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«Exposure of humanistic feelings in the literary activity of Theodore Dreiser»

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EXPOSURE OF HUMANISTIC FEELINGS IN “SISTER CARRIE” BY THEODORE DREISER

INTRODUCTION

Actuality of theme. Today's fast developing society always demands highly skilled specialist. Intellectually developed generation is basis of great future. After independence great attention started to be paid to foreign languages and their teaching. State sovereignty, along with membership in the United Nations and other international organizations has given Uzbekistan an opportunity to conduct independent foreign policy, search for ways to join the international community, and prioritize the goals of international relations. One of the most important tasks of our country is to train of qualified specialist in the fields of diplomacy, international law, external economic activities, banking and other new realms of endeavors; expended study and training opportunities for students and specialists at leading foreign educational and research centers, foreign firms, banks and companies. In order to fulfill these tasks, we should think about methods and ways of teaching English to our specialists. In December 2010, our president Islam Karimov proposed about improving foreign language teaching, especially English, to our specialists in different fields.

Education provides creative inspiration for the spirituality of the people of Uzbekistan. It helps us discover the best abilities of the up and coming generation, while continuously improving the skills of professionals. Education helps elucidate and pass down the wisdom and experiences of the older generation to the younger. Young people, with their budding talents and thirst for knowledge, begin to understand spirituality through education. Our state will attract on a broad scale the experience of advanced countries in training specialists and establishing conditions for high-quality education in Uzbekistan itself. During the era of cultural renaissance in Maveraunnahr in the 10-12th and 14-16th centuri[1]es A.D. there were many cities with institutions of higher education and scientific centers. This excellent tradition is now being revived.

For Uzbeks, family and its values have always been sacred. This institute is the main link of the society. The country officially dedicates this year to Family. In this regard, further strengthening the role and place of family in the society and state, and improving the work being done in this direction gain significance.

In Uzbekistan, from the first years of independence, a lot attention has been paid to the institute of family. The goal of the reforms, carried out sequentially in the country, is to protect human interests and to provide peace and prosperity in each family. Healthy atmosphere, prevailing here, makes a solid foundation for upbringing well-rounded people, who can take good position in society. Quiet and prosperous life of each member of a family is the factor for sustainable development and prosperity of the state as a whole.

In order to implement a wide range of targeted measures on the further strengthening and development of the institution of the family as basis of the society, to raise to a qualitatively new level of the whole of the work to strengthen the legal and socio-economic protection of the interests and support of the family, especially young families, increase of the role of the family in the upbringing physically healthy and spiritually Mature and harmoniously developed generation, strengthening of the status and the strengthening of the role of community in the practical implementation of target tasks on formation of a strong, healthy families, and also in connection with the proclamation of the Republic of Uzbekistan 2012, "Year of the strong family":

To approve developed by the Republican Commission, formed by the decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 13 December 2011 No. P-3760, jointly with the interested ministries, departments, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, khokimiyats of oblasts and Tashkent city, public and non-governmental organizations, bodies of self-government of the citizens of the State program "Year of the strong family".

[1] Karimov I.A. Yuksak ma'naviyat yengilmas kuch. Toshkent - 2008

Support to young families will get particular emphasis in the governmental program. As the President said during his speech on occasion of the 19th anniversary of Uzbekistan's Constitution, "All of us are well aware that the existence of a strong, healthy family and its happy life depends primarily on the young people themselves, who are building their own family, on their intellectual level, their spiritual and moral values, on their good awareness of responsibilities and obligations before their family and society. And this is an indisputable truth. Strong material and moral support, providing necessary assistance, privileges and preferences to a young family who just enters the life with high hopes, are not only parents' burden, but especially of the state and the whole society.

We all know what a great care and attention our country pays to the young families today. However, we must recognize that we still have much to do to ensure consistent expansion of the effectiveness of this work in the center, city and in the countryside.[2]"

Strong family begins with good health of its members. That is why in the development of the health care system much attention is paid to improving the medical services for families. Today, every couple before get married undergoes a compulsory medical examination. This enables young people to create and plan the family, taking into account the level of health of each of them.

With the development of a network of rural medical units and general practice the country has implemented a system of health visit nursing. The health visitor's tasks include: to make round the families, to advise the healthy lifestyles, to organize the providing of quality health care to the needy. As a result, there is an improve of the situation with early detection of diseases and timely treatment for diseases not only in primary health care but also in regional diversified medical centers and in republican specialized scientific-practical medical centers.

Another element, the health care system proceeds from, is the fact that the health begins in childhood, and child's health comes from healthy parents. For this reason, the country established a National model of motherhood and childhood, which reduced infant and maternal mortality by more than three times over the past twenty years.

English literature is a component part of the world literature. Its best national traditions have played an important role in enriching and development of the world literature. English literature consists of poetry, prose and drama written in the English language by authors in England, Scotland, and Wales. These lands have produced many outstanding writers.

English literature is a rich literature. It includes masterpieces in many forms, particularly a novel, a short story, an epic and lyric poetry, an essay, literary criticism, and drama. English literature is also one of the oldest national literatures in the world. The masters of English literature from the turn of the XIV century to the present rank among the world's greatest literary figures. Such names as Geoffrey Chaucer, Wiiliam Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, George Gordon Byron, Charles Dickens, Bernard Shaw, John Galsworthy and many others are famous all over the world. Their way of writing has influenced a great number of writers, poets and playwrights from other countries.

National literature is the reflection of the history and national peculiarities of people. Each national literature has much in common with the world literary progress, but at the same time has Its own specific features as well. One of the characteristic features of the English authors is that they have always been deeply interested in political and social environment of their time.

The present diploma work is devoted to the comprehensive study of humanistic feelings in «Sister Carry» by Dreiser. There were a lots of works done on this field. But about his role in English literature and special historical features of "Sister Carry" have not been fully investigated. This defines the actuality of the work and its theoretical value.

[2] From speech of president I.Karimov made in the 19-aniversary of the constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Tashkent December. 2011

The purpose of diploma work is to analyze the peculiarities of "Sister carry" by Th.Dreiser.

The aim predetermines the concrete tasks of the research of our diploma work. The diploma paper pursues the **following tasks**:

- to learn specific features of the literary activity of Theodore Dreiser,
- to analyze the peculiarities of Dreiser's critical reputation,
- to study the humanistic feelings in "Sister Carrie" by Theodore Dreiser ,
- to learn about the composition and publication of "Sister Carrie",
- get to know about short content of "Sister Carrie",
- to analyze cultural and historical contexts for "Sister Carrie",
- to overview to the history of publishing "Sister Carrie"

The novelty of diploma work is that the analyses of humanistic feelings in "Sister Carry" by Th.Dreiser are inspected as the significant place in creativity of Th. Dreiser.

From the **theoretical point of view** this work presents the comprehensive study of biography, creature and humanistic feelings in the creature of Th. Dreiser and main peculiarities of "Sister Carry" by Th.Dreiser.

Content of the work. Present work consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusion and bibliography.

CHAPTER I
SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE LITERARY ACTIVITY OF THEODORE DREISER

1.1. Theodore Dreiser – outstanding American novelist

Theodore Dreiser was born in August 27, 1871 in Terre Haute, Indiana, and baptized as Herman Theodore Dreiser. He was the ninth of ten surviving children (three others died as infants) of Säräh Schanab and Johann Dreiser. His father had emigrated from Mayen, Germany in 1844, worked briefly in New England wool mills, and then moved to the Midwest, where large numbers of Germans had settled. He went first to Dayton, Ohio, where he met Sarah, the daughter of a Mennonite family that had come to Ohio from Pennsylvania. Since he was a Roman Catholic and her family was strongly anti-papist, religious tensions forced the couple to elope. When they married in 1851, Sarah was seventeen and Johann twelve years her senior. They moved to Indiana, first to Fort Wayne and then to Terre Haute. Johann became a moderately successful wool dealer and prospered enough to be able to strike out on his own and become the proprietor of a wool mill in Sullivan, Indiana. In 1869 their fortunes changed for the worse when a fire destroyed the mill, leaving Johann with a debilitating injury. The fire, the downturn of the wool industry after the Civil War, and the national economic depression of the early 1870s resulted in long periods of unemployment. As Dreiser recorded in memoirs, the family never recovered financially or psychologically from this economic fall from grace.

Dreiser's childhood coincided with the family's hard times. Consequently, his earliest memories included the joblessness of his father and older siblings, as well as the constant search for economic stability. In his first sixteen years he lived in five different towns in Indiana (as

well as in Chicago for a few months), at times relocating only with his mother and the two other younger children, Ed and Claire. As a result, his youth was emotionally unstable, and he had few educational opportunities, which was a special hardship for such a bookish boy. This time was further darkened by the strict Roman Catholic training he received in German American parochial schools, an experience that informed his later critique of Catholicism and deeply influenced his quest for alternative forms of religious experience.

Dawn (1931), an autobiography dealing with his first twenty years, is a classic of German American literature. In it Dreiser gives a vivid picture of his German-speaking, Roman Catholic, downwardly mobile family and offers a moving chronicle of the financial, social, and emotional pressures facing working-class families in the late nineteenth century. He was sensitive to the plight of his mother, who took in boarders, washed clothes for her more prosperous neighbors, and suffered over her inability to feed and clothe her children properly. He often blamed his father for their condition, particularly as Johann often reacted to adversity by turning to prayer and a belief that true happiness was to be found only with God in the afterlife. Dreiser's autobiography presents a somber version of the archetypal bilingual and bicultural experiences of first- and second-generation Americans. He incorporated his memories into some of his best fiction, notably *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911), in which he modeled the Gerhardt family on the Dreisers in Indiana. In this and other works one finds the themes of the memoirs: the figure of the foreign-born father who fails to understand his children's American ways and loses authority over them; the second generation's rebellion against Old World religious and moral values; the role of the public school in the Americanization process; and the isolated, beleaguered mother who attempts to mediate between traditional values and the emotional needs of her children. Dreiser eventually extended these motifs to his portraits of other American families, such as those of the evangelical preachers in *An American Tragedy* (1925) and the Quakers in *The Bulwark* (1946).

Although Dreiser was a serious student, he never finished high school. The conduct of his siblings, especially the sexual adventures of his sisters, entered into his decision to leave school. Depressed over his family's poor social standing in the small northern Indiana town of Warsaw, he decided at age sixteen to seek work in Chicago. There he held a number of nondescript jobs, until he was rescued by a former teacher, Mildred Fielding, who paid his way to Indiana University at Bloomington for one year (1889-90). Another kind of education began when he landed a job as a reporter in Chicago. In June 1892, two months before his twenty-first birthday, he wrote his first news story for the *Chicago Globe*. Three years later, he abruptly abandoned journalism by walking out of Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World*, where as a space-rate reporter he was being paid, like the garment worker in the city's sweatshops, by the inch.

As a journalist, Dreiser never came close to realizing his dream of having his own by-line, a column the public would read because his name appeared above it. But he showed enough talent to get decent assignments-as drama critic, special feature writer, investigative reporter-for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, the *St. Louis Republic*, and the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*. Dreiser found material for his later fiction in his observations as a big-city reporter in the 1890s. He was adept at writing special feature stories, in which he was able to experiment with local color settings, dialogue, and character sketches. He was known even then as, in the words of one editor who knew him, "a writing machine." Naturally, he was encouraged by his fellow newspapermen to write fiction. He wrote poetry; he worked on a script for a comic opera called "Jeremiah I," of which only a fragment survives; and he began to experiment with short stories. He continued to educate himself, as did another famous autodidact, Benjamin Franklin, by reading widely in fiction, science, natural history, and philosophy.

After a brief stint on the *World*, Dreiser went to work in the office of Howley, Haviland & Co. a music production firm that published the popular songs of his brother, Paul Dresser, remembered today mainly as the author of the Indiana state song, "On the Banks of the Wabash."

Dreiser became the editor of the company's publication, *Ev'ry Month*, which billed itself as "The Woman's Magazine of Literature and Popular Music." As editor, he wrote reviews, editorials, and a "Reflections" column. In all these forms he expressed for the first time his ideas about books, social problems, art, and philosophy. His columns reflected his general reading in world literature, particularly the writing of the High Romantics and Victorians; among the authors who had a special impact on him were the naturalist thinkers, such as Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Thomas Huxley, as well as the novelists Thomas Hardy and Honoré de Balzac.

In 1897 Dreiser left *Ev'ry Month* and spent the next three years as a free lance writer for national magazines such as *Munsey's Metropolitan* and *Harper's Monthly*. For O. S. Marden's *Success* he interviewed the celebrities of his day: among others, Andrew Carnegie, Thomas Edison, Marshall Field, William Dean Howells, and Philip Armour. For other magazines he wrote articles on a wide range of subjects: America's fruit growing industry, the meatpacking business in Chicago, modern art, the making of stained glass windows, and the photography of Alfred Stieglitz. He continued to experiment with poetry and fiction. His early short stories-"Nigger Jeff," "Butcher Rogaum's Door," and "The Shining Slave Makers"-are still readable today and reflect both urban and rural life in the last decade of the century.

In 1898 Dreiser married Sara Osborne White, a schoolteacher from Missouri, whom he had met when he covered the 1893 Columbian Exposition as a reporter for the St. Louis Republic. With her encouragement and that of his friend Arthur Henry, a novelist and former editor of the Toledo Blade, Dreiser began writing his historic first novel, Sister Carrie. Among other sources for the novel was the story of his sister Emma's affair with L. A. Hopkins, a married man who had run off with funds embezzled from his Chicago employer. In the pages of what is now considered the first great urban novel in America, Dreiser mixed philosophical speculations about the nature of existence together with scenes that presented much of the gritty details of city life. As even his first reviewers understood, Dreiser at the age of twenty-nine had created in George Hurstwood one of the most memorable characters in American literature.

The Doubleday company published Sister Carrie under protest on November 8, 1900. It is perhaps the most famous story in American publishing history. Frank Doubleday had been on a business trip to Europe when his firm accepted the book on the strong recommendation of one of its editors, the novelist Frank Norris. Norris convinced the company's junior partner, Walter Hines Page, that he should offer Dreiser a contract-a document that was discussed but not drawn up at the time. Norris wrote privately to Dreiser that Sister Carrie "was the best novel I have read in M. S. since I have been reading for the firm," and that "it pleased me as well as any novel I have read in any form, published or otherwise." When Doubleday returned and read the new work, he strongly disagreed with Norris. Moreover, he protested. He considered the book "immoral" because of its depiction of a "fallen" woman as a success story. He tried very hard to abort the verbal agreement, but Dreiser refused to take the book to another publisher. It was rumored (but later denied by Doubleday) that Mrs. Doubleday was the person most adamant in her opposition to the novel. Over the years Dreiser developed the incident into a legendary story of censorship and "puritanical" repression, and the book became a symbol of literary freedom for an entire generation.

Since Dreiser refused to give in to the pressure, Doubleday's lawyer advised the company to publish the novel or risk losing its good name. An "agreement to publish" was drawn up and signed by Dreiser and Doubleday. The firm, however, did nothing to promote the sale or distribution of Sister Carrie. Working for the fledgling author behind the scenes, Norris wrote to English publishers in an attempt to market the book, and in 1901 a truncated version of the novel was published by William Heinemann. It was received with considerable critical acclaim by the English reviewers. It was this British edition that in fact established the international reputation of the novel.

Attempting to put the Doubleday incident behind him, Dreiser began a second novel, Jennie Gerhardt, which he started to write on January 6, 1901, less than two weeks after the death of his father. It tells the story of a German American girl compelled by economic forces to support her family by entering the larger American world of her lover, Lester Kane, the son of a wealthy Irish immigrant. Dreiser based the character of Jennie in part on his sister Mame, Lester on her husband Austin Brennan, and Jennie's father was modeled after Dreiser's own father, who, like Old Gerhardt in the novel, disowned one of his daughters after she had become pregnant outside the bounds of marriage.

Within five months Dreiser had written forty chapters of the novel. Then began a severe writer's block that virtually halted his career as a novelist until 1910. The inability to write was the result of an extended nervous breakdown, brought on, Dreiser later claimed, by the suppression of Sister Carrie.

Dreiser's disability lasted nearly three years, after which he recovered enough to seek employment in editorial jobs with the New York Daily News, the publishers Street and Smith, and the magazine Broadway. In 1904 he wrote an account of his crisis that remained in manuscript until the Pennsylvania Dreiser Edition published it as An Amateur Laborer (1983). By 1907 he had worked his way up to become editor-in-chief of the prestigious Delineator, an organ of the Butterick Company, which specialized in women's fashions. In the meantime Sister Carrie was enjoying an underground reputation, particularly after the Dodge Company reissued it in 1907. Dreiser continued at Butterick until 1910, when a platonic infatuation with the seventeen-year-old daughter of one of his associates cost him his job. With the encouragement of his friend, the critic H. L. Mencken, Dreiser returned to his writing desk and completed Jennie Gerhardt. Once again he had become a full-time writer. He made up for lost time with a burst of creative energy that resulted in the publication of fourteen books between 1911 and 1925.

