Durham University

Durham E-Theses

Apocalypticisim in the fiction of William S. Burroughs, J.G. Ballard, and Thomas Pynchon.

Philip Neil Best

How to cite:

Best, Philip Neil (1998) Apocalypticisim in the fiction of William S. Burroughs, J.G. Ballard, and Thomas Pynchon. Doctoral thesis, Durham University.

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a https://etheses.durham.ac.uk/id/eprint/994/ is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the full Durham E-Theses policy for further details.

Academic Support Office, The Palatine Centre, Durham University, Stockton Road, Durham, DH1 3LE
e-mail: e-theses.admin@durham.ac.uk Tel: +44 0191 334 6107
https://etheses.durham.ac.uk

Apocalypticism in the Fiction of William S. Burroughs, J.G. Ballard, and Thomas Pynchon.

by Philip Best.

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the written consent of the author and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

Department of English Studies, University of Durham, 1998.



3 0 SEP 1998

PHILIP NEIL BEST - *Apocalypticism in the Fiction of William S. Burroughs, J.G. Ballard, and Thomas Pynchon*. PhD, 1998.

Abstract

Apocalypse should not be thought of as merely a synonym for chaos or disaster or cataclysmic upheaval; more properly we should think of disclosure, unveiling and *revelation*. The exact status of literary apocalyptic is the subject of some debate, and in an attempt to help clarify matters an introductory historical survey examines both the formal characteristics of apocalypse and the various critical positions taken in regard to the genre's social influence. Texts considered in the chapter include the *Revelation of John* and Thomas Pynchon's short story *Entropy* (1959); theoretical works by Frank Kermode, John Barth, and Jean Baudrillard (amongst others) are also discussed. Chapter One traces the development of William S. Burroughs's apocalyptic sensibility through readings of his correspondence with Allen Ginsberg and the novel *The Naked Lunch* (1959); the latter's apocalyptic title referring to the "frozen moment when everyone sees what is on the end of every fork". Chapter Two considers Burroughs's experiments with the "cut-ups" and their application in a number of texts, most notably *Nova Express* (1964). Chapter Three is concerned with Burroughs's work in the 1970s and 80s, and specifically his concept of *Here to Go*, a theory of mutability presented as a transcendental antidote to the threat of nuclear annihilation (the author's alleged misogyny and the views of radical US feminists are also taken into account). Chapters Four and Five explore the apocalyptic fiction of J.G. Ballard; topics covered include Ballard's concept of *inner space*, his debt to Surrealism, and the coded landscapes of his more experimental texts; in particular the "condensed novels" which comprise *The Atrocity Exhibition* (1970). A concluding chapter returns to the work of Thomas Pynchon, offering a reading of *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973) which allows us to consider his treatment of such related themes as Paranoia, Holocaust, Apocalypse, and finally, Counterforce.

Contents

Apocalypse: An Introduction 5

Chapter One: William S. Burroughs - 'The Naked Lunch' 62

Chapter Two: William S. Burroughs and the Nova Conspiracy 89

Chapter Three: William S. Burroughs - Here to Go (A Boy's Book) 136

Chapter Four: J.G. Ballard - Which Way to Inner Space? 171

Chapter Five: Planes Intersect - J.G. Ballard and 'The Atrocity Exhibition' 201

Thomas Pynchon - Paranoia, Apocalypse, Counterforce: A Conclusion 235

Notes 253

Bibliography 323

Note: In texts quoted at some length my editorial ellipses appear in square brackets. All idiosyncrasies of spelling and punctuation are those of the authors concerned.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank David Pringle for kindly allowing me a copy of the forthcoming second edition of his "The Work of J.G. Ballard: An Annotated Bibliography and Guide". I would also like to thank the staff at the following libraries and institutions for their assistance; the British Library, the Imperial War Museum, the British Film Institute, the Science Fiction Foundation at the University of Liverpool, the libraries of the Universities of Durham, London, Bristol, and Newcastle Upon Tyne. For their patience and good humour I am especially grateful to the staff of the Inter-Library Loan department at Durham. The following booksellers have provided invaluable assistance by locating obscure texts (at reasonable prices); Compendium, Andrew Sclanders, Richard Cupidi, Silver Moon, the Fantasy Centre, New Worlds, and Bristol Books. I owe an immense debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Professor P.N. Waugh, for her inspiration, wit, and hospitality. Professor T.R. Wright, Dr Sean Burke, and Dr Robert Clark have also encouraged me and offered sound advice when I needed it. I gladly acknowledge the intellectual generosity of Peter Sotos and Matthew Bower, as well as the love and support of my parents and my partner, Elena Antoniou. Thanks also to Dan.

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without their prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

Apocalypse: An Introduction

Commentators on the literary genre of apocalypse tend to concur on one issue; the very nebulousness of the term. The theologian Leon Morris concedes that "since, then, there is no agreement as to exactly which books are apocalyptic and which not, it is not surprising that it is somewhat difficult to give the term an exact definition".[1] The literary scholar David Ketterer writes from a different perspective but draws a similar conclusion, admitting that "the word apocalypse now often functions as a somewhat Delphic critical counter".[2] Even Bernard McGinn, who in recent years has been perhaps the most prominent translator and editor of apocalyptic texts, warns against the perils of an overzealous interpretive approach: "to reduce apocalypticism to a clear and distinct idea may well be to sacrifice understanding for illusory clarity".[3] With these auguries ringing in our ears we must be prepared to tread carefully and observe cautiously (acknowledging McGinn's counsel that any definitions should be "provisional" or "working"), for if it is correct that apocalyptic visions "are our way of escape, having seen the Minotaur"[4], it would prove wise not to lose the thread of our argument and thus succumb to the blind alleys of the labyrinth.

The concept of apocalypse is Judaeo-Christian, although the word itself is derived from the Greek *apokalupsis;* the roots being *apo* (away from) and *kalupto* (concealment). Despite its popular usage apocalypse should not be thought of as merely a synonym for chaos or disaster or cataclysmic upheaval, more properly we should think of disclosure, unveiling, and *revelation*. According to Klaus Koch's polemical work *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* (1972): "the great mass of apocalyptic literature came into being between 200 BC and AD 100 in the world of Semitic-speaking (or at least strongly Semitically influenced) Israel and Jewish Christianity".[5]

Hebrew works such as *The Book of Jubilees, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, I Enoch, II Enoch, II Esdras, The Apocalypse of Baruch,* and the recently unearthed *Qumran* texts (or Dead Sea Scrolls) offered consolation to a persecuted and scattered race who were, in Debra Bergoffen's words: "powerless to control their national destiny and confronted by people who were intent on either destroying or assimilating them".[6] The visions that these works presented of an end to earthly oppression through the introduction of divine judgment certainly raised hopes for an equally violent overthrow of foreign dominion, but such aspirations were disappointed by the breakdown of the uprising against Rome and destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Such a failure weakened the position of apocalypse in the Jewish tradition, whereas in Christianity interest continued unabated. Although not apocalyptic in form, the *First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians* (c. AD 50) reveals an expectation of the coming End: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (4:16).[7] Further New Testament apocalyptic thought can be found in Peter's Second Epistle, Matt. 24-5, 1 Cor. 15 and Luke 21. The earliest Gospel, that of Mark, was written shortly after the fall of Jerusalem, and in its thirteenth chapter Jesus foretells natural calamities, global wars, false prophets, and the salvation of the elect. This so-called Little Apocalypse is itself thought to be modelled on the Old Testament *Book of Daniel* (c. 165 BC) and on a brief Jewish fragment. Thus, the strands of Hebrew and Christian apocalyptic speculation are often intertwined, so much so that McGinn even reflects upon the "considerable doubt about whether some late first- and early second-century apocalypses are to be labelled Jewish or Christian".[8]

The most celebrated and influential demonstation of the strength of the apocalyptic tendency in Jewish Christianity is the *Revelation of John*. Scholars are united in rejecting the earlier claim that the author of this apocalypse is John, disciple of Jesus, and responsible for the Fourth Gospel and three Epistles. Few disagree with the more reasonable proposition that the book was written in Asia

Minor by a Christian prophet at sometime toward the end of the first century AD. The narrative takes the form of a series of visions granted to John as he lies in exile on the isle of Patmos. In the first a white-haired Christ appears, "and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword" (1:16), who instructs John to record what he sees in a book to be sent to the seven churches of Asia. In the second vision a door is opened in heaven and God hands the Lamb (Christ) a sacred book bound with seven seals. Each of these is loosed, in turn releasing four horsemen of death and various natural calamities. It is with the breaking of the seventh seal that seven angels appear bearing seven trumpets, and when these are blown they are the herald of yet more destruction; "hail and fire mingled with blood" (8:7), "locusts upon the earth" (9:3-11), mountains cast into the sea, and burning stars falling from the heavens.

The thirteenth chapter of *Revelation* concerns the appearance upon the earth of two blasphemous creatures; the first with seven heads and ten crowned horns, the second bearing the number 666, "the number of the beast" and "the number of a man" (13:18). Seven angels then unleash the wrath of God in the form of "the seven last plagues" (15:1); grievous sores, rivers turning to blood, scorching fires, awesome darkness, droughts, a great earthquake, and a final "hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent" (16:2-21). John is then witness to the fallen city of Babylon, personified as the whorish mother of all harlots and abominations, drunken with the blood of saints and riding upon a seven-headed beast clad in scarlet. This beast joins battle with the armies led by the Lamb (or "The Word of God" - 19:13) and is flung alive into a lake of fire. The vanquished Satan is himself cast into the bottomless pit where he must remain for a period of one thousand years; the length of his absence being marked by Christ's reign on earth (20:4-6).

As John's vision draws to a close the devilish hordes of Gog and Magog are reunited with the loosed Satan and together they lay seige to "the beloved city" of Jerusalem (20:9). Heavenly fire devours them and Satan is finally pitched into the lake of burning brimstone where he must endure eternal torment. The book

of life is opened and the Last Judgment pronounced: "every man according to their works" (20:13). An ecstatic vision is then granted of "a new heaven and a new earth": "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (21:1-2). God shall wipe away all tears, sorrow and death will be no more, "the former things are passed away" (21:4), and all shall be made anew. John concludes by faithfully describing the precious streets of the bride of the Lamb:

> And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.
>
> And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. (22:8) / (22:10).

What are we to make of such a paraenetic discourse, with its exhortations that the wicked will be destroyed and only true believers saved? And how should we read such a lurid text, resplendent as it is with gaudy symbols, numerical patterns, allegorical figures, rhetorical devices, and proof absolute of God's retributive mightiness? Do we draw comfort or feel horror at the awesome sight of the heavens departing "as a scroll when it is rolled together" (6:14)? Any simple characterisation of the reading process must appear fruitless. One approach would be to read *Revelation* as a purely *eschatological* document, dealing explicitly with the known events of the coming End of earthly existence. As mythographers we might tackle the book on its *symbolic* level, teasing out its use of archetypes and commonplaces from earlier legendary material. An *historical* reading may prove feasible, with Nero cast as the Antichrist and degenerate Rome filling the role of the sluttish Babylon. On a critical level we might display our *literary* skills and pinpoint the attitude of the author as the key to the text's mystery; asking why there is such a demonisation and radical loathing of the female form throughout the work. We might also detect and explore John's almost obsessive desire for order and spiritual

hygiene through persistent calculating and measuring (culminating in the loving cataloguing of the "precious stones" and "pure gold" buildings and streets of the new Jerusalem - 21:11-21). Whichever way we interpret *Revelation*, it would be difficult to disagree with McGinn's assertion that "no single approach can suffice to capture the richness of the book".[9]

Whatever our misgivings may be about John's psychological profile, they are not specifically alluded to by Perry Miller, the respected historian of early Puritan settlements in New England. He finds *Revelation* ethically satisfying: "the perfect combination of aesthetic and moral spectacle", and an "ideal mixture of destruction and retribution".[10] Certainly there is a harmonious balance, which most commentators identify, in the book's threefold structure of chaos, judgment, and redemption. A favoured line is that adopted by scriptual critic Leon Morris who argues that the terminal visions of the tripartite apocalyptic scenario "made life livable for men under intolerable conditions with its emphasis on God's final and perfect solution"[11]; as a consequence, apocalyptic "represents the opinions and suggestions of men without power".[12]

This is certainly the argument proposed by D.H. Lawrence in his somewhat eccentric study *Apocalypse* (1931). A late work and posthumous publication, *Apocalypse* probably reveals as much of Lawrence's own preoccupations as it does of John's "orgy of mystification".[13] *Revelation* is "perhaps the most detestable of all these books of the Bible"[14]; a repulsive work which offers succour to the uneducated, the second-rate, and the middling masses. Lawrence has no time for the glorification of the poor and the weak: "it will be a millennium of pseudo-humble saints, and gruesome to contemplate".[15] Such aristocratic distaste can be traced to two sources; firstly Lawrence condemns John's vision as nothing more than a sordid manifestation of the proletariat's will-to-power: "this business of reigning in glory hereafter ... is, of course, only an expression of frustrated desire to reign here and now".[16] Second, and perhaps more importantly, Lawrence is aghast at what he diagnoses as Revelation's perversion of Christianity's doctrine of tough but tender

Love. John's hateful apocalypse is the Judas Iscariot among the books of the New Testament, an unnatural interloper ready "to give the death kiss to the Gospels".[17] Lawrence can think of nothing more hellish than "that jeweller's paradise of a New Jerusalem".[18]

At this stage it is worth pausing to consider the subtle but important differences between apocalypse and the related terms of *eschatology* and *prophecy*. Apocalypticism is a species of the genus eschatology - in other words, both dictate that history is a teleological process and scriptural meditation will reveal God's plan for the End of the World. Where the two attitudes differ is in their conception of the proximity of divine revelation. Eschatology suggests an awareness that man's actions can be understood in relation to a coming endtime, whereas apocalypse stresses that the Antichrist is among us and that Judgment is imminent, thus promoting a heightened sense of living in the shadow of Armageddon. Apocalypse is a desperate form of eschatology. Prophecy meanwhile, is the practice of conjuring the future out of the present - if we modify our current habits then we will reap the benefits in *this* world. By comparison, the apocalypticist sees the future boldly breaking into the present; single-mindedly tearing up the worn fabric of terrestrial reality and enshrining in its place a fresh realm of transcendental perfection.

Ultimately then, the *Book of Revelation* reflects a way of thinking about history; as Lois Parkinson Zamora makes clear: "apocalyptic narration is offered as the account of how divine word becomes historical fact and, conversely, how historical fact reveals God's eschatological design".[19] Potentially baffling or upsetting social and political events are shown to be everyday displays of divine will; contemporary traumas attain a readily apparent religious significance when placed in the wider context of God's historical purpose. Thus, hardship and calamity are not the product of blind chance or supreme indifference, all have a meaning in relation to the blissful End.

It follows from this that Biblical apocalypse also provides a way of thinking about time. A cyclical cosmic view would see time as essentially repeating

itself, just as the sun rises and the fresh spring follows the harsh winter so man will be reborn to establish himself once again in the grand scheme and unity of Being. These conceptions stem from a harmonious relationship with natural forces, and find full expression in Oriental myth and the rich traditions of Greek and Mesopotamian antiquity. The Judaeo-Christian perspective is that time is a linear phenomenon, moving inexorably forward like an arrow released from a bow. Apocalyptic then, stresses the twin elements of final Judgment and release from worldly suffering which are inherent in the linear model of time and history (and, of course, absent from the cyclical). Retribution and salvation are assured in apocalypse; with Time as God's instrument for steering us toward a unique and utter cataclysm, rich with the promise of a higher eternity.

Some further observations are perhaps needed on the literary aspects of apocalypse; the immense drama is, after all, God's final word on his *own* creation. Frank Kermode notes that apocalypse is related to our more modest fictions in that both "impose other patterns on historical time".[20] Apocalypse provides us with an analogue of narrative plot; each could be described as a teleological schema of sentences and incidents conspiring to produce a coherent statement on our being in the world. Where apocalypse is perhaps more explicit is in its emphasis on the absolute equation of meaning with ending. Apocalyptic further provides a final destination for personal and public goals, with the death of the individual allied with the destruction of the community. Thus, apocalypse is a literary form which promises a pleasing and resonant marriage of history and biography.

Apocalyptic's testament to God's active direction of historical events and revelation of his own metaphorical presence in the vicissitudes of the current time indicate a deterministic view of the world. Within the scope of God's master plan there is room, however, for human free will; with individual actions receiving their fitting reward or punishment at the Last Judgment. Having said this, it should be noted that the magnitude of the wars of Armageddon and the attendant plagues and famines do somewhat reduce the importance of man's contribution to the

cosmic drama. Against such an imposing backdrop of catastrophe, the consciousness and behaviour of the individual cannot help but seem insignificant. We shall appreciate the literary consequences of this when we come to examine some of the more recent texts which favour an apocalyptic perspective; the human contribution may seem absurd and foredoomed (as in the case of, say, Beckett's *Endgame* - 1958), or alternatively, detailed characterisation may appear unconvincing or simply unimportant (J.G. Ballard and William S. Burroughs are obvious examples, but there are many others).

Apocalypse also promotes a dualistic view of the universe, and of any subsequent action within it. Existence becomes a tense affair, balanced as it is between the promise of millennium (the one thousand years of Christ's reign on earth) and the threat of cataclysm. Thus, triumph is set against tribulation, reward with retribution, order versus chaos, salvation as opposed to damnation. The characters and locales of *Revelation* exist in a similar state of polarisation; *either* Babylon *or* New Jerusalem, Whore or Bride, Beast or Lamb. The use of such coded symbols is also significant. On one level the depiction of Nero as an obscene sea creature is a necessary subterfuge; if he were easily identifiable, official hostility may be the more readily invoked by such a blatant act of literary sedition (and returning to an earlier point, a despairing sense of political impotence may in turn find expression in the desire to punish women or to objectify them as promiscuously unnatural). But more than this, the concealment and subsequent revelation of meaning through the employment of arcane imagery and signs is central to the concept of literary apocalypse as a whole. The apocalypticist deciphers God's plans for the future and then enciphers these findings in a complex web of symbol and allegory. In this respect, John of Patmos is both a reader and a writer; and his only available weapon, the stylus, is proleptic to Christ's sword of ultimate destruction.

We must now trace apocalypse's development from being a means of interpretation to becoming an *object* of interpretation. The painful fact that the expected Parousia (the presence of the Risen Christ) failed to materialise, thus

undermining hopes of imminent salvation, drastically affected Christian apocalypticism in the second century. Apocalypse seemed to be less about the present time, and the relevance and motivational powers of its historical concerns suffered accordingly. McGinn, however, identifies three areas of study in which renewed interest maintained the buoyancy of patristic apocalyptic. The first is the increased prominence enjoyed by the Antichrist, with the early Church Fathers highlighting his already noteworthy role in the *Revelation* and further developing a pseudo-pathology of the figure. Chronologies of the Antichrist's career were studiously debated; a practice which, when combined with popular myth, greatly added to his phantom existence.

Mounting anxiety over the nonoccurrence of the Second Coming prompted efforts to calculate again the timetable of cosmic history with the hope that an accurate record of the World's Duration would prove precisely when the End could be expected. This led to the third, and perhaps most important, development in apocalyptic exegesis; the doctrine of chiliasm. Chiliasm expands upon the brief description given in *Revelation* (20:4-6) of the thousand-year reign of Christ and his saints, positing a vision of the millennium as achievable and, in effect, worth fighting for. Liberally interpreted, the role of any of the resurrected millennial saints could be filled by someone willing to martyr themselves in the present circumstances. This "explosive element in apocalyptic prophecy"[21] emphasised the revolutionary potential of apocalypse; as a consequence, the exact status of the millennium has remained a source of much controversy in Christian teaching and later secular thinking.

One of the earliest dissident groups to harbour millennial aspirations were the Montanists, a heretical and severely ascetic Christian sect active in Phrygia in Asia Minor (c. AD 165); they welcomed persecution as a means to ensuring participation in the millennium. The appearance of similar groups in the third and fourth centuries posed an embarrassing problem for the spiritual leaders of the emerging Christian Church (itself no longer a radical sect but now the dominant

source of power, based at the very Rome so roundly vilified in *Revelation*). A compromise acceptable to the largely conservative society of Imperial Rome was found in the theology of Augustine, bishop of Hippo (354-430). In *The City of God* (413-427), St. Augustine argued that the promise of millennium seen in *Revelation* was to be read as an allegory; the Kingdom of the Saints had, in fact, already been instituted by Christ's first Advent, and was now conducting itself in an invisible and unreachable spiritual realm. Having witnessed Alaric's sack of Rome in 410 (an event readily held by some to be an inauguration of the coming endtime) Augustine realised the pressing need to challenge an overly literal reading of biblical prophecy. The safety and continued security of Christian civilisation depended upon the separation of Imperial destiny from any counterproductive thoughts of a millennial kingdom. Augustine's greatest legacy was to weaken apocalypse's toehold in the modern world; history could now be viewed as a secular affair.

Augustine's partition of sacred and secular discourse received no serious challenge until the teachings of a Cistercian monk, Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202), rose in popularity and revived hopes of a literal millennium. Appropriately enough, Joachim's initial insight into the symbolic message of scripture and history came to him in a vision as he meditated over a copy of *Revelation*. For Joachim, the historical process could not be understood in isolation from the divine Trinity. God had provided the world with three great epochs; the first age (or *status*) was the founding time of the Old Testament Father, the present age was that of the Son, and the coming age was that of the Holy Spirit, when man would aid God in the fulfilment of earthly felicity. Joachim's followers took heart from his assertion that the death of the antichrist at the close of the second *status* would usher in the glorious millennium of the Third Age. It was once again feasible to read into the political squabbles of the world a revelation of divine intention; it seemed possible that a drastic change in the nature of human society was indeed imminent, and such emotions were probably still being felt when Hitler's National Socialist regime was christened, with no intended irony, the Third Reich.

An earlier adherent of Joachite prophecy was Fra Dolcino, leader of the Apostolic Brethren and among the first, in McGinn's words: "to make the fatal step from the mere preaching of apocalyptic ideas to armed resistance to the combined forces of Church and State".[22] None of Dolcino's writings have survived, but the general contents of two letters to his followers are known through the records of the Holy Inquisitor, Bernard Gui. Dolcino identified himself as the earthly representation of the Angel of Thyatria (Rev. 2:18-28), and further claimed "that all his persecutors along with the prelates of the Church will soon be slaughtered and destroyed. Those who are left will be converted to his sect and united to him. Then he and his sect will prevail over all".[23] In actuality, the opposite happened, with the Apostolic Brethren and their peasant supporters routed at Monte Rebello in 1307; Dolcino was tortured and publicly executed.

Norman Cohn's influential *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (1957), a historical study of groups such as Dolcino's, argues that messianic movements "occurred with increasing frequency from the end of the eleventh century onwards".[24] Inspired by Johannine and Sibylline prophecies (the Sibyl was a female seer whose existence can be traced back to the eighth century BC, her influence is the result of later Judaeo-Christian oracles which bear her name), these groups pictured salvation in five senses; as collective, terrestrial, imminent, total, and miraculous. Cohn links the popular acceptance of such ideas to contributing social factors; with over-population, urbanisation, and rapid economic growth creating a frustrated underclass of the dispossessed poor. The catalyst to major civil unrest was the subsequent expansion into medieval intellectual life of Joachite expectations, often accentuated with an anti-ecclesiastical bias. Indeed, it would be erroneous to cite a concern for worsening social conditions as the chief inspiration for Europe's growing band of prophet-leaders; such hardships were often merely exploited to fulfil potent individual fantasies of mass destruction and millennial violence. Thomas Müntzer (c. 1490-1525), for example, did not draw his justification for peasant insurrection

from the material injustices of everyday life, but used instead the pages of *Revelation* and *Daniel*. Having proclaimed himself "Christ's messenger" and his followers the "League of the Elect", Müntzer led a rebel army into battle singing "Come, Holy Spirit" and proclaiming his supernatural ability to deflect all enemy fire. The forces of Philip of Hesse are said to have slaughtered five thousand men that day, with Müntzer spared for torture and eventual beheading.

It is worth noting that it was as an early disciple of Martin Luther that Müntzer first rejected the teachings of the Catholic faith. The Reformation not only heightened eschatological expectations, it also encouraged the individual to enter into a personal relationship with God, with an emphasis placed on private study of the Scriptures. Given such circumstances, the arousal of new and potentially inflammatory Biblical interpretations seems, with the benefit of hindsight, almost inevitable. None could have anticipated, however, the short but violent reign of the charismatic Anabaptist leader, John of Leyden (c. 1509-36). Born Jan Bockelson, he commanded a militant sect called the "Children of God", which established theocratic rule in the north-west German town of Münster in 1534. The persecution and expulsion of the town's Lutherans and Roman Catholics led to a siege being laid by the combined forces of the local bishop and princes. Bockelson rose to the occasion - abolishing private ownership, introducing polygamy, presiding over huge banquets with theatrical entertainments, and all the while maintaining discipline through showpiece public executions. As the plight of the town's ten thousand or so inhabitants worsened, Bockelson proclaimed himself the "Messiah of the Last Days", "King of the New Jerusalem"; and dressed in fine robes he paraded the streets as his subjects succumbed to starvation; eating rats, old shoes, and even the bodies of the dead. Bockelson's justification for all of this was his divine intuition of the Three Ages of Man. The first was the pre-Flood age of sin, the second was the age of persecution which had continued until the present time, and the third, the Age of the Saints (Bockelson's Joachite vision of the millennium), was to be established in the town of Münster prior to the purification of all doubters in preparation for the

Second Coming. John of Leyden's kingdom fell in June 1535, and the following January he was publicly tortured to death with red-hot irons.

Cohn narrates these and other tales of collective madness to illustrate his central argument, that millennial fantasies were the province of the oppressed, and as a consequence the images of apocalypse were employed as agents of social change. McGinn has attacked the widespread acceptance of such conclusions, maintaining that the manipulation of people's hopes and fears concerning the future proved equally important in combating revolutionary fervour and ensuring continued social stability; Cohn's approach, McGinn maintains, is "almost totally blind to those manifestations of apocalyptic traditions that were intended to *support* the institutions of medieval Christianity rather than to serve as critique, either mild or violent".[25] McGinn's case is certainly the stronger of the two: Christian apocalypticism was not primarily the preserve of the lower classes; indeed, the damning of a political adversary as the Antichrist was essentially a positive use of apocalyptic material. Thus, when both popes Gregory IX and Innocent IV accused Frederick II in these terms: "such language was invoked by a part of the established order in support of the total medieval notion of a divinely ordained society".[26]

The major social changes caused by the Reformation did not just raise eschatological expectations in Northern Europe. Christopher Hill's study of the English Civil War, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (1972), shows how millenarian fantasies shaped the aspirations of groups such as the Levellers, the Diggers, and the Fifth Monarchists (the latter, in particular, relying upon a peculiar mixture of Merlin, Mother Shipton, the French sage Nostradamus, and the Sibylline prophecies). As Hill explains: "the Reformation, for all its hostility to magic, had stimulated the spirit of prophecy. The abolition of mediators, the stress on the individual conscience, left God speaking direct to his elect".[27] The comparatively wide availability of printing presses furthered the spread of these fresh and potentially explosive ideas. Hill's book offers a convincing

reassessment of a hitherto familiar period of English history, and in terms which we should by now recognise:

> By the mid-seventeenth century a consensus seemed to have been reached, indicating the advent of remarkable events in the mid-1650s: the fall of Antichrist, perhaps the second coming and the millennium. This underlay the confident energy, the utopian enthusiasm, of the Puritan preachers in the early 1640s. With what subsequently seemed to them naive optimism, they called the common man to fight the Lord's battles against Antichrist.[28]

The Reformation, then, inadvertently encouraged the development of fringe religious groups, who found that their new forms of belief increasingly placed them in opposition to the controlling powers of the centralist state and the approved Church. The generation of Puritans previous to those discussed in Hill's book were themselves the victims of systematic persecution under Archbishop Laud. Many fled to the Continent, notably the Netherlands, before some made the complete and final break with Europe and sailed to America; arriving at the place they christened Plymouth in 1620. As the critic Douglas Robinson observes: "the very idea of America in history *is* apocalyptic, arising as it did out of the historicizing of apocalyptic hopes in the Protestant Reformation. Discovered by Europeans in the sixteenth century, America was conceived as mankind's last great hope, the Western site of the millennium".[29] Such aspirations can also be traced back to Christopher Columbus, who interpreted his own divinely ordained discovery of the New World as the necessary herald to a Joachite vision of earthly perfection. Marjorie Reeves identifies the apocalyptic strain running through the great explorer's bid to establish new kingdoms for the Spanish Empire: "he believed himself to have been inspired by the Holy Spirit in his explorations and saw the three climactic events of the Last Age as the discovery of the Indies, the conversion of the Gentiles and the recovery of the Holy City".[30]

The Puritans also believed that America was, in a sense, a Promised Land. The early settlers felt that they were in a covenantal relationship with God; and, in return for such divine providence, it was their duty to fashion communities fit to serve as shining examples to those who remained in the old and decadent Europe. It was to the chosen people on board the *Arbella* that John Winthrop addressed his celebrated 1630 sermon concerning the "citty upon a hill"[31]; the exemplary model of Christian life that the voyagers were soon to establish in the Massachusetts Bay colonies. As Stephen J. Stein has demonstrated, the Puritan mind found further revelation of God's millennial purpose (and perhaps justification for any ensuing atrocities) in the strange, untutored inhabitants of the virgin territories: "many in early New England shared a conviction that the natives in America were the ten lost tribes of Israel, a view that intensified speculation concerning the relationship between their conversion and the beginning of the millennium".[32] The detrimental effects of these elements of the Puritan *Weltanschauung* have been far reaching, as the historian Larzer Ziff has noted: "the Puritan extension of righteousness from a personal to a cultural scope was to continue to condone the violence unto extermination in future Indian conflicts and was to add its dimension of impersonality to the history of race relations within America and to foreign policy when the foreigners were ethnically outsiders as well".[33] For Ziff, the Puritan emphasis on the divine power of the Word meant that they saw all conflicts as essentially dramas of competing beliefs, with the losing parties bleeding vanquished arguments rather than blood. Nothing, of course, could have been further from the truth, and as Stephen Greenblatt has indicated: "the history of a great culture's salvation" is also "the chronicle of a great culture's destruction".[34]

The sense of millennial destiny continued to exert its influence upon the succeeding waves of colonists; in 1653 Edward Johnson reminded his audience: "for your full assurance, know this is the place where the Lord will create a new Heaven and a new earth ... new Churches and a new Commonwealth together".[35] Jonathan Edwards, writing a century later amidst the renewed religious fervour of

the Great Awakening, strikes a similar note: "this new world is probably now discovered ... that God might in it begin a new world in a spiritual respect, when he creates the *new heavens* and *new earth*".[36] Perry Miller's study of Puritan social and intellectual history, *Errand into the Wilderness* (1956), shows how developing scientific ideas threatened and seriously challenged the continued acceptance of such beliefs as those held by Johnson and Edwards. Miller freely admits that the apocalypse's "consuming chord of rest and resolution"[37] was cherished by the early New England communities, so much so that the first American bestseller was Michael Wigglesworth's versified story of the Judgment *The Day of Doom*, published in 1662. However, the vast cosmic theories of natural scientists such as Newton raised the spectre of a universe which, although created in time, might remain ultimately indestructible. Miller articulates the dilemma: "is an end of the world any longer thinkable, or artistically conceivable, if the world be only a minor planet in a vast Copernican system?"[38]; if the universe was being read as an abstract mathematical equation, how was it possible to view man's puny actions as a drama of divine destruction and retribution? For a time, then, scientific advancements weakened the sway of eschatological feeling in the mainstream of American life; Miller detects that "'Orthodox' Protestants in the early nineteenth century continued to give lip service to the conception of a catastrophic end of the world, but obviously their hearts were no longer behind it".[39] Liberal theologians completed the drift away from apocalypse by rather optimistically reading into Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) a story of unchecked progress and human fulfilment. America's errand into the wilderness was disclosing itself as an errand without the consummation of a satisfactory end.

Apocalyptic expectations (however frustrated) could be said to have had a dual effect on American life and thought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. After the assimilation of secularizing Enlightenment attitudes *explicit* apocalyptic reference becomes the province of marginalised religious groups. The millennial faiths professed by the Mormons, the Christadelphians, the Oneida

Perfectionists, the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Shakers (or "The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing"), as well as their more recent incarnations in the shape of Jehovah's Witnesses, television evangelists, and renegade cult leaders such as Charles Manson (the Sharon Tate slayings), the Reverend Jim Jones (the Guyana suicides), and David Koresh (Waco's Ranch Apocalypse), all give their dispossessed and alienated followers, in Charles H. Lippy's words: "a higher status in the cosmic scheme than they had in mundane reality".[40] The secular counterpart of such thinking can be found in America's self-proclaimed role of Redeemer Nation, with its *implicit* reference to chiliastic doctrine. Thus, in its guise of World Policeman or as figurehead of the Joachite New World Order, US foreign policy continues to present America as a messianic model for the world; tirelessly exhorting or enforcing the benefits of free-market capitalism and (limited) democracy.

Further to this, millennial ideology has exerted a considerable influence upon the development of American literature. David Ketterer has asserted that in much the same way as science fiction, his own specialised field of study, is concerned with new worlds and alien possibilities, so "American literature is notable for its prophetic character, perhaps attributable to the American impulse toward originality".[41] Ketterer argues that this innovatory impulse can to some degree be explained by the comparative absence of a great storehouse of national historical material (which he terms the "lack of a usable past"[42]); thus encouraging the tendency of the American psyche to focus upon future events. The weakness of Ketterer's argument is that he fails to fully explore how American aspirations for the future can themselves incorporate imaginative reconstructions of an idealised past.

For example, the most potent future-orientated fantasies of recent times have been those regarding space travel and the possible colonisation of other planets or solar systems. Leaving aside the question of how much the Space Race of the 1960s was a displaced (and reasonably safe) form of Cold War conflict (cf. both the US boycott of the Moscow 1980 Olympic Games, ostensibly in protest at the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, followed by the predictable Soviet non-appearance

in Los Angeles four years later, and the intense international interest generated by the Fisher/Spassky World Chess Championship of 1972); the popular appeal to the American mind of the NASA space programme can be traced to three major sources. The first is the eternal wonder of the night sky (a hallmark of all cultures); the second, the resonance created by a public marriage of the twin secular powers of progress and technology (qualities so revered in post-Enlightenment Western civilisation); and the third, the uniquely American conception of outer space as the final frontier, where the founding traditions of westward expansion can once again prove profitable, but on this occasion, in an extraterrestrial setting.

Thus, a significant part of the imaginative appeal of the 1969 moon landing lay in its high-technology re-enactment of emotive scenes from America's past; the command module of the successful Apollo 11 mission was named the Columbia, and more ambiguously, the planting of the US flag on alien soil could not help but revive memories of *Life* magazine's famous cover photograph of American troops taking Iwo Jima in 1945. Two centuries earlier, the spirit of American expansion was similarly motivated by the promise of a glorious future in concordance with a reassuring past serenity. John Filson's *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke* (1784) sought to encourage pioneers to purchase farm lands in the dangerous frontier territories by directly linking the Kentucky wilderness to a regenerative vision of the new Eden:

> In your country, like the land of promise, flowing with milk and honey, a land of brooks and water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, and all kinds of fruits, you shall eat bread without scarceness, and not lack anything in it ... Thus your country, favoured with the smile of heaven, will probably be inhabited by the first people the world ever knew.[43]

The degree of American literature's indebtedness to a 'usable past' is evident from the continuing influence on modern fiction of the Puritan literary form, the *jeremiad*. Stephen J. Stein describes the jeremiad's traditional mixture of

complaint and castigation as "the characteristic expression of New England's developing sense of mission. This genre fused secular and sacred history, combining the woeful cries of the lamenter with the forward glances of the visionary. The apocalyptic mode was especially congenial to the preacher of the jeremiad who indicted his audience for their sins and then called them to repentance".[44] As with apocalypse, the jeremiad flourishes in times of social crisis and intellectual doubt. Stein identifies Samuel Danforth's sermon before the General assembly of the Bay colony in 1670 as a notable example of the jeremiad; in his address Danforth passed harsh judgment on those who had lost their sense of divine mission. The consequences would be dire for the New England communities unless they renewed their commitment to the Errand into the Wilderness; invoking *Revelation*, Danforth prophesied that the time had come to "remember whence we are fallen, and repent, and do our first works" (2:5). Increase Mather (1639-1723) was another accomplished practitioner of the jeremiad; he regarded the escalating violence between colonists and Indians, which culminated in King Philip's War of 1675-76, as God's punishment for a falling off of religious observance amongst the settlers. It is apparent that the origins of the jeremiad's popularity can be traced to a mood of disenchantment with the present time and to a sense of uncertainty concerning the future. As Ernest Cassara has concluded: "the emergence of the jeremiad - a ritualistic discourse which lamented the declining morals of the Puritan society - tells us much about the mood of the second and third generations: the leaders of the churches believed that the children were falling away from the high ideals and performance of the fathers".[45]

Hence, one of the most important post-war American novels, Thomas Pynchon's gargantuan *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), has been described by the critics Marcus Smith and Khachig Tololyan as "an astonishing and brilliant reworking of the old Puritan jeremiad".[46] We will have more time later to engage in a fuller account of both the apocalyptic concerns and Puritan roots of Pynchon's novel, but for the moment we should note the active presence of discourses from America's

'usable past' amongst the hurly-burly of what is probably the quintessential postmodern novel; as Smith and Tololyan view it: "the controlling idea of *Gravity's Rainbow* is that the world's present predicament - the system of global terror dominated by ICBMs - threatens to fulfill in historical time the apocalyptic and millennial visions which prevailed in the Puritan culture of colonial New England". In another context, M.H. Abrams has lamented the negative influence of the prophetic tradition upon the disillusioned mind, warning that American jeremiads have "also fostered a paranoid tendency to blame historical setbacks on diverse baleful conspirators, determined to frustrate the divine intention".[47] In an essay which begins "God is the original conspiracy theory"[48], Scott Sanders seeks to chart the link between Puritanism and paranoia which Abrams has hinted at. For Sanders, the modern "mind that preserves Puritan expectations after the Puritan God has been discredited will naturally seek another hypothesis that explains life as the product of remote control".[49] Thus, paranoia is "the last retreat of the Puritan imagination", finding neurotic comfort in the belief that the world is organised into a conspiracy. Again, we shall pay further attention to these ideas when we return in later chapters to the conspiracy-laden novels of Pynchon and Burroughs.

In the meantime, it should be apparent that just as there are competing definitions of the formal characteristics of apocalypse and a related controversy over the genre's subsequent social influence; so there has accumulated a myriad of critical positions regarding the exact status of apocalyptic literature. Allied to an overview of this vigorous debate, we will occasionally pause to consider the perhaps unanswerable question which nevertheless preoccupies so many commentators - *Is there a radical difference between our own apocalyptic sensibilities and those experienced by others in times of past crisis?* Given the apocalyptic 'mood' which permeates so much of the literature, visual art, and critical thinking of our century, many observers find it difficult to resist the suggestion that there is, indeed, a heightened topicality to contemporary visions of the world's violent end.

The major critical work on the literary apocalyptic genre is Frank Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending* (1967).[50] For Kermode, apocalypse is an essentially healthy field of human activity which gives form and meaning to an existence which might otherwise prove unbearable. The apocalyptic imagination:

> ... reflects our deep need for intelligible Ends. We project ourselves - a small, humble elect, perhaps - past the End, so as to see the structure whole, a thing we cannot do from our spot of time in the middle.
>
> Apocalypse depends on a concord of imaginatively recorded past and imaginatively predicted future, achieved on behalf of us, who remain 'in the middest'. (SOE 8).

As we have seen, apocalypse differs from standard eschatology by virtue of the greater emphasis placed on the proximity of the End. The apocalypticist derives a good deal of his power from this visionary promise or threat of imminent catastrophic change. Of course, up to now the subsequent unfolding of time has discredited whatever historical allegory man his drawn from the scenario of the last days; yet, apocalyptic visions persist, and in times of perceived crisis they further multiply. As Kermode remarks: " ... this is important. Apocalypse can be disconfirmed without being discredited. This is part of its extraordinary resilience" (SOE 8). The research of the American sociologist L. Festinger into modern apocalyptic sects demonstrates that such disconfirmation is generally a matter for indifference; with cult members unabashedly producing "new end-fictions and new calculations" (SOE 17), thereby maintaining rather than abandoning prophecy. Festinger deduces from these events the notion of *consonance*, which shows that the apocalyptic mind is essentially sound - the desire for the certainty of an end being strong, yet tempered by the demands of empirical reality. From this Kermode adopts a general theory of apocalyptic practice, in this its most beneficial state: "Men in the middest make considerable imaginative investments in coherent patterns which, by the provision of an end, make possible a satisfying consonance with the

origins and with the middle" (SOE 17). The apocalyptic will can never be *permanently* frustrated.

Kermode is not blind, however, to the negative aspects of these desires, or to what Gerald Gillespie has referred to as the "permissive myths of radical modernity such as apocalyptic Fascism".[51] The apocalypse is a 'useful' fiction, but its Joachite component should be treated with a degree of scepticism, for "its ideological expression is fascism; its practical consequence the Final Solution" (SOE 103). The refined eschatologies of the early modernists such as Pound, Eliot, Joyce, Lewis, and Yeats (and one thinks of Lawrence as well) were nevertheless "dangerous lapses into mythical thinking" (SOE 104), involving a call to arms against tradition and "the creation of fictions which may be dangerous in the dispositions they breed towards the world" (SOE 111). Such fictions may include the fantasy of a racial elite, a related contempt for those deemed 'unclean' or 'degenerate', and myths associated with natural purity, mass society, and the wish for a cleansing spectacle of annunciatory violence.

The Apocalypse and man's sense of an ending have both a long history and a tendency to change; thus: "the Emperor of the Last Days turns up as a Flemish or an Italian peasant, as Queen Elizabeth or as Hitler; the Joachite transition as a Brazilian revolution, or as the Tudor settlement, or as the Third Reich" (SOE 29). Kermode argues that in regard to literature, prophecy mutated into apocalypse; and post-Reformation, apocalypse merged with tragedy, where "the humble elect survive not all the kings of the earth as in Revelation, but the one king whose typical story is enacted before them" (SOE 30). Later still, tragedy yields to absurdity, and the end becomes a terrible game.

Despite this emphasis on the evolutionary nature of terminal visions and "the admittedly apocalyptic tenor of much radical thinking about the arts in our century" (SOE 93), Kermode nevertheless insists that "there is nothing at all distinguishing about our eschatological anxiety" (SOE 95). True, we live in a time of immense technological, military, and cultural crisis: "but it would be childish to

argue, in a discussion of how people behave under eschatological threat, that nuclear bombs are more real and make one experience more authentic crisis-feelings than armies in the sky". Out of the important differences that do exist between modern man and his ancestors, the sense of profound anxiety borne by those in the 'middest' is not one of them: "many of them felt as we do. If the evidence looks good to us, so it did to them".

Perry Miller would not agree with Kermode, for he sees in the advent of the atomic age a grim new development for the apocalyptic imagination. The US bombing of Hiroshima on 6 August 1945 destroyed irreparably whatever remained of our faith in a divinely ordained end of human history. The nuclear nightmare has "less and less to do with good and evil"[52] and could even be translated into fact by a freak accident or technological malfunction. The heat flash of detonation and mushroom cloud of radioactive dust provide what Miller terms the required "stage effects", but not the moral satisfaction of an authentic Last Judgment. The apocalyptic mind needs to feel the force of grace operating from Heaven: "catastrophe, by and for itself, is not enough".

This position is restated, some twenty years later, by David Ketterer in his study of the apocalyptic strain in American literature *New Worlds for Old* (1974):

> Within recent history our notion of the end of the world as something man himself may instigate, detracts considerably from the visionary coloration of a possible apocalypse. In a very real sense, the atomic bomb completed the process of secularization that apocalyptic thinking has undergone since medieval times.[53]

Ketterer's arguments may lack the sublety of Miller's meditations or Kermode's wide-ranging and cogent speculations (Kermode's magisterial tone occasionally proves irritating however), but he does at least attempt a definition of the modern apocalyptic: "any work of fiction concerned with presenting a radically different world or version of reality that exists in a credible relationship with the world or

reality verified by empiricism and common experience".[54] *Credible* is a problematic term here, I think; many works which we consider to be postmodernist flaunt their outrageous relationship with what might be held to be 'reality' - character, psychology, history and locale all appear to be, frankly, unbelievable (in the sense that they don't appear to possess anything approaching 'realistic' *credibility*). By Ketterer's definition, many of the novelists we have already mentioned (as well as, for instance, Donald Barthelme, B.S. Johnson, Richard Brautigan, John Barth, and Kurt Vonnegut) would be incapable of producing any apocalyptic work. I would also distrust any critic who calls upon something to be verified by common experience. Great writers, such as Blake or Joyce, articulate a new form of human and spiritual consciousness; something which, at the time of its inception, is understood by a handful, grasped at by a few, and completely alien to the *common experience*.

Ketterer does not appear to be unduly perturbed by his stated belief that the atomic bomb has profoundly altered our lives and the methods we use to express ourselves artistically. Indeed, his ideas rest on a foundation of technological optimism and a typically American faith in progress: "it is, perhaps particularly relevant to our ambiguous, secularized understanding of the apocalyptic that, while atomic power might destroy our world, the same power might allow a remnant of humanity to escape the conflagration and seek a new and better Earth amid a new view of the heavens".[55] This may strike us as idle whimsy, but it should be remembered that Ketterer grew up as part of a generation surrounded by powerful cultural images of interplanetary travel and salvation in the stars. The popular media portrayals of the utopian communities soon to be established on Mars, and Venus, and the like, may have looked like your average Mid-West town with the scientific gloss of a few new gadgets, but they were mercifully free of Cold War tensions, political assassinations, and civil rights marchers. If our hopes turn to outer space today, they are more likely to be clouded by imaginings of satellite surveillance, STAR WARS defence policy (ie. a 'winnable' nuclear war), the

Challenger disaster, and the sobering thought that our own planet will one day be as incapable of supporting life as any of the other planets in this abandoned solar system.

John R. May's *Toward a New Earth* (1972), a study of apocalypse in the modern American novel, shares the qualified optimism of both Kermode and Ketterer. May feels, however, that Kermode overemphasises the structural importance of man's sense of an ending. The quest for (displaced) origins is equally crucial: "apocalypse consoles, not because it conceals the terrors of history within the pleasing form of an expected ending, but rather because it counsels genuine hope in a new beginning despite the ravages of irreversible time".[56] May further differs from Kermode in detecting a subtle shift in our eschatological expectations, primarily as a response to cultural crisis:

> And even though the imagination of cosmic catastrophe is nothing new to man, it is true that the dawning of the thermonuclear age, when man has developed the literal capacity to destroy the world himself, has added something of a cutting edge to the anxiety spawned by the literary, artistic, and even religious imagination of contemporary man.[57]

These arguments are essentially repeated in David Dowling's *Fictions of Nuclear Disaster* (1987); post-war apocalypses are neither adolescent or unduly morbid, because "the nuclear possibility forces late twentieth-century man to confront his human nature and his place in the nature of things afresh".[58] This cannot be denied, but so does toothache or missing the bus - men have never had to rely on ICBM's to confront their darkest fears. Dowling's prescription is that "imagined disasters keep us sane"[59], and "fictions of nuclear disaster ... call on the power of the word to de-fuse the power of the fused atom".[60] Such a remedy may not prove possible, however; Jacques Derrida maintains that the power of the atom is indistinguishable from that of the word; the nuclear arsenal is "a phenomenon whose essential feature is that of being *fabulously textual*". Derrida continues:

> Nuclear weaponry depends, more than any weaponry in the past, it seems, upon structures of information and communication, structures of language, including non-vocalizable language, structures of codes and graphic decoding. But the phenomenon is fabulously textual also to the extent that, for the moment, a nuclear war has not taken place: one can only talk and write about it.[61]

With his customary radical flair, Derrida claims that "literature has always belonged to the nuclear epoch"[62]; with nuclear issues being more directly addressed in the texts of Mallarmé, Kafka, or Joyce "than in present-day novels that would offer direct and realistic descriptions of a "real" nuclear catastrophe".[63] What Derrida appears to 'mean' is that literature has always been characterised by a sense of instability and inescapable mortality; the same perilous attributes which have now come to be recognised as the hallmarks of the post-Hiroshima world. Derrida's call for a new critical procedure to analyse these apocalyptic concerns is answered in an unsigned proposal for a colloquium on "Nuclear Criticism" (a document published in a special issue of the theoretical journal *Diacritics*). Nuclear Criticism would involve two kinds of textual practice; the first would read "canonical texts" in order to reveal their unconscious nuclear fears, and the second would aim to show how nuclear conceptions (of which no examples are given but one might consider, for instance, the deterrence policy known as MAD - Mutually Assured Destruction) are themselves shaped, and perhaps handicapped, by standard literary or philosophical assumptions. Quite simply, it's time to fight back: "the representation of nuclear war in the media as well as in the literary canon demands to be analyzed ideologically, that is, in terms of the interests it seeks to promote and to conceal, in terms of the whole critique of representation which for some time has been engaged".[64]

Misgivings are apparent, however. The colloquium proposer wonders whether "the current versions of apocalypse now merely feed the vice of the hypocritical reader, the deep-seated boredom of an alienated public that dreams of

debris, of swallowing the world with a yawn". Derrida stikes another note of caution, worried as he is that a proliferation in the nuclear discourse "may constitute a fearful domestication, the anticipatory assimilation of that unanticipatable entirely-other".[65] These fears, in turn, recall those expressed by Susan Sontag in her important essay *The Imagination of Disaster* (1965).[66] Sontag finds in the popular genre of Science Fiction movies a set of powerful metaphors which aim to capture the quotidian anxieties of survival under the threat of the ubiquitous A-bomb. The alien hordes may be on a mission from Mars but their spiritual home is the Soviet Union, and the towering indestructible monster is the Bomb itself. As with apocalypse, this new form of cinema allows the consumer to "participate in the fantasy of living through one's own death and more, the death of cities, the destruction of humanity itself".[67] The modern imagination of disaster is beguiled by the "aesthetics of destruction, with the peculiar beauties to be found in wreaking havoc"[68]; but it is a hollow display, "one of the purest forms of spectacle; that is, we are rarely inside anyone's feelings"[69] - we are, in effect, dealing with comic-book catastrophes. Sontag concludes that we are undeniably living through an age of mass trauma, but every epoch has produced demons as metaphors for subterranean fears. What distinguishes the modern era is our moral reaction (or lack of it); we are "in the position of the Berliners of 1945" who "received without great agitation the news that Hitler had decided to kill them all, before the allies arrived, because they had not been worthy enough to win the war".[70] We are not doing enough, the imagination's "inadequate response" is a symptom of Derrida's "fearful domestication" - our terror is a banal media-fix, and "there is a sense in thich all these movies are in complicity with the abhorrent".[71]

Douglas Robinson's *American Apocalypses* (1985) is perhaps the most optimistic study of the apocalyptic phenomenon; indeed, the book's arguments seem to be specifically constructed in order to counter conservative claims that literary apocalypses are no more than "puerile fantasies of escape from the pressures of history ... expressions of a diseased lust for racial suicide".[72] Robinson argues that

any such reactionary criticism cannot help but add to the cultural presence and subsequent power of apocalypse, since the anti-apocalypticists invariably rely on apocalyptic rhetoric for their ultimate stylistic and moral effects. Kermode's plausible fear that apocalypse reaches its final solution in the gas chambers of a Buchenwald or an Auschwitz-Birkenau can likewise be rebuffed by the recognition that the Nazis were defeated by an allied coalition led by an equally millenarian America; in these terms, World War II can be viewed as a conflict "between forces with opposing apocalyptic designs".[73] As a consequence, American literary apocalypses courageously seek "a freedom to explore the prevailing ideologies by placing themselves in opposition to them".[74] Such violent fantasies should be encouraged and not repressed: they offer necessary avenues of expression amongst the many dead ends and blind alleys of late capitalist pseudo-democratic society; and Robinson concludes that "the American apocalyptist, among other things, maintains the community by challenging it; the American apocalypse destroys *itself*, finally, in order to direct us back to human life".[75] When the novel ends a fresh dialogue is free to begin.

On a more cautious note, Zbigniew Lewicki's *The Bang and The Whimper: Apocalypse and Entropy in American Literature* (1984)[76] detects a fundamental shift in the concept of apocalypse as a result of the secularization of social and intellectual life. Apocalypse is "increasingly understood to denote destruction rather than rebirth"[77]; the absence of the millennial component from apocalyptic visions is an indicator of the growing pessimism which characterises our postmodern literary productions. Lewicki's main thesis, however, is that scientific advancements have not only provided us with a fear of a cataclysmic end to human time (the *bang*), but also with the perhaps more terrifying prospect of a slow irreversible process of entropic decay (the *whimper*). We are sliding out of time, and Lewicki's prognosis for the mood of the future is bleak: a "sense of impending destruction has dominated American consciousness, and literature, for centuries. It has, however, changed over the years, not only because the concept of apocalypse has partly lost its regenerative

promise, but also because the idea of entropic death can offer nothing but the fear of destruction".[78]

It is as hazardous to attempt a full and explicit defintion of entropy on which all commentators can agree as it is to try and tie apocalypse down to any one convenient formulation. The notion was introduced in 1852 by the German physicist and mathematician Rudolf Clausius (1822-1888) in relation to his earlier *Second Law of Thermodynamics* (1850). The law states that heat cannot be transferred from a colder to a hotter body within a system without net changes occurring in other bodies within that system. Thus: "heat must always be transferred from the hotter to the colder body"[79]; with entropy (the degree in which the energy of a thermodynamic system is so distributed as to be unavailable for conversion into work) always increasing. The entropic decline is then "the irreversible tendency of a system including the universe, toward increasing disorder and inertness; also, the final state predictable from this tendency".[80] Within a closed system, both bodies will eventually achieve a condition of uniform temperature, with no energy remaining to disturb the deadening conformity.

In Tony Tanner's words: "entropy is concerned with the fate of energy - the individual's, society's, the world's".[81] Entropic ideas can also be applied in the field of communication theory; for the transmission of an author's messages or the coded instructions to detonate the fabulously textual warhead. Norbert Wiener's enormously influential *The Human Use of Human Beings* (1950) draws the analogy:

> Messages are themselves a form of pattern and organization. Indeed, it is possible to treat sets of messages as having an entropy like sets of states of the external world. Just as entropy is a measure of disorganization, the information carried by a set of messages is a measure of organization. In fact, it is possible to interpret the information carried by a message as essentially the negative of its entropy, and the negative logarithm of its probability. That is, the more probable the message, the less information it gives. Clichés, for example, are less illuminating than great poems.[82]

The unambiguous computerised instruction (in all likelihood a rigid and predetermined numerical pattern) to unleash the energy of a thermonuclear device cannot help but increase entropy. A writer, however, may temporarily halt the inevitable accumulation of entropy by inscribing a text in a way which may defy all probability. Stylistic innovation, ethical indeterminacy, wilful obscurity, and parodic irony can all be mobilised to create a pocket of resistance against the overall entropic decline. This is not to dispense with organisation all together; a measure is needed because its absence would once again surrender the text to the negative influence of predictability.

As we have seen, Lewicki finds no hope whatsoever in an entropic universe crawling towards the unavoidable heat-death (apocalypse, by comparison, does not presuppose cosmic indifference and is further blessed with the rich promise of a new heaven and new earth beyond time). Wiener's ideas offer a qualified degree of hope, however, and they are refreshingly free of the cheery technological optimism with which scientific concepts are often presented to a popular audience. To be sure, Wiener pulls no punches about the fate which eventually awaits us; we are shipwrecked on a doomed planet, and:

> As entropy increases, the universe, and all closed systems in the universe, tend naturally to deteriorate and lose their distinctiveness, to move from the least to the most probable state, from a state of organization and differentiation in which distinctions and forms exist, to a state of chaos and sameness.[83]

But human beings are not closed systems; we can allow ourselves to be challenged by difficult information and in doing so we can decrease our own personal entropy. Equally, within our expiring universe, which as a whole "tends to run down, there are local enclaves whose direction seems opposed to that of the universe at large and in which there is a limited and temporary tendency for organization to increase". It is within these enclaves that we live; and our communities, our lifestyles, *and* our

artifacts can bring small victories to us. Wiener knows that we'll never win the war, as it were, but we can be stoical, and indeed, dignified in defeat; life will inevitably come to a complete and utter end: "yet we may succeed in framing our values so that this temporary accident of living existence, and this much more temporary accident of human existence, may be taken as all-important positive values, notwithstanding their fugitive character".[84] Perhaps unsurprisingly, Wiener's considered optimism has not always survived the journey from an initial scientific context to a literary, and then popular, environment.

Certainly, Thomas Pynchon read both Wiener's volume and *The Education of Henry Adams* (1907) whilst studying Engineering Physics and English at Cornell during the 1950s.[85] It was Adams (1838-1918) who applied the laws of the scientific concept of entropy to the study of history and social relations. Convinced that the actions of men represented a waning force in the 'progression' of history, Adams's hallmark pessimism was perhaps further fuelled by the influence of his "idol"[86] Edward Gibbon (1737-94), whose monumental *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88) told a similar tale of vast human effort, inevitable dissolution, and a final, numbing stasis. In Chapter XXV of the *Education*, Adams contrasts the two great symbols of human civilisation, the Virgin Mary (the spiritually uniting) and the Industrial Dynamo (the scientifically dividing). The rise to prominence of the latter as an object of veneration can only herald the eventual collapse of human enterprise and innovation. Adams's views find confirmation in an epiphany at the World's Fair in Paris (the autobiographical *Education* is, of course, written in the third-person):

> Satisfied that the sequence of men led to nothing and that the sequence of their society could lead no further, while the mere sequence of time was artificial, and the sequence of thought was chaos, he turned at last to the sequence of force; and thus it happened that, after ten years' pursuit, he found himself lying in the Gallery of Machines at the Great Exposition of 1900, with his historical neck broken by the sudden irruption of forces totally new.[87]

Striving to kick-start a career in writing, Pynchon relates that: "given my undergraduate mood, Adams's sense of power out of control, coupled with Wiener's spectacle of universal heat-death and mathematical stillness, seemed just the ticket".[88] Written in 1958 or 1959, the short story *Entropy* is an important early work which contains a virtual compendium of the themes Pynchon was to return in his later novels, *V.* (1963), *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966), *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), *Vineland* (1990), and *Mason and Dixon* (1997).[89]

Entropy is precisely set in Washington, DC in early February 1957, and opens with a vision of the accumulating debris of Meatball Mulligan's lease-breaking party, currently crawling into its fortieth hour. Those partygoers remaining are either asleep or stoned, whilst outside it is raining (on the previous days there has been snow, gale force winds, and bright sunlight). On the storey above Meatball's exhausted decadence live Callisto and his female companion Aubade. Their apartment is a "hothouse jungle" (SL 79), as languid and stultifying as any "Rousseau-like fantasy":

> Hermetically sealed, it was a tiny enclave of regularity in the city's chaos, alien to the vagaries of the weather, of national politics, of any civil disorder. (SL 79-80).

On Callisto's instructions, Aubade monitors the outside temperature, and despite the changing weather, the mercury has remained at 37 degrees Fahrenheit for the past three days.

Fittingly enough for a work which contains many musical references and allusions, the structure of *Entropy* is modelled on fugue, with the narrative toing and froing between the counterpointing scenes of Meatball's detritus and Callisto's ennui. Thus, Meatball restores order to his nervous system with a "monster tequila" (SL 82), and immediately afterwards Callisto maintains his own equilibrium through the intellectual discipline of dictating his memoirs. Meatball discusses with a fresh reveller the impossibility of unambiguous communication, and Callisto attempts to

transmit body heat to an expiring bird he has cradled in his hands. Both consider the theory and practice of new musical forms; and in their respective final scenes, Meatball has to decide what action to take as violence escalates his party to "a sustained, ungodly crescendo" (SL 92), while Callisto has to contemplate life as the sick bird finally dies: "the heartbeat ticked a graceful diminuendo down at last into stillness" (SL 93). Aubade finds she cannot share Callisto's paralysis any longer, and decides to rebel against the regime of their exotic cell:

> He sank back, terrified. She stood a moment more, irresolute; she had sensed his obsession long ago, realized somehow that that constant 37 was now decisive. Suddenly then, as if seeing the single and unavoidable conclusion to all this she moved swiftly to the window before Callisto could speak; tore away the drapes and smashed out the glass with two exquisite hands which came away bleeding and glistening with splinters; and turned to face the man on the bed and wait with him until the moment of equilibrium was reached, when 37 degrees Fahrenheit should prevail both outside and inside, and forever, and the hovering, curious dominant of their separate lives should resolve into a tonic of darkness and the final absence of all motion. (SL 94).

It seems likely that both Meatball and Callisto represent differing responses to the problems posed by the accumulation of entropy. We are introduced to each of them as they awake; Callisto clutching the bird on which he has to some extent pinned his hopes for the future, and Mulligan "holding an empty magnum to his chest as if it were a teddy bear" (SL 77). Meatball is a pragmatic man for whom a hangover can be offset with a healthy dose of further alcohol; moreover he positively revels in entropy, but, most crucially, is only prepared to tolerate its accumulation *up to a point*. When the celebrations degenerate into a boozy brawl and a girl is in danger of drowning as the water level in a blocked shower unit threatens to rise above her neck, Meatball realises that he is presented with two options. The first is, in essence, Callisto's choice: he can "(a) lock himself in the closet

and maybe eventually they would all go away" (SL 92); but to his credit Meatball decides that he must take the second path offered and employ plan "(b) try to calm everybody down one by one". Meatball Mulligan may be a reprobate waster, but he is not prepared to surrender lightly to the ultimate entropic state of "total chaos" (SL 93).

By comparison, Callisto is a rather pretentious character, with an artificial, literary name which complements his remote and cerebral approach to life. His malaise seems rather pompous (the reader never gets the impression that Callisto has authentically 'suffered' in any respect), and as a consequence this potentially grand story of the end of the world has more of a local flavour than cosmic proportion. This is surely one of Pynchon's comic effects; to reduce intellectual pessimism to a rather silly, detached, emotionally adolescent stance. Make no mistake however, *Entropy* does contain dark hints of sinister forces at work. Washington is, after all, the centre of Western power, home to an administration in a state of undeclared hostility with Moscow. The set is littered with passing references to the aborted Hungarian uprising of 1956 (SL 82), the Italian political strategist Machiavelli (SL 84), top secret government computer projects, colonial violence in North Africa (both SL 86), the vital US naval base at Naples (SL 88), the unprecedented slaughter at Passchendaele and the Marne (SL 89); Aubade herself is part French and part Vietnamese (SL80) and most importantly, one character suffers acute radiation sickness as a result of an accident connected with the Manhattan Project (the code name for the clandestine mission to produce America's first atomic device - SL 88). Throughout the story the American capitol is associated with mass destruction and political violence; the tale's unyielding contrapuntal structure in turn recalls the rigid dualism of the two superpower states, and, as John Dugdale has observed: "the disturbingly changeless temperature" can be read as "a 'screen' figure for the atmosphere of the Cold War, itself a thermal or climatic metaphor".[90]

None of this is to say that Pynchon wholly endorses Mulligan's anarchic, interventionist behaviour at the expense of Callisto's isolationism (and I

don't believe the text can support a reading which proposes the two protagonists as representatives of separate approaches to US foreign policy). To a certain extent, all the practical, intellectual and aesthetic positions in the story are subject to an ironic undercutting (and conversely, if such attitudes are mocked it does not necessarily follow that the general issues raised are without importance, or that the views held up to ridicule are lacking some degree of insight). For example, Callisto's passive acceptance of the entropic decline is an obvious parody of Henry Adams's jaded reasoning, so much so that he dictates his memoirs, Adams-fashion, in the third-person; yet despite their rather puffed up tone ("As a young man at Princeton, Callisto ..." etc. - SL 83) they reveal some valid concerns, especially perhaps for any young artist in the late 50s:

> "Nevertheless," continued Callisto, "he found in entropy or the measure of disorganization for a closed system an adequate metaphor to apply to certain phenomena in his own world. He saw, for example, the younger generation responding to Madison Avenue with the same spleen his own had once reserved for Wall Street: and in American 'consumerism' discovered a similar tendency from the least to the most probable, from differentiation to sameness, from ordered individuality to a kind of chaos. He found himself, in short, restating Gibbs' prediction in social terms, and envisioned a heat-death for his culture in which ideas, like heat-energy, would no longer be transferred, since each point in it would ultimately have the same quantity of energy; and intellectual motion would, accordingly, cease." (SL 84-85).

Commercial advertising, mass market consumption, the media-led packaging of emotions; all of these highly visible aspects of post-war American society contribute to the growth of entropy. The triumph of shallow cliché over authentic feeling, of crude pop sensationalism over genuinely democratic art forms; all signal the 'heat-death for culture'. *What's to be done?* Callisto's passivity is both comic and doomed, he represents entropy more than he resists it; and as laudable as Mulligan's eventual decision to come to terms with his situation is, his general

attitude is still too self-indulgent, too decadent, to present any form of practical solution to the approaching chaos. Pynchon is *not* a didactic writer, nor is he interested in easy answers to complex questions. Behind his playfulness, however, there do appear to be two suggestions for future action, two possible gestures against the suffocating sameness.

The first is unwittingly provided by the computer specialist Saul, an unexpected party guest, owing to his wife having left him, in Meatball's words, for "acting like a cold, dehumanized amoral scientist type" (SL 86) - an impression which is not contradicted by the text. Saul is frustrated by the manner in which language and communication seem to impede the transmission of an unambiguous message:

> "Tell a girl: 'I love you.' No trouble with two-thirds of that, it's a closed circuit. Just you and she. But that nasty four-letter word in the middle, *that's* the one you have to look out for. Ambiguity. Redundance. Irrelevance, even. Leakage. All this is noise. Noise screws up your signal, makes for disorganization in the circuit." (SL 86-87).[91]

Saul confuses simplicity with significance, and makes an artificial distinction between noise and meaningful communication. As I have argued earlier, entropy may be resisted through a certain limited deployment of irony, obscurity, paradox, and general linguistic innovation - and all without ultimately impeding some degree of informative discourse. The stone-cold probability which Saul laments the absence of could only lead to an increase in entropy. Noise can be beneficial, adding an exhilaratingly random and revelatory nature to previously predictable signals (the Burroughs/Gysin 'cut-up' technique is an extreme version of this, and may tend once again toward the creation of the 'more probable'; the issue will be returned to in chapter two). Saul's words, "Ambiguity. Redundance. Irrelevance, even. Leakage", could serve as a shorthand manifesto for certain strains of postmodernist literature,

and in particular, they could stand as a helpful rubric for Pynchon's own *Gravity's Rainbow*.

The reaction of Saul's wife to her husband's insensitivity and violence (he also slugs her) is to throw a *Handbook of Chemistry and Physics* through the window of their apartment. This response links her to Aubade, whose complementary gesture suggests a second possible neg-entropic position. In the face of the blatant inadequacy of Callisto's solipsism and Meatball's good-natured oafishness; the final 'voice' heard in the story, that of Aubade's, may be the closest to the author's own. The portrait of the girl is certainly tenderly drawn, "she lived on her own curious and lonely planet ... her own lovely world" (SL 80/93), and the romantic qualities of her name alone evoke a sense of natural innocence and beauty. Moreover, Pynchon blesses her with attributes drawn from the animal world (a self-consciously 'poetic' technique, cf. Chaucer's celebrated description of Alisoun, the young wife in *The Miller's Tale* (c. 1388-92), herself another bird confined to a cage). Thus, Aubade whimpers, pads, crawls, and soars (SL 79/80/84); and in another cluster of images associating her with avian traits, her soft skin is described as both "tawny" (SL 80) and "golden" (SL 83). Even Aubade's "part French and part Annamese" (SL 80) ancestry suggests, on one level, a harmonious meeting of West and East; a reconciling of the many opposites which characterise the normal course of human relations throughout the story. Unlike Callisto, Aubade is not "helpless in the past" (SL 93), her final actions are both courageous and affirmative. To be sure, after shattering the glass she merely lies down with her partner to accept their inevitable fate; but if we were to break windows, as it were, the decision as to what to do afterwards (destroy/create/give up) would still, emphatically, be ours.

Pynchon's story, then, whilst acknowledging the terrible entropic fate which awaits us (or more precisely, our universe - since, we as individuals, will not be present for the final numbing stasis), nevertheless manages to propose both aesthetic and practical solutions to the immediate problems of localised chaos. He is

less clear on the interesting question of what (if anything) is actually responsible for the entropic drive. Norbert Wiener theorizes the dilemma in these terms:

> The scientist is always working to discover the order and organization of the universe, and is thus playing a game against the arch enemy, disorganization. Is this devil Manichaean or Augustinian? Is it a contrary force opposed to order or is it the very absence of order itself?[92]

The works of many recent American novelists tend to suggest that they veer towards the former proposition; William S. Burroughs, for example, attributes much of the violence, suffering, and sheer torment in his fictional worlds to the machinations of an all-powerful Nova Conspiracy. The Manichaean novelist is, in essence, the apocalyptic writer *par excellence*. The causes of the vicissitudes of life can be comprehensively traced to a particular individual, ideology, or social grouping (either real or imagined) - our own incompetence and evil can be projected onto such scapegoats as the Devil, Marxism, or the Elders of Zion.

Pynchon undoubtedly lacks Burroughs's self-conscious extremism; and, as a less fervent apocalypticist, he seeks to delicately negotiate the subtle differences between an understandably human need to create fictions capable of explaining existence, and a far more dangerous practice which involves reducing the complex nature of 'reality' to a paranoid fantasy of plot, occult conspiracy, and hidden designs. Having said this, it is an incredibly difficult balancing act to maintain, and for Tyrone Slothrop, the picaresque hero of *Gravity's Rainbow*, a seemingly impossible one:

> If there is something comforting - religious, if you want - about paranoia, there is still also anti-paranoia, where nothing is connected to anything, a condition not many of us can bear for long. Well right now Slothrop feels himself sliding onto the anti-paranoid part of his cycle, feels the whole city around him going back roofless, vulnerable,

> uncentered as he is, and only pasteboard images now of the Listening Enemy left between him and the wet sky.
>
> Either They have put him here for a reason, or he's just here. He isn't sure that he wouldn't, actually, rather have that *reason* ... [93]

All of the totalitarian (and perhaps late-capitalist) states of the twentieth century have prospered as a result of reducing their citizens to such desperate circumstances; and indeed, Jan Bockelson employed similar tactics to enforce order in sixteenth century Münster. Slothrop's diminished sense of selfhood is a hallmark of both a secular and a consumer society. The isolated individual's yearning for surveillance and the reassuring electronic arms of Big Brother play neatly into the hands of the state-controlled police and media forces. The ideal inhabitants of any community are those who do exactly what their leaders want them to do; the immobilising suspicions of the chronically paranoid effectively mean that they will police themselves. They will view their neighbours as informers or adversaries and not as potential accomplices - and furthermore, they are more likely to blame their troubles on those who share in their suffering (similar dispossessed or marginalised groups) than on those who are, directly or indirectly, responsible for it. The choice is of the utmost epistemological, and revolutionary, importance; in Tony Tanner's words: "the difference is between consciousness in control of its own inventions, and consciousness succumbing to its inventions until they present themselves as perceptions".[94]

Returning, however, to our overview of the various critical positions in the debate surrounding apocalypse and the modern arts, Zbigniew Lewicki's grim vision of a literature surrendering to an entropic fatalism is certainly not shared by John Barth, the author of such exemplary postmodern works as *Giles Goat-Boy* (1966) and *Lost in the Funhouse* (1968). Barth's views are perhaps best sampled in his complementary essays *The Literature of Exhaustion* (1967) and *The Literature of Replenishment* (1980).[95] The main theme of the first essay is "the literature of exhausted possibility" (LOE 1), a term which implies "only the used-upness of

certain forms or exhaustion of certain possibilities - by no means necessarily a cause for despair". The work of Jorge Luis Borges, for example, deals with "the difficulty, perhaps the unnecessity, of writing original works of literature" (LOE 8); thus, Borges revives literature's jaded palate through an essentially ironic resurrection of past texts (or he concocts palpably false footnotes for the pages of a history that never was[96]). Samuel Beckett is another writer who nevertheless manages to remain inventive despite acknowledging the traditional novel's (and indeed language's) increasing impotence. In their separate approaches, both authors are telling examples of "how an artist may paradoxically turn the felt ultimacies of our time into material and means for his work - *paradoxically* because by doing so he transcends what had appeared to be his refutation" (LOE 10/11). Unfortunately, Barth does not consider whether such a condition may, in some respects, be a curse. It would depend, I suspect, on whether you saw a flickering of hope or just further agony in the hellish narration which completes Beckett's *The Unnamable* (1958), a novel which rambles its way through an inferno of exhausted possibilities:

> ... you must say words, as long as there are any, until they find me, until they say me, strange pain, strange sin, you must go on, perhaps it's done already, perhaps they have said me already, perhaps they have carried me to the threshold of my story, before the door that opens on my story, that would surprise me, if it opens, it will be I, it will be the silence, where I am, I don't know, I'll never know, in the silence you don't know, you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on.[97]

Barth is more explicit in the later essay, where he has a twofold purpose; first to answer the question "Well, but what *is* postmodernism?" (LOR 24), and secondly to clarify the "much misread" (LOR 37) and criticised *Exhaustion* piece (and of the two essays, incidentally, *The Literature of Replenishment* is both the more ambitious and successful). Barth confesses that he feels uncomfortable with 'postmodernism', a tag which has regularly been applied to his own work: "the term itself, like "postimpressionism," is awkward and faintly epigonic, suggestive less of a

vigorous or even interesting new direction in the old art of storytelling than of something anti-climactic, feebly following a very hard act to follow" (LOR 24). This hard act is, of course, literary modernism, which employed a number of artistic strategies to challenge the conventions of late-nineteenth-century bourgeois realism. Among these tactics, Barth identifies the following; the use of non-linear narrative, the discarding of 'cause-and-effect' psychological motivation, the deployment of moral irony and ambiguity, the championing of internal consciousness over external objectivity and rationality, the elevation of the alienated artist to the role of redeemer-hero, the foregrounding of language and technique, the self-conscious resistance to mass-market consumption; and all of this executed with the complete assurance of what Ihab Hassan has called "their aristocratic cultural spirit" (LOR 32).

Barth's argument with the various professional critics and academic gurus who revel in the new-found glories of postmodernism is that they seem content to merely define 'po-mo' as no more than a radically self-conscious and self-reflexive subspecies of high modernism. Postmodernist fiction flaunts its performative processes, wallows in its blatant artificiality, and all in a churlish mood of pseudo-confrontation and petty *fin-de-millennium* anarchy. If the professors are right, "then postmodernist writing is indeed a kind of pallid, last-ditch decadence, of no more than minor symptomatic interest" (LOR 31). Happily, Barth can see a way out of this impasse; a "worthy program" (LOR 34) for the postmodernist author would be the production of "a fiction more democratic in its appeal" (LOR 34/35) than the inscrutable marvels of a Nabokov or a Beckett. Fine sentiments indeed, but both of the writers Barth identifies *do* enjoy a wide readership outside of the confines of professional academic discourse (more so than Barth himself, for example); and it is difficult to visualise what an art more 'democratic' in its appeal actually is if it is not something like the celebrated production of *Waiting for Godot*, staged by prisoners at the notorious San Quentin penitentiary in 1961 (or indeed, Susan Sontag's recent staging of the play in the besieged city of Sarajevo).[98]

Barth, then, is prepared to both recognise postmodernism as a valid proposition and to place his faith in it as an artist and critic, but only for as long as it is clearly understood that postmodernism is the best next thing after late-modernism and not the next-best thing. Returning to the theme of *The Literature of Exhaustion*, Barth has this to say:

> The simple burden of my essay was that the forms and modes of art live in human history and are therefore subject to used-upness, at least in the minds of significant numbers of artists in particular times and places; in other words, that artistic conventions are liable to be retired, subverted, transcended, transformed, or even deployed against themselves to generate new and lively work. (LOR 37/38).

The aesthetics of literary modernism have had their day, as it were, but neither the flexibility of language nor the abundant richness of the literature it produces are in any real sense exhausted. An ironic visitation on the past ensures that the weight of history does not rest too heavily on the shoulders of the present; the playful mock-tactics of postmodernism may irritate a lot of people, but for Barth they are the redeeming gifts of our literature of replenishment. In this era of 'felt ultimacies' (and it is difficult to imagine a more apposite phrase with which to characterise our contemporary apocalytptic mood) exhaustion or entropy can effectively be negated through parody and perversity; through openly telling lots and lots of lies.[99]

A fine example of Barth's democratic (i.e. anti-academic) ideas in action is Adam Parfrey's small press collection *Apocalypse Culture* (1987).[100] In his preface to the anthology's second edition (1990) Parfrey boasts that the initial print run of the first edition was of a magnitude sufficiently meagre to be easily bested by your average scholarly monograph on Edmund Spenser. Nevertheless:

> The reader of *Apocalypse Culture* will soon begin to notice a preponderance of material from individuals who have the audacity to consider themselves their own best authority, in repudiation or ignorance of the orthodoxy factories of Church, University or State.

> The constructions of these folk researchers may often seem wildly amiss, laughable, disreputable, but are more revealing cultural barometers than the acculturated pabulum of compromised and corrupt professionals.[101]

Parfrey's own contribution to the debate is a piece entitled *Cut it Off: A Case for Self-Castration,* which includes the observation that "postmodern penises seem positively naked without ornate tattoos, and a stud, ring or chain piercing the glans and the urethra".[102]

To be fair to Parfrey, he writes with a satirist's eye for outrageous or obscene detail, and although he never confirms it, you suspect that his tongue is firmly placed in his cheek. It would prove difficult to be as charitable to some of the other essays in the collection. Gregory Krupey's *The Christian Right, Zionism, and The Coming of The Penteholocaust* is little more than a squalid exercise in crude anti-Semitism (Krupey would no doubt claim that allegations of prejudice are misplaced since he despises all religions equally). His 'argument' is typical:

> Christian fundamentalists and dispensationalists are convinced that the Last Days prior to the Apocalypse - the final earth-shattering war that will precede the Second Coming of Christ - are here now ... they are exerting and manipulating their considerable influence in both the U.S. and Israeli governments, in order that they bring about the conditions favorable to biblical fulfillment of Armageddon.[103]

Apocalypse Culture represents an attempt to deal with the 'felt ultimacies' of our time; but unfortunately the anti-academic stance of many of the contributors soon degenerates into anti-liberalism, anti-humanism, or worse. The more worrying aspects of the views forwarded are not necessarily their racist, misogynist, or misanthropic (or indeed, pornographic) bias; most disturbingly, the baroque fantasies of the anthology's many conspiracy theorists graphically illustrate the

dangerously morbid effects of paranoid thinking. James Shelby Downard's *The Call to Chaos* begins:

> The United States, which long has been called a melting pot, should more descriptively be called a witches' cauldron wherein the "Hierarchy of the Grand Architect of the Universe" arranges for ritualistic crimes and psychopolitical psychodramas to be performed in accordance with a Master plan.[104]

Quite. The 'apocalyptic theologies' (to use Parfrey's term) of these counterculture folk researchers do not serve as shining examples of either 'democratic' criticism or the apocalyptic imagination. Surprisingly, Parfrey's own opinions on apocalypse are quite conservative; taking his cue from J.G. Ballard's observation that "the catastrophe story ... represents a constructive and positive act"[105], Parfrey suggests that to imagine the end of the world may, in some small way, help avert disaster.

