FOOTNOTES IN FICTION: A RHETORICAL APPROACH

DISSERTATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the use of footnotes in fictional narratives. Footnotes and endnotes fall under the category of what Gérard Genette has labeled paratexts, or the elements that sit above or external to the text of the story. In some narratives, however, notes and other paratexts are incorporated into the story as part of the internal narrative frame. I call this particular type of paratext an artificial paratext. Much like traditional paratexts, artificial paratexts are often seen as ancillary to the text. However, artificial paratexts can play a significant role in the narrative dynamic by extending the boundaries of the narrative frame, introducing new heuristic models for interpretation, and offering alternative narrative threads for the reader to unravel. In addition, artificial paratexts provide a useful lens through which to explore current theories of narrative progression, character development, voice, and reliability.

In the first chapter, I develop a typology of paratexts, showing that paratexts have been used to deliver *factual* information, *interpretive* or analytical glosses, and *discursive* narratives in their own right. Paratexts can originate from a number of possible sources, including allographic sources (editors, translators, publishers) and autographic sources— the author, writing as author, fictitious editor, or one or more of the narrators. The second chapter shows that artificial paratexts can have significant effects on narrative progression. Building on the work of James Phelan and Peter Rabinowitz, I show that

artificial paratexts introduce tensions and instabilities that complicate narrative development and force readers to rethink their expectations about narrative conventions. In the next two chapters, I look closely at two complex uses of artificial paratexts, one in the short fiction of Jorge Luis Borges and the other in Vladimir Nabokov's novel, *Pale Fire*. In the concluding chapter of the dissertation, I posit a number of extensions to my analysis through an examination of Manual Puig's *Kiss of the Spider Woman* and Stuart Moulthrop's hypertext novel, *Victory Garden*.

Dedicated to Kirsten

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PUBLICATIONS

1. *Heath Anthology of American Literature Electronic Resources* (with Randy Bass and Lois Levine). *Heath Anthology of American Literature*. 4th Edition. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002).

2. "Authors, Readers, and Progression in Hypertext Narrative" (with James Phelan). In *Works and Days*. (v17&18, 1999-2000).

3. "J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*." In *The Encyclopedia of the Novel*, edited by Paul Schellinger (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999).

4. "Rear Window: Looking at Theory through Pedagogy" (with Paul Miller). In *Cinema-(to)-Graphy: Film and Writing in Contemporary Composition Courses*. Edited by Ellen Bishop (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Press, 1999).

5. "The Legacy of James Joyce." In *Milestones of the 20th Century*, edited by James E. Churchill, Jr. (Grolier Incorporated, 1999).

FIELDS OF STUDY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> With notes we doubtless reach one—indeed, several—of the borders, or absences
> of borders, that surround the eminently transitional field of the paratext. Their
> strategic importance will perhaps offset the inevitably disappointing nature of a
> "genre" whose occurrences are by definition irregular, divided up, crumbly, not to
> say dustlike, and often so closely connected to a given detail of a given text that
> they have, as it were, no autonomous significance: hence our uneasiness in taking
> hold of them.
>   — Gérard Genette, *Paratexts*

Noel Coward, the British playwright and infamous wit, once quipped that having

to read a footnote was like having to go downstairs to answer the door while making

love.[1] Coward's mild annoyance with footnotes is echoed in Gérard Genette's

trepidation at tackling the subject of notes in his work *Paratexts*. To further cement his

point, Genette quotes the French writer, Alain: "A note is the mediocre attached to the

beautiful" (*Paratexts* 319). For Genette, notes are the "crumbly" objects with no

independent meaning, defined only by their relation to the text proper.[2] His opinion is

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[1] I am indebted to a number of sources for this (possibly apocryphal) story. See Anthony
Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History*: 69-70; Betsy Hilbert, "Elegy for Excursus:
The Descent of the Footnote," 401; G. W. Bowersock, "The Art of the Footnote," 54.

[2] Genette is somewhat conflicted in his view of notes: "hatred of notes is one of the most
unchanging stereotypes of a certain anti-intellectual Poujadism" (319). Even Genette,
though, knows that such comments can only be "said in a note" (319).

fairly common. Footnotes are frequently seen as an interruption to the "enjoyable" part

of the story. In fictional narratives especially, they often go unnoticed; when they are

recognized, they are often dismissed as incidental to the story. Even scholarly editors,

the one group we might expect to have a vested interest in notes, have been known to

overlook the important role that footnotes can play in fictional narratives.[3] Footnotes, at

least in fiction, get no respect.[4] My argument in this dissertation, however, is that

footnotes—and their modern cousin, endnotes—frequently play a significant role in the

progression of narrative fiction, often extending the boundaries of the narrative frame,

introducing new heuristic models for interpretation, and offering alternative narrative

threads for the reader to unravel. While it may be true that footnotes require us to go

downstairs to answer the door, one never knows who might be knocking, let alone how

their arrival may influence what happens when one returns upstairs.

Footnotes and endnotes fall under the category of what Genette calls paratexts.

Briefly, paratexts are the elements of a book—publisher's information, title, name of the

author, dedications, prefaces, epigraphs, chapter divisions, and, of course, notes—that

enable "a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers" (*Paratexts* 1).

These elements exist at the threshold or boundary of the text. In order to account for the

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[3] For an interesting example of this type of editorial decision, see the Norton Critical
Edition of Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. In this edition, Sterne's notes are barely
distinguished from the editorial notes. In fact, Sterne's notes are interspersed and
numbered sequentially with the editorial notes.

[4] A number of recent works have sought to elevate and honor the scholarly footnote, but
little has been done in the realm of the fictional footnote. See Anthony Grafton, *The
Footnote: A Curious History* and Chuck Zerby, *The Devil's Details: A History of
Footnotes*.

various relationships of the paratexts to the text, Genette also distinguishes between two levels of paratexts: peritexts (paratexts located in the same volume or physical space as the text itself) and epitexts (paratexts located at a distance from the text). Peritexts and epitexts can carry with them a great deal of illocutionary force, communicating a piece of information, making known an intention or interpretation by the author, conveying a decision, committing the text to a genre definition, offering advice, and so on (*Paratexts* 2-11). They can also originate from a number of sources (editors, publishers, authors, translators, etc.), and appear at various points in time, either prior to publication (advertisements), at the point of publication, and at any point after publication. Paratexts in Genette's formulation, then, can perform a number of functions, exist in any number of spatial and temporal configurations in relationship to the text, and originate from a variety of possible sources.

In the end, Genette is primarily interested in the material conditions of publication, conditions that can have a range of influences on any particular interpretation of any particular text. He is less interested, for example, in the type of paratexts that are part of the narrative frame. In fact, Genette makes a relatively clear distinction between the inside and outside: the text constitutes the internal frame and the elements external to that frame are the paratexts.[5] Thus, for example, publication information is external; a first sentence such as "I owe the discovery of Uqbar to the conjunction of a mirror and an

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[5] For my limited purposes here, the phrases narrative frame and internal frame are meant to be synonymous with Genette's use of the term "text" (or the phrase "literary text"), though I appreciate that there are many competing definitions of the word 'text' that would not line up quite as well.

encyclopedia" is internal. Genette's distinction, however, does not fit the phenomenon of notes very well, since notes are both internal and not part of the body of the text. For lack of a better phrase, I am calling notes of this sort artificial or fictional paratexts in order to distinguish them from Genette's concept of paratext. The phrase "fictional paratexts" originates with Genette, but is not without problems as it does not distinguish between paratexts that are in a fictional narrative (as opposed to a nonfiction narrative) and paratexts such as notes that are internal to the narrative frame. As I am interested in examining only fictional narratives, I will use the term interchangeably with the term "artificial paratexts" to represent the mimicking of paratextual features—notes, prefaces, indexes, etc.—within the fictional frame. The scope and context for the argument of my dissertation, then, are fictional texts that employ artificial paratexts.

Since one of the key distinctions I am making involves the use of paratexts within the narrative frame, I am primarily interested in how this use affects the communication between the author and the authorial audience, as well as between the narrator(s) and narrative audience. If we consider narratives to be rhetorical devices meant to communicate particular effects to readers, as Wayne Booth, James Phelan, Peter Rabinowitz and others have argued, the techniques and devices employed by authors all have an impact on this communication. My questions about artificial paratexts are an attempt to understand narratives in rhetorical terms and artificial paratexts as rhetorical devices. Why do authors choose to use artificial paratexts? What are the heuristic and illocutionary effects of artificial paratexts? What is the relationship between artificial paratexts and the more traditional paratexts as defined by Genette? Do artificial paratexts

necessarily foreground the self-reflexive or metafictional aspects of narrative? How do artificial paratexts fit into the author/authorial audience, narrator/narrative audience dynamic? How are we to read these paratextual devices in the context of the narrative frame? What impact do they have on the mimetic, thematic, and synthetic components of character development? And, finally, what effect do artificial paratexts have on the progression and development of a narrative? Because the number of questions raised by the use of artificial paratexts is large, this dissertation will focus primarily on the issue of narrative progression, a focus that will also help address many of the other questions as well.

In order to answer the question about narrative progression, I will be relying on the work of a number of narrative theorists, including Phelan and Rabinowitz. While neither Phelan nor Rabinowitz discusses paratexts directly, their work is an important framework for understanding how artificial paratexts function within fictional narratives. Phelan's analysis of narrative progression and character development is especially important to this study, as are Rabinowitz's models of the authorial and narrative audiences and his discussion of the rules of reading. The issue of narrative progression as it relates to artificial paratexts depends on how a narrative introduces and develops tensions, instabilities, and narrative configurations. As such, artificial paratexts can help establish, complicate, and resolve (or resist the resolution of) narrative instabilities and tensions, just as they can alter our expectations of narrative development. Following Phelan and Rabinowitz, my contention is that authors configure their texts in particular ways with the goal of achieving particular effects. In using these artificial paratexts,

however, writers often make the choice to locate key interpretive strategies and pieces of information in elements of the narrative that frequently go unheeded. In this way, authors often use artificial paratexts to develop new kinds of narrative progression that offer readers who attend to them new kinds of reading experiences.

In order to develop this argument, I first examine the ways paratexts—footnotes and notes in general—have been utilized in various fictional narratives. Thus, in Chapter Two, I develop a typology of paratexts with an emphasis on footnotes and endnotes. While it may seem that notes of this sort are a relatively modern invention, the footnote, especially, has long and distinguished tradition in the novel. Early examples from Laurence Sterne, Jonathan Swift, and Sir Walter Scott stand alongside modern examples from John Fowles, Vladimir Nabokov, and Manuel Puig. I show that artificial paratexts can be a variety of types, such as factual, interpretive, and narrative. Notes can also originate from a number of sources, including what Genette calls allographic sources (editors, publishers, translators, etc.), authors, and narrators. Though the typology discusses all kinds of paratextual notes, the emphasis is on artificial paratexts, and as such the chapter is meant to give a broad context to the types of artificial paratexts I begin to explore in the next chapter.

In Chapter Three, I outline a rhetorical model for understanding how footnotes and other artificial paratexts function in narrative fiction. Looking at brief examples from J. D. Salinger, Susanna Clarke, John Dickson Carr, and others, I examine the claim by Shari Benstock that the primary function of footnotes in fiction is "to call attention to the author and reader on textual grounds" (205). While notes can serve to make the authorial

presence known, they also function in fictional texts to bolster the mimetic qualities of a narrative, to foreground the synthetic qualities of a narrative, or to introduce new models of narrative progression that are dependent on a necessary dialogue between notes and body text. Building on the work of Phelan and Rabinowitz, I show how notes often perform a balancing act between mimetic and synthetic functions as part of their role in narrative progression.

In the next two chapters, I look closely at two extensive uses of artificial paratexts, one in the short fiction of Jorge Luis Borges, and the other in Vladimir Nabokov's novel, *Pale Fire*. In much of their fiction, each of these writers constructs an implicit theoretical model of reading and interpretation that is dependent on artificial paratexts. Borges uses footnotes in seventeen of his short stories, though in many ways all of his early fiction functions as the commentary on non-existent works of fiction.[6] In *Pale Fire*, Nabokov uses the device of artificial paratexts to play with the very form of fictional narrative, as he constructs a novel in the form of a critical edition of a poem. I explore the issue of narrative progression in the work of both writers, showing that each develops a complex, innovative narrative progression that foregrounds both mimetic and synthetic functions. In the concluding chapter of the dissertation, I posit a number of extensions to my analysis thus far. Looking at the works of Manual Puig and the hypertext fiction of Stuart Moulthrop, I explore how some contemporary writers have taken up artificial paratexts, and suggest that our understanding of intertextuality,

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[6] See the Foreword to the collection of short stories entitled *The Garden of Forking Paths*, Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*: 67.

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metafiction, and hypertext fiction can be enhanced by a nuanced understanding of artificial paratexts.

Ultimately, then, this dissertation is as much about the rhetorical function of narrative as it is about artificial paratexts. The questions I raise in the context of these paratextual forms are intimately connected to the notions of narrative progression, character development, and discourse analysis. But just as these theoretical constructs provide a framework for understanding artificial paratexts, the effort to understand those paratexts expands, and in some cases, revises, these theoretical constructs. Consequently, my study should have implications not only for our understanding of narratives that employ artificial paratexts, but also for the rhetorical theory of narrative and for other narratives that employ a non-traditional form.

CHAPTER 2

PARATEXTS IN FICTION

> The footnotes to the story, the place where all the secrets could be unearthed, the place where the true story could be deciphered and the sum of the subject's life could eventually be tallied.
> — Diane Schoemperlen, "Innocent Objects"

2.1. At the Foot of the Path

Early on in Neal Stephenson's novel, *Cryptonomicon*, readers encounter a slightly unexpected and odd feature of the text. Stephenson, known for his cyberpunk/science fiction novels *Snow Crash* and *The Diamond Age*, explores a slightly different literary terrain in *Cryptonomicon*, a historical novel about cryptography and information systems. On page twenty-two, in a paragraph describing one of the novel's main characters, Lawrence Waterhouse, an asterisk in the middle of a sentence refers the reader to a footnote. In this case, the character happens to be a fictional character, though many of Stephenson's characters in the novel are based on historical personages. The sentence that initiates the note is a somewhat crude description of a soldier living a soldier's life in the South Pacific during World War II: "Waterhouse did some penis work of his own, got the clap, had it cured,* bought condoms" (*Cryptonomicon* 22). The note offers a mischievous gloss to the somewhat brusque description:

Though the footnote—one of eighteen footnotes in the novel—is short, to the point, and overall fairly simple, it raises a number of questions: Who wrote the note? The author? The narrator? An editor? From whose perspective or focalization is the note written? Is the note Stephenson's attempt to avoid the narrator and communicate directly with the reader? Why include this particular piece of information? Does this fact tell us something about Waterhouse and his degree of carefulness (i.e., he would not have experimented sexually if injectable penicillin had not become available that year)? Or, does it tell us something about his degree of luck (i.e., wasn't he lucky that he began experimenting in 1940, a good year to be a young soldier in the South Pacific)? Why annotate this descriptive detail and not one of the many other places in the beginning of the novel that might be unfamiliar to the reader, of which there are many? Is there something about the overt and rather crude sexual nature of the sentence that suggests its need for a gloss? Is there something about 1940 medicine that we, as readers attempting to occupy what Peter Rabinowitz has called the authorial audience, need to know? Does the note carry with it implications about who Stephenson expects his audience to be? Is the note an annotation to the sentence or a justification for it? And, ultimately, why include this information in a note and not in the body text?[7]

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[7] By body of the text, I mean the area within the margins of the page, excluding paratexts as defined by Genette (1997).

Another note that appears later in the novel raises even more questions. When the internally focalized, heterodiegetic narrator uses a derogatory term for the Japanese, the note offers a defense of sorts:[8]

> But towards the end of 1940, what with the Nips[*] basically running all of northeast China now, the politicians back in D.C. had finally thrown in the towel and told the China Marines not to steam up the Yangtze any more.
> _____
> [*]As the Nipponese were invariably called by Marines, who never used a three-syllable word where a three-letter one would do. (*Cryptonomicon* 33)

As with the first note, this note raises a number of questions about voice, focalization, and origination, but this note also foregrounds what we might call ethical concerns for us as readers and for Stephenson as the author. It seems most likely that the phrase "Nips" is meant to be associated with the focalizing character, another rough and ready Marine in the South Pacific, Bobby Shaftoe. Why then does the narrator feel the need to defend his or more likely Shaftoe's use of the term? Is the narrator attempting to soften Shaftoe's character, showing that he is not really a racist, just a Marine like any other Marine, prizing efficiency over sensitivity, as if this was enough to justify his racial slur? If so, why? Does it matter if this particular character is a racist? If so, is the narrator concerned about the character's reception by readers? Or is Stephenson concerned about the novel's reception if it comes to light that there are characters in it who are less than politically correct? This last point seems to be supported by Stephenson's answer to a

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[8] Where it is useful to cite both the body text and the note together, I will separate the body text from the note with a short horizontal line. Additionally, I will follow the formatting of the original note (symbols, numbers, letters, roman numerals, etc.) where possible.

question about the novel's use of racial slurs, included in a Frequently Asked Questions

(FAQ) section at the back of the electronic version of the novel:

> The concept of racial sensitivity had not been dreamed up yet in the World War II era, and so the characters see the world, and express themselves, accordingly. To me this seems more constructive than presenting a sugarcoated view of history, and the fact that the single most admirable character in the whole book is Japanese should put to rest suspicions about my motives. However, people who object to, e.g., *Huck Finn* on the ground that it contains racial slurs may want to avoid *Cryptonomicon*. (1147 electronic version)

Reading the footnote after having read Stephenson's response to a query about political

correctness raises the question, does Stephenson use the note to soothe (or at least to

attempt to soothe) potential critics of his use of racial epithets? If so, does he believe the

note is enough to justify his use of the derogatory term? There is a great deal riding on

our interpretation of this note. This simple note carries with it a significant amount of

ethical and interpretive power. As we will see, notes in fictional narratives perform many

complex functions. For many writers, they become foundational structures for the entire

narrative dynamic, developing narrative progression, strengthening claims to realistic

representation, foregrounding the metafictional aspects, and as we saw in Stephenson's

example, raising complex ethical questions.

    As literary scholars, we are all more or less familiar with the scholarly footnote

and endnote.[9] At this point in the history of literary scholarship, notes are as ubiquitous

in texts of critical theory as they are in historical studies and the social sciences.

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[9] The shift from footnotes to endnotes over the course of the past two centuries, not to mention the more devaluing of notes in general in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, has led some to lament the loss of the footnote. See Hilbert; Zerby.

Footnotes and endnotes that exist as part of the internal logic of the narrative are more uncommon in literary works and not without their critics. In her 1983 analysis of footnotes in fiction, Shari Benstock remarks that one can probably only find footnotes in a handful of fictional works (204). While relatively atypical, notes of this sort are more common than Benstock suggests, and they have become even more so in the twenty plus years since her article. As the admittedly incomplete list in *Appendix A* shows, the number of fictional works that utilize notes as part of the internal narrative dynamic is larger than we might first think. Despite the fact that they are used regularly, notes are often overlooked by readers and critics, even in the more well-known works listed in the Appendix. Ask a student of literature how many works she knows of that have footnotes or endnotes and she might name a handful. David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest* may come to mind, with its hundreds of endnotes. Some might recall a note or two in Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, or even that Melville's *Moby Dick*, famous for its pedantic discussion of cetology, uses footnotes sprinkled throughout the novel to inform the reader of the practices aboard nineteenth-century whaling vessels. Readers of modernist and postmodernist works might name Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and *Ada, or Ardor*, and, of course, many of the stories of Jorge Luis Borges.

But there are many others. There are notes in works as varied as Dostoyevsky's *Notes from Underground*, John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Ishmael Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo*, William Gass's *Willie Masters' Lonesome Wife*, Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman*, and J.D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey*. Students of the historical

novel might remember that William T. Vollmann's *Fathers and Crows* and *The Ice Shirt*

follow in the tradition of Sir Walter Scott's *Waverly*, but many new hybrid historical

novels, such as Lawrence Norfolk's *In the Shape of a Boar*, include extensive notes as do

the more popular adventure/historical novels of H. Rider Haggard and George

MacDonald Fraser. A die-hard science fiction fan might know of dozens of works, from

Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* series to Douglas Adams's *A Hitchhiker's Guide to the*

Galaxy. Fantasy fans need look no further than *The Lord of Rings*,[10] though many other

works fill the ticket, including the works of Joseph Stroud, Edgar Rice Burroughs, and all

thirty plus novels in Terry Pratchett's Discworld series. Mystery readers will find notes

in just as many works, from the pulp fiction of Stephanie Barron's *Jane and the*

Unpleasantness at Scargrave Manor to John Dickson Carr's *The Nine Wrong Answers*

and Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. Nicholson Baker, Jasper Fforde, Michael

Chabon, and Mark Dunn all carry on the tradition of crossing genre boundaries with

fictional notes.

Linking in hypertext fiction has also often been compared with notes, suggesting

a future for notes that is dynamic and digital. Of interest in this context is Sarah Smith's

Chasing Shakespeares, which does not include notes for the novel in the book but rather

includes them on the novel's web site. Commenting on the oddity of adding citations to

her work, she introduces the notes in the following manner:

> I have a lot of first-reader friends who have done more graduate
> work than is good for them. When they looked at *Chasing Shakespeares*,
> they all wanted to know more about the background. Did Cecil really do

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[10] Almost all of J.R.R. Tolkien's works contain notes.

that? Who said so? Did I know I was quoting Donne, not Shakespeare? (Well, duh, of course I did.) And what about that poem?

"It's a novel, guys," I said. "What do you want, like footnotes or something? That's like writing a novel about the Titanic and asking for a lot more about the iceberg." (Smith)

Of course, as with all things digital related to writing and literature, the relationship between footnotes and hypertext is not without problems. Chuck Zerby suggests:

the art of annotation is stretched into shapelessness when made analogous to the exuberant cross-referencing, list making, and site linking that occur on a Web crisscrossed with blinking, neonlike come-ons for insurance companies and astrologers and auctions and weather reports and everything else under the digital sun. The footnote either becomes so new an entity on the Web that it ceases to be a footnote or stays so much the same old footnote that it is likely to be overlooked amid the digital glitter. (Zerby 146-46)

In the end, regardless of the text or medium, notes in fictional narratives owe their origin to the scholarly note. As we will see throughout this dissertation, the function and effect of notes in fictional texts are aligned closely with the function and effect of scholarly notes in nonfiction narratives. At its most basic level, the scholarly note serves a number of purposes. It acts as a commentary on the text to which it is tied and it provides references to sources cited in the text, connecting one text to many others. In practice, scholarly notes give legitimacy to a text. They cite authority and in doing so they grant authority to a text by association, by its references, by its external corroboration, and by its visible indication of the necessary work of a scholar to be familiar with all of the sources relevant to her work. Physically, the scholarly note exists in the margins of the text, whether at the bottom, separated from the text by font and figure, or at the end, in a collection of endnotes hidden away from all but the most

intrepid hermeneutic explorers. Because the note exists at the boundaries of the text, it is

to the boundaries of the text, or paratexts, that we must now turn.

2.2. Paratexts

The physical form of the book has become so familiar that we often ignore many

of its most distinctive features. Every written or otherwise published work of fiction,

whether short story, novel, novella, or hypertext narrative is packaged in such a way as to

distinguish what we might call the "text" from the material meant to identify, introduce,

contextualize, and, at least in contemporary economies, market the work. A published

work might include an author's name, a title, sometimes a preface or other introductory

material, copyright information, a dedication, a jacket blurb, notes, an index, and even

generic definition (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, history, etc.). These features are, as often

as not, created by editors or publishing teams, and yet these elements can greatly

influence how readers approach a particular text, including the meaning they ultimately

take away from it. On the one hand, these features are distinct from the text proper; on

the other hand, they help to define the text itself. Some of these elements can change

from edition to edition or from medium to medium.[11] Some works only include a select

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[11] Hypertext versions of print texts have created interesting scenarios where notes found
in print editions do not always show up in free, online text archives. In some cases, the
notes that are removed are the author's or narrator's notes and are intended components
of a text. For example, in some online editions of Melville's *Moby Dick*, the notes are
removed completely (see Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, Available:
http://www.princeton.edu/~batke/moby/moby-1.html, 25 July 2005.) In others, the notes
appear at the end of the web page, disassociated from the textual reference (see Herman
Melville, *Moby Dick*, U of Virginia Library, Available:
http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/Mel2Mob.html, 25 July 2005.)

number of paratexts, those necessary for identification but not contextualization. While

few would argue for the absolute constituent nature of most paratexts, it is clear paratexts

serve multiple purposes: "they surround [a text] and extend it, precisely in order to

present it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to *make present*,

to ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception; and consumption in the form

(nowadays, at least) of a book" (Genette *Paratexts* 1).

Take, for example, the title of a book. The title introduces certain information to

the reader well before the reader has started the narrative proper. While a study of the

role of the title in determining meaning is well beyond the scope of this dissertation (or

even Genette's exhaustive study), the title is a good example of a paratextual element that

can have a significant impact on the reader's understanding of a text. Titles can clarify

and titles can obscure. Mary Louis Pratt argues that titles often function as the abstract of

the novel, inviting the "hearer to commit himself to playing the role of narrative

audiences" (60). Abstracts within Pratt's concept of natural narrative also "encapsulate

the point of the story" (45). Similarly, Umberto Eco explains in his Postscript to *The

Name of the Rose*, published three years after the original novel but now included in

many editions—a paratext in its own right—the title has a direct influence on the reader.

As such, Eco chose a title that was evocative while not being constraining: "A narrator

should not supply interpretations of his work; otherwise he would not have written a

novel, which is a machine for interpretations. But one of the chief obstacles to his

maintaining this virtuous principle is the fact that the novel must have a title. A title,

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unfortunately, is in itself a key to interpretation" (504). Instead of choosing a title that

leads his readers in one direction or another, Eco chooses ambiguity:

> The idea of calling my book *The Name of the Rose* came to me virtually
> by chance, and I like it because the rose is a symbolic figure so rich in
> meanings that by now it hardly has any meaning left . . . . The title rightly
> disoriented the reader, who was unable to choose just one interpretation;
> and even if he were to catch the possible nominalist readings of the
> concluding version, he would come to them only at the end, having
> previously made God only knows what other choices. A title must muddle
> the reader's ideas, not regiment them. (505)

Eco chose to resist the role of the title as abstract, but despite his best efforts, the title has

become one of the key and enduring conundrums in the years since the novel's

publication.

Beyond the title, other paratextual information also plays an important role in the

reading process. The name of the author—or the lack of a name in the case of

anonymous texts—is a significant element in defining the book. An informed reader of

Eco's novel, for example, might give great interpretive weight to the fact that it was

written by a professor of semiotics. While the novel contains many references to sign

theory, Eco's professional identity can work to make those references all the more

visible. This type of anterior and external information, what Genette calls the "epitexts,"

can have a significant effect on the reading of a text. Eco's "other" profession casts an

aura about the novel that can directly influence those readers familiar with his work or his

reputation. While the novel can be read without much knowledge of semiotics, those

who understand the basic tenets of semiotics are more likely to see the issues Eco

incorporates into his text, and those who are familiar with Eco's profession as a

semiotician may assign greater value to these concepts than others. Even if we avoid the

question of authorial intent for the moment the name of an author can carry with it a cultural value that can direct a reader's attention from the point of choosing a book to read to the interpretive process that we all undergo as we read. How many readers have chosen to read Dan Brown's earlier works because of the recent popularity and success of *The Da Vinci Code*?

There are many other paratextual components that Genette discusses, from the publisher's information—readers of critical theory often find themselves influenced to some degree by the academic press in which a book is published—to the dedication, genre definition, prefaces, external, post-publication epitexts, notes, and indices. While there are a variety of different types of paratexts that define the boundaries of a text differently, each of which can have an influence on the overall impact of a text on a reader, this dissertation will focus on paratexts that authors have intentionally manipulated in order to control the internal progression and development of their narratives. I call these elements artificial paratexts, and I am particularly concerned with the use of notes—footnotes and endnotes—and to a lesser degree, prefaces and indexes as artificial paratexts. While many newer novels have gone so far as to parody even the most elemental paratextual information—consider the copyright page of Mark Danielewski's *House of Leaves* or the inside cover directions for reading in *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth*—there is a long tradition of authors of fiction co-opting the preface, the index, and most often, the various types of footnotes and endnotes to help tell their story. The frontispiece, the title, the book jacket, the publishing information, advertising, or other peritexts and epitexts are all significant elements, but

spatial and rhetorical devices such as notes, prefaces, and indexes have all been used by writers to direct their readers towards particular interpretive strategies or conclusions.

While paratexts define the limits of a text, one significant difference between most other paratexts and the note, is that notes can be situated within the narrative frame just as easily as they can exist on the cusps of the narrative. They can be located anterior to the main narrative; they can be located within the text; and they can come at the end of the text, after the end of the main narrative. Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Lolita* is a perfect example of the use of a paratextual "preface" that functions external to Humbert Humbert's narrative but is also a necessary and internal part of the overall narrative structure. Without Ray's Foreword, we would not know that Humbert has died in prison—"'Humbert Humbert,' their author, had died in legal captivity, of coronary thrombosis, on November 16, 1952, a few days before his trial was scheduled to start" (3)—a key piece of information that has a significant impact on how we read the rest of Humbert's narrative.[12] Ray's Foreword mimics the function of a traditional preface, but given the fact that we as readers know—from other clues, such as authorial inscription on the title page—that Ray is not the author, the Foreword is an important element in the development of the narrative's progression, even if it only functions, at first, to create a tension for the readers who wonder whether or not the preface is fictional and part of the narrative, written by someone other than Nabokov; or whether it is, as it appears, a

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[12] We also learn that Lolita has died as well, but this information is hidden for first-time readers, as we are only told the "Mrs. 'Richard F. Schiller' died in childbed" (4); Lolita's marriage to Schiller and subsequent name change does not come until very near the end of the novel (262).

epitextual and allographic element, written by an external voice, providing editorial evidence of the true nature of the narrative we have before us.

On the other hand, readers who pick up Alfred Appel's *The Annotated Lolita* might be forgiven for thinking that Nabokov's "On a Book Entitled *Lolita*" is part of the novel:

Contents

Figure 1: Table of Contents from *The Annotated Lolita*

Published in 1957, a year before the American publication of the novel, the short article on the novel was originally intended to accompany a heavily excerpted edition of the

novel published in *The Anchor Review*. Appel notes that the Afterword has since been

published with most editions of *Lolita* (453). Given its clearly distinct status from the

novel itself, it is somewhat odd that the Afterword is listed at the same indented level as

the other parts of the novel (the Foreword, Part One, and Part Two), underneath the title

of the novel (see Figure 1). In a novel that plays with paratexts to great effect, Appel's

Table of Contents adds to Nabokov's game. Nabokov makes an indirect reference to this

problem in the Afterword itself:

> After doing my impersonation of suave John Ray, the character in *Lolita*
> who pens the Foreword, any comments coming straight from me may
> strike one—may strike me, in fact—as an impersonation of Vladimir
> Nabokov talking about his own book. A few points, however, have to be
> discussed; and the autobiographic device may induce mimic and model to
> blend. (311)

In this instance, Ray's Forward and Nabokov's thoughts on the novel create what we

might call, following Jacques Derrida, a supplemental narrative path.

In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida criticizes Rousseau's analysis of writing in his

Essay on the Origin of Languages. In this work, Rousseau suggests that writing is a

"dangerous supplement" for speech if it is seen as a replacement for speech (141-64).

Because of the absence of the speaker/writer, a written text cannot only subvert the

original intention of the spoken word, but the intention cannot be recovered as much as

one might try in writing. Writing, in this context, can corrupt the original intention of

any particular use of language as it is ideally represented in speech. Derrida argues that

Rousseau's suggestion that writing is simply a representation of speech is problematic.

According to Derrida, writing does not necessarily come after speech in any one act of

communication. Derrida co-opts the term supplement, relying on both its meanings to

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replace something that is lacking and to add to something on top of what is already in place. Writing is a supplement in that it can both support speech and enhance it. Unlike Rousseau who focuses on the absences that writing represents—an absent speaker— Derrida argues that writing can actually create a presence for an absent speaker, thus reversing the paradigm of absence/presence long held as the weakness of writing. The key point for this particular discussion of paratexts is that notes, indices, and other paratextual information are often seen as supplementary—and therefore unnecessary—to the narrative in which they occur. Following Derrida's use of the term supplement, I would argue that in many texts notes are in fact necessary elements of the overall narrative, even when they do not appear to have an immediate relationship to the story, progression, or character development. Notes are both additional and necessary components in many narratives.

2.3. The Footnote

The footnote is the scholarly note *par excellence*, and thus will serve as the primary focus of this study. Footnotes precede the implementation of endnotes by many years,[13] and to this day remain the object of both praise (Zerby), middling respect (Grafton), and at times scorn. The footnote is a device that could only come after the printing press introduced conventions in the format and layout of a printed book, but its ancestry clearly lies in the illuminated manuscript. The printing press may have enabled

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[13] The history of the endnote is equally unclear, but Zerby suggests that readers and authors alike often pressured publishers to move the notes to the end of the work where they would not interrupt the flow of the text.

the defined structure of the footnote (and eventually the endnote), but notes and annotations have a long tradition in written texts. Marginalia and other notes were a standard practice of manuscript illuminators and scribes (Jackson 44-45). Prior to the printing press, manuscripts illuminated by scribes and monks all followed the rough format of their predecessors, but notes, marginalia, and illustrations varied widely and tended to follow the whims of the scribe and the availability of space.

> Scholars of the Middle Ages were just as choleric as their later colleagues, but their disagreements, their anger, could be easily expressed in manuscripts by handwritten comments inserted directly into the text or scrawled in the left or right margins. It was the printed book that brought a need for order and predictability, space allocation, and the formal apparatus of reference marks. (Zerby 18)

Somewhere in the transition between the illuminated manuscript and the printed book made possible by Gutenberg's fifteenth-century invention, the first footnote appeared. The footnote was an extension of this annotative practice.

