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Contents

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EDITORIAL

The phenomena of co-dependence, support groups, and the various off-shoots of AA have become the lastest targets of social science journalism (a linkage that does justice to neither of these disciplines separately). After a series of intelligent pieces culminating in Nan Robertson's "The Changing World of Alcoholics Anonymous" (The New York Times Magazine, 21 February 1988), The New York Times shifted gears, apparently to demonstrate that tough-minded individualists are not about to be taken in by sentimental togetherness. In rapid succession it favored Middle America with such items as "Is America Becoming Hooked on Addictions?" (Trish Hall, 7 October 1988); "I Did Drugs Until They Wore Me Out. Then I Stopped" (Mike Posey, 15 December 1989); and "Chances Are You're Codependent Too" (Wendy Kaminer, Book Review, 11 February 1990). Not to be outdone, The American Spectator published Elizabeth Kristol's "Declarations of Codependence" ("People who need people are the sickliest people in the world--and that's just for starters," June 1990). In a flank attack on "Neoprohibitionists," apparently a support group for the support groups, the old warhorse Dr. Morris Chafez (having changed steeds in the middle of the stream) declared, in The Wall Street Journal, that "[o]ur concern with illegal drugs has forced us into an obsessive state about alcohol and its problems. We do not need to create new groups of victims by overestimating alcohol's dangers" ("Alcohol and Innocent Victims," 5 March 1990). (For his effort, Dr. Chafez was treated to a flood of uncomplimentary letters.) In addition, we have been informed by D. Keith Mano that "prohibition" is causing people needlessly to die in agony ("Marijuana," National Review, 14 May 1990). Finally, the libertarians, once again protecting individual "autonomy" from the "New Temperance" (Jacob Sullum, "Invasion of the Bottle Snatchers," Reason, February 1990), lecture the unsophisticated about "[t]he disturbing consequences of treating addiction as a disease--and every bad habit as an addiction" (Stanton Peele, "Control Yourself," Reason, February 1990). Perhaps the best answer to this series of suspiciously well-coordinated rationalizations is Michael Dorris's account of his adopted child's affliction with fetal alcohol syndrome (The Broken Cord, Harper, 1989). Dorris's tale may be pure anecdote, yet it has the ultimate authority of deeply felt truth, itself the best answer to the laconic cynicism of the press.

Dionysos contributes, we believe, to the argument of Michael Dorris. Timothy Rivinus and Brian Ford complete their exploration of children of alcoholics in literature, Amy Mashberg demonstrates that Emma Bovary had help in her destruction, and Jennifer Manning discovers another secret of John Berryman's Henry. And our reviewers continue their survey of the use and misuse of alcohol and drugs in literature. "Is this what life is?" William Wyatt asks, in his poem printed below: "Where went the joy, youth, hope,/the freedom and the tenderness. I need some peace."

Review Article

ALCOHOL, LITERATURE, AND SOCIAL PATTERNS

Paul H. Schmidt

"Alcohol in Literature: Studies in Five Cultures," Contemporary Drug Problems 13 (Summer, 1986), special issue, ed. Nicholas O. Warner.

This special issue of Contemporary Drug Problems, "Alcohol in Literature: Studies in Five Cultures," illustrates two important themes in the study of literature and addiction: 1) an examination of the ways in which an author's drinking significantly affects both the form and content of what he or she writes; and 2) the documentation of references to drinking in literary works reveals historical patterns in societal attitudes towards drinking. Only the first of these is a specifically literary subject, though both use literature as a main source.

As the editor, Nicholas O. Warner, observes in his "Introduction," "Alcohol in Literature" can be divided into three sections. The first section contains two of the issue's eight essays, one concerning attitudes towards drinking as found in Finnish fiction, the other detailing similar concerns in American films (Pirjo Paakkanen, "Cultural Continuity in Finnish Drinking: Alcohol in Finnish Literature in 1911-1912 and 1972"; Denise Herd, "Ideology, Melodrama, and the Changing Role of Alcohol Problems in American Films"). Both articles attempt to study the differences and similarities between strategies for depicting drinking behavior in different periods. Paakkanen (sociology) compares references to drinking in literature written in the years 1911-12 with those of 1972 in order to determine patterns of continuity and change between the two periods. Herd (anthropology) performs a similar analysis of drinking in American film of the years 1920-1960. Both authors rely heavily on statistics and both attempt to resist excessive interpretation of their statistics. Of the two, Herd is the more suggestive, especially in her insights into gender identification and alcoholism.

The next four essays (Richard A. Filloy, "Of Drink and Detectives: The Genesis and Function of a Literary Convention"; June Dwyer, "A Drop Taken: The Role of Drinking in the Fiction and Drama of the Irish Literary Revival"; Sarah C. Pratt, "From the Anacreontic to the Dionysian: Changing Images of Intoxication in Russian Poetry"; Julia Lee,"Alcohol in Chinese Poems: References to Drunkenness, Flushing, and Drinking") form the second part of the editor's three part division. Each of these studies focuses on a national literature and draws conclusions on the meaning of inebriation within an historical literary period or within a specific genre. Richard A. Filloy (English) studies

drinking behavior in the hard-boiled detective genre in America and discovers an interesting relation between societal attitudes as expressed in laws and the creation of a literary convention, in this case the hard-drinking detective. He argues that this convention, invented by Dashiell Hammett, came about largely because of Hammett's need to find a workable method for establishing the moral ambiguity of his character. He serves this need by having his character violate the law of prohibition every time he takes one of his frequent drinks. But, his argument continues, if social conditions can stimulate the creation of a genre, then literary conventions may help to form human attitudes towards drinking.

Jane Dwyer explores attitudes towards drinking in a specific literary movement in her essay on the Irish Literary Revival. While in more scientific articles, drinking is studied with the neutrality of statistics, and while other essays in this volume emphasize the dangers of alcoholism, one even referring to it as a "disaster," Dwyer's essay is unique in describing a movement in which drinking is viewed in a positive light. To the revivalists, she contends, the pub represented a haven from English oppression, a small sanctuary of freedom in an alien world. But she qualifies: drink for these writers, especially for Joyce, was not an answer to the problem of living in "trying" times, "it was not pure escapism either" (285).

From Ireland we move east, as the editor tells us, to "the land that made vodka famous" (183), with an essay of almost purely literary historical interest. In exploring the attitudinal patterns toward intoxication in three Russian poets, Lomonosov, Pushkin, and Bloc, Pratt (Russian) observes that Russian literature in general does not follow the "movement from classicism through romanticism to symbolism" that one expects to find in European literature. After outlining the reasons for this idiosyncracy, she shows how one can discern this development in the attitudes of these poets toward drink. In a sense she merely offers these perceptions of drink as another piece of evidence to prove "Russia's separation from the mainstream of European culture" (297). In the eighteenth century, Russia's separation from Europe was not as pronounced as it was to become. She finds Lomonosov to be roughly in agreement with his eighteenth-century European fellow poets in sharing Anacreon's "notions of reason and balance that were so much a part of eighteenth-century western European culture" (289). After this historical parallel, however, one can, in reading Pushkin, observe Russia's divergence from Europe. A contemporary of Coleridge, (who, by the way, Pratt takes, somewhat uncritically, as a disciple of Dionysius), Pushkin, she argues, who could in his early poems celebrate the pleasure of drinking in a way we now associate with European romanticism, modulates this view in his later poetry to a position of Anacreontic moderation more like that of Lomonosov. In Bloc, "the symbolist, who should be

revelling in altered states of consciousness with Baudelaire," Pratt sees a complex attitude of debauchery spoiled by guilt, an emotion she deems inappropriate to symbolist poetry. The essay provides interesting examples of attitudes toward drink in Russian literature, but is a little too prone to unsubstantiated historical generalization.

Psychologist Julia Lee's essay is an attempt to arrest oversimplification regarding the so-called "Chinese pattern" of alcohol-intake, a pattern of moderation regulated by the "flushing" phenomenon. "Flushing" is the result in many Chinese people of a particular sensitivity to alcohol that causes "upper body reddening" and other circulation disorders. Scientists have argued that moderate drinking by the Chinese can be attributed to the desire to avoid flushing. Lee argues that the problem is more complex. Drawing on Chinese poetry written over the last twenty-five hundred years, Lee shows convincingly that Chinese attitudes have been far too varied and complex to be explained by the "flushing" argument alone.

The final two essays in this issue deal with individual American writers (Sonya Jones, "The Hallucination Sonnets: Alcoholism in Berryman's Dream Songs"; Roger Forseth, "Alcohol and the Writer: Some Biographical and Critical Issues [Hemingway]"). In a complex argument, Jones (English), focusing on Dream Songs. terms Berryman's poems "Hallucination Sonnets," and the explanation for that title forms one section of her three part purpose. Her essay aims to show that in a complex way creativity and alcoholism form a two-edged sword: "As creativity can feed alcoholism," she argues, "so alcoholism can feed creativity" (340). She identifies a parallel movement between Berryman's often turbulent creation of the sonnets and his battle to defeat his alcohol addiction.

In an essay that performs for students of Hemingway what Thomas Gilmore accomplished for Boswell scholars, Forseth (English), in the issue's final essay, makes an elegant case for making accurate knowledge of alcoholism (and, I would say, of addiction in general) a central tool to be used by biographers whose subjects are known to have been addicts. Gilmore, in his study of Boswell forthcoming in Eighteenth Century Studies. argues that traditional scholars of Boswell have either ignored his alcoholism, downplayed it, or winked at it. Only a writer with an informed awareness of how alcoholism affected Boswell's life and work, Gilmore suggests, can do justice to Boswell's biography.

Forseth, taking Hemingway as his prime example, makes a much broader plea: "Alcohol addiction is a . . . complex personal, social, and cultural affliction. The nature of this affliction in its manifold forms and expressions must, I am convinced, be clearly understood by the researcher who examines the relation

between the writer and drink" (364). Thus what Gilmore says is true of Boswell's biography, Forseth says is true of the biography of any writer with a history of alcohol abuse.

Having thus briefly summarized the arguments of the eight essays comprising this issue, I wish now to take a more specific look at those essays in which the question of alcohol's effect on the writer is most central. In the first six essays, the primary concern is with societal attitudes towards drink as reflected in literature or film or with the attitudes of writers or filmmakers towards excessive drinking. In other words, the first six essays attempt to discover attitudes toward heavy drinking by studying artistic representation of it. Of these six, Filloy's essay has the most wide-ranging suggestiveness for literary scholars, Herd's, Dwyer's, and Pratt's also having some importance for students of literature and film. The other two essays of this group of six are of more historical than literary interest. In contrast to these six, the last two essays of this issue of Contemporary Drug Problems deal with the significant question of how a knowledge of addiction can improve our ability to read and to write about literature.

In her discussion of Berryman, Sonya Jones demonstrates quite clearly "how the disease of alcoholism intersects with the creative process" to affect the structure, the imagery, and the subject matter of the Songs. In dealing with the relation of Berryman's drinking to his complex attitude toward poetic structure, Jones is at her most suggestive. Berryman's attraction to the sonnet form, she argues, fits the essential pattern of Berryman's life--an attraction "to authority figures" and a need to rebel against or subvert this authority. (This cycle of behavior is called the "catholic compulsion" by some recovering alcoholics.) It arises from a need to find structure and security in the world, a need complicated by a low tolerance for accepted authoritative models of behavior.

Thus Berryman employs the sonnet form, strictly ordered and rigidly thematized by traditional love sonnet sequences, only to disturb the structure with extreme metrical and schematic variations and violate its thematic promises with violent diversions. Jones shows how Berryman will, at times, flagrantly violate the rules of the sonnet form with impulsive changes--a method which, in imitation of the sexual behavior of the alcoholic, sometimes "causes his endings to fall limp or to come too abruptly" and then again sometimes proves successful (346). She also uses this alcoholic mimesis as an explanation for the prosaic nature of some of Berryman's lines--mirrors of emotional numbness. Thus the illogical rambling at the ends of some poems, she argues, reflects the "alcoholic inability to sort out or clarify reality" (348-49). For example, in an attempt "to parody . . . the symmetrical use of repetend in certain sonnet sequences (if not actually 'drunk talk'), D.S. 176 builds to an

anticlimactic letdown" (349). Though a reader unfamiliar with Berryman's prosodic virtuosity might be tempted to dismiss such endings as the result less of fully conscious alcoholic mimesis than of unfortunate alcoholic disability, Jones is I think right to assume that Berryman's effects are intended. But she might have strengthened her case by citing other evidence to prove to the skeptical reader that he was as careful a composer as she says he was.