Dreiser's life changed dramatically in this period. In 1912 he took his first trip to Europe as the guest of the British publisher Grant Richards and wrote about his adventures there in A Traveler at Forty (1913). Shortly after, he separated from his wife, moved into the artistic community developing in Greenwich Village, and began the life-long practice of what he called "varietism," a term he used to describe his habit of being sexually involved with more than one woman at the same time.

Dreiser had close relations with the liberal thinkers and artistic avant-garde of the 1910s. He associated with leading political radicals like Max Eastman, Daniel DeLeon, and Floyd Dell; supported the birth-control movement of Margaret Sanger; befriended the anarchist Emma Goldman; and wrote for leftist journals such as The Masses, as well as for magazines with more purely aesthetic goals, like Seven Arts. Dreiser was eclectic in his interests, and although generally progressive in his social thought, he was too eccentric and independent a thinker to fit into any one ideological mode.

After 1911, H. L. Mencken became the most visible publicist on the American scene, and his reviews in the Smart Set promoted Dreiser as America's greatest living realist. Despite such support, the threat of censorship haunted Dreiser for over two decades. Publishers often refused to print manuscripts as Dreiser wrote them. Editors substantially cut both fiction and non-fiction before publication. For example, the Century Company severely truncated the original text of A Traveler at Forty, omitting over forty chapters and diluting many of the sequences that did appear in print.

Censorship was not limited to publishers and editors. The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice caused The "Genius" (1915), an autobiographical novel, to be removed from the bookshelves, precipitating a court battle that lasted for years before the book was finally reissued in 1923. Dreiser faced other challenges during the period of the first World War, when his German name caused critics to attack his "barbaric naturalism" and unconventional writing

style as representative of "a new note in American literature, coming from the 'ethnic' element of our mixed population."

Dreiser wrote prolifically through all this turmoil. It is worth noting that although he is remembered primarily for his novels, he wrote in many genres. In fact, of his twenty-seven published books only eight are novels-and two of these, The Bulwark and The Stoic (1947), were published posthumously. Besides journalism, which he wrote throughout his life, he published volumes of poetry [Moods, Cadenced and Disclaimed (1928), Moods, Philosophical and Emotional (1935)]; short stories [Free and Other Stories (1918), Chains: Lesser Novels and Stories (1927)] ; plays [Plays of the Natural and Supernatural (1916), The Hand of the Potter (1918)]; travel books [A Traveler at Forty, A Hoosier Holiday (1915), Dreiser Looks at Russia (1928)]; autobiographies [Newspaper Days (1922), Dawn (1931)]; philosophical essays [Hey Rub-a-Dub-Dub (1919)]; social criticism [Tragic America (1932), America is Worth Saving (1941)]; character sketches [Twelve Men (1919), A Gallery of Woman, 2 volumes (1929)]; and The Living Thoughts of Thoreau (1939).

Although much of this writing has received scholarly attention, Dreiser's novels remain the focus of critical inquiry and the main source of his reputation. His first novels, Sister Carrie and Jennie Gerhardt, portray women who battle poverty and the conventional prejudices of society. Dreiser turned to a very different subject for his next novel: the career of an American financier, Frank Algernon Cowperwood, a character based on the Philadelphia and Chicago traction magnate Charles T. Yerkes. Dreiser decided that he needed a trilogy to explore this figure, and it came to be called "The Trilogy of Desire." The first book, The Financier (1912), was followed by The Titan (1914), but Dreiser had difficulty completing the third book and was still working on the final chapter of The Stoic when he died in 1945. The trilogy is generally considered to be among the finest historical novels in America.

The head of the censor reared up once again when Dreiser's publisher, Harper and Brothers, decided that The Titan would be too risky to publish, due in large part to the depiction of Cowperwood's promiscuous sexuality. Fearing a repeat of the Sister Carrie incident, Dreiser withdrew the book and signed on with the English publisher, the John Lane Company. His experiences with censorship led him to become a leading spokesman -in articles, interviews, and correspondence-for the idea that the artist in America was limited severely by conservative conventions that had a crippling effect on all creative expression. He wrote on this theme classically in his essay "Life, Art, and America" (1917).

All the controversies surrounding Dreiser's novels did not sell books; they enjoyed critical esteem rather than high sales. Dreiser's distrust of publishers, born of his mistreatment at the hands of Doubleday, kept him constantly embattled in contractual disputes. To make ends meet, he repeatedly turned out minor work for the magazines, and he wasted considerable energies on money-making schemes, such as writing film scripts, most of which were unsuccessful. His road was made considerably easier after 1917 when he met Horace Liveright, a publisher who supported the kind of writing Dreiser wanted to do and, with great patience, endured his distrust of publishers. Nevertheless, the war years and the poor sales of his books took its toll on him.

By 1919, he was at a low point financially and mentally. Then he met Helen Patges Richardson, whose grandmother was a sister of Dreiser's mother. She was young, strikingly beautiful, and set on pursuing a career as an actress in Hollywood. When she appeared one day at the door of his apartment, they immediately began a stormy twenty-five year relationship that survived periods of separation, estrangement, and many romantic affairs on Dreiser's part. In 1919 he traveled to Los Angeles with Helen, settled in a small bungalow to write, and watched her walk off each day to work in films that are now footnotes in motion-picture history. In the charged atmosphere of Hollywood Dreiser tried to write The Bulwark, the story of a Quaker family whose children and traditional values are exposed to the corrupting forces of modern

American life. He did not get much writing done, however, partly because he spent himself in attempts to cash in on the big money offered in Hollywood for movie scripts.

His time in California, nevertheless, was not altogether fruitless. While there he began to focus on a story that was rooted in a type of sensational crime that he believed characterized American life. He first observed these crimes as a young reporter in 1892, and he continued to take notes on such cases for years. They consisted of murders in which the motive is not personal hatred but the desire of a socially marginal man to escape from a romantic entanglement in order to marry another woman who brings with her upper-class position and wealth. Dreiser had a brilliant insight into this condition: such an aspiration "was really not an anti-social dream as Americans should see it, but rather a pro-social dream. [The defendant] was really doing the kind of thing which Americans should and would have said was the wise and moral thing for him to do had he not committed a murder. His would not ordinarily be called the instinct of a criminal; rather, it would be deemed the instinct of a worthy and respected temperament."

Dreiser began experimenting with this story, as well as researching certain cases that seemed to fit his scenario. By 1922 he had written twenty chapters of a novel, but shortly after he realized that they constituted a false start. His research led him to the Chester Gillette murder of Grace Brown in 1906, an upstate New York case that had been given extensive coverage in the newspapers. The Gillette-Brown trial sparked his imagination enough for him to leave Helen and return to New York, where he felt the atmosphere was more suited to the mood he wanted to capture in the novel. There the story took hold of him again. He isolated himself for nearly a year in a Brooklyn apartment, where Helen joined him until he finished the book in 1925. A huge manuscript, it was cut by editors nearly in half before it was published by Horace Liveright in two volumes as An American Tragedy (1925).

Although the novel was a critical and commercial success (in fact, Dreiser's only best-seller), he was not yet finished battling such literary vice crusaders as the Watch and Ward Society. The novel was banned in Boston, where the sale of the book led to a trial and an appeal that dragged on in the courts for years. This, however, was now an isolated instance. Dreiser seemed finally to have won over even his most severe critics, many of whom were now applauding the book as the Great American Novel. Dreiser soon sold the motion picture rights; the first film version appeared in 1931, followed in 1951 by a remake entitled A Place in the Sun. For the first time Dreiser could afford to live something of the high life he had desired since his youth. He moved into a fashionable Rodin Studios apartment at 200 West 57th Street, across from Carnegie Hall. There he held open house gatherings on Thursday evenings at which he entertained famous and talented celebrities from every walk of life. In addition, he built a country home at Mount Kisco, in upstate New York, which he called Iroki (Japanese for "the spirit of beauty").

By the late 1920s Dreiser had become famous as an old warrior in the battles for literary freedom in America, a war that in fact had been won by this point. Despite his new-found security, he championed an array of public causes in the last two decades of his life. Although the Great Depression and the threat of American involvement in another World War were strong stimulants to social activism, this was not a new direction for Dreiser. He had always prided himself on being what he called "radically American," which for him had included his freedom to defend the rights of speech of socialists, anarchists, and other radical groups who had criticized American capitalist values.

A dramatically new phase of Dreiser's activism began in 1927, when the Soviet government invited him to be present at the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution in Moscow. He agreed to go upon condition that he be allowed to extend his stay and tour the Soviet Union to see what he called the "real, unofficial Russia." He arrived as an American "individualist," eager to question the reality of an ostensibly humane economy that claimed to have abolished social hierarchies. He left not totally convinced of the value of the

new experiment, but when he returned to America in 1928 to find the first breadlines he had seen since 1910, he was outraged and began to compare the efforts of the Russians to what he perceived to be the neglect of an American government controlled by monied interests.

The personal significance the Russian program eventually came to have for Dreiser appeared in a muted way in the first newspaper articles he wrote after returning to America in early 1928. He speculated in the New York World that in the new Russia it might "be possible to remove that dreadful sense of social misery in one direction or another which has so afflicted me in my life in America ever since I have been old enough to know what social misery is." This aspect of his feelings about Russia emerged more powerfully in the 1930s, a decade in which Dreiser was one of many American intellectuals whose idealization of the Soviet Union was stimulated by the economic breakdown and social malaise of the Depression years.

Dreiser wrote little fiction in the 1930s. He devoted much of himself to political activities. A partial list provides an idea of the range of his social interests: he fought for a fair trial for the Scottsboro Boys, young African Americans unfairly accused of rape in Alabama; he contributed considerable time to the broadly-based political and literary reforms sponsored by the American Writer's League; he spoke out against American imperialism abroad; he attacked the abuses of the financial corporations; he went to Kentucky's Harlan coal mines, as chairman of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, to publicize the wrongs suffered by the striking miners; he investigated the plight of tobacco farmers who were cheated by the large tobacco companies; he spoke on behalf of several antifascist organizations and attended an international peace conference in Paris; he became an advocate in America for aid to the victims of the Spanish Civil War.

Dreiser attempted to collect his thoughts and research on the social problems of the day in Tragic America. This volume of over four hundred pages is an argument against the organizations that Dreiser felt were responsible for the lack of economic equity in American society. Gathering together a large amount of raw data, he focused his attack on large corporations, religious and educational institutions, the depositories of wealth, and the leisure class in the United States. In 1932, he thought he had found a vehicle for his views in the American Spectator, a new journal whose editorial board included Eugene O'Neill and George Jean Nathan. Dreiser withdrew after a year, protesting that the magazine was too literary and not concerned enough with the vital social issues of the day.

Before he left, he became embroiled in a public debate with the author Hutchins Hapgood on the question of what Hapgood felt were anti-Semitic remarks Dreiser and the other editors made in an "Editorial Conference (with Wine)" article in May 1933. Always contentious, Dreiser responded angrily with a combination of Zionist remarks and ethnic slurs which haunted him for the rest of his days. He believed, he said, that the Jews should establish a national homeland and that they should otherwise assimilate completely into American life. In listing the unassimilated characteristics of American Jews, he used racial stereotypes that convinced many that he was either anti-Semitic or, at the least, totally insensitive to the events occurring in Europe at the time. Although he publicly retracted his statements, he never could redeem himself completely.

Besides politics, Dreiser's other passion in the 1930s was a scientific-philosophical study for which he gathered information from various sources. He went to famous scientific laboratories such as the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts; he read in physics, biology, chemistry, and philosophy; he discussed the organization of matter with Jacques Loeb of the Rockefeller Institute and with such kindred spirits as John Cowper Powys and George Douglas; he employed researchers to investigate the latest sciences and pseudo-sciences and to collect data that supported his mechanistic view of existence; and he began to organize these materials into essays with titles like "The Myth of Individual Thinking," "The Force Called Illusion," and "The Emotions." Dreiser died before completing his book, selections of which were later published as Notes on Life (1977). Although the text he left behind suggests

his book would not have revolutionized modern philosophy, this work is an important key to understanding Dreiser's thought in the last two decades of his life.

Dreiser left New York in 1938 and permanently settled in California, where he lived his final years with Helen Richardson, whom he married in 1944. For many readers today, the most important work of his last seven years are his last two novels, The Bulwark and The Stoic. Although the literary quality of these books is not equal to that of the novels he wrote between 1900 and 1925, they reflect the final stages of his thinking and, in a sense, help us to understand more fully the implications of his earlier works. In their time, however, they were seen as the product of an author who had outlived his literary generation.

Readers in the 1940s knew Dreiser as much through his public statements as through his creative writing. His political views, although not always popular, were not atypical among intellectuals before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. In early 1941 he responded to the prospect of American involvement in the European war with America is Worth Saving, in which he argued against coming to the aid of English imperialists and against the prospect of putting money into the pockets of wealthy Americans who would profit from war. In these years, Dreiser's infatuation with the Russian social regime reached its apogee. He aligned himself with radical political groups and supported many of the goals of the Communist Party. Until Hitler invaded Russia, Dreiser had feared that if Americans went to war against Germany, they would also fight the Russians. His public statements, therefore, expressed the ideals of such organizations as the Committee for Soviet Friendship and American Peace Mobilization.

The accolades from the literary establishment that he had sought most of his life came to him late. In 1944 he traveled for the last time to New York to receive the Award of Merit from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. They cited Sister Carrie, Twelve Men, and An American Tragedy as his greatest books. There were other signs of recognition. He sold the movie rights to Sister Carrie, which was made into a film with Jennifer Jones as Carrie and Lawrence Olivier as Hurstwood. Another movie, My Gal Sal, was a popular version of Dreiser's story of his brother Paul, who had composed the hit song of that name. The aging writer laughed at the portrait of himself in the film, a scene showing the young Theodore in Indiana breaking into tears over some minor incident.

In July 1945, five months before his death, Dreiser made his last dramatic gesture of public protest by joining the Communist Party. He had been considered by Earl Browder, the leader of the Party in the 1930s, to be too ideologically independent to be a card-carrying member. But in the public statement he issued in 1945, he tried to sum up his reasons for his decision: "Belief in the greatness and dignity of Man has been the guiding principle of my life and work. The logic of my life and work leads me therefore to apply for membership in the Community Party." While this action did nothing to increase his popularity with the general public, he was at the time of his death generally recognized as the greatest realist-naturalist in American literary history-and among the best novelists in world literature. Moreover, his many feuds with censors and conventional publishers gained him a legendary reputation as an advocate for freedom of expression. These judgments have sustained the test of time.

His strength clearly ebbing, Dreiser died of heart failure on December 28, 1945, before completing the last chapter of The Stoic. The book reflected his late interest in Hinduism, which, like his earlier attraction to Quakerism, centered on the mystical element in its system of belief. The book was published with an appendix by Helen Dreiser that outlined the novelist's plans for the ending. Services were held at Forest Lawns' Church of the Recessional, where Dreiser's friend John Howard Lawson paid homage to him for his writing and for his lifelong struggle for a more equitable society. Another friend, Charlie Chaplin, read from Dreiser's poem "The Road I Came."

Oh space!
Change!

Toward which we run
So gladly,
Or from which we retreat
In terror-
Yet that promises to bear us
In itself
Forever.
Oh, what is this
That knows the road I came?

Dreiser was buried in Hollywood's Forest Lawn Cemetery on January 3, 1946.

1.2. Peculiarities of Dreiser's critical reputation

Because discussion of Dreiser and his fiction has often served as a vehicle for cultural and literary polemics, criticism of his writing frequently reveals as much about its moment as about its ostensible subject. From the appearance of *Sister Carrie* to the present, an opportunity to examine Dreiser also has meant an opportunity to press the claims of a particular view of American life and thus a specific concept about the nature of fiction.

