FROM PEMBERLEY TO ECCLES STREET
Families and Heroes in the Fiction of
Jane Austen, Charles Dickens,
and James Joyce

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David Citino, B.A., M.A.

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Reading Committee:
Morris Beja
John M. Muste
Arnold Shapiro

Approved by:

Morris Beja
Adviser
Department of English
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VITA

Born: 1947, Cleveland, Ohio

Degrees: 1969--B.A., Ohio University, Athens, Ohio.
       1972--M.A., Ohio State University.
       1974--Ph.D., Ohio State University.

Experience: 1970-71: Teaching Assistant, Ohio State University, Department of English.
            1973-74: Teaching Associate.
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## CHAPTER

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For what has been spoiled by the father can only be made good by a father, just as what has been spoiled by the mother can only be repaired by a mother. The disastrous repetition of the family pattern could be described as the psychological original sin, or as the curse of the Atrides running through the generations.

--Carl Gustav Jung

No man's a mythic hero to his wife.

--John Barth
The following study of three major novelists is an attempt at defining the hero's relationship to his family. It is my belief that the theme of a quest for love, for union, permeates the novel, and that this quest is often symbolized by the family unit. The symbol of the family contains inherent contradictions, however. On the one hand, the cohesive family unit represents such traditional comic values as the triumph of the human spirit over death, the positive aspects of tradition, stasis in a world of flux, and the magical and mystical joys of childhood. On the other hand, and opposed to this near pastoral world, a family in a novel can be a house of horrors, a torture chamber the destruction of which (or the persistence of which) generates much of the fictive action. And while the emphasis in a given novel is usually on the negative aspects of the family (loving, peaceful families would make for dull reading, perhaps) the two views--pastoral, peaceful family or prison--often exist together. The comic world is always implied, even in the family's darkest hours. In fact, these
two views serve as conflicting forces which trap a character forced to choose between them. The essential irony of life is often represented by basic contradictions existing in attitudes toward the family.

I intend to examine these attitudes in the novels with which I shall deal, to show ways in which they form together an integral part of a novelist's art, and finally to trace the influences which such views exert on a particular character, the hero. My emphasis will be on this last aim since the hero of a novel is often portrayed as victim, caught between a past represented by family ties and a present need for love and fulfillment which necessitates a breaking away from the family. The controlling image of this study is one of centripetal versus centrifugal force—the movement inward and the cohesion of the family contrasted with the family's rushing outward, its destruction. This image is analogous in certain respects to the interpenetrating gyres of William Butler Yeats: two opposing "forces" juxtaposed in space, held together by their opposing natures and forming together an integral whole.

It was necessary for me to choose carefully from among the major novelists; for I am tracing an image which I believe to exist in much literature of the modern period (I am
here using the term "modern" to refer to that literary period extending from the rise of the novel down to the present day) and I wished the works with which I dealt to be representative of a great many other novels. In order to trace the family image with any degree of completeness I soon found it necessary to present extensive readings of particular novels. I have chosen to include major works of Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and James Joyce because these are major writers who have had, and continue to have a lasting influence on the development of the novel. Jane Austen's works are among the finest examples we have of the early novel of manners and the comedy of sentiment. Dickens' works epitomize the Victorian, expansive novel—rambling and epic in scope—which seeks to mirror the world by including as much of it as possible between its covers. And Joyce is in every sense of the word a "modern" novelist. Austen and Dickens and Joyce make extensive use of the image I am tracing, which is another reason I decided to limit my investigation to them. But many other major novelists, such figures as Hardy, George Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, and William Faulkner, employ the family in symbolic and thematic ways, and I wish certain of the conclusions I reach in this study
to be applicable to them as well. In the final section of
the first chapter I outline a type of novel which I name,
adapting a term from Jung, the novel of individuation. It
seems to me that the novel of individuation, dealing as it
does with a young hero smothered in a family blanket and
struggling to break free, is best represented by the works of
Austen, Dickens, and Joyce. These three writers so consist­
tently employ the symbol of the family to represent the quest
for emotional and intellectual fulfillment that close criti­
cal readings should yield general principles which can be
applied to the novel as a whole.

This study is based in part on the works of R. D. Laing
and Joseph Campbell, and since these two men have constructed
complex and elaborate theories of the self, hero, and family,
their works have received in-depth analyses. And since
Laing and Campbell have stood on the shoulders of Freud and
Jung, I felt that a brief presentation of some of the
primary concepts of these two pioneers in psychology should
precede the sections on Laing and Campbell.

In such works as The Politics of Experience, The Divided
Self, and Self and Others, R. D. Laing looks closely at the
political make-up of the family and the psychological
geography of the self. And although he often focuses on the
families of schizophrenics he intends the results of his study to be applicable to all families. I am indebted to Joseph Campbell's work, especially The Hero with a Thousand Faces, for a definition of the hero and a description of the hero's journey. But although I refer to Laing and Campbell often in the course of this study I am concerned with the novels themselves above all else. I consider the neo-psychoanalytic approach of Laing and Campbell's mythic method as aids which hopefully will provide me with an opportunity to deal in new and illuminating ways with novels about which much has already been written.