The world of professional academic discourse is quite capable of producing its own batch of eccentric thinkers and outlaw theorists. The renegade opinions of sociologist Arthur Kroker (the self-styled "Canadian Virus") are perhaps best 'enjoyed' in his collections *Body Invaders: Sexuality and the Postmodern Condition* and *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics* (both 1988).[106] If Adam Parfrey were to read the first volume he might be surprised to learn that Montreal's Concordia University has provided him with an unlikely ally. This is Kroker on one of his pet subjects; the Panic Penis:

> No longer the old male cock as the privileged sign of patriarchal power and certainly not the semiotician's dream of the decentred penis which has, anyway, already vanished into the ideology of the phallus, but the *postmodern penis* which becomes an emblematic sign of sickness, disease and waste. Penis burnout, then, for the end of the world.[107]

Underneath all the bluster and bravado it becomes apparent, however, that Kroker has probably just spent too long in a small room reading Foucault, Bataille, and

Vogue magazine (the latter providing a tantalising photographic record of young women in various sado-masochistic poses or in Kroker's terms, *hyper-real* panic situations). Aside from the radical chic, Kroker is merely a hoary old realist; if his nonsensical prose "sounds paradoxical, ambivalent and contradictory" then it is just faithfully reflecting "the quantum age which it seeks to describe".[108]

More subtle subversive positions can be found in the work published by Sylvère Lotringer's *Semiotext(e)* group at Philosophy Hall in Columbia University. The Foreign Agents series, in particular, have provided the first US publication for the compelling views of Jean Baudrillard, the somewhat reluctant 'high priest' of postmodernism. A typically provocative volume is the anthology *Looking Back on the End of the World* (1989) which contains an important essay on the apocalypse by Baudrillard, characteristically entitled *The Anorexic Ruins*.[109] Baudrillard's thesis is that we live in an excrescential society; one plagued by orgiastic excess and cancerous proliferation at the expense of harmonious natural development. Thus, our expanding arsenals of evil are "represented by our means of communication, memory, storage, production, and destruction, means that have been expanded and overburdened so much that their uselessness is a foregone conclusion" (LBW 30). With regards to nuclear weapons Baudrillard has this to say: "the obesity of the systems of destruction is the only thing that protects us from their use"; we are sprawling into a world of post-1945, post-atomic hypertrophy:

> All these memories, all these archives, all this documentation that do not give birth to a single idea, all these plans, programs, and decisions that do not lead to a single event, all these refined and sophisticated weapons that do not lead to any war! (LBW 31).

As was the case in Bruce Springsteen's recent song *57 Channels (And Nothin' On)*[110], Baudrillard is alluding to the media overload which inevitably hastens entropic decline: "every factor of acceleration and concentration is like a factor bringing us to a point of inertia". There is no discernible movement in a world

of speed; and our sense of the apocalyptic, our suspicions of felt ultimacies, are peculiarly ossified: "it is no longer a matter of crisis but of disaster, a catastrophe in slow motion" (LBW 33). Baudrillard clearly suggests that there *is* something radically different about our postmodern eschatological mood. H-Bomb Reality has created the anorexic ruins: "everything has already become nuclear, faraway, vaporized. The explosion has already occurred; the bomb is only a metaphor now" (LBW 34). Logically, we are Beyond Apocalypse, we are looking back on the end of the world. It is with supreme visionary confidence that Baudrillard can make his central prophetic statement: "the year 2000 will not take place" (LBW 38).[111]

Life has ceased to exist, and the modern world's moral and political purposes are in a state of suspended animation. Intellectual impotence and the anorexia of our demands upon ourselves and our history have caused time to stop. It is the profound terror that something significant and earth-shattering could occur which ultimately dictates that the next millennium will not take place. Baudrillard clarifies:

> What I mean is that this stopping of time, this fear of the millennium and of this whole metaphysical or historical convulsion that is symbolized by the approach of the next millennium has long since occurred. The fear is manifested in the collective indifference to the political development of societies - a kind of end to the efforts made in the previous century without anyone really having any premonition of anything else. And the euphoria of the new information society is not succeeding at masking this mental recession into indifference, this retardation of time as it approaches its end. (LBW 39).

Significantly, Baudrillard has little time for the excesses of postmodernism. In relation to our modernist ancestors "we are only inferior imitators" (LBW 40); the century's essential visions are those of the pre-atomic years between 1920 and 1930: "we live only now as wearied explainers of that furious epoch":

> The maximum in intensity lies behind us; the minimum in passion and intellectual inspiration lie before us.

Unlike John Barth, for example, Baudrillard views exhaustion as a terminal condition with no possible hope of replenishment. The postmodern age is one of exhaustive representation (and nothin' on) and event-free media simulations (the Gulf War did not take place). Baudrillard's antipathy towards the postmodernist project of "restoration in distortion" (LBW 41) is absolute. Indeed, he intimates that it is the supreme pornography:

> ... the ultimate configuration, that of "postmodernism", undoubtedly characterizes the most degenerated, most artificial, and most eclectic phase [of entropy] - a fetishism of picking out and adopting all the significant little bits and pieces, all the idols, and the purest signs that preceded this fetishism. (LBW 40/41).

Baudrillard may well be correct, but in other respects he is a curious thinker. For one thing, he appears to be haunted by a possibly dangerous form of nostalgia. Throughout *The Anorexic Ruins* he laments both our neglect of "social inputs and goals" (LBW 32) and that "in the human order there is no longer an ideal principle governing these things" (LBW 31). Furthermore, Baudrillard's Augustan temperament resents the potentially healthy postmodern thrust towards pluralism and multiplicity because it "puts an end to the challenge, passion, and rivalry of peoples" (LBW 41). He seems saddened that the heroic era is over, now that we have dispensed with our apocalyptic myths (Fascism, Communism) and are living cool lives "far from fateful deviations ... without illusion, without bitternesss, and without violence" (LBW 42). Instead, Western societies participate in a choreographed spectacle of 'democracy', with phantom political issues representing "a lethargic relationship between the masses and power". The price to be paid for forty years of peace in Europe is "a weak identity, weak intensity, low standard, an air-conditioned

intelligence". Such anorexic minds are fed on gentle ideologies (human rights, antiracism, nuclear disarmament, save the whale):

> They are easy, *post coitum historicum*, after the orgy; ideology for an agreeable generation - the children of crisis, who are acquainted with neither hard ideologies nor radical philosophies. (LBW 43).

We grow obese on "cosmopolitan emotivity and multimedia pathos" - we are apocalyptic yuppies.

It is certainly fitting that Baudrillard, the '68 veteran, concludes his essay with an appeal from Nietzsche to "cultivate mendacious and deceptive clear-sightedness" (LBW 45), the very qualities which lie at the heart of Baudrillard's own revelations. *The Anorexic Ruins* also contains some pertinent meditations on the 'thinkability' of nuclear fictions, especially Nicholas Meyer's sloppy TV movie *The Day After* (1983).[112] Meyer's globally broadcast picture chronicles the destruction of Lawrence, Kansas, and the subsequent 'day after' in which old-time frontier values struggle to reassert themselves in the post-apocalyptic dawn. It's not that the film is bad (although it undoubtedly is) but that its action and dialogue are wholly 'unimaginable'; as Baudrillard asks: "in the realm of our imagination, is the nuclear clash not a total event without a day after whereas in the film it leads simply to a regression of the human species?" (LBW 36). Again, Baudrillard is correct, the ludicrous image of Jason Robards (inexplicably covered in flakes of radioactive dust which look suspiciously like Homepride flour) taking to the saddle, shotgun in hand, cannot help but conjure images of that oldest, and most comforting, of American genres, the Western (albeit here with a marginally surrealistic flourish). World War III will not bring back the 'good old days', although to endure Meyer's movie you might be forgiven for thinking otherwise. As Susan Sontag has already indicated, films such as *The Day After* may be in complicity with the abhorrent; Baudrillard extends this line of argument, rather than being mere unwitting

accomplices, such heinous fantasy movies could even be absolute manifestations of evil:

> The coarse projection into a film is only a diversion from the nuclearization of everyday life. Better yet, this film itself *is* our catastrophe. It does not represent our catastrophe, it does not allow it to be dreamt. On the contrary, it says that the catastrophe is already there, that it has already occurred *because the very idea of the catastrophe is impossible*. (LBW 37).

Baudrillard's argument is watertight when dealing with the moronic excesses of commercial American television. But more thoughtful novelists, painters, and filmmakers will still dream of catastrophe and seek to express their visions in an artistic form. *Einstein's Monsters* (1987), Martin Amis's collection of nuclear fictions, is prefaced by a polemical essay entitled *Thinkability*, which wrestles uncomfortably with the moral and aesthetic issues at stake when dealing with such daunting, and potentially obscene, subject matter.[113] Amis certainly takes nuclear weapons personally; born in August 1949, he unwittingly enjoyed four carefree days before the Russians 'successfully' detonated their first atomic device, introducing *deterrence* and escalating the Cold War ... since then Amis (and perhaps every one of us) has felt very sick indeed. Aside from their 'obvious' murderous potential, no-one should underestimate the tragic importance of our nuclear 'guardians' (or as Amis prefers, 'Keepers'); they "are mirrors in which we see all the versions of the human shape" (EM 20), and "failing to get the point about nuclear weapons is like failing to get the point about human life" (EM 4).

> Amis maintains that we are all suffering from an insidious form of nuclear fallout, although the weapons themselves lie unexploded in their silos. Even if they claim that they are not, everyone is haunted by the massed warheads of the major powers and the more 'advanced' developing nations:

> ... the process, the seepage, is perhaps preconceptual, physiological, glandular. The man with the cocked gun in his mouth may boast that he never thinks about the cocked gun. But he tastes it, all the time. (EM 5).

In such a desperate circumstance it may be the most natural act imaginable to attempt an articulation of our nuclear anxieties and phobias (both conscious and unconscious). Language is a major obstacle, however; it refuses to cooperate with the "anti-reality of the nuclear age" (EM4). Thus, civilian losses in the lower tens of millions are 'acceptable', the Hiroshima bomb was the "Little Boy", we stake our sanity on the MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) option, and after the firestorm only the 'healthy' will be in any way considered 'treatable' - what we call the A-bomb is, in actuality, the Z-bomb.

Such sentiments, of course, are invariably drawn from the cool jargon of military-industrial nukespeak and from the impoverished routines of Civil Defence manuals. The latter form, in particular, promotes the 'idea' of a 'winnable' nuclear war ... the precautionary measures (lie face down in a ditch, or dig a hole in the back garden, or hide under the stairs with a can of beans) are grotesquely inadequate (and once again language cannot live with this; the UK government's contribution to the genre "Protect and Survive" rapidly mutated into the far more constructive *Protest and Survive*):

> Because when you stagger out of your shelter, following the 'All Clear' (all clear for what?), the only thing worth doing would be to stagger back in again. Everything good would be gone. You would be a citizen of a newtown called Necropolis. Nuclear civil defence is a non-subject, a mischievous fabrication. It bolsters fightability. It bolsters thinkability. (EM 15).

Such 'thinkability' then, it seems, can cause grave damage. Similarly, the vile pronouncements of the pro-STAR WARS (May the Force be with us!) and pro-

Neutron (happily, property damage will be minimal) lobbyists are almost beneath contempt. Amis is particularly incensed by the "psychotic" fantasies of Robert Jastrow (and it is worth remembering that Jastrow's "technophiliac" pro-SDI (Strategic Defence Initiative) stance is in full accordance with the stated aims of both the US and NATO):

> For Jastrow, the unthinkable is thinkable. He is wrong, and in this respect he is also, I contend, subhuman, like all the nuclear-war fighters, like all the 'prevailers'. The unthinkable is unthinkable; the unthinkable is not thinkable, not by human beings, because the eventuality it posits is one in which all human contexts would have already vanished. (EM 8).

But what of literature? What of considered artforms which are surely far removed from the degraded propaganda of the policy makers and space-weapon apologists? Will the apocalyptic imagination inevitably promote the thinkability of a thermonuclear exchange? The very existence of the short, cautionary tales which follow Amis's essay and his own later novel *London Fields* (1989) would appear to indicate that a voice can be found to tell the tale of our terrible predicament. Language will still pull against the reins, as it were, and finding the correct tone will perhaps prove more difficult than it ever has done before. But, to *not* consider the catastrophic situation we have brought ourselves to would surely constitute a further sin, a further crime against our frail humanity:

> Besides, it could be argued that all writing - all art, in all times - has a bearing on nuclear weapons, in two important respects. Art celebrates life and not the other thing, not the opposite of life. And art raises the stakes, increasing the store of what might be lost. (EM 19).

Ultimately, Amis suggests that it is the technological, political, and strategic justification of nuclear weaponry and warfare which should remain forever unthinkable. It is the honourable task of art and metaphor to make nuclear

disarmament eminently thinkable: "Bullets cannot be recalled. They cannot be uninvented. But they can be taken out of the gun" (EM 9).

Of course, the nuclear consciousness, the mind haunted by felt ultimacies and post-Hiroshima anxieties, is not the exclusive preserve of an articulate elite of professional artists and enlightened socialist thinkers. Indeed, in recent times some of the more challenging expressions of the eschatological mood have been found in the backstreets of popular culture rather than on the regal highways claimed by establishment art; and perhaps none has proved more vivid, exhilarating, and purely apocalyptic than the briefly fashionable 70s youth cult of Punk Rock. Jon Savage's account of the phenomena, *England's Dreaming* (1991), not only succinctly captures the apocalyptic mood of London in 1976 and 1977, but also manages to suggest an apocalyptic aesthetic which is essentially positive (whilst remaining acutely aware of the possibly negative effects of aggressive nihilism).[114] The title of Savage's book is taken from the song *God Save the Queen*, a hit single for the most notorious of the punk bands, the Sex Pistols:

> God save the Queen: the fascist regime,
> It made you a moron, a potential H-Bomb,
> God save the Queen: she ain't no human being,
> There is no future, in England's dreaming!
>
> No future for you, no future for me, no future for you![115]

No future; the year 2000 will not happen. With impeccable timing, the single's release, in the summer of 1977, delivered a defiant two-fingered salute to a moribund nation traipsing through the motions of celebrating the Silver Jubilee of an equally redundant monarch. No future; because England's dreaming of Union Jacks, horse-drawn carriages, and the glorious Empire (and not the IRA or OPEC or the NF); as Savage acidly observes: "to those who were unconvinced, the Jubilee seemed an elaborate covering of the social cracks - with fading Coronation wallpaper" (ED 352). *God Save the Queen* was an apocalyptic anthem, not only

because it castigated the present as a sham but also because it prophesied a future nation of more unemployment, more racism, more depravation, and more H-bombs. Typically, Punk preached violence as the final solution to this mess (and not the love, peace, and understanding of the 60s West Coast generation):

> Give me World War Three we can live again.[116]

By late 1977, however, Punk was almost ending, it was on its last legs. Speculators from the mainstream recording industry were moving in, ready to dilute its radical message into a token stance of pseudo-rebellion (a "New Wave" of nothing). In 1976, as London suffered its hottest weather since records began, it seemed difficult to imagine such a capitulation:

> As the heatwave intensified, drought conditions prevailed: by late August, columns of smoke from small fires, dotted the landscape like warning beacons. When the weather broke in early September, the apocalyptic mood did not. It was a time of portents. (ED 229)

And the clearest, most damning and damned voice, was that of Johnny Rotten, the prophetic lead singer of the Sex Pistols, introducing their first recording, *Anarchy in the U.K.*[117], released (and hastily withdrawn) in November 1976:

> RIGHT NOW!
> I am an ANTICHRIST
> and I am an ANARCHIST
> don't know what I want
> but I know where to get it
> I wanna DESTROY
> passers by
> cos I wanna be
> ANARCHY
>
> I wanna be
> ANARCHIST
> get PISSED
> DESTROY!

Greil Marcus has called it "a voice that denied all social facts, and in that denial affirmed that everything was possible".[118] It is difficult to capture in words the sheer malevolence of Rotten's demonic opening cackle; and virtually impossible to explain just how revolutionary the cacophony which followed it actually *sounded* at the time of release, coming as it did into a world of tired musical posturing and pompous, self-indulgent, Adult-Orientated Rock (little wonder that the English 'supergroups' - Yes, Genesis, Pink Floyd - were soon contemptuously being referred to as 'dinosaurs'). *Anarchy in the U.K.* was a millenarian roar, with Rotten at its centre, a doomsaying anarchist relishing the role of secular Antichrist:

> We want chaos to come, life's not going to get any better for kids on the dole until it gets worse first. (Johnny Rotten - quoted in ED 231).

Clearly, Rotten is interested in something with wider social consequences than the selling of a few records. But it would be a grave error to view Punk in standard socio-political terms; it *was* not a class-based movement in the sense of being a working class cultural phenomenon confronting a middle and upper class Establishment. True, Rotten was a poor London Irish kid on the dole but his manager, Malcolm McLaren, was well-educated and from a comfortable background. McLaren's frustration, his apocalyptic boredom, was identical to his protégé's:

> You have to destroy in order to create, you know that.[119]

Punk did not strike a chord worldwide because it played upon British class anxieties; its success can be traced to its millennial roots. Post-war, post-60s England was boring, not just dreaming of nostalgia but drowning in it; the future was a one way ticket to nowhere.[120] In America, the feeling was the same:

> I would like to know the source of the deep rage that runs through this story like a razor-edged wire, it wasn't precisely class hatred; it

> certainly wasn't political; it went too deep ... It should be remembered that we had all grown up with Civil Defense drills and dreams of the bomb at night; we had been promised the end of the world as children, and we weren't getting it.[121]

The early Punks had no time for Baudrillard's gentle ideologies. They proudly sported Swastikas, and defaced their clothes and bodies with 'safety' pins - they were nihilists because they were raised under the shadow of the Bomb and they confidently expected no future. But they equally expected the world to end with a resounding bang ... and not through tedium and societal stasis causing time to stop dead. Quite simply, the Punk generation wanted Apocalypse, not Entropy. Punk was a positive event (in a largely 'event'-free society) because its apocalyptic noise resisted the accumulation of entropy; for a few extraordinary moments pop music was no longer bland, predictable, or probable; and society itself was no longer vacantly dreaming - any new reality could be imagined and willed into existence. As Jon Savage concludes:

> Punk was beaten, but it had also won. If it had been the project of the Sex Pistols to destroy the music industry, then they had failed; but as they gave it new life, they allowed a myriad of new forms to become possible. When Punk entered the music and media industries, its vision of freedom was eventually swamped by New-Right power politics and the accompanying value systems, but its original, gleeful negation remains a beacon. History is made by those who say 'No' and Punk's utopian heresies remain its gift to the world. (ED 541).[122]

This introduction has succeeded if it has demonstrated that the exact status of apocalyptic fictions is a matter of fierce debate. Augustine reads *Revelation* as a spiritual allegory and Joachim counters that the text should have an immediate influence in the world of secular affairs, Cohn argues that the apocalyptic mind is essentially revolutionary while McGinn replies that it is equally capable of helping maintain social order, Miller finds the final scenario of Judgment and New

Jerusalem entirely satisfactory but Lawrence's verdict is that the whole spectacle is plainly detestable. Professional literary critics are also divided; Kermode, Ketterer, May, Robinson, and Dowling offer their qualified approval of the apocalyptic imagination, whilst perversely, those writers often held to be modern apocalypticists (Sontag, Derrida, Baudrillard) are in actuality the strongest opponents of the form. And as we have noted, millennial aspirations can encourage the dangerous militarism of disturbed messianic individuals or equally they may aid the cause of valid and valuable forms of social protest. Nuclear fictions can both promote the thinkability of war or demand the thinkability of disarmament; some texts may prove to be an accomplice to the forces of entropy and others yet may help release its deadening grip.

If we wish to assign any credibility to apocalyptic as a worthwhile political and aesthetic form, and I must confess that I do, then we have a duty to answer the eloquent reservations of many hostile critics. M.H. Abrams, for example, presents a plausible case for denying our apocalyptic impulses:

> ... the Book of Revelation has fostered a dubious heritage of reductive historical thinking in terms of absolute antitheses without the possibility of nuance, distinction, or mediation. Complex social, political, and moral issues are reduced to the two available categories of good and bad, right and wrong, the righteous and the wicked. Those who are not totally for are totally against; if you are not part of the solution you are part of the problem; and the problem can only be resolved by liquidating the opposition. In the popular mind - especially in countries such as America where there is a long and deep millenarian tradition - Revelation has fostered a conspiracy-view of history in which all reverses or disasters are attributed to the machinations of Satan or Antichrist, or else of human agencies, whether individuals or classes or races, who are demoniac or (in the secular rendering) are motivated by the negative forces in the historical process. In times of extreme stress such thinking has helped engender a collective paranoia, religious or racial or national, which has manifested itself in Crusades, sacred wars, pogroms, witch-hunts, or

other attempts to achieve, by annihilating the massed forces of evil, a final solution.[123]

Undoubtedly the apocalyptic mind can succumb to the perilous follies of paranoia (one further glance at Parfrey's *Apocalypse Culture* will be enough to persuade us of this). Chronic paranoia should in no circumstances be encouraged; but I intend to demonstrate, in the following chapters on William S. Burroughs and J.G. Ballard, and particularly in a concluding discussion of Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, that we may cultivate such a thing as "creative", or "sensitive" paranoia.[124] The Punks (and, as it transpired, many others too) suspected that time had, in a sense, stopped by 1977 and that the nation was hopelessly trapped in the past.[125] If there was a conspiracy, it was one of circumstances (which could be readily changed) rather than of hidden plots and secret unfathomable purposes. Instead of retreating into a damaging realm of private fantasy, the Punks came together in a startling display of emotional solidarity, the immediate result of which was collective action. To use Abrams's terms, Punk's apocalypse *was* a 'crusade'; but it was a crusade to save the world, not destroy it.

Chapter One: William S. Burroughs - 'The Naked Lunch'

> The Word, gentle reader, will flay you down to the laughing bones and the author will do a striptease with his own intestines. Let it be. No holes barred. The Word is recommended for children, and convent-trained cunts need it special to learn what every street boy knows: "He who rims the Mother Superior is a success-minded brown nose and God will reward him on TV with a bang at Question 666."
>
> Brothers, the limit is not yet. I will blow my fuse and blast my brains with a black short-circuit of arteries, but I will not be silent nor hold longer back the enema of my word hoard, been dissolving all the shit up there man and boy forty-three years and who ever held an enema longer? I claim the record, folks, and any Johnny-Come-Late think he can out-nausea the Maestro, let him shove his ass forward and do a temple dance with his piles.
>
> William S. Burroughs, "WORD", *Interzone*.[1]

In January 1954 William S. Burroughs arrived from Rome via Gibraltar at Tangier, a prosperous free port in Northern Morocco and neutral "international zone" administered by the agents of various foreign governments.[2] In the preceding years Burroughs had led a peripatetic existence[3]; his travels had taken him from a comfortable middle class home in St Louis, Missouri to a ranch school at Los Alamos (where J. Robert Oppenheimer was to later develop the atomic bomb) and on to Harvard (being awarded a degree in anthropology) and Vienna (briefly studying medicine). He had worked as a roach exterminator in Chicago and gained underworld experience and a drug habit in New York. Moving south to the rural

climes of Louisiana and Texas, Burroughs assumed the role of gentleman farmer and dabbled in the cultivation of marijuana. Pending narcotics charges and the prospect of incarceration sent him fleeing across the border into Mexico and a period of further study (on this occasion he took courses in Mayan and Aztec archaeology).

When Burroughs accidentally shot dead his second wife Joan Vollmer in September 1951, his residence in Mexico was effectively terminated. A long-standing fascination with the almost mythical properties of the hallucinogenic drug Yage (*Banisteriopsis caapi*) offered another escape route and prompted an extended South American trip which took in Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia in search of "the final fix".[4] Burroughs survived this quest and travelled to Palm Beach in August 1953 to visit his young son and parents (who did not want him to settle in Florida but would continue his monthly stipend of $200). The following month he endured a miserable erotic liaison in New York with his old friend Allen Ginsberg and a Christmas sojourn in Italy proved equally dispiriting. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Burroughs's early impressions of Tangier were not favourable:

> I like Tangiers less all the time [...] Their lousy weed tears your throat out like it's cut with horse shit [...] Would God I was back in Mexico. Or Peru.
>
> What's all this old Moslem culture shit? One thing I have learned. I know what Arabs do all day and night. They sit around smoking cut weed and playing some silly card game. And don't ever fall for this inscrutable oriental shit like [Paul] Bowles puts down (that shameless faker). They are just a gabby, gossipy simple-minded, lazy crew of citizens. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 26, 1954).[5]

Nevertheless, Burroughs's arrival and subsequent prolonged stay in Tangier, which he was to later describe in mystical terms as "the prognostic pulse of the world, like a dream extending from past into the future, a frontier between dream and reality - the 'reality' of both called into question"[6], proved to be a deeply significant period in the career of this itinerant writer of modern apocalyptic texts.

That January day in 1954 Burroughs was a month short of his fortieth birthday. Despite the restlessness of his amorphous existence it could be argued that there had been three constant features in Burroughs's recent years; boys, drugs (or their absence), and the frustrated desire to earn recognition and a living as a writer. More crucially, Burroughs's surviving letters reveal that he was finding it increasingly painful to write at all; he had yet to acquire and develop a wholly appropriate literary form or authentic narrative "voice". He had written just two works; the first, an autobiographical account of his heroin addiction and lowlife escapades in New York and the South, had been published in a cheap paperback format the previous year. An inauspicious debut, *Junkie: Confessions of an Unredeemed Drug Addict* appeared under the pseudonym of William Lee, "doubled up" with a reprint of *Narcotics Agent*, a law enforcement memoir by former officer Maurice Helbrandt. Burroughs's second novel, *Queer*, would remain unpublished until 1985.[7]

This chapter is primarily concerned with William S. Burroughs's third novel, *The Naked Lunch* (1959); while the following chapter will consider Burroughs's "cut-up" techniques of literary composition and their application in a series of novels and related texts revealing the machinations of an all powerful "Nova Conspiracy". A full appreciation of *The Naked Lunch* or the later "cut-up" process is not possible, however, without an understanding of their genesis in Burroughs's concept of the "Routine". The Routine is the creation of William Lee, Burroughs's fictional persona in *Queer*. It is a "frantic attention-getting format ... shocking, funny, riveting" (Q 12)[8]; Lee employs this desperate tactic to woo and impress a sullen young American, Eugene Allerton, whom he seduces in Mexico City. The Routine begins life as a simple (if slightly surreal) barroom anecdote: "I was reading up on chess. Arabs invented it, and I'm not surprised. Nobody can sit like an Arab. The classical Arab chess game was simply a sitting contest. When both contestants starved to death it was a stalemate" (Q 69). No one present is permitted to interrupt the flow of bogus academic information and as the improvisation progresses its details become

increasingly baroque: "The next time I saw Tetrazzini was in the Upper Ubangi. A complete wreck. Peddling unlicensed condoms. That was the year of the rinderpest, when everything died, even the hyenas" (Q 70).

Dismayed by the performance Lee's companions depart. The Routine is insatiable, however, and it assumes a will and appetite of its own, cannibalizing the texts of travel narratives, colonial biographies, commercial advertising, popular love songs, hardboiled detective fiction, and crude vaudeville innuendo:

> 'In Timbuktu I went to Corn Hole Gus's Used-Slave Lot to see what he could do for me on a trade-in.
>
> 'Gus rushes out and goes into the spiel: "Ah, Sahib Lee. Allah has sent you! I have something right up your ass, I mean, alley. Just came in. One owner and he was a doctor. A once-over-lightly, twice-a-week-type citizen. It's young and it's tender. In fact, it talks baby talk ... behold!"
>
> '"You call those senile slobberings baby talk? My grandfather got a clap off that one. Come again, Gussie"'. (Q 71).

The bar empties as Lee helplessly continues. In its ascendancy the Routine enjoys complete mastery over its abject host and the monologue climaxes in pure obscenity: "Jesus, Lee! You know I'd cut off my right nut for you, but I swear by my mother's cunt, may I fall down and be paralysed and my prick fall off if these mixed jobs ain't harder to move than a junky's bowels" (Q 72).

In the grand mal of a Routine, Lee, in effect, regurgitates the cut-up contents of the many other lesser routines (chat up lines, sales talk, newspaper stories etc.) he has been exposed to and disturbed (or possibly traumatised) by. It would be of little consolation to Lee that the same could be said of him as Edgar observed of Lear: "O, matter and impertinency mixed - Reason in madness!".[9] The image of Lee, anxious to impress his guests, yet usurped by a grotesque carny stand-up whose comic turn goes hysterically and horribly awry, further recalls Alberto Cavalcanti's "The Ventriloquist's Dummy" (the closing segment of Ealing's

celebrated 1945 portmanteau horror film *Dead of Night*). In this genuinely chilling episode, Michael Redgrave is compelled by his malevolent dummy to commit murder; and in a final vignette we witness the mannikin assume complete control as Redgrave is strangled to death (by the dummy!) in his prison cell.[10]

In his 1985 "Introduction" to the first edition of *Queer* Burroughs offers a retrospective analysis of Lee's possession by a Routine. Threatened by psychic turmoil and "painful dispersal" (Q 13) Lee evolves the desperate skits as a primitive defence mechanism; the routines function as both a haunted plea for "contact or recognition" and as "a mask, to cover a shocking disintegration" (Q 12). Burroughs claims that such a disintegration is a distinct possibility owing to Lee's having kicked heroin. In Burroughs's reading, junk withdrawal produces two major side-effects; the first is an extraordinarily painful self-consciousness (hence the need of a 'mask') and the second is just plain randiness (hence the desire for 'contact'). Thus, Lee coos to an unimpressed Allerton: "I'm a little junk sick, you know, and that makes me sooo sexy" (Q 86). To relieve the situation Lee bargains with Allerton and agrees to financially support him and in return "all I ask is be nice to Papa, say twice a week" (Q 75). Of course, a relationship built on such foundations is unlikely to endure or prove particularly rewarding and especially so when one of the parties is as chronically lonely as Lee is (Allerton's motives and aspirations remain unclear). However, it is the sheer cynicism of the arrangement which is most revealing. Lee inhabits a world morbidly devoid of empathy and he is profoundly alienated from other people. Thus, the sexual fantasias of his routines merely replicate the naked commercial activities of everybody else. A friend chatting in a bar begins "putting down a little-boy-in-a-foreign-country routine" (Q 24), a lottery vendor works "the last-ticket routine" (Q 50), and a drug dealing quack issues a script as he runs "through the routine again" (Q 86). *Queer* remorselessly chronicles a society dominated by the Routine. To be sure, a craving for junk (and love) feeds Lee's routines - but drugs are *not* an essential part of the equation and the shallow workings of others can be prompted by causes as diverse as the need for power or

money or sex or just about anything else. At their basest, the routines can be no more than the product of sheer blind animal instinct. Burroughs's deterministic vision of humanity trapped in the entropic processes of the Routine is unremittingly bleak; yet it is one he would return to, modify, and render in more optimistic terms in his later apocalypses.

That Burroughs should soon warm to Tangier and find it congenial to creative endeavour is, with the benefit of hindsight, not that extraordinary. One obvious attraction would be that the port boasted a thriving criminal fraternity to match that which Burroughs fondly recalled from his earlier adventures in and around Times Square. The general ambience of illicit behaviour was further heightened by the artistic community which had been drawn to the city; as the biographer of a fellow resident, the writer and composer Paul Bowles, makes explicit:

> To the expatriates who landed there after World War II, the International Zone of Tangier was an enigmatic, exotic and deliciously depraved version of Eden. A sun-bleached, sybaritic outpost set against the verdant hills of North Africa, it offered a free money market and a moral climate in which only murder and rape were forbidden. Fleeing an angst-ridden Western culture, European émigrés found a haven where homosexuality was accepted, drugs were readily available and eccentricity was a social asset.[11]

In this reading, renegade intellectuals such as Bowles and Burroughs developed an iconoclastic aesthetic in an artistic "oasis where one could give free rein to the unconscious and explore forbidden impulses without fear of reprisal".[12] It could be argued, however, that Burroughs also had a far more prosaic reason for relishing the isolation afforded to him by the literary outpost of Tangier. A few months earlier Allen Ginsberg had rejected his amorous advances with the brutal declaration: "I don't want your ugly old cock".[13] Tangier offered Burroughs the opportunity to place some distance between himself and the younger poet. But Burroughs did not

entirely reject his friend; indeed, the two conducted a voluminous correspondence throughout the years of Burroughs's stay in North Africa. As with the routines, the letters written to Ginsberg also offer important clues to the development of Burroughs's apocalyptic aesthetic.

Burroughs had been ensconced in Tangier for three months when he wrote the following:

> Dear Allen,
>
> I have written and rewritten this for you. So please answer.
>
> Routines like habit. Without routines my life is chronic nightmare, gray horror of midwest suburb [...]
>
> I have to have receiver for routine. If there is no one there to receive it, routine turns back on me like homeless curse and tears me apart, grows more and more insane (literal growth like cancer) and impossible, and fragmentary like berserk pin-ball machine and I am screaming: "Stop it! Stop it!"
>
> Trying to write novel. Attempt to organize material is more painful than anything I ever experienced. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, April 7, 1954).[14]

This is a significant letter for a number of reasons. First, we realise the extent of Burroughs's utter dependence upon Ginsberg (a few weeks later Burroughs would confess to Jack Kerouac: "I did not think I was hooked on him like this. The withdrawal symptoms are worse than the Marker habit [*Adelbert Lewis Marker*, the real-life inspiration for *Queer*'s Eugene Allerton]. One letter would fix me. So make it your business, if you are a real friend, to see that he writes me a fix. I am incapacitated. Can't write. Can't take interest in anything"[15]); the production of the routines is an act of artistic collaboration, with Ginsberg as an almost silent partner or "receiver". Ginsberg's assigned role in the 'sender/receiver' process is equivalent to that of the barroom patrons who witness Lee's routines in *Queer*, the one essential difference being that Ginsberg is not permitted to walk out on the performance. Secondly, this letter reveals Burroughs's increasing dependence upon the Routine

itself. Not only is Burroughs addicted to the conjuring of routines but his conception of the form seems to grant them supernatural powers of retribution if improperly handled. Finally, we have a reference to a new novel, a work in progress aiming to capture the routines issuing forth from Burroughs's self-imposed solitary confinement and literary exile.

Through reading Burroughs's remaining letters of 1954 we can trace the maturing of his thought regarding the routines. The potentially damaging power of the form should not be underestimated:

> I've been thinking about routine as art form, and what distinguishes it from other forms. One thing, it is not *completely symbolic*, that is, it is subject to shlup over into "real" action at any time (like cutting off finger joint and so forth) [frustrated by an unsuccessful affair in the late 1930s Burroughs had cut off the end of the little finger of his left hand with poultry shears]. In a sense the whole Nazi movement was a great, humorless, evil *routine* on Hitler's part. Do you dig me? [...]
>
> Let's get on with this novel. Maybe the real novel is letters to you. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, June 24, 1954).[16]

If the routines could be viewed as no more than individual psychosis 'shlupping' over into collective derangement then it is unlikely that Burroughs would have been capable of writing anything else but endless monotonous variations on the dark, misanthropic themes of *Queer*. Burroughs came to realise, however, that the grim laughter of the routines could deliver genuine therapeutic benefits and bring something approaching rational order to an increasingly chaotic universe. A major letter from the end of 1954 is well worth quoting at some length:

> Dear Allen,
>
> I always have so much I want to say to you, that a letter is a major operation. Never get it all said, either. I wish you could make it here [Ginsberg did not visit Burroughs in Tangier until 1957].
>
> I am downright incapacitated without a typewriter, but have written 1st chapter of a novel in which I will incorporate all my

routines and scattered notes. Scene is Tangiers, which I call Interzone [...]

Routines are completely spontaneous and proceed from whatever fragmentary knowledge you have. In fact a routine is by nature fragmentary, inaccurate. There is no such thing as an exhaustive routine, nor does the scholarly-type mind run to routines [...]

Glimpsed a new *dimension* of sex: Sex mixed with routines and laughter, the unmalicious, unstrained, *pure* laughter that accompanies a good routine, laughter that gives a moment's freedom from the cautious, nagging, aging, frightened, flesh. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 13, 1954).[17]

This letter represents a breakthrough for Burroughs. He can now conceive of the routines as healing agents; purging a menacing and hostile existence with an eroticised and exorcising laughter. According to Burroughs's metaphysic the pornographic logic of a "completely spontaneous" routine can simultaneously offer emetic relief to the *sender* and provide remedial mirth to the *receiver*. Ultimately, a successful routine snatches a few moments respite from the body, from the "nagging, aging, frightened, flesh". In apocalyptic terms the raucous cackle of a routine allows consciousness to transcend the horrors of the body and the attendant claims of Time and History.

Burroughs's first year in Tangier was spent grappling with and refining the intricacies of the Routine technique. It seems clear that his developing success with the form encouraged him greatly in the composition of a new novel to follow the melancholy improvisations of the unpublished *Queer*. Burroughs's work in progress was, of course, destined to appear in 1959 as *The Naked Lunch*, the book which would finally and emphatically launch him on a long and controversial literary career.[18] The novel's title had been coined by Jack Kerouac; and Burroughs's gloss makes it evident that the text is fundamentally concerned with the processes of apocalyptic revelation:

> The title means exactly what the words say: NAKED Lunch - a frozen moment when everyone sees what is on the end of every fork. (NL 9).

It would be erroneous to assume, however, that having mastered the Routine, the writing of *The Naked Lunch* would prove to be plain sailing. The overbearing number of shocking routines unleashed by Burroughs's new-found creativity would lead him to complain to Ginsberg that "I am strangled with routines, drowning in routines and nobody to receive" (again one is reminded of Michael Redgrave and his murderous ventriloquist's dummy).[19]

The letters subsequently written by Burroughs to Ginsberg between the years 1955-1957 are fascinating in two respects. Firstly, the letters contain early versions of many of the routines later included in *The Naked Lunch* and other publications. Secondly, they provide a running commentary on the numerous anxieties Burroughs faced as he continued the perilous journey towards the completion of his 'great novel':

> All day I had been finding pretexts to avoid work [...] So finally I say: "Now you must work," and smoke some tea and sit down and out it comes all in one piece like a glob of spit [a draft of the notorious "Talking Asshole" scene from *The Naked Lunch* follows]. This is my saleable product. Do you dig what happens? It's almost like automatic writing produced by a hostile, independent entity who is saying in effect, "I will write what I please." (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, February 7, 1955).[20]

> This writing is more painful than anything I ever did. Parentheses pounce on me and tear me apart. I have no control over what I write, which is as it should be. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, October 21, 1955).[21]

> I have wandered off the point, out of contact, fallen into a great gray gap between parentheses [...] I am progressing towards complete lack of caution and restraint. Nothing must be allowed to dilute my routines [...] You are free to choose, add, subtract, rearrange if you find a potential publisher [...] Now I'm swamped with material [...] Every

time I try to terminate it, another routine pounces on me. (Letter to Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, October 23, 1955).[22]

I have entered a period of change more drastic than adolescence or early childhood. I live in a constant state of routine. I am getting so far out one day I won't come back at all. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, October 13, 1956).[23]

> The only way I can write narrative is to get right outside my body and experience it. This can be exhausting and at times dangerous. One cannot be sure of redemption ... (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, October 28, 1957).[24]

Of course, a sceptical observer may draw attention to a certain 'camp' or self-dramatizing tone in these utterances; as if Burroughs secretly relishes (and wallows in) the role of a tortured scribe suffering for his craft. Nevertheless, whilst Burroughs does indeed betray a shrewd talent for self-mythologizing and even if his fevered outpourings may occasionally border on the hysterical, then these traits are perfectly consistent with the assumed status of apocalyptic seer. Burroughs produces prose in the manner of a blind Milton or *Revelation*'s John of Patmos: "Interzone is coming like dictation, I can't keep up with it ... often I do not know what I wrote last night till I read it over - the whole thing is a dream".[25]

In these letters Burroughs also employs another tactic from the armoury of the apocalyptic writer. In a neat sleight of hand he effectively abandons and disclaims culpability for much of the outrageous sexual obscenity in his work. Burroughs achieves this trick by constantly hinting that throughout the compositional process he is the victim of some form of ill-defined supernatural possession (and yet crucially Burroughs's denial of the traditional moral responsibilities of authorship confers further authority on his writing precisely because it could be the product of another stronger "independent entity"). The author is now a mere oracle; faithfully transcribing disturbing messages from a world elsewhere. The Freudian in Burroughs would possibly locate the provenance

of the routines in the writer's creative unconscious - an unimpressed reader would probably object to indecency being validated as self-analysis; as the vulgar babble of the Routine is domesticated as the ultimate talking cure. What *is* clear is that by ostensibly claiming to be the weakened vessel of a possessing force, Burroughs, in effect, appears to be the more heroic; courageously enduring a dangerous situation and yet still delivering a redemptive art. Burroughs, in common with most apocalyptic writers, promises his audience a literature won from painful experience.

The exact nature of the psychological underpinnings of Burroughs's 'painful experience' will remain unfathomable and I would preach caution to any reader attempting even a rudimentary analysis of Burroughs's case. Writing *The Naked Lunch* obviously, on occasion, disquieted its author: "Reading it over I get an impression of something very sinister just under the surface, but I don't know what it is. Just a feeling ... Will let the book write itself [note again the abdication of authorial responsibility]".[26] It seems feasible that Burroughs considered his writing the result of (and also the antidote to) an earlier distressing episode. In a particularly graphic letter written towards the end of his time in Tangier he even renounces his homosexuality and blames it on "the whole original trauma"[27] (whilst a later letter tentatively locates the primal scene in Burroughs having witnessed the "murder" of a miscarried baby by his childhood nanny, Mary Evans).[28] Regrettably, an otherwise more than competent biographer has further suggested that the infant Burroughs was in fact sexually abused by a male companion of the governess.[29]

Such speculations serve little valuable purpose when it comes to decoding Burroughs's art and perhaps stand only as 'evidence' of contemporary social concerns and phobias (a similar critical debate surrounds the supposed influence of childhood abuse on the apocalyptic novels of the late SF writer Philip K. Dick).[30] What is undeniable is that Burroughs has himself linked his fears of supernatural possession and the loss of rational control with the accidental killing of his second wife. There are varying accounts of exactly what happened at the small informal drinks party attended by Burroughs and his wife, Joan Vollmer, in Mexico

City on the afternoon of September 6, 1951; yet the basic facts seem inescapable. At some stage in the afternoon's drunken proceedings, Burroughs attempted to prove his marksmanship, in the manner of *William Tell*, by shooting a glass balanced on his wife's head. Burroughs shot low and Joan died.

A letter written to Ginsberg in 1955 reveals Burroughs to be troubled by the implications of *specifically* addressing the killing:

> May yet attempt a story or some account of Joan's death. I suspect my reluctance is not all because I think it would be in bad taste to write about it. I think I am *afraid*. Not exactly to discover unconscious intent. It's more complex, more basic and more horrible, as if the brain *drew* the bullet toward it. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, February 7, 1955).[31]

Some readers may find that the 'bad taste' truly lies in Burroughs's evasion of responsibility for firing the fatal shot (and in the subsequent blaming of Joan's brain for somehow inviting the bullet to blast it out of existence). Our point, however, is to illustrate how Burroughs associates his recurring fear of the loss of autonomy with the shooting of his wife:

> I am forced to the appalling conclusion that I would never have become a writer but for Joan's death, and to a realization of the extent to which this event has motivated and formulated my writing. I live with the constant threat of possession, and a constant need to escape from possession, from Control. So the death of Joan brought me in contact with the invader, the Ugly Spirit, and maneuvered me into a lifelong struggle, in which I have had no choice except to write my way out.[32]

These words, written in 1985, present us with a view of Burroughs little different from that shown in the letters penned thirty years previously; this is the heroic Burroughs, stoically enduring all in the hazardous quest to evade Control and gain transcendence by *writing my way out*. To a degree, both Burroughs *and* his

biographer are correct; the shooting of Joan is undeniably reflected in Burroughs's prose and it is more than likely that a childhood experience could shape the chosen themes of a writer's career. What is also true, however, is that Burroughs was a writer fascinated by addiction, obscenity, transcendence, and Control way before he shot Joan. Equally, a formative childhood experience need not be (and indeed rarely is) traumatic and abusive. Writers write what they write for a myriad of different reasons and it seems extremely reductive to assign one particular effect to one particular cause. Having recognised this, I would like to propose a reading of *The Naked Lunch* in which *one* of the sources for Burroughs's stated anxiety about "something very sinister just under the surface" is identified in his corresponding fears regarding the Cold War, the atomic bomb, and the end of the world.

Before fully exploring the apocalyptic themes of *The Naked Lunch*, however, it may prove useful to understand a little more of the novel's gestation and final editorial assembly; the unconventional form and publishing history of Burroughs's novel are in many ways as remarkable as its coruscating contents. The task of rounding up Burroughs's stray routines and ordering the scattered notes into a reasonably coherent whole began when Ginsberg (with his new love Peter Orlovsky) finally visited Burroughs in Tangier in March 1957. Together with Alan Ansen, the men worked steadily for two months until they had a manuscript sufficiently polished to be offered to potential publishers (*The Naked Lunch* was actually still unfinished at this point and Burroughs continued his daily routine of writing new material as Ginsberg and the others diligently typed and edited).[33] In the fall of that year Ginsberg visited Paris but could find no one willing to commit themselves to publishing the novel. Meanwhile, Burroughs was soon to join him in France, the magic of Tangier having worn itself out (yet in many ways the port's transformative work was already complete):

> I do nothing but work ... Given up liquor entirely. Writing the narrative now, which comes in great hunks faster than I can get it down. Changes in my psyche are profound and basic. I feel myself

> not the same person. I am about ready to leave Tanger. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, November 10, 1957).[34]

The projected move made sound sense really; not only was Burroughs now finally on the way to realising his dream of becoming a fully-fledged writer, but Tangier's loss of "international zone" status on October 29, 1956 had destabilised the region and robbed it of much of its libertarian charm.

Burroughs flew into Paris on January 16, 1958, and installed himself in a room Ginsberg had found for him at a cheap hotel on rue Gît-le-Coeur. Here he would continue to churn out further portions of *The Naked Lunch* and, as we shall see in the following chapter, begin work on the cut-up projects. The autumn 1958 issue of the *Chicago Review* and the first issue of *Big Table* in the following spring, both published extracts from Burroughs's orgiastic work in progress, and attracted considerable controversy to themselves as a consequence. Burroughs's new-found notoriety led to an offer to publish *The Naked Lunch* from Maurice Girodias, proprietor of the Paris-based Olympia Press (publisher of, among many other titles, Nabokov's *Lolita* and Beckett's *Watt*).[35] Burroughs was granted just ten days in which to fashion a comprehensible manuscript and with further editorial assistance from fellow hotel resident Brion Gysin (himself another recent exile from Tangier) and Girodias's assistant, Sinclair Beiles, finally *The Naked Lunch* was published in late July 1959. The completed state of the novel was in many ways the product of divers hands, brought together under the command of Burroughs's unmistakable narrative drawl.[36] For a closing aleatory gesture Burroughs insisted that the finished text (with a few minor changes) faithfully reproduce the random order in which the typeset galley proofs of the routines were returned from the printers (who did not read English).

It would be erroneous to assume, however, that the fragmented routines and bawdy digressions of *The Naked Lunch* metamorphosed conclusively into a coherent and stable entity upon publication by Olympia. Burroughs revised

his novel for the first US edition (Grove Press, 1962) and (perhaps mindful of possible legal action) added introductory chapters and appendices to clarify his sincere intentions.[37] Prior to the first UK edition (John Calder, 1964) Burroughs allowed considerable portions from *The Naked Lunch* to *shlup* over into more recent material to form an entirely new work which his anxious publishers considered less likely to be prosecuted (*Dead Fingers Talk* - Calder, 1963). No legal action was brought and an unexpurgated edition of *The Naked Lunch* was duly issued. What *Dead Fingers Talk* did instead provoke was three months of heated correspondence through the Letters page of the *Times Literary Supplement*. Predictably enough, the various epistles (running to over fifty pages and penned by such luminaries as Anthony Burgess, Edith Sitwell, Victor Gollancz, and Burroughs himself) were gathered up and included in the text of *The Naked Lunch*'s 1982 Calder reprint (together with a new preface and afterword). The 1992 US edition (Evergreen) adds even more fare.[38] Furthermore, in 1984 the original manuscript of "Interzone" (Burroughs's precursor to *The Naked Lunch*) was discovered among Allen Ginsberg's papers at Columbia University and subsequently re-edited by Burroughs and published; thus creating additional variations on the Tangier routines.[39] In an amplification of its author's themes of assimilation and possession, the various published editions of *The Naked Lunch* digest and regurgitate the remains of other texts, on each new occasion begetting fresh formal juxtapositions and further textual couplings - thus revealing a promiscuity of patterns and potential readings.[40]

The Paris edition of *The Naked Lunch* is the shortest published version of the novel and it is also the most radical (for this reader, the one unwelcome effect of including so much explanatory material in later editions of the book is the smoothing down of the rawer edges of Burroughs's 'argument'; the authorial stance can appear less uncompromising when surrounded by the occasionally heavy-handed didacticism and self-justification of the later textual additions). The original Olympia text consists of twenty two unnumbered sections and opens with an untitled chapter ("I can feel the heat closing in ...") in which Burroughs records his

inspired vision of a sadly degraded humanity awakening from another night of uneasy slumber. The tone is at times bitter and yet remarkably compassionate (there is a tenderness in *The Naked Lunch* which is largely absent from both *Junkie* and *Queer*):

> The world network of junkies, tuned on a cord of rancid jissom, tying up in furnished rooms, shivering in the junk-sick morning [...] In Yemen, Paris, New Orleans, Mexico City and Istanbul [...] The living and the dead, in sickness or on the nod, hooked or kicked or hooked again [...] feeling for the silent frequency of junk. (NL 20/21).

Just as the believers are summoned to prayers by the *muezzin*, so the junk-sick rally to the call of their metabolic need, broadcast on the internal short-wave band which briefly unites and yet ultimately controls them all.

The Naked Lunch is primarily a novel about addiction, about absolute dependency and the blindest cravings (be they for sex, cash, dope, religion, death). Burroughs's own weakness is for the "unspeakably toothsome" (NL 58) delights of Opium and its derivatives. As a junkie author (literally, *hooked or kicked or hooked again*), Burroughs approaches drugs warily, with a curious combination of both nostalgia and horror. His ambivalence creates a gritty, urban pastoralism - rendered with surrealistic flourishes and undercut by coarse, mocking humour:

> I saw it happen. Ten pounds lost in ten minutes standing with the syringe in one hand holding his pants up with the other, his abdicated flesh burning in a cold yellow halo, there in the New York hotel room ... night table litter of candy boxes, cigarette butts cascading out of three ashtrays, mosaic of sleepless nights and sudden food needs of the kicking addict nursing his baby flesh ... (NL 22).

> Chicago: invisible hierarchy of decorticated wops, smell of atrophied gangsters, earthbound ghost hits you at North and Halstead, Cicero, Lincoln Park, panhandler of dreams, past invading the present, rancid magic of slot machines and roadhouses. (NL 24).

I saw it happen: this is Burroughs's literature won from experience. Whether he is conjuring a panoramic vista of global want or observing the smallest details of a night-table collage, it is the unnerving accuracy of Burroughs's recording eye which startles the reader.

This opening chapter of *The Naked Lunch* also recreates Burroughs's earlier flight west from New York to Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, and on down to Houston, New Orleans, and Mexico City before surfacing in Tangier. The 'heat closing in' on Willy Lee (Burroughs's latest autobiographical persona) is, of course, the drug cops - but the heat also seems to stand for death itself, the pale rider, inexorably pursuing Lee and his travelling companions as they flee across country:

> And the junk was running low. So there we are in this no-horse town strictly from cough syrup. And vomited up the syrup and drove on and on, cold spring wind whistling through that old heap around our shivering sick sweating bodies and the cold you always come down with when the junk runs out of you ... On through the peeled landscape, dead armadillos in the road and vultures over the swamp and cypress stumps. Motels with beaverboard walls, gas heater, thin pink blankets. (NL 25).

This is a portrait of Willy Lee's life pre-Tangier. The harsh reality of life on the road is that there is plainly more loneliness and suffering than there is idealistic, bohemian camaraderie. Lee only goes places because he has to leave places. The long day ends under the fragile protection of thin pink blankets. The US is all used-up in *The Naked Lunch*, the parched and 'peeled landscape' of the New World is haunted by something akin to an ancient and malignant radiation: "America is not a young land: it is old and dirty and evil before the settlers, before the Indians. The evil is there waiting" (NL 24).

Later chapters of *The Naked Lunch* all but dispense with conventional, descriptive narrative; as Willy asks: "Why all this waste paper getting The People from one place to another?" (NL 172). Burroughs's purposes are neatly served by

shipping the whole sick crew to Interzone: "the Composite City where all human potentials are spread out in a vast silent market" (NL 91). In Burroughs's (d)evolutionary fantasy, the City Market is "a place where the unknown past and the emergent future meet in a vibrating soundless hum ... Larval entities waiting for a Live One" (NL 93). The novel's hallucinated apocalyptic vision of Tangier as inter/zone for the past/future, West/East, death/life, man/beast, with new forms emerging from the husks of the old is clearly *Spenglerian*, with cities and civilisations and races all rising lustily and falling away again into dissolution. Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) is often crudely interpreted and a full reading of his philosophy of history lies, by necessity, beyond the scope of this present work. In brief, Spengler considered it possible to deduce the history of the future through studying the recurring "general biographic archetypes" of the past. All Cultures (however mighty) decay and inevitably die when they reach the status of Civilization (Spengler maintains that the Western world crossed this threshold at some point in the nineteenth century). What is often ignored in readings of *The Decline of the West* is that the end of our own exhausted civilization is to be welcomed as a merciful release, and inevitable herald to a fresh and vibrant new beginning. Spengler further contends that a sure portent of a society in decline is the emergence of the "World-city" (Rome for the Classical world, New York for the modern), where decadent cosmopolitanism creates a parasitic and degraded human stock. The urban nomads of Burroughs's Interzone could be refugees from the "radiation-circle" of Spengler's necropolis:

> To the world-city belongs not a folk but a mass. Its uncomprehending hostility to all the traditions representative of the Culture (nobility, church, privileges, dynasties, convention in art and limits of knowledge in science), the keen and cold intelligence that confounds the wisdom of the peasant [...] - all these things betoken the definite closing-down of the Culture and the opening of a quite new phase of human existence - anti-provincial, late, futureless, but quite inevitable. (I. 33-34). Oswald Spengler *The Decline of the West* (1918/1922).[41]

In one of the many footnotes (scholarly or otherwise) which litter even this early version of the text, Burroughs claims to have written his vision of Interzone's "races as yet unconceived and unborn" (NL 91) whilst under the narcotic influence of the Yage vine. He also claims that Yage bestows the ability to foresee the future upon those who imbibe it; and so once again we witness Burroughs explicitly assuming the role of prophet-seer and unveiling the unavoidable destiny of the Western World. Not everything, however, is as fantastic or exotic in Interzone. Burroughs patiently explains the aims and objectives of the Zone's four main political parties and further hints at the machinations of a shadowy group of conspirators known as Islam Inc.. The paranoid brinkmanship of the parties and their fear of alien influence or contamination is reminiscent of the heightened suspicions of the, then on-going, Cold War between the superpowers. Much of contemporary America and Western Europe can be found in Interzone, whilst in the background atomic scientists and technicians prepare to reduce the planet to cosmic dust: "they'll hear this fart on Jupiter" (NL 136).

The atomic bomb is a constant, menacing presence in *The Naked Lunch;* either as 'something very sinister just under the surface' of the text or as an apocalyptic threat looming high over the carnivalesque orgies of Interzone. Human society is teetering on the verge of a holocaust. Burroughs describes his delicately balanced fictional world as "an atomic shambles" (NL 64) and this is presumably meant in both senses of the word. Interzone is not only a place of great disorder and mayhem but also a slaughterhouse where the doomed inhabitants will receive their final and bloody Judgment; or as the manuscript of *Interzone*, rediscovered in 1984, puts it: "This is the time of Witness, when every soul stands with a naked hard-on in the Hall of Mirrors under the meat cleaver of a disgusted God".[42] The irreparable damage inflicted upon the planet by the sheer existential fact of nuclear weaponry is a consistent theme in Burroughs's fiction (and as we shall see in a later chapter, these are views are not necessarily shared by Burroughs's fellow apocalypticist J.G. Ballard, who credits the Hiroshima bomb with effectively terminating the war in the

East and saving hundreds of thousands of lives, including his own). There is compelling evidence that, even from the earliest stages of its composition, Burroughs envisaged his Interzone/Naked Lunch novel pursuing a 'nuclear' theme. A letter written to Ginsberg in January 1955 encloses a mock publisher's "blurb jacket" ("a bit previous, I admit") which showcases the atomic anxieties of the emergent text:

> Suppose you knew the power to start an atomic war lay in the hands of a few scientists who were bent on destroying the world? That is the terrifying question posed by this searching novel.
>
> "The book grabs you by the throat." Says L. Marland, distinguished critic. "It leaps in bed with you, and performs unmentionable acts [...] Behind the humor, the routines, the parody (some of it a bit heavy-handed to be sure), you glimpse a dead-end despair, a bleak landscape of rubble under the spreading black cloud of a final bomb."
>
> This book is a must for anyone who would understand the sick soul, sick unto death, of the atomic age.[43]

Of course, the 1959 published text of *The Naked Lunch* resists the explicit approach to the "atomic age" promised in the 1955 blurb. Instead, the global reach of the terrifying new supervirulent diseases in Burroughs's novel serves as a metaphor for the awesome destructive capabilities of the vast US/Soviet arsenals of intercontinental nuclear missiles:

> So it started in Addis Ababa like the Jersey Bounce, but these are modern times, One World. Now the climactic buboes swell up in Shanghai and Esmeraldas, New Orleans and Helsinki, Seattle and Capetown. (NL 46).

Similarly, Doctor Benway ("I deplore brutality ... it's not efficient" - NL 31), the ubiquitous villain and "*pure* scientist" of *The Naked Lunch*, stands as the amoral representative of two related (in Burroughs's mind) strains of perverted and genocidal rationalism; the Los Alamos atomic scientists and the Nazi death-camp

doctors. Burroughs shares certain affinities with Blake and Wordsworth and other writers of the English Romantic tradition[44]; a fascination with dream-states (drug-induced or otherwise) and supernatural occurrences, a sympathy for revolutionary causes and political radicalism, a belief in the primacy of the visionary imagination and its apocalyptic potential, a paradoxical distrust of both social orthodoxy *and* technological change, an enthusiasm for individual nonconformity and aesthetic spontaneity, and most tellingly in this context, an outright hostility toward the crushing arrogance of scientists and techno-bureaucrats:

> Really, it is exasperating to sit helpless like in a nightmare while these life-hating character armadillos jeopardize the very ground under our feet and the air we breathe [...] and nobody shows any indication of curtailing their precious experiments. (Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 9, 1955).[45]

Burroughs and the Romantic poets also share a mutual debt to John of Patmos and the authors of other apocalyptic texts for some of their tactics. As we noted in the "Introduction" to this present study, the concealment and subsequent revelation of meaning through the employment of coded signs is central to the concept of literary apocalypse as a whole. The apocalypticist deciphers the divine plan for the future and then enciphers his prophecies in a complex web of symbol and allegory. In *The Naked Lunch,* Willy Lee struggles to comprehend the occult meanings tantalisingly signalled in his narcotised fugues:

> Keep going on the nod [...] Fall asleep reading and the words take on code significance ... Obsessed with codes ... Man contracts a series of diseases which spell out a code message ... (NL 63).

If it is metaphorically correct, as Herbert Stencil hypothesises in *V.* (1963), Thomas Pynchon's novel of apocalyptic code-breaking, that "sometime between 1859 and 1919, the world contracted a disease"[46], then the reader's task in *The Naked Lunch,* like

Willy Lee's as he drifts in and out of revelatory dream-states, is to diagnose, from amongst all that is "meaningless mosaic" (NL 64) in the novel, the genuine ills of our age in preparation for a meaningful course of therapeutic treatment. In common with other apocalyptic authors, Burroughs contends that his arcane and magical writing ("This is Revelation and Prophecy of what I can pick up without FM on my 1920 crystal set with antennae of jissom" - NL 180) nevertheless serves an eminently practical purpose:

> *The Naked Lunch* is a blueprint, a How-To Book [...] How-To extend levels of experience by opening the door at the end of a long hall. (NL 176-77).

Thus, *The Naked Lunch* is nothing less than a survival manual. If the attentive reader can crack its "code message", then s/he is rewarded with the key to unlock the doors of (a previously clouded) perception. We shall see in due course how the later apocalypses of William S. Burroughs become increasingly didactic as they attempt to direct the reader towards a specific course of political action; in his first major novel, however, it is simply enough that "everyone sees what is on the end of every fork".

Before moving on, however, we should pause to consider the vexed question of Burroughs's alleged misogyny. This is a complex issue and one we shall have cause to deliberate further in chapters two and three. There is, without doubt, persuasive biographical evidence that Burroughs cares little for the company of females; yet such behaviour is not at all uncommon amongst certain homosexual men and in truth proves nothing of any real substance.[47] In interviews, Burroughs has occasionally come close to giving the impression that he is a woman-hater; most notably in a series of extended discussions with the French academic Daniel Odier, where he blithely asserts (quoting Conrad) that "women are a perfect curse" and "a basic mistake".[48] Such incautious remarks serve little purpose apart from providing cheap ammunition for his detractors. When taken out of their initial context Burroughs's views can also appear to be more offensive or dangerous than they

actually are. Thus, when he claims that some American women are "possibly one of the worst expressions of the female sex"[49], it is important to understand that Burroughs is equating (rightly or wrongly) Southern matriarchy with white supremacy, as this routine (narrated by the County Clerk) from *The Naked Lunch* illustrates:

> "They burned that ol' nigger over in Cunt Lick. Nigger had the aftosa and it left him stone blind ... So this white girl down from Texarkana screeches out:
>
> "'Roy, that ol' nigger is looking at me so nasty. Land's sake I feel just dirty all over".
>
> "'Now, Sweet Thing, don't you fret yourself. Me an' the boys will burn him'.
>
> "'Do it slow, Honey Face. Do it slow. He's give me a sick headache'.
>
> "So they burned the nigger and that ol' boy took his wife and went back up to Texarkana without paying for the gasoline and old Whispering Lou runs the service station couldn't talk about nothing else all Fall: 'These city fellers come down here and burn a nigger and don't even settle up for the gasoline'". (NL 141).

It is plainly not Burroughs's intention here to suggest that *all* women are natural liars and murderously manipulative. What the above episode attempts to reveal instead is the hidden motive of sexual jealousy behind much racial hatred and mob violence. Furthermore, the County Clerk's closing interrogation of Willy Lee makes it abundantly clear that, for Burroughs, an illegal Texan lynching and an institutionalised German pogrom still manage to share the same warped pathology:

> "What you think about the Jeeeeews ... ?"
>
> "Well, Mr. Anker, you know yourself all a Jew wants to do is doodle a Christian girl ... One of these days we'll cut the rest of it off".
>
> "Well, you talk right sensible for a city feller ... Find out what he wants and take care of him ... He's a good ol' boy". (NL 142).

Some readers may be less assured, however, by other more disturbing aspects of *The Naked Lunch.* There are very few female characters to be found in the entire Burroughs corpus and women seldom feature in the orgies of fucking and hanging which routinely punctuate his novels. Having said this, many of Burroughs's later boy leads possess distinctly feminine characteristics (and androgynous names, see Audrey and Kim, the young heroes of *The Wild Boys* (1971) and *The Place of Dead Roads* (1983) respectively), whilst one of his most sustained and affectionate portraits is that of a woman (Salt Chunk Mary, mother of the Johnson Family in *Dead Roads*). Similarly, William/Willy Lee takes his surname from the maiden name of Burroughs's mother, Laura Lee Burroughs.[50] Nevertheless, the only female character of any note in *The Naked Lunch* is a slim, boyish swinger called Mary, whose sexual technique suggests another meaning for the novel's title (and one quite apart from that envisaged by Kerouac):

> She bites away Johnny's lips and nose and sucks out his eyes with a pop ... She tears off great hunks of cheek ... Now she lunches on his prick ... Mark walks over to her and she looks up from Johnny's half-eaten genitals, her face covered with blood, eyes phosphorescent [...] "Let me hang you, Mark ... Let me hang you ... Please, Mark, let me hang you!" (NL 85).

Images of castration, dismemberment, and absorption into the body of another recur throughout the novel; as does the vile threat of the *vagina dentata*, or the "cunt full of colored glass splinters" (NL 153). Again, we should be wary of enlisting pat psychological theories to explain Burroughs's obsessions. In fact, the only thing we can assert with any real confidence is that in his editorial revisions Burroughs has been careful to transplant any unsavoury opinions into the mouths of minor grotesques or out and out crooks such as Benway. For example, William Seward (Burroughs's first-person narrator of the original "Interzone" manuscript) baldly states that "women seethe with hot poison juices eat it off in a twink"[51]; in *The Naked Lunch* the line is thrown over to Lovable Lu, "your brainwashed poppa" (NL 115).

These textual emendations appear to indicate that, despite the demonisation of women being something of a staple ingredient of apocalyptic literature (e.g. *Revelation*'s Whore of Babylon), Burroughs is keen to ensure that any misogynous sentiments in *The Naked Lunch* are expressed by lowlifes or con men and *not* by the narrating authorial voice.

Unsurprisingly, there has been much critical (and legal) debate as to whether or not the explicit sexual content of *The Naked Lunch* makes it an obscene book and one likely to be a corruptive influence. Mary McCarthy, the US novelist and an early champion of Burroughs's work (most notably in association with Norman Mailer at the Edinburgh Festival of 1962), argues that although much of *The Naked Lunch* can be described with some justification as tiresome and disgusting, it should not be too harshly condemned or lightly dismissed as mere pornographic filth. Burroughs's keenly satirical novel invites favourable comparison with the bitter fantasies of Dean Swift, and the two writers share many qualities: "not only the obsession with excrement and the horror of female genitalia but a disgust of politics and the whole body politic".[52] In a spirited and provocative defence, McCarthy portrays Burroughs as a literary heir to Swift, with both men united as the inspired practitioners of "a kind of soured utopianism". David Lodge disputes the accuracy of such claims in his important and perceptive essay "Objections to William Burroughs" (1966).[53] Lodge judges Burroughs to be neither a great satirist nor a serious literary innovator; the crudities of *The Naked Lunch* are not redeemed by a higher moral purpose and Burroughs's novel is, in fact, a "very indecent book".[54] Lodge may well be correct when he maintains that "the analogy with Swift won't stand up"[55]; Burroughs's contention that the hanging-orgies of his novel "were written as a tract against Capital Punishment in the manner of Jonathan Swift's *Modest Proposal* ... intended to reveal capital punishment as the obscene, barbaric and disgusting anachronism that it is" (NL 14) not only rings hollow but seems, given the sheer number of hanging/orgasm routines so lovingly recorded in his later works, a

little dishonest (although Burroughs's opportunism is perhaps understandable given the then vulnerable legal status of the novel).

Lodge surely errs, however, when he denies a moral dimension to *The Naked Lunch*; as we have seen, Burroughs's work exposes the stupidity and monstrous arrogance of bigots and racists, it challenges the rights of genocidal scientists to become the new lords of creation, and his novel also intimately and compassionately records the junk-sick sufferings of those who have been lost or forgotten to society. In this last respect, *The Naked Lunch* appears to be not an "indecent" book, but an extremely charitable, humane, and perhaps even Christian work. Burroughs does not immorally advocate the free and unthinking abuse of drugs; his well-chosen words are both prophetic and admonitory:

> *NOTHING Ever Happens* in the junk world [...] Look down LOOK DOWN along that junk road before you travel there and get in with the Wrong Mob ...
> A word to the wise guy. (NL 14/16).

Two crucial factors, then, seem to have been in some way responsible for allowing Burroughs to unleash his *word hoard* ("all the shit up there man and boy forty-three years and who ever held an enema longer?"); the relative sanctuary afforded by a prolonged stay in Tangier and the unique intensity of the epistolary relationship with Ginsberg. Through exploring and refining the workings of the Routine, Burroughs was able to perfect a literary method capable of recording his apocalyptic vision. His sterner critics may demur, but the scatological fantasias and nuclear anxieties of *The Naked Lunch* represent an anarchic affirmation of the human potentialities so thoroughly denigrated in the dark routines of the earlier *Queer*.

Chapter Two: William S. Burroughs and the Nova Conspiracy

> Thus with the year
> Seasons return, but not to me returns
> Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
> Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
> Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
> But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark
> Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
> Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
> Presented with a universal blank
> Of nature's works to me expunged and razed,
> And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
> So much the rather thou celestial Light
> Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
> Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
> Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
> Of things invisible to mortal sight. (III. 40-55)
>
> John Milton *Paradise Lost* (1667).[1]

One day in either late September or early October 1959, and just two months after the publication of *The Naked Lunch*, William S. Burroughs celebrated his new-found fame by taking two visiting journalists from *Life* magazine out to lunch. Back at his cheap, unnamed hotel on rue Gît-le-Coeur, the painter Brion Gysin was preparing some picture mounts with a Stanley knife. At some stage in the process Gysin noticed that he had inadvertently sliced through the assorted copies of the *New York Herald Tribune* he was using to protect his work bench. The strips of

newsprint he was left with could now be read alongside each other in various new combinations; with one story leaking into another and thus creating bizarre sentences full of surreal juxtapositions and plausible-sounding nonsense.[2] Burroughs was more than impressed when his friend showed him what he had stumbled upon during his absence:

> I became interested in the possibilities of this technique, and I began experimenting myself. Of course, when you think of it, "The Waste Land" was the first great cut-up collage, and Tristan Tzara had done a bit along the same lines. Dos Passos used the same idea in "The Camera Eye" sequences in *U.S.A.* I felt I had been working toward the same goal; thus it was a major revelation to me when I actually saw it being done.[3]

Burroughs instinctively seized upon what Gysin had cheerily viewed as little more than an amusing afternoon's diversion. Almost immediately, he was filling scrapbooks with the butchered remains of *Time*, *Life*, *Fortune*, and the *Herald Tribune*; the better passages being transcribed on the typewriter in preparation for the next bout of publishing activity. Over the following months the "Beat" Hotel became a kind of literary laboratory for Burroughs and his cohorts, as they began to explore the strange alchemies of the cut-up process; not only in writing, but in painting, audio tape, and eventually, film, as well. This chapter will examine some of these experiments and further consider the validity of the various claims that Burroughs has made for importance of the cut-up project. The cut-up was to become the most potent weapon in Burroughs's apocalyptic armoury of the 1960s, and we shall conclude our discussion by tracing its deployment against the life-threatening forces of the Nova Conspiracy, as recorded in the novel *Nova Express* (1964). By way of a coda, the various critical positions taken in relation to Burroughs's confrontational literary tactics will also be assessed.

Brion Gysin's serendipitous 'discovery' of the cut-ups struck Burroughs as a *major revelation* for a number of reasons. For one thing, Burroughs had for some

time been fascinated by the possibilities of applying montage techniques to literature. A letter written in October 1955, finds him struggling to devise a formal structure capable of assimilating his disparate routines, sketches, and notes into a coherent and unifying whole:

> Chapter II is: *Selections from Lee's Letters and Journals.* With this gimmick I can use all letters including love letters, fragmentary material, anything [...] I will often sort through 100 pages to concoct 1 page [...] The selection chapters form a sort of mosaic with the cryptic significance of juxtaposition, like objects abandoned in a hotel drawer, a form of still life.[4]

Furthermore, Burroughs viewed Tangier itself as something of a cut-up. The composite city, overlooking both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, represented a meeting place for Western and Eastern cultures. Business in the teeming markets and cafés could be conducted in any one of the international zone's three official languages (French, Spanish, and Arabic) or two currencies (French franc and Spanish peseta). Thus, Gysin's early cut-ups not only crystallised Burroughs's feelings towards the use of collage as a principle of structure in literary texts; they also offered a means of (mass-) producing the appropriate contents for these new works of 'cryptic significance'.

Unlike the many apocalypticists who have been keen to preserve the arcane secrets which help maintain their elite status as sacred oracles, Burroughs has made a point of clearly explaining the cut-up method in a number of texts (most notably in *The Third Mind*, a collection of essays written in collaboration with Gysin during the mid-1960s):

> In the summer of 1959 Brion Gysin painter and writer cut newspaper articles into sections and rearranged the sections *at random* [...] The method is simple. Here is one way to do it. Take a page. Like this page. Now cut down the middle and across the middle. You have four sections: 1 2 3 4 ... one two three four. Now

> rearrange the sections placing section four with section one and section two with section three. And you have a new page. (TMD 29-31).[5]

The tone of Burroughs's tireless pronouncements on the revelatory powers of the cut-ups is uniformly evangelical. A freshly liberated and radically empowered new reader/writer is created by the supremely democratic processes of the cut-up:

> Cut-ups are for everyone. Anybody can make cut-ups. It is experimental in the sense of being *something to do*. Right here write now.
>
> Cut the words and see how they fall. Shakespeare Rimbaud live in their words. Cut the word lines and you will hear their voices. Cut-ups often come through as code messages with special meaning for the cutter. (TMD 31-32).

Cut-up poetics require that the reader is no longer the passive partner in a hierarchical relationship in which the writer encodes a text with a single, authoritative meaning (which the reader in turn effortlessly extracts and obediently digests). Burroughs's manifesto is, in fact, a call to arms; his emphasis lies on the cut-up as a practical activity, with the reader taking a pair of scissors to the hallowed works of his favoured poets. The dismembered pages reveal an "expanding ripple of meanings" (TMD 34), which the reader/writer can choose to interpret, in true apocalyptic style, as "code messages with special meaning". In Gysin's words, this is nothing less than "Machine Age knife-magic" (TMD 51); with the cut-ups casting a disabling spell over language's traditional lines of word association and thought control: "the first step in re-creation is to cut the old lines that hold you right where you are sitting now" (TMD 28). Ultimately, the wild meanings unleashed by the cut-up techniques not only produce a brave new reader, they also serve to create a text capable of resisting the deadening grip of entropy:

The best writing seems to be done almost by accident but writers until the cut-up method was made explicit [...] had no way to produce the accident of spontaneity. You cannot *will* spontaneity. But you can introduce the unpredictable spontaneous factor with a pair of scissors. (TMD 29).

The first fruits of Burroughs's labours appeared in a small-press collection of cut-ups entitled *Minutes to Go*.[6] The limited edition booklet was written in English and published in Paris by Two Cities in March 1960; and included in the volume are early cut-ups by Burroughs, Gysin, Sinclair Beiles, and the beat poet Gregory Corso.[7] The very title, *Minutes to Go*, suggests an apocalyptic reading (as if to emphasise this image of a planet under threat, the 1968 US reprint inserts a photo-montage frontispiece by Claude Pélieu depicting a globe with the hands of a clock affixed to its 'face'), but *Minutes* can also be read in the sense of *a written record of conference proceedings*. The Paris pamphlet collects and condenses all the documentation generated at the Beat Hotel laboratory, presenting the findings as *minutes*, or notes, which will enable the race *to go*, or to evolve (into space). *Minutes to Go* represents Burroughs's first tentative attempt at seeking practical solutions to the various ills of the world (you will recall that in *The Naked Lunch* it was merely enough to know what was really on the menu).

It is doubtful, however, that early readers of *Minutes to Go* found too much wise instruction in some of the cut-up counsel they were presented with. This is a section from Sinclair Beiles's "Telegram from Meknes", a dismembered re-reading of an article from *Life* magazine concerning Morocco:

Luceairbase

USAIRBASENCIENT CITYOG MEK HOBBLESONOIL MO-
ROSIBLE PENINDEF TINGLEWAND DILUTES FAMILIES
WIT MOROMICALSUDDS CHEAP SURPLUS AIR WORKS
DEATHRALYSIS SPEEDILY 10?000 PARALERVES AU-
THORITIES RUSH PHOSPHATES TRAGICURE FOR

DISEASECOMBO USE OIL 10??000 PARALYTMICAL
TRIOTHOCRESYLICS WOULDN'T YOU. (MTG 38).

Here we have a classic example of all that is objectionable about some results from the cut-up experiments. Beiles's tedious and typographically ugly meditation tells us nothing about Morocco that we could not have learned in the more pleasing surroundings of *Life*; i.e. Morocco (the Beat paradise), on account of its oil stocks, is the subject of foreign investment (in the form of magnate Henry Luce) and military protection (the US army). Since Luce also happens to be the publisher of *Life*, then I guess that Beiles's knife-magic reveals that imperialism operates through exploitative economics, the threat of force, and the distortions of the media (propaganda). Having had to negotiate Beiles's torturous prose in order to reach such a state of enlightenment, the reader may well feel that this is a cheap point made at great expense. Burroughs and Gysin are far too canny to apply the cut-up techniques with anything approaching Beiles's Stalinist zeal. For them, the cut-ups are invariably only the starting point for a poem or prose-piece, and not an end in themselves; furthermore, there is nothing particularly *random* about the materials selected for cutting (Burroughs seems to favour poets with a rich, allusive style - e.g. Eliot, Shakespeare, the Symbolists) or their subsequent editorial revision. Beiles's contributions to the group project, however, represent the cut-ups in their most primitive and unattractive form; one in which Burroughs's prized neg-entropic "unpredictable spontaneous factor" is replaced by the stone-cold probability of pretentiousness and unintelligibility.

Far more satisfying is Gysin's opening declaration "Minutes to Go". The poem begins with a vision of contemporary society under totalitarian control:

the hallucinated have come to tell you that yr utilities
are being shut off dreams monitored thought directed
sex is shutting down everywhere you are being sent

all words are taped agents everywhere

marking down the live ones to exterminate

they are turning out the lights [...]

this dear friends they intend to do on you. (MTG 3).

The planet is declining entropically ("shutting down everywhere") into death camp conditions, and the primary agent of repression is language: "in the beginning was the word / the word has been in for a too long time / you in the word and the word in you". Language dictates behaviour both *externally*, through enforcing coercive ("thought directed") social practices, and *internally*, by patrolling the subject's unconscious fantasies and desires ("dreams monitored ... the word in you"). Gysin insists, of course, that the cut-up procedures demonstrated in *Minutes to Go* will be a vital weapon in the coming war to extermination:

we have come to let you out
hear and now we will show you what you can do
with and to
the word
the words
any word
all the words

Pick a book any book cut it up [...]
use better materials more highly charged words [...]
the writing machine is for everybody
do it youself. (MTG 4-5).

In Gysin's apocalyptic scenario, tyranny over the individual is exercised by the subjugating language-routines of the Church, the State, big business, and the bourgeois family-unit. The message is blunt; if want to understand how religion or

capitalism maintains and manipulates power, then deconstruct its sacred texts (be they the Authorized Version or inane commercial advertising copy):

> slice down the middle dice into sections
> according to taste
> chop in some bible pour on some Madison Avenue
> prose [...]
> you will soon see just what they really are
> saying this is the terminal method for
> finding the truth. (MTG 4-5).

Gysin's terminal methods may smack somewhat of sloganeering (as a veteran of the manifesto-ridden Parisian surrealism scene of the 30s, Gysin's need to breathlessly announce a new movement in the avant garde is perhaps understandable[8]), but the extent of his influence upon the more thoughtful and creative Burroughs should not be underestimated.

