far away is another such symbol of goodness. It is also a symbol of his unreal, far-removed dream of home. "It looked great from where he was, far away and nice and small, very genuine, a real quiet little town, the kind of place to live in and settle down in, marry in, have a home, kids, a job, and all the rest of it." (Stern, p. 265) The old friend Tony is another unchanged symbol of this goodness from his memories.

It is his own street and his own house which bring the first touches or symbols of reality into this return. "He saw the house from a distance of about a block, and his heart began to jump. He felt suddenly ill and afraid, something he had forgotten about the place, about that life which he had always hated, something ugly and mean." (Stern, p. 266)

The house and the family he sees through the window become symbols of reality. "The water; yes, it was good, it was splendid; but there were other things." (Stern, p. 266) Memories of the poverty and stupidity which surrounded him in the valley, which he escaped from only through constant reading, become real again. His memories of home have included only the good things; the actual act of returning has brought to mind the bad ones. "And now something he had forgotten while he had been away, something real but ugly in that life, had come up swiftly, changing everything,

changing the appearance and meaning of the house, the city, the whole valley, making it all ugly and unreal, making him wish to go away and never return." (Stern, p. 267)

It isn't the house or the valley which are unreal in themselves, however; they are symbols of reality. It is his dream or memory of them, which has sifted out the ugliness and salvaged only the beauty, which is unreal.

"That Tree"

The characters in the story are strong and central. First of all, there is the journalist, a victim of illusion, an immature dream which he has carried with him all his life in which he sees himself as a rather cheerful bum lying under a tree in a warm climate doing nothing but writing poetry. He is a man who continuously fools himself by pretending to face reality, while actually he fails to ever establish any true conflict with it. He dwells in his illusion, an incurable romantic.

Miriam, the other central character, is the exact opposite of the journalist. She is incapable of any illusions or any type of romanticism. Miriam is a "force", a prim, conservative schoolteacher from Minneapolis, Minnesota, with definite and clear-cut ideas about right and wrong.

The supporting characters of Carlos, Ricardo, and Jaime, some of the journalist's friends, not only add local color to the story, but also serve to fully develop the man's character. It is typical of him not to see them for what they are: lazy bums who pretend to love Art while actually searching for an easy dollar. It is also significant that Miriam is able, with her practical outlook, to at once sense their true characters and denounce them. They not only serve to illustrate both the principal characters' personalities, but they also serve to show the contrast between the two.

The man in the cafe is not significant except to show the journalist's immaturity and attempt to convince himself of his own worth and ability to boss Miriam around. The fact that he will attempt to pick a fight with the man in the cafe shows the journalist's childish attitudes.

One of the conflicts evident in the story is that of the journalist with his first wife, Miriam. Their marriage, based on a correspondence, is a miraculous flop, since he expects her to behave like a gay Mexican native and she expects him to behave like a Madison Avenue executive. When Miriam finally tires of her life with him, she packs her bag and coldly walks out. Because of this ostracism, the journalist is forced to act, to prove himself, and he becomes the successful man he is at the time of the

story. In spite of this remarkable success, however, he still regrets his old dream of lying under "that tree" writing bad poetry and still wants to realize it. His regret has actually made him take revenge on the world and against his first wife by becoming a success.

Another conflict evident is that of the journalist with the practical, everyday world. He is in constant struggle to avoid mundanity and attempts to be Bohemian and gay. For a time, he is almost able to completely do so. This is during the time before he marries Miriam when he lives idly in Mexico with a native girl, and it is rather "a picnic to wash a lot of gayly colored Indian crockery out of doors in the sunshine, with the bougainvillea climbing up the wall and the heaven tree in full bloom." (Stern, p. 256) He simply prefers his world of gay illusion to that of simple everyday living. He is almost adolescent in his avoidance of any responsibility.

Probably the main essential conflict of the story is within the journalist himself. One side of his nature attracts him to indolent native girls, the other to prim school teachers. One side of him wants to lie under a tree; the other wants to "show" the world by acquiring success. This internal indecision is further evidence of the man's inability to grow up and accept an adult's responsibilities.

The climax of the story occurs at the end when we see the journalist about to take his first wife back again. She has evidently been attracted by his new success, and he is attracted by the prospect of taking her back without marriage and forcing her to do as he wishes. The last words of the story are significant, as they show that the journalist is not facing reality, but only fooling himself as to what will really happen when Miriam returns.

"That tree" is, of course, the foremost symbol. It represents an easy, indulgent life, one of lazy fun, poor creativity (in the form of bad poetry), and general meaninglessness which the journalist aspires to even after he is old enough to know better. In the dream world in which the tree grows, everything in life is very gay and young and romantic, and above all, colorful.

Several scenes from the story are symbolic. For instance, no gesture is more typical of the type of woman Miriam is nor more symbolic of her nature than the one in which she sweeps the gardenias off her bridal bed with an impatient gesture. Miriam is a woman who has no time for beds strewn with flowers. Her gesture is a symbolic renunciation of the romantic tendencies the gardenias stood for.

Similarly, the scene in the cafe represents symbolically Miriam's prim, practical attitude and the journalist's

romantic one. The Mexican girls instinctively push the men they are with in front of them as a form of protection during the knife fight. Miriam hides sensibly under a table, which chagrins the romantic journalist, who feels she has not lived by the code. Once again, their different natures are symbolically expressed.

Miriam's "chalk line" is also symbolic of her primness. "She had a terrible phrase about 'walking the chalk line' which she applied to all sorts of situations. One walked, as never before, the chalk line in marriage; there seemed to be a chalk line drawn between them as they lay together" (Stern, p. 255).

The climax is also a symbolic one. The reader learns about the former situation through the use of flashback, and actually meets the man at his moment of decision. Miriam has written, asking him to take her back, and he has consented to do so. "'This time I know.' He seemed to be admonishing himself before a mirror" (Stern, p. 262). The mirror in his climax seems to represent the illusion of the journalist that this time things will be different, that things have changed. It also illustrates the unreality of his position. He is not honest with himself. He reassures himself feebly, but it is hopeless. His adolescent dream, his particular form of unreality is still with him in the shape of "that tree", making his life a meaningless

one. He is a man who never quite grows up, but who remains instead resenting the forces which have kept him from reaching his tree.

In some ways, of course, the journalist can be a sympathetic, even pathetic figure, as all humans have dreams that are never realized. Most people strive toward some goal which the world prevents them from achieving. It is in the fact that his dream is a childish one and that he does not realize it as such nor accept the fact that it can never be achieved, blaming others for its loss, that he becomes unsympathetic. He does not ever seem to come to terms with reality nor any true contact with it; he merely skirts around it, avoiding it, putting it off, pretending he has faced it.

"A Country Love Story"

The hallucinations of a lonely young woman married to an older husband as she turns to imaginary outlets for her frustrations are the main themes of "A Country Love Story." The title itself is obviously an ironic one, as it names an idyllic, romantic situation while the actual events which take place portray exactly the opposite happenings to the characters involved.

There are only two central characters, May and Daniel, the married couple. May is a young woman who always previously

enjoyed not only a gay and active city social life, but also a happy marriage with her husband. Evidence in the story points to a formerly happy situation between them in which they shared events and incidents with a complete joy in each other. Age has not previously been a barrier. It is only after they move to the country that May's youthfulness and need for guidance and attention separate them.

Daniel is obviously a scholarly, quiet type of man. He is at least twenty years older than May, and quite devoted to his work. He has probably spent a great deal of time fussing over her and entertaining her as he would a charming child whom he loved until after his illness when he needs rest and attention himself. It is then that he changes into the helpless one, and she must become the stronger to guide him.

There is in the story the obvious conflict between May and Daniel, which centers around their marriage. Their situation is a pathetic one. They have come to the country after his long illness in order that he may rest. May becomes lonely and friendless in the new surroundings; as her husband turns more and more to his work, she withdraws into loneliness and misery more and more. Communication between them is destroyed for various reasons; and as May begins to brood, the conflict between them grows. Daniel begins to speak to his wife as if she were a child, and her

resentment hardens into an imaginary betrayal which he senses.

May is also involved in a mental conflict with herself. Her excessive loneliness, due to much idle time, drives her to exasperation and a desperate need for Daniel's companionship. When this is denied her, she turns inward and begins to daydream a lover for herself in order to punish her husband for his neglect. This conflict finally resolves itself, at least in that she realizes her situation and what is happening to her.

The climax of the story comes at the end when May is forced to face up to what has happened in her life. She is rudely drawn back from her dream world, loses her imaginary lover and the comfort he has to offer, and is forced to face squarely the reality of her situation. Whether she can cope with it or not is another matter. The climax brings only the realization of the problem, not its solution.

The story is heavy with symbolism. The central symbol is that of the sleigh in the yard, which is visible from their kitchen window and which they begin to find themselves staring at and musing about. The sleigh is, of course, a symbol of their entire relationship: her youth and his age--her warmth and his cold; it is incongruous as is their relationship. "And now she felt that

she was stationary in a whirlpool, and at the very moment she conceived the notion a bit of wind brought to the seat of the sleigh the final leaf from the elm tree that stood beside it. It crossed her mind that she might consider the wood of the sleigh in its juxtaposition to the living tree and to the horses who, although they were long since dead, reminded her of their passionate, sweating, running life every time she went to the barn for firewood." (Warren and Erskine, p. 446) Here again the sleigh represents their situation...her liveliness and passion, his seeming deathliness and cold.

The second strong symbol in the story is the imaginary lover. He grows out of her severe loneliness and need for love and companionship and is supposedly to punish Daniel for his neglect. However, he is actually in the image of Daniel, and he seems to be only a younger version of the husband or perhaps the traits she first saw and loved in him grown stronger. He is, then, both a symbol of loneliness and of what she desires to find again in her husband.

The names "May" and "Daniel" are in themselves symbolic: "May" obviously representing springtime or youth, fertility, gaiety, while "Daniel" is the formal, fatherly version of a name which perhaps conjures images of bearded Biblical patriarchs.

The setting of the story is also symbolic. When

they first come to the country, it is warm and rich and green, representative of their then happy marriage. As time passes, however, winter sets in, bringing cold and lack of communication. The same thing happens to their marriage.

The scene in which May dreams again of her lover, and Daniel wakens her and tenderly tells her that winter is over for him, that he needs her, that she must forgive him, that he wants her always to care for him, is also a symbolic scene. May, in the confusion of sleep, thinks her lover has spoken, and indeed he has, for her lover and Daniel are one and the same. "...to deceive him one last time, she cried, 'Oh, thank God, Daniel.'" (Warren and Erskine, p.453) Here there is evidence that May is beginning to accept the situation already, and further evidence that perhaps she has always deceived Daniel, thinking of him as a father rather than a husband.

While she is talking to herself in the kitchen, her pitiful words: "What time is it?" (Warren and Erskine, p. 453) are also symbolic of her situation. She is realizing that Daniel is an old man now, and that she is his wife and must stay beside him throughout years of loneliness and take care of him. The words indicated show the hopelessness of her situation, a young woman married to an old man who will now need her when she doesn't need him.

The final act of the story, that of her sitting

in the sleigh, is also symbolic. "She knew now that no change would come, and that she would not see her lover again."

(Warren and Erskine, p. 453) Here May, by her act of going to the empty sleigh, is accepting reality. The dream lover is gone. The Daniel she once loved is gone, replaced by an old man, but she must face this fact. Now she must figure out a way to make this realization work. There is no evidence that she will be able to do so. Her life stretches before her, empty, lonely, but she does see it as it really is. In this story, then, we at last encounter a woman who ultimately meets reality face to face, accepts it for what it is, and attempts to find a way to keep on living in spite of the destructive force it has in her life. At the end, we find her "rapidly wondering over and over again how she would live the rest of her life." (Warren and Erskine, p. 454)

The disappearance of the lover is also symbolic. It represents the disappearance of her former love for Daniel and also the loss of the ability to fool herself. She is then confronted with the reality of loveless life, and she now has no dreams to aid her.