The following investigation of the family is divided into four chapters. The first is concerned mainly with definitions—such terms as "family" and "hero" are discussed with the aim of establishing working definitions and discovering working symbols which will allow me to deal with the novels to be discussed from a firm foundation. I then devote a chapter each to Austen, Dickens, and Joyce, in which I aim not so much for inclusiveness (which would clearly be impossible) as for a close critical scrutiny of the political relationships existing within the hero's family in a specific novel. In the Austen chapter I emphasize the definition of family as social institution and caste. With
respect to Dickens, I have isolated the child-parent relationship and the influence which parents exert over their offspring. And in the works of Joyce I have looked at the mythic and psychological aspects of the hero's relationships within the family (and the family as it exists within the hero). I have not, the reader will soon discover, attempted a step-by-step application of the principles discussed in the opening chapter to the characters and families of the novels. I have rather looked at the theories of Laing and Campbell (and Freud and Jung) and utilized their ideas as symbols which embody certain realities of the modern condition.

Merely to point to a character like Stephen Dedalus and shout "Aha! Oedipus" seems to me to offer no new insight into the way Stephen functions within his family, and within the two novels in which he appears.

It would be too much to hope that this study could point out a totally new critical direction for an approach to the novel; if it does nothing else it at least presents the works of three major novelists, and two major scientists--one a psychologist, the other an expert in comparative mythology--together for the first time. At best it offers a synthesis of a sort which enables us to view the fiction of Austen, Dickens, and Joyce in a new and revealing light.
CHAPTER ONE

R. D. LAING, JOSEPH CAMPBELL, AND THE NOVEL OF INDIVIDUATION

Introduction

Until recently the family has been considered by many the most sacred of institutions. Anyone daring to subject the family to close critical scrutiny risked the anger of those to whom such concepts as motherhood, love of children, and the white magic of the memories of childhood seemed utterly sacrosanct. In spite of what Freud and Jung revealed about the less desirable psychological situations and complexes which arise within the family circle, Ruth Nanda Anshen could still, in mid-century, compose this hymn to the family: “the family is intrinsic to human life and society....it is an institution founded on the laws of nature...an association supporting and supported by every civilization; sanctioned by law, esteemed by knowledge; blessed by religion and wisdom, extolled, in its highest achievements, by literature and art, and endowed with
specific attributes by all forms of economy."¹ Such a state-
ment stands more as a reaction to the revolution begun by
Freud than as evidence of ignorance of the existence of
Oedipal situations within the family: there is it seems
something deep within us which rises to defend our earliest
experiences when we feel they are being threatened. Recently,
however, the nuclear family as a social institution has come
under another attack (Freud's being considered the first) by
such social critics as women's rights advocates and "new wave"
psychiatrists, who have openly questioned the view that the
family is "esteemed by knowledge" and blessed by wisdom.
These social revisionists have looked closely at the family
and have described it in far different terms. Laing, for
example, argues that "the family's function is to repress
Eros; to induce a false consciousness of security; to deny
death by avoiding life; to cut off transcendence; to believe
in God, not to experience the Void; to create, in short,
one-dimensional man; to promote respect, conformity, obedi-
ence; to con children out of play; to induce a fear of

¹Ruth Nanda Anshen, ed., The Family: Its Function and
failure; to promote a respect for work; to promote a respect for 'respectability'. Such a view seems less psychological than openly political--Laing's idea of the family goes beyond the Oedipal, and far beyond the traditional, to an attempt at an understanding of the subtle ways in which one family member can influence another. It is the political make-up of the family, the distribution of power and influence within the family structure, which is the major concern of this study. Laing and Campbell (and Freud and Jung) provide us with the methods for reading these family maps.

I shall not attempt to reconcile these opposing views of family life. I am concerned in this study with illustrating ways in which both views exist together in certain novels. A great many novels portray a hero who finds himself faced with both aspects of the family, and rather than being forced to choose one or the other "definition" of family such a hero discovers himself hopelessly trapped and totally unable to choose or to synthesize. It seems that an inability to overcome a contradictory vision of the family

is a mark of the modern hero in the novel. Such figures as Elizabeth Bennet, Pip, and Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom are trapped in this way—forced to choose between a benign and malignant family existence and unable to do so. This, then, is a study of the contradictory impulses a family member receives from the group and the heroic quest undertaken to reconcile these paradoxes.

The Family: Toward a Definition

In order to present a study of the family in the novel it first becomes necessary to construct a working definition of family. Such a definition needs to be inclusive enough to enable us to apply it to biological units, such as the Bloom family in Ulysses, and to symbolic families like the union created by Bloom and Stephen Dedalus in the same novel, or the "mother-daughter" relationship formed by Emma Woodhouse and Harriet in Austen's Emma. Claude Levi-Strauss has defined the family as a "kinship system," with the relationships between family members assuming major importance, since "the essence of human kinship is to require the establishment of relations."3 In similar fashion Marion J. Levy and

L. A. Fallers have recognized the necessity of a broad definition of the family which would be "applicable to any society" and which would facilitate comparative analysis. David L. Sills summarizes the lengthy definition arrived at by Levy and Fallers in this manner: "They have suggested that a distinction should be made between the nuclear family as a concrete group and the 'nuclear-family relationship complex.' The latter would consist of the relationship of husband-wife, mother-son, mother-daughter, father-son, father-daughter, brother-sister, brother-brother, and sister-sister considered as a system of interaction between roles." These two attempts at broadening the definition in order to include different types of families will serve as the basis for the concept of family to be employed in this study. The works of Austen, Dickens, and Joyce will be viewed as different "cultures," metaphorically speaking, and I shall approach the family not only as the social unit traditionally defined as being responsible for socialization and biological reproduction, but also as a system of relationships.