The second part of Jones' thesis, while less technical and brilliant, is still useful in explicating Berryman's poetry. Noting with other scholars that since "only two of the Dream Songs are about dreams . . . the title is something of a misnomer" (351), Jones attempts to resolve this problem by suggesting that rather than dreams the sonnets really reflect hallucinations. With convincing evidence drawn from hallucination research and Henry's images of castration and dismemberment, she marshals evidence for seeing a pattern of chronic hallucinosis running through the songs.

Jones' third argument, that Henry's fearfulness in the Dream Songs coincides with the alcoholic's ultimate fear of being discovered as an impostor, is the least convincing section of the essay. She maintains, for example, that the line "I'm not, he cried, what I appears" (D.S. 356), suggests "the greatest alcoholic fear--the fear of being found out" (356). Whether this is the greatest alcoholic fear seems open to question, but that it is a fear common to many people, alcoholic and not, is more to the point. Berryman's art takes this common human fear and raises it to an alcoholic extreme, thus revealing his alcoholic obsession, but probing a more general problem as well.

All in all, however, this is a convincing and very useful discussion of the way a writer's drinking can come to play an important, even a dominating role in his or her writing. It also helps show the way for other scholars to begin to study the ways in which an addicted writer's use of alcohol or other substances may be analyzed as a part of that writer's prosody, thematics, architectonics, etc.

Similarly pointing the way to make knowledge of addiction an important element of literary study, Roger Forseth, in his essay, in addition to countering the too-often glib and almost celebratory discussions of writers and their drinking, makes the claim that alcoholic writers' drinking, "second only" to their writing, is the most important part of their lives and must be a central concern for literary critics and especially biographers. He cites two recent Hemingway biographers, "thoughtful and sensitive and meticulous in other respects," who make far too little of the problem of drink in Hemingway's life (372). A biography of Hemingway, Forseth argues, like that of any addicted writer, must concern itself very carefully with the ways drinking

affected his behavior and writing. There is a too-ready potential, he suggests, for the biographer, like a family member, to become co-dependent and defensive, too willing to excuse or dismiss the centrality of the drink or the substance in the subject's life. Forseth cushions his criticism of these biographies with an interesting caution that deserves citation:

> I do not wish to appear superior or to make accusations. The questions I am raising need, I believe, to be faced and answered, but in a spirit of considerable humility. It is not a simple matter to be an alcoholic, nor to be called one, nor to live with one--nor to write about one.

He further states that he does not wish to recommend the application of a "theoretical conception of alcoholism to the writing of biography or criticism. . . ."

> Alcoholism is not an ideology; [he continues] it is a disaster, and a disaster that manifests itself in myriad forms. But a firm grasp of the nature of alcoholism, of how it works its devious way into the most ordinary aspects of the human condition, can serve as a useful explanatory tool. (372)

As useful as this caveat is in its attempt to free alcoholism from the specter of ideology, it betrays its own ideological assumptions. That is, while alcoholism itself is not an ideology, any interpretation of it, such as the AA disease model that Forseth favors, has ideological assumptions attached to it. He might better have said that a writer about addiction has to be wary of following too closely and uncritically any one school of thought regarding addiction.

But this is to quibble. To his significant suggestions about the nature of writing biography, Forseth adds some interesting readings of Hemingway in order to make a distinction between what he calls "reflection," the imaginative recreation of the culture of drinking, something Hemingway did without peer, and "rumination," Hemingway's "specious and self-serving recollections of his contemporaries" (378). Forseth insists that the authentic artistic presentation of drinking behavior is one of the great gifts an alcoholic writer like Hemingway has to give. But, citing Hemingway's acidulous ruminations on Sinclair Lewis and F. Scott Fitzgerald, Forseth explains that Hemingway's need to damn those around him who, like Lewis and Fitzgerald, could not both drink and write, was a symptom of "a pathological condition" (377). Forseth's analysis stops short of explicitly stating the point that I think it implies--that the Hemingway

"code," so widely admired and discussed, is really little more than the addictive mechanism of denial, systematized and valorized. This angle on Hemingway's drinking could serve as a stimulus to an important revision of the way we view his writings.

I wish to finish this essay with a suggestion that is heresy to many people involved in the process of recovery from addiction. To many of these people, the problems of addiction are seen as unique to addiction--that drug addiction involves a process different from that of any other type of illness. I would like to suggest here that the reason problems of dependency and addiction are interesting even to people not involved directly in substance abuse cases is that these problems are not restricted to people who abuse substances. In other words, a person who has never had a drink may respond to the problems of a heavy drinker because he has experienced obsessions and compulsions of his own and therefore sympathizes with the behavior without having had the direct experience. I would suggest further that addictions and dependencies resulting in ritualized compulsive behavior are part of a culture-wide problem involving not only those with obvious addictions. Substance abuse victims provide extreme examples of the very problems--dependence, co-dependence, denial, lack of communication, enablement, fear of failure, etc.--that exist chronically, widely, but less obviously, in the so-called normal members of society, i.e., people not addicted to any substance. Even addictions to such things as gambling and sex are extreme examples of non-chemical abuse, more obvious than the more widespread problem I am trying to describe. I am suggesting that even where no specific addiction is identifiable, the mechanisms of the disease are at work in our culture, like chronic, low-grade infection that effects its subtle, enervating damage without causing obvious symptoms. The study of addiction is the study of cultural pathology. And as this issue of Contemporary Drug Problems amply demonstrates, literature and film are important places to look for ways of portraying and understanding this sickness in all its forms.

CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS IN LITERATURE
PORTRAITS OF THE STRUGGLE

(Part Two)[1]

Timothy M. Rivinus
Brian W. Ford

Abstract. The critical application of findings derived from the children of alcoholics (COA) movement and from clinical sources can shed light on both classic and less well-known works of literature. This critical inquiry probes the foresight, insight, and empathic power of literature regarding the nature of addiction and the experience of growing up in a chemically dependent family. Works by Betty Smith, Mark Twain, Thomas Hardy, Eugene O'Neill, Theodore Roethke, D. H. Lawrence, and John Cheever, works we consider to have been pioneering in their courage and insight, will be discussed. We also hope to suggest that what one less well-known author presented here (the poet Paul Smyth) describes as "the power of metaphor to save our lives" may lie at the core of the aesthetic force of these works.

III

A close parallel to the character of Tess and to her mother Joan Durbyfield, in Thomas Hardy's novel Tess of the d'Urbervilles, is Mary Cavan Tyrone, the protagonist of Eugene O'Neill's autobiographical play, Long Day's Journey into Night. Mary, too, is trapped in the intergenerational grip of an addicted family system; she and her children are its tragic victims. Mary, the addicted child of an alcoholic father and the wife of an alcoholic, James Tyrone, transmits an addictive legacy to her own children, Edmund and James, Jr. Mary's children are grown men in the play: Jamie is 33, Edmund 23. But because they have grown up in an addicted family, they are still, like Mary, children emotionally. They still live at home and have not separated from their parents. They remain enmeshed, often coming between their parents as spokesmen, keeping the family in childish turmoil. Like so many children of addicted parents, they are addicted themselves. An enmeshed, unseparated family structure is characteristic of many addicted families and of the lives of many children of alcoholics.[2] The only way to distance oneself from such a family as the Tyrones (although leading neither to separation nor adult status) is to become intoxicated, to blame, to shame, to character-assassinate or stereotype, or to run away.[3] It follows that Long Day's Journey is richly and painfully full of intoxicated verbal exchange, of blaming, shaming, character assassination, and half-hearted attempts to "escape."

Character stereotyping plays the same role as character assassination in addicted families. James Tyrone, Sr., for example, stereotypes women. Mary should be slim and beautiful; Tyrone, however, need not be obliged to accept or even to tolerate his wife's feelings, her pain, her real self. Tyrone says to Mary, "Your eyes are beautiful, and well you know it,"[4] but he allows her subsequent words no credence. Long Day's Journey provides an excellent example of the contrast between male alcoholism as socially acceptable and female opiate addiction as socially intolerable. Consequently, Mary is placed by these distinctions in the role of family outcast and scapegoat. Her honest efforts to communicate are consistently subverted by all.

Character subversion occurs when a character attributes feelings and motives to others and direct communication is subverted or blocked. In an addicted family it is often only acceptable to talk and speak one's "real feelings" when intoxicated (the classical in vino veritas). When Jamie tries to be direct with his father, his father replies, "That's enough! You're not drunk now! There's no excuse" (3). While sober, James, Sr., rejects Jamie's efforts to get across real sentiment, saying:

> I wouldn't give a damn if you ever displayed the slightest sign of gratitude. The only thanks is to have you sneer at me for a dirty miser, sneer at my profession, sneer at every damn thing in the world--except yourself. (32)

Jamie pointedly replies, "That's not true, Papa. You can't hear me talking to myself, that's all" (32). His father replies, doggedly insisting that Jamie fit his own image of what his son should be, "You could still make your mark. You had the talent to become a fine actor! You have it still. You're my son!" (33). To his father Jamie is an "adult child," never a grown autonomous man. He is, potentially, "a fine actor" who has become a failure because he has not fulfilled his father's dreams. None of the Tyrones are free to be themselves. They have become only tired caricatures of another's hopes and fears.

As Jamie's efforts suggest, communication in addicted families often takes the form of an autistic monologue in the company of others. In his stage directions, O'Neill describes Mary as she enters the room, intoxicated on opium, oblivious of her husband and sons:

> Mary is terribly nervous again, as if the strain of sitting through lunch with them had been too much for her. Yet at the same time, in contrast to this, her expression shows more of

> that strange aloofness which seems to stand apart from her nerves and the anxieties which harried them. She is talking as she enters. . . . She appears indifferent to the fact that their thoughts are not on what she is saying any more than her own are. (71)

The euphemisms of addiction serve, in addicted families, to absolve individuals of responsibility. By euphemism and denial, the affliction of the addicted individual becomes systemic. Mary excuses James's hangover and withdrawal irritability, saying, "You must have gotten out of the wrong side of the bed this morning" (22). This sets the tone for the "long day's journey" into a night devoid of any acknowledgment of the role that intoxication or addiction plays. Jamie and Edmund try to assert their identities throughout the play, but they are blocked by the grip of a closed system whose power, fueled by drug and alcohol use, is greater than that of the individual. Children of addicted families often take on stereotyped roles which are characteristic of pathological family systems.[5] In Long Day's Journey into Night James is an "acting-out" child who defies his father and the parental rules openly. Edmund is both the "lost child" and the "baby" or "mascot." James, Sr., attributing motives (his role as dominant parent), describes Jamie's role to Mary: "He's jealous because Edmund has always been the baby" (109).

The addicted family often lacks any sense of existential comfort, understanding, or serenity. Each member is self-absorbed, unaware of the possibilities inherent in the recognition that one is "not God" but mortal, not alone, but related.[6] O'Neill captures the tragedy of the Tyrone family members, trapped in the solipsism of their own world view, without the knowledge that a process of recovery from addiction might have been possible for them. This dilemma merely underscores the tragedy of the play and of its characters. One way to begin the process of recovery from addiction, according to AA,[7] may rest on a basic restructuring of the linear aspects of western rationalism and determinism that separate the addicted individual from others and from a "higher" spiritual order. As Gregory Bateson has put it in his essay "The Cybernetics of Self":[8]

> The "logic" of alcoholic addiction has puzzled psychiatrists no less than the "logic" of the strenuous spiritual regime whereby the organization Alcoholics Anonymous is able to counteract the addiction. (1)

With regard to the healthy interpersonal relationships necessary for recovery, Bateson continues:

> The healthy relationship between [a] person and [a higher] power is complementary. It is in precise contrast to the "pride" of the alcoholic, which is predicated upon a symmetrical relationship to an imagined "other." (9)

James Tyrone, Sr. betrays his own pride and spiritual desolation when he describes his wife Mary as spiritually empty. "If your mother had prayed too--she hasn't denied her faith, but she's forgotten it. Until there's no strength of spirit left in her to fight against her curse" (78). Tyrone understands the principle of spirituality but is unable to empathize, help, or acknowledge his own complementary role in the addictive process. He sees himself and Mary as alone, cursed among women and among men.