CHAPTER III

POSSIBLE PARALLELS AND CONTRASTS
IN INTERPRETATION AMONG
THE STORIES

Those stories with the seemingly most significant and obvious parallels or contrasts in interpretation were assigned together in pairs for the benefit of the students' ease.

First of all, "Silent Snow, Secret Snow" and "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment" were listed together as the first reading assignment. Paul and the unnamed woman share several obvious traits. They are both dissatisfied with the humdrum, everyday world which they find much too boring or even ugly for their purposes. They both have a method of changing this world: Paul covers it with his symbolic snow; the woman rearranges it as if it were a setting for a play according to her own whims. Moreover, they both have secrets which they place between themselves and reality. Paul's secret is more of a psychological disturbance, however, but the woman's secret of her Young Man and pseudo world is in its own way a sign of mental inadequacy. One of the most startling things about Paul and the woman is that they both choose consciously between illusion and reality and select illusion for no apparent reason other than

their own personal preference. There is some evidence that Paul's father is perhaps harsh with him or that the real world he lives in is ugly, but this evidence is not sufficiently established to give him a motive for retreat. Similarly, there is evidence that the woman has been created by her idle, wealthy society; but this theory cannot account for her personal weaknesses since others in her society are not as she and disapprove of her. It seems to be her personal weaknesses which cause her to become a phony, insincere romantic and drive her to acting her life out as if she were on a stage. Both Paul and the woman, then, retreat from reality by choice, preferring their own illusions.

"Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut" and "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud" were the next story assignments. Eloise and the orange-haired man share a similar fate in that their lives are miserable, loveless, and personally unsatisfactory to them. They have both lost a love that meant everything to them, that was their personal salvation. They have both tried to compensate for this loss unsuccessfully: Eloise through a wealthy, but unfortunate marriage; the man in the cafe through his science of love. Both of them have also turned to alcohol and a certain hard way of life because of their disillusionment. The man in the cafe has obviously been thoroughly destroyed by reality, as he is mentally unbalanced. Eloise, on the other hand, is in the

process of being thoroughly destroyed by life. Perhaps she will even go to the extreme that the man has reached; it is difficult to say. At any rate, she, too, is trapped by reality and the unhappy events of her life. Her forms of escape (hardness and drinking) are not satisfactory in that the end of the story finds her faced with her plight. The man's escape is more successful, but he has paid the high price of sanity for it.

Dexter Green from "Winter Dreams" and the young man in "Going Home" are both faced with problems of dream preservation; hence, these stories were assigned together. They both carry in their minds a certain dream or memory of former days which comes against the vital test of reality in the story's action. For Dexter, of course, there is no question of choice in preservation. He stumbles on the loss of his dreams accidentally, through the idle conversation of a business acquaintance, and he has no choice to do anything about it. He must merely face the loss of his youthful hopes and furthermore his own inability to feel this loss greatly because of his age. The young man in the other story has a chance to choose between his dream and the reality of home, however. As he draws near and begins to sense the truth of the situation, he has time to make a conscious choice. He chooses to run from his family, not

to face them, and thereby at least preserve the good memories of home rather than having them shattered by "going home" and being spoiled by the actual truth of his home life. His choice is a healthy one; it has no intimation of the psychological problems of Paul or even of the woman in McCarthy's story. It will probably have no effect on the rest of his life at all, for he is not retreating in an illusive world by running away. He is merely seeking to preserve the goodness of a dream which would otherwise be shattered as Dexter's was shattered by time and life in general.

The journalist in "That Tree" and May in "A Country Love Story" (the final class assignment) both have a problem of immaturity. The journalist is a man who has never really grown up at all and probably never will. He is out of contact with reality, and the story's end finds him still in such a state. May is also immature, a young woman whose husband has previously treated her as a child, giving her attention and security. When he retreats into his world of scholarship, temporarily deserting her, she also loses contact with reality, though only until the story's end. She and the journalist are basically different at the end of their various story plots, as May in a sense grows up while the journalist does not. He will always carry the mental image of "that tree" which represents his illusion

and is essentially a childish one. May, however, gives up the mental image of her imaginary lover and attempts to at least face reality and her actual situation. Although the journalist pretends to do this, he does not really do so.

There are other parallels and contrasts in interpretation other than those in the stories that were assigned together. These characters may be grouped to fall under such headings as: Problems of Immaturity; Problems of Reality's Inadequacy; and Problems of Circumstance.

There are several characters with problems of immaturity. Paul and the journalist have this problem in common as well as an inability to accept the mundanities of living, the commonness of the everyday world. Paul needs a beautiful, snow-covered escape while the journalist seeks a gay Bohemian life in which he lies under a tree. May is another character who shares this problem, along with a boredom with her life which causes her to seek escape in a dream. The woman in "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment" definitely falls into this group, also. She has the foolish, immature and romantic tendencies of the journalist in particular. They share a common self-centered attitude. They seek to make themselves the center of attention and always see the world only in terms of their own particular wants. They both fool themselves about their lives, too. The journalist pretends

to face reality, but the woman does not. She is more completely out of touch with it than the journalist in most ways.

Although May is more or less immature and would essentially fall into this group, she may be contrasted to the others in that she seems to gain a kind of maturity in the course of the story. For instance, she and the woman in McCarthy's story are alike in that they both need attention and love; but May's need is a healthy, normal one while the other woman's is a perverted need that has gone beyond normal proportions. The woman contrives events for mere attention-getting, while May seeks only a response from her husband that could satisfy her basic wants. May has been spoiled and treated as if she were a child by her husband until they move into the country where he suddenly rudely abandons her for his work. Her reaction is immature; she broods and reverts to dreams to compensate rather than seeking out neighbors and objects to constructively fill her time. Toward the end of the story, however, she has realized her situation and has attempted to decide how to remedy it. In this way, she matures.

Paul is only twelve years old, of course, and perhaps accusing him of immaturity is unfair. But he seems incapable of making normal adjustments to growing up as other, more normal children would. He reverts into a dream world,

seeking beauty and loveliness in images rather than facing his future as an adult.

Several characters fall into the group who have problems of reality's inadequacy. Paul falls more completely into this group than the first one. He seeks an unreal world which is more beautiful than the real one. The man in the cafe could effectively fall into this group as he is not only seeking escape, but has had to conjure an artificial substitute for lost love to fill his life. He has a device to fill the inadequacy of reality, as does Paul. The boy hides behind his snow; the man retreats behind his science of love. These two are, of course, the most mentally disturbed characters in the stories. They are the only ones who have a true psychological sickness. Paul is in the process of moving over into the derangement that the man in the cafe has already achieved. They are different, though, in that Paul has no substantial reason for his retreat while the man in the cafe has been shattered by the reality of events in his life such as the loss of the only woman he'd ever loved. In this respect, the man in the cafe overlaps into the group who have problems of circumstance.

Others who find reality inadequate would be the young man in "Going Home", whose dreams of home were not so terrible as the actual reality of home, a fact which causes

him to run in order to preserve the perfection of the dream. Also, to a certain extent, Dexter would be included in this group as he needs his "winter dreams" to inspire him and embellish his days of poverty. Dexter's dreams represent his youthful ambitions and hopes for the future. They are in no particular way a form of actual escape as Paul's (or some of the other character's) are. Although Dexter clings to his dreams throughout most of his life, needing them to spur him to greatness, the loss of them at the story's end brings no mental breakdown but only a faint sadness that he cannot even feel their loss.

Reality is inadequate for the McCarthy woman, also. She alters it to fit her purposes, finding it much too dull. She embraces a play-acting form of living to fill the inadequacy. For a time, May, also, finds reality inadequate and turns to dreams to fill her days, but gives this form of living up at the story's end.

Another group of characters would be those who have problems of circumstance. The most striking member of this group is Eloise. She is seeking a form of escape, as does Paul, into a world of greater warmth and happiness, for which the words "poor Uncle Wiggly" are symbolic. However, Eloise is not able to accomplish this escape. She fears the reality of self but cannot effectively leave it behind, as Paul can do, of course. Eloise is unhappily married and has to

seek other methods of outlet for her frustrations (as does McCarthy's woman), but Eloise's problems are not so much of her own creation or due to her own shortcomings. They are a result of circumstances that are more or less beyond her control: the demoralizing war, the loss of Walt, etc. The failure of her marriage is even somewhat a matter of helpless incompatibility that Eloise could not change if she wanted to. (This is in contrast to McCarthy's woman, who has deliberately created her own unhappy marital situation.) Circumstances also prevent Eloise from making a successful escape from reality. She is bound to misery by her inability to make an effective escape.

The man in the cafe has problems of circumstance. He has been forced into mental incompetency by a series of events over which he had no control: mainly, his wife's leaving him. He has embraced the imaginary science of love only as a pitiful substitute for things he once possessed. A vain attempt to find normal love in a society which over-emphasizes romance has probably brought on his destruction as much as anything.

One character from the stories seems to stand alone. That is May from "A County Love Story." She is like the young man in "Going Home" in that they both have a conscious awareness of their situation. They are neither one fooled as to what is happening, nor do they particularly want

to be. They merely seek to find something for themselves to preserve out of the chaos. May is perhaps temporarily fooled, as she gives herself up to the dream of the imaginary lover, but in the end she returns to reality. However, she seems unlike the young man in that there is no satisfactory way possible for her to reconcile dreams with reality by running. She is forced to face reality.

May, then, is like Dexter. Dexter, too, is forced to face reality and the loss of his dream. He stumbles on this more accidentally than May does, but it is the same dilemma. They share a full realization of their situations as both of them clearly see and feel what has happened. They furthermore both face a future that is somewhat unsatisfactory without their dreams and wonder how they will get along now. The future is a question mark for both of them.

May stands alone, however, in that she seems to be the only one who actually forces herself to face her problems for what they are, abandoning the imaginary when she does so. Dexter perhaps could be said to face his problems squarely, but he stumbles on the loss of his dream accidentally, not on his own initiative. May seems to come to the realization more fully on her own accord, consciously surrendering the dream. She could have retreated farther toward her imaginary lover and denied Daniel's plea for

help, but she does not do so. Instead, she faces the problem and attempts to plan for the future.

These are some of the many possible parallels and contrasts in interpretation for the stories.

CHAPTER IV

STUDY MATERIALS

Study and Discussion Questions

"Silent Snow, Secret Snow"

Study questions (to be written out by students in 50-100 words before class discussion:)

1. "Nor was it only a sense of possession--it was also a sense of protection."

In what way does Paul's secret protect him?

2. What does the "silent snow, secret snow" represent for the boy?

Discussion questions (to be discussed in class)

1. How many worlds does the boy live in? How does he reconcile the two? Does he do it successfully? (yes, somewhat, p. 149)

2. Why does Paul retreat into his dream world? Is he driven to it? Does the retreat seem probable; that is, does the author develop his character sufficiently so you accept the situation?

3. What happens to the boy at the story's end? Does this change occur suddenly or has it developed over a long period of time? What evidence is there to support your opinion?