Thus, continuing the metaphor, the "culture" of Joyce's novels contains the mother-son relationship of Mrs. Dedalus and Stephen, or the father-son relationship of Bloom and Rudy. Relationships in a personal and political sense will be emphasized in this study: the human contacts and contracts formed between members of a "kinship system."

There is, as I have mentioned, a distinction to be made between actual and symbolic families in literature. R. D. Laing has argued that "the family may be imagined as a web, a flower, a tomb, a prison, a castle. Self may be more aware of an image of the family than of the family itself, and map the images on to the family."6 Paul Dombey is torn apart by contradictions generated by his family, and Paul's destruction serves as a major thematic statement in Dombey and Son. Laing's insistence on the importance of an image of the family lends support to the thesis that the hero of a novel is often trapped between two conflicting choices which are not really choices at all. Whether a character chooses the past, represented by the family dynasty (or, as in the

case of Paul Domey, the family firm) which remains intact and endures, or whether he chooses to break with tradition, a break symbolized by his break with the family, he remains haunted by the memory of the road not taken: one can be threatened by webs, prisons and tombs, and at the same time be liberated and protected by flowers and castles, to borrow Laing's imagery. This investigation of the family in the novel will be an attempt to distinguish between negative and positive family symbols, between webs and flowers.

**Freud and Jung**

R. D. Laing and Joseph Campbell may be considered by many to be rebels, but they did not arrive at their complex theories in an intellectual vacuum—they did not ignore those who came before them. Perhaps the strongest influence discernible in their work is that of Freud and Jung. It is my intention to focus on predominantly non-sexual (that is to say, political and mythic) relationships within the family. I say "predominantly" since it is all-too apparent that anyone wishing to investigate family behavior and family myth would soon find it impossible to completely ignore sexual relationships. Within the family the boundaries dividing sex, politics, and myth continually shift and blur.
Several critics (Frederick J. Hoffman and Leslie Fiedler immediately come to mind) have utilized Freudian theories to analyze the sexual side of the modern experience as it is portrayed in literature. And the so-called "myth critics," who owe a large debt to Jung, have seen in a wide variety of literature recurring patterns of plot and symbol--patterns which seem to flow from mankind's earliest history. But in order to set the stage for this investigation of families and heroes, and to illuminate the backgrounds out of which emerge the theories of Laing and Campbell, it should prove helpful to go over such ground again. By outlining (ever so briefly) the Oedipal configurations of Sigmund Freud and the archetypes of Jung, we shall be able to identify the foundations upon which Laing and Campbell have built their elaborate theoretical structures.

It would not be too far off the mark to say that Freud's views of family behavior are contained in one word: Oedipus. Freud describes the Oedipus complex in this manner: "children regularly direct their sexual wishes towards their father and mother, and afterwards towards their brothers and

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7One of the best critical works applying Jungian ideas to the novel is Albert J. Guerard's Conrad the Novelist (New York: Atheneum, 1970).
sisters. The first object of a boy's love is his mother, and of a girl's her father. The other parent is felt as a disturbing rival and not infrequently viewed with strong hostility. Such internecine sexual warfare within the family generates an acute ambivalence in the child-parent relationships.

The mother appears in the male child's eyes both as a sustainer of life, and as first lover. Freud claims that "a child's first erotic object is the mother's breast that nourishes it," and that "by care of the child's body she becomes its first seducer." According to Freud "in these two relations lies the root of a mother's importance, unique, without parallel, established unalterably for a whole lifetime as the first and strongest love object, and as the prototype of all later love-relations--for both sexes."\textsuperscript{9}

Yet a figure exerting over the child such an overwhelming power is also to be feared. A child is forced to flee from his mother's love when he is threatened by castration:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{9}Complete Psychological Works, XXIII, p. 188.
\end{quote}
"He no longer ventures to love his mother, but he cannot risk not being loved by her, for in that case he would be in danger of being betrayed by her to his father and handed over to castration." 10

A child is made to feel a similar confusion toward the father. "Ambivalence," says Freud, "is a part of the essence of the relation towards the father." 11 Freud acknowledges the longing for a father experienced by every child: "I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection." 12 Yet he also recognizes the necessity of doing battle with the father, and destroying him: "a hero is someone who has had the courage to rebel against his father and has in the end overcome him." 13 Thus there exists a complex set of contradictory relationships within a family; and within the mind of any one family member, such confusions and contradictions abound.