According to Chuck Zerby, the precise origin of the first footnote is difficult to uncover. He traces the origin of the footnote to early print editions of the Bible but only after a great deal of guesswork and fictional flourish; he believes the first footnote still remains to be uncovered. The first footnote, Zerby hypothesizes, arose out of a problem with space: how do you fit seven annotations in the margins when only five will fit? The story as Zerby tells goes something like this: sometime around 1568, a period early in the development of Gutenberg's printing press, Richard Jugge, the Queen's Printer, ran into a problem with the new edition of the Bishops' Bible, a heavily annotated edition meant to counter the Calvinist version of the Bible, which had become popular and potentially dangerous to the established Protestant Church in England at the time. Rather than

simply wrap the notes down around the bottom—as might have been done in an illuminated manuscript or as was, in fact, done in the Geneva Bible, Jugge's direct competition—Jugge choose to find a better, more elegant solution. Taking notes (f) and (g), Jugge separated the notes, providing for them their own space, marking them as distinct from the body of the text, while at the same time finding a method for representing notes that was novel and clean. This latter point is crucial, as it was an imposed condition of the new Bible and the financial success of the Bible for Jugge: the "Bishops' Bible was intended to be as much about decorum as about doctrine" (Zerby 22).

As Zerby notes, Jugge's footnote was a convenience, a simple solution to a problem of space and design forced upon him by the constraints of the political and religious context, as well as the financial system in which his Bible was being produced. In this respect, the footnote owes its origins as much to materialist conditions of production as to intellectual rigor. In fact, it was some time before the footnote became a tool for scholarship or "humanistic aside" (Zerby 39) separate from church doctrine. When the note was taken up by people such as Pierre Bayle, Edward Gibbon, and Leopold von Ranke, it took on new meaning as a device of scholarship and rhetorical value. Gibbon's notes extended his massive *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in a manner that made him famous and infamous at the same time. "To know Gibbon's footnotes is to know Gibbon the man" (Zerby 81). Interestingly enough, despite the recognized value of the notes in Gibbon's famous history, the abridged edition of Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was reduced in

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size by removing almost all of the footnotes, which account for fully one quarter of the

original text: "Nearly one fourth of the original *Decline and Fall* consists of footnotes,

which D. M. Low aptly calls Gibbon's 'table talk.' Nearly all of them had to go; but only

a lover of Gibbon will understand the pain involved in their deletion, and how hard it was

to choose the few that could remain" (Gibbon 23). In the nineteenth century, the footnote

reached the pinnacle of its artistic form in the works of Ranke. According to Grafton, it

is with Ranke that modern historical scholarship begins. Ranke's success is not in

providing footnotes to secondary sources but in using the footnote to mark primary

sources, or in practicing "scientific history"—rather than, presumably, narrative history—

a history that relies on facts from other documents and sources:

> The presence or the absence of references, quotations and footnotes is so
> much a sign that a document is serious or not that you can transform a fact
> into a fiction or fiction into fact just by adding or subtracting references
> . . . . A paper that does not have references is like a child without an escort
> walking at night in a big city it does not know: isolated, lost, anything may
> happen to it. (Latour 33)

Zerby's text is a tribute to the footnote—"A text sometimes is something only a scholar

can love; a footnote, however, is like a blind date, threatening and exciting, dreary

occasionally but often entertaining. And a footnote does not require or expect a long-

term commitment" (14). He finds the note to be a crucial element in historical narratives.

For Grafton, the note is a part of the underbelly of the historical process. His study of the

footnote is much more of an analysis of the note as metonym for the historical process as

represented in the great German historians of the nineteenth century, in particular by

Leopold von Ranke.

Though their allegiance clearly lies with the scholarly tradition, for Zerby as for Grafton, the use of footnotes and endnotes in fictional or poetic contexts is a unique and even challenging feature: "my argument is that the footnote is a dramatic device worthy of any contemporary poet's consideration" (Zerby 133). As I have shown above, notes in literary works have a long history though they are often overlooked components, seen as supplemental to the main text. The seventeenth-century poets Aphra Behn and Alexander Pope all used notes in one form or another to offer critical asides. While Miguel Cervantes did not use notes in *Don Quixote*, the Prologue to the first part acknowledges the importance of notes in scholarly works and laments the lack thereof in his own text:

> coming out now with all my years upon my back, and with a book as dry as a bone, devoid of invention, meager in style, poor in conceits, wholly wanting in learning and doctrine, without quotations in the margin or annotations at the end, after the fashion of other books I see, which, though on fictitious and profane subjects, are so full of maxims from Aristotle and Plato and the whole herd of philosophers that they fill the readers with amazement and convince them that the authors are men of learning, erudition, and eloquence. (10)

Many novels and short stories since Cervantes have utilized the footnote and endnote to great effect. Despite this tradition of co-opting the style and mechanisms of historical discourse, the footnote or endnote in fictional narratives is often overlooked or ignored. As I noted in the introduction, this dissertation seeks to change that situation, and in the next section I will define some of the attributes and functions of the literary footnote.

2.4. Definitions

As I have suggested, notes can exist in a number of different forms and serve a number of functions within a fictional narrative. As a first step towards exploring these functions, I want to introduce a typology of notes in fiction that will serve as the foundational structure for the analysis of the rhetorical effect of notes that occupies the remainder of this dissertation. I have outlined three types of notes defined by function, each with the possibility of having one of three types of senders or writers. It is important to note that the three types of notes—*factual*, *interpretive*, *discursive*—can overlap; the boundaries between them are porous and permeable. These three types of notes can, in turn, originate from one of two types of speakers: allographic speakers (editors and translators)[14] and autographic speakers (authors and narrators) (see Figure 2).

		SOURCES		
		ALLOGRAPHIC	*AUTOGRAPHIC*	
		Editor/Translator	Author	Narrator
TYPES	Factual	Bedford Edition of James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*	Ernesto Sabato, *On Heroes and Tombs*	J. D. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*
	Interpretive	Introduction to *The Annotated Lolita*	Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*	John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*
	Discursive	Introduction to the Norton Critical Edition of Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*	Umberto Eco, Postscript to *The Name of the Rose*	Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire*

Figure 2: Sources and Types of Notes

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[14] I will follow Genette's lead here and use the term "allographic" to refer to a writer who writes something for someone else's work (i.e., an editor, copy editor, scholar, publisher, etc.)

Identifying both authors and narrators as autographic is somewhat of a categorical convenience, since narrators are clearly written by authors. While there is a significant difference between paratexts originating from the author and paratexts that originate with the narrator, in both cases the author constructs a narrating proxy. In one case, the author's proxy takes on the appearance of the author and becomes one aspect of what narratology has called the implied author. In the other case, the proxy is a narrator, whether homodiegetic or heterodiegetic, and speaks from a different representational consciousness. Of course, the distinction is not always so clear, as we will see. Some authors will use this distinction to introduce speakers into the narrative frame who appear in the guise of the author. In these cases, the author-figure may have information that the narrator does not, while at the same time it may still be useful to distinguish between the real author and the author-figure who appears as a speaker within the narrative frame. Because of these many variances, this chart is meant to be suggestive, not rigidly defined, as many notes cross boundaries between the types listed below and most works that utilize notes include multiple types of notes throughout their narrative. As this dissertation progresses, I will also discuss other issues, including the relationship of the notes to the primary text (real, apocryphal), as well as order and frequency of notes.

2.4.1 Factual Notes

The general function of the factual note is to provide a particular piece of information to the reader at a particular point in time, most often as supporting evidence

for the fact being represented in the main text. Factual notes can take many different

forms, including:

Definitional notes

> Perhaps they had stolen a monstrance.°
> _____
>
> °monstrance: vessel of precious metal in which the host is displayed.
> (Joyce 52)

Explanatory notes

> These lamentations did not exclude suspicion, and matters were so
> represented to Government, that our Chieftain was deprived of his military
> command.[*]
> _____
>
> [*] Note K. Highland policy. (Scott *Waverly* 158)

Intertextual notes

> . . . its voice, rarely heard, is like that of the Baptist himself, a voice crying
> in the wilderness.[66]
> _____
>
> 66. John 1:19-23. (Lachman 46)

Historical notes

> But not before banishing the person I believe you seek to the realms of
> Cush.[2]
> _____
>
> 2 . . . Cush, the short-lived but glorious 25th or "Ethiopian" Dynasty of
> Egypt (728-664 B.C.E.) eventually ceded Lower Egypt but continued to
> rule in the Sudan, first at Napata (653 to 525 B.C.E) until trouble with the
> Persians moved them farther south up the Nile to Meroe (near modern-day
> Kjartoum). (Barnhardt 687)

There are other types of factual notes as well (translations, intratextual, etc.), not to

mention hybrids that combine features of each. Factual notes—at least in their

allographic form—can be found in virtually any edited edition of a novel or short story.

On the other hand, factual notes within the internal narrative frame are much less

common, though they pose interesting problems for the narrative dynamic. I will begin by looking at allographic factual notes.

<u>Allographic Factual Notes</u>

In one respect, allographic factual notes function in much the same way that a footnote in a traditional historical narrative might function. They provide sources, details, and legitimacy. The purpose of providing factual information in a fictional narrative is often much the same as the purpose in providing factual information in a historical document.   We translate terms to provide clarity and to communicate information, but we also do so to engage readers. Depending on the source or sender, factual notes in fiction are often suspect, and one of the effects of these types of notes is to strengthen or weaken the mimetic qualities of the novel. There are notes that refer to real things; notes that are factual in representation that refer to fictitious things; notes that are fictional in representation that refer to real things, suggesting an unreliability in the narrator; and, of course, fictional notes to fictional things. Some notes mimic the role of the other notes. A factual note that can be proven to be true by a reader bolsters the realistic effect of the narrative, as does a note than can never be proven to be true or false, such as in the case of science fiction, where the reader agrees to believe in the verity of a factual reference, assuming all other signs suggest the reader should take the speaker of the note to be reliable. The assumption in these notes is that the notes are in fact truthful and we therefore proceed on faith that the context for the fictional account is realistic to some degree. In other words, the notes can create a sense of dimension in an overtly

fictional world, heightening our willingness to suspend our sense of disbelief and read

from the position of the narrative audience. Notes that are clearly false, however,

foreground the constructed nature of the narrative. While the other types of notes

mentioned above can also foreground a text's fictionality, factual notes that are overtly

false create a very distinct tension in relation to the reality and reliability of the narrative

voice in the notes.[15] If notes function as the structural borders of a text, they also support

the text to a degree, and when the notes are obviously false, our sense of security in the

narrative is less than stable. The Editor's Note that is written by an invented editor to

suggest a layering within the text that is not necessarily there, imitates an extratextual

element when in reality it is an intratextual element. Much depends on the origin of the

note, though, as we saw with Nabokov, authors will play with convention and mimic

roles to establish a particular rhetorical effect.

In an edited work, the most common type of factual note is the note inserted by an

editor or other writer. Virtually every edited edition of a literary work includes notes

written by someone other than the author. Consider, for example, Mary Shelley's

Frankenstein. When the Frankenstein monster is recounting his unfortunate

"relationship" with the de Lacy family, he describes the text used by Felix to teach Safie

French as "Volney's *Ruins of Empires*" (80). In the note to the Norton Critical edition,

the editor, J. Paul Hunter, provides the source for the book as "*Les Ruins, ou Meditations*

---

[15] Reality and reliability are not synonymous terms by any means. A reliable narrator can exist in a very unrealistic story and a unreliable narrator can exist in a very realistic narrative. The truth of a factual footnote, though, can call both of these into question at the same time.

sur les revolutions des Empires (1791), by Constantin François Chasseboeuf, comte de Volney (1757-1820)" (80). This reference serves a very basic function and because the note is provided by the editor, it carries with it a particular level of authority. In fact, notes of this sort—verifiable by the reader—help to establish not only the credibility of the author (Shelley is aware of a key text in French that works well for Felix's lessons to Safie) but also that of the editor, whom we trust to give us accurate information. Unless apocryphal, these notes function in the exact same manner as scholarly notes in nonfiction.

Autographic Factual Notes

Autographic factual notes can also be written by the author, either as elements external to the narrative frame or as elements internal to the narrative from a speaker such as a narrator or author-figure. While these notes can function much like allographic factual notes, our sense of their authority and legitimacy is much more complicated. Notes of this sort, when included in fictional texts are not necessarily fictional themselves, though clearly this is not always the case, as examples of "factual" notes can be found in many works of science fiction (e.g., Asimov 3), referencing works, historical events, and people that have never yet existed. Ernesto Sabato's *On Heroes and Tombs* is an illustrative example of authorial notes intended to provide factual information. The novel, which is told in four parts by two different homodiegetic narrators as well as two differently focalized heterodiegetic narrators, tells the story of the murder of a father by his daughter and their relationships with a number of other characters in their extensive

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social circle in Argentina in the 1950s. Sabato utilizes footnotes sparingly throughout the book to explain some potentially unfamiliar terms; terms that were not translated from Spanish with the rest of the text, suggesting a colloquial connotation that would be difficult to translate. For example, a note to the phrase "a savage, icy *pampero*" defines a *pampero* as a "A strong cold wind from the vast pampas to the Southwest. [*Author's Note*]" (54). All of the footnotes in Sabato's text are written in this manner, and do little more than provide factual information. As with most notes of this type, though, they make us all the more aware of the authorial voice present in the text, manipulating the narrative. This is especially the case with the two parts of the narrative told in the first person "Report on the Blind" and "An Unknown God." This last section is told in both homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narration, alternating between focalization on Martin, Alexjandra's lover, and Bruno, the philosophical voice that attempts to understand the pain and suffering that lead to the horrific murder-suicide.

Factual notes by authors create an interesting dynamic in the narrative. On the one hand, in narratives without notes, the reader who does her best to occupy the authorial audience will seek the kind of information often supplied in the factual notes. On the other hand, in narratives with notes, the author explicitly helps the flesh and blood audience that seeks to join the authorial audience: rather than assuming that there are readers out there who will "get it," the author decides to provide information that will help those readers get it. Factual notes can function as scaffolding for the reader. They support the reader as she makes her way through the narrative, offering her pieces of information that might make the details of the narrative clearer. In this respect, the notes

offer the author one more device to guarantee the type of authorial audience she seeks for her narrative. In this respect, the notes become what Evelyn Fishburn, William Rowe, and others have called "reading machines" (2). Since paratexts can help the reader interpret the text as the author intends, they raise interesting questions about authorial intention and communication.

Neal Stephenson's novel *Quicksilver* also includes notes written by the author to explain particular details or historical events to the reader that would be unfamiliar to contemporary readers:

> You reached into the wrong pocket and you pulled out your black money[*]
> ———————————
> [*]Counterfeits made of base metals such as copper and lead. (*Quicksilver* 86)

On the one hand, reading as I might normally, I assume the terms introduced by Stephenson should be familiar to me if I fully occupy the authorial audience. This is what it means to read successfully from the authorial audience. On the other hand, if I assume that these terms are meant to be unclear, I have to ask if this obfuscation is intentional. If it is intentional, then what is the rhetorical effect? If not intentional, what is the effect? It is possible that Stephenson hopes to maintain the mimetic illusion created by his accurate use of eighteenth-century slang, but in using a note in the manner he does, he already breaks the illusion for his readers. One of the assumptions seems to be that both the flesh and blood audience and the authorial audience will know a great deal less than the narrative audience, who would already be privy to the details of the factual note, and that the author must fill in the gaps. In historical fiction of the sort that Stephenson is writing, this type of editorial comment is perfectly reasonable. On the

other hand, what does it mean to assume an authorial audience with a limited narrative perspective? What the note actually does is problematize our narrative categories. What we first assume to be the authorial audience is in actuality another narrative audience. In his analysis of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Phelan argues that the apparent authorial voice that makes an appearance in Chapter Thirteen is, in fact, the narrator's voice, not the voice of the author. What follows is the introduction of a narrator who is playing the part of an author, the author of the narrative we are reading. The implied author's voice is much more difficult to distinguish, in this case, though Phelan shows that the struggles of the narrator to define the thoughts of his characters are clearly not the same as the struggles of the author (*Reading People* 95).

This problem points out a potential inconsistency in all notes that appear to be written by the author but that exist within the narrative frame. These notes are more appropriately seen as notes written by a narrative voice, a narrator that may don the mantle of the author, but who always needs to be seen as separate from the real author. This type of note is written for the narrative audience, or at least one of the narrative audiences. Depending on the perceived reliability of the narrator—and the notes themselves can be used to great effect to establish or abolish a narrator's reliability—the factual note written by a narrator can enhance a reader's sense of the overall reliability of the narrative or detract from it. One curious effect of the factual note written by a narrator is that the dynamic of the medium is changed. If the speaker of the factual note is the narrator, the assumption would then be that the narrator is not speaking his text but writing it. Some novels, such as H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, account for

this oddity by having the narrator establish a context for writing (and thus for the notes). In Haggard's novel, Alan Quatermain lets us know from the beginning that he is writing his account of his adventure in a preface to the text. However, many novels do not establish some mimetic context for this effect and the net result is a breach in narrative structure, even if only a small one.

Umberto Eco, following the example of Borges, includes two notes in the preface to his novel, *The Name of the Rose*. Eco's notes reference two medieval texts, one in French and the other in Latin: *Liber aggregationis seu liber secretorum Alberti Magni* and *Les Admirables Secrets d'Albert le Grand*. These notes, much as the fictitious references in Borges stories, help bolster the story of the narrator who claims to have found Adso's manuscript. Again, it is important to distinguish the effect of the notes at the level of the narrative (i.e., for the narrative audience) and the effect of the notes for the authorial audience. For the narrative audience, the notes provide detail and support, suggesting mimetic authenticity. For the authorial audience, the notes call attention to the synthetic component of the narrative and to Eco's sophisticated play with the semiotics of fiction.

One rather impressive example of heavy use of the factual note is Lawrence Norfolk's *In the Shape of a Boar*, a novel that tells a story that spans three millennia and relies heavily on historical references. Footnotes in Norfolk's novel function in two ways, though they are only used in Part I, when the story of a boar hunt in Ancient Greece is told. The first type of note is an extremely complicated reference to an appendix of abbreviations of works in Greek. Consider the following passage:

> For others, the scratch of the quill over the papyrus's surface decrees contradictory lineages and mad progresses which will send them sailing between Argos and Colchis,[52] drive them from the well polluted by the body of Chrysippus, or tumble them into the labyrinth which will be built by their sons. (10)

The note in this sentence is the fifty-second note to occur in less than ten pages of text. There are one-hundred-eighty notes in the first part of the novel, which comprises approximately one-hundred-eight pages. While the sheer number of notes is astounding, the complexity of the notes is even more dramatic. This particular note reads:

> [52] Ov, Met viii. 360 (MS 'U') qua 'Hippalamon', aliq. 'Hippalamus', aliq. 'Hippalcimus'; Hyg, Fab lxxxiv, Schol. Ad Eur, Or 5; Apollod iii.II.8;Schol. Ad Pind, Ol i.89; Paus vi.20.7; Schol. Ad Hom, Il ii.105; qua 'Euphemon', Ov, Met viii.360 (vid. Emend. Slater) et vid. Apollod i.9.16, Ap Rhod iv.1754ff., Hyg, Fab clvviii; Ov Met viii.360 (Codex Planudes, Paris 2848), qua 'Eupalamon', aliq. 'Eupalamus', Apollod iii.15.5, iii.15.7; Tzet, Chil i.490; Schol. Ad Plat, Ion 121a; Schol. Ad plat, Rep viii. 529d; Hyg, Fab xxxix; Serv ad Virg, Aen vi.14, sed vid. Paus ix 3.2; Diod Sic iv.76.1; Pherecydes cit. Ap. Schol. Ad Soph, Oed Col 472; Plat, Ion 533a; Clidemus cit. ap. Plut, Thes 19. (10)

The density of this note is striking, even for a critical text, and especially for a reader not familiar with the conventions of texts within the field of Classics, let alone for someone unfamiliar with the sources being referenced. An intrepid reader looking to be the best authorial audience member she might be might look up each abbreviation in the Appendix supplied by Norfolk, track down each source, and determine the extent to which the sources provide supporting or significant information that enhances the referenced portion of the text above. On the other hand, one must ask what Norfolk's purpose is in proving so much detail, creating a reference list that is complicated at best, obscure and effectively obfuscating at worst. Does he expect his readers to track down the material? Unlike Borges, his sources are real works. One can, of course, locate

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Ovid's *Metamorphosis* and determine the source of the reference to Hippalamon/Hippalamus/Hippalcimus. The question for this dissertation, though, is what effect this type of note has on the narrative progression. The support they provide might impress a scholar of classics, but their impact on the narrative proper is as complicated as the notes themselves. Much like Grafton's argument about the role of footnotes in supporting the research of the scholar and providing a sense of legitimacy for the work, the sheer number and extensiveness of the notes in Norfolk's novel suggest a similar purpose. Since the beginning of the text references a story from the classical tradition, the references provide a foundation on which Norfolk's novel can be built. The question is why and how these function later in the text when the narrative shifts to contemporary times and carries over the story of the boar hunt.

A novel such as *In the Shape of a Boar* forces us to rethink the relationship between the note and the primary text, not quite to the degree or in the same manner as *Pale Fire* or *House of Leaves*, but it does ask us to consider the boundary between the scholarly tradition and the literary tradition with less rigidity. At the same time, these extensive notes play both a visual role (often notes are introduced for each word in a list creating an almost rhythmic typography of normal and superscript fonts), a role in defining the narrative voice and the voice of the implied author. Norfolk's novel suggests that a density of historical information can be one of the elements of a fictional text; rather than providing scholarly support as one might hope to find in a scholarly text, the illusion of scholarship is the point. The entirety of Norfolk's story rests on the

foundation established in the first part of the novel, and this foundation has to appear

solid for the mimetic qualities of the final story to appear realistic.

Up to this point, I have defined three senders of notes that are meant to represent

factual information to the reader, whether this is factual in the context of the novel or in

the expected context of the reader. Unlike notes in historical documents, in which the

notes serve a function vis-à-vis the text (Benstock 204), supporting its foundational

information and legitimatizing its claims based on previous scholarship, factual notes in

fiction can serve a number of functions in relationship to the text and the reader. If they

serve the function of legitimizing the text, they can do so either by helping the author

imitate or parody a particular style of narrative (history, science, etc.), creating the

illusion that the fictional narrative is not a fictional narrative at all. Borges uses this

technique to great effect, but he is not unique in this respect. Factual notes can also grant

legitimacy to a particular text by constructing a particular reality for the narrative,

suggesting the relationship of the fictional to the real world of the reader. Or, these kinds

of factual notes can provide a legitimate context for the narrative content, the progression

and the development of the characters or the stability of the ontological world in which

the text exists. In *The Name of the Rose*, Eco's factual notes grant the narrative some

measure of legitimacy, both by referencing the finding of Adso's text—which, of course,

mirrors Borges's model for textual ontology found in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"—and

the particular historical and religious setting for the story. The notes in Eco's novel

create the illusion of mimesis, the sense of a historical document, even if that document is

unattainable ultimately by the narrator. Just as Borges is able to establish some level of

mimetic foundation in "The Garden of Forking Paths" by stating that the first two pages

of Yu Tsun's deposition are missing—why would two pages of a fictional deposition be

missing?—Eco is able to create the illusion of a real narrative by Adso of Melk by losing

the text in which he found the story in the first place. The effort by Eco to create the

illusion of a historical document alters the reading process, placing the reader off balance,

forcing her, at least at some level, to adjust her bearings by referencing known textual

devices. In fact, one of the first questions often asked by my students who have started to

read the novel is whether or not the book is a true story. Despite the other paratextual

information on the jacket of the book that labels the book a novel, the power of the

internal texts that mimic the paratexts of a true historical narrative have a great deal of

influence over a reader's understanding of a text. This is one of the reasons that both

Linda Hutcheon and Brian McHale are able to argue, from different perspectives, that

The Name of the Rose is a postmodern novel. Seeing a preface or a footnote establishes a

particular context the novel can use to a particular rhetorical effect, in this case the effect

of suggesting truth in a novel that calls into question truth at every turn.

2.4.2 Interpretive Notes

The second type of note that I have mapped is the interpretive note. Like the

factual note, the interpretive note can be attributed to an allographic writer, such as an

editor or translator, or to the author or narrator(s). Unlike the factual note, this type of

note is not meant to convey (at least not solely) a particular piece of information, but

rather is meant to provide a perspective, aside, or comment on an event or description in

the main narrative. The function of the interpretive note is to make a comment on the context of the narrative at that stage. Interpretive notes are defined by both their content and their focalization. Since interpretive notes are, in essence, small accounts of a particular text, they have a particular voice and point of view and can influence a readers's engagement with a text to a greater degree than factual notes.[16]

Allographic Interpretive Notes

Most often, interpretive paratexts by editors or translators take the form of Prefaces or Introductions to narratives rather than as notes. Alfred Appel Jr.'s lengthy Introduction to *The Annotated Lolita* is a good example of this kind of paratext. In interpretive notes, information is focalized. In allographic interpretive notes, an editor or other writer might suggest a particular perspective on a passage, a context, the text, the author, or the place of the narrative in a particular socio-historical context. Ian Duncan's notes to Scott's *Ivanhoe* are one example of allographic interpretive notes. In a note to Scott's use of the phrase "the freedom of the Rules," Duncan writes:

> *the freedom of the Rules*: the liberty granted to a Scots advocate to plead at the English bar. Scott may also have had in mind another sense. On provision of a security, imprisoned debtors were sometimes allowed to live within 'the rules', a circumscribed area in the neighborhood of the prison; this was known as enjoying the freedom of the rules. (*Ivanhoe 1988, 527*)

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[16] It is arguable that all notes, regardless of their place in the typology I've defined, have a voice and perspective. However, because of the limited textual detail provided in these types of notes, there is often too little information to make a definitive determination of voice in and against the tagged description (Editor's note, Author's note, etc.).

Duncan offers a particular interpretive analysis of Scott's use of the phrase that extends

beyond the merely factual first sentence. The hybridity of the note makes visible the fact

that even factual notes contain some level of interpretation.

Autographic Interpretive Notes

Autographic interpretive notes written by the author can be found in a number of

works, though the authorial voice is often heavily invested with irony or satire. While

not a footnote, the well-known prefatory note in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of*

Huckleberry Finn is one such note: "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative

will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons

attempting to find a plot in it will be shot" (27). The invocation and warning against

finding motive, moral, or plot is laden with sardonic wit, especially when compared with

the explanatory note that follows about the dialects used in the novel:

> In this book a number of dialects are used, to wit: the Missouri negro
> dialect; the extremest form of the backwoods South-Western dialect; the
> ordinary "Pike-County" dialect; and four modified varieties of this last.
> The shadings have not been done in a hap-hazard fashion, or by
> guesswork; but pains-takingly, and with the trustworthy guidance and
> support of personal familiarity with these several forms of speech.
> 　　I make this explanation for the reason that without it many readers
> would suppose that all these characters were trying to talk alike and not
> succeeding.
>
> 　　THE AUTHOR.

Twain's second note is a good example of an interpretive note that is intentional and

serious. In the second note, we clearly find an author proud of his narrative

accomplishment even while his curmudgeonly sense of authority takes over the text.

Much like Twain's novel, Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground* includes a footnote "disclaimer" explaining that the narrator and the *Notes* themselves are in fact fictitious:

> It goes without saying that both these *Notes* and their author are fictitious. Nevertheless, people like the author of these notes may, and indeed must, exist in our society, if we think of the circumstances under which that society has been formed. It has been my wish to show the public a character of the recent past more clearly than is usually shown. He belongs to the generation that is now rounding out its days. In the excerpt entitled "The Mousehole," this man introduces himself and present his views, trying to explain why he has appeared, and could not help but appear, in our midst. The next excerpt consists of the man's actual "notes," relating to certain events in his life. Fyodor Dostoyevsky. (90)

Unlike Twain, however, Dostoyevsky appears entirely serious in his disclaimer. While Dostoyevsky states that it goes without saying that the notes are fictitious, he then goes on to say precisely this. It appears that the intended effect of his note is not to point out the fictional nature of the *Notes*, but rather to suggest that they are closer to reality than we might realize. In this respect, the notes serve to bolster the mimetic quality of the notes and the narrator. While we would be hard pressed to claim that any narrative fiction is real, at least real in the sense that the characters in the text are real people who behave and think exactly as presented in the narrative, one thing we can say about mimetic aspects of fiction is that the fictional narrative resembles reality. This is precisely the effect of this note. Rather than create the illusion of mimesis in some other more indirect manner, akin to the paratextual epilogue of many contemporary films (i.e., this film is based on a true story), Dostoyevsky chooses a much more complex approach that places his novel in dialogue with social reality. His story, he claims from the beginning is fictional, but surely people of the sort he is writing about "must exist" and it

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is therefore our duty to pay attention to the people who live "underground" in society, the people who fall through the cracks.

There is one other note of sorts in Dostoyevsky's novella. The final paragraph of the novel ends with the narrator expressing his desire to stop writing, frustrated with the lack of *élan vital* in human beings: "Soon we'll invent a way to be begotten by ideas altogether. But that's enough, I've had enough of writing these *Notes from Underground*" (203). The final words of the novella, though, are not by the narrator, but by an unnamed, unsigned authorial presence, a presence distinctly different in voice and construct from the authorial note of the first page: "*Actually the notes of this lover of paradoxes do not end here. He couldn't resist and went on writing. But we are of the opinion that one might just as well stop here*" (203). The note suggests the voice of an editor, not a reformist author attempting to justify his story. Here, however, the note also works to maintain the sense of the mimetic illusion created by the story and the original authorial note. The character, his writing, his ranting, his life, his thoughts, continue well beyond the *Notes*, and well beyond the self-imposed end to his writing.

The next order in the matrix is an interpretive note written by the narrator. This type of note is meant for the narrative audience, and unlike the authorial interpretive note, the note is meant to be read by a narrative audience. It is often the case, however, that these types of notes are employed by writers without making a clear enough distinction between these two categories, so that the notes written by a narrator are often only intended for the authorial audience. This can be especially problematic if the narrator is a homodiegetic narrator. To suggest otherwise would potentially create problems of

narrative continuity. *Pale Fire* is a particularly complex example of this problem, though in *Pale Fire* the tension occurs when what are ostensibly interpretive notes turn quickly into discursive notes.

An interesting example of an interpretive note by a narrator can be found in H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*. In Haggard's novel, the narrator, Allan Quatermain, commenting on the writing of *his* book in his introduction, suggests that more could have been written about the flora and fauna of Kukuanaland. In the note, he states that he "discovered eight varieties of antelope, with which I was previously totally unacquainted, and many new species of plants, for the most part of the bulbous tribe.—A. Q." (9). Quatermain's note serves a number of functions. First, it suggests that he is a worthy narrator of the story he is about to tell because he is as much a scientist as an adventurer; it establishes his credentials. In doing so, the note bolsters his reliability and gives us reason to believe not only the narrative, but also the notes which follow. Given that his narrative is heavily peppered with comments about the cultural attitudes and behaviors of the people he encounters, not to mention the fantastic story of the diamond mines of King Solomon, Quatermain's reliability is extremely important for Haggard to establish. Second, it legitimizes the value of the adventure because he deems it more worthy to tell than the scientific discoveries he made along the way. In this case, the notes support the mimetic development of a highly fantastic story. Haggard's novel also includes interpretive notes that are labeled as having been written by an editor even though no editor is named in any of the editions I have been able to examine. In one note, the Editor explains that the word "Suliman" is Arabic for Solomon, which suggests

a voice intimately familiar with the content and language Haggard chooses. In another, the Editor derides Quatermain for mistaking Saxons for Danes:

> Mr. Quatermain's ideas about ancient Danes seem to be rather confused; we have always understood that they were dark-haired people. Probably he was thinking of Saxons.—*Editor*. (14)

It is fairly obvious that Haggard is mimicking the role of the Editor here, and he is able to accomplish this imitation much more easily given the homodiegetic nature of Quatermain's narrative. The imitation of the Editor once again allows Haggard to strengthen the mimetic qualities of his highly fantastic story.

Borges's short story "The Garden of Forking Paths" is also a particularly good example of this kind of note. In this story, the note functions as an editorial comment on the confession of Yu Tsun ("A hateful proposition . . ."), and as such creates a particular tension for the reader who now must read Yu Tsun's confession under the guidance of the note of the "Editor." While it would be just as reasonable for Borges to have given the reader this kind of perspective in the introduction to the confession, Borges's use of the note provides a particularly complex influence on the reader. His use of the footnote mimics the historical convention he is parodying in his story; the note, as with source notes in historical texts, grants the editorial voice a particular legitimacy. Given the fact that the Editor is writing from the perspective of the victor—the English in a historical account of a German spy—the legitimacy is even greater. But the note itself allows Borges to have the editor comment on Yu Tsun's confession without breaking the illusion of the unity of his confession. This in itself is a curious issue since we already know we are dealing with an incomplete confession since the first two pages of the

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confession have been lost. It would not do to have the narrator break in and interrupt Yu

Tsun in the main body of the text given the convention of the confession that Borges has

established. He could have chosen a different method to reveal Yu Tsun's story, of

course, but in following the method he chose, Borges emphasizes the mimetic aspects of

the story through a reference to a particular type of convention found in historical texts.

Borges is therefore able to utilize the extratextual reference not of content but of structure

in his story. This is a powerful mechanism for establishing mimetic verisimilitude. If we

compare the methods used by Borges in "The Garden of Forking Paths" with those he

utilizes in the much more traditional detective story "Death and the Compass," we can

see how Borges relies on the development of a strong mimetic component in the first to

mask the fantastical content of the story, and in the latter how Borges utilizes the mode of

the fictional narrative to break down the structures of the fictional detective story all

together. "Death and the Compass" is an anti-detective story, and yet it does not stray far

from the conventions of the detective story. Lönnrot in this story follows the rules of the

fantastic only to fall victim to the very real, very conventional trap set by Red Scharlach.