The literary scene which Dreiser entered in 1900 with the publication of *Sister Carrie* was still largely controlled by the conventions of what was later to be designated as "The Genteel Tradition." The purpose of literature, most publishers and reviewers held, was to appeal to man's "higher nature," to inspire him through the depiction of man's capacity to achieve the ethical life to seek such a life for himself. The commonplace and sordid in human existence played little role within this aim, while felicities of style, which constituted the "art" of the work, were held to be inseparable from ethical power. *Sister Carrie* constituted a direct challenge to these assumptions. While some reviewers did indeed note its "extraordinary power" and that its story "has all the interest of fact, and the terrible inevitableness of fact," most seized upon the central situation of the novel-that of a young girl who has two illicit sexual relationships without suffering either material loss or moral degeneration-as immediate grounds for dismissal of the novel. "Squalid," "Neither a pleasant nor an edifying book," "The name of God is not mentioned from cover to

cover, a significant omission" were characteristic comments about the work, while "annoying anachronisms and blunders in English" constituted the thrust of another large number of negative remarks. In short, the novel was neither uplifting nor well-written, and was thus "Not a book to be put into the hands of every reader indiscriminately." Dreiser complained bitterly about the negative impact of The Genteel Tradition on the critical reception of *Sister Carrie* in a brief essay of 1903 entitled "True Art Speaks Plainly." "The extent of all reality is the realm of the author pen," he concluded, "and a true picture of life, honestly and reverentially set down, is both moral and artistic, whether it offends the conventions or not." Dreiser's need to struggle for acceptance of his work on its own grounds, however, was to continue until the great success of *An American Tragedy* in 1925.

After a long hiatus, Dreiser reappeared fully on the literary scene in 1911 with *Jennie Gerhardt*. The decade of the 1910s was the most prolific of Dreiser's career, with the publication of four major novels and the appearance of a number of other works in various genres. It was also a period in which, to use the loaded terminology of the age, the conflict between the forces of American "puritanism" and the ideal of "artistic freedom" reached a fever pitch. For many critics, Dreiser's work of this period provided an ideal vehicle for the expression of their views on the issues of morality and art in American writing. *Jennie Gerhardt* had received an ambivalent reception, since many reviewers were attracted by Jennie's essential purity despite the "unsavory" character of her career. But when this novel was quickly followed by *The Financier* (1912), *The Titan* (1914), and *The "Genius"*-three works whose male protagonists defy all conventions of acceptable sexual behavior -the die was cast. "Humanity is presented on the zoological plane," one reviewer noted of *The Financier*, sounding a note that was to be repeated throughout this period. "A Riot of Eroticism" and "Mr. Dreiser Chooses a Tom-Cat for a Hero," for example, headed two reviews of *The "Genius."* On the other hand, a group of writers and critics seized on the attack upon Dreiser's work as a striking instance of the limitations placed upon the artist in America and vigorously defended the "honesty" and "power" of his portrayal of American life.

Thus, during Dreiser's early career, such supporters of his work as Sherwood Anderson, H. L. Mencken, and Randolph Bourne were not merely engaged in the praise of novels which had moved them. They were also seeking to cast Dreiser in the symbolic role of the trailblazer whose willingness to challenge the conventional beliefs and genteel codes of American life has opened a way for others. "The feet of Dreiser," Anderson wrote, are "making a path for us." If Dreiser's feet were "heavy" and "brutal," as Anderson went on to note, it was because he had mountains of resistance to scale. If his work appeared to lack beauty, it was because the concept of beauty had degenerated into a belief in mere surface grace and polish. And if his ideas were often tedious or obscure, it was because he was fumbling honestly for truths which others had so long refused to acknowledge. In short, Dreiser's defects were the virtues of a pathfinder and iconoclast. To those who opposed Dreiser-and these included the great majority of journalistic reviewers and most academic critics-he issue was joined on the question of "brutality"-or, more specifically, the amorality and sexuality of the first two volumes of the Cowperwood trilogy and *The "Genius."*

The most substantial efforts during the late teens and early twenties to reject Dreiser as a major voice in American fiction were by writers and academics associated with the conservative New Humanism movement of the period. To Stuart Sherman in 1915, Dreiser's fiction constituted not the pure voice of truth but rather the howl of an atavistic animalism. Men may often be selfish and brutal, Sherman and other New Humanists agreed, but they also held that civilization represented an effort to control these remnants of our animal past through reason and will, and that literature should depict the desirability and possibility of achieving this goal. (It is of interest to note that this attack on Dreiser's "barbarism" reached its shrillest level during World War I, when critics such as Sherman frequently alluded to Dreiser's German ancestry.)

A major shift in Dreiser's critical reputation occurred with the publication of *An American Tragedy* in late 1925. Although Dreiser by the mid-1920s was grudgingly acknowledged, largely as a result of the weight and persistency of his publications, to be a major figure in American letters, he was still often denied full stature because of his suspect themes and awkward fictional expression. But for almost all readers, including many previous detractors, *An American Tragedy* was (in an oft-repeated term) a "great" novel. Symptomatic of this sea-change was the review by Stuart Sherman, who had earlier attacked Dreiser's "jungle" philosophy and who now praised him for his mature tragic vision of experience. The novel was both a critical and popular success; a Broadway adaptation was also successful; and Dreiser was frequently mentioned in connection with the Nobel Prize in literature.

By the mid-1930s, with the near-universal applause for *An American Tragedy* and the critical acceptance of writers far more sensationally explicit than Dreiser in their material and themes, it appeared that his struggle for recognition had been won. But instead he became during this and the following decade the negative focus of two additional critical movements with widespread cultural significance. Although critics such as Alfred Kazin and F. O. Matthiessen continued to praise him for having achieved a powerful blend of social realism and pathos, it became more common to attack Dreiser, as did Lionel Trilling in his well-known essay "Reality in America," both for his idea of reality and for his mode of depicting it.

Trilling's essay indirectly expresses a widely shared revulsion by formerly radical critics of the 1930s (Philip Rahv and Malcolm Cowley are other significant examples) toward writers whose work and thought had close ties to the Communist Party and its policies during the decade. Dreiser was perhaps the principal example of a major American literary figure of this kind. During the 1930s and early 1940s he could be counted upon to endorse the party's position in almost every cause and issue, including its support of the Soviet Union during the vastly unpopular Soviet-Finnish War. When Dreiser died not only an unrepentant camp follower but also an actual party member (in a symbolic act, he had joined the party the year of his death), he became a prime target for those critics who had themselves been party sympathizers during the early 1930s but who had rejected its leadership and ideology as the decade progressed. And since it was Dreiser's intellect which was suspect in his continued support of communism, what better way to demonstrate his intellectual vacuity than to point out the inadequacies of his ideas in his fiction?

Trilling's essay also reflects the adverse impact upon Dreiser's reputation during this period of the New Criticism, a school of interpretation which dominated literary criticism for more than two decades beginning in the early 1940s. To many academic New Critics bred upon the great attention to form and structure in the close reading of the intricacies of Henry James's novels and of post-Jamesian fictional experimentation, Dreiser's awkwardness and massiveness seemed the antithesis of the art of fiction. Thus, with Dreiser in disfavor as both thinker and artist-to say nothing of the confusion created by the mystic element in his two posthumous novels, *The Bulwark* (1946) and *The Stoic* (1947)-it was no wonder that during the 1940s and 1950s, as Irving Howe recalls, his work was "a symbol of everything a superior intelligence was supposed to avoid."

Although the Trilling-Matthiessen dispute of the early 1950s over Dreiser's "power" (Is it a left-wing myth, or does it in truth reside in his fiction?) still occasionally surfaces, much of the academic writing about Dreiser since the 1950s has shifted from the use of him as a cultural symbol to a close examination of his career and work. Robert Elias's and Thomas P. Riggio's editions of Dreiser's letters, and biographies by Elias, W. A. Swanberg, and Richard Lingeman, provided a solid base of fact about Dreiser's life. In addition, since the early 1960s the availability of Dreiser's literary estate at the University of Pennsylvania Library has provided an important basis for the detailed study of the genesis of his work. A number of scholars-for example, Ellen Moers, Richard Lehan, Philip Gerber, and Donald Pizer-have written full-length

studies of Dreiser which are based in large part upon material in the Dreiser Papers. And the on-going Pennsylvania Dreiser Edition, a project devoted to the preparation and publication of scholarly editions of Dreiser's works, owes much to the Papers.

By the mid-1960s, some of the older strains in Dreiser criticism had died out. No longer was it necessary to defend or attack his subjects or ideas because of their challenge to contemporary conventions. But other issues of long-standing controversy in the discussion of Dreiser's work continued to attract much attention, which suggests that they have become permanent centers of interest in Dreiser criticism. One of these is Dreiser's naturalism-or, to put it another way, what is naturalism and how is Dreiser a naturalist? The question appears simple, and many early critics treated it as such. Naturalism, which had its origin in the theories and fiction of the late nineteenth-century French novelist Emile Zola, was a Darwinian-based pessimistic determinism in theme and a crude massiveness in technique, and Dreiser was a prime example of both. But most critics who have written since the seminal essay by Eliseo Vivas in 1938 have recognized that many different strains make up the distinctive fictional voice which is Dreiser's, and that some of these strains-his mysticism and transcendentalism, or his prophetic tone-are antithetical to the biological and environmental determinism and amoral objectivity of a conventionally conceived naturalist. Although such recent critics as Charles Walcutt, Donald Pizer, June Howard, John Conder, Lee Clark Mitchell, and Michael Davitt Bell still engage the problems of defining American naturalism and explaining Dreiser as our principal naturalist, they now incline toward an acceptance of the complexities and ambivalences of both the movement and Dreiser.

Dreiser criticism is also still often concerned with the related issue of his verbal and fictional ineptness. Even Mencken, the staunchest of Dreiser's early champions, could not ignore this aspect of Dreiser's fiction, and it was of course one of the major reasons for the New Critics' contempt for his work. Since the late 1960s, however, a number of critics (most notably Ellen Moers) have discovered considerable subtlety and even "finese" in Dreiser's prose style, while still others (Julian Markels and Robert Penn Warren, for example) have argued that the novel as a form creates its effect as much through symbolic constructs as through language, and that Dreiser's success with such constructs explains his success as a novelist.

Much Dreiser criticism since the mid-1980s, however, has focused less on the themes and quality of his fiction than on the question of the relationship of his thought and work to large-scale social and cultural issues arising out of our condition as an urban society and consumerist economy, issues which still preoccupy us as a nation. Often drawing on the critical strategies of contemporary movements in literary theory and cultural studies and also often focused on *Sister Carrie*, this criticism seeks to identify the significant centers of cultural density in Dreiser's fiction that constitute the underlying relationship of his fiction to its historical moment. Several studies of this kind attempt to open up new areas of interest in Dreiser by tracing the underlying significance in his fiction of such major cultural realities of his day as mass communication (Thomas F. Strychacz), a faith in science (Louis J. Zanine), and class values and practices (Clare Eby). An especially rich area of concern has been Dreiser's depiction of the ethos of the late nineteenth-century America phenomenon of the great metropolis. Thus, for example, Rachel Bowlby examines the institution of the department store in *Sister Carrie* as a microcosm of the urban consumerism which engulfs Carrie in Chicago, while Philip Fisher studies the ways in which the "hard fact" of the urban impersonality of Chicago and New York is reflected in the failure of identity in Hurstwood and Carrie. A considerable number of other cultural studies of Dreiser's work, however, express the revisionist position that a close examination of Dreiser representation of his culture reveals an underlying endorsement of its principal values rather than (as has been generally held) a critique of them. The New Historicist criticism of Walter Benn Michaels, which holds that Carrie's "practical economy," her desire for things, is endorsed by Dreiser in various unconscious ways, has played a major role in encouraging this point of view.

To Michaels and other recent critics preoccupied with the cultural dynamics of Dreiser's fiction, he is therefore of less interest as a turn-of-the-century social realist or naturalist than as an unconscious participant in the underlying myths and values of the American scene then and now.

Over his lifetime, Theodore Dreiser amassed a library of more than 1,900 volumes, excluding works that he wrote himself. In 1949, the University of Pennsylvania purchased Dreiser's manuscripts and a majority of his books from Helen Dreiser for $16,500, and in 1958, the remainder of the library arrived in several shipments as gifts from Helen's estate. This book collection shows Dreiser as a bibliophile, a book collector who knew the value of first editions and who actively sought autographed volumes from other authors. For example, on March 16, 1942, Dreiser wrote to George Ade:

It's so very exceptionally nice of you to reward my inquiry as to where I might find a copy of *Artie* with a copy of the book itself. If I had known I was to be so favored I would have stepped in with the autograph hunters' customary gall and asked you to sign it. (*Letters* 3: 949)

Hoping Ade would send him an autographed copy of *Artie*, Dreiser ends the letter with a grievous lament that the two writers did not know each other better. In correspondence with authors that he knew well, such as H. L. Mencken and Charles Fort, Dreiser regularly offered to exchange autographed volumes as he does in a letter to Mencken dated December 6, 1909: "I have received *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*, by one H. L. Mencken, and the book of poems from the press of Thomas B. Mosher, both duly inscribed" (*D-M Letters* 1: 41). But Dreiser also requested books from authors and publishers whom he did not know. And despite his tendency towards parsimony, Dreiser spent money throughout his life to collect, store, and catalogue these worksa good librarian.

The formal creation of Dreiser's library can be dated to 1909 when, after financial success as an editor and after a reissue of *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser asked Franklin Booth to design a bookplate (see fig. 1). As a newspaper and advertising illustrator, Booth worked with Dreiser on the *New York Daily News* Sunday supplement, and Booth later collaborated with Dreiser to create and illustrate *A Hoosier Holiday* (Swanberg 228). The bookplate is a unique artwork that simply names Dreiser's library "Theodore Dreiser, Ex Libris," but the illustration is not simplepastoral scene in which cramped humanity buried underground supplies the compost from which trees and books rise. The focal point of the image is an ink well and pen, and these objects are the literary implements that transform human thought into enduring culture. That Dreiser asked Booth to create this elaborate bookplate and that Dreiser placed it in his books is evidence that his collection mattered, but the value he placed on his books is also demonstrated by the care with which he cataloged and stored the library.

Bills from Manhattan Storage and Warehouse that are now part of the Dreiser Collection indicate that Dreiser rented storage space for his books from 1914 to 1938 (file 3647). From 1910 to 1914, Dreiser lived intermittently with his wife Sara and used his New York apartment at 3609 Broadway "as a convenient hotel and mailing address" where he could store his belongings (Swanberg 175). But after 1914, Dreiser separated permanently from his wife and moved into a small apartment at 165 W. 10th Street in Greenwich Village, which forced him to store his books. During the 1930s when Dreiser focused almost exclusively on the writing of nonfiction, his library was of greater importance, and he regularly moved books in and out of Manhattan Storage. First, to save money, Dreiser stored books at Iroki, his country home at Mt. Kisco, N.Y., as Helen Dreiser reports in her memoir *My Life with Dreiser*: "we had moved a large part of everything, including paintings, books, literary materials, furniture, dishes" (214). As Dreiser spent more time at Iroki writing, he required more books, and Helen writes that his secretary Evelyn Light came to Iroki to assist Dreiser and "to arrange his reference library" (232). From book lists Light prepared in 1932, 1933, and 1934, it is evident that Dreiser moved

books from the Manhattan storage to the Hotel Ansonia and to Iroki, and these lists point to his growing concern with documenting his collection (files 13818 and 13819). On May 6, 1932, there is a record indicating that trunks 13 and 14 were shipped to Light at the Hotel Ansonia where Dreiser had a suite and where Light had an office (files 3647-3649). In a 1932 note, Light writes that "Trunk 3," containing Dreiser's Library of American Realism, is in Manhattan Storage, but this trunk is later moved to Iroki, then to Los Angeles, and then to Oregon (file 13820). Another list specifies that Dreiser's autographed books are at Mt. Kisco in a large wooden box marked "A.B.," but these books would also move several times before arriving at the University of Pennsylvania.

During the 1930s, Evelyn Light and Harriet Bissell had Dreiser's proxy and could move books in and out of storage, but after 1938, all of Dreiser's books were shipped to Iroki, and in early 1941, the library moved west to Los Angeles, as reported by Helen: "three large vanloads of furniture, literary materials and the Dreiser library arrived from Iroki to find lodging in their new surroundings. A moisture-proof storeroom was already under construction" (276). As mentioned above, four years after Dreiser's death, Helen Dreiser signed a contract with the University of Pennsylvania, and the majority of Dreiser's books were shipped from Los Angeles to Philadelphia, arriving in September 1949. The contract indicates that the large box labeled "A.B." and another box containing the Library of American Realism were in Gresham, Oregon (at Helen's sister's home), and that these books would not ship until later in the summer. But acquisition lists at the University of Pennsylvania indicate that over four hundred books in Helen's possession were not shipped until 1958, three years after her death. These final books, a gift from Helen's estate, arrived from Gresham, Oregon, and Los Angeles, where Harold Dies, a relative of both Helen and Theodore, controlled what remained of Dreiser's library. These factors may help to explain why some books are no longer part of the collection.