In one sense, therefore, the tragedy of Long Day's Journey is that the members of the Tyrone family are locked within themselves. It is an isolation in which dialogue with the self may be finally possible; but in isolation dialogue with others is impossible, and, when attempted, produces only anger and retribution by others, and despair in the self. As Mary, in monologue, laments: "It's so lonely here. . . . You're lying to yourself again. You wanted to get rid of them. Their contempt and disgust aren't pleasant company. You're glad they're gone. . . . Then Mother of God, why do I feel so lonely?" (95)

The Tyrones' inability to relate to one another is linked to their inability to conceptualize addiction as a disease. Addiction is seen only in terms of personal failure. Hurt and angry, they lock themselves into cells constructed of guilt and shame. They are unable to grasp what Bateson describes as the "single purpose of A.A." which

> is directed outward and is aimed at a noncompetitive relationship to the larger world. The variable to be maximized is a complementarity and is of the nature of "service" rather than dominance. (16)

Ironically, even as Long Day's Journey into Night was being written, the disease concept of alcoholism and the AA movement were being developed.[9]

In the play, addictions are characterized as moral failures, weakness of will. The medical and moral tenets of the times are embodied in Dr. Hardy, who never actually appears on stage but who is both a medical and moral presence in the play Mary says of Dr. Hardy:

When you're in agony and half insane, he sits and holds your hand and delivers sermons on willpower! He deliberately humiliates you! He makes you beg and plead! He treats you like a criminal! He understands nothing! And yet it was exactly the same type of cheap quack who first gave you [Tyrone] the medicine [morphine] - and you never knew what it was until too late!

It is still true that the addicted are sometimes abetted and misunderstood by physicians. Like unwitting family members, many doctors have little understanding of addictions and continue to prescribe and, paradoxically, harm when they would only help. They join the family as enablers.[10]

In Long Day's Journey into Night the Tyrones' remorseless "cycle of addiction," tragically, remains unbroken.[11] The play is autobiographical; however, O'Neill, prior to its authorship, had for himself broken the cycle of his family heritage and his own addiction. In fact, his greatest creative work followed his abstinence from alcohol; and his escape provides the unstated framework within which the tragedy of the Tyrones so hugely stands. As a work of art Long Day's Journey into Night stands, surely, for the creative release and expository healing born of adversity, personally felt and transformed by abstinence and creative rebirth.[12] In sharing the personal tragedy of his own family life, O'Neill "connects"--turning isolation into complementariness.

IV

A captivating poetic statement by a child of an alcoholic parent is the intoxicating "My Papa's Waltz" by Theodore Roethke.[13] The poem romanticizes, with an accompanying uneasiness and sense of foreboding, a small boy's encounter with his drunken father.

The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing is not easy.

We romped until the pans
Slid from the kitchen shelf;
My mother's countenance
Could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist
Was battered on one knuckle;

At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle.

You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt. (43)

The first stanza captures the power of the paternal example and the worship of the young child. Without tasting whiskey, the child experiences its presence on his father's breath. The intoxicating experience of the waltz is enough to make a boy "dizzy." The implication is that liquor and waltzing to its rhythm is "not easy" but is exciting, exhilarating--a lasting memory for a small boy. In the second stanza, a disapproving mother appears. She may enjoy the romp; but the frown, at its extravagance and drunkenness behind it, wins. In the third stanza, father and son share the wounds of intoxication, the father's fist battered--from a fight, perhaps--and the son's ear scraped. By the final stanza, the father is beating time on his son's head "with a palm caked hard by dirt." Life is hard. A son's clinging to his father's shirt is both a matter of life and death and a passionate, loving embrace.

What does this dance mean for the child? The poem maintains a delicate ambiguity, but it is easy to imagine hours of sleeplessness from the excitement and implied violence of the encounter. The memory has clearly haunted the poet: the romance, the fear, the taste of blood are infectious and indelible. As a son, the poet fears, admires, wishes to compete with and join his father. He romanticizes and idealizes the father who makes his son a dancing partner. The memory of Papa's waltz is captured by that son's memory in a breathtaking poem. It may be no coincidence, however, that Roethke apparently grew to romanticize drinking, frequently dancing a waltz of death by excessive eating and drinking.[14]

In contrast, the poet Paul Smyth does not romanticize his experience as the stepchild of an alcoholic. Smyth outlines the pain and violence of his growing up in starkly realistic verse. In his poem "Of His Affliction," he describes how an alcoholic stepparent affected him as a child.[15]

Always the threat,
Downstairs, of violence-
Whiskey and frothy shouting; yet
Silence was worse, the creaking silence.
And what was your offense?
Weakness: the kind that must beget

An iron obedience
  Upon its debt.

   Lying in bed
 You heard his shouting rise
Around your name, a sound that led
To ruin, to facts like myths: his size,
  His strength, his fists, his eyes.
You listened to the brook instead,
 Its muddy compromise
   Of hope and dread.

   How to prepare?
  You watched the ceiling, tried
To gauge his voice. Time was your lair,
And night, where hope and dread collide
  Crushing the minutes. Outside
The brook kept gurgling, unaware
  Of his terrific stride
   Leveling the stair. (26)

Smyth's description of the atmosphere of threat, violence, and fear, often experienced by young people with violent, alcoholic parents, is accurate and universal. This stepfather is no caretaker, no real parent. He is the opposite; he is a cancer of the family system, a threat to the very being of the child within the home, and from whom there is no refuge.

The dread described by Smyth is reminiscent of the dread felt by the young D. H. Lawrence in his poem "Discord in Childhood":[16]

Outside the house an ash-tree hung its terrible whips,
And at night when the wind rose, the lash of the tree
Shrieked and slashed the wind, as a ship's
Weird rigging in a storm shrieks hideously.

Within the house two voices arose, a slender lash
Whistling she-delirious rage, and the dreadful sound
Of a male thong booming and bruising, until it had
  drowned
The other voice in a silence of blood, 'neath the voice
  of the ash. (36)

Lawrence compares the violence of a storm to the fury of parents arguing below. The whipped branches of the ash-tree echo the lash of tongues. The memory is expressed in violent sexual terms, ending in a "silence of blood." Like the poetry of Roethke and Smyth, Lawrence's poem captures the memory of a young child's experience of parental alcoholism, violence, childhood

terror, blood, and the threat of annihilation.

We know that D. H. Lawrence's "Discord in Childhood" is an autobiographical recollection of his alcoholic father quarrelling with his mother.[17] The poem echoes the memories of the young Lawrence as Paul Morel in Sons and Lovers.[18] A companion poem to Lawrence's "Discord in Childhood" is his poem "Thief in the Night," which frames the abiding disquietude and the legacy of parental violence as a "loss of peace" in typically Lawrentian terms:

> Last night a thief came to me
> And struck at me with something dark,
> I cried, but no one heard me,
> I lay dumb and stark.
>
> When I awoke this morning
> I could find no trace;
> Perhaps 'twas a dream of warning,
> For I've lost my peace. (46)

The isolation and exposure of "no one heard me,/I lay dumb and stark" capture the pain of a memory of childhood deprivation, even castration, as the result of alcoholism, robbing the child of his "peace" forever.

Paul Smyth, too, captures the immediacy, the existential castration, and the abiding loss of peace in his description of the child's horror and fear as the parent-aggressor comes toward him in Conversions. In the poem the helpless child tries to withdraw, to protect himself, only to be assaulted in the most cruel way, the way in which only a crazed tyrant can assault the innocent:

> But can't recite;
> You think of a grinning skull,
> Also a speechless thing, then bite
> Your lip to make deep pain seem dull
> Till sleep begins to pull,
> To lure you in, till sleep seems right
> And even masterful.
> But in the night
>
> Your nerves, that twist
> Like roots down through your back,
> Begin the ruttish whines that mist
> Your eyes with turpentine and crack
> Your skin - veins drip shellac,
> Hot bubbling muscle-fibers kissed

To tar. Shrunk hard and black,
Your brain's a fist. (28)

Smyth continues with a sonnet, graphically depicting the wounds inflicted by the drunken stepparent and the brand of social embarrassment which they cruelly leave.

In the wavy bathroom mirror rippling lay
Five badge-like bruises: four finger-prints, the thumb.
He'd grabbed and held your throat like a fistful of clay.
Sick with pain and the smell of spilled Bay Rum
You winced touching those marks that seemed afloat
Like islands on your skin - his madness's map,
A clumsily worked projection of remote
Volcanic realms that would spread and overlap -

The blotch would be too hideous in school.
But the bus, your daily ark, could not be missed:
You readied yourself for playground ridicule
And washed your swollen face and buttoned your coat.
Then, in a last reflex of the will to resist,
You smeared your mother's makeup on your throat. (28-29)

The marks of the abusive parent are indelible. Every subsequent move by the aggressor puts the victim through the hell of anticipated, further violence:

You knew so well
The fist that crushed your lip,
Had watched so closely as it fell
Or rushed in level from his hip,
That when that hand would grip
A chairback angrily you could tell
By a whitening knuckletip
Degrees of hell. (29)

How can the adult, remembering such experiences as a child, come to terms with the horror of a stepfather who "grabs and holds" you like a "fist full of clay?" The answer is that the anticipated hell never leaves. Paul Smyth relives the fearful memory as an adult looking back--the memories of a camp survivor:

Lying in bed,
Imagine a chainlink fence
With barbed-wire gates, a tin-roofed shed,
Lean, iron-eyed guards who live in tents

Nearby. For all the time hence
Let memories eat the meager bread
Of despair, each violence
Dying or dead.

How to prepare?
Fear rolls large flickering eyes.
Swings nimbly from rib to rib - "Beware!"
Kill him, feed him, muffle his cries -
A stack of heartbeats tries
Buying that hunchback out of there.
But fear is pennywise
Screeching, "The stair!" (33)

The painful memory of abuse and threatened annihilation cannot be extinguished or forgiven, nor is the desire for retaliation fully surrendered. It must not be; it is the metaphor of survival of our time ("Lest we forget").

But how is the surviving child, the "adult child," to come to terms with the experience, and put past physical and psychic trauma to some kind of rest? Smyth implies that there is, in part, no rest; but there may be a kind of restitution: one in the struggle for external reparation; the other in the struggle to create, a kind of internal reparation. There are no guarantees as to which works better. Smyth describes the two choices in lyric form in the poem "Last year, at Christmas, I asked my brother why":[19]

Last year, at Christmas, I asked my brother why
He'd run away when he was fourteen, gone
Six bewildering months before they sent him

Home from Florida in handcuffs. "Are you kidding?"
He spit it, his face twisting ugly and flushed.
He meant our stepfather, he meant living in fear

Of physical pain, the terrible, terrible beatings.
He began to say more, but stopped. His mouth
Went white and tightened, his eyes glazed and burned

With furious hatred, hatred decades old.
I changed the subject, embarrassed for us both,
But thought all afternoon about the miraculous

Power of metaphor to save our lives.
He had none, none at all, only a white
Lincoln, three-hundred-dollar suits, money

To bet heavily and, if he wished, to burn.

The one brother denies and represses memory which, provoked, bursts from his nervous system in a fight/flight response. The other, in search of a reconciliation, the other choice, the way of the poet, relies on "the power of metaphor to save our lives." The poet mourns his brother, who appears to have no creative metaphor from within--only the metaphor of material addiction, bought things: a Lincoln, suits, money to wager, to burn.

Poetry is, clearly, an apt medium in which to convey the memory ("screeching, 'The stair!'"), the pain and emotional catharsis of a brutal childhood experience. As in Munch's painting, The Scream, Smyth paints the picture of the skull, of violence, of pain. But he also creates a work of art which, if created safely and truthfully, may partly liberate him (and others) by the bearing (and provision) of painful witness, "a metaphor to save our lives."