4. Is the boy's real life (at home or at school) unpleasant? (no indication of such)

5. Why are the conversations of Miss Buell and the school children recorded in parentheses? (they are reality)
6. What does the homeward walk after school with its careful attention to detail represent? (reality)
7. What conflicts are evident in the story?
8. Why does Paul hate his mother at the end of the story when she enters his room? (she is a tie to love and reality)

"Cruel and Barbarous Treatment"

Study questions

1. In what way (one important point) are Paul in "Silent Snow, Secret Snow" and the woman in this story alike? (they don't face reality--they exclude it--they choose for themselves to remove reality from their lives)
2. Describe the character of the woman as you see it.

Discussion questions

1. What do the woman's friends actually think of her as indicated subtly in the story?
2. What kind of person is the Young Man? (colorless, spineless)
3. Why do you think the author uses capital letters on such expressions as What People Will Say, Public Appearance, and Woman with a Secret? (the self-dramatization and romanticism of the woman are indicated)
4. What kind of a man does the husband seem to be? (decent)

5. In what separate ways do the husband and wife interpret their tearful, affectionate scene in the park? be specific? (husband--reconciliation and forgiveness; wife--renunciation on husband's part, dramatic "absolution")
6. Does the woman really love the Young Man? Why, or why not? On what do you base your opinion?
7. Do you think this woman is honest with herself? Does she face facts? Reality?
8. Is there any substantial reason given in the story as to why the woman is constantly acting, pretending to herself, and ignoring reality? (no) In what ways are she and Paul similar? Not similar?

"Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut"

Study questions

1. Do you think that Eloise has always been the type of person she now is? What do you think she was like in college?
2. If you feel Eloise has changed, what do you think has brought about this initial change in her character? (the war has had a demoralizing effect)

Discussion questions

1. What kind of a person is Eloise? Mary Jane?
2. How do we learn about these characters? (from their conversation)

3. What kind of man is Eloise's husband? Is their marriage a successful one? What evidence supports your opinion?
4. Does Eloise love her husband? Why do you suppose she married him? Do you think she knew him very well when she married him?
5. What kind of person do you think Walt was? Did Eloise love him?
6. Of what significance is the expression "poor Uncle Wiggly" in Eloise's life? What does it stand for? (pity or affection) Why does she suddenly use it toward the end of the story?
7. What kind of child is Ramona? Why does she have an imaginary friend? Is she a believable child? Why do you think she is as she is?
8. Eloise and Mary Jane escape from reality through drinking and reminiscing. Is their escape an effective one? That is, is it a successful one as is Paul's and the woman's in the McCarthy story? Why or why not? Discuss.

"A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud."

Study questions

1. In what possible ways are Eloise and the man in the cafe alike?
2. Describe carefully the character of the man as he struck you. What type of individual is he to you?

Discussion questions

1. What kind of man is Leo? How does he look at the man in the cafe?
2. How does the little boy look at the man in the cafe? Does he understand the man?
3. Of what significance is the title of the story?
4. Explain the man in the cafe's science of love. How does it affect Leo? The paper boy?
5. What job does the man in the cafe work at? Where does he live? What is his name? Where is he going when he leaves the cafe?
6. Why is Leo unwilling to answer the boy's questions about the man?
7. Does the man in the cafe face reality? Is there any element of reality in his life? Has there ever been reality in his life? What, if anything, destroyed his former normal life?
8. Has the man in the cafe been able to cope with reality? Or has he been destroyed by it?

"Going Home"

Study questions

1. Why do you think the young man changes his mind about going home at the end of the story?
2. What various memories does the young man have of his

home? Are they good, bad, or both? Discuss thoroughly.

Discussion questions

1. What type of young man is this? How much do we learn about him in a few short pages?
2. What does the water he drinks from the garden hose represent symbolically to the young man? (the good things of home)
3. Did the young man plan to return to his home? Why had he left it in the first place?
4. As he draws near his home, what mixed feelings does he have?
5. What kind of life do you think he had before he left home? What evidence in the story is there to this effect?
6. Why doesn't he go into the house or speak to his brother, Paul, through the window? Why does he run away?
7. What does he sense about the home when he draws near it?
8. What does the home represent to him? In the beginning of the story, are his memories good or bad? As he draws near home, how do his memories change? Does he choose between the reality of home or the dream of home? Which does he choose and why?

"Winter Dreams"

Study questions

1. What are the "winter dreams" and why does Dexter have them?

What do they represent?

2. What do the last words of the story, "that thing will come back no more", spoken by Dexter, mean?

Discussion questions

1. How does Judy Jones change Dexter's life dramatically several times? Does she do it purposefully?
2. What kind of young girl is Judy? What kind of boy is Dexter? Are their backgrounds similar or different? In what ways?
3. Does Dexter make a success of his life? What does he do in later life?
4. Does Judy make a success of her life? What does she do in later life?
5. What does Judy represent to Dexter in later life? Does he retain a dream of her as she once was? What happens to this dream?
6. In what way are Dexter and the young man in "Going Home" alike? Do they both retain dreams of things that once were? How do these dreams hold up against reality?
7. Do you think Dexter leads a happy life? Why or why not?
8. At the end of the story, what happens to Dexter? What important adjustment does he have to make? Has reality destroyed his dream without his wanting it?

"That Tree"

Study questions

1. What does "that tree" represent in the man's life?
2. We have discussed many elements of reality in the stories we have been reading so far. What part does reality play in this story? Does the journalist accept it or not?

Discussion questions

1. What kind of person is the journalist? Is he mature? What kind of person is Miriam? Do they seem well suited to each other?
2. What does Miriam's phrase "walking the chalk line" mean? How does it develop her character and add to the story?
3. Why do you think the author chose Mexico as the setting for this story? Is there a significant relation between Mexico and the journalist and Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Miriam? What do these settings add to the story in the way of characterization?
4. Why does the journalist disapprove of Miriam's action in the cafe during the duel? Is he a realist or a romantic? Explain their different viewpoints on the occurrence.
5. Of what significance are the newspaper man's friends, Jaime, Ricardo, and Carlos? Do they indicate something about the man's character? How does the author skillfully

achieve this?

6. What kind of life did the journalist and Miriam have together in Mexico? Did Miriam find what she expected when she arrived for the marriage? Was she what the journalist expected? Illustrate their difference in attitude.

7. Do you think their reconciliation will be effective? Why does each want to return to the other? Have either of them changed in the last years? In what ways?

8. What light does the last sentence of the story throw upon the coming reconciliation? What clue does it give to the man's sense of reality? How does it tie in with his idea of "that tree"?

"A Country Love Story"

Study questions

1. What does May's imaginary lover represent in her lonely life?
2. At the end of the story, why does May feel forced to wonder how she will endure the rest of her life? What does her act of sitting in the sleigh mean?

Discussion questions

1. What do you think the sleigh represents in this story? (it symbolizes their whole situation: youth and age, cold and warmth)

2. What happens to May and Daniel's marriage in the country? Why have they gone to the country? How old is May? Daniel?
3. Do you think May and Daniel were happy before they came to the country? Why or why not? What spoils their relationship?
4. Why does May begin to dream of an imaginary lover? What does he subconsciously represent to her? (what she first saw and loved in Daniel)
5. Why doesn't May begin to confide in Daniel her loneliness? What does he suspect her of? Why does he sense this in her?
6. What happens at the end of the story? Is she able to cope with it? Does May suddenly understand her situation? Does she suddenly realize that she is a young woman married to an older husband?
7. Does May face reality at the end of the story? Can she handle it? Does she make an honest effort? How is she unlike other characters in the stories we've read?
8. What do you think will happen to May and Daniel in the future? Will they be happy together? Discuss thoroughly.

Objective and Essay Tests

The entire test over the short story unit consisted of an objective test containing twenty quotations and ten short answer questions and an essay test containing two study questions. The entire test is to be administered in a regular one hour class period.

Objective test

Match one of these names to the quotation below:

- A. Paul in "Silent Snow, Secret Snow"
- B. The journalist in "That Tree"
- C. Miriam in "That Tree"
- D. The young man in "Going Home"
- E. The man in the cafe in "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud."
- F. The paper boy in "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud."
- G. Dexter in "Winter Dreams"
- H. Judy in "Winter Dreams"
- I. The woman in "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment"
- J. Eloise in "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut"
- K. Ramona in "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut"
- L. May in "A Country Love Story"

1. She could no longer truthfully deny that she was guilty, for she was in love, and she heard the subterfuge in her own voice and felt the guilty fever in her veins. L. (Warren and Erskine, p. 450)
2. This was, after all, only what he had expected. It was even what pleased him, what rewarded him: the thing was his own, belonged to nobody else. A. (Stern, p. 146)
3. He wanted not association with glittering things and glittering people--he wanted the glittering things themselves.

Often he reached out for the best without knowing why he wanted it--and sometimes he ran up against the mysterious denials and prohibitions in which life indulges. G.

(Warren and Erskine, p. 187)

4. The moment had come for her to tell her husband. By this single, cathartic act, she would, she believed, rid herself of the doubts and anxieties which beset her. I.

(Warren and Erskine, p. 327)

5. He was aware of his delay, of his smiling and detached and now almost uncomprehending gaze at the little bird-house: he knew what he was going to look at next: it was his own little cobbled hill-street, his own house, the little river at the bottom of the hill, the grocer's shop with the cardboard man in the window. A. (Stern, p. 153)

6. He wrote bushel basketfuls of poetry and it was all no good and he knew it, even while he was writing it. B.

(Stern, p. 246)

7. The man leaned his head down and tapped his forehead on the counter. For a few seconds he stayed bowed over in this position, the back of his stringy neck covered with orange furze, his hands with their long warped fingers held palm to palm in an attitude of prayer. E. (Stern, p. 289)

8. He wasn't far from town, the city itself, and he could see one or two of the taller buildings, the Pacific Gas and Electric Building, all lit up with colored lights, and

another, a taller one, that he hadn't seen before. D.
(Stern, p. 264)

9. She stopped short on the floor board between the living room and the dining room and executed a grind and a bump. J.
(Warren and Erskine, p. 415)

10. Her glasses were on a little Donald Duck night table, folded neatly and laid stems down. K. (Warren and Erskine, p. 422)

11. She knew now that no change would come, and that she would never see her lover again. L. (Warren and Erskine, p. 453)

12. She was entertained only by the gratification of her desires and by the direct exercise of her own charm. Perhaps from so much youthful love, so many youthful lovers, she had come, in self-defense, to nourish herself wholly from within. H. (Warren and Erskine, p. 196)

13. She could not understand it all. Sometimes she said it was all perfect nonsense...or she remarked complacently that it had never occurred to her to save her life at his expense. C. (Stern, p. 251)

14. When he went into the cafe he unbuckled the chin strap and raised the right flap up over his pink little ear; often as he drank his coffee someone would speak to him in a friendly way. F. (Stern, p. 267)

15. Three times a week or oftener, at lunch or tea, she

would let herself tremble thus on the exquisite edge of self-betrayal, involving her companions in a momentous game whose rules and whose risks only she herself knew.