2.4.3 Discursive Notes

The final form of the footnote/endnote paradigm I have outlined is one I have

called Discursive. Discursive notes come in many forms, the most common form being

notes that are narratives in their own right. This type of discursive note contains a

narrative that is separate from, though most often interconnected with, the main body of

the text. This narrative might run parallel, informing the reader of an analeptic or

proleptic aspect of the main narrative, diverge off on a tangential story about a particular

character or plot line, or tell an entirely new story. Discursive notes can also contain

authorial or narrator asides or glosses, meant to be read in dialogue with the main

narrative. Often, discursive notes give an author a tool to tell a story in a way that would

break the mimetic consistency of the narrative if it were told in the main body of the

narrative. The methods of introducing this type of note are varied, though in many cases

the justification falls on the main text, with the note explaining why the primary text

exists in the first place. This in turn justifies the note as well. As with the other notes I

have discussed above, discursive notes can be written by an allographic source or by the

author or narrator(s).

Allographic Discursive Notes

The discursive note written by an allographic source functions in much the same

way as the interpretive note, providing a particular interpretive framework through which

to read the narrative. The boundary between interpretive notes and discursive notes can

be quite porous at times. In many cases, this type of paratext will provide a historical or

cultural context for the narrative the reader is about to read. Traditional prefaces or

introductions serve this function well, especially when introduced by allographic sources.

This type of paratextual source can influence a reading by suggesting details of an

author's life or the particular context of writing, or—of particular significance for this

dissertation—the intertextual relationship between this text and its predecessors,

contemporary texts, or even the texts that have come after, suggesting an anachronistic

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influence on the narrative itself. Classic edited editions of novels or poems often carry with them the weight of their introductions. This can be as simple as a short paragraph about an author's life, as found in the Penguin Classic editions of the canonical texts, or the more elaborate prefaces and forewords of academic editions of texts. An interesting example of an allographic discursive note is Walker Percy's Foreword to John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces*. Percy tells the story of how he came to be involved with the publication of Toole's novel:

> Perhaps the best way to introduce this novel—which on my third reading of it astounds me even more than the first—is to tell of my first encounter with it. While I was teaching at Loyola in 1976 I began to get telephone calls from a lady unknown to me. What she proposed was preposterous. It was not that she had written a couple of chapters of a novel and wanted to get into my class. It was that her son, who was dead, had written an entire novel during the early sixties, a big novel, and she wanted me to read it. Why would I want to do that? I asked her. Because it is a great novel, she said. (7)

Percy's introduction to the novel creates its own narrative that contextualizes the story for the reader, providing a sense of discursive perspective.

Autographic Discursive Notes

Authorial discursive notes are far less common, often beginning as epitextual narratives about a text that become embedded in the original narrative at some future date. A good example of this type of discursive paratext is the Postscript to Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. Eco is fully conscious of the influence an Authorial note will have on readers of the novel; so great an influence, in fact, that publishers have thought it crucial that the Postscript be published with each new edition of the book,

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turning the Postscript into a key element of the text, unlike, say the separate scholarly text the *Key to The Name of the Rose*, which provides more traditional notes (translations of the Latin passage, historical information on the actual historical personages mentioned in Eco's novel, and essays on the relationship between Eco's novel and the historical and religious controversies it discusses). Eco chose to write his Postscript as a narrative about the process of writing the novel rather than as a justification of his intentions as they relate to particular interpretations, though it contains many justifications as well. Rather than attempt to predetermine a reading of the text, Eco defines a particular theoretical approach to reading, but in doing so he inevitably influences any reading of the novel itself. It is not difficult to imagine a time when one would hardly distinguish between the novel and its Postscript, similar in manner, if not in kind, to the way we might not pay much attention to the separateness of the two books of *Don Quixote* when they are published as one.

Notes by narrators are by far the most complicated and most significant type of note for the present study. Interpretive notes, such as those we might find in Norfolk's *In the Shape of a Boar* or Borges's "The Garden of Forking Paths," create a particular tension with the reader that is resolvable through careful reading of the rhetorical effects of the narrative. Discursive notes, however, can contain their own narrative tensions and instabilities, their own characters, stories, discursive elements, audiences, and overall rhetorical effects. In *House of Leaves*, Mark Danielewski constructs multiple narrative levels through the use of notes and other paratextual devices. He uses discursive notes to suggest competing narratives that are not only self-referential—the notes speak to each

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other (Truant speaks of Zampanò's notes, while the horror of Zampanò's story invades

Truant's life as it did with Zampanò's)—but they also reference external texts; they are

intertextual and dialogic in the best of senses.

Discursive notes can alter the dynamics of character development, progression,

and tension. The discursive note written by a narrator, such as the notes in *Pale Fire* or

House of Leaves, is often used to tell a particular story without interrupting the continuity

of the primary text. In the former case, the primary text is ostensibly the poem, though

clearly Kinbote's notes take over primacy as we read the text, both intentionally on

Kinbote's part and intentionally on Nabokov's part as well. The fictional paratexts

(Preface, Endnotes, and Index) give Kinbote a space to tell his story without disrupting

the unity of the poem. At the same time, the unity of the poem becomes dependent on the

paratextual information. Without the notes, the poem has little meaning, as Kinbote

already has told us many times, and without the poem, the notes, of course, are a story

without anchor or motivation. Notes in this case are the evidence of a mimetic necessity

and therefore call the reader's attention to the mimetic aspects of the narrative. The

problem is that the defining feature of a mimetic text is that the reader must occupy the

narrative audience and suspend, for the lack of a better phrase, her sense of disbelief.

Once a note comes into play, the mimetic qualities have two possible avenues. The notes

themselves can develop the mimetic aspects of the text or the notes can take away from

the mimetic aspects. As I have argued above, in "The Garden of the Forking Paths" the

notes support the mimetic aspects of the text. The story is written in the form of narrative

history; the confession is seen as a piece of primary evidence worthy of Leopold von

Ranke that will have an impact on our understanding of Liddell's narrative. In order for the notes to support the mimetic aspects of the narrative, the notes must have some sort of mimetic justification of their own. One finds notes in narrative history and therefore they can be expected in a story that mimics the conventions of this history. On the other hand, the notes can also serve the function of the print equivalent of an aside, but in doing so they call the reader's attention to the print convention under which such an aside would be made, namely by forcing the reader to look down on the page or in the end of the book. In other texts, however, and *Tristram Shandy* is a good example, the notes serve to call our attention to the very unrealistic aspects of the story. The notes point out the fact that Tristram Shandy is simply telling us a tale, and we are made aware of the "fictionality" of his tale.

With discursive notes, it is important to distinguish between notes written by a homodiegetic narrator and notes written by a heterodiegetic narrator. At first glance, this distinction might not seem significant, but each narrative point of view carries with it a set of concerns and problems for the discursive notes. Notes written by a heterodiegetic narrator have few problems maintaining the mimetic context for the telling. There is nothing unusual about a heterodiegetic narrator inserting an aside in a text. The form it takes, however, can be unique. Why does a heterodiegetic narrator need to insert a note when she might simply construct the aside in the narrative itself, a problem we saw in Stephenson's novel *Quicksilver*? In some cases, this has to do with particular narrative constraints. Looking back at "The Garden of Forking Paths," we know that Borges has his narrator comment on Yu Tsun's confession in a note. While it would certainly be

possible to halt the confession at the point of the note and return to the narrator's voice, as I have argued above, the footnote allows him to maintain the illusion of a historical document, to achieve the editorial effect he is seeking, and to keep the ultimate focalization on Yu Tsun rather than the narrator. The problem is that there is competing focalization in notes of this sort.

Homodiegetic discursive notes, on the other hand, such as in *House of Leaves*, create a sense of narrative tension that is much different. A note by a homodiegetic narrator must establish a mimetic context ahead of time, such as commenting on a published journal, as in the case of *King Solomon's Mines*; or publishing the crazy ranting of a dead, blind writer as in *House of Leaves*. Homodiegetic discursive notes create an entirely different dynamic for the reader, as well as for the characters in the novel, in much the same way that authorial notes of one sort or another can call into play the concept of the authorial audience. Unless accounted for through some sort of narrative device as in *King Solomon's Mines*, notes by characters in a text can disrupt the boundaries between the narrative audience and the authorial audience.

One such example is John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Footnotes in Fowles's novel are clearly written from the perspective of the narrator masquerading as author. The author narrator, in fact, becomes a character in the text, and the notes take on his point of view. Fowles's notes fall into two categories. Many notes explain terms that would be unfamiliar to his readers in the late 1960s, and in this regard the notes continue the mimetic illusion under the guise of a synthetic development. The notes, while clearly foregrounding the "written" quality of the text, also suggest that the narrator

is aware of his audience and the potential gaps in their knowledge of nineteenth-century slang. Notes are provided for terms such as "dollys" and "gays," and yet his most complex notes are those that provide a editorial perspective on the issues his characters encounter in their travels through the nineteenth-century English countryside—religious duty, economic systems, contraceptive practices. Additionally, Fowles's unnamed narrator is not without opinions, of course. In a note to Thomas Hardy's poem "Her Immortality," the narrator writes: "Not the greatest, but one of the most revealing poems, in this context, that Hardy ever wrote. Its first version may be dated to 1897. Gosse's key question was asked in the course of a review of *Jude the Obscure* in January 1896" (271).

Fowles's use of footnotes allows him to extend the voice and perspective of the narrator, while at the same time masking the narrator's identity behind the veil of the implied author. The notes, normally associated with authorial interventions in scholarly texts, engage us precisely in what Shari Benstock calls the "search for the author" (206). However, in doing so, the process that transpires is an illusion. We do not find the author but rather, as Phelan has pointed out, the narrator. We read the narrator's notes as the author's, not the other way around, and in this respect, Fowles's is able to call our attention to the differences between the narrator and the implied author. To what purpose, however, does Fowles's make this difference visible? By maintaining the illusion of the author/narrator—again, an illusion supported by the notes—Fowles is able to create a greater sense of mimetic development even in a novel that foregrounds the synthetic aspects of the telling. In other words, Fowles creates the mimetic illusion of an

author writing a novel. While this has a very strong synthetic component on the one hand—he constantly makes us aware that we are reading a novel—the flip side is that he *is* able to maintain the mimetic illusion of a writer struggling with the task of writing a nineteenth-century Victorian novel in the later part of the twentieth century. Fowles's notes do not tell their own story, unlike the notes of *Pale Fire* or Mark Dunn's novel *Ibid*, but they do tell the story of a narrator who is looking back on the nineteenth century from the perspective of the twentieth. This narrator who is not only fascinated by the grim figures of the nineteenth-century English country—"scrofula, cholera, endemic typhoid and tuberculosis" (270)—but also someone who can find some measure of distance, a distance that allows him to create a novel that is as much a commentary on the nineteenth century as on nineteenth-century novels.

<center>*   *   *</center>

The typology I've developed in this chapter will serve as the foundation for an analysis of the rhetorical effect of paratexts in fictional narratives. Footnotes and other paratextual devices are a useful device through which to examine narrative dynamics. Often these notes provide details or information, while in some cases these notes might function as a critical apparatus under which the structure and form of the narratives can be read. In other cases, these notes interrupt the flow of the text, altering the pace and progression of the narrative. In still more extreme examples, artificial paratexts can contain entire narratives of their own that compete with or complement the "main" narrative. As such, paratexts have been used to define the boundaries of a text and the narrative frames within which a story is told. Notes and other similar paratextual

elements call the reader's attention to the attributes and functions within a text that enable

and encourage narrative progression, engaging readers through instabilities and tensions,

character development, and other rhetorical strategies.

CHAPTER 3

A RHETORIC OF ARTIFICIAL PARATEXTS

The aesthetic evil of a footnote seems in order just here, I'm afraid.
— J. D. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*

3.1. Artificial Paratexts

In the previous chapter, I developed a typology of footnotes and endnotes in

fictional narratives, suggesting that notes vary in type and kind. This variance is based

primarily on the origin of the note and the information communicated in the note.

Recognizing the need for flexibility in definition, this typology classifies each type of

note as factual, interpretive, and discursive, while also showing that notes can originate

from a variety of sources related to the production of a narrative, including allographic

sources (i.e., an editor, a translator, a publisher, etc.) and autographic sources. Notes

originating in the narrative frame can come from the author, either as herself or in the

guise of a fictional editor, or from one of the narrators. In addition to identifying the

kinds of notes and their sources, we must also pay attention to the various ways notes are

used in narratives. Writers and editors, of course, use notes for multiple purposes: to

grant authority to their text, to extend the boundaries of their narratives, to supplement

the meaning of the text, to bolster the mimetic qualities of the narrative, and so on.

Ultimately, authors utilize notes to communicate a complex set of assumptions about and relationships between narrators, characters, and readers.

While an analysis of the effect of all types of footnotes in narrative fiction would be useful, my interest here and in the rest of the dissertation lies in notes that are part of the fictional landscape. This is not to say that editorial or other autographic notes—or even authorial notes intended (regardless of the actual effect) to be read outside of the narrative frame as an unmediated or unnarrated communication between the author and the reader—cannot have an effect on a reader's understanding and engagement with a text. On the contrary, these types of paratexts can have a significant impact on the interpretation of a text by a reader. However, these types of paratexts are rarely considered necessary elements of a narrative. We need only look at the multiple editions of some canonical texts to see that different versions often exclude the authorial notes altogether. Sir Walter Scott's novel, *Ivanhoe*, is a particularly apt example in this regard. In most editions of the novel, Scott's notes are included in the text as footnotes, or, as in the Oxford University Press edition, at the end of the text as endnotes (*Ivanhoe* 1998, 503-23). The Tor Classics edition, however, removes Scott's notes completely (*Ivanhoe 2000*). It is debatable whether Scott's informative notes play a significant role in the novel beyond educating the authorial audience, but it is clear that notes of this sort are often considered external to the narrative. In this regard, traditional paratexts are subject to constraints or requirements of individual publishers and it is difficult to construct a theory of notes across different publications. There are other types of paratexts, which if not different in kind are different in intent and function. These paratexts are what we

might call "constituent" elements of the narrative. Working from Roland Barthes' notion of "nuclei" and "catalyzers" and Seymour Chatman's concepts of "kernels" and "satellites," H. Porter Abbott defines constituent events in opposition to what he calls supplementary events: "constituent events are events that are necessary for the story, driving it forward. Supplementary events are events that do not drive the story forward and without which the story would still remain intact" (21). While Abbott does not extend his terms beyond events, many metafictional narratives contain structural elements that we might consider to be constituent elements of a narrative. Abbott's use of the term 'supplementary' also creates an interesting contrast to my reference in the preceding chapter of Derrida's notion of supplement. What many would consider to be supplemental elements in the form of paratexts can in fact be significant elements— though often overlooked elements—in the narrative dynamic, operating in multiple possible positions vis-à-vis the text but still necessary to the narrative as a whole. In other words, this type of paratext is an essential element of the discursive structure. For example, we might be able to tell the story of Manuel Puig's *Kiss of the Spider Woman* without reference to the notes that occur throughout the narrative—telling only of the instabilities between Molina and Valentin—but we would be only telling half the story. The notes, while discursive and sitting on a different diegetic level relative to Molina and Valentin's conversation, are a necessary part of the text Puig constructs. His story is the story of multiple voices and incorporated genres as much as it is the story of two men in prison talking to each other about cultural and personal identity and politics. In this

respect, the narrative form of the novel is as much part of his text as the story of Molina's mother's illness or Valentin's revolutionary activities.

Paratexts of this sort extend the boundaries of narratives, create new narrative levels, and engage readers in new modes of interpretation, even as they create new expectations for the reader. This type of paratext is what I call an *artificial* or *fictional* paratext (artificial footnote, artificial endnote, artificial preface, etc.).[17] Artificial paratexts can be factual, interpretive, or discursive, and they can occur with any frequency, density, motivation, or duration. All artificial paratexts share a number of common features. First, artificial paratexts are elements of the text that mimic the form of traditional paratextual components (Preface, Foreword, Index, Notes, etc.), but that are intended to be read as part of the narrative frame rather than as separate, extratextual features of the book or other publication. Second, though sometimes ignored in translations to other media, artificial paratexts are constituent elements of the narrative rather than external elements associated only with particular edition of a text. To publish a work without the artificial paratexts is to publish a different work altogether. Third, artificial paratexts are autographic, originating from within the text by a narrator, though this narrator may often take the guise of an author or editor. Of course, all artificial paratexts are written at some level by the author; however, it is important to distinguish between an author's paratexts and artificial paratexts. An author's preface to a novel is a

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[17] The phrase 'artificial paratext' is not unproblematic as many paratexts of this sort are more often than not used to bolster the perceived realism of the narrative and not to foreground its artificial or constructed nature. However, the phrase does highlight the fictional aspect of this type of paratext.

paratext and not an artificial paratext in my definition. In other words, Mary Shelly's "Author's Introduction to the Standard Novels Edition" of *Frankenstein*, a preface included in many contemporary editions of the novel, is a paratext and not an artificial paratext, at least not in its intention and general effect. John Ray, Jr.'s "Foreword" to *Lolita*, however, is an artificial paratext as it is meant to be read as part of the novel's narrative frame. Fourth, all fictional paratexts initiate a tension between the perceived realism of a narrative and a self-conscious effort to make the reader aware of the text as text; or, what we might call the metafictional nature of a narrative.

Each of these features points to an interconnected relationship between artificial paratexts and the text, a relationship that cannot be separated. This relationship is unlike the relationship between traditional paratexts and texts, which are extratextual in Genette's terms. Because of the interdependent relationship artificial paratexts have with the body text, they can impact the development of narratives and the communication between the author, text, and reader. In this respect, the artificial paratexts have a rhetorical effect in narratives in which they are employed. I discuss the characteristics of a rhetorical analysis in greater detail later in this chapter, but for now it is important to note that once we have identified the manner in which writers have employed notes in their narratives, we have only begun to address the question why they do so. In order to answer this question, we need to examine the effect of notes on readers and the practice of interpretation. The previous chapter explored the *what* of paratexts in fiction; this chapter and the rest of the dissertation explores the *how* and *why*.

3.2. The Problem of Footnotes

Artificial paratexts come in many forms but the most common by far is the footnote (and by extension, the endnote). Fictional footnotes show up in dozens of novels, short stories, and even plays. In "At the Margin of Discourse: Footnotes in the Fictional Text," one of the few critical studies of footnotes in fiction, Shari Benstock argues that footnotes in fiction are specifically related to notions of authority. For Benstock, "notes force us, then, to search for the author in [the] text" (206). For Benstock, fictional footnotes reinforce the author's authority by involving the reader in the process of determining meaning in much the same way that scholarly notes function in nonfiction. They provide insight into origins and connects a text with other texts. The note exemplifies scholarship by indicating that the scholar has done her work; that she has read all the significant works on a subject. It shows that the work has support, that it is built on a foundation of scholarship that is presumably—or at least verifiably—solid in its own right. The note persuades. It suggests value. Even more so, the note gives legitimacy to an idea or to the entire text. It says that this story is a sound representation, despite the possibilities for misreading or poor analysis, the footnote defines the authority of the text. In nonfictional texts that aspire to the status of "scientific" discourse, she argues, scholarly footnotes are inherently marginal, appended to a text rather than incorporated into it:

> As annotations, they are innately referential, as well, reflecting on the text, engaged in a dialogue with it, and often performing an interpretative and critical act on it, while also addressing a larger, extratextual world in an effort to relate this text to other texts, to negotiate the middle ground between this author and other authors, between this author and the reader. (204)

According to Benstock, notes bear an uneasy relation to the body text. It is their marginal status that allows for a shifting line between critical discourse and its supporting context, a line:

> that sometimes acknowledges and admits readers within its circumference but sometimes excludes them . . . It is this closed circle of reasoned criticism that footnotes negotiate, clarifying hidden assumptions, pointing out referential pre-texts, insisting that the author engage the readers in the critical process. Finally, footnotes appear to be (and often are) after thoughts, appended to a text that is not in itself fully accessible to readers; the notes allow the writer to anticipate readers' needs, to answer potential questions, to hedge whatever bets the critical discourse may have made. (204)

Using notes in fiction is a practice that shares many of the same effects as notes in critical texts, but the shape, form, content, and purpose is in many cases quite different than those in critical texts, and different to a degree that cannot be simply assigned to the difference between nonfiction and fictional narratives. Stylistic changes can represent "genuine ambivalence—toward the text, toward the speaker in the text, toward the audience" (204), and because of their extratextual status "they are freer to adopt a new line of rhetoric" (204). In other words, footnotes in fictional narratives are liminal elements of the text, forcing the reader to adjust the boundaries of the text and to the different narrative levels.

For the most part, Benstock is interested in what I have called autographic notes. Benstock argues, following Genette, that the external references of notes are self-referential because they exist at the level of the narrative. All levels within the diegesis are the same. This may be true in one respect, but the intertextual and dialogic function of notes is important to tease out. Autographic notes that reference external sources are

one more indication of intertextual functionality. This functionality, like Bakhtin's

notion of dialogism, can work to foreground the fictionality of a text but also the text's

role in a network of other texts. This process can help us understand how a text comes to

constrain and represent meaning. It can also suggest ways in which the mimetic

functions of a text are dependent on the dialogic constructs to a degree; words are social

conventions that deploy rhetorical value based on their intertextual relationship within a

larger linguistic construct.

Footnotes in a literary work "highlight the interplay between author and subject,

text and reader, that is always at work in fiction, giving us occasion to speculate on self-

reflective narration as an aspect of textual authority" (Benstock 205). At least, some

autographic notes highlight this interplay. Allographic notes, of course, function quite

differently, foregrounding the material conditions of a text far more than the interplay

between author, reader, and text. Some autographic notes actually work to hide the

interplay Benstock discusses. Additionally, Benstock argues that fictional footnotes

serve much the same function as they do in criticism, that is:

> In critical commentary, much of this authority will, of necessity, exist
> outside the text (in the works to which the text refers for further support,
> elaboration, evidence, etc.): the notes that bring this extratextual authority
> to bear on the present analysis support that authority's foundations for the
> text and stem from the thesis and argument of the text itself; the
> supposition is always that the present critical endeavor extends a pattern of
> thought that was begun in the past, that was applied to the immediate
> context through citation, and that will be continued in the future, when
> presumably the present text will itself be a citation in someone else's
> critical thesis. There is no equivalent paradigm in fictional texts, but the
> difference rests on an interesting paradox that has specifically to do with
> notations of address. In critical texts they really address no one; if they
> are directed anywhere, they are directed toward the text (the text
> frequently appears in dialogue with itself), and while the comments extend

the boundaries of the text by clarifying and illuminating pre-texts on which the argument rests, they rarely—if ever—invite the reader to participate directly in the critical act. (Benstock 205-06).

If the authority for a critical text lies outside the text, the authority of the fictional narrative, according to Benstock, is in the author. Footnotes give us access to this authority through competing discursive voices.

While in general Benstock's argument makes a great deal of sense and is quite powerful, she places too many limits on how notes can function in critical works and she does not account for both the different types of notes authors employ and the power of authorization for fictional works that might come from sources other than the author, such as the form of the note itself or even other intertextual sources. Notes and other overtly intertextual elements refer to external works in significant ways. A work's thematic functionality may in fact depend on this extratextual referentiality, even at the level of the fictional diegesis. But, if we were to extend the reading practice beyond the fictional levels that Benstock references in Genette's work, we can also see how the synthetic function of many postmodern texts—none of which are directly discussed by Benstock—could depend on the extratextual references. The significant hermeneutic processes that we undergo as readers in the authorial audience are often dependent on our ability to make connections to other works. The notes themselves may or may not give us direct access to these external sources—how can we believe Borges's references, for example, when so many of them are false trails and misleading feints by the master of references? The idea of the note does engage us, as Benstock says, not simply in a search for the author, but in a search for the intertextual web, both within the text (intratextual)

and external to the text (intertextual), in such a way that we authorize the/a meaning of the text. When Benstock states that "authority in fictional texts rests not on extratextual sources that support an intellectual aesthetic but on the implied presence of the author—as creator certainly and sometimes as speaker—who is immediately and frequently directly engaged with the reader, not solely with the text" (207), she ignores the significant intertextual functionality of notes. As Eco has his detective William of Baskerville claim in *The Name of the Rose*, "Often books speak of other books" (286).

Notes and other fictional paratextual devices often foreground the aspects of the text that are, in essence, textual or more specifically metafictional. Metafictional elements in a narrative make us aware—intentionally or unintentionally—of what we might call the ontological nature of a text.[18] Metafiction highlights questions about the nature of the fictional text: what is it, what are its boundaries, and what is our relationship to it? In essence, metafiction breaks the illusion of reality that so many narratives attempt to establish and asks us always to be aware that we are reading a fictional text.[19] Of course, since all fictional narratives have a discursive level, we are always aware at some

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[18] Brian McHale has noted that ontological questions—or more specifically, an ontological dominant—are key components of postmodern fiction (1987). Texts that employ artificial paratexts of one sort or another raise ontological questions in this manner, even if the dominant of the text is not necessarily an ontological one. The footnotes in Susanna Clarke's *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell* are a good example of this type of synthetic textual play. While the notes may achieve the effect of making the reader aware of the text's synthetic aspects, this effect is lessened by Clarke's attempt to make the novel as realistic as possible in order to normalize the concept of magic as a scholarly pursuit rather than a fantastic possibility.

[19] There are many metafictional texts that raise the possibility that there is little difference between the real word and the textual world; or at the very least, the textual world and the real world are constantly in dialogue with each other.

level of the aspects of a narrative that are what we might call constructed or synthetic.

We realize, for example, that we are reading words printed on a page, not listening, say, to Marlow spin a yarn about Kurtz aboard the Nellie, just as we understand the various influences on and influences from the text we are reading in relation to the cultural and historical context of its writing and of our reading. In other words, the things that make a text a text are always in front of us as we are reading. Some texts, such as those written in the tradition of the realistic novel, do their best to hide these textual components as much as possible, going so far as to make concessions to the form of a text.[20] Other narratives accept the conventions of these elements, and neither struggle against them nor work with them. The vast majority of printed narratives fall into this category. Some may take advantage of these conventions for marketing purposes, but rarely do the contents of the cover of the book overtly or directly affect the material inside the book, for example. On the other hand, some narratives play with these elements at the level of the story, working with a greater range of textual elements. These narratives take the entire history of writing and publishing as the sources of their contextual playground. These texts foreground their fictionality at the level of the story; however, when they do, the boundary between the story and the discourse is fluid and potentially warped and permeated by the author in order to achieve the rhetorical effect of the narrative.

When foregrounding a self-reflective text, however, we have to recognize that metafictional narratives are metafictional precisely because of their context within a

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[20] Examples of this type of formal alteration include the epistolary novel, which mimic the form of letters, or digital stories constructed in such a way as to mask the boundaries of the text with technical conventions.

history of writing fiction. There could be no metafiction without fiction, and to a less

obvious degree no fiction without an underlying, if not explicit, theory of fiction. The

texts that exploit this theory rely on notions of writing and reading that recognize reading

as both a rhetorical act—uncovering the intended effects of a text and producing its own

effects in the process—and a social act. Literary texts, according to Bakhtin, are the most

social of all texts because they rely on language that is heavily influenced by conventions

("Discourse" 261-62). The dialogic nature of literary texts calls our attention to the

relationship between discourse and story. Many notes, then, establish alternative

narrative threads and competing narrative voices, introducing what Bakhtin has called in

his analysis of Dostoevsky's works, a polyphony of voices:

> A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a
> genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic
> of Dostoevsky's novels. What unfolds in his works is not a multitude of
> characters and fates in a single objective world, illuminated by a single
> authorial consciousness; rather a plurality of consciousnesses, with equal
> rights and each with its own world, combine but are not merged in the
> unity of the event. (*Dostoevsky's Poetics* 6)

In novels such as Mark Danielewski's *House of Leaves* or Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*,

this polyphony is primarily evident in the play between the notes and the ostensible body

text, but it is also evident in the novels' ability to foreground their own status as text.

In this respect, autographic notes in particular can serve not simply as

placeholders for information but as rhetorical structures that give us evidence of a

particular type of reading that is expected of the authorial audience. If I see a note in a

literary work, my expectations about the meaning of that note are influenced by how I

expect a note to function in a critical text. The note then foregrounds a rhetorical strategy

as much as it foregrounds an author or a self-reflective text. In part, notes allow the

author additional latitude to take into account the needs of the reader, filling in the gaps

that might need filling in order to grant the reader enough information to be capable of

following the rest of the text. As Chuck Zerby suggests

> The art of this kind of annotation, of adding information without
> interrupting the pleasure of the story, demands a finely tuned sense of
> timing and of narrative *pull*; the pull must be strong enough to carry the
> reader past the reference mark, but a pause in the story, a diminishing of
> excitement, must occur soon enough for the reader to remember the
> footnote and want to return to it. (Zerby 103)

Notes become the spatial center of a different type of interaction, one that requires new

rules and rhetorical reading strategies. Artificial paratexts allow writers to split the

narrative into multiple components, each with potentially competing and complementary

narrative dynamics. These different parts can work together to establish the narrative

coherence of the overall story; or, they can work in tension with each other, defying

narrative coherence.

The effect of the notes, as we will see throughout the dissertation, will depend to a

large degree on the choice the author makes between mimetic and synthetic constructs. If

the author chooses a strong mimetic development, the notes function much as a narrative

in dialogue with itself. If the author chooses, however, to avoid these mimetic aspects,

the notes foreground the synthetic attributes of a text and call the reader's attention to the

book as a book, or to its metafictional aspects. In this case, the book is not only in

dialogue with itself, but it is in dialogue with the history of writing and literary creation.

Regardless of how well developed the mimetic component is, however, I would argue

that at some level, notes and other intentional or artificial paratextual components always

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foreground the "constructed" aspects of a narrative to some degree. Our reading of a text then depends on where the text places its emphasis—on internal self-referentiality or on external intertextuality—and what the rhetorical effect of this balancing act between mimesis and synthetic qualities accomplishes. I explore this question in the next section of this chapter.

3.3. A Rhetorical Approach

In its most basic form, narrative is someone telling a story to someone: "A *narrative text* is a text in which an agent relates ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination thereof" (Bal 5). Given this definition of narrative, what does it mean to analyze narrative in terms of its rhetorical functions? According to James Phelan, to define a narrative in rhetorical terms is to call attention to the fact that somebody is "*telling a particular story to a particular audience in a particular situation for, presumably, a particular purpose*" (1996, 5; emphasis original). For my purposes, the key element here is that narrative is not just the telling of a story, but the telling of a story *with a purpose*. The ambiguity of the phrase "with a purpose" is a useful construct here, as the narrative is by definition multilayered and it has different purposes at each level. Purpose or intent can be a literary quagmire, and it is not my goal to offer a new approach to thinking about authorial intent or even a new definition of narrative. Rather, I think it is important to recognize a range of intents that are made recognizable by the narrative exchange. Narrative as a rhetorical communication presumes a full range of interactions between the reader, the text, and the

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implied author through the voice(s) of her narrator(s), while at the same time, it suggests

that we can best understand this engagement with the text through a thorough analysis of

the various narrative elements and techniques:

> When I talk about narrative as rhetoric or about a rhetorical relationship
> between author, text, and reader, I want to refer to the complex
> multilayered processes of writing and reading, processes that call upon our
> cognition, emotions, desires, hopes, values, and beliefs . . . . I am more
> specifically interested in the elements of narrative (e.g., character, event,
> setting, narrative discourse) and in techniques, forms, structures, genres,
> and conventions of narrative for the ways in which they enable, enrich,
> interfere with, or otherwise complicate narrative as rhetoric. (Phelan 1996,
> 19)

In a work earlier than the one quoted above, *Reading People, Reading Plots*, Phelan

argues that a rhetorical approach to character and narrative analysis is ultimately a more

effective way of accounting for readerly experience than other analytic practices. In

particular, he believes that structuralist analyses of narrative are useful in so far as they

help to generate comprehensive lexicons of narrative form and technique, but their ability

to develop engaging interpretive models is limited.[21] As Phelan suggests, the power of a

rhetorical approach comes from its ability to account for the *effects* of reading rather than

solely giving us a methodology for identifying the various pieces that make up a

narrative's structure or the techniques employed by an author. While structuralist reading

practices have long been out of vogue in critical theory circles, one place where

structuralist practices have seen some resurgence is in contemporary new media studies,

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[21] This comparison is easily extended to other methodologies of reading, as Phelan shows
throughout his writings. In *Narrative as Rhetoric*, Phelan similarly argues for the power
of rhetorical analysis in conjunction with (and in opposition to, at times) deconstruction
and pragmatic analyses.

where scholars are working to identify the components of new media, of hypertext, of cybertext, and so on.[22] Reading narrative as rhetoric attempts to understand the interplay between "authorial agency, textual phenomena (including intertextual relations), and reader response" (Phelan 2005, 18), and in this respect is a useful approach in understanding how artificial paratexts function. My analytical approach will rely heavily on Phelan's model of narrative as rhetoric, including his study of character functions and attributes as they relate to narrative progression.   Before discussing some of the texts I introduced above in terms of a rhetorical model, some background on the functions of characters, the various levels of audience, and our expectations as readers is in order.