10 _Ibid._, p. 191.  
12 _Complete Psychological Works, XXI_, p. 72.  
13 _Complete Psychological Works, XXIII_, p. 12.
In addition to the personal Oedipal situations, Freud speaks of the child-father-mother triangle as it occurs on a mythic (or more correctly, an historical) plane. He recognizes the existence of an "archaic heritage," a racial legacy similar in nature to Jung's "collective unconscious." Freud argues that in some far-away past mankind has acted out the Oedipal drama. He claims that "psycho-analytic investigation of the individual teaches with special emphasis that god is in every case modelled after the father and that our personal relation to god is dependent upon our relation to our physical father, fluctuating and changing with him, and that god at bottom is nothing but an exalted father." This father once ruled over his tribe and was slain by jealous sons who had banded together in order to defeat him and possess his women. The brothers who had united to kill the father "had each been animated by the wish to become like the father." Thus after the deed "the bitter feelings against the father which had incited to the deed could subside in the course of time,

14 Complete Psychological Works, XX, p. 69.

while the longing for him grew."\(^{16}\) The Oedipal myth is therefore mankind's "archaic heritage," and each male child must undergo such a horrible ritual of conflict with the father, courtship with the mother. The drama—a family drama—was first acted out in the dim pre-history of the race and is commemorated over and over again in the childhood of each human being.

Jung, like Freud, distinguishes between a circumscribed, private history, which he termed the "personal unconscious," and a shared, mythic history, the "collective unconscious." The personal aspect of the unconscious "contains lost memories, painful ideas that are repressed (i.e., forgotten on purpose), subliminal perceptions, by which are meant sense-perceptions that were not strong enough to reach consciousness, and finally, contents that are not yet ripe for consciousness.\(^{17}\) But the shared, mythic part of our subconscious is, according to Jung, "detached from anything

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\(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 191.

personal and is common to all men" (Two Essays, p. 66). The collective unconscious contains the "archetypes" or "primordial images," which are "the inherited possibilities of human imagination as it was from time immemorial" (Two Essays, p. 65).

Jung argues that the collective characteristics of our consciousness are the foundations of myth: "In so far as through our unconscious we have a share in the historical collective psyche, we live naturally and unconsciously in a world of werewolves, demons, magicians, etc., for these are things which all previous ages have invested with tremendous affectivity" (Two Essays, pp. 93-94). In other words, just as Freud posits the basic Oedipal configuration unfolding on a primal, mythic level, Jung recognizes the leap from childhood memory to racial memory, from playground to heaven. By means of our dreams and secret memories we recreate history and myth--there exists a direct (if mysterious) line connecting our nurseries with the cave dwellings of our earliest ancestors.

As we might expect, many of Jung's archetypes are of a family nature. Perhaps the most famous "parental imago" (Two Essays, p. 186) is the "magna mater," a terrifying figure who threatens a child with a horrible fate: "You meet that motif all over the world, and the monster is called the
mother dragon. The mother dragon eats the child again, she sucks him in after having given birth to him. The 'terrible mother,' as she is also called, is waiting with wide-open mouth in the Western Seas, and when a man approaches that mouth it closes on him and he is finished. That monstrous figure is the mother sarcophaga, the flesh-eater; it is, in another form, Matuta, the mother of the dead. It is the goddess of Death. 18 (Jung's description and the words Stephen Dedalus uses to refer to his mother's ghost in Ulysses are strikingly similar). But the mother archetype has another, a benign self. She can be an embodiment of love and tenderness, sustaining rather than threatening the child. This mother-love "is one of the most moving and unforgettable memories of our lives, the mysterious root of all growth and change; the love that means homecoming, shelter, and the long silence from which everything begins and in which everything ends." 19 The father archetype as well contains an


essential duality. On the one hand a father can appear as "the thunderer" (Two Essays, p. 64), a cold, powerful presence demanding strict obedience and obeisance. There is, on the other hand, the father-protector "in whose protecting arms the dreamer rests like an infant" (Two Essays, 135).

The concept of archetype--particularly the family archetype--explains the leap made from the personal to the historic. Jung maps out the geography of the psyche and portrays the dual nature of human consciousness--and of the unconscious. We are children of physical, finite parents, and we are children of our dreams and myths. Freud's Oedipal complex explains this same leap by looking at sexual roles and drives. The theories of Freud and Jung have exerted a great influence over what we may for convenience's sake term "second generation" psycho-mythic thinkers such as Laing and Campbell. The movement from literal (that is to say, physical and "real") levels of existence to symbolic (historical and mythical) is, as we shall see, a movement mirrored in the fiction of Austen and Dickens, and especially, Joyce, all of whom imply the psychological intensity of the family paradox described by Freud and Jung.
R. D. Laing: "Within the Magic Circle"

R. D. Laing's theories of the family have a firm foundation in his existential views of the self, and in order to fully appreciate his complex family constructs an extensive outline of the "self and other" confrontation is needed. Laing believes that shortly after the act of biological birth a new organism has the opportunity to establish a firmly-anchored "feeling" of self which has as its basis a recognition of the linear progressions of time and space. Most new beings need to be born again, in a sense: "In short, physical birth and biological aliveness are followed by the baby becoming existentially born as real and alive."\(^{20}\) After such a rebirth has occurred the human child learns of the existence of "the other," one who is beyond the self and apart from it. But if, Laing argues, the individual does not experience an existential rebirth he may be unable to distinguish clearly between his self and the other, and the result can be a serious disorientation.