I. (Warren and Erskine, p. 323)

16. He had fallen into the cowardly habit of thinking their marriage was permanent, no matter how evil it might be, that they loved each other, and so it did not matter what cruelties they committed against each other, and he had developed a real deafness to her words. He was unable, toward the end, to either see her or hear her. E. (Stern, p. 259)

17. He bent his head over the water again and began again to swallow the splashing liquid, laughing to himself with delight. It seemed as if he couldn't get enough of it into his system; the more he drank, the finer the water tasted to him and the more he wanted to drink. D. (Stern, p. 263)

18. She had a terrible phrase about "walking the chalk line" which she applied to all sorts of situations. C. (Stern, p. 255)

19. She began to think with longing of the crowded days in Boston before Daniel was sick, and even in the year past, when he had been away and she had gone to concerts and recitals and had done good deeds for crippled children and had endlessly shopped for presents to lighten the tedium

of her husband's willing exile. L. (Warren and Erskine, p. 144)

20. A million phrases of anger, pride, passion, hatred, tenderness, fought on his lips. Then a perfect wave of emotion washed over him carrying off with it a sediment of wisdom, of convention, of doubt, of honor. This was his girl who was speaking, his own, his beautiful, his pride. G. (Warren and Erskine, p. 202)

Answer the following questions briefly:

1. Where is the story "That Tree" set? (Mexico)
2. What, briefly, was the man in the cafe's science of love? (start with small things, a tree, rock, or cloud, and then work up to big things like people)
3. What becomes a symbol of the marriage situation to May in "A Country Love Story"? (the sleigh in the yard)
4. Where is the home located in "Going Home"? (California in the San Joaquin valley)
5. How does the boy in "Silent Snow, Secret Snow" measure his retreat? (by listening to the steps of the postman)
6. What was Dexter's occupation as a young boy which caused him to first see Judy Jones? (a caddy)
7. Where is the woman in "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment" bound? (Reno)
8. What expression of tenderness does Eloise use toward

Ramona's illness at the story's end? (poor Uncle Wiggly)

Essay test

1. Discuss thoroughly one character from one story or one theme from one story. Touch fully on the development of your character or theme as treated by the individual author.
2. In all the stories, there is a similar theme of an illusion or sense of reality which causes the central character to have a traumatic or climactic experience. Discuss thoroughly the various treatments of reality and what facing it or not facing it, accepting it or not accepting it, discovering it or not, does to the story's protagonist.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

From the teacher's point of view, the teaching study guide was very successful. The students were enthusiastic in their class participation, and while all of them were not equally perceptive, the discussions were lively and intelligent. All of the freshmen took part in these class sessions, although some were more eager and answered more often than others.

Since they had already written out provocative questions about the story's theme before coming to class, the students were prepared to discuss thoroughly the many possible interpretations. They often argued among themselves about various characters, tending to treat them as real people and not as story characters at all. They expressed interest in the authors of the stories, also, and in modern short stories in general.

The story that excited the least comment and the least lively discussion was "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment", which was also voted most unpopular story by the students. All the other stories were discussed with equal enthusiasm, however.

From the student's point of view, the experiment seemed to be a success, also. In appendix C, the poll

to see which story was best-liked is reprinted. This sheet also contained a space for comment on the section of study in general, and most of the students were favorable toward it.

About one-third of them said they would never plan to read such stories outside of class on their own initiative. Out of this one-third, about ten students said they had not enjoyed reading the stories at all and had found them dull. The others said they were glad to have had the opportunity to be introduced to something new and had enjoyed the experience, although they probably would not repeat it.

The other two-thirds of the classes expressed general enthusiasm for the study session. They particularly praised the method of class discussion, which allowed them to express their opinions freely, with only guiding and summarizing comments from the teacher. Most of them said the class discussions had cleared up many points they had not understood on the first reading. About one-fourth of the class said they always re-read the stories after discussions for better, fuller understanding.

Most of the students also seemed to feel that writing out study questions ahead of class was very worthwhile as it caused them to think more seriously about the stories, enriching the discussion periods which followed and helping

them to keep up with assignments.

The teacher would recommend this plan of study for modern short stories, which are difficult and strangely new to most college freshmen.

The following are sample comments from the rating sheets:

The first two stories were assigned, and after I had read them, I didn't understand them. In class, however, after we had discussed them, I began to understand and like them more. I think the study questions and class discussions helped me a great deal. The class discussion, I think, helped the most. I wasn't used to reading this type of story, but I found them to be very interesting after the first two made sense to me.

I think the class discussions helped a great deal as they brought out the various interpretations that could be and were derived from the stories.

These stories were not what I would read on my own time, but I found the time spent on them very valuable to me.

I didn't like the stories very well because they were so different from stories I have read before. I think the discussions of these stories helped me a lot, and I really believe I will understand stories such as these better in the future now that we have studied these so carefully and in such an interesting way.

The discussions in class were most helpful. Though I usually had an opinion as to the meaning of the story, suggestions from other students usually caused me to think along new lines and sometimes re-interpret the story.

The class discussions were very helpful. The most disturbing thing about these stories was that they not only dealt with intangibles, but that most of them seemed to have no point or moral. They simply began and ended as if they were unfinished. I didn't really care for any of them, but I enjoyed studying them for some reason.

I enjoyed these modern short stories very much. The way they were all tied together through reality was interesting and helped me to understand them better. The class discussion was good, I thought, and I never left class without understanding a story better. The questions over these stories also helped me to realize the main points and distinguish what I should look for in each story.

SELECTED ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

General Problems of Fiction

Aldridge, John, Critiques and Essays on Modern Fiction, 1920-1951, The Ronald Press Co.; New York, 1952.

(This is a book designed for use as a primary text in courses in the criticism of modern fiction, with strongly formalistic views. It is primarily for an interest in fiction as an art rather than a model. The student studies the technique of fiction first as principle, then some critiques in which principle is illustrated in the method of single works, and finally analyses of the general modes of various individual authors. It is an anthology to suggest the range and variety of achievement, not to act as an agent of dispute for critical interests.)

Brooks, Cleanth, and Warren, Robert Penn, Understanding Fiction, F. S. Crofts and Co.: New York, 1944.

("This contains a discussion of what interests a student. The book is based on the belief that students can best be brought to an appreciation of the more broadly human values implicit in fiction by a course of study which aims at the close analytical and interpretive reading of concrete examples. The appendix contains a discussion of the technical problems and principles in the composition of fiction in terms of exposition, setting, atmosphere, key moment, climax, and conflict. There is also a good glossary of literary terms for students to use. One of the stories contained is Porter's "Old Mortality.")

Forster, E.M., Aspects of the Novel, Harcourt, Brace, and Co.: New York, 1927.

(The different ways to look at a novel and the different ways a novelist can look at his work are discussed. These aspects are covered: The Story; People; The Plot; Fantasy; Prophecy; Pattern and Rhythm. Most of this is material which can be similarly applied to the short story, though perhaps it is somewhat dated to fit the specifically modern forms.)

James, Henry, The Art of the Novel, Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1947 (reprint)

(In this book, James gives specific and lengthy criticisms to his own works which demonstrate the artist's consciousness and the character of his work. The articles make an essay in general criticism and a reference book on the technical aspects of the art of fiction. His Prefaces somewhat tell the plots of his stories, and the different types of narratives are compared and contrasted and cross-referenced for unity. They also tell the facts and considerations which went into the writing of the stories as James considers this important. The major themes are: the relation of art and the artist; the relation of art and life; art, life, and the Ideal; art and morals; art as salvation for its characters.)

_____, "The Art of Fiction", (1884), printed in The Portable Henry James, edited by Zabel, The Viking Press: New York, 1951, pp. 391-418.

(The work of fiction is to give a direct impression of life. The only reason for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life. James feels the analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist is complete. Their inspiration is the same; their process--though with different vehicles--is the same; their success is the same. They may learn from each other, explain and sustain each other. As the picture is reality, so the novel is history and history can represent life and should not apologize. James also feels that stating beforehand what a good novel is or should be is unwise. To suggest a priori rules ruins the health of good art, which needs true freedom in order to reproduce life. The only advance obligation of a novel, he says, should be that it is interesting. The primitive or ultimate test of a good work is "liking" it or not. The only condition James can think of to attach to the composition of a novel is to be sincere. The deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer.)

Lubbock, Percy, The Craft of Fiction, Charles Scribner's Sons; New York, 1955. (reprint)

(Lubbock discusses criticism in terms of its weaknesses--the language used has been devised for the material arts; parts of the book are necessarily forgotten by the end of it, etc.--and further proposes the theory that in order to discuss a novel usefully, critics must fasten on and explore a novel's "making." Critics are hampered, then, in their judgements of books in that they are often unfamiliar with the technical aspect. "The author of the book was a crafts-

man, the critic must overtake him at his work and see how the book was made." p. 274 The author also gives homage to Henry James, whom he considers the prominent and dominating figure in the practice and theory of the craft of fiction.)

O'Conner, William Van, Forms of Modern Fiction: Essays Collected in Honor of Joseph Warren Beach, University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1948.

(a collection of essays on the techniques and forms of the novel, which concentrate more on problems of technique than on definite statements about major novelists)

Schorer, Mark, "Technique as Discovery", Hudson Review, Spring, 1948, reprinted on pages 67-82 in Aldridge.

(Technique is the means by which the writer's experience--his subject matter--makes him present it. The writer capable of the most exacting technical scrutiny of his subject matter will produce works of the most satisfying content. Technique alone objectifies the materials of art; hence, technique alone evaluates these materials. "Writing is best when a passionate private vision finds its objectification in exacting technical research." Writers like Saroyan, says the author, have no objectification; also, the committed realists deny the resources of art for the sake of life and therefore have poor technique and write dull literature.)

"Fiction and the 'Matrix of Analogy'", Kenyon Review, XI, No. 1, (Autumn, 1949), 539-60

("Fiction is a literary art." The author uses the novels Persuasion, Wuthering Heights, and Middlemarch to examine each one in terms of its dominant metaphorical quality to better understand them. The same technique could be employed to short stories in terms of symbolism.)

Tate, Allen, "Techniques of Fiction", Sewanee Review, Spring, 1941, reprinted on pages 31-42 in Aldridge.

(Tate feels that the technique of the good writers such as Flaubert has not just the trick of getting us--the reading audience--to imagine for him. A good author does the complete imaginary job himself and doesn't merely point to what is going on, leaving the imaginative specification to the good will or intellectual vanity of the reader. He feels Flaubert had a completeness of presentation. He seems to favor impressionistic fiction.)

Wagenknecht, Edward, A Preface to Literature, Henry Holt and Co.: New York, 1954.

(A clear, if somewhat oversimplified in places, introduction to all the forms and techniques of literature for a beginning student is presented here. It is designed to create true interest and appreciation where only misunderstanding and prejudice have existed before.)

Wellek, Rene, and Austin, Warren, Theory of Literature, Harcourt, Brace, and Co.: New York, 1956. Selected Pages.

(The book contains a uniting of literary theory and evaluation of literature with research and the "dynamics" of literature in contrast with the "statics" of theory and criticism. Mention is made of Conrad Aiken as a conscious user of Freudian psychoanalysis in his writings. Both the extrinsic and intrinsic studies of literature are discussed, along with various definitions and distinctions as to types.)

Problems of the Short Story

Bader, A.L., "The Structure of the Modern Short Story" College English, VII, No. 2, (November, 1945), 86-92.

(The author points to the many criticisms of modern short stories which call them structureless and compares the old and new types of stories to demonstrate that moderns do have structure--a basic design or skeletal framework. He feels that this structure is basically the same as that of the older story and that what is frequently taken to be lack of structure is the result of various changes in techniques, as modern stories have tried to break from the traditional plot line.)

Bates, H.E., The Modern Short Story: A Critical Survey, The Writer, Inc. (publishers): Boston 16, Mass., 1956. ✓

(This book has no rules or suggestions for beginners, but instead studies certain writers who have used the short story as a specific craft. It aims to show what kinds of stories certain writers wrote, how they achieved effects, how good or bad they were and why, and how they stand in relation to the short story as a whole. It is an attempt

to explain the short story as an art in a rather detached way. He names Katharine Anne Porter "in a sense" the most accomplished writer of the short story in America today. He names Saroyan as a slick, arresting, wise-cracking author, yet with a touch of narrative realism, who writes and talks very fast, with color and entertainment, though he repeats the same songs under new and catchy titles. Saroyan has shown that the short story can be "stripped of every shred of convention, turned inside out and upside down and yet remain the short story."--page 191)

Beck, Warren, "Art and Formula in the Short Story", College English, V, No. 2, (November, 1943,) 55-62.