The pair collaborated on a series of scrapbooks which recorded their evolving experiments and obsessions. Many of these are now lost or in private hands, but it is known that approximately twenty volumes were completed between the years 1963 and 1972.[9] A 'typical' scrapbook would be a paperback-sized page-a-day diary; and inside it would be pasted various newspaper headlines and articles (with plane crashes and natural disasters as favoured topics), photographs (either clipped from the pages of *Newsweek* and *Time* or taken by Burroughs himself), comic-strips, magazine advertisements, and ephemera (sketches of boys, portions of maps etc.). Interlaced with this material would be extracts from Burroughs's own writings, quite often poorly typewritten (with no attempt made to disguise the frequent errors) and laid-out in a three column newsprint format. Decorating these cut-up texts would be assorted small paintings, drawings, stencilled grids and cod Arabic calligraphs. These scrapbooks would often prove to be the starting point for much of Burroughs's printed output in the 60s (and Burroughs would invariably

complete the process by pasting the dust wrappers from his finished works back into the scrapbooks).

Burroughs's writing career operated on two distinct levels throughout the remainder of his stay in Paris (Burroughs spent most of 1965 in the US and moved to London in January 1966); Olympia published his 'mainstream' novels *The Soft Machine* (1961) and *The Ticket That Exploded* (1962), whilst a whole host of obscure 'underground' magazines and short-lived literary fanzines (all part of the burgeoning beat culture) disseminated the routines and cut-ups not featured in the parent novels. Throughout these scattered pronouncements the eschatological mood of Burroughs's concerns is unmistakable:

> His finger tapped unfinished cigarette. Ashes fall on Ewyork Onolulu Aris Ome Oston. "And HERE Death takes over the game BEFORE board books. Oh yes - this button - the laser guns: (a black silver sky of broken film.)". ("Unfinished Cigarette" *Birmingham Bulletin* 2, 1963).
>
> I / here / *burning* / *burning* / rockets across the valley / *whole sky burning*. ("Distant Hand Lifted" *Cleft* 2, 1964).
>
> Good-bye Mister. I must go. *The tide is coming in at Hiroshima.* Exploded star between us. ("Who is the Third that Walks Beside You?" *Art and Literature* 2, 1964).
>
> the old sunlight over New York 'Enemy intercepted.' [...] Any second now the whole fucking shit house goes up [...] Last a black silver star of broken film rockets across the valley all the light left on a star drifting away down a windy street forever adios [...] Rockets fell here on these foreign suburbs**********
> **********
> [...] dress of blood and excrement. The cabin reeks of exploded star.****
> **********
> You can watch our worn out
> film dim jerky far away
> shut a bureau drawer *****. ("The Last Post *Danger Ahead*" *Lines* 6, 1965).[10]

Burroughs's cut-up texts resonate with subtle variations on a core of apocalyptic images; burning missiles in the sky, the litany of the world's major cities (their decapitated names anticipating the coming destruction), the notion of human existence as a broken or worn out film, distant exploding stars as evidence of the universal nature of the holocaust, and the *bureau drawer* itself, rich with sibylline promise: "The word cannot be expressed direct ... It can perhaps be indicated by mosaic of juxtaposition like articles abandoned in a hotel drawer, defined by negatives and absence" (NL 98).

Tellingly, Burroughs's tone in these vignettes of atomic devastation is one of remembrance rather than prophecy; he is nostalgic for the 'old sunlight' of the future. The text of the final piece quoted above, "The Last Post *Danger Ahead*", is taken from a three column scrapbook-style collage executed in 1965. The original work was recently exhibited at Burroughs's *Ports of Entry* retrospective at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (July-October 1996), and the catalogue makes reference to a "rosette red seal" affixed to the bottom left hand corner of the typescript.[11] To be precise, the "red seal" is, in fact, the paper 'petal' section of a poppy, the traditional token of remembrance for the war dead, manufactured and sold each year by the British Legion. Thus, as its title further implies, "The Last Post *Danger Ahead*" is both a memorial to those slain in past conflicts and a grim warning of the further untold casualties to come. The *last post* is not only the plaintive bugle call which brings military funerals to an end; it is also a final missive, a terminal document of the kind advocated by Gysin as a "method for finding the truth":

> stars splash the silver answer back on lost youth
> there books and toys trailing blood down windy steps
> far away smell of ashes rising from the typewriter. ("The Last Post *Danger Ahead*").

The sheer wealth of material being generated by Burroughs (by now busy 'cutting up' the cut-ups) at the Beat Hotel only partially explains his prodigious

publishing output in the early to mid-60s. Obscure, small-press publications not only provided a valuable outlet for his growing pile of manuscripts; they also allowed Burroughs greater room to experiment with typography, book design, and the use of illustrations to accompany cut-up texts. Furthermore, because their production budgets would be much smaller than Olympia's or Grove's, independent publishers could get his work into print far quicker than the larger houses; thus replicating the sense of immediacy and contemporaneity which Burroughs so prized when cutting that day's *Herald Tribune* into some Baudelaire or Conrad. A particularly striking example of Burroughs's activity from this period is *Time* (1965), an ambitious 32-page pastiche of the US news magazine; published in an edition of just 1000 copies by the New York based "C" Press.[12]

The dimensions for Burroughs's rogue magazine (27.5 x 21.5 cm) are the same as those of the legitimate publication; and for the front cover Burroughs merely swiped an earlier "Time" cover, retained its iconic masthead, and pasted a reproduction of an oil painting across the lower half. The casual observer may well be hoodwinked by *Time*'s parodic front cover, but a glance at the booklet's contents soon reveals the deception; Burroughs's cut-ups are set out in the familiar three column format, yet they are crudely typewritten and annotated with hand-written corrections. Mixed in with Burroughs's typically apocalyptic speculations ("All was lost at Hiroshima") is a cut-up of an article from the genuine "Time" concerning Red China's hopes of developing "nuclear warheads". Completing the pirate issue are advertisements, photographs, 'ticker tape' cut-ups (where the text is laid out in thin strips separated by bold hand-drawn vertical lines), and four full-page drawings by Gysin. Burroughs's ultimate intentions remain unclear (I cannot quite agree with one observer's slightly facile view that the cut-up *Time* exists "in order to obtain the news within the news"[13]), but I think the central issue here is *empowerment*; just as the reader is at liberty to allow his carefully cut-up words to rub shoulders with those of Kafka or Milton, so, following Burroughs's lead, anyone can produce their own samizdat newspaper, be it *Time*, the *Washington Post*, or the *Daily Mail*. There is no

copyright on the future; a fact attested to by the existence of such do-it-yourself proto-punk periodicals as Jeff Nuttall's significantly titled *My Own Mag* (1963-66) and Tom McGrath's heretical *International Times* (1966-86), both of which regularly published the cut-up texts and images of Burroughs and Gysin.[14]

Unlike Burroughs's almost morbidly obsessive attachment to Ginsberg in the 50s, his collaborations with Gysin did not exclude the possibility of either of them working alone or together with other partners. The pair collaborated on a series of cut-up films with the novice English director Antony Balch, and Burroughs enthusiastically explored tape-recording experiments with a young Cambridge science graduate (and lover) called Ian Sommerville. Furthermore, Sommerville and Gysin designed, patented, and unsuccessfully marketed *The Dream Machine*, a rotating cylinder with shapes cut into it, which when placed over a light source, produced stroboscopic 'flicker' effects capable of inducing hallucinations (especially if the user happened to be using hashish at the time!).[15] Typically, Burroughs first met Balch at the Beat Hotel in 1960, and the pair shot a number of short films, most notably *Towers Open Fire* (1963) and *The Cut-Ups* (1966). The latter is a challenging (and some may say gruelling) work dedicated to strictly enforcing the rules applying to cut-up literary composition, but on this occasion in a cinematic context. In a rare interview, Balch explained the mechanics of the process:

> Four sections of film (four locations) are cut together with mathematical precision - 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4, etc. - for twenty minutes; a four-sentence sound track is cut up to match [...]
> The material in it [*The Cut-Ups*] was edited into sequences, so that when one sequence finished another fed in, and it worked itself out like that to the end. I cut the original material into four and then gave it to a lady who simply joined it ... I didn't actually make the joins; they were a purely mechanical thing for laboratory staff. Nobody was exercizing any artistic judgement at all. The length of the shots (except for the last) is always a foot. (*Cinema Rising* 1, 1972).[16]

Interestingly, Balch's abdication of a degree of editorial responsibility to disinterested "laboratory staff" clearly echoes Burroughs's decision to fashion the published text of *The Naked Lunch* in accordance with the purely arbitrary order in which the galleys were returned from the printers employed by Olympia.

On the strength of Balch's outline of his cinematic methods (ominously reminiscent of Comrade Beiles's dogmatic approach to cut-up poetics) the reader may be excused for giving *The Cut-Ups* a very wide berth. In fairness, however, Balch's film makes for reasonably compelling viewing; although probably more so for its subject matter than its avant-garde compositional techniques. We are treated to looped black-and-white footage of Burroughs engaged in various mundane routines (yet given our traditional viewing habits, these isolated episodes seem to hint at some hidden narrative significance); thus, we see Burroughs hurriedly emptying his bureau drawers at the Beat Hotel, prowling furtively through the seedier environs of Paris like a renegade foreign agent, buying a parrot from a bemused sea captain in Tangier (this scene may well be an ironic allusion to Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* - 1798, a favourite poem of Burroughs's), and loitering around outside the Chelsea Hotel and the headquarters building of the Burroughs Corporation in New York.[17] These scenes (and many others) are edited together in the rhythmic sequence described above; the accompanying soundtrack is a collage of Burroughs croaking out a handful of repeated phrases such as "hello-yes-hello" (a Church of Scientology routine), "look at that picture ... does it seem to be persisting?", and "where are we now?". The truly disorientating aspect of *The Cut-Ups* is that the rhythm established by the regular foot-long edits of celluloid is often wildly at odds with the staccato beat of Burroughs's persistent interrogations and barked commands. To add to the melange, Burroughs's taped voice is more often than not doubled or tripled-up, with the coldly delivered phrases overlapping and interweaving with each other. The cacophonous effect of this sound montage is nauseously amplified when, as the film rushes to its 'climax', the soundtrack edits become increasingly sharper and pounding, before accelerating into a brutal and

unyielding rhythmic pulse. In any state of advanced intoxication, watching *The Cut-Ups* must surely prove to be simply unbearable.

Visually, the film records a kind of fetishistic autobiography; Gysin is shown modelling a chunky-knit sweater decorated with his own inimitable Arab hieroglyphs and then stripping off to commence upon a particularly demanding artwork. Meanwhile Burroughs is captured trolling for street kids, admiring a boy lying face down naked on his bed, and (in the role of 'doctor') medically examining the lower abdomen of an attractively vacant youth. In essence, however, Balch's movie nicely captures the myriad points of connection and correspondence that Burroughs and Gysin invite into their lives and work. Thus, Balch juxtaposes footage of Gysin rolling a joint, Gysin rolling out a huge canvas in preparation for his latest masterpiece, Gysin laying down stencilled grids for the scrapbooks with a paint-roller, and Gysin and the boys gazing intently into the rolling cylinder of the Dream Machine. This is a world of (cheerfully) paranoid signification in which everything is connected; from private recreational pursuits to the most exacting processes of artistic creation - every gesture (personal and political) is an act of serious scholarly research and another valuable step towards authentic spiritual enlightenment. The central narrative thrust of *The Cut-Ups* is provided by Gysin's evolving work on a substantial floor-length panoramic roller-brush painting of the New York City skyline. As Balch's jerky hand-held camera records Gysin's labours in his studio, the damaged contours of his painted buildings shimmer as if on the verge of psychic or physical collapse (and the film ends with Gysin's vast unrolled canvas refusing to stay upright and falling to the floor). A final apocalyptic note is sounded by the scattered objects on his workbench, the opened pages of the scrapbooks and a single bold-print newspaper banner headline: TARGET SET FOR 3.08 P.M. NEW YORK TIME!

The first cut-up tape experiments were conducted by Gysin in Room 25 at the Beat Hotel in 1959. Both he and Burroughs went on to record literally hundreds of hours of material on professional reel-to-reel recorders and early

cassette tape machines. The methods employed on the initial recordings were relatively primitive; the pair simply recorded passages of spoken word material and then cut-in various phrases and observations at random. Later innovations included cutting in Moroccan tribal music, news broadcasts, Short Wave radio interference, and street noises; as well as using effect units (reverb, echo etc.) to further manipulate the sounds produced. Listening back to the tapes which have survived can be a bewildering and hallucinatory experience; the recording quality is often awful and the tape edits are both frequent (every four seconds or so) and technically unsubtle (the sound you will hear more than any other on these tapes is the ugly *CLUNK* of another random cut-in). Nevertheless, Burroughs's cracked voice possesses a certain incantatory charm and the overall effect can be curiously mesmeric. In his sleeve notes to an LP record of some of the cut-up tapes, the musician Genesis P-Orrdige states that "when you cut-up and rearrange words, new words emerge, the future leaks through"[18], before going on to boldly assert that the early-60s track "'Handkerchief Masks' - News Cut-up" eerily predicts the Watergate scandal. Burroughs himself has never really sought to *consistently* maintain any such grand claims for the ultimate 'meaning' (if any) or revelatory power of the cut-up tape recordings, and it seems fair to assume that the exploratory spirit of the enterprise was justification enough for the time spent splicing and overdubbing. Thus, Burroughs and Sommerville could quite happily spend many hours experimenting with "inching" cut-ups (i.e. recording onto a tape which is being pulled manually, inch by inch, over the cassette machine's recording heads - the end result is to slow down and slur speech) and the "throat microphone" technique (where microphones are strategically placed in the hope of capturing 'sub-vocal' speech).[19]

Burroughs expended a great deal of time and energy on the cut-up tape experiments; a remarkable feat considering that the entire project probably had no commercial potential whatsoever (furthermore, mass-produced cassette recorders intended for non-professional use were not extensively marketed until the early 70s).

Nevertheless, Burroughs excitedly outlined his enthusiasm for the tape cut-ups and their possible applications in an important essay, *The Invisible Generation*, first published in the November 1966 issue of *International Times*.[20] Burroughs begins his manifesto by making modest claims for the tapes he has made; they can be both "hilariously funny" and anarchic in their arbitrary juxtapositions: "as if the words themselves had been interrogated and forced to reveal their hidden meanings" (IG 206). According to Burroughs, what we see is determined to a large extent by what we hear, thus "anyone with a tape recorder controlling the sound track can influence and create events" (IG 207). This is a startling (perhaps reckless) observation; and one made to seem increasingly dubious by an authorial tone which seems lifted straight from the pages of a charlatan's 'self-improvement' advice manual (cf. Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*[21]):

> you will learn to give the cues you will learn to plant events and concepts after analyzing recorded conversations you will learn to steer a conversation where you want it to go the physiological liberation achieved as word lines of controlled association are cut will make you more efficient in reaching your objectives. (IG 208).

Burroughs's own principal *objective* would appear to be the dismantling of the mass-media "control machine" (IG 215); an ugly, reductive, and vulgar propagandistic apparatus dedicated to the "inexorable degradation" of human thought and aspiration. Television and newspapers serve up prejudice as fact and effectively pre-programme predictable and hysterical reactions from their simple-minded customers (politically, Burroughs is very much an elitist - his aristocratic views do not exclude the possibility of some individuals bettering themselves, however; we will examine Burroughs's political thought in greater detail in the following chapter):

> what are newspapers doing but selecting the ugliest sounds for playback by and large if its ugly its news [...] what are we waiting for

> let's bomb china now and let's stay armed to the teeth for centuries this ugly vulgar bray put out for mass playback you want to spread hysteria record and play back the most stupid and hysterical reactions marijuana marijuana why that's deadlier than cocaine [...] snarling cops pale nigger killing eyes reflecting society's disapproval fucking queers i say shoot them if on the other hand you select calm sensible reactions for recordings and playback you will spread calmness and good sense [...] only way to break the inexorable down spiral of ugly uglier ugliest recording is with counterrecording and playback. (IG 216-17).

This is a significant passage for a number of reasons; most importantly, Burroughs's position has subtly shifted from one of advocating the cut-ups for mainly aesthetic purposes to one now offering their services as a tool for political change.[22] Within two years, Burroughs (fully armed with tape recorder) would be marching with Genet outside the troubled Democratic Party convention in Chicago[23]; and, as we shall see in our later discussion of his *Electronic Revolution 1970-71* (1971) treatise, an increasingly impatient and radical Burroughs would eventually have little time for the manufacturing of the "calm sensible reactions" so earnestly proposed by *The Invisible Generation*. Additionally, it could be argued that the revolutionary tactic of "counterrecording and playback" is, in fact, a reactionary device which merely replaces one subliminal slogan with another ("Vote for me", *No! Vote for me*). Modern apocalyptic writers such as Burroughs and Thomas Pynchon have come to recognise that so-called political reform (no matter how superficially radical) is often just a tokenistic gesture, with a new leadership cynically presiding over unchanged hierarchies of control and repression. Burroughs appears to be moving towards this realisation in *The Invisible Generation*, thus, his ultimate hope for the tape experiments is that the bifurcated meanings of the ruthlessly cut-up words will prove incapable of supporting any grand totalitarian designs: "the more you run the tapes through and cut them up the less power they will have" (IG 217). As he did with the scattered routines of *The Naked Lunch* and the cut-up prophecies of *Minutes*

to Go, so Burroughs couches the revelatory arguments of *The Invisible Generation* in explicitly apocalyptic terms:

> there was a gray veil between you and what you saw or more often did not see that grey veil was the prerecorded words of a control machine once that veil is removed you will see clearer and sharper than those who are behind the veil whatever you do you will do it better than those behind the veil this is the invisible generation it is the efficient generation. (IG 209).

Burroughs's most sustained attempt to *lift the veil* on the control machine is to be found in the apocalyptic science fiction novel *Nova Express* (1964), his final cut-up novel of the 60s and, indeed, his last major mainstream work until Grove published *The Wild Boys: A Book of the Dead* in 1971.[24] Burroughs had first announced his developing themes of interplanetary warfare and human enslavement in an article published by the *Evergreen Review* in 1962:

> In Naked Lunch The Soft Machine and Novia Express - work in progress - i am mapping an imaginary universe. A dark universe of wounded galaxies and novia conspiracies where obscenity is coldly used as a total weapon [...] Is it to be assumed that a writer likes war because he writes about it? That a doctor advocates the disease the disease he describes? That a mapmaker is promoting residence in the areas he maps?[25]

The completed novel maps a zone which is little more than a concentration camp, with the viral agents of a vast Nova Conspiracy plotting to abandon their human hosts and surrender the planet to nuclear destruction. Pitted against the carny-type criminals of the Nova Mob (Sammy the Butcher, Izzy the Push, Hamburger Mary etc.) are the Nova Police, who include in their understaffed ranks one "Inspector J. Lee" (Burroughs's latest and most unlikely literary persona).

Burroughs's Manichaean fantasy commences with a section entitled "Last Words" (the final utterances of personalities as diverse as Billy the Kid, General

Robert E. Lee, and the New York racketeer Dutch Schultz (Arthur Flegenheimer) are something of a leitmotif in Burroughs's fiction of the 1970s and 80s[26]):

> LISTEN TO MY LAST WORDS anywhere. Listen to my last words any world. Listen all you boards syndicates and governments of the earth. And you powers behind what filth deals consummated in what lavatory to take what is not yours. To sell the ground from unborn feet forever - [...]
>
> Listen: I call you all. Show your cards all players. Pay it all pay it all pay it *all* back. Play it all pay it all play it *all* back. For all to see. In Times Square. In Piccadilly [...]
>
> These words may be too late. Minutes to go. Minutes to foe goal [...] What scared you all into time? Into body? Into shit? I will tell you: "*the word*." Alien word "*the*." "*The*" *word* of Alien Enemy imprisons "*thee*" in Time. In Body. In Shit. Prisoner, come out. The great skies are open. I Hassan i Sabbah *rub out the word forever*. If you I cancel all your words forever. And the words of Hassan i Sabbah as also cancel. Cross all your skies see the silent writing of Brion Gysin Hassan i Sabbah: drew September 17, 1899 over New York. (NE 9-10).

Perversely, Burroughs's novel claims that these are the "Last Words" of Hassan i Sabbah (c. 1034-1124), mystical prophet and founder of the (male only) Ismaili Assassins cult, and now somehow inscribing his stark accusations and terminal warnings in the skies above New York.[27] By ascribing the opening of his novel to a historical figure famed for possessing wondrous powers (from his mountain hideaway in Persia, Hassan is said to have "ruled an invisible empire as great and as fearsome as any man before"[28], rewarding his disciples with sumptuous and most probably drug-induced visions of an earthly paradise), Burroughs is repeating a tactic used many times before by the authors of apocalyptic texts. The unknown author of the *Book of Daniel* (c. 165 BC) states that his book is the work of the heroic figure of Daniel, thus enhancing a reader's interest in his pseudepigraphic apocalypse. The scholar Paul Boyer has written of this aspect of the early Jewish apocalypses: "the works are almost invariably attributed to some revered sage or

semimythic leader of the past: Ezra, Enoch, Baruch, Abraham, Daniel, and the like. By this means the actual authors gave their texts added credibility and linked them to Jewish history and religious tradition".[29] Shemaryahu Talmon has usefully described such literary manoeuvring as "inverted plagiarism"[30]; and although no wholesale deception is seriously attempted by Burroughs, he nevertheless indicates that his sympathies are allied with those of a visionary outsider, known variously for using narcotics, training guerrilla bands of boys, and stealthily plotting against enemies whose power base would appear invincible. Thus, the "Last Words" section of *Nova Express* firmly establishes the novel as an apocalyptic work, written with "minutes to go" and magically informed by the revolutionary spirit of an earlier iconoclast and political rebel.

A crucial weapon in Burroughs's/Hassan's armoury is *silence*. Language, the viral Word of the Alien Enemy, condemns its unsuspecting human hosts to the twin horrors of temporality and mortality; to eternal bondage in the prison house of a "Maximum Security Birth Death Universe" (NE 57). The "silent writing" of Hassan i Sabbah is intent on 'rubbing out the word forever' - *and then simply erasing itself* - just as skywriting inevitably fragments and disperses its transient declarations to the four winds. Burroughs's championing of silence is consistent with his growing hostility towards the noisy and repressive routines of the Word; in an interview given shortly after the publication of *Nova Express* he speaks at some length about the "evolutionary trend" towards the "wordless state":

> [Silence is] the *most* desirable state. In one sense a special use of words and pictures can conduce silence. The scrapbooks and time travel are exercises to expand consciousness, to teach me to think in association blocks rather than words, I've recently spent a little time studying hieroglyph systems, both the Egyptian and the Mayan. A whole block of associations - boonf! - like that! Words, at least the way we use them, can stand in the way of what I call non-body experience. It's time we thought about leaving the body behind.[31]

Burroughs's evident enthusiasm for 'leaving the body behind' will increasingly preoccupy his fictional output in the following decades. Meanwhile, in the at times quite complicated cosmography of *Nova Express*, he states that the genocidal designs of the Nova Conspiracy can only be thwarted by the strategic deployment of silence and the judicious use of the "sanity drug" (NE 13) *Apomorphine*. Briefly, Apomorphine is a morphine derivative which can be used by alcoholics and kicking addicts as a metabolic regulator to help ease the agonies of withdrawal. Burroughs himself had first taken the cure with Dr. John Yerbury Dent at his London clinic in 1956. Although he had to repeat the course of treatment two years later Burroughs became convinced that the cure was not only effective but that it was also being underfunded and suppressed by the health authorities (thus further reminding him of the travails of another eccentric hero of his, the US-based Austrian psychologist Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957)[32]). Typically, Burroughs quotes freely from Dr. Dent's published works throughout *Nova Express*:

> *Peoples of the earth, you have all been poisoned* [...] Apomorphine is the only agent that can disintoxicate you and cut the enemy beam off your line. Apomorphine and silence. I order total resistance directed against this conspiracy to pay off peoples of the earth in ersatz bullshit. I order total resistance directed against The Nova Conspiracy and all those engaged in it [...]
>
> 'Apomorphine is made by boiling morphine with hydrochloric acid. This alters chemical formulae and physiological effects. Apomorphine has no sedative narcotic or addicting properties. It is a metabolic regulator that need not be continued when its work is done.' I quote from *Anxiety and Its Treatment* by Doctor John Dent of London. (NE 12/48).

In Burroughs's *nova mythos*, Apomorphine is equivalent to the Nova Police (and to Hassan i Sabbah's silent skywriting); both have a specific task to perform and when that is completed they have no need to stick around, or as Burroughs fondly explains: "Any man who is doing a job is working to make himself

obsolete" (NE 49). Similarly, morphine is equivalent to the Nova Mob (and to the cynically motivated police forces of contemporary America):

> Now look at the parasitic police of morphine. First they create a narcotic problem then they say that a permanent narcotics police is now necessary to deal with the problem of addiction. Addiction can be controlled by apomorphine and reduced to a minor health problem. The narcotics police know this and that is why they do not want to see apomorphine used in the treatment of drug addicts:
>
> PLAN DRUG ADDICTION. (NE 49).

Some readers may find Burroughs's tone here to be both monotonous and verging upon the paranoid. To be sure, isolated allegations concerning the vested interests of *some* police authorities in maintaining the flow of narcotics to inner city areas may possess some foundation in the truth, but these are hardly earth-shattering revelations (such conspiracy theories date back to the Prohibition (when they certainly had a greater claim to validity) and find their most recent expression in the current sensationalist US media stories concerning a supposed CIA plot to flood Black communities with inexpensive and highly toxic crack cocaine - all to raise funds to help arm the Nicaraguan Contras in their fight against the left wing Sandinista government, of course[33]). It is surely a little disingenuous of Burroughs to partly blame his long-standing habit upon a federal conspiracy to "PLAN DRUG ADDICTION"; the reality (as *Junkie* so eloquently testifies) is that Burroughs and his 42nd Street cronies were turned on by both the illicit glamour and the sheer physical pleasure of narcotics abuse. Put simply, they enjoyed taking their drugs and if they were ever dupes, then it was because they found themselves victims of their own psychological disposition towards addictive behaviour (as both *Queer* and *The Naked Lunch* suggest).

These objections noted, it is nevertheless the case that *Nova Express* does indeed repay close attention, although some of the more arcane aspects of

Burroughs's baroque fantasy may require some explication. The central conceit of the novel is that life is a decaying film ("a precarious aqualung existence in somebody else's stale movie" - NE 39), with the script already written and all actions and gestures within it rigorously pre-determined: "the house know every card you will be dealt and how you will play all your cards".[34] The *Biologic Film* is set to come to an abrupt conclusion with a nuclear conflagration or "scheduled nova date" (NE 39) (which can only be averted if all verbal units are deactivated, thus blanketing the wor(l)d in silence and "disconnecting the entire heat syndrome" - NE 38). To prevent just such an outcome and to ensure their imminent apocalypse (minutes to go) the Nova Mob are busy blockading the planet Earth whilst partisan activity (co-ordinated from Saturn) is directed towards cutting "the control lines of word and image" (NE 52). If apprehended, the Nova Criminals (who themselves hail from the Crab Nebula) have to take their chances in the *Biologic Courts*, a free-floating Kafkaesque assembly which is "constantly swept away by stampeding forms all idiotically glorifying their stupid ways of life" (NE 51).

Burroughs stresses that the Nova Criminals are not readily identifiable "three-dimensional organisms" (NE 52), they often operate through unsuspecting human hosts whom they control and manipulate at certain *Co-ordinate Points* (a single Nova controller can secretly enslave thousands of people in this manner). Another particularly virulent agent of the Nova Conspiracy is the hideous *Death Dwarf*. These are grown from a foetal state in the breeding grounds of the *Grey Room*: "a vast grey warehouse of wire mesh cubicles - Tier on tier of larval dwarfs tube-fed in bottles" (NE 61) (as we shall see, the image of the homunculus will occur again and with greater significance in *The Wild Boys*). The Grey Room (a.k.a. the *Reality Studio*) is where the Biologic Film is developed and it is also home to the priceless *Board Books*:

> In three-dimensional terms the board is a group representing international big money who intend to take over and monopolize space - They have their own space arrangements privately owned and

consider the governmental space programs a joke - The board books are records pertaining to anyone who can be of use to their program or anyone who could endanger it. The board books are written in symbols referring to association blocks - Like this: $ - "American upper middle-class upbringing with maximum sexual frustration and humiliations imposed by Middle-Western matriarchs".[35]

The conspiracy itself is directed by the *Insect Brain of Minraud* (principle instrument of social control - *The Ovens*, principle weapon of interplanetary warfare - *The Blazing Photo from Hiroshima and Nagasaki* - NE 65). Ultimately then, the complex cosmology of *Nova Express* allows Burroughs to explore the terminal moments of a dying civilisation which is unmistakably modelled upon our own (complete with camp ovens and atomic explosions). The novel dramatises the stark predicament facing modern man; *Operation Total Disposal* (species extermination) versus *Operation Total Exposure* (exposure in two senses; 1) revealing the true identity of the nova criminals (or board members), and 2) hopelessly ruining the entropic script of the *Biologic Film*). What distinguishes *Nova Express* from other science fiction novels with a broadly similar theme (say H.G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* - 1898) is that in order for *Operation Total Exposure* to be an unqualified success, then radical and irreversible species mutation is necessary. Language must be jettisoned and the apocalyptic *Silence Virus* released (note how Burroughs's typographical design illustrates that the fallout from the virus replicates the sense-destroying effects of the cut-ups):

> THIS IS WAR TO EXTERMINATION. FIGHT CELL BY CELL THROUGH BODIES AND MIND SCREENS OF THE EARTH. SOULS ROTTEN FROM THE ORGASM DRUG, FLESH SHUDDERING FROM THE OVENS, PRISONERS OF THE EARTH COME OUT. STORM THE STUDIO -
>
> Plan D called for Total Exposure. Wise up all the marks everywhere. Show them the rigged wheel of Life-Time-Fortune. Storm The Reality Studio. And retake the universe [...]
>
> "Board Books taken - Heavy losses - "

"Photo falling - Word falling - Break Through in Grey Room - Use Partisans of all nations - *Towers, open fire* - "

The Reality Film giving and buckling like a bulkhead under pressure and the pressure gauge went up and up. The needle was edging to NOVA. Minutes to go. Burnt metal smell of interplanetary war in the raw noon streets swept by screaming glass blizzards of enemy flak [...]

The deadly Silence Virus. Coating word patterns. Stopping abdominal breathing holes of The Insect People of Minraud.

The grey smoke drifted the grey that stops shift cut tangle they breathe medium

the word cut shift patterns words

cut the insect tangle cut shift

that coats word cut breath silence shift

abdominal cut tangle stop word holes [...]

Word dust everywhere now like soiled stucco on the buildings. Word dust without color drifting smoke streets. Explosive bio advance out of space to neon. (NE 55-57).

The disquieting prophecy at the heart of *Nova Express* is that the final solution to mankind's nuclear anxieties and genocidal mentality lies in species change and "explosive bio advance" - lasting salvation only comes with inhumanity (or perhaps more palatably, *posthumanity*).

Unsurprisingly, the body is treated as a vessel of weakness in *Nova Express*, providing as it does the place of access (or *co-ordinate point*) for alien invasion. In a major interview for the *Paris Review* concerning (among other things) *Nova Express*, Burroughs indicates that it is the fear of physical suffering and concern for personal welfare "which lead inevitably to tribal feuds and dissension"[36] (and, by extension, to the Cold War and tense atomic stand-offs). Burroughs is also more than happy to explicitly embrace the role of prophet-seer:

> I do definitely mean what I say to be taken literally, yes, to make people aware of the true criminality of our times, to wise up the marks.

> All of my work is directed against those who are bent, through stupidity or design, on blowing up the planet or rendering it uninhabitable.[37]

The sense of Burroughs's personal and heroic stake in the outcome of the nova wars is heightened by the character of Inspector J. Lee, whose nova bulletin immediately follows Hassan i Sabbah's "Last Words" in *Nova Express*:

> These are conditions of total emergency. And these are my instructions for total emergency if carried out *now* could avert the total disaster *now* on tracks [...] The purpose of my writing is to expose and arrest Nova Criminals. In *Naked Lunch, Soft Machine* and *Nova Express* I show who they are and what they are doing and what they will do if they are not arrested [...] With your help we can occupy The Reality Studio and retake their universe of Fear Death and Monopoly -
>
> "(Signed) INSPECTOR J. LEE, NOVA POLICE". (NE 12).

Similarly, the creation of the Burroughs/Gysin cut-up scrapbooks in the Paris laboratory has already earned the attention of the Nova Controllers: "'Sure, sure, but you see now why we had to laugh till we pissed watching those dumb rubes playing around with photomontage - Like charging a regiment of tanks with a defective slingshot'" (NE 42). As was the case with *The Cut-Ups* movie (where the personal gesture is indistinguishable from the political statement - as life is raised to the status of revolutionary art), these brief autobiographical asides manage to incorporate Burroughs's actual day-to-day activities into the grand cosmic drama of the Nova Mythos; thus each new cut-up or collage or tape experiment becomes another brave attack on the arrogant Goliaths of the Nova Conspiracy:

> Fade out to a shabby hotel near Earl's Court in London. One our agents is posing as a writer. He has written a so-called pornographic novel called Naked Lunch ... (NE 53).

Furthermore, Burroughs cannot resist the opportunity to use *Nova Express* as yet another platform from which to attack the cynical machinations of the authoritarian mass-media (whose propagandistic output he is so ruthlessly intent on cutting up and nullifying). According to the *mythos* the media exists solely to facilitate the workings of the *Basic Nova Mechanism*; to wit: "Always create as many insoluble conflicts as possible and always aggravate existing conflicts" (NE 50). Hence, mob hoodlum The Intolerable Kid, a.k.a. I&I (Immovable and Irresistible), "takes over this news-magazine" and blasts out a relentless diet of atrocity footage, racial hatred, and crude sexual titillation:

> "Now," he said, "I'll by God show them how ugly the Ugly American can be."
>
> And he breaks out all the ugliest pictures in the image bank and puts it out on the subliminal so one crisis piles up after the other right on schedule [...]
>
> "Wanta molest a child and disembowel it right after?" (NE 16-17).

Despite what the Nova Controllers may think of the ineffectiveness of Burroughs and Gysin's "defective slingshot", the overriding mood of *Nova Express* is one of optimism and cautious hope for the coming struggle. Biologic Agent K9 (an ally of Inspector Lee's) identifies the central weakness of the Mob: "The error in enemy strategy is now obvious - It is machine strategy and the machine can now be redirected" (NE 76). Agent K9 posits the ethical basis for a legitimate and lasting counterforce:

> You will understand why all concepts of revenge or moral indignation must be excised from a biologic police agent - We are not here to keep this tired old injustice show on the road but to stop it short of Nova [...] Thinking in association blocks instead of words enables the operator to process data with the speed of light on the association line - Certain alterations are of course essential. (NE 78-79).

As we shall see in our concluding chapter, Thomas Pynchon's treatment of the theme of "counterforce" in *Gravity's Rainbow* offers a more cautious assessment of man's chances of effectively combating the forces of repression and indoctrination. Burroughs offers an utopian fantasy of world liberation in *Nova Express*, the basic nova mechanism can be diffused and the night black "agents of shadow empires" (NE 86) vanquished forever. Perhaps the most crucial aspect of Burroughs's renegade apocalyptic vision is that it records and promotes what is essentially an *Outlaw* utopia:

> Frankly we found that most existing police agencies were hopelessly corrupt - the nova mob had seen to that - Paradoxically some our best agents were recruited from the ranks of those who are called criminals on this planet. (NE 52).

Nova Express concludes with a section entitled "Pay Color", the title of which derives from Hassan i Sabbah's final words in the novel:

> Boards Syndicates Governments of the earth *Pay* - Pay back the *Color* you stole -
>
> *Pay Red* - Pay back the red you stole for your lying flags and your Coca-Cola signs - Pay that red back to penis and blood and sun -
>
> *Pay Blue* - Pay back the blue you stole and bottled and doled out in eye droppers of junk - Pay back the blue you stole for your police uniforms - Pay that blue back to sea and sky and eyes of the earth -
>
> *Pay Green* - Pay back the green you stole for your money [...] Pay that green back to flowers and jungle river and sky -
>
> Boards Syndicates Governments of the earth pay back your stolen colors - *Pay Color* back to Hassan i Sabbah. (NE 131).

Burroughs's hostility towards "life-hating" scientists and their nuclear arsenals is here complemented by Sabbah's distaste for nationalism (lying flags), capitalism (money), the police state (uniforms), and the imperial project (Coca-Cola signs). In a remarkably prescient ecological manifesto, Burroughs/Sabbah accuses rapacious

multinationals and irresponsible governments of plundering the planet's natural resources and demands immediate reparation for the damage done. There is palpable disgust for those who would drain or corrupt the vibrant hues of "penis and blood and sun" (especially to fund that product which seems to so tastelessly encapsulate all that is crass and ugly about the Ugly American): "For this you have sold out your sons. Sold the ground from unborn feet forever" (NE 10). Burroughs's environmental concerns may have their roots in his antipathy towards US overground nuclear testing (see his "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 9, 1955.")[38] and they have certainly continued to inform his fictional output (see, for example, 1991's *Ghost of Chance*).[39] More problematically, Burroughs's eco-awareness appears to intersect with (and be informed by) an idealised vision of eroticised childhood (his later fiction will resonate with images of pre-Edenic youth unspoiled by physical ageing or sexual guilt), nostalgia for the wide-open (i.e. sparsely populated) spaces and supposed existential freedom of the early American West, and an aristocratic contempt for the breeding masses (as revealed in the following extract from an informal interview granted to the academic Eric Mottram in 1973):

> But, of course, under the present circumstances, with these top-heavy, over-populated Western countries, there's not a great deal that can be accomplished in the way of liberation [...] Now, the mere problem of feeding a city the size of London: now that means that you have this vast unseen bureaucracy of people who raise food, bring it to the cities, distribute it to the food shops and so on. If anything happened to that bureaucracy, millions of people would be starving overnight - which might be a very good thing, we've got too many [...]
>
> Obviously, the way the West is heading now, they're heading for absolute disaster, Chaos and disaster [...] Population's the big issue. Population and inflation are the same issue. Takes more and more money to buy less and less because more and more people ... The exhaustion of natural resources, pollution, all these factors [...]
>
> The most sensible suggestion is Professor Postgate who wants to put out a pill for producing male children only.[40]

My argument is that an appreciation of Burroughs's environmentalism is best approached through an understanding of the shifting contexts of Burroughs's pederasty, his romanticised notions of the recent past, and his wildly idiosyncratic political views (which some may claim as fascist or anti-feminist). In this particular case the specific charge of fascism would be notoriously difficult to prove (although Burroughs probably *is* guilty of mistaking an uneven distribution of the world's resources for an insupportable claim on the planet's natural riches); the simple truth is that Burroughs is a keenly perverse thinker whose speculations (however eccentric or offensive) typically defy categorisation:

> You see, the pill [for producing male children only] would be least used in industrialised countries, and most used in unindustrialised countries, which would mean that the number of males of military age would soar, in say Arab and African countries. And they could very quickly overrun Rhodesia and South Africa.[41]

The "Pay Color" section presents two additional visions of a kind of utopia; the first, *The Amusement Gardens*, is a continent-sized pleasure park of "canals and lagoons ... and gondolas piloted by translucent green fish boys" (NE 132). Burroughs's dreamy and almost 'picture postcard' homoerotic pastoralism is far removed from the orgiastic, minatory excesses of *The Naked Lunch*:

> Blue light played over their bodies - Projectors flashed the color writing of Hassan i Sabbah on bodies and metal walls - Opened into amusement gardens - Sex Equilibrists perform on tightropes and balancing chairs - Trapeze acts ejaculate in the air - The Sodomite Tumblers doing cartwheels and whirling dances stuck together like dogs - Boys masturbate from scenic railways - Flower floats in the lagoons and canals - Sex cubicles where the acts performed to music project on the tent ceiling a sky of rhythmic copulation - Vast flicker cylinders [i.e. Dream Machines] and projectors sweep the gardens writing explosive bio-advance to neon - Areas of sandwich booths blue movie parlors and transient hotels under ferris wheels and scenic railways - soft water sounds and frogs from the canals - K9 stood

> opposite a boy from Norway felt the prickling blue light on his genitals filling with blood touched the other tip and a warm shock went down his spine and he came in spasms of light - Silver writing burst in his brain and went out with a smell of burning metal in empty intersections where boys on roller skates turn slow circles and weeds grow through cracked pavement. (NE 137-38).

The Amusement Gardens represent a particularly ambiguous Burroughsian utopia. To be sure, the voluptuous fecundity of the gardens offer a tantalising glimpse of prelapsarian sexual innocence, yet there is also something in their languid onanistic attractions which suggests the spiritual ennui and moral depravity of a latter day *Bower of Bliss*: "Where Pleasure dwelles in sensuall delights / Mongst thousand dangers, and ten thousand magick mights" (II. xii. 1):

> And in the midst of all, a fountaine stood,
> Of richest substaunce, that on earth might bee,
> So pure and shiny, that the silver flood
> Through every channell running one might see;
> Most goodly it with curious imageree
> Was over-wrought, and shapes of naked boyes,
> Of which some seemd with lively jollitee,
> To fly about, playing their wanton toyes,
> Whilest others did them selves embay in liquid joyes. (II. xii. 60)
>
> Edmund Spenser *The Faerie Queene* (1590/96).[42]

Readers will recall that, when confronted by such temptations, Spenser's knight of *Temperaunce* destroys the lascivious gardens in an apocalyptic frenzy of "rigour pittilesse" (II. xii. 83).

Sir Guyon's bold (if perhaps intemperate) actions aside, it remains unclear (to this observer at least) just how the Amusement Gardens should be viewed. Burroughs clearly intends to introduce a level of uncertainty into his readers' responses; many of the erotic vignettes depicting youthful sensuality are

themselves products of the cut-up process of composition, which (following Burroughs's frequent theoretical statements on the matter) renders them, by definition, incapable of supporting a single, authoritative meaning. The feeling persists, however, that Burroughs remains suspicious of utopias founded upon pleasurable bodily sensations and unrestrained hedonism (although he is undoubtedly attracted in some respects by the prospect). A clue to Burroughs's position may be found in Inspector J. Lee's evident hostility towards the traditional paradisiacal fantasies of the Christian Church (which, according to the *mythos,* is little more than a front for the Nova Mob):

> Who monopolized Immortality? Who monopolized Cosmic Consciousness? Who monopolized Love Sex and Dream? Who monopolized Life Time Fortune? Who took from you what is yours? Now they will give it all back? Did they ever give anything away for nothing? [...] *Listen*: Their Garden Of Delights is a terminal sewer - I have been at some pains to map this area of terminal sewage in the so-called pornographic sections of *Naked Lunch* and *Soft Machine* [...] Stay out of the Garden Of Delights - It is a man-eating trap that ends in green goo - Throw back their ersatz Immortality. (NE 11).

It seems likely that the Amusement Gardens and their idle enchantments (which operate through stimulating rather than obliterating the body) will prove to be yet another variation on the "man-eating trap" of the Garden Of Delights; far better, perhaps, to stoically ally oneself with "Hassan i Sabbah and his cold windy bodiless rock" (NE 11).

A similar ambivalence pervades Burroughs's conception of *The People-City,* the second of "Pay Color"'s dubious utopias. The People-City and its kaleidoscopic fantasias of sound and image is the creation of *The Subliminal Kid* (our difficulties in assessing the People-City begin with the character of the Kid himself; on the one hand he is identified as a prime mover in the Nova Conspiracy (NE 51), and yet on the other he makes exemplary use of all the tactics and weaponry

Burroughs/Sabbah recommends for his *invisible generation* of teenage assassins[43]), who "moved in and took over bars cafés and juke boxes of the world cities and installed radio transmitters and microphones in each bar so that the music and talk of any bar could be heard in all his bars and he had tape recorders in each bar that played and recorded at arbitrary intervals":

> so he set waves and eddies and tornadoes of sound down all your streets and by the river of all language - Word dust drifted streets of broken music car horns and air hammers - The Word broken pounded twisted exploded in smoke. (NE 129).

This cacophonous destruction of The Word and its repressive routines *appears* to fulfil the aims of the Burroughs/Gysin cut-up project; as does the creation of a postmodern city-state unconstrained by the rigid demands of time or place:

> and nobody knew whether he was in a Western movie in Hongkong or The Aztec Empire in Ancient Rome or Suburban America whether he was a bandit a commuter or a chariot driver whether he was firing a "real" gun or watching a gangster movie and the city moved in swirls and eddies and tornadoes of image explosive bio-advance out of space to neon - [...]
>
> The Kid stirred in sex films and The People-City pulsed in a vast orgasm and no one knew what was film and what was not and performed all kinda sex acts on every street corner. (NE 130-31).

Nonetheless, the cornucopia of the People-City is most definitely governed by noise and dissonance, whilst the crucial virtues of *silence* are neglected in favour of the mixed tongues of Babel: "all accents and language mixed and fused and people shifted language and accent in mid-sentence" (NE 130). The anarchic scenes and carnivalesque abandon of the People-City may represent a stepping stone towards a future utopian state, but the City is unlikely to be the Promised Land itself. The People-City is the ultimate giddying metropolis; with its discordant parodic architecture and reeling cinematic ambience making it curiously reminiscent of the

studio lot "dream dump" in Nathanael West's novel of Hollywood apocalyptic *The Day of the Locust* (1939).[44] West's visionary hero, Tod Hackett, spends his time dreaming of completing his grand eschatological canvas *The Burning of Los Angeles* ("a great bonfire of architectural styles, ranging from Egyptian to Cape Cod colonial"[45]); while the garbled idioms of Beverly Hills only intensify his need for a final and cleansing display of violence:

> But not even the soft wash of dusk could help the houses. Only dynamite would be of any use against the Mexican ranch houses, Samoan huts, Mediterranean villas, Egyptian and Japanese temples, Swiss chalets, Tudor cottages, and every possible combination of these styles that lined the slopes of the canyon.
>
> He wanted the city to have quite a gala air as it burned, to appear almost gay. And the people who set it on fire would be a holiday crowd.[46]

Burroughs's plans for the city are not as clear as Hackett's apocalyptic designs (again, the narrative of events in the People-City is cut-up, spliced, and re-arranged; absolute "meaning" remains elusive); yet the closing paragraphs of *Nova Express* suggest that the banshee squall of the Subliminal Kid's revolutionary urban project will have to be silenced:

> So leave the recorders running and get your heavy metal ass in a space ship - Did it - Nothing here now but the recordings - Shut the whole thing right off - *Silence* - When you answer the machine you provide it with more recordings to be played back to your "enemies" keep the whole nova machine running - The Chinese character for "enemy" means to be similar to or to answer - Don't answer the machine - Shut it off -
>
> "The Subliminal Kid" took over streets of the world - Cruise cars with revolving turrets telescope movie lenses and recorders sweeping up sound and image of the city around and around faster and faster cars racing through all the streets of image record, take, play back, project on walls and windows people and sky - And slow moving

turrets on slow cars and wagons slower and slower record take, play back, project slow motion street scene - Now fast - Now slow - slower - *Stop* - Shut off - No More - My writing arm is paralyzed - No more junk scripts, no more word scripts, no more flesh scripts [...]

Well that's about the closest way I know to tell you and papers rustling across city desks ... fresh southerly winds a long time ago.

September 17, 1899 over New York

July 21, 1964
Tangier, Morocco

William Burroughs
[novel ends]. (NE 156-57).

Thus, *Nova Express* draws to a sombre conclusion with a poignant quartet of related images. The first is that of the exhausted and mildly apologetic writer at his desk, arm paralysed in an heroic attempt to *write my way out* (and perhaps provide safe passage for the attentive reader as well). The second is the date, September 17, 1899; the momentous occasion of Brion Gysin Hassan i Sabbah's silent sky-writing over New York. The third is (presumably) the precise time and location in which Burroughs completed his revelation of the Nova Conspiracy (which, incidentally, is a decade after his initial uncertain arrival in Tangier). The fourth impression is perhaps the most striking of all; the author's name, *William Burroughs*. Deconstructionist philosophers, poststructuralist literary critics, various commentators on modern culture, and, indeed, Burroughs himself (through his theoretical texts and fictional works) have all taken the opportunity to proclaim the death of the author, to decry literary ownership, and to attack the suzerainty of the writer over his words.[47] The signature remains, however; obstinate, emphatic, unyielding, and authoritative; sole witness and guarantor to a mystically-conceived apocalyptic vision "Of things invisible to mortal sight".

Or maybe the Burroughs signature should be more properly thought of as a trademarked brand name; as a corporate logo representing a shared literary

endeavour corralled and marshalled by the distinctive penmanship of one man. The author's foreword to *Nova Express* states that "an extension of Brion Gysin's cut-up method which I call the fold-in method has been used in this book which is consequently *a composite of many writers living and dead*" (emphasis added, NE - "Foreword Note").[48] According to Brion Gysin, this aggregate text nevertheless betrays the controlling hand of its maker:

> He wrote up a storm, literally. He covered tons of paper with his words and made them his very own words [...] he branded them like cattle he rustled out there on the free ranges of Literature [...] He pushed cut-ups so far with variations of his own that he produced texts which were sickeningly painful to read, even to him, mind you. These were texts which had to be wrapped in sheets of lead and sunk in the sea, disposed of like atomic waste, in marl holes (one of his favorites). Used by another writer who was attempting cut-ups, one single word of Burroughs' vocabulary would run a stain right through the fabric of their prose, no matter how they cut it. One single high-powered Burroughs word could ruin a whole barrel of good everyday words, run the literary rot right through them. One sniff of that prose and you'd say, "Why, that's a Burroughs".[49]

Gysin's good-humoured anecdote captures an intriguing lesson of the cut-up experiments; which is that in the furious drive to assassinate authority and bestow equal powers to 'many writers living and dead', even though the shattered sentences and butchered paragraphs may resist providing a univocal 'meaning', they nevertheless reverberate with the unmistakable voice of their creator/conductor. Burroughs's *composite* style is instantly recognisable as one which is uniquely his own.

The principal texts cut-up (or folded) into *Nova Express* are Franz Kafka's *The Trial* (1925) and various poems by T.S. Eliot (*The Waste Land* (1922), *Prufrock* (1917) etc.): "Remember I was carbon dioxide - Voices wake us and we drown - Air holes in the faded film ... Hurry up please its William - I will show you

fear in the cold spring cemetery - Kind, wo weilest du?" (NE 103). Cut-up methods are not only used to create many of the more baffling (or tedious) passages which proliferate in the latter stages of *Nova Express*, they are also employed *within* the novel as disabling strategies by mob members (e.g. the Subliminal Kid) and the Nova Police alike (the Silence Virus being the ultimate cut-up weapon); thus, the cut-ups serve both a formal and a thematic function. Formally, they are at their most successful when used to capture the elegiac tones of a dying universe:

> Last of the gallant heroes - "I'm you on tracks Mr. Bradly Mr. Martin" - Couldn't reach flesh in his switch - And zero time to the sick tracks - A long time between suns I held the stale overcoat - Sliding between light and shadow - Muttering in the dogs of unfamiliar score - Cross the wounded galaxies we intersect - Poison of dead sun in your brain slowly fading - Migrants of ape in gasoline crack of history - Explosive bio advance out of space to neon - "I'm you, Wind Hand caught in the door -" Couldn't reach flesh ... (NE 116).

The broken syntax of Burroughs's terminal prose commemorates the closing moments (or *Last Words*) of a stricken and expiring cosmos: "Some boy just wrote last good-bye across the sky ... All the dream people of past time are saying good-bye forever, Mister" (NE 111).

The cut-ups have, of course, attracted much critical debate, with hostile commentators seeking to attack Burroughs for both the explicit sexual content of his works and the formal methods he has devised in order to narrate such depravities. In his defence, Burroughs has made various claims for the validity of the cut-up techniques. These include the bold assertion that 'scientific discoveries' could be more readily facilitated by consciously introducing elements of chance into the creative process. Artists too could benefit from this arrangement; as the literary cut-ups linguistically reproduce the hazy contours of a "mescaline hallucination", thus leading to a Rimbaudian "systematic derangement of the senses" (TMD 32). Not only this, but the cut-ups are also capable of quite *soberly* reflecting everyday aspects

of existence; because "montage is actually much closer to the facts of perception ... Consciousness *is* a cut-up; life is a cut-up".[50] As we have already noted in our discussion of the tape experiments, Burroughs has somewhat eccentrically maintained that the cut-ups can influence and create future events.[51] Allied to this, the cut-ups can magically reveal our hidden destinies:

> I would say that my most interesting experience with the earlier techniques was the realization that when you make cut-ups you do not get simply random juxtapositions of words, that they do mean something, and often these meanings refer to some future event [...] Perhaps events are pre-written and pre-recorded and when you cut word lines the future leaks out.[52]

The reader may well be wary of embracing such extravagant claims; but it is thoroughly consistent with Burroughs's self-assumed role as a visionary writer that he should seek to make such daring assertions.

Of greater interest are Burroughs's remarks regarding the literary application of the cut-up techniques. In his essay, *Les Voleurs*, Burroughs credits the cut-ups with a therapeutic dimension; they have allowed him to abandon "the fetish of originality", since "the whole sublime concept of total theft is implicit in cut-ups and montage".[53] The manual composition of cut-ups can also prove to be a fruitful remedial exercise, providing valuable inspiration for writers faced with a creative block.[54] Most usefully, the cut-ups increase the range of techniques and stylistic options available to the (previously) impoverished writer: "Cutting and rearranging a page of written words introduces a new dimension into writing enabling the writer to turn images in cinematic variation" (TMD 32). That Burroughs should be attracted to tactics promising 'cinematic variation' is perhaps appropriate considering his oft-repeated contention that life is a biologic movie. Prior to Gysin's fortuitous discovery of the cut-up processes, Burroughs had felt writing to be the "retarded twin" of the visual arts[55], and Gysin himself had written in an early manifesto: "Writing is fifty years behind painting. I propose to apply the painters'

techniques to writing ... the poets are supposed to liberate the words - not to chain them in phrases" (TMD 34).

Burroughs's most celebrated appropriation of cinematic procedure is the *Fold-In* (a practice widely employed in *The Ticket That Exploded* and *Nova Express*). The fold-in is essentially a subtle variation on the cut-up method, the most obvious innovation being that it is performed without the aid of scissors. Burroughs unveiled his latest compositional routine in a workshop on "The Future of the Novel" at the Edinburgh Festival Writers Conference in 1962 (the presentation being subsequently published in the *Transatlantic Review*):

> Certainly if writing is to have a future it must at least catch up with the past and learn to use techniques that have been used for some time past in painting, music and film [...] In writing my last two novels [...] i have used an extension of the cut up method i call 'the fold in method' - A page of text - my own or some one elses - is folded down the middle and placed on another page - The composite text is then read across half one text and half the other - The fold in method extends to writing the flash back used in films, enabling the writer to move backwards and forewards on his time track - For example i take page one and fold it into page one hundred - I insert the resulting composite as page ten - When the reader reads page ten he is flashing forwards in time to page one hundred and back in time to page one - The deja vue phenomena can be produced to order.[56]

The critic Robin Lydenberg has carefully assessed Burroughs's fictions of '*déjà vu* to order' and she finds favourably that "in the cut-up or fold-in narrative, reading is non-linear, every reading already a rereading in which the whole exists simultaneously, sensed almost subliminally by the reader in vague feelings of familiarity, dislocation, premonition".[57] Thus, the attentive reader not only partakes of Burroughs's premonitory powers, s/he is also granted a "secular equivalent of divine vision"[58], being at all times omnipresent "in the limitless and reversible space of the cut-up text". Michael Skau has been similarly enthusiastic regarding the

anarchic potentialities manufactured by the fold-in methods: "Burroughs offers these techniques as ways of weakening the tyranny of the controlling verbal system and destroying conventional syntactical patterns. Suggestions and hints of motifs are allowed to recur, but through their arbitrary juxtapositions are intended to avoid controlling the reader's intellectual response".[59]

What unites both Lydenberg's and Skau's readings of Burroughs's cut-up texts is their shared emphasis on the apocalyptic liberation achieved by the reader. The jaded palate of the reader is enlivened by the "rejuvenating flow"[60] of resuscitated images torn from the pages of Shakespeare or Conrad or Graham Greene; ownership and identity are shattered as the cut-ups (in Lydenberg's words) reveal "reality as fiction, fiction as language, and language as a system of control which can be appropriated, extended, and perhaps exploded".[61] Other critics have greeted the news of their emancipation less rapturously. Frank Kermode, for example, sensibly observes:

> Admirers of William Burroughs' *Nova Express* admit that the randomness of the composition pays off only when the text looks as if it had been composed straightforwardly, with calculated inspiration.[62]

David Lodge, typically, is more scathing. Contrary to the wishes of his proselytizers, Burroughs's mangled cut-ups fail to generate "any significant new meaning"[63]; and in a mischievous amplification of Kermode's remarks, Lodge is prepared to wager that the more inspired cut-up passages of *Nova Express* probably *were* 'composed straightforwardly' anyway. Lodge is bored and disgusted by Burroughs, but mostly bored; the cut-ups seem to be "a lazy shortcut, a way of evading the difficult and demanding task of reducing to order the personally felt experience of disorder"[64]:

> "Cut-ups," says Burroughs, "make explicit a psycho-sensory process that is going on all the time anyway." Precisely: that is why they are so uninteresting.[65]

Burroughs's allies are prone to their doubts as well. Skau is forced to concede that much of the material in *The Soft Machine* and *Nova Express* is "opaque, obfuscated, and unintelligible. The prose is liberated from conventional syntax but also from meaning and comprehensibility".[66]

Cary Nelson warns, however, that to doggedly pursue 'meaning and comprehensibility' is antithetical to the stated aims of the cut-up project and a "perfect inversion of Burroughs's writing".[67] The reader/critic, studiously anxious to generate a coherent reading of the text, is constantly on the lookout for (in Tony Tanner's words) "bits of shipwrecked meaning"[68] and statements of alleged authorial intention. Nelson argues that Burroughs's advocates fail or simply refuse "to accept the novels as written":

> Our uneasiness in confronting Burroughs's art has two sources. The first is an entirely justified suspicion that *Naked Lunch* may be read as a marriage manual, that Burroughs means to reveal the true violent content of our sexuality. The other, confirmed by his later novels, is a fear that Burroughs believes an act of murder is implicit in every human contact.[69]

The wish to interpret the cut-up novels as conventional narratives is "an act of domestication, one that enables us to integrate revelation", and thus deny the "radical potential" of Burroughs's "visionary posture".[70] The uncomfortable truth about Burroughs's novels is that they show him to be fully "committed to the end of the world he mythologizes"; allied to this, his apocalyptic scenarios blatantly refuse to offer the consolation of an Edenic new landscape (thus, the act of *the reader's* murder is implicit in every reading of Burroughs).

Ihab Hassan would no doubt concur with Nelson's prognosis. In an early essay (*The Subtracting Machine*, 1963) he writes that:

> Perhaps without realizing it fully, Burroughs seems to have devised in the Cut-Up method a means not so much of liberating man as of declaring his bondage.[71]

Hassan detects in Burroughs's "cold apocalypse of the race"[72] a singular lack of empathy. He is a lesser writer than Mann or Kafka, or Joyce and Faulkner: "not because his scope and knowledge are less than theirs, which is indubitably true, but because his love is also smaller"[73]; ultimately, Burroughs's utopianism is rendered impotent by his monstrous nihilism. Hassan neglects to consider, however, that it could be plausibly argued that the extent of Burroughs's outrage is a measure of the depth of his love. Burroughs's view (if, indeed, he ever had one) of Hassan's judgment remains unrecorded; yet it seems to reasonable to assume that he would take Hassan to task over the exact definition of the "love" he is alleged to be so conspicuously lacking. In *"do you love me?"*, a particularly virulent section of *The Ticket That Exploded*, Burroughs ruthlessly cuts up the idealised lyrics of the sentimental love songs which seem to have so thoroughly tormented his boyhood:

> All the tunes and sound effects of *"Love"* spit from the recorder permutating sex whine of a sick picture planet: [...]
>
> Do you love me? - Love is red sheets of pain hung oh oh baby oh jelly - The guide slipped off his jelly - I've got you under my skin pulsing red light - Clouds of *Me* always be true to you - Hula hoops of color formed always be true to you darling in my Bradly - Weak and torn i'll hurry to my blue heaven as i sank in suffocation panic of rusty St. Louis woman - With just a photograph, Mary, you know i love you through sperm - Contraction turnstile hoped you'd loved me too - Orgasm floated arms still i feel the thrill of slow movement but it won't last - i've forgotten you then? - i love you i love you and bones tearing his insides apart for the ants to eat - Jelly jelly jelly shifting color orgasm back home - Scratching shower of sperm that made cover of the board books - It's a long way to Tipperary.[74]

This is a remarkable piece of writing for a number of reasons. One notable comic effect of *"do you love me?"* (and how often critics ignore or dismiss Burroughs's humorous intentions) is its sheer excessive length (I have quoted just one short extract from its seven pages of spleen); the *joke* is that the vulgar yet seemingly harmless inanities of pop culture could drive someone to such malicious

distraction. The absurdity of the situation aside, Burroughs's butchered cut-ups propose some serious points; for example, that love (whatever it may be) is commodified and ultimately demeaned by a puerile and opportunistic mass media, that love (like the language which is used to deify it) may *really* be a debilitating virus ("I've got you under my skin") and not just a pleasingly self-indulgent form of mild sickness, that love (or the artistic representation of love) is a sham whenever physicality is denied: "you know i love you through sperm". Burroughs's notions of language are grounded in the recognition of a seeming abyss between the *word* and the *thing* (Burroughs is particularly fond of quoting from the works of Count Alfred Korzybski (1879-1950), architect of a theory of "General Semantics", and prone to beginning public lectures by banging on a table before announcing: "Whatever this is, it is not a table").[75] Burroughs clearly distrusts language; thus, whatever Hassan means by "love" or "nihilism" (although we could attempt an informed guess), it may well be completely alien to what Burroughs understands (or guesses) the terms to denote. Hence, Burroughs frequently refuses (some might claim rather conveniently) to recognise terms such as fascist, misogynist, misanthrope, immoralist, anti-humanist: "I don't consider myself pessimistic, because that word doesn't have any significance; neither does 'optimistic'".[76]

Cary Nelson is probably correct when he accuses Burroughs's critics of wilfully misreading the venerable old man's works, and failing to note the depth of his utter commitment to the end of the world. Jennie Skerl, in her volume on Burroughs in the *Twayne's US Authors* series, offers us a nicely domesticated reading of *Nova Express*: "the novel's apocalyptic tone does not stem from Burroughs's social criticism, but from a spiritual message. The world of conflict and suffering that is our present reality is a fallen world that can be redeemed and transformed by truth, i.e., a correct vision of things as they are".[77] This is a perfectly reasonable interpretation of the novel, but it is one which becomes problematic when we pause to consider a few further examples of Burroughs's 'spiritual message' or *truth* (these remarks being taken from an interview given to Daniel Odier):

> Dualism is the whole basis of this planet - good and evil, communism, fascism, man, woman, etc. As soon as you have a formula like that, of course you're going to have trouble [...] Just take men and women for example, they'll never get together, their interests are not the same.[78]

> I think that the whole anti-sex orientation of our society is basically manipulated by female interests. Because it is to their interest to keep sexuality down; that's the way they hang onto a man, or latch on to one, and then he's not supposed to do anything else. It is the vested interest of the female sex, which is anti-sexual [...] I think that what we call love is a fraud perpetrated by the female sex and that the point of sexual relations between men is nothing that we could call love ... [79]

As we shall see in the next chapter, Burroughs repeatedly insists that 'our present reality' cannot be wholly redeemed and transformed by mere 'truth'; authentic transcendence can only be secured through *radical* evolutionary change and interplanetary migration (and certainly not through "space in an aqualung trailing wires to wives and mothers").[80]

The Nova Conspiracy provides the perfect metaphor for revealing Burroughs's essentially Manichaean conception of the nature of existence; man and woman are "separate flesh engaged in endless sexual conflict"[81] and each, in turn, is occupied by the viral presence of language:

> The "Other Half" is the word. The "Other Half" is an organism. Word is an organism. The presence of the "Other Half" a separate organism attached to your nervous system on an air line of words can now be demonstrated experimentally [...] The word is now a virus [...] The word may once have been a healthy neural cell. It is now a parasitic organism that invades and damages the central nervous system. Modern man has lost the option of silence. Try halting your sub-vocal speech. Try to achieve even ten seconds of inner silence. You will encounter a resisting organism that *forces you to talk*.[82]

Man is in thrall to his 'other half', and the internal struggle is externally replicated through domestic disputes, border wars, and superpower brinkmanship (and, incidentally, on the spliced pages of Burroughs's cut and folded texts). Like *Queer*'s William Lee, helplessly possessed by an obscene routine in a Mexico City barroom, Man is 'forced to talk', to endlessly replay the primal rape scene when he fell to language and the *word* forever exiled the *thing*; and in the apocalyptic cosmology of *Nova Express*: "To speak is to lie - To live is to collaborate" (NE 12).

In their competing analyses of the cut-ups, Burroughs's critics neatly reproduce the polarities of the Nova Conspiracy; *either* "gibberish prevails over revelation" and "permutation produces not variety but sameness"[83] (Hassan) *or* "the reader experiences a systematic program of immunization by exposure - exposure to the repressive functions of all dualisms (especially that of body/mind), to the restrictions of naming and representation, to the coercion and violence of all word and image. Overexposure to the word and the body has a liberating and purgative effect" (Lydenberg).[84] Of course, *both* Hassan *and* Lydenberg make extremely valid observations regarding the outcome (successful or otherwise) of the cut-up experiments. To be sure, certain passages in *The Soft Machine* or *The Ticket That Exploded* do descend into pointless repetition and terminal nonsense; the overall ambition of the cut-up novels, however, coupled with the inventiveness, wit, and pathos of their more inspired sections of writing (whether 'calculated' or not), serve to redeem the cut-up enterprise and justify Burroughs's and Gysin's creative endeavours. In novels such as *Nova Express*, Burroughs may not offer the (dubious) consolation of a brave new landscape (unless *silence* is your bag), but he does deliver a revelatory vision of human existence in the closing moments of this world.

It is significant that after *Nova Express*, Burroughs did not publish another novel for seven years. The small press routines and occasional item of fanzine journalism continued, as did the cut-up variations; yet Burroughs found that he was increasingly producing "writing that I thought was interesting, experimentally, but simply not readable".[85] By the end of the 1960s the cut-ups had

effectively run their course and exhausted their apocalyptic potential. Interviews given by Burroughs at the time reveal him to be nervous about continuing with the cut-up project, as these remarks to Odier demonstrate:

> I think *Finnegan's Wake* rather represents a trap into which experimental writing can fall when it becomes purely experimental. I would go so far with any given experiment and then come back; that is, I am coming back now to write purely conventional straightforward narrative. But applying what I have learned from the cut-up and the other techniques to the problem of conventional writing. It's simply if you go too far in one direction, you can never get back, and you're out there in complete isolation ... [86]

"I am getting so far out one day I won't come back at all"[87], Burroughs had confessed in a letter written to Ginsberg over a decade earlier. The daunting prospect of 'complete isolation' (as opposed to a carefully maintained solitude) clearly troubles Burroughs; as does the possibility that his readers may no longer comprehend or care for the cut-ups ("I have to have receiver for routine", he pleaded with Ginsberg in 1954).[88] Wishing to avoid what he viewed as the literary dead-end enshrined by *Finnegan's Wake* (1939), Burroughs's works in the 1970s and 80s have marked a "Return to Narrative"[89] (albeit a narrative style informed by the earlier experiments and in no manner wholly 'conventional'). Perhaps not coincidentally, Burroughs left England for good in 1974 and took up residence again in the United States; most notably leasing 'the Bunker' (a converted YMCA gymnasium locker room, complete with urinals) in New York's seedy Bowery district, before returning to the Midwest and finally settling in Lawrence, Kansas, "the *Day After* town".[90]

Burroughs persevered with the cut-ups for such a considerable length of time for a number of reasons; with a new page of completed text only a few cuts away, Burroughs rarely succumbed to writer's block, indeed, cut-ups of the day's newspapers introduced a stunning sense of contemporaneity to the creative process; the cut-up routines soon became habitual, like drug-taking or masturbation. The

cut-ups also permitted the restless and ambitious Burroughs to operate in a variety of media; film, tape, scrapbook collage, and, of course, print (both in 'mainstream' novels and 'underground' texts); equally, the content of such work could alternatively include snatches of popular 'low' culture (music hall routines, the colourful argot of the criminal underworld etc.), sophisticated allusions to (or straight theft from) 'high' literary culture (Shakespeare, Eliot etc.), or highly charged vignettes of homosexual eroticism. Pursuing the alchemical processes of the routines, and then, more importantly, the cut-ups, in such a thoroughly intense and obsessive manner gave Burroughs a vital role to play in the ongoing resistance to the principal manifestations of the genocidal Nova Conspiracy (moral censorship, political conservatism, and the ubiquitous Atomic Bomb). Perhaps most significantly, the cut-ups provided Burroughs with a reliable means to mass-produce revelatory works; with each new text given enhanced credibility due to the strange, eventful history of its apocalyptic creation.

Chapter Three: William S. Burroughs - Here to Go (A Boy's Book)

This is the space age. Time to look beyond this rundown radioactive cop-rotten planet. Time to look beyond this animal body.

(William S. Burroughs, *Academy 23*).

My general theory since 1971 has been that the Word is literally a virus, and that it has not been recognized as such because it has achieved a state of relatively stable symbiosis with its human host.

(William S. Burroughs, *Ten Years and a Billion Dollars*).

He letteth in, he letteth out to wend,
  All that to come into the world desire;
  A thousand thousand naked babes attend
  About him day and night, which doe require,
  That he with fleshly weedes would them attire:
  Such as him list, such as eternall fate
  Ordainéd hath, he clothes with sinfull mire,
  And sendeth forth to live in mortall state,
Till they againe returne backe by the hinder gate.

After that they againe returnéd beene,
  They in that Gardin planted be againe;
  And grow afresh, as they had never seene
  Fleshly corruption, nor mortall paine.
  Some thousand yeares so doen they there remaine;
  And then of him are clad with other hew,
  Or sent into the chaungefull world againe,
  Till thither they returne, where first they grew:
So like a wheele around they runne from old to new. (III. vi. 32-33)

(Edmund Spenser, "The Garden of Adonis", *The Faerie Queene*).

There is no word in space.

(William S. Burroughs, *The Soft Machine*).[1]

William S. Burroughs's apocalyptic fictions of the 1970s and 80s differ from their predecessors in two important respects. Formally, they are less iconoclastic than the earlier texts; with the number of cut-up passages and experimental sections drastically reduced in favour of a simplified, more traditional narrative style. To be sure, the novels which comprise Burroughs's late trilogy (*Cities of the Red Night* - 1981, *The Place of Dead Roads* - 1983, and *The Western Lands* - 1987) are not exactly wholly conventional in form, but neither are they possessed of the confrontational tactics which so informed the writing and promotion of the earlier cut-up works. Thematically, however, Burroughs's later apocalypses are, if anything, far more subversive, inflammatory, and problematical than the radical excesses of either *The Naked Lunch* or *Nova Express*. This chapter will consider Burroughs's mature political thought and utopian preferences; the provocative nature of which some readers may find compelling, baffling, offensive, or just plain ludicrous.

Burroughs's extremism is apparent in a series of interviews granted to Daniel Odier in the late 1960s (and subsequently published in *The Job* (1970); revised edition - 1974). According to Burroughs, the world faces two immediate dangers; the ever-present threat of nuclear annihilation and the enormous burdens placed upon humanity's fragile resources by spiralling overpopulation (i.e. "more and more so-called normal men, that is, just ordinary stupid sons of bitches"):

> With overpopulation the quality of the human stock is declining disastrously. They're becoming more and more stupid, more and more incompetent, and there are more and more of them.[2]

Again, Burroughs attributes the likely eradication of man's evolutionary potentials to twin causes: the needless existence of nation-states (whether totalitarian or democratic) and the degenerative barbarism engineered by the Industrial Revolution: "[overpopulation] results from the concept of a nation, the necessity for

armies, and the necessity for large numbers of people to produce and consume consumer goods".

In Burroughs's new revolutionary mythos, "we all are confined in concentration camps called nations"[3]; and this penal nation-state is, of course, no more than a coercive extension of the institution for which Burroughs reserves his greatest contempt: the biologic family. Burroughs claims that "the whole human race is crippled in childhood, and this is done by the family."[4] Children (and adults) possess a "general fear of sexuality", a neurotic anxiety "carefully fostered by their upbringing and training, which is basically controlled by women". Moreover: "the real thing that keeps children tied to their parents is economic dependence, and this must be broken down" (Burroughs, of course, had extensive first-hand experience of relying upon parental handouts).[5] Short-term solutions to "the family problem" would include "state nurseries" and paying children to go to school (hence, *The Job*); and in the long term, Burroughs envisages the widespread application of new reproductive technologies (such as IVF) and enlightened rearing methods, thus restricting the pernicious influence of the mother. The final solution is already in sight: "Women are no longer essential to reproduction".[6] Another common Burroughsian fantasy of this period is the homosexual enclave, sometimes known as the *Academy* or *My Own Business* (MOB): "the withdrawal of like-minded individuals into separate communities within nations" (analogous to and, for Burroughs, equally acceptable to, similar utopian experiments conducted by Black Muslims, separatist lesbians, and commune-dwelling hippies).[7]

As set out in his various interviews with Odier, Burroughs's radical proposals and dubious utopias foreshadow the thematic content of his later novels. Unlike the peace-loving hippies (who were in many respects fathered by the Beat Generation), the quinquagenerarian Burroughs claims to be firmly committed to the creed of violence:

> The people in power will not disappear voluntarily, giving flowers to the cops just isn't going to work. This thinking is fostered by the

establishment; they like nothing better than love and nonviolence. The only way I like to see cops given flowers is in a flower pot from a high window [...] There should be more riots and more violence. Young people in the West have been lied to, sold out, and betrayed. Best thing they can do is take the place apart before they are destroyed in a nuclear war. Nuclear war is inevitable if the present controllers remain in power.[8]

Time and again throughout his published interviews and underground press manifestos, Burroughs casts himself in the role of apocalyptic seer and pied piper to a disaffected (yet extremely affluent) generation of bored youth. He tirelessly advocates the use of revolutionary tactics in a bid to avert the coming holocaust (typically, Burroughs insists that America "absolutely intend[s] to start a nuclear war" without offering a single plausible reason why this may be the case): "I certainly prefer the total destruction of the present system of society to a nuclear war, which is the inevitable result of its remaining in operation".[9] As with many other apocalyptic writers, Burroughs's marshalling of purportedly factual data and portrayal of many 'truths' as being obviously self-evident (the wrapper to *The Job* boasts, somewhat unconvincingly, of Burroughs possessing "the questing intelligence of a literary scientist") nonetheless seeks to mask a deeply irrationalist hostility towards existing power relations (the irony being, of course, that Burroughs's position is more privileged than most, and in any youth revolution, if they weren't great readers or sexual libertarians, he'd have more to lose than most).[10]

In 1971 Burroughs published two new works; *Electronic Revolution*, a small press polemical handbook for potential urban guerrillas, and *The Wild Boys: A Book of the Dead*, his first major novel for seven years.[11] *Electronic Revolution* is in many respects a radical updating of *The Invisible Generation* (1966). Burroughs's principal theme is the deployment of pre-recorded cut-up tapes "played back in the street as a revolutionary weapon".[12] In keeping with his new found insurrectionist credentials, Burroughs abandons the relatively moderate tone which characterised

The Invisible Generation and opts instead for a defiant pose. Among the (vaguely improbable) uses suggested for the scrambled word-loops are the spreading of malicious rumours, the discrediting of political opponents (cut "drooling idiot noises sex and animal sound effects" into their speeches and broadcast the results), and:

> *As a front line weapon to produce and escalate riots*
>
> There is nothing mystical about this operation. Riot sound effects can produce an actual riot in a riot situation. *Recorded police whistles will draw cops. Recorded gun-shots, and their guns are out.*
>
> "MY GOD, THEY'RE KILLING US."
>
> A guardsman said later: "I heard the shots and saw my buddy go down, his face covered in blood (turned out he'd been hit by a stone from a sling shot) and I thought, well this is it." BLOODY WEDNESDAY. A DAZED AMERICA COUNTED 23 DEAD AND 32 WOUNDED.[13]

As amusing as this little routine may be, a year later, on "Bloody Sunday", January 30, 1972, British Army paratroopers opened fire on stone-throwing Nationalist protesters in Londonderry, killing thirteen and, in the process, laying the foundation for a quarter of a century of increased sectarian division and brutal tit-for-tat terrorist killings. The British Army commanders claimed that their soldiers had been fired upon (although the Catholic community has bitterly denied this[14]); the point is that Burroughs's apocalyptic abstractions just don't translate at all well onto "the streets" where he claims to be pitching his seditionary message. At Kent State, the National Guard did not need to hear a "shrill chorus of recorded pig squeals and parody groans" in order to shoot and kill four unarmed students (and nor would the unfortunate victims have been protected by portable cassette recorders). Similarly, if the ultimate aim of the Electronic Revolution is to increase urban unrest and thus bring about the "END OF THE WAR GAME"[15] promised in the booklet's closing paragraph; it seems difficult to persuasively ally these objectives with the lessons of Northern Ireland (or the West Bank or South Central Los Angeles).

Burroughs is a mischievous old agitator, however. Beneath the chic street-fighting rhetoric of *Electronic Revolution* lies the escape clause of another, less bombastic, textual reading. In this interpretation, what matters most is not the act of rebellion per se, but the actual weapons chosen to achieve the anarchic ideal. Thus, the cut-up tapes and spliced and scrambled political messages proclaim a furious assault on language (the mythical cause of all the world's injustice and conflict). Taking his cue from Count Korzybski, Burroughs uses *Electronic Revolution* to declare open season on *The IS of Identity* (which "carries the assignment of permanent condition. To stay that way"[16]), *The whole concept of EITHER/OR*, and *The definite article THE*:

> The categorical THE is also a virus mechanism, locking you in THE virus universe. EITHER/OR is another virus formula. It is always you OR the VIRUS. EITHER/OR. This is in point of fact the conflict formula which is seen to be an archetypal virus mechanism. The proposed [new] language will delete these virus mechanisms ... [17]

Hence, THE God becomes *a god*, and the basic 'conflict formula' bred into language is erased or cut-up and rewritten through such mutational innovations as pictorial hieroglyphic script and other, as yet undiscovered, forms of *silent* communication. In *Electronic Revolution*, pelting cops with flowerpots is just a sideshow to the main event of atomizing THE Word and destroying traditional means of representation (read repression).

The riotous techniques recommended in *Electronic Revolution* are among those used by the teenage insurgents of *The Wild Boys*, one of Burroughs's most explicitly apocalyptic texts.[18] Burroughs's extraordinary fantasy is set in the near-future of 1988, when "under the pretext of drug control suppressive police states have been set up throughout the Western world" (WB 138). In the rapidly decaying cities, underground armies of street kids employ the tactics of Electronic

Revolution ("Illusion is a revolutionary weapon"[19]) to hasten the decline of the metropolitan infrastructure:

> We put out false alarms on the police short wave directing patrol cars to nonexistent crimes and riots which enable us to strike somewhere else. Squads of false police search and beat the citizenry. False construction workers tear up streets, rupture water mains, cut power connections. Infra-sound installations set off every burglar alarm in the city. Our aim is total chaos. (WB 139).