V

One of the masters of the modern American short story, John Cheever, has drawn on his own childhood and adult experiences to highlight various aspects of the child of the alcoholic.[20] In his story "The Sorrows of Gin"[21] he describes the predicament of the child Amy. Amy is a fourth-grader, daughter of the Lawtons, a suburban, upper-middle-class couple, who is already taking on her parents' values and examples. Asked by one of her parents' guests at a cocktail party how she likes her new school, Amy replies: "'I like it,' Amy said. 'I like private schools better than public schools. It isn't so much like a factory'" (198).

In "The Sorrows of Gin," Cheever outlines two types of destructive drinking. First is the "bad," falling-down drunkenness, characterized by the newly hired cook Rosemary. Rosemary is one of a succession of "unreliable" hired people working for the Lawtons. The second type of drinking is the socially acceptable suburban drinking pursued by Amy's parents themselves. The Lawtons are heavy drinkers but conceal many of their symptoms of alcoholism within a tolerant social milieu. Nevertheless, their drinking lifestyle has resulted in their withdrawal into a world of endless cocktail parties in which they neglect their daughter Amy. As a result, Amy becomes an example of the "lost child" of a alcoholic family system[22] and a prisoner of the self-absorbed, neglectful parents described by Alice Miller in her book Prisoners of Childhood.[23] Neither of these two alcoholisms has any distinction for Amy in terms of their results--they result in abandonment.

Amy's world is one where the middle class heavy drinkers make themselves out to be better than drunkards. But Rosemary, the "falling-down drunk," is more real to Amy than her parents.

Because her parents are unavailable to her, Amy relies on Rosemary as a caretaker, a friend, and as a model of behavior. Amy follows Rosemary's suggestion that she pour her own parents' gin down the sink. Amy's father is indignant and accuses Rosemary. When Rosemary returns to the Lawton home intoxicated, she is summarily fired and put on a train. Amy follows Rosemary to the train station hoping to join her. As Amy buys a ticket the station manager calls her father. Mr. Lawton goes to the station, ruminating, "Why should she want to do this?" He answers himself in terms of his own existential predicament:

> Oh, why should she want to run away? Travel--and who knew better than a man who spent three days of every fortnight on the road--was a world of overheated plane cabins and repetitious magazines, where even the coffee, even the champagne, tasted of plastics. How could he teach her that home sweet home was the best place of all? (209, emphasis added)

Cheever presents drinking as Amy sees it--as an attempt to escape the American dilemma; the solution that doesn't work; an attempt to reverse the predicament by repeated intoxicant use, which yields only loneliness and pain for the addicted parent and his child. Cheever portrays Amy as Amy sees herself: vulnerable, disregarded, and dispensable. Cheever accurately portrays the concrete thinking of a child in the stress of abandonment, who seeks identification with a caring person, in the form of Rosemary, and her wish to follow her as the only person who really seems to care.

Mr. Lawton is also a victim of addiction: of the suburban life whose price is paid in travel, long hours at work, the upper middle class rituals of heavy alcohol use, absence from his wife and children. He wonders where he could have gone wrong. His inability to teach Amy that "home sweet home was the best place of all" is painfully characteristic of the breakdown of the parent-child relationship in the addicted family--a theme to which Cheever often returns in his work.

Cheever's masterly "Reunion," a spare and riveting account of parent-child breakdown, also shows his understanding of the plight of the children of addicted parents. In this two and one-half page story Cheever depicts the adolescent Charlie who, while on his way to boarding school, visits his father (for the first time in three years) between trains in New York. Charlie's parents are divorced and he has since lived with his mother. The story begins with a prophecy. Charlie knew

> as soon as I saw him I felt that he was my father, my flesh and blood, my future and my doom. I knew that when I was grown I would be something like him; I would have to plan my campaigns within his limitations. (518)

In their one and one-half hour meeting, the son's longing and pride and the father's pride and longed-for camaraderie with his son rapidly erode under the influence of alcohol. The father, drunk before the meeting, takes his son on a toxic search for more booze. Desperately he forfeits all judgment and attempts to buy his under-age son a cocktail, to initiate him as a drinking partner. He berates waiters, and father and son are finally asked to leave one restaurant after another. Emotions which the father may have soberly felt--love for his son, sadness, and his sense of loss--are drowned in ugly drunken turmoil. Charlie's train is due to leave. Charlie struggles to say, "good-by, Daddy." But his father is unable to take leave; he is intent only on trying to "get a rise" out of a newsstand attendant. Painfully, Charlie says, "Goodby," noting that ". . . that was the last time I saw my father" (520).

What is the future for a son who knows that his father is his "flesh and blood, my future, and my doom?" Charlie has seen his father for the last time (is his father's death or disappearance imminent?), and he will view the memory of his father through the distorted lens of this last "reunion." Within the painful limitations of this paternal example of behavior, the son must wage his "campaign" of adulthood. How is a son to come to terms with these limitations without rejecting his own flesh and blood? How is a child to understand alcoholic behavior if it is not understood as a disease? Must he reject his father (and part of himself) outright? Should he emulate his father and abuse alcohol himself? These are the choices, "the future and the doom" of many children of chemically dependent parents. The "disease concept" of addiction[24] may be the only recourse to the child of the alcoholic parent wishing better to understand the failures of that parent.

John Cheever was the child of an alcoholic father,[25] and, himself, perpetuated the intergenerational cycle of addiction.[26] Cheever was an alcoholic parent; and his insights into these patterns, developed in his stories and novels,[27] may have played a part in his own ultimate recovery from alcoholism.[28] They also reflect painful, instructional moments of introspection with respect to his own behavior in the company of his children.[29] The wrenching dilemmas of initiation in Cheever's "Reunion" and "The Sorrows of Gin" are, for all time, brilliant cameos of the child and parent of alcoholism.

VI

This review of literary works describing the child of the chemically dependent family is intended to show that classic descriptions exist in fine literary works and to bring them to the attention of adult children of alcoholics, of clinicians, and of those who use literature to heal and to teach. It is our premise that such a critical viewpoint is reasonable, from both a literary and a clinical point of view. We hope it succeeds in focusing literary and clinical lenses upon the same subject--the predicament of a child of a chemically dependent parent--and in opening the subject to further critical scrutiny. Literary accounts of the children of alcoholics antedate descriptions coming from clinical material, and they do so with great accuracy. The works reviewed here are also the forerunners of similarly important, newer, literary efforts to describe the plight of children of alcoholics that await further examination. The numerous autobiographical or biographical accounts are also not here discussed, nor do we treat accounts of alcoholism or addiction which do not specifically focus on the child and the parent-child relationship, nor do we address fiction and autobiographical literature in languages other than English. We therefore invite readers to bring poetic, dramatic, autobiographical, or fictional accounts in any language to our attention.

We also do not treat the extensive autobiography and fiction of children of alcoholics in the Temperance Movement. This would be a relevant topic to a more general discussion of the literature of the children of alcoholics; and it is reviewed elsewhere.[30] In general, Temperance fiction was pamphleteering in fictional form. It served the purpose of disseminating accurate stereotypes of the progressively abusive and depriving effects of parental alcoholism on children. Nevertheless, most Temperance fiction was not great literature and did not treat the subtly complex relationship of the child of addicted parents with the depth and skill of the literary efforts presented here. Twain, Hardy, and Lawrence were, however, all personally acquainted with the Temperance Movement, which, like alcoholism, had touched their family members, friends, and acquaintances. The telling portraits of children of alcoholics in their works may have been, in part, their own literary responses to the Temperance Movement and to their own personal experience with alcoholic relatives and friends. The accounts by Betty Smith, Eugene O'Neill, Theodore Roethke, Paul Smyth, John Cheever, on the other hand, appear to arise directly from autobiographical material. Our discussion makes brief reference to and speculates on some of the autobiographical sources of the works discussed. We refer to the autobiographical nature of these works because of our contention that acts of creation may be an act of healing for many children of alcoholics, <u>including</u> those authors presented.

The act of reading and emotionally sharing in a creative experience may also result in an epiphany for readers[31] and may in addition provide a clue to the greatness of these works whose reputation resides, after all, as much in the creative response of an audience of affected readers as it does in the act of creation itself.[32]

* * * * * * * * * * * *

NOTES

[1] For Part One see Dionysos 1.3 (Winter 1990). The novel is treated in Part One.

[2] Jay Haley, Leaving Home: The Therapy of Disturbed Young People (New York: McGraw, 1980) 194-220.

[3] Merle A. Fossum and Marilyn J. Mason, Facing Shame: Families in Recovery (New York: Norton, 1986) 86-114.

[4] Eugene O'Neill, Long Day's Journey into Night (New Haven: Yale, 1955) 48.

[5] For further discussion of roles within pathological and addicted family systems, see Virginia Satir, Peoplemaking (Palo Alto, CA: Science & Behavior Books, 1972); S. Minuchin, Families and Family Therapy (Cambridge: Harvard, 1974); Claudia Black, It Will Never Happen to Me (Denver: Medical Administration Co., 1981); Sharon Wegscheider, Another Chance: Hope and Health for the Alcoholic Family (Palo Alto, CA: Science & Behavior Books, 1981).

[6] Ernest Kurtz, Not God: A History of Alcoholics Anonymous (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 1980).

[7] Alcoholics Anonymous (New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1976).

[8] Gregory Bateson, "The Cybernetics of 'Self': A Theory of Alcoholism," Psychiatry 33: 1-18, 1971.

[9] Edward M. Jellinek, "An Outline of Basic Policies for a Research Program on Problems of Alcohol," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol 3:103-124 (1942); Alcoholics Anonymous. (New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1939).

[10] Black, 1981, 17-20.

[11] For lucid discussions of the legacy of the intergenerational and cyclic aspects of addiction, see Patricia O'Gorman & Phillip Oliver-Diaz, Breaking the Cycle of Addiction: A Parents Guide to Raising Healthy Kids (Pompano Beach, FL:

Health Communications, 1987); D. C. Treadway, Before It's Too Late: Working with Substance Abuse in the Family (New York: Norton, 1989).

[12] Arthur Gelb & Barbara Gelb, O'Neill (New York: Harper, 1960) 224-239; Roger Forseth, "Denial as Tragedy: The Dynamics of Addiction in O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh and Long Day's Journey Into Night. Dionysos. 1.2; Tom Dardis, The Thirsty Muse (New York: Ticknor, 1989) 211-256.

[13] Theodore Roethke, The Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke (New York: Anchor, 1975).

[14] Eileen Simpson, Poets in Their Youth (New York: Random, 1982).

[15] Paul Smyth, Conversions. (Athens, GA: U of Georgia P, 1974).

[16] D. H. Lawrence, The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence. ed. V. de Sola Pinto and F. W. Roberts (New York: Viking, 1971).

[17] Harry T. Moore, The Priest of Love (Carbondale: Southern Illinois U P, 1974).

[18] D. H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers (New York: Penguin, 1976) 59-60.

[19] Paul Smyth, "A Frame for the Angels," No. 19, Last year, at Christmas, I asked my brother why . . . Poems to A Listener, host Henry Lyman, WFCR, Amherst, MA, 1985.

[20] Susan Cheever, Home before Dark: A Biographical Memoir of John Cheever by his Daughter (Boston: Houghton, 1984) 128, 192-202.

[21] John Cheever, Stories of John Cheever (New York: Knopf, 1977) 198-209.

[22] Wegscheider, 127-136.

[23] New York: Basic Books, 1981.

[24] Edward M. Jellinek, The Disease Concept of Alcoholism (New Haven: College and University P, 1960).

[25] S. Cheever, 210.

[26] O'Gorman and Oliver-Diaz; Treadway, 6-10.

[27] Gilmore, 62-80.

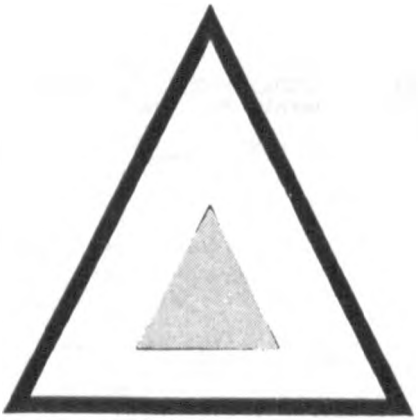
[28] S. Cheever, 192-202.