In establishing a rhetorical approach to understanding character as a construct in particular and narrative in general, Phelan outlines three components of character: the synthetic, the mimetic, and the thematic. These components not only define the functions and dimensions of characters. Each of these components may be more or less developed (or, in the case of the synthetic, more or less foregrounded) in any particular narrative, and they not only work together to create the various aspects of a character but also in relationship to the overall progression of the narrative. Mimetic components are those components that are developed in order to make the character appear to be as real as possible to the reader. In realistic fiction, the mimetic component of a character is

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[22] While this process is both necessary and useful, I would argue that we must develop in parallel methodologies for interpreting the complexity of digital narratives. Because the nature of digital media is fundamentally active—requiring both intellectual and at times physical engagement by its readers—it lends itself to an analytical practice that attempts to account for the process and effect of this engagement. A rhetorical theory of narrative is such a practice.

developed to such a degree as to encourage seeing the character as a real person rather than as an artificial construct simply made up of words. While mimetic components of character are often associated with the depth of development the character receives in the narrative, the mimetic nature of a character owes as much, if not more, to the reader's ability to read from the perspective of what Peter Rabinowitz calls the narrative audience. When we read a story at the level of the narrative audience, we are, in essence, acknowledging the characters as real within the context of our reading, ignoring the implicit and explicit knowledge that we have about the artificiality of the text. The synthetic components are those aspects of a character that foreground the artificiality of a character. As Phelan shows, in a novel such as John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, the artificiality of Sarah Woodruff and Charles Smithson is made explicit by the narrator's declaration in Chapter 13 of their status as characters that "never existed outside my own mind" (95). These aspects make the reader aware that the character is precisely that, a character within a narrative, created by an author and functioning through discursive processes. As readers we are often asked to ignore the synthetic components, especially in realistic narratives that attempt to repress their own materiality. The third, or thematic, component is the aspect of a character that functions to represent a particular theme or concept.

Both the mimetic and thematic components may be more or less developed, and at times these two aspects may compete with each other for the reader's attention. For example, the stream of consciousness narrative technique of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* serves to develop the mimetic aspects of Stephen Dedalus in that

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novel, making him seem all the more real to us as readers. However, when we read a *Portrait* back through the lens of *Ulysses*, as many critics have done, we see Stephen Dedalus as much more of a thematic—and, at times, flat—representation of the artist as theme. Whereas in *Ulysses*, the very human aspects of the quintessential 'everyman' character, Leopold Bloom, help to define him less as the thematic representation of 'every man' and much more as a real, flesh and blood character. As I discuss in Chapter Four, a novel such as *Pale Fire* places the synthetic and mimetic aspects of character in constant tension, while the thematic component is far less developed.

These three components of character can be further distinguished in terms of dimensions and functions. A character may have certain thematic dimensions—that is, attributes that have the potential to be used in the service of the story's ideational purposes—but these dimensions may or may not be converted to functions by the progression of the narrative. As Phelan shows, this distinction is significant because it allows his model to account for the full complexities of character (it is person, idea, and construct) and for the intersection of those complexities with narrative progression (progression determines the relations of the components in any given narrative).

Phelan goes on to distinguish two types of narrative conflicts that maintain narrative progression, or the way "an author introduces, complicates, and resolves (or fails to resolve) certain instabilities which are the developing focus of the authorial audience's interest in the narrative" (15). The first he calls instabilities. Instabilities occur at the level of the story, and include conflicts between characters, between a character and herself, or between a character and the world around her. The second type

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of narrative conflict that Phelan relates to narrative progression and contrasts to

instabilities is what he calls tension. Tensions are conflicts at the level of discourse or in

the interplay between story and discourse. For Phelan, much of the rhetorical effect of

narratives depends on the tensions and instabilities created in the various aspects of

character that are made implicit or explicit by a reader's relationship to what Peter

Rabinowitz calls the authorial and narrative audiences. Tensions often arise as the reader

attempts to reconcile discursive problems raised by the telling of a narrative, and are

often located in the interplay between implied author, narrator, narrative audience, and

authorial audience. Narrative progression is dependent on how a narrative develops,

complicates, and then resolves tensions and instabilities.

While he does not do this directly, Phelan's reading of the various components of

character can be extended to narrative form and structure itself, especially as it relates to

rhetorical devices such as notes and other fictional paratexts. One example would be the

emphasis on the synthetic component in digital narratives, which often goes beyond the

realization of a particular artificiality of character to a much larger concern with what we

might call the ontological uncertainty in the entire text. Synthetic components are

generally made visible in one of two ways, though neither of these is mutually exclusive

or exhaustive, as we are most often always aware, at some level, of the artificiality of a

text even when we are most engaged in the practice of effacing that artificiality. First,

hermeneutic reading models, such as literary scholarship, highlight a text's synthetic

components. One thing that can be said of much literary criticism is that it frequently

attempts to read a text from the perspective of the authorial audience (i.e., to understand

the full range of possible interpretations intended by the narrative process), and as such

often attempts to make evident the elements of narrative that work to create character (or,

more generally, the narrative itself). In this respect, we frequently become aware of the

synthetic components of a narrative through analytic practice. Second, some narratives

foreground synthetic aspects in the process of telling a story. In *The French Lieutenant's*

Woman, Fowles frequently reminds readers of the 'constructedness' of the text. While

there is certainly nothing new about self-conscious narratives that make readers

consciously (and continually) aware of the fact that they are reading a narrative, this

process often contradicts our expectations for narrative fiction. I discuss the synthetic

component in *Pale Fire* in more detail in Chapter Four, but for now it is important to

recognize that at one level, some narratives such as *Pale Fire* function to make the

synthetic component more visible to the reader. This process can offer its own rhetorical

rewards.

In *Before Reading*, Rabinowitz describes the techniques used to make us aware of

elements and events within a narrative, the meaning we assign to those elements and

events, the relationships between the elements and events that create expectations, and

the unifying sense of the whole we apply to the entire text as we put together the various

constituent elements and events. He labels these the Rules of Notice, Rules of

Signification, Rules of Configuration, and Rules of Coherence, respectively. In part,

synthetic footnotes and endnotes alter our sense of expectation by introducing elements

we do not imagine seeing in a work of fiction, calling attention to their role in the

narrative as textual devices for which we have to adjust our expectations. In some cases

we might not notice these notes initially; or, if we do notice them because of their

unusual status in the text, we might not be sure what the significance of the notes might

be or how to configure those notes into our preconceived notions of meaning in the text.

Texts themselves may, in fact, offer little in the way of direction about how we might

read the footnotes as they are presented to us. In essence, notes play off of rules of notice

and signification, and, I would argue, alter our methods of configuration and need to be

accounted for in any model of coherence that we might want to assign to the narrative.

Our job, then is to determine how the notes impact the overall reading process.

The model I am proposing for reading synthetic notes as rhetorical devices makes

use of both Phelan's and Rabinowitz's approaches to reading narratives as rhetorical

texts. In my model, I follow Rabinowitz and suggest that notes can more or less call

attention to themselves, can be more or less significant, can more or less affect our

expectations and points of configuration, and can be a necessary component in the overall

coherence of the narrative. In doing so, however, I assume that artificial notes are

directly connected to our understanding of the mimetic, synthetic, or thematic

components of narrative. In other words, our sense of the significance and coherence of

any particular note or set of notes is often dependent on how the notes fit into our

understanding of the narrative's goal of developing mimetic or thematic qualities while

foregrounding to a greater or lesser degree the synthetic aspects of the text. Ultimately,

meaning and progression occur in the dynamic between the author, the text, and the

reader, and notes of the sort that I am discussing can have a significant impact on this

dynamic. In order to test this model, I would like to offer a number of examples of artificial footnotes.

3.4. Note Functions

Like any textual feature, artificial footnotes and endnotes create expectations and carry with them certain effects in any particular reading. For some notes, these expectations create tensions in dialogue with the body text. In Rabinowitz's terms, artificial notes call into question many of the rules of reading we have learned to follow. In part, rules of reading that have been honed by years of reading realistic novels make us less likely to notice the notes in texts. Highly mimetic narratives in the realist tradition do their best to mask their artifice, and many of our rules of reading encourage us to go along with this mimetic illusion. We often ignore the paratextual features at the level of the narrative audience. Of course, scholarly texts are just as responsible for establishing rules of reading. Unless extremely interested in a particular topic or dissatisfied with an argument or piece of evidence, readers will often overlook notes in scholarly texts as well, assuming they are tangential to the main text. And in some narratives, the notes do little to call attention to themselves. It's easy (now at least) to miss the notes in Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*, for example, though we have only to imagine reading the novel in the early eighteenth century—just as footnotes were becoming all the rage in scholarly texts—in order to appreciate how our rules of notice may have changed. And, of course, as a novel of digressions, the notes themselves play an important role in the text. Other texts do little to make their notes visible, though as we learn through reading the notes

almost always play a key role in our understanding of the text. The notes in Michael

Chabon's *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* or J. D. Salinger's *Franny and

Zooey* stand out only because of their unusualness in the otherwise very traditional

realistic narratives. Many texts that incorporate footnotes will often only include one or

two, making them seem incidental to the text as a whole and often going unread. Of

course, as Rabinowitz has pointed out, rules of reading are just as active when we do not

expect something as when we do. The effect, however, is quite different. Narrative

tensions are just as often as not developed by presenting a reader with something outside

of his expectations. Notes in many of the narratives I mentioned in the beginning of this

chapter work precisely against these expectations.

3.4.1 Intertextuality and Synthetic Functions

There are many notes that we notice because we are specifically asked to pay

attention to them, such as in *The Nine Wrong Answers* or *House of Leaves*. These notes

have strong synthetic functions that highlight the text's artifice. In each of these novels,

the notes are the keys to understanding the motivations of the text, just as they call our

attention to the complex relationship between authorial audience and narrative audience.

In *House of Leaves*, the text offers explicit instructions about the differences between the

various narrators, including the fictitious editors. In one early note, the "editors" offer a

key to the notes:

> In the 17th century, England's greatest topographer of worlds satanic and
> divine warned that hell was nothing less than "Regions of sorrow, doleful
> shades, where peace/ And rest can never dwell, hope never comes/ That
> comes to all" thus echoing the words copied down by hell's most famous

tourist: "*Dananzi a me non fuor cose create/ Se non etterne, e io etterna duro/ Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate.*"[4]

[4] That first bit comes from Milton's <u>Paradise Lost</u>, Book I, lines 65-67. The second from Dante's <u>Inferno</u>, Canto III, lines 7-9. In 1939, some guy named John D. Sinclair from the Oxford University Press translated the Italian as follows: "Before me nothing was created by eternal things and I endure eternally. Abandon every hope, ye that enter."[5]

[5] In a effort to limit confusion, Mr. Truant's footnotes will appear in Courier font while Zampanò's will appear in Times. We also wish to note here that we have never actually met Mr. Truant. All matters regarding the publication were addressed in letters or in rare instances over the phone.—The Editors. (4)

The complex narrative layering of the novel occurs in the interplay between the three

levels of notes (Zampanò's notes on his text, the Navidson Record; Johnny Truant's notes

on Zampanò's text and notes; and the Editors' notes on Truant's notes, Zampanò's text,

and Zampanò's notes). In *House of Leaves* it is virtually impossible not to notice the

notes as they take up as much, if not more, of the text than the body text and appear in

different typefaces. Unlike a traditional frame narrative, distinguishing the primary

narrative level in a novel such as *House of Leaves* is a complex task, in part because the

best candidate for the primary level is not the body text or at least not solely the body

text. In the case of *House of Leaves*, our engagement moves back and forth between

Zampanò's text and Johnny Truant's notes. *House of Leaves* is also clearly intent on

deconstructing the stability of the printed text, and Danielewski employs a variety of

metaleptic devices, most of which are visible by changes in the typeface, spacing, or

other print techniques. Genette defines narrative metalepsis as "any intrusion by the

extradiegetic narrator or narratee into the diegetic universe (or by diegetic characters into a metadiegetic universe, etc.), or the inverse" (*Narrative* 234-35).

The notes in *House of Leaves* are in constant dialogue with the body text; each informs the other and eventually our reading of the novel must take into account all levels of the notes. In the terms I have laid out above, the notes carry with them their own rules of notice, signification, configuration, and coherence that we as readers must learn in order to make our way through the text. Understanding these rules offer great rewards as the novel progresses and the relationship between the notes and Zampanò's story develops. As the novel's structure and print techniques advance, we gradually become accustomed to paying attention to the unusual layout of the novel (backwards pages, text that is printed in circles, etc.), in part because we have learned to notice and value irregular elements in the process of reading the notes. And part of our reward depends on our recognizing that the novel itself is a self-conscious play of narrative conventions and print techniques. There are, of course, mimetic functions as well, especially as the novel develops the instabilities around the Navidsons' house and labyrinth therein, but even the suspense of the lightless maze and the other horrors of the body story, all serve to call our attention to the synthetic aspects of the novel. This is no where more evident than when Truant points out to us that everything Zampanò narrates is patently false and the sources he uses for his notes are made up or assigned meaning they never had. The notes and our notice of them, then, serve as a constant reminder of the synthetic aspects of the text.

In John Dickson Carr's *The Nine Wrong Answers*, the notes work to connect the novel to an intertextual history of detective fiction in which the expected role of the

reader is to try to figure out the solution to the mystery before it is revealed in the text.

The notes only become interesting or even make sense in the novel if we consider them in

the context of detective fiction as a whole. In this context, the notes foreground the

synthetic aspects of the text—the equivalent of a metafictional detective story—even as

the novel itself works to construct a highly mimetic, in fact gritty, narrative of cat and

mouse. Early on in the novel, the reader is directed to the following footnote:

> [1] The astute reader will already have wondered whether the preceding
> scene was not a corporate conspiracy directed at Bill Dawson himself,
> who was intended to overhear the conversation. This idea is wholly
> wrong. Discard answer number one. (5)

As synthetic constructions, the notes create a discursive tension that we seek to resolve

just as we seek to understand how the complex masquerade that Bill Dawson plays to

help Larry Hurst get even with his malicious uncle, Gaylord Hurst.

Carr uses numbered footnotes to speak directly to the reader, running what he

calls a "fair-play duel of wits between reader and writer" (n.p.) But, who speaks here?

The implied author? The heterodiegetic narrator? A different narrator altogether? This

last possibility seems most likely, but the novel never makes the speaker of the notes

explicit. Carr includes eight more notes—thus the title of the novel—with each note

creating a greater sense of tension between the reader's expected interpretation of the

narrative and the narrator/author's. At some level, the notes exist outside of the level of

narrative and apart from the narrator who focalizes almost entirely through Bill Dawson,

the main character. What motivation is there for the narrator to speak directly to the

reader in notes rather than in the body of the narrative? Which audience is he speaking

to? Identifying the author is further complicated by notes that are editorial rather than the

unusual dialogue between the reader and the narrator. For example, Carr also includes

notes, introduced by a symbol, that provide American readers with colloquial definitions

(i.e., the British word "producer" means the same thing as the American word

"Director"). These colloquial translations are striking in and of themselves as they also

foreground the relationship between the narrative audience and the authorial audience.

The narrative audience would not need the colloquial translations, and yet the

expectations of the authorial audience would also preclude the need for further

explanation by the implied author. The inclusion, then, is unmotivated at the level of the

narrative, and unwarranted at the level of the perceived authorial audience. On the other

hand, the notes create a new frame for the reader that might best be described as an

interaction between a new narrator and a new narratee, one who is intended to have

access to the notes. One effect of the notes is to further engage the reader and force her

to rethink her current theory of the mystery. Another effect, though, is to force us to

confront our expectations about how to read a mystery novel. In other words, the notes

ask us to rethink our rules of notice, significance, and configuration.

Given the fact that we do not often notice artificial notes, assigning significance to

specific notes can be difficult. The notes in Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman*, for

example, can certainly be funny, especially when we are told the details of one of de

Selby's more outlandish philosophical theories, but it is not immediately obvious why

O'Brien would employ footnotes to support the descriptions of a non-existent

philosopher with his non-existent works. O'Brien's notes reference the works of a

somewhat delusional, though entirely fictitious, philosopher by the name of de Selby.

Sometimes the notes will be simple references to de Selby's works:

> De Selby has some interesting things to say on the subject of houses.[1]
> _____
> [1] *Golden Hours*, ii, 261. (21)

Much as one would expect in a nonfiction historical narrative, other notes are much more expository and interpretive. After discussing in detail the oddities of de Selby's theories on house construction, the narrator questions the validity of such thoughts:

> In the light of present-day theories of housing and hygiene, there can be no doubt that de Selby was much mistaken in these ideas but in his own remote day more than one sick person lost his life in an ill-advised quest for health in these fantastic dwellings.[3]
> _____
> [3] Le Fournier, the reliable French commentator (in *De Selby—l'Énigme de l'Occident*) has put forward a curious theory regarding these 'habitats'. He suggests that de Selby, when writing the *Album*, paused to consider some point of difficulty and in the meantime engaged in the absent-minded practice known generally as 'doodling', then putting his manuscript away. The next time he took it up he was confronted with a mass of diagrams and drawings which he took to be the plans of a type of dwelling he always had in mind and immediately wrote many pages explaining the sketches. 'In no other way,' adds the severe Le Fournier, 'can one explain so regrettable a lapse.' (21-22)

Here not only is reference made to de Selby, but also to commentators on de Selby, extending the levels of intertextual reference and deepening the mimetic possibilities of the narrative. The novel itself, of course, ventures deep into the realm of the fantastic and despite the mimetic possibilities of the notes, the effect is rather to call into question the narrator's sanity and reliability. Readers of O'Brien's later works are also brought into the synthetic play to a greater degree when de Selby shows up as a character in *The Dalkey Archive*. Reading *The Third Policeman* back through the lens of *The Dalkey*

Archive makes real the intertextual fiction of the former novel's reference to the fictitious

author and philosopher in a manner befitting the metafictional focus of *The Third*

Policeman. Ultimately, given the novel's metafictional tendencies, the notes can best be

explored as part of a coherent whole that is as much a critique of contemporary

philosophy and science as it is a comic tale.

3.4.2 Mimetic Functions

In some texts, such as Ishmael Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo* and Michael Chabon's *The*

Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay, the notes serve the clear function of bolstering

the mimetic aspects of the tale, but again how these notes are supposed to fit into our

rules of configuration is not always clear. Part of the difficulty in determining the role

the notes are supposed to play in our reading process is determining from whom the notes

originate. For example, Reed's novel includes an extensive bibliography, a synthetic

construct in and of itself, and a number of footnotes that make reference to the works in

the bibliography, as in the following:

> Passersby stopping to watch this man double up on the street
> HEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEH
> Dance is the universal art, the common joy of expression. Those who
> cannot dance are imprisoned in their own ego and cannot live well with
> other people and the world. They have lost the tune of life. They only
> live in cold thinking. Their feelings are deeply repressed while they attach
> themselves forlornly to the earth.[†]
> _____
> † Joost A. M. Meerloo, *The Dance: from Ritual to Rock and Roll, Ballet to*
> *Ballroom* (Philadelphia: Chilton, 1960), p. 39. (60)

The note is a factual note. It references a real work of sociological criticism by a writer

and doctor with an extensive publication history. The intra- and intertextual references

aside, there is very little about the note that would call the reader's attention to its

structure and role in the text. In this example, the difference between a factual note from

a narrator and one from the author is difficult to determine. The effect of the choice,

however, is significant. Assigning the note to the author in a first person narrative aligns

the author with the narrator, making it difficult to determine any differences between the

narrator and the author. Take, for example, the following note:

> Mu'tafikah—According to The Koran, inhabitants of the Ruined Cities
> where Lot's people had lived. I call the "art-nappers" *Mu'tafikah* because
> just as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were the bohemians of
> their day, Berbelang and his gang are the bohemians of the 1920s
> Manhattan.

Here Reed provides interpretation and commentary by the narrator. At the same time, the

note entrenches the authority of the narrative, even as we understand the fantastical

nature of the tale of the *Jes Grew*. In essence, the factual note allows Reed's interpretive

notes to carry with them a greater degree of authority despite the fantastic nature of the

body narrative. Reed uses the notes to create conflicting expectations and to destabilize

our sense of narrative coherence, even as the story itself is about destabilizing ideological

categories (the dominant Judeo-Christian Ethic). In Reed's novel, the notes function as

another site of what Henry Louis Gates, Jr., has called signifying, a place where meaning

can be represented, even as they function as an additional element in the novel's

deconstruction of the novel form. *Mumbo Jumbo* is as much about creating new forms

out of old as it is about "the process of willing into being a rhetorical structure, a literary

language, replete with its own figures and tropes" (Gates 214). These tropes and figures

function as a critique of Western forms and structures. The notes in the novel work in

both ways, as a critique of Western forms of narrative and as a place of signifying

through which new figures and tropes are represented. The notes are doubly meaningful

in so far as they foreground the constructedness of the text even as they lay bare the

constructedness of all forms.

Much like Reed's novel, the notes in Chabon's *The Amazing Adventures of*

Kavalier & Clay, follow the much more traditional model of a factual note, and at first

glance appear to come from the author:

> The previous January, *Amazing Midget Radio Comics* had debuted with a
> sold-out print run of three hundred thousand.[*]
> _____
>
> [*] In 1998, the New York branch of Sotheby's offered a rare copy of
> *Amazing Midget Radio Comics* #1 in Very Good condition. The minimum
> bid was fixed at ten thousand dollars. Its staples were shiny, its corners
> sharp, its pages white as piano keys. The cover had a long transverse
> crease, but after more than half a century—three generations removed now
> from that jittery year in that brutal yet innocent city—the joy and rage
> incarnate in the knockout Kavalier punch still startled. It sold, after lively
> bidding, for $42,200. (169)

Of course, *Amazing Midget Radio Comics* only exists in the context of the narrative. The

note extends the realism of the novel even as it raises the question: who makes up the

diegetic frame that allows *Amazing Midget Radio Comics* to exist in the world outside of

the time frame and context of the novel? If the note were to come from Chabon rather

than the narrator, the structure of the narrative space of the novel would need to be

radically altered to account for an authorial voice that was speaking directly to the

narrative audience. The note is able to foreground these concerns because of rules of

notice, significance, and configuration that we have developed over time that tell us that

footnotes and endnotes authorize a narrative. Because these rules of reading are so

ingrained in us, we often do not even have to read a note in order to realize that the note stands for authority and more specifically, realism. This is a crucial point in fictional narratives that are attempting to make their story as real as possible, and follows what Rabinowitz has called the Rule of Realism (93). This mimetic illusion is especially important in narratives with a fantastical premise, such as *The Third Policeman* or Susanna Clarke's *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*.

In *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*, the footnotes are perfectly reasonable within the diegesis of the novel where magic is real, but has become a scholarly pursuit rather than a practiced albeit fantastical vocation. Footnotes become metonyms for scholarly pursuit, and once again function to develop the overall mimetic qualities of the narrative. Despite the fact that the novel is a fantasy, there is a strong need for well-developed mimetic functions since much of the novel depends on instabilities around the issue of scholarship. Like Chabon's notes, the notes function to maintain the illusion of the diegesis that is larger than the context of the novel, at times referencing real places and things. However, the majority of Clarke's notes indicate that the story in the body of the text is not the entire story to be understood by the reader, extending the narrative frame anachronistically and spatially:

> "Building a Quiliphon would take too long," said Tom, firmly. "I suggest we turn our attention to De Chepe's Prophylaxis.[4]"
> _____
> [4] Walter De Chepe was an early thirteenth-century London magician. His procedure, Prophylaxis, protects a person, city or object from magic spells. Supposedly it closely follows a piece of fairy magic. It is reputed to be very strong. Indeed the only problem with this spell is its remarkable efficacy. Sometimes objects become impervious to human or fairy agency of any sort whether magical or not. Thus, if Strange's students had succeeded in casting the spell over one of Strange's books, it is quite

possible that no one would have been able to pick up the book or turn its pages.

> In 1280 the citizens of Bristol ordered the town's magicians to cast de Chepe's Prophylaxis over the whole town to protect it from the magic spells of its enemies. Unfortunately so successful was the magic that everyone in the town, all the animals and all the ships in the harbour became living statues. No one could move; water stopped flowing within the boundaries; even the flames in the hearth were frozen. Bristol remained like this for a whole month until John Uskglass came from his house in Newcastle to put matters right. (562)

Given that the novel equates magic with a type of scholarship—indeed before Mr. Norrell's reclaims the title of practicing magician, all magicians in Clarke's novel were little more than scholars of the lost art of magic—Clarke's use of the note is contextualized throughout the narrative. References to well-known and obscure magical works alike help establish a greater sense of the reality of the narrative even as readers are confronted with the fantastical nature of the novel and its story.

3.4.3 Supplemental Notes

The preceding notes have generally been factual, interpretive, or primarily dialogic in nature. *The Mezzanine* by Nicholson Baker relies heavily on notes to augment the already minute, detailed observations about everyday office life. I quote the following at length to give a greater sense of the observational quality of the narrative:

> Just after lunch always seemed to be the time to think about practical things like bills—and I can't help mentioning here the rarefied pleasure that I took in handling my finances back then: especially the pleasure of getting in the mail fat envelopes filled with charge statements and their receipts, the documentary history of that month, dinners out and odd purchases that you would have forgotten completely but for those slips, which nicely resurrect the moment of paying for you: you're there in the restaurant, very full, an entire steak in your stomach, with your beloved darling, smiling and happy, your bottom by this time on fire from the

unabsorptivity of the vinyl seat, and you weigh whether or no to ask her help in calculating the tip—sometimes it is better to be the complete man and dash in a generous round sum, other times it is nice to confer with her about the shades between fifteen and twenty-two percent that evening's waiter or waitress deserved—and you experience the pleasure of writing down the tip's amount through several layers of carbon paper, bearing down hard against the little black tray the restaurant has provided to keep its compensation off the tablecloth, and then, once the totaling has been done and double-checked, you sign, more rapidly than you would sign a business letter because it doesn't matter here what character traits people will read into your signature, and because wine makes you sign more fluently: you whip off most of your last name with the sort of accelerating wriggle that a vacuum cleaner cord makes retracting into its coiled place of storage[1] . . .

_____

[1] Sometimes it is better to use the pen the restaurant provides, which is usually a cheap stick pen, even when the restaurant is quite fancy; sometimes it is more satisfying to wait with your hand on your own pen in you shirt pocket until the end of a story you are being told, and then, nodding and laughing, remove it from your pocket, hearing the click of its clip as it slips off the shirt pocket's fabric and springs against the barrel, followed by a second click as you bare the ballpoint—these two sounds being like the successively more remote clicks that initiate a long-distance call that you come to associate with the voice of the person who will answer—audible even in loud restaurants, because the burble of voices is of a much lower frequency. And just as your signature is freed into illegibility by the wine, so you imagine that the very ink in the pen adheres more readily to the tiny pores on the surface of the ball because it has been warmed by your body and by the flow of all this conversation. Rarely do pens go dry in restaurants. (69-70)

Unlike the previous examples of factual and interpretive notes, Baker's notes extend the narrative. Unlike the example from *House of Leaves*, however, the narrative level of the notes does not compete with the body text; instead, it complements the body narrative. The notes in Baker's novel function as tangents to the main thought of the narrative even as they extend the levels of the narration as a metaleptic device. Narrative metalepsis raises issues of narrative coherence that Genette suggests always ends up as comical or fantastic (*Narrative* 235).

The larger coherence of a text is a concept fraught with a long history of New

Criticism and Formalist readings, and trying to incorporate artificial paratexts into any

unified whole is a complex enterprise. With respect to narrative coherence, notes tend to

function in terms of gaps and surpluses. In the previous chapter, I discussed notes in

terms of Derrida's concept of *supplement*, both a surplus and a lack. Similarly,

Rabinowitz defines two rules under the Rule of Coherence: License to Fill and Rule of

Surplus. Texts often have gaps and excess information, and many of the assumptions we

make as we read are based on these gaps.   Baker's novel makes extensive use of notes to

fill in gaps in the text and, often, to provide a surfeit of information. Baker's notes are

supplements in the most Derridean of senses. Each note extends the minutiae of his

observations, and it is only in the end that we learn that footnotes for Baker are the source

of truth. In speaking about Lecky, Gibbon, and Boswell, Baker writes:

> They knew that the outer surface of truth is not smooth, welling and
> gathering from paragraph to shapely paragraph, but is encrusted with a
> rough protective bark of citations, quotation marks, italics, and foreign
> languages, a whole variorum crust of "ibid.'s" and "compare's" and
> "see's" that are the shield for the pure flow of argument as it lives for a
> moment in one mind. They knew the anticipatory pleasure of sensing with
> peripheral vision, as they turned the page, a gray silt of further example
> and qualification waiting in tiny type at the bottom . . . . They liked
> deciding as they read whether they would bother to consult a certain
> footnote or not, and whether they would read it in context, or read it before
> the text it hung from, as an hors d'oeuvre . . . the footnote functions as a
> switch , offering the model-railroader's satisfaction of catching the march
> of thought with a superscripted "1" and routing it, sometimes at length,
> through abandoned stations and submerged leaching tunnels.
> Digression—a movement away from the *gradus*, or upward escalation, of
> the argument—is sometimes the only way to be thorough, and footnotes
> are the only form of graphic digression sanctioned by centuries of
> typesetters . . . the great scholarly or anecdotal footnotes of Lecky,
> Gibbon, or Boswell, written by the author of the book himself to
> supplement, or even correct over several later editions, what he says in the

primary text, are reassurances that the pursuit of truth doesn't have clear outer boundaries: it doesn't end with the book; restatement and self-disagreement and the enveloping sea of referenced authorities all continue. Footnotes are the finer-suckered surfaces that allow tentacular paragraphs to hold fast to the wider reality of the library. (122-23)

In a text that makes extensive use of notes for tangents of thoughts or further elaboration of detail, the final comments about footnotes are as much a synthetic construct as a thematic one. We cannot help but read back through the text with an idea towards finding the truth of the text within its hills and valleys that the notes help to define.

As we see in *Nine Wrong Answers*, artificial notes are often a dialogic narrative device that can extend the boundaries of the text and create new narrative levels. This dialogue can also be one of continuity as in Baker's novel, or one of resistance. This type of resistance is evident in J.D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey*:

> He was the second youngest of what had originally been seven brothers and sisters.[*]
> _____
> [*] The aesthetic evil of a footnote seems in order just here, I'm afraid. In all that follow, only the two youngest of the seven children will be directly seen or heard. The remaining five, however, the senior five, will be stalking in and out of the plot with considerable frequency, like so many Banquo's ghosts. The reader, then, may care to know at the outset that in 1955 the eldest of the Glass children, Seymour, had been dead almost seven years. He committed suicide while vacationing in Florida with his wife. If alive, he would have been thirty-eight in 1955. The second-eldest child, Buddy, was what is known in campus catalogue parlance as "writer-in-residence" at a girls' junior college in upper New York State. He lived alone, in a small, unwinterized, unelectrified house about a quarter of a mile away from a rather popular ski-run. The next-eldest of the children, Boo Boo, was married and the mother of three children. In November, 1955, she was traveling in Europe with her husband and all three of their children. In order of age, the twins, Walt and Waker, come after Boo Boo. Walt had been dead just over ten years. He was killed in a freakish explosion while he was with the Army of Occupation in Japan. Waker, his junior by some twelve minutes, was a Roman Catholic priest, and in

November, 1955, he was in Ecuador, attending a Jesuit conference of
some kind. (53)

The narrator's lack of enthusiasm for the footnote form leads way to a use of the note as

metalepsis, and as such we might classify this note as an interpretive note, or one that

extends both the story and the discourse through narration. Much like Carr's use of notes

to resist the interpretive momentum of the narrative, Buddy, the narrator, forestalls

expectations about ancillary characters, while at the same time refocusing the reader's

attention. He does so in the guise of the author—who else would have access to the

boundaries of the text? who else would lament the indecorous use of a scholarly device

such as a footnote in a fictional narrative?—but in doing so he maintains the mimetic

illusion that would normally only be available in the communication between the narrator

and the narrative audience. Buddy plays the role of both homodiegetic and heterodiegetic

narrator even as he moves back and forth between narrative levels. We now know what

happens to characters outside of the diegesis and yet our expectations for the rest of the

story are challenged by the note.

While the complexity of the relationship between the author and the narrator is

left unresolved in many artificial footnotes, such as in Salinger's *Franny and Zooey*,

other novels go to great lengths to force the reader to actively engage with the distinction

in order to appreciate the complexity of the narrative method. John Fowles' *The French

Lieutenant's Woman* extends the overt narrator's commentary to the notes. For example,

a story about feminine guile and revenge in the face of masculine trespass, first

introduced to Charles by Dr. Grogan, is completed in a note:

After such examples, which it would be easy to extend, who would say that it is impossible for a girl, in order to attain a desired end, to inflict pain upon herself?[*]

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[*] I cannot leave the story of La Roncière—which I have taken from the same 1835 account that Dr. Grogan handed Charles—without adding that in 1848, some years after the lieutenant had finished his time, one of the original prosecuting counsel had the belated honesty to suspect that he had helped procure a gross miscarriage of justice. He was by then in a position to have the case reopened. La Roncière was completely exonerated and rehabilitated. He resumed his military career and might, at that very hour Charles was reading the black climax of his life, have been found leading a pleasant enough existence as military governor of Tahiti. But his story has an extraordinary final twist. Only quite recently has it become known that he at least partly deserved the hysterical Mlle de Morell's revenge upon him. He had indeed entered her bedroom on that September night of 1834; but not through the window. Having earlier seduced the governess Miss Allen (_perfide Albion!_), he made a much simpler entry from her adjoining bedroom. The purpose of his visit was not amatory, but in fulfillment of a bet he had made with some brother officers, to whom he had boasted of having slept with Marie. He was challenged to produce proof in the form of a lock of hair—but not from the girl's head. The wound in Marie's thigh was caused by a pair of scissors; and the wound to her self-esteem becomes a good deal more explicable. An excellent discussion of this bizarre case may be found in René Floriot, _Les Erreurs Judiciares_, Paris, 1968. (235)

Much like Buddy's narration in _Franny and Zooey_ and narrative tangents of Baker's _The Mezzanine_, the unnamed narrator of Fowles' novel extends the diegesis to the notes. Fowles's narrator, however, is moving between two metaleptic levels already, the time of novel (1867) and the time of the telling (1967). The notes stand as a third textual level, different in kind from the narrative levels of the story itself, but contemporaneous with the time of the telling.