(This article is a disoussion of the various techniques and structures of the "literary" short story and the formula story, pointing out the deeper earnestness and compassion of the "literary" which causes the formula to fall behind it in importance.)

Brickell, Herschel, "The Contemporary Short Story", The University of Kansas City Review, Summer, 1949, 267-270.

(The author makes the following generalizations about the short story in this article: 1. there are fewer quality magazines alive today; 2. there has been a strong influence from Tchekov, bringing tighter organization, more structure, and an attempt at arousing the deeper emotions, if only briefly; 3. the short story has turned inward, is more subjective, and there are fewer humorous stories today; 4. now (1949) "we are suffering from a dearth" of good short story writers as the one time masters seem to have turned to longer works.)

Canby, Henry S., A Study of the Short Story, Henry Holt and Co.: New York, 1913.

(The author gives a brief, clear, and reasonably comprehensive account of the short story in English and American literature until his time, characterizing the broader movements and including selections from the lists of short narrative writings which have been vital in themselves or because of their influence. The book is very interesting for its date, describing the medieval short story through the Renaissance, 18th century, the Romantic movement, to what he calls the "contemporary" short story.)

Friedman, Norman, "What Makes A Short Story Short?", Modern Fiction Studies, IV, No. 2, (Summer, 1958), 103-17.

(The author makes mention of Fitzgerald's story "Winter Dreams" in which he says the story finds its particular unity in treating only as many episodes as are necessary to show Dexter's infatuation with Judy and his subsequent disillusionment and his other experiences--business, etc.--aren't important. This limitation as to what phases of the protagonist's life are relevant to a given change accounts for the shortness of the short story. Stories may also be short because their action is intrinsically small or because their action, being large, is reduced in length by means of the devices of selection, scale, and/or point of view. We should recognize shortness, ask how and why, and then we can understand it.)

Gordon, Caroline, and Tate, Allen, The House of Fiction; An Anthology of the Short Story with Commentary, Charles Scribner's sons: New York, 1950.

(The authors have tried to put into one book an ample selection from the great writers who have been called--after James's phrase--the Impressionist school. There are two appendices, A--which is a discussion of points of view, symbolism, etc.; and B--which is a discussion of the faults of the amateur such as lack of proportion, neglect of the reader, dead dialogue, etc. Both appendices have examples of the techniques used by writers in the last one hundred years.)

Heilman, Robert B., Modern Short Stories, A Critical Anthology, Harcourt, Brace, and Co.: New York, 1950.

(This volume of short stories for students was picked for the stories' supposed appeal to the student reader, variety, and range. Each story contains a comment by the author which endeavors to 1. suggest why a story is one kind of story rather than another; 2. to point out the specific methods by which the author secures his effects and 3. to introduce the criteria which may be used in judging the quality of the story. The stories are grouped by different kinds, points of view, contrasts in method and time, and methods of character study and symbolism. Porter's "Flowering Judas" is included.)

Hampton, Kenneth Rayson, The Short Story, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1947.

(This is a book for those interested in writing short

stories, though not essentially a handbook or classroom text. It is divided into two parts: Technique--talk, action, points of view, objective telling, and stream of experience; and Content--reader, editor's needs, plausibility, suspense and surprise, characterization, place and atmosphere, plot versus theme, direction and restraint, beginning, and a list of good short stories;. The book encourages young writers to read good works and contains no formulas or plans, just suggestions and advice.)

MacLinn, George, and Eagleson, Harvey, College Readings in The Modern Short Story, Ginn and Company: Boston, 1931. ✓

(The authors attempt to provide materials for a study of short story phases--materials of intrinsic value in substance as well as form--with variety as a principal element. The book includes a detailed revue of the technique of the modern short story so the student can be guided into critical appreciation. This portion of the book discusses: the focusing of the story, the point of view, order and movement, character drawing, setting, special kinds of technique, and constants and variables. The stories are grouped according to their point of view.)

O'Brien, Edward J., The Advance of the American Short Story, ✓
Dodd, Mead, and Co.: New York, 1931.

(This is an evaluation of the American short story rather than a comprehensive history. It is concerned more with forces and tendencies than with individual works, an attempted synthesis rather than a detailed analysis. Fitzgerald, Aiken, and Porter are mentioned as members of the new generation, whom he sees as revolting against a mechanical technique and view of life. He considers Aiken a follower in the tradition of Henry James.)

O'Faolain, Sean, The Short Story, The Devin-Adair Company: ✓
New York, 1951.

(Although there are some technical tricks to short story writing and one-third of the book is spent discussing them, the author generally feels and takes the attitude or position that the essentials of a good story are indefinable and "technique" is the least part of the whole. He wants "punch" and "poetry" in stories. These qualities come from a combination of reality, in the simple sense of plausibility--hardwon--and personal voltage. The introductory part of the book is devoted to keeping story lines clear, followed by a section entitled "The Personal Struggle", which includes

essays by Daudet, Chekov, and deMaupassant. Fully the next third is written on the technical struggle, touching convention, subject, construction, and language. The final portion is illustrative of his ideas, containing stories from the old to the new.)

Orvis, Mary Burdard, The Art of Writing Fiction, Prentice-Hall, Inc.: New York, 1948. °

(This is a book to give writers help in using their gifts and to help beginners avoid wasted effort. It advocates emphasizing the simple and incidental, as complex and moving fiction often arises from such. It tries to help beginners free themselves from inhibiting ideas about plot and to direct their attentions away from the imitative and sterile and into the sincere and creative. It stresses insight into experiences as the primary necessity, with skills and techniques necessary but secondary. Also, the book tries to show by quoting extensively from the best modern writers the best subjects and devices. There are references to Porter, McCullers, and Saroyan, although very brief.)

Schramm, Wilbur L., The Story Workshop, Little, Brown, and Co.: Boston, 1938. ✓

(This is a guide to studying the fine stories of the world, a sort of laboratory manual to learning the short story technique by experiment. It is designed for the young writer who wants to learn the skill of his craft and for the young critic who wants to learn to understand and evaluate the writing of stories. It shows rather than tells, using the inductive rather than the deductive approach. The idea is that by breaking a story down into its parts, a student can best understand what makes it great--somewhat of a scientific approach.)

Summers, Richard, Craft of the Short Story, Rinehart and Co.: New York, 1948.

(This is to help the beginning writer of the short story to learn what he is best suited to do and whether or not he's actually suited at all to creative writing. The main aim of the book is: a sampling of the various types or forms of the short story, both commercial and literary--both types are studied, and the differences between the two are pointed out and students are encouraged to follow their particular talent. The book is generally quite commercial, with an appendix containing lists of literary agents, magazine markets, book publishers, and proofreader's marks.

Thurston, Jarvis A., Reading Modern Short Stories, Scott
Foresman and Co.: Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, San
Francisco, and New York, 1955.

(Thurston's object is to examine closely a number of stories of varying technique and complexity, and to ask all possible questions about why everything in each story is the way it is. This is his plan to overcome the complexity of the modern short story. He feels that these are the basic features to be considered: theme; title; names of characters; character; character and action; action and change; point of view; symbolism; and setting. The book also contains a good bibliography.)

Williams, George G., Creative Writing for Advanced College Classes, Harper and Brothers Publishers: New York, 1954. (revised edition)

(This book is supposedly one of the most successful texts ever prepared for creative writing. It is divided into three parts: Writing--the fundamental principles, rationality in style, vigor in style, beauty of style, personality in style, imagery; The Writing of Exposition--the nature of exposition, the types of exposition, the methods of exposition, argumentation, writing the exposition; and The Writing of Fiction--the nature of fiction, the types of fiction, the writer's approach, the substance of fiction, composing the narrative, writing the narrative.)

West, Ray B., The Short Story in America, 1900-1950, Henry
Regnery Co.: Chicago, 1952.

(This is a formal acknowledgement of America's best short story writers. Not primarily a book of criticism, this work is more a brief history of the development of the short story in America during the rich period from 1900-1950. It includes background, history, and definition of the short story as an art form, plus cursory evaluations of major and minor figures and their contributions. All eight authors used in this thesis are mentioned in the book, with only Saroyan being severely criticized.)

Criticism: Authors of the Eight Stories

Conrad Aiken

Beach, Joseph Warren, "Conrad Aiken and T.S. Eliot: Echoes and Overtones", PMLA, LXIX, (September, 1954), 753-62.

(a description of Aiken's changes in poetry style, with a concentration on "The Jig of Forslin", showing an influence of Eliot; Aiken is an exponent of the psychology of the unconscious as it has been explored by writers who stem from Freud; the character Forslin tries to enrich his life by indulging in fantasies and so obtaining emotional balance; Aiken deals with man's liability to confuse dream and reality; article shows influence of both poets on each other)

Blackmur, R., "Conrad Aiken", New Republic, LXI, (January, 22, 1930), 255-56.

(a review of Selected Poems by Aiken; in his prose works, we get straight psychology; in his poetry, it is translated into symbols, images, and music; modern psychology provides much of Aiken's material)

Hamalian, Leo, "Aiken's 'Silent Snow, Secret Snow'", Explicator, VII, 11, (November, 1948), 17.

(a critique, somewhat bizarre, of the story which says it is not a clinical case study, but psychological prose showing the influence of Freud; Paul may be losing 1. his hearing 2. his life 3. his sanity 4. his innocence; 1. is unsupportable 2. is literally implausible 3. is exaggerated 4. is incomplete; Paul dreads blunderers who threaten his independence and self-sufficiency; he leads a split existence, is confronted with puberty and a revelation of sex; it is an Oedipal situation; Paul has become aware of his parent's sex life and the North Pole is a phallic symbol while the door and the window are female symbols; the carpet of snow is maybe a censored recollection of bed sheets; this interpretation puts Freud's dream symbols into the stories, but seems far-fetched)

Hoffman, Frederick J., Freudianism and the Literary Mind, Louisiana State University Press: Baton Rouge, La., 1945, 82, 129, 279-88.

(of all American writers, Conrad Aiken has taken the most serious interest in Freudianism and allied psychologies;

his approach is that of the artist independent and critical, but his debt to Freud is without question; the artist's problem is essentially psychological, and Freud has best and most honestly described his nature; Aiken has given us many penetrating studies of the several layers of modern man's unconscious life; dreams fill his pages--the dream path is the path to death for his characters)

Schorer, Mark, "For Aiken: Reparation", New Republic, CXXVI, (March 31, 1952), 19-20.

("A story by Conrad Aiken...seems to rear up on its hind legs and throw its head into white clouds and among patterned stars; or it seems to race down into the abysses of peculiar horror and shrill alarm..." (19); he calls Aiken's fantasies or works rooted in detail, with a contemplation of the incoherence around us)

_____, The Story: A Critical Anthology, Prentice-Hall, Inc.: New York, 1950.

(contains the story "Silent Snow, Secret Snow", with a few brief study questions; chief interpretation of the story calls it a protracted psychological character change in a young boy)

Wake, "Conrad Aiken Number", XI, (1952), 1-121.