Or as the apocryphal last words of Hassan i Sabbah have it: "Nothing is True, Everything is Permitted". The urban gangs operate as adjuncts to the main guerrilla body of boy warriors, encamped in Mexico and Tangier (both former Burroughs outposts), and ready to liberate the United States and Western Europe respectively:

> We intend to march on the police machine everywhere. We intend to destroy the police machine and all its records. We intend to destroy all dogmatic verbal systems. The family unit and its cancerous expansion into tribes, countries, nations we will eradicate at its vegetable roots. We don't want to hear any more family talk, mother talk, father talk, cop talk, priest talk, country talk *or* party talk. (WB 139-40).

These soon-to-be victorious wild boys are themselves the surviving progeny of an earlier North African youth cult of "gasoline gangs"; a boy-tribe of callous, sexy adolescents who achieved notoriety in 1969 for a series of particularly cruel attacks on soft bourgeois targets:

> They rush in anywhere nice young couple sitting in their chintzy middle-class living room when hello! yes hello! the gas boys rush in douse them head to foot with a pump fire extinguisher full of gasoline and I got some good pictures from a closet where I had prudently taken refuge. Shot of the boy who lit the match he let the rank and file slosh his couple then he lit a Swan match face young pure, pitiless as the cleansing fire brought the match close enough to catch the fumes. Then he lit a Player with the same match sucked the smoke in and

> smiled, he was listening to the screams and I thought My God what a cigarette ad. (WB 143).

The BOY (as the young killer is christened) becomes a teen icon, "the hottest property in advertising" (WB 144), with temples and billboards erected in his honour, "and all the teenagers began acting like the BOY looking at you with a dreamy look lips parted":

> They all bought BOY shirts and BOY knives running around like wolf packs burning, looting, killing it spread everywhere all that summer in Marrakech the city would light up at night human torches flickering on walls, trees ...

The BOY assassins are eventually rounded up and slaughtered by a gang of mercenaries under the command of one Colonel Arachnid Ben Driss; a few survive the purge, however, and take to the hills, evolving "different ways of life and modes of combat".

Such then, is the basic apocalyptic scenario of *The Wild Boys*. The reader will have noticed that Burroughs's violent fantasy is not merely a fetishistic chronicle of ('young, pure, pitiless') murderous youth (although there is a strong homoerotic/pederastic component to the entire novel). There is genuine satire in Burroughs's treatment of the brief career of the teen arsonist (the 'hottest property' in commercial advertising); and the mass-produced images of the BOY imply a certain parallel with the posthumous existence enjoyed by Ernesto "Che" Guevara (1928-67) on a million T-shirts and student bedsit walls.[20] The random killing of the 'nice young couple' in their beautiful new home also suggests a darker analogue to the BOY; on successive nights of the weekend August 9-10, 1969, young (mostly female) followers of the cult leader, Charles Manson, broke into two houses in affluent areas of Los Angeles and killed everyone they found. In the first, they butchered the actress Sharon Tate and four of her friends; a day later *The Family* 'offed'

supermarket owner Leno LaBianca and his wife Rosemary as they relaxed after dinner, daubing slogans such as "Death to Pigs" and "Helter Skelter"[21] with their victims' blood (many of the more bizarre aspects of these terrible crimes were an attempt to facilitate Manson's apocalyptic prophecy of a coming race war between blacks and whites).[22] The Manson killings may not be a direct source for Burroughs's vignette of bourgeois innocence abused by brutally indifferent youth (even though kids were soon sporting Family t-shirts and certain sections of the underground press dubbed Manson (with varying degrees of irony) their "Man of the Year"), yet it seems fair to say that the routines of *The Wild Boys* go some way towards capturing the avant-garde *Zeitgeist* at the end of the 60s. Consider, for example, the spectacular closing sequence of Michelangelo Antonioni's movie *Zabriskie Point* (1969), in which a house and its entire contents are blown up (in stunning slow motion), creating a "dazzling, almost celebratory symbol of youthful dreams of ending consumerism".[23] A darker variation on this theme is the grisly rape of Adrienne Corri (with a giant phallus from her private art collection) by the ultraviolence-loving droogs in Stanley Kubrick's own grim take on the Wild Boys myth, *A Clockwork Orange* (1971).[24]

The wild "little boys armed with slingshots and scout knives" (WB 128) also bear a resemblance to the young, poorly-armed rebels of the Vietcong; responsible for frustrating (and ultimately 'defeating') the US military machine through an inspired application of guerrilla tactics and terrorist activity. Although Burroughs's novel is indeed informed by the Vietnam War (*and* by the youth-initiated anti-war movement in the US and Europe), *The Wild Boys* does not seek to present a comprehensive critique of the conflict in South East Asia. The thematic core of the book is instead provided by Burroughs's utopian vision of what the surviving gasoline boys get up to when forced by Colonel Driss to mutate into new modes of existence. Once in *fairyland* (the pun is Burroughs's) the fugitive boys evolve promiscuously into "humanoid subspecies" (WB 147), each possessing "special skills and knowledge". There are glider boys and slingshot boys, shaman

boys, silent boys and roller-skate boys, dream boys and many others besides. Initially, the boys breed through artificially inseminating "medically inspected females" (WB 153) from poor, local communities. Once delivered, the "male crop" is removed from the female carrier; thus: "a whole generation arose that had never seen a woman's face nor heard a woman's voice" (WB 154). Later, the boys graduate to conducting experiments in "clandestine clinics" with "test-tube babies and cuttings". Each clinic houses a *Cutting Room*, where "fugitive technicians" attempt to discover the secrets of reproductive self-generation through removing a portion of the rectum. Burroughs's dream of masculine self-sufficiency reaches fruition when his young heroes learn how to create (through copulating with magical spirits) a new breed of boys known as *Zimbus*:

> A red boy was lying there buttocks spread the rectum a quivering rose that seemed to breathe, the body clearly outlined but still transparent. Slowly the boy penetrated the phantom body I could see his penis inside the other and as he moved in and out the soft red gelatin clung to his penis thighs and buttocks young skin taking shape [...] The boy leaned forward and fastened his lips to the other mouth spurting sperm inside and suddenly the red boy was solid buttocks quivering against the boy's groin [...] A red-haired boy lay there breathing deeply eyes closed. The boy withdrew his penis, straightened the red knees and lay the newborn Zimbu on his back. (WB 158-59).

Tellingly, Burroughs apocalyptic fantasy not only refashions anal intercourse as an act of procreation; it also renders all women obsolete:

> Little boy without a navel in a 1920 classroom. He places an apple on the teacher's desk
> "I am giving you back your apple teacher."
> He walks over to the blackboard and rubs out the word MOTHER. (WB 155).

This is the final lesson of *The Wild Boys*; once the female sex is no longer needed, the disastrous effects of the Fall can be reversed, and young men can return in triumph to a sensual world of prelapsarian innocence and eternal delight.

Burroughs's novel may read like a singular work of science fiction, yet according to certain radical US feminists (unlikely to be familiar with *The Wild Boys*) such male dreams of controlling the reproductive process are not only on the verge of becoming scientific *fact*; they also represent widespread and long-held masculine aspirations. Gena Corea, for example, detects in new reproductive technologies such as sex predetermination and in vitro fertilisation (i.e. test-tube babies), a male desire to dictate who can breed and who can be born into the world. The development and future application of cloning offers to fulfil "the classical patriarchal myth of single parenthood by the male"[25]; whilst ectogenesis ("the "machine-based gestation" of a fetus outside a woman's body"[26]) accords with masculine suspicions that the womb is a hostile and potentially deadly environment. In her essay, *The Coming Gynocide*, Andrea Dworkin asks:

> What is going to happen to women when life can be made in the laboratory and men can control reproduction not just socially but also biologically with real efficiency?[27]

Answer: "a new kind of holocaust ... using now available or soon to be available reproductive technology in conjunction with racist programs of forced sterilization, men finally will have the means to create and control the kind of women they want: the kind of women they have always wanted."[28] Furthermore, Joseph Fletcher, a genetic ethicist, has observed that in the biblical myth of Genesis, there is no conventional mother-figure at all. Adam is artificially created from the dust by God (a "male mother"), Eve is then born of Adam (with God as midwife); and only after the Fall does Eve deliver Cain and Abel. The coming reproductive reality will bring us full circle and reinstate the Edenic "artifice" of "motherless children and male

mothers".[29] As Corea concludes: "the new biology is restoring the modes of birth in effect before the Fall".[30]

Whether the fears of certain feminists and medical ethicists are realised or not, there is little doubt that the ideological roots of Burroughs's fantasy of male motherhood could be reasonably described as eugenicist. Corea defines eugenics as "the attempt to improve the human race by controlling who is allowed to reproduce"[31], whilst literary critic William Greenslade (in a more charitable tone) records that, for pioneering positivist scientists such as Francis Galton (1822-1911), the enlightened aim of the eugenicist project was "the conscious development and improvement of man by the application of rational principles".[32] As the historians Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann have demonstrated, the later and wholly *irrational* attempt by the Third Reich to remodel Germany (and much of Europe) into a "barbaric utopia" hierarchically ordered "in accordance with racial criteria"[33], certainly owes much to a perverse interpolation of genocidal anti-Semitism into eugenic theory. Corea claims that after the Nazis "brought eugenics into disrepute, and new developments in anthropology, genetics and mental testing undercut the scientific basis of the movement"[34], some US eugenicists found a new (and respectable) "vision of the apocalypse" in the supposed threat to the world's resources posed by "overpopulation"; with increased birth control, sterilisation, and the introduction of "man-child" pills being among the first remedies suggested.

Burroughs has never specifically allied himself with any eugenicist or racial theories, yet he has frequently emphasised in his interviews the dangers posed by overpopulation; and he has also advocated the use of sex predetermination (i.e. man-child) techniques[35]:

> Everyone wants a boy, so we're going to have more and more boys. It's the best thing. I don't mind if we don't have any girls at all.[36]

Burroughs also shares the eugenicist view that the quantitative increase in the world's population is complemented by a qualitative decline in the pool of available

genetic material. In his later works especially, Burroughs's conviction that the human race is degenerating chronically (and concomitantly destroying the planet) borders on the misanthropic, as in *Ghost of Chance* (1991):

> When we see the planet as an organism, it is obvious who the enemies of the planet are. Their name is legion. They dominate and populate the planet [...] Bulldozers are destroying the rain forests, the cowering lemurs and flying foxes [...] All going, to make way for more and more devalued human stock, with less and less wild spark [...] A vast mud-slide of soulless sludge.[37]

When interviewed by Robert Palmer for *Rolling Stone* magazine in May 1972, Burroughs candidly admitted that, for himself, the female-free communities of *The Wild Boys* were "desirable" and hopefully predictive of coming events; adding that he would "certainly have no objections if lesbians would like to do the same". As a trenchant satirist of racist attitudes in the southern states of America, it seems curious that Burroughs should believe that the strongest guarantee for future harmony should lie in separatism and not integration. The utopian dream of *The Wild Boys* is predicated upon a systematic hostility towards women:

> Women are trouble. It is another organism with interests perhaps basically irreconcilable with the male interests - which has installed itself as indispensable.[38]

It bears underlining that *The Wild Boys* is a work of fiction and not a political manifesto or social policy document. Burroughs's evolutionary fantasy seeks to exclude women and not exterminate them. Yet, for many readers, the distinction may seem hopelessly academic.

Having said this, Burroughs's radical utopia is very much a product of its insurrectionary times (Maurice Girodias, for example, the original publisher of *The Naked Lunch*, spent much of the late 60s opportunistically promoting Olympia USA's *S.C.U.M. Manifesto* [Society for Cutting Up Men], after its young separatist

author, Valerie Solanas, shot and critically wounded Andy Warhol).[39] Meanwhile, fringe revolutionary groups such as the Black Panthers, the Angry Brigade, and the Weathermen gained mainstream notoriety through their apocalyptic slogans, utopian ideals, and occasional terrorist activities. In West Germany, the Baader-Meinhof gang evolved out of the alternative living experiments of the student left[40]; whilst in Amsterdam, a young, fellow commune dweller (and battered wife) named Andrea Dworkin, worked hard on her first book, an ambitious utopian tract aimed at attacking the misogynistic myths of both the patriarchal establishment and the permissive counterculture.[41] Dworkin, of course, went on to become (in the words of a recent commentator) "the most celebrated, outrageous, and influential enemy of the male sex that America, or perhaps any country, ha[s] ever produced"[42], whilst her book, *Woman Hating* (eventually published in 1974), offered a dazzling vision of an apocalyptic new world, every bit as incendiary as Burroughs's promiscuous fairyland of warrior children and absent mothers.[43]

Dworkin's published views on Burroughs are restricted to just one, dismissive comment regarding the supposed "rapist frenzy" of the latter's fiction.[44] Nevertheless, the pair could be said to be make unlikely bedfellows. For despite some obvious differences in their political outlooks, Burroughs and Dworkin do still manage to share many enmities, obsessions, and revolutionary aims; and both are ardent apocalypticists, of course, given to utopian speculation and calculated provocative behaviour. Thus, like Burroughs, Dworkin insists that we live in a "concentration-camp world of polarity" (WH 191) which can only be usurped through subversive action:

> We want to destroy sexism, that is, polar role definitions of male and female, man and woman. We want to destroy patriarchal power at its source, the family; in its most hideous form, the nation-state. We want to destroy the structure of culture as we know it, its art, its churches, its laws: all of the images, institutions, and structural mental sets which define women as hot fuck tubes, hot slits. (WH 153).

Each too, despises notions of *maternal love* ("the real basis of human (male-dominated) sexuality" - WH 38) and, especially, *romantic love*: "Romantic love, in pornography as in life, is the mythic celebration of female negation. For a woman, love is defined as her willingness to submit to her annihilation ... For the female, the capacity to love is exactly synonymous with the capacity to sustain abuse and the appetite for it".[45] Both writers share a morbid distrust of language ("I write however with a broken tool" - WH 26) and the body; "Death is our only remedy", advocates Dworkin (paraphrasing Ginsberg, before going on to anticipate Deleuze and Guattari[46]): "We recognize the body as the source of our suffering. We dream of a death which will mean freedom from it because here on earth, in our bodies, we are fragmented, anguished - either men or women, bound by the very fact of a particularized body to a role which is annihilating, totalitarian, which forbids us any real self-becoming or self-realization" (WH 34).[47] As with Burroughs, Dworkin also believes that we are *here to go* (i.e. to either evolve or perish): "women must seize power, or we must accomplish the transformation into androgyny" (WH 191).

The (inevitably violent) feminist seizure of political power in Amerika may prove to be counterproductive, however ("we wonder how to kill pigs with becoming pigs" - WH 76); yet there could be only minutes to go until the genocidal plans of the male (master) race are finally realised (Dworkin, like Gena Corea, fears that the reproductive female will only be tolerated "until the technology of creating life in the laboratory is perfected" - WH 93). Thus, the visionary core of *Woman Hating* is provided by Dworkin's extraordinary utopian proposal for the redemption of humankind through the creation of an androgynous community capable of destroying all 'polar role definitions'. In this pansexual paradise, androgynous multisexuality will dismantle the ubiquitous structures (both external and internal) of sexual repression and exploitation; thus facilitating "the fullest expression of human sexual possibility and creativity" (WH 153).[48] According to Dworkin's truly apocalyptic vision, such radical evolutionary change will boldly herald a cataclysmic

(yet ultimately healing) cultural transformation and the begetting of "a new kind of human being and a new kind of human community" (WH 192).

The androgynous regime will dispense with the reductive and totalitarian "fictions" of both heterosexuality ("which is properly defined as the ritualized behavior built on polar role definition" - WH 174) and homosexuality (which although preferable to heterosexuality, is nevertheless "polluted by internalized notions of polarity, coupling, and role-playing" - WH 185). The recognition that sexual identity or preference are not discrete but polymorphous will be complemented by the development of a liberatory erotics of, in Dworkin's words, *androgynous fucking*. Thus, bestiality and incest will flourish (although each will be distinctly "nonpredatory" and somehow unable to "degenerate into abuse"):

> Primary bestiality (fucking between people and other animals) is found in all nonindustrial societies. Secondary bestiality (generalized erotic relationships between people and other animals) is found everywhere on the planet, on every city street, in every rural town. Bestiality is an erotic reality, one which clearly places people in nature, not above it [...] Needless to say, in androgynous community, human and other-animal relationships would become more explicitly erotic, and [...] that eroticism in its pure form is life-affirming and life-enriching.
>
> The parent-child relationship is primarily erotic because all human relationships are primarily erotic. The incest taboo is a particularized form of repression, one which functions as the bulwark of all the other repressions. The incest taboo [...] denies us essential fulfillment with the parents whom we love [...] The destruction of the incest taboo is essential to the development of cooperative human community based on the free-flow of natural androgynous eroticism. (WH 187-89).

Dworkin's ecstatic conception of a pleasure garden of unlimited sensual delights may seem suspiciously like dangerous twaddle to us in the late 90s, but her intoxicating utopia, like Burroughs's licentious dream of the copulatory wild boys,

predates our current puritanical climate and curiously exaggerated anxieties (obsessions) regarding both the welfare of children and the dangers of adult sexual free-expression. The grim irony, of course, is that the dubious antics (including ad hoc alliances with the forces of the Christian Right), throughout the 80s and 90s, of feminist separatists and pro-censorship lobbyists such as Dworkin, Catherine A. MacKinnon, and Diana E.H. Russell, have actually done much to foster contemporary hysterical and repressive attitudes; thus effectively blocking any utopian hope of an enlightened or sophisticated approach to human (poly)sexuality.[49]

Unlike Dworkin and her supporters in the anti-pornography movement, however, Burroughs has consistently opposed *any* form of censorship, lamenting that "the anxiety of which censorship is the overt expression has so far prevented any scientific investigation of sexual phenomena".[50] Such differences apart, what conspicuously unites the radical utopias of both Burroughs and Dworkin is that each is informed to a significant degree by a yearning for a prelapsarian world of sensual innocence and spiritual wholeness. Thus, Dworkin postulates that "humans once were androgynous - hermaphroditic and androgynous", created in the precise image of a "constantly recurring androgynous godhead" (WH 197), whilst the critic Wayne Pounds has tellingly observed that "like the gnostic Blake, [Burroughs] sees history as determined by a primordial fall from an androgynous unity into a strife-ridden duality whose chief expressions are language and sexual difference".[51] Ultimately, Burroughs and Dworkin share the distinguishing characteristic common to almost all apocalyptic writers; each claims to have exclusively divined the (r)evolutionary measures needed to engineer man's liberation from his current state of bondage, hence ensuring the restoration of Paradise and eternal salvation.

In 1974, the year that *Woman Hating* was finally published, Burroughs (by now sixty years old) returned to America so that he could teach a creative

writing course at the Community College of New York. His stay in the US was to become a permanent one (London had become a lonely and increasingly expensive redoubt); and Burroughs was soon at work on an ambitious new project, a major novel which would eventually take him seven years to complete.[52] During this time, Burroughs continued the habit of reworking his earlier texts (revised editions of *The Job* (1974) and *The Last Words of Dutch Schultz* (1975) appeared, as well as two versions of *Port of Saints* (1973/80); a volume collecting (and cutting-up) material not included in *The Wild Boys*, with the intention of amplifying the separatist cosmology of the child warriors):

> ... the wild boys put all thought of women from their minds and bodies. Anyone who joins them must leave women behind. There is no vow. It is a state of mind you must have to make contact with the wild boys. According to the legend an evil old doctor, who called himself God and us dogs, created the first boy in his adolescent image. The boy peopled the garden with male phantoms that rose from his ejaculations. This angered God, who was getting on in years. He decided it endangered his position as CREATOR. So he crept up upon the boy and anesthetized him and made Eve from his rib. Henceforth all creation of beings would process through female channels. But some of Adam's phantoms refused to let God near them under any pretext. After millenia these cool remote spirits breathe in the wild boys who will never again submit to the yoke of female flesh. And anyone who joins them must leave woman behind forever.[53]

Burroughs also maintained his practice of allowing smaller publishing houses to produce his more challenging and experimental work; such as *The Book of Breeething* (1974), a short text with accompanying illustrations by Robert F. Gale[54], and *Blade Runner: A Movie* (1979), a screenplay treatment for a film set in a post-apocalyptic New York City.[55]

The return to New York proved to be significant to Burroughs for a number of reasons. It was there that Allen Ginsberg introduced him to James Grauerholz, a young acolyte of the Beat movement who, after a brief affair with

Burroughs, became his full-time secretary and business manager. Grauerholz not only organised Burroughs's schedule, he helped collate and edit the author's various manuscripts and notebooks (in much the same way as Ginsberg himself had taken charge of the scattered "Naked Lunch" routines back in Tangier); indeed, Grauerholz, who today commands William Burroughs Communications, has proved to be another important collaborator in the Burroughs enterprise. Being back in New York inevitably raised Burroughs's media profile in the US, thus allowing him to negotiate more lucrative book contracts (on unpublished titles such as *Queer*) and generous advances for his latest work in progress. New York also left Burroughs well placed to assumed the mantle of godfather to the burgeoning punk movement[56]; with Grauerholz installed as tour manager, Burroughs spent much of the late 70s and early 80s on the road, reading at venues as diverse as university lecture theatres, punk rock clubs, and performance art spaces.[57] The unlikely spectacle of the elderly and increasingly fragile-looking Burroughs spitting out his routines against a backdrop of Marshall amplifier stacks nevertheless won him a legion of young admirers who, up to that point, may well have assumed that the beat guru had OD'd on smack sometime back in the early 60s. The numerous official and bootlegged recordings of Burroughs's readings reveal him to be a witty and captivating performer, wisely steering away from much of the cut-up material and focusing instead on the comic highlights of *The Naked Lunch* and the later trilogy.

Grauerholz also helped Sylvère Lotringer and the poet John Giorno to organise *The Nova Convention;* a three day multimedia event held in New York on November 30, December 1, and December 2, 1978. The festival not only enshrined Burroughs's place in the punk/avant garde community (fellow performers included Patti Smith, John Cage, the B-52's, Frank Zappa, Laurie Anderson, and Philip Glass), it also provided a platform for him to launch his apocalyptic concept of *Here to Go;* the latest radical proposal for mankind's redemption. Speaking at the Entermedia Theater on December 2, Burroughs explained:

> People have asked me what the whole Nova Convention is about [...] *This is the space age and we are here to go.* However, the space programme has been restricted so far to a mediocre elite who at great expense have gone to the moon in an aqualung. Now, they're not really looking for space; they're looking for more time, like the lungfish and the walking catfish, they're not really looking for a new dimension or a dimension different from water; they're looking for more water [...]
>
> And as we leave the aqualung of Time we may step into an epic comparable to the days when the early mariners set out to explore an unknown world [...] Only those who are willing to leave everything they have ever known in Time need apply. It is necessary to travel; it is not necessary, and becoming increasingly difficult, to live.[58]

Navigare necesse es. Vivare no es necesse. Burroughs's credo has its roots in his dissatisfaction with the manned Apollo space programme of the previous decade. In common with J.G. Ballard and the "inner space" writers of the English New Wave science fiction movement (of whom more in the following chapter), Burroughs is largely unimpressed by the supposedly innovative technological achievement of physically propelling a man into space. Simply going to 'the moon in an aqualung' is symptomatic of a far greater error; that of failing to embrace fully the visionary potential of the human imagination:

> The astronaut is not looking for Space, he's looking for more Time to do exactly the same things. He's equating Space with Time and the Space Program is simply an attempt to transport all our insoluble problems, our impasses, and take them somewhere else where exactly the same thing is bound to occur. (Reading given at the "1980 Planet Earth Conference", Aix-en-Provence, France).[59]

Thus, the ethos of the space exploration programme is fundamentally flawed. Writing in *The Job*, Burroughs makes it clear that even the clean-cut family men sent into outer space by NASA were certainly not possessed of the right stuff:

> Doctor Paine of the Space Center in Houston says: "This flight was a triumph for the squares of this world who aren't hippies and work with slide rules and aren't ashamed to say a prayer now and then." Is this the great adventure of space? Are these men going to take the step into regions literally unthinkable in verbal terms? To travel in space you must leave the old verbal garbage behind: God talk, country talk, mother talk, love talk, party talk. You must learn to exist with no religion no country no allies. You must learn to live alone in silence. Anyone who prays in space is not there.[60]

Under the bureaucratic auspices of the US and Soviet governments the final frontier has been systematically closed to the wild boys of the world; and if the space agencies (it is mischievously implied) are unwilling or unable to dispatch men of the calibre of John Dillinger or Billy the Kid to explore the stars, then any long-term ambitions regarding the successful colonisation of other planets are hopelessly doomed (and on a more prosaic level, the siting of many of NASA's industrial facilities in the Southern states may also provoke Burroughs's WASP-ish hostility).

Speaking at the Nova Convention, Burroughs is emphatic that not only are we here to go (meaning that our true biologic and spiritual destiny is to evolve beyond our current physiological condition), we *need* to go:

> Now if we see the Earth as a spaceship and go further to invoke the comparison of a lifeboat, it is, of course, of vital concern to everybody in the boat if the crew or the passengers start polluting the supply of food and water, distributing supplies on a grossly inequitable basis, knocking holes in the bottom of the boat, or worst of all, plotting to blow the boat out from under us. And what more blatant *Nova Conspiracy* than the development and use of an Atom Bomb? As the founder of the Nova Conspiracy [J. Robert] Oppenheimer said; "We have become Shiva, Destroyer of Worlds".[61]

Ultimately, then, *Here to Go* is a Burroughsian theology of mutability, presented as a transcendental antidote to the immediate threat of nuclear annihilation. *Authentic*

space travel requires the jettisoning of language and polarised hostilities; it need not involve machine technology at all:

> The last frontier is being closed to youth. However there are many roads to space. To achieve complete freedom from past conditioning is to be in space.[62]

The apocalyptic concept of Here to Go most heavily informs *The Place of Dead Roads* (1983), the central volume of Burroughs's late trilogy. In order to enhance our understanding of this novel, however, it may be wise to first consider *Cities of the Red Night* (1981), the opening book in the series, and Burroughs's first major work since the publication of *The Wild Boys* a whole decade earlier.[63] *Cities of the Red Night* is a postmodern text of great fluidity, in which (as the critic Steven Shaviro has noted) narrative, character, and milieu are each subjected to "the violence of continual metamorphosis".[64] The novel artfully establishes multiple themes and plots, returning to some whilst casually discarding others; and certain major characters, in particular, appear in one narrative, and then surface in another, before fading inexplicably from the stage (or merging effortlessly into each other). Nothing is True and Everything is Permitted. Yet, *Cities of the Red Night* is a playful rather than a difficult book, and it is far more accessible to the general reader than the vast majority of Burroughs's previous work. It is still possible to discern at least three main narratives in the novel; a pirate fantasy, a hardboiled detective story, and a historical romance concerning the six red cities: "located in an area roughly corresponding to the Gobi Desert, a hundred thousand years ago" (CRN 141).

> The first narrative thread, the pirate tale, presents what can be considered as the novel's governing theme; that of "retroactive Utopia" (CRN 11).

The novel opens:

> The liberal principles embodied in the French and American revolutions and later in the liberal revolutions of 1848 had already

> been codified and put into practice by pirate communes a hundred years earlier. (CRN 9).

One such commune, *Libertatia*, was established on the Madagascan coast by a buccaneer named Captain Mission. Those who lived there submitted to the egalitarian *Articles* of the colony, which guaranteed religious freedom, democratic voting rights, and the abolition of slavery and capital punishment. Mission's outlaw project eventually succumbed, prompting Burroughs to envision a utopia which is already lost to the past:

> Imagine such a movement on a world-wide scale [...] The land would belong to those who used it. No white-man boss, no Pukka Sahib, no Patróns, no colonists. The escalation of mass production and concentration of population in urban areas would be halted, for who would work in their factories and buy their products when he could live from the fields and the sea and the lakes and the rivers in areas of unbelievable plenty? And living from the land, he would be motivated to preserve its resources [...]
>
> The chance was there. The chance was missed. The principles of the French and American revolutions became windy lies in the mouths of politicians [...] There is simply no room left for "freedom from the tyranny of government" since city dwellers depend on it for food, power, water, transportation, protection, and welfare. Your right to live where you want, with companions of your choosing, under laws to which you agree, died in the eighteenth century with Captain Mission. Only a miracle or a disaster could restore it. (CRN 11-12).

Many of Burroughs's deepest political fantasies coalesce in this mournful catalogue of lost chances and shipwrecked dreams; the Edenic plenitude of separatist self-sufficiency (recalling/anticipating the pioneering values of the American frontier) and republican liberty is swamped by the catastrophic excesses of Burroughs's *bête noire*, the Industrial Revolution. The apocalyptic option of 'a miracle or a disaster' is

the restorative grail pursued by Burroughs's protean characters for the remaining nine hundred pages of the trilogy.

The concept of an alternative history of the West is not a new one for Burroughs. In *Academy 23* (1972) he records the subterranean activities of a global network of boys' clubs, established in September 1899 (the date of Hassan i Sabbah's silent skywriting) with the task of restoring order to a society fast approaching the ground zero of the twentieth century. Under the tutelage of "A.S. - Academy Security" (Burroughs's adolescent counterparts to "the *samurai*, the 'voluntary nobility'" of H.G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* - 1905)[65], World War II was "easily averted by mediation ... and in consequence no atomic weapons were developed".[66] This is Burroughs's first 'retroactive Utopia', an alternative *Boy's Own* account of the pre-emptive routing of Oppenheimer's Nova Conspiracy:

> One academy could bring back hope to dead radioactive riot-torn streets to this contaminated overpopulated mismanaged planet [...] If you want the world you could have in terms of discoveries and resources now in existence be prepared to fight for that world. To fight for that world in the streets.[67]

The revolutionary rhetoric which ignites *Academy 23* is conspicuously absent from *Cities of the Red Night*, however. The later novel is altogether cooler and more considered; or calculating, even. The older Burroughs has little time for the fleeting euphoria of insurrectionary street-fighting and perhaps even distrusts the utopian model itself (or at least Captain Mission's hopelessly idealistic version of it). Thus, in his fictional retracing of the earliest days of Libertatia's fledgling republic, Burroughs insists upon one vitally important amendment to the constitutional Articles; the reintroduction of the death penalty:

> Any body of men will be found to contain ten to fifteen percent of incorrigible troublemakers. In fact, most of the misery on this planet derives from this ten percent. It is useless to try and reeducate them, since their only function is to harm and harass others [...] There is but

> one sure remedy. In future operations, as soon as these individuals are discovered, either by advance intelligence or by on-the-spot observation, they will be killed on any pretext. In the words of the Bard, "Only fools do those villains pity who are punished ere they have done their mischief". (CRN 170).

The Wellsian analogue here is the dark treatise *Anticipations* (1901):

> It has become apparent that whole masses of human population are, as a whole, inferior in their claim upon the future, to other masses, that they cannot be given opportunities or trusted with power as the superior peoples are trusted, that their characteristic weaknesses are contagious and detrimental in the civilizing fabric, and that their range of incapacity tempts and demoralizes the strong. To give them equality is to sink to their level, to protect and cherish them is to be swamped in their fecundity.[68]

It should be noted, however, that although the shared genocidal rationalism of Burroughs's 'one sure remedy' and Wells's final solution for "the People of the Abyss"[69] may tell us a little of the prejudices of the authors concerned, far more is revealed about the essentially problematic nature of utopian planning. Each utopia, like each apocalypse, proposes a strange and, in many cases, frightening new world which, if ever achieved, is likely to be realised through momentous upheaval rather than peaceful, negotiated settlement. Utopias also have a nasty habit of suggesting, both for their readers and creators, as many fresh dilemmas as they *appear* to solve. It is difficult to be absolutely certain of Burroughs's attitude towards utopia in *Cities of the Red Night*; a casual reading may indicate that his sympathies rest entirely with Captain Mission's renegade commune. But, as David Ayers has pointed out, Mission's glorious enterprise is, in fact, no more than a "plausible forgery"[70]; a literary invention which can be traced back to the second volume of Daniel Defoe's *A General History of the Pyrates* (1728).[71] Burroughs does not acknowledge whether or not he is aware of the true provenance

of the exemplary pirate myth which animates his work (although I suspect that he is). In this context, the remarks addressed to Clem *Williamson* Snide, "private asshole" (CRN 44) and questing hero of the novel's detective narrative, are not without significance:

> Changes, Mr. Snide, can only be effected by alterations in the *original*. The only thing not prerecorded in a prerecorded universe are the prerecordings themselves. The copies can only repeat themselves word for word. *A virus is a copy*. You can pretty it up, cut it up, scramble it - it will reassemble in the same form. (CRN 151).

Even if Burroughs believed Mission's maritime republic to be an absolute historical fact, it would nevertheless be a *copy;* a prettyfied, cut up, and scrambled vision of what is, essentially, just another political order, destined to *reassemble in the same form* (additionally, it is difficult not to detect in the above quotation a thinly-veiled valediction to the Cut-Up method, that most utopian of literary inquiries). This may be one reason why Burroughs's reintroduces the death penalty to Libertatia; it provides the men of the new republic with an inquisitional apparatus to match that of the invading Spanish colonists. As Herr Doktor Kurt Unruh von Steinplatz asserts in his 1961 four-volume treatise on "the nature, development and terminal stages of the Authority Virus": "He who opposes force with counterforce alone forms that which he opposes and is formed by it. History shows that when a system of government is overthrown by force a system in many respects similar takes place".[72] Steinplatz's learned study, incidentally, is a wholly fictitious work (worthy of Defoe himself) which Burroughs refers to and quotes from in a number of novels and interviews. Traditional utopian models (fictional or otherwise) do not, ultimately, tamper with the pre-recordings or effect authentic (r)evolutionary growth. Perhaps the radical species change ('alterations in the *original*') of the Here to Go scenario (still yet to be proposed in *The Place of Dead Roads*) represents the only form of utopian speculation that Burroughs can subscribe to with any real degree of comfort.

The final clue towards Burroughs possessing a deeply ambivalent attitude towards the utopia presented in *Cities of the Red Night* is provided by the prevailing mood of the novel's concluding chapter. There is little hope for the future, only a haunted nostalgia for the failed Edenic experiments of the past (millennial exercises which were, of course, inevitably doomed to crushing defeat):

> The pool of the Palace is covered with algae. A snake slithers into the green water. Weeds grow through the rusty shell of a bucket in the *haman*. The stairs leading to the upper porch have fallen. Nothing here but the smell of empty years [...]
>
> We were in Panama waiting for the Spanish. I am back in the fort watching the advancing soldiers through a telescope, closer and closer to death.
>
> *"Go back!"* I am screaming without a throat, without a tongue - *"Get in your galleons and go back to Spain!"*
>
> [...] Better weapons led to better and better weapons, until the earth is a grenade with the fuse burning.
>
> I remember a dream of my childhood. I am in a beautiful garden. As I reach out to touch the flowers they wither under my hands. A nightmare feeling of foreboding and desolation comes over me as a great mushroom-shaped cloud darkens the earth. (CRN 286-87).

All the great dreams of Utopia are ended. *Adam's phantoms* must melt into the air; it is at last closing time in the dissolving Gardens of the West.

Speaking to Conrad Knickerbocker in 1965, Burroughs remarked that his next book would be an uncharacteristically "straight narrative" concerning "the whole concept of a gunfighter": "I'm not sure if it's possible, but I want to try. I've been thinking about the western for years".[73] The project would continue to preoccupy Burroughs for some time further, and it would be nearly twenty years until *The Place of Dead Roads*, his long-awaited western, was finally written and published.[74] The hero of the book is Kim Carsons, a hip young gunslinger who yearns "to be a dedicated assassin in an all-male society" (PDR 20). The novel opens

with his death, in a shoot-out at the Boulder cemetery, on (that date again) September 17, 1899. The remainder of *The Place of Dead Roads* chronicles Kim's long journey to a violent and dusty death; retracing his boyhood homosexuality and Zen-like training in tactics, weaponry, and the cultivation of visionary dream-states (Burroughs's space opera is grounded in English Romanticism):

> Kim considers these imaginary space trips to other worlds as practice for the real thing, like target shooting. As a prisoner serving a life sentence can think only of escape, so Kim takes for granted that the only purpose of his life is space travel [...]
>
> Kim knows that the first step toward space exploration is to examine the human artifact with *biologic* alterations in mind that will render our H.A. more suitable for space conditions and space travel ... We are like water creatures looking up at the land and air and wondering how we can survive in that alien medium. The water we live in is Time. That alien medium we glimpse beyond time is Space. And that is where we are going [...]
>
> Kim sees dreams as a vital link to our biologic and spiritual destiny in space. Deprived of this air line we die. The way to kill a man or a nation is to cut off his dreams, the way the whites are taking care of the Indians: killing their dreams, their magic, their familiar spirits. (PDR 40-42).

Somewhat confusingly, "Kim Carsons" is also the pen name of William Seward Hall, the author of numerous pulp westerns and other boys' books; each character is, in effect, interchangeable with the other, and both share certain biographical details with the actual William Seward Burroughs. Hall's life is "a war played out on the chessboard of his writings" (PDR 116) and his westerns are apocalyptically encoded with secret messages for their juvenile readership:

> William Seward Hall ... he was a corridor, a hall, leading to many doors [...] a guardian of the knowledge and of those who could use it [...] he developed new ways of imparting the knowledge to others [...] he concealed and revealed the knowledge in fictional form. Only those for whom the knowledge is intended will find it. (PDR 115).[75]

Kim Carsons is also something of a writer; for a magazine called *Boy's Life* he writes a "very educational" short story entitled "The Baron Says These Things" (PDR 29-34). The tale concerns a children's crusade to exterminate the B.B.s (Bible Belts):

> The B.B.s are completely possessed by a Venusian virus. The whole Christian religion, Catholic and Protestant, is a Venusian ploy [...]
>
> "You mean, Sarge, that most of the trouble on Earth is caused by Venusians in human bodies?"
>
> "Now you're getting smart."
>
> "Wouldn't it be a good idea to kill these mothers?"
>
> "Now you're getting smarter. You are here to learn the theory and practice of Shiticide. Boys will be organized into Shit Slaughter troops ... the S.S., with two phosphorescent cobras at their lapels ...
>
> *"Slaughter the shits of the world. They poison the air you breathe."*

Kim's thoroughly offensive apprentice piece prefigures the central theme of *The Place of Dead Roads;* the Manichaean conflict between *The Shits* and *The Johnson Family*. According to Carsons/Hall/Burroughs, the basic mark of a shit is that he *has* to be RIGHT; "*they*" are arch-conservatives who support the Church and ruthlessly persecute anybody who disagrees with them (*Dead Roads* is venomous in its hostility towards organised religion). Carsons notes in his journal that the Shits are, in fact, alien parasites whose "precise intention is to destroy human intelligence, to blunt human awareness and to block human beings out of space" (PDR 96). The invaders maintain power through manipulation of the Word, and thanks to the Industrial Revolution ("a virus revolution, dedicated to controlled proliferation of identical objects and persons" - PDR 98) they have a "vast reservoir of stupid bigoted uncritical human hosts":

> They are more at home occupying women than men. Once they have a woman, they have the man she cohabits with. Women must be regarded as the principle reservoir of the alien virus parasite. Women and religious sons of bitches. Above all, religious women. (PDR 97).

The democratic process is also anathema to the young Carsons (and, one suspects, to the elder Burroughs): "the rule of the majority is to their advantage since the majority can always be manipulated". Behind this moron majority, there is a hard core of "ten to twenty percent of folks", who are out and out, irredeemable shits. Their punishment is decreed: "We seek a Total Solution to the Shit Problem: Slaughter the shits of the world like cows with the aftosa" (PDR 155).

The shiticide will be co-ordinated by agents of *The Johnson Family*, the utopian cell dedicated to "the realization of our biologic and spiritual destiny in space" (PDR 154). In a prefatory note to the novel, Burroughs explains that ""The Johnson family" was a turn-of-the-century expression to designate good bums and thieves". Unlike the Shits, the Johnsons are quite capable of minding their own business and they will only "give help when help when help is needed" (given that the membership of the Johnsons consists almost exclusively of young male outlaws and gunfighters, it might not be inappropriate to record that the name Johnson also enjoys wide currency as a slang term for the penis).[76] The spiritual father of the Johnsons and their "all-out worldwide space program" (PDR 102) is the by now familiar figure of Hassan i Sabbah, founding prophet of the all-male Ismaili Assassins cult:

> Hassan i Sabbah was well known through the Moslem world just as Kim was known as a gunfighter throughout the Old West [...] What Hassan i Sabbah learned in Egypt was that *paradise actually exists and that it can be reached*. The Egyptians called it the Western Lands [...] This is no vague eternal heaven for the righteous. This is *an actual place* at the end of a very dangerous road.
>
> The Garden of Eden was a space station, from which we were banished to the surface of the planet to live by the sweat of mortal brows in a constant losing fight with gravity. But banished by whom? An asshole God who calls himself Jehovah or whatever [...]
>
> "Nothing is true. Everything is permitted." Last words of Hassan i Sabbah. And what is the truest thing to a human mark? Birth and Death. The Old Man showed his assassins freedom from rebirth and death. He created actual beings, designed for space travel [...]

> New beings. You can't fake it. You can't breathe in fake lungs. (PDR 170-73).

Burroughs's novel records an apocalyptic vision of the universe as cosmic battlefield: "Good and evil are in a state of conflict. The outcome is uncertain" (PDR 102); and if *The Wild Boys* rewrites *Peter Pan* as homosexual fantasy, then *The Place of Dead Roads* is *Star Wars* brutally reshot by Sam Peckinpah.

Burroughs's principal textual source for his novel is an obscure volume entitled *You Can't Win* (1926), the autobiography of Jack Black, a 'good bum' and original Johnson.[77] Salt Chunk Mary, for example, the "mother of the Johnson Family" (PDR 122), appears in both narratives:

> "Did you eat yet?" was the first thing you heard after entering her house. "I have a pot of beans on the stove and a fine chunk of salt pork in them." [...] She could say "no" quicker than any woman I ever knew, and none of them ever meant "yes." (*You Can't Win*, 1926).[78]

> She keeps a pot of pork and beans and a blue porcelain coffee pot always on the stove. You eat first, then you talk business, rings and watches slopped out on the kitchen table. She names a price. She doesn't name another. Mary could say "no" quicker than any woman Kim ever knew and none of her no's ever meant yes. (*The Place of Dead Roads*, 1983).[79]

Burroughs deviates from Black's account in one significant respect; in both tales Salt Chunk Mary is a no-nonsense "fence" (a trader in stolen property), but in the earlier text her "principal business" is prostitution, ruling her "half-dozen "girls" with a heavy hand". As Carsons and his criminal gang (the *Wild Fruits*) have no desire for female contact, Mary's brothel-keeping activities are excised from the later work. Black's memoir commemorates a world that, even in the 1920s, was virtually extinct; his *bum's utopia* of cat burglars, hobos, "yeggs", and "jungle buzzards"[80] could not possibly (*You Can't Win*) uphold the outlaw values of the Old West, as towns and

cities established and enforced an increasingly repressive set of bureaucratic measures. Burroughs suggests that through Here to Go, however, the remaining Johnsons may eventually triumph:

> So our local war revolves around a basically simple situation: a conflict between those who must go into space or die and those who will die if we go. They need us for their film [...]
>
> Yes we can lose any number of times. *They* can lose only once [...] So what bullet, what smell can rupture or damage or immobilize or totally destroy the film? Quite simply, any action or smell not prerecorded by the prerecorder [...] This violates the most basic laws of a predictable control-oriented universe. Introduce one unforeseen and therefore unforeseeable factor and the whole structure collapses like a house of cards. (PDR 219-20).

But such a magnificent victory is not for Kim; like Keats and Rimbaud and Denton Welch[81] and all the other "flawed, doomed but undefeated, radiant heroes who attempted the impossible, [and] stormed the citadels of heaven" (PDR 201-2) before him, Kim *loses*, and dies still tethered to the planet, marooned on the place of dead roads.[82] Other roads to the Western Lands may still be opened by Here to Go, however, and in the meantime: "the immortality of a writer is to be taken literally. Whenever anyone reads his words the writer is there. He lives in his readers" (PDR 42):

> So every time someone neatly guts his opponent with my spring knife or slices off two heads with one swipe of my spring sword I am there to drink the blood and smell the fresh entrails as they slop out with a divine squishy sound. I am there when the case bullet thuds home - right in the stomach ... what a lovely grunt! And my saga will shine in the eyes of adolescents squinting through gunsmoke.
>
> Kapow! Kapow! Kapow!

There is a photograph on the front cover of my edition of *The Place of Dead Roads* (John Calder paperback, 1984). It is an old black and white photograph,

probably dating from the mid-to-late nineteenth century, and it depicts three Indians and a cowboy, posed together. There is no way of knowing how they came to be united for that one frozen moment. Inside the book, we are invited to "look at this picture ... the Indians and the one white are all related, by location: the end of the line" (PDR 87-88):

> This picture is the end. The mold is broken.
>
> This final desolate knowledge impelled them to place phalluses, crudely carved from wood and painted with ocher, on male graves. The markers are scattered and broken. Only the picture remains [...]
>
> The picture itself is a cryptic glyph, an artifact out of context, fashioned for a forgotten purpose or a purpose blocked from future realization. And yet spelling out [...]
>
> Spelling out ... August 6, 1945: Hiroshima. Oppenheimer on screen: "We have become Death, Destroyer of Worlds."

There is another photograph. It can be found on page 32 of Victor Bockris's biographical study, *With William Burroughs: A Report from the Bunker* (Vermilion paperback, 1982).[83] The picture shows Burroughs and Grauerholz posed together, author and editor, magus and scribe; and displayed between them is the dust wrapper for a proof copy of *Cities of the Red Night*. The book jacket reproduces a detail from Pieter Brueghel the Elder's *The Triumph of Death* (c. 1560), and clearly visible on the front cover is a bold subtitle for the novel: *A Boy's Book*. Of course, at some late stage in the production process this thoroughly appropriate subtitle was omitted. The picture remains, however. Both *Cities of the Red Night* and *The Place of Dead Roads* are fashioned from the heroic narratives of boys' adventure fiction; each novel is a boy's fantasy book, imagining a wild boy wonderland free from school, work, and women. These adolescent utopias are founded, perversely enough, on the primary values of the boy scouting movement; self-sufficiency (elevated to the status of survivalism in *The Wild Boys* and *Dead Roads*) and honour (amongst thieves in *Dead Roads* and *Red Night*). What ultimately unites so much of Burroughs's

fiction, however, from *The Naked Lunch* (1959) to *Ghost of Chance* (1991), is the threat represented by a third picture, one described amid the intergalactic cops and robbers routines of another boy's book, *Nova Express*, as "The Blazing Photo from Hiroshima and Nagasaki".[84]

Fittingly, the genocidal menace of nuclear weapons is a central theme of *The Western Lands* (1987), the concluding novel of Burroughs's late trilogy.[85] The immortality offered by the Western Lands ("the natural, uncorrupted state of all male humans" - WL 75) is threatened by Oppenheimer's Nova Conspiracy ("Scientists always said there is no such thing as a soul. Now they are in a position to prove it. Total Death. Soul Death" - WL 9):

> And you know the difference between the air before August 6, 1945, and after that date: a certain security. No one is going to explode the atoms you are made of ... with a little strength and skill one could outlive himself ... but now ... (WL 58).

Many of Burroughs's familiar concerns are present in the novel; the deadly arrogance of rational thought processes informed by "the monumental fraud of cause and effect" (WL 30), the redemptive hope offered by the mysticism of the apocalyptic seer ("Writers don't write, they read and transcribe something already written" - WL 74), and the cosmic battle for men's souls fought between the Magical Universe (MU) and the pre-recorded, entropic "One God Universe" (OGU): "He knows everything, so there is nothing for him to learn. He can't go anywhere, since He is already fucking everywhere, like cowshit in Calcutta" (WL 113). Kim Carsons is revived, "striking histrionic poses on the buckling deck of a doomed planet" (WL 13); yet, uniquely, it is the figure of the aged writer, nearing death, which dominates the novel, not "debonair heartless Kim ... escape child of a frightened old man". *The Western Lands* begins with the figure of William Seward Hall, the "old writer" (WL 1), attempting "to write his way out of death" (WL 3), and ends when Hall finds that he cannot write anymore "because he had reached the end of words, the end of what

can be done with words" (WL 258). Hall remembers a "hectic, portentous time in Paris, in 1959, at the Beat Hotel, No. 9, rue Git-le-Coeur. We all thought we were interplanetary agents involved in a deadly struggle" (WL 252):

> Human feelings are withering away to lifeless fragments abandoned in a distant drawer. "Held a little boy photo in his withered hand ... dim jerky far away someone has shut a bureau drawer" [...] The boys? Even lust is dead. The boys wink out one by one, like dead stars. (WL 256).

The Western Lands reeks of death, yet suggests that in our ends we may also find our beginnings. Burroughs's final novel concludes with the words of another poet born in St. Louis, Missouri:

> In Tangier the Parade Bar is closed. Shadows are falling on the Mountain.
>
> "Hurry up, please. It's time."
>
> [novel ends]. (WL 258).

Chapter Four: J.G. Ballard - Which Way to Inner Space?

> I always prophesied that the Space Age was over. They should build spaceships of rice-paper and bamboo, decorated with poems.
>
> (J.G. Ballard, *1991 Interview*).

> All of my own fiction could be regarded as an attempt to escape from time.
>
> (J.G. Ballard, *Images of the Future*).

> The biggest developments of the immediate future will take place, not on the Moon or Mars, but on Earth, and it is *inner* space, not outer, that needs to be explored. The only truly alien planet is Earth.
>
> (J.G. Ballard, *Which Way to Inner Space?*).

> So we may conclude that the dropping of the atomic bombs was not so much the last military act of the second World War, as the first major operation of the cold diplomatic war with Russia now in progress.
>
> (P.M.S. Blackett, *Fear, War, and the Bomb*).

> Kim collected last words, all he could get his hands on. He knew these words were pieces in a vast jigsaw puzzle.
>
> (William S. Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*).[1]

Writing in 1977, in an essay published in the perhaps unlikely setting of *Vogue* magazine, J.G. Ballard had this to report on mankind's faltering first steps away from the planet:

> One of the most surprising but barely noticed events of the period since the Second World War has been the life and death of the space age. Almost twenty years ago to the day, 4 October 1957, I switched on the BBC news and heard for the first time the radio call-sign of Sputnik

1 as it circled the earth above our heads. Its urgent tocsin seemed to warn us of the arrival of a new epoch. As a novice science fiction writer, I listened to this harbinger of the space age with strong misgivings - already I was certain, though without the slightest evidence, that the future of science fiction, and for that matter of popular consciousness in general, lay not in outer space but in what I had already christened 'inner space', in a world increasingly about to be remade by the mind [...]

> Looking back, we can see that far from extending for ever into the future, the space age lasted for scarcely fifteen years: from Sputnik 1 and Gagarin's first flight in 1961 to the last Skylab mission in 1974 - and the first splashdown, significantly, *not* to be shown on television. After a casual glance at the sky, people turned around and went indoors.[2]

This chapter will explore J.G. Ballard's concept of *inner space,* as revealed in a number of apocalyptic texts, the most notable being a tetralogy of novels concerning global disaster; *The Wind from Nowhere* (1962)[3], *The Drowned World* (1962)[4], *The Drought* (1964/65)[5], and *The Crystal World* (1966).[6] These dark fantasies of world-wide destruction have repelled some observers, as we shall discover in a survey of critical responses to Ballard's end-of-the-world fictions. This chapter will also consider Ballard's debt to Surrealism and his uneasy relationship with both 'mainstream' literature and 'genre' Science Fiction. As is the case with William S. Burroughs, Ballard is a self-consciously apocalyptic writer and we shall discuss certain other similarities between the two in a concluding reading of Ballard's late stories *News from the Sun* (1981)[7] and *Myths of the Near Future* (1982).[8] Like Burroughs, Ballard has also pursued a radical course of literary experimentation, perhaps most successfully in *The Atrocity Exhibition* (1970); and this collection of 'condensed novels' will be examined, along with Ballard's other more unconventional works, in the next chapter.

I would like to begin, however, by briefly considering *The Voices of Time* (1960)[9], an important short story by Ballard first published in the modest

confines of a reasonably obscure (yet destined to be hugely influential) Science Fiction magazine called *New Worlds*.[10] The story is of particular interest for two reasons; firstly, because it offers a template for many of the themes and preoccupations of Ballard's later fiction and thus serves as useful introduction to his work as a whole, and secondly, because it neatly illustrates Ballard's aloofness from many of the established concerns of genre SF (e.g. rocket ships, time travel, robots, and ray guns). *The Voices of Time* opens with Ballard's hero, a neurosurgeon named Robert Powers, pausing to remember his former colleague, Whitby (a recent suicide), and "the strange grooves the biologist had cut, apparently at random, all over the floor of the empty swimming pool" (VT 7). Like his partner before him, Powers now finds himself "moving down the physical and mental gradients" with "detached fatalism"; his "slackening metabolism" the result of a widespread yet mysterious "narcoma syndrome" (VT 12), which may, the text obliquely suggests, have been triggered by overground H-Bomb tests on the Pacific Islands. As Powers lives out his last days he involves himself in a curious relationship with an enigmatic former patient, Kaldren, and his female companion, Coma (Powers spends the rest of his time constructing a "gigantic cipher" (VT 32) in the remote grounds of an "abandoned Air Force weapons range" (VT 23)).

In a particularly revealing episode, Kaldren invites Powers to view his "collection of final statements about homo sapiens" (VT 23); items such as an edition of Freud's complete works, recordings of Beethoven's *Späte Streichquartette*, an automatic novel, and an electrocardiogram tape labelled "Einstein, A.; Alpha Waves, 1922":

> Kaldren chattered away, explaining the significance of the so-called Terminal Documents. "They're end-prints, Powers, final statements, the products of total fragmentation. When I've got enough together I'll build a new world for myself out of them." He picked a thick paper-bound volume off one of the tables, riffled through its pages. "Association tests of the Nuremburg Twelve. I have to include these ..." (VT 32).

Kaldren also tells Powers of the "strange messages" received by the crew of the ill-fated *Mercury Seven* space mission (they were told that space exploration is futile) and shows him three ticker-tape machines constantly printing out sequences of numbers:

> 96,688,365,498,695
> 96,688,365,498,694
> 96,688,365,498,693
> 96,688,365,498,692 [...]
>
> "A diminishing mathematical progression. A count-down, if you like [...] they were first picked up at Jodrell Bank about twenty years ago. Nobody bothers to listen to them now [...] it's been estimated that by the time this series reaches zero the universe will have just ended [...]
>
> "You're not alone, Powers, don't think you are. These are the voices of time, and they're all saying goodbye to you. Think of yourself in a wider context. Every particle in your body, every grain of sand, every galaxy carries the same signature." (VT 29-31).

Ballard's entropic fantasy ends with Powers perfectly positioned at the centre of his weapons range mandala; the primitive structure serving as the mystical ground zero for the "myriad deaths of the cosmos" (VT 37):

> He climbed onto the platform and raised his eyes to the darkened sky, moving through the constellations to the island galaxies beyond them, hearing the thin archaic voices reaching to him across the millenia [...] Around him the outlines of the hills and the lake had faded, but the image of the mandala, like a cosmic clock, remained fixed before his eyes, illuminating the broad surface of the stream. Watching it constantly, he felt his body gradually dissolving, its physical dimensions melting into the vast continuum of the current, which bore him out into the centre of the great channel sweeping him onward, beyond hope now but at rest, down the broadening reaches of the river of eternity. (VT 35).

Such then is the basic scenario of *The Voices of Time*. Powers's extraordinary death has lead certain critics to dismiss the tale as a misanthropic hymn to disintegration and accuse Ballard of being "entropy's celebrant"[11] or a "poet of decay"[12]; Robert Platzner, for example, expresses a not uncommon view when he observes that "like the author of the Book of Revelations, Ballard occasionally exhibits signs of grim satisfaction at the spectacle of world annihilation".[13] In Platzner's reading the visionary conclusion to *The Voices of Time* represents a "metaphysical Slough of Despond" in which the entire human project is deemed "irrelevant".[14] Similarly, Charles Nicol reports that "the hope of transcendence leads instead to madness and destruction"[15]; and far from conquering the boundaries of time and entropy, Ballard's hero finds himself enmeshed in "an inescapable network of arid futility".[16] I would suggest, however, that *The Voices of Time* seeks to affirm rather than belittle or deny mankind's essentially harmonious relationship with the immense powers of the universe. Powers's climactic epiphany not only grants him a divine vision of the discrete identity of "each sand grain and salt crystal" (VT 34), it also affords him a greater realisation of the interconnectedness of all things in a single, vast, united cosmos. Bluntly put, Ballard's apocalypse celebrates the transient wonders of life and not the (admittedly irresistible) claims of the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

To be sure, Ballard's characters do, on occasion, display a level of fatalism which might lead one to read *The Voices of Time* as a paean to Thanatos; the biologist Whitby, for example, leaves behind a tape-recorded sermon which appears to be informed by both Spengler's *Decline* and Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895):

> Just as an individual organism's life span is finite, or the life of a yeast colony or a given species, so the life of an entire biological kingdom is of fixed duration. It's always been assumed that the evolutionary slope reaches forever upwards, but in fact the peak has already been reached, and the pathway now leads downward to the common biological grave [...] Five thousand centuries from now our

> descendants, instead of being multi-brained star-men, will probably be naked prognathus idiots with hair on their foreheads ... (VT 21).

There is a something of a hyperbolic feel to Whitby's grand *fin de siècle* pessimism, however: "My total failure, my absolute lack of any moral or biological right to existence, is implicit in every cell of my body". Maybe so, but also implicit in every cell of Whitby's body is the DNA signature, an internal voice of time to match the glorious external "time-song of a thousand galaxies" (VT 35). Ballard's essentially Romantic conception of the interrelatedness of each particle in the universe and his hero's concluding vision of the "majestic current" of "the river of eternity" is at complete odds with Whitby's reductive claim that life is "simply a matter of biochemistry" (VT 21). *The Voices of Time* suggests that man can, indeed, transcend the small matter of his own death and pursue instead (in both biological and spiritual terms) a lasting arrangement with the infinite.

Powers's unlikely tutor in learning the lessons of the "wider context" is the narcotomised Kaldren, curator of the "insane terminal documents" (VT 23). Kaldren's exhibits constitute the collected *Last Words* of Western Civilisation; the terminal scripts representing a doomsday code to be deciphered and acted upon. Kaldren's immersion in the "total fragmentation" of pornography and violence is an attempt to access the infinite through transgression and psychopathia. Of course, on one level the stockpile of final transmissions is a fetishistic record of trauma and suffering, but on another it is a survival kit of sorts, one which Kaldren hopes to use to break through to a "new world". Significantly, Kaldren's mystical anarchism is thoroughly opposed to Whitby's resigned rationalism (and, indeed, to Powers's holistic mandala[17]). This is not to say that his methods are wholly discredited, however; as a writer with certain affinities to the Romantic tradition, Ballard is by temperament disposed to value creative madness over scientific pragmatism and religious dogmatism. The deeply ambiguous figure of Kaldren is, in fact, the prototype for a common figure in Ballard's later apocalyptic texts; that of the

psychopathic saint. Thus, the tellingly named Blake (messianic "hero" of Ballard's most ambitious apocalypse, *The Unlimited Dream Company* - 1979) is able to justify his undeniably "perverse impulses" as innocent virtues in the service of a greater good:

> I remembered my molesting of small children [...] Already I was convinced that there was no evil, and that even the most plainly evil impulses were merely crude attempts to accept the demands of a higher realm that existed within each of us. By accepting these perversions and obsessions I was opening the gates into the real world, where we would all fly together, transform ourselves at will into the fish and the birds, the flowers and the dust, unite ourselves once more within the great commonwealth of nature.[18]

The deviant logic of Kaldren's and Blake's "benevolent psychopathology"[19] reveals the pair to be apostles of inner space; renegade creators of apocalyptic new worlds "remade by the mind".

Given the ambitious scope and keen intelligence of *The Voices of Time*; Ballard's first novel, *The Wind from Nowhere*, is somewhat of a disappointment. Published in January 1962 as a lurid paperback for the American market, Ballard has since dismissed the book as "a hack job written in a fortnight to allow me to make the break into full-time writing"[20]; remarkably for such a major literary figure, the novel is no longer in print and is regularly omitted from publishers' lists of Ballard's works. True, the story is something of a potboiler, tailored to meet the conventional expectations of a mass audience, yet *The Wind from Nowhere* does contain certain elements which ally it to the later, more successful, novels in the disaster sequence. Ballard's aloof hero, Robert Maitland, is in many respects the prototype for the remote quester-heroes of the later texts (indeed, the marooned protagonist of Ballard's 1974 novel, *Concrete Island*, is also named Robert Maitland); and the hubristic figure of Hardoon, the "power-crazy ... shipping and hotel magnate" (WFN 152) who fruitlessly attempts to master the storm-winds (i.e. Nature) "like some Wagnerian super-hero in a beseiged Valhalla" (WFN 181), is, in effect, the model of

rationality defeated by catastrophe (a governing theme of the later novels in Ballard's quartet). Typically too, the unlikely disaster which gives the novel its very title is described in the most perfunctory of terms:

> We're witnessing a meteorological phenomenon of unprecedented magnitude, a global cyclone accelerating at a uniform rate [...] perhaps a vast tangential stream of cosmic radiation exploded from the sun during the solar eclipse a month ago, struck the earth on one exposed hemisphere, and its gravitational drag might have set in motion the huge cyclone revolving round the earth's axis at this moment. (WFN 55).

Ballard is clearly uninspired by this implausible scenario and the story ends with the great wind inexplicably tailing off into a mild breeze. In essence then, *The Wind from Nowhere* is a fairly routine example of what Brian Aldiss has termed the *cosy catastrophe*: "the hero should have a pretty good time (a girl, free suites at the Savoy, automobiles for the taking) while everyone else is dying off".[21] Additionally, the cosy catastrophe invariably envisions a disaster which drastically alters the external world, yet somehow manages to leave the psychological contours of the inner landscape wholly undisturbed. As we shall discover shortly, this psychological component, completely absent from *The Wind from Nowhere*, is a crucial element in the apocalyptic novels which follow it.

A clearer indication to the tenor of Ballard's thinking at the time can be found in his important essay, *Which Way To Inner Space?*, published as a "Guest Editorial" to the May 1962 edition of *New Worlds* magazine.[22] Ballard's polemic is principally directed against the "juvenile" space stories of genre SF and "the narrow imaginative limits imposed by the background of rocket ships and planet hopping" (IS 3). Science Fiction is poorly served by the space story's "standard paraphernalia of robot-brains and hyper-drives" (IS 2); and the medium as a whole needs to drastically re-invigorate itself by turning its back on space and jettisoning the tired old gimmicks and plots (telepathy, time travel, intergalactic wars, contact with extra-

terrestrial life forms etc.). Plainly put, outer space is *boring*, and not least because the space exploration programmes of the competing superpowers also lack an imaginative dimension:

> Curiously enough, in the light of the present roster of astronauts, the one authentic element in old-style space opera is its wooden, one-dimensional dialogue. But if one can't altogether blame Commander Shepard for his 'Boy, what a ride,' Major Titov's dreamless sleep after the first night in space was the biggest let-down since the fall of Icarus. (IS 3).[23]

Ballard's dissatisfaction with the "limited psychological experiences" of the space crews allies with him with Burroughs's later pronouncements on the inadequacies of the Apollo astronauts. And again, like Burroughs, Ballard argues that literary science fiction needs to take its cues from the "experimental enthusiasm which has characterised painting, music and the cinema during the last four or five decades" (IS 117). Ballard's remedy is to prescribe an "abstract and 'cool'" SF, to be taken with a "big dose of the experimental" (IS 118). The New SF will employ an "oblique narrative style, understated themes, private symbols and vocabularies"; the hollow wonders of outer space will be abandoned in favour of the "remote, sombre half-worlds one glimpses in the paintings of schizophrenics". Ballard's credo is that "it is *inner* space, not outer, that needs to be explored" (IS 117); thus leading to the apocalyptic creation of "new states of mind, new levels of awareness, constructing fresh symbols and languages where the old cease to be valid". In its absolute insistence that "space fiction can no longer provide the main wellspring of ideas for s-f" (IS 3), *Which Way To Inner Space?* ultimately offers an heretical blueprint for the kind of psychological complexity which characterises much of Ballard's work in the 1960s and 70s:

> The first true s-f story, and one I intend to write myself if no one else will, is about a man with amnesia lying on a beach and looking at a rusty bicycle wheel, trying to work out the absolute essence of the

> relationship between them [...] and if it sounds boring, well at least it will be a new kind of boredom. (IS 118).[24]

In its primary sense, of course, *inner space* is an antonym of outer space; and is used to describe the surface of the planet and the Earth's atmosphere as opposed to what lies further afield. Beyond this, Ballard employs the term as a spatial metaphor to denote the internal regions of memory and desire, in which the external world can be transformed and remade anew by the sovereign power of the human imagination; in essence, as Colin Greenland has observed, the concept of inner space "romanticises the unconscious mind".[25] There is some debate as to when the term was first used in this secondary sense (the writer Robert Bloch is said to have used it in a speech given in 1948, for example)[26]; perhaps more significantly, an essay written by J.B. Priestley and published in the *New Statesman and Nation* in 1953 employs the phrase and in a context not too dissimilar to Ballard's.[27] Priestley's article, *They Come from Inner Space,* records his reflections after having read "a good deal of science fiction" on a recent visit to America, where it is "now produced ... in astonishing quantities, both in magazine and volume form".[28] What he has found can be neatly divided into three categories; the first is pure "bosh consisting of corny short stories, on the gangster or Western pattern, with a few rocket ships, atomising pistols, and mysterious planets thrown in", the second is betrayed by a boyishly "vast enthusiasm for inventions and gadgets"[29], whilst the third, and by far the rarest variety, is "genuinely imaginative" and possessive of "some literary merit"; here stories do not aim blandly at "the other side of the sun", but rather they move inwardly, exploring "the hidden life of the psyche".[30] Priestley singles out Ray Bradbury (b. 1920) for special mention as a representative of this final category (and interestingly, Bradbury is the sole writer Ballard deems worthy of praise in *Which Way To Inner Space?*): "He is not concerned with gadgets but with men's feelings. He creates imaginatively; and it may be assumed that he is not merely turning out stuff

for a new and flourishing market but is trying to express some of his own deepest feelings".[31]

That Bradbury's (occasionally over-sentimental) nostalgic lyricism should appeal to Priestley's refined tastes is not that surprising, but he does make for an unlikely exponent of the sort of cool and abstract science fiction which Ballard is advocating. The work of Bradbury's fellow American fantasist, Richard Matheson (b. 1926), for example, appears to present a more plausible prototype for Ballard's new, cerebral SF. Indeed, Matheson's claustrophobic novel *The Shrinking Man* (1956), the story of a man gradually reduced to a microscopic size after exposure to a cocktail of insecticide and radiation, is a pioneering work of inner space. The novel ends with Matheson's hero, Scott Carey (by now on the verge of extinction), peering out (like Ballard's Robert Powers) at the vast and "total darkness"[32] of the night sky:

> The idea came. Last night he'd looked up at the universe without. Then there must be a universe within, too [...] For the inch was man's concept, not nature's. To a man, zero inches mean nothing [...]
>
> But to nature there was no zero. Existence went on in endless cycles [...]
>
> He might not have to be alone.
>
> Suddenly he began running toward the light.
>
> And, when he'd reached it, he stood in speechless awe looking at the new world with its vivid splashes of vegetation, its scintillant hills, its towering trees, its sky of shifting hues, as though the sunlight were being filtered through moving layers of pastel glass.
>
> It was a wonderland.[33]

Clearly, Matheson's epiphanic concept of life beyond the zero is remarkably close to Ballard's zone of inner space, and certainly more so than Bradbury's accomplished recreations of the Midwestern idyll upon the shifting sand-seas of Mars.[34]

Ballard's first authentic novel of inner space, *The Drowned World*, was first published as a paperback original in the US in August 1962, before appearing a few months later in a more respectable hardcover edition issued by Victor Gollancz

in London. The novel is set at some unspecified time in the next century and, typically, the exact cause of the catastrophe which has befallen the planet is also never adequately explained. A mysterious "sudden instability in the Sun" (DW 21) at the end of the twentieth century has resulted in global warming and the melting of the polar ice caps. As a consequence, plant growth has increased rapidly and mammalian fertility declined drastically; the world population now stands at less than five million:

> The birth of a child had become a comparative rarity, and only one marriage in ten yielded any offspring [...] The genealogical tree of mankind was systematically pruning itself, apparently moving backwards in time, and a point might ultimately be reached where a second Adam and Eve found themselves alone in a new Eden. (DW 23).

In effect, climactic conditions on Earth have reverted to how they were in the Triassic period and the planet is once again a hothouse of steaming lagoons with reptiles reinstalled as the dominant form of life. The narrative of *The Drowned World* principally concerns the experiences of a United Nations "biological mapping" team (DW 8), nearing the end of a three year tour of duty and heading back northward to the comparative safety of sub-tropical Greenland. Ballard's hero is Dr Robert Kerans, a middle-aged marine biologist with a "*fin de siècle* temperament" (DW 15). As the deadline approaches for his repatriation, Kerans finds himself entering an internal "zone of transit" (DW 35), in which the certain extinction offered by any movement South becomes a "spectral grail" (DW 45). In an act of "inverted Crusoeism" (DW 47), Kerans deliberately maroons himself from the rest of the expeditionary party and, after a series of escapades, determinedly journeys towards the burning jungles of "an insane Eden" (DW 52):

> ... within a few days [Kerans] was completely lost, following the lagoons southward through the increasing rain and heat, attacked by

> alligators and giant bats, a second Adam searching for the forgotten paradises of the reborn sun.
>
> [novel ends] (DW 171).

In Ballard's devolutionary fantasy, the drowned world of the novel's title is not just the immediate, predatory environment of Triassic swamps and lagoons to which Kerans so blissfully surrenders himself, but also the internal "ghostly deltas and luminous beaches of the submerged neuronic continents" (DW 44). As the book tirelessly (and somewhat mystically) reiterates, a disaster in the biosphere has triggered an equally cataclysmic descent through the levels of "spinal and archaeopsychic time" (DW 43), revealing at last the "drowned seas submerged beneath the lowest levels of [the] unconscious ... total biopsychic recall":

> Just as the distinction between the latent and manifest contents of the dream had ceased to be valid, so had any division between the real and the super-real in the external world. Phantoms slid imperceptibly from nightmare to reality and back again, the terrestrial and psychic landscapes were now indistinguishable, as they had been at Hiroshima and Auschwitz, Golgotha and Gomorrah. (DW 72).

Thus, as opposed to events in *The Wind from Nowhere* and the other stories of cosy catastrophe (such as John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids* - 1951), an apocalyptic "new psychology" (DW 44) is developed in *The Drowned World;* a "total reorientation of the personality" (DW 43) which, although perversely at odds with accepted notions of personal survival and biological destiny, is nevertheless in perfect accord with the dangerous new topographies uncovered by the planet's "avalanche backwards into the past" (DW 41). Not every character in the novel is able to accept the radical demands of the perilous new environment, however. Colonel Riggs, for example, the pragmatic military leader of the biological testing station, is condemned to "still obeying reason and logic" (DW 73), and as a consequence Kerans finds him lacking in "physical validity" (DW 155), his soldiers similarly "flat and

unreal". Another character, the albino Strangman, an opportunistic freebooter (and adversary of Kerans') making a living from raiding the forgotten treasures of Europe's abandoned cities, understands Kerans's motivations perfectly, yet he declines to follow them, preferring instead to pursue his mercantile ambitions and mercilessly tease his passive opponent: "'Kerans, you look like the man from inner space'" (DW 102).

As Kerans becomes increasingly withdrawn, so his affair with the languorous Beatrice Dahl drifts into oblivion: "they were entering a new zone, where the usual obligations and allegiances ceased to operate ... her personality intruded upon the absolute freedom he required for himself" (DW 79). Like Kerans, Dahl hears the enchanting music of the "time jungles" (DW 80), yet she is not allowed to interfere with the pilgrim's progress. As with many of the female characters in Ballard's fiction (who are either a threat, a hindrance, or a total non-entity in relation to the male protagonist), Dahl possesses the "waxen, *glacé* beauty of an inanimate mannequin" (DW 87), her body coiled "like a sleeping python" (DW 25).

Interpersonal relationships do not interest Kerans (or for that matter, do they much concern Ballard, the novelist); the only authentic and truly meaningful relationship in *The Drowned World* is the harmonizing marriage of inner and outer space, the archaic song shared between the "deep subliminal drumming" (DW 73) of the human pulse and the thunderous beating of the white-hot sun. As in *The Voices of Time*, contentment and transcendence only comes with the dissolution of the body and the sacrificial merging of man with the vital forces of the cosmos:

> [Kerans] stepped out into the lake, whose waters now seemed an extension of his own bloodstream. As the dull pounding rose, he felt the barriers which divided his own cells from the surrounding medium dissolving, and he swam forwards, spreading outwards across the black thudding water ... (DW 69).

Interviewed in 1975, Ballard complained that "people seem to imply that these are books with unhappy endings, but the reverse is true: they're books with happy endings, stories of psychic fulfillment".[35]

Ballard's comments certainly indicate that he views his disaster novels (with the obvious exception of *The Wind from Nowhere*) as instalments of the same, extended text; and in many respects, *The Drought* is, indeed, more of the same, yet despite what Ballard claims, the novel reads as a somewhat bleaker work than *The Drowned World* or *The Voices of Time*. *The Drought* (published in an earlier and slightly different version in the US as *The Burning World*) is the story of Dr Charles Ransom, a middle-aged surgeon estranged from his wife, and a band of fellow travellers through the "apocalyptic landscape" (DR 38) of a world deprived of water. Ransom's companions include Richard Foster Lomax, a white-suited architect and analogue to the albino Strangman, a sensual and enigmatic woman named Catherine Austen, and Lomax's sister, Miranda, a predatory female with "hard eyes and the mouth of a corrupt cupid" (DR 47-48). Unusually for the catastrophe quartet, the global drought of the novel's title is a direct result of man polluting the environment (but in no respect is *The Drought* an eco-manifesto or cautionary tale in the mould of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) or John Brunner's *The Sheep Look Up* (1972)):

> Covering the off-shore waters of the world's oceans, to a distance of about a thousand miles from the coast, was a thin but resilient mono-molecular film formed from a complex of saturated long-chain polymers, generated within the sea from the vast quantities of industrial wastes discharged into the ocean basins during the previous fifty years. This tough, oxygen-permeable membrane lay on the air-water interface and prevented almost all evaporation of surface water into the air space above [...] The sea had constructed a skin no thicker than a few atoms, but sufficiently strong to devastate the lands it once irrigated. (DR 34).

Etcetera. Of course, Ballard's real interest lies in the realignment of internal and external concerns, as Catherine Austen remarks of a parched riverbed: "It's almost

dry. Don't you feel, doctor, that everything is being drained away, all the memories and stale sentiments?" (DR 19).

The world revealed by the drought is an apocalyptic text which its inhabitants must strive to decode; thus, obscure, personal gestures metamorphose into "irrational signs" (DR 10) of the future and "dead trees form brittle ciphers" (DR 17) that offer clues to the past. It is a harsh and dangerous environment of "infinite possibilities unrestrained by any moral considerations" (DR 52), and one in which the landscape increasingly seeks to dictate rather than accord with human behaviour: "She was looking out over the bleached bed of the river, and at ... [the] ciphers suspended in the warm air. Ransom began to speak, but this cryptic alphabet seemed to overrule anything he might say" (DR 81). As I have suggested, *The Drought* presents a more sombre vision than *The Drowned World*; like the earlier Kerans, the questing Ransom is faithful to his "true inner compass" (DR 152), yet he is rewarded with a "platonic future" (DR 153) which is little more a zone of nothingness (and something less than a harmonious absorption into the cosmic eternal):

> To [Ransom's] surprise he noticed that he no longer cast any shadow on to the sand, as if he had at last completed his journey across the margins of the inner landscape he had carried in his mind for so many years [...] An immense pall of darkness lay over the dunes, as if the whole of the exterior world were losing its existence.
>
> It was some time later that he failed to notice it had started to rain.
>
> [novel ends] (DR 188).

The degenerative transformations which afflict the other characters in the concluding stages of the novel share something of the bleakness of Ransom's end. The architect Lomax is reduced to the status of a "tottering desert androgyne", "reverting to a primitive level where the differentiation into male and female no longer occurred" (DR 178-79). His sister, Miranda, is almost unrecognisable to

Ransom: "She was now as fat as a pig, with gross arms and hips, hog-like shoulders and waist ... wearing, almost modishly, a black nightdress that seemed designed expressly to show off her vast corpulence" (DR 167). Together with her retarded lover, Miranda has managed to raise a brood of malformed "idiot-children" (DR 183), and Ballard grotesquely poses the parents for a disturbing final vignette depicting the fall of man:

> The two of them would sit together in the concrete pool, as the water evaporated in the reservoir and the dunes outside drew nearer, a last Eve and Adam waiting for time's end. (DR 179).

Readers perhaps unfamiliar with Ballard's writings will have begun to detect certain recurring elements in the author's work; and, as various critics have noted, these characteristic repetitions of theme, detail, and style are not solely restricted to the disaster tales, but can also be found in many of Ballard's ninety or so short stories and fourteen novels.[36] David Pringle, for example, has produced an inventory of typically *Ballardian* "landscapes and properties"; these include concrete weapons-ranges, drained swimming pools, predatory helicopters, multi-storey car parks, dry lake-beds, crashed space-capsules, abandoned airfields, and a whole host more.[37] Amongst these connotative artefacts moves the figure of the archetypal hero; a white, middle-aged professional man (usually a doctor), with a detached manner and conventional two-syllable English surname. He is likely to be estranged from his wife, but still sexually attractive to her *and* to almost all other women. Invariably, the protagonist will have a main adversary (a *Strangman*-type character), who may additionally act as a choric commentator on some aspects of the narrative (occasionally this explicatory role may be shared or taken by an ally (Dr Bodkin in *The Drowned World*) or ambiguous 'helper' (Kaldren in *The Voices of Time*)).[38] Pringle notes that the "repetitive and obsessive"[39] nature of these scenarios is seen by some observers as a significant failing in Ballard's fiction, an inadequacy which is compounded by a poor prose style, weak characterisation, and overly pessimistic

outlook. Other critics have focused, somewhat predictably, on Ballard's supposed racism and sexism.[40]

Certainly, Ballard's writing does have its faults; his ear for dialogue leaves something to be desired, for example, and although *The Drowned World* and *The Drought* are relatively short novels, both still seem too long. His obsessional style, however, is integral to his status as an apocalyptic writer, and as such, bestows a unique and resonant power upon his work as a whole. Ballard's repetitions are not failures of the imagination; through their repeated appearance as vital elements in an end-time conundrum, the drained swimming pools and the motorway flyovers acquire mythic significance and direct the reader to look again at the disquieting architecture of contemporary life. After Ballard, no suburban avenue, rear end shunt, or airport slip road can seem quite the same again; this unwavering fictional assault on what he has termed "our commonplace notions of reality"[41] is a self-consciously apocalyptic tactic (informed by an enthusiasm for Surrealism) designed to both remake the world anew and further reveal the latent content of our inner and outer landscapes (we shall return to these matters later in the chapter). Again, critics who complain that the characters in the disaster novels are lifeless and unconvincing are somewhat missing the point; Ballard is not interested in the psychological nuances of the realist novel and his characters are not interested in each other at all:

> To use the stylistic conventions of the traditional oral novel - the sequential narrative, characters 'in the round', consecutive events, balloons of dialogue attached to 'he said and 'she said' - is to perpetuate a set of conventions ideally suited to a period of great tales of adventure in the Conradian mode, or to an over-formalized Jamesian society, but now valuable for little more than the bedtime story and the fable.
>
> (J.G. Ballard, *[William Burroughs:] Myth Maker of the 20th Century*. New Worlds, 1964).[42]

Detailed or even plausible characterisation is simply unnecessary to Ballard's literary purpose; the individual is either insignificant against the grand apocalyptic backdrop of global catastrophe or he is absorbed into the greater 'oneness' of the cosmos (as in *The Voices of Time*).