As we can see from the sampling of texts above, the rhetorical effect of different types of notes can vary greatly. Similarities in type or kind are often of little help in determining how the note functions in a narrative or why it might be there in the first

place. As I shall show in later chapters, there are more complex narrative threads in footnotes, such as in Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, in which the artificial paratexts contain much of the primary story, while the ostensible focus of the narrative, John Shade's poem, becomes secondary in Kinbote's narrative.   For now, I would like to turn from these examples to begin to explore a rhetorical approach that will help develop a model for reading through the effects of these various types of notes. The examples above will serve as the foundation for this discussion. The next three chapters explore detailed examples of the function of notes in narratives. In each case, notes function to alter our expectations, our sense of significance, and our vision for the details of the text. And in each case, notes serve a dialogic function that develops mimetic, thematic, and synthetic functions in the service of narrative progression. The tensions and instabilities in each of the narratives I will examine come in part from the interplay between notes and other textual components.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRESSION AND ARTIFICIAL PARATEXTS IN THE WORK OF JORGE LUIS
BORGES

> But to what extent is the footnote reference an objective tool or a rhetorical
> device?
> —Evelyn Fishburn

4.1 Introduction

In 1967, the American novelist and short story writer John Barth published his

views on the state of contemporary literature in "The Literature of Exhaustion." In this

now widely referenced article, Barth decries the exhausted forms of much mid-to-late

twentieth-century literature even as he finds hope in writers such as Vladimir Nabokov,

Samuel Beckett, and Jorge Luis Borges. Though Borges had been writing fiction for

more than thirty years at the time of Barth's article—and indeed poetry and essays since

the early 1920s—his work was still relatively unknown outside his native Argentina and

other Spanish-speaking countries.[23] Barth places writers like Borges, Beckett, and

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[23] The marking of Borges's introduction to English-speaking audiences is as much a
convenient fiction as a reality. Borges shared the International Publisher's prize in 1961
with Samuel Beckett, and with the publications of *Ficciones* and *Labyrinths* in 1962, his
influence on contemporary fiction in English began to be felt. While Barth's article for
The Atlantic was hardly the first English-language article to praise Borges—Paul de Man
wrote a highly complimentary review for the *New York Review of Books* in November
1964, for example—it was especially significant in placing Borges as a forerunner of
postmodern fiction, not to mention as a writer who raised many of the concerns and

Nabokov (not to mention himself) in a transitional moment, what we might now call a

paradigm shift, between the techniques of writers stuck in a nineteenth-century mode,

"who write as if the twentieth century didn't exist" ("Exhaustion" 66), and writers who

were defining the cultural moment, both in their themes and through their technique.

Today, almost forty years later, many consider Borges to be one of the most influential

writers of the twentieth century, and Barth's arguments to be one of the early attempts to

define what we now call postmodernism.[24] Though critics and theorists after Barth have

discussed Borges's fiction in terms of its relationship to late modernism, postmodernism,

structuralism, poststructuralism, and any number of philosophical theories, he is still

difficult to pin down as representative of any one theoretical approach. For many, he is

the epitome of a writer that crosses narrative boundaries and mixes literary genres,

making his readers constantly aware of the ontological instability of these boundaries and

genres. Interestingly, one of the elements of Borges's work that stood out for Barth was

his use of footnotes, representing in Barth's mind one of the ways Borges responded to

the "felt ultimacies" of the time:

> If you happened to be Vladimir Nabokov, you might address that felt
> ultimacy by writing *Pale Fire*: a fine novel by a learned pedant, in the
> form of a pedantic commentary on a poem invented for the purpose. If
> you were Borges you might write *Labyrinths*: fictions by a learned
> librarian in the form of footnotes, as he describes them, to imaginary or
> hypothetical books. ("Exhaustion" 72)

issues that were just beginning to be part of the critical discourse around literature and art
in the 1960s. See Paul De Man, "A Modern Master."

[24] Barth reflects on and attempts to focus some of his claims in a later piece. See John
Barth, "Replenishment," 205-06.

I will spend more time with Nabokov's response to this problem in the next chapter, but for now I would like to explore how Borges's fiction proposes its own response to this felt ultimacy. In particular, this chapter will examine how Borges uses artificial paratexts as part of what I would argue is a dominant component of all his work: understanding the relationship between good readers and good writers.[25] The goal of this chapter is not only to show how attention to Borges's use of artificial paratexts can reveal something about his fiction, but how his use of artificial paratexts can extend our understanding of the function of these paratextual forms in narrative progression.

Progression in Borges's short fiction—in particular the stories that employ artificial paratexts—is intimately connected with his project of destabilizing the ontology of fictional literature. In this respect, Borges's stories challenge and extend the model of progression I explored in the previous chapter. The development of mimetic and thematic components along with the foregrounding of synthetic components is part of the construction of character in Phelan's model. As I have suggested, Phelan's model tends to privilege progression that is based on character development (and in later works, character narration). Character development is an important and, at times, dominant element of progression in many narratives, so Phelan's focus makes some sense. At the same time, his model for narrative progression—based on tensions and instabilities—is flexible enough to account for the influence of structural components on progression, even if Phelan himself does not always apply the model to narratives with this kind of structural progression. Narrative progression based on character development occurs in

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[25] See, for example, Borges's Preface to the First Edition of *The Universal History of Iniquity*.

Borges's texts to a degree, of course, though his narratives are much less character driven—even at a synthetic or thematic level—than some other fiction. It is more often the case that Borges's stories progress through tensions between discursive structures and the reader's expectations, expectations that are based on previous experience with general rules of configuration of narrative fiction. In part, the development of tensions occurs because Borges creates mimetic, thematic, and synthetic components at the level of discourse rather than (or in addition to) the development of mimetic, thematic, and synthetic components for character at the level of story. Mimicking nonfiction historical discourse, for example, creates mimetic tensions for the reader. These mimetic tensions are often in dialogue with synthetic components of the narrative, and this dialogue foregrounds Borges's intertextual and metatextual concerns. Borges often develops these tensions by altering our expectations about the borders between narrative fiction and nonfiction. In Rabinowitz's terms, we might say that Borges's stories develop rules of configuration that challenge our preconceived rules of configuration for realistic fiction. This is not to say that there are not story-level instabilities present in Borges's fiction, but rather, these instabilities are often subordinated to larger technical concerns that come out through discursive tensions. These technical concerns challenge the literary convention in much the same way his thematic concerns do.

The description Barth refers to in the passage quoted above occurs in Borges's Foreword to his collection of short stories, *The Garden of Forking Paths* (1941):

> It is a laborious madness and an impoverishing one, the madness of composing vast books—setting out in five hundred pages an idea that can be perfectly related orally in five minutes. The better way to go about it is to pretend that those books already exist, and offer a summary, a commentary on them. This was Carlyle's procedure in *Sartor Resartus*,

Butler's in *The Fair Haven*—though those works suffer under the imperfection that they themselves are books, and not a whit less tautological than the others. A more reasonable, more inept, and more lazy man, I have chosen to write notes on imaginary books. (67)

As Borges half-facetiously claims, a more reasonable writer does not waste his time composing extensive novels to explore topics that can be uncovered in far fewer words and possibly with greater depth and control. In many respects, much of Borges's short fiction follows this pronouncement. Borges uses footnotes in seventeen of his short stories and postscripts in about half as many, but the reliance on artificial paratexts of one sort or another pervades much of his fiction. His most enduring stories tend to mimic nonfictional forms, even while the content is often full of fantastic events and characters. Many of his stories call attention to the margins of the page, and to a new perspective that can undermine, challenge, or support the mimetic aspects of his narrative. Given the intertextual and metafictional nature of much of his work, it is easy to see how his stories might function as the tangents, the commentary, the notes, and the paratexts to larger, nonexistent works.

Barth argues that Borges responds to the felt ultimacies of the time by "deal[ing] with ultimacy, both technically and thematically" ("Exhaustion" 67). In other words, he makes the cultural problem of exhaustion the thematic and technical issue of his fiction. This is not unusual. One could argue that the Romantic and Modernist periods are defined by writers who do the same for their day and age. But as times change, so too do the limits to which writers need to respond. For Borges and his time, this meant reflecting on the form, structure, and boundaries, both literal and metaphorical, of prose narrative, while at the same time questioning the ontological foundations of literature and

literary works. As I have suggested, one of the ways his work destabilizes narrative

fiction is by calling our attention to the porous boundaries between fiction and nonfiction

and between author and reader. This type of destabilization is similar to what Brian

McHale calls the ontological dominant of postmodernism (*Postmodernist Fiction* 10-11).

This destabilization is what Barth finds so attractive in Borges's work. Artificial

paratexts are the most prominent technical device that Borges uses to develop this

process of destabilization, and it is through an analysis of these forms that we can see one

of the ways his work challenges traditional narrative progression. In what follows, I

illustrate these points, first with short analyses of a range of works, and, second, with a

more detailed analysis of one of Borges's most famous stories, "The Garden of Forking

Paths."

4.2 Good Readers and Intertextual References

Borges varies how he uses artificial paratexts quite a bit throughout his short

stories, with the most extensive examples coming in two of his earliest collections:

Ficciones and *The Aleph*. His first use of a footnote, however, occurs in the story "The

Improbable Impostor Tom Castro" from *A Universal History of Inequity*. The stories in

this collection are narrative accounts of infamous criminals. Because Borges is

attempting to depict characters rather than deliver accurate historical accounts, the stories

in this collection often conflate many historical events and construct composite figures

out of many different people. In this respect, the stories begin with the premise that

historical discourse is a fluid and malleable entity. Borges chooses people on the

periphery of society—much as the artificial notes exist on the margins of the narrative—

as his subject: "To approach Borges from the edges of the paper seems eminently appropriate given his avowed attraction for *las orillas*, the margins, and *los orilleros*, those living at the margins of society, the 'hoodlums' as he called them in his Edwardian English" (Fishburn 2). The footnote to one of the first stories in the collection is significant in that it shows Borges, the author, implicating himself in the stories and reminding his readers that he is there, behind the scenes putting the pieces together: "I have chosen this metaphor in order to remind the reader that these vile biographies appeared in the Saturday supplement of an evening newspaper" (13). While the ostensible purpose of factual notes is to clarify a detail or offer a short piece of information, one effect is to make his presence as author known to his readers, much as we might expect from an historian and similar to what Benstock argues is the role of notes in fictional texts. In fact, here the note does more to illuminate the entire collection ("these vile biographies")—and Borges's role in all the narratives—rather than the particular story, but the autographic commentary also foregrounds the constructed nature of the historical account. Borges asks his readers to notice the validity of his story by calling our attention to an element that contains its own mimetic support. Without the note, the line referenced in the story (". . . a Saturday-night amusement") would have little context. But even as we can justify the note on contextual grounds, the use of the note still foregrounds a number of questions: why use a footnote to relate this particular piece of information? Why use a footnote for this story only, when all of the "vile biographies" contain references that could use glossing? Why use a footnote here and not elsewhere in the same story?

For Borges, commentary—or the act of the reader influencing the meaning of the text—is a critical component in all of literature, and in many respects, the reader is paramount to Borges: "good readers are poets as singular, and as awesome, as great authors themselves" (3). In fact, his fiction makes as much of the dialogue between reader, text, and other texts as it does of the myriad of philosophical beliefs and historical events that pepper his works. For Borges, being a good reader means being an active reader, one who is willing to engage with the hermeneutic games of the narrative. The note in "The Improbable Impostor Tom Castro" raises such hermeneutic concerns, foregrounding problems of reading that all artificial paratexts highlight to one degree or another. But being a good reader often means recognizing the ethical choices we make as readers. In *Living to Tell About It*, Phelan argues that narration and ethics are inextricably linked. Characters, narrators, readers, and authors all occupy and relate different ethical positions. As I suggested in my discussion of Neal Stephenson's *Cryptonomicon*, notes can raise significant ethical problems.

In "*Deutsches Requiem*," Borges's use of artificial paratexts calls attention— intentionally or unintentionally—to the ethics of narration. The short story is told as a death row reflection by a Nazi waiting to be shot for his crimes against humanity. The notes alternate in origin between a fictitious editor and Otto Dietrich zur Linde, the homodiegetic narrator and author of the reflection (and preface to the reflection). The story itself walks a fine line between mourning the defeat of the German state and mourning the loss of Germanic culture under Nazi rule. The fact that the narrator is an unabashed Nazi—"I have no desire to be pardoned, for I feel no guilt, but I do wish to be understood" (228)—places him in a particular ethical location in relationship to the

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authorial audience, and one might expect Borges to use the notes to offer an alternative viewpoint, much as he does in "The Garden of Forking Paths." Instead, the notes offer lukewarm opposition to zur Linde's narration. In one note, the editor censors zur Linde as he is about to give details to one of his crimes—"Here, the excision of a number of lines has been unavoidable. [Ed.]" (232)—while in another, the editor points out zur Linde's anti-Semitism, even towards his own family:

> During the last days of 1870, my maternal great-grandfather, Ulrich Forkel, was killed in the Marchenoir forest by French sharpshooters; Captain Dietrich zur Linde, my father, distinguished himself in 1914 at the siege of Namur, and again two years later in the crossing of the Danube.[1]
> _____
> [1]It is significant that zur Linde has omitted his most illustrious forebear, the theologian and Hebraist Johannes Forkel (1799-1846), who applied Hegel's dialectics to Christology and whose literal translation of some of the Apocrypha earned him the censure of Hengstenberg and the praise of Thilo and Gesenius. [Ed] (229)

In none of the editor's notes, however, is there a sense of outrage at zur Linde's beliefs to parallel the outrage we witness in the editorial footnote to Yu Tsun's confession in "The Garden of the Forking Paths." This is not to say that Borges must always incorporate the same ethical perspective in his stories, but rather that the choices he does make carry with them certain ethical implications. These implications are sometimes more visible in the artificial paratexts he employs than elsewhere.

Ethical choices, while always present, often give way to intertextual games in Borges's fiction. Textuality is a key concern for him and his work. As I have suggested, footnotes for Borges are elements of the text that help propose new ways of reading the short story. They are what Evelyn Fishburn refers to (following William Rowe) as "reading machines" or devices that "make holes in the text to redistribute it allowing for

different configurations" (2). Despite this excellent metaphor for the role of footnotes in Borges's fiction, Fishburn focuses on these reading machines as textual spaces that Borges uses to insert himself into the text in covert ways. In "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," for example, the first footnote refers to an author of a work in labyrinths: "Haslam was also the author of *A General History of Labyrinths*" (70). Labyrinths are a common metaphor for Borges, as is the concept of authorship. Haslam, as Fishburn points out, was his paternal grandmother's name. In Fishburn's eyes, the note represents Borges "wink to the reader and prophetic self-mocking allusion to the literary image with which he is so often identified" (9).

While Borges clearly uses notes as pieces on his literary game board, his notes are much more, both thematically and technically. Borges's short, metafictional stories often make use of artificial paratexts to raise self-reflexive questions about the very nature of reading and in particular, what it means to read his fiction. He does so through references to his literary predecessors, contemporaries, and his other stories, even as he makes himself visible as author in the notes. It is just as important to Borges's literary project that the reference to his grandmother appears in the guise of a bibliographic reference as it is for him to reference her—or any biographical detail—in the first place.[26] The second note of "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," in fact, connects the fantastic philosophical constructs of Tlön to the work of Bertrand Russell: "Russell (*The Analysis of Mind* [1921], p. 159) posits that the world was created only moments ago, filled with human beings who 'remember' an illusory past" (74). This note makes visible one of the more

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[26] Others, I am sure, would disagree, as biographical criticism often locates the sources of much of Borges's writing in his family. See Edwin Williamson, *Borges: A Life*: 3-31.

consistent themes of his writing. Borges's works are inherently intertextual, self-reflexive, and, in Genette's use of the term, hypertextual. Borges is a master at foregrounding for his readers what Peter Rabinowitz calls the "Rule of Hyperdense Intertextuality," and he is practiced in the concepts Bakhtin defines (in a different context) as dialogism and heteroglossia. The entire premise of "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" is a play on the fluid borders between text and reality. The brilliance of the story that so attracted Barth lies in the way it is told, as much as what it has to say about the relationship between text and reality. The inclusion of footnotes, as well as a postdated postscript, calls our attention to both mimetic and synthetic tensions. The notes and postscript suggest mimetic components, as they mimic paratextual forms found in nonfictional narratives, while fictitious bibliographic details and the postscript postdated six years from the date the story was published all foreground the artificial or synthetic nature of the story. It is after all only a story, but the mimetic development of the narrative is so strong, despite its fantastic premise, that readers, including my own students, often mistake the story for nonfiction.[27] Only when we consider the paratextual elements as a whole can we see how strong the synthetic tensions are in the story. Progression in the story, then, develops through a balancing of the mimetic tensions and the synthetic tensions. We can seek to find resolution of either, but the narrative provides both and neither functions as well without the other. Without the artificial paratexts to provide mimetic support, the realistic aspects of the story would not be as strong. At the

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[27] To be fair, this type of response occurs most often when I excerpt the story from its context in a collection called *Ficciones* (Fictions). Nevertheless, it is clear that mimetic aspects of the story are highly developed.

same time, the artificial paratexts foreground synthetic tensions that the narrative resolves in different ways.

Intertextuality is a continual presence in Borges's work. In "Story of the Warrior and the Captive Maiden," for example, the one note glosses a line in Latin, not to provide a translation, but to refer to another text that also quoted these lines: "Gibbon also records these lines, in the *Decline and Fall*, Chapter XLV" (208). To varying degrees, intertextuality can be one of the cornerstones of an ontological interrogation of the nature of the text itself. Of course, not all intertextual fragments raise overt metafictional questions. Sometimes a quotation is just a quotation, even if at some level the fact that one book includes fragments of another make us aware of the texts outside the text we are reading, and by extension, the textuality of the text we are reading. Still, Borges plays with the conventions of intertextuality by following through with the premise—stated in the Foreword to *The Garden of Forking Paths* and quoted above—that his works are commentaries to non-existent works. The extensive footnote (his longest) to "The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim" is a microcosm of his entire project of fictional commentary, suggesting instability in categories such as intertextuality that can be exploited as part of his literary project:

> In the course of this article, I have referred to the *Mantīq al-taīr*, or *Conference* [perhaps "*Parliament*"] *of the Birds*, by the Persian mystic poet Farīd al-dīn Abī Hāmid Muhammad ben Ibrāhīm (known as Attār, or "perfumer"), who was murdered by the soldiers under Tuluy, the son of Genghis Khan, when Nishapur was sacked. Perhaps I should summarize that poem. One of the splendid feathers of the distant King of the Birds, the Sīmurgh, falls into the center of China; other birds, weary with the present state of anarchy, resolve to find this king. They know that the name of their king means "thirty birds"; they know that his palace is in the Mountains of Kaf, the mountains that encircle the earth. The birds undertake the almost infinite adventure. They cross seven *wadis* or seven

seas; the penultimate of these is called Vertigo; the last Annihilation. Many of the pilgrims abandon the quest; others perish on the journey. At the end, thirty birds, purified by their travails, come to the mountain on which the Sīmurgh lives, and they look upon their king at last: they see that they are the Sīmurgh and the the Sīmurgh is each, and all, of them. (Plotinus, too, in the *Enneads* [V, 8, 4], remarks upon a paradisal extension of the principle of identity: "Everything in the intelligible heavens is everywhere. Any thing is all things. The sun is all stars, and each star is all stars and the sun.") The *Mantīq al-taīr* has been translated into French by Garcin de Tassy, into English by Edward FitzGerald; for this note I have consulted Richard Burton's *1001 Nights*, Vol. X, and the Margaret Smith study entitled *The Persian Mystics: Attar* (1932).

The parallels between this poem and Mir Bahadur Ali's novel are not overdone. In Chapter XX, a few words attributed by a Persian bookseller to Al-Mu'tasim are perhaps an expansion of words spoken by the hero; that and other ambiguous similarities may signal the identity of the seeker and the sought; they may also signal that the sought has already influenced the seeker. Another chapter suggests that Al Mu'tasim is the "Hindu" that the law student thinks he murdered. (86-7)

The narrative in "The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim" progresses based on our attempts to determine the reality of the intertextual play, just as the general scheme of the novel, *The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim*, involves the "insatiable search for a soul by means of the delicate glimmerings or reflections this soul has left in others" (84). In other words, the story is as much about textual traces as it is about spiritual traces.

We encounter a similar note in "A Survey of the Works of Herbert Quain," which, like "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*," is a catalogue of the works of a non-existent writer:

So much for Herbert Quain's erudition, so much for page 215 of a book published in 1897. The interlocutor of Plato's *Politicus*, the unnamed "Eleatic Stranger," had described, over two thousand years earlier, a similar regression, that of the Children of Terra, the Autochthons, who, under the influence of a reverse rotation of the cosmos, grow from old age to maturity, from maturity to childhood, from childhood to extinction and nothingness. Theopompus, too, in his *Philippics*, speaks of certain northern fruits which produce in the person who eats them the same retrograde growth . . . . Even more interesting than these images is

imagining an inversion of Time itself—a condition in which we would remember the Future and know nothing, or perhaps have only the barest inkling, of the Past. *Cf. Inferno*, Canto X, II. 97-105, in which the prophetic vision is compared to farsightedness. (109)

Like the note in "The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim," the note in "A Survey of the Works of Herbert Quain" is entirely consistent with the mimetic goals of the story: to create the illusion of the catalogue of a work—or in the case of Herbert Quain, the works—of a particular writer. In fact, the issue of narrative progression is complicated in these stories by their mimetic structures. Since both stories purport to be nonfiction, we have fewer expectations about the development of narrative instabilities at the story level. Narrative progression develops as we learn more about the work or works, and as we try to figure out what question or problem the narrative is trying to answer. In other words, neither story develops a dominant internal instability that moves the narrative forward towards resolution. Rather, each story relies on a tension between the mimetic illusion—in one, the catalogue of a writer's works; in the other, a critical reading of a book—and the synthetic construct. The fact that we know—or should know—we are reading fiction, establishes the dominant tension of the narrative. In other words, the purpose of the text is a distinctly different tension than the purpose or goal of a particular story within a text. The artificial paratexts of the narrative encourage the development of this tension and its role in the progression of the narrative.

4.3 Palimpsests

Many of the synthetic and intertextual aspects shown in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" and "The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim" are repeated in "The Immortal," the first

story of Borges's third major collection of fiction, *The Aleph*. As the title suggests, the

short story tells the history of a man cursed with immortality. The story begins with an

epigraph from Francis Bacon's *Essays*. The quotation from Bacon refers to the repetition

of time and the lack of novelty in the world because of the circular nature of time. The

quotation reminds one of the story, "The Theologians," in which the protagonist,

Aurelian, writes a theological treatise against a heretical sect bent on altering church

doctrine and challenging the authority of the Pope. After the quotation from Bacon, there

is a short section that functions much like a preface, though without the paratextual

trappings. This section identifies the text and explains how it came into the hands of its

present owner, the Princess de Lucinge. The manuscript we are about to read was found,

we are told, in the last volume of the six quarto minor volumes of Pope's *Iliad*, which

was purchased by the princess from a rare book dealer by the name of Joseph Cartaphilus

of Smyrna in 1929. In the terms I have been discussing, the note functions to create a

deepened sense of mimesis. The unnamed narrator establishes a fully realistic context for

the story he is about to tell. We are not told how the manuscript came into the narrator's

hands or what his intention in repeating the text "verbatim" might be, but we do know

that the narrator has some investment in the manuscript, if only as a critical eye on the

"Latinisms" that populate Cartaphilus's English manuscript. Like the earlier "The

Garden of Forking Paths," here Borges establishes a frame narrative based on a narrative

contrivance about the historical reality of the text. This frame narrative functions much

like other frame narratives that offer a story from a narrator about a different place or

time, but one of which the narrator has intimate knowledge. In contrast to the early

modernist versions of this type of narrative, Borges returns to a device much in vogue in

early epistolary novels. A text has been found and the narrator is simply representing that text to us as is, with no intervention on his part. This contrivance allows Borges to establish an expectation of verisimilitude in the context of an utterly fantastic story. In other words, the narrative device allows Borges to make the fantastic that much more real, and thus create a tension between the reader and the discourse that continually alerts us to the synthetic aspects of the narrative. It is the balance between the mimetic functions of a found manuscript and the obvious synthetic construction of a frame narrative that Borges manages so well in this and in his other works of fiction.

The prefatory remarks by the narrator are not the only paratextual elements that become part of what we might call, following Genette, the palimpsest of the text. The story also contains a footnote to support the authenticity of the manuscript: "Part of the ms. scratched out just here; the name of the port may have been erased" (193). The manuscript itself tells the story of a traveler in ancient Thebes in the fourth century. In a dream, the wanderer is told of the City of Immortals and he dedicates his life to finding the city. The complexity of the story comes from the shift in focalization that is dependent on the time of the telling and the time of the story. When the hypodiegetic narrator comes close to the end of his story, we are confronted with the collapsing of two characters, the narrator and the Troglodyte Argos, who is also both Homer and Joseph Cartaphilus.

How does Borges get to this point in the narrative? How is he able to keep his readers focused on the fantastic elements—Cartaphilus is at once the immortal, Homer, the author of the *Iliad* that he sells to Princess de Lucinge in the beginning of the story— while still maintaining a sense of the mimetic? I suggest that he is able to do so by

employing the notes and commentary, artificial paratexts that hold the reader's attention

and create a discursive instability that must be resolved for the story to reach closure.

Unlike the end of "The Garden of Forking Paths," in which Yu Tsun's end also marks the

closure of the narrative, the end of the narrative in "The Immortal," a story marked by

gaps and spaces and marginal text, is completed by the reintroduction of the diegetic

narrator. The narrator who introduces the manuscript to the readers in the first place

returns in a Postscript, which, like the Postscript in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," is itself

postdated a year after the actual story was published in 1949. Again, as in "Tlön, Uqbar,

Orbis Tertius," Borges complicates the effect of the postscript as a narrative coda by

deliberately foregrounding the synthetic aspect of the narrative. The final claim about the

conclusion of Cartaphilus's story introduces a new tension about the status of the story

and manuscript: "To my way of thinking, that conclusion is unacceptable. *As the end*

approaches, wrote Cartaphilus, *there are no longer any images from memory—there are*

only words. Words, words, words taken out of place and mutilated, words from other

men" (195). Words are all that Borges has to work with, and "The Immortal" constantly

calls our attention to this fact by its very structure and discursive elements.

4.4 Metalepsis

In some cases, notes point out inconsistencies at the mimetic level that can only

be resolved by opening up the discursive tensions at play through various narrative levels.

How we navigate the metaleptic moves from the hypodiegetic level to the diegesis to the

extradiegetic level can be a significant element of the narrative progression in Borges's

fiction. Consider the last story in Borges's oeuvre to include a footnote, "Brodie's

Report" from the collection of the same name. The story begins as a frame narrative, or at the top level of the diegesis, with an introduction by an unknown narrator, though the voice is recognizable enough through various personal references as the character/narrator/author figure—possibly the other Borges of "Borges and I"—that Borges so often utilized. The story begins in a typical Borgesian manner with the finding of a manuscript. The manuscript of the hypodiegetic level was ostensibly written by a Scottish missionary by the name of David Brodie. And, as in many of Borges's stories, almost as soon as we enter the hypodiegetic frame, we are pointed to a footnote: "The *ch* here has the sound of the *ch* in the word *loch*. [Author's note]" (402). Readers familiar with Borges's stories will recognize the convention, of course, but the note itself—a note with very low internal motivation—raises a number of interesting questions, first and foremost of which is: who is the author of the note? Because of Borges's propensity to multiply authors as if in a mirror (himself; the character/narrator, sometimes also known as Borges; and Brodie), it is virtually impossible to assign authorship to the note.

In an otherwise clever story, like many of his clever stories, the effect of the story depends on how we locate ourselves in relation to the mimetic or synthetic aspects of the narrative poses—which is dominant, the mimetic or the synthetic? If the author of the note is Borges, what effect is he hoping to create by breaking the diegetic frame? Why does he feel the need to gloss one of his neologisms here and not elsewhere? Is it merely a pedantic intrusion? What is at stake for him in letting us know this linguistic detail, other than to cross narrative levels and complicate his goal of writing "plain tales" (345)? If the note comes from the character/narrator/author of the frame, how does he know how to pronounce the *ch* since he came across manuscript by accident and has very few details

about David Brodie and why he wrote the manuscript in the first place? If the note was

written by Brodie, in the hypodiegesis, why does the character/narrator/author of the

diegesis not identify the note differently? Of course, these questions, like many of the

riddles Borges poses to his readers, may be without answers. The fact that there may be

no answer might itself be as appropriate an answer as any, foregrounding a complexity in

reading that Borges acknowledges is part of all language and literature:

> Kipling's last stories were no less tortured and labyrinthine than Franz
> Kafka's or Henry James's, which they unquestionably surpass . . . . I have
> tried (I am not sure how successfully) to write plain tales. I dare not say
> they are simple; there is not a simple page, a simple word, on earth—for
> all pages, all words, predicate the universe, whose most notorious attribute
> is complexity. But I do wish to make clear that I am not a fabulist or a
> spinner of parables. (345)

Borges, of course, is a writer of parables and, in many respects, a fabulist. What better

way to acknowledge that complexity than to create a metaleptic puzzle that asks readers

to pay attention to levels in a story that is itself about narrative levels or frames?

Similar issues of consistency and coherence occur in "The House of Asterion"

from the collection *The Aleph*. The story is told by a homodiegetic narrator, who details

his solitude and separation from society. The only footnote of the story appears on the

first page: "The original reads 'fourteen,' but there is more than enough cause to

conclude that when spoken by Asterion that number stands for 'infinite'" (221). This

note opens up one of three different levels in the story. The first is what appears to be the

diegetic level of the homodiegetic narrator. The second level, or hyperdiegetic level, is

the footnote, written by someone familiar enough with the narrator to comment on his

choice of language ("when spoken by Asterion that number stands for") and to have some

role in changing the choice of language ("the original reads"), as a translator or

transcriber, for example, or to have access to both the original and the copy. The third and final level does not come until the end, when the narrative shifts voice and perspective to a heterodiegetic narrator, but a narrator with an unclear relationship to the diegesis:

> The morning sun shimmered on the bronze sword. Now there was not a trace of blood left on it.
>> "Can you believe it, Ariadne?" said Theseus. "The Minotaur scarcely defended itself." (222)

It is here, in the final two paragraphs, that we learn—or have our suspicions confirmed— that the identity of the narrator of the first level of the story is the Minotaur of Greek mythology. The structure of the story follows a simple pattern of illusion and revelation in the manner of a parable that asks us to reconsider our preconceived notions about the Minotaur. Throughout the initial part of the story, we are asked to see the Minotaur's life as sad and difficult, and his death comes as a moment of release ("The Minotaur scarcely defended itself") rather than a triumph for Theseus. In this respect, the final two paragraphs, though inconsistent in form with the rest of the story, function as a narrative coda that provides resolution and closure for the reader, offering her a new view of an age-old myth. The intended rhetorical effect of the story is to defamiliarize a familiar tale.

What then is the relationship between the note and the rest of the story? As in "Brodie's Report," the authorship of the note is unclear. In "The House of Asterion," however, the inclusion of the note creates a metaleptic problem for the narrative's mimetic configuration that is much greater than the potentially justifiable inconsistencies in "Brodie's Report"; in other words, on a synthetic level. Following Rabinowitz, we

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might say that the note in "The House of Asterion" poses inconsistencies in the narrative's rules of configuration and coherence, and these inconsistencies alter our expectations and overall interpretation. The inconsistencies stem from the relationship between each of the narrative levels. Reading from the level of the note, we are asked to believe—at least insofar as we read from the narrative audience—that there is an original manuscript in which the Minotaur's tale is revealed. This establishes a particular mimetic foundation for the story and creates a tension between the levels—who is the author of the note and what is his relationship to the Minotaur's tale?—that we would expect to be resolved by the end of the narrative. Here there is a one-to-one, diegetic/hypodiegetic relationship between the narrative level of the note and the narrative level of the Minotaur's narrative. We have a similar one-to-one relationship between the narrative level of the final two paragraphs and the Minotaur's narrative.

The final two paragraphs introduce a new narrative voice, one that cannot be the Minotaur for obvious reasons, and we would be hard pressed to assign this voice to the author of the note because it would put him in an entirely different relationship to the Minotaur's tale. The final two paragraphs are necessary for aesthetic coherence and are motivated by artistic concerns. These paragraphs provide closure. We would not have the same emotional response to the parable unless we are able to assign the original tale to the Minotaur and witness both his death and Theseus's surprise at the Minotaur's lack of a defense. A difficulty arises when we consider all three levels together, and, in particular, the relationship between the note and the final two paragraphs. The note's mimetic foundation is based on the illusion of a found document, but the addition of the final two paragraphs adds an extradiegetic perspective that deconstructs the unity of the

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Minotaur's text. In other words, our sense of the mimetic quality of the Minotaur's narrative is constructed in part by our recognition of it as having its origin in a real text ("the original"), which we only know from the note. The final two paragraphs introduce an aesthetic motivation that undercuts this sense of origin because there is now a third voice added to the Minotaur's tale. Metalepsis is here a problem because of the triangular possibilities.

We see a greater metaleptic fluidity between the notes and the main text in "The Library of Babel." In this story, Borges coheres the narrative differently than the previous two examples by allowing access to the top level of the narrative to both the homodiegetic narrator and the extradiegetic editors. In the first note, Borges once again attempts to authenticate the text by having an "outside" voice acknowledge an "original" manuscript:

> The original manuscript has neither numbers nor capital letters; punctuation is limited to the comma and the period. Those two marks, the space, and the twenty-two letters of the alphabet are the twenty-five sufficient symbols that our unknown author is referring to. [Ed. Note.] (113)

But Borges freely moves back and forth between levels here, granting access to the level of the note to his narrator (or alternatively, granting access to this level to his fictitious editor):

> In earlier times, there was one man for every three hexagons. Suicide and diseases of the lung have played havoc with that proportion. An unspeakably melancholy memory: I have sometimes traveled for nights on end, down corridors and polished staircases, without coming across a single librarian. (114)

The fluidity of metaleptic moves allows Borges to foreground the primary concerns of both the story and his literary enterprise without the same narrative inconsistencies

present in "The House of Asterion." In a later note, the narrator comments in a note on what is ultimately the process that Barth praised:

> I repeat: In order for a book to exist, it is sufficient that it be *possible*. Only the impossible is excluded. For example, no book is also a staircase, though there are no doubt books that discuss and deny and prove that possibility, and others whose structure corresponds to that of a staircase. (117)

For Borges, any book is possible, but the most interesting books are those that challenge the forms of fiction and call attention to their own artifice.