[29] S. Cheever, 128.

[30] J. R. Kirkpatrick, "The Temperance Movement and Temperance Fiction." Diss. U of Pennsylvania, 1970; M. E. Lender and K. R. Karnchanapee, "Temperance Tales: Antiliquor Fiction and American Attitudes Toward Alcoholics in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries," Journal of Studies on Alcohol 38 (1977): 1347-1370; H. W. Pfautz, "The Image of the Alcoholic in Popular Fiction, 1900-1904 and 1946-1950," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol 23 (1962): 131-146.

[31] Robert Coles, The Call of Stories: Teaching and the Moral Imagination (Boston: Houghton, 1989).

[32] The authors wish gratefully to acknowledge the help of Henry Lyman and Paul Smyth for their warm and trusting encouragement and for making unpublished material available to us.



TORN BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND DESIRE
ALCOHOLISM IN JOHN BERRYMAN'S "DREAM SONG #96"

Jennifer Manning

Often overlooked in the examination of John Berryman's poetry as it relates to his drinking and attitudes on drink is "Dream Song #96." At the beginning of this poem we see Henry on a bender, having alcoholic hallucinations but accepting his drunken fate with a smile. After seeing a "flagon [that] had breasts" he decides that, simply, "Some men grow down cursed." His answer, when asked (or when asking himself) "Why drink so, two days running? / two months, O seasons, years, two decades running?" is a smiling "Man, I been thirsty." Some time during his alcoholic spree, which is expressed here with the kind of time distortion we see in John Cheever's "The Swimmer" and to an extent in the "The Scarlet Moving Van," he has come up with this answer, he gives it happily, it is almost as though he were waiting to be asked.

Henry does a stint in the hospital, as evidenced by the statement "white costumes / threaten rum, his cointreau, gin-& sherry." He is not ready to be cured, can't stop completely, he feels "[t]he brake is incomplete." But although he sees how destructive alcohol is, Henry refuses to admit he can't always go back--he is divided between knowledge and desire. During the hours the hospital permits him to go out alone, he gets drunk, making the excuse that "even or especially in hospital things get hairy. / He makes it back without falling." One morning he sees some scouts, young, healthy, going on a hike, and thinks he shares their joy in the fresh new day. He seems to be denying his alcoholism by telling himself that he can stay sober and enjoy life, but perhaps he is experiencing the alcoholic's wonder at each dawn. Although Henry comes close to admitting his addiction, he is still trying to justify his drinking, trying to prove what he so desperately wants to believe--that he can drink and not be hurt.

CO-DEPENDENCY AND OBSESSION IN MADAME BOVARY

Amy L. Mashberg

When Balzac wrote the preface to his opus La Comédie Humaine. he stressed the importance of the influence of social surroundings on the personalities and actions of individuals. The century's interest in zoology did not escape Balzac, as he categorized characters as one would different species of animals. As he writes: "L'animal est un principe qui prend sa forme, ou, pour parler plus exactement, les différences de sa forme, dans les milieux où il est appelé à se développer" 'Animal is a principle which takes shape, or more precisely, differentiates its shape, within the various environments in which it develops'.[1] But the study of social surroundings does not place enough attention on the individual's first primary social environment--the nuclear family. Recent studies on the phenomenon of co-dependency have indicated that children who grow up in dysfunctional homes become obsessive individuals as adults, unable to live without the excitement of compulsive behaviors. While social standing may be adequate to explain certain behavior patterns, I believe it is insufficient to explain the purely obsessional nature of some of the protagonists of the nineteenth-century novel. One of the more compulsive activities depicted in the novel is adultery, and Flaubert's Madame Bovary epitomizes, perhaps as no other novel of its epoch, the repeated use of forbidden sexual encounters as a way to reach a more satisfactory emotional state. I will study obsessiveness in Madame Bovary--realized in adultery and other acts--and attempt to enhance our uderstanding of Emma's motives and actions by applying theories of co-dependency to her behavior.

Critics have often stressed the influence of romantic literature on Emma in order to explain her rush towards destruction. They see this as the major source of her malaise. She jumps into disastrous love affairs, spends money way beyond her means, and finds it impossible to live with her husband because she is striving to behave like and to locate the passionate characters she has read about as a child. Additionally, they consider Emma's life as acted on by a malevolent force of destiny: while she strives for the fantasy life gleaned from novels, her aspirations are destroyed by the middle-class mediocrity which surrounds her--a mediocrity which remains in full force at the end of Flaubert's novel.

These critics have based their theories in part on the letters of the author himself--letters which amply describe his dislike of bourgeois stupidity as well as his condemnation of girls' education. But these scholars have missed a very important point, although they do allude to it. The author, like his heroine, experienced the first years of his life in a dysfunctional home. And while critics do describe the author's

early family life, they do not indicate any correlation between that period and his later obsessive behavior. Similarly, they do not explore the dysfunctional backgrounds of both Emma and Charles Bovary.

I propose to study Flaubert's novel from the standpoint of co-dependency. My ultimate goal is to indicate how this psycho-sociological theory can help the reader to further understand the novel. I will indicate that the information Flaubert gives us about the nuclear families of both Emma and Charles Bovary points to co-dependency within the two characters. Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse, in her book Choicemaking, has developed the following definition of co-dependency after ten years of study on the subject: "A specific condition that is characterized by preoccupation and extreme dependence (emotionally, socially and sometimes physically) on a person or object."[2] I will show how Emma's behavior--her marrige to Charles Bovary, her love affairs, her spending, her religious ecstasy, her illness and her suicide --can be further illuminated by the theories of co-dependency.

Flaubert describes many families in the novel. These descriptions, overlooked by critics, are not gratuitous. They provide valuable insights into the psychological composition of the characters. Flaubert the realist has depicted in Emma and Charles characters who suffered the effects of dysfunctional homes. In early studies of this type of atmosphere, families in which one or more parents were alcoholics became the prototype of the dysfunctional environment. Prior to the interest shown in the home environment as a unit, professionals focused all of their attention on the alcoholics in an effort to cure their illness. When experts in the field of chemical dependency first began studying the alcoholic's family, the co-dependent within the relationship was termed an enabler--a person so compulsively attached to the alcoholic that he or she denied that drinking or other compulsive behavior occurred, thus allowing it to continue. The enabler was defined as "the person--usually the spouse--who subtly helps support the drinking. . . ."[3] But as Anne Wilson Schaef notes in Co-Dependence: Misunderstood--Mistreated:

> Currently we are beginning to recognize that co-dependence is a disease in its own right. It fits the disease concept in that it has an onset (a point at which a person's life is just not working, usually as the result of an addiction), a definable course (the person continues to deteriorate mentally, physically, psychologically and spiritually), and, untreated, has a predictable outcome (death). (6)

While the alcoholic home is now by definition considered dysfunctional, that term can be applied to any home in which children are unable to progress through normal stages of growth

in order to create their own personalities. They are stifled in some way by parental behavior. As Wegscheider-Cruse states: "Anyone who lives in a family of denial, compulsive behavior, and emotional repression, is vulnerable to co-dependency--even if there is no alcoholism or chemical dependency in the family" (4). Families replete with sexual, physical, and emotional abuse as well as those where a child was forced to "grow up" too fast due to the absence of one of the parents fit this dysfunctional mold.

These definitions of co-dependency and the dysfunctional home enable the reader to better comprehend the early family environment of the Bovary couple. As has often been pointed out, Flaubert's novel does not begin and end with Emma, but with Charles Bovary. Albert Thibaudet sees this as Flaubert's way of stressing the importance of fate in the novel: "Mais précisément Madame Bovary a été écrite parce que dès le collège . . . toute la vie de Charles était préfigurée. Charles y était, sans le savoir déjà épousé par l'Emma de Flaubert qui allait, en le traînant avec elle à la lumière de la célébrité, former avec lui un couple indissoluble" 'But Madame Bovary was written because from his school days on . . . Charles' life was entirely shaped. He was, without knowing it, already married to Flaubert's Emma who would form an unbreakable union with him, as she dragged him into the public eye.'[4] He stresses here that Flaubert is creating a family and in fact he later mentions "la défaite des Bovary" 'the defeat of the Bovarys' (110).

Charles Bovary is certainly not a minor character in the novel. He is described, in the very first scene, as a shy, withdrawn young man who is unable to communicate in the presence of the other students. Flaubert also points out his scholastic mediocrity in that he is not at the correct grade level for his age. Flaubert introduces us to Charles' family later in the first chapter. His father is described as an alcoholic who chases after women, an opportunist who lives off his wife's fortune. His mother is depicted as someone who suffered her husband's abuse and neglect in silence:

> Elle avait tant souffert, sans se plaindre, d'abord, quand elle le voyait courir après toutes les gotons du village et que vingt mauvais lieux le lui renvoyaient le soir, blasé et puant l'ivresse! Puis l'orgueil s'était révolté. Alors elle s'était tué, avalant sa rage dans un stoïcisme muet, qu'elle garda jusqu'à sa mort. Elle était sans cesse en courses, en affaires. Elle allait chez les avoués, chez le président, se rappelait l'échéance des billets, obtenait des retards.
>
> She had suffered so, without complaining, at first, when she saw him running after all the village tramps and traveling twenty leagues only to come home stinking drunk! Then her pride rebelled. She said nothing, stuffing her rage in a

> silent stoicism, an attitude she kept until her death. She was constantly running errands, taking care of business. She visited lawyers and presiding judges, remembered when his debts were due, got continuances.[5]

This passage clearly describes the mechanism at work within the alcoholic/co-dependent home as I described earlier. While the alcoholic drinks and shows belligerence towards the spouse, the latter, who is totally dependent on the alcoholic's behavior, "enables" that behavior by doing everything possible to keep the peace and rectify situations brought about by the drinking. The man who became Emma's husband grew up in this environment, and as a result, became a co-dependent himself.

Emma's nuclear family is not described at such length. When the reader first meets her in the second chapter, she is living on the farm with her father. Her mother had died two years earlier while the girl was in a convent. Her father had just suffered a broken leg and is in his bedroom swigging alcohol (eau-de-vie). Emma is downstairs trying to sew some pads for her father, who becomes impatient at the length of time she is taking to complete the task: "elle ne répondait rien, mais tout en cousant elle se piquait les doigts" 'she did not answer, but as she sewed she pricked her fingers.' (49). Later in the chapter we learn that "Mlle Rouault ne s'amusait guère à la campagne, maintenant surtout qu'elle était chargée près qu'à elle seule des soins de la ferme" 'Miss Rouault was not happy in the country, especially now that she was almost solely responsible for running the farm' (49). The chapter leaves us with the impression of a country girl who lost her mother at an early age, and who was forced to take on most of the responsibilities of her home after her sequestration in a convent. Emma's ability to progress is stifled by her family's need for a new wife/mother figure. Her father's expectations push her into the role of "surrogate spouse," though not necessarily in the sexual sense. John Bradshaw, in Bradshaw On--the Family, discusses each individual's need for completion brought about by a healthy childhood dependency as well as a two-way communication: "When children cannot get their dependency needs met, they become dysfunctional."[6] Thus, taking on adult reponsibilities as a child, even during late adolescence, contributes to later dysfunctional behavior. In addition, Emma's communication with her father seems all too one-sided, as he expects her to carry on the domestic duties left by his late wife and yet cannot accept her flaws and is all too glad to rid himself of a daughter "qui ne lui servait guère dans sa maison" 'who was of no use to him in the house' (57).