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Laing claims that "the capacity to experience oneself as autonomous means that one has really come to realize that one is a separate person from everyone else. No matter how deeply I am committed in joy or suffering to someone else, he is not me, and I am not him" (DS, p. 52). But should this capacity not become available to the developing person then an absence of any feeling of autonomy can arise with the result that "one feels one's being to be bound up in the other, or that the other is bound up in oneself, in a sense that transgresses the actual possibilities within the structure of human relatedness" (DS, p. 53). An existential confusion, then, is the result of the crumbling of the walls between self and the other, and the other comes to exert a potentially dangerous power over the self.

The consequences of any blurring of the distinctions between self and other are of extreme importance to the developing psyche: once nosce teipsum becomes an impossibility attempts at any kind of transcendence must be doomed to failure. If one is forced into a position in which a mutually beneficial relationship with the other becomes something more--if one becomes dependent on another for one's own ontological survival--then the fear of this other assumes primary importance in the relationship. Laing claims that
"utter detachment and isolation are regarded as the only alternative to a clam- or vampire-like attachment in which the other person's life-blood is necessary for one's own survival, and yet is a threat to one's survival" (DS, p. 53). These two alternatives, then, detachment or attachment, are in reality not alternatives at all—-a man is forced to choose between absolute isolation from human contact and absolute merging of the self into the other, either of which would quickly extinguish any spark of self-autonomy. Thus an existential disease of sorts suspends a developing human psyche between two worlds and applies pressure on the victim to choose one.

Before describing further Laing's theories on the development of the human personality one crucial point needs clarification. Laing is a psychiatrist whose special interests include the care and treatment of schizoid and schizophrenic persons. The stated purpose of The Divided Self is "to make madness, and the process of going mad, comprehensible" (p. 9). Laing's critics have been quick to seize on this statement, claiming that his theories of self, other, and family can be applied only to schizophrenics and
their particular families. 21 But as early as Self and Others, a work which precedes The Divided Self, Laing realized the full potential of what he was attempting for the development of a comprehensive theory of behavior applicable to many persons in many families. Self and Others was written, Laing claims, "with particular but not exclusive reference to psychosis." 22 In later works, especially The Politics of Experience, he states that his ideas can and should be applied to "normal" persons and behavior. In fact Laing comes to see the person traditionally thought of as "sick" as a potential hero, or at least an exceptional being with a special message for the rest of mankind. I shall deal further with this problem of the normal, abnormal, and the exceptional later in the chapter. It is not to be decided in this study whether the modern hero is by definition mad--I shall

21 Peter Sedgwick, for example, accuses Laing of viewing all families as if they were to some extent diseased: "It is not even clear whether, within his terms, 'normal' families can be said to exist at all" (Robert Boyers and Robert Orrill, eds., R. D. Laing and Anti-Psychiatry (New York: Harper & Row, 1971/, p. 23).

leave that to the psychoanalytical critics. I believe that since the modern experience as described in many novels so closely coincides with the existential theories of R. D. Laing, an analysis of these novels from a self-family point of view should yield valuable critical insights.

Laing argues, particularly in his later works, that man's environment is diseased and man doomed to perpetual isolation, and I shall incorporate such ideas into the discussion of the hero which appears below.

It was noted above that the interaction of the self with the other serves as the cornerstone for Laing's description of ontological development. The split between self and other is carried further in the model of "the embodied and unembodied self." Laing believes that we all experience ourselves "inextricably bound up" with our bodies, and that "to the extent that one feels one's body to be alive, real, and substantial, one feels oneself alive, real, and substantial" (DS, p. 66). To experience such an existence within the body is to be "embodied"--to recognize as valid the relationship between the physical and spiritual parts of the whole being. Laing further defines the embodied self in this manner:
The embodied person has a sense of being flesh and blood and bones, of being biologically alive and real: he knows himself to be substantial. To the extent that he is thoroughly 'in' his body, he is likely to have a sense of personal continuity in time. He will experience himself as subject to the dangers that threaten his body, the dangers of attack, mutilation, disease, decay, and death. He is implicated in bodily desire, and the gratifications and frustrations of the body. The individual thus has as his starting point an experience of his body as a base from which he can be a person with other human beings (DS, p. 67).

The self's ability to relate to the other can be influenced then by the internal geography of that self. The embodied person is able to relate to others—yet there is no assurance that he will do so successfully: "Being in his body is no haven from possibly crushing self-condemnation. Being embodied as such is no insurance against feelings of hopelessness or meaninglessness. Beyond his body, he still has to know who he is" (DS, p. 68).

At the other extreme one experiences his self as being detached from his body: the body is felt to be more a material "thing" among other material things than the center of the individual's own being. When this occurs the self becomes totally alienated from the body. Laing terms this the "unembodied self":

Such a divorce of self from body deprives the unembodied self from direct participation in
any aspect of the life of the world, which is mediated exclusively through the body's per-
ceptions, feelings and movements (expressions, gestures, words, actions, etc.). The unem-
bodied self, as onlooker at all the body does, engages in nothing directly. Its functions come to be observation, control, and criticism vis-a-vis what the body is experiencing and doing, and those operations which are usually spoken of as purely 'mental' (DS, p. 69).