At present, the University of Pennsylvania has Dreiser's library arranged according to when the books were received, and the acquisition lists that were prepared when the different shipments arrived in Philadelphia offer the best catalogue of the collection. Finding a particular book, however, can be difficult. After briefly scanning Dreiser's library, one immediately notices that it is as large and eclectic as Dreiser himself, containing non-fiction works on most topics, as well as classical literature, popular and serious fiction, poetry, and drama. Moreover, a number of books and authors are likely to be unfamiliar to present-day readers, for the library represents the literary world in which Dreiser was both scholar and critic and which was inhabited by well-known authors such as Eugene O'Neill and James Joyce as well as numerous writers who are now seldom read or discussed. For example, within Dreiser's library is a collection of books that Dreiser labeled the "Library of American Realism," but few of these authors are now read or taught and few can be identified in standard reference works, such as *The Concise Oxford Companion to American Literature*. Besides capturing the literary world of the early twentieth century, the library also reveals Dreiser's desire to define American realism.

For Dreiser, his Library of American Realism was a collection of more than 100 books that represented the best of American literature, a collection that he began early and that he augmented regularly. With his private library, Dreiser attempted to define and shape the American canon. On March 16, 1942, Dreiser refers to his Library of American Realism in the above-mentioned letter to George Ade:

As early as 1900, or before, it [*Artie*] passed into my collection of genuine American realism-a picture of the smart engaging amusing youngster of the "gay nineties," with all of his wit and self-confidence. In fact, I entered it with your *Fables in Slang*, Finley Dunne's *Philosopher Dooley*, Frank Norris' *McTeague*, and Hamlin Garland's *Main-Travelled Roads*. And I stored it-or thought I had-along with these and a very few others of that time or earlier:- Howell's *Their Wedding Journey*, for example. These were the beginning of my private library of American Realism. (*Letters* 3: 949)

This letter reveals both Dreiser's desire to collect autographed first editions and his ambition to create a library of great works. In Dreiser's copy of Hamlin Garland's *Main-Travelled Roads*, Garland inscribed the phrase: "Theodore Dreiser's Library of Realism," which shows that Dreiser contacted Garland, just as he contacted George Ade, and requested an autographed book for his realism library. In a note that records the movement of books in and out of Dreiser's New York storage, Evelyn Light writes that she is adding Sara Orne Jewett's *The Country of the Pointed Firs* and Edgar Lee Masters's *Mirage* to the storage box titled "Library of American Realism," and she speculates that these books are replacements, not duplicates, since the works are on Dreiser's list but not already in the box. What Light does not realize is that the books were being added to the library as Dreiser was able to secure them from authors. In some cases, Dreiser probably never owned the books, but in other cases, as in the case of Jewett's *The Country of the Pointed Firs* and Masters's *Mirage*, we have evidence that Dreiser owned the books, yet these books are not in the collection at the University of Pennsylvania.

In the above letter to Ade, Dreiser probably exaggerates when he claims that he began the Library of American Realism before 1900, but there is evidence that he carefully planned, collected, and changed this realism library over a thirty-year period. In a letter to H. L. Mencken on March 22, 1915, Dreiser wrote, "Barring Howells, James, Norris, Phillips, Mrs. Wharton, Garland, Herrick and London, are there any fugitive realistic works of import. I want a list. I would exclude Whitlock, H. B. Fuller and Stephen Crane. . . . Make it as comprehensive a list as you can" (*D-M Letters* 1: 190). Three days later, on March 25, Mencken replied to list Upton Sinclair's *Love's Pilgrimage* and *The Jungle*, Frederic Arnold Kummer's *A Song of Sixpence*, Winston Churchill's *The Inside of the Cup*, Mark Twain's and Charles Dudley Warner's *The Gilded Age*, and Robert Steele's *One Man* (*D-M Letters* 1: 191). Dreiser wrote again on March 29, 1915, to ask whether Harry Leon Wilson, Will Levington Comfort, Alice Brown, Mary E. Wilkins, or Margaret Deland wrote any sound works "realistically speaking" (*D-M Letters* 1: 191), but none of these authors appear on Dreiser's list of American realism, even though Dreiser owned books by Harry Wilson and Will Comfort.

During the 1930s, Dreiser employed his Library of American Realism as evidence that American writers were finally writing a realistic literature that represents society, not just the individual. In 1932, Dreiser's desire to convey his views on literature, politics, and the economy overwhelmed his fear of public speaking: as W. A. Swanberg explains, "determination to conquer his terrible stage fright was proof of his longing for leadership" (394). And in 1934, Dreiser wished to enhance his income further with more lecturing, so he "quit the Pond [lecture] bureau and signed up with Ernest Briggs, insisting on a $500 fee and on dignified promotion cards rather than the usual handbills" (Swanberg 420). In a lecture entitled "The Realist and His Sources," dated April 17, 1935, Dreiser argues that the realistic writer must suffer as Dostoyevsky, Dickens, and Hamsen suffered, and then he laments the lack of American realism: "Here in American we have no really distinguished list of realists to whom to point. I would like to mention Mark Twain as a great realist, but the trouble in that case is that he was also a great humorist, not an ironic, but a kindly humorist" (file 13368). In lecture notes entitled "Realism and Other Literature," Dreiser laments that too much literature is based on action instead of reaction-he then begins a list of 100 realistic novels, but only catalogues 56 (file 13701). He includes a number of early American works, such as *Charlotte Temple*, by Susanna Rowson (labeling it the "first piece of American realism"); *Arthur Mervyn*, by Charles Brockton Brown; *Typee*, *Mardi*, *Pierre*, and *Billy Budd*, by Melville; *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac*, by Thoreau; *The Scarlet Letter*, by Hawthorne; *Leaves of Grass*, by Whitman; and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by Stowe. Unlike this list, Dreiser's Library of American Realism contains over 100 books and, with the exception of Melville's *Typee* and Stowe's *Dred*, excludes early works. In place of these early American novels, Dreiser includes contemporary works by Faulkner,

Hemingway, and Steinbeck, which demonstrates that the collection reflected Dreiser's sense of an evolving American canon.

Not only was Dreiser concerned with realism in America, but he also collected and catalogued foreign realists. In the Dreiser Collection, there are lecture notes that list "Great Foreign Realists," including Tolstoy, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Hugo, Balzac, De Maupassant, Flaubert, Thackerary, Gogol, Defoe, Hardy, George Moore, Chekhov, Conrad, Joyce, James, and Wharton (file 13386). Dreiser includes James and Wharton among the "Great Foreign Realists," but both are also on his list of American realists. For Dreiser, his library was more than a collection of valuable books; it was a means by which he could physically select, arrange, and define the American canon. Despite his condemnation of American literature as lacking great realists, he proceeds, in his literary speeches, to list modern American writers who portend an American renaissance. In notes for a 1936 lecture titled "Are Writers Born?" Dreiser lists living writers together with their states, which suggests that he perceived realism to be in part an outgrowth of region, and these writers-William Saroyan, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, and Thomas Wolfe-appear in his Library of American Realism (file 13373). And in Paris on July 25, 1938, Dreiser delivered a speech to the International Association of Writers that further articulates his vision of American literature: "the great writers have almost uniformly struggled to express in the novel form the ills of man," and the best American literature until recently has been too concerned with "individual or emotional problems," not societal problems (file 13379). First citing Poe, Melville, and Hawthorne as examples of the great American writers concerned with the individual, Dreiser then lists the American authors who focus on societal issues in their writing: Twain, Crane, Fuller, Ade, Sinclair, Cather, Anderson, Lewis, Fitzgerald, and Faulkner, all writers who appear in Dreiser's Library of American Realism. These speeches reveal Dreiser's realism library as a physical means by which he defined American literature, which is further corroborated by the contract signed by Helen Dreiser and the University of Pennsylvania.

In listing the contents to be shipped, the contract describes Dreiser's Library of American Realism as a group of books that Dreiser planned to analyze further: "There is his library of American Realism about which he intended to write" (file 6961). But only forty of the books listed as part of the Library of American Realism ever arrived at the University of Pennsylvania, and sixteen of those forty books did not turn up until 1958, three years after Helen Dreiser's death. The Library of American Realism was stored in trunk 3, and at the top of what appears to be the most current content list, there is a handwritten note, "Check these books in shipment," which leads one to assume that most of the 119 books listed are in the trunk. The absence of so many books is odd, and there is evidence, as mentioned above, that Dreiser owned some of the missing books. For example, Dreiser owned sixteen books by Edgar Lee Masters (four of which are inscribed to Dreiser by Masters) and all are in the Pennsylvania collection, but the one book that Dreiser listed as belonging to his Library of American Realism, *Mirage*, did not arrive in Philadelphia, even though Evelyn Light wrote a note stating that she added the book to the trunk.

Besides showing Dreiser as a collector of books and a shaper of the canon, his private library reveals the authors that he admired. When looking at the larger collection, one might wonder which authors are best represented and which authors appear most often in Dreiser's library. At the top of the list is Upton Sinclair. Dreiser owned twenty-nine books by Sinclair-six more than by any other author. He owned twenty by Eugene O'Neill, nineteen by Sherwood Anderson, eighteen each by Charles Fort, John Powys, and H. L. Mencken, sixteen by Edgar Lee Masters, twelve each by Emile Zola and Frank Norris, eleven by George Sterling, ten each by Barrett Clark and H. G. Wells, nine each by Knut Hamsun, Sarah Millin, and Llewelyn Powys, eight by William Woodward, George Ade, and Hendrick Van Loon, and seven by Leon Trotsky, Gustavus Myers and Arthur Train. And although he listed works by William Dean Howells and Henry James as belonging in his Library of American Realism, works by these authors did not

arrive in Philadelphia. Dreiser owned three books by Mark Twain, but *Huckleberry Finn* is not in the collection, a novel that is also listed in his Library of American Realism.

As Dreiser's letters, critics, and biographers reveal, we know that Dreiser loved reading Charles Fort's pseudo-scientific studies, H. G. Wells's science fiction, and John Powys's transcendental philosophy, so it is no surprise that he owned a large number of their books. But why he owned twenty-two volumes by Eugene O'Neill and ten by Barrett Clark, who was a drama critic and who wrote a book about Eugene O'Neill, is less certain, but these books remind us that Dreiser was a playwright who studied modern American drama. That he owned nine books by Sarah Millin, a South-African novelist, and none by Henry James or W. D. Howells, may be a mystery, but this also reveals Dreiser's eclectic, independent reading habits. Since Dreiser did own a number of books that he received as gifts and that he never read, judging Dreiser's reading habits by his book ownership can be misleading. For example, the crate labeled "A.B." contains valuable, autographed first editions, but many of these works remain unread, unopened, with the pages uncut, and a surprising number are in foreign languages, such as Russian and French, languages that Dreiser could not read.

Of the books in the collection, the ones containing marginalia best reveal Dreiser's reading patterns and his varied intellectual interests. As early as 1896 in a "Reflections" column for *Ev'ry Month*, Dreiser outlined his approach to reading, one that he followed throughout his life. In the column, he argues that we should not begin with the classics of Greece and Rome, nor old masters, nor Shakespeare nor Milton, nor romances, nor clever novels; instead, we should begin with non-fiction, with "some light, readable works on astronomy, botany, chemistry, physics, and so forth . . . gather from them a little knowledge of the flowers and plants, the rocks and minerals and their qualities, and the position of the earth" (86). After educating ourselves, we may then turn to novels and differentiate good fiction from bad. Throughout his life, Dreiser followed his own advice. There are 117 books that contain marginalia and all are nonfiction, except Melville's *Typee*. And the marking in *Typee* indicates that Dreiser focused on the biographical introduction, not the novel. Of his annotated books, religious and philosophical works comprise the largest number, but they range greatly in subject matter, from Hinduism to Schopenhauer to works by Quakers. Even at the end of his life, Dreiser was reading to learn. In December 1945, on the inside cover of Dreiser's copy of Paul Bunton's *A Search in Secret India*, Helen Dreiser wrote that Dreiser was reading and marking this volume "a few days before passing away." In 1944, when she visited Dreiser in Los Angeles, Marguerite Tjader found Dreiser surrounded by his books: "All around were bookcases with dictionaries, and many scientific books and magazines, and manuscripts; the whole room seemed alive with information and ideas" .

If we are to measure the ideas that influenced Dreiser by looking at the books that he marked, then Quakerism ranks first. He owned and wrote in at least eight books on, about, or by Quakers, including *The History, Beliefs, Practices of Friends*, *Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of Members of the Religious Society of Friends*, *A History of the Friends in America*, *The Journal of John Woolman*, George Fox's *Journal*, and three Quaker books by Rufus Jones. And even in the volume *Hinduism: The World-Ideal*, by Maitra Harendranath, next to a line that states "Hindus are the Fortean work (*Wild Talents*) contains any marginalia and those markings are slight. Dreiser's fascination with Fort and with reading non-fictional works emanated from one desire, the attainment of truth. If nothing else, Dreiser's private library shows him to be a seeker of knowledge who would use any means at his disposal to reach beyond the limits of traditional thinking if he were to know the unknowable.

Besides these religious works, Dreiser read and annotated books on almost every topic, from economics to sex, from science to literature, and from history to psychology. In general, the books with marginalia fall into seven categories: economics, literary criticism, philosophy, politics, psychology, religion, and science. While his varied intellectual interests are well known,

the library offers proof that Dreiser's philosophical and scientific musings were based on extensive reading. In *The Inevitable Equation: The Antithetic Pattern of Theodore Dreiser's Thought and Art*, Rolf Lundén argues that Dreiser would read "anyone who moved him closer to the truth" (35). In 1894, Dreiser began his search for the truth by reading Spencer and Huxley, and he continued his eclectic search for knowledge by reading Charles Fort, Sigmund Freud, John Powys, H. G. Wells, Mary Baker Eddy, John Woolman, John Watson, A. A. Brill, and Jacques Loeb.

In the 117 books with marginalia, Dreiser was far more likely to underline passages than to write in the margins, and only about half of these books contain extensive marking. Dreiser marked books by underlining passages, running a line beside the text, and/or placing X's, exclamation marks, and arrows in the margins In books with extensive markings, there is a combination of these marks, apparently indicating the significance of the passage. The lack of marking in most books may seem odd since Dreiser, especially in preparing his *Notes on Life*, borrowed extensively from other writers. Instead of marking books, Dreiser often prepared notes or had notes prepared, as Neda Westlake explains in "Theodore Dreiser's *Notes on Life*." Of the thirty-one books that Westlake lists as being quoted extensively in *Notes on Life*, only six are among the books containing marginalia and a majority of the thirty-one books are not in the Dreiser collection at the University of Pennsylvania, which indicates that Dreiser borrowed from libraries and/or that books are missing.

As mentioned above, the extent to which Dreiser marked books varied greatly. For example, in Glenn Plumb's *Industrial Democracy* only one page is slightly marked, but Gustavus Myers's five books are extensively marked. To Gustavus Myers, Dreiser wrote on March 31, 1916, "Quite recently I sat down and went through four of your volumes on American Wealth-*Great Fortunes in America*-three volumes-and *Canadian Wealth* one. Before that I had read your *History of Tammany Hall*. I may express myself lamely in this matter but to me these are very important books-the first honest, intelligible and intelligent explanation and proof of how great fortunes are, unusually, made" (*Letters* 1: 208-9). As judged by the underlining and marginalia that appear throughout Myers's books, Dreiser's admiration of the author is genuine. But the type and purpose of Dreiser's markings varied greatly. In a work that attacks Catholicism by Saxby Penfold entitled *Why a Roman Catholic Cannot Be President of the United States*, Dreiser inserted a two-page note, indicating that the author's argument goes too far. In Melville's *Typee*, the only work of fiction to contain marginalia, Dreiser marks lightly throughout the work, but he is particularly interested in the introduction where he notes Melville's age when writing various works. In Theodore Reik's *Psychology of Sex Relations*, in an attempt to distance herself from the marginalia, Helen Dreiser writes that Theodore Dreiser marked the book. But Dreiser only marked the beginning of Reik's book, and the marginalia indicates that he focused on the nature of the sex drive and the confusion of sex and love. In other works, Dreiser simply admires an author; for example, on the dedication page of Llewelyn Powys's book *Love and Death*, Dreiser wrote: "This book is beautiful in wisdom, narrative poetry and truth. A book I truly love. T.D."

In his few marginal comments, Dreiser would typically qualify, contradict, or emphasize passages of the text. For example, in *The Economy of Abundance* Stuart Chase analyzes our modern economic structure and claims that we cannot go "back to the land"; in response, Dreiser writes, "no good to go back to the land." In a small popular version of Schopenhauer entitled *Studies in Pessimism*, Dreiser writes throughout, underlining passages about women that claim men are nobler than women because men reach the age of reason at twenty and women reach it at eighteen. Beside Schopenhauer's claim that the child should learn through experience and not through preconceived ideas, Dreiser writes, "Yes. Yes". But in response to Schopenhauer's claim that this method of education has never been tried, Dreiser circles the word "tried" and writes, "never been permitted," qualifying Schopenhauer's claim. In reaction to this same passage, Dreiser writes, "In order that people may lead many must follow." In this longer comment,

Dreiser is challenging Schopenhauer's philosophy, which is clear on the next page where Schopenhauer outlines his plans for children to learn from the "original" and not from "copies." In marginal comments, Dreiser contradicts Schopenhauer by writing: "But life does not work so" and "But they [children] are not capable of learning for the original" (122-23). Although Dreiser's marginal comments are rare, they demonstrate his independent and iconoclastic thinking.