And Flaubert has 'fated' these two survivors of dysfunctional homes to marry, an event which occurs, within the novel's time, two chapters later. One might wonder why Emma

agrees to marry an individual so unlike the heroes of her girlhood novels. Thibaudet attributes Emma's acceptance of the marriage proposal to her desire to leave her father's home: "Charles . . . est accepté par elle simplement parce qu'il est le dehors" 'Charles . . . is accepted by her simply because he is the unknown' (97). If Charles represents that which is outside her home, he also represents that which is outside of her self. Emma, as will become clear later, is an addictive personality, searching for meaning through some type of compulsive activity. Charles, to the contrary, is content to muddle along in his daily existence, to allow life to act upon him. As Thibaudet states: "Toute sa vie il a été agi. Il semble que son infortune conjugale soit vraiment sa seule raison d'être et arrive seule à [lui] donner quelque figure" 'He has been acted upon all of his life. It seems that his marital misfortune remains his only reason to live and is the only factor which gives him any grandeur' (101). These two types of co-dependent personalities attract and begin dysfuntional relationships which mirror in many ways the homes they grew up in. While Emma seeks sex and love outside her marriage later in the novel, Charles remains to deal with the results of her compulsive spending, in the same way his mother did before him.

That Flaubert was able to so accurately depict the cycle inherent within the dysfunctional home over a century prior to research on the subject illustrates the truly visionary side of that writer. But one must not overlook the fact that the author himself was well acquainted with life in a dysfunctional environment. Benjamin Bart, in an excellent biographical study of Flaubert, describes the lack of communication and acceptance within the Flaubert family. He states that "his mother was the most important single figure in his life."[7] His relationship with his father was strained: "with his father as with the common citizens of Rouen, young Gustave too often felt distant and alien" (8). While the father's interest was in medicine, a profession which had been in the family for generations, the son began writing at an early age. Thibaudet relates how Gustave's father fell asleep the first time his son read one of his works to him (13). Just as Emma lost her mother at a young age, so the author symbolically lost contact with one of his parents. Bart goes on to describe the mother's attachment to the son: "ever-present in his life . . . she is a shadowy figure moving impassively in the background, ruling her son through total dependence on him and through the unremitting threat of the pain it would cause her were he ever to make her less than the center of his life" (8). Bart later states that Flaubert was constantly terrified of offending his mother (9).

The description of Flaubert's interaction with his mother illustrates the lack of boundaries inherent in co-dependent relationships. The feelings between mother and son become enmeshed to such a point that the mother finds fulfillment

through the son's devotion, and the son has trouble breaking away for fear of offending the mother. Appropriate psychological boundaries are never formed. As Schaef writes: "Since they have no boundaries, co-dependents take on another's sadness, happiness, fear, or whatever people around them are feeling and/or thinking" (46). Thus co-dependents negate their own true feelings and, as Charles Whitfield states in Healing the Child Within, the negation of feelings leads to compulsive behavior: "We learn that 'quick fixes,' such as compulsive behaviors will allow us to glimpse our true self."[8] Compulsive behavior--such as Flaubert's frenzied writing and Emma's string of love affairs --offers some measure of relief from the feelings of lifelessness associated with discarded feelings: "When we behave compulsively, we usually get temporary relief from tension, suffering and numbness, even though we might feel some shame about it. And even though of short duration, we feel alive again" (Whitfield 51). Finally, adults who grew up in dysfunctional homes experience an inability to feel like a whole person without constant stimuli from outside sources. The co-dependent is devoid of self-worth without the other. As Schaef writes: "Co-dependents have no concept of self that others could relate to. Whatever small vestige of a self does exist is easily given away in order to maintain a relationship because they feel like nothing without the relationship" (44).

The various characteristics of a dysfunctional background at work in Flaubert's life can also be applied to the author's heroine. While Emma believes she has found passion through marriage, her illusions are rapidly dispelled by the narrator. Her marriage, from the start, is viewed from a different perspective than all of her other adventures. Emma cannot endure the immediate state of calm inherent in the relationship: "et elle ne pouvait s'imaginer à présent que ce calme où elle vivait fût le bonheur qu'elle avait rêvé" 'and she could not presently believe that the calm in which she lived was the happiness she so desired' (74). In fact, her married life is described in the most placid and boring of terms. Charles shows no emotion when Emma sings romantic love ballads to him, and his affection has become a habit: "il l'embrassait à de certaines heures. C'était une habitude parmi les autres, and comme un dessert prévu d'avance, après la monotonie du dîner" 'he kissed her at specific times. It was a habit among many others, like an anticipated dessert after a monotonous dinner' (78). Critics have described Emma as a dreamer, and have described her subsequent actions in the novel from that vantage point. Victor Brombert, in The Novels of Flaubert. writes of Emma's "capacity to dream and a wish to transform the world to fit her dreams,"[9] and of her headlong crash into the realities of life which in the end defeat her. According to Benjamin Bart, Emma carries a sense of "nobility and of grandeur" to the grave as she is destroyed by the things she has dreamed for rather than by her inability to live in the real world (318). Albert Thibaudet expresses a

similar idea when he mentions the author's ironic smile regarding the desired objects: Flaubert has no illusions as to the worth of the coveted objects, "et une moitié de l'artiste, la moitié réaliste, peindra impitoyablement ces objects médiocres et dérisoires" 'and the artist's realist side will show no pity as he displays these mediocre and derisory objects' (95).

Yet while these critics stress the paramount importance of dreams, they do not truly explore the mechanism behind this type of escapism. Brombert sees Emma as a victim of her convent upbringing, where she began her fantasy life by reading romantic novels and keepsakes, by feeling the "mystic langor provoked by the incense, the whisperings of the priest, the very metaphors comparing Christ to a celestial lover" (54). There are many reasons to accept this interpretation, not the least of which are the writings of the author himself. As Bart notes, "Flaubert had long proclaimed the source of the malady: it was the way girls were brought up. He had written a diatribe protesting it . . . and now he could display it" (273). However, the very ability to dream was present in Flaubert himself, who was not educated like the girls. In addition, while romantic novels and incense may explain her ability to dream, they alone do not elucidate her repeated striving for destruction through her fantasies. Why does Emma, through dreams, bury herself in despair and finally reach for the suicide solution?

To truly understand Emma, we must look beyond the convent life to the life she led with her family, and we must accept that Emma's dreaming, as well as other activities such as sex, spending, and religion, represent obsessions which she could not live without.

The term obsession is not so far-fetched when dealing with an author whose own obsessions are clearly documented as fact. When Flaubert rescued Eliza Sleschinger's cloak in the summer of 1836, his act initiated an obsession with another human being which was to last his entire life and to reappear constantly in his writings. As Bart states "Again and again he told this momentous meeting in fictional form. Later versions lack the adolescent passion . . . but they still recount the same event" (26). In Madame Bovary he depicts the "adolescent passion" through Justin's feelings for Emma. The act of writing was also an obsession for Flaubert. As Bart explains it: "Flaubert wrote novels in part as other men drink alcohol or take drugs, because it was intoxicating" (323). He further describes the loss of self inherent in Flaubert's act of writing:

> For twelve hours he was living completely within the illusion of what he was writing. When he wrote the words "nervous attack" concerning Emma, he was so carried away, shouting out his words and feeling with the heroine what she felt, that he

> became frightened and feared for a moment that he would have one, too. . . . Now, after all these hours, his muscles ached, but he was filled with the total relaxation of fulfillment, an intoxicating lassitude. (324)

It is therefore not surprising that an obsessed author would create an obsessive main character. Emma craves excitement in the same manner that her co-dependent author does.

In his excellent study of imagery in Madame Bovary, Brombert discusses how the images represent a pattern which recurs throughout the novel: "from ennui to expectation, to confusion, back to ennui and to a yearning for nothingness" (55). While Brombert studies the cycle in terms of imagery, we can also indicate how it is similar to the co-dependent's cycle of escape-disillusionment-escape. Emma finds excitement through her adulterous activity, and with both Léon Dupuis and Rodolphe Boulanger the same cycle occurs. Following her first passionate, but non-sexual involvement with Leon, Emma is left with the feeling of boredom which follows all of her escape attempts: "L'amour peu à peu s'éteignit par l'absence, le regret s'étouffa sous l'habitude" 'Little by little love was snuffed out by absence, and habit suffocated regret' (156). Use of the verbs éteindre and étouffer give an impression of impending nothingness, and Emma is described as surrounded by a cold void: "il fut de tous côtés nuit complète, et elle demeura perdue dans un froid horrible qui la traversait" 'dark night surrounded her, and she remained lost in a horrible bone-chilling coldness' (156). Flaubert also describes the physical symptoms Emma experiences after her return to boredom: "Souvent des défaillances la prenaient. Un jour même elle eut un crachement de sang" 'She often felt faint. One day, she even coughed blood' (157). Emma's illness correlates with Schaef's statement that "physical illness is also a characteristic of co-dependence, which is indeed a disease that will lead to death if it is untreated" (54). These symptoms indicate that Emma is in need of another "fix," just as an addict recognizes the need for drugs from feeling sick.

When Rodolphe begins his seduction of Emma in the "Comices" chapter she has recuperated from her illness and experienced another period of ennui. She longs for escape, wishing she were as free as Rodolphe. When the latter stares into her eyes, she begins to feel confused about where and with whom she is: "il lui sembla qu'elle tournait encore dans la valse, sous le feu des lustres, au bras du vicomte, et que Léon n'était pas loin, qu'il allait venir . . . et cependant elle sentait toujours la tête de Rodolphe à côté d'elle" 'it seemed to her that she was still waltzing, under the bright lights, on the Vicomte's arm, and that Leon was not far away, that he would come . . . and yet, she still felt Rodolphe's head next to her' (177). After their first

sexual encounter (depicted in Chapter IX of Part Two, Emma becomes more driven in her passion, and begins early morning visits to Rodolphe's home. Emma is therefore basking in her new-found escape: "elle entrait dans quelque chose de merveilleux où tout serait passion, extase, délire; une immensité bleuâtre l'entourait, les sommets du sentiment étincelaient sous sa pensée, l'existence ordinaire n'apparaissait qu'au loin, tout en bas" 'she was entering some marvelous area where all would be passion, ecstasy, delirium; a bluish void surrounded her, the heights of feeling shone in her thoughts, ordinary existence could only be seen in the distance, down below' (191). But novelistic time continues, and, by the end of the same chapter, Rodolphe informs her that her visits are becoming unwise. As Rodolphe begins to pull away from her--after all, she has become 'sentimentale'--she becomes so confused that she recalls her father's farm with fond memories, seemingly forgetting her desire to leave the paternal home: "Quel bonheur dans ce temps-là! Quelle liberté! Quel espoir! Quelle abondance d'illusions!" 'What happiness she had felt at that time! What freedom! What hope! What abundance of illusions!' (201). At this point she returns to her marriage but finds the same lack of excitement as before: "il n'offrait pas grande prise à ces retours de sentiment" 'he didn't give her re-emerging feelings much of a chance to bloom' (202). She then attempts to create a hero out of her husband through the club-foot operation, an attempt doomed from the outset owing to the lack of personality and the mediocre intelligence of Charles Bovary. This failure illustrates Emma's need for completion through another person, as if her own self-esteem would be raised if only her husband were to succeed at something. As Bradshaw states: "Two half-people create an entrapment or enmeshment, rather than a relationship. . . . Each is entrapped by needing the other for completion" (65).

After the disastrous results of the operation, Emma escapes once again through Rodolphe, and as Flaubert develops the differences between them, we can better understand the obsessiveness in Emma's behavior. Rodolphe could not comprehend "ce trouble dans une chose aussi simple que l'amour" 'such turmoil in something as simple as love' (215). Later, Flaubert describes Rodolphe's loss of interest in Emma now that the affair is no longer new: "Emma ressemblait à toutes les maîtresses; et le charme de la nouveauté, peu à peu tombant comme un vêtement, laissait voir à nu l'éternelle monotonie de la passion, qui a toujours les mêmes formes et le même langage" 'Emma resembled all mistresses; and the charm of newness, falling like an article of clothing, showed the eternal monotony of passion in all of its nudity, always taking the same shape and using the same language' 219). While Rodolphe's behavior represents a certain extreme of indifference, it does enhance Emma's co-dependency through contrast. When she receives the farewell letter from Rodolphe, Emma is described as "haletante, éperdue, ivre" 'panting, bewildered, drunk' (231). In addition, the more she concentrates

on the letter, the more her level of confusion rises. Her attempted suicide is foiled by her husband's voice calling her to dinner, as if she plummets from the height of delirium and confusion to the disillusionment of the evening meal. As Emma returns to a non-compulsive stage, she also becomes physically ill, although Flaubert integrates the emotional aspects of her disease into his description: " . . . elle ne parlait pas, n'entendait rien et même semblait ne point souffrir--comme si son corps et son âme se fussent ensemble reposés de toutes leurs agitations" '. . . she did not speak, heard nothing and even seemed not to be suffering--as if her body and her soul had together decided to rest from all of their agitation' (236).