The unembodied individual, one who can not comprehend the true nature of his own psyche and its relationship to his body, is thus forced to create "false-selves" in order to attempt interaction with others. Laing states that "the 'personality', false self, mask, 'front', or persona that such individuals wear may consist in an amalgam of various part-selves, none of which is so fully developed as to have a comprehensive 'personality' of its own" (DS, p. 73). Two types of personality have thus been mapped out. On the one hand a person may live almost entirely within his body; on the other, one may be more or less detached from any physical existence. This distinction seems directly applic-
cable to the character of the hero in the novel. The hero moves from an embodied self (which is often supported by his dependence on his mother) to an unembodied (which I believe to be symbolized by the hero's relationship to his father).

The attempted transcendence of the hero may be related to his
movement from physical to spiritual, from mother to father.

We have been discussing the extent to which the other can influence the self. Should the distinction between self and other be blurred, or should the self come to exist totally inside the body, outside of it, or be suspended somewhere in-between, then any sense of ontological security can be jeopardized. Laing describes three distinct ways in which a person who is ontologically insecure encounters anxiety. He terms these "engulfment," "implosion," and "petrification" (DS, p. 43). A brief discussion of these three concepts should provide a further understanding of the ways in which the other (and the family) can influence the self (what we shall come to call the "hero").

Engulfment describes a situation in which every attempt at human relatedness threatens the self with loss of identity. The individual avoids contact with the other because he feels that the other is capable of swallowing him up, or smothering him. The self feels a terrible risk involved in being understood or being loved, since to be loved could result in total annihilation of self. To be understood is to be "drowned, eaten up, smothered, stifled" (DS, p. 45), while there is safety in isolation. Implosion refers to the belief that at any moment the entire world may rush in and destroy
identity. The individual feels totally empty and wishes to be filled, yet he realizes that should his emptiness be filled he might explode into nothingness. Petrification is the fear that the self will be turned to stone. The self is real and alive, but the establishment of a relationship with the other will result in self becoming a robot, with no personal autonomy.

These three sources of anxiety to the ontologically insecure person are really ways in which the other can intimidate the self; but they are also barriers to a person's search for love and communion with his fellow man and with his family. We shall see the importance of the search for love in the novel in the chapters to come. We are now ready however to investigate Laing's views on the family, and the ways in which the family can influence the actions and thoughts of its members.

Once R. D. Laing's existential portrait of the internal workings of the human psyche is understood it becomes relatively easy to move from the self with respect to the other to the next level, the self with respect to the group. As we have seen, Laing views the family as potentially harmful:

"The family is, in the first place, the usual instrument for what is called socialization, that is, getting each new
recruit to the human race to behave and experience in substan-
tially the same way as those who have already got there. We are all fallen Sons of Prophecy, who have learned to die in the Spirit and be reborn in the flesh. This is also known as selling one's birthright for a mess of pottage" (PE, p. 68). Laing believes that the family can influence the ontologically insecure member in definite ways—he terms the family or marriage in which a member's experience of self is threatened a "nexus," which he defines as "a group whose unification is achieved through the reciprocal interiorization by each of each other, in which neither a 'common object' nor organizational or institutional structures, etc., have a primary function as a kind of group 'cement'" (PE, p. 86). This definition of the nexal family distinguishes the family grouping from institutionalized groupings such as the inmate population of prisons or asylums, while it stresses the "interiorization" within the group—such

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23 In his work Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1961), Erving Goffman discusses those institutionalized relationships with which Laing chooses not to deal. It seems to me that the "forced interpersonal contact" and "forced social relationship" which the asylum or prison inmate experiences is directly analogous to what Laing describes as the "nexal family." See Asylums, p. xiii.
processes as projection and introjection—by which a family member internalizes the family within himself until it becomes a false-family, an object of fantasy invented by the member. In other words, a member of a "nexus" must confront not only the group of which he is a part, but also the image of the group within himself (what he thinks the nexus to be). We have two families, Laing argues, and one of them is within us, is us, in a psychological sense.

In terms of self and other, the self depends on the other for its existence because it has falsely incorporated the other into its experience and its fantasy. Members of the family nexus are able to manipulate and influence behavior of the other members: "the relationships of persons in a nexus are characterized by enduring and intensive face-to-face reciprocal influence on each other's experience and behaviour."\(^{24}\)

We spoke above about definitions of the family which focused on the relationships set up within the group. Laing's nexal family, too, is a description of the interiorized family as an "introjected set of relations" (PF, p. 6),

and it is upon these relationships that I wish to focus my study of the novel. The nexal family which Laing portrays is an attempt at getting beyond Oedipus, as it were, in describing the politics of the family—the subtle ways in which family members are influenced by their own nexus.

The nexal family may be defined further by looking at its effects. Laing lists a variety of ways in which the nexus causes feelings of guilt and confusion to arise in its members. The first of these he terms "confirmation," which is defined as "the slightest sign of recognition from another" (SO, p. 98). It consists of some form of action by the other or the group which acknowledges the self's existence. When there is evidence of a lack of confirmatory action within the family, when one family member fails to acknowledge the true self of another, the results can be dangerous: "lack of genuine confirmation takes the form of actively confirming a false self, so that the person whose false self is confirmed and real self disconfirmed is placed in a false position. Someone in a false position feels guilt, shame, or anxiety at not being false" (SO, pp. 100-101). Another source of confusion and guilt for the family member Laing calls "collusion": a term used to describe a situation in which two or more persons in the nexal family, each
desiring confirmation from the other, are caught in a web of mistrust and despair of ever being fully understood. Collusion takes the form of a delusion spread over a group, a playing at what Laing describes as "counterfeiting a relation" (SO, p. 109). These two family situations, the games of confirmation and collusion, are more than descriptions of power relationships within the family. They can result in a confusion in the mind of the hero as to his true self.