But Dreiser's eclectic reading and ideas were often misunderstood. For example, Dreiser's appreciation and promotion of Charles Fort, a collector of bizarre and supernatural data, was taken by some as a sign of intellectual weakness or muddled thinking. When Dreiser sent his personal copy of Fort's *Book of the Damned* to H. G. Wells, Wells returned the book admonishing Dreiser to stop criticizing "orthodox science," and Wells requested God to "dissolve (& forgive)" Dreiser's Fortean society (*Letters* 2: 532). Dreiser responded to H. G. Wells on May 23, 1931:

In regard to Fort's work, I am still of the opinion that such a body of ideas, notions, reports, hallucinations-anything you will-gathered from whatever sources and arranged as strangely and, certainly I can say in this case, imaginatively, is worth any mind's attention. I think it is arresting just as pure imagination, as Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand League Under the Sea*, or your own *The Island of Dr. Moreau* is arresting. (*Letters* 2: 532)

Dreiser greatly admired Fort's method of collecting and synthesizing data ignored by scientists, but Dreiser read Fort's books for entertainment and mental stimulation, not for factual information-only one Fortean work (*Wild Talents*) contains any marginalia and those markings are slight. Dreiser's fascination with Fort and with reading non-fictional works emanated from one desire, the attainment of truth. If nothing else, Dreiser's private library shows him to be a seeker of knowledge who would use any means at his disposal to reach beyond the limits of traditional thinking if he were to know the unknowable.

CHAPTER II
HUMANISTIC FEELINGS IN “SISTER CARRIE” BY THEODORE DREISER

2.1. The composition and publication of “Sister Carrie”

The making of Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie is one of the best-known-and most apocryphal-stories in American literary history. Fortunately a great many materials survive to help us reconstruct the story and dispel the myths. The holograph manuscript of the novel is preserved at The New York Public Library, together with some notes and other materials that Dreiser saved. The setting-copy typescript (the crucial document) is part of the Theodore Dreiser Papers in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. Also at Penn is a useful collection of correspondence between and among the principal players in the drama. These materials do not answer all questions about the composition of Sister Carrie, but they cast light on most of them.

The story of Sister Carrie began in March 1894 when young Theodore Dreiser, an itinerant newspaperman with vague literary ambitions, came to Toledo, Ohio, in search of a job. He had been working his way east from Chicago since 1892, writing for various newspapers and hoping eventually to land in New York City, where he wanted to secure a position at one of the large metropolitan daily papers. In Toledo, Dreiser met Arthur Henry, an editor at the Toledo Blade, and wrote an account of a streetcar strike for the paper. Dreiser and Henry hit it off well, and though Henry could not offer Dreiser a permanent position, the two men vowed to keep in touch. Dreiser moved on to Cleveland, then to Buffalo, and finally to Pittsburgh, working in each city as a reporter and features writer, gaining experience and hoping, as always, to end up in Manhattan.

Dreiser did move to New York in November 1894, but he found it difficult to break into journalism there. After a period of frustration and near-poverty, he was rescued by his brother, Paul Dresser, a songwriter and vaudeville performer who had an interest in a magazine called Ev'ry Month. The magazine was little more than a vehicle for popularizing Paul's songs (each issue contained the sheet music for a tune), but in Dreiser's hands Ev'ry Month became a lively journal, a place for him to publish his own writings-and some of Arthur Henry's work as well, for the two men had indeed kept up with one another. During the summer of 1897, Henry came east to live and to look into some writing possibilities for himself in New York. Shortly after that, Dreiser left Ev'ry Month and moved into free-lance magazine work, where he had good success. By December 1898 he was financially secure enough to marry Sara Osborne White, a Missouri schoolteacher whom he had met several years before. These two-Arthur Henry and Sara White-were now living in New York; they would play crucial roles in the composition of Sister Carrie.

The initial impetus to compose the novel came from Henry. By the fall of 1899 he had prodded Dreiser into beginning a manuscript; part of the argument was that Henry would be writing his own novel, to be called A Princess of Arcady, at the same time. The two young writers would help one another, offering advice and encouragement as they pursued what they both wanted-literary fame. Dreiser remembered later that he began his novel as much to please Henry as to answer any need of his own. He took a half-sheet of coarse copy paper and at the top wrote a title, "Sister Carrie." Then he began to set down the story of Caroline Meeber.

Dreiser moved along steadily, drawing on his knowledge of Chicago, where the narrative began, and on his experiences in the streets, saloons, and theaters of that city. He drew material from the misadventures of one of his sisters, Emma Dreiser, who had become involved with a married man named L. A. Hopkins and had fled with him to Canada, then to New York, after Hopkins had stolen money from the bar at which he worked. Dreiser managed to write nine chapters before running into trouble. He had brought Carrie Meeber and Charlie Drouet together and had introduced George Hurstwood into the narrative, but he had no idea where the story should go from there. Dreiser put down the manuscript in mid-October 1899, probably not intending to take it up again, but Henry kept goading him and eventually persuaded him to resume work on the manuscript in December.

This time Dreiser advanced the novel to the point at which Hurstwood was to steal money from his employers, but Dreiser was puzzled by Hurstwood's motivations and could not capture them on paper. He abandoned the novel-permanently this time, he thought-but again Arthur Henry insisted that he continue. Dreiser wrote the scene in which Hurstwood takes the cash from the safe (one of the best sequences in Sister Carrie); thus encouraged, he moved ahead briskly with the chapters that remained.

Dreiser was confident enough now to have the completed chapters put into typescript for later submission to a publisher. These finished holograph drafts had by this time been read, edited, and revised by both Sara and Henry-she functioning mainly as a grammarian, he mostly as a stylistic advisor. Henry had become involved with a woman named Anna Mallon, who operated a typewriting agency, and Dreiser took his chapters there for copying. Anna's typists worked on the finished chapters as Dreiser forged ahead with the rest of the novel, writing quickly now and with confidence. On the 29th of March 1900 he finished the narrative, for the first time, with Hurstwood's suicide in a Bowery flophouse. The typists had caught up with him, so by early April he had a complete typescript of Sister Carrie in hand.

Dreiser had written what he must have known to be an unpublishable novel. Its title character was a young woman who came to the city, formed two out-of-wedlock relationships, made her way onto the stage, and rose to fame and financial security. According to the conventions of the day she should have been punished for her moral lapses, but instead she was rewarded. Dreiser's typescript was also permeated with bleak, naturalistic thinking-antithetical to

the pieties of the literary world. He probably knew that he would have to compromise his narrative if he were to see it into print, and toward this end he enlisted the help of Sara and Henry. Both of them went over the typescript, toning down some of the blunt treatment of sex, smoothing over the style, but not (as it turned out) making the novel palatable enough for it to be accepted by the first house to which Dreiser would show it.

Dreiser also changed the ending of Sister Carrie. The notes that survive with the manuscript suggest that he was influenced to do so by Sara, and possibly by Henry as well, though one can only speculate about their roles. Whatever the case, Dreiser altered his conclusion, ending not with the death of Hurstwood but with Carrie in her rocking chair, still melancholy and desirous, unsatisfied by her fame and possessions. Dreiser also altered the end of the penultimate chapter of the book, Chapter XLIX, so that Robert Ames, the young inventor from the Midwest, would not appear to be a romantic possibility for Carrie.

Dreiser now began his search for a publisher. He turned first to the prestigious house of Harper and Brothers, where he had an influential friend named Henry Mills Alden on the editorial staff. Dreiser submitted the typescript to Alden in early April 1900; about three weeks later it was turned down. The rejection letter, saved by Dreiser, contained some praise: "This is a superior piece of reportorial realism-of highclass newspaper work," the Harpers adviser said. "It is graphic, the local color is excellent, the portrayal of a certain below-the-surface life in the Chicago of twenty years ago faithful to fact." But Sister Carrie was still not publishable, at least by Harpers: Dreiser's touch was "neither firm enough nor sufficiently delicate to depict without offense to the reader the continued illicit relations of the heroine.... Their very realism weakens and hinders the development of the plot." Sister Carrie would surely offend "the feminine readers who control the destinies of so many novels." The decision: Harper and Brothers would pass on Dreiser's novel.

Dreiser was likely stung by these criticisms. Probably he saw that he would have to revise and cut his novel further, but whether he did so at this juncture is not clear from the surviving typescript. What is apparent is that Dreiser, Sara, and Henry-at this point or later-performed a major revision on the narrative. Some 40,000 words were removed, partly to quicken the pace, partly to do away with references to sex, partly to blunt the force of the naturalistic thinking. Much of the remaining prose was revised, trimmed, and buffed. What emerged was a different novel, less sexually frank and philosophically bleak.

The typescript was now submitted to another house, a new firm called Doubleday, Page & Co. Dreiser approached Doubleday because it published the writings of Frank Norris, a promising young naturalistic writer whose novel McTeague had recently caused a stir. Norris, in fact, worked as an advisor for Doubleday, and it was he who read the Sister Carrie typescript in May 1900 and pronounced judgment on it. Norris was much taken by the narrative, later calling it "the best novel I had read in M.S. since I had been reading for the firm." Acting on Norris's enthusiasm, the junior partner, Walter Hines Page, promised Dreiser that Sister Carrie would appear under the Doubleday imprint. No contract was signed, but a gentlemen's understanding was reached.

At this point the familiar details of "l'affaire Doubleday" began to unfold. Frank Doubleday, the senior partner, returned in July 1900 from a vacation and read Sister Carrie in typescript. Perhaps his wife read the novel as well, though this has never been firmly established. For whatever reason, Doubleday expressed a strong dislike for the narrative, calling it "immoral" and urging that his firm not publish it. Working through Page, he attempted to persuade Dreiser to withdraw the book, but Dreiser (probably with counsel from Arthur Henry) stood firm and demanded publication. Doubleday sought legal advice and found that indeed he was committed to putting Sister Carrie into print, but that he was under no obligation to market it strongly.

After a round of blue-pencilling meant to remove the last objectionable features from the text, Sister Carrie was published on 8 November 1900. Norris sent out some 127 review copies;

the notices were mixed. Some reviewers complained about the unpleasantness of the story, calling it depressing and pessimistic, but others praised the skillful realism and noted the power of the themes and characters. Without support from its publisher, however, Sister Carrie was a flop. Only 456 copies were sold, netting Dreiser a paltry $68.40 in royalties.

A British edition appeared in 1901 from the firm of Heinemann; this text was abbreviated by Arthur Henry in order to make the book conform to the length restrictions of Heinemann's "Dollar Library of American Fiction." Reviews in the British press were generally favorable, though not as positive as Dreiser would later claim. In 1907 Dreiser himself arranged for a reprint of Sister Carrie by the firm of B. W. Dodge and Co., a remainder house in which he had a financial stake. This republication brought the novel to the attention of new readers and reviewers and prepared the way for a second reprint, this one by Harper and Brothers in 1912-an irony, since Harpers had rejected the novel originally in 1900. In the years after 1912, as Dreiser published more fiction and rose to a prominent position in American letters, Sister Carrie became a famous novel. The story of its suppression by Doubleday was a rallying point for forward-looking intellectuals and a paradigm for the suppression of artistic freedom by the forces of puritanism and Comstockery.

The text of Sister Carrie, however, remained in the compromised form-cut and bowdlerized-in which it had originally been published in 1900. A new British typesetting appeared from Constable in 1927, and a fresh American typesetting was issued by Heritage Press in 1939, but neither edition restored the cut and censored material. Finally in 1981, a scholarly edition of Sister Carrie from the University of Pennsylvania Press returned to Dreiser's manuscript as copy-text and, relying on the evidence of cutting and bleaching from the Penn typescript, restored most of the deleted passages and the unrevised language. The Pennsylvania edition also ends with Hurstwood's suicide, not with Carrie in her rocker. This edition is a synthetic, eclectic text-an imaginative effort to bring the novel as close as possible to Dreiser's original intentions.

The initial reception of the Penn Sister Carrie was mixed; subsequent defenders and attackers have brought into the discussion many important issues about literary texts and authorial intentions, and especially about works of literature which exist in more than one version. Both texts (the Doubleday and the Penn) are today in print, in widely available paperbacks; scholars continue to debate the merits of one over the other. Those who favor the Doubleday text see it as an historical artifact-a negotiated, collaborative product of the culture that produced it. Those who argue for the Penn text see it as more nearly the novel that Dreiser himself meant to publish, a narrative far ahead of its time which could not be issued until eighty years after he wrote it.

The importance of the surviving typescript, reproduced on this website, is that it preserves the work of all of the participants in the Sister Carrie story-Dreiser, Henry, Sara, and the Doubleday editors. One can see on its leaves the evidence of consideration and reconsideration, cutting and softening and revising, that produced the text published in 1900. This evidence is subject to various explanations, all of them influenced by one's views about literary inspiration and intention. For this reason there will never be an established or "definitive" text of Sister Carrie. The typescript, and the conflicting intentions that it displays, will remain open to many interpretations.

2.2. Short content of “Sister Carrie”

Caroline Meeber, Carrie, arrives in Chicago and she stays at her sister, Minnie Hanson's, house in an attempt to get ahead in her life.

Dissatisfied with life in her rural Wisconsin home, 18 year-old Caroline "Sister Carrie" Meeber takes the train to Chicago, where her older sister Minnie, and her husband Sven, have agreed to take her in. On the train, Carrie meets Charles Drouet, a travelling salesman, who is attracted to her because of her simple beauty and unspoiled manner. They exchange contact information, but upon discovering the "steady round of toil" and somber atmosphere at her sister's flat, she writes to Drouet and discourages him from calling on her there.

Carrie soon embarks on a quest for work to pay rent to her sister and her husband, and takes a job running a machine in a shoe factory. Before long, however, she is shocked by the coarse manners of both the male and female factory workers, and the physical demands of the job, as well as the squalid factory conditions, begin to take their toll. She also senses Minnie and Sven's disapproval of her interest in Chicago's recreational opportunities, particularly the theatre. One day, after an illness that costs her job, she encounters Drouet on a downtown street. Once again taken by her beauty, and moved by her poverty, he encourages her to dine with him, where, over sirloin and asparagus, he persuades her to leave her sister and move in with him. To press his case, he slips Carrie two ten dollar bills, opening a vista of material possibilities to her. The next day, he rebuffs her feeble attempts to return the money, taking her shopping at a Chicago department store and securing a jacket she covets and some shoes. That night, she writes a good-bye note to Minnie and moves in with Drouet.

Drouet installs her in a much larger apartment, and their relationship intensifies as Minnie dreams about her sister's fall from innocence. She acquires a sophisticated wardrobe and, through his offhand comments about attractive women, sheds her provincial mannerisms, even as she struggles with the moral implications of being a kept woman. By the time Carrie meets George Hurstwood, the manager of Fitzgerald and Moy's - a respectable bar that Drouet describes as a "way-up, swell place" – her material appearance has improved considerably. Hurstwood, unhappy with and distant from his social-climbing wife and children, instantly becomes infatuated with Carrie’s youth and beauty, and before long they start an affair, communicating and meeting secretly in the expanding, anonymous city.

One night, Drouet casually agrees to find an actress to play a key role in an amateur theatrical presentation of Augustin Daly’s melodrama, “Under the Gaslight,” for his local chapter of the Elks. Upon returning home to Carrie, he encourages her to take the part of the heroine, Laura. Unknown to Drouet, Carrie long has harbored theatrical ambitions and has a natural aptitude for imitation and expressing pathos. The night of the production – which Hurstwood attends at Drouet’s invitation – both men are moved to even greater displays of affection by Carrie’s stunning performance.

The next day, the affair is uncovered as Drouet discovers he has been cuckolded, Carrie learns that Hurstwood is married, and Hurstwood’s wife, Julia, learns from an acquaintance that Hurstwood has been out driving with another woman and deliberately excluded her from the Elks theatre night. After a night of drinking, and in despair from his wife’s financial demands and Carrie’s rejection, Hurstwood stumbles upon a large amount of cash in the unlocked safe in Fitzgerald and Moy’s offices. In a moment of poor judgment, he succumbs to the temptation to embezzle a large sum of money. Under the pretext of Drouet’s sudden illness, he lures Carrie onto a northbound train and escapes with her to Canada. Once they arrive in Montreal,

Hurstwood's guilty conscience – and a private eye - induce him to return most of the stolen funds, but he realizes that he cannot return to Chicago. Hurstwood mollifies Carrie by asking her to marry him, and the couple move to New York City.