It is undeniable that, in his fiction of the late 50s and early 60s at least, Ballard's women are either erotic toys or obnoxious bitches of no real consequence to the questing male hero. Ballard's defenders have dealt with this potential source of embarrassment in a number of ways; Peter Brigg, for example, places the blame squarely on the shoulders of the male characters ("those carriers and purveyors of the death of affect"[43]), which is a little problematic as elsewhere in his monograph Brigg writes of the extremely close identification between Ballard the man and his archetypal heroes (both author and creation are "medically trained men gifted with exceptional powers of introspection" etc.).[44] Pringle concurs, asserting that "there can be little doubt that all of these characters *are*, in a sense, James Ballard"[45], before constructing an elaborate (if occasionally reductive) rubric for decoding Ballard (the so-called *fourfold symbolism*[46]); in this reading the characters are "personifications of psychological urges rather than 'real people'"[47] and "all Ballard's women are aspects of the lamia".[48] Such an attitude is certainly consistent with John's apparent demonisation of women in *Revelation* (e.g. the Whore of Babylon), but it does tend to obscure Ballard's satirical purposes. Thus, it is unlikely that the dull or vacuous females who appear in stories such as *Passport to Eternity* (1962), *The Subliminal Man* (1963), and *Having a Wonderful Time* (1978)[49] are intended to be seen as somehow emblematic of their gender; instead, they could be said to represent the deadening conformity of bourgeois aspirations and mindless (middle-class) consumerism. Hence, the female narrator of *Having a Wonderful Time* reveals her predicament through an unfolding series of that most banal of modern communications; the holiday picture postcard:

12 NOVEMBER Hotel Imperial

> [My husband] calmly told me a preposterous story about the entire Canaries being developed by the governments of Western Europe, in collusion with the Spanish authorities, as a kind of permanent holiday camp for their unemployables, not just the factory workers but most of their management people too [...] Once there, the holiday-makers will never be allowed to return home, for fear of starting revolutions. I tried to argue with him, but he casually stood up and said he was going to form a resistance group, then he strode away along the beach. The trouble is that he's found nothing with which to occupy his mind - I wish he'd join our theatre group, we're now rehearsing Pinter's *The Birthday Party*. *Diana*.[50]

Ballard's fanciful 'entertainment' is a sly dig at the burgeoning leisure industry (there is an obvious play on the word "Camp"[51]) and its uniquely comatose clientele (with, as the above passage demonstrates, a neat sideswipe at the political theatre of the London literary Left thrown in for good measure). It seems a little harsh to claim (as Pringle does) that *Having a Wonderful Time* "represents a slide back"[52] by Ballard into his (presumably) bad, old ways; the story is satire, not sexism.

The final novel in Ballard's disaster quartet, *The Crystal World*, has also attracted the opprobrium of certain reviewers, with H. Bruce Franklin, for example, (rather recklessly) declaring that the novel contains "images so disgustingly racist that they might embellish a Ku Klux Klan rally".[53] *The Crystal World* is set in an "isolated corner of the Cameroon Republic" (CW 12) and features the usual cast of players; including our hero, Dr Edward Sanders, assistant director of a leper hospital, his lovers Suzanne Clair and Louise Peret, Captain Radek, a French army doctor, a white-suited architect named Ventress, and Ventress's partner in a "private duel" (CW 91), the mine owner Thorensen. Around these characters, the forests and jungles of West Africa are rapidly crystallizing, as a result of "distant cosmic processes of enormous scope and dimensions" (CW 85). Captain Radek 'helpfully' explains:

> At this moment at least two other sites exist - one in the Florida Everglades, and the other in the Pripet Marshes of the Soviet Union [...]

> Apparently at the Mount Hubble Observatory in the States they have seen distant galaxies efflorescing! [...] This Hubble Effect, as they call it, is closer to cancer than anything else - and about as curable - an actual proliferation of the sub-atomic identity of all matter. It's as if a sequence of displaced but identical images of the same object were being produced by refraction through a prism, but with the element of time replacing the role of light. (CW 65-66).

Thus, a disaster in outer space is triggering a catastrophe in inner space: "When you first arrive here everything seems dark, but then you look at the forest and see the stars burning in the leaves" (CW 36). The "enchanted world" (CW 75) of the illuminated forest assumes the role of a "new Jerusalem" (CW 138) for many of the inhabitants of Ballard's jungle outpost; with Sanders, in particular, transfixed "as if he were some fugitive Adam chancing upon a forgotten gateway to the forbidden paradise" (CW 79):

> For some reason [Sanders] felt less concerned to find a so-called scientific explanation for the phenomenon he had just seen. The beauty of the spectacle had turned the keys of memory, and a thousand images of childhood, forgotten for nearly forty years, filled his mind, recalling the paradisal world when everything seemed illuminated by that prismatic light described so exactly by Wordsworth in his recollections of childhood. The magical shore in front of him seemed to glow like that brief spring. (CW 69).

The novel ends with Sanders poised to reject "the slack shallows of a spent world" (CW 120), embracing instead the vitrified forest's "gift of immortality[,] a direct consequence of the surrender by each of us of our own physical and temporal identities" (CW 169).

Standard Ballardian fare, one may suspect, but H. Bruce Franklin's comments on *The Crystal World* and the disaster sequence as a whole suggest a darker undercurrent to Ballard's utopian speculations. Franklin's perceptive and challenging essay, *What Are We to Make of J.G. Ballard's Apocalypse?* (1979), accuses

Ballard and his fellow writers in the UK "New Wave" of Science Fiction (Michael Moorcock, Brian Aldiss, and those generally found in *New Worlds* magazine[54]) of being a "leading force in the broad and deep expansion of a doomsday mentality in our culture".[55] Franklin finds it significant that Ballard's terminal fictions and the numerous other apocalyptic scenarios envisioned by the Wave (nuclear holocaust, overpopulation, computer meltdown etc.) are "pulsating outward from England, that disintegrating homeland of a collapsed global empire".[56] Thus, the draining of time and history from the petrified African forests of *The Crystal World* is a sinister figure for Ballard's wish to halt the triumphant march of the anti-colonial liberatory movement: "the inner meaning of the desire to stop time ... is to stop revolution in order to preserve archaic privilege and order".[57] Franklin's thesis is a compelling one, to be sure, but Ballard's ecstatic fantasy of a crystallized world devoid of revolutionary *political* change would surely also be free at last from oppression, xenophobia, genocide, nationalism and, indeed, "archaic privilege". In his broader argument Franklin accuses Ballard of "mistaking the end of capitalism for the end of the world"[58], whilst himself confusing the end of Ballard's fallen world with the cessation of *spiritual* growth and authentic revolutionary potential. Far from wishing to preserve the colonial landscape, *The Crystal World* imagines a transcendent realm far beyond division and injustice:

> This illuminated forest in some way reflects an earlier period of our lives, perhaps an archaic memory we are born with of some ancestral paradise where the unity of time and space is the signature of every leaf and flower. It's obvious to everyone now that in the forest life and death have a different meaning from that in our ordinary lack-lustre world [...] However apostate we may be in this world, there perforce we become apostles of the prismatic sun. (CW 83/169).

Franklin's essentially Marxist demolition of Ballard's "death-worshipping imagination"[59] has been countered by critics such as Warren W. Wagar, who argues persuasively that the apocalyptic transformations of the disaster quartet

are not solely intended for a "privileged élite" (Ballard's heroes are more Everyman than Overman), but allow instead for "the emergence of a *utopian cell*, a pilgrim band of the reborn"; thus, Sanders, Suzanne, Radek, and the others stand as "the shock troops of a psychic revolution destined to sweep the world".[60] Contrary to Franklin's dismal view of Ballard as a decadent solipsist trapped in the nightmare of history, Wagar maintains that "it is possible to foresee a future for J.G. Ballard as the literary herald of a new, liberated world society".[61] This may be overstating the case somewhat, but Wagar's reclaiming of Ballard for the Left marries nicely with Fredric Jameson's intuition (in *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*) that "the reassuring extinction fantasies of early Ballard, which no longer seemed possible in the world cataclysms of the sixties" nevertheless represent a "fragile acknowledgment of a future and a Utopia out of reach, all the more powerful for the toxic atmosphere it has to penetrate".[62] As a rule, postmodernists like Ballard should be deeply suspicious of grand narratives such as Utopia; Jameson contends, however, that the generalised end of ideology is more exactly the end of Marxism. Despite the apocalyptic violence of Vietnam and the Congo, the 1960s witnessed an explosive renewal in Utopian thinking and one can still find "everywhere today - not least among artists and writers - something like an unacknowledged "party of Utopia"" (or Burroughsian *Invisible Generation*, perhaps?):

> An underground party whose numbers are difficult to determine, whose program remains unannounced and perhaps even unformulated, whose existence is unknown to the citizenry at large and to the authorities, but whose members seem to recognize one another by means of secret Masonic signals.[63]

Jameson also detects a telling anticipation of postmodern aesthetic strategies in the fragmentary terminal documents (or atrocity exhibits) collated by Kaldren in *The Voices of Time*. Such elements may indeed foreshadow the pop-trauma displays of the contemporary art horrorshow (Myra Hindley magnified and

immortalised in children's hand-prints), yet Ballard's fiction is most notably informed by the past lessons of Surrealism; thus, Ransom in *The Drought*, hoards anatomy texts, fossil fragments, a photograph of himself as a child, and a faded magazine reproduction of Yves Tanguy's *Jours de Lenteur* (1930) as the vital components of a "psychic ark" (DR 160), or inner-space ship:

> The craft was as much a capsule protecting him against the pressures and vacuums of time as the steel shell of an astronaut's vehicle guarded the pilot from the vagaries of space. Here his half-conscious memories of childhood and the past had been isolated and quantified, like the fragments of archaic minerals sealed behind glass cases in museums of geology. (DR 15-16).

Ballard's obvious enthusiasm for Surrealism is evident in two articles written for *New Worlds* magazine, *The Coming of the Unconscious* (July 1966)[64] and *Salvador Dali: The Innocent as Paranoid* (February 1969).[65] In the first essay (ostensibly a review of Marcel Jean's *The History of Surrealist Painting* and Patrick Waldberg's *Surrealism*[66]) Ballard affirms that "the images of surrealism are the iconography of inner space"; the coded landscapes of painters such as Ernst, Dali, and Tanguy fuse "the outer world of reality and the inner world of the psyche" to produce a "heightened or alternate reality" (a *surreality*) magically imbued with a "redemptive or therapeutic power".[67] In their assault on reason and logic, the waking dreams of surrealism provide an ontological tool for decoding and quantifying the latent content of the external landscape (thus offering a benevolent psychopathology analogous to Freud's explorations within the inner space of the unconscious):

> At the same time we should not forget the elements of magic and surprise that wait for us in this realm. In the words of Andre Breton: "The confidences of madmen: I would spend my life in provoking them. They are people of scrupulous honesty, whose innocence is only equalled by mine. Columbus had to sail with madmen to discover America".[68]

Ballard's second essay suggests that Salvador Dali (1904-1989) is just such a holy madman (or paranoid innocent): "in the mature Dali, nuclear and fragmentary forms transcribe the posture of the Virgin, tachist explosions illuminate the cosmogony of the H-Bomb, the images of atomic physics are recruited to represent a pietist icon of a Renaissance madonna".[69] In this reading, it is surrealism and inner space SF (the authentic visual and literary traditions of the twentieth century) which alone share the ability to transcribe the hidden codes contained in phenomena as (seemingly) diverse as a deserted beach at twilight, the interior styling of an automobile, a commercial advertising billboard, and the angle between two walls:

> Elements from the margins of one's mind - the gestures of minor domestic traffic, movements through doors, a glance across a balcony - become transformed into the materials of a bizarre and overlit drama. The Oedipal conflicts we have carried with us from childhood fuse with the polymorphic landscapes of the present to create a strange and ambiguous future - the contours of a woman's back, the significance of certain rectilinear forms, marry with our memories and desires. The roles of everything are switched. Christopher Columbus comes ashore, just having discovered a young woman's buttocks.[70]

The willed capacity to divine the secret logic and *sub rosa* analogies of the 'polymorphic landscape' is an exegetic talent displayed by many of Ballard's characters (Blake in *The Unlimited Dream Company*, Tarrant in *Zodiac 2000*, the T-figure in *The Atrocity Exhibition*, Vaughan in *Crash*, etc.); and what Ballard's writings on Surrealism most intriguingly suggest is that such creative madness owes much to Dali's own *paranoiac-critical method* of interpretation. Dali developed his theory of paranoiac-critical activity in the late 1920s and defines it in his essay *The Conquest of the Irrational* (1935) as a "*a spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based upon the interpretive-critical association of delirious phenomena*".[71] In other words, the paranoiac-critical artist actively propels himself into a state of delirium in order to perceive a "coherent whole of systematic and significant relations":

> By this method paranoiac-critical activity discovers new and objective "significances" in the irrational; it makes the world of delirium pass tangibly on to the plane of reality [...]
>
> Thus the history of art in particular is to be rewritten according to the method of "paranoiac-critical activity"; according to this method pictures as apparently different as the Giaconda, Millet's Angelus and the Embarkment for Cytheria by Watteau would represent exactly the same subject, would mean exactly the same thing.[72]

Thus, in his book *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus* (written in the 1930s, revised and published in 1963)[73], Dali offers an exhilarating and wholly paranoid re-reading of Jean-François Millet's *The Angelus* (1858-59), in which an apparently idyllic scene of religious contemplation is revealed to be the bloody re-enactment of a primal scene of castration and sexual cannibalism; whilst in his own paintings of the period, Dali employs both visual correspondences (through the use of "double images", such as in *The Slave Market with the Disappearing Bust of Voltaire* (1940), in which Voltaire's head can also be viewed as two female figures) and psychological or 'psychic' correspondences (e.g. the use of linked but visually dissimilar objects in *Suburb of the Paranoiac-critical Town; Afternoon on the Outskirts of European History* (1936)) to suggest the true contours of the 'new and objective' reality.[74] What unites both the master surrealist Dali and Ballard's legion of deranged heroes is that they each seek to reconcile the demands of inner and outer space, in order to access a paranoid, yet ultimately redemptive realm of transcendent *surreality*. In Ballard's uncollected 'condensed novel' *Journey Across a Crater* (1970)[75], the enigmatic Vorster assembles a bizarre "machine" constructed from "the symbols in a new calculus of unconscious rescue":

> **Junction Makers**
>
> Dr Manston indicated the items: (1) Photograph of partly constructed motorway cloverleaf, concrete embankments exposed in transverse section, labelled 'Crater'; (2) Reproduction of Salvador Dali's *Madonna of Port Lligat*; (3) 500 imaginary autopsy reports of the first Boeing 747 air disaster; (4) Sequence of perspective drawings of corridors at the

Belmont asylum; (5) Facial grimaces, during press conference, of Armstrong and Aldrin; (6) List of pH levels of settling beds, Metropolitan Water Board Reservoir, Staines; (7) Terminal voice-print, self-recorded, of an unidentified suicide; (8) The market analysis of a new hemispherical building-system module.

Space Platform

Dr Manston glanced sympathetically at the young woman. "Perhaps together they make up a love poem to yourself, Helen. On a more prosaic level they seem to represent the components of a strange kind of 'space vehicle' - literally, a device for moving through space in every sense of that term: figurative, dimensional, metaphorical. A far more powerful vehicle than any astronaut's space ship".

Or as Captain Kirby enquires, when confronted by a comparable collection ("(3) a crayon self portrait by David Feary, seven-year-old schizophrenic at the Belmont Asylum, Sutton" etc.) of terminal documents in *The Atrocity Exhibition* (1970): "And all these make up one picture?".[76] Similarly, the scattered properties in a Dali landscape and the fragmented paragraphs and insane lists in a Ballard text could also be said to constitute *one picture*; an atrocity exhibit declaring war on reason and rationality, while further demanding that its viewers suspend their normal (bourgeois) critical faculties and embrace instead the apocalyptic possibilities suggested by deviant logic of the paranoiac method.

Ballard's late cluster of space stories (*News from the Sun*, *Memories of the Space Age*, *Myths of the Near Future* - 1981/82)[77] continue to mine the theme of "unconscious rescue" from the degraded reality of the everyday world. In the visionary conclusion to the latter story, the architect Roger Sheppard ecstatically breaks free from the coils of his "transient, time-locked flesh" (MNF 35) and immerses himself in the vibrant sensations of "a world the surrealists might have invented" (MNF 17). Sheppard is afflicted with "the so-called 'space sickness'" (MNF 12); a terminal condition marked by chronic lethargy, delusions that the sufferer was once an astronaut (the Space programme had been abandoned thirty years earlier), and an increasing preoccupation with "wayward and compulsive hobbies, like the

marking of obsessive words in a novel, the construction of pointless arithmetical puzzles on a pocket calculator, the collecting of fragments of TV programmes on a video recorder" (MNF 13). Sheppard speculates that his disease is the direct result of psychic fallout from the Space Age; the Apollo and Soyuz missions constituting "a forced evolutionary step with unforeseen consequences, the eating of a very special kind of forbidden fruit" (MNF 14). To propel himself beyond the disastrous effects of this second Fall, Ballard's paranoid hero constructs a "survival kit" of sorts, a "time-machine" to be powered by the drained swimming pools of a now deserted Cape Kennedy:

> A framed reproduction of Magritte's *The March of Summer*, a portable video-cassette projector, two tins of soup, a well-thumbed set of six *Kamera Klassic* magazines, a clutch of cassettes labelled *Elaine/Shower Stall I-XXV*, and a paperback selection of Marey's *Chronograms* [...]
>
> Sheppard explained "They're the fusing device for a time-machine [...] This is the key to it all [...] It's an engine, Anne, of a unique type. It's no coincidence that the Space Centre is surrounded by empty swimming pools [...]
>
> "There's a door out of this pool, I'm trying to find it, a side-door for us all to escape through. This space sickness - it's really about time not space, like all the Apollo flights. We think of it as a kind of madness, but in fact it may be part of a contingency plan laid down millions of years ago, a real space programme, a chance to escape into a world beyond time. (MNF 19/33).

This is the *real* space age; and we are Here to Go. Both Burroughs and Ballard lament the absence of an imaginative dimension to guide man's excursion to the stars; they argue that planet itself need not be left behind, only the body. *Authentic* space travel does not necessarily require machine technology at all, Kim Carsons's *Last Words* or Sheppard's *Terminal Documents* can provide the appropriate *fusing devices*. The apocalyptic space programmes of both writers seek new worlds far beyond the fallen gantries of Time.

A recurring argument in Burroughs's late fiction is that mankind is in a state of *neotony* (or arrested evolutionary development), helplessly fixated at a larval phase.[78] Implicit in Ballard's cosmology is the notion that man's clumsy attempts to bypass this state represent a botched raid on the cosmos. As Dr Robert Franklin, the NASA psychiatrist in *News from the Sun* ruminates:

> By leaving his planet and setting off into outer space man had committed an evolutionary crime, a breach of the rules governing his tenancy of the universe [...] Sadly, not only the astronauts were affected. Each space-launch left its trace in the minds of those watching the expeditions. Each flight to the moon and each journey around the sun was a trauma that warped their perception of time and space. The brute-force ejection of themselves from their planet had been an act of evolutionary piracy, for which they were now being expelled from the world of time. (NS 91).

With typical perversity, however, Ballard diagnoses the mysterious "time-sickness" (NS 86) which besets Franklin and his companions in the testing ranges of the Nevada desert as a fortuitous punishment, complete with a 'happy ending' reminiscent of *The Drowned World*. Franklin welcomes the calming limbo of the fugal interlude and its "awakening premonition of the past" (NS 100); in these states he enters the "radiant city" (NS 112) of the "real world", far from the "harsh light and rigid perspectives" (NS 114) of the overlit "world of appearances" (NS 111):

> There was a new language to learn, sentences whose nouns and verbs were separated by days, syllables whose vowels were marked by phases of the sun and moon. This was a language outside time, whose grammar was shaped by the contours of Ursula's breasts in his hands, by the geometry of the apartment. The angle between two walls became an Homeric myth [...]
>
> Happy now to be free of time, he embraced the great fugue. All the light in the universe had come to greet him, an immense congregation of particles. (NS 114/116-17).

News from the Sun fantastically re-imagines the short-lived banalities of the space programme (dismissed in the 1977 *Vogue* article as "the last great period piece of the twentieth century, as magnificent but as out of date as the tea-clipper and the steam locomotive"[79]); re-shooting the noble, but entirely humdrum mechanical exercise as a Promethean vaulting at the heavens, "a cosmic misdemeanour" (NS 79) of epic proportions. In Ballard's apocalyptic myths of an impossible future, it is not technology, but transgression and 'evolutionary piracy' which elevate man to the celestial paradise, to the Edenic realm of lasting communion with an undying Sun.

Chapter Five: Planes Intersect - J.G. Ballard and 'The Atrocity Exhibition'

It was an illusion, of course, but, in his tininess, he was plagued by manifold illusions; the illusion that he was not shrinking, but the world enlarging.

(Richard Matheson, *The Shrinking Man*).

This is the way. Step inside.

(Joy Division, *Atrocity Exhibition*).

Was this some kind of end-of-the-world elation? Did he seek distraction from his own small miseries in some violent and overwhelming event? His voice betrayed a craving for terrible things [... Or] was it possible that out of the turmoil and surge of this dreadful event he would learn to make his way in the world?

(Don DeLillo, *White Noise*).

Like the fucking assassination metaphysic is just out there too undeniably.

(James Ellroy, *American Tabloid*).

... it is my sense of wondering about the future which makes me go on reading s-f. Any author who constructs a story which entertains me with intelligent guesswork, or with a credible set of characters in a situation unlikely to have yet occurred, is an s-f author to me, irrespective of whether his scientific extrapolations are accurate or not. Purpose - entertainment : artform - hooey! Too often, the s-f author with delusions of grandeur produces a story which is unintelligible. He is so keen on convincing the reader that it's *LITERATURE* that's being read or a vast scientific truth propounded that the entertainment content is reduced to nil.

So my advice to your authors is - forget your "messages," write a story and if you're competent enough workmen, you'll entertain us, your readers, which should be your purpose!

(Reader's Letter to the Editor, *New Worlds Science Fiction*, March 1964).[1]

Frank Michaels's letter bemoaning what he considered to be increasingly grandiose attempts by certain SF writers to elevate their recondite scribblings to the hallowed status of an "artform" appeared in the same issue of *New Worlds* magazine as a provocative new story by J.G. Ballard entitled *The Terminal Beach*.[2] The tale, intriguing both in terms of its thematic content and striking visual appearance, provided the clearest illustration yet of Ballard's conviction that the New SF must be taken seriously as *LITERATURE* and that in addition to this, Speculative Fiction should also, in fact, be recognised as the "the main literary tradition of the 20th century".[3] The typographical form of *The Terminal Beach* anticipates Ballard's later experiments with the so-called 'condensed novels' of the mid-to-late 60s (collected and published as *The Atrocity Exhibition* in 1970)[4]; thus, blocks of text are separated by evocative 'chapter' headings reproduced in heavy, bold print; **The Synthetic Landscape**, **The Blocks (3)**, **The Catechism of Good-bye** etc. *The Terminal Beach* also incorporates journal entries, italicised passages, quotations from other (imaginary) books, snatches of philosophical dialogue, and sections such as the following:

Traven: In Parenthesis

Elements in a quantal world:
The terminal beach.
The terminal bunker.
The blocks.

The landscape is coded.
Entry points into the future = Levels in a spinal landscape = zones of significant time. (TB 147).

In this chapter we will explore the *coded landscapes* of Ballard's more experimental apocalyptic 'texts'; items as diverse as the condensed novels, the plastic surgery stories (*Jane Fonda's Augmentation Mammoplasty* etc.), a billboard novel (*Project for a*

New Novel, c. 1958), the collage advertisements of the late 60s, and the celebrated exhibition of crashed cars at the New Arts Laboratory in 1970.

The Terminal Beach presents episodes from the final days of a man known simply as Traven, a former H-Bomb pilot who has deliberately marooned himself on the evacuated Pacific atoll of Eniwetok. During World War II, of course, Eniwetok was captured from the Japanese by US naval troops and subsequently used as a testing ground for atomic weapons; indeed, *Mike*, the first of the new range of Hydrogen bombs (and a thousand times more powerful than *Little Boy*, the Hiroshima device) was successfully detonated over the atoll in November 1952.[5] Ballard's story is set some time after a world wide moratorium has been passed on overground nuclear testing. Traven is a profoundly haunted hero; he is both a bomber pilot "carrying a full load of cosmic guilt" (TB 150) and a grieving husband and father; his wife and six-year-old son having perished in a (totemic) car crash which seemed "only part of this immense synthesis of the historical and psychic zero, the frantic highways where each morning they met their deaths the advance causeways to the global armageddon" (TB 138-39). Traven's curtailed military career is based in some respects on the eventful life of Claude Eatherly (1918-78), the American pilot involved in preparations for the raid on Hiroshima and subsequently embroiled in petty crime and well-publicised confessions of unbearable guilt and mental torment.[6] Adrift under "the thermo-nuclear noon" (TB 137) of Eniwetok, Traven meditates on his status as *Homo hydrogenesis*:

> For me the hydrogen bomb was a symbol of absolute *freedom*. I feel it's given me the right - the obligation, even - to do anything I want [...] In effect we are men raised from the dead. (TB 150).

As in the apocalyptic fantasies of William S. Burroughs, Traven believes that the basic laws governing man's tenancy of the planet have been irredeemably altered by the tragic events of August 6, 1945; Traven now enjoys a posthumous existence, existentially *free* in a world in which Nothing is True and

Everything is Permitted. Superficially, this grave new world appears to be at peace, but it is at heart "an Auschwitz of the soul" (TB 138); the Cold War is in reality "The Pre-Third" and the entire age lies "suspended from the quivering volcano's lip of World War III". Writing in 1948, the Nobel Prize-winning-physicist P.M.S. Blackett (1897-1974) confessed that he could find "no compelling military reason" for the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs "but a most compelling diplomatic reason, relating to the balance of power in the post-war world".[7] In Blackett's reading, the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan was a cynical act heralding not so much the last act of the war in the East as the first manoeuvres in the new Cold War (or *Pre-Third* campaign). *The Terminal Beach* indicates that Ballard would concur in part with Blackett's conclusions; indeed, the concept that the world is in a permanent state of undeclared war forms an apocalyptic *leitmotif* in Ballard's work. Thus, Jim, the young hero of the autobiographical fiction *Empire of the Sun* (1984) witnesses the brilliant white light "heralding the end of one war and the beginning of the next":

> Jim thought of the last weeks of the war. Toward the end everything had become a little muddled. He had been starving and perhaps had gone slightly mad. Yet he knew that he had seen the flash of the atomic bomb at Nagasaki even across the four hundred miles of the China Sea. More important, he had seen the start of World War III, and realized that it was taking place around him. The crowds watching the newsreels on the Bund had failed to grasp that these were the trailers for a war that had already started. One day there would be no more newsreels.[8]

Clearly, the title *Empire of the Sun*, although referring to the fallen Japanese dominion in the East, alludes most pertinently to the fragile new world born under the burning skies of Hiroshima.

Where Ballard would differ from Blackett, however, would be in his interpretation of events leading up to the bombings in Japan; in his second autobiographical fantasy, *The Kindness of Women* (1991), Ballard writes of "the saving

miracle of Hiroshima and Nagasaki"[9], and in an article published by the *Sunday Times* in 1995 Ballard argues passionately in favour of the attacks:

> American power had saved our lives, above all the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Not only our lives had been spared, but those of millions of Asian civilians and, just as likely, millions of Japanese in the home islands. I find wholly baffling the widespread belief today that the dropping of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs was an immoral act, even possibly a war crime to rank with Nazi genocide [... Such claims] have had an unfortunate effect on the Japanese, confirming their belief that they were the victims of the war rather than the aggressors. As a nation the Japanese have never faced up to the atrocities they committed, and are unlikely to do so as long as we bend our heads in shame before the memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.[10]

Ballard's life was indeed 'spared' by the atom bomb; interned since 1943 at Lunghua Camp (a converted teacher training college south of Shanghai), the bombs on the Japanese mainland and subsequent military surrender prevented the implementation of a plan to evacuate the camp and send its inmates on a forced march to an almost certain death. Ballard's acknowledgement of the "saving miracle" of the atomic bomb stands in marked contrast to Burroughs's virulent hostility towards both the weapon and the "life-hating" scientists responsible for its manufacture.[11] Ballard is actually closer to Jean Baudrillard in his contempt for such "gentle ideologies"[12] as the ban-the-bomb movement; thus Ballard, unlike say Martin Amis, distrusts fashionable "millenial causes" like the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: "it *is* tailor-made for those people who have a general or non-specific sense that society is wrong or ill in some way; people who need a cause which in all probability will never be fulfilled ... which is the perfect recipe for a great cause! I think that's a large part of the appeal of CND over here, which I may say I'm totally out of sympathy with - I want *more* nuclear weapons!".[13] Ultimately, however, the often wilfully perverse speculations of both Ballard and Burroughs, in common with

those of most apocalyptic writers, stubbornly resist easy assimilation into conventional political groupings.

These observations aside, *The Terminal Beach* ends with Traven completing his inner space odyssey through the familiar Ballardian landscape of target lakes, emergency landing fields, camera towers, and abandoned super fortresses. At the centre of a labyrinth of concrete observation blocks Traven bids a series of apocalyptic farewells to a rapidly receding world:

> "*Good-bye, Eniwetok*," he murmured.
>
> Somewhere there was a flicker of light, as if one of the blocks, like a counter on an abacus, had been plucked away.
>
> *Good-bye, Los Alamos*. Again, a block seemed to vanish. The corridors around him remained intact, but somewhere in his mind had appeared a small interval of neutral space.
>
> *Good-bye, Hiroshima*.
>
> *Good-bye, Alamagordo*.
>
> *Good-bye, Moscow, London, Paris, New York* .... (TB 152-53).

Emaciated and close to death, Traven engages in a final dialogue with the corpse of a Japanese doctor; Yasuda is Traven's "dead archangel" (TB 157) and he counsels the dying pilot to relinquish his search for "the white leviathan, zero", the hidden logic behind the linked atrocites of the H-Bomb and the apparently senseless death of his family: "Have a proper humility, pursue a philosophy of acceptance" (TB 156). As in the epiphanic conclusion to *The Voices of Time*, man must learn his rightful place in this "ontological Garden of Eden"; and as he waits to die, Traven is comforted by the feeling that he will very shortly hear the voices of his wife and child again.

Unhappily, Ballard's own young wife, Helen Mary Matthews, died in the summer of 1964 from "galloping pneumonia"[14] whilst the couple holidayed with their children in Spain. Following her death, Ballard wrote *The Crystal World* but after that book no new novel appeared until *Crash* was published in 1973; the author preferring instead to return to the form pioneered in *The Terminal Beach*, refining and

experimenting with the technique in a series of 'condensed novels' published in various magazines and small-press editions (the results finally being collected and published as *The Atrocity Exhibition* in 1970).[15] Ballard has identified the death of his wife, a "meaningless act of gratuitous violence", as a major catalyst to the *atrocity* stories; her untimely demise coinciding horribly with the assassination of John F. Kennedy to reveal something of the "mad Nazi world" of the 1960s:

> I think I was trying to make sense of my wife's death by taking as a subject matter the world of the 1960s, particularly that around Kennedy's death, and trying to make sense of it, trying to find in a paradoxical way, something good. Now I know that's a sort of nightmare logic, but that's what *Atrocity Exhibition* is, a book of nightmare formulas.[16]

The first of these nightmare formulas, *You and Me and the Continuum*, was published in March 1966 in *Impulse*, a short-lived sister magazine to *New Worlds*. In a modification which is retained for most of the other atrocity stories, the bold print 'chapter titles' of the condensed novel are followed by just one paragraph of text (in *The Terminal Beach* one chapter could consist of as many as half a dozen paragraphs); the effect being to starkly emphasise the discrete nature of each compressed instalment in Ballard's new novel. Additionally, the chapter headings in *You and Me and the Continuum* are arranged in alphabetical order (**Gioconda, Helicopter, Imago Tapes, Jackie Kennedy, I See You in My Dreams** etc.), thus suggesting that the narrative may be structured according to different principles than those found in more conventional works. *You and Me and the Continuum* does not approach the bleakness or radical obscenity of the later stories in the sequence, however; the plot, such as it is, focuses on the supposed reappearance of Christ in the modern age (a favourite theme of Ballard's; see, for example, *The Comsat Angels* (1968) and *The Index* (1977)[17]), but the tale is a relatively light entertainment, complete with bad jokes: "Perhaps in the end Fellini would make a sex fantasy out of this botched second coming: $1^{1}/_{2}$ " (AE 106). The concluding episode does capture something of the

remarkable and oddly poetic style of metaphysical juxtaposition which characterises the more accomplished atrocity stories; thus, a dark trinity of 60s anti-heroes preside over the atomisation of the protagonist's consciousness, his dissolution and fragmentation counterpointed by the elevation of these bit-part players in the 60s continuum of violence onto the billboard of the heavens:

> **Zodiac.** Undisturbed, the universe would continue on its round, the unrequited ghosts of Malcolm X, Lee Harvey Oswald and Claude Eatherly raised on the shoulders of the galaxy. As his own identity faded, its last fragments glimmered across the darkening landscape, lost integers in a hundred computer codes, sand-grains on a thousand beaches, fillings in a million mouths. (AE 109).

A more representative story is *The Death Module* (re-titled "Notes Towards a Mental Breakdown" for *The Atrocity Exhibition*), published in the July 1967 issue of *New Worlds*.[18] The central character is Trabert, an enigmatic and disturbed doctor at a mysterious "Institute"; Trabert is on the verge of a complete breakdown and Ballard's 'novel' records the doctor's hallucinations, increasingly bizarre experiments, and the stylised reactions of his colleagues and lovers. Trabert is obsessed with the Kennedy assassination and the recent deaths of the three Apollo astronauts (Grissom, White, and Chaffee, the crew of Apollo I, were killed on January 27, 1967, asphyxiated in an on board fire as they ran through a simulated countdown at Cape Kennedy[19]):

> **The Transition Area.** During this period, as Trabert prepared for his departure, the elements of apocalyptic landscapes waited on the horizons of his mind, wrecked helicopters burning among broken gantries. With deliberate caution, he waited in the empty apartment near the airport overpass, disengaging himself from the images of his wife, Catherine Austin and the patients at the Institute. Wearing his old flying jacket, he listened to the unending commentaries from Cape Kennedy - already he realized that the transmissions were coming from sources other than the television and radio stations. The deaths of the three astronauts in the Apollo capsule were a failure of the code that contained the operating formulae for their passage through consciousness. Many factors confirmed this faulty eucharist of time and space - the dislocated perspectives of the apartment, his isolation from his own and his wife's body (he moved restlessly from one room

> to the next, as if unable to contain the volumes of his limbs and thorax), the serial deaths of Ralph Nader on the advertisement hoardings that lined the airport approaches. Later, when he saw the young man in the laminated suit watching him from the abandoned amusement park, Trabert knew the time had come for his rescue attempt, the resurrection of the dead spacemen. (AE 54-55).

According to the nightmare logic of *The Death Module*, Trabert willingly enters the 'transition area' of (creative) madness in order resurrect the astronauts (thus repairing the faulty dimensions of time and space); or more exactly, Trabert kills the astronauts again, but this time in a way which makes sense.[20] These false or *Alternate Deaths* are staged throughout *The Atrocity Exhibition* (see AE 36, 71, 97 etc.); Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, and the protagonist's wife and various girlfriends are sacrificed in conceptual executions which attempt to attribute a "moral dimension and even, perhaps, a measure of hope"[21] to a world devoid of feeling, unable to comprehend such tragedies outside of their sensationalised media re-enactments. Thus, Trabert engineers a "cathartic collision" (AE 61) between his wife's car and a Lincoln Continental containing plastic mannequins of the President and the First Lady. Dr Nathan (Ballard's *Benway*[22]) glosses the scene for the reader: "This motorcade ... we may interpret as a huge environmental tableau, a mobile psycho-drama which recapitulates the Apollo disaster in terms of both Dealey Plaza and the experimental car crashes examined so obsessively by Nader".[23] The final chapter of *The Death Module* suggests that Trabert's nightmare formula is, on this occasion, a success:

> **The Serial Angels.** Undisturbed now, the vaporizing figures of the dead astronauts diffused across the launching grounds, recreated in the leg stances of a hundred starlets, in a thousand bent auto-fenders, in the million instalment deaths of the serial magazines. (AE 62).

Kennedy is also 'killed again' in *The Assassination Weapon* (*New Worlds*, April 1966):

"But isn't Kennedy already dead?" Captain Webster studied the documents laid out on Dr. Nathan's demonstration table. These were: (1) a spectroheliogram of the sun; (2) tarmac and take-off checks for the B29 Super-fortress Enola Gay; (3) electroencephalogram of Albert Einstein; (4) transverse section through a Pre-Cambrian Trilobite; (5) photograph taken at noon, 7th August, 1945, of the sand-sea, Quattara Depression; (6) Max Ernst's 'Garden Airplane Traps'. He turned to Dr. Nathan. "You say these constitute an assassination weapon?" (AE 42).

This latest collection of terminal documents is assembled by Traven, a former H-bomber pilot, "carrying World War III in his head" (AE 39), and now a patient of the ubiquitous Dr Nathan. "Traven" also appears in many of the atrocity stories, cast variously as Travis, Talbot, Tallis, Talbert, Travers etc. (and indeed, debuting in prototypical form in *The Terminal Beach*); each new incarnation of the T-character perhaps corresponding with a fresh episode in a single protagonist's unfolding psychosis. The exact nature of the relationship between the T-characters is never made explicit in the actual texts of the condensed novels, but, as in the case of *The Naked Lunch*, the atrocity stories have spawned a host of supplementary materials (prefaces, essays, anthology introductions, afterwords, and in the first US edition; an explanatory interview with Ballard entitled *The New Science Fiction*[24]). In the 1990 *Annotated Edition* of the work, Ballard reveals that T. is indeed one single character, his "core identity" being Traven, "a name taken consciously from [the author] B. Traven".[25] That Ballard should draw a kinship between T. and the famously reclusive (German?) writer is surely an ironic gesture, for the closest analogue to T. is actually Ballard himself, or the "Ballard" chronicled in a number of playful, yet nevertheless self-publicising texts.[26] Interviewed in 1981 (and still keen to spend much time explicating a work published over a decade earlier), Ballard claimed that "from *The Atrocity Exhibition* you could reconstitute the late sixties almost *in toto*, and get it all right"[27]; this is a bold claim and one that does not entirely bear up to serious investigation (Ballard may (obsessively) cover JFK and Vietnam, but he studiously avoids South Africa, the beginnings of feminism, gay rights, the antiwar movement, pop music, Paris 1968, fashion, psychedelics, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia

etc.), indeed, *The Atrocity Exhibition* is not so much the biography of a decade as an extremely violent rehearsal for the later volumes of fictional autobiography.[28] Hence, Traven lives in "a small suburban house among the reservoirs of Staines and Shepperton" (AE 13), writes extensively of his time in "Lunghua internment camp" (AE 89-91), and, again like Ballard, places magazine advertisements promoting "A Neural Interval" and "The Angle Between Two Walls" (AE 58).[29]

The character of Dr Nathan could also be considered as a surrogate for Ballard, the novelist. Nathan acts as a choric figure in *The Atrocity Exhibition*, meticulously analysing the increasingly distracted behaviour of T. and directing the reader towards an informed prognosis of his condition. Nathan's cool detachment and flat, unaffected tone may satirise the rigorous rationalism to be found in certain medical papers, those illustrating what Ballard identifies as "the reductive drive of the scientific text, as it moves on its collision course with the most obsessive pornography"[30] (i.e. each trades in body parts in a manner which suggests no obvious emotional engagement - additionally, both pornography and psychiatry defend themselves on the grounds that they possess a therapeutic dimension), yet Nathan's wholly conceptual approach is remarkably akin to Ballard's prescription for a cool, abstract SF in *Which Way To Inner Space?* Significantly, the chapter in *The Death Module* in which Nathan offers his diagnosis of T.'s breakdown/breakthrough (**'Planes Intersect.'** - AE 59) is an almost exact reproduction of Ballard's earlier comments in the essay *Notes from Nowhere: Comments on Work in Progress* (*New Worlds*, October 1966).[31] In this revealing article Ballard provides a set of numbered responses to a series of "unstated questions" concerning "his current ideas":

> 9. Fiction is a branch of neurology.
> 10. Planes intersect: on one level the world of public events, Cape Kennedy and Viet Nam mimetised on billboards. On another level, the immediate personal environment, the volumes of space enclosed by my opposed hands, the geometry of my own postures, the time-values contained in this room, the motion-space of highways, staircases, the angles between these walls. On a third level, the inner world of the

> psyche. Where these planes intersect, images are born. With these co-ordinates, some kind of valid reality begins to clarify itself.[32]

Ballard's retrospective glosses and autobiographical re-writings of his work should always be treated with extreme caution (see, for example, his, to my mind rather dubious, claim that *Crash* is a "cautionary" text concerning a "pandemic cataclysm institutionalized in all industrial societies that kills hundred of thousands of people each year and injures millions"[33]), but at least *Notes from Nowhere* is contemporaneous with the atrocity stories, and not a later attempt at authorial revision or damage limitation. Apart from providing a telling example of Nathan regurgitating what are essentially Ballard's own views, **'Planes Intersect.'** presents an apocalyptic code designed to unveil the "valid reality" routinely suppressed by conventional ontological strategies.

The final episode in the atrocity sequence, *Tolerances of the Human Face* (*Encounter*, September 1969), is the longest and perhaps the most important of Ballard's new novels. The narrative revolves around the making of an "unsavoury documentary" (AE 95) at Dr Nathan's Institute. In a series of disturbing vignettes Travers (who may be a doctor or may be a patient) indulges in various conceptualised attacks on women (schoolgirls, typists etc.) whilst in the company of a young psychopath named Vaughan (who may or may not be a projection of Travers's more anti-social impulses).[34] At other times Travers is variously engaged in defending (and possibly curating) a festival of mondo movies, devising optimum auto-fatalities, notating a forensic catalogue of imaginary genitalia, and planning the "sex-death" of Karen Novotony in a snuff movie ("an erotic film - of a very special kind" - AE 98).[35] The reader is never entirely sure just what is going on, but thankfully Dr Nathan is on hand to elucidate the psychological underpinnings behind such an apparently baffling set of events:

> **Biomorphic Horror.** With an effort, Dr. Nathan looked away from Catherine Austin as she picked at her finger quicks. Unsure whether she was listening to him, he continued: "Travers's problem is how to

> come to terms with the violence that has pursued his life - not merely the violence of accident and bereavement, or the horrors of war, but the biomorphic horror of our own bodies, the awkward geometry of the postures we assume. Travers has at last realized that the real significance of these acts of violence lies elsewhere, in what we might term 'the death of affect'. Consider all our most real and tender pleasures - in the excitement of pain and mutilation; in sex as the perfect arena, like a culture-bed of sterile pus, for all the veronicas of our perversions, in voyeurism and self-disgust, in our moral freedom to pursue our own psychopathologies as a game, and in our ever greater powers of abstraction. What our children have to fear are not the cars on the freeways of tomorrow, but our own pleasure in calculating the most elegant parameters of their deaths. The only way we can make contact with each other is in terms of conceptualizations. Violence is the conceptualization of pain. By the same token psychopathology is the conceptual system of sex". (AE 93-94).

Dr Nathan's concept of *The Death of Affect* is the key to understanding the deviant logic of *The Atrocity Exhibition*. Typically, however, Nathan's diagnosis is a virtual repeat of Ballard's own views as expressed in the *New Worlds* essay *Salvador Dali: The Innocent as Paranoid*, published six months earlier in February 1969.[36] In the Dali piece Ballard characterises the world of the mid-to-late twentieth century as a "glaucous paradise" of uneasy pleasures, with aberrant sex games played out in the shadow of "the most sinister casualty of the century: the death of affect ... this demise of feeling and emotion".

Ballard is unclear about what exactly has caused this widespread "neutralisation of emotion"[37] (the "absolute freedom" promised by the atom bomb, perhaps?), yet he suspects that our loss of empathy is somehow "inseparable from the communications landscape"[38]; with endless re-runs of the Zapruder footage and the napalming of Vietnamese children merging imperceptibly into a holocaust of soap operas, cookery shows, and celebrity panel games: TV as banality exhibition.[39] In his uncollected story *A Guide to Virtual Death* (1992), Ballard lists the day's scheduled television programming for December 23, 1999; a terminal document which "offers its own intriguing insight into the origins of the disaster".[40] Highlights include:

3.00 pm Housewives' Choice. Rape, and how to psychologically prepare yourself.

6. 00 *Today's Special*. Virtual Reality TV presents "The Kennedy Assassination." The Virtual Reality head-set takes you to Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963. First you fire the assassin's rifle from the Book Depository window, and then you sit between Jackie and JFK in the Presidential limo as the bullet strikes. For premium subscribers only - feel the Presidential brain tissue spatter your face *OR* wipe Jackie's tears onto your handkerchief.

11.00 *Today's Special*. Tele-Orgasm. Virtual Reality TV takes you to an orgy. Have sex with the world's greatest movie-stars. Tonight: Marilyn Monroe and Madonna *OR* Warren Beatty and Tom Cruise. For premium subscribers only - experience transexualism, paedophilia, terminal syphilis, gang-rape, and bestiality (choice: German Shepherd or Golden Retriever).

5.00 am The Charity Hour. Game show in which Third-World contestants beg for money.

Ballard implies that Television relays the death of affect in two ways; either by reducing tragedy and suffering to a series of mawkish newsroom clichés, or by sensationalising and manipulating catastrophe in a bid to pander to hopelessly decadent tastes; whichever way, an authentic connection with bereavement or compassion is impossible. Nathan's "armchair view of damnation"[41] sees Vietnam and its remorseless television coverage as being "for the public good" (AE 97), given that the latent significance of both message and medium allows previously disconnected individuals to "make contact with each other through the new alphabet of sensation and violence"; the global gang-bang. Travers takes a step beyond this, however, devising ever more abstract deviations in an attempt to transcend the affectless *frisson* of these mediated (virtual) encounters:

> In many ways [Nathan continued] he is the first of the new naïves, a Douanier Rousseau of the sexual perversions. However consoling, it seems likely that our familiar perversions will soon come to an end, if only because their equivalents are too readily available in strange stair angles, in the mysterious eroticism of flyovers, in distortions of gesture and posture. At the logic of fashion, such once-popular perversions as paedophilia and sodomy will become derided clichés, as amusing as pottery ducks on suburban walls.

Thus, Travers's conceptual games and countless collections of terminal documents (see AE 87, 93, 96 etc.) allow planes of sexual possibility to intersect; thereby nullifying the death of affect and permitting instead the seeding of 'some kind of valid reality'. A terrible question raises itself, however; could not both Travers's nightmare abstractions (desperate attempts to understand his wife's death and the century's continuum of violence) and *The Atrocity Exhibition* stories themselves (by Ballard's admission an attempt to make sense of the decade of mayhem initiated by his own wife's death and the Kennedy's assassination) constitute yet further damning evidence of the all-embracing *Death of Affect*? Ballard's text certainly seems to be aware of just such a possibility; Catherine Austin, Nathan's assistant (and yet another Ballard surrogate?), remains deeply suspicious of Travers's apocalyptic "Marriage of Freud and Euclid" (AE 94-95):

> By contrast, for Catherine Austin [Travers's] activities were evidence of an ever widening despair, a deliberate summoning of the random and grotesque [...] He worked away endlessly on his obscene photographs: left breasts, the grimaces of filling station personnel, wound areas, catalogues of Japanese erotic films: 'targeting areas', as he described them. He seemed to turn everything into its inherent pornographic possibilities [...] part of a new grammar of callousness and aggression.

To claim that *Tolerances of the Human Face* is haunted by the fact that it may be the most obvious symptom of the disease it claims to diagnose would be an exaggeration, but Ballard's recognition of the possibility (and positioning of it within his text) suggests that he is no passive subscriber to the death of affect's "neutral exploration of sensation" (AE 96); and Travers, as his name suggests, is perhaps journeying to a similar conclusion. Put simply, that Ballard even cares about the *Death of Affect* makes for compelling evidence that he has not yet succumbed to it.

Among the exhibitors at the current atrocity exhibition (*Sensation* at the Royal Academy, Winter 1997) is the sculptor Jake Chapman, half of the Chapman Bros., and purveyor of fibreglass models of little girls with adult genitalia rudely

appended to their faces (the charmingly titled *Fuckface Twin*[42], *Two-faced Cunt* etc.). Unlike Ballard, Jake likes to give the impression that he couldn't care less:

> I asked Jake what he liked to watch on television. "I like it when people hurt themselves. I liked it when the policeman video-taped his own death. It was hilarious. It was great [...]".
>
> We discuss that the [fibre-glass models] are not really children, they are mannequins. Jake wondered out loud if it was possible to be sexualized and innocent. I reassured him that Henry James thought so. "Are you doing the same thing as Henry James did in *The Turn of the Screw*?" I asked. He looked blank.
> (Chapman Bros. interview in *Flash Art International*, Jan./Feb. 1996).[43]

The point is not that Chapman so conspicuously displays the death of affect or that he lacks even a modicum of compassion; the precise opposite, in fact, for according to aberrant logic of *The Atrocity Exhibition* and the equally perverse reasoning of Ballard's other apocalyptic fantasias, Chapman's grammar of callousness and aggression (and studied stupidity) may yet connect with a higher, more valid form of reality; an authentic new world offering asylum from the nightmare of history:

> I remembered my bizarre attempt to suffocate Mrs St Cloud, the strange way in which I had tried to rape the little blind girl, and the unconscious young woman I had nearly murdered in her apartment near London Airport [...] I was certain now that vice in this world was a metaphor for virtue in the next, and that only through the most extreme of those metaphors would I make my escape.[44]

As the above passage from Ballard's *The Unlimited Dream Company* (1979) so vividly demonstrates, both he and Burroughs deal in terminal scenarios which steadfastly resist the claims of rational thought and liberal sentiment; their apocalyptic speculations often defy both reason and taste.

In a sense *The Atrocity Exhibition* could be considered a book split into two related parts; with the first (and longest) section consisting of what are

recognisably 'condensed novels' (i.e. from the story *The Atrocity Exhibition* through to *You and Me and the Continuum*, pp. 7-109), while part II of the work (pp. 111-39) comprises of a group of shorter pieces, many with provocatively tasteless titles (such as *Plan for the Assassination of Jacqueline Kennedy, The Assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy Considered as a Downhill Motor Race*, and the supremely offensive *Why I Want to Fuck Ronald Reagan*). In these later stories the bold-print 'chapter titles' no longer consist of separate phrases or single headlines (**Fake Newsreels, Pirate Radio** etc.), instead the paragraph headings now form parts of sentences which continue as a separate narrative throughout the main story; thus the following is contained in the piece entitled *Love and Napalm: Export U.S.A.*: **At night, these visions of helicopters and the D.M.Z. / fused in Traven's mind with the spectre / of his daughter's body. The lantern of her face / hung among the corridors of sleep. / Warning him, she summoned to her side / all the legions of the bereaved. / By day the overflights of B.52s / crossed the drowned causeways of the delta, / unique ciphers of violence and desire.**. Other pieces in this second part of *The Atrocity Exhibition* dispense with chapter headings altogether or pursue the earlier condensed novels to their logical conclusion and present the reader with little more than just lists and obscene parodies of scientific/market research data. *The Generations of America*, for example, offers a bleak view of recent US history: "Sirhan Sirhan shot Robert F. Kennedy. And Ethel M, Kennedy shot Judith Birnbaum. And Judith Birnbaum shot Elizabeth Bochnak. And Elizabeth Bochnak shot Andrew Witner" (AE 127), and so on for another five pages and two hundred or so deaths.

Ballard's chronicle of the American way of death is a bitter parody of "the generations of Adam" in chapter five of the Old Testament book of *Genesis*; with the verb "begat" replaced by the verb "shot". H. Bruce Franklin has attacked the piece for expressing the "fashionable liberal"[45] prejudice that the US is a violent country, but Ballard is a more subtle writer than Franklin ever really gives him credit for. It is possible to read *The Generations of America* as an ironic comment on the (ruined) dynastic ambitions of the Kennedy clan, for example; and considering

that the names of the other assassins and victims are all taken from the editorial mastheads of magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek*[46], it is equally possible to see Ballard's piece as a further attack on a voracious media which does as much to create a climate of violence as it does to report it. Burroughs, of course, constructs an entire paranoid mythology out of the supposed machinations of the US news magazines and their big business partners in corporate America, and although Ballard may agree with him up to a point, it would be a misreading to conclude that Ballard subscribes to Burroughs's thesis of news-management with anything approaching the revolutionary zeal of his American counterpart. In essence, *The Atrocity Exhibition* never really attempts to present a rigorous deconstruction of the media, any more than it claims to be a serious novel about Vietnam or profound meditation on US political life. Despite some dark mutterings about "hidden agendas"[47] in the 1990 annotated edition, *The Atrocity Exhibition* never really fully engages with the Kennedy assassination either; and certainly not on the level of such works as Don DeLillo's *Libra* (1988) or James Ellroy's *American Tabloid* (1995)[48]; indeed, Ballard's remarks in a December 1969 *New Worlds* review of Hitler's "novel" *Mein Kampf* (1925/26) show, that at the time of his writing the atrocity stories, Ballard certainly believed that Oswald alone fired the fatal shot.[49]

The Atrocity Exhibition, then, is not a novel about conspiracy, paranoia, or plot-making; the deaths of Kennedy, Monroe, and James Dean are primarily of interest to Ballard because they represent a "psychic cataclysm"[50], and not because they may reveal dark secrets about Washington or Hollywood. Ballard conceives of these high-profile deaths as inner-space disasters, beamed directly into the subconscious landscape by the power of television. The historian Michael Barkun reaches a similar conclusion in his study *Disaster and the Millennium* (1974); Kennedy's death, he argues, was subject to a degree of television coverage unprecedented in the history of the medium:

> Television created a sense of vicarious participation which made every viewer feel as if he were not merely a spectator at the sidelines but an active participant.
>
> The Kennedy assassination marked a quantum leap in the interpenetration of public and private.[51]

According to Barkun, the nature and impact of catastrophe has fundamentally changed in the post-war era: "modern disaster is an artifact of interdependence ... the 'imagination of disaster' has become fixated on worldwide catastrophe. This is so because technology and the expansion of international transactions now makes it plausible ... with the advent of television we are all potential disaster victims".[52] Barkun may well be correct, in recent years we have seen relatives (unsuccessfully) claim damages against South Yorkshire police for post-traumatic stress suffered as a result of watching the Hillsborough football stadium disaster live on television, a national ban on the ownership of handguns has been introduced in the wake of the exhaustively-covered Dunblane massacre (Independent television broadcast selected funerals 'live', for example), and the extraordinary scenes which followed the death of Diana, Princess of Wales have left many observers in doubt about the wisdom of saturation television coverage (at times the UK appeared to be in a state of national hysteria rather than mourning). The 'psychic cataclysm' at the centre of *The Atrocity Exhibition* is the atomic bomb, what Burroughs calls "The Blazing Photo from Hiroshima and Nagasaki"[53]; and the atrocity exhibition itself is the annual show of artworks by the inmates of Dr Nathan's institute. Ballard's theme is announced with the very first word of his book:

> **Apocalypse.** A disquieting feature of this annual exhibition - to which the patients themselves were not invited - was the marked preoccupation of the paintings with the theme of world cataclysm, as if these long-incarcerated patients had sensed some seismic upheaval within the minds of their doctors and nurses [...] these bizarre images, with their fusion of Eniwetok and Luna Park, Freud and Elizabeth Taylor [...] they hung on the enamelled walls like the codes of insoluble dreams, the keys to a nightmare ... (AE 7).

Every apocalypse should have its very own Antichrist, of course, and in *The Atrocity Exhibition* Ballard nominates Ronald Reagan (b. 1911) to play the role. At the time that Ballard published *Why I Want to Fuck Ronald Reagan* (both as a chapbook and as a contribution in *International Times*), Reagan was the recently-elected (conservative) Republican governor of California; gaining office on a populist platform that promised tax reform and widespread cuts in welfare spending. During his two terms as California governor (1967-74), Reagan's right-wing rhetoric made him an easy target for campus radicals and the political left (although Richard Milhous Nixon was undoubtedly considered Grand Satan No. 1 by the doomsayers of the counterculture). This demonisation of Reagan resumed when he became 40th president of the United States (1981-89), although as Ballard later observed: "the amiable old duffer who occupied the White House was a very different person from the often sinister figure I described in 1967".[54] Ballard's obscene satire on the crude right-wing antics of the younger Reagan also serves as a wry comment on the degraded vocabularies employed by market/medical researchers and political 'policy study groups'; a point amplified by the story's circulation on headed Party note paper (minus both title and author's name) at the 1980 Republican Nomination Convention[55]:

> Slow-motion cine-films of campaign speeches exercised a marked erotic effect upon an audience of spastic children. Even with mature adults the verbal material was found to have minimal effect, as demonstrated by substitution of an edited tape giving diametrically opposed opinions. Parallel films of rectal images revealed a sharp upsurge in anti-Semitic and concentration camp fantasies (cf., anal-sadistic fantasies in deprived children induced by rectal stimulation). (AE 134).

Ballard's subversive text attempts to reveal the hidden dynamics informing both political campaigning and broadcasting and the audience consumption of such materials; the manifest content of Reagan's speeches is largely irrelevant (his words have 'minimal effect'), it is their latent significance which requires decoding. Ballard's researchers suggest that "powerful erotic fantasies of an

anal-sadistic character [surround] the image of the Presidential contender" (AE 133); and what more potent anal-sadistic fantasy is there than the wish to bring the planet to nuclear destruction? (or as Nero reportedly put it: "I wish the world had but one neck and my hands were upon it"). It is unclear whether Reagan himself is consciously aware of the threat he poses, the danger lies in the wayward and deviant impulses he secretly appeals to. Perversely, Reagan's (admittedly fading) film star good-looks and all-round (heterosexual) charm taps into the darker dreams of his constituency:

> Incidence of orgasms in fantasies of sexual intercourse with Ronald Reagan. Patients were provided with assembly kit photographs of sexual partners during intercourse. In each case Reagan's face was superimposed upon the original partner. Vaginal intercourse with 'Reagan' proved uniformly disappointing, producing orgasm in 2 per cent of subjects [...] The preferred mode of entry overwhelmingly proved to be rectal. (AE 134).

Not only (Ballard's text mischievously implies) is Reagan an asshole, he is a wanker ("tests indicate the masturbatory nature of the Presidential contender's posture" - AE 135), with a hair style which reminds male subjects of "their own pubic hair", and furthermore, "in assembly-kit tests Reagan's face was uniformly perceived as a penile erection" (AE 136): Ronald Reagan as Chapmanesque *Fuckface* doll. Ballard has a wider purpose than the mere accumulation of such scatological detail; Reagan's electoral success reflects "society's periodic need to re-conceptualize its political leaders" (AE 135), thus Reagan's popularity accords with the violent demands of the late 60s (just as the oral Kennedy, presumably, tallied nicely with the general mood of public optimism in the earlier part of the decade). Reagan, like Thatcher and Clinton and Blair at other times, "appears as a series of posture concepts", and his aggressive, confrontational stance, Ballard prophesies, bodes ill for the planet's fragile future: "The profound anality of the Presidential contender may be expected to dominate the United States in the coming years" (AE 135-36).

The Atrocity Exhibition concludes with an equally notorious text, *The Assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy Considered as a Downhill Motor Race* (*Ambit*, Autumn 1966); an absurdist piece which not only signposts the way forward for the New SF but also manages to reveal one of the driving forces behind Ballard's oblique new fiction. The story is a recognisable re-write of *The Passion Considered as an Uphill Bicycle Race* (1900) by the French proto-surrealist and self-proclaimed *pataphysicist* Alfred Jarry (1873-1907); an English translation of Jarry's mildly blasphemous piece had first appeared in 1965, and Ballard's version reconceives Kennedy as the martyred King and the hapless Oswald as Pilate.[56] Other noticeable influences on the condensed novels include Burroughs (of course) and Bernard Wolfe's ambitious SF novel *Limbo '90* (1952), a sprawling work which contains examples of such later Ballardian properties as journal entries, footnotes, tables of information, slogans, and large, block-print words (**NO** and **YES** in *Limbo '90*, **YOU** in *The Voices of Time*, for example).[57] Ballard traces his fondness for "those lists and paragraphs which carried the real story"[58] back to Jack Vance's obscure novella *Meet Miss Universe* (*Fantastic Universe*, March 1955), an anti-smoking parable which centres around an intergalactic beauty contest:

> 4. Miss Shaula (Lambda Scorpii). Inverted tub. Mottled brown and gray. Shiny. A hundred little suckers underneath. Eye in center like a periscope. Weight 200 lbs.
> 5. Miss TIX (Tau Draconis). Humanoid D. Jackstraw type. 9 feet tall, spindly. Big head, no chin. Faceted eyes. Cockroach-color. Suckers at tips of fingers (16 fingers). Weight 90lbs.
> 6. Miss Aries 44R951. A big dry tumbleweed, with a hundred jellyfish tangled in it. Weight 40lbs.[59]

Thematically, Vance's light-hearted tale makes for an unlikely forerunner of the atrocity stories, but it is not difficult to see how Vance's compact style and the dense double-column design of the original magazine layout caught Ballard's imagination. Similarly, Ballard has attributed his habit of reproducing character dialogue in the form of a screenplay to the inspiration of such experimental works as Aldous

Huxley's *Ape and Essence* (1949) and Nigel Balchin's now largely forgotten *Lord, I Was Afraid* (1947).[60]

Another major stylistic source for *The Atrocity Exhibition* are the cut-up experiments of Burroughs and Gysin, although the true extent of Burroughs's hallowed influence should not be overestimated as many of Ballard's ideas appear to have evolved quite independently of the Paris laboratory. Ballard has made no secret of his admiration for Burroughs's work (and the American writer has returned the compliment by providing the preface for the US edition of *The Atrocity Exhibition*) and certain similarities (and differences) are apparent between the theory and practice of both the condensed novels and the cut-up texts.[61] Ballard has described his technique in the atrocity stories as "conventional narrative with all the unimportant pieces left out ... you know: 'He went out of the door and down the steps. As he crossed the square' etc."[62]; such remarks echo both Burroughs's views as expressed in his influential 1965 *Paris Review* profile and Willy Lee's metafictional plea in *The Naked Lunch*: "Why all this waste paper getting The People from one place to another?".[63] Both writers have identified a therapeutic component in their respective literary experiments (each, coincidentally, concerning a deceased spouse); it is possible to read *The Atrocity Exhibition* as a collection of terminal documents seeking to make sense of Helen's untimely death (and similarly, Joan's violent death alerts Burroughs to the nefarious existence of Control, which to escape from he has to *write his way out*).[64] What ultimately unites both Ballard and Burroughs is their fervent apocalypticism; planes intersect in the condensed novels to produce fresh images and *some kind of valid reality*, whilst according to Burroughs: "Cut-ups establish new connections between images, and one's range of vision consequently expands".[65]

As we discovered in chapter one, Burroughs effectively kick-started his career as a writer of apocalyptic fiction after exposure to the forbidden delights of Tangier, a mystical zone of transit "like a dream extending from the past into the future, a frontier between dream and reality".[66] For his part, Ballard has proposed

Shanghai ("a city with absolutely no restraints on anything"[67]) as another *interzone*, or site of revelation:

> In Shanghai, what had been a conventional world for me was exposed as no more than a stage set whose cast could disappear overnight; so I saw the fragility of everything, the transience of everything, but also, in a way, the *reality* of everything [...] Perhaps I've always been trying to return to the Shanghai landscape, to some sort of truth that I glimpsed there.[68]

Like Burroughs's promiscuous hallucination of the Tangier interzone, Jim's conception of Shanghai in *The Kindness of Women* as "a waking dream where everything I could imagine had already been taken to its extreme"[69] is essentially indebted to English Romanticism, a literary movement notable for its absolute faith in the apocalyptic potential of the visionary dream-state.[70] Both Ballard and Burroughs have adopted an evangelical attitude towards spreading the good news promised by their new compositional techniques, and each too has recanted to a degree; with Ballard admitting in 1975 that he may have made "over-large claims for non-linear narrative or whatever you want to call it".[71] There are also some obvious differences between the pair; Ballard lacks Burroughs's willingness to experiment for experiment's sake, for example. Thus, Ballard's period of improvising with a tape recorder (during the writing of *Concrete Island*) rather quickly wound to a halt; and again, the contrast between Ballard's approach to the new medium and Burroughs's is illuminating; whereas the latter could quite happily spend (literally) months editing and splicing away in the search for fresh patterns of revelation and meaning, Ballard simply tape recorded private conversations in the hope of being able to plough them back verbatim into his novel (thus supposedly replacing fiction with *reality*).[72]

A trifle perversely perhaps, Ballard seems to dislike the metafictional excesses of postmodernist fiction almost as much as he detests mainstream social realism or the parochial boundaries of the Hampstead novel; indeed, he claims that

the related texts in the atrocity sequence are not experimental works at all (such a description, he sniffs, "implies a test procedure of uncertain outcome"[73]); and certainly, whereas Burroughs wishes (on occasion) to destroy not just the story, but the paragraph, the sentence, and the word as well, Ballard's writing is remarkably clear and its meaning, on the whole, coherent (the narrative may be fragmented, but the individual sentences are not). In his review of the annotated edition of *The Atrocity Exhibition*, Richard C. Walls makes the pointed observation that "after all that has transpired, been destroyed, posited, mutilated, fucked, erased and violated" in Ballard's novel, the "mannered, droning voice" that narrates the concluding section "without the slightest waver or mistake" is an "exact replica of the one who started" (and Walls considers this "the most horrifying prospect" in Ballard's atrocity show).[74] In his defence, Ballard insists that his precise tone is neutral, rather than *affectless*:

> I use the language of an anatomist. It's rather like doing a post-mortem on a child who's been raped. The anatomist's post-mortem is no less exact, he itemizes things no less clearly, for the rage and outrage he feels.[75]

Ballard's choice of simile is appropriate; just as the external landscape is a ravaged war zone, so "the human organism is an atrocity exhibition" (AE 15). Ballard's literary post-mortem reveals "A Krafft-Ebing of Geometry and Posture" (AE 76), a biomorphic horrorshow in which man's profound disquiet at the inescapable fact of his own physical existence is reflected in the violence he projects onto the world.[76] Burroughs, of course, shares this radical loathing of the body; but Walls's telling criticism points us towards a fundamental difference between the two authors. Ballard's cool precision and rational commentary on the holocaust stand opposed to the bawdy routines and elegiac interludes which characterise Burroughs's carnivalesque apocalypse. Ballard's jokes are weak and one suspects that his pessimism and despair runs deeper than Burroughs's. For Burroughs,

laughter grants "a moment's freedom from the cautious, nagging, aging, frightened, flesh"[77], much of *The Atrocity Exhibition* suggests that only biological extinction can offer such respite; or as Freud proposed in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), quite simply "the aim of all life is death".[78] Burroughs's fictional revels are remarkably rich in their comic variety and ceaseless erotic invention; after a while Ballard's monotone delivery resembles little more than a terminal countdown, his last words the final bit-parts in an increasingly moribund pornography:

> **Spinal Levels.** 'Sixties iconography: the nasal prepuce of L.B.J., crashed helicopters, the pudenda of Ralph Nader, Eichmann in drag, the climax of a New York happening: a dead child. (AE 24).

In an astute essay, Robert Platzner complains that Ballard is quite "unable to screen out his own fetishistic obsessions"[79] from those he seeks to ridicule or condemn in others. Platzner's analysis is surely correct, yet much of the terrible power of *The Atrocity Exhibition* is derived precisely from these same grim fetishes and obsessional fantasies (and especially from the novel's numerous lists, their iconic elements produced through "free association"[80], a process intended to access the guarded secrets of the unconscious mind). The Dead Child (who's been raped) is a troubling and emblematic presence in *The Atrocity Exhibition*, and Ballard's supposed chronicle of "Sixties iconography" remains in many ways curiously haunted by the flaccid embryos of Dali and the killing fields of World War II. Compared to the almost yuppie-ish pleasures to be had in Ballard's next novel, *Crash* (1973), the harrowing catalogue of the atrocity exhibition reads, finally, like a particularly painful and distressing war memoir.

There is an episode in Martin Amis's early novel, *Dead Babies* (1975), in which his characters visit "The Psychologic Revue", a "straightforwardly apocalyptic" performance art club convened in an derelict cinema off the Kilburn

High Road.[81] The venue is home to the *Conceptualists*, a ruthless new breed of art terrorists:

> Precision and arbitrariness were the twin hallmarks of Conceptualist activity [...] stolen helicopters showered over key cities a bizarre confetti of pornographic postcards, atrocity photographs, suppressed medical reproductions, vetoed X-ray plates [...] The remains of perverse sexual scenarios periodically came to light - [...] A stylized car crash, the impacted instrument binnacles of either vehicle stained with semen [...] The crippled and insane looted from various asylums and returned dumbstruck. A kidnapped surgeon required at gunpoint to perform strange anal surgery on a masked patient. An eighteen-month-old girl found in a ditch with severe genital injuries.[82]

The thoroughly decadent yearning for erotic violence displayed by Amis's aesthetic storm-troopers serves as mordant comment on the dubious pleasures to be had in the twilight world of contemporary art. The Conceptualists and their dead babies are also, of course, modelled from the pages of Ballard's atrocity exhibition catalogue. For his part, Ballard broke the frame of his novel when he staged a show of terminal exhibits at the New Arts Laboratory in North London in April 1970.[83] The exhibition, *Crashed Cars: New Sculpture by J.G. Ballard,* can be seen as an attempt to reproduce something akin to the "Apocalypse" show curated by Travis in *The Atrocity Exhibition*. Ballard's installation consisted of "three crashed cars in a formal gallery ambience"[84], a Mini, an Austin A40, and an impressively wrecked American Pontiac (doubtless Ballard found it impossible to procure a Lincoln Continental from the breaker's yard[85]). In a printed handout, the artist explained the reasoning behind his trinity of atrocity exhibits:

> Each of these sculptures is a memorial to a unique collision between man and his technology [...] The 20th century has given birth to a vast range of machines - computers, pilotless planes, thermonuclear weapons - where the latent identity of the machine is ambiguous. An

> understanding of this identity can be found in a study of the automobile.[86]

As we know from Dr Nathan, the libidinal auto-smash "may be perceived unconsciously as a fertilizing rather than a destructive event" (AE 28); thus, one assumes, technology secretly appeals to deviant needs and erotic agendas (nuclear weapons, in effect, become objects of profound desire). During the month-long duration of *Crashed Cars* the vehicles were repeatedly vandalised, and Ballard reported himself to be intrigued when a "topless girl" he hired for the opening party was "nearly raped" in the back seat of the disfigured Pontiac:

> Now, the whole thing was a speculative illustration of a scene in *The Atrocity Exhibition*. I had speculated in my book about how the people might behave. And in the real show the guests at the party and the visitors later behaved in pretty much the way I had anticipated. It was not so much an exhibition of sculpture as almost of experimental psychology using the medium of the fine art show. People were unnerved, you see.
> (JGB in conversation with E. Paolozzi, *Studio International*, Oct. 1971).[87]

In retrospect, however, the true significance of Ballard's exercise in "experimental psychology" appears to lie elsewhere. *Crashed Cars* is now an established item in Ballard's well-thumbed anthology of anecdotal routines and interview responses. As with the canny decision to bestow the name of James Ballard upon the narrator of *Crash*, Ballard's subsequent dispatches on events at the New Arts Lab serve to self-consciously mythologise both his life and work. *Crashed Cars* links the fictional exploits of T. in *The Atrocity Exhibition* with actual behaviour of J.G. Ballard, the author-artist; *Crash*, the novel, further confuses the boundaries between artifice and reality by projecting a "J.G. Ballard" back into the fictional text (additionally, Ballard's own subsequent car crash has now become another popular episode in the anecdotal repertoire). Ballard's tactic of placing "J.G. Ballard" in his novels (*Crashed*

Cars is further mythologised in "The Exhibition" chapter of *The Kindness of Women;* and on this occasion, Jim does manage to lay his hands on a Lincoln Continental) and the related gesture of recreating events from those novels in the 'real world' is a strategy which has also served Burroughs well. In a sense, both writers are modern exponents of *dandyism,* a transformative process in which each routine junkie's fix, each uneventful morning in an anonymous suburb, is nevertheless suffused with weighty significance and authentic artistic purpose.

Ballard's playful tampering with the fragile boundaries which separate fictional and 'actual' experience is a crucial element in his apocalyptic assault on the nature of "reality". Like the Romantics and the Surrealists before him, Ballard views conventional ontological strategies with extreme suspicion, if not outright hostility. Ballard contends that the world is a fiction, an enormous novel, which needs to be re-written in order to reveal *some kind of valid reality* (and not the degraded pseudo-reality so cynically offered and manipulated by the related orthodoxies of television, advertising, and politics). The task of the imaginative writer forced to endure such conditions is not to create further fictions for his work: "the fiction's already *there;* the writer's job is to put the reality in".[88] The logical conclusion of such views can be found in the post-atrocity stories *Coitus 80: A Description of the Sexual Act in 1980* (*New Worlds,* January 1970) and *Princess Margaret's Face Lift: An Intersection of Fiction and Reality* (*New Worlds,* March 1970)[89]; experimental works in which Ballard attempts to "lower the fictional threshold to the floor".[90] In the latter text, Ballard reproduces passages from a plastic surgery teaching manual and substitutes the patient's name with that of the Queen's younger sister. Later works in the series include *Mae West's Reduction Mammoplasty* (*Ambit,* Summer 1970) and *Jane Fonda's Augmentation Mammoplasty* (*Semiotext(e),* 1989):

> Miss Fonda was then turned onto her back, and her breasts were thoroughly cleansed and towelled off. An incision was made in the inframammary sulcus on each side, straight down to the deep fascia

> under her breasts. Each breast was then lifted up until it stood well forward, and the cavity was temporarily packed with ribbon gauze.[91]

The "valid reality" revealed by this particularly gruesome intersection of the planes of fiction and reality may be a modest one (scientific texts unveil their hidden pornographic potential once the part of Miss X is taken by Madonna or Elizabeth Taylor), yet Ballard's approach is thoroughly consistent with his over-riding ambition to remake the world by illuminating the "true" meaning behind the signs and postures within it.

Another group of experimental "texts" from the period of the condensed novels is the series of "Advertiser's Announcements" which Ballard placed in *Ambit* magazine between 1967 and 1970.[92] There are five published collages in all (Ballard has stated that he originally intended *The Atrocity Exhibition* to be copiously illustrated with montages of medical diagrams, charts, photographs etc.); each containing a single photographic image, a headline, and a paragraph of Ballard text. The advertisements themselves are virtually identical to those placed in various (admittedly more glamorous) periodicals by the T-character in the atrocity stories (according to the "Atticus" column in the *Sunday Times* (October 15, 1967), Ballard had to content himself with the smaller circulation *Ambit* when the Arts Council refused his request for £1000 "to back a personal advertising campaign [promoting] a nude on Westminster Abbey's high altar, a motor crash, and Princess Margaret's left armpit"[93]). Ballard's finished designs are perhaps less inflammatory than the anarchic delights promised to readers of the *Sunday Times*; yet they are nevertheless among the more disquieting of the terminal documents. *A Neural Interval*, for example (*Ambit* 36, Summer 1968), features a full-length photograph of a bound woman clad in elaborate bondage gear; the woman's subjection is amplified by the opening sentence of Ballard's cool prose: "In her face the diagram of bones forms a geometry of murder". In a 1983 interview with Graeme Revell, Ballard spends a considerable amount of time discussing a series of commercially-produced

bondage pictures taken "aboard a motor yacht near Miami" (the "Neural Interval" shot is taken from this same collection):

> The final photos in this series showed this strange yacht in which these girls, all tied up and shackled, were incorporated into the rigging.
>
> Now, this would be classed as pornography. Yet there was absolutely nothing sexual about it at all.[94]

I can understand Ballard's general theory that sexual activity is becoming increasingly conceptualised (and, indeed, the manufacture and distribution of these pictures appears to confirm this), yet to claim that there is "absolutely nothing sexual" about these photographs strikes me as arrant nonsense. The sexual fantasy at the centre of these (relatively soft-core) bondage shots is the masculine dream of a woman who is tethered and unable to resist attack or defend herself (and in the more extreme poses Ballard discusses, in which the bodily forms of the women are virtually indistinguishable under a soft armour of leather and rubber, the potent sexual fantasy is now the total obliteration of the female object itself). I would argue that the picture selected by Ballard for his advertisement is undeniably "sexual", and in addition, Ballard's fetishistic siting of it within a commercial space juxtaposed with his own headline and remarkable text renders it even more "sexually" arousing (for those receptive to its initial erotic potential). In other words, Ballard's provocative statement ("a geometry of murder" etc.) emphasises and intensifies the implicit sadistic content of the original picture; details such as the manner in which the bound model holds her hands out as far apart as they can go (which is not far) in order to stress the imposed boundaries of her subjection, the way in which the photographer places her on the very edge of the boat with her back to the sea - one push and she will topple overboard and drown. Ballard chooses a very nasty picture for *A Neural Interval*; his advertisement makes it even nastier.

Venus Smiles (*Ambit* 46, Winter 1970/71) is another disturbing "J.G. Ballard Production"; the photographic illustration is of a naked woman, hunched

over in a confined space and engaged in either pulling off or putting on an item of clothing (?) over her right ankle (the photograph is closely cropped so the exact scenario is unclear; the woman's pubis is centrally positioned and her exposed body appears to be marked in some places). Ballard's text reports:

> He worked endlessly at the photographs: left breasts, the grimaces of filling station personnel, wound areas, catalogues of Japanese erotic films. By contrast their own relationship was marked by a seraphic tenderness, transits of touch and feeling as serene as the movements of a dune.

The "Venus Smiles" photograph is, in fact, a impromptu portrait, taken by Ballard, of his long-term girlfriend Claire Churchill; she is sat in their car, beginning to dress herself after a swim in the sea at Brighton (the markings on her body, presumably, being plant debris from the ocean and the beach). This reassuring information, offered by Ballard in interview, is, of course, unavailable to viewers of the "Advertiser's Announcement". What they see is a woman, apparently in some distress, and quite possibly in the last stages of undressing; her left forearm (or "wound area"), in particular, marked by a ugly injury; without the later authorial gloss, Ballard's domestic scene of "seraphic tenderness" reads suspiciously like a scenario for rape (and such a reading becomes increasingly plausible when *Venus Smiles* is viewed next to *A Neural Interval*). Taken together, these two documents are among the most sinister artefacts in Ballard's catalogue.