4.5 Forking Paths

As I argued in the beginning of this chapter, much of Borges's fiction asks ontological questions about the nature of fiction and the form of narrative literature. These questions are posed, in part, by his use of artificial paratexts. One of Borges's more complex explorations of the ontology of fiction occurs in "The Garden of Forking Paths." On one level, the story is about Dr. Yu Tsun, a Chinese Professor of English, living in England and reluctantly spying for Germany during World War I. When Yu Tsun's partner is killed by a British officer, Yu Tsun realizes he has one chance to communicate his knowledge of a secret artillery base to his superiors in Germany. To carry out this mission Yu Tsun decides to kill the one man in England, Stephen Albert, who has the same last name as the city where the artillery are stored. By a coincidence of fate, one of many in the story, Albert is a sinologist studying the works of Ts'ui Pen, a distant ancestor of Yu Tsun's who spent thirteen years of his life creating a great labyrinth and writing an immense book. Unfortunately, Ts'ui Pen failed in his endeavors: no one could find the labyrinth and the book was incomprehensible. Ts'ui

Pen's failure disgraces his family and his descendents, and much of Yu Tsun's

motivation for spying is to redeem himself (and his race) by proving capable of his

superiors' charge. Upon meeting Albert, however, Yu Tsun learns that he has deciphered

the mystery of the labyrinth and book: Ts'ui Pen did not fail—the book and the labyrinth

are one. The book and labyrinth represent all moments in history, all branching events.

As most readers of the story discover, Yu Tsun's choices and the events of the

day mirror the complex questions of plot, progression, and fate his ancestor struggled

with in the writing of his labyrinthine book. According to Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan,

"that the governing structural principle of Jorge Luis Borges' 'The Garden of Forking

Paths' is the analogy among fictional levels goes almost without saying" (185). Yu Tsun

is walking in a garden of forking paths, and, as Albert points out, all of them contain

different plots, endings, and character relationships. At the end of the narrative, Yu Tsun

is faced with a choice. He can either let Albert live and carry on the work of uncovering

the truth of Ts'ui Pen's legacy; or, he can kill him and carry out his mission as a spy for a

country to which he has no allegiance. As we know from the beginning of his narrative,

Yu Tsun chooses to carry out the events he set in motion at the beginning of the day and

kills Albert just as Capt. Richard Madden, the officer who has been doggedly pursuing

Yu Tsun, arrives. The irony is that Yu Tsun's life is what it is because of the apparent

failure of his ancestor. Yu Tsun's choice in the end is doubly damning. He chooses to

aid a country he does not care for, and he chooses to lock the secret of his ancestry away

by murdering the one man who could reveal the truth of Ts'ui Pen's labyrinth. While the

thematic issues of the narrative are significant, much of the rhetorical power of these

issues is evident in the story's structure and technique. The narrative techniques that

Borges employs mirror the philosophical problem he raises, a conundrum that is at once

steeped in a literary tradition of intertextuality and dialogism. The binding of textual or

narrative problems with the problem of the story or plot is evident in many of the stories

in Borges's oeuvre, but it is particularly manifest in "The Garden of Forking Paths."

In order to illustrate these claims, I would like to look carefully at the first page of

the story. The first page establishes a number of structuring principles that the remaining

story carries forth in thematic terms. I quote it at length in order to highlight some of the

tensions and instabilities it raises:

> On page 242 of The History of the World War, Liddell Hart tells us that an
> Allied offensive against the Serre-Montauban line (to be mounted by the
> thirteen British divisions backed by one thousand four hundred artillery
> pieces) had been planned for July 24, 1916, but had to be put off until the
> morning of the twenty-ninth. Torrential rains (notes Capt. Liddell Hart)
> were the cause of that delay—a delay that entailed no great consequences,
> as it turns out. The statement which follows—dictated, reread, and signed
> by Dr. Yu Tsun, former professor of English in the Hochschule at
> Tsingtao—throws an unexpected light on the case. The first two pages of
> the statement are missing.
>
> <p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>
>
> . . . and I hung up the receiver. Immediately afterward, I recognized the
> voice that had answered in German. It was that of Capt. Richard Madden.
> Madden's presence in Viktor Runeberg's flat meant the end of our efforts
> and (though this seemed to me quite secondary, or should have seemed)
> our lives as well. It meant that Runeberg had been arrested, or murdered.[1]
> Before the sun set on that day, I would face the same fate. Madden was
> implacable—or rather, he was obliged to be implacable. An Irishman at
> the orders of the English, a man accused of a certain lack of zealousness,
> perhaps even treason, how could he fail to embrace and give thanks for
> this miraculous favor—the discovery, capture, perhaps death, of two
> agents of the German Empire?
>
> ---
>
> [1]A bizarre and despicable supposition. The Prussian spy Hans Rabener,
> alias Viktor Runeberg, had turned an automatic pistol on his arresting
> officer, Capt. Richard Madden. Madden, in self-defense, inflicted the
> wounds on Rabener that caused his subsequent death. [Ed. note.] (Borges
> 119)

The story begins in the manner of a historical account of an (insignificant) attack that took place during a particular battle in World War I. The attack, we are told, was delayed for five days due to heavy rain. The effect of the delay, we are also told, was minimal. Furthermore, the narrator tells us, a statement that he will now present "throws an unexpected light on the case (119), even though the statement by Yu Tsun is missing the first two pages. When the statement begins following an ellipsis used to represent the missing two paragraphs, which I will discuss in a moment, we learn that the statement by Yu Tsun is, in fact, a confession. At the bottom of the third paragraph, and in the first paragraph of Yu Tsun's deposition we encounter a footnote. As with all of the artificial paratexts I have discussed thus far, the presence of the note is enough to create a discursive tension for the reader. Are we actually reading a fictional short story or a true historical account? Should we stop and read the footnote at the bottom of the page? Moreover, if we do, how should we respond to the interpretation of Yu Tsun's confession provided by the Editor?

There are at least three other distinct tensions introduced in the first few paragraphs of the story. First, the story begins by introducing multiple narrative levels: an account of an account of a historical event and a statement about an event that is ancillary to that event. In essence, Borges introduces two narrative voices and places them in dialogue with each other. It is important to note, of course, that this dialogue is not a dialogue in which each voice has equal say or equal ability to define a point. This is especially important in the relationship to Liddell Hart's historical text, which is a real text that actually does provide the initial account described by the narrator. Hart's narrative is paraphrased, interpreted, and re-represented. The narrative is in a dialogue

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with a text and a voice that is already written, and yet that voice, which serves as the

foundation for the verisimilitude of the narrative, is the one story with no actual

references. Interestingly, Liddell Hart's voice is only a stepping off point for the rest of

the narrative. We also have a narrator, whose voice is clearly invested in this story. Yu

Tsun's emotionless interpretation of the events leading to the death of his partner is

immediately countered by the emotional interpretation of the narrator, a narrator who is

clearly invested in countering the interpretation provided by a German spy. We can

assume, then, the narrator is invested in a positive view of the Allied actions in this story.

While it may seem that this is an obvious assumption given the events of the war, the fact

is that Borges makes a focused effort to emphasize this perspective, both in the voice of

the narrator and the fact that he references a work by an Allied historian's account—

rather than, say, a German historian's account—of the events. Second, the reader is left

to wonder what the statement by Yu Tsun actually says about the attack on the Serre-

Montauban line? The narrator says an unexpected light is thrown on the case. What is

this light? What is the relationship between what we learn and the insignificance of the

delay? Why does the narrator feel compelled to present this incomplete confession to us?

What is his motivation? It's possible that his motivation is historical accuracy, but why

then does he detail the account in this manner? Third, what have we missed in the first

two pages of Yu Tsun's statement? What did Yu Tsun say? We are never given an

explanation about why these pages are missing. Can we trust the editor who possibly

omitted the first two pages? Or is there some other reason for their absence? How can

we trust a partial statement? While the statement begins in the middle of a confession

that appears to be nothing more than a description of the events of the fateful day in Yu

Tsun's life, we are left with a problem that we might hope to resolve, though we never do.

The tensions that are introduced in the first page are further enhanced by the role of the note in the text. First, in using the footnote as a device to comment on the text of Yu Tsun's confession, Borges is able to maintain the mimetic illusion of the confession as a separate text; incomplete as it is, it remains unified within the context of the short story. As readers, we are not given much room to doubt the reality of Yu Tsun's confession even while the note asks us to question the reliability of Yu Tsun's narrative. In fact, the incompleteness of the confession only adds to the mimetic quality. Second, Borges is able to interject an opinion on the confession without interrupting the story— or, more precisely, without necessarily interrupting the story. In other words, Borges is able to direct his reader's interpretative gaze towards a position of antagonism with Yu Tsun long before the reader has invested her emotional energies one way or the other, and he does so, as I said above, without breaking the mimetic unity of Yu Tsun's deposition. Third, Borges is able to extend the illusion of the pseudo-historical narrative by utilizing the mechanisms of historical scholarship. This move allows Borges to rely on the conventions of the historical narrative even as he undercuts those conventions with a fictional narrative. The footnote also serves the rhetorical purpose of adding a new puzzle for the reader to solve, one that is both discursive and diegetic. When the story begins, the reader is put in the position of trying to understand what role the deposition of Yu Tsun had on the delayed battle for Serre-Montauban—an insignificant delay, we are told. But with the introduction of the note, the reader also has to decide whether or not to trust the interpretation of Yu Tsun by the Editor, and therefore whether or not to trust the

Editor at all, placing in question the entire purpose for the narrative. All of these effects help define a path for the reader and play an important role in any one interpretation of the story. "The Garden of Forking Paths" is about writing, about books, and about the sometimes labyrinthine process of reading and interpretation. In other words, it is about the themes of Ts'ui Pen's book, *The Garden of Forking Paths*. The single footnote on the first page of Borges's story serves as a marker of the limits of the text, of the limits of reading, and of the paths we choose to follow in any given text. It is a metonymic device that functions intertextually and intratextually, connecting Borges's story to the history of historical scholarship and to a rich literary history.

In "The Garden of Forking Paths," the footnote and the pseudo-historical narrative conventions help to articulate the same point he makes about time and narrative in the description of the book and labyrinth of Yu Tsun's great ancestor, Ts'ui Pen. Much like Ts'ui Pen's work, Yu Tsun's confession is incomplete. Yu Tsun's story is at once fantastical and plausible. At one point, Albert tells Yu Tsun that "The Garden of Forking Paths is a huge riddle" (126). In many respects, the riddle is one of telling and story. Borges creates a Chinese-box riddle of narrative levels, built as much on the balance between mimetic and synthetic constructs as on the philosophical paradoxes he parodies. This complex balance between synthetic construct and mimetic illusion is a hallmark of Borges's fiction. In the end, though, narrative fiction is a fluid category for Borges, and one of the elements that passes through the porous walls between fiction and nonfiction is his use of artificial paratexts. They are one of the tools that Borges uses to foreground his ontological concerns about the nature of the text and its relationship to the world around us. The use of the note early on in "The Garden of Forking Paths" also

establishes a particular set of tensions and instabilities. As I have noted, Borges's story

plays with the unity and stability of the text in its use of footnotes—not to mention the

internal references to a historical text and events that are real and verifiable by the reader

willing to take the time to look up his references—within the highest narrative level.

Narrative progression is dependent on the dialogue between the two narrative levels.

These tensions and instabilities move the reader towards a sense of closure that relies on

our ability to resolve many of the questions raised by the use of the artificial paratexts:

why is a footnote present in a fictional narrative? What does this footnote have to tell us

about the story we are being told? Who wrote the footnote and why?

CHAPTER 5

READING *PALE FIRE*: PARATEXTS AND PROGRESSION

> Regardless of how we conceive of the core of any literary work, will it be entirely
> free of a rhetorical dimension?
> — Wayne Booth

In the previous chapters, I have developed a broad typology of footnotes in

fictional narratives, showing both that footnotes have a long history in the novel and that

they occur in many different forms with many different effects. Chapter One highlighted

what I call artificial paratexts, or the mimicking of traditional paratexts—most notably

notes, prefaces, and indexes—in the narrative frame of novels and short stories. I

extended Genette's distinction between the text and its paratexts in order to show how

authors have employed artificial paratexts to expand the borders of the narrative, and then

narrowed the focus of this typology by suggesting a rhetorical strategy for reading and

understanding the effect of artificial paratexts.[28] By paying attention to fictional

paratexts as key elements in the heuristic of the narrative, I am advocating a reading

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[28] Genette does spend some time discussing fictive prefaces and fictional notes, but he
tends to view them as external to his effort since fictional paratexts of this sort no longer
constitute paratexts in his definition. See Gérard Genette, *Paratexts*: 284-92. As I make
clear in Chapter Two, my analysis attempts to show how the mimicking of paratexts
inside the narrative frame asks us to apply what Peter Rabinowitz calls the Rules of
Notice, Significance, Configuration, and Coherence as they are applicable to non-
fictional paratexts, but the effect of the fictional paratexts is generally quite distinct,
altering our expectations as we read. See Peter J. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*: 42-46.

practice that attempts to understand and negotiate the complex rhetorical communication between the author, the text, and the reader. With some slight modification and expansion of scope, I have suggested that Rabinowitz's and Phelan's analytical models are especially useful for understanding the effect of artificial paratexts on fictional narratives. As I claim throughout this dissertation, artificial paratexts are intimately connected with our sense of character development, plot movement, and discursive structure. Narrative progression in Borges's stories becomes a dynamic interplay between the notes and the body text. Despite the often fantastic nature of his stories, Borges's short stories frequently attempt to create the illusion of nonfiction stories. This illusion is bolstered in a large part by his use of footnotes, illustrating one of the key rhetorical functions of artificial paratexts.

In this chapter, I extend this reading practice to one of the more complex uses of artificial paratexts, Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*. Considered by many to be one of Nabokov's greatest novels, *Pale Fire* is also one of the most distinctive novels of the mid-twentieth century. Written ostensibly in the form of a critical edition of a 999-line poem, the novel is told in four sections: a Foreword; a poem, "Pale Fire"; an extensive Commentary that occupies the bulk of the text; and an Index. As others have argued, *Pale Fire* is a puzzle seeking a solution, a frame narrative, a text within a text, a "book of mirrors" (McCarthy 86). It is a novel of sexual politics, aesthetic extremes, and anagrammatic conundrums, even as it is a self-reflexive commentary on literary criticism and on the form of the novel itself. In the words of Brian McHale, Nabokov's novel is a "text of absolute epistemological uncertainty" (*Postmodernist Fiction* 18) that calls into question its own ontological status as a novel. It is also a novel at play, what we might

call a *ludic* text. Like the game of chess Nabokov so dearly loved, the novel has rules of

verisimilitude and form, and offers its own inherent strategies of movement, success, and

analysis, all of which are based on its self-conscious deconstruction of the critical

apparatus. Given the self-conscious nature of the novel, it might seem straightforward

enough to simply call the novel a fine example of metafiction and leave the matter at that.

The novel, however, takes the concept of metafiction to the next level. If metafiction is

about the world as text, then *Pale Fire* is both about the world as text and the text as

paratext.

There have been a number of plausible interpretations of *Pale Fire* posited by

readers throughout the forty plus years since its publication, many of which were first

outlined by Mary McCarthy immediately after the publication of the novel in 1962, and

others that were developed over the years by scholars seeking to offer the definitive

reading of Nabokov's complex novel. Critics have variously argued that Charles

Kinbote, the novel's narrator and ostensible artificer, is really a Professor of Russian

named Botkin (a character mentioned only a couple of times in the novel), who is slowly

going insane, prompting Shade to take pity ("Kinbote: And so the password is—? Shade:

Pity." [225]) and befriend him despite his eccentric behavior (McCarthy 85-6); that

Kinbote invented Shade and wrote both the poem and the Commentary as well (Stegner

129-30); that Shade invented Kinbote and wrote both himself (Field 300); and, more

recently, Brian Boyd has argued that the novel is really an elaborate ghost story, with

Kinbote commenting on the meaning of the poem under the direct guidance of Hazel

Shade's and John Shade's spirits. The novel does not lend itself, however, to a single,

straightforward interpretation. Instead, it raises a series of questions for the reader in the

authorial audience that are not easily answered: Is Kinbote really Botkin? And if so, is Botkin slowly going mad, "peeling off a drab and unhappy past and [replacing] it with a brilliant invention" (238)? The difficulty in determining Kinbote's reliability as a narrator leads to many other ancillary questions: Does the country of Zembla exist within the reality of the novel or is it a fiction of Kinbote's? Is Gradus really an assassin sent to kill Charles II or is he an escaped convict bent on revenge against Judge Goldsworth? While it is difficult if not impossible to separate a single, true story from the novel's complex discursive structure, a brief summary of the more obvious story lines or "levels of meaning" (McCarthy 83) will introduce some of the key critical questions that will serve as a foundation on which to build a successful rhetorical reading of the novel.

At first glance or, more specifically, in the initial stages of reading, *Pale Fire* appears to be a critical commentary by Kinbote on an unfinished 999-line poem written by John Shade, an American poet on the faculty of Wordsmith College, a small liberal arts college in New Wye, Appalachia. The poem is a lyrical reflection on life, death, and the loss of the Shades' only daughter, Hazel, who killed herself in a lake by the school two years prior. In the months leading up to the composition of the poem, Kinbote, a recent émigré from a small country in Eastern Europe called Zembla and an admirer of Shade (he had translated him into Zemblan), attains a faculty position at Wordsmith, as well as a residence in the home of Judge Goldsworth, a neighbor of the Shades on sabbatical in England. Kinbote, an odd, eccentric pedant who is oblivious to most social conventions, ingratiates himself to the generous Shade, alienating the rest of the Wordsmith community, including Shade's wife, Sybil. Learning that Shade is writing a poem, Kinbote takes the opportunity to obsessively feed Shade the story of his homeland

and its dethroned, escaped monarch, Charles the Beloved. Upon finishing all but the last

line of the poem, Shade is mistakenly murdered by Jack Grey, an escapee from a local

asylum intent on killing Judge Goldsworth, who committed Grey to the asylum and to

whom Shade bears an unfortunate resemblance. In a moment of emotional distress,

Sybil, believing that Kinbote selflessly threw himself between the homicidal Grey and

her husband, agrees to Kinbote's request that he be allowed to edit Shade's final poem.

Kinbote soon learns that Shade has not written, in fact, an epic monument to Zembla's

errant monarch. Despite his disappointment, he acquires a publisher and sets about the

task of commenting on the poem, ignoring all entreaties to take on the eminent Shadeans

Professor H. and Professor C. as co-editors.

This is more or less the story as Kinbote tells it in the Foreword and very early on

in the Commentary. If we read as Kinbote wants us to read, we can develop a different

understanding of the characters and events. We soon learn that Kinbote is not a simple

émigré from Zembla but is, in fact, Charles the Beloved, King of Zembla, recently

escaped from the clutches of the revolutionary extremists who have taken over his

country. Fearing retribution and assassination by the secret revolutionary society of

Zembla known as the Shadows, Charles parachutes, literally, into exile in the United

States and takes on the pseudonym of Dr. Charles Kinbote. As Kinbote, he secures a

teaching position at Wordsmith College with the help of Mrs. Sylvia O'Donnell, mother

to Charles' closest confidant, Odon, and a trustee of the college. Jakob Gradus, a

blundering assassin, is sent by the Shadows to kill the escaped king and we follow his

path much as we follow the path of the plot through Kinbote's Commentary. As we

already know, Gradus fails in his quest, missing Charles/Kinbote, and killing instead

Shade, who is returning home with Charles for a glass of wine and a discussion of the theme of his nearly finished poem. When arrested, Gradus offers the name Jack Grey to the authorities and kills himself a few days later out of embarrassment at having botched his most important assignment. Afraid that more competent assassins are on the way, Charles/Kinbote flees to a cabin in Cedarn, Utana with the poem that he believes to be the literary validation of his monarchy, only to find that Shade has not taken his thematic cues and has instead written a lyrical reflection on the nature of life, death, and his daughter. Undaunted, Kinbote carries through with his editorial duties out of respect for his dead friend, finding more correspondence between the poem and his story than he first realized. Kinbote's true identity is revealed though much of the story remains the same. The more we read, however, the more this story begins to unravel, and we are left wondering what parts are true and what parts are the fantasies of an increasingly delusional Kinbote, if Kinbote is even Kinbote let alone Charles the Beloved.

As these two different readings suggest, *Pale Fire* is a puzzle with many pieces and no single solution. This chapter does not attempt to provide a definitive reading of the novel, but rather to show that many of the questions raised by the text are inseparable from the paratextual aspects of the narrative. This is not to say that the form of the novel has created a problem for which there is no answer, but rather that it poses a problem for which there are many complementary answers, each of which asks us to pay attention to the constructed or synthetic nature of the novel. The impossibility of resolving these puzzles with a single solution points not to flaws in the novel but instead to its having a different formal principle, one in which the impossibility is a designed effect to call attention to Nabokov as the ultimate artificer of this narrative puzzle.

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Given the complex problems of narrative truth raised above and the explicit paratextual forms employed by Nabokov, I also want to suggest that *Pale Fire* is a useful limit case for any analysis of artificial paratexts. Unlike many narratives that make use of artificial paratexts, *Pale Fire* constructs a realistic justification for the use of each of its sections. If Borges's stories demonstrate the discursive possibilities of artificial paratexts, *Pale Fire* takes those possibilities to the extreme limit, showing us how paratexts can dramatically alter our sense of narrative progression and realism. Instead of a text with a handful of footnotes, *Pale Fire* builds its entire narrative around and through the paratextual form. The brilliance of Nabokov and the critical narcissism of Kinbote merge in this paratextual form as the novel transforms paratext into text. What we end up with is not a commentary on the poem—the text within the text, as we might expect from its paratextual trappings—but a novel that emerges from implicit competition for dominance between textual and paratextual forms and from the multiple ways of construing both the poem and its paratexts. This novel, in turn, takes us back to the hovering presence of its author and to his embedded commentary on all literary commentary, his critical reflection on critical reflection.

Because of this self-conscious paratextual form, reading *Pale Fire* for the first time raises a number of questions, the least discussed of which (and, to my mind, the most obvious) is how to *read* a novel written in the form of a critical edition of a poem. The novel's structure as "*apparatus criticus*" (Nabokov 86, emphasis original), places it in distinct tension with traditional realistic fiction. Unlike more traditional novels structured on a sequential, chapter-by-chapter format, *Pale Fire* presents the reader with a

structure that is at once unique and familiar. Confronted with this unusual form, then,

does one read it as a traditional novel or as a work of literary criticism? Should the

reader start at the beginning? Read the poem first and then the Foreword and

Commentary, as one might if one's main interest was in the primary text of the poem?

What role does the Index play in a reading of the novel? Should all four sections be read

together as a whole, structured narrative? Or, does the poem stand on its own as a

literary (and lyrical) achievement apart from the critical work of the narrator? Should the

novel be read in a linear fashion, in the manner prescribed by the traditional form of the

novel? Or, does one follow the various paths and "links" that Kinbote—and Nabokov—

pepper throughout the text? Does the Commentary explicate the poem, as some have

argued (Couturier 59-60); the poem the Commentary, as still others have argued (Boyd

129-246); or, neither (McCarthy 83-85)? Or, should we accept what Maurice Couturier

has called one of the novel's primary "reading contracts" (56), and follow Kinbote's

directions?

> Although those notes, in conformity with custom, come after the poem,
> the reader is advised to consult them first and then study the poem with
> their help, rereading them of course as he goes through its text, and
> perhaps, after having done with the poem, consulting them a third time so
> as to complete the picture. (Nabokov 28)

Ultimately, these are all questions of narrative progression, which, in *Pale Fire*, is a

complex matter inherently connected to how we negotiate the paratextual features of the

text.

Much of our sense of how a narrative progresses is dependent on how our

expectations are met, or what Rabinowitz calls rules of configuration. As readers, we

know that some narratives establish expectations—either independently or by relying on

external influences, such as our previous experiences as readers—and then resolve those expectations, while others establish expectations and resist providing resolution. In establishing a narrative's rules of configuration, writers often build on the features we are accustomed to paying attention to (rules of notice) and the value we assign those features (rules of significance). Artificial paratexts deal with these rules in distinct ways. In part, artificial paratexts give us additional elements to pay attention to (or not), depending on our prior experience and expectations of paratextual features in other texts. They also require us to alter dynamically our sense of what is important in a text. For example, do we read the footnotes in a fictional narrative or not, and if we do, what value do we assign those notes? In fact, our sense of notice and significance of artificial paratexts is often dependent on experience with paratexts in nonfiction. If we ignore or find little value in notes in nonfiction, we may be just as likely to ignore them in fictional texts. Writers of fiction, constructing rules of configuration for their texts, utilize our experiences with and expectations of paratexts in nonfiction to establish and play off our expectations of artificial paratexts. Additionally, artificial paratexts can alter our expectations, either by constructing new paths for us to consider in our configuration of the narrative events and existents, or by placing significant components of the narrative in places we are unaccustomed to reading. Of course, the narrative might give direction to how we are supposed to deal with footnotes or other paratextual elements, as Kinbote does, ironically, in the section of the Foreword quoted above. And, there may be, in fact, competing configurations between the narrator(s) and the author, again as we see in the section above. There, Kinbote's arrogance and unreliability as a narrator—partially established throughout the Foreword and confirmed in part here—enables us to question

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his directives even as we begin to see that there might be a different way of reading, one intended by Nabokov,[29] that competes with Kinbote's direction.

Alternatively, Phelan has argued that progression is dependent on the internal logic of the narrative (instabilities) and the responses that logic engenders in the authorial audience (tensions). Though neither makes this connection explicitly, Phelan's notion of instabilities and tensions can work hand in hand with Rabinowitz's rules of configuration. Instabilities and tensions are one way a novel establishes progression, but they are also a tool to help construct a novel's configurations and our expectations. A novel may move us in a certain direction and establish expectations of resolution because of the conflicts that are introduced in the narrative. At the same time, instabilities and tensions are often dependent on rules of notice and signification, much in the same way the rules of configuration depend on how we pay attention to certain elements of a narrative. Finally, narrative progression depends on how we notice and configure the elements that work together to create the internal instabilities and the discursive tensions. How we answer the questions about progression and *Pale Fire* that I posed above depends in part on how the novel develops instabilities and tensions in relationship to certain configurations. All of these concerns are contingent in *Pale Fire* on the foregrounding of paratextual elements as part of the narrative structure. My contention, then, is that progression in *Pale Fire*, at least in part, is a paratextual problem.

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[29] There are, of course, paths of reading that were neither directly intended by Nabokov nor directed by Kinbote, but one of my claims is that artificial paratexts place in dynamic tension the narrative voice and the authorial voice of the text. We see this being played out in the "artificial" Foreword, a space usually reserved for an author to introduce or contextualize her text.

*   *   *

Exploring some of the first instabilities and tensions introduced in the Foreword to *Pale Fire*[30] will help clarify the reading I am proposing. I have already discussed, in part, Kinbote's instructions to the reader, and while this is one of the more emblematic moments of the collapse of text and paratext—as well as the distance between author and narrator—the Foreword introduces and complicates many other instabilities and tensions. While it is not unusual to encounter tensions and instabilities early in a novel, *Pale Fire* establishes some of the more significant tensions and instabilities within the first few paragraphs, and the Foreword as a whole serves as a guide to the larger instabilities and tensions. As with much realistic fiction, *Pale Fire* sets up a series of tensions immediately in the first sentence: "*Pale Fire*, a poem in heroic couplets, of nine hundred ninety-nine lines, divided into four cantos, was composed by John Francis Shade (born July 5, 1898, died July 21, 1959) during the last twenty days of his life, at his residence in New Wye, Appalachia, U.S.A." (13). This Borges-esque first sentence raises a number of issues: who is Shade? How did he die? Where is New Wye, Appalachia? Why is a poem written in heroic couplets only nine hundred ninety-nine lines long? What happened to the last line? And so on. What may be slightly less common, at least from the vantage point of realistic fiction, is that we are also introduced to a significant narrative tension about the form of the text: why are we reading about a poem in a novel?

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[30] It is arguable that the initial tension in the novel comes in the Table of Contents, and possibly even earlier in some of the initial paratexts. Readers who make their way past the frontispiece may notice that the text they hold in their hands is called *Pale Fire*: A Novel by Vladimir Nabokov, but immediately upon reaching the Table of Contents they will find an unusual description for the contents of a novel, with its listing of the Foreword, Poem, Commentary, and Index.

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More to the point, why are we reading a Foreword to a novel? The first set of tensions involves the characters and events; the second set, on the other hand, involves implied author-audience relationships.

The tensions introduced here signal that we have two kinds of configuration to attend to, each arising from the interplay of artificial paratexts with our expectations of realistic fiction. When we encounter Kinbote's direct address to the reader in the next paragraph—"Canto Two, your favorite" (13)—and his odd aside about the "very loud amusement park right in front of [his] present lodgings" (13), the two kinds of configuration merge: who is this narrator and who is his narratee? Moreover, what is Nabokov doing by placing Kinbote in the position of commentator on Shade's poem? More specifically, Nabokov establishes a dynamic tension between our expectations of a novel and our expectations of an academic text. Nabokov also focuses our attention on the difference between Kinbote's intended audience—the narratee addressed in second person—and his own authorial audience, who finds it odd that an exclamation about a noisy amusement park is included in an otherwise scholarly description of Shade's poem. I will discuss in greater detail the differences in communication between Nabokov and the authorial audience versus Kinbote and the narratee/narrative audiences later in the chapter. For now, though, it is important to recognize that the play between tensions and instabilities in the Foreword leads to greater questions about the role of the paratexts in the narrative—why did Nabokov choose this format for his novel?—and ultimately to a more sophisticated narrative progression that foregrounds and attempts to resolve, in a manner of speaking, the internal instabilities and tensions of the narrative.

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One result of the structural imitation of a critical text is that Nabokov (with and

against Kinbote) is able to utilize the elements of that form to lead his readers through the

web of Kinbote's identity, which, as I showed above, is one of the key questions of the

narrative. If we choose to heed the narrative cues enabled by the paratextual form and

follow the various links throughout the Foreword and Commentary,[31] we are rewarded

for our curiosity with a paradigm of reading that mimics, in Brian Boyd's terms, the

magic of scientific discovery. The discovery here is not related to the physical sciences,

however, but to the issue of narrative progression. If we read the novel as we might a

traditional novel—that is, in a linear or sequential manner—we are presented with a

particular set of problems and (possibly unsatisfactory) resolutions to these problems. If,

on the other hand, we consider seriously the form Nabokov chose for his novel, and read

the text as we might read a critical edition of a poem with extensive commentary and a

full index, we open ourselves to other paths through the text. One example of this type of

progression as discovery occurs early in the Foreword. When discussing the day Shade

completed his poem, Kinbote suggests that we see his note to line 991 in order to get

more information about "the end, or almost the end, of [Shade's] labors" (15). If we take

his advice and turn to his note, we see Kinbote approach Shade, who has just finished the

poem, "as a wary lover taking advantage of a young husband's being alone in the house!"

(287). Setting aside the overt sexual connotations for the moment, a significant narrative

instability in its own right, following this link gives the reader a greater sense of

Kinbote's obsession with Shade and Shade's weakness for alcohol, information that has

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[31] D. Barton Johnson argues convincingly that the Index also is "a playing field for still
another game of cross references." See D. Barton Johnson, "Index of Refraction," 37.

only been hinted at in the Foreword up to this point. Even if we were to stop here and

return to the Foreword, we would have learned a great deal about Kinbote's mania and

this knowledge would influence how we responded to the internal instabilities of the

novel as well as to our developing understanding of Kinbote as a narrator. If the unusual

comments about the very loud amusement park or Kinbote's critical battles with the

"professed Shadeans" did not already alert us to the fact that we might be dealing with an

unreliable narrator, the details of this note would surely do so. Recognizing Kinbote as a

potentially unreliable narrator encourages us to rethink Kinbote's aesthetic evaluation of

Shade's poem—"It contains not one gappy line, not one doubtful reading" (14), or at the

very least, his self-definition as Shade's "discreet companion" (14). What this suggests is

that early on in the novel's progression, if not in its actual pagination, Nabokov is

establishing the rules by which we can form judgments about Kinbote as narrator.

Once we have made the decision to follow Kinbote's direction—and Nabokov's

configuration—and read the note to line 991 we have another choice to make, and this

choice is also reflective of the issue of narrative progression I have been discussing. We

can return to the Foreword and continue reading sequentially, as we might a traditional

narrative, seeing the endnote reference as a minor interruption to our progress; or, we can

choose to follow Kinbote (and Nabokov) further to see where they lead us, either by

reading the rest of the note to line 991 or by following the other paths and new narrative

webs. If we stay with the endnotes, we are soon rewarded. In the third paragraph of the

note to line 991, we are again prompted to see another set of notes: "Through the trees I

distinguished John's white shirt and gray hair: he sat in his Nest (as he called it, the

arborlike porch or veranda I have mentioned in my note to lines 47-48" (287). As with

the first prompt in the Foreword, we can choose to continue reading the current note, learning in the process that Kinbote assumes that the poem is about "all of Zembla" (289), a potential clue to Kinbote's secret that Shade has guessed "quite some time ago" (288). Or, we can follow a new web of reading that takes us from a description of Wordsmith's campus and the details of the Goldsworth family ("lines 47-48," 82-93), to a description of the Zemblan monarchy ("line 62," 95-98), to the note to line 691, where we first hear about Charles the Beloved's escape to America and his parachute landing in Sylvia O'Donnell's field. Reading the shift in pronouns from third person to first person carefully, we also get our first indication that Kinbote is, or at least believes he is, Charles the Beloved: "*he* was still wrestling with the unfamiliar French contraption . . . *I* relaxed on a shooting stick . . ." (247, emphasis mine).