In New York, Hurstwood and Carrie rent a flat where they live as George and Carrie Wheeler. Hurstwood buys a minority interest in a saloon and, at first, is able to provide Carrie with a satisfactory – if not lavish – standard of living. The couple grow distant, however, as Hurstwood abandons any pretense of fine manners toward Carrie, and she realizes that Hurstwood no longer is the suave, opulent manager of his Chicago days. Carrie's dissatisfaction only increases when she meets Bob Ames, a bright young inventor from Indiana and her neighbor's cousin, who introduces her to the idea that great art, rather than showy materialism, is worthy of admiration.

After several years, the saloon's landlord sells the property and Hurstwood's business partner expresses his intent to terminate the partnership. Too arrogant to accept most of the job opportunities available to him, Hurstwood soon discovers that his savings are running out and urges Carrie to economize, which she finds humiliating and distasteful. As Hurstwood lounges about, overwhelmed by apathy and foolishly gambling away his remaining savings, Carrie turns to New York's theatres for employment and becomes a chorus girl. Once again, her aptitude for theatre serves her well, and as the rapidly aging Hurstwood declines into obscurity, Carrie begins to rise from chorus girl to small speaking roles, and establishes a friendship with another chorus girl, Lola Osborne, who begins to urge Carrie to move in with her. In a final attempt to prove himself useful, Hurstwood becomes a scab driving a Brooklyn streetcar during a streetcar operator's strike. His ill-fated venture, which lasts only two days, prompts Carrie to leave him; in her farewell note, she encloses twenty dollars.

Hurstwood joins the homeless of New York, taking odd jobs, falling ill with pneumonia, and finally becoming a beggar. Reduced to standing in line for bread and charity, he commits suicide in a flophouse. Meanwhile, Carrie achieves stardom, only to find that money and fame could not satisfy her longings or bring her happiness.

Characters in "Sister Carrie"

- **Caroline Meeber**, a.k.a. Carrie, a young woman from rural Wisconsin; the protagonist.
- **Minnie Hanson**, Carrie's dour elder sister who lives in Chicago and puts her up on arrival.
- **Sven Hanson**, Minnie's husband, of Swedish extraction and taciturn temperament.
- **Charles H. Drouet**, a buoyant traveling salesman Carrie meets on the train to Chicago.
- **George W. Hurstwood**, a well-to-do, sophisticated man who manages the Fitzgerald and Moy resort.
- **Julia Hurstwood**, George's strong-willed, social-climbing wife.
- **Jessica Hurstwood**, George's and Julia's daughter, who shares her mother's aspirations to social status.
- **George Hurstwood, Jr**, George's and Julia's son.
- **The Vances,** a wealthy merchant and his wife, who live in Hurstwood's and Carrie's first flat in New York City.
- **Bob Ames**, Mrs. Vance's cousin from Indiana, a handsome, young, Thomas Edison-like inventor whom Carrie regards as a male ideal.
- **Lola Osborne'**, a chorus girl Carrie meets during a theatre production in Chicago, who encourages Carrie to become her room-mate.

CHAPTER III

COMPARATIVE ANALYSES OF THE CONTENT OF SISTER CARRIE" BY THEODORE DREISER

3.3. Cultural and historical contexts for "Sister Carrie"

Ceaseless motion directed toward uncertain goals: for many readers, that is an overriding impression left by Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie (1900). The restless indecision typical of Dreiser's characters reflects profound transformations in American life in the late nineteenth century. His novel makes the volatility of the period concrete, vivid, and unforgettable by registering its effect on individual lives. Among the most sweeping changes registered in the novel are the economy's shifting from an agricultural to an industrial base, the erosion of traditional values following the Darwinian revolution, and the changing relations of men and women. Reading Sister Carrie with an eye to cultural and historical contexts such as these can lead to a shock of recognition, for the novel captures the origins of much that we take for granted as familiar, even inevitable, aspects of modern life.

As Dreiser would be the first to insist, the culture that Sister Carrie reflects is grounded in economic conditions. He sets the plot in motion by tracing the migration of "Sister" Carrie, a young woman whose attachment to her family is faint, from her small town home to the city of Chicago. The declared purpose of this journey, if not the psychological impetus behind it, is Carrie's need to find work. The year Dreiser assigns to Carrie's migration is 1889, and her search for labor in the closest major city reflects a national trend, as glimpsed in the titles of contemporaneous texts, such as the U.S. Bureau of Labor's Working Women in Large Cities (1888) and the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor's The Working Girls of Boston (1889). In 1890, one year after Dreiser imagines Carrie's arrival in Chicago, women made up seventeen percent of the national labor force, with women between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four forming the largest proportion of this group (Matthaei 141).

Dreiser's initial focus on women's work, which he quickly expands to include men's labor as well, provides an apt index of the changing economy. From the founding of the U.S. through the early nineteenth century, the economy had been primarily agricultural, with the individual household the center of production. Individual families consumed, for the most part, only what they could themselves produce. Contrary to the model of stay-at-home wife and mother associated with the Victorian era through much of the twentieth century, in the early economy, the labor of women was central. Women canned the family crops, spun cloth and crafted it into clothing and linens, made soaps and candles, and produced other essential goods. The transition from an agricultural economy centered in the family to an industrial order characterized by managerial capitalism depended on the development of factories throughout the nineteenth century. Factories demanded centralized labor, large groups of unrelated people leaving the home and working under one roof. With this shift, work necessarily moved outside the home, and as that happened, the meaning of the family and the home also changed. Dreiser grounds Sister Carrie in this factory-based capitalist economy, highlighting its effects on individuals and families.

Sweeping economic change marked the period from the Civil War to the close of the nineteenth century. This transformation depended not only upon the factory system and a labor

force centralized in cities, but also on a vast infrastructure of technology as well as communications and financial systems. Prior to the Civil War, individual state banks (as many as 1500 of them) had issued their own currencies; only with the 1864 National Bank Act did the U.S. establish a national currency of paper money. Five years later, competing brokers were consolidated into the New York Stock Exchange. The telegraph was in commercial use by 1847, the transcontinental railroad completed in 1869, the telephone commercialized in the 1880s. Financial and technological innovations such as these allowed for an increased volume and speed of business. A striking example concerns the time it took to move freight from Philadelphia to Chicago: nine weeks in 1849, three days in 1859 (Chandler 122). Since the capitalist economy depends on quickly moving goods from producer to consumers, speed became the order of the day. Human life was similarly set to the clock: because the railroads needed precisely synchronized schedules to operate effectively, time zones were instituted in 1883; meanwhile, "scientific management," the brainchild of Frederick W. Taylor, devised time-motion studies to regulate every moment of a worker's day.

While Sister Carrie registers the frenzied pace set by the marketplace, one of the most important changes the novel illustrates is the transformation of the economy from being fueled by production to being driven by consumption. This shift is visible from the early chapters, when Carrie rejects the frugality and hard work favored by her sister and brother in law, Sven and Minnie Hanson, those upright but dull exemplars of the Protestant work ethic. Representative of a new generation of Americans, Carrie is not one to "submit[] to a solemn round of industry" while postponing gratification (32). Appropriately, Carrie's first lover is a "drummer" (5) or travelling salesman who goes on the road to market his company's wares. The genial Charlie Drouet produces nothing tangible to sell, but the efforts of thousands like him kept goods moving to their ultimate destination, the consumers. Potential buyers like Carrie with easily manipulable desires are also essential: without desire, the consumer economy stalls. In his best-selling Progress and Poverty (1877-79), Henry George provides a taxonomy of desires that perfectly describes what we observe in Sister Carrie. Describing "man" as "the only animal whose desires increase as they are fed; the only animal that is never satisfied," George explains that "[t]he demand for quantity once satisfied, he seeks quality. The very desires that he has in common with the beast become extended, refined, exalted. It is not merely hunger, but taste, that seeks gratification in food; in clothes he seeks not merely comfort, but adornment; the rude shelter becomes a house." And so the consumer "pass[es] into higher forms of desire," world without end (134-5). Illustrating what George calls "an infinite progression" of wants (135), Carrie Meeber remains a recognizably modern figure.

We observe the psychology of the consumer in its purest form when Carrie wanders the Chicago department stores, which Dreiser calls "vast retail combinations [. . . that] form an interesting chapter in the commercial history of our nation" (22). The history to which Dreiser refers involves changes in merchandising during the second half of the nineteenth century, when methods of selling products were developed that remain common. In the 1850s and 60s, wholesalers began marketing standardized consumer wares-everything from underwear to coats, from curtains to furniture. The modern mass retailer, such as the department store (primarily serving urban populations) and mail order firms (bringing products to rural communities), developed in the 1870s and '80s. One of the stores that Carrie visits, Chicago's The Fair, opened in 1879. Mass retailing had wide-ranging effects, which Dreiser translates memorably into human terms. Customers benefited from lower prices and expanded choices, but these choices were intended to instill-as illustrated by Carrie in the Chicago department store-a new and curiously intimate relationship between purchaser and consumer goods. As she examines the attractive goods available for sale, Carrie "could not help feeling the claim of each trinket and valuable upon her personally [. . . .] The dainty slippers and stockings, the delicately frilled skirts and petticoats, [. . .] all touched her with individual desire" (22). From the vantage point of the

twenty-first century, it is difficult to imagine what must have been a profound psychological transformation, as people set aside garments made at home from coarse homespun cloth, in favor of selecting ready-made clothing cut to standard sizes and available in endlessly proliferating styles. But the allure that clothing and other personal effects has for Dreiser's characters-what he calls "[t]he voice of the so-called inanimate!" (98)-allows us to glimpse that momentous change.

Unbounded consumption thrives especially in cities. Dreiser's metropolitan settings in Sister Carrie-the booming city of Chicago and the established metropolis of New York-are ideal locations for what social scientist and cultural critic Thorstein Veblen defined in 1899 as "conspicuous consumption." The adjective in Veblen's famous phrase is as telling as the noun, for the behaviors that typify modern spending patterns have less to do with satiating desire than with advertising status. Such consumption needs to be conspicuously on display, and Carrie's strolling along Broadway with Mrs. Vance, "going purposely to see and be seen", precisely fits the bill. The modern city, indeed, may be Dreiser's greatest character in Sister Carrie. "The city has its cunning wiles," the narrator remarks in the opening chapter, and it seems that Chicago, rather than any man, seduces the heroine. Chicago, described by Dreiser as "a giant magnet drawing to itself from all quarters the hopeful and the hopeless", may have so enticed Carrie because of its unprecedented growth: from a population of 300,000 at the time of the fire in 1871 to over one million by 1890. A commentator in that year captures the lure of the urban experience in language strikingly anticipating Dreiser's: "[t]he metropolis is to lots of people like a lighted candle to the moth. It attracts them in swarms that come year after year with the vague idea that they can get along here if anywhere"; Dreiser uses the moth image to characterize the saloon that Hurstwood manages: "Here come the moths in endless procession to bask in the light of the flame". But the metropolis that attracts one person could also exclude others, becoming what Dreiser terms a "walled city". Thus New York, which "interested [Carrie] exceedingly", has a negative effect on George Hurstwood. As the narrator says, "Whatever a man like Hurstwood could be in Chicago, it is very evident that he would be but an inconspicuous drop in an ocean like New York" .

Factory production, mass distribution, and conspicuous consumption in the modern city all helped create unprecedented fortunes in the late nineteenth century. The appropriately named Gilded Age inaugurated the era of the "robber baron" and the plutocrats, those who ruled by wealth. Names such as Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Jay Gould, Philip Armour, Jay Cooke, and Charles Tyson Yerkes (the latter being Dreiser's model for Frank Cowperwood in The Trilogy of Desire) represent both the promise and the corruption of American business. These tycoons took advantage of new structural forms for business: while the corporation limited owners' liability, organizations such as pools, trusts, and holding companies allowed for greater control of the market. The Interstate Commerce Act (1887) and Sherman Antitrust Act (1890) only partially checked the rise of what muckrakers derided as "octopus"-like businesses and instances of "frenzied finance."

Dreiser was steeped in the American mystique of self-promotion through financial success. Even before he wrote his first novel, Dreiser published interviews with Andrew Carnegie and other magnates for Orison S. Marden's Success, a magazine that promulgated the ideology of upward mobility. As such, he joined the ranks of popular writers like Russell Conwell, who proclaimed that "Acres of Diamonds" could be mined in anyone's backyard. But Dreiser also understood how the economy that produced wealth for some also caused poverty for many. In the last decades of the nineteenth century the economy was extremely volatile, characterized by boom-bust cycles. Two of the most severe financial crises in the U.S. occurred during Dreiser's early years, one beginning in 1873 with the failure of Jay Cooke (who was financing the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad) and the second starting in 1893. While some robber barons maintained vast fortunes during these depressions, about forty percent of industrial workers remained below the $500 per year poverty line in the late 1880s

(Trachtenberg 90). In reaction, laborers struggled to organize and protect themselves by forming unions such as the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and later the more radical Industrial Workers of the World. Between 1881 and 1905, over 37,000 strikes occurred throughout the country (Trachtenberg 86). One of the most dramatic occurred in Chicago in 1886, the so-called Haymarket massacre, resulting in seven deaths and many wounded after an unidentified person threw a bomb at a gathering of workers favoring a strike.

But as Dreiser's George Hurstwood realizes when he scabs during the Brooklyn streetcar strike, "He had read of these things but the reality seemed something altogether new" (425). By juxtaposing Hurstwood's story with Carrie's, Dreiser maintains a dual perspective on the prospects the economy holds out for individuals. Carrie's economic rise and Hurstwood's economic fall illustrate that social mobility entails movement not only up the ladder of success but also down it. When we meet Hurstwood he is an emblematic, successful American male: married with children, comfortably well off, a member of the new managerial class, at ease in Chicago's metropolitan scene. But from the time he steals money from his employer and lies to get Carrie on the train, Hurstwood begins a plummet that will accelerate along with Carrie's gradual social climb. In an influential book of photojournalism, How the Other Half Lives (1890), Jacob Riis captured the middle class's guilty fascination with the urban poor, many of them immigrants. Dreiser shows through Hurstwood's fall that the unfortunate "other" could in fact be any one-even a man of affluence and reputation.

While Sister Carrie registers the capriciousness of the economy, immensely productive yet disastrously erratic, an equally important context for Dreiser's novel is the Darwinian revolution, which had its own profound and often unsettling effects. Many of Sister Carrie's overarching themes-drift, chance, competition, struggle, survival-derive directly from evolutionary thought. The Origin of Species, published in 1859, declared that all species derived from random variation, not divine plan. Evolutionary ideas such as Darwin's opened the door for replacing God with chance as the universe's creative force. The ensuing intellectual revolution constitutes one of the fundamental paradigm shifts as discussed by historian of science Thomas Kuhn. Darwin's assertion of non-teleological evolution (that is, change without a particular goal) challenged the notion of "progress" that had been dear to humans for generations, but particularly since the Enlightenment. By elevating the notion of blind chance and emphasizing the contingent, even accidental nature of the universe, Darwin's theories had the effect of eroding the fixed principles that underwrote most traditional moral assumptions. Perhaps most important, natural selection displaced man from his central position in the Biblical account of divine creation over seven days, as recorded in the book of Genesis. Endless modification, not unchanging truth, characterized the new philosophical order, and the position of mankind in the new order was up for debate.

"Social Darwinism," which refers to the extension of evolutionary ideas to human behavior and interaction, was extrapolated from Darwin by many popularizers, most notably the British philosopher Herbert Spencer. The well-known phrase, "survival of the fittest," was in fact coined not by Darwin but by Spencer. The latter, who wrote ponderous books under titles such as First Principles (1862), was immensely popular in the America of Dreiser's day, as were other Social Darwinists like Yale professor William Graham Sumner. Grandiose and vague ideas like Spencer's apostrophes to "force" appealed mightily to Dreiser, whom he describes in Sister Carrie as promulgating a "liberal" philosophy (87). But Dreiser's view of evolution entertained little of Spencer's signature optimism. Rather, Dreiser saw "our civilization" as being in "a middle stage-scarcely beast [. . .] scarcely human"; as to human actors, the narrator of Sister Carrie proclaims our "innate instincts dulled," our "free will scarcely sufficiently developed" (73). Such sentiments indicate Dreiser's affinity for a more compassionate strain of evolutionary thought. Although Social Darwinism has a long history of underwriting conservative political agendas in the U.S.-especially for glorifying the wealthy as "fit" and excoriating the poor as

"weak"-many progressive social thinkers in Dreiser's day used evolutionary ideas to argue for opposite ends. Works such as Lester Frank Ward's Dynamic Sociology (1883) and Pure Sociology (1903), Thorstein Veblen's The Place of Science in Modern Civilization (1919), and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Women and Economics (1898) all use evolutionary theory to challenge conservative ideas and institutions.