I have attempted to describe Emma's sexual passion as a form of co-dependency. And while her behavior fits within that mold, it can also be argued that passion generally exhibits those characteristics. All human beings yearn for the escape they experience at the beginning of a relationship, but some, unlike Emma, come to understand that the novelty has to disappear. When that yearning for escape carries over into other domains it becomes clear that the compulsions of co-dependency are at work.

Critics, for example, have also been hard-pressed to explain the co-existence of idealism and materialism within Emma. Thibaudet states that the upwardly-mobile Emma would need to express beauty through material things: "pour une bourgeoise fille de paysan la substance et le poids de la vie seront faits naturellement d'une certaine argenterie vulgaire" 'for a middle-class farmer's daughter, life's weight and substance will naturally be composed of a certain amount of common baubles' (90). Others see Emma's liberality as a reward for virtue: "Emma began to spend money, to allow herself to indulge small fantasies as a repayment for such great sacrifices" (Bart, 286). But there is more to it than that. Immediately after Léon's departure, she begins to spend a great deal. Flaubert describes the purchases in detail: "Elle s'acheta un prie-Dieu gothique, elle dépensa en un mois pour quatorze francs de citrons pour se nettoyer les ongles; elle écrivit à Rouen afin d'avoir une robe en cachemire bleu" 'She bought herself a gothic praying-stool, in one month she purchased fourteen francs worth of lemon essence with which to clean her nails; she wrote to Rouen in order to have a blue cashmere dress' (156). The description of Emma's spending has a frenetic quality, similar to her adulterous activities. Emma buys books but is never satisfied with her purchases: "Il en était de ses lectures comme de ses tapisseries, qui, toutes commencées, encombraient son armoire; elle les prenait, elle quittait, passait à d'autres" 'Her readings were like her tapestries which, once started, cluttered her "armoire"; she picked them up, she left them, she went on to others (157). Clearly Emma is not spending money because she needs or even wants her various purchases. The act of buying has become a compulsion for Emma. As Whitfield states: "Such compulsive

actions range across a wide spectrum of possible behaviors . . . it may involve overeating, oversexing, overworking, overspending" (51). Emma's use of excessive spending as a way to feel alive, however, fails, in much the same way as her adulterous activities have failed her and she falls back into disillusionment with its accompanying physical symptoms. Flaubert describes her as "pâle partout, blanche comme du linge; la peau du nez se tirait vers les narines, ses yeux vous regardaient d'une manière vague" 'pale, as white as linen; her nose was pinched in towards her nostrils, her eyes looked at you in a vacant way' (157).

While Emma spends money compulsively in order to flee the pain she feels after her first episode with Leon, she uses religion as an escape from the despair she feels following her affair with Rodolphe. The latter's departure triggers physical symptoms in Emma. At one point she believes she is dying and asks to receive the last rites. She is so overwhelmed by the beauty of the ceremony that she thinks she has found another way to escape: "Il existait donc à la place du bonheur des félicités plus grandes, un autre amour au-dessus de tout les autres amours, sans intermittence ni fin, et qui s'accroîtrait éternellement!" 'Thus there existed, instead of happiness, a greater bliss, another love above all other love, without end, and which would grow eternally! (240). Emma displays her religious feelings with such fervor that even the curate considers her to be a bit extravagant: "Alors elle se livrait à des charités excessives. . . . C'était un parti pris de résignation, une indulgence universelle" 'And so she devoted herself to excessive charity. . . . She had decided in advance to be resigned, to be generally indulgent' (241). This new escape brings along with it new confusions. Emma has buried any memories of Rodolphe, and yet they resurface as she is praying: "Quand elle se mettait à genoux sur son prie-Dieu gothique, elle adressait au Seigneur les mêmes paroles de suavité qu'elle murmurait jadis à son amant, dans les épanchements de l'adultère" 'When she kneeled at her gothic praying-stool, she spoke those same suave words of love to the Lord that she used to whisper to her lover, during the outpourings of adultery' (241). Finally, her attempts at flight through religion lead to the same disillusionment and boredom as her previous methods: "elle enveloppait tout maintenant d'une telle indifférence" 'she surrounded everything now with such indifference' (242).

While theories of co-dependency allow the reader to understand the motives and actions of characters, they can also help to explain the ultimate question raised by critics about the novel--that of fate and determinism. As Bart says: "The issue the reader must decide is whether the determinism of Madame Bovary, the fated or inevitable quality the reader feels, depends in fact on a chance absence of anyone strong enough to break the chain of intellectual and moral conditioning" (319). Had Emma been placed in a different environment, would she have obtained the goal of

her fantasy life? Fate is blamed for many events throughout the novel: Rodolphe accuses fate, in his tongue-in-cheek way, for Emma's beauty and for their chance meeting (230); Charles repeats this notion at the end of the novel, and the narrator intervenes to call Charles' statement "un grand mot" (366). The notion of fate is present throughout the novel in the circular as well as linear imagery. The juxtaposition of this imagery indicates that while the world keeps turning human beings will march on, in linear fashion down the dusty road or corridor towards death.

Perhaps the image of the Duc de Laverdière, the drooling old man at the Vaubyessard ball, can answer the question of determinism. The duke "avait mené une vie bruyante de débauches, pleine de duels, de pairs, de femmes enlevées, avait dévoré sa fortune et effrayé toute sa famille" 'had led a life of turbulent debauchery lived among his peers, full of duels, women he'd run off with; had squandered his fortune and terrified his entire family' (83). Thus, he had certain things in common with Emma, as the compulsive aspects of his own life are described above. And yet he lived at court, in a totally different environment. Flaubert depicts him as "courbé sur son assiette remplie et la serviette nouée dans le dos comme un enfant . . . laissant tomber de sa bouche des gouttes de sauce" 'bent over a full plate with a napkin tied around his neck like a child . . . while he dribbled sauce' (83). A different environment did not save this man from a cruel fate. It is possible to visualize Emma, who idolizes this "auguste" individual, as growing old, stuttering and dribbling her soup in the same manner. In fact, when Emma becomes ill after Rodolphe's rejection, she is reduced to being pushed in her wheel-chair and eating small meals in bed. Flaubert saves his heroine from the ignominious fate of the old nobleman through suicide. Yet the implication is clear. Existence, whether it be that of Emma at Yonville or that of the nobility, is crushed by a determinism which is not defined by purely social surroundings. Emma's life is determined from early childhood by the psychological conditioning she received in her family and never overcame.

The genius of Flaubert stems from his ability to relate truths. His practice of slaving over a text in order to find the right word is a well-known fact. But Flaubert is more than a craftsman of sentences. He is an interpreter of the human soul. In the mid-nineteenth century the psychology of addiction was unknown. Novels dealing with the genetic aspects of alcoholism would appear later in the century with Emile Zola's Rougon-Macquart series. And yet Flaubert has depicted in Madame Bovary the psychological effects of addiction on those who were raised with it. The statement "Madame Bovary c'est moi!" becomes even clearer in the light of co-dependency, as Flaubert translates his unconscious knowledge of a universal truth into a novel. Emma may appear to be confined and destroyed by her middle-class world. But the significance of the character and the genius of

the author have survived into the twentieth century.

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NOTES

[1] Walter Scott Hastings, ed., The Student's Balzac (New York: Crofts, 1937) 24. (This, and future translations, mine.)

[2] Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse, Choicemaking (Pompano Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 1985) 2.

[3] Anne Wilson Schaef, Co-Dependence: Misunderstood--Mistreated (San Francisco: Harper, 1986) 5.

[4] Albert Thibaudet, Gustave Flaubert (Paris: Gallimard, 1935) 90.

[5] Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1966) 40. Future references will be from this edition and will be noted by page number in the text.

[6] John Bradshaw, Bradshaw On--The Family (Deerfield Beach: Health Communications Inc., 1988) 67.

[7] Benjamin Bart, Flaubert (Syracuse: Syracuse U P, 1967) 8.

[8] Charles L. Whitfield, M.D., Healing the Child Within (Pompano Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 1987) 30.

[9] Victor Brombert, The Novels of Flaubert (Princeton: Princeton U P, 1966) 85.

The Living Room

The double shock of ice and liquid fire
at day's end brings repose. The anxious lord
assumes the chair, receives reports and, calm
now, issues edicts, comments, orders, plans.
He finds a blessed end to rage and fear
as scotch's welcome balm removes his cares.
The earth revolves more slowly now that booze
and home enfold. The broken lamp? That chair?
That's yesterday's affair. Besides, the bitch
deserved it. Why can't people understand?
Why must they bug one? Neglect to love?
They interrupt, relate a boring dream,
a day in school, a meeting of the PTA.
For Christ's sake, what does all that signify?
Petty litanies without the real import
of B's in subjects that really should be A's;
of braces, glasses, shoes, expensive flaws.
Another drink. The rage recurs. Is this
what life is? Where went the joy, youth, hope,
the freedom and the tenderness? I need some peace.
It's hard to run things all the time. Good God,
it's hard! If only they could understand!

William F. Wyatt, Jr.

Brief Reviews

Donald Newlove, Those Drinking Days: Myself and Other Writers. New York: McGraw-Hill Paperbacks, 1988.

When Donald Newlove--novelist, short-story writer, essayist and recovering alcoholic--published this memoir in 1981, reviewers called it "courageous," "frightening," "harrowing," and "astonishing" for its candor and realism. This welcome reissue reminds us how new and startling stories of addiction were only a decade ago. In blunt, gritty prose, Newlove dispels the romantic myth that drinking and writing go together. In Part I, he describes "Drunkspeare," his drinking-writer persona, whose first memory (at age 5) was a bar. He drank heavily by age 13, had blackouts by age 15, and drank his way through eight failed and forgotten books, three marriages, and five jails. Then, "things got worse." He added drugs to booze and withdrew into isolation and despair. At age 38, he tried recovery through AA, though it took another five years to get sober. Since then, he lives by the AA motto, "One Day At A Time," and writes books that matter.

Part II describes other "Great slaking thirst artists" like Faulkner, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and two dozen others. Again his message is blunt and unequivocal: great drinkers don't create great art, and on the few occasions when good writing has been created under the influence, it is in spite of, not because of, alcohol. The only real fellowship drinking writers share, Newlove states, is a "Little Dreamland" of self-delusion. Thus, when Allen Ginsburg eulogizes Kerouac as "the last of the great Christian drinkers," that is "high manure" which is only "pouring romance over the corpse."

After his own story, Newlove's longest anecdote describes a drunken Robert Lowell at a Christmas party--"Lord Weary in a wine-dark cloud." He admires Lowell's poetry, but "Genius is no excuse for self-destruction." Thus, this book will disappoint anyone who wants to believe drinking intensifies experience or helps the creative juices flow.

Those Drinking Days adds a grim portrait to the confessional literature of our therapeutic culture. Newlove's own story includes recovery, so he also provides hope, but his chief purpose is to warn against the false claims of writers and artists who use suffering or their art as a rationalization for destructive drinking. And he might add the critics and biographers who ignore or excuse drinking in the name of art. Newlove says his book "is for my fellow writers who are still out there walking in front of cars." It is also for anyone who wants to understand alcoholism and what it can do--which in his characteristically direct manner, Newlove tells us: "Alcohol kills."

--Donald C. Irving

Scott Russell Sanders. "Under the Influence: Paying the Price of My Father's Booze." Harper's (November 1989): 68-75.

A teacher of literature, novelist, and essayist, Scott Russell Sanders tells a polished version of an old story: a son grows up loving and hating and fearing his alcoholic father. Those who have read any of the collections devoted to life stories of adult children of alcoholics (ACOA) will recognize the staples of that genre: the fearful listening, the angry words and threats, what Sanders calls a "corrosive mixture of helplessness, responsibility, and shame."