Laing spends a great deal of time discussing the ways in which older family members influence younger ones, and since a major family theme in the novels under consideration in this study is that of youth versus old age, it would be helpful to follow briefly Laing's arguments relating to the child-parent relationship in the nexal group. Adults in a nexal family are often portrayed as being unsympathetic to the child's specific needs and desires:

As adults, we have forgotten most of our childhood, not only its contents but its flavor; as men of the world, we hardly know of the existence of the inner world; we barely remember our dreams, and make little sense of them when we do; as for our bodies, we retain just sufficient proprioceptive sensations to coordinate our movements and to ensure the minimal requirements for biosocial survival--to register fatigue, signals for food, sex, defecation, sleep; beyond that, little or nothing. Our capacity to think, except in the service
of what we are dangerously deluded in supposing is our self-interest and in conformity with common sense, is pitifully limited: our capacity even to see, hear, touch, taste and smell is so shrouded in veils of mystification that an intensive discipline of unlearning is necessary for anyone before one can begin to experience the world afresh, with innocence, truth and love (PE, p. 26).

Adults are, according to Laing, deluded. And they must deal with impressionable, highly sensitive children: "Each child is a new being, a potential prophet, a new spiritual prince, a new spark of light precipitated into the outer darkness" (PE, p. 30). Laing is not at his best, or his most convincing, when he engages in such unrestrained rhapsodizing. But his enthusiasm for the pure spirituality and wise innocence of a child would seem to be shared by many novelists, including Charles Dickens. The child is indeed father to the man, then; this theme of the cult of the child is evident throughout Laing's works. In order to survive, this "potential prophet" must do battle with powerful adults who stand in the way of the child's final transcendence. Not only must a child struggle against father and mother in order to exist freely in the world, he must also fight his parent's parents: "Each generation projects onto the next, elements derived from a product of at least three factors: what was (1) projected onto it by prior generations, (2) induced
in it by prior generations, and (3) its response to this projection and induction" (PF, p. 77). The family thus becomes a metaphor for history, and a young child's ancestors take on the characteristics of a nightmare from which he must struggle to awake. We come into this world, Laing argues, trailing clouds of wisdom and potential greatness, but are at once stripped of everything but our family identities, which are not, we have seen, our true selves. The fiction of James Joyce portrays this battle between the young soul and the mythic monster of the family in great detail, and we shall have more to say about this in the final chapter.

The result of all this, of our battle with parents, our search for true confirmation and communication within the family, is the development of a situation in which we become trapped. Laing believes that a search for freedom from the family and personal transcendence is, in many instances, doomed to failure. He argues that the struggle against the family leads only to what he calls, in a borrowing from anthropologist Gregory Bateson, the "double-bind" situation (PE, p. 113). By this he means that the internal communication patterns of families lead to a "can't win" impasse in which a victim is forced to choose a course of
action yet is unable to so choose: "He cannot make a move, or make no move, without being beset by contradictory and paradoxical pressures and demands, pushes and pulls, both internally and from himself, and externally from those around him. He is, as it were, in a position of checkmate" (PE, p. 115). Laing goes on to cite specific instances in which this "double-bind" theory can be used to explain aberrant behavior. This is, as I have mentioned above, beyond the scope of my study. But the "double-bind" concept, in terms of its more general applicability, does seem an accurate description of the ironic condition of the hero in many novels. Such figures as Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse, or Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom, seem to enter into just such a checkmated situation in their dealings with their respective families—a situation which stands between them and their search for self-knowledge and transcendence. The "double-bind" situation is a metaphor for the hero's failures and frustrations.

One final area in the writings of R. D. Laing which needs to be discussed before we can begin to deal with the characteristics of the hero is Laing's description of an unfriendly universe in which the struggling self must fight
for survival. Laing postulates a universe which is bleak and barren, one in which the seeker of self-knowledge encounters innumerable obstacles, not the least of which is a hostile or unresponsive family. At the root of this desolate environment is the destructive self-and-other split which we noted above: man is and always has been totally alone. Everyone of us, no matter how hard we try to deny it, is at the same time separate from others and related to them. Laing claims that "here we have the paradox, the potentially tragic paradox, that our relatedness to others is an essential aspect of our being, as is our separateness, but any particular person is not a necessary part of our being" (DS, p. 26). We are condemned to loneliness and at the same time forced to seek an end to it. This single fact, the existence of an undeniable split between self and other, is the chasm from which all discord within the family rises.