Sister Carrie's ambiguous moral stance indicates Dreiser's deep engagement with the most human consequence of the Darwinian revolution, the matter of ethics. Carrie's leaving her sister to move in with Drouet provokes the first of a series of ethical crises. Their initial responses suggest a conventional portrayal of seduction and sin:

"Oh," thought Drouet, "how delicious is my conquest."

"Ah," thought Carrie, with mournful misgivings, "what is it I have lost?"

But right after the characters' predictable, even hackneyed, responses, the narrator cuts in to declare, "Before this world-old proposition we stand, serious, interested, confused; endeavoring to evolve the true theory of morals-the true answer to what is right" (88). Humans have sought for centuries the "true answer" to ethical dilemmas, but Dreiser, by framing this quest in terms of "evolving," not proclaiming, the moral order, approaches the conclusion of the leading philosophical movement of his day.

The philosophy of American pragmatism was based on the idea that truth is a process, not a fixed essence. Thinkers like Charles Sanders Peirce, John Dewey, and William James attempted to reconstruct philosophy in a world in which evolution had made "Truth with a big T" uncertain (James 102). In reaction, Peirce celebrated what he called "fallibilism," explaining that "the first step toward finding out is to acknowledge you do not satisfactorily know already" (4). Rejecting the methodological assumptions of traditional philosophy, the pragmatists believed "The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events" (James 89). Pragmatism's evolutionary underpinning-and its affinity to Dreiser's treatment of ethical questions-becomes clear in James's proposition that reality, as well as the "truths" that humans believe about it, "are everlastingly in process of mutation". Truth is made, not found; thus "human systems evolv[e] in consequence of human needs". Although there is much to be said for reading Dreiser's novel as an illustration of one of William James's most famous images, in which he talks about the "cash value" of one's belief , the point is not that Sister Carrie is a pragmatist tract. Rather, Dreiser's novel and American pragmatism constitute related attempts to cope with the impact of evolution in the field of ethics.

Dreiser's evolutionary treatment of ethics in Sister Carrie ultimately verges toward the revolutionary, in that he tries to get readers to suspend judgment on actions that would typically be condemned as immoral, such as Carrie's premarital sex and Hurstwood's theft. At the beginning of the novel the narrator invokes the traditional moral judgment on a young woman who moves alone to the city: "When a girl leaves her home at eighteen, she does one of two things. Either she falls into saving hands and becomes better, or she rapidly assumes the cosmopolitan standard of virtue and becomes worse". But that familiar judgment seems finally to be a straw man (or woman), for when the narrator shifts from looking at Carrie to examining the principle that would condemn her-he calls it "the world's attitude toward woman"-he unequivocally posits that "[a]ctions such as hers are measured by an arbitrary scale". Dreiser thus discourages readers from viewing Carrie as immoral, instead drawing attention to the obsolescence of traditional moral standards. The ending of the novel is especially significant in this regard, for Dreiser breaks with long-standing literary tradition that "fallen women" must be fully punished, preferably by a grisly death (as, for instance, in Anna Karenina and Madame Bovary). Carrie, to the contrary, may be unfulfilled or lonely at the novel's end, but she is very much alive and eminently successful in the eyes of the world.

Likewise, Dreiser handles Hurstwood's life so as to preclude moralistic commentary. The pivotal moment when Hurstwood steals money from his Chicago employer complicates the

question of moral agency, for the safe just happens to have been left unlocked on a night when the manager, uncharacteristically, has had too much to drink. Anticipating his important treatment of the difficulty of distinguishing crime from accident in An American Tragedy (1925), Dreiser so clouds Hurstwood's theft in ambiguity that readers cannot easily pass judgment. Rather than acting as a purposeful agent, Hurstwood "could not bring himself to act definitely"; he is "drawn" and "driven" to act by forces out of his control . And so "[w]hile the money was in his hand, the lock clicked. It had sprung. Did he do it? He grabbed at the knob and pulled vigorously. It had closed. Heavens!" (271). Dreiser crafts this pivotal moment to suggest that Hurstwood, again anticipating Clyde Griffiths in An American Tragedy, "was accused without being understood".

While the Darwinian revolution contributed to unsettling many established codes of conduct, some of the most extensive of these changes occurred in gender relations. Here again, Sister Carrie is an exemplary text that so completely registers change as to provide both deep insight into its historical era and essential background for understanding the present consequences of those changes. Carrie's and Hurstwood's movement in opposite social and economic directions draws attention to the erosion of Victorian assumptions about proper male versus female "spheres," a belief system that regulated many aspects of middle- and upper-class white American life. According to this nineteenth century ideal (which still has many advocates), woman's proper "sphere" in the home allowed her to develop her innate nurturing tendencies while exercising her influence in an appropriate fashion: by directing the moral development of her children and husband. Correspondingly, man's "sphere" was the public world, particularly the marketplace, where his competitive tendencies could be channeled to benefit his family and society as a whole.

Although the narrator of Sister Carrie engages in some gratuitous generalizations about women that may make Dreiser appear conservative, his empathy for Carrie's position and aspirations seems finally the more telling indication of his views on women. She begins the novel an ordinary young woman with an "average little conscience" that urges her to stick to the traditional sphere assigned women. But besides wanting to be a consumer-a desire that leads her to depart from the traditional role and move in with Drouet-Carrie is a rebel, albeit largely an inarticulate one. In exactly the same way that "her heart rebelled" against the Hansons' attempts to stifle her personality, she chafes when her supposed husband, the bigamist Hurstwood, attempts to contain her desires. Although outwardly placid when they settle in New York, Carrie "was coming to have a few opinions of her own". Because she is so eager to be a consumer, Carrie not surprisingly first discerns the double standard governing men's and women's conduct in the way Hurstwood sees fit to spend his dwindling store of money. While Hurstwood tells Carrie they don't have enough to buy her any new clothes, "[s]he had not failed to notice that he did not seem to consult her about buying clothes for himself. Her reply was mild enough, but her thoughts were rebellious" (340-1). Dreiser makes clear that Hurstwood routinely underestimates Carrie's potential: "he had not conceived well of her mental ability. That was because he did not understand the nature of emotional greatness". Rather than see Carrie as she really is, Hurstwood sees her as he wishes she would be-"a wife [who] could thus be content." The reason for Hurstwood's error in character analysis is easy enough to comprehend: "since he imagined he saw her satisfied, he felt called upon to give only that which contributed to such satisfaction". More ominously, the narrator remarks, "Hurstwood was pleased with her placid manner, when he should have duly considered it". While "[h]e saw nothing remarkable in asking her to come down lower [, ... h]er heart revolted" .

Carrie's "revolt" is quiet but decisive. Finding the conventional domestic sphere for women menial as well as stifling, Carrie decides she will not "live cooped up in small flat" with someone who treats her like a "servant". She decides for the second time to go to work, and at this point switches roles with the unemployed Hurstwood. What Dreiser calls the "beginning of

the new order" occurs when Carrie starts earning the money while Hurstwood begins to do the shopping. Nothing less than a reversal of gender roles ensues as Carrie begins to ask herself, "Was she going to act and keep house? [. . . Hurstwood was] waiting to live upon her labor". As might be expected, Carrie's "dawning independence gave her more courage", and she is soon emboldened by her increasing salary to leave the oppressive domestic sphere altogether.

Carrie is not simply rebelling against her husband but more significantly against the role that women were traditionally supposed to follow. As historian Barbara Welter describes the nineteenth century ideal for the white middle class, the "True Woman" was expected to be pious, pure, domestic, and submissive. However a competing model for femininity emerged in the U.S. around the 1880s. The "New Woman" typically had a career and was economically independent. Frequently New Women aligned themselves with members of their own sex (in partnerships that were not necessarily romantic) rather than in conventional marriages. Carrie follows this pattern when, deserting Hurstwood, she earns a fine income on stage and moves in with the more upbeat Lola Osborne. Yet the typical New Woman was better educated and frequently more politically inclined than Carrie, and so we might best think of Dreiser's heroine as a transitional figure, moving from the Victorian model of True Woman toward the recognizably modern New Woman.

Change in the social position of either gender often creates a predicament for the other. This was certainly the case as the New Woman came on the scene, for she "threatened men in ways her mother never did". We see this happen as Carrie struggles to comprehend Hurstwood's chronic unemployment, for her sense that "'No man could go seven months without finding something if he tried'" none too subtly questions his masculinity. Hurstwood seems emasculated by Carrie's working to support him-although it is worth noting that his first wife's control of him suggests a deep-seated weakness. Hurstwood's decline illustrates the conclusion of one historian that "the feminine revolt was creating tension and confusion and challenging the masculine paradigm". Thus Dreiser's novel as a whole exemplifies how the rise of the New Woman was attended by what historians describe as a "crisis of masculinity." The time in which the New York section is set, the 1890s, is precisely when historians typically place this crisis. For someone like Hurstwood, who has lost his prestigious job managing Hannah and Hogg's and finds it difficult to continue in the obligatory male breadwinner role after moving to New York, the crisis of masculinity would be especially acute.

We can also describe Hurstwood's predicament in terms of what an eminent sociologist of the time, Lester Frank Ward, refers to as male "efflorescence." Ward proposes in Pure Sociology to counter the "androcentic bias" that runs throughout social science with his own "gynaecocentric theory" of the primacy of the female. According to Ward, "[t]he female sex [. . .] existed from the beginning," whereas "[t]he male is [. . .] a mere afterthought of nature". Thus what appears in contemporary society to be male superiority "bears a certain stamp of spuriousness and sham." So-called male superiority is a defensive reaction that masks the reality of "male efflorescence". That an esteemed sociologist should develop such a theory indicates a climate receptive to innovative ideas about men and women. Ward's theory certainly applies to Hurstwood, whose playing at being the gentleman, reading newspapers in New York hotel lobbies, certainly suggests a sham masculinity. In the final section of the novel Hurstwood confirms his efflorescence by becoming precisely what an American man is not supposed to be: dependent, helpless, passive, and reactive.

When Carrie deserts Hurstwood, she leaves behind a short note and twenty dollars. With this financial transaction, Dreiser brings the novel full circle-for it was with two "soft, green, handsome ten-dollar bills" that Charlie Drouet first tempted Carrie to leave the stifling Hansons. These moments in the novel capture how effectively Dreiser uses concrete details to convey multiple levels of historical change, for the twenty dollars synthesizes Sister Carrie's pervasive concern with economic reality, with shifting moral standards, and with dramatically changing

gender roles. Hurstwood will soon be a suicide, and Carrie has emerged as a celebrated actress. Yet as Bob Ames will tell her (as printed on page 449 of the Signet text of the Doubleday & Page edition), "'If I were you, [. . .] I'd change.'" And so, we may presume, will Carrie endlessly drift and change, making her an emblematic figure of the late nineteenth century, as well as a curiously apt exemplar of our own time.

3.2. Overview to the history of publishing "Sister Carrie"

One hundred years ago the first novel by American journalist and editor Theodore Dreiser was issued by Doubleday, Page & Co. At the outset the work was primarily distributed to and read by book reviewers. Among the mixed reactions printed in the initial year of publication came a prophetic analysis by William Marion Reedy in the St. Louis *Mirror*; it was entitled "*Sister Carrie*: A Strangely Strong Novel in a Queer Milieu" (3 January 1901). Although he admits that the novel is neither "nice" nor "nasty," Reedy identifies one of the enduring powers of Dreiser's tale: "the strong hint of the pathetic in *banale* situations which is more frequent than often imagined." In a review dominated by plot summary and frequently acknowledging Dreiser's uneven craft, Reedy always returns to his own captivation with Dreiser's remarkable blend of veritism and art: "at times the whole thing is impossible, and then again it is as absolute as life itself."

Sister Carrie remains vital for many reasons: as an historical marker for the turn away from sentimentality, romance, and moral rectitude in the American novel at the brink of the twentieth century; as a text that influenced-pro and con-succeeding American novelists over the next several decades; and as a conundrum that never ceases to provoke debate for readers both general and professional. While the first half of the twentieth century produced a diverse range of critical opinion on *Sister Carrie* by reviewers and essayists, the second half has been witness to an abiding argument within academia regarding the quality, value, importance, and interpretation of this signature text.

Before there was a sister Carrie, there was Theodore Dreiser's sister Emma. Born 27 August 1871, Dreiser was the ninth child amid a clan that comprised ten surviving siblings. Among his five older sisters were Mame, Emma, Sylvia, and Theresa, young women who bristled under their father's strict moral demands as well as the economic and social limitations resulting from his business failures. In the mid-1880s, when Dreiser was a teenager and his family had left Chicago to live in Warsaw, Indiana, not only did the unwed Sylvia become pregnant by the son of a wealthy family in town, but Emma had also lived the events that would form an essential aspect of the plot for the novel *Sister Carrie*. Having left her Chicago lover, who was an architect, Emma took up with L. A. Hopkins, the urbane cashier of Chapin & Gore, a fashionable bar in downtown Chicago. Although initially unaware that Hopkins was already married, she nevertheless agreed to elope with him to Montreal, only to learn once they arrived that he had stolen $3,500 from the safe at Chapin & Gore and they were fugitives. Eventually he returned the money, save $800, with the hope that he would not be prosecuted, and the couple fled to New York.

Dreiser's coming of age in a family on hard economic times, which entailed frequent moves and even the splitting up of the family, left an indelible imprint: the social embarrassment and alienation felt by Dreiser, as well as the unfairness of it all, haunted him for the rest of his life. Yet it also provided him with the sensibility as a novelist to present his characters honestly but not necessarily judge them. Their strengths and weaknesses receive equal treatment and the social and economic conditions that shape their lives remain at the center of his re-creation of their stories and milieu. Dreiser was torn by the actions of his sisters: on the one hand, he agreed with his father that their behavior was shameful (if for no other reason than the public scandal and gossiping it engendered), but he was also the one who "rescued" Emma from Hopkins years later in New York (the two were still together but Hopkins was unemployed and urging Emma to

rent rooms to prostitutes). Through a pretext that he was leaving New York for Pittsburgh, Dreiser invited Emma to join him there. She told Hopkins that she was accepting her brother's offer; she moved, however, into a small apartment only a few blocks away in Manhattan.

Before publishing his first novel, Dreiser's apprenticeship in writing comprised a menagerie of short-term assignments and positions with newspapers and magazines from St. Louis to New York. His first reporter's job came in 1892 with the *Chicago Daily Globe*, considered one of the weakest of the Chicago papers at the time. But the *Globe's* less-than-premiere status afforded the inexperienced writer the opportunity to prove himself. He parlayed his few months of work at the *Chicago Daily Globe* into a position at the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, a morning Republican paper that was the biggest in town. At one point Dreiser was assigned the "hotel beat," which meant interviewing visiting celebrities. After returning to the city room one night, having just interviewed the theosophist Annie Besant, he was called away to cover a triple murder. Still dressed in his rented evening clothes, Dreiser arrived at the scene of the crime to find the bloody corpses of a mother and her two children who had been brutally murdered by her husband, the children's father. This dichotomy between wealth and poverty, between appearance and reality, between prospects and hopelessness informs *Sister Carrie*.

The life of the newspaperman in Dreiser's time was itself filled with poverty, lasciviousness, and corruption, as were many of the events that a reporter covered. At first naïve, Dreiser quickly learned the ropes and the realities of urban America, but invariably his ideals or vision or personal pride created rifts between himself and management. Freedom-or what appeared to be freedom-to write works to his own plan drove Dreiser not only to seek the editorship at *Ev'ry Month* but also to pursue creative writing, such as poetry. After departing *Ev'ry Month* in September 1897, Dreiser wrote scores of articles for all manner of publications, always hoping that he could find a measure of financial freedom to write his first novel. Among these works came material that would latter be incorporated into *Sister Carrie*, which he began in earnest in the fall of 1899.

After faking a group of theatrical reviews for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* (Dreiser wrote them without attending the performances, unaware that the shows had not yet arrived because of a train delay), Dreiser resigned his position at the *Globe-Democrat* and ultimately presented himself to the inferior morning daily, *Republic*. To promote circulation, the paper sponsored a contest to select the most popular Missouri schoolteachers; Dreiser was assigned to cover the trip to the Chicago World's Fair for the twenty who received the most votes. On the train he met his future wife, Sara Osborne White, one of the contest's finalists: she was two and a quarter years Dreiser's senior. Married in Washington, D.C., on 28 December 1898-more than five years after first meeting-the couple initially settled in New York. As Dreiser began his first novel in earnest in the fall of 1899, it was Sara (known as Jug)-the schoolteacher-who corrected grammar and improved sentence structure. Her misgivings about the immorality of some of the characters proved prophetic in the turmoil that ensued with the publication of *Sister Carrie*.