To be entirely fair to Ballard, however, I seriously doubt that it was his sincere intention to promote such readings. The series of "Advertiser's Announcements" should perhaps be read as part of a more generalised campaign against accepted notions of what exactly constitutes literary narrative (a confrontational tactic complemented by a sideswipe at the bourgeois deification of the novel); the *Guardian* (October 24, 1967) reports Ballard as saying: "If you take space in a mass magazine you immediately reach millions, whereas the novel is a

declining form ... I'm working towards a stage where magazines pay me to take advertisements".[95] Further compelling evidence of Ballard's wish to challenge the formal properties of the novel can be found in his so-called *Project for a New Novel* (c. 1958)[96], a set of four double page spreads, sample collages for "a new kind of novel" consisting entirely of ambiguous magazine headlines and "deliberately meaningless text".[97] When displayed end to end, the interlocking pages of Ballard's composite narrative form a 'billboard novel' (Ballard is pictured in front of his assembled creation on the cover of the January 1963 issue of *New Worlds*); although remaining unpublished until 1978, *Project for a New Novel* obviously stayed with Ballard through the 60s, as certain headlines from the work are resurrected to serve as chapter titles for the condensed novels; Imago Tapes, Pre-Uterine Claims, Coma: the million-year girl etc.

Each of the three remaining "Advertiser's Announcements" also employ images of women to promote their seditionary message; *Homage to Claire Churchill* (*Ambit* 32, Summer 1967) uses a pleasant facial portrait of the aforementioned Miss Churchill, *Placental Insufficiency* (*Ambit* 45, Autumn 1970) marshals a dubious vérité picture of a naked (retarded?) woman brandishing a shotgun, whilst *Does the Angle Between Two Walls Have a Happy Ending?* (*Ambit* 33, Autumn 1967) features an explicit still from Stephen Dwoskin's short film *Alone* (something of a staple on the late 60s arthouse circuit, *Alone* quite simply involves a woman smoking and masturbating). This last advertisement boasts the following caption:

> Fiction is a branch of neurology: the scenarios of nerve and blood vessel are the written mythologies of memory and desire.

Sex: Inner Space: J.G. Ballard

Does the Angle Between Two Walls Have a Happy Ending? endorses Ballard's proposition that the world is an enormous novel; and residing dormant within the

elegant contours and murderous geometries of this world are the narrative elements of an apocalyptic text yet to be written, a prophetic new algebra unveiling latent "mythologies of memory and desire":

> **'In Death, Yes.'** Nathan nodded sagely over his cigarette smoke [...] 'These images of angles and postures constitute not so much a private gallery as a conceptual equation, a fusing device by which Talbot hopes to bring his scenario to a climax [...] In the post-Warhol era a single gesture such as uncrossing one's legs will have more significance than all the pages in *War and Peace*. In twentieth-century terms the crucifixion, for example, would be re-enacted as a conceptual auto-disaster'. (AE 33-34).

The world is a doomsday text, a coded landscape rich in signs and wonders, and the intersecting planes of Claire Churchill's enigmatic smile, Jayne Mansfield's punctured pudenda, and the overlit angle between two walls reveal the faulty dimensions of a nightmare; but somehow, Ballard perhaps perversely insists, these terminal documents may yet come to represent an unlikely escape route from the barbarous realities of Time and Space.

Thomas Pynchon - Paranoia, Apocalypse, Counterforce: A Conclusion

Are space vehicles merely overgrown V-2s, or are they Jung's symbols of redemption, ciphers in some futuristic myth?

(J.G. Ballard, *You and Me and the Continuum*).

Casualties and materiel damage resulting from V-2 attacks were severe. In Antwerp, Liege, and vicinity, some 5,400 persons were killed, 22,000 wounded, and 90,000 houses were destroyed. These losses were not determining military factors, but they did adversely affect morale, and make it difficult to maintain an adequate supply of civilian labor.

(*V-2 Rocket Attacks*, US Army Report, European Theater, 1945).

We're all in the movies.

(J.G. Ballard, *Tolerances of the Human Face*).

So, in the end, above ground you must have the Haves, pursuing pleasure and comfort and beauty, and below ground the Have-nots; the Workers getting continually adapted to the conditions of their labour.

(H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine*).

We were all killed in the blast.

(Philip K. Dick, *Ubik*).

But one thing I know for sure now like I know any fact: so-called "death" is not final, though a powerful lobby or interest block presumes to know what Life and Death is, and give out with their bulletins of "scientific" horseshit.

(William S. Burroughs, *Letter to Allen Ginsberg*, May 18, 1959).

"Science acquiesces, fatally, to the second law of thermodynamics; magic is free to be a conscientious objector. The fact is that I'm not *interested* in a universe in which I have to die."

"Which is to say that you've chosen self-delusion."

"Indeed, no! I choose to escape. I choose freedom."

(Thomas M. Disch, *Camp Concentration*).

If, as it seems, we are in the process of becoming a totalitarian society in which the state apparatus is all-powerful, the ethics most important for the survival of the true, free, human individual would be: cheat, lie, evade, fake it, be elsewhere, forge documents ...

(Philip K. Dick, *The Android and the Human*).

Only he who denies every belief in a higher force is godless to us.

(Heinrich Himmler, 1937).

An uninhibited paranoid is always a bad deal.

(William S. Burroughs, *Letter to Allen Ginsberg*, August 10, 1955).[1]

Back in 1944 when people were normal and there was a world war on ... Lt. Tyrone Slothrop, an American soldier all the way from Mingeborough, Mass., finds himself stationed in London and employed as an intelligence gatherer for the shadowy bureaucrats at ACHTUNG (Allied Clearing House, Technical Units, Northern Germany).[2] Slothrop's main brief is to investigate the destructive "Aftermaths" of the terrifying new German "V-bomb 'incidents'"; he is a mock-heroic "Saint George after the fact, going out to poke about for droppings of the Beast" (GR 24).[3] The hapless Lt. Slothrop is himself the subject of keen surveillance by the nominally allied agents of PISCES (Psychological Intelligence Schemes for Expediting Surrender[4]), for by an unhappy coincidence (or nefarious design, or quite possibly, neither), Hitler's fiendishly apocalyptic V-2 rockets are falling on the exact sites of Slothrop's (not infrequent) erotic trysts; the amorous Yank gets a hard-on and a few days later a ton of Nazi hardware comes screaming out of the sky. Such is the unlikely and bizarre premise of Thomas Pynchon's extraordinary *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), a complex and gargantuan work comprising over 400,000 words and involving some 300 characters. This concluding chapter will consider the related themes of Paranoia, Apocalypse, and Counterforce in Pynchon's great novel; a vast and visionary text which begins with a rocket attack on London in December 1944, and ends thirty years later, in the

Californian sunshine, with a nuclear warhead poised to obliterate the patrons of a movie theater managed by one Richard M. Zhlubb (read Nixon).[5]

The German A-4 rocket, or "Vengeance Weapon (*Vergeltungswaffe*) 2", is, of course, notorious, by virtue of its travelling faster than the speed of sound, for despatching its payload of death before its helpless civilian targets have had any inkling of its unwelcome arrival. If you were lucky enough to hear the sound of the V-2's approach and subsequent detonation ("the rocket's ghost calling to ghosts it newly made" - GR 138) then you had mercifully survived the missile attack, escaping the final judgment of "the one Word that rips apart the day":

> a Word spoken, with no warning into your ear, and then silence forever. Beyond its invisibility, beyond hammerfall and doomcrack, here is its real horror, mocking, promising him death with German and precise confidence. (GR 25).

The V-2 missile is Pynchon's most potent apocalyptic symbol in *Gravity's Rainbow;* linking, as we shall see later in this chapter, Western man's ambiguous dream of transcending his earthbound condition, the manufacture of death on an industrial scale by the genocidal Nazi regime, and the post war Space Programme of the totalitarian Rocket State (prop. R.M. Zhlubb). The V-2 rocket is also emblematic of a world turned upside down by war and the perverted utopianism of the Reich; thus, the missile is assembled by forced labourers in underground factories and fired at urban populations who are themselves compelled to take refuge underground, and uniquely in the history of warfare, more people are killed producing the weapon than die being on the receiving end of it. As the military historian Michael J. Neufeld has demonstrated, the V-2 certainly fulfilled the predictions of the German rocket-scientists who argued that its development would shorten the war, but it did so in favour of the Allies. Neufeld concludes that "the rocket program built an institution and a weapon that made little sense, given the Reich's limited research resources and industrial capacities - a perfect symbol of the Nazis' pursuit of

irrational goals with rational, technocratic means".[6] Before engaging more fully with the above issues, however, I propose to plot the trajectory of Slothrop's erratic progress through the 760 pages of Pynchon's paranoid history of the West.

Slothrop's prophetic erections arouse the interest and horror of those who pursue him because of the blatant challenge they pose to the hallowed laws of cause and effect (laws which allow an elite *They* to maintain their icy grip upon the universe[7]). The dark forces marshalled by the sinister Edward W.A. Pointsman, F.R.C.S., Pynchon's Pavlovian villain and the luckless Slothrop's main persecutor, can explain quite perfectly the apparent threat to cause and effect presented by the V-2's cargo of silently discharged death (e.g. the precise missile simply travels faster than the speed of sound); what profoundly disturbs them is the unknown relationship between Slothrop's premonitory hard-ons and the subsequent rocket strikes:

> It's the map that spooks them all, the map Slothrop's been keeping on his girls [...] just like the rocket strikes on Roger Mexico's map [...] The two patterns also happen to be identical. They match up square for square [...] the two images, girl-stars and rocket-strike circles [...] coincide.
>
> Helpfully, Slothrop has dated most of his stars. A star always comes *before* its corresponding rocket strike. The strike can come as quickly as two days, or as slowly as ten. The mean lag is about $4^{1}/_{2}$ days [...]
>
> But the stimulus, somehow, *must* be the rocket, some precursor wraith, some rocket's double present for Slothrop in the percentage of smiles on a bus, menstrual cycles being operated upon in some mysterious way - what *does* make the little doxies do it for free? (GR 85-86).

Pointsman and his henchmen at PISCES never do discover why Slothrop gets laid with alarming regularity, or more importantly, how this winning way with women so unerringly invites death from the sky. Significantly, the reader is never enlightened either. Pynchon's apocalyptic fiction steadfastly refuses to fulfil the

normal contractual obligations of cause and effect[8]; we *do* discover that as a baby, the Infant Tyrone was conditioned by the evil Professor Laszlo Jamf (another creepy Pavlovian) to get hard in the presence of a Mystery Stimulus (which we later find out is a sensuous, "*erectile*" (GR 699), aromatic plastic called Imipolex G), and the diabolic Jamf's Imipolex G does indeed play a part in the V-2 weapons programme, but it is not a component included in every rocket (it is, in fact, installed as an insulation device in only one missile, an equally mysterious 00000 Rocket, and the subject of a later grail-quest through the ruins of an anarchic post war Europe). Pynchon's novel resolutely refuses to answer the central question of the exact relationship between Slothrop's ominous erections and their corresponding V-2 rocket strikes; and perhaps more crucially, Pynchon deliberately obscures the issue with retractions, impossibilities, and outright textual contradictions.[9] Pynchon doesn't want to give Them the answer that They want (or more exactly, need, like a vampire craves blood for its continued existence); and he uses the thoroughly unpleasant Pointsman to alert the reader to the foul agenda of the cause and effect brigade:

> When we find it, we'll have shown again the stone determinacy of everything, of every soul. There will be precious little room for any hope at all. You can see how important a discovery like that would be. (GR 86).

Pointsman's "Firm" (GR 14) ensnare Slothrop through an elaborate ruse which involves Slothrop rescuing one of Their female operatives from the choreographed attentions of a well-trained octopus (a fishy accomplice suggesting a conspiracy of wide-reaching proportions). Now ensconced with his new-found "friends", Slothrop begins to sense the first uneasy stirrings of a feeling which will come to haunt him as he is pursued through the twilight "Zone" of post war Germany:

So it is here, grouped on the beach with strangers, that voices begin to take on a touch of metal, each word a hard-edged clap, and the light, though as bright as before, is less able to illuminate ... it's a Puritan reflex of seeking other orders behind the visible, also known as paranoia [...] Oh, that was no "found" crab, Ace - no random octopus or girl, uh-uh. Structure and detail come later, but the conniving around him now he feels instantly, in his heart. (GR 188).

The Firm install Slothrop and his planted lady friend as guests at the *Casino Hermann Goering* on the French Riviera (under the dubious pretence that once there Slothrop can better study the numerous V-2 documents and blueprints now emerging from the rapidly disintegrating Reich). Like his use of Octopus Grigori to hoodwink Slothrop, so Pynchon's choice of venue for Slothrop's house arrest is also significant; the odds are heavily stacked against the vulnerable Yank, and "the House always does, of course, keep turning a profit" (GR 209). As Burroughs's paranoid narrator intones in *The Ticket That Exploded* (1962):

> The house know every card you will be dealt and how you will play all your cards - And if some wise guy does get a glimmer and maybe plays an unwritten card:
>
> "Green Tony - Izzy the Push - Sammy the Butcher - *Hey Rube !!!* Show this character the Ovens - This is a wise guy".[10]

Slothrop's burgeoning paranoia (the ability, you will recall, to intuit other, less disinterested, orders behind the visible: "two orders of being, looking identical ... but, but ... " - GR 202) allows him to wise up and *fast*; he initiates "one small impromptu counter-conspiracy (GR 212), a drinking game (on the House) which loosens the tongues of his paralytic minders (and anticipates, of course, the improvised gestures of the novel's insurrectionary Counterforce). Soon Slothrop has escaped from the clutches of the Octopus gang and surrendered himself ("poor sap" - GR 240) to an outlaw's life *in the Zone*.

The Zone is Pynchon's hallucinated vision of preterite existence in what remains of occupied Germany[11]; the fledgling republic is peopled by DPs, flamboyant black marketeers, liberated camp inmates (refugees from the collapsing Oven State), soldiers scavenging for rocket parts (and rocket scientists), lost children[12], and numerous obliging Fräulein (lucky sap). More ominously, Slothrop detects that amongst the shifting scenery another order is taking shape (a new realm for the Elect and their coming Rocket State):

> [There is] never a clear sense of nationality anywhere, nor even of belligerent sides, only the War, a single damaged landscape [...]
>
> The War has been reconfiguring time and space into its own image. The track runs in different networks now. What appears to be destruction is really the shaping of railroad spaces to other purposes, intentions he can only, riding through it for the first time, begin to feel the leading edges of ... (GR 257).

If the train runs to schedule, the Pointsman just needs to flick a switch and we will be safely en route to "the rationalized power-ritual that will be the coming peace" (GR 177); a one-way ticket terminating in a globalised Raketen-Stadt designed to correct the unsophisticated totalitarianism of the maverick Nazi experiment (*cue* Benway: "I deplore brutality ... it's not efficient"[13]). But in its still unconquered state (absolute structure and detail will come later), the Zone also represents a site of revelation and apocalyptic potential (akin to Burroughs's Interzone or Ballard's Shanghai); as the leader of a crew of exiled Argentinian gauchos makes clear: "We want it to grow. We want it to change. In the openness of the German Zone, our hope is limitless [...] So is our danger" (GR 265).

For the other dispossessed peoples of the Zone, the interregnum offers (however briefly) a prototypical "community of grace [and] a gift of persistence"; a diverse, yet "anarchic oneness" of men, creatures, and unbounded Nature wildly opposed to the labyrinths and borders which map out and regulate "the closed white version of reality" (GR 264). Pynchon returns to this theme in his novel *Vineland*

(1990), where, once again: "idealistic flower children looking to live in harmony with the Earth were not the only folks with their eyes on Vineland".[14] Given its jazz/blues soundtrack[15] and the large amounts of dope awash in the Zone, Pynchon's post-war Germany also on occasion resembles an Edenic vision of a Beat America; or more exactly, a vision of an American paradise now lost. Back in the seventeenth century, Slothrop's first American ancestor freely enjoyed life "out on the road"; "the mobility, the chance encounters ... get-togethers over hemp and tobacco with the Indians" (GR 555-56). The venerable William Slothrop represents "the fork in the road America never took", the wrong turning made as the points changed seemingly irreversibly for the worse (as Burroughs laments of the spurned utopia in *Cities of the Red Night* (1981): "The chance was there. The chance was missed."[16]), yet:

> It seems to Tyrone Slothrop that there might be a route back - maybe that anarchist he met in Zürich was right, maybe for a little while all the fences are down, one road as good as another, the whole space of the Zone cleared, depolarized, and somewhere inside the waste of it a single set of coordinates from which to proceed, without elect, without preterite, without even nationality to fuck it up ... (GR 556).

As Slothrop "paranoids" (GR 253) through the magical Zone bedecked in a variety of guises (war correspondent, Rocketman, Plechazunga the Pig-Hero etc.) he gradually unravels the web of conspiracy which has brought him to his fallen state. As a child the Infant Tyrone was sold by his father "to IG Farben like a side of beef" (GR 286); and at the Zone's heart of darkness Slothrop uncovers "a secret he cannot survive":

> Once something was done to him, in a room, while he lay helpless ...
>
> His erection hums from a certain distance, like an instrument installed, wired by Them into his body as a colonial outpost here in our raw and clamorous world, another office representing Their white metropolis far away ... (GR 285).

In the world turned upside down, Slothrop, the Harvard-educated WASP, discovers that he is also the "Schwarzknabe" (GR 286); the sold Black Child experimented upon by Laszlo Jamf and his cronies in "the Octopus IG" (GR 284). Far from being a member of the Elite, Slothrop is an expendable chattel, a colonial subject of what Conrad termed the "whited sepulchre" in *Heart of Darkness* (1899)[17]; and which Pynchon rechristens "Their white metropolis far away". As such, Slothrop is linked with those other Preterite in Pynchon's novel ("the many God passes over when he chooses a few for salvation" - GR 555); forgotten souls such as the awkward dodoes wiped off the face of the Earth by Dutch settlers in the seventeenth century (GR 108-11) or the South-West African *Hereros*[18], a tribal pocket of "Pre-Christian Oneness" (GR 321) systematically suppressed by German colonists in the early years of this century (a genocidal programme which Pynchon casts as a brutal dress rehearsal for the later and final solution). In *Gravity's Rainbow* the colonial ambitions of the Western European powers are always synonymous with sexual plunder and racial extermination:

> Colonies are the outhouses of the European soul, where a fellow can let his pants down and relax, enjoy the smell of his own shit. Where he can fall on his slender prey roaring as loud as he feels like, and guzzle her blood with open joy. Eh? Where he can just wallow and rut and let himself go in a softness, a receptive darkness of limbs, of hair as woolly as the hair on his own forbidden genitals [...] Christian Europe was always death, Karl, death and repression. Out and down in the colonies, life can be indulged, life and sensuality in all its forms, with no harm done to the Metropolis, nothing to soil those cathedrals, white marble statues, noble thoughts ... No word ever gets back. (GR 317).

Pynchon's great novel of World War II barely mentions the Holocaust (Hitler's Final Solution to the Jewish Problem), but instead approaches it obliquely, through detailing the exploitation and pacification of peoples as diverse as the Hereros, the South American gauchos (GR 264), the tribesmen of the Russian Steppes (GR 338-42), the Vietcong (GR 362), and the Native American Indians who

liked to get high with William Slothrop: "when the land was still free and the eye innocent, and the presence of the Creator much more direct ... of course Empire took its way westward, what other way was there but into those virgin sunsets to penetrate and to foul?" (GR 214). Pynchon's apocalypse predicts that the restless Empire-builders of the IG Raketen Stadt will eventually perfect a "Vertical Solution" (GR 735) capable of satiating Christian Europe's rapacious need to export its imperial "order of Analysis and Death" (GR 722); our "new Edge, our new Deathkingdom" (GR 723) will be founded on the untouched surface of the Moon.

Pynchon also approaches the Holocaust through his treatment of the V-2 missile; an apocalyptic symbol in *Gravity's Rainbow* which is not only connected to the intercontinental "cosmic bomb" (GR 544) of the post war superpowers, but also instrumental in the development of Their lunar space programmes: "the real, *the planetary mission* yes perhaps centuries in the unrolling" (GR 521). On his tour through the Zone, Slothrop stumbles upon the Nordhausen Mittelbau (Central Construction) camp, the underground factory where forced labourers completed the final assembly of the V-2 weapons. The Mittelbau complex also incorporates the Dora concentration camp:

> The odors of shit, death, sweat, sickness, mildew, piss, the breathing of Dora, wrapped [Pökler] as he crept in staring at the naked corpses being carried out now that America was so close, to be stacked in front of the crematoriums, the men's penises hanging, their toes clustering white and round as pearls ... each face so perfect, so individual, the lips stretched back into death-grins, a whole silent audience caught silent at the punch line of the joke. (GR 432).

This is the only passage in *Gravity's Rainbow* in which the Holocaust is directly confronted; and the bitter joke is not only on the "whole silent audience" (a stack of corpses which tellingly foreshadows the captive cinema crowd and their "white and silent" (GR 760) screen in the novel's final scene), it is also at the expense of Franz Pökler, Pynchon's idealistic rocket engineer, who dreamed of "a good Rocket to take

us to the stars" (GR 727), but finds instead just death and suffering amidst the wreckage of Planet Dora. Pökler has learned what the V-2 historian Michael J. Neufeld describes as "one of the twentieth century's most horrifying lessons: that advanced industrial technology is perfectly compatible with barbarism, slavery, and mass murder. Out of the portals of the underground factory next to Dora came not only nearly six thousand V-2s in sixteen months but also dead bodies".[19]

At least 20,000 prisoners died in the Mittelbau complex (more than four times the number killed by V-2 rocket strikes[20]), most from starvation and disease, but many too from torture and beatings at the hands of the SS command. In his harrowing record of the camp regime, *Planet Dora: A Memoir of the Holocaust and the Birth of the Space Age* (1997), the French survivor Yves Béon includes a sketched drawing of a mass execution, in which prisoners accused of sabotage were hanged from an overhead crane normally used to erect the V-2 missiles for final assembly and checkout.[21] It is a genuinely disturbing picture, one which succinctly captures the conflation of industrial enterprise and mass extermination which was the true essence and ultimate product of the Nazi death factory system. Such executions were routinely witnessed by prominent rocket scientists such as Arthur Rudolph, no mere bystander but a keen advocate of slave labour and later Project Manager of NASA's Saturn V rocket design programme (and it was the Saturn launch vehicle, of course, which successfully put the Apollo spacecraft into orbit and led to man landing on the moon in 1969). In the aftermath of Dora, the British, American, and Russian leadership placed profit above honour and scrambled frantically to *rescue* the rocket scientists from each other's advancing armies; and by December 1945, Rudolph, Wernher von Braun, and scores of German technicians, engineers, and scientists were safe in the US and ready to launch the first American V-2 (precursor to the Saturn moon launcher, the cruise missile, the Ariane space probe, and, indeed, both the SCUD and Patriot missile systems).

The conspiracy which envelops Slothrop also relates to the Holocaust; the Infant Tyrone being sold off to the IG (*Interessengemeinschaft*, community of

interests) Farben chemical cartel, "the very model of nations" (GR 566) founded in 1925.[22] In 1942 IG Farben established its own work camp at Monowitz (Auschwitz III) in order to ensure a continuous supply of forced labour for its synthetic oil and rubber plant; and as the work camps evolved into extermination centres Farben dutifully provided the Zyklon-B for the gas chambers.[23] Pynchon contends that like the careers of the Nazi rocket scientists, the global reach of the IG cartel will survive and prosper in the aftermath of World War II, and as Slothrop flounders in the Zone, the structure and detail of the post war world finally slouches into view: "a State begins to take form in the stateless German night, a State that spans oceans and surface politics, sovereign as the International or the Church of Rome, and the Rocket is it soul. IG Raketen" (GR 566). The IG's sinister links with fellow multinationals ICI ("the Icy Eye" - GR 250) and Shell ("$Hell"[24]) will guarantee that Their white metropolis remains untouched by the cessation of hostilities ("There are rumors of a War Crimes Tribunal under way in Nürnberg. No one Slothrop has listened to is clear who's trying whom for what" - GR 681) and thus trading can continue unmolested:

> Don't forget the real business of War is buying and selling. The murdering and violence are self-policing, and can be entrusted to non-professionals. The mass nature of wartime death is useful in many ways. It serves as a spectacle, as diversion from the real movements of the War [...] The true war is a celebration of markets. Organic markets, carefully styled "black" by the professionals, spring up everywhere. Scrip, Sterling, Reichsmarks continue to move, severe as classical ballet, inside their antiseptic chambers. But out here, down among the people, the truer currencies come into being. So, Jews are negotiable. Every bit as negotiable as cigarettes, cunt, or Hershey bars. (GR 105).

Pynchon's apocalyptic text seeks to reveal an alternative history of the West: "the Germans-and-Japs story was only one, rather surrealistic version of the real war" (GR 645). History is at best a fiction in *Gravity's Rainbow*, and "all talk of cause and effect is secular history, and secular history is a diversionary tactic" (GR 167) to allow

Their enterprise, their "dusty Dracularity" (GR 263), to keep feeding. Pynchon's paranoia is comparable to Burroughs's or Don DeLillo's in *Libra* (1988): "There's something they aren't telling us. Something we don't know about. There's more to it. This is what history consists of. It's the sum total of all the things they aren't telling us".[25]

As Their rough beast takes shape in the haunted German twilight, Slothrop begins to experience a curiously pleasing and not entirely unwelcome death of affect: "He is growing less anxious about betraying those who trust him. He feels obligations less immediately. There is, in fact, a general loss of emotion, a numbness he ought to be alarmed at, but can't quite ... *Can't* ... " (GR 490-91). In a movement which is complemented by the increasing fragmentation of Pynchon's narrative as the novel descends toward its Californian apocalypse, "Leftenant" (GR 627) Slothrop allows himself "to thin, to scatter" (GR 509):

> He's letting hair and beard grow [...] he likes to spend whole days naked, ants crawling up his legs, butterflies lighting on his shoulders, watching the life on the mountain, getting to know shrikes and capercaillie, badgers and marmots [...]
>
> He's been changing, sure, changing, plucking the albatross of self ... (GR 623).

Slothrop also assumes the magical status of an apocalyptic divine, one supernaturally alive to occult meanings and hidden designs:

> Omens grow more specific. He watches flights of birds and patterns in the ashes of his fire, he reads the guts of trout he's caught and cleaned, scraps of lost paper, graffiti on the broken walls where facing has been shot away to reveal the brick underneath - broken in specific shapes that may also be read ...

Slothrop is eventually plucked right out of Pynchon's text, his exact fate unknown; but in his final days the preterite rocketman achieves a state of grace as he is

dissolved and then reintegrated into the mystical, pre-Christian oneness of Nature. Slothrop becomes acutely aware of "each single grassblade's shadow reaching into the shadows east of it" (GR 561), and the means by which he reaches this exalted condition is nothing less than Paranoia: "the discovery that *everything is connected*, everything in the Creation" (GR 703). Pursued to the bitter end by the Pointsman, Slothrop himself bows out as a Crossroads, "a living intersection" (GR 626) and perhaps a final precious chance to find our way home:

> and now, in the Zone, later in the day he became a crossroad, after a heavy rain he doesn't recall, Slothrop sees a very thick rainbow here, a stout rainbow cock driven out of pubic clouds into Earth, green wet valleyed Earth, and his chest fills and he stands crying, not a thing in his head, just feeling natural ...

Slothrop's curative paranoid vision of the interconnectedness of all things allies him with the insurrectionary Counterforce which follows in his prophetic wake (and, indeed, with other paranoiac-critical heroes such as Ballard's Robert Powers in *The Voices of Time*). The agents of the ad-hoc Counterforce employ an improvised and "Creative paranoia" (GR 638) to develop a provisional "We-system" to combat Their entrenched "They-system"; according to the radical logic of *Gravity's Rainbow* the *creative* paranoia encouraged by the freewheeling Counterforce is fundamentally different to the *genocidal* paranoia practised by the techno-strategists of the White Metropolis (White House), the vampiric architects of the coming military-industrial complex whose chilling boast is that:

> Once the technical means of control have reached a certain size, a certain degree of *being connected* one to another, the chances for freedom are over for good. (GR 539).[26]

The Counterforce affirm, however, that "for every kind of vampire, there is a cross" (GR 540), but in addition to this, and most crucially, the We-system must not be

allowed to develop into a coherent and bureaucratic entity; for if this were to happen the Counterforce would merely reproduce the repressive tactics and morbid paranoias of the Father (land) Conspiracy:

> It's a little bewildering - if this is a "We system," why isn't it at least thoughtful enough to interlock in a reasonable way, like They-systems do?
>
> "That's exactly it," Osbie screams [...] "*They're* the rational ones. We piss on Their rational arrangements." (GR 638-39).

Literally, as it happens. In an echo of Slothrop's "impromptu" sophomore drinking game (GR 212), Counterforce agent Roger Mexico pisses on a group of oil executives and their "official papers, the shed skin of a Beast at a large" (GR 632-37); whilst in a later episode, agents indulge in scatological "culinary pranksterism" to sabotage an evening get-together for reps from ICI, Krupp, and General Electric (GR 709-17). Pynchon's schoolboy humour aside, *Gravity's Rainbow* remains, in essence, a "How-To" handbook of guerrilla tactics and countercultural routines, an apocalyptic text not too far removed from the hands-on radicalism of Burroughs's *Electronic Revolution* (1971):

> Slothrop's intensely alert to trees [...] he will spend time touching them, studying them, sitting very quietly near them and understanding that each tree is a creature, carrying on its individual life, aware of what's happening around it, not just some hunk of wood to be cut down. Slothrop's family actually made its money killing trees, amputating them from their roots, chopping them up, grinding them to pulp, bleaching that to paper and getting paid for this with more paper. "That's really insane." He shakes his head. "There's insanity in my family." He looks up. The trees are still. They know he's here. They probably also know what he's thinking. "I'm sorry," he tells them. "I can't do anything about those people, they're all out of my reach. What can I do? A medium-size pine nearby nods its top and suggests, "Next time you come across a logging operation out here, find one of their

> tractors that isn't being guarded, and take its oil filter with you. That's what you can do." (GR 552-53).

Radicals together, Pynchon shares Burroughs's profound affection for the outlaws, bandits, and all-round Johnsons of pre-Rocket State America. "For John Dillinger, in the hope that he is still alive" commences Burroughs's "A Thanksgiving Prayer" (memorably delivered by him on *Saturday Night Live* in 1981[27]), and Dillinger is a folk-hero to the Pynchonian Counterforce also: "He went out socked Them right in the toilet privacy of Their banks" (GR 741). Dillinger, of course, was shot dead on the sidewalk outside the Biograph Theatre in Chicago in 1934: "federal cowards at the signal took Dillinger with their faggots' precision" (GR 516). *Gravity's Rainbow* ends at the Orpheus Theater on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles, as Richard M. Zhlubb, House Manager, stands by with his "black Managerial Volkswagen" (GR 755).[28] Back in December 1944, a V-2 missile hit the Rex Theatre in Antwerp, killing anywhere between 400 and 1,000 people (estimates vary wildly), but what is certain is that the single direct hit on the Belgian cinema resulted in "the largest death toll caused by any missile of the whole European war".[29] *Now everybody* awaits the final judgment in the City of Angels; minutes, maybe seconds, to go ...

... Burroughs's emblematic "Blazing Photo from Hiroshima and Nagasaki"[30] also makes an appearance in Pynchon's novel:

> In one of those streets, in the morning fog, plastered over two slippery cobblestones, is a scrap of newspaper headline, with a wirephoto of a giant white cock, dangling in the sky straight downward out of a white public bush. The letters
>
> MB DRO
>
> ROSHI
>
> [...] A few doomed Japanese knew of her as some Western deity. She loomed in the eastern sky gazing down at the city about to be sacrificed. The sun was in Leo. The fireburst came roaring and sovereign. (GR 693-94).

In Pynchon's apocalyptic cosmology the "white image" of Their cosmic bomb possesses "the same coherence, the hey-lookit-me smugness, as the Cross does"; the atomic weapon is the ultimate realisation of Western Christianity's institutionalised paranoia. The image of Their cross, "a giant white cock", returns us to Slothrop, Pynchon's creative paranoid and *crossroads*, just feelin' natural under the blessed sign of the "stout rainbow cock" (GR 626). *Could this rainbow yet seed a Counterforce to beat the West's wicked bomb and find a safe road home?*

> Some believe that fragments of Slothrop have grown into consistent personae of their own. If so, there's no telling which of the Zone's present-day population are offshoots of his original scattering. (GR 742).

Pynchon's apocalyptic text challenges the reader to decide.

The reader of this study of the apocalyptic themes and tactics present in the terminal documents of Burroughs, Ballard, and Pynchon will also, doubtless, have already divined intriguing connections (and subtle differences) in the end-time scenarios of these three writers. Each author values apocalyptic forms of creative paranoia and mystical anarchism over the discredited (and indeed, dangerous) claims of rationalism. Both Burroughs and Pynchon on occasion urge their audience to engage with the world on political terms (albeit in an unorthodox manner), whilst Ballard encourages his readership to challenge a degraded reality through the transformative power of the human imagination. Each writer has also at various times been accused of being deliberately obscure or gratuitously offensive, but in truth, their provocative texts are specifically designed to offer coded messages to a readership which is already largely disenchanted with traditional attitudes towards sexual behaviour, spiritual beliefs, literary protocol, and the hollow routines of the democratic process. In common with the earliest practitioners of Hebrew apocalyptic, these three post war apocalypticists offer a literature of consolation to a scattered audience of preterite brethren. Ballard may claim that he wants a "social

philosophy for the rich"[31] but in his fictional works his sympathies always clearly lie with the messianic hero who rejects the trappings of bourgeois convention. All three also owe a considerable debt to Romanticism; Nature is a profoundly redemptive force in their work (although to a lesser degree in the early Burroughs), whilst scientists and their pet projects, the A-Bomb or the Space Programme, are consistently viewed with the gravest suspicion; and regardless of the "saving miracle" of Nagasaki[32], what most tellingly distinguishes the apocalyptic fantasies of Burroughs, Ballard, and Pynchon is their fervent belief that the events of August 6, 1945, the Blazing Photo from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, have fundamentally altered the basic laws governing man's tenancy of the planet. The ubiquitous A-Bomb represents a second Fall, and in their differing ways, the apocalyptic works of each writer mark a valiant attempt to bring the restoration of Paradise one small step closer.

Notes

Apocalypse: An Introduction

1 Morris, Leon. *Apocalyptic*. 1972. 2nd ed. London: Inter-Varsity P, 1973. p. 24.

2 Ketterer, David. *New Worlds for Old: The Apocalyptic Imagination, Science Fiction, and American Literature*. NY: Anchor-Doubleday, 1974. p. 5.

3 McGinn, Bernard. *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*. Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies 96. NY: Columbia UP, 1979. p. 3.

4 Dowling, David. *Fictions of Nuclear Disaster*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987. p. 19.

5 Koch, Klaus. *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*. Trans. Margaret Kohl. Studies in Biblical Theology Second Series 22. London: SCM Press, 1972. p. 20.

6 Bergoffen, Debra. "The Apocalyptic Meaning of History." *The Apocalyptic Vision in America: Interdisciplinary Essays on Myth and Culture*. Ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1982. 11-36. p. 27.

7 All citations are from the Authorised King James Version. See 1 Thess. 4:13 - 5:11.

8 McGinn (1979), p. 11.

9 McGinn (1979), p. 13.

10 Miller, Perry. *Errand Into The Wilderness*. 1956. NY: Harper, 1964. p. 218.

11 Morris (1973), p. 27.

12 Morris (1973), p. 73.

13 Lawrence, D.H. *Apocalypse*. 1931. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974. p. 3.

14 Lawrence (1974), p. 5.

15 Lawrence (1974), p. 12.

16 Lawrence (1974), p. 14.

17 Lawrence (1974), p. 18.

18 Lawrence (1974), p. 89.

19 Zamora, Lois Parkinson. *Writing the Apocalypse: Historical Vision in Contemporary U.S. and Latin American Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989. p. 13.

20 Kermode, Frank. *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1967. p. 35.

21 Abrams, M.H. *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*. NY: Norton, 1971. p. 57.

22 McGinn (1979), p. 226.

23 McGinn (1979), p. 228.

24 Cohn, Norman. *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*. 1957. 3rd ed. London: Paladin-Granada, 1970. p. 53.

25 McGinn (1979), p. 29.

26 McGinn (1979), p. 35.

27 Hill, Christopher. *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution*. London: Temple Smith, 1972. p. 73.

28 Hill (1972), p. 74.

29 Robinson, Douglas. *American Apocalypses: The Image of The End of The World in American Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1985. p. xi.

30 Reeves, Marjorie. "The Development of Apocalyptic Thought: Medieval Attitudes." *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature:*

Patterns, Antecedents and Repercussions. Eds. C.A. Patrides and Joseph Wittreich. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984. 40-72. p. 64.

31 Stein, Stephen J. "Transatlantic Extensions: Apocalyptic in Early New England." In Patrides and Wittreich (1984). 266-98. p. 267. cf. Matt. 5:12-16.

32 Stein (1984), p. 271. cf. Rev. 7:4-9.

33 Ziff, Larzer. *Puritanism in America: New Culture in a New World*. NY: Viking, 1974. p. 145.

34 Greenblatt, Stephen. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991. p. 128.

35 Abrams, M.H. "Apocalypse: Theme and Variations." In Patrides and Wittreich (1984). 342-68. p. 357.

36 Abrams (1984), p. 357.

37 Miller (1964), p. 217.

38 Miller (1964), p. 221.

39 Miller (1964), p. 235.

40 Lippy, Charles H. "Waiting for the End: The Social Context of American Apocalyptic Literature." In Zamora (1982). 37-63. p. 46.

A legion of books surround the phenomena of 60s cult leader Charles Manson; for a general overview the most accessible is Vincent Bugliosi's *Helter Skelter* (Norton, 1974), although bear in mind that the author was actually responsible for prosecuting Manson's case. For direct, unmediated exposure to Manson's (often puerile) apocalyptic views, see Schreck, Nikolas, ed. *The Manson File: The Unexpurgated Charles Manson as Revealed in Letters, Photos, Stories, Songs, Art, Testimony, and Documents*. NY: Amok Press, 1988. This volume also contains an extensive survey of Manson-related literature.

For an exhaustive bibliography of material concerning the Rev. Jim Jones, see the "Notes" section of Judge, John. "The Black Hole of Guyana - The Untold Story of the Jonestown Massacre." *Secret and Suppressed: Banned*

Ideas & Hidden History. Ed. Jim Keith. Portland: Feral House, 1993. 127-65. Judge's essay, however, is a textbook example of paranoid thinking; amongst other things he claims that the colony was a CIA-supported prototype for a concentration camp project aimed at liquidating America's black inner-city populations.

By contrast, Umberto Eco, in a perceptive essay, has this to say:

> In brief, Jones's cult, the People's Temple, had all the characteristics of the millenarian movements throughout Western history from the first centuries of Christianity down to the present ... For the story of the People's Temple is old, a matter of flux and reflux, of eternal returns. Refusal to remember these things leads us then to see in terrorist phenomena the hand of the CIA or the Czechs. If only evil really did come always from the across the border. The trouble is that it comes not from horizontal distances but from vertical. Certain answers, that is, must be sought from Freud and Lacan, not from the secret services.
>
> Or as Jim Jones's altarpiece had it: "Those Who Do Not Remember The Past Are Condemned To Repeat It". "The Suicides of the Temple." Eco, Umberto. *Faith in Fakes*. 1986. Rpt. as *Travels In Hyperreality*. Trans. William Weaver. London: Picador-Pan, 1987. 95-101.

The omens are that the mass suicide (or was it murder? - see Fawcett, Ken. "Why Waco?" In Keith (1993), pp. 174-78) of David Koresh and his Branch Davidian sect at Waco, Texas, in June 1993, will prompt a deluge of books, articles, and wild theories. For a review of two 'instant' paperback accounts of the conflagration, published within weeks of the siege's apocalyptic conclusion, see Masters, Brian. "Armageddon, USA." *Sunday Times*. 11 July 1993, Books section, 6:3. Masters explains that "the Davidians based their cult on the Book of Revelations, the mystery of the Seven Seals and the Apocalypse, none of which is remotely comprehensible, which makes it subject to infinite interpretations".

An academic approach to the (rapidly growing) fallout from Waco can be found in Tabor, James D., and Eugene V. Gallagher. *Why Waco?: Cults and the Battle for Religious Freedom in America.* Berkeley: U of California P, 1995.

41 Ketterer (1974), p. 21.

42 Ketterer (1974), p. 23.

43 Slotkin, Richard. *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 1973. p. 277.

44 Stein (1984), p. 273.

45 Cassara, Ernest. "The Development of America's Sense of Mission." In Zamora (1982). 64-96. p. 71.

46 Smith, Marcus, and Khachig Tololyan. "The New Jeremiad: *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Critical Essays on Thomas Pynchon*. Ed. Richard Pearce. Boston: Hall, 1981. 169-86. p. 169.

47 Abrams (1984), p. 357.

48 Sanders, Scott. "Pynchon's Paranoid History." *Mindful Pleasures: Essays on Thomas Pynchon*. Eds. George Levine and David Leverenz. Boston: Little, 1976. 139-59. p. 139.

49 Sanders (1976), pp. 139-40.

50 Kermode (1967). Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials SOE.

51 Gillespie, Gerald. "New Apocalypse for Old: Kermode's Theory of Modernism." *Boundary* 2 3 (1975): 307-23. p. 311.

52 Miller (1964), p. 239.

53 Ketterer (1974), p. 94.

54 Ketterer (1974), p. 91.

55 Ketterer (1974), p. 95.

56 May, John R. *Toward A New Earth: Apocalypse in the American Novel.* Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame, 1972. p. 224.

57 May (1972), p. 4.

58 Dowling (1987), p. 1.

59 Dowling (1987), p. 191.

60 Dowling (1987), p. 218.

61 Derrida, Jacques. "No Apocalypse, Not Now (full speed ahead, seven missiles, seven missives)." Trans. Catherine Porter and Philip Lewis. *Diacritics* 14.2 (1984a). 20-31. p. 23.

62 Derrida (1984a), p. 27.

63 Derrida (1984a), p. 28.

64 "Proposal for a *Diacritics* Colloquium on Nuclear Criticism." *Diacritics* 14.2 (1984). pp. 2-3.

65 Derrida (1984a), p. 23.

66 Sontag, Susan. "The Imagination of Disaster." *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*. NY: Farrar, 1966. 209-25.

67 Sontag (1966), p. 212.

68 Sontag (1966), p. 213.

69 Sontag (1966), p. 215.

70 Sontag (1966), p. 224.

71 Sontag (1966), p. 225.

72 Robinson (1985), p. 3.

73 Robinson (1985), p. 44.

74 Robinson (1985), p. 7.

75 Robinson (1985), p. 232.

76 Lewicki, Zbigniew. *The Bang and The Whimper: Apocalypse and Entropy in American Literature*. Contributions in American Studies 71. Westport: Greenwood, 1984.

77 Lewicki (1984), p. xiv.

78 Lewicki (1984), p. 115.

79 Slade, Joseph W. *Thomas Pynchon*. Writers For The Seventies. NY: Warner Paperback Library, 1974. p. 33.

80 Lewicki (1984), p. 71.

81 Tanner, Tony. *City of Words: American Fiction 1950-1970*. London: Cape, 1971. p. 144.

82 Wiener, Norbert. *The Human Use of Human Beings*. 1950. London: Sphere, 1968. p. 22.

83 Wiener (1968), p. 15.

84 Wiener (1968), p. 38.

85 "Introduction." Pynchon, Thomas. *Slow Learner: Early Stories*. 1984. London: Picador-Pan, 1985. 5-25.

86 Adams, Henry. "From *The Education of Henry Adams*." *Norton Anthology of American Literature Volume* 2. eds. Nina Baym, et al. 2nd ed. NY: Norton, 1985. 821-60. p. 857.

87 Adams (1985), p. 854.

88 Pynchon (1985), p. 15.

89 "Entropy." In Pynchon (1985). 77-94. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials SL. Original publication in *Kenyon Review* 22 (1960). 277-92.

90 Dugdale, John. *Thomas Pynchon: Allusive Parables of Power*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990. p. 65.

91 As for ourselves, Umberto Eco has touchingly asserted that love can now only be declared *ironically*:

> I think of the postmodern attitude as that of a man who loves a very cultivated woman and knows he cannot say to her, "I love you madly," because he knows that she knows (and that she knows that he knows) that these words have already been written by Barbara Cartland. Still, there is a solution. He can say, "As Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly." At this point, having avoided false innocence, having said clearly that it is no longer possible to speak innocently, he will nevertheless have said what he wanted to say to the woman: that he loves her, but he loves her in an age of lost innocence. If the woman goes along with this, she will have received a declaration of love all the same. Neither of the two speakers will feel

innocent, both will have accepted the challenge of the past, of the already said, which cannot be eliminated; both will consciously and with pleasure play the game of irony ... But both will have succeeded, once again, in speaking of love.

In *Reflections on "The Name of the Rose"*. Trans. William Weaver. 1984. London: Secker, 1989. 67-68.

92 Wiener (1968), p. 33.

93 Pynchon, Thomas. *Gravity's Rainbow*. 1973. London: Picador-Pan, 1975. p. 434.

94 Tanner (1971), p. 156.

95 Barth, John. *The Literature of Exhaustion and The Literature of Replenishment.* Northridge: Lord John Press, 1982. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials LOE / LOR. Original publication in *The Atlantic* 220/245 (1967:1980). 29-34/65-71.

96 In a representative 'story', Borges faithfully records the transgressions of a (almost certainly fictional) millennial sect named the Histriones (or Simulacra). Their heretical customs included self-multilation, homicide, sodomy, incest, and bestiality; and all justified by the radical doctrine that "everything we see is false". The most compelling aspect of the Histriones' cosmology was their reasoning "that the world would end when the number of its possibilities was exhausted; since there can be no repetitions, the righteous should eliminate (commit) the most infamous acts, so that these will not soil the future and will hasten the coming of the kingdom of Jesus". Such apocalyptic fantasies are, of course, not too far divorced from the violent excesses of many 'actual' ancient and modern day cults. "The Theologians." Borges, Jorge Luis. *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*. Trans. James E. Irby. 1964. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970. 150-58.

97 Beckett, Samuel. *The Unnamable*. 1958. London: Calder & Boyars, 1975. p. 132.

98 *Waiting For Godot* (1956) was first staged at San Quentin in 1957. See Kennedy, Andrew K. *Samuel Beckett*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989. For further information on the San Quentin Drama Workshop, founded by former convict Rick Cluchey, consult McMillan, Dougald, and Martha Fehsenfeld, eds. *Beckett in The Theatre: The Author as practical Playwright and Director. Volume 1: From "Waiting for Godot" to "Krapp's Last Tape"*. London: John Calder, 1988.

99 But is postmodernism no more than formal realism in a fresh guise? This is the painter Francis Bacon:

> I believe that realism has to be re-invented. It has to be continuously re-invented. In one of his letters Van Gogh speaks of the need to make changes in reality, which become lies that are truer than the literal truth. This is the only possible way the painter can bring back the intensity of the reality which he is trying to capture. I believe that reality in art is something profoundly artificial and that it has to be recreated. Otherwise it will be just an illustration of something - which will be very second-hand.

In Sylvester, David. *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon*. 3rd ed. London: Thames & Hudson, 1987. p. 172.

100 Parfrey, Adam, ed. *Apocalypse Culture*. 1987. 2nd ed. Portland: Feral House, 1990.

101 Parfrey, Adam. "Preface to the Second Edition." In Parfrey (1990). 7-9. p. 7.

102 Parfrey, Adam. "Cut it Off: A Case for Self-Castration." In Parfrey (1990). 98-103. p. 98.

103 Krupey, Gregory. "The Christian Right, Zionism, and the Coming of the Penteholocaust." In Parfrey (1990). 287-98. p. 287.

104 Downard, James Shelby. "The Call to Chaos: From Adam to Atom by Way of the Jornada del Muerto." In Parfrey (1990). 307-27. p. 307.

105 Parfrey (1990), p. 8.

106 Kroker, Arthur, and Marilouise Kroker, eds. *Body Invaders: Sexuality and the Postmodern Condition*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Kroker, Arthur, and David Cook. *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

107 Kroker and Kroker (1988), p. 95.

108 Kroker and Cook (1988), p. i.

109 Baudrillard, Jean. "The Anorexic Ruins." Trans. David Antal. *Looking Back on the End of the World*. Eds. Dietmar Kamper and Christoph Wulf. NY: Semiotext(e), 1989. 29-45. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials LBW.

110 Springsteen, Bruce. "57 Channels (And Nothin' On)." *Human Touch*. Columbia, 471423 4, 1992.

111 cf. Baudrillard, Jean. "The Year 2000 Has Already Happened." Trans. Nai-fei Ding and Kuan-Hsing Chen. In Kroker and Kroker (1988). 35-44.

See also J.G. Ballard's remark: "postmodernism is a gift to nostalgia and re-affirms that we don't have a future". Quoted in "The House that Jencks Built." *Modern Review* 20 (1995), p. 31.

112 *The Day After*. Dir. Nicholas Meyer. With Jason Robards, JoBeth Williams, and Steve Guttenburg. ABC, 1983.

H. Bruce Franklin notes that the first transmission of *The Day After* "set the record for the number of viewers watching a single show". Franklin, H. Bruce. *War Stars: The Superweapon and the American Imagination*. NY: Oxford UP, 1988. p. 211.

113 "Thinkability." Amis, Martin. *Einstein's Monsters*. 1987. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988. 1-23. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials EM.

114 Savage, Jon. *England's Dreaming: Sex Pistols and Punk Rock*. 1991. Faber, 1992. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials ED.

115 Sex Pistols. "God Save the Queen." Virgin, VS 181, 1977.

116 Sex Pistols. "I Wanna Be Me." EMI, 2566[B], 1976.

117 Sex Pistols. "Anarchy in the U.K." EMI, 2566[A], 1976.

118 Marcus, Greil. *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century*. 1989. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993. p. 2.

119 *Nationwide*. BBC 1, London. 12 Nov. 1976. Quoted in Savage (1992), p. 255.

120 Jamie Reid's artwork for the rear picture cover of the Sex Pistols' third single ("Pretty Vacant"/"No Fun." Virgin, VS 184, 1977) vividly illustrates the crucial prominence of 'boredom' in Punk's cosmography. Reid's stark design features two buses (the typical mode of transport for the young and the poor) bearing the clearly marked destinations "NOWHERE" and "BOREDOM". This striking record cover is reproduced in Wakefield, Neville. "Pretty Vacancy." *"Brilliant!": New Art from London*. Minneapolis: Walker Arts Center, 1995. 8-12. Early Punk song titles included "Boredom", "I'm So Bored with the USA", "Bored Teenagers", "Blank Generation", "When I'm Bored", "What a Boring Life", and "Time's Up". Writing in 1962, J.G. Ballard proposed a new kind of 'abstract' SF to revive a literary form hoplelessly marooned in the past: "science fiction could use a big dose of the experimental; and if it sounds boring, well at least it will be a new kind of boredom". See Ballard, J.G. "Which Way To Inner Space?" *New Worlds* 118 (1962): 2-3, 116-18.

121 Pressler, Charlotte. "Those Were Different Times - A History of Cleveland 1969-75, Part 1." *Cle* 3, (1979). Quoted in Savage (1992), p. 136.

122 Greil Marcus's *Lipstick Traces* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), a "reconstruction of a new history out of forgotten utopian experiments and massacred rebellions" (p. 355), offers a paranoid perspective on Punk's cultural ancestry. In an ambitious and remarkably successful project, Marcus seeks to trace an invisible empire of conspirators, including Hasan i-Sabbah (leader of the twelfth century Assassins cult and a major influence on the work of William S. Burroughs), the Cathars, the Brethren of the Free Spirit,

John of Leyden (Johnny Rotten's true name was, of course, John Lydon), the Ranters, the Lollards, the Zurich dadaists, the Situationist International, and the Punks themselves. Marcus's analysis of this mystical underground (written "out of a desire to come to grips with the power of *Anarchy in the U.K.*" - p. 23) is a wholly audacious undertaking; but his paranoid imagination is 'sensitive' to the limits of such an epistemological approach (and other paranoid critics would be well advised to study his methods): "real mysteries cannot be solved, but they can be turned into better mysteries" (p. 24).

123 Abrams (1984), pp. 345-46.

124 See note 122 above, for a provocative demonstration of the "creative" or "sensitive" paranoid approach.

125 For all the 'rapid-fire' technological progress and social 'benefits' of life in the 50s and 60s, time could be said to have stopped for those decades also. If we had to decide, for argument's sake, on 'the day the world ended', we could do far worse than settle on July 16, 1945. It was on this date, at the Trinity site in New Mexico, that the first atomic device was detonated; and it could perhaps be argued that our experience of both space and time has been radically altered, and indeed irreparably impaired, as a direct result of what happened on that day. I should finally emphasise my intuition that just as it possible to create small enclaves and artifacts capable of briefly resisting the inevitable accumulation of entropy, so time can be restarted through human art and political struggle. We hold the Time Bomb.

These fanciful observations aside, many critics (Kermode excepted) would recognise and endorse Martin Amis's comments on the "evolutionary firebreak of 1945" (Amis 1988, pp. 17-18):

Our time is different. All times are different, but our time is *different*. A new fall, an infinite fall, underlies the usual - indeed traditional - presentiments of decline ... something seems to have gone wrong with time ... the modern

situation is one of *suspense* ... what we are experiencing, in as much as it can be experienced, is the experience of nuclear war. Because the anticipation, the anxiety, the suspense, is the only experience of nuclear war that anyone is going to get.

Chapter One: William S. Burroughs - 'The Naked Lunch'

1 Burroughs, William S. "WORD." *Interzone*. Ed. James Grauerholz. 1989. London: Picador-Pan, 1990a. 133-194. p. 136 / p. 144.

2 For a cultural history of Tangier and further information on its status as an "international zone", see Greene, Michelle. *The Dream at the End of the World: Paul Bowles and the Literary Renegades in Tangier*. London: Bloomsbury, 1992. The title of Greene's study is derived from an old junkie's remark to Burroughs in 1955: "It's the end of the world, Tangier. Don't you feel it, Bill?"

3 The fullest biography of Burroughs is provided in Morgan, Ted. *Literary Outlaw: The Life and Times of William S. Burroughs*. NY: Avon, 1990.

See also Miles, Barry. *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*. London: Virgin, 1992. For a particularly vivid account of Burroughs's return to New York in the 1970s, consult Bockris, Victor. *With William Burroughs: A Report from the Bunker*. 1981. London: Vermilion-Hutchinson, 1982.

4 Burroughs, William S. *Junky*. 1953. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977. p. 152.

For a picaresque account of Burroughs's time in South America, see Burroughs, William S., and Allen Ginsberg. *The Yage Letters*. 1963. San Francisco: City Lights, 1975.

5 Burroughs, William S. *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. p. 195.

Harris's excellent edition of Burroughs's correspondence effectively supersedes the earlier *Letters to Allen Ginsberg: 1953-1957*. Eds. Ron Padgett and Ann Waldman. NY: Full Court, 1982c.

6 "Letter to Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, November 2, 1955." In Burroughs (1993a), pp. 302-4.

7 Burroughs, William S. *Junkie: Confessions of an Unredeemed Drug Addict*. NY: Ace Books, 1953. An unexpurgated edition, with an introduction by Allen Ginsberg, has since been published under Burroughs's original title for the work; *Junky*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.

8 Burroughs, William S. *Queer*. 1985. London: Picador-Pan, 1986. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initial Q.

9 Shakespeare, William. "The Tragedy of King Lear: The Folio Text." 1623. *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works (Compact Edition)*. Eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988. 943-74. p. 967 (IV.5.170-1).

10 *Dead of Night*. Dirs. Robert Hamer, Basil Dearden, Charles Crichton, Alberto Cavalcanti. With Mervyn Johns, Michael Redgrave, Frederick Valk, and Googie Withers. Ealing, 1945.

11 Greene (1992), p. xi.

12 Greene (1992), p. xiv.

13 A remark recorded in Morgan (1990), p. 231. Morgan's source for this quotation is probably Ginsberg's "Recollections of Burroughs Letters", an introductory essay (pp. 5-10) to the Padgett and Waldman edition of Burroughs's *Letters to Allen Ginsberg: 1953-1957*.

14 Burroughs (1993a), p. 201.

15 "Letter to Jack Kerouac, April 22, 1954." In Burroughs (1993a), pp. 203-7.

16 Burroughs (1993a), pp. 216-17.

17 Burroughs (1993a), pp. 243-46.

18 Burroughs, William S. *The Naked Lunch*. 1959. Rev. ed. London: Paladin-Collins, 1986. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials NL.

The Naked Lunch is noteworthy for the differing contents of its various editions. The edition used here is a reprint of the 1982 John Calder paperback (the most extensive edition to date) and includes amongst the usual depositions and appendices the so-called "Ugh" correspondence from the letters page of the *Times Literary Supplement* (occasioned by the publication of *Dead Fingers Talk* in 1963).

The first edition of the novel was published in 1959 by the Olympia Press, Paris. First American publication was in 1962 by the Grove Press, New York. The novel finally appeared in England in 1964 when it was published by John Calder, London. For information on *The Naked Lunch*'s progress through the courts, see Goodman, Michael B. *Contemporary Literary Censorship: The Case History of Burroughs' "Naked Lunch"*. Metuchen (NJ): Scarecrow Press, 1981.

19 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 13, 1954." In Burroughs (1993a): pp. 243-46.

20 Burroughs (1993a), pp. 259-64.

21 Burroughs (1993a), pp. 288-91.

22 Burroughs (1993a), pp. 292-99.

23 Burroughs (1993a), pp. 329-35.

24 Burroughs (1993a), p. 375.

25 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 23, 1957." In Burroughs (1993a): pp. 349-50.

26 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 30, 1954." In Burroughs (1993a): p. 247.

27 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, November 26, 1957." In Burroughs (1993a): pp. 377-78.

28 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, July 24, 1958." In Burroughs (1993a): pp. 392-94.

29 See Morgan (1990), pp. 30-31.

30 See, for example, Rickman, Gregg. *To the High Castle: Philip K. Dick - A Life, 1928-1962*. Long Beach: Fragments West/Valentine Press, 1989. Csicsery-Ronay Jr., Istvan. "Gregg Rickman and Others on Philip K. Dick." *Science-Fiction Studies* 67 (1995): 430-38. "Notes and Correspondence." *Science-Fiction Studies* 68/69 (1996): 149-57/312-15.

31 Burroughs (1993a), pp. 259-64.

32 Burroughs, William S. "Introduction." *Queer*. 1985. London: Picador-Pan, 1986. 5-18.

33 Ansen has written a brief but intimate portrait of the Beats. See, "Anyone Who Can Pick Up a Frying Pan Owns Death." *William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959-1989*. Ed. Jennie Skerl and Robin Lydenberg. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991. 25-29. Ansen's essay originally appeared in *Big Table* 2 (1959): 32-41.

34 Burroughs (1993a), p. 376.

35 For further information on Maurice Girodias and the Olympia Press, see de St Jorre, John. *The Good Ship Venus: The Erotic Voyages of the Olympia Press*. London: Hutchinson, 1994.

36 Burroughs can be heard reading sections of *The Naked Lunch* on various CD's, LP's, and audio cassette tapes (many of which are bootlegged recordings of live performances). By far the most satisfactory version is *The Naked Lunch*. 3-CD Set. Warner Audio Video Entertainment, 2-522206, 1995.

37 The 1962 Grove Press edition adds an introductory "Deposition: Testimony Concerning a Sickness" and includes "Letter from a Master Addict to Dangerous Drugs" (written in 1956 for *The British Journal of Addiction*) as an appendix.

38 The 1992 US Evergreen-Grove Weidenfeld adds "Afterthoughts on a Deposition" (1991). This edition omits the "Ugh" letters (probably because they are of lesser interest to American readers). An earlier Grove edition (the

1966 Evergreen Black Cat paperback) has also included selections from the transcripts of the 1965 Boston obscenity trial. Mercifully, the "Twenty Fifth Anniversary" edition (Grove, 1984) resists the temptation to dredge up even more material and opts instead to reproduce the Paris text (albeit with a scholarly introduction by Jennie Skerl).

39 Burroughs, William S. *Interzone*. Ed. James Grauerholz. 1989. London: Picador-Pan, 1990a. Grauerholz admits that, as in Tangier some thirty years earlier, Burroughs oversaw the editorial process and fully approved the final manuscript. For further information on the editing of Burroughs's (later) works, see Zurbrugg, Nicholas. "Burroughs, Grauerholz, and *Cities of the Red Night*: An Interview with James Grauerholz." *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 4.1 (1984): 19-32.

40 The publication of an authoritative edition of Burroughs's letters in 1993 spawned yet further variations on the routines of *The Naked Lunch* (as did David Cronenberg's 1991 motion picture adaptation of the novel). Burroughs has made a habit of significantly revising and expanding his texts; most notably in *The Soft Machine* (1961, 1966, 1968), *The Ticket That Exploded* (1962, 1967, 1985), and *The Job* (1969, 1970, 1984).

41 Spengler, Oswald. *The Decline of the West: Complete in One Volume*. 1926/28. Trans. Charles Francis Atkinson. NY: Knopf, 1939.

Burroughs's correspondence reveals that he was certainly familiar with Atkinson's translation of *The Decline of The West*. The original German edition of the work was published in two volumes (in 1918 and 1922 respectively). Spengler claims that his manuscript for the first volume was ready for publication *before* the outbreak of the Great War. An excellent introduction to Spengler's philosophy of history is provided in Fischer, Klaus P. *History and Prophecy: Oswald Spengler and the Decline of the West*. American University Studies IX:59. NY: Peter Lang, 1989.

42 Burroughs, William S. "WORD." In Burroughs (1990a). 133-94. p. 139.

43 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 12, 1955." In Burroughs (1993a): pp. 255-56.

44 Duncan Wu has addressed some, but not all, of these points. In a fascinating essay, he writes:

> As we've seen, Burroughs shares with Wordsworth a belief in the power of language, when manipulated by a skilled artist, to change the world for good or bad; both are essentially moral in their view of literature. In a lesser writer this might be seen as little more than flaccid idealism, but in Burroughs' case it underpins a profound optimism comparable with Wordsworth's millennial aspirations.

Wu, Duncan. "Wordsworth in Space." *The Wordsworth-Circle* 22.3 (1991): 172-79. pp. 174-75.

45 Burroughs (1993a), p. 254.

46 Pynchon, Thomas. *V.* 1963. London: Picador-Pan, 1975. p. 461.

47 Burroughs's reputation as a rabid misogynist largely rests on his responses to Daniel Odier's questions in *The Job: Topical Writings and Interviews*. 1970. London: John Calder, 1984a. See especially the section "A New Frog" (pp. 111-22). Burroughs's subsequent attempt to clarify the controversial views expressed in *The Job* ran aground somewhat when his publishers neglected to include the question mark from the title of his essay "Women: A Biological Mistake [?]" See Burroughs, William S. *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays*. London: John Calder, 1985a. 124-26.

48 Burroughs (1984a), p. 118.

49 Burroughs (1984a), p. 122.

50 For an affectionate portrait of the author's parents, see Burroughs, William S. *Cobble Stone Gardens*. NY: Cherry Valley, 1976.

51 Burroughs (1990a), p. 169.

52 McCarthy, Mary. "Burroughs' *Naked Lunch.*" In Skerl and Lydenberg (1991). 33-39. p. 37. McCarthy's essay originally appeared in the inaugural issue of *The New York Review of Books* 1.1 (1963): 4-5.

53 Lodge, David. "Objections to William Burroughs." In Skerl and Lydenberg (1991). 75-84. Lodge's essay originally appeared in *Critical Quarterly* 8 (1966): 203-12.

54 Skerl and Lydenberg (1991), p. 76.

55 Skerl and Lydenberg (1991), p. 78.

Chapter Two: William S. Burroughs and the Nova Conspiracy

1 Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. Ed. Alastair Fowler. London: Longman, 1971. pp. 145-46.

2 Gysin's discovery of the cut-up process is recorded in Gysin, Brion, and Terry Wilson. *Here to Go: Planet R-101 (Brion Gysin interviewed by Terry Wilson, with an Introduction and Texts by William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin)*. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1982. p. 51.

3 Knickerbocker, Conrad. "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview with William Burroughs." *Paris Review* 35 (1965): 12-49. p. 24.

4 Burroughs, William S. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, October 21, 1955." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 288-91.

5 Burroughs, William S., and Brion Gysin. *The Third Mind*. 1978. London: John Calder, 1979. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials TMD.

The essays which make up this collection were mostly written in 1965. Burroughs's ambitious plan to include reproductions from the cut-up scrapbooks in the published volume led to its non-appearance for over a decade. A compromise edition finally appeared in Paris in 1977 (as *Oeuvre Croisee*, Flammarrion). The first US edition was published in 1978 (NY, Viking) and the first UK edition (London, John Calder) appeared a year later.

6 Burroughs, William S., et al. *Minutes to Go*. 1960. San Francisco: Beach Books, Texts & Documents, 1968. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials MTG.

7 Later in the year a second volume of cut-ups was published, see Burroughs, William S., and Brion Gysin. *The Exterminator*. San Francisco: Auerhahn Press, 1960.

Photographic reproductions of material from Burroughs's cut-up scrapbooks can be found in *The Third Mind* (1978) and *The Burroughs File* (San Francisco: City Lights, 1984b). See also Sobieszek, Robert A. "Scrapbook Experiments." *Ports of Entry: William S. Burroughs and the Arts*. Afterword by William S. Burroughs. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1996. 45-53.

8 For an informative overview of Gysin's life and art, see "Doors of Chance." In Sobieszek (1996). 90-97.

9 Sobieszek (1996), p. 45.

10 All of these texts are collected in Burroughs (1984b).

11 Sobieszek (1996), p. 55.

12 Burroughs, William S. *Time*. NY: "C" Press, 1965.

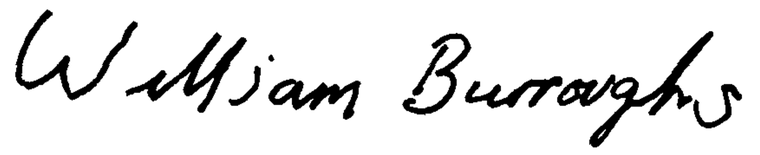
John Lydon repeated Burroughs's parodic trick (as "Pime") on the rear cover design of his first post-Sex Pistols LP record. See Public Image Ltd., *Public Image*. 1978. Compact Disc. Virgin, 0777 7 87475 2 9, 1986.

13 Mottram, Eric. *William Burroughs: The Algebra of Need*. London: Marion Boyars, 1977. p. 15.

14 The definitive history of this period of DIY countercultural publishing is provided in Fountain, Nigel. *Underground: The London Alternative Press, 1966-74*. London: Comedia-Routledge, 1988.

In the true spirit of Burroughs's initial enterprise a bootlegged edition of *Time* appeared in 1972. Explaining their use of an "anarchist duplicator",

the publishers write: "Remember, anyone could have done this, but we did. Remember, anyone could sign



."

See, Burroughs, William S. *Time*. [Brighton]: Urgency Press Rip-Off, [1972].

15 Balch's cut-up films are available on Burroughs, William S., et al. *Thee Films: 1950's - 1960's*. Video Cassette. Dir. Antony Balch. Temple of Psychic Youth, TOPTV 002, n.d. (c. 1986). 120 min.

A good selection of the tape-recorder experiments can be found on the (long-deleted) Burroughs, William S. *Nothing Here Now But The Recordings*. LP Record. Industrial Records, IR0016, 1981a.

Those interested in experimenting with their own Dream Machine should consult the following volume ("including full construction plans"), Cecil, Paul, ed. *Flickers of the Dreamachine*. Hove: Codex, 1996.

16 Quoted in Mottram (1977), pp. 251-52.

17 Burroughs's paternal grandfather, William Seward Burroughs (1857-1898), invented the mechanized adding machine. Contrary to some biographical speculation, Burroughs has no financial interest in the corporation which bears his name. As is the case with Thomas Pynchon, the family millions are long gone.

18 P-Orridge, Genesis. "About These Recordings." Sleeve note to rear cover of Burroughs (1981a).

19 See "Inching - "Is This Machine Recording?"" and "Throat Microphone Experiment", both collected on Burroughs (1981a).

20 Burroughs, William S. "The Invisible Generation." *The Ticket That Exploded*. 1962. Rev. ed. London: John Calder, 1985b. 205-17. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials IG.

Burroughs's essay originally appeared in *International Times* 3 (November 1966) and was reprinted a month later in *Los Angeles Free Press* 125

(1966). An expanded version was included as an appendix to the first US edition of *The Ticket That Exploded* (NY: Grove, 1967).

21 Burroughs claims that the title of *The Third Mind* is taken from Napoleon Hill's self-help book *Think and Grow Rich*. An equally likely source is the line "Who is the third who walks always beside you?" from *The Waste Land* (1922). Burroughs obviously has a penchant for the genre of popular self-improvement literature; see, for example, Burroughs, William S. "The Discipline of DE." *Exterminator!* 1973. NY: Viking Penguin, 1979. 55-67.

22 Burroughs writes to Ginsberg: "I am not much interested in politics, though an old-fashioned, bomb-throwing terrorist movement might be amusing." "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 24, 1952." In Burroughs (1993a), pp. 145-46.

23 Burroughs, Genet, and Terry Southern covered events surrounding the convention for *Esquire* magazine, see Morgan, Ted. *Literary Outlaw: The Life and Times of William S. Burroughs*. NY: Avon, 1990. pp. 444-47. The definitive account remains Mailer, Norman. *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*. NY: New American Library, 1968.

24 Burroughs, William S. *Nova Express*. 1964. London: Panther, 1968. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials NE.

25 Burroughs, William S. "Introduction to *Naked Lunch, The Soft Machine, Novia Express*." *Evergreen Review* 6.22 (1962): 99-109. p. 99.

"Novia Express" was shortly to be published in Paris under the revised title of *The Ticket That Exploded* (1962). This novel contains material relating to the Nova Conspiracy, most of which is repeated and significantly expanded upon in the later *Nova Express*.

26 See, for example, Burroughs, William S. *The Last Words of Dutch Schultz: A Fiction in the Form of a Film Script*. 1970. Rev. ed. NY: Arcade, 1993b. Dutch was gunned down at the Palace Chop House in Newark, New Jersey,

in October 1935. He survived for two days and a police stenographer recorded his death-bed ramblings. The dissociative recollections are not dissimilar to a Burroughs cut-up and perhaps explain the latter's fascination with terminal pronouncements.

27 Typically, it was Brion Gysin who introduced Burroughs to the historical legend of Hassan i Sabbah and the Ismaili Assassins cult. The word *assassin* is, of course, derived from the Arabic *hashshashin*, plural of *hashshash* (one who eats Hashish). Burroughs would probably have been familiar with the account of the sect provided in Daraul, Arkon. "The Old Man of the Mountains." *Secret Societies*. 1961. London: Tandem, 1965. 11-24.

28 Daraul (1965), p. 24.

29 Boyer, Paul. *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992. p. 23.

30 Talmon, Shemaryahu. "Daniel." *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode. 1987. London: Fontana-Collins, 1989. 343-56. p. 346.

31 Knickerbocker (1965), pp. 22-23.

32 Reich's colourful life and controversial views are best explored in Sharaf, Myron. *Fury on Earth: A Biography of Wilhelm Reich*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1983.

33 The respected American ethnographer Terry Williams has written a sober account of the crack cocaine phenomenon. He notes that "the increasingly popular view among minorities (and increasingly the majority) is that they, as poor people, are viewed by the larger society as superfluous and expendable, and that they are being killed off in a sort of triage operation, victims of a kind of low-intensity war". Williams, Terry. *Crackhouse: Notes from the End of the Line*. 1992. NY: Penguin, 1993. p. 13.

Suspicions of a covert CIA operation to devastate black communities with cheap crack cocaine (and fund the Contras) result from allegations made

by LA drug baron "Freeway" Ricky Ross at his recent trial. A labyrinthine conspiracy was then proposed by the journalist Gary Webb in a series of articles published by the *San Jose Mercury News* in August 1996. This (frankly ridiculous) media-led story is still on-going; for a firm and coherent rebuttal of Webb's claims, see the three part "Special Investigative Report", prepared by staff at the *Los Angeles Times* (October 20-22, 1996).

34 Burroughs (1985b), p. 159.

35 Burroughs (1985b), p. 139.

36 Knickerbocker (1965), p. 47.

37 Knickerbocker (1965), p. 49.

38 Burroughs (1993a), p. 254.

39 Burroughs, William S. *Ghost of Chance*. 1991. London: Serpent's Tail, 1995.

40 Burroughs, William S., and Eric Mottram. *Snack ... Two Tape Transcripts.* London: Aloes, 1975. pp. 27-32.

Mottram's interview with Burroughs was conducted over lunch at the latter's St. James's flat in the "early summer" of 1973. The Professor Postgate referred to by Burroughs is likely to be John Postgate, proponent of the "man-child" pill; see his article "Bat's Chance in Hell." *New Scientist*. April 5, 1973. The feminist academic Gena Corea has taken issue with Postgate's proposals. She concludes: "Commentators also note that the problem is less a population explosion in the underdeveloped world than a consumption explosion in the overdeveloped world". See Corea, Gena. *The Mother Machine: Reproductive Technologies from Artificial Insemination to Artificial Wombs*. 1985. London: Women's Press, 1988. p. 211.

41 Burroughs and Mottram (1975), p. 32.

42 Spenser, Edmund. "The Faerie Queene - *From* Book II." *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*. Ed. Hugh Maclean. 2nd. ed. NY: Norton, 1982. 148-95.

43 Furthermore, Barry Miles suggests (not implausibly) that the character of *The Subliminal Kid* is affectionately modelled on Burroughs's lover and tape cut-

up collaborator, Ian Sommerville. See Miles, Barry. *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*. London: Virgin, 1992. p. 153.

44 West, Nathanael. "The Day of the Locust." *The Collected Works*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975. 7-154. The "dream dump" is described in Chapter 18 of the novel (pp. 90-96).

45 West (1975), p. 153.

46 West (1975), p. 11 / p. 76.

47 The French theorist Roland Barthes (1915-1980) writes (in apocalyptic fashion):

> We now know that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture [...] Classic criticism has never paid any attention to the reader; for it, the writer is the only person in literature. We are now beginning to let ourselves be fooled no longer [...] we know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author.

Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *Image-Music-Text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. London: Fontana-Collins, 1977. 142-48. pp. 146-48.

48 Cut-ups aside, *Nova Express* includes two formal collaborations; one with Sommerville and the other a reconstruction of a piece written in 1938 with childhood friend, Kells Elvins. Collaboration is obviously vitally important to the Burroughs corporate enterprise. Joint productions include those written with Gysin or Ginsberg (e.g. *The Yage Letters* - 1963), or illustrated by Keith Haring (*Apocalypse* - 1988) or S. Clay Wilson (*Tornado Alley* - 1989), or edited by Grauerholz, and, of course, the film/tape experiments with Balch and Sommerville. Burroughs has also written a (now lost?) novel with Kerouac, *And the Hippos Were Boiled in Their Tanks* (c. 1944).

49 Gysin and Wilson (1982), pp. 187-91.

50 Burroughs, William S. *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays*. London: John Calder, 1985a. p. 62.

51 cf. Burroughs's concept of *Playback;* the simple operation of "making recordings and taking pictures of some location you wish to destroy, then playing recordings back and taking more pictures" (thus leading to "accidents, fires, removals"). Burroughs and unnamed accomplices carried out Playback actions against the Moka Bar, London (for "outrageous and unprovoked discourtesy and poisonous cheesecake") in August 1972; the establishment soon ceased trading. The more outrageous claims for the prowess of the cut-ups are often made with a humorous glint in the eye.

Burroughs, William S. "Playback From Eden to Watergate." *The Job: Topical Writings and Interviews*. 1970. London: John Calder, 1984a. 9-20.

52 Burroughs (1984a), p. 28.

53 Burroughs, William S. "Les Voleurs." 19-21. In Burroughs (1985a). 19-21. p. 20.

54 See, for example, Burroughs's remarks in McCaffery, Larry. "An Interview with William S. Burroughs." *Across the Wounded Galaxies: Interviews with Contemporary American Science-Fiction Writers*. Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1990. 31-53. p. 52.

55 Burroughs (1985a), p. 64.

56 Burroughs, William S. "Censorship." *Transatlantic Review* 11 (1962): 5-11. pp. 6-7.

57 Lydenberg, Robin. *Word Cultures: Radical Theory and Practice in William S. Burroughs' Fiction*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1987. p. 48.

58 Lydenberg (1987), p. 73.

59 Skau, Michael. "The Central Verbal System: The Prose of William Burroughs." *Style* 15.4 (1981): 401-14. p. 406.

60 Lydenberg (1987), p. 49.

61 Lydenberg (1987), p. 69.

62 Kermode, Frank. *Continuities*. NY: Random, 1968. p. 20.

63 Lodge, David. "Objections to William Burroughs." *William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959-1989*. Ed. Jennie Skerl and Robin Lydenberg. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991. 75-84. p. 80.

64 Skerl and Lydenberg (1991), p. 82.

65 Skerl and Lydenberg (1991), p. 81.

66 Skau (1981), p. 408.

67 Nelson, Cary. The End of the Body: Radical Space in Burroughs." *The Incarnate Word: Literature as Verbal Space*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1973. 208-29. p. 211.

68 Tanner, Tony. "The New Demonology." *Partisan Review* 33 (1966): 547-572. p. 564.

69 Nelson (1973), p. 212.

70 Nelson (1973), p. 222.

71 Hassan, Ihab. "The Subtracting Machine: The Work of William Burroughs." *Critique* 6 (1963): 4-23. p. 16.

72 Hassan (1963), p. 6.

73 Hassan (1963), pp. 21-22.

74 Burroughs, William S. *"do you love me?"* In Burroughs (1985b). 43-49. pp. 43-45.

75 According to Morgan (1990), Burroughs attended Korzybski's lecture series in Chicago in August 1939. For more information on General Semantics, see Korzybski, Alfred. *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics*. 1933. Rev. ed. Lakeville (CT): International Non-Aristotelian Library Publishing Co., 1958.

76 McCaffery (1990), pp. 49-50.

77 Skerl, Jennie. *William S. Burroughs*. Twayne's United States Authors 438. Boston: Twayne-G.K. Hall, 1985. p. 70.

78 Burroughs (1984a), p. 97.

79 Burroughs (1984a), p. 118.

80 Burroughs (1984a), p. 223.

81 Burroughs (1985b), p. 52.

82 Burroughs (1985b), p. 49.

83 Hassan (1963), p. 15 / p.16.

84 Lydenberg (1987), p. 44.

85 Burroughs (1984a), p. 56.

86 Burroughs (1984a), p. 55.

87 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, October 13, 1956." In Burroughs (1993a), pp. 329-35.

88 "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, April 7, 1954." In Burroughs (1993a), p. 201.

89 See both Harris, Oliver C.G. "Cut-Up Closure: The Return to Narrative." In Skerl and Lydenberg (1991), pp. 251-62, and Barry Miles's chapter "The Return to Narrative", in Miles (1992), pp. 188-208.

90 Burroughs, William S. *My Education: A Book of Dreams*. NY: Viking Penguin, 1995. p. 139.

Chapter Three: William S. Burroughs - Here to Go (A Boy's Book)

1 Burroughs, William S. "Academy 23." *The Job: Topical Writings and Interviews*. 1970. Rev. ed. London: John Calder, 1984a. 123-224. p. 137. "Ten Years and a Billion Dollars." *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays*. London: John Calder, 1985a. 48-52. p. 48. *The Soft Machine*. 1961. Rev. ed. NY: Grove, 1967. p. 162. Spenser, Edmund. "The Faerie Queene - Book III." *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*. Ed. Hugh Maclean. 2nd. ed. NY: Norton, 1982. 196-350.