If we take up this new "reading contract" and stay with the notes, we are acknowledging the key role the notes play in the progression of the narrative, not simply as sources of information, but as elements that define the formal progression of the narrative. For Boyd, this progression is Nabokov's way of rewarding his readers' curiosity: "If we have followed this trail to the end, we know to trust Nabokov; we know to follow our curiosity, even when it can lead at times to uncertainty and frustration, as well as to the surprise of discovery" (22). Boyd follows this progression to show that the novel offers us a glimpse at Kinbote's true identity before we get to the point in the novel that would reveal this to us in any substantial way (we are given hints, of course). Boyd does not distinguish, however, between Kinbote and Nabokov. For Boyd, these links are Nabokov's method of moving us around the text, supporting Boyd's argument that Kinbote is not in control of the narrative progression. I want to suggest that this reading

path does more than just reveal key plot instabilities, though this is obviously a significant effect. Rather, I think this is an attempt by Nabokov to foreground his self-conscious questions about the nature of the novel and of literary criticism. In doing so, he attempts to make us aware of the difference between himself as author and Kinbote as narrator. While Kinbote may be the one leading us—consciously or subconsciously—towards the revelation of his "true" identity early, we are always aware of Nabokov as the designer standing behind him and deliberately having him lead us in one way rather than another.

What I hope is clear in my reading of the novel thus far is that just as we begin to engage the novel at the level of its story, we are confronted by discursive tensions that foreground the process of narrative progression and problematize our expectations of the text. These tensions have a significant effect on the exchange between the reader, the text, and the author, and as such are one of the key rhetorical elements of narrative progression in the book. As David Packman notes, "*Pale Fire* is perhaps less about the interpretation of a text than about the textuality of interpretation: the way a reading rewrites the text and meaning is produced in the encounter-collision between text and audience" (77). These discursive tensions, which are fundamentally self-reflexive tensions, implicitly question the stability of the narrative form of the novel, and are one of the constituent elements of *Pale Fire*. In other words, *Pale Fire* is a self-reflexive, synthetic narrative whose interpretive questions are most visible in its use of artificial paratexts, and these artificial paratexts are an integral part of the novel's progression and development.

If I am correct in this reading, we can begin to apply this approach to narrative progression and paratexts to some of the more prominent internal questions raised by the novel to see if the issues of form can help us resolve any of the narrative tensions and instabilities. If we focus solely on the paratextual elements, however, we run the risk of highlighting the synthetic aspects of the narrative above all else. In some fictional narratives, paying attention to the synthetic aspects alone is perfectly reasonable. Overtly metafictional narratives, for example, often foreground synthetic components above all else. The problem is that many of the explicit tensions and instabilities in *Pale Fire* are not synthetic questions but mimetic ones: who is Kinbote? What kind of person is he? Is he the exiled King of Zembla or a deranged Professor of Russian constructing a new world for himself? What is his relationship to Shade? In fact, these are the questions that dominate Nabokovian criticism, that continue to be raised on Nabokov email lists, and that we intuitively ask as we read. And yet, as Rabinowitz points out in "Truth in Fiction," the dominant question of the novel is about the relationship between the poem and the commentary. What then is the relationship between these questions about the story Kinbote tells and the questions about the way Nabokov constructs the story? To begin to address this question, I would like to look first at a reading that privileges the mimetic over and above all else, the one offered by Rabinowitz in "Truth in Fiction." I will return in the end to the issue of Nabokov's role as the implied author, standing behind the scenes configuring the rules of the novel.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

According to Wayne Booth, "in any reading experience there is an implied dialogue among the author, narrator, the other characters, and the reader" (146). Building

on the work of Booth and others, Rabinowitz defines four different types of audiences

involved in this dialogue. While not all audiences appear or are made more or less

apparent in every work of fiction, a reader's successful interaction with a text, according

to Rabinowitz, is often dependent on her ability to occupy a particular audience at a

particular moment. The first type of audience is the actual audience, the real reader. This

is "the only one over which the author has no guaranteed control" ("Truth in Fiction"

213). The second audience is the authorial audience or the ideal audience for which the

writer designs her work. The authorial audience is synonymous with Booth's concept of

the implied reader. According to Rabinowitz, in designing a text, a writer makes certain

assumptions about the reader for whom she is writing. The authorial audience

understands all of the presuppositions the author makes about what the reader will know;

they understand all of the possible choices, beliefs, and decisions the author makes. They

are the (hypothetical) perfect readers. Ideally, all readers would be able to occupy the

authorial audience at will, though it is not always possible to do so, especially with a

novelist as complex as Nabokov, who seems to take delight in writing for a reader far

more knowledgeable than his actual audience. One of the goals of an attentive reader is

"call upon the 'best part' of ourselves when we join the authorial audience" (Rabinowitz

"Truth in Fiction" 213), learning as much as we can to close the gap between what we

know and what is expected of the authorial audience. As Phelan notes, the authorial

audience is also perfectly aware of the synthetic aspects of the narrative: "The authorial

audience of fiction . . . operates with the tacit knowledge that the characters and events

are synthetic constructs rather than real people and historical happenings" (*Narrative as*

Rhetoric 215).

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The third audience that Rabinowitz defines is the narrative audience, or the audience for whom the narrator is writing or telling her tale. When we read a work of fiction, we are often called upon to occupy the narrative audience even as we play the dual role of reading from the point of view of the authorial audience. Phelan modifies Rabinowitz's definition of the narrative audience by pointing out that it conflates two distinct roles, (a) that of the narratee, that is, the audience addressed by the narrator, and (b) "the actual audience's projection of itself into the observer role within the fiction" (*Narrative as Rhetoric* 145), and suggesting that rhetorical theory keep the term narratee for the first role and use "narrative audience" for the second role. Taking this modification into consideration, reading as part of the narrative audience often, though not always, requires suspending our sense of disbelief to engage with what are intended to be the realistic aspects—or the mimetic components—of the narrative. The distance between the beliefs expected of the authorial audience and those that the narrative audience are asked to take on partially defines a model of realism for Rabinowitz. The narrower the gap between the authorial and narrative audiences, the more realistic the text. The greater the gap, the more the narrative audience has to take on to engage with the narrative as a realistic text. In some case, the distance between the expected beliefs of the authorial audience and the necessary beliefs of the narrative audience might be narrow, and yet the actual audience might still have trouble recognizing the novel as a realistic story, coming from a vantage point where the actual audience's knowledge is greater than the authorial audience's knowledge could possibly be. Prophetic science fiction written at a time when certain beliefs in the future were held, and then shown to be largely fantasy would be such an example. In many texts, our emotional and intellectual

engagement with a narrative depends on our ability to read from the narrative audience. One of the key complexities of a novel like *Pale Fire* is that it makes reading from this perspective difficult, if not impossible, causing many, including Rabinowitz, to feel that the novel does not allow for successful emotional engagement. The difficulty, however, is not that the actual audience is unable to project itself into an observer role, but rather that the audience can never be confident in its choice between the many possible observer roles available to it. As I shall argue below, this element of the novel is part of Nabokov's play with the form of the novel and with his authorial audience.

The fourth audience is the narrator's ideal audience, or "the audience for which the narrator wishes he were writing" ("Truth in Fiction" 220). This audience may or may not always be present in a given narrative, though many of Nabokov's novels make use of this ideal audience to magnify the distance between the narrator's self-perception of his actions and the authorial audience's understanding of the effect this perception has on narrative progression. Again, as Phelan argues in *Narrative as Rhetoric*, the concept of the ideal narrative audience has not been widely embraced by narrative theorists, but it is a useful concept nonetheless. Phelan goes on to suggest that the concepts of narratee,[32] narrative audience (with the modification described above), and ideal narrative audience are all useful constructs in understanding the rhetorical communication between the text and the reader. In some cases, the narratee and the ideal narrative audience may be fairly close together. In *Pale Fire*, the narratee and the ideal narrative audience are virtually identical, located in the "you" that Kinbote addresses in the second paragraph. Kinbote is

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[32] For a detailed discussion of the concept of the narratee, see Gerald Prince, "Narratee."

writing to an ideal audience that appreciates his interpretation of Shade's poem and that will ultimately go along with his worldview, including his self-identification as the King of Zembla.

According to Rabinowitz, our engagement with a narrative is due, in a large part, to our understanding of the relationships among the different audiences and our ability to occupy both the narrative and the authorial audiences when appropriate. Rabinowitz also wants to use his concepts of audience as part of a larger investigation into the concept of truth in fiction. He argues that the truths of a narrative are entirely dependent on the audience role we occupy at any one moment. This distinction allows fictional narratives, no matter how extravagantly contrived, to carry with them truths inherent to the frame of the narrative, even if we are meant to recognize them as fictions from our vantage point in the authorial audience. Occupying the narrative audience, we 'believe' certain facts about the narrative that we may know to be completely fictional in our role as members of the authorial and actual audiences. In science fiction or fantasy novels, for example, occupying the narrative audience role means that we agree to believe that the fictional world is real, even as we know from our position in the authorial audience that the fictional world is just that, fictional. In realistic fiction—Rabinowitz uses the example of *War and Peace*—the distance between the authorial and narrative audiences is small. As such, readers who occupy the narrative audience in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* are not meant to question the fact that within the confines of the internal narrative frame, hobbits and elves exist, even though we know from our vantage point in the authorial audience

that hobbits and elves do not exist.[33] As we will see, the distance between the ideal narrative audience and the narrative audience, as well as the distance between the narrative audience and the authorial audience, allows us to negotiate complex narrative constructs such as the unreliable narrator.

I find Rabinowitz's model quite attractive and useful for understanding how narratives establish truth claims within the context of fictional worlds. However, Rabinowitz also equates the success of a novel with its ability to engage us at the level of the narrative audience. In fact, he goes so far as to argue that "we cannot read a novel properly until we have joined the narrative audience" and that "reading problems can occur when we have difficulty discovering precisely what are the characteristics of the narrative audience" ("Truth in Fiction" 221). While truth claims may, for the most part, be determined in the distance (small or large) between the audiences Rabinowitz (and Phelan) describe, a novel like *Pale Fire* suggests that engagement with a text can exist at many levels and not necessarily require that we occupy one audience over another. While our engagement in *Pale Fire* might be different than it would be if we were able to join the narrative audience simply and freely—not to mention appreciate all that is implied in the authorial audience—there are many rewards offered by texts that make it difficult for us to join the narrative audience or impossible to fully stand "on the dock— in the authorial audience" ("Truth in Fiction" 219). Rather than seeing resistance at the level of narrative audience as a sign of failure on the part of the novel to engage its

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[33] There are, of course, times when the flesh and blood audience knows more (or less) than the authorial audience is supposed to know, and in these cases the process of joining the authorial audience is a pretense that ultimately affects our engagement with the narrative according to Rabinowitz ("Truth in Fiction" 217).

readers, I want to propose that such resistance can in fact open up new avenues of reading, many of which are exemplified in narratives that make use of artificial paratexts, as we have seen above.

Rabinowitz's model, with its claims about joining a clear narrative audience, ultimately privileges what Phelan calls the mimetic component of narrative. As I discussed earlier, Phelan argues that as a narrative progresses, certain components of the narrative are developed or foregrounded. He defines these components in terms of character. Characters can have mimetic, thematic, or synthetic attributes which narrative progression might convert into functions necessary for the development (and possibly resolution) of tensions and instabilities (*Reading People* 2-3). While we can appreciate all three components from our vantage point in the authorial audience, mimetic components become real for us when we occupy the narrative audience, while synthetic components are only visible from the perspective of the authorial audience. Though Phelan does not discuss these components in relationship to paratexts, I believe his is a model worth extending to other elements of the narrative, including artificial paratexts. That is, I would argue that artificial paratexts, much like character, can have mimetic, thematic, or synthetic attributes and functions. The fact that the narrative audience remains unaware of synthetic components suggests that narratives that foreground the synthetic components require an understanding of engagement different from Rabinowitz's model. If we bring the slightly modified versions of both Phelan's and Rabinowitz's models together, I think we have a strong rhetorical model for understanding both narrative truth and narrative engagement. Levels of truth may be understandable through an analysis of the audience roles we occupy at any moment

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within a narrative, but engagement can exist both at the level of the narrative audience (mimetic engagement) and at the level of the authorial audience (synthetic engagement).

Many of the questions about *Pale Fire* that I have raised in this chapter thus far revolve around the issue of Kinbote's reliability. Rabinowitz's model for understanding truth in fiction provides one approach for determining the reliability of a narrator, an approach that privileges the mimetic components above all others. We begin to question Kinbote's reliability as a narrator almost immediately in the Foreword, and our uneasiness with him as a narrator is further developed and enhanced through the reading of the commentary. His inability to focus on the task of writing his commentary is one example of his narcissistic tendencies, but we soon realize that his commentary has little to do with Shade's poem and everything to do with Kinbote and his Zemblan tale. His reliability is further tested in his interactions with virtually every other character in the novel, with the significant exception of his relationship with his Zemblan friends. To put this in the terms defined by Rabinowitz, there is a divide between the narrative audience and the ideal narrative audience, and ultimately between the multiple possible narrative audiences, each of whom has a different, incompatible understanding of truth in the novel. This divide is what makes it difficult to provide any stable interpretation of the novel. From our role in the authorial audience, we may read with humor, frustration, and possibly a Shadean pity, the details of his belief that he is the King of Zembla. From our role in the narrative audience, however, we have no way of knowing whether he is telling the truth. Our role in one narrative audience might lead us to believe him; occupying a different narrative audience would mean believing him to be a liar. The obliviousness

with which he describes his interactions, such as his first meeting of Shade, is further

evidence of this distance:

> "At last presented credentials," as noted, a little ironically, in my agenda.
> I was invited to join him and four or five other eminent professors at his
> usual table . . . . His laconic suggestion that I "try the pork" amused me. I
> am a strict vegetarian, and I like to cook my own means. Consuming
> something that had been handled by a fellow creature was, I explained to
> the rubicund convives, as repulsive to me as eating any creature, and that
> would include—lowering my voice—the pulpous pony-tailed girl student
> who served us and licked her pencil . . . . My free and simple demeanor set
> everybody at ease. (21)

Kinbote's failure to recognize that his "free and simple demeanor"—or lack thereof—has

set no one at ease, let alone Shade, is one of the key instabilities and tensions in the text.

In moments such as this, Kinbote appears to have little trouble relating events, even ones

that place him in a disparaging light. From one perspective, Kinbote can relate these

events because he assumes his ideal narrative audience will side with him and see him as

the wronged party at every turn. Our vantage point from the authorial audience enables

us to see what Kinbote cannot, his inability to recognize his own arrogance and possible

insanity. Despite Kinbote's belief that he is accepted by those around him, he appears to

us in the authorial audience to be a pariah of Wordsmith society. In the model of

unreliability that Phelan puts forth in *Living to Tell About It*, this reading suggests that

Kinbote is an unreliable evaluator and interpreter, though he does not appear to be

unreliable as a reporter of the events (*Living to Tell* 50).

As soon as we get comfortable with this dynamic, however, larger issues about

whether or not Kinbote is reporting truthfully are raised by our movement through the

narrative progression Nabokov has established for us. If we follow the path I outlined

earlier in this chapter, for example, we find out relatively early on that Kinbote

underreports his sexual preferences and activities. From one perspective, Nabokov initially sets up a model for us to see Kinbote as a reliable reporter, but an unreliable interpreter and evaluator. Sooner or later, we have to determine whether he is a reliable reporter. The problem of his reliability creates a greater problem for the members of the narrative audience. If Kinbote is unreliable on all axes, how can we believe anything he tells us? What is real in the narrative? Is Zembla real? Is Shade real? Early in any narrative, we might expect there to be things the narrative audience knows that the authorial audience does not. As a narrative progresses, we assume that this knowledge gap would begin to shrink and the authorial audience would eventually know as much as the narrative audience does, at least as it relates to the significant instabilities and tensions of the narrative. In *Pale Fire*, the gap grows rather than shrinks, even as new gaps are created. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that Kinbote is telling the complete truth. As we have seen, this is the story as told to the narratee and Kinbote's ideal narrative audience. In this reading, Kinbote is the former king of Zembla, a country that really does exist within the fictional world, and Gradus/Grey really was trying to kill him when he shot and killed Shade. Reading at this level, the mimetic aspects of Kinbote's character come to the fore. He is admittedly a self-indulgent narcissist, but could any expect anything less from a sheltered monarch recently forced to flee his country? Kinbote does little to hide his less than attractive side, trusting that his ideal reader will see the insults and snickering of his colleagues and the townsfolk to be expressions of what he truly believes them to be, jealousy at his friendship with Shade. An analysis of the mimetic dimensions of his character does not obviate the possibility that the ideal narrative audience hears everything as it should, that the fantastic story of

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Zembla and its monarch is real, at least within the context of the narrative. There is no

reason, for example, to assume that Zembla is any less real than the entirely fictitious

Wordsmith College or New Wye, Appalachia or Cedarn, Utana, for that matter.

It is also possible that he is telling part of the truth, that he is at times a reliable

reporter and at times an unreliable reporter. Our ability to determine when he is reliable

and when he is not reliable would depend on how clearly we see Nabokov behind

Kinbote making visible one or more axes of unreliability. In other words, we may

determine that we can believe what Kinbote reports to us in the moments when his

interpretation appears to be at odds with the interpretation of the characters around him,

and we may decide that barring any external validation, we cannot believe anything he

reports. Part of the difficulty in determining how we should understand Kinbote's

reliability comes from his own playful representation:

> I shall continue to exist. I may assume other disguises, other forms, but I
> shall try to exist. I may turn up yet, on another campus, as an old, happy,
> healthy, heterosexual Russian, a writer in exile, sans fame, sans future,
> sans audience, sans anything but his art . . . . I may pander to the simple
> tastes of theatrical critics and cook up a stage play, an old-fashioned
> melodrama with three principles: a lunatic who intends to kill an
> imaginary king, another lunatic who imagines himself to be that king, and
> a distinguished old poet who stumbles by chance into the line of fire, and
> perishes in the clash between two figments. (301)

This statement has, on one hand, a mimetic quality about it, while at the same time it

represents a foregrounding of the synthetic aspects of Kinbote's character and the novel

as a whole. The fact that this passage echoes lines 939-940 of the Poem—"*Man's life as

commentary to abstruse / Unfinished poem*. Note for further use" (67)—can be seen as

Kinbote's attempt to foreground his tenuous relationship to his story or Nabokov's

attempt to foreground Kinbote's synthetic components. On the surface, the statement by

Kinbote in the final paragraph of his Commentary and the selection from the Poem, like many of the other false paths of the book, seem to offer a clue into the novel's narrative ambiguity. Is Kinbote really a "lunatic imagining himself [a] king"? If so, it does not make much logical sense to see Grey/Gradus as both an escapee of a local asylum *and* bent on killing a king. Within the mimetic context of the novel, Grey/Gradus can only be one or the other but not both. At the level of the synthetic components, however, the overt self-reflexive qualities foreground the status of the story as a story, as a narrative constructed for a particular purpose, enabling him to be both. The shift from mimetic to synthetic concerns occurs as Nabokov creates tensions out of the instabilities internal to the text. In other words, the instabilities in Kinbote's identity are carried over as discursive tensions for the reader in the authorial audience, tensions that she must confront in order to follow the progression of the text. This discursive tension is made all the more apparent by the synthetic representation of Kinbote as aware of his own status as a character in a book.

As this short discussion of possible audience roles suggests, Rabinowitz's model is a powerful tool for understanding how we interact with the novel. I believe he is correct in his claim that we are constantly put in the position of having to choose a particular audience vantage point from which to read the text. If we read from the perspective of one of the possible narrative audiences, we stabilize a particular reading of Kinbote, a reading that will eventually become unstable as we move to another narrative audience. On the other hand, if we read the novel as members of the authorial audience—as much as we might be able to do so—we will come away with a different sense of Kinbote's role as narrator and ultimately a different understanding of his

identity. The fact that these possibilities exist is what Rabinowitz sees as the major

failing of the novel. The novel does not allow for easy identification with the narrative

audience because we can never fully determine what is supposed to be true for that

audience. We may be able to see this problem as members of the authorial audience, but

this fact does not allow for any greater stability on the mimetic front. *Pale Fire* forces

the reader to choose between different narrative audiences, but it also never offers a clear

signal as to which audience is ultimately the one the novel privileges: "This exaggerated

artificiality and remarkable use of our second kind of ambiguity is quite consistent with

Nabokov's general aesthetic, but it makes *Pale Fire* a frustrating novel to read, and in

some respects an impossible one" ("Truth in Fiction" 224). In the end, Rabinowitz

defines, but does not elaborate on, a reading practice for *Pale Fire*, one that implicitly

suggests that play and choice are two key elements of reading in a novel that does not

tend towards easy (or even locatable) closure: "How then is one to read the book? The

only way, I suppose, is to make an arbitrary choice about which narrative audience one

wants to join—or to read the novel several times, making a different choice each time.

As in a game, we are free to make several opening moves; what follows will be

dependent upon our initial decision" ("Truth in Fiction" 225).

    The reading process that Rabinowitz suggests is only a problem if we privilege

the mimetic components of the narrative. The difference between my reading and

Rabinowitz's reading is that I suggest that being forced to choose a level of engagement

with the text is precisely the goal of the narrative. Nabokov has configured the novel—in

and around the issue of Kinbote's reliability—to foreground the textuality and the

interpretive process. For Rabinowitz, the lack of a singular truth is ultimately frustrating.

Narratives that develop the mimetic components of character are much easier to engage with emotionally, but narratives that foreground the synthetic aspects engage their readers at a different, and sometimes more challenging, level. *Pale Fire* is about narrative play; it is about establishing a paradigm for reading that highlights the tensions between the synthetic aspects and the mimetic aspects of narrative. While the novel does not overtly signal Kinbote's synthetic characteristics in the manner of Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, the elements of unreliability and narrative form combine to foreground the novel as a self-reflexive narrative about reading. The novel as paratext creates an ongoing tension between mimetic and synthetic functions that cannot be reduced to one over the other. Attempting to address the novel solely in mimetic terms leads to frustration at the lack of singular truth in the novel; attempting to read the novel solely in synthetic terms leads to similar problems about the choices Nabokov made in his justification for the novel as critical edition.

I want to suggest that each type of reading the novel offers provides its own rewards to readers, allowing us to participate in the narrative game Nabokov has created, recognizing as we go his attempts to highlight the fictionality of fiction through the paratextual form. The use of paratextual devices allows Nabokov to foreground a synthetic structure as well as the synthetic aspects of Kinbote's character (Shade and others are highly mimetic and act as buffers for Kinbote's synthetic function), but even more so, the paratextual form allows for additional reading paths that can engage readers in new ways that highlight both mimetic and synthetic components at the same time. The artificial paratexts of *Pale Fire* serve as structure and metaphor for the reading Nabokov asks us to undertake. Nabokov is successful precisely because he chooses a narrative

form that highlights the borders along which a text exists. His use of artificial paratexts foregrounds the role of narrative form as we read. To ignore this form by privileging a mimetic reading above all else does not acknowledge the role that this paratextual form plays in his overall construct. While we may not be able to answer definitively the internal questions that are raised by the novel, we can read *Pale Fire* as a novel that privileges its own materiality and sense of play.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

So what does this reading tell us about progression in *Pale Fire*? In part, it suggests that *Pale Fire* complicates current models of narrative progression. New or modified models are needed, ones that account for alternative discursive structures. Peter Brooks's model of narrative desire, for example, suggests that progression and meaning "develop only through textual and temporal succession" (37). In a text such as *Pale Fire*, where progression can vary in unicursal and multicursal ways (Aarseth 6-8), succession is no longer a simple matter. As I have attempted to show, Phelan's model of progression as a rhetorical exchange built on tensions and instabilities is flexible enough to account for progression in a novel such as *Pale Fire*, but little work has been done, by Phelan or others, to discuss texts that develop tensions from their use of realistic, nonfictional narrative forms—the critical edition of poem (Nabokov) or the personal historical narrative (Borges) or the artificial paratext form in general. Issues of telling, character development, and plot, while significant, are sometimes subordinated to larger discursive issues in postmodern narratives, or narratives with alternative modes of narrativity. Narrativity itself is a vexed issue, related to questions of depth and complexity, but most often being associated with issues of immersion. Marie-Laure Ryan proposes a model of

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narrativity that includes simple, multiple, complex, proliferating, braided, diluted, embryonic, underlying, figural, antinarrativity, instrumental, and deferred.[34] In many respects, *Pale Fire* spans the different types of narrativity Ryan outlines, in part because of its cross-genre form, but also because of its dialogic form. Hardly a model of antinarrativity, *Pale Fire* contains elements of antinarrativity, as well as elements of the complex narrativity. In "Revisiting Narrativity," Gerald Prince suggests that narrativity depends "on the extent to which a text involves a hierarchical organization as opposed to a mere temporal concatenation of events," though he continues to suggest that "narrativity is also said to be affected by inordinate amounts of commentary (of non-narratemes)" (49). In Prince's and Ryan's models, *Pale Fire* might be considered to have low narrativity, though the question is clearly vexed as the novel creates depth even as it esablished new models of surface level progression. Progression and narrativity in the novel are clearly complex issues.

In some respects, *Pale Fire*'s unique structure, its intricate narrative development, and its nonlinear progression all parallel similar aspects found in hypertext narratives, minus the digital media. Hypertext theory is a rich source of models of progression and narrative engagement, some of which can be usefully applied to *Pale Fire*. Marie-Laure Ryan's model of immersion and interactivity in hypertext offers an interesting alternative or addendum to Rabinowitz's approach to narrative audience:

> Through immersion in a fictional world we become in make-believe a
> member of this world, a situation which enables us to relate emotionally to

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[34] See Marie-Laure Ryan, "The Modes of Narrativity and Their Visual Metaphors." Brian McHale makes a convincing counterargument to Ryan's model. See Brian McHale, "Weak Narrativity."

the situations depicted in the work, while through an active encounter with the text, we actualize its semantic potential into an individuated imaginative experience. (Ryan "Introduction" 19)

If *Pale Fire* does not engage its reader emotionally in a manner that Rabinowitz finds attractive, we might say that the novel has a low level of immersivity but a high level of interactivity, requiring a greater level of commitment by the reader to do our best to occupy the authorial audience. That Nabokov makes this process as difficult as possible—even more difficult, I would argue, than occupying (one of the) narrative audiences—suggests that he wants his readers to engage with the narrative, actively and with endeavor, much like Espen Aarseth's notion of ergodic literature, in which "nontrivial effort is required to allow the reader to traverse the text" (1). Nabokov's co-opting of the nonfictional form of critical edition and self-conscious lens reminds one of Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's concepts of remediation of other media into a new form (literary criticism into the novel) and of immediacy through hypermediacy: "we do not look *through* the medium in linear perspective; rather, we look *at* the medium" (81).

I would also argue that a novel such as *Pale Fire*, as with many self-conscious fictions, tests the story/discourse borders. Narrative discourse and progression are as much a theme of the novel as it is a technique employed in the process of telling a story. That is, progression in *Pale Fire* is both part of the unique structure of the novel and part of the story Nabokov is telling. In many respects, Bakhtin's well-known claim that "form and content in discourse are one" ("Discourse" 259) holds doubly true for *Pale Fire*. In Bakhtin's formulation, form and content are one because "the novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of object and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types [*raznorečie*] and by the differing individual

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voices that flourish under such conditions" ("Discourse" 263). In *Pale Fire*, as with

much postmodern fiction, attention to form is a major element of the novel's content.

As Phelan and I have shown elsewhere,[35] despite differences in the manner in

which we might read the lexias, or pieces of a narrative, hypertext progression functions

very similarly to progression in print narratives. In both, we are asked to occupy multiple

audience roles, and our relationship to the truth claims of the narrative are affected by the

communication of the narrative to those audiences. Tensions and instabilities continue to

be key components of progression in hypertext fiction as they are in print narratives, just

as mimetic, thematic, and synthetic functions develop over the course of both types of

narratives. In some respects, the arguments over limitations in print narrative linear

progression are only part of the story. As we see in *Pale Fire*, print narratives can be

more complex, both in terms of narrative progression and character development, than

hypertext fiction. A rhetorical reading practice that acknowledges both the role of the

reader in the process of reading and understands the elements of progression inherent in

all narratives is equally suited for discussing all types of narratives, despite their form. In

the end, understanding narrative progression—whether in hypertext or narratives that

employ artificial paratexts—requires understanding how a narrative introduces tensions

and instabilities, how these tensions and instabilities are developed, and how they are

ultimately resolved.

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[35] See James Phelan and Edward Maloney, "Authors, Readers, and Progression in
Hypertext Narratives," 265-77. Much of this argument is developed in Chapter Six of
this dissertation.

CHAPTER 6

EXTENSIONS

Borges's short fiction and Nabokov's *Pale Fire* each employ artificial paratexts in different ways and to different degrees. Borges's notes are often simple, one or more sentence glosses to the body text; his postscripts extended the narrative, rather than interrupting narrative progression, creating a sense of narrative recursion that forces us back into the text from a new perspective. Both his short notes and postscripts alter the dynamics of his narratives in significant ways, but often as a slight nudge can significantly alter the course of a large object over long distances. Nabokov, on the other hand, constructed an entire novel in the form of artificial paratexts. The paratexts in *Pale Fire* are not defined by their dialogue with the main text, but are rather the primary text in which a space for a truly dialogic narrative dynamic of hybrid genres has been created. There are many novels and short stories that fall somewhere in the middle of these two cases, some of which were introduced in the first and second chapters. In my final chapter, I would like to look briefly at two texts that suggest further extensions for my argument. The first, Manuel Puig's *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, raises issues of spatial and temporal progression—including issues of dialogism and chronotopic representation— that are significant components for any understanding of the effect of artificial paratexts. The second example is of a different form and medium, Stuart Moulthrop's hypertext

novel *Victory Garden*. As I show in my reading of Moulthrop's novel, hypertext and

artificial paratexts share as many similarities as differences.

6.1 Chronotopes in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*

There are many narratives that could complicate and extend my analytical

framework, just as there are a number of significant theoretical models that I have only

touched on here that would be important to consider in a more extensive project. Much

of the work of Mikhail Bakhtin has implicitly influenced my discussion. A further

extension to my argument would need to address the relationship of Bakhtin's more

significant theoretical models to artificial paratexts. In "Dialogism in Manuel Puig's *Kiss

of the Spider Woman*," Michael Dunne argues that Puig's 1976 (trans. 1979) novel is a

particularly apt example of Bakhtinian dialogism. As I have suggested earlier in Chapter

Two, artificial paratexts create interesting dialogic possibilities, and their use often

creates an important space for double-voiced discourse. Puig's novel raises these

possibilities in a number of ways, and is a useful illustration of one direction to extend

my reading. The basic story of *Kiss of the Spider Woman* centers around the prison

conversations of Luis Molina, a homosexual window dresser convicted of corrupting a

minor, and Valentin Arregui, a revolutionary imprisoned for his political activism and

beliefs. Before the novel begins, the government has imprisoned Valentin in order to

learn more about the activities of his revolutionary friends. Unsuccessful at extracting

information by torture, Molina is placed in Valentin's cell to gain his trust. Worried

about the deteriorating health of his mother, Molina agrees to spy on Valentin for a

reduced sentence. The much older Molina befriends Valentin and earns his trust by

talking, sharing his food, and taking care of Valentin after he is tortured and poisoned.

Molina's most powerful weapon in gaining Valentin's trust, though, is the stories he tells.

Every night Molina retells the plots of films he has seen, engaging Valentin as a viewer,

listener, reader, in much the same way as we engage with Puig's narrative. The stories

serve a rhetorical purpose for Molina in much the same way the novel does for Puig:

Molina is trying to gain Valentin's trust, Puig is trying to gain ours so we will follow the

complex ideological argument he presents. The novel—and like Molina's layered

stories—is told almost entirely through dialogue and sporadic interior monologues. The

dialogue format creates interesting possibilities and limitations for Puig. Puig overcomes

this limitation by incorporating lists, police surveillance records, narrativized films,

interior monologues, and footnotes. Puig also makes some use of various typographic

conventions (italics for interior monologue and official discourse, ellipses for silences, a

different font for footnotes) to distinguish the multiple voices of the novel. The novel is

truly polyphonic, in part because of its incorporation of many different genres:

> The novel permits the incorporation of various genres, both artistic
> (inserted short stories, lyrical songs, poems, dramatic scenes, etc.) and
> extra-artistic (everyday, rhetorical, scholarly, religious genres and others).
> In principle, any genre could be included in the construction of the novel,
> and in fact it is difficult to find any genres that have not at some point
> been incorporated into a novel by someone. Such incorporated genres
> usually preserve within the novel their own structural integrity and
> independence, as well as their own linguistic and stylistic peculiarities
> . . . . All these genres, as they enter the novel, bring into it their own
> languages, and therefore stratify the linguistic unity of the novel and
> further intensify its speech diversity in fresh ways. (Bakhtin, "Discourse"
> 320-21)

For Dunne, the incorporated elements—along with character dialogue—establish the

novel's dialogic credentials. While the polyphony of voices goes hand-in-hand with the

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typographic conventions described above, according to Dunne the inclusion of mixed genres, such as the bolero and film press-book, create a double-voiced discourse that allows readers to locate Puig alongside Molina, as one of the novel's principal narrative voices. Outside of the paratextual elements, there are very few places that allow us to distinguish between Puig and one of the characters who is speaking, though even in the dialogue we can often find traces of Puig.