(an entire issue devoted to Aiken containing some of the following articles: Brown, "Something Old, Something New"; Stallman, "An Annotated Checklist on Conrad Aiken: A Critical Study"; Cowley, "Biography with Letters"; Hamilton, "The Floodlit Mind; a study of three poems by Conrad Aiken"; Moore, "If A Man Die"; Schorer, "The Life in Fiction"; Pagnini, "The Myth of William Blackstone in a Poem by Conrad Aiken"; and Ganigire, "A Consideration of Mr. Arcularis, the play")

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Friedrich, Otto, "The Hole in Fitzgerald's Pocket", Reporter, XVIII, xii, (June 12, 1958), 37.

(a review of Afternoon of an Author; Fitzgerald was blessed with the knowledge that everything he believed in was a fraud and cursed with the social climber's adulation of wealth and gentility; he also faced the problem of hack writing: was it necessary? what does it demand? what are its results?--this is the main theme of this new volume of his works)

Frohock, W.M., "Morals, Manners, and Scott Fitzgerald",
Southwest Review, XL, 111, (Summer, 1955), 22-28.

(Fitzgerald is a combination of an inured metropolitan who sees and knows everything and is always on the inside, and a wistful youngster from Minnesota who is on the outside looking in and wondering what everything is really all about; articles says that Fitzgerald's writing is not always "clean, hard, and true" in the Hemingway tradition, but full of inexact adjectives; Fitzgerald's writing is, fundamentally, the heterogencous nature of American culture, which he interpreted to the reader)

Harrison, James M., "Fitzgerald's 'Babylon Revisited'",
Explicator, XVI, iv, (January, 1958), 20.

(an interpretation of Charlie Wales which says his loss of the beloved daughter is due to present weaknesses, not past; he is defeated, not by accident, but by an impulsive act of another side to his nature)

Ranso, Thomas A., "The Theme and Narrator of The Great Gatsby", Modern Fiction Studies, II, iv, (Winter, 1956-57), 183-90.

(another detailed account, discussing various critical attitudes toward the book and its author, which concludes that its subject is an American morality)

Mallich, Martin, "F. Scott Fitzgerald: Money or Morals?",
University of Kansas City Review, XV, iv, (Summer, 1949), 271-280.

(a discussion of the now popular theory of Fitzgerald's dilemma of disliking the rich yet unwillingly becoming a fascinated member of their group; money is the source of neurotic conflict--not having it means discouragement and maladjustment, but having it means heartlessness, selfishness, and amorality)

Marquand, John P., "Fitzgerald: This Side of Paradise",
Saturday Review of Literature, XXXII, xxxii, (August 6, 1949), 30-31.

("an exceptionally brilliant piece of work by a precocious young Princeton graduate who was perhaps a genius" (30); Marquand feels the following facts will save the book from oblivion in the years to come: 1. it was written by a great writer who wrote with beauty, epigram, and depth; 2. he wrote of a world he knew)

Mizener, Arthur, "Scott Fitzgerald and the Imaginative Possession of American Life", Sewanee Review, LIV, 1, (January-March, 1946), 66-86.

(Fitzgerald is perhaps more completely American than any other writer; he realized in completely American terms the developed romantic attitude, an instinct for the tragic view of life; in his mature work, there is historical objectivity; the article discusses the major novels, stating that we are too close to Fitzgerald in our time to separate judgement of the man from judgement of the writer, especially since his life was so legendary; Mizener feels that when the lies about his life fade, we will probably view him as great)

———, "F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Poet on Borrowed Time", Sewanee Review, (Winter, 1956), reprinted on pages 286-302 in the Aldridge reprint.

(Fitzgerald realized in completely American terms the developed romantic attitude as he had an instinct for the tragic view of life; there are three clearly definable elements to his work: 1. an almost historical objectivity produced by his acute sense of the pastness of the past 2. a Proustian minuteness of recollection of the feelings and attitudes which made up an experience as it was lived 3. a glow of pathos cast on the first two)

———, The Far Side of Paradise: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, 1949.

(a now famous work with detailed descriptions of Fitzgerald and his turbulent life, which includes critical material on his works and the main theory that Fitzgerald was torn between loving and hating the rich he wrote about)

Stallman, R. W., "Gatsby and the Hole in Time", Modern Fiction Studies, I, iv, (November, 1955), 2-16.

(a detailed exploration of the novel which says it isn't merely a criticism of the American dream, but more, with Gatsby existing in relation to everything else in the novel)

Stanton, Robert, "'Daddy's Girl': Symbol and Theme in Tender is the Night", Modern Fiction Studies, IV, ii, (Summer, 1958), 136-42.

(indicates that Fitzgerald is now being studied as an artist and craftsman and not just a glamour writer of the twenties; the purpose of the article is to examine one of

the major artistic devices used in the above named novel; shows that the novel contains many "incest motifs" that have symbolic value and that contribute to the thematic unity of the novel)

Troy, William, "Scott Fitzgerald: The Authority of Failure", Aocent, (1945), reprinted in O'Conner, 80-86.

(author feels Fitzgerald made failure one of his consistent themes and has perhaps been called a failure himself because of it; if Fitzgerald failed, it was because the only standard which he could recognize was too much for him to realize)

Mary McCarthy

Folheim, Norman, and Steinhoff, Study Aids for Teachers, (for Modern Short Stories), Oxford University Press: New York, 1951, 31-34.

(a brief explication of the story "The Unspoiled Reaction", calling it a naturalistic story of considerable suggestivity in which the author takes sides with no character)

Podhoretz, Norman, "The America of John O'Hara and Mary McCarthy", Commentary, XXI, 111, (March, 1956), 269-73.

(the two authors are significant because of their opposition; each navigates on his own course, but both discover the same America; contains a discussion of "The Oasis" and The Groves of Academe by McCarthy; calls her a good and capable satirist who makes her own heaven and hell; in her world, all activities are equally absurd, all people equally ridiculous; she distinguishes only between the intelligent and stupid; the intelligent are those who refuse to harbor any illusions about themselves, who are vigilant and severe in their flaying the self deception out of their souls; the Mary McCarthy heroine is usually a high-minded adult under the tyranny of five year old brat emotions)

Carson McCullers

Evans, Oliver, "The Theme of Spiritual Isolation in Carson McCullers", New World Writing, A Mentor Selection, published by the New American Library of World

Literature, Inc. : New York, 1952.

(the main recurring theme of McCullers's chief works is discussed as one of spiritual isolation of characters one from the other)

Kohler, Dayton, "Carson McCullers: Variations on a Theme", College English, XIII, 1, (October, 1951), 1-8.

(the typical characteristics of McCullers's writings are given as follows: a prevailing dream or theme of loneliness and desire; oddly dreamlike quality pervading; symbols of misshapen and hurt individuals; a single theme of loneliness and longing in all works; "the ability to create with fidelity and rich complexity a world of sense impressions, an intimation of the mystery surrounding our circle of awareness, and a technique giving form and meaning to the raw lump of human experience"-2; "to the realist's strict regard for appearances and sense experience she has joined the symbolists' preoccupation with meaning and value"-3)

Katharine Anne Porter

Allen, Charles A., "Katharine Anne Porter: Psychology as an Art", Southwest Review, (Summer, 1956), 223-30.

(usually Porter's theme is the betrayal of life through the hostility that develops if physical and social needs are repeatedly and consistently frustrated; a discussion of the story "Downward Path to Wisdom" in terms of hostilities present is included; the best of Porter's work carries a subtle humanistic implication: man's first duty is to understand himself rather than try to save the world: personal)

Felheim, Newman, and Steinhoff, Study Aids for Teachers (for Modern Short Stories), Oxford University Press: New York, 1951, 174-88.

(a brief discussion of the story "That Tree" for the benefit of the teacher, which calls it a story of illusion, an adolescent dream that besets a man all his life; a few suggestions for study questions are also listed to help the student better and more clearly interpret the story)

Graves, Allen Wallace, "Difficult Contemporary Short Stories: William Faulkner, Katharine Anne Porter, Dylan Thomas, Eudora Welty, and Virginia Woolf", Dissertation Abstracts, XIV, 2067-68.

(a new method of analyzing stories that are particularly difficult is presented here; instead of approaching through critical terms such as Character, Key Moment, and Conflict, each difficulty is faced as it appears in the story as to 1. precisely what the obscurity is and 2. whether it is justified artistically; a major part of this study consists of essays on the five authors; the stories by Porter used are "Flowering Judas", "He", "Pale Horse, Pale Rider")

Hall and Langland, The Short Story, The MacMillan Co.:
New York, 1956.

(an explication of "Theft" by Porter, calling it a tour de force which presents a perceptive woman caught in a series of difficult moments in a difficult world)

Hartley, Ludwick, "Katharine Anne Porter", Sewanee Review,
XLVIII, 11, (April-June, 1940), 206-16.

(this brief study reveals the art of a distinguished southern writer whose work is increasingly commanding widespread attention; in "That Tree", finding herself faced with the possibility of a conventional ending, Porter cleverly sidesteps and fixes the focus both of theme and technique on the ego-centric journalist who is the central figure; there is a hint of expansiveness--perhaps moving toward the novel in the story; mastery of detail assures Porter of a high distinction in character delineation; she is a superior craftsman, one of the most talented living American writers)

"The Lady and the Temple--The Critical Theories of
Katharine Anne Porter", New Republic, XIV, vii,
(April, 1953), 386-91.

(Porter is a writer's writer, a perfectionist; religion and human relations offer her no essential and permanent satisfaction; she is acutely conscious of the isolation of the individual; critically, she takes refuge in the temple of art, wishing to be a Classicist in the Greek tradition both in her practice and in her theory; Porter was against the mass of experimentalism of the twenties as it appeared superficial to her; she likes concrete detail and exact statement of matter; she furthermore feels the artist must be noble, sensitive, objective, and aloof from life; art will set the artist apart from the conventional relationships and criteria of living; Porter wants the highest standards of performance from artists at all times)

Marshall, Margaret, "Writers in the Wilderness: III. Katharine Anne Porter", Nation, CL, xv, (April 13, 1940), 473-75.

(a summary of Porter's effort to that date; biographical background is presented in quite full detail and constitutes the bulk of the article's theme; author predicts that Porter's best works in the future will be in the shorter forms of fiction and that her productivity will continue to be limited)

Warren, Robert Penn, "Katharine Anne Porter (Irony With A Center)", Kenyon Review, IV, 1, (Winter, 1942), 29-42.

(the author feels that the magazine has both made the short story popular and corrupted it; Porter's methods don't lend readily to compromise for popular fiction as she does not accept the formula--she is different; Warren feels that a story must test its thematic line at every point against its total circumstantiality, and Porter passes this test with her delicacy of phrase, close structure, and counter-point of incident and implication)

West, Ray B., "Katherine Anne Porter: Symbol and Theme in 'Flowering Judas'", Accent, (Spring, 1947), reprinted in Aldridge, 217-27.

(an examination of "Flowering Judas" which West considers her most successful single work of fiction, trying to understand what she means by social sensibility and how it operates within the story itself; "man cannot live divided by materialistic and spiritual loves and values, nor can he live in the modern world without faith and love"-223)

Wilson, Edmund, "Katharine Anne Porter", Classics and Commercials; A Literary Chronicle of the Forties, Farrar, Straus, and Co.: New York, 1950, 219-24.

(Porter is baffling to a reviewer because one can't take hold of her work in any of the obvious ways; she falls into no patterns and shows no one's influence; she writes with purity and precision, mostly stories that show human relations in their constantly shifting phases and in the moments of which their existence is made; her stories fall into three groups: 1. studies of family life in working or middle class households 2. pictures of foreign parts 3. stories about woman--he feels her best are here; she is further called by Wilson "a first rate artist")

J. D. Salinger

Kaplan, Charles, "Holden and Huo: The Odysseys of Youth",
College English, XVIII, 11, (November, 1956), 76-80.