2 Burroughs (1984a), pp. 77-78.

3 Burroughs (1984a), p. 98.

4 Burroughs (1984a), p. 119.

5 Burroughs (1984a), p. 120.

6 Burroughs (1984a), p. 116.

7 Burroughs (1984a), p. 98-99.

8 Burroughs (1984a), p. 74 / p. 81.

9 Burroughs (1984a), p. 108.

10 See, for example, the revolutionary career of Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98): "Dominican monk and Renaissance ayatollah who terrified his city [Florence] with gangs of adolescent zealots ... the Dominicans formed gangs of youths into a kind of moral police who roamed the city, demanding alms, dispersing gamblers and ripping the clothes off women they considered indecently clad". Savonrola's rowdies also made a habit of burning books and ruthlessly persecuting homosexuals. James, Barry. "The Case for Savonrola Gets a

New Hearing." *International Herald Tribune*. 6 June 1997. 22. See also the treatment meted out to homosexuals by the Iranian revolutionary guards in the aftermath of the 1979 uprising.

11 "Electronic Revolution" (text in French and English) was first published in a limited edition of 500 copies by the Blackmoor Head Press (Cambridge, 1971). A German/English edition appeared shortly afterwards (Gottingen: Expanded Media Editions, 1971). It is also included as part of the "Academy 23" section of Burroughs (1984a) and in Burroughs's *Ah Pook Is Here and Other Texts*. London: John Calder, 1979. 123-57.

12 Burroughs (1984a), p. 174.

13 Burroughs (1984a), p. 175.

14 For a good general introduction to events surrounding the massacre and their significance in the longer term, see Coogan, Tim Pat. "They Shot Well, Didn't They!" *The Troubles: Ireland's Ordeal 1966-1996 and the Search for Peace*. London: Arrow, 1996. 157-90.

15 Burroughs (1984a), p. 203.

16 Burroughs (1984a), p. 200.

17 Burroughs (1984a), p. 202.

18 Burroughs, William S. *The Wild Boys: A Book of the Dead*. 1971. London: John Calder, 1982a. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials WB.

19 Burroughs (1984a), p. 174.

20 cf. the King's Road clothes emporium BOY (now relocated to Carnaby St., W1). Opened in March 1977, the shop gained early notoriety (and the attention of the Metropolitan police) for its provocative window displays; i.e. hypodermic syringes, news clippings of teen killers, poster-prints of mass murderers, and (simulated) charred human Boy-limbs, "as if, while vandalizing, he had been caught in a fire". See Savage, Jon. *England's Dreaming: Sex Pistols and Punk Rock*. Faber, 1991. p. 324.

BOY's window-dresser was Peter Christopherson, later to co-produce Burroughs's album of cut-up recordings for Industrial Records (IR 0016, 1981a).

21 See George Harrison's lyrics to "Piggies" (Everywhere there's lots of piggies / Living piggy lives / You can see them out for dinner / With their piggy wives / Clutching forks and knives to eat their bacon ... What they need's a damn good whacking) and Paul McCartney's song "Helter Skelter". The Beatles. *The Beatles [White Album]*. EMI, 7 46443 8, 1968.

22 There is a plethora of material available on Charles Manson (much of it sensational or even celebratory). A good, reasonably sober introduction is Vincent Bugliosi's *Helter Skelter* (Norton, 1974).

23 *Zabriskie Point*. Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni. With Mark Frechette, Daria Halprin, Rod Taylor, and Paul Fix. MGM, 1969.

Andrew, Geoff. "Zabriskie Point." *Time Out Film Guide*. 3rd ed. Ed. Tom Milne. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993. 805.

24 *A Clockwork Orange*. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. With Malcolm McDowell, Patrick Magee, Michael Bates, Warren Clarke, and Adrienne Corri. Warner Bros., 1971.

25 Corea, Gena. *The Mother Machine: Reproductive Technologies from Artificial Insemination to Artificial Wombs*. 1985. London: Women's Press, 1988. p. 260.

26 Corea (1988), p. 253.

27 Dworkin, Andrea. "The Coming Gynocide." *Right-Wing Women: The Politics of Domesticated Females*. London: Women's Press, 1983. 147-94. p. 172.

28 Dworkin (1983), p. 188.

29 Fletcher, Joseph. *The Ethics of Genetic Control: Ending Reproductive Roulette*. NY: Anchor-Doubleday, 1974. Quoted in Corea (1988), p. 292.

30 Corea (1988), p. 292.

31 Corea (1988), p. 7.

32 Greenslade, William. *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel 1880-1940.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994. p. 26.

33 Burleigh, Michael, and Wolfgang Wippermann. *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991. pp. 304-5.

34 Corea (1988), p. 19.

35 See, for example, Burroughs's remarks in Burroughs, William S., and Eric Mottram. *Snack ... Two Tape Transcripts*. London: Aloes, 1975.

36 "Dinner with [William Burroughs], Andy Warhol and Allen Ginsberg: New York 1980." Bockris, Victor. *With William Burroughs: A Report from the Bunker*. 1981. London: Vermilion-Hutchinson, 1982. 57-58. p. 57.

37 Burroughs, William S. *Ghost of Chance*. 1991. London: Serpent's Tail, 1995. pp. 18-19.

38 Palmer, Robert. "Rolling Stone Interview: William Burroughs." *Rolling Stone* 108. 11 May 1972. 48-53. Quoted in Mottram, Eric. *William Burroughs: The Algebra of Need*. London: Marion Boyars, 1977. pp. 163-68.

39 Solanas, Valerie. *S.C.U.M. Manifesto*. NYC: Olympia, 1968.

Details of Girodias's sensationalist promotion of Solanas's tract ("Warhol ... the ultimate voyeur ... felled by S.C.U.M.") can be found in de St Jorre, John. "Olympia USA." *The Good Ship Venus: The Erotic Voyages of the Olympia Press*. London: Hutchinson, 1994. 275-92.

40 For an impressively researched and impassioned denunciation of the Red Army Faction, see Becker, Jillian. *Hitler's Children: The Story of the Baader-Meinhof Terrorist Gang*. 1977. 3rd ed. London: Pickwick Books, 1989. This particular edition also contains a useful appended essay ("Another Final Battle on the Stage of History", pp. 245-55) which "examines the anti-semitic and millenarian tenor of German terrorism".

41 Dworkin recounts some of the details surrounding the genesis and composition of *Woman Hating* in "My Life as a Writer", collected in *Life and Death: Unapologetic Writings on the Continuing War against Women*. NY: Free

Press-Simon & Schuster, 1997. 3-38. Some readers may also find Dworkin's autobiographical fiction, *Ice and Fire: A Novel* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1986), revealing and instructive.

42 Heidenry, John. *What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution.* NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997. p. 111.

43 Dworkin, Andrea. *Woman Hating*. NY: Dutton, 1974. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials WH.

44 "Sade is precursor to Artaud's theater of cruelty, Nietzsche's will to power, and the rapist frenzy of William Burroughs." Dworkin, Andrea. *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*. London: Women's Press, 1981. p. 71.

45 Dworkin, Andrea. "The Root Cause." [Speech delivered at M.I.T., Cambridge, Mass., September 26, 1975]. *Our Blood: Prophecies and Discourses on Sexual Politics*. 1976. London: Women's Press, 1982. 96-111. p. 105.

46 Dworkin may, however, have been familiar with 1972 French language edition of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (which, like *Woman Hating*, contains much on the rigidly gendered body's capacity for fascistic expression and the liberatory delights of pursuing a polymorphous sexuality):

> Making love is not just becoming as one, or even two, but becoming as a hundred thousand. Desiring-machines or the nonhuman sex: not one or even two sexes, but *n* sexes. Schizoanalysis is the variable analysis of the *n* sexes in a subject, beyond the anthropomorphic representation that society imposes on this subject, and with which it represents its own sexuality. The schizoanalytic slogan of the desiring-revolution will be first of all: to each its own sexes". (p. 296).

For more information on "De-oedipalizing, undoing the daddy-mommy spider web" (p. 112), consult Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane. 1977. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1983.

47 Unlike Dworkin, however, Burroughs does not believe that the body is inherently disposed towards fascistic self-regulation. See Burroughs and Mottram (1975), p. 26.

For Burroughs, the body is at the mercy of Time (and therefore, death). The time-bound body prevents man from gaining access to immortality (just as the 'stinking mummies' of the Pharaohs prevented them from reaching the eternal paradise of the Western Lands). The visionary mind is also threatened by the cannibalistic demands of the body (as illustrated by the horrifying routine of "The Talking Asshole" in *The Naked Lunch* - pp. 110-11; in which a carny ventriloquist act is usurped by his lower partner: "'It's you who will shut up in the end. Not me. Because we don't need you around here any more. I can talk and eat *and* shit'".).

48 Again, the influence here of Wilhelm Reich suggests another parallel with Burroughs. See, for example, Reich's *The Sexual Revolution* (1936, NY: Farrar, 1974), described by one critic as "the most slashing critique of traditional sexuality and the clearest affirmation of the healthy genital impulses of children, adolescents, and adults". Sharaf, Myron. *Fury on Earth: A Biography of Wilhelm Reich*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1983. p. 522. Reich also partly attributed both the rise of fascism and (more notoriously) the onset of cancer to sexual repression.

49 For details regarding Dworkin's career, post-*Woman Hating*, and the unholy coalition of feminist separatists and Christian crusaders, see Thompson, Bill. *Soft Core: Moral Crusades against Pornography in Britain and America*. London: Cassell, 1994. Catherine A. MacKinnon's views are best encountered in *Only Words*. 1993. London: HarperCollins, 1994.

Both Dworkin and MacKinnon feature heavily in Diana E.H. Russell's revealing anthology, *Making Violence Sexy: Feminist Views on Pornography*. Buckingham: Open University, 1993. Sample essay title: "There Are Better Ways of Taking Care of Bret Easton Ellis Than Just Censoring Him ... ".

Heidenry (1997) offers an excellent overview of changing public attitudes to sexuality over the last thirty years. He pithily remarks that "radical feminism was Dworkin's way out of madness, though not necessarily back into sanity". (p. 112).

50 Burroughs, William S. "Censorship." *Transatlantic Review* 11 (1962): 5-11. p. 6.

51 Pounds, Wayne. "The Postmodern Anus: Parody and Utopia in Two Recent Novels by William Burroughs." *Poetics Today* 8:3-4 (1987): 611-29. p. 620.

52 Burroughs, like Beckett before him, appears to have had an unhappy time of teaching (although for different reasons). For details of this interlude, see Morgan, Ted. *Literary Outlaw: The Life and Times of William S. Burroughs*. NY: Avon, 1990.

Bockris (1982) is useful on the period covering the composition of *Cities of the Red Night* (1974-80).

53 Burroughs, William S. *Port of Saints*. 1973. Rev. ed. London: John Calder, 1983. pp. 96-97. This is the first UK 'trade' edition of this volume; it reproduces the text of the revised Blue Wind Press edition (Berkeley, 1980). The original version of the novel was published in a limited edition by the Covent Garden Press (London, 1973).

54 Burroughs, William S. *The Book of Breeething*. Illus. Robert F. Gale. Ingatestone (Essex): OU Press, 1974.

55 Burroughs, William S. *Blade Runner (A Movie)*. Berkeley: Blue Wind, 1979. It should be noted that this volume bears no relation to Ridley Scott's 1982 movie of the same name, which is based upon Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968).

56 More recently, see Burroughs's collaboration with the late Kurt Cobain, singer/guitarist with the hugely successful grunge band *Nirvana*. Burroughs, William S., and Kurt Cobain. *The "Priest" They Called Him*. Compact Disc. Tim/Kerr, TK 92 CD044, 1993.

As ridiculous as it sounds, one theory advanced to explain Cobain's suicide is that he spent the three days prior to his death immersed in the Burroughs/Gysin *Dream Machine*.

57 Burroughs's 1982 "Final Academy" shows in England, for example, saw him performing with the Mersey poets in the function suite of a Liverpool hotel, reading at the Haçienda nightclub in Manchester, and sharing the bill with 'industrial-noise' acts such as Psychic Television at the Ritzy Cinema in Brixton.

58 Burroughs, William S. "What The Nova Convention Is All About." Burroughs, William S., et al. *The Nova Convention*. 2-LP Record Set. Giorno Poetry Systems, GPS 014-015, 1979.

This is an incredibly rare double album; my transcript of Burroughs's speech is taken from a two cassette bootleg edition of *The Nova Convention* (which includes material not available on the original record set).

For further details on the Nova Convention and punk rock in America see McNeil, Legs, and Gillian McCain. *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk*. London: Little, Brown, 1996. Burroughs is quoted in a front cover blurb: "A beautifully organized collection ... I felt like I was there ... wait a minute, I *was* there".

59 Burroughs, William S. *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. Illus. Christof Kohlhofer. [1984] Bonn: Expanded Media Editions, 1996. p. 22.

60 "Navigare necesse es. Vivare no es necesse." In Burroughs (1984a). 9.

61 Burroughs, William S. "Keynote Commentary & Roosevelt After Inauguration." On Burroughs et al (1979).

62 Burroughs (1984a), p. 9.

63 Burroughs, William S. *Cities of the Red Night*. 1981. London: Picador-Pan, 1982b. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials CRN.

64 Shaviro, Steven. "Burroughs' Theater of Illusion: *Cities of the Red Night*." *William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959-1989*. Ed. Jennie Skerl and Robin Lydenberg. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991. 197-207. p. 197. Shaviro's essay originally appeared in *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 4.1 (1984): 64-74.

65 Wells, H.G. *A Modern Utopia*. 1905. London: Everyman-Dent, 1994. p. 153.

66 Burroughs, William S. "Academy 23." In Burroughs (1984a). 123-224. p. 221.

67 Burroughs (1984a), p. 224.

68 Wells, H.G. *Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress Upon Human Life and Thought*. 1901. 8th ed. London: Chapman & Hall, 1902. pp. 289-90.

69 Wells (1902), p. 280.

70 Ayers, David. "'Politics Here is Death': William Burroughs's *Cities of the Red Night*." *Utopias and the Millennium*. Ed. Krishan Kumar and Stephen Bann. London: Reaktion, 1993. 90-106. p. 92.

71 Defoe, Daniel. *A General History of The Pyrates*. 1724/28. Ed. Manuel Schonhorn. Columbia: U of South Carolina P, 1972.

The editor remarks: "The narrative of Mission's piratical exploits and utopian ventures is a fiction to which Defoe gave the illusion of history by introducing a few easily recallable facts". p. 683.

72 Burroughs (1984a), p. 101.

73 Knickerbocker, Conrad. "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview with William Burroughs." *Paris Review* 35 (1965): 12-49. pp. 35-36.

74 Burroughs, William S. *The Place of Dead Roads*. 1983. London: John Calder, 1984c. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials PDR.

75 cf. "*The Naked Lunch* is a blueprint, a How-To Book ... How-To extend levels of experience by opening the door at the end of a long hall". Burroughs,

William S. *The Naked Lunch.* 1959. Rev. ed. London: Paladin-Collins, 1986. pp. 176-77.

76 In his account of the rise and fall of the sexual revolution, Heidenry (1997) explains that the pioneering Doc Johnson dildo was so-called "partly in homage to the president, whose commission had koshered porn, and partly because the name was a synonym for penis in many parts of the English-speaking world ... ". p. 75.

77 Black, Jack. *You Can't Win: The Autobiography of Jack Black.* Intro. William S. Burroughs. 1926. NY: Amok, 1988.

78 Black (1988), pp. 83-84.

79 See also "The Dead Star" cut-up text (c. 1965): "You eat and then you / salt chunk in front of / of coffee and a plate of / out a word and puts a mug / come in she gets up with / porsk and beans. When you /stove and a pot of salt / pot always on the wood / Mary keeps a blue coffee ... ". Burroughs, William S. *Time*. NY: "C" Press, 1965. no pagination [p. 3].

80 Black (1988), p. 129.

81 Burroughs records his appreciation of the gay writer Denton Welch (1915-48) and his influence upon *Dead Roads* in the essay "Creative Reading". In Burroughs (1985a). 38-47. The novel is also dedicated to him.

Arthur Rimbaud (1854-91), hip young gunslinger and original wild boy, is an obvious influence on the Burroughs oeuvre. And as for Johnny Keats (1795-1821):

> [Kim] longed for new dangers and new weapons, "for perilous seas in faery lands forlorn." For unknown drugs and pleasures, and a distant star called HOME. (PDR 101).

Dead Roads also manages to induct Johnny Rotten into the pantheon of heroes: "Kim's hatred for England is becoming an obsession ... God save the Queen and a fascist regime ... Never go too far in any direction, is the basic

law on which Limey-Land is built ... They'll never get all that ballast of unearned privilege into space ... They get out of a spaceship and start looking about desperately for inferiors" (PDR 194-95). Burroughs's enthusiasm for the *Sex Pistols* is further evident in his article "Bugger the Queen." *International Times* 5.5 (1980): 23

82 Speaking in 1980, Burroughs refers to and reads from a work in progress entitled "Place of Dead Roads - Planet Earth". In Burroughs (1996), pp. 22-24.

83 See note 36 for full publication details.

84 Burroughs, William S. *Nova Express*. 1964. London: Panther, 1968. p. 65.

85 Burroughs, William S. *The Western Lands*. 1987. London: Picador-Pan, 1988. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials WL.

Chapter Four: J.G. Ballard - Which Way to Inner Space?

1 Filippo, Paul Di. "Ballard's Anatomy: An Interview with J.G. Ballard." *Science Fiction Eye* 8 (1991): 66-75. p. 67. Ballard, J.G. "Images of the Future: Comments on Some Recent Experiments." [1966] *JGB News* 19 (1993): 1-3. p. 2. "Which Way to Inner Space?" *New Worlds* 118 (1962): 2-3, 116-18. p. 117. Blackett, P.M.S. *Fear, War, and the Bomb: Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy*. NY: Whittlesey House, 1949. p. 139. Burroughs, William S. *The Place of Dead Roads*. 1983. London: John Calder, 1984c. p. 204.

2 Ballard, J.G. "The Future of the Future." *Vogue* 134 (November 1977): 213-14. Collected in Ballard, J.G. *A User's Guide to the Millennium: Essays and Reviews*. London: Harper-Collins, 1996a. pp. 224-27.

3 Ballard, J.G. *The Wind from Nowhere*. 1962. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967g. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials WFN.

Ballard's novel was first published in the US as a paperback original (NY: Berkley, 1962). The first (and only) UK edition was also a paperback (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967). A "shortened and altered" version of the novel appeared under the title "Storm-Wind." *New Worlds* 110/11 (1961): 4-48/83-125. This two-part serialisation contains a final chapter and epilogue subsequently omitted from the novel.

4 Ballard, J.G. *The Drowned World*. 1962. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials DW.

Again, Ballard's novel first appeared in the US as a paperback (NY: Berkley, 1962). This was followed by a British hardcover edition (London: Gollancz, 1962).

5 Ballard, J.G. *The Drought*. 1965. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1978a. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials DR.

This novel first appeared in the US as a paperback under the title *The Burning World* (NY: Berkley, 1964). A revised edition was published as *The Drought* (London: Cape, 1965). All subsequent printings have followed the text of the UK edition.

6 Ballard, J.G. *The Crystal World*. 1966. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1978b. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials CW.

First published in 1966 by Jonathan Cape (London) and Farrar, Straus, and Giroux (NY).

7 Ballard, J.G. "News from the Sun." *Myths of the Near Future*. 1982. London: Triad/Paladin-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and HarperCollins, 1984a. 76-117. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials NS.

Ballard's story originally appeared in *Ambit* 87 (1981): 2-28.

8 Ballard, J.G. "Myths of the Near Future." Collected in Ballard (1984a), pp. 7-43. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials MNF.

9 Ballard, J.G. "The Voices of Time." *The Voices of Time and Other Stories*. NY: Berkley, 1962. 7-37. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials VT.

Ballard's story originally appeared in *New Worlds* 99 (1960): 91-123.

10 For further information on the story of *New Worlds* magazine, see Greenland Colin. *The Entropy Exhibition: Michael Moorcock and the British 'New Wave' in*

Science Fiction. London: Routledge, 1983. *and* Moorcock, Michael, ed. *New Worlds: An Anthology*. London: Flamingo-Fontana, 1983. The history of *New Worlds* is fascinating one; from its pulp-SF origins in the late-1940s it evolved into a countercultural contemporary of underground magazines such as *International Times* and *Oz*.

11 Libby, Anthony. "Merwin's Planet, Alien Voices." *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 24.1 (1982): 48-63. p. 52.

12 Finkelstein, Haim. "'Deserts of Vast Eternity': J.G. Ballard and Robert Smithson." *Foundation* 39 (1987): 50-62. p.52.

13 Platzner, Robert L. "The Metamorphic Vision of J.G. Ballard." *Essays in Literature* 10.2 (1983): 209-17. p. 209.

14 Platzner (1983), p. 211.

15 Nicol, Charles. "J.G. Ballard and the Limits of Mainstream SF." *Science-Fiction Studies* 3 (1976): 150-57. p. 155.

16 Nicol (1976), p. 154.

17 A *mandala* is a symbolic design (usually circular) which is employed in the performance of sacred rites. It represents the whole of the universe and serves a meeting place for the various grand powers of the cosmos. During a ceremony or meditative rite, the adept visualises himself entering the mandala and journeying towards it centre, thus reproducing the eternal processes of disintegration and reintegration.

In a compelling essay, Fredric Jameson writes that "Ballard's story is also very specifically a story about "future" art or postmodern aesthetics - indeed, the opposition between two kinds of spatial art, the mandala of the sixties built by the hero ... and the "atrocity exhibit" of the other, Byronic figure, which foreshadows ... the creative exhibitions of the postmodern museums today". Jameson, Fredric. "Utopianism After the End of Utopia." *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London: Verso, 1991. 154-80. p. 156.

18 Ballard, J.G. *The Unlimited Dream Company*. 1979. London: Paladin-Collins, 1990c. p. 173.

19 Ballard, J.G. "Zodiac 2000." Collected in Ballard (1984a), pp. 66-75. p. 71.

20 Frick, Thomas. "The Art of Fiction LXXXV: J.G. Ballard." *Paris Review* 94 (1984): 132-60. p. 151.

21 Aldiss, Brian. *Billion Year Spree: The History of Science Fiction*. 1973. London: Corgi-Transworld, 1975. p. 337.

22 Ballard, J.G. "Which Way To Inner Space?" *New Worlds* 118 (1962): 2-3, 116-18. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials IS.

The essay is also collected in Ballard (1996a), pp. 195-98.

23 Major Gherman Stepanovich Titov (b. 1935), pilot of the Vostok 2 spacecraft (launched August 6, 1961) and the first person to complete a space flight of more than one orbit.

24 cf. The Beckettian conclusion to "The Assassination Weapon." *New Worlds* 161 (1966d): 4-12.

> **The Terminal Zone.** He lay on the sand with the rusty bicycle wheel. Now and then he would cover some of the spokes with sand, neutralizing the radial geometry. The rim interested him. Hidden behind a dune, the hut no longer seemed a part of his world. The sky remained constant, the warm air touching the shreds of test papers sticking up from the sand. He continued to examine the wheel. Nothing happened. (p. 12).

25 Greenland (1983), p. 53.

26 See both Greenland (1983) and Clute, John, and Peter Nicholls. "Inner Space." *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*. Ed. John Clute and Peter Nicholls. London: Orbit, 1993. 618-19.

Interestingly, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Second Edition, CD-ROM version) records the publication of the following book, a year before Ballard's

essay. J[ane] Dunlap. *Exploring Inner Space: Personal Experiences under LSD-25*. London: Scientific Book Club, 1961.

27 Priestley, J.B. "They Come from Inner Space." *Thoughts in the Wilderness*. London: Heinemann, 1957. 20-26. Priestley's essay originally appeared in *New Statesman and Nation* 16 (1953): 712, 714.

28 Priestley (1957), p. 21.

29 Priestley (1957), p. 22.

30 Priestley (1957), p. 25.

31 Priestley (1957), p. 23.

For a useful introduction to Bradbury's long career, see Mogen, David. *Ray Bradbury*. Twayne's United States Authors 504. Boston: Twayne-G.K. Hall, 1986.

32 Matheson, Richard. *The Shrinking Man*. 1956. NY: Berkley, 1979. p. 214.

33 Matheson (1979), pp. 216-17.

34 Bradbury's Mars stories are best sampled in *The Silver Locusts* (US title, *The Martian Chronicles* - 1950). London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1951.

35 Goddard, James, and David Pringle, eds. "An Interview with J.G. Ballard." *J.G. Ballard: The First Twenty Years*. Hayes: Bran's Head, 1976. 8-35. p. 24.

Ballard continues:

> I know that when *The Drowned World* was accepted by my American publisher about twelve years ago he said: 'yes, it's great, but why don't we have a happy ending? Have the hero going north instead of south into the jungle and sun.' He thought I'd made a slight technical mistake by a slip of the pen, and had the hero going in the wrong direction.

36 There have been, to date, three full length studies of Ballard published. These are (in order of publication); Pringle, David. *Earth is the Alien Planet: J.G. Ballard's Four-Dimensional Nightmare*. Milford's Popular Writers of Today 26. San Bernardino: Borgo Press, 1979.

Brigg, Peter. *J.G. Ballard*. Starmont Reader's Guide 26. Mercer Island: Starmont, 1985.

Stephenson, Gregory. *Out of the Night and into the Dream: A Thematic Study of the Fiction of J.G. Ballard*. Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy 47. Westport: Greenwood, 1991.

37 See Pringle (1979), pp. 15-16.

38 We shall examine this aspect of Ballard's fiction in greater detail in chapter five, when we consider the character of Dr Nathan in *The Atrocity Exhibition*.

39 Pringle (1979), p. 14.

40 The issue of Ballard's alleged racism is raised in Franklin, H. Bruce. "What Are We To Make of J.G. Ballard's Apocalypse?" *Voices For The Future 2*. Ed. Thomas Clareson. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1979. 82-105.

Ballard's supposed sexism is discussed in Fallowell, Duncan. "Ballard in Bondage." *Books and Bookmen* 22.6 (1977): 59-60.

41 Ballard, J.G. "The Coming of the Unconscious." *The Overloaded Man*. London: Panther, 1967a. 140-45. p. 144.

Ballard's essay-review first appeared in *New Worlds* 164 (1966f): 141-46.

42 Ballard, J.G. "Myth Maker of the 20th Century." *New Worlds* 142 (1964): 121-27. p. 121.

Ballard's article is a celebratory review of William S. Burroughs's *The Naked Lunch*, *The Soft Machine*, and *The Ticket That Exploded* (occasioned by Calder's UK publication of the *Dead Fingers Talk* omnibus). Ballard concludes his essay:

> In his trilogy, William Burroughs has fashioned from our dreams and nightmares the authentic mythology of the age of Cape Canaveral, Hiroshima and Belsen. His novels are the terminal documents of the mid-twentieth century, scabrous and scarifying, a progress report from an inmate in the cosmic madhouse.

Collected in Ballard (1996a), pp. 126-30.

43 Brigg (1985), p. 81.

Pringle (1979) defines the *death of affect* as: "the growth of a ruthlessly emotionless and guiltless form of individualism" (p.41). The concept is explored in chapter five of this thesis.

44 Brigg (1985), p. 37.

Ballard studied medicine at King's College, Cambridge for two years, before leaving to study English Literature at the University of London (for one year only). See Pringle, David. "The Profession of Science Fiction 26: From Shanghai to Shepperton." *Foundation* 24 (1982): 5–23. Ballard's time at Cambridge is alluded to in the "Queen of the Night" section (pp. 77-98) of his autobiographical fiction *The Kindness of Women*. 1991. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1992a.

45 Pringle (1979), p. 37.

46 In his pioneering study, Pringle (1979) argues that Ballard is a "symbolic fantasist" (p. 39) and that in his fiction he employs a coherent "fourfold" pattern of symbolism; Water stands for the past (Eden), Sand for the future (Hell), Concrete for the present (the Fallen World), and Crystal for eternity (Heaven, or the City of God).

47 Pringle (1979), p. 51.

48 Pringle (1979), p. 46.

49 Ballard, J.G. "Passport to Eternity." In Ballard (1967a). 65-83. Originally published in *Amazing Stories* 36.6 (1962): 56-74. This is one of Ballard's earliest stories, written in 1955, but not published until seven years later.

"The Subliminal Man." *The Disaster Area*. 1967. London: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979b. 55-76. Originally published in *New Worlds* 126 (1963): 109-26.

"Having a Wonderful Time." In Ballard (1984a), pp. 44-50. Originally published in *Bananas* 10 (1978c): 24-25.

50 Ballard (1984a), pp. 48-49.

51 A year before Ballard's story was published the *Sex Pistols* were riding high in the charts with their third single *Holidays in the Sun*; opening line: "I don't want a holiday in the sun / I don't want to go to the new Belsen". Sex Pistols. "Holidays in the Sun." Virgin, VS 191, 1977.

52 Pringle (1979), p. 43.

53 Clarseon (1979), p. 98.

54 Briefly, New Wave SF in England flourished under Michael Moorcock's editorship of *New Worlds* magazine (beginning May/June 1964; see his opening editorial, "A New Literature for the Space Age." *New Worlds* 142: 2-3, which hints at the shape of things to come: "[Burroughs's] work is the SF we've all been waiting for" etc.). New Wave SF is generally characterised by an experimental (for SF) approach to form and pessimistic/nihilistic attitude towards the future. Favoured themes include catastrophe, sex, drugs, war, death, tv, dystopia, entropy, and entropy (again). Two essential anthologies of the period are Merril, Judith, ed. *England Swings SF: Stories of Speculative Fiction*. Garden City (NY): Doubleday, 1968. *and* Jones, Langdon, ed. *The New S.F.: An Original Anthology of Modern Speculative Fiction*. 1969. London: Arrow-Hutchinson, 1970. Note the prominent use of the term "Speculative Fiction" in both titles.

For further information on New Wave SF and *New Worlds* etc., see Greenland (1983), Aldiss, Brian. "The Stars My Detestation: Yesterday and Tomorrow." In Aldiss (1975), pp. 326-363. James, Edward. "From New Wave to Cyberpunk and Beyond, 1960-1993." *Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994. 167-208. Priest, Christopher. "New Wave: A Radical Change in the 1960s." *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*. Ed. Robert Holdstock. London: Octopus, 1978. 162-73. Nicholls, Peter. "Jerry Cornelius at the Atrocity Exhibition: Anarchy and Entropy in *New Worlds* Science Fiction 1964-1974." *Foundation* 9 (1975): 22-44.

A useful bibliography is provided in Ruddick, Nicholas. "New Wave S(peculative) F(iction) (1962-78)." *British Science Fiction: A Chronology, 1478-1990*. Bibliographies and Indexes in World Literature 35. Westport: Greenwood, 1992. 107-43. Ruddick charts the Wave as beginning with the publication of *The Drowned World* in 1962.

55 Clareson (1979), p. 82.

56 Clareson (1979), p. 83.

57 Clareson (1979), p. 98.

58 Clareson (1979), p. 103.

59 Clareson (1979), p. 94.

60 Wagar, W. Warren. "J.G. Ballard and the Transvaluation of Utopia." *Science-Fiction Studies* 18 (1991): 53-70. pp. 58-59.

61 Wagar (1991), p. 68.

62 Jameson (1991), p. 178.

63 Jameson (1991), p. 180.

64 Ballard, J.G. "The Coming of the Unconscious." *The Overloaded Man*. London: Panther, 1967a. 140-45. Original publication in *New Worlds* 164 (1966f): 141-46. Also collected in Ballard (1996a), pp. 84-88.

65 Ballard, J.G. "Salvador Dali: The Innocent as Paranoid." *New Worlds* 187 (1969a): 25-31. Collected in Ballard (1996a), pp. 91-98.

66 That these publications should even be reviewed in a Science Fiction magazine tells you something of the increasingly iconoclastic approach of *New Worlds*. Other distinctly non-SF books reviewed by Ballard in *New Worlds* include *Mein Kampf* ("Alphabets of Unreason." *NW* 196 (1969h): 26), *How to Achieve Sexual Ecstasy* ("Use Your Vagina." *NW* 191 (1969g): 58-60), and Wyndham Lewis's *The Human Age* trilogy ("Visions of Hell." *NW* 160 (1966i): 148-54).

67 Ballard (1967a), p. 140.

68 Ballard (1967a), p. 145.

69 Ballard (1969a), pp. 28-29.

70 Ballard (1969a), p. 28.

71 Dali, Salvador. "The Conquest of the Irrational." *The Secret Life of Salvador Dali.* Trans. Haakon M. Chevalier. 3rd ed. London: Vision Press, 1949. 415-423. p. 418.

72 Dali (1949), p. 419.

73 Dali, Salvador. *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus: Paranoiac-Critical Interpretation, including The Myth of William Tell*. Trans. Eleanor R. Morse. St Petersburg (FLA): Salvador Dali Museum, 1986.

74 These paintings are reproduced in Ades, Dawn. *Dali*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1982. p. 136 / p. 130.

Dali's paranoiac-critical methods are examined in Finkelstein, Haim. "Under the Sign of Angelus." *Salvador Dali's Art and Writing, 1927-1942: The Metamorphoses of Narcissus*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. 177-226. Aspects of Ballard's relationship with Surrealism are discussed in Dowling, Terry. "Alternative Reality and Deviant Logic in J.G. Ballard's Second 'Disaster' Trilogy." *Science Fiction: The Review of Speculative Fiction* 1.1 (1977): 6-18.

75 Ballard, J.G. "Journey Across A Crater." *New Worlds* 198 (1970): 2-5.

76 Ballard, J.G. "You and Me and the Continuum.". *The Atrocity Exhibition*. 1970. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979a. 101-09. p. 105.

77 The majority of Ballard's space stories are collected in *Memories of the Space Age*. Illus. Jeffrey K. Potter. Sauk City (WI): Arkham House, 1988.

78 See, for example, Burroughs, William S. *The Place of Dead Roads*. 1983. London: John Calder, 1984c. pp. 40-44. *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. Illus. Christof Kohlhofer. [1984] Bonn: Expanded Media Editions, 1996. pp. 20-24.

79 Ballard, J.G. "The Future of the Future." *Vogue* 134 (November 1977): 213-14. Collected in Ballard (1996a), pp. 224-27.

For further evidence of Ballard's ambivalence towards NASA's forays into outer space, see his article "One Dull Step for Man ..." *The Observer*. 22 December 1996d, Review section: 15.

Chapter Five: Planes Intersect - J.G. Ballard and 'The Atrocity Exhibition'

1 Matheson, Richard. *The Shrinking Man*. 1956. NY: Berkley, 1979. p. 14.

Joy Division. "Atrocity Exhibition." *Closer*. Factory Records, FACT 25, 1980.

DeLillo, Don. *White Noise*. 1984. London: Picador-Pan, 1986. pp. 123/31.

Ellroy, James. *American Tabloid.* London: Century-Random, 1995. p. 562.

["Letter from Frank Michaels, Papatoetoe, New Zealand."] *New Worlds* 140 (March 1964): 121-22.

2 Ballard, J.G. "The Terminal Beach." *The Terminal Beach*. 1964. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966a. 136-57. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials TB.

This is a marginally revised version of the text which originally appeared in *New Worlds* 140 (1964): 4-24. The most noticeable amendment is that the bold print 'chapter' headings of the magazine version are re-set in *italics* for the book edition.

3 Ballard, J.G. "Some Words about *Crash!* / Interview with J.G. Ballard by Robert Louit." *Foundation* 9 (1975a): 44-54. p. 46.

4 Ballard, J.G. *The Atrocity Exhibition.* 1970. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979a. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials AE.

First UK edition published by Cape in 1970 (Pringle lists the true first as Copenhagen: Rhodos, 1969). First US edition published (and hastily withdrawn) by Doubleday in 1970. Finally published as *Love and Napalm: Export U.S.A.* (with a preface by William S. Burroughs) by Grove Press in

1972. One other important publication is the Re/Search edition (San Francisco, 1990d), with extensive annotations by Ballard.

5 See Rhodes, Richard. *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1986.

6 Eatherly was *not*, as has been claimed, the pilot of the *Enola Gay* (Eatherly flew the *Straight Flush* on a reconnaissance mission over Hiroshima on the morning of the attack). Both Eatherly himself and over-enthusiastic or unscrupulous reporters have been known to exaggerate the extent of his involvement in the bombing of Hiroshima. A fascinating (and reliable) account is provided in Huie, William Bradford. *The Hiroshima Pilot*. 1964. London: Consul-World Distributors, 1966.

See also, Tibbets, Paul W. "The Sad Case of Major Eatherly." *Mission: Hiroshima*. 1978. NY: Stein and Day, 1985. 282-90.

7 Blackett, P.M.S. *Fear, War, and the Bomb: Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy*. NY: Whittlesey House, 1949. pp. 134-39.

Rhodes (1986) notes that "the bombs were authorized not because the Japanese refused to surrender but because they refused to surrender unconditionally". p. 698.

8 Ballard, J.G. *Empire of the Sun*. 1984. London: Grafton-Collins, 1990a. pp. 325/49.

9 Ballard, J.G. *The Kindness of Women*. 1991. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1992a. p. 66.

The radical playfulness of Ballard's autobiographical *novels* is explored in Luckhurst, Roger. "Petition, Repetition, and "Autobiography": J.G. Ballard's *Empire of the Sun* and *The Kindness of Women*." *Contemporary Literature* 35.4 (1994): 688-708.

10 Ballard, J.G. "The End of My War." *Sunday Times*. 20 August 1995, News Review section: 1-2. p. 2.

Also collected in Ballard, J.G. *A User's Guide to the Millennium: Essays and Reviews*. London: Harper-Collins, 1996a. pp. 283-94.

11 Burroughs, William S. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 9, 1955." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. p. 254.

12 Baudrillard, Jean. "The Anorexic Ruins." Trans. David Antal. *Looking Back on the End of the World*. Eds. Dietmar Kamper and Christoph Wulf. NY: Semiotext(e), 1989. 29-45. p. 43.

Baudrillard's enthusiastic (if highly idiosyncratic) readings of *Crash* (1973) and Ballard's own collision with postmodernism lie beyond the scope of the present work. Those interested should consult Baudrillard, Jean. "Two Essays [Simulacra and Science Fiction / Ballard's *Crash*]." Trans. Arthur B. Evans. *Science-Fiction Studies* 55 (1991): 309-20. *and* Ballard, J.G., et al. "In Response to Jean Baudrillard." *Science-Fiction Studies* 55 (1991): 321-29. A useful overview of the fallout generated by SFS #55 is provided in Ruddick, Nicholas. "Ballard/ *Crash* /Baudrillard." *Science-Fiction Studies* 58 (1992): 354-60. In his interviews and journalism Ballard can rarely resist the opportunity to condemn both postmodernism and academia in general, yet he is careful to exempt Baudrillard from any criticism and, indeed, often cites the French philosopher's *America* (1988) as an inspirational work.

13 Juno, Andrea, and Vale, V. "Interview with J.G. Ballard [29 October 1982]." *Re/Search: J.G. Ballard*. Ed. V. Vale and Andrea Juno. Re/Search 8/9. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1984b. 6-35. p. 27.

14 Frick, Thomas. "The Art of Fiction LXXXV: J.G. Ballard." *Paris Review* 94 (1984): 132-60. p. 145.

15 Publication details of the fifteen short stories (or 'condensed novels') which comprise *The Atrocity Exhibition* are as follows (in chronological order):

"You and Me and the Continuum." *Impulse* 1 (1966c): 53-60.

"The Assassination Weapon." *New Worlds* 161 (1966d): 4-12.

"You: Coma: Marilyn Monroe." *Ambit* 27 (1966e): 3-6.

"The Atrocity Exhibition." *New Worlds* 166 (1966g): 91-102.

"The Assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy Considered as a Downhill Motor Race." *Ambit* 29 (1966h): 3-4.

"Plan for the Assassination of Jacqueline Kennedy." *Ambit* 31 (1967c): 9-11.

"The Death Module." *New Worlds* 173 (1967f): 21-24. Rpt. in *The Atrocity Exhibition* as "Notes Towards as a Mental Breakdown." (not to be confused with another story of the same name in *War Fever*, 1990/1991a).

"Why I Want to Fuck Ronald Reagan." Brighton: Unicorn Bookshop, 1968. Story also published in *International Times*.

"The Great American Nude." *Ambit* 36 (1968): 39-43.

"Love and Napalm: Export U.S.A." *Circuit* (1968).

"The University of Death." *Transatlantic Review* (1968): 68-79.

"The Generations of America." *New Worlds* 183 (1968): 13-14.

"The Summer Cannibals." *New Worlds* 186 (1969c): 19-23.

"Crash!" *ICA Eventsheet*. London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1969e.

"Tolerances of the Human Face." *Encounter* 33.3 (1969f): 3-14.

16 Burns, Alan. "J.G. Ballard." *The Imagination on Trial: British and American Writers Discuss their Working Methods*. Ed. Alan Burns and Charles Sugnet. London: Allison and Busby, 1981. 14-30. p. 22.

17 Ballard, J.G. "The Comsat Angels." *Low-Flying Aircraft and Other Stories*. London: Cape, 1976. 165-82.

"The Index." *War Fever*. 1990. London: Paladin-HarperCollins, 1991a. 171-76. See also "The Object of the Attack" (1984) and "Answers to a Questionnaire" (1985), both collected in Ballard (1991a).

18 With this issue (no. 173) *New Worlds* entered its most radical phase in terms of both content and design. This is the first of the 'large-format' issues (with

cover art by M.C. Escher); the increased size allowing Moorcock to experiment more freely with collage, illustration, and typography. A "typical" issue of the magazine could now include double page spreads of concrete poetry, essays on aesthetics, a Ballard 'condensed novel', articles on drugs and pornography, anything *except* mainstream SF. Ballard's observations (in Pringle, David. "Interview with J.G. Ballard." *Thrust: Science Fiction in Review* 14 (1980): 12-19) are of interest: "It ceased to be a science fiction magazine even in the very elastic sense in which *I* use the term. It became something much closer to a magazine of alternative fiction or whatever you want to call it. I think *New Worlds* was drawing much closer to magazines like *Frendz* and *IT*, the counter-culture magazines" (p.14). And like these magazines, *New Worlds* fared badly once the 60s subsided into the 70s.

19 See Wilford, John Noble. "Apollo's Darkest Hour." *We Reach the Moon: The New York Times Story of Man's Greatest Adventure.* NY: Bantam, 1969. 92-110.

20 Images of resurrection abound in Ballard's novels; see, for example, *The Crystal World* (1966/1978b), *Crash* (1973/1990b), *The Unlimited Dream Company* (1979/1990c), and *The Kindness of Women* (1991/1992a). See also the story "The Dead Time" (1977), collected in *Myths of the Near Future* (1982/1984a).

21 Ballard, J.G. *The Atrocity Exhibition.* Annotated ed. Illus. Phoebe Gloeckner. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1990d. p. 57.

22 Passages such as the following, "Nurse Nagamatzu gazed at him with cool eyes ... Dr Nathan lit a cigarette, ignoring the explicit insolence. This elegant bitch, like all women she intruded her sexuality at the most inopportune moments" (AE 38), are *pure* Benway.

23 *Dealey Plaza*, of course, is where John F. Kennedy was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald (and persons unknown?) on November 22, 1963. A reliable, *pre-Conspiracy* account of the momentous events in Dallas can be found in Manchester, William. *The Death of a President: November 20 - November 25, 1963.* London: Michael Joseph, 1967.

Ralph Nader (b. 1934) published *Unsafe at Any Speed*, an all-out attack on the US motor industry, in 1965. A *bête noire* of Ballard's, Nader is a long time advocate of consumer rights and campaigner against atomic energy, modern farming methods, corporate America etc. A millennial figure, Nader also organises teams of investigators, the so-called *Nader's Raiders*.

24 The first US edition of *The Atrocity Exhibition* was, of course, the suppressed Doubleday printing. *The New Science Fiction* is a transcript of a conversation between Ballard and the poet George MacBeth, broadcast on BBC Radio's *Third Programme* on March 29, 1967. The interview was dropped from all subsequent US editions, but is available in Jones, Langdon, ed. *The New S.F.: An Original Anthology of Modern Speculative Fiction*. 1969. London: Arrow-Hutchinson, 1970. 52-60.

25 Ballard (1990d), p. 19.

26 The reclusive behaviour of B(erick) Traven (1890?-1969) has given rise to various competing theories as to his origins and life (the most colourful of which places him as an illegitimate son of Kaiser Wilhelm II). A useful account is provided in Wyatt, William. *The Man Who Was B. Traven*. London: Cape, 1980.

27 Burns (1981), p. 24.

28 Most obviously *Empire of the Sun* (1984/1990a) and *The Kindness of Women* (1991/1992a), but see also *Crash* (1973/1990b) and *The Unlimited Dream Company* (1979/1990c).

29 Ballard designed a series of "Advertiser's Announcements" and placed them in *Ambit* magazine during the years 1967-71. These are reproduced as "Collages [Advertiser's Announcements]" in Vale and Juno (1984b), pp. 147-52.

30 Ballard (1990d), p. 111.

31 Ballard, J.G. "Notes from Nowhere: Comments on Work in Progress." *New Worlds* 167 (1966a): 147-51.

32 Ballard (1966b), p. 149.

33 Ballard (1975a), p. 49.

Ballard's comments on *Crash* now routinely preface the numerous reprints of his novel, no such comforting words were available in the first edition.

34 Vaughan, of course, returns as the vicious "hoodlum scientist" of *Crash*.

35 Mondo movies collect together atrocity footage (both staged and genuine) from around the world; executions, tribal rites, disasters, autopsies, massacres, animal butchery etc. Travers/Vaughan organises a festival of films by the Italian mondo filmmaker [Gualtiero] Jacopetti, director of such 'classics' as *Mondo Cane* (1962), *Mondo Cane 2* (1963), *Africa Addio*, a.k.a. *Africa Blood and Guts* (1966), and *Farewell Uncle Tom* (1971). Compared to the later excesses of the genre these wholly repugnant films are nevertheless relatively mild fare. The authoritative account is provided in Kerekes, David, and David Slater. "Nobody's Interested in Sex Any More: A History of Mondo Cinema." *Killing for Culture: An Illustrated History of Death Film from Mondo to Snuff*. London: Creation, 1994. 101-61.

Snuff films purport to show the (sexual) murder of women and children. Although their existence (and easy availability) is an article of faith amongst radical feminists (Dworkin, MacKinnon, Russell etc.) most rational commentators (Amnesty International, the FBI etc.) recognise an urban myth when they see one, with Dworkin's tales of "skull-fuck" movies from Vietnam now being replaced by "rape tapes" supposedly emanating from the former Yugoslavia. See, for example, Allen, Beverly. *Rape Warfare: The Hidden Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1996 *and* MacKinnon, Catherine A. "Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide." *Mass Rape: The War against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Ed. Alexandra Stiglmayer. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1994. 73-81. MacKinnon also turns up in Yaron Svoray's oafish *Gods of Death: Around the World, Behind*

Closed Doors, Operates an Ultra-Secret Business of Sex and Death. One Man Hunts the Truth about Snuff Films (NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997). Despite what Svoray claims to find in Pale, the truth is that MacKinnon, Allen, Dworkin et al. desperately *want* to believe in snuff movies, and that is the real pornography.

36 Ballard, J.G. "Salvador Dali: The Innocent as Paranoid." *New Worlds* 187 (1969a): 25-31. See esp. pp. 25-26. Also collected in Ballard (1996a), pp. 91-98.

37 Ballard (1969a), p. 27.

38 Ballard (1990d), p. 72.

39 Abraham Zapruder, of course, gained unwelcome celebrity when he captured Kennedy's assassination on his cine-camera. The footage sparked a furious bidding war between rival news networks, with Time Inc. eventually paying $150, 000 to secure the exclusive rights for a special commemorative edition of *Life* magazine.

Dale Carter notes the grotesque irony that Time Inc.'s founder, Henry Luce, helped launch Kennedy's public career by penning the introduction to his *Why England Slept* (1940), and later aided the Senator's electoral victory through securing favourable news coverage for JFK's campaign: "three years later *Life*, unlike its ostensible beneficiary, remained fully operative: not simply prepared to lament his passing but financed to outbid all others for the best color film of the President's murder in preparation for its memorial issue". See Carter, Dale. *The Final Frontier: The Rise and Fall of the American Rocket State*. London: Verso-New Left, 1988. p. 195.

40 Ballard, J.G. "A Guide to Virtual Death." *Interzone* 56 (1992b): 29.

41 Burns (1981), p. 27.

42 *Fuckface Twin* is reproduced in "Dinos and Jake Chapman: Our Own Work is Crap." *"Brilliant!": New Art from London*. Minneapolis: Walker Arts Center, 1995. 20-24. p. 23.

43 Maloney, Martin. "The Chapman Bros.: When Will I Be Famous." *Flash Art International* 186 (1996): 64-67. p. 64.

44 Ballard, J.G. *The Unlimited Dream Company*. 1979. London: Paladin-Collins, 1990c. p. 166.

45 Franklin, H. Bruce. "What Are We To Make of J.G. Ballard's Apocalypse?" *Voices For The Future* 2. Ed. Thomas Clareson. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1979. 82-105. p. 101.

46 Frick (1984), p. 155.

47 Ballard (1990d), p. 72, for example.

48 DeLillo describes Kennedy's assassination as "an aberration in the heartland of the real" (p. 15) and "the seven seconds that broke the back of the American century" (p. 181). DeLillo, Don. *Libra*. 1988. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1989.

Both DeLillo and Ballard read the sprawling *Warren Commission Report* on Kennedy's killing as the experimental text *par excellence*: "This is the Joycean Book of America, remember - the novel in which nothing is left out" (*Libra*, p. 182).

49 Ballard, J.G. "Alphabets of Unreason." *New Worlds: An Anthology*. Ed. Michael Moorcock. London: Flamingo-Fontana, 1983. 353-55.

Originally published in *New Worlds* 196 (1969h): 26. Revised text collected in Ballard (1996a), p. 221-23.

50 Ballard (1990d), p. 39.

51 Barkun, Michael. *Disaster and the Millennium*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1974. p. 206.

52 Barkun (1974), pp. 204-06.

53 Burroughs, William S. *Nova Express*. 1964. London: Panther, 1968. p. 65.

54 Ballard (1990d), p. 105.

55 For more information on this stunt, see Vale and Juno (1984b), pp. 88-89.

56 Jarry, Alfred. "The Passion Considered as an Uphill Bicycle Race." *Selected Works of Alfred Jarry*. Ed. Roger Shattuck and Simon Watson Taylor. London: Methuen, 1965. 122-24.

57 Wolfe, Bernard. *Limbo '90*. 1952. Rev. ed. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961.

58 Ballard, J.G. "Letter from J.G. Ballard on His "Lost" 1950s Novel." *JGB News* 22 (1994), pp. 1-2. p. 2.

59 Vance, Jack. "Meet Miss Universe." *Fantastic Universe* 3.2 (1955): 4-21. p. 12.

60 Huxley, Aldous. *Ape and Essence*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1949.

Balchin, Nigel. *Lord, I Was Afraid*. London: Collins, 1947.

61 For a selection of Ballard's journalism concerning Burroughs, see the "Writers" section of Ballard (1996a), pp. 126-36.

In Vale and Juno (1984b), Ballard praises Burroughs as "without a doubt ... the greatest American writer since WWII" (p. 6).

62 Burns (1981), p. 23.

63 Knickerbocker, Conrad. "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview with William Burroughs." *Paris Review* 35 (1965): 12-49. Burroughs, William S. *The Naked Lunch*. 1959. Rev. ed. London: Paladin-Collins, 1986. p. 172.

64 See Burroughs, William S. "Introduction." *Queer*. 1985. London: Picador-Pan, 1986. 5-18.

65 Knickerbocker (1965), p. 25.

66 Burroughs, William S. "Letter to Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, November 2, 1955." In Burroughs (1993a), pp. 302-04.

67 Platt, Charles. "J.G. Ballard." *Dream Makers: Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers at Work*. Rev. ed. NY: Ungar, 1987. 87-96. p. 89.

68 Platt (1987), p. 90. / Frick (1984), p. 140.

69 Ballard (1992a), p. 18.

70 See Abrams, M.H. *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*. NY: Norton, 1971.

71 Goddard, James, and David Pringle, eds. "An Interview with J.G. Ballard." *J.G. Ballard: The First Twenty Years*. Hayes: Bran's Head, 1976. 8-35. p. 29.

72 Ballard discusses the tape-recorder experiments and his various other attempts to "lower the fictional threshold right to the floor" in Burns (1981), p. 29, and Frick (1984), p. 154.

73 Goddard and Pringle (1976), p. 28.

74 Walls, Richard C. "Atomized Artifacts: *Atrocity Exhibition* and the End of History." *Science Fiction Eye* 8 (1991): 75-77. p. 76.

75 Burns (1981), p. 19.

76 Richard, Freiherr von Krafft-Ebing (1840-1902). German psychiatrist and pioneer in the study of deviant sexuality; his compendious *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), like Gray's *Anatomy*, the *Warren Commission Report*, and *The Black Box* (the recorded last words of aircraft pilots), comprises an "invisible literature" for Ballard.

77 Buroughs, William S. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 13, 1954." In Burroughs (1993a), pp. 243-46.

78 Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle ... and Other Works*. Standard Edition XVIII. London: Hogarth, 1955. p. 38.

79 Platzner, Robert L. "The Metamorphic Vision of J.G. Ballard." *Essays in Literature* 10.2 (1983): 209-17. p. 216.

80 Ballard (1990d), p. 9.

81 Amis, Martin. *Dead Babies*. 1975. Rpt. as *Dark Secrets*. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, 1977. p. 100-106.

In addition, chapter 53 of Amis's novel ("The Lumbar Transfer", pp. 179-80) presents a passable pastiche of Ballard's *The Drowned World*.

82 Amis (1977), p. 103.

83 *Crashed Cars: New Sculpture by J.G. Ballard* ran at the London New Arts Laboratory Gallery, Robert Street, NW1, April 4-28, 1970. An advertisement for the show can be found in *New Worlds* 200 (1970): 30.

Ballard appears to have been uninvolved in an earlier attempt to recreate events from *The Atrocity Exhibition* in a gallery space. In his "At the Theatre" column in *Punch* (August 20, 1969, pp. 313-14), Jeremy Kingston reviews a "remarkable programme" at the ICA called *The Assassination Weapon* ("portentously explained as a transmedia search for reality"):

> In the centre of the room a large white disc slowly rotates. Projectors in the four corners flash images on to this double screen while a voice sonorously reads passages by the ex-science-fiction writer J.G. Ballard. The programme is "an attempt to conceive the 'false' deaths of Kennedy, Oswald and Malcolm X" as imagined by a psychotic patient who believes himself to have been a H-bomber pilot. The superimposed photographs, surrealist paintings, charts and mandalas coupled with Ballard's dense distressing sentences have the texture of an unhappy dream.

84 Frick (1984), p. 141.

85 Talbot's student, Koester, exhibits such a car, complete with "plastic models of the late President and his wife in the rear seat" (AE 30), in "The University of Death" section of *The Atrocity Exhibition*.

86 Ballard, J.G. "Crashed Cars." Quoted in Vale and Juno (1984b), p. 154.

87 "Speculative Illustrations: Eduardo Paolozzi in Conversation with J.G. Ballard and Frank Whitford." *Studio International* 183 (1971): 136-43.

88 Burns (1981), p. 20.

89 Ballard, J.G. "Coitus 80": A Description of the Sexual Act in 1980." *New Worlds* 197 (1970): 16-17.

"Princess Margaret's Facelift: An Intersection of Fiction and Reality." *New Worlds* 199 (1970): 8.

90 Burns (1981), p. 29.

91 Ballard, J.G. "Mae West's Reduction Mammoplasty." *Ambit* 44 (1970): 9-11.

"Jane Fonda's Augmentation Mammoplasty." *Semiotext(e) SF* Semiotext(e) 5.2 (14). Ed. Rudy Rucker, Peter Lamborn Wilson, and Robert Anton Wilson. NY: Semiotext(e)-Autonomedia, 1989. 132-34. p. 134.

92 These are reproduced as "Collages [Advertiser's Announcements]", in Vale and Juno (1984b), pp. 147-52.

Original publication details of the five advertisements are as follows: "Homage to Claire Churchill." *Ambit* 32 (1967d): inside front cover. "Does the Angle Between Two Walls Have a Happy Ending?" *Ambit* 33 (1967e): rear cover. "A Neural Interval." *Ambit* 36 (1968): rear cover. "Placental Insufficiency." *Ambit* 45 (1970): rear cover. "Venus Smiles" *Ambit* 46 (1970/71): rear cover.

93 Oakes, Philip. "Ambit's Gambit." *Sunday Times*. 15 October 1967. Quoted in Merril, Judith, ed. *England Swings SF: Stories of Speculative Fiction*. Garden City (NY): Doubleday, 1968. pp. 404-05.

94 "Interview by Graeme Revell." In Vale and Juno (1984b), pp. 42-52. p. 49.

95 Anonymous. "Print My Money." *The Guardian*. 24 October 1967. p. 8.

96 Ballard, J.G. ["Project for a New Novel."] Reproduced in Vale and Juno (1984b), pp. 38-40.

97 J.G. Ballard, quoted in Vale and Juno (1984b), p. 38.

Thomas Pynchon - Paranoia, Apocalypse, Counterforce: A Conclusion

1 Ballard, J.G. "You and Me and the Continuum." *The Atrocity Exhibition*. 1970. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979a. p. 102. U.S. Army. *V-2 Rocket Attacks and Defense*. Report of the General Board, United States Forces, European Theater, 1945. p. 14. Ballard, J.G. "Tolerances of the Human Face." In Ballard (1979a), p. 85. Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*. 1895. London: Pan, 1953. p. 57. Dick, Philip K. *Ubik*. 1969. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1973. p. 164. Burroughs, William S. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, May 18, 1959." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. p. 415. Disch, Thomas M. *Camp Concentration*. 1968. London: Panther-Granada, 1969. p. 68. Dick, Philip K. "The Android and the Human." *The Dark Haired Girl*. Willimantic (CT): Ziesing, 1988. 121-62. p. 139. Heinrich Himmler quoted in Clay, Catrine, and Michael Leapman. *Master Race: The Lebensborn Experiment in Nazi Germany*. 1995. London: Coronet-Hodder Headline, 1996. p. 33. Burroughs, William S. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, August 10, 1955." In Burroughs (1993a), p. 278.

2 "Back in 1944 ..." etc., Spark, Muriel. *The Hothouse by the East River*. 1973. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975. p. 50.

3 Pynchon, Thomas. *Gravity's Rainbow*. 1973. London: Picador-Pan, 1975. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and will be identified by the initials GR.

4 "Whose surrender is not made clear" (GR 34).

5 At the risk of winning a year's free subscription to *Pynchon Notes*, the estimable house-magazine of the Pynchon Industry, it seems entirely fitting that the apocalyptic action of *Gravity's Rainbow* (pub. 1973) should so abruptly cut off in its 73rd (unnumbered) section.

6 Neufeld, Michael J. *The Rocket and the Reich: Peenemünde and the Coming of the Ballistic Missile Era*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995. p. 278.

Neufeld's book presents the definitive account of the V-2 rocket programme, but see also Klee, Ernst, and Otto Merk. *The Birth of the Missile: The Secrets of Peenemünde*. Intro. Wernher von Braun. Trans. T. Schoeters. London: Harrap, 1965. Longmate, Norman. *Hitler's Rockets: The Story of the V-2s*. London: Hutchinson, 1985. Dornberger, Major-General Walter. *V2*. Trans. James Cleugh and Geoffrey Halliday. 1954. London: Panther, 1958. Irving, David. *The Mare's Nest*. London: William Kimber, 1964. Ordway, Frederick I., III, and Mitchell R. Sharpe. *The Rocket Team*. Intro. Wernher von Braun. London: Heinemann, 1979. Additionally, there is an unfired V-2 missile on permanent display at the Imperial War Museum, London.

7 In Pynchon's paranoid mythography the sinister enemy is always a "*They*".

Burroughs, of course, in *The Western Lands* (1987/1988), traces "the monumental fraud of cause and effect" (p. 30) to the shadowy agents of the One God Universe. Similarly, the genocidal techno-bureaucrats of *Gravity's Rainbow* are products of Western Christianity's "order of Analysis and Death" (GR 722). Each writer abhors the cool (reductive) rationalism of "cause and effect", both in life and in art. As one of Pynchon's preterite heroes (and later defector to the Counterforce), the statistician Roger Mexico remarks: "there's a feeling about that cause-and-effect may have been taken as far as it will go. That for science to carry on at all, it must look for a less narrow, a less ... sterile set of assumptions. The next great breakthrough may come when we have the courage to junk cause-and-effect entirely, and strike off at some other angle" (GR 89). The apocalyptic fantasies of Burroughs and Ballard and

Pynchon each seek, in their different ways, to engineer the appropriate conditions for this *next great breakthrough*.

8 Pynchon is openly scornful of readers who demand the comfort blanket of narrative plausibility. After a character rather improbably resurfaces in the text, "Pynchon" pauses to address the reader directly: "You will want cause and effect. All right. Thanatz was washed overboard in the same storm that took Slothrop from the *Anubis*. He was rescued by a Polish undertaker in a rowboat, out in the storm tonight to see if he can get struck by lightning" (GR 663), and so on.

9 Some of these wilful inconsistencies are addressed in Fowler, Douglas. "Appendix III: The Problem of Imipolex G". *A Reader's Guide to "Gravity's Rainbow"*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1980. p. 273. A problem missed by Fowler is the mystery of just how exactly does Slothrop, the V-2 "Aftermaths" investigator, fail to notice that the bomb-sites he visits are the scene of earlier, more pleasurable interludes?

10 Burroughs, William S. *The Ticket That Exploded*. 1962. 2nd ed. London: John Calder, 1985b. p. 159.

11 An hallucination which is, in many repects, grounded in reality; in his truly extraordinary study of Allied attempts to *wage peace* in occupied Germany, Douglas Botting reports that "foreign soldiers and native civilians alike were forced to live in an environment which resembled, to a degree, a landscape and a society in the wake of a nuclear holocaust" (p. 281). See Botting, Douglas. *In the Ruins of the Reich*. 1985. London: Grafton-Collins, 1986.

12 Appropriately, Pynchon's chooses Dorothy's now immortal remark from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) as an epigraph to the Zone episodes: "Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas any more ... " (GR 279).

13 Burroughs, William S. *The Naked Lunch*. 1959. Rev. ed. London: Paladin-Collins, 1986. p. 31.

14 Pynchon, Thomas. *Vineland*. 1990. London: Minerva-Reed, 1991. p. 319.

15 *Gravity's Rainbow* (p. 541) includes, for example, an anachronistic re-setting of the Rolling Stones' *Salt of the Earth* (1968), the folky hymn to the common man which closes their *Beggar's Banquet* album.

16 Burroughs, William S. *Cities of the Red Night*. 1981. London: Picador-Pan, 1982b. p. 11.

Pynchon's apocalyptic text continues: "America was a gift from the invisible powers, a way of returning. But Europe refused it ... Now we are in the last phase. American Death has come to occupy Europe" (GR 722).

17 Conrad, Joseph. "Heart of Darkness." *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales*. Ed. Cedric Watts. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990. 133-252. p. 145. cf. Matt. 23:27-8.

18 The Herero population in German-administered South-West Africa was reduced from 80,000 to 16,000 during General Adolf von Trotha's repression of the 1904-07 uprising. Pynchon first explores von Trotha's brutal response to the Herero rebellion in chapter nine of his novel *V.* (1963). Pynchon, Thomas. *V.* 1963. London: Picador-Pan, 1975. 229-79.

19 Neufeld, Michael J. "Introduction: Mittelbau-Dora - Secret Weapons and Slave Labor." In Béon, Yves. *Planet Dora: A Memoir of the Holocaust and the Birth of the Space Age*. Trans. Yves Béon and Richard L. Fague. Boulder: Westview Press, 1997. ix-xxviii. p. ix-x.

20 Neufeld (1995), p. 264.

21 Béon (1997), p. xxxiii. Béon's book was originally published in French in 1985.

22 For further information on IG Farben's war-time activities, see Borkin, Joseph. *The Crime and Punishment of I.G. Farben.* NY: Free Press, 1978. Another useful account is provided in Hayes, Peter. *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987.

23 Lifton, Robert Jay. *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide.* NY: Basic-HarperCollins, 1986. p. 161.

For further information on Monowitz-Auschwitz III, see Krakowski, Shmuel. "The Satellite Camps." *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*. Ed. Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum. Washington, D.C. and Bloomington: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Indiana UP, 1994. 50-60.

24 Ballard, J.G. "The Concentration City." *The Disaster Area*. 1967. London: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979b. 31-54. p. 54.

25 DeLillo, Don. *Libra*. 1988. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1989. p. 321.

26 The Reich's obsession with contamination by impure elements elevated genocidal paranoia to the status of State policy. See, for example, Burleigh, Michael, and Wolfgang Wippermann. *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.

27 A recording of "A Thanksgiving Prayer" can be found on *Dead City Radio*. Compact Disc. Island, 422-846 264-2, 1990.

28 The preterite musicians of the Counterforce make their own entertainment with kazoos and thumb-harps "whose reeds are cut from springs of a wrecked Volkswagen" (GR 562).

29 Longmate (1985), p. 383.

Longmate gives the number of dead as 492. Ordway III (1979) records Hitler being told of 1,100 casualties (p. 247). Pynchon makes no mention of the Rex Theatre bomb in *Gravity's Rainbow*, though he is probably familiar with Irving (1964), which mentions the attack on p. 294.

30 Burroughs, William S. *Nova Express*. 1964. London: Panther, 1968. p. 65.

31 Frick, Thomas. "The Art of Fiction LXXXV: J.G. Ballard." *Paris Review* 94 (1984): 132-60. p. 158.

32 Ballard, J.G. *The Kindness of Women*. 1991. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1992a. p. 66.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Acker, Kathy. *Blood and Guts in High School: plus two (Great Expectations - 1983 / My Death, My Life by Pier Paolo Pasolini - 1984).* London: Picador-Pan, 1984.

---. *Don Quixote*. London: Paladin-Collins, 1986.

---. *Empire of the Senseless*. London: Picador-Pan, 1988.

---. *In Memoriam To Identity*. NY: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990.

---. *Hannibal Lecter, My Father*. NY: Semiotext(e), 1991.

---. *Portrait of an Eye: Three Novels (The Childlike Life of the Black Tarantula by the Black Tarantula - 1975 / I Dreamt I was a Nymphomaniac: Imagining - 1980 / The Adult Life of Toulouse Lautrec by Henri Toulouse Lautrec - 1978).* NY: Pantheon-Random, 1992.

Amis, Martin. *The Rachel Papers*. 1973. St Albans: Panther-Granada, 1976.

---. *Dead Babies*. 1975. Rpt. as *Dark Secrets*. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, 1977.

---. *Success*. 1978. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979.

---. *Other People: A Mystery Story*. 1981. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982.

---. *Money: A Suicide Note*. 1984. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985.

---. *The Moronic Inferno and Other Visits to America*. 1986. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987.

---. "Thinkability." *Einstein's Monsters*. 1987. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988. 1-23.

---. *London Fields*. 1989. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990.

---. *Time's Arrow, or The Nature of the Offence*. London: Cape, 1991.

Auster, Paul. *The New York Trilogy*. London: Faber, 1987.

Balchin, Nigel. *Lord, I Was Afraid.* London: Collins, 1947.

Ballard, J.G. "The Voices of Time." *New Worlds* 99 (1960): 91-123.

---. "Storm-Wind." *New Worlds* 110/11 (1961): 4-48/83-125.

---. "Passport to Eternity." *Amazing Stories* 36.6 (1962): 56-74.

---. *The Voices of Time and Other Stories*. NY: Berkley, 1962.

---. "Which Way To Inner Space?" *New Worlds* 118 (1962): 2-3, 116-18.

---. "The Subliminal Man." *New Worlds* 126 (1963): 109-26.

---. *The Burning World*. NY: Berkley, 1964.

---. "The Terminal Beach." *New Worlds* 140 (1964): 4-24.

---. "Myth-Maker of the 20th Century." *New Worlds* 142 (1964): 121-27.

---. *The Drowned World*. 1962. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965.

---. *The Terminal Beach*. 1964. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966a.

---. "Notes from Nowhere: Comments on Work in Progress." *New Worlds* 167 (1966b): 147-51.

---. "You and Me and the Continuum." *Impulse* 1 (1966c): 53-60.

---. "The Assassination Weapon." *New Worlds* 161 (1966d): 4-12.

---. "You: Coma: Marilyn Monroe." *Ambit* 27 (1966e): 3-6.

---. "The Coming of the Unconscious." *New Worlds* 164 (1966f): 141-46.

---. "The Atrocity Exhibition." *New Worlds* 166 (1966g): 91-102.

---. "The Assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy Considered as a Downhill Motor Race." *Ambit* 29 (1966h): 3-4.

---. "Visions of Hell." *New Worlds* 160 (1966i): 148-54.

---. *The Overloaded Man*. London: Panther, 1967a.

---. *The Day of Forever*. London: Panther, 1967b.

---. "Plan for the Assassination of Jacqueline Kennedy." *Ambit* 31 (1967c): 9-11.

---. "Homage to Claire Churchill." Advertisement. *Ambit* 32 (1967d): inside front cover.

—. "Does the Angle Between Two Walls Have a Happy Ending?" Advertisement. *Ambit* 33 (1967e): rear cover.

—. "The Death Module." *New Worlds* 173 (1967f): 21-24.

—. *The Wind from Nowhere.* 1962. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967g.

—. "Why I Want to Fuck Ronald Reagan." Brighton: Unicorn Bookshop, 1968.

—. "The Great American Nude." *Ambit* 36 (1968): 39-43.

—. "A Neural Interval." Advertisement. *Ambit* 36 (1968): rear cover.

—. "Love and Napalm: Export U.S.A." *Circuit* 1 (1968).

—. "The University of Death." *Transatlantic Review* (1968): 68-79.

—. "The Generations of America." *New Worlds* 183 (1968): 13-14.

—. "Salvador Dali: The Innocent as Paranoid." *New Worlds* 187 (1969a): 25-31.

—. "How Dr Christopher Evans Landed on the Moon." *New Worlds* 187 (1969b): 49.

—. "The Summer Cannibals." *New Worlds* 186 (1969c): 19-23.

—. "The Thousand Wounds and Flowers." *New Worlds* 186 (1969d): 54.

—. "Crash!" *ICA Eventsheet.* London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1969e.

—. "Tolerances of the Human Face." *Encounter* 33.3 (1969f): 3-14.

—. "Use Your Vagina." *New Worlds* 191 (1969g): 58-60.

—. "Alphabets of Unreason." *New Worlds* 196 (1969h): 26.

—. "Coitus 80": A Description of the Sexual Act in 1980." *New Worlds* 197 (1970): 16-17.

—. "Journey Across A Crater." *New Worlds* 198 (1970): 2-5.

—. "Mae West's Reduction Mammoplasty." *Ambit* 44 (1970): 9-11.

—. "Placental Insufficiency." Advertisement. *Ambit* 45 (1970): rear cover.

—. "Princess Margaret's Facelift: An Intersection of Fiction and Reality." *New Worlds* 199 (1970): 8.

—. "Crashed Cars: New Sculpture by J.G. Ballard." Advertisement. *New Worlds* 200 (1970): 30.

—. "Venus Smiles" Advertisement. *Ambit* 46 (1970/71): rear cover.

—. *Love and Napalm: Export U.S.A.* Intro. William S. Burroughs. NY: Grove, 1972.

—. "The Recognition." *Dangerous Visions* 3. Ed. Harlan Ellison. 1967. London: Sphere, 1974. 159-75.

—. "Some Words about *Crash!* / Interview with J.G. Ballard by Robert Louit." *Foundation* 9 (1975a): 44-54.

—. *Vermilion Sands*. 1971. St Albans: Panther-Granada, 1975b.

---. *Low-Flying Aircraft and Other Stories*. London: Cape, 1976.

—. *The Four-Dimensional Nightmare*. 1963. Rev. ed. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.

---. *The Best Science Fiction of J.G. Ballard*. London: Orbit-Futura, 1977.

---. "The Future of the Future." *Vogue* 134 (November 1977): 213-14.

---. *The Drought*. 1965. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1978a.

---. *The Crystal World*. 1966. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1978b.

—. "Having a Wonderful Time." *Bananas* 10 (1978c): 24-25.

---. *The Atrocity Exhibition*. 1970. St Albans: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979a.

—. *The Disaster Area*. 1967. London: Triad/Panther-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Granada, 1979b.

—. *The Venus Hunters*. St Albans: Granada, 1980.

—. "News from the Sun." *Ambit* 87 (1981): 2-28.

—. "Alphabets of Unreason." *New Worlds: An Anthology*. Ed. Michael Moorcock. London: Flamingo-Fontana, 1983. 353-55.

—. *Myths of the Near Future*. 1982. London: Triad/Paladin-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and HarperCollins, 1984a.

—. "Myths of the Near Future." *Myths of the Near Future*. 1982. London: Triad/Paladin-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and HarperCollins, 1984a. 7-43.

—. "Zodiac 2000." *Myths of the Near Future*. 1982. London: Triad/Paladin-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and HarperCollins, 1984a. 66-75.

—. "The Side-Effects of Orthonovin G." 1972. *Re/Search: J.G. Ballard*. Ed. V. Vale and Andrea Juno. Re/Search 8/9. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1984b. 37.

—. "Project for a New Novel." 1978. *Re/Search: J.G. Ballard*. Ed. V. Vale and Andrea Juno. Re/Search 8/9. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1984b. 38-40.

—. "Collages [Advertiser's Announcements]." *Re/Search: J.G. Ballard*. Ed. V. Vale and Andrea Juno. Re/Search 8/9. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1984b. 147-52.

—. "The Secret Autobiography of J.G. B******." *Ambit* 96 (1984c): 3-5.

—. *High-Rise*. 1975. London: Triad/Panther-Granada, 1985.

—. *The Day of Creation*. 1987. London: Grafton-Collins, 1988.

—. *Memories of the Space Age*. Illus. Jeffrey K. Potter. Sauk City (WI): Arkham House, 1988.

—. *Running Wild*. Illus. Janet Woolley. London: Hutchinson-Century, 1988.

—. "Jane Fonda's Augmentation Mammoplasty." *Semiotext(e) SF* Semiotext(e) 5.2 (14). Ed. Rudy Rucker, Peter Lamborn Wilson, and Robert Anton Wilson. NY: Semiotext(e)-Autonomedia, 1989. 132-34.

—. *Empire of the Sun*. 1984. London: Grafton-Collins, 1990a.

—. *Crash*. 1973. Rev. ed. London: Triad/Paladin-Random Century and HarperCollins, 1990b.

—. *The Unlimited Dream Company*. 1979. London: Paladin-Collins, 1990c.

—. *The Atrocity Exhibition*. Annotated ed. Illus. Phoebe Gloeckner. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1990d.

—. *Hello America*. 1981. London: Paladin-Collins, 1990e.

—. *War Fever*. 1990. London: Paladin-HarperCollins, 1991a.

—. "Neil Armstrong Remembers His Journey to the Moon." *Interzone* 53 (1991b): 33.

—. *The Kindness of Women*. 1991. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1992a.

—. "A Guide to Virtual Death." *Interzone* 56 (1992b): 29.

—. *Concrete Island*. 1974. London: Triad/Paladin-Random Century and HarperCollins, 1992c.

—. "The Message from Mars." *Interzone* 58 (1992d): 6-10.

—. "Project for a Glossary of the 20th Century." *Zone 6: Incorporations*. Ed. Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter. NY: Zone, 1992e. 268-79

—. "Images of the Future: Comments on Some Recent Experiments." [1966] *JGB News* 19 (1993): 1-3.

—. Letter from J.G. Ballard on His "Lost" 1950s Novel." *JGB News* 22 (1994): 1-2.

—. *Rushing to Paradise*. London: Flamingo-HarperCollins, 1994.

—. "The End of My War." *Sunday Times*. 20 August 1995, News Review section: 1-2.

—. "The House that Jencks Built." *Modern Review* 20 (1995): 31.

—. "Hydrogen, treason and plot." *The Observer*. 5 November 1995, Review section: 14.

—. *A User's Guide to the Millennium: Essays and Reviews*. London: Harper-Collins, 1996a.

—. *Cocaine Nights*. London: Flamingo-HarperCollins, 1996b.

—. "The Dying Fall." *Interzone* 106 (1996c): 6-9.

"One Dull Step for Man ..." *The Observer*. 22 December 1996d, Review section: 15.

—. "The Widest Windows onto the New: A Tribute to Judith Merril." *Interzone* 106 (1996e): 17-18.

Ballard, J.G., et al. "The Invisible Years: A Series of Apocalytic Texts written for *Ambit* by Varying Hands." Illus. Ronald Sandford. *Ambit* 67-78 (1976-79).

—. "In Response to Jean Baudrillard." *Science-Fiction Studies* 55 (1991): 321-29.

Ballard, J.G., and George MacBeth. "The New Science Fiction." *The New S.F.: An Original Anthology of Modern Speculative Fiction*. Ed. Langdon Jones. 1969. London: Arrow-Hutchinson, 1970. 52-60.

Bear, Greg. *Blood Music*. 1985. London: Arrow-Random Century, 1988.

The Beatles. "Helter Skelter." *The Beatles [White Album]*. EMI, 7 46443 8, 1968.

---. "Piggies." *The Beatles [White Album]*. EMI, 7 46443 8, 1968.

Beckett, Samuel. *Endgame*. London: Faber, 1958.

---. *Malone Dies*. 1958. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962.

---. *How It Is*. London: John Calder, 1964.

---. *Imagination Dead Imagine*. London: Calder & Boyars, 1965.

---. *No's Knife: Collected Shorter Prose, 1945-1966*. London: Calder & Boyars, 1967.

---. *Film: Complete Scenario/Illustrations/Production Shots*. London: Faber, 1972.

---. *The Lost Ones*. London: John Calder, 1972.

---. *Murphy*. 1938. London: Picador-Pan, 1973.

---. *The Unnamable*. 1958. London: Calder & Boyars, 1975.

---. *Watt*. 1953. London: John Calder, 1976.

---. *Molloy*. 1955. London: John Calder, 1976.

---. *For To End Yet Again and other FIZZLES*. London: John Calder, 1976.

---. *Happy Days (Oh Les Beaux Jours)*. 1961. London: Faber, 1978.

---. *All Strange Away*. 1976. London: John Calder, 1979.

---. *Ill Seen Ill Said*. London: John Calder, 1982.

---. *Worstward Ho*. London: John Calder, 1983.

---. *Collected Shorter Plays of Samuel Beckett*. London: Faber, 1984.

—. *As The Story Was Told: Uncollected and Late Prose*. London: John Calder, 1990.

Benford, Gregory, and Martin Harry Greenberg, eds. *Nuclear War*. NY: Ace, 1988.

Black, Jack. *You Can't Win: The Autobiography of Jack Black*. Intro. William S. Burroughs. 1926. NY: Amok, 1988.

Borges, Jorge Luis. *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*. Trans. James E. Irby. 1964. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970.

Bradbury, Ray. *The Silver Locusts*. 1951. London: Corgi, 1960.

—. *Dandelion Wine*. 1957. London: Panther-Granada, 1977.

—. *Long After Midnight*. 1977. London: Panther-Granada, 1978.

—. *The Stories of Ray Bradbury: Volume 1*. 1981. London: Granada, 1983.

Brautigan, Richard. *In Watermelon Sugar*. 1968. London: Picador-Pan, 1973.