Although his father died in 1981, Sanders understands that "the story continues." He describes how alcohol distorted his own personality as surely as it did his father's: while Greeley Sanders became the classic drunk--red-faced and rageful, stashing Gallo bottles under his coat, gobbling Clorets--his son, illogically but powerfully convinced that the drinking was his fault, was likewise reduced to a type, the family hero, the perfect son, what counselors and therapists will recognize as the textbook ACOA:

> If my father was unstable, I would be a rock. If he squandered money on drink, I would pinch every penny. If he wept when drunk--and only when drunk--I would not let myself weep at all. If he roared at the Little League umpire for calling my pitches balls, I would throw nothing but strikes. . . . I would go through life without making anyone mad. I vowed never to put in my mouth or veins any chemical that would banish my everyday self. I would never make a scene, never lash out at the ones I loved, never hurt a soul. Through hard work, relentless work, I would achieve something dazzling--in the classroom, on the basketball court, in the science lab, in the pages of books--and my achievement would distract the world's eyes from his humiliation. I would become a worthy sacrifice, and the smoke of my burning would please God.

Sanders concludes accurately and sadly: "It is far easier to recognize these twists in my character than to undo them." He tells that his daughter recently presented him with a placard reading "WORKAHOLIC," that his ten-year-old son is now as crushed by his sadness as he was by his father's, that he cautiously sips no more than a glass of wine or a can of beer, fearful that the alcohol will transform him as destructively and inexplicably and irreparably as it did his father.

Sanders' obviously heartfelt memoir provides further evidence--as if such were needed--that alcoholism is indeed a family disease and that children of alcoholics continue to pay the price, enduring their own unique miseries and suffering their own spiritual and emotional malaise. One hopes only that Sanders avails himself of the help available--goes to a meeting, joins a group, finds a therapist--and achieves a measure of peace of mind, lest his children contribute their own sad stories to a future volume recording the pain of adult children of adult children of alcoholics.

--Hamilton E. Cochrane

George R. Carlson. "Aristotle and Alcoholism: Understanding the Nicomachean Ethics." Teaching Philsophy 9.2 (June 1986): 97-102.

The Nicomachean Ethics is to moral philosophy what the Poetics is to literary criticism: the locus classicus against which all later texts are measured. Both works are, however extraordinarily discursive, loosely organized. It is refreshing, therefore, that George R. Carlson has applied the case method to the Ethics in order to render Aristotle's ethical principles clear to the modern reader. His "case" is alcoholism. Readers "often cannot grasp what Aristotle means by 'moral virtue,' because they cannot identify with so much of what he says about the nature of vice, and most particularly, about the vice of self-indulgence." He states, further, "it seems paradoxical to argue, as does Aristotle, that the vice-ridden hedonist is . . . the victim of a disease, but nonetheless acts voluntarily." Carlson points out that self-indulgence (akolasia) is difficult to analyze psychologically, but that the "disease/vice" of alcoholism fits Aristotle's category admirably. Carlson's analysis is especially effective where he interprets Aristotle's view of self-indulgence as "denial syndrome," defense mechanism, rationalization. In short, this is a refreshing exercise in practical reason, useful, for instance, in the analysis of the Tyrones in Eugene O'Neill's Long Day's Journey into Night.

--Roger Forseth

NOTES AND COMMENT

Areté will devote its Summer 1990 issue to alcohol, drugs, and creativity. Editor Doug Balding says that we will find it on the newsstands in July; or write to him for a sample issue ($3.50): Areté, 405 West Washington Street, Suite 418, San Diego, CA 92103 (800/537-5825). Look for George Wedge's "Notes from the Bottle: Literary Creativity, Alcohol, and Drugs" in that issue. . . . Cheryl Krasnick Warsh reviewed Ernest Kurtz's Not-God: A History of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Fall 1989 issue of The Social History of Alcohol Review. . . . Dan Wakefield conducted a workshop, "Alcohol and Creativity: Dispelling the Myth," May 18 in Boston (Interface: New England's Center for the Education of Body, Mind and Spirit). Dan writes, "I'd like to do these programs elsewhere." Those interested, write: Dan Wakefield, c/o Kings Chapel, 64 Beacon Street, Boston MA 02108. . . . Contributor Hayden Carruth received the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize of $25,000, poetry's richest prize, awarded jointly by the Modern Poetry Association and the American Council for the Arts. . . . Scott Donaldson reviewed Tom Dardis's The Thirsty Muse, Tom Gilmore's Equivocal Spirits, Don Goodwin's Alcohol and the Writer. and Donald Newlove's Those Drinking Days for The Sewanee Review (April-June 1990). Roger Forseth reviewed the first three of these books and Mark Lender/James Martin's Drinking in America for American Quarterly (March 1990). . . . The citations in the new Oxford English Dictionary (1989) for "alcoholism" and its cognates are intriguing if, for the OED, somewhat spare. The first mention of "alcoholism" is in German (always put the unpleasant in a foreign language): "1852 M. Huss Chron. Alcohols-Krank. Pref., Ich habe dieser Krankheit einen neuen Namen, nämlich Alcoholismus chronicus beigelegt." Even dictionaries can be quaint: "alcoholic . . . 1907 Daily Chron. 4 Sept. 3/1 There is a time coming when the alcoholic will be a rarity." Our favorites: "Alcoholist . . . 1894 Pop. Sci. Monthly Nov. 99 A moderate alcoholist. 1920 W. J. Locke House of Baltazar iii, Old Jack Bonnithorne, the champion alcoholist of the moorland." . . . Most fascinating book title of 1989: Don't Worry. He Won't Get Far on Foot: The Lighter Side of Being Paralyzed for Life by Jack Callahan (Morrow 1989): "The joke of the title is that Callahan's a paraplegic . . . with an acidic wit that permeates this involving and extraordinarily frank account of how he came to grips with his disability--and with the alcoholism that helped cause it" (Kirkus Reveiws. 1 April 1989).

Conferences

The John Berryman Conference (announced in our winter issue) will be held in the Coffman Union, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis MN, 25-27 October (information: Richard Kelly, 5 Wilson Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 55455; 612/624-5860). One of the seven panels is on the topic, Berryman, alcoholism, and the sources of creativity. Panelists:

Lewis Hyde, George Wedge, Roger Forseth. Philip Levine will deliver the keynote address. . . . The announcement for the literature and addiction conference at the University of Sheffield appears elsewhere in this issue. "The conference, while interdisciplinary, is concerned with the nature of addiction and its connections with fictionalizing and writing. Excessive appetites covered will range from alcohol, drugs, and food, to love, sex and gambling. Please send short abstracts, or requests for further information, to The Secretary, Literature and Addiction, Dept. of English Literature, the University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2Tn. GB." Among those reading papers are Tom Gilmore, Don Goodwin, Nick Warner, and Roger Forseth.

Research Notes

"The social cost of an alcohol-related decrement in lifespan is emphasized by these data from a highly talented selection of American writers," concludes W. Marvin Davis: "Premature Mortality Among Prominent American Authors Noted for Alcohol Abuse." Drug and Alcohol Dependence 18 (1986) 133-38. . . . The Fall 1989 issue (No. 20) of The Social History of Alcohol Review contains a Ten-Year Index to the first decade of this excellent journal. The separate Book Review Index should be especially useful for Dionysos readers. . . . A special issue of Journal of Abnormal Psychology (97.2 [1988]) is devoted to "Models of Addiction." It "highlights empirical approaches to addiction that have clear theoretical relevance and significant theoretical perspectives." . . . A useful research project might be to survey the early issues of Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol examining in particular its "Classics of Alcohol Literature," cultural, literary, and philological items, and reviews (e.g., "A Student of the Problems of Alcohol and Alcoholism Views the Motion Picture, The Lost Weekend" [December 1945]).

Work in Progress

Frank Morral (English, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057) writes, "I will be working over the next fifteen months on a book tentatively titled D. H. Lawrence and the Drunken Father: The Effects of Alcoholism and Violence on His Early Life, Work, and Critics." Professor Morral has received a 1990 NEH Summer Grant for his research. "My study considers D. H. Lawrence's life and work up through his completion of Sons and Lovers and how his experience in his family during this time shapes the way he portrays characters and their relationship to one another in his early short stories, novels, and plays. I will show how recent paradigms of the effects of alcoholism and violence on families serve as better models for understanding Lawrence's life, fiction, and plays than do current critical approaches, which never (to my knowledge) take into account how violence or alcoholism actually does affect individuals, families, and by extension texts."

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS TO DIONYSOS

Hamilton Cochrane is an assistant professor of English at Canisius College, where he teaches courses in literature and creative writing. His essay "'Taking the Cure': Alcoholism and Recovery in the Fiction of Raymond Carver" was published in the Summer 1989 issue of The University of Dayton Review.

Brian Ford has been teaching English in secondary schools for seventeen years. He earned his Ph.D. with a dissertation on the problem of religion in the poetry of Wallace Stevens. He is chair of the English department at Noble & Greenough School in Dedham, Massachusetts.

Donald C. Irving, professor of English & American Studies at Grinnell College, has had a long scholarly interest in America's literary landmarks, and is collecting materials toward a biography of the Chicago poet, painter, and dancer Mark Turbyfil. He wrote the essays on the biographies of J. F. Cooper and Theodore Roethke for the forthcoming (January) St. James Press Guide to Biography.

Jennifer Manning is an undergraduate studying English with a creative writing concentration at Georgia State University. She has had poetry published, and is planning on taking a doctorate and teaching.

Amy Mashburg is currently writing her dissertation at The University of Texas at Austin on the subject of systemic functioning (including family systems functioning) in several of Balzac's novels and short stories.

Timothy Rivinus, M.D., runs a Dual Diagnosis (substance abuse plus other psychiatric problems) Program for adolescents and their families at Bradley Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island, and is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at the Brown University School of Medicine.

Paul H. Schmidt is an assistant professor of English at Georgia State University, where he teaches courses in nineteenth-century literature. His essay "Addiction and Madame Bovary" appears in the Winter 1990 issue of the Midwest Quarterly.

William F. Wyatt, Jr., is professor of classical philology at Brown University and is currently Whitehead Visiting Fellow at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece. He has published extensively in the field of classical language and literature and has translated works from the modern Greek.

ENGLISH Literature

AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

Literature and Addiction: An Interdisciplinary Conference, 4-7 April 1991

Advance Notice and Call for Papers

Literature and Addiction will present new thought about a subject in which interest has accelerated, for example, in the foundation of the journal of literature and intoxication, *Dionysos*. At the centre of the conference will be literature and the compulsions of the writer, as drinker, drug-taker, lover and eater. There will also be papers on the medical, psychoanalytic and sociological aspects of addiction, and on its political, religious and gender-related ramifications.

Literature has long been associated with intoxicants and sedatives, in its content and in its making. The bottle has been seen as complementary to the pen. The consciousness-distorting properties of alcohol can act as inspiration, releasing multi-coloured visions, a 'stream' of words.

Like writing itself, addiction operates through postponement and avoidance. The addict proceeds from shot to shot, the writer from word to word, avoiding consummate confrontation. Perhaps deferral operates in addictive behaviour as it does in the narrative which describes it. Drinking and writing may be delay, the epitome of Freud's pleasure principle.

At **Literature and Addiction** the speakers will include Betsy Ettore (Centre for Research on Drugs and Health Behaviour, London), Roger Forseth (editor, *Dionysos*), Thomas Gilmore (author, *Equivocal Spirits*), Donald Goodwin (University of Kansas Medical Center), John Haffenden (author, *The Life of John Berryman*), Sheila Henderson (Institute of the Study of Drug Dependence, London), F.A. Jenner (Professor of Psychiatry, University of Sheffield) and Frances Spalding (author, *Stevie Smith: A Critical Biography*). The conference is organised by Tim Armstrong, Matthew Campbell, Ian MacKillop and Sue Vice.

Literature and Addiction is a full residential conference at Halifax Hall of Sheffield University, costing £175 /$285; concessionary and non-residential rates will be available. The registration fee of £50/$80 is payable by 1 February 1991. If you wish to attend, contribute or require further information please contact The Secretary, Literature and Addiction, at the address below.

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