(a comparison of The Catcher in the Rye and Huckleberry Finn; both the young boys are travelers in their native lands and in the geography of their souls; both test the bland, glib philosophies of their elders by whether or not they ring true personally or false for them by experience; each book has an adolescent outcast whose language is both a reflection and a criticism of his times)

MacClean, Hugh, "Conservatism in Modern American Fiction",
College English, XV, vi, (March, 1954), 315-25.

(Holden in The Catcher in the Rye represents reason enlightened by the imagination and brought to bear upon the whole body of human experience in a vicious world of materialistic rationalism--the story describes his search for some assurance that his outlook is not altogether futile, but nowhere is this assurance found)

William Saroyan

Burgum, Edwin Berry, "The Lonesome Young Man on the Flying Trapeze", Virginia Quarterly Review, XX, 111, (Summer, 1944), 392-403.

(discusses "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8" thoroughly as the best example of Saroyan's writing; the article also shows the changing phases of Saroyan's work)

Carpentor, Frederic I., "The Time of William Saroyan's Life",
Pacific Spectator, I, 1, (Winter, 1947), 88-96.

(article states that of all the authors who achieved fame since 1930, Saroyan is perhaps the most original, the most versatile, and the closest to the mood of the common people, although critics damn him; Saroyan is called here a "natural", like Whitman, original, egotistical, the least bookish and least traditional of contemporary American writers; he reaffirms the old American faith of Emerson and Whitman; this author feels that Saroyan hasn't realized his potential at the date of the article; he further feels that Saroyan is not an immature romantic, but has progressively realized a consistent American philosophy)

Felheim, Newman, and Steinhoff, Study Aids for Teachers (for Modern Short Stories), Oxford University Press: New York, 1951, 188-203.

(an explication of "The Sunday Zeppelin", which supposedly deals with the problem of illusions; the story's main theme is the discovery of reality; it contrasts the world of appearances and the world of reality)

Fisher, William J., "Whatever Happened to Saroyan?", College English, XVI, vi, (March, 1955), 336-40.

(this author feels that Saroyan has followed the tradition of American transcendentalism with his belief in the virtue of self-reliant individualism; Saroyan is "a man baffled at the failure of a Dream, but unwilling to give it up" (336); he is also a teller of joyful tales and tales of high sentiment, but he set out to justify his unadulterated hopefulness, which doomed him)

Saroyan, William, "Twenty Years of Writing", Atlantic, CXCV, (May, 1955), 65-68.

(Saroyan states that for twenty years he's been an American writer who is entirely free and independent; while airing many personal views on various subjects, he also states that he meant to revolutionize American writing with his first book because he had freedom in style; he furthermore feels that all courses in writing are "useless, entirely useless";)

Wilson, Edmund, "The Boys in the Backroom", Classics and Commercial; A Literary Chronicle of the Forties, Farrar, Straus, and Co.: New York, 1950, 26-31.

(Saroyan shows the influence of Hemingway and Sherwood Anderson, but he's not hard-boiled; W. feels Saroyan is putting his talent to poor use and is in danger of becoming just a columnist; he rather warns Saroyan to watch out)

_____, "William Saroyan and His Darling Old Providence", Classics and Commercial; A Literary Chronicle of the Forties, Farrar, Straus, and Co.: New York, 1950, 327-31.

(a review of The Adventures of Wesley Jackson in which the sentimentalism is thoroughly blasted and "this is surely some of the silliest nonsense ever published by a talented writer" -330-generally sums up the reception of the book)

Jean Stafford

Condon, Richard A., "Stafford's 'The Interior Castle'",
Explicator, XV, 1, (October, 1956), 6.

(a brief explication of "The Interior Castle" which compares Dr. Nicholas to Satan and Pansy to a contemporary St. Theresa)

Hall and Langland, The Short Story, The MacMillan Co.: New York, 1956.

(an explication on Stafford's story, "Children Are Bored on Sundays" which says it has a kind of social and spiritual life which focuses on the cocktail party situation although the characters present all have a sense of isolation and are seeking a Sunday escape)

Hassan, Ihab H., "Jean Stafford: The Expense of Style and the Scope of Sensibility", Western Review, XIX, 111, (Spring, 1955), 185-203.

(her work has an air of freshness and orthodoxy and is usually centered on a metaphor of age and childhood, a composite image of change and experience, caught in an ironic, elegiac, and retrospective vision--as defined in the title; best known as a short story writer, she is best suited to this medium; mentions "A Country Love Story" as picturing a slow estrangement and hopeless retrenchment of the couple)

Jones, Ernest, "Review of 'The Catharine Wheel'", Nation, CLXXIV, vi, (February 9, 1952), 136-37.

(the medieval instrument of torture in the title represents the long, virginal, imperceptive and horrible torment of Catharine Congreve)

APPENDIX A

Chronology of the Stories

- F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Winter Dreams", Metropolitan Magazine, December, 1922, reprinted in All the Sad Young Men, Scribner's, 1926.
- Conrad Aiken, "Silent Snow, Secret Snow", Virginia Quarterly Review, October, 1932, reprinted in Among the Lost People, Scribner's, 1934.
- Katharine Anne Porter, "That Tree", Virginia Quarterly Review, July, 1934, reprinted in Flowering Judas and Other Stories, Harcourt, 1935.
- William Saroyan, "Going Home", first printed in Inhale and Exhale, Random House, 1936.
- Mary McCarthy, "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment", Southern Review, Spring, 1939, reprinted in The Company She Keeps, Brandt and Brandt, 1939.
- Carson McCullers, "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud.", Harper's Bazaar, November, 1943.
- J. D. Salinger, "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut", New Yorker, March 20, 1948, reprinted in Nine Stories, Little, 1953.
- Jean Stafford, "A Country Love Story", New Yorker, May 6, 1950, reprinted in Children Are Bored on Sundays, Harcourt, 1953.

APPENDIX B

Significant Answers to the Study Questions

Silent Snow, Secret Snow

(no. 1) Student punctuation and spelling are unchanged.

It protects him from the outside world; he is living in a world of his own. He is living two different lives. I believe he must be a schizophrenic, as something inside him was fighting with another part of him.

Paul's secret protects him from reality. It serves as protection from an outside world that he dislikes.

Paul's secret snow protected him from realism. Paul used his secret to take him away to another world, one which to him is beautiful and wonderful. By replacing the real world he lives in with an imaginary one, he thus protects himself from the world which he seems to dislike. Paul dislikes the routine of his life and craves something new and different.

Paul's secret gave him protection in the sense that he could place it between himself and reality; in that way, he could have a world of peace and security all his own in which there could be no intruders.

(no. 2)

The "silent Snow, secret Snow" is really a private world for the boy; it is his own mental world apart from the reality of life. It protects him, but also hurts him by carrying him away.

Paul used the snow as a cover for all the ugly parts of reality. It created for him a new world, a beautiful world into which he could go anytime and from which it was harder to retreat each time he entered it.

The snow is Paul's way of escaping from reality. It takes the shape of a partly spherical world, drawing closer to him each day, until it finally engulfs him. It represents escape from reality into a world where all is white, darkness, and silence.

Cruel and Barbarous Treatment

(no. 1)

Both Paul and the young woman refuse to face reality. Both were living in a dream world of their own liking.

Both are mentally confused, Paul more seriously so. Both have removed themselves from realistic burdens and set themselves aside in different worlds to play characters in make believe circumstances. Paul's world is entirely imaginary, while the woman's is only partially so, in the distorted views she takes of herself and the ordeals she is going through.

They are alike in that they both turned against reality, trying to either create a new world or reshape the one in which they lived. In doing this, they thought it was perfectly correct, even desirable.

They are alike in that they refuse to accept reality and choose instead to live in their own dream worlds.

(no. 2)

Life to the woman in the story is one big dramatic play in which she is the leading character. She takes advantage of those around her to make her imaginary play more dramatic and exciting.

The woman is a young socialite who likes to be talked about. To her, the greatest thing in life is to be well known.

She fancied that life and the world was a stage and that she was the actress. She refused to face reality and life in general. She changed her moods according to the scene.

She was a vain woman who always thought of herself. She wanted life to be exciting so she pretended she was an actress and acted out parts of her life. It was always real in her mind what she wanted to do, but it was hard for her to always achieve it as people didn't co-operate exactly the way she planned. Her two worlds were not perfect.

Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut

(no 1)

I do not think Eloise was the same type of girl in college as she is now. I am under this impression because of the last scene in the story where Eloise pleaded, "I was a nice girl, wasn't I?". It also showed she worried about her dresses and things in college just as any normal girl probably does.

Eloise obviously hasn't always been the type of person she is in the story. The turning point of her character probably came in college when disappointments and outside influences changed her into the vulgar type of person she now is.

No, I do not think Eloise was always the type of person that she was in the story. I think that she was once very naive, innocent, and capable of compassion.

(no. 2)

Eloise changed from good to bad, and this could have been because she was kicked out of college and had nowhere to go or nothing to do except run around. Some of her low standards could be attributed to the fact that it was war time, and there were moral-less people everywhere.

I think her change in character occurred or came about first when her lover, Walt, was killed. After that, war had a demoralizing effect on her as it did on many people.

A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud.

(no. 1)

They both have lost loves and now feel that their whole world is shattered. They both are trying to forget their problems by drinking. They want to love again and be loved, but they are afraid for fear they will be hurt again.

They both cling to something in the past: Eloise to her dead lover, and the man to his lost wife. They both have built a wall around themselves not wanting to face reality or what has happened, although it has truly destroyed both their lives.

(no. 2)

The man in the cafe seems to be a sad, rather pitiful character at first. Later you think over his science and think he is sort of a saint with a great wisdom to be able to love everything and everybody he comes in contact with.

Yet, you have the feeling that he is not at all happy and probably never will be so again.

The character of the man in the cafe is filled with discouragement, disgust, and self-pity. He has built up a false love for everything to ease his disappointment of having been rejected by the one person he loved. This has become an obsession with him, affecting his mind. The reality of his situation has destroyed him.

He does not want to face reality and uses the gimic of a love science to withdraw. Reality has crushed him, and he is left helpless. People hardly know how to accept him now.

Going Home

(no. 1)

The young man just couldn't bear to enter the house he had lived in as a child. He previously had wanted nothing more than to get away from the filth, dirt, and slums in which he lived. When he saw the house again, he realized he had at first remembered only its good points and left in order to be able to preserve some of his pleasant memories.

The young man changes his mind about going home because the sight of the house where he spent most of his life repels him. A person tends to forget unpleasant things and remember only the pleasant incidents in his life. Seeing the house and its surroundings brings back all the unpleasant memories of the past, and he seeks to keep the good ones alive by leaving.

The man has replaced his true memories of home with more imaginary ones that are pleasant. He runs away from the bad ones.

(no. 2)

The memories of the young man are pretty well mixed between good and bad. His first memories are of the delicious water of the San Joaquin valley, then of the streets and buildings of the town and of an old friendship and pleasant experiences. His mother's cooking and the comfort of a place called home are also pleasant memories. The sight of the house itself brings back memories of boredom and the unpleasantness that made up his daily life, and these memories crowd out the pleasant ones.

The young man has good physical memories of home: the food, water, friends, etc. Despite this, his psychological memories are bad. He didn't like the monotonous, oppressing life he had led before and wanted to go back to the city where he could forget these things.

Winter Dreams

(no. 1)

His dreams were always of success and advancement which represented his desire to get ahead in life and make something of himself. His desire to succeed was mainly for the purpose of "showing the world", especially one person--Judy Jones. His dreams of love for her were also a part of his winter dreams.