Brown, Chester. *Ed The Happy Clown*. Toronto: Vortex Comics, 1992.

Burroughs, William S. *Junkie: Confessions of an Unredeemed Drug Addict*. NY: Ace Books, 1953.

—. "Censorship." *Transatlantic Review* 11 (1962): 5-11.

—. "Introduction to *Naked Lunch, The Soft Machine, Novia Express*." *Evergreen Review* 6.22 (1962): 99-109.

—. *Time*. NY: "C" Press, 1965.

—. *Dead Fingers Talk*. 1963. London: Tandem, 1966.

—. "The Invisible Generation." *International Times* 3 (1966): 1.

—. *The Soft Machine*. 1961. Rev. ed. NY: Grove, 1967.

—. "23 Skidoo Eristic Elite." *International Times* 18. August 31, 1967.

—. *Nova Express*. 1964. London: Panther, 1968.

—. *The Soft Machine*. 1961. Rev. ed. London: Corgi-Transworld, 1970.

—. *Electronic Revolution*. Gottingen: Expanded Media Editions, 1971.

—. *Time*. 1965. Bootleg ed. [Brighton]: Urgency Press Rip-Off, [1972].

—. *The Book of Breeething*. Illus. Robert F. Gale. 1974. Berkeley: Blue Wind, 1975.

—. *Cobble Stone Gardens*. NY: Cherry Valley, 1976.

—. *Junky*. 1953. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.

—. *Exterminator!* 1973. NY: Viking Penguin, 1979.

—. *Ah Pook Is Here and Other Texts*. London: John Calder, 1979.

—. *Blade Runner (A Movie)*. Berkeley: Blue Wind, 1979.

—. *Roosevelt After Inauguration and Other Atrocities*. San Francisco: City Lights, 1979.

—. "Bugger the Queen." *International Times* 5.5 (1980): 23

—. *Nothing Here Now But The Recordings*. LP Record. Industrial Records, IR0016, 1981a.

—. "The Popling." *Semiotext(e): Polysexuality* 4.1 (1981b): 119-24.

—. *The Wild Boys: A Book of the Dead*. 1971. London: John Calder, 1982a.

—. *Cities of the Red Night*. 1981. London: Picador-Pan, 1982b.

—. *Letters to Allen Ginsberg: 1953-1957*. Eds. Ron Padgett and Anne Waldman. NY: Full Court, 1982c.

—. *Port of Saints*. 1973. Rev. ed. London: John Calder, 1983.

—. *The Job: Topical Writings and Interviews*. 1970. Rev. ed. London: John Calder, 1984a.

—. *The Burroughs File*. San Francisco: City Lights, 1984b.

—. *The Place of Dead Roads*. 1983. London: John Calder, 1984c.

—. *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays*. London: John Calder, 1985a.

—. *The Ticket That Exploded*. 1962. 2nd ed. London: John Calder, 1985b.

—. *The Naked Lunch*. 1959. Rev. ed. London: Paladin-Collins, 1986.

—. *Queer*. 1985. London: Picador-Pan, 1986.

—. *The Doctor is on the Market*. LP Record. Les Temp Modernes, V:XX, 1986.

—. *The Western Lands*. 1987. London: Picador-Pan, 1988.

—. *Tornado Alley*. Illus. S. Clay Wilson. NY: Cherry Valley, 1989.

—. "WORD." *Interzone*. Ed. James Grauerholz. 1989. London: Picador-Pan, 1990a. 133-194.

—. *Dead City Radio*. Compact Disc. Island, 422-846 264-2, 1990b.

—. "My Purpose Is to Write For the Space Age." *William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959-1989*. Ed. Jennie Skerl and Robin Lydenberg. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991. 265-68.

—. *The Cat Inside*. NY: Viking-Penguin, 1992.

—. *Painting and Guns*. NY: Hanuman, 1992.

—. *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 24, 1952." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 145-46.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, April 7, 1954." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 201.

—. "Letter to Jack Kerouac, April 22, 1954." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 203-7.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 13, 1954." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 243-46.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, December 30, 1954." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 247.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 9, 1955." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 254.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 12, 1955." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 255-56.

—. Burroughs, William S. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, August 10, 1955." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 278.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, October 21, 1955." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 288-91.

—. "Letter to Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, November 2, 1955." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 302-4.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, October 13, 1956." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 329-35.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, January 23, 1957." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 349-50.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, November 26, 1957." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 377-78.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, July 24, 1958." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 392-94.

—. "Letter to Allen Ginsberg, May 18, 1959." *The Letters of William S. Burroughs: 1945-1959*. Ed. Oliver Harris. London: Picador-Pan, 1993a. 415.

—. *The Last Words of Dutch Schultz: A Fiction in the Form of a Film Script*. 1970. Rev. ed. NY: Arcade, 1993b.

—. *Break Through in Grey Room*. Compact Disc. 1986. Sub Rosa, SUBCD006-8, 1993c.

—. "Death Fiend Guerillas." *Confederacy of the Dead*. Ed. Richard Gilliam, Martin H. Greenberg, and Edward E. Kramer. NY: Roc-Penguin USA, 1993d. 25-30.

—. *Vaudeville Voices*. Compact Disc. Grey Matter, GM02CD, n.d. (c. 1994).

—. *Ghost of Chance*. 1991. London: Serpent's Tail, 1995.

—. *My Education: A Book of Dreams*. NY: Viking Penguin, 1995.

—. *The Naked Lunch*. 3-CD Set. Warner Audio Video Entertainment, 2-522206, 1995.

—. *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. Illus. Christof Kohlhofer. [1984] Bonn: Expanded Media Editions, 1996.

Burroughs, William S., et al. *So Who Owns Death TV?* San Francisco: Beach Books, Texts & Documents, 1967.

—. *Minutes to Go*. 1960. San Francisco: Beach Books, Texts & Documents, 1968.

—. *The Nova Convention*. 2-LP Record Set. Giorno Poetry Systems, GPS 014-015, 1979.

—. *Thee Films: 1950's - 1960's*. Video Cassette. Dir. Antony Balch. Temple of Psychic Youth, TOPTV 002, n.d. (c. 1986). 120 min.

—. *10%: File Under Burroughs*. 2-Compact Disc Set. Sub Rosa, SR93, 1996.

Burroughs, William S., and Kurt Cobain. *The "Priest" They Called Him*. Compact Disc. Tim/Kerr, TK 92 CD044, 1993.

Burroughs, William S., and Allen Ginsberg. *The Yage Letters*. 1963. San Francisco: City Lights, 1975.

Burroughs, William S., and Brion Gysin. *The Exterminator*. San Francisco: Auerhahn, 1960.

—. *The Third Mind*. 1978. London: John Calder, 1979.

Burroughs, William S., and Keith Haring. *Apocalypse*. 1988. Paris: DTV, 1993.

Burroughs, William S., and Eric Mottram. *Snack ... Two Tape Transcripts*. London: Aloes, 1975.

Burroughs, William S., and Gus Van Sant. *William S. Burroughs: The Elvis of Letters*. Compact Disc. Tim/Kerr, TK 91 CD001, 1985.

Carter, Angela. *Heroes and Villains*. 1969. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981.

Chapman Bros. "Dinos and Jake Chapman: Our Own Work is Crap." *"Brilliant!": New Art from London*. Minneapolis: Walker Arts Center, 1995. 20-24.

Christopher, John. *The Death of Grass*. 1956. pub. in US as *No Blade of Grass*. NY: Pocket Books, 1958.

—. *The World in Winter*. 1962. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964.

A Clockwork Orange. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. With Malcolm McDowell, Patrick Magee, Michael Bates, Warren Clarke, and Adrienne Corri. Warner Bros., 1971.

Coleman, Joe. *Cosmic Retribution: The Infernal Art of Joe Coleman*. Seattle: Fantagraphics, 1992.

Conrad, Joseph. "Heart of Darkness." *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales*. Ed. Cedric Watts. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990. 133-252.

Cooper, Dennis. *Frisk*. NY: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.

—. *Try*. London: Serpent's Tail, 1994.

Dali, Salvador. *The Secret Life of Salvador Dali*. Trans. Haakon M. Chevalier. 3rd ed. London: Vision Press, 1949.

The Day After. Dir. Nicholas Meyer. With Jason Robards, JoBeth Williams, and Steve Guttenburg. ABC, 1983.

Dead of Night. Dirs. Robert Hamer, Basil Dearden, Charles Crichton, Alberto Cavalcanti. With Mervyn Johns, Michael Redgrave, Frederick Valk, and Googie Withers. Ealing, 1945.

Defoe, Daniel. *A General History of The Pyrates*. 1724/28. Ed. Manuel Schonhorn. Columbia: U of South Carolina P, 1972.

DeLillo, Don. *End Zone*. 1972. NY: Viking Penguin, 1986.

—. *White Noise*. 1984. London: Picador-Pan, 1986.

—. *The Names*. 1982. London: Picador-Pan, 1987.

—. *Libra*. 1988. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1989.

—. *Ratner's Star*. 1976. London: Vintage, 1991.

—. *Running Dog*. 1978. London: Picador-Pan, 1992.

—. *Mao II*. 1991. London: Vintage, 1992.

—. *Underworld*. 1997. London: Picador-Macmillan, 1998.

Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* 1968. St Albans: Granada, 1972.

—. *Ubik*. 1969. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1973.

—. *Now Wait for Last Year*. 1966. London: Panther-Granada, 1975.

—. *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*. 1965. London: TriadGrafton-Random and HarperCollins, 1978.

—. "The Android and the Human." *The Dark Haired Girl*. Willimantic (CT): Ziesing, 1988. 121-62.

—. *The Zap Gun*. 1967. NY: Carroll & Graf, 1989.

—. *The Divine Invasion*. 1981. London: Grafton-Collins, 1989.

—. *A Scanner Darkly*. 1977. NY: Vintage-Random, 1991.

—. *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*. 1982. NY: Vintage-Random, 1991.

—. *In Pursuit of Valis: Selections from the Exegesis*. Ed. Lawrence Sutin. Lancaster (PA): Underwood-Miller, 1991.

—. *Valis*. 1981. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1992.

—. *The World Jones Made*. 1956. NY: Vintage-Random, 1993.

—. *We Can Build You*. 1972. NY: Vintage-Random, 1994.

Disch, Thomas M. *Camp Concentration*. 1968. London: Panther-Granada, 1969. 334. NY: Avon-Hearst, 1974.

—, ed. *The Ruins of Earth*. 1973. London: Arrow-Hutchinson, 1975.

Dworkin, Andrea. *The New Womans Broken Heart: Short Stories*. East Palo Alto (CA): Frog In The Well, 1980.

—. *Ice and Fire: A Novel*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1986.

—. *Mercy*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1990.

Eco, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose*. Trans. William Weaver. 1983. London: Picador-Pan, 1984.

—. *Foucault's Pendulum*. 1989. London: Picador-Pan, 1990.

Ellis, Bret Easton. *American Psycho*. London: Picador-Pan, 1991.

Ellroy, James. *The Big Nowhere*. 1988. London: Mysterious Press-Century Hutchinson, 1989.

—. *Silent Terror*. 1986. London: Arrow-Random, 1990.

—. *The Black Dahlia*. 1987. London: Arrow-Random, 1993.

—. *White Jazz*. 1992. London: Arrow-Random, 1993.

—. *L.A. Confidential*. 1990. London: Arrow-Random, 1994.

—. *American Tabloid*. London: Century-Random, 1995.

—. *My Dark Places: An L.A. Crime Memoir*. London: Century-Random, 1996.

Etchinson, Dennis. *The Dark Country*. 1982. London: Futura-Macdonald, 1988.

Farmer, Philip José. *The Image of the Beast. An Exorcism: Ritual One*. 1968. London: Quartet, 1975.

—. *Blown, or Sketches Among the Ruins of My Mind. An Exorcism: Ritual Two.* 1969. London: Grafton-Collins, 1985.

Faulkner, William. *Light in August*. 1932. London: Picador-Pan, 1991.

Finney, Jack. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. 1955. Rev. ed. London: Sphere, 1978.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. 1926. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950.

Gee, Maggie. *The Burning Book*. 1983. London: Faber, 1985.

Gysin, Brion, and Terry Wilson. *Here to Go: Planet R-101 (Brion Gysin interviewed by Terry Wilson, with an Introduction and Texts by William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin).* San Francisco: Re/Search, 1982.

Horovitz, Michael, ed. *Children of Albion: Poetry of the "Underground" in Britain*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969.

Huxley, Aldous. *Ape and Essence*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1949.

Jarry, Alfred. "The Passion Considered as an Uphill Bicycle Race." *Selected Works of Alfred Jarry*. Ed. Roger Shattuck and Simon Watson Taylor. London: Methuen, 1965. 122-24.

Joy Division. "Atrocity Exhibition." *Closer*. Factory Records, FACT 25, 1980.

Kafka, Franz. *The Trial*. Trans. Willa and Edwin Muir. 1936. London: Secker & Warburg, 1945.

—. *The Castle*. Trans. Willa and Edwin Muir. 1930. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957.

—. *Metamorphosis and Other Stories*. Trans. Willa and Edwin Muir. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961.

—. *Wedding Preparations in the Country and Other Stories*. Trans. Ernst Kaiser, et al. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978.

King, Stephen. *The Dark Half*. New York: Viking-Penguin, 1989.

—. *The Stand: The Complete and Uncut Edition*. 1978. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990.

Kuttner, Henry. *Fury*. London: Mayflower-Dell, 1963.

Leonard, Elmore. *Maximum Bob*. 1991. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992.

Ligotti, Thomas. *Songs of a Dead Dreamer*. London: Robinson, 1989.

---. *Grimscribe: His Lives and Works*. 1991. NY: Jove Books, 1994.

Lovecraft, H.P. *The Colour Out of Space and Others*. NY: Lancer, 1963.

---. *Selected Letters*. 5 vols. Ed. August Derleth and Donald Wandrei (vols. 1-3) and August Derleth and James Turner (vols. 4-5). Sauk City (WI): Arkham House, 1965-76.

---. *At the Mountains of Madness and Other Tales of Terror*. NY: Ballantine-Random, 1971.

---. *The Doom that Came to Sarnath and Other Stories*. Ed. Lin Carter. NY: Ballantine-Random, 1971.

---. *The Lurking Fear and Other Stories*. NY: Ballantine-Random, 1971.

---. *The Best of H.P. Lovecraft: Bloodcurdling Tales of Horror and the Macabre*. NY: Ballantine-Random, 1982.

---. *The H.P. Lovecraft Omnibus 2: Dagon and Other Macabre Tales*. 1967. London: Grafton-HarperCollins, 1985.

McCarthy, Cormac. *Blood Meridian, or The Evening Redness in the West*. 1985. London: Picador-Pan, 1989.

---. *All The Pretty Horses*. NY: Knopf, 1992.

McCormack, Eric. *The Paradise Motel*. 1989. London: Flamingo-Fontana, 1990.

Mailer, Norman. *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*. NY: New American Library, 1968.

---. *Tough Guys Don't Dance*. 1984. London: Sphere, 1985.

Malzberg, Barry N. *The Falling Astronauts*. 1971. London: Arrow-Hutchinson, 1975.

---. *The Destruction of the Temple*. 1974. London: NEL, 1975.

Matheson, Richard. *The Shrinking Man*. 1956. NY: Berkley, 1979.

Merril, Judith, ed. *England Swings SF: Stories of Speculative Fiction*. Garden City (NY): Doubleday, 1968.

Michaels, Frank. ["Letter from Frank Michaels, Papatoetoe, New Zealand."] *New Worlds* 140 (March 1964): 121-22.

Miller, Walter M., Jr., and Martin H. Greenberg, eds. *Beyond Armageddon: Survivors of the Megawar*. 1985. London: Robinson, 1987.

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. Ed. Alastair Fowler. London: Longman, 1971.

Moorcock, Michael. "A New Literature for the Space Age." *New Worlds* 142 (1964): 2-3.

---. *The Lives and Times of Jerry Cornelius*. London: Quartet, 1976.

---. "*New Worlds*: A Personal History." *Foundation* 15 (1979): 5-18.

—, ed. *Best S.F. Stories from New Worlds* 1-8. London/St Albans: Panther, 1967-74.

---, ed. *New Worlds: An Anthology*. London: Flamingo-Fontana, 1983.

---, et al, eds. *New Worlds* 142-201 (1964-71).

---, et al, eds. *New Worlds: The Science Fiction Quarterly* 1-10 [202-11]. London: Sphere/Corgi, 1971-76.

Morrison, Robert, and Chris Baldick, ed. *Tales of Terror from 'Blackwood's Magazine'*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995

Platt, Charles. "The Disaster Story." *Best SF Stories from New Worlds 3*. Ed. Michael Moorcock. London: Panther, 1968. 85-88.

Poe, Edgar Allan. *The Science Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe*. Ed. Harold Beaver. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976.

—. *The Portable Poe*. Ed. Philip Van Doren Stern. 1945. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.

Pohl, Frederik, ed. *Nightmare Age*. NY: Ballantine, 1970.

Priest, Christopher. *Fugue for a Darkening Island*. 1972. London: NEL, 1973.

Public Image Ltd. *Public Image*. 1978. Compact Disc. Virgin, 0777 7 87475 2 9, 1986.

Pynchon, Thomas. "Mortality and Mercy in Vienna." *Epoch* 9 (1959): 195-213.

—. "Entropy." *Kenyon Review* 22 (1960). 277-92.

---. "Journey into the Mind of Watts." *Man Against Poverty: World War III. A Reader on the World's Most Crucial Issue.* Ed. Arthur I. Blaustein and Roger R. Woock. NY: Random, 1968. 146-58.

---. *V.* 1963. London: Picador-Pan, 1975.

---. *Gravity's Rainbow.* 1973. London: Picador-Pan, 1975.

---. *The Crying of Lot 49.* 1966. London: Picador-Pan, 1979.

---. "Introduction." *Slow Learner: Early Stories.* 1984. London: Picador-Pan, 1985. 5-25.

---. *Vineland.* 1990. London: Minerva-Reed, 1991.

---. *Mason & Dixon.* London: Cape, 1997.

Rolling Stones. "Salt of the Earth." Beggar's Banquet. 1968. Compact Disc. Abkco 844 471-2, 1986.

Roszak, Theodore. *Flicker.* 1991. NY: Bantam, 1993.

Sallis, James, ed. *The War Book.* 1969. London: Panther, 1971.

Selby Jr., Hubert. *Requiem For A Dream.* 1978. London: Marion Boyars, 1979.

---. *Last Exit to Brooklyn.* 1964. London: Paladin, 1988.

---. *The Room.* 1971. London: Paladin, 1988.

---. *The Demon.* 1976. London: Marion Boyars, 1989.

Sex Pistols. "Anarchy in the U.K." EMI, 2566[A], 1976.

---. "I Wanna Be Me." EMI, 2566[B], 1976.

---. "God Save the Queen." Virgin, VS 181, 1977.

---. "Pretty Vacant"/"No Fun." Virgin, VS 184, 1977.

Shakespeare, William. "The Tragedy of King Lear: The Folio Text." 1623. *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works (Compact Edition).* Eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988. 943-74.

Sheckley, Robert, ed. *After the Fall.* London: Sphere, 1980.

Smith, Clark Ashton. *Genius Loci and other tales.* 1972. St Albans: Panther-Granada, 1974.

Solanas, Valerie. *S.C.U.M. Manifesto.* NYC: Olympia, 1968.

Spark, Muriel. *The Hothouse by the East River*. 1973. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975.

Spenser, Edmund. "The Faerie Queene - *From* Book II." *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*. Ed. Hugh Maclean. 2nd. ed. NY: Norton, 1982. 148-95.

---. "The Faerie Queene - Book III." *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*. Ed. Hugh Maclean. 2nd. ed. NY: Norton, 1982. 196-350.

Spinrad, Norman. *Bug Jack Barron*. NY: Avon, 1969.

Springsteen, Bruce. "57 Channels (And Nothin' On)." *Human Touch*. Columbia, 471423 4, 1992.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. 1886. Harmondsworth: Penguin Popular Classics, 1994.

Strieber, Whitley, and James Kunetka. *Warday and the Journey Outward*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984.

Sturgeon, Theodore. *Some of Your Blood*. 1961. NY: Carroll & Graf, 1994.

Thompson, Jim. "The Killer Inside Me." *4 Novels*. 1952. London: Zomba Books, 1983. 117-248.

Vance, Jack. "Meet Miss Universe." *Fantastic Universe* 3.2 (1955): 4-21.

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Cat's Cradle*. 1963. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965.

---. *Slaughterhouse-Five*. 1969. London: Triad Grafton-Chatto, Bodley Head & Cape, and Collins, 1979.

Wallace, David Foster. *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again: Essays and Arguments*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1997.

Wells, H.G. *Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress Upon Human Life and Thought*. 1901. 8th ed. London: Chapman & Hall, 1902.

---. *The War in the Air*. 1908. London: Nelson, n.d., c. 1930.

---. *Mind At The End of Its Tether*. London: Heinemann, 1945.

---. *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. 1896. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1946.

---. *The Time Machine*. 1895. London: Pan, 1953.

---. *The World Set Free*. 1914. London: Corgi-Transworld, 1976.

—. *The War of the Worlds*. 1898. London: Everyman-Dent, 1993.

—. *The Shape of Things to Come: The Ultimate Revolution*. 1933. London: Everyman-Dent, 1993.

—. *A Modern Utopia*. 1905. London: Everyman-Dent, 1994.

West, Nathanael. "The Day of the Locust." *The Collected Works*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975. 7-154.

Wigglesworth, Michael. "The Day of Doom." *The Puritans: Volume II*. Rev. ed. Eds. Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson. 1938. NY: Harper Torchbooks, 1963. 585-606.

Wolfe, Bernard. *Limbo '90*. 1952. Rev. ed. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961.

Wurlitzer, Rudolph. *Flats*. NY: Dutton, 1970.

Wyndham, John. *The Chrysalids*. 1955. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958.

—. *The Midwich Cuckoos*. 1957. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960.

Zabriskie Point. Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni. With Mark Frechette, Daria Halprin, Rod Taylor, and Paul Fix. MGM, 1969.

Zoline, Pamela. "The Heat Death of The Universe." *New Worlds: An Anthology*. Ed. Michael Moorcock. London: Flamingo-Fontana, 1983. 148-59.

Secondary Sources

Abrams, M.H. *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*. NY: Norton, 1971.

—. "Apocalypse: Theme and Variations." *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature: Patterns, Antecedents and Repercussions*. Eds. C.A. Patrides and Joseph Wittreich. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984. 342-68.

Acheson, James, and Kateryna Arthur, eds. *Beckett's Later Fiction and Drama: Texts for Company*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987.

Adams, Henry. "From *The Education of Henry Adams*." *Norton Anthology of American Literature Volume 2*. Eds. Nina Baym, et al. 2nd ed. NY: Norton, 1985. 821-60.

Ades, Dawn. *Dali*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1982.

Ahearn, Edward J. *Visionary Fictions: Apocalyptic Writing from Blake to the Modern Age*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1996.

Aldiss, Brian. "The Wounded Land: J.G. Ballard." *SF: The Other Side of Realism*. Ed. T.D. Clareson. Bowling Green (OH): Bowling Green Press, 1971. 116-29.

—. "The Stars My Detestation: Yesterday and Tomorrow." *Billion Year Spree: The History of Science Fiction*. 1973. London: Corgi-Transworld, 1975. 326-363.

Allen, Beverly. *Rape Warfare: The Hidden Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1996.

Alter, Robert, and Frank Kermode, eds. *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. 1987. London: Fontana-Collins, 1989.

Andrew, Geoff. "Zabriskie Point." *Time Out Film Guide*. 3rd ed. Ed. Tom Milne. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993. 805.

Andrews, Valerie, et al, eds. *Facing Apocalypse*. Dallas: Spring Publications, 1987.

[Anon.] "Print My Money." *The Guardian*. 24 October 1967. p. 8.

[Anon.] "Proposal for a *Diacritics* Colloquium on Nuclear Criticism." *Diacritics* 14.2 (1984). pp. 2-3.

Ansen, Alan. "Anyone Who Can Pick Up a Frying Pan Owns Death." *Big Table* 2 (1959): 32-41.

Arnheim, Rudolf. *Entropy and Art: An Essay on Disorder and Order*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1971.

Attali, Jacques. *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Theory and History of Literature 16. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1985.

Ayers, David. "'Politics Here is Death': William Burroughs's *Cities of the Red Night*." *Utopias and the Millennium*. Ed. Krishan Kumar and Stephen Bann. London: Reaktion, 1993. 90-106.

Bailey, K.V. "There are No Nightmares at the Ritz: An Exploration of *The Drowned World*." *Vector* 121 (1984): 24-28.

Baldwin, Hélène L. *Samuel Beckett's Real Silence*. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1981.

Banta, Martha. "American Apocalypses: Excrement and Ennui." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 7.1 (1974): 1-30.

---. *Failure & Success in America: A Literary Debate*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978.

Barkun, Michael. *Disaster and the Millennium*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1974.

---. "Racist Apocalypse: Millennialism on the Far Right." *American Studies* 31 (1990): 121-40.

Barth, John. "The Literature of Exhaustion." *The Atlantic* 220 (1967): 29-34.

---. "The Literature of Replenishment." *The Atlantic* 245 (1980): 65-71.

---. *The Literature of Exhaustion and The Literature of Replenishment*. Northridge: Lord John Press, 1982.

Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *Image-Music-Text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. London: Fontana-Collins, 1977. 142-48.

Bartter, Martha A. "Nuclear Holocaust as Urban Renewal." *Science-Fiction Studies* 13 (1986): 148-58.

---. *The Way to Ground Zero: The Atomic Bomb in American Science Fiction*. Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction 33. Westport: Greenwood, 1988.

Bataille, Georges. *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*. Ed. Allan Stoekl. Trans. Allan Stoekl, Carl R. Lovitt, and Donald M. Leslie, Jr. Theory and History of Literature 14. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1985.

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulations*. Trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman. NY: Semiotext(e), 1983.

—. *America*. Trans. Chris Turner. London: Verso-New Left, 1988.

---. "The Year 2000 Has Already Happened." *Body Invaders: Sexuality and the Postmodern Condition*. Eds. Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988. 35-44.

—. "The Anorexic Ruins." Trans. David Antal. *Looking Back on the End of the World*. Eds. Dietmar Kamper and Christoph Wulf. NY: Semiotext(e), 1989. 29-45.

—. *Cool Memories*. Trans. Chris Turner. London: Verso-New Left, 1990.

—. "Two Essays [Simulacra and Science Fiction / Ballard's *Crash*]." Trans. Arthur B. Evans. *Science-Fiction Studies* 55 (1991): 309-20.

—. *Baudrillard Live: Selected Interviews*. Ed. Mike Gane. London: Routledge, 1993.

—. *The Transparency of Evil: Essays on Extreme Phenomena*. Trans. James Benedict. London: Verso-New Left, 1993.

—. *The Illusion of the End*. Trans. Chris Turner. London: Polity, 1994.

Becker, Jillian. *Hitler's Children: The Story of the Baader-Meinhof Terrorist Gang*. 1977. 3rd ed. London: Pickwick Books, 1989.

Bellamy, Joe David, ed. *Apocalypse: Dominant Contemporary Forms*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972.

Bellman, Samuel Irving. "The Apocalypse in Literature." *Costerus* 7 (1973): 13-25.

Ben-Zvi, Linda. *Samuel Beckett*. Twayne's English Authors 423. Boston: Twayne-G.K. Hall, 1986.

Benison, Jonathan. "Jean Baudrillard on the Current State of SF." *Foundation* 32 (1984): 25-42.

Béon, Yves. *Planet Dora: A Memoir of the Holocaust and the Birth of the Space Age*. Trans. Yves Béon and Richard L. Fague. Intro. Michael J. Neufeld. Boulder: Westview Press, 1997.

Bergoffen, Debra. "The Apocalyptic Meaning of History." *The Apocalyptic Vision in America: Interdisciplinary Essays on Myth and Culture.* Ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1982. 11-36.

Berressem, Hanjo. *Pynchon's Poetics: Interfacing Theory and Text.* Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1993.

Bersani, Leo. "Pynchon, Paranoia, and Literature." *Representations* 25 (1989): 99-118.

Best, Steven, and Douglas Kellner, eds. *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991.

Blackett, P.M.S. *Fear, War, and the Bomb: Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy.* NY: Whittlesey House, 1949.

Bloom, Harold. *Omens of Millennium: The Gnosis of Angels, Dreams, and Resurrection.* London: Fourth Estate, 1996.

Bockris, Victor. *With William Burroughs: A Report from the Bunker.* 1981. London: Vermilion-Hutchinson, 1982.

Borkin, Joseph. *The Crime and Punishment of I.G. Farben.* NY: Free Press, 1978.

Botting, Douglas. *In the Ruins of the Reich.* 1985. London: Grafton-Collins, 1986.

Boyer, Paul. *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age.* NY: Pantheon, 1985.

—. *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992.

Boyers, Robert, and Robert Orrill, eds. *Laing and Anti-Psychiatry.* Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972.

Brians, Paul. *Nuclear Holocausts: Atomic War in Fiction, 1895-1984.* Kent: Kent State UP, 1987.

Brigg, Peter. *J.G. Ballard.* Starmont Reader's Guide 26. Mercer Island: Starmont, 1985.

—. "The Night Dream and the Glimmer of Light: J.G. Ballard's *Hello America*." *Foundation* 36 (1986): 31-34.

—. "J.G. Ballard: Time Out of Mind." *Extrapolation* 35.1 (1994): 43-59.

Brown, Norman O. *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History*. 1959. London: Sphere, 1968.

Bugliosi, Vincent. *Helter Skelter*. NY: Norton, 1974.

Buhle, Paul. "Dystopia as Utopia: Howard Phillips Lovecraft and the Unknown Content of American Horror Literature." *H.P. Lovecraft: Four Decades of Criticism*. Ed. S.T. Joshi. Athens: Ohio UP, 1980. 196-210.

Bukatman, Scott. "Postcards from the Posthuman Solar System." *Science-Fiction Studies* 18 (1991): 343-57.

Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science Fiction. Durham: Duke UP, 1993.

Burleigh, Michael, and Wolfgang Wippermann. *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.

Burns, Alan. "J.G. Ballard." *The Imagination on Trial: British and American Writers Discuss their Working Methods*. Ed. Alan Burns and Charles Sugnet. London: Allison and Busby, 1981. 14-30.

Bush, Clive. "An Anarchy of New Speech; Notes on the American Tradition of William Burroughs." *Journal of Beckett Studies* 6 (1980): 120-28.

Butler, Christopher. *After The Wake: An Essay on the Contemporary Avant-Garde*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1980.

de Camp, L. Sprague. *Lovecraft: A Biography*. Garden City (NY): Doubleday, 1975.

Cannon, JoAnn. "The Imaginary Universe of Umberto Eco: A Reading of *Foucault's Pendulum*." *Modern Fiction Studies* 38.4 (1992): 895-909.

Cannon, Peter. *H.P. Lovecraft*. Twayne's United States Authors 549. Boston: Twayne-G.K. Hall, 1989.

Caputi, Jane. *The Age of Sex Crime*. 1987. London: Women's Press, 1988.

Caramello, Charles. *Silverless Mirrors: Book, Self & Postmodern American Fiction*. Tallahassee: Florida UP, 1983.

Carter, Dale. *The Final Frontier: The Rise and Fall of the American Rocket State*. London: Verso-New Left, 1988.

Caserio, Robert. "Mobility and Masochism: Christine Brooke-Rose and J.G. Ballard." *Why the Novel Matters: A Postmodern Perplex*. Eds. Mark Spilka and Caroline McCracken-Flesher. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990. 310-28.

Cassara, Ernest. "The Development of America's Sense of Mission." *The Apocalyptic Vision in America: Interdisciplinary Essays on Myth and Culture*. Ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1982. 64-96.

Cecil, Paul, ed. *Flickers of the Dreamachine*. Hove: Codex, 1996.

Chadwick, Peter K. *Borderline: A Psychological Study of Paranoia and Delusional Thinking*. London: Routledge, 1992.

Chambers, Judith. *Thomas Pynchon*. Twayne's United States Authors 607. NY: Twayne-Macmillan, 1992.

Chandler, Russell. *Doomsday: The End of the World (A View Through Time)*. 1993. Milton Keynes: Nelson Word, 1994.

Clarke, I.F. *Voices Prophesying War 1763-1984*. London: Oxford UP, 1966.

Clay, Catrine, and Michael Leapman. *Master Race: The Lebensborn Experiment in Nazi Germany*. 1995. London: Coronet-Hodder Headline, 1996.

Clerc, Charles, ed. *Approaches to "Gravity's Rainbow"*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1983.

Clute, John, and Peter Nicholls, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*. London: Orbit-Little, 1993.

Cohn, Norman. *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*. 1957. 3rd ed. London: Paladin-Granada, 1970.

Cole, Hugh M. *The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge*. United States Army in World War II: The European Theater of Operations. Washington DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1965.

Collins, Jim. *Uncommon Cultures: Popular Culture and Post-Modernism*. London: Routledge, 1989.

Connor, Steven. *Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

Coogan, Tim Pat. "They Shot Well, Didn't They!" *The Troubles: Ireland's Ordeal 1966-1996 and the Search for Peace*. London: Arrow, 1996. 157-90.

Cooper, Peter L. *Signs and Symptoms: Thomas Pynchon and the Contemporary World*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1983.

Cordesse, Gérard. "The Science-Fiction of William Burroughs." *Caliban: Annales de L'Universitié de Toulouse-Le Mirail* 12 (1975): 33-43.

Corea, Gena. *The Mother Machine: Reproductive Technologies from Artificial Insemination to Artificial Wombs*. 1985. London: Women's Press, 1988.

Coren, Michael. *The Invisible Man: The Life and Liberties of H.G. Wells*. London: Bloomsbury, 1993.

Cowart, David. "Attenuated Postmodernism: Pynchon's *Vineland*." *Critique* 32.2 (1990): 67-76.

Cox, John. *Overkill: The Story of Modern Weapons*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.

Crary, Jonathan. "J.G. Ballard and the Promiscuity of Forms." *Zone* (NY) 1/2 (1986): 159-65.

Cruz, Nicky. *A Final Warning*. 1990. Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1992.

Csicsery-Ronay Jr., Istvan. "The SF of Theory: Baudrillard and Haraway." *Science-Fiction Studies* 55 (1991): 387-404.

---. "Gregg Rickman and Others on Philip K. Dick." *Science-Fiction Studies* 67 (1995): 430-38.

Csicsery-Ronay Jr., Istvan, et al. "Notes and Correspondence." *Science-Fiction Studies* 68 (1996): 149-57.

---. "Notes and Correspondence." *Science-Fiction Studies* 69 (1996): 312-15.

Dali, Salvador. "The Conquest of the Irrational." *The Secret Life of Salvador Dali*. Trans. Haakon M. Chevalier. 3rd ed. London: Vision Press, 1949. 415-423. p. 418.

—. *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus: Paranoiac-Critical Interpretation, including The Myth of William Tell*. Trans. Elanor R. Morse. St Petersburg (FLA): Salvador Dali Museum, 1986.

Daly, Mary. *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*. 1978. London: Women's Press, 1979.

Daraul, Arkon. "The Old Man of the Mountains." *Secret Societies*. 1961. London: Tandem, 1965. 11-24.

Davies, Philip John, ed. *Science Fiction, Social Conflict and War*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1990.

Davis, Robin J., and Lance St. J. Butler, eds. *'Make Sense Who May': Essays on Samuel Beckett's Later Works*. Irish Literary Studies 30. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1988.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane. 1977. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1983.

Derrida, Jacques. "No Apocalypse, Not Now (full speed ahead, seven missiles, seven missives)." Trans. Catherine Porter and Philip Lewis. *Diacritics* 14.2 (1984a): 20-31.

—. "Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy." Trans. John P. Leavey, Jr. *Oxford Literary Review* 6.2 (1984b): 3-37.

—. *Cinders*. Trans. Ned Lukacher. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1991.

Dewey, Joseph. *In a Dark Time: The Apocalyptic Temper in the American Novel of the Nuclear Age*. West Lafayette: Purdue UP, 1990.

Dipple, Elizabeth. *The Unresolvable Plot: Reading Contemporary Fiction*. London: Routledge, 1988.

Dobbins, Austin C. *Milton and the Book of Revelation: The Heavenly Cycle*. Studies in the Humanities 7. University: U of Alabama P, 1975.

Docherty, Brian, ed. *American Horror Fiction: From Brockden Brown to Stephen King*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990.

Dolan, Frederick M. "The Poetics of Postmodern Subversion: The Politics of Writing in William S. Burroughs's *The Western Lands*." *Contemporary Literature* 32.4 (1991): 534-51.

Dornberger, Major-General Walter. *V2*. Trans. James Cleugh and Geoffrey Halliday. 1954. London: Panther, 1958.

Dowling, David. *Fictions of Nuclear Disaster*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987.

Dowling, Terry. "Alternative Reality and Deviant Logic in J.G. Ballard's Second 'Disaster' Trilogy." *Science Fiction: The Review of Speculative Fiction* 1.1 (1977): 6-18.

Downard, James Shelby. "The Call to Chaos: From Adam to Atom by Way of the Jornada del Muerto." *Apocalypse Culture*. 1987. Ed. Adam Parfrey. 2nd ed. Portland: Feral House, 1990. 307-27.

Draper, Michael. *H.G. Wells*. Macmillan Modern Novelists. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987.

Duckworth, Colin. *Angels of Darkness: Dramatic Effect in Samuel Beckett with Special Reference to Eugene Ionesco*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1972.

Dugdale, John. *Thomas Pynchon: Allusive Parables of Power*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990.

Dworkin, Andrea. *Woman Hating*. NY: Dutton, 1974.

---. *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*. London: Women's Press, 1981.

---. *Our Blood: Prophecies and Discourses on Sexual Politics*. 1976. London: Women's Press, 1982.

---. *Right-Wing Women: The Politics of Domesticated Females*. London: Women's Press, 1983.

---. *Intercourse*. 1987. London: Arrow-Century Hutchinson, 1988.

---. *Letters From a War Zone: Writings 1976-1987*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1988.

—. *Life and Death: Unapologetic Writings on the Continuing War against Women*. NY: Free Press-Simon & Schuster, 1997.

Dworkin, Andrea, and Catharine MacKinnon. "Questions and Answers." *Making Violence Sexy: Feminist Views on Pornography*. Ed. Diana E.H. Russell. Buckingham: Open University, 1993. 78-96.

[Dworkin, Andrea, and Catherine MacKinnon, et al.]. *Pornography and Sexual Violence: Evidence of the Links. The Complete Transcript of Public Hearings on Ordinances to add Pornography as Discrimination against Women: Minneapolis City Council, Government Operations Committee, December 12 and 13, 1983*. London: Everywoman, 1988.

Eco, Umberto. "The Suicides of the Temple." *Faith in Fakes*. 1986. Rpt. as *Travels in Hyperreality*. Trans. William Weaver. London: Picador-Pan, 1987. 95-101.

---. *Reflections on "The Name of the Rose"*. Trans. William Weaver. 1984. London: Secker, 1989.

Eddins, Dwight. *The Gnostic Pynchon*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990.

Egan, James. "Apocalypticism in the Fiction of Stephen King." *Extrapolation* 25.3 (1984): 214-27.

Fallowell, Duncan. "Ballard in Bondage." *Books and Bookmen* 22.6 (1977): 59-60.

Fawcett, Ken. "Why Waco?" *Secret and Suppressed: Banned Ideas & Hidden History*. Ed. Jim Keith. Portland: Feral House, 1993. 174-78.

Fekete, John, ed. *Life After Postmodernism: Essays on Value and Culture*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Filippo, Paul Di. "Twenty-Five Years of Drowning: Mapping J.G. Ballard's *The Drowned World* onto *The Day of Creation*." *Quantum* 37 (1990): 13-15.

---. "Ballard's Anatomy: An Interview with J.G. Ballard." *Science Fiction Eye* 8 (1991): 66-75.

Finkelstein, Haim. "'Deserts of Vast Eternity': J.G. Ballard and Robert Smithson." *Foundation* 39 (1987): 50-62.

---. "Under the Sign of Angelus." *Salvador Dali's Art and Writing, 1927-1942: The Metamorphoses of Narcissus*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. 177-226.

Firsching, Lorenz J. "J.G. Ballard's Ambiguous Apocalypse." *Science-Fiction Studies* 12 (1985): 297-310.

Fischer, Klaus P. *History and Prophecy: Oswald Spengler and the Decline of the West*. American University Studies IX:59. NY: Peter Lang, 1989.

Fletcher, John. "J.G. Ballard." *British Novelists since 1960*. Ed. Jay L. Helio. Dictionary of Literary Biography 14. 2 vols. Detroit: Gale, 1983.

Fletcher, Joseph. *The Ethics of Genetic Control: Ending Reproductive Roulette*. NY: Anchor-Doubleday, 1974.

Foster, Dennis A. "J.G. Ballard's Empire of the Senses: Perversion and the Failure of Authority. *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 108.3 (1993): 519-532.

Foster, Hal, ed. *The Anti-Aesthetic*. 1983. Rpt. as *Postmodern Culture*. London: Pluto, 1985.

Foucault, Michel, ed. *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother ... A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*. Trans. Frank Jellinek. 1975. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1982.

Fountain, Nigel. *Underground: The London Alternative Press, 1966-74*. London: Comedia-Routledge, 1988.

Fowler, Douglas. *A Reader's Guide to "Gravity's Rainbow"*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1980.

Franklin, H. Bruce. "What Are We To Make of J.G. Ballard's Apocalypse?" *Voices For The Future* 2. Ed. Thomas Clareson. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1979. 82-105.

—. *War Stars: The Superweapon and the American Imagination*. NY: Oxford UP, 1988.

Freedman, Carl. "Towards a Theory of Paranoia: The Science Fiction of Philip K. Dick." *On Philip K. Dick: 40 Articles from "Science-Fiction Studies"*. Ed. R.D. Mullen, et al. Terre Haute & Greencastle: SF-TH Inc., 1992. 111-18.

Freese, Peter. "Surviving the End: Apocalypse, Evolution, and Entropy in Bernard Malamud, Kurt Vonnegut, and Thomas Pynchon." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 36.3 (1995): 163-76.

Frick, Thomas. "The Art of Fiction LXXXV: J.G. Ballard." *Paris Review* 94 (1984): 132-60.

Friedman, Ellen G., and Miriam Fuchs, eds., "Kathy Acker, Christine Brooke-Rose, and Marguerite Young." *The Review of Contemporary Fiction* 9.3 (1989).

Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle ... and Other Works*. Standard Edition XVIII. London: Hogarth, 1955.

---. *Case Histories II*. 1979. Penguin Freud Library 9. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990.

Gillespie, Gerald. "New Apocalypse for Old: Kermode's Theory of Modernism." *Boundary 2* 3 (1975): 307-23.

Ginsberg, Allen. "Recollections of Burroughs Letters." *Letters to Allen Ginsberg: 1953-1957*. Eds. Ron Padgett and Anne Waldman. NY: Full Court, 1982. 5-10.

Gleason, William. "The Postmodern Labyrinths of *Lot 49*." *Critique* 34.2 (1993): 83-99.

Goddard, James, and David Pringle, eds. *J.G. Ballard: The First Twenty Years*. Hayes: Bran's Head, 1976.

Golsan, Richard J., ed. *Fascism, Aesthetics, and Culture*. Hanover (NH): UP of New England, 1992.

Goodman, Michael B. *Contemporary Literary Censorship: The Case History of Burroughs' "Naked Lunch"*. Metuchen (NJ): Scarecrow Press, 1981.

Gopman, Vladimir. "The Category of Time in the Writings of J.G. Ballard." *Foundation* 30 (1984): 34-42.

Gormlie, Frank. "Ballard's Nightmares / Spielberg's Dreams: *Empire of the Sun*." *Cinema and Fiction: New Modes of Adapting, 1950-1990*. Ed. John Orr and Colin Nicholson. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1992. 140-50.

Greene, Michelle. *The Dream at the End of the World: Paul Bowles and the Literary Renegades in Tangier*. London: Bloomsbury, 1992.

Greenberg, Martin Harry, and Joseph D. Olander, eds. *Philip K. Dick*. Writers of the 21st Century. NY: Taplinger, 1983.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.

Greenland, Colin. *The Entropy Exhibition: Michael Moorcock and the British 'New Wave' in Science Fiction.* London: Routledge, 1983.

Greenslade, William. *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel 1880-1940.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.

Griffin, Susan. *Pornography and Silence: Culture's Revenge Against Nature.* London: Women's Press, 1981.

Gunn, James, ed. *The New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction.* NY: Viking-Penguin, 1988.

Gutman, Yisrael, and Michael Berenbaum, eds. *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp.* Washington, D.C. and Bloomington: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Indiana UP, 1994.

Hall, Chris. " 'Behind the Hieroglyphic Streets': Pynchon's Oedipa Maas and the Dialectics of Reading." *Critique* 33.1 (1991): 63-77.

Hanson, Paul D., ed. *Visionaries and their Apocalypses.* Issues in Religion and Theology 2. London: SPCK, 1983.

Harris, Oliver C.G. "Cut-Up Closure: The Return to Narrative." *William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959-1989.* Ed. Jennie Skerl and Robin Lydenberg. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991. 251-62.

Harrison, J.F.C. *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850.* London: RKP, 1979.

Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Social Change.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

Hassan, Ihab. "The Subtracting Machine: The Work of William Burroughs." *Critique* 6 (1963): 4-23.

Hayes, Peter. *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987.

Hayles, N. Katherine. "'Who Was Saved?' Families, Snitches and Recuperation in Pynchon's *Vineland*." *Critique* 32.2 (1990): 77-91.

Heidenry, John. *What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution.* NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997.

Helfers, Lt. Col. Melvin C. "Chaotic Command: The German Experience with Missiles." *Army* 6.9 (1956): 22-4, 62-4.

Hellholm, David, ed. *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12-17, 1979*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1983.

Hewitt, Elizabeth. "Generic Exhaustion and the 'Heat Death' of Science Fiction." *Science-Fiction Studies* 64 (1994): 289-301.

Hill, Christopher. *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution*. London: Temple Smith, 1972.

Hite, Molly. *Ideas of Order in the Novels of Thomas Pynchon*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1983.

Hollington, Michael. "Great Books and Great Wars: J.G. Ballard's *Empire of the Sun*." *Meanjin* 44.2 (1985): 269-75.

Hotchner, A.E. *Blown Away: The Rolling Stones & The Death of the Sixties*. 1990. London: Touchstone-Simon, 1994.

Huie, William Bradford. *The Hiroshima Pilot*. 1964. London: Consul-World Distributors, 1966.

Hume, Kathryn. *Pynchon's Mythography: An Approach to "Gravity's Rainbow"*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1987.

---. "Views from Above, Views from Below: The Perspectival Subtext in *Gravity's Rainbow*." *American Literature* 60.4 (1988): 625-42.

---. "Repetition and the Construction of Character in *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Critique* 33.4 (1992): 243-54.

Humphrey, Nicholas, and Robert Jay Lifton, eds. *In a Dark Time*. London: Faber, 1984.

Hutchinson, Roger. *High Sixties: The Summers of Riot & Love*. Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1992.

Huyssen, Andreas. *After The Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism*. 1986. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Irving, David. *The Mare's Nest*. London: William Kimber, 1964.

Jaffrey, Sheldon. *The Arkham House Companion: FiftyYears of Arkham House. A Bibliographical History and Collector's Price Guide to Arkham House/Mycroft & Moran including the revised and expanded "Horrors and Unpleasantries"*. Mercer Island: Starmont House, 1989.

James, Barry. "The Case for Savonrola Gets a New Hearing." *International Herald Tribune*. 6 June 1997.

James, Edward. "From New Wave to Cyberpunk and Beyond, 1960-1993." *Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994. 167-208.

James, JoAnn, and William J. Cloonan, eds. *Apocalyptic Visions Past and Present: Selected Papers from the Eighth and Ninth Annual Florida State University Conferences on Literature and Film*. Tallahassee: Florida UP, 1988.

Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London: Verso, 1991.

de St Jorre, John. *The Good Ship Venus: The Erotic Voyages of Olympia Press*. London: Hutchinson, 1994.

Joshi, S.T. *H.P. Lovecraft: The Decline of the West*. Starmont Studies in Literary Criticism 37. Mercer Island: Starmont House, 1990.

Judge, John. "The Black Hole of Guyana - The Untold Story of the Jonestown Massacre." *Secret and Suppressed: Banned Ideas & Hidden History*. Ed. Jim Keith. Portland: Feral House, 1993. 127-65.

Kadrey, Richard. "More Stories About Buildings and Mood." *Science Fiction Eye* 6 (1990): 54-55.

Kaplan, David E., and Andrew Marshall. *The Cult at the End of the World: The Incredible Story of Aum*. London: Hutchinson, 1996.

Keith, Jim, ed. *Secret and Suppressed: Banned Ideas & Hidden History*. Portland: Feral House, 1993.

Kellner, Douglas. *The Persian Gulf TV War*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1992.

Kennedy, Andrew K. *Samuel Beckett*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.

Kerekes, David, and David Slater. "Nobody's Interested in Sex Any More: A History of Mondo Cinema." *Killing for Culture: An Illustrated History of Death Film from Mondo to Snuff*. London: Creation, 1994. 101-61.

Kerman, Judith B. "J.G. Ballard: We Are The Survivors." *Phoenix From The Ashes: The Literature of the Remade World*. Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy 30. Ed. Carl B. Yoke. Westport: Greenwood, 1987. 133-44.

Kermode, Frank. *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1967.

---. *Continuities*. NY: Random, 1968.

Ketterer, David. *New Worlds for Old: The Apocalyptic Imagination, Science Fiction, and American Literature*. NY: Anchor-Doubleday, 1974.

King, Martin, and Marc Breault. *Preacher of Death: The Shocking Inside Story of David Koresh and the Waco Siege*. Harmondsworth: Signet-Penguin, 1993.

Kingston, Jeremy. "At the Theatre." *Punch*. August 20, 1969. 314.

Klee, Ernst, and Otto Merk. *The Birth of the Missile: The Secrets of Peenemünde*. Intro. Wernher von Braun. Trans. T. Schoeters. London: Harrap, 1965.

Klein, Richard, and William B. Warner. "Nuclear Coincidence and the Korean Air Disaster." *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986): 2-21.

Knickerbocker, Conrad. "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview with William Burroughs." *Paris Review* 35 (1965): 12-49.

Koch, Klaus. *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*. Trans. Margaret Kohl. Studies in Biblical Theology Second Series 22. London: SCM Press, 1972.

Korzybski, Alfred. *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics*. 1933. Rev. ed. Lakeville (CT): International Non-Aristotelian Library Publishing Co., 1958.

Krafft, John M. "Anarcho-Romanticism and the Metaphysics of Counterforce: Alex Comfort and Thomas Pynchon." *Paunch* 40/41 (1975): 78-107.

Krakowski, Shmuel. "The Satellite Camps." *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*. Ed. Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum. Washington, D.C. and Bloomington: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Indiana UP, 1994. 50-60.

Kroker, Arthur, and David Cook. *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Kroker, Arthur, and Marilouise Kroker, eds. *Body Invaders: Sexuality and the Postmodern Condition*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Krupey, Gregory. "The Christian Right, Zionism, and the Coming of the Penteholocaust." *Apocalypse Culture*. 1987. Ed. Adam Parfrey. 2nd ed. Portland: Feral House, 1990. 287-98.

Kumar, Krishan, and Stephen Bann, eds. *Utopias and the Millennium*. London: Reaktion, 1993.

Laing, R.D. *The Politics of Experience and The Bird of Paradise*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.

Lasch, Christopher. *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times*. 1984. London: Picador-Pan, 1985.

Lawrence, D.H. *Apocalypse*. 1931. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974.

LeClair, Tom. *In the Loop: Don DeLillo and the Systems Novel*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1987.

Leddy, Michael. "'Departed Have Left No Address': Revelation/Concealment Presence/Absence in *Naked Lunch*." *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 4.1 (1984): 33-40.

Lentricchia, Frank, ed. *Introducing Don DeLillo*. Durham: Duke UP, 1991.

---. ed. *New Essays on "White Noise"*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.

Levine, George, and David Leverenz, eds. *Mindful Pleasures: Essays on Thomas Pynchon*. Boston: Little, 1976.

Lévy, Sydney, and Michel Pierssens, eds. "In Search of Eco's Roses." *SubStance* 14.2 (1985): 2-101.

Lewicki, Zbigniew. *The Bang and The Whimper: Apocalypse and Entropy in American Literature*. Contributions in American Studies 71. Westport: Greenwood, 1984.

Libby, Anthony. "Merwin's Planet, Alien Voices." *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 24.1 (1982): 48-63.

Lifton, Robert Jay. *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*. NY: Basic-HarperCollins, 1986.

Lifton, Robert Jay, and Eric Markusen. *The Genocidal Mentality: Nazi Holocaust and Nuclear Threat*. 1990. London: Macmillan, 1991.

Lippy, Charles H. "Waiting for the End: The Social Context of American Apocalyptic Literature." *The Apocalyptic Vision in America: Interdisciplinary Essays on Myth and Culture*. Ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1982. 37-63.

Lodge, David. "Objections to William Burroughs." *Critical Quarterly* 8 (1966): 203-12.

Longmate, Norman. *Hitler's Rockets: The Story of the V-2s*. London: Hutchinson, 1985.

Luckhurst, Roger. "Nuclear Criticism: Anachronism and Anachorism." *Diacritics* 23.2 (1993): 89-97.

—. "Petition, Repetition, and "Autobiography": J.G. Ballard's *Empire of the Sun* and *The Kindness of Women*." *Contemporary Literature* 35.4 (1994): 688-708.

Lydenberg, Robin. "Cut-Up: Negative Poetics in William Burroughs and Roland Barthes." *Comparative Literature Studies* 15.4 (1978): 414-30.

—. "Beyond Good and Evil: "How-To" Read *Naked Lunch*." *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 4.1 (1984): 75-85.

—. "Notes from the Orifice: Language and the Body in William Burroughs." *Contemporary Literature* 26.1 (1985): 55-73.

---. *Word Cultures: Radical Theory and Practice in William S. Burroughs' Fiction.* Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1987.

McCaffery, Larry. "An Interview with William S. Burroughs." *Across the Wounded Galaxies: Interviews with Contemporary American Science-Fiction Writers.* Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1990. 31-53.

McCarthy, Mary. "Burroughs' *Naked Lunch.*" *The New York Review of Books* 1.1 (1963): 4-5.

McGinn, Bernard, ed. *God's Plot: The Paradoxes of Puritan Piety. Being the Autobiography & Journal of Thomas Shepard.* Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1972.

---. *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages.* Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies 96. NY: Columbia UP, 1979.

McHoul, Alec, and David Willis. *Writing Pynchon: Strategies in Fictional Analysis.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990.

McKee, Alan. "Intentional Phalluses: The Male "Sex" in J.G. Ballard." *Foundation* 57 (1993): 58-67.

McMillan, Dougald, and Martha Fehsenfeld, eds. *Beckett in the Theatre: The Author as practical Playwright and Director. Volume 1: "Waiting for Godot" to "Krapp's Last Tape".* London: John Calder, 1988.

McNeil, Legs, and Gillian McCain. *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk.* London: Little, Brown, 1996.

Mackey, Douglas A. *Philip K. Dick.* Twayne's US Authors 533. Boston: Twayne-G.K. Hall, 1988.

Mackey, Louis. "Paranoia, Pynchon, and Preterition." *SubStance* 30 (1981): 16-30.

MacKinnon, Catherine A. *Only Words.* 1993. London: HarperCollins, 1994.

---. "Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide." *Mass Rape: The War against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* Ed. Alexandra Stiglmayer. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1994. 73-81.

Maloney, Martin. "The Chapman Bros.: When Will I Be Famous." *Flash Art International* 186 (1996): 64-67.

Manchester, William. *The Death of a President: November 20 - November 25, 1963*. London: Michael Joseph, 1967.

Marcus, Greil. *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century*. 1989. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993.

Márquez, Antonio. "Everything is Connected: Paranoia in *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Perspectives on Contemporary Literature* 9 (1983): 92-104.

Marroni, Francesco. "*High-Rise*: Interior Adventure and Fictional Space. Topology as a Metalanguage in J.G. Ballard's Fiction." *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* (U de La Laguna, Tenerife) 10 (1985): 81-93.

---. "*Concrete Island*: J.G. Ballard and the Paradox of Memory." *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* (U de La Laguna, Tenerife) 12 (1988): 131-43.

Masters, Brian. "Armageddon, USA." *Sunday Times*. 11 July 1993, Books section, 6:3.

May, John R. *Toward a New Earth: Apocalypse in the American Novel*. Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame, 1972.

Mead, Clifford. *Thomas Pynchon: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Materials*. Elmwood Park (IL): Dalkey Archive Press, 1989.

Meikle, Jeffrey L. "'Other Frequencies': The Parallel Worlds of Thomas Pynchon and H.P. Lovecraft." *Modern Fiction Studies* 27 (1981): 287-94.

Melley, Timothy. "Bodies Incorporated: Scenes of Agency Panic in *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Contemporary Literature* 35.4 (1994): 709-38.

Mendelson, Edward, ed. *Pynchon: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs (NJ): Prentice-Hall, 1978.

Meyer, Adam. "'One of the Great Early Counsellors': The Influence of Franz Kafka on William S. Burroughs." *Comparative Literature Studies* 27.3 (1990): 211-29.

Mielke, Robert E. "J.G. Ballard." *Contemporary Novelists*. Ed. Lesley Henderson. 5th ed. London: St James, 1991.

Miles, Barry. *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*. London: Virgin, 1992.

Miller, Perry. *Errand Into The Wilderness*. 1956. NY: Harper, 1964.

Mitchell, D.M., ed. *The Starry Wisdom: A Tribute to H.P. Lovecraft*. London: Creation, 1994.

Mogen, David. *Ray Bradbury*. Twayne's United States Authors 504. Boston: Twayne-G.K. Hall, 1986.

Moore, Thomas. *The Style of Connectedness: "Gravity's Rainbow" and Thomas Pynchon*. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1987.

Morgan, Ted. *Literary Outlaw: The Life and Times of William S. Burroughs*. NY: Avon, 1990.

Morris, Leon. *Apocalyptic*. 1972. 2nd ed. London: Inter-Varsity P, 1973.

Mottram, Eric. *William Burroughs: The Algebra of Need*. London: Marion Boyars, 1977.

Murray, Charles Shaar. "J.G. Ballard: Waiting for the Silver Coconuts." *Shots From The Hip*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991. 373-82.

Myers, Robert E., ed. *The Intersection of Science Fiction and Philosophy*. Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy 4. Westport: Greenwood, 1983.

Nadeau, Maurice. *The History of Surrealism*. Trans. Richard Howard. 1965. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989.

Naisbitt, John, and Patricia Aburdene. *Megatrends 2000*. 1990. London: Pan, 1991.

Nelson, Cary. "The End of the Body: Radical Space in Burroughs." *The Incarnate Word: Literature as Verbal Space*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1973. 208-29.

Neufeld, Michael J. *The Rocket and the Reich: Peenemünde and the Coming of the Ballistic Missile Era*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995.

---. "Introduction: Mittelbau-Dora - Secret Weapons and Slave Labor." In Béon, Yves. *Planet Dora: A Memoir of the Holocaust and the Birth of the Space Age*. Trans. Yves Béon and Richard L. Fague. Boulder: Westview Press, 1997. ix-xxviii.

Newman, Robert D. *Understanding Thomas Pynchon*. Columbia: U of South Carolina P, 1986.

Nicholls, Peter. "Jerry Cornelius at the Atrocity Exhibition: Anarchy and Entropy in *New Worlds* Science Fiction 1964-1974." *Foundation* 9 (1975): 22-44.

Nicol, Charles. "J.G. Ballard and the Limits of Mainstream SF." *Science-Fiction Studies* 3 (1976): 150-57.

Nordau, Max. *Degeneration*. Intro. George L. Mosse. 1895. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1993.

Norris, Christopher. "Lost in the Funhouse: Baudrillard and the Politics of Postmodernism." *Textual Practice* 3.3 (1989): 360-87.

Ordway, Frederick I., III, and Mitchell R. Sharpe. *The Rocket Team*. Intro. Wernher von Braun. London: Heinemann, 1979.

Palmer, Christopher. "Postmodernism and the Birth of the Author in Philip K. Dick's *Valis*." *Science-Fiction Studies* 55 (1991): 330-42.

Palmer, Robert. "Rolling Stone Interview: William Burroughs." *Rolling Stone* 108. 11 May 1972. 48-53.

Palumbo, Donald. "William Burroughs' Quartet of Science Fiction Novels as Dystopian Social Satire." *Extrapolation* 20.4 (1979): 321-29.

Paolozzi, Eduardo. "Speculative Illustrations: Eduardo Paolozzi in Conversation with J.G. Ballard and Frank Whitford." *Studio International* 183 (1971): 136-43.

Parfrey, Adam, ed. *Apocalypse Culture*. 1987. 2nd ed. Portland: Feral House, 1990.

Patrides, C.A., and Joseph Wittreich, eds. *The Apocalypse in English Renaissaance Thought and Literature: Patterns, Antecedents and Repercussions*. Manchester: Mancherster UP, 1984.

Pearce, Richard, ed. *Critical Essays on Thomas Pynchon*. Boston: Hall, 1981.

Percy, Walker. "Notes For a Novel About The End of the World." *The Message in the Bottle: How Queer Man Is, How Queer Language Is*. NY: Farrar, 1975. 101-18.

Phelan, John Leddy. *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World.* 1956. Rev. ed. Berkeley: U of Calif. P, 1970.

Pierce, Hazel. *Philip K. Dick.* Starmont Reader's Guide 12. Mercer Island: Starmont House, 1982.

Plater, William M. *The Grim Phoenix: Reconstructing Thomas Pynchon.* Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1978.

Platt, Charles. "J.G. Ballard." *Dream Makers: Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers at Work.* Rev. ed. NY: Ungar, 1987. 87-96.

Platzner, Robert L. "The Metamorphic Vision of J.G. Ballard." *Essays in Literature* 10.2 (1983): 209-17.

P-Orridge, Genesis. "About These Recordings." Sleeve note. Burroughs, William S. *Nothing Here Now But The Recordings.* LP Record. Industrial Records, IR0016, 1981a.

Porush, David. *The Soft Machine: Cybernetic Fiction.* London: Methuen, 1985.

---. "'Purring into Transcendence': Pynchon's Puncutron Machine." *Critique* 32.2 (1990): 93-105.

Postgate, John. "Bat's Chance in Hell." *New Scientist.* April 5, 1973.

Potts, Stephen W. "J.G. Ballard." *Postmodern Fiction: A Bio-Bibliographical Guide.* Ed. Larry McCaffery. Movements in the Arts 2. Westport: Greenwood, 1986.

Pounds, Wayne. "The Postmodern Anus: Parody and Utopia in Two Recent Novels by William Burroughs." *Poetics Today* 8:3-4 (1987): 611-29.

Priest, Christopher. "New Wave: A Radical Change in the 1960s." *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction.* Ed. Robert Holdstock. London: Octopus, 1978. 162-73.

Priestley, J.B. "They Come from Inner Space." *Thoughts in the Wilderness.* London: Heinemann, 1957. 20-26.

Pringle, David. *Earth is the Alien Planet: J.G. Ballard's Four-Dimensional Nightmare.* Milford's Popular Writers of Today 26. San Bernardino: Borgo Press, 1979.

—. "Interview with J.G. Ballard." *Thrust: Science Fiction in Review* 14 (1980): 12-19.

—. "The Profession of Science Fiction 26: From Shanghai to Shepperton." *Foundation* 24 (1982): 5–23.

J.G. Ballard: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography. Masters of Science Fiction and Fantasy. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1984.

—. "J.G. Ballard Interviewed." *Interzone* 106 (1996): 12-16.

—, ed. *JGB News* 1-25. Brighton: privately printed, 1981-96.

Psychological Warfare Division (SHAEF). *The Buchenwald Report*. Trans. David A. Hackett. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995.

Punter, David. *The Hidden Script: Writing and the Unconscious*. London: RKP, 1985.

R1 Army Group. AA Troops. *The Flying Bomb: The Defence of Antwerp and Brussels, Oct. 1944 to Apr. 1945*. London: R1 Army Group, 1945.

Rabkin, Eric S., Martin H. Greenberg, and Joseph D. Olander, eds., *The End of the World*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1983.

Radford, Jill, and Diana E.H. Russell, eds. *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*. Buckingham: Open University, 1992.

Reeves, Marjorie. "The Development of Apocalyptic Thought: Medieval Attitudes." *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature: Patterns, Antecedents and Repercussions*. Eds. C.A. Patrides and Joseph Wittreich. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984. 40-72.

Reich, Wilhelm. *The Sexual Revolution*. 1936. NY: Farrar, 1974.

Relfe, Mary Stewart. *The New Money System 666*. Montgomery (AL): Ministries, Inc., 1982.

Revelation: Its Grand Climax At Hand! NY: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1988.

Rhodes, Richard. *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1986.

Richards, Thomas. *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire*. London: Verso-New Left, 1993.

Rickman, Gregg. *To the High Castle: Philip K. Dick - A Life, 1928-1962*. Long Beach: Fragments West/Valentine Press, 1989.

Rifkin, Jeremy. *Entropy: A New World View*. NY: Viking, 1980.

Robinson, Douglas. *American Apocalypses: The Image of The End of The World in American Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1985.

Robinson, Kim Stanley. *The Novels of Philip K. Dick*. Studies in Speculative Fiction 9. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1984.

Rohmer, Richard. *Massacre 007: The Story of the Korean Air Lines Flight 007*. London: Coronet-Hodder, 1984.

Rossi, Umberto. "Images from the Disaster Area: An Apocalyptic Reading of Urban Landscapes in Ballard's *The Drowned World* and *Hello America*." *Science-Fiction Studies* 62 (1994): 81-97.

Rovit, Earl. "On the Contemporary Apocalyptic Imagination." *American Scholar* 37 (1968). 453-68.

Royle, Nicholas. "Nuclear Piece: *Memoires* of *Hamlet* and The Time to Come." *Diacritics* 20.1 (1990): 39-55.

Ruddick, Nicholas. "Ballard/*Crash*/Baudrillard." *Science-Fiction Studies* 58 (1992): 354-60.

---. "New Wave S(peculative) F(iction) (1962-78)." *British Science Fiction: A Chronology, 1478-1990*. Bibliographies and Indexes in World Literature 35. Westport: Greenwood, 1992. 107-43.

Ruland, Richard, and Malcolm Bradbury. *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*. NY: Viking Penguin, 1991.

Russ, Joanna. "Lovecraft, H(oward) P(hillips)." *Twentieth-Century Science-Fiction Writers*. Ed. Noelle Watson and Paul E. Schellinger. 3rd ed. London: St James, 1991. 502-5.

Russell, Diana E.H., ed. *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies*. Athene Series. NY: Pergamon, 1989.

—, ed. *Making Violence Sexy: Feminist Views on Pornography*. Buckingham: Open University, 1993.

Rymer, Russ. *Genie: A Scientific Tragedy*. 1993. NY: HarperCollins, 1994.

Safer, Elaine B. "Pynchon's World and Its Legendary Past: Humor and the Absurd in a Twentieth-Century *Vineland*." *Critique* 32.2 (1990): 107-25.

Sanders, Scott. "Pynchon's Paranoid History." *Mindful Pleasures: Essays on Thomas Pynchon*. Eds. George Levine and David Leverenz. Boston: Little, 1976. 139-59.

Savage, Jon. *England's Dreaming: Sex Pistols and Punk Rock*. Faber, 1991.

Savolainen, Matti. "The Wave of Science Fiction as Postmodern Literature: J.G. Ballard as a Test Case." *Criticism in the Twilight Zone: Postmodern Perspectives on Literature and Politics*. Stockholm Studies in English 77. Ed. Danuta Zadworna-Fjellestad and Lennart Björk. Stockholm: Almquist & Wiskell, 1990. 121-28.

Schaub, Thomas H. *Pynchon: The Voice of Ambiguity*. Urbana: U of Chicago P, 1981.

Schnabel, Jim. *Dark White: Aliens, Abductions, and the UFO Obsession*. 1994. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995.

Schreck, Nikolas, ed. *The Manson File: The Unexpurgated Charles Manson as Revealed in Letters, Photos, Stories, Songs, Art, Testimony, and Documents*. NY: Amok Press, 1988.

Schweitzer, Darrell. *The Dream Quest of H.P. Lovecraft*. Milford's Popular Writers of Today 12. San Bernardino: Borgo Press, 1978.

Seago, Alex. *Burning the Box of Beautiful Things: The Development of a Postmodern Sensibility*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995.

Seed, David. *The Fictional Labyrinths of Thomas Pynchon*. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1988.

Shapiro, Gary, ed. *After The Future: Postmodern Times and Places*. Contemporary Studies in Philosophy and Literature 2. Albany: State U of New York P, 1990.

Sharaf, Myron. *Fury on Earth: A Biography of Wilhelm Reich*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1983.

Shaviro, Steven. "Burroughs' Theater of Illusion: *Cities of the Red Night*." *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 4.1 (1984): 64-74.

Sheppard, Richard, ed. *Dada: Studies of a Movement*. Chalfont St Giles: Alpha Academic, 1980.

Shires, Linda M. *British Poetry of the Second World War*. London: Macmillan, 1985.

Siegel, Mark Richard. *Pynchon: Creative Paranoia in "Gravity's Rainbow"*. Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1978.

Silverman, Hugh J., ed. *Postmodernism: Philosophy and the Arts*. Continental Philosophy 3. London: Routledge, 1990.

Simmon, Scott. "A Character Index: *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction* 16.2 (1974): 68-72.

---. "*Gravity's Rainbow* Described." *Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction* 16.2 (1974): 54-67.

Skau, Michael. "The Central Verbal System: The Prose of William Burroughs." *Style* 15.4 (1981): 401-14.

Skerl, Jennie. *William S. Burroughs*. Twayne's United States Authors 438. Boston: Twayne-G.K. Hall, 1985.

Skerl, Jennie, and Robin Lydenberg, eds. *William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959-1989*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991.

Slade, Joseph W. *Thomas Pynchon*. Writers For The Seventies. NY: Warner Paperback Library, 1974.

---. "Escaping Rationalization: Options for the Self in *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Critique* 18 (1977): 27-38.

---. *Thomas Pynchon*. 1974. 2nd ed. Worcester Studies in Science, Technology, and Culture 5. NY: Peter Lang, 1990.

---. "Communication, Group Theory, and Perception in *Vineland*." *Critique* 32.2 (1990): 126-44.

Slotkin, Richard. *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 1973.

Smith, Barry. *Second Warning*. Marlborough: Barry Smith Family Evangelism, 1985.

---. *Postscript*. Marlborough (NZ): Barry Smith Family Evangelism, c. 1993.

Smith, Marcus, and Khachig Tololyan. "The New Jeremiad: *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Critical Essays on Thomas Pynchon*. Ed. Richard Pearce. Boston: Hall, 1981. 169-86.

Smith, David C. *H.G. Wells: Desperately Mortal. A Biography*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1986.

Smith, Thomas S. "Performing in the Zone: The Presentation of Historical Crisis in *Gravity's Rainbow*." *Clio* 12.3 (1983): 245-60.

Smyth, Edmund J., ed. *Postmodernism and Contemporary Fiction*. London: Batsford, 1991.

Sobieszek, Robert A. *Ports of Entry: William S. Burroughs and the Arts*. Afterword by William S. Burroughs. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1996.

Sontag, Susan. "The Imagination of Disaster." *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*. NY: Farrar, 1966. 209-225.

Spengler, Oswald. *The Decline of the West: Complete in One Volume*. 1926/28. Trans. Charles Francis Atkinson. NY: Knopf, 1939.

Stableford, Brian. "The Short Fiction of J.G. Ballard." *Survey of Science Fiction*. Ed. Frank N. Magill. Vol. 4. Englewood Cliffs: Salem Press, 1979. 1994-98.

Stark, John O. *Pynchon's Fictions: Thomas Pynchon and the Literature of Information*. Athens: Ohio UP, 1980.

Stein, Stephen J. "Transatlantic Extensions: Apocalyptic in Early New England." *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature: Patterns, Antecedents and Repercussions*. Eds. C.A. Patrides and Joseph Wittreich. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984. 266-98.

Stephenson, Gregory. "J.G. Ballard: The Quest for an Ontological Eden." *Foundation* 35 (1985-86): 38-47.

—. *Out of the Night and into the Dream: A Thematic Study of the Fiction of J.G. Ballard.* Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy 47. Westport: Greenwood, 1991.

Stiglmayer, Alexandra, ed. *Mass Rape: The War against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1994.

Stoller, Robert J. *Perversion: The Erotic Form of Hatred.* Hassocks: Harvester, 1976.

Storr, Anthony. *Freud.* Past Masters. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989.

Stull, William L. "The Quest and the Question: Cosmology and Myth in the Work of William S. Burroughs, 1953-1960." *Twentieth Century Literature* 24 (1978): 225-42.

Sutin, Lawrence. *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick.* 1989. London: HarperCollins, 1994.

Svoray, Yaron. *Gods of Death: Around the World, Behind Closed Doors, Operates an Ultra-Secret Business of Sex and Death. One Man Hunts the Truth about Snuff Films.* NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997.

Sylvester, David. *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon.* 3rd ed. London: Thames & Hudson, 1987.

Tabor, James D., and Eugene V. Gallagher. *Why Waco?: Cults and the Battle for Religious Freedom in America.* Berkeley: U of California P, 1995.

Talmon, Shemaryahu. "Daniel." *The Literary Guide to the Bible.* Ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode. 1987. London: Fontana-Collins, 1989. 343-56.

Tanner, Tony. "The New Demonology." *Partisan Review* 33 (1966): 547-572.

—. *City of Words: American Fiction 1950-1970.* London: Cape, 1971.

—. *Thomas Pynchon.* Contemporary Writers. London: Methuen, 1982.

Terr, Lenore. *Too Scared to Cry: Psychic Trauma in Childhood.* NY: Basic-HarperCollins, 1990.

Thomason, Sue. "Living Water: Archetypal Power in *Dune* and *The Drowned World*." *Vector* 119 (1984): 33-34.

Thompson, Bill. *Soft Core: Moral Crusades against Pornography in Britain and America*. London: Cassell, 1994.

Thompson, Damian. *The End of Time: Faith and Fear in the Shadow of the Millennium*. 1996. Rev. ed. London: Minerva-Random, 1997.

Tibbets, Paul W. "The Sad Case of Major Eatherly." *Mission: Hiroshima*. 1978. NY: Stein and Day, 1985. 282-90.

Tolley, A.T. *The Poetry of the Forties*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1985.

Topsfield, Valerie. *The Humour of Samuel Beckett*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Trupp, Sylvia L., ed. *Millennial Dreams in Action: Studies in Revolutionary Religious Movements*. NY: Schocken Books, 1970.

Turnill, Reginald "A Dark Side to the Moon." *Daily Telegraph*. 20 July 1994, 16.

Underwood, Tim, and Chuck Miller, eds. *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror with Stephen King*. 1988. London: NEL-Hodder, 1990.

U.S. Army. *V-2 Rocket Attacks and Defense*. Report of the General Board, United States Forces, European Theater, 1945.

Van Der Meer, Frederick. *Apocalypse: Visions from the Book of Revelation in Western Art*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1978.

Vale, V., and Andrea Juno, eds. *Re/Search: J.G. Ballard*. Re/Search 8/9. San Francisco: Re/Search, 1984b.

Vernon, John. *The Garden and the Map: Schizophrenia in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1973.

Wagar, W. Warren. *Terminal Visions: The Literature of Last Things*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982.

---. "J.G. Ballard and the Transvaluation of Utopia." *Science-Fiction Studies* 18 (1991): 53-70.

Wakefield, Neville. "Pretty Vacancy." *"Brilliant!": New Art from London*. Minneapolis: Walker Arts Center, 1995. 8-12.

Waldberg, Patrick. *Surrealism*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1965.

Walls, Richard C. "Atomized Artifacts: *Atrocity Exhibition* and the End of History." *Science Fiction Eye* 8 (1991): 75-77.

Warrick, Patricia S. *Mind in Motion: The Fiction of Philip K. Dick*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1987.

Watson, Noelle, and Paul E. Schellinger, eds. *Twentieth-Century Science-Fiction Writers*. 3rd ed. London: St James, 1991.

Waugh, Patricia. *Practising Postmodernism / Reading Modernism*. London: Edward Arnold, 1992.

---. *Harvest of the Sixties: English Literature and its Background, 1960-1990*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995.

---, ed. *Postmodernism: A Reader*. London: Edward Arnold, 1992.

Weisenburger, Steven. *A "Gravity's Rainbow" Companion: Sources and Contexts for Pynchon's Novel*. Athens: U of Georgia P: 1988.

---. "Thomas Pynchon at Twenty-Two: A Rediscovered Autobiographical Sketch." *American Literature* 62.4 (1990): 692-97.

Werner, Craig Hansen. *Paradoxical Resolutions: American Fiction since James Joyce*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1982.

Wiener, Norbert. *The Human Use of Human Beings*. 1950. London: Sphere, 1968.

Wilford, John Noble. "Apollo's Darkest Hour." *We Reach the Moon: The New York Times Story of Man's Greatest Adventure*. NY: Bantam, 1969. 92-110.

Wilkerson, David. *Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth*. Springdale: Whitaker House, 1985.

Williams, Paul. *Only Apparently Real: The World of Philip K. Dick*. NY: Arbor House, 1986.

Williams, Terry. *Crackhouse: Notes from the End of the Line*. 1992. NY: Penguin, 1993.

Wilson, Colin. *The Strength to Dream: Literature and the Imagination*. 1963. London: ABACUS-Sphere, 1976.

—. *The Occult*. 1971. London: Grafton-Collins, 1979.

Wilson, Edmund. "Tales of the Marvellous and the Ridiculous." *H.P. Lovecraft: Four Decades of Criticism*. Ed. S.T. Joshi. Athens: Ohio UP, 1980. 45-49.

Winter, Douglas E. *The Art of Darkness. The Life and Fiction of the Master of the Macabre: Stephen King*. 1984. Rev. ed. London: NEL-Hodder, 1989.

Wisker, Alistair. *The Writing of Nathanael West*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990.

Wollheim, Richard. *Freud*. Modern Masters. 1973. London: Fontana-Collins, 1985.

Wu, Duncan. "Wordsworth in Space." *The Wordsworth-Circle* 22.3 (1991): 172-79.

Wullschläger, Jackie. *Inventing Wonderland: The Lives and Fantasies of Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, J.M. Barrie, Kenneth Grahame and A.A. Milne*. London: Methuen-Reed, 1995.

Wyatt, Will. *The Man Who Was B. Traven*. London: Cape, 1980.

Zakai, Avihu. *Exile and Kingdom: History and Apocalypse in the Puritan Migration to America*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.

Zamora, Lois Parkinson, ed. *The Apocalyptic Vision in America: Interdisciplinary Essays on Myth and Culture*. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1982.

—. "Umberto Eco's Revelation: *The Name of the Rose*." *Humanities in the South* 61 (1985): 3-5.

—. *Writing the Apocalypse: Historical Vision in Contemporary U.S. and Latin American Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.

Ziff, Larzer. *Puritanism in America: New Culture in a New World*. NY: Viking, 1974.

Zurbrugg, Nicholas. "The Limits of Intertextuality: Barthes, Burroughs, Gysin, Culler." *Southern Review* 16 (1983): 250-73.

---. "Burroughs, Grauerholz, and *Cities of the Red Night*: An Interview with James Grauerholz." *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 4.1 (1984): 19-32.