Many of what I will call Molina's film-stories are taken from actual movies—*Cat People* (Tourneur 1942), *I Walked with a Zombie* (Tourneur 1943), *White Zombie* (Halperin 1932), and *The Enchanted Cottage* (Cromwell 1946).[36] Others are made up. Since there is little evidence that Molina makes up the stories—he seems unaware when he combines the plots of two films, *I Walked with a Zombie* and *White Zombie*, and goes to some length to convince Valentin that he actually saw the Nazi propaganda film—the fictitious films are one place where Puig can be recognized behind Molina, controlling the discourse and narrative progression. Given the ethical and ideological issues that the novel addresses (homosexuality, gender, Marxism, violent revolution, totalitarianism, etc.), the reader is often left seeking a unifying voice to help define the novel's own ideological perspective. The novel does not easily allow for a single voice behind the scenes. This allows Dunne to make a strong case for the dialogic elements of the novel. Unfortunately, Dunne often equates dialogue with dialogism. Molina and Valentin's dialogue can be dialogic, to a degree; the fact that it is a dialogue does not immediately make it dialogic, however. Rather, the polyphony of voices that Puig incorporates in the

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[36] See Becky Boling, "From *Beso* to *Beso*," 85.

discursive structure foreground Bakhtin's sense of "the internal dialogism of the word" and not the "compositional form in the structuring of speech" ("Discourse" 279). Despite Dunne's occasional conflation of dialogue with dialogism, he correctly points out the highly dialogic nature of the footnotes in the novel, which carry with them a polyphony of narrative voices and occupy a singular narrative space.

There are nine fairly extensive notes in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, each occupying multiple pages, over which both the body text and the footnotes extend. The majority of the notes are given over to a review of theories of homosexuality as posited by a range of scholars on human sexuality, including Sigmund Freud, Norman O. Brown, D. J. West, and Herbert Marcuse. As Dunne points out, "these footnotes create a parallel discourse which interacts polyphonically with the novel's action and dialogue" (128). For Becky Boling, however, the notes are "present to tax the reader's patience," though to be fair she acknowledges that they also function as "an ironic commentary from outside the text on Valentin's curiosity, without resolving the question" (79). The notes introduce a voice altogether different from any we have thus far encountered in the novel. Read in their entirety, the notes develop a theory of homosexuality that provides a counterpoint to the action of the body dialogue between Molina and Valentin. In the main narrative, Molina's sexuality is at first a source of gendered weakness, but he is ultimately able to seduce Valentin on a number of levels even as he maintains the appearance of the submissive interlocutor. Valentin and Molina have sex, though Valentin maintains the dominant position afforded by his views of sexuality and machismo; and Valentin confides in Molina and asks him to contact his friends in his political party. The main narrative develops a view of homosexuality that is far more complex than the "scientific"

views extended in the footnotes. Molina does not share what he learned from Valentin

with the Warden, in one respect maintaining his own power over the exchange of

information. On the other hand, Molina is followed and ultimately killed by the police as

he meets with Valentin's compatriots. The novel does not allow for a complete reversal

of the heterosexual power structure, but it does create a space for multiple possibilities

and competing discourses that require some role for the reader to negotiate the discursive

spaces.

At the end of the novel, many readers of the novel are left wondering what the

purpose of the notes is, as they do not seem to confirm, support, or even completely

undermine the relationship between Molina and Valentin or even Molina's identity. If

we seek an answer in the notes, we are more than likely not going to find it. As my entire

project suggests, unlike Boling I find notes to be far more rewarding than taxing.

Boling's point is well taken, however, as the notes in *Kiss of the Spider Woman* provide

an alternative narrative progression that removes the reader from Molina and Valentin's

dialogue and potentially from her engagement with the story and character development.

As with the issues of narrative progression I have explored earlier, progression in Puig's

novel depends in part on how we read the artificial paratexts and their relationship to the

dialogue between Molina and Valentin. Building on Dunne's work on dialogism in the

novel, I would like to suggest that the notes function as what Bakhtin would call a

chronotope. In Bakhtin's formulation, chronotope refers to "the intrinsic connectedness

of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature"

("Chronotope" 84). Chronotopes represent the space

> where the knots of the narrative are tied and untied. It can be said without qualification that to them belongs the meaning that shapes narrative . . . . Thus the chronotope, functioning as the primary means for materializing time in space, emerges as a center for concretizing representation, as force giving body to the entire novel. All the novel's abstract elements— philosophical and social generalizations, ideas, analyses of cause and effect—gravitate toward the chronotope and through it take on flesh and blood, permitting the imaging power of art to do its work. Such is the representational significance of the chronotope. ("Chronotope" 250)

For Bakhtin, chronotopes are primarily representational elements or motifs—the romance, the carnival, the meeting of the road in quest narratives—though I would extend his definition to suggest that artificial paratexts and other discursive conventions can be significant chronotopic elements in themselves. The question of homosexuality raised in both the notes and in the dialogue between Molina and Valentin reflect the novel's attempt to provide different perspectives on the same topic in the same space and narrative time. Puig invites his readers to compare and contrast these different perspectives and possibly even authorizes one (body text) over the other (footnotes) by its spatial relationship in the text. The dominance of one story space over the other is ultimately a moot point as both are necessary for the type of narrative progression Puig wants to develop. The chronotopic effect of the notes deepens our understanding of the issues Puig is representing, even as the notes themselves invoke a particular pattern of narrative progression. While beyond the scope of the dissertation, a full analysis of the artificial paratexts as chronotopes would be a useful extension of my analysis. The following example of a footnote as a chronotopic device will serve as a model for this extension.

One of Molina's film-stories is the retelling of an old Nazi propaganda film. Molina loves the film because of its costumes, beautiful female characters, and strong,

handsome leading man. Valentin, on the other hand, initially despises the film—though

not Molina's retelling—because it creates a heroine out of a woman who betrays her

country, while vilifying the French resistance as Mafiosi and thugs. Valentin's

frustration with Molina's lack of political acumen leads to many interruptions in Molina's

telling:

> — Do you know what the maquis were?
> — Yes, I already know they were patriotic, but in this film they're not.
>   Let me finish, okay? So . . . let's see, what happens next?
> — I don't understand you at all.
> — Well, it's just that the film was divine, and for me that's what counts,
>   because I'm locked up in this cell and I'm better off thinking about
>   nice things, so I don't go nuts, see? (78)

The conflict between art and politics continues, and Molina eventually proceeds with his

narrative, only to stop when he tires and Valentin expresses his dislike of the film:

> — . . . Like it?
> — No, and now I'm sleepy. Let's wait for tomorrow to go on, all right?
> — No, Valentin, if you don't like it I don't want to go on.
> — I'd like to know how it ends.
> — No, if you don't like it, why bother? . . . So now it's settled. Good
>   night. (81)

After Valentin says good night, we are offered a footnote. This note, unlike the previous

note (and the remaining notes) on homosexuality, purports to be the press-book release of

a German film, "*Her Real Glory* (middle pages)" (82). The press-book picks up the story

Molina has been telling, but in far greater detail and from a narrative voice supportive of

the film's politics. As I have shown, a common function of artificial paratexts is the

reflection of realistic discursive foundations in order to bolster the mimetic qualities of

the text. Puig uses the footnote to Molina's retelling of *Her Real Glory* to bolster the

mimetic qualities of one of the films in the novel that is not actually based on a real film.

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One of the functions of the note, then, is mimetic support, and in this respect the note is not all that different from other examples we have seen. However, Puig's note and creation of the film can be seen as a chronotope of the instabilities between Molina and Valentin: a place where narrative time and space come together and narrative tensions and instabilities are developed and resolved. In fact, the film serves as a stylized reflection of Molina and Valentin's relationship, as many of the film-stories Molina tells do. Molina's telling and the lengthy press-book description show the film's heroine, Leni, struggling with her own political beliefs, much as Molina and Valentin spar over Molina's lack of political awareness, and eventually Valentin's own unstable convictions. In other words, the film foregrounds the conflict between art and politics we see being played out in the body text. At the same time, the press-book tells of Leni's heroic transformation into a spy for the Third Reich, paralleling Molina's similar role as spy for the Warden and the state.

Unlike the other notes, which exist as descriptive glosses outside of the diegetic time, this note—the second in the novel—actually competes for narrative time with the main text. When Molina begins telling the film-story again the next day, he begins for the most part with a very cursory summary of what we have been told in detail in the press-book excerpt. In other words, he begins where the note has left off, not where he left off in his version of the film the night before. At this point and for the first time, at least within the context of the novel, we know more than Valentin about the film Molina is telling. This knowledge is especially significant given what we know about Molina's spying. This note, like the scientific studies of homosexuality that we get in the majority of the notes, offers a perspective on Molina, but the effect of this perspective is

dependent on how the notes effect the narrative progression. The chronotopic elements

in *Kiss of the Spider Woman* represent a particular role that artificial paratexts can play in

narrative progression. The note can become a spatial locus for temporal development

rather than a gloss on a narrativized element of the story. While many texts subordinate

their notes to the main text, Puig's novel suggests a model of dialogic tension in which

the notes proffer an alternative yet simultaneous voice with the body text. In novels like

Puig's, the social implications of the competing discourses can be quite significant, as

issues of sexuality and ideology are placed in direct tension with one another. In many

respects, the notes in *Kiss of the Spider Woman* reflect Bakhtin's contention that "a

literary work's artistic unity in relationship to an actual reality is defined by its

chronotope" ("Chronotope" 243).

6.2 The Progression of *Victory Garden*[37]

The advent of hypertext fiction in the past twenty years has brought with it a

number of theoretical models for understanding how hypertext functions as a narrative

tool, not to mention the effect the medium has on narrative progression. As we shall see,

progression in hypertext fiction is not too dissimilar from narratives that make heavy use

of artificial paratexts, relying on elements of narrative progression that happen to be

similar to all narratives. One of the early hypertext novels, Stuart Moulthrop's *Victory

Garden*, will serve as a model for hypertext progression. While not all hypertext fiction

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[37] Phelan and I have explored these issues in an article for *Works and Days*, a
significantly excerpted and edited selection of this text is included here; see Phelan and
Maloney.

works the same or follows the same narrative or even technical patterns, *Victory Garden*

is a canonical text in the field and shares many common features with other hypertext

fiction: multiple starting points, variable and alternating plot paths, linked passages,

infinite textual loops, narrative dead-ends, and graphics. Much like footnotes and

endnotes, hypertext links split the text into two or more levels. In the print texts I have

examined, these levels are represented most often by the body text and the notes. In

hypertext fiction, there can be as many levels as there are lexias, the name for the

individual textual fragments that make up a hypertext novel. Despite the difference in

kind, there are many similarities between narrative levels in print and narrative levels in

hypertext. Both notes and links require the reader to make an active choice to leave the

body text and pursue narrative in another space. I make the case earlier in this chapter

that chronotopic elements provide narratives with multiple perspectives on a text, and this

is often the case in hypertext fiction, where multiple narrative elements—and, in fact,

multiple media elements—can share the same relative space. *Victory Garden* also shares

elements with traditional print narratives: multiple characters who develop relationships

and cross paths, multiple plots that occasionally intertwine, and multiple narrative

perspectives.

The novel's story centers around a group of characters at the University of Tara, a

fictitious college based in part on the University of Texas at Austin. At some point prior

to the present-time action of the narrative, one of the characters, Emily Runbird, leaves

for active duty in the first Gulf War. Part of the narrative involves her day-to-day

experiences in the war, while the remaining characters watch the Gulf War unfold on TV,

with more or less investment in what happens to Emily. As Emily's story develops, a

number of parallel plots occur. Thea Agnew, a liberal professor and critic of traditional

Western Civilization curriculum, works through a relationship with her son, her

relationship with her friends, Emily and Veronica Runbird, the difficulties of the war, and

a curriculum battle at Tara. In addition, Boris Urquhart, Emily's boyfriend and a scholar

of Virtual Studies, experiences a midlife crisis; and Veronica Runbird and her boyfriend,

Harley Morgan, go through changes in their relationship. Intermingled with these plot

developments is a healthy dose of political disagreement between liberal and

conservative factions.

Because this narrative is in a hypertext format, different readers will encounter

this narrative information in different ways, just as the same reader can take different

paths through it on different reading occasions. Nevertheless, a short overview of the

reading can be given. *Victory Garden* begins, unless one asks for help or chooses to go

directly to the map, with the words:

IN

THE

labyrinth : beginning

From here, the reader is presented with a section of a large map, the hypertext equivalent

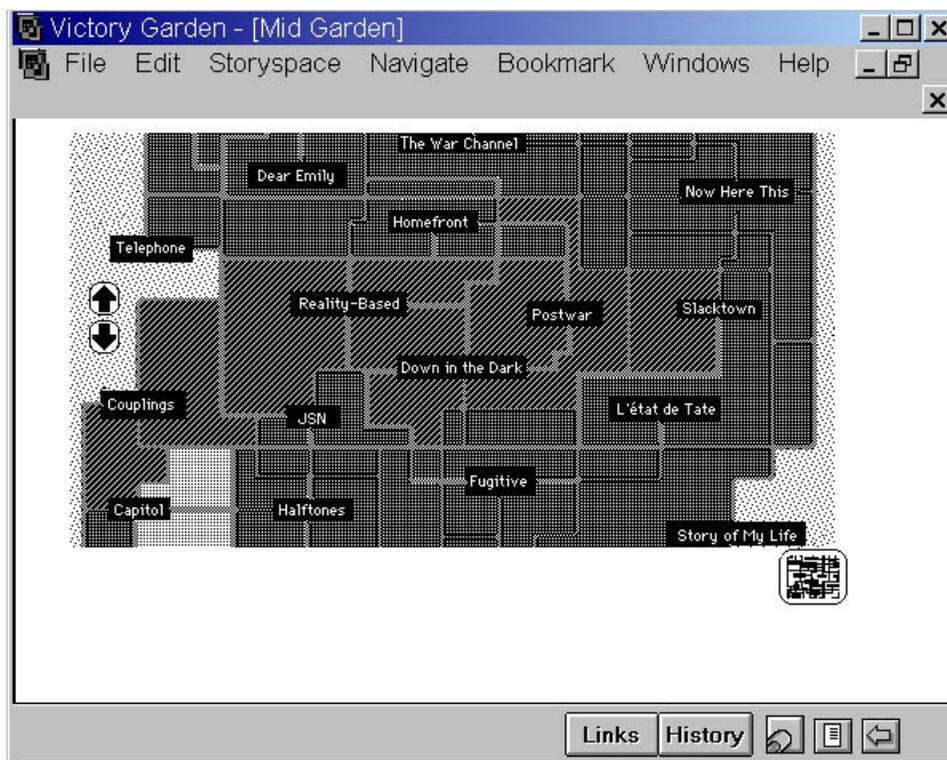of a table of contents (see Figure 3).

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Figure 3: *Victory Garden* Map

Like a traditional print text, there is a default path one can follow. Just as the default path in a print narrative is taken by starting on page one and reading each subsequent page in the order in which it is printed, the default path in a hypertext fiction of this sort is taken by hitting the "enter" key every time one wants to get to another lexia. If one chooses, though, one can take a path different from the default path—and unlike the situation with print narrative, choosing a non-default path is a normative reading strategy. One leaves the default path simply by clicking on one of the words in the story that has been "linked" to another lexia.

For example, if we choose the heading "Down in the Dark," from the table of contents, we go to a lexia with a conversation between Emily Runbird and her troop

during an air raid. The conversation is simple enough. Concerns about the bombing are

expressed and hopes of returning home soon are shared among Emily's troop. This first

lexia leads, by default, to the second, which continues the conversation. If we choose one

of the links in the second lexia, we enter a different path, with a discussion between two

of the soldiers, Whizzer and Dexter, about the point of the war. If, however, we stayed

with the default links from the starting point of "Down in the Dark," we would be led to a

dead end, literally and figuratively. That is, the default path leads to an image of a

broken page (see Figure 4) and then finally to a black square from which there are no
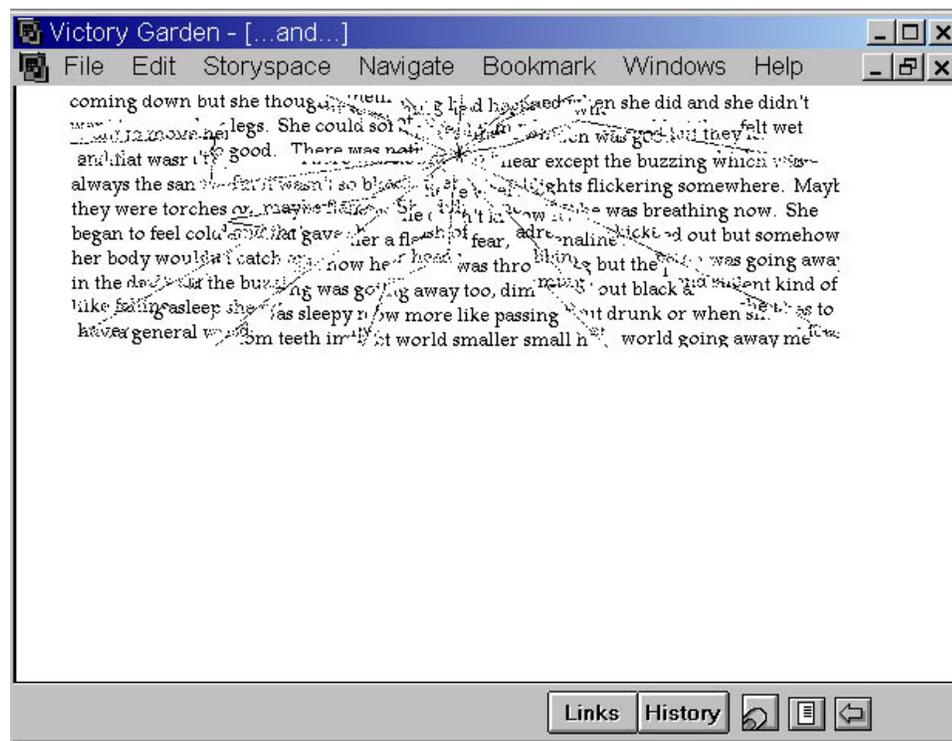
links.

Figure 4: *Victory Garden* Broken Page

Understanding the dead end is very important for understanding the progression of *Victory Garden*. At the end of the path we have been describing, Emily Runbird dies. Thematically, the broken link and the black box represent that death. Structurally, however, the broken link and black box offer the reader a choice to continue with the narrative or to end there. If we were to end our reading, we would do so with the knowledge that we had not "finished" the narrative. To continue reading from this point, we can either back track to a lexia with a link that takes us to a different path or return to the map and choose a different starting point. These paths, in turn, will eventually lead either to a dead end or to a loop into a previous path.

This description indicates that completing the reading of a hypertext fiction involves more than reading from a clearly marked beginning to a clearly defined endpoint—from the first to the last lexia. Instead, completing a hypertext fiction involves reading all (or some significant number) of the lexias in whatever order we encounter them. Not surprisingly, many features of *Victory Garden* guide us to the recognition of what it means to complete it: other links in the table of contents; missed links that point to lexias we did not see on our first path through the text; and, instabilities and tensions that evoke the desire for more information. And, of course, the format of the text provides a procedure for our continued reading: a link to the map, a back button, a list of other possible links.

Clearly, there are many differences between the features of *Victory Garden* and those of print narratives. From the perspective of the reader's activity, however, the most salient point is that the structure of *Victory Garden* means that there will be a great variability in the temporal order in which different readers experience the lexias—or from

one reading to the next by the same reader. In considering the extent to which *Victory*

Garden's progression is an instance of a new mode of narrative, the key issue, then, is the

consequence of this variability in the temporal order for our experience of the

progression.   That is, does one set of paths through the whole of the narrative create a

substantially different reading experience from another set of paths? I believe the answer

is no. Moulthrop writes the narrative in such a way that the temporal order of our

experience of the lexias is not finally crucial to the experience of the whole. There are,

however, a few strands of the overall narrative, such as the revelation of Emily's fate,

which I discuss in more detail below, where order matters. Strikingly, in those strands,

Moulthrop builds in restrictions that limit the variability of different readers' experience

of the order. In fact, *Victory Garden*, like many other hypertext narratives, indicates that

claims about the reader's freedom with hypertext narratives are exaggerated. There are,

in fact, more restrictions on the progression of reading Moulthrop's narrative than there

are freedoms. We cannot, for example, begin reading at any lexia we choose—something

that, though non-normative, we can easily do in any print narrative. And, we cannot take

any path we choose: only some words function as links and those links lead us to specific

lexias. In other words, although there are lots of ways to get through the narrative, all

those ways have been plotted for us. More generally, Moulthrop's effort in constructing

the narrative has been to create a variety of paths through the lexias in such a way that

different readers' different paths lead to common, sharable experiences and

understandings of the whole.

   This point can be illustrated by considering Moulthrop's handling of instabilities

and tensions. In the default path through the narrative, Moulthrop builds the story by

constructing multiple mini-narratives that progress mostly by instabilities between characters, but also by some tensions. (Indeed, following the default order is not all that different from following the sequence of numbered pages in a print narrative.) However, even along the default path, we end up making jumps from one story line to the next before the first story line is resolved. The mini-narratives, for the most part, are not greatly affected by this kind of interruption, though following the default order ultimately only gives the reader a small portion of the entire set of lexias. What happens within the default order also happens when readers choose to deviate from it by clicking on specific links. That is, we leave one story line before it is resolved, but that departure does not ultimately interfere with our sense of that storyline's development or eventual resolution. Furthermore, the repeated experience of jumping from one story line to the other reinforces our knowledge that the individual story lines are only parts of some larger whole. This repeated experience also teaches us that in this narrative the order in which we read the events is less important than our ability to put them all together once we have accumulated sufficient knowledge of each. Let us take a closer look at one set of instabilities and one significant tension.

The instabilities with Thea Agnew exist on a number of levels. When her son returns from boarding school, or rather from the trip across America he decided to take instead of staying in boarding school, we see Thea struggle with her own politics and the paths she sees her son taking. Her liberal perspective is at odds with her desire to protect her son, and Moulthrop is able to draw us into their unstable relationship:

> Thea stared at him. "Well kiddo, you certainly are confused. A while ago you were asking about protests. Now it sounds like you want to join the Marines."

> Leroy shook his head. "I just don't know. I feel restless and unsure about things."

We might choose to stay with the default sequence in order to see how Thea works through her conflicting impulses. However, if we make that choice, we jump, via an emotive lexia, from Thea's story to a short narrative about one of the local Texas fraternity-types, Billy Van Saxgutter.

AAAAAAA!

YEEEEEEEEEEE

ha

After following the narrative about Billy Van Saxgutter, we can return, by following different paths, to Thea's story and stay with it until it reaches its resolution. The shift to Billy Van Saxgutter's storyline does increase our suspense about Thea's story, but it does not materially affect our understanding of what happens with Thea. Nor does our stopping at just this point in Thea's narrative have significant consequences for our experience of Billy Van Saxgutter's story. Instead, each of these mini-narratives, like all the others in *Victory Garden*, is an important piece of the larger mosaic Moulthrop is constructing.

Something different, however, happens with the tension created by the unequal knowledge between the narrator and the reader about the fate of Emily Runbird: the narrator knows, but we do not. Furthermore, Moulthrop does not want us to learn of Emily's fate until we have experienced the rest of her story. Consequently, he is careful to control the resolution of this tension. His control is all the more noticeable because the

tension leads us to look for clues about the outcome of Emily's experience in the war.

Moulthrop, however, rarely gives anything away in the various non-Emily threads. In

fact, the few times we get close to a resolution—when Thea receives a phone call that

anticipates some news about Emily or the various narrative moments when we see Emily

and her troop putting on their protective gear in expectation of a chemical attack—

Moulthrop carefully avoids any revelation of Emily's fate. Furthermore, when we do

reach the revelation, clicking on return does not throw us back into the hypertext mix, so

we know that we have reached one important endpoint. Unless we have already hit

endpoints or eternal loops with all the other possible paths, we also know that our

experience of the narrative is not complete.

Looking at Moulthrop's narrative more globally, we see that its building blocks

are a series of traditional mini-narratives and that the effect of the whole narrative

depends less on the order in which we encounter them than on their cumulative

interactive effect. The hypertext format shows readers' capacity for negative

capability—or, as Henry James might say, for hanging fire—but it does not create a

radically new form that produces radically new experiences. To restate the case

succinctly: starting with the Boris narrative, skipping to the Thea narrative, and then to

the Emily in the gulf narrative before returning to Boris, does not yield a substantially

different experience than reading each of these narratives in straight sequence.[38] The

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[38] In addition to the effects that experiencing the various mini-narratives in different
orders might have, there is also the additional impact of rereading in hypertext. A typical
progression in a reading of *Victory Garden* involves returning to the same place over and
over again. The effect of this reification can vary from frustration to a sense of
heightened tension as part of the reading experience, but the overall narrative structure
varies little and one still continues to read past the parts one has already read in order to

effect of this reading is a function of the kind of narratives Moulthrop works with, which in turn is a function of the kind of larger narrative he wants to write: one that allows for the pleasures and rewards of mimetic investment in characters, even as the individual characters are all part of a larger portrait of American academic society at the time of the gulf war.

As this analysis suggests, progression in hypertext narratives raises similar issues as artificial paratexts. Understanding how the narrative progresses involves recognizing the development of tensions and instabilities, as well as the dynamic relationship between textual elements. In artificial paratexts, the relationship between notes and the body text requires a comprehensive view of the narrative levels, audience roles, and intratextual conventions. Although there are significant differences in the media of print and hypertext, theorists have been too quick to proclaim that the advent of hypertext marks a revolution in the writing and reading of narrative. Instead, the advent of hypertext helps us appreciate some of the complexities of progression in sophisticated print narrative, much in the same way that artificial paratexts ask us to recognize alternative narrative progressions.

The issues of immersion and interactivity raised earlier are dominant elements of hypertext fiction. Artificial paratexts share with hypertext the dynamic balance between the deeper, immersive narrative structures and the surface-level interactivity developed through linked relationships. Texts with a high emphasis on artificial paratexts such as

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find some bit of narrative that fills in blanks of the various mini-narratives. Ultimately, this is not much different than the repetition of certain character descriptions one might find in a very traditional novel.

Pale Fire or *House of Leaves* also require extensible theories of narrative progression in order to account for the effects of their various narrative components. Much of our sense of how each of these types of narratives progress can inform the other. Models for reading hypertext can tell us a great deal about how artificial paratexts function, just as a rhetorical model for understanding narratives with artificial paratexts can help inform hypertext theory. Reading both requires that we consider the dynamic relationship of the extratextual features as key textual components. Links, notes, hypermediacy, and postscripts all make readers aware of the borders of a text and yet function as significant elements in the development of a narrative.

6.3 Looking Back, Looking Ahead

My project thus far has outlined a field, established a reading practice, and applied this practice to a number of examples. I have shown that coming across a footnote in a fictional text can be a jarring experience. Notes that highlight synthetic aspects of a text can interrupt a reader's attempt to occupy the narrative audience, advancing her sense of disbelief rather than helping her suspend it. On the other hand, notes that develop the mimetic aspects of a narrative (e.g., by mimicking the conventions of historical or scientific texts) can engender a sense of uneasiness in the reader and her expectations for narrative fiction. Despite (or maybe because of) the potential for altering our expectations of narrative fiction, artificial paratexts are a unique rhetorical device that can have a complex set of effects on narrative progression. Notes can provide alternative—and at times competing—perspectives on narrative events and discourse, creating new instabilities and tensions for the reader to resolve. More generally, they can

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alter even the simplest of narratives, foreground the dialogic nature of narrative fiction, and establish complex inter- and intratextual dynamics. Furthermore, attempts to account for extensive uses of artificial paratexts can destabilize fundamental concepts in narratology and narrative theory.

While this project has attempted to raise many of the most significant issues surrounding artificial paratexts, there is more that can be done. There is a large number of narratives I did not explore here—including entire collections of works by writers of science fiction, adventure stories, fantasy, mysteries, and historical fiction—that deserve attention in this context. One of the next steps will be to explore why certain genres have gravitated towards artificial paratexts. Alternatively, many narratives that employ artificial paratexts fall into the category of certain definitions of postmodernism, particularly when postmodernism is seen as a conceptual category rather than as—simply or solely—an issue of temporal linearity. Therefore, understanding artificial paratexts in dialogue with postmodern theory is a useful next step. As this chapter begins to demonstrate, reading artificial paratexts through the lens of Bakhtin's theories on narrative and discourse is a potentially rich area for further investigation. Paratexts and artificial paratexts each carry with them questions of hybridity, polyphony, dialogism, heteroglossia, and, of course, chronotope. There is a great deal of work to do in this space. Additionally, as my analysis of Moulthrop's *Victory Garden* and my discussion of immersion and interactivity suggest, new media texts provide a corollary, and at times alternative model, for understanding how artificial paratexts function. Another important next step will be to conduct a more thorough analysis of artificial paratexts for the purpose of exploring the similarities between print and new media narratives. Finally, in

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Chapter Four, I briefly examined the role artificial paratexts can have in understanding how the interaction between the author, reader, and text can pose to what Phelan has called "the ethical dimension of the rhetorical communication" (*Living to Tell* 21). Artificial paratexts can disturb the at times straightforward exchange between the author, reader, and text, multiplying narrative voices to construct a complex dynamic of narrative telling. A richer understanding of the effect of artificial paratexts needs to account for this ethical interaction in a more deliberate manner. Analyzing the many uses of this technique can help us better understand how narratives progress at the story and discourse levels, showing that writers who employ artificial paratexts highlight many of our most basic assumptions about the book and about narrative in general.

APPENDIX A

FICTIONAL WORKS WITH NOTES[39]

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[39] This list owes much to William Denton's collection of works that make use of
paratextual devices such as footnotes, endnotes, and indexes. (See William Denton,
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[40] William Denton reports that the entire *Brotherhood of War* series and the *Saga of the Corps* series also include notes. The books in these series are: *The Lieutenants* (1982), *The Captains* (1982), *The Majors* (1983), *The Colonels* (1983), *The Berets* (1985), *The Generals* (1986), *Semper Fidelis* (1986), *The New Breed* (1987), *Call to Arms* (1987), *The Aviators* (1988), *Counterattack* (1989), *Battleground* (1991), *Line of Fire* (1991), *Close Combat* (1993), *Behind the Lines* (1995), *In Danger's Path* (1998), *Special Ops* (2001), *Under Fire* (2002), *Retreat, Hell!* (2003).

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[41] According to Denton (2005), virtually every one of Pratchett's stories from the Discworld Series include footnotes. I list *The Color of Magic* above. The remaining works in the series are: *The Light Fantastic* (1986), *Equal* (1987), *Mort* (1987), *Sourcery* (1988), *Wyrd Sisters* (1988), *Pyramids* (1989), *Guards! Guards!* (1989), *Eric* (1990), *Moving Pictures* (1990), *Reaper Man* (1991), *Witches Abroad* (1991), *Small Gods* (1992), *Lords and Ladies* (1992), *Men at Arms* (1993), *Soul Music* (1994), *Interesting Times* (1994), *Maskerade* (1995), *Feet of Clay* (1996), *Hogfather* (1996), *Jingo* (1997), *The Last Continent* (1998), *Carpe Jugulum* (1998), *The Fifth Elephant* (1999), *The Truth* (2000), *Thief of Time* (2001), *The Last Hero* (2001), *The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents* (2001), *Night Watch* (2002), *The Wee Free Men* (2003), *Monstrous Regiment* (2003), *A Hat Full of Sky* (2004), *Going Postal* (2004).

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[42] Many if not all of Scott's novels include notes from the author, though these are often removed from certain editions or left virtually undistinguishable from the notes of an editor. I've listed four of his major works above, but a complete study of his notes would also include: *Guy Mannering* (1815), *Tales Of My Landlord* (1816), *The Bride Of Lammermoor* (1819), *A Legend Of Montrose* (1819), *Kenilworth* (1821), *The Fortunes Of Nigel* (1822), *Peveril Of The Peak* (1823), *Quentin Durward* (1823), *The Talisman* (1825), *Woodstock* (1826), *The Surgeon's Daughter* (1827), *Chronicles of the Canongate* (1827-8), *Tales of a Grandfather* (1828-31), and *Anne Of Geierstein* (1829).

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[43] Denton reports that nearly all of Vance's novels include notes. I have verified notes in the omnibus edition, *Planet of Adventure*. Vance's remaining novels include: *The Dying Earth* (1950), *Big Planet* (1952), *The Five Gold Bands* (1953), *The Space Pirate* (1953), *Vandals of the Void* (1953), *To Live Forever* (1956), *The Languages of Pao* (1958), *Slaves of the Klau* (1958), *The Man in the Cage* (1960), *The Dragon Masters* (1963), *Son of the Tree* (1964), *The Houses of Iszm* (1964), *The Star King* (1964), *The Killing Machine* (1964), *Space Opera* (1965), *Monsters in Orbit* (1965), *The Brains of Earth* (1966), *The Blue World* (1966), *The Many Worlds of Magnus Ridolph* (1966), *The Last Castle* (1966), *The Eyes of the Overworld* (1966), *Cugel's Saga* (1966), *The Palace of Love* (1967), *Morreion* (1968), *City of the Chasch* (1968), *Emphyrio* (1969), *Servants of the Wankh* (1969), *The Dirdir* (1969), *The Pnume* (1970), *Trullion: Alastor 2262* (1973), *The Anome* (1973), *The Brave Free Men* (1973), *The Asutra* (1974), *The Seventeen Virgins* (1974), *The Gray Prince* (1974), *Showboat World* (1975), *Marune: Alastor 993* (1975), *Maske: Thaery* (1976), *Wyst: Alastor 1716* (1978), *The Bagful of Dreams* (1979), *The Face* (1979), *Dust of the Far Suns* (1980), *Galactic Effectuator* (1980), *The Book of Dreams* (1981), *Gold and Iron* (1982), *Bad Ronald* (1982), *Suldrun's Garden* (1983), *Lyonesse* (1984), *Rhialto the Marvellous* (1984), *The Green Pearl* (1985), *Light from a Lone Star* (1985), *Araminta Station* (1988), *Madouc* (1990), *The Grey Prince* (1990), *Ecce and Old Earth* (1991), *Throy* (1992), *When the Five Moons Rise* (1992), *Night Lamp* (1996), *The Laughing Magician* (1997), *Ports of Call* (1998), *Lurulu* (2004).

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