In March 1894 Dreiser, still an itinerant newspaperman, came to Toledo, Ohio, in search of a job. There he met Arthur Henry, the then twenty-six-year-old city editor at the *Toledo Blade*, for whom Dreiser wrote an account of the Toledo streetcar strike. The two men felt an immediate rapport, and although Henry could not offer Dreiser a permanent position, they agreed to keep in touch, particularly regarding their shared literary ambitions. By 1899 Dreiser, his wife Jug, and Henry were all in New York. Henry convinced his friend to begin work on a novel, suggesting, in fact, that they spend the summer of 1899 at Henry's home in Ohio, where both would devote time to their literary endeavors, offering each other advice and encouragement and even sharing their incomes. Dreiser never did begin a novel during this summer retreat, although he did work on several short stories. Upon their return to New York, Dreiser and Henry continued their tandem pursuit of becoming novelists: Henry produced *A Princess of Arcady* and Dreiser began and completed *Sister Carrie*. Both texts were published by Doubleday, Page & Co. in 1900

In seeking a publisher for his novel, Dreiser first submitted his manuscript to Harper & Brothers, where an influential friend named Henry Mills Alden served on the editorial staff, but it was rejected within a few weeks. The reasons for rejection, however, appear to have prompted a major revision of the text. Some 40,000 words were removed, partly to quicken the pace, partly to do away with references to sex, partly to blunt the force of the naturalistic thinking. Much of the remaining prose was revised, trimmed, and buffed. What emerged was a different novel, less sexually frank and philosophically bleak. This revised typescript was then submitted to Doubleday, Page & Co., because it had published the writings of Frank Norris, a promising young naturalistic writer, whose novel *McTeague* had recently caused a stir.

Working as an advisor for Doubleday, Norris was the one who read the *Sister Carrie* typescript in May 1900 and pronounced judgment on it. He was much taken by the narrative, later calling it "the best novel I had read in M.S. since I had been reading for the firm." Acting on Norris's enthusiasm, the junior partner, Walter Hines Page, promised Dreiser that *Sister Carrie* would appear under the Doubleday imprint. No contract was signed, but a gentlemen's understanding was reached. In July 1900 Frank Doubleday, the senior partner of Doubleday, Page & Co., returned from a vacation and read *Sister Carrie* in typescript. Doubleday, however, expressed a strong dislike for the narrative, calling it "immoral" and urging that his firm not publish it. Working through Page, he attempted to persuade Dreiser to withdraw the book, but Dreiser (probably with counsel from Arthur Henry) stood firm and demanded publication. After consulting with a lawyer, Doubleday found that indeed he was committed to putting *Sister Carrie* into print, but that he was under no obligation to market it strongly.

After a round of blue-pencilling meant to remove the last objectionable features from the text, *Sister Carrie* was published on 8 November 1900. Frank Norris sent out some 127 review copies; the notices were mixed. Some reviewers complained about the unpleasantness of the story, calling it depressing and pessimistic, but others praised the skillful realism and noted the power of the themes and characters. Without support from its publisher, however, *Sister Carrie* was a flop. Only 456 copies were sold, netting Dreiser a paltry $68.40 in royalties.

A British edition appeared in 1901 from the firm of Heinemann; this text was abbreviated by Arthur Henry in order to make the book conform to the length restrictions of Heinemann's "Dollar Library of American Fiction." Reviews in the British press were generally favorable, though not as positive as Dreiser would later claim. In 1907 Dreiser himself arranged for a reprint of *Sister Carrie* by the firm of B. W. Dodge and Co., a remainder house in which he had a financial stake. This republication brought the novel to the attention of new readers and reviewers and prepared the way for a second reprint, this one by Harper and Brothers in 1912-an irony, since Harpers had rejected the novel originally in 1900. In the years after 1912, as Dreiser published more fiction and rose to a prominent position in American letters, *Sister Carrie* became a famous novel. The story of its suppression by Doubleday was a rallying point for forward-looking intellectuals and a paradigm for the suppression of artistic freedom by the forces of puritanism and Comstockery.

The text of *Sister Carrie* has gone through many hands not only before but also since it was first published by Doubleday, Page & Co. in 1900. Among the first to edit the manuscript were Dreiser's wife Jug and his friend Arthur Henry. In the manuscript-which Dreiser gave to H. L. Mencken, who later donated the item to The New York Public Library-Jug's editing tended toward corrections to grammar, spelling, and the like, although she also made changes for the sake of propriety (for example, references to Carrie's "corsets" and "body" were removed in manuscript Chapter XVI). Henry's edits often entailed major revisions (Henry was also responsible for the abridgement of the text for Heinemann Dollar Library of American Fiction). In the typescript, held by the Rare Book & Manuscript Library of the University of Pennsylvania, one finds the hands of Dreiser, Henry, and Jug, together with some marginal blue-pencilling by an editor at Doubleday-though this editor wrote no words on any leaf. Dreiser's

hand is most readily identifiable: he writes a backhanded script, not easy to read, with no loop in his p's and with the crosses for his t's inscribed to the right of the downstroke. Henry has a rather sprawling hand with a characteristic turning-down of the terminal stroke on the letter d. Jug's right-slanting letters, on the other hand, are formed conventionally, and her script is smaller and tighter than Henry's.

For the better part of the twentieth century the text of *Sister Carrie* remained in the compromised form-cut and bowdlerized-in which it had originally been published in 1900. A new British typesetting appeared from Constable in 1927, and a fresh American typesetting was issued by Heritage Press in 1939, but neither edition restored the cut and censored material. Finally in 1981, a scholarly edition of *Sister Carrie* from the University of Pennsylvania Press returned to Dreiser's manuscript as copy-text and, relying on the evidence of cutting and bleaching from the Penn typescript, restored most of the deleted passages and the unrevised language.

The edit of *Sister Carrie* by Arthur Henry for the 1901 Heinemann edition condensed the first 200 pages down to eighty but kept the ending as published in the 1900 Doubleday edition. Until the 1981 Pennsylvania Edition, all published editions of *Sister Carrie* concluded with eleven paragraphs summarizing and editorializing about Carrie and her life-a Carrie who "had attained that which in the beginning semed [sic] life's object" but who is described by the narrator in the final paragraph as "neither surfeit nor content. In your rocking-chair, by your window dreaming, shall you long, alone."

The ending was revised by Dreiser sometime after he received the original typescript from Anna T. Mallon & Co. His manuscript clearly indicates that his first intention was to end the novel with Hurstwood's death and his final words, "What's the use?" But in revising the typescript, Dreiser rewrote the endings of Chapters XLIX and L, precluding any reading that would assume Ames and Carrie might marry and returning the plot to where it began-with Carrie.

But the last word-in 1900-went to Sara White Dreiser, for although Dreiser himself composed in manuscript a revised ending to *Sister Carrie*, his wife made a "fair copy" for the typist. In the process, she made significant changes in the text. Her version was transcribed by the typist, set by the typesetter, and published in the first edition of *Sister Carrie*.

Although Dreiser revised the ending for *Sister Carrie* sometime after receipt of the typescript, it was his wife Jug who revised his revision. The final paragraph in Dreiser's manuscript revision begins "Carrie! O, Carrie" but reveals subtle differences from the published, that is Jug's, ending. Dreiser writes: "In your rocking chair, by your window, dreaming, shall you long for beauty." Jug's alteration to "shall you long alone" chastens the image and questions the potential for Carrie to find a measure of happiness in the future. Jug's revision of the last line of the novel indicates that Carrie "may never feel" the happiness of which she dreams; Dreiser had originally written: "shall you still know such happiness as you may ever feel."

As much as the elegant shops of Chicago attracted Carrie, it was the theater that captivated her and ultimately provided economic independence. Dreiser was well acquainted with theatrical life in the 1890s, whether it be in Chicago or New York. He incorporated that knowledge into the text of *Sister Carrie*. The names of real actors, actresses, dramatists, and plays frequently appear in the characters' dialogues as well as in the third-person narration that describes where someone has been or is going.

They dined and went to the theatre. That spectacle pleased Carrie immensely. The colour and grace of it caught her eye. She had vain imaginings about place and power, about far-off lands and magnificent people. When it was over, the clatter of coaches and the throng of fine ladies made her stare.

In Dreiser's lifetime an adaptation of *Sister Carrie* never reached the stage nor the silver screen. Scenarios, scripts, and plans, however, were developed with Dreiser's full knowledge and

support. In 1922, for example, Lionel Barrymore telegramed Dreiser about being "enormously interested in possibility of playing Heirstwend [sic] it would make a great play." In the late 1920s Dreiser met the New York theatrical producer, H. S. Kraft, who proposed dramatizing *Sister Carrie* with Paul Muni as George Hurstwood. Kraft engaged the successful playwright John Howard Lawson, who completed a script. Dreiser, however, rejected his work and the project was abandoned. By 1939 Dreiser was intently seeking to sell the motion picture rights to *Sister Carrie*. In 1940 they were sold to RKO for $40,000, although it was not until 1952 that a cinematic version was produced-not by RKO-but by Paramount Pictures

Theodore Dreiser was a prolific writer and published extensively. Beyond his years of newspaper and magazine articles and in addition to his novels, he published books of autobiography, poetry, plays, and essays. In his lifetime he saw through to publication six novels, including *Sister Carrie*; two novels, *The Bulwark* and *The Stoic*, were published posthumously, within two years of his death.

In his critical study, *The Novels of Theodore Dreiser*, Donald Pizer writes:

Throughout his career as a novelist Dreiser was to rely on . . . formulas [derived from sentimental or hackneyed narrative patterns], particularly those of the seduced country girl in Sister Carrie and Jennie Gerhardt and the Horatio Alger myth of success in the Cowperwood trilogy, The "Genius," and An American Tragedy. In most instances, he both used the myth and reversed some of its traditional assumptions. Carrie "rises" not only despite her seduction but also because of it, and Clyde finds neither luck not pluck in his attempt to succeed. Like many major American novelists, Dreiser used the mythic center of American life as a base from which to remold myth into patterns more closely resembling experience as he knew it.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion we can say that national literature is the reflection of the history and national peculiarities of people. Each national literature has much in common with the world literary progress, but at the same time has Its own specific features as well. One of the characteristic features of the English authors is that they have always been deeply interested in political and social environment of their time.

Theodore Dreiser was born in August 27, 1871 in Terre Haute, Indiana, and baptized as Herman Theodore Dreiser. He was the ninth of ten surviving children (three others died as infants) of Säräh Schanab and Johann Dreiser. His father had emigrated from Mayen, Germany in 1844, worked briefly in New England wool mills, and then moved to the Midwest, where large numbers of Germans had settled. He went first to Dayton, Ohio, where he met Sarah, the daughter of a Mennonite family that had come to Ohio from Pennsylvania. Since he was a Roman Catholic and her family was strongly anti-papist, religious tensions forced the couple to elope. When they married in 1851, Sarah was seventeen and Johann twelve years her senior. They moved to Indiana, first to Fort Wayne and then to Terre Haute. Johann became a moderately successful wool dealer and prospered enough to be able to strike out on his own and become the proprietor of a wool mill in Sullivan, Indiana. In 1869 their fortunes changed for the worse when a fire destroyed the mill, leaving Johann with a debilitating injury. The fire, the downturn of the wool industry after the Civil War, and the national economic depression of the

early 1870s resulted in long periods of unemployment. As Dreiser recorded in memoirs, the family never recovered financially or psychologically from this economic fall from grace.

The literary scene which Dreiser entered in 1900 with the publication of *Sister Carrie* was still largely controlled by the conventions of what was later to be designated as "The Genteel Tradition." The purpose of literature, most publishers and reviewers held, was to appeal to man's "higher nature," to inspire him through the depiction of man's capacity to achieve the ethical life to seek such a life for himself. The commonplace and sordid in human existence played little role within this aim, while felicities of style, which constituted the "art" of the work, were held to be inseparable from ethical power. *Sister Carrie* constituted a direct challenge to these assumptions. While some reviewers did indeed note its "extraordinary power" and that its story "has all the interest of fact, and the terrible inevitableness of fact," most seized upon the central situation of the novel-that of a young girl who has two illicit sexual relationships without suffering either material loss or moral degeneration-as immediate grounds for dismissal of the novel. "Squalid," "Neither a pleasant nor an edifying book," "The name of God is not mentioned from cover to cover, a significant omission" were characteristic comments about the work, while "annoying anachronisms and blunders in English" constituted the thrust of another large number of negative remarks. In short, the novel was neither uplifting nor well-written, and was thus "Not a book to be put into the hands of every reader indiscriminately." Dreiser complained bitterly about the negative impact of The Genteel Tradition on the critical reception of *Sister Carrie* in a brief essay of 1903 entitled "True Art Speaks Plainly." "The extent of all reality is the realm of the author pen," he concluded, "and a true picture of life, honestly and reverentially set down, is both moral and artistic, whether it offends the conventions or not." Dreiser's need to struggle for acceptance of his work on its own grounds, however, was to continue until the great success of *An American Tragedy* in 1925.

Over his lifetime, Theodore Dreiser amassed a library of more than 1,900 volumes, excluding works that he wrote himself. In 1949, the University of Pennsylvania purchased Dreiser's manuscripts and a majority of his books from Helen Dreiser for $16,500, and in 1958, the remainder of the library arrived in several shipments as gifts from Helen's estate. This book collection shows Dreiser as a bibliophile, a book collector who knew the value of first editions and who actively sought autographed volumes from other authors. For example, on March 16, 1942, Dreiser wrote to George Ade.

The making of Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie is one of the best-known-and most apocryphal-stories in American literary history. Fortunately a great many materials survive to help us reconstruct the story and dispel the myths. The holograph manuscript of the novel is preserved at The New York Public Library, together with some notes and other materials that Dreiser saved. The setting-copy typescript (the crucial document) is part of the Theodore Dreiser Papers in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. Also at Penn is a useful collection of correspondence between and among the principal players in the drama. These materials do not answer all questions about the composition of Sister Carrie, but they cast light on most of them.

The story of Sister Carrie began in March 1894 when young Theodore Dreiser, an itinerant newspaperman with vague literary ambitions, came to Toledo, Ohio, in search of a job. He had been working his way east from Chicago since 1892, writing for various newspapers and hoping eventually to land in New York City, where he wanted to secure a position at one of the large metropolitan daily papers. In Toledo, Dreiser met Arthur Henry, an editor at the Toledo Blade, and wrote an account of a streetcar strike for the paper. Dreiser and Henry hit it off well, and though Henry could not offer Dreiser a permanent position, the two men vowed to keep in touch. Dreiser moved on to Cleveland, then to Buffalo, and finally to Pittsburgh, working in each city as a reporter and features writer, gaining experience and hoping, as always, to end up in Manhattan.

Caroline Meeber, Carrie, arrives in Chicago and she stays at her sister, Minnie Hanson's, house in an attempt to get ahead in her life.

Dissatisfied with life in her rural Wisconsin home, 18 year-old Caroline "Sister Carrie" Meeber takes the train to Chicago, where her older sister Minnie, and her husband Sven, have agreed to take her in. On the train, Carrie meets Charles Drouet, a travelling salesman, who is attracted to her because of her simple beauty and unspoiled manner. They exchange contact information, but upon discovering the "steady round of toil" and somber atmosphere at her sister's flat, she writes to Drouet and discourages him from calling on her there.

Carrie soon embarks on a quest for work to pay rent to her sister and her husband, and takes a job running a machine in a shoe factory. Before long, however, she is shocked by the coarse manners of both the male and female factory workers, and the physical demands of the job, as well as the squalid factory conditions, begin to take their toll. She also senses Minnie and Sven's disapproval of her interest in Chicago's recreational opportunities, particularly the theatre. One day, after an illness that costs her job, she encounters Drouet on a downtown street. Once again taken by her beauty, and moved by her poverty, he encourages her to dine with him, where, over sirloin and asparagus, he persuades her to leave her sister and move in with him. To press his case, he slips Carrie two ten dollar bills, opening a vista of material possibilities to her. The next day, he rebuffs her feeble attempts to return the money, taking her shopping at a Chicago department store and securing a jacket she covets and some shoes. That night, she writes a good-bye note to Minnie and moves in with Drouet.

Drouet installs her in a much larger apartment, and their relationship intensifies as Minnie dreams about her sister's fall from innocence. She acquires a sophisticated wardrobe and, through his offhand comments about attractive women, sheds her provincial mannerisms, even as she struggles with the moral implications of being a kept woman. By the time Carrie meets George Hurstwood, the manager of Fitzgerald and Moy's - a respectable bar that Drouet describes as a "way-up, swell place" – her material appearance has improved considerably. Hurstwood, unhappy with and distant from his social-climbing wife and children, instantly becomes infatuated with Carrie’s youth and beauty, and before long they start an affair, communicating and meeting secretly in the expanding, anonymous city.

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