His dreams represent his youth because when the man in New York tells him that Judy is no longer the way he remembers her, his dreams are lost as he suddenly realizes that all things have a beginning and an ending.

I think that Dexter's winter dreams involved more than just the girl although she was obviously a part of them. I believe they represent all the hopes for the future that he had as a young boy.

(no. 2)

All the dreams of how wonderful and beautiful Judy Jones was are shattered. His dreams of success are also gone, as he is no longer a young man with all the time in the world ahead of him. Now he is facing the reality of the world and can no longer lose himself in his winter dreams.

He has lost his youthful dreams and has just realized it. He is faced with both reality and old age.

He means that his winter dreams are gone and nothing is left to him. The sad thing about it is that he doesn't even seem to care anymore for he is no longer young and cannot feel such things.

That Tree

(no. 1)

"That Tree" represents the type of life the man wanted to lead,

but couldn't. It personified the ability of being able to lie down underneath a tree and to write beautiful poetry. It meant a time when he could have no responsibility, no respectability, and no money to speak of.

The tree represents an escape from reality to him, as all he wants is to lie under it and write bad poetry. It shows his immaturity.

"That Tree" represented in the man's life a refuge from reality. He said that he really wanted to be a cheerful bum lying under a tree in a good climate writing poetry. Miriam put reality into his life (her special kind), and he could not live up to the responsibility of it.

(no. 2)

Reality is the main point of the story. The journalist can't grasp reality fully. He is much too immature for it to have any true meaning in his life. He pretends to himself and to others that he understands what is happening in his life, but he is only fooling himself.

Reality played a large part in this story. The man could not face it, while Miriam, his wife, could not face unreality or romanticism. They were too different to understand one another, and one feels they never will.

The journalist was very immature and unwilling to face reality. He was still clinging to his illusion of sitting under a tree in a lazy type of life, free from any mature responsibilities.

A Country Love Story

(no. 1)

The lover represented the man she wanted her husband to be, perhaps the way he had once been. This lover gave her the companionship and attention that she so desperately wanted and needed in her lonely life.

May's imaginary lover represents a form of companionship to her loneliness. I understood him to be in the image of Daniel.

May's imaginary lover represented her husband the way she wanted him to be. The reason she couldn't see his face, I

think, is that his face is actually Daniel's. He also represented her loneliness in that she had to imagine a companion.

May's imaginary lover represents either an image of her husband in his younger days or an image of the way she would have liked him to be. She turns to him in her loneliness and solitude.

(no. 2)

May has to learn to live with reality again. She doesn't know how she will be able to face the real things in life. She sits in the sleigh to sort her dreams and her realities into their proper places.

Her act of sitting in the sleigh means she realizes what the conditions of her life really are. The sleigh is a symbol of their entire situation, and she accepts it by sitting in it.

May finally faces reality and realizes that she is actually a young woman and her husband is actually an old man. She knows she will have to learn to live with this fact, and she is uncertain how to go about it.

At the end of the story, May feels that she cannot endure life because she must go back to her loneliness and solitude. She must face reality and comprehend the fact that there never was a lover at all. I think she sits in the sleigh to assure herself that he is really gone and she can never imagine him again. Also, she may sit there as a farewell gesture--saying goodbye to her make believe world of happiness and companionship.

APPENDIX C

Representative Student Themes

Students wrote themes on the following list of topics, from which they were to select one:

1. A character sketch of anyone in the stories
2. Discussion of the treatment of reality in the stories
3. My favorite story and why
4. An interesting contrast or parallel between two or more characters from different stories
5. The story which best makes its point and why
6. A discussion of similar themes in the stories

Theme I This student was an especially perceptive one, and his theme reflects more original thought than the average:

"Escape"

In an attempt to analyze the personalities of the characters we have become acquainted with, I find myself classifying them in two distinct groups. These categories separate the characters on the basis of the attempt or circumstances which force them to avoid reality.

One of these groups makes a successful escape into a permanent world of make believe, while the other makes only a temporary transformation.

The group that makes this hurtle permanent consists of Paul, the elderly man, and to a certain extent, the woman from "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment". To these people their world of retreat has become an obsession which once formed and deeply rooted becomes their only way of life. Their motives for this withdrawal are caused by circumstances or choice, or as in the woman's case, a combination of both factors. A situation or development that this type of personality cannot cope with causes him to enter his private shell with increasing frequency, until the end result is a partial or complete mental breakdown or deterioration.

This factor is the line of distinction separating the permanent from the temporary group. The journalist, the young man, Dexter Green, Eloise, and May all desire to escape to their special worlds, also, but only as a means of temporary relief. Their motives for escape are also provoked by the anxieties and pressures of reality, but in their secret worlds they seek the pleasures of daydreams to help them combat the monotony and difficulties of everyday life.

Although some may put themselves into a role that is highly exaggerated, their imaginary world is not an obsession, and they retreat into it and out of it at will. Often they find that they cannot do this as satisfactorily as desired, and an aid such as liquor is used to insure a more complete departure from reality.

Each of the characters concerned in these groups have their own special idiosyncrasies and some of them could be considered borderline cases in regard to which group they belong. Certainly, the result of an excessive amount of their interludes in daydreams would affect them permanently.

Exploring the mind of each of these characters can be done with as much imagination as is employed by the imaginations of each of these personalities themselves. In their own special cases, they have innumerable parallels and contrasts of character, but in their respective groups their general purpose is best expressed in their efforts to leave the reality of the daily world behind and---escape.

Theme II This is an example of an average student's theme. Its paragraphs are short and rather anemic, and it draws rather heavily on class discussion for its sources:

"Dream Worlds"

In all the stories we read in this series, reality played a great part. However, each character reacted to reality in a different way.

In "Silent Snow, Secret Snow", the young boy retreated into a dream world because everything around him was boring and ugly. When this new world becomes too much for him, he withdraws completely. He refused to face reality.

In "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment", the woman was completely bored with her life and for what her life stood. Therefore, she tried to make changes in her life and the lives around her. When this didn't work out, she couldn't face the world, so she withdraws from reality by her own choice.

Eloise, the woman in "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut", was another who tried to escape from the real world. Because her life was an unhappy one, she tried to bury her troubles in alcohol and hardness, but her withdrawal was not a successful one, and the end of the story found her still confronted with her troubles.

In "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud.", the man became mentally unbalanced as the result of his wife's leaving him for another man. Therefore, in a sense, the reality of his world destroyed him.

"Going Home" is the story of a young man who did not want to ruin his beautiful dream of home by seeing his family again. Because his dreams were both good and bad, he chose to shut out all the bad by leaving the reality of home and at least salvaging the good memories.

Dexter, the main person in "Winter Dreams", had a dream of Judy that did not change as the years went by. When he found that she had changed, he had to face reality. There was nothing he could do to preserve his dream as the young man in "Going Home" had done. He had no choice but to face life as it was.

In "That Tree", the man's sense of reality was distorted. Because he was not a mature person, his pride became hurt when his wife left him. This shock was the act that drove him on to be a success in journalism, but all the time he was becoming a success, he was thinking about his dream world. Therefore, his dream world was the only thing that was real or important to him. Because he kept on living in reality, however, he could never successfully escape into his other world.

Because of her loneliness, May withdrew from reality into a dream world with an imaginary lover. However, she did abandon her dream on her own accord and faced life as it was at the story's end.

In the eight stories we have read, the plots were basically alike. All the main characters were faced with the problem of whether to withdraw from reality or not. Because some of the characters could not face reality at all, while others could, the stories were completely different in other respects.

Theme III Although this theme also draws rather heavily on the discussion questions, it has a summary with more original insight. It is a better than average effort, but it is not outstanding:

"Reality"

Reality played a big part in the lives of the characters

in all of the short stories that we read. In some instances the characters had a choice between facing reality and not facing reality. In other instances, the characters were forced into retreating into their own make believe worlds.

In the story "Silent Snow, Secret Snow", Paul had a choice. He could have lived a normal life, but it was too dull and boring and monotonous. He found in his own world something new and clean, and thus retreated further and further into it.

Paul was successful in not facing reality; Eloise in "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut", on the other hand, was not quite so successful. When she tried to escape from reality, it still confronted her, and she was a very unhappy woman.

Dexter Green in "Winter Dreams" couldn't run from reality. His dreams to become rich and successful were centered around Judy, and at the end when he learned that Judy wasn't the same as he remembered her, he realized that he couldn't keep his dream.

In "Going Home", the young man had a choice between his dream and reality. He chose his dream because reality was too ugly for him to bear. In choosing his dream, he could remember his home town as a good, clean town, rather than something dirty.

The woman in "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment" also refused to face reality, although she had no reason not to. Her life was more or less in the form of a play, and no matter what happened she had to go on with it.

The man in "A Tree. A Rook. A Cloud." didn't face reality either. In his case, however, he was forced into it; he had no choice in the matter. He loved the woman, and when she walked out on him, he more or less fell apart.

The journalist in "That Tree" refused to accept reality. When Miriam walked out on him, he began to wake up a little, but the only reason that he bettered himself was because he had an incentive to do so. He felt he had to prove to Miriam that he could make a success of himself.

In "A Country Love Story", May tried to escape reality. She was more or less forced into it because of loneliness. She had a dream, but gave up the dream in favor of facing reality.

I think loneliness was a big factor in the lives of these various characters--loneliness and a feeling of not being loved. Loneliness led May to imagine a lover. It was a feeling of not being loved that led Eloise to drink. The elderly man in McCullers's story was lonely and therefore was forced into retreating into his own world. Paul was more or less lonely, too, but in a different way. His companions and friends were not of the type that offered the excitement he craved.

Loneliness has a great effect on the lives of each individual. One has to have someone to whom he can turn for comfort and trust. One has to be loved. Those that aren't loved and are therefore lonely, are the ones that seek love elsewhere. They create their own private make-believe worlds and retreat into them. Here they find the love and comfort that they so desperately need.

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire Results

The following tabulation sheet was given to the students at the end of the study period covering the eight short stories. They were asked to fill them out carefully and impartially, without signing their names:

Please mark from 1-8 below in the order you liked them.
(No. 1--the best liked story, etc.)

<input type="checkbox"/> "Silent Snow, Secret Snow"	<input type="checkbox"/> "Uncle Wiggly in Conn."
<input type="checkbox"/> "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment"	<input type="checkbox"/> "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud."
<input type="checkbox"/> "Winter Dreams"	<input type="checkbox"/> "That Tree"
<input type="checkbox"/> "Going Home"	<input type="checkbox"/> "A Country Love Story"

Comment:

According to the tabulation system used, the results of the scoring were as follows:

"Winter Dreams"	339 points
"Going Home"	310 "
"Silent Snow, Secret Snow"	251 "
"A Country Love Story"	250 "
"That Tree"	250 "
"A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud"	219 "
"Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut"	214 "
"Cruel and Barbarous Treatment"	181 "

In both classes, then, the favorite story was "Winter Dreams" followed closely by "Going Home." Also, both sections of students unquestionably put "Cruel and Barbarous Treatment" at the bottom of the list. Other than that, the variations in popularity between classes were

small except for "Silent Snow, Secret Snow", which was third favorite in one class and seventh in the other.

Various reasons could be given for these ratings. The most popular two stories are perhaps the most conventional of the group, and are also perhaps the closest to the student's own experiences.

The most disliked story contained no dialogue and was about a society and situation that was far removed from their worlds. These reasons at best are merely cursory and consist of guess work on the part of the teacher.