According to R. D. Laing the normal human condition is an unalterable alienation produced by what we, by definition, are. Yet he does admit to certain glimmers of hope. We spoke above of the potential which each new-born infant possesses. And there is another possible key to fit so many locked doors. We have been following Laing as he focuses
in on one individual self in its relations with the other, especially the family other. This self Laing portrays as victim. In The Politics of Experience Laing examines ways in which this victim may, as the result of his struggle with family and the world, gain a special knowledge through creative transcendence. The creative act is described in almost mystical terms, as in this description of a poem:

"What is called a poem is compounded perhaps of communication, invention, fecundation, discovery, production, creation. Through all the contention of intentions and motives a miracle has occurred. There is something new under the sun; being has emerged from nonbeing; a spring has bubbled out of a rock" (pp. 39-40). Such creation is not achieved without a price. The artist—and Laing would surely argue that we are all potential artists—must face great hardships and privation before he is ready to create:

A man may indeed produce something new—a poem, a pattern, a sculpture, a system of ideas—think thoughts never before thought, produce sights never before seen. Little benefit is he likely to derive from his own creativity. The fantasy is not modified by such "acting out," even the sublimest. The fate that awaits the creator, after being ignored, neglected, despised, is, luckily or unluckily according to point of view, to be discovered by the noncreative (p. 43).
To the "noncreative" person the artist's works appear dangerous. They are "acts of insurrection" (p. 44) which generate a revolutionary impulse powerful enough to overthrow even this devastatingly powerful established order.

Laing speaks often of an "inner" and an "outer" space—a distinction which arises as a result of a corresponding split in human experience. We have begun life alienated from both realms, and the inner world is slowly neglected more and more until, primarily because of the demands of the other and of our environments, we come to know only the outer. Laing believes that the inner world can be rediscovered through the process of rebirth; he claims that the entrance into the lost world of inner space can be "as natural as death and giving birth or being born" (p. 125). Again, although he argues that that person generally regarded as schizophrenic can most easily achieve this transcendental and liberating vision, and that this person is modern society's true "hero," I wish to emphasize Laing's insistence that every man and woman is capable of such a voyage within. Whether or not the experience of the hero as portrayed in a given novel can be described as schizophrenic seems to me to be both impossible to determine, and, even if such a thing were possible, totally irrelevant to my
study. I wish to show ways in which modern heroes attempt to journey into their own inner space to achieve a self-knowledge and an understanding of the world which can enable them to live in that world without being destroyed.

Laing employs terms which call to mind the description of the hero and the hero's journey found in the works of Joseph Campbell. Laing claims that a person is capable of a "voyage into inner space and time" (PE, p. 147) in search of "those experiences of the divine that are the living fount of all religion" (p. 131). Like Campbell, he acknowledges a debt to Jung for first charting the course for such a "night-sea journey."

Of course attempts at any such voyage can incur the suspicions of others. Most of us live our lives, Laing states, as if he were in a trance, remaining in such a state until we awaken to find that we have never really lived. This new-found knowledge is often misunderstood by others: "Attempts to wake before our time are often punished, especially by those who love us most, because they, bless them, are asleep. They think anyone who wakes up, or who, still asleep, realizes that what is taken to be real is 'a dream' is going crazy" (PF, p. 82). But in spite of the heavy strain of pessimism which flows through his works
Laing believes that the journeying hero can bring back from deep within himself the key to unlock the door of human happiness--and this special key is for Laing, as it is for Joseph Campbell and so many novelists, love:

In the last fifty years, we human beings have slaughtered by our own hands coming on for one hundred million of our species. We all live under constant threat of our total annihilation. We seem to seek death and destruction as much as life and happiness. We are as driven to kill and be killed as we are to let live and live. Only by the most outrageous violation of ourselves have we achieved our capacity to live in relative adjustment to a civilization apparently driven to its own destruction. Perhaps to a limited extent we can undo what has been done to us and what we have done to ourselves. Perhaps men and women were born to love one another, simply and genuinely, rather than to this travesty that we call love. If we can stop destroying ourselves we may stop destroying others. We have to begin by admitting and even accepting our violence, rather than blindly destroying ourselves with it, and therewith we have to realize that we are as deeply afraid to live and to love as we are to die (PE, p. 76).

I have attempted to present an extended discussion of the complex existential theories of an extremely complex and often misunderstood figure. Hopefully this would, in itself, be of value since Laing writes about the world, or worlds, in which we all must live. But I wish to attempt to use the ideas and concepts discussed above as new tools which will allow me to handle, perhaps a bit more easily,
that amorphous literary form, the novel. By viewing Laing's theories of behavior as symbols I hope to be better able to understand why certain characters act as they do and to discover the meanings of the idea of "family" as it appears in fiction. I hope to show that the split between self and other, and the double-bind and embodied-unembodied situations detailed by Laing, exist in the novel as metaphors for the hero's personality, his journey through experience, his relationship with his family--and for the modern condition. I shall discuss this journey in terms of a movement from the embodied to the unembodied self; and the dangers hidden along the way will be analyzed, especially those relating to the other's intimidation of the self. I hope to show that it is precisely the realization of a "double-bind" situation which can propel the hero on his way beyond the reach of the nexus and toward possible transcendence. And, finally, I wish to deal with the search for such a transcendence--the journey through family and beyond in search of love and communion. R. D. Laing has provided the basis for certain critical theories necessary to detail such a voyage in the novels of Austen, Dickens, and Joyce. I intend to search for further help in the writings of Joseph Campbell.
I have used the term "hero" often to this point without pausing to attempt to fix its meaning more precisely. We saw above that R. D. Laing's idea of what a hero is and does coincides in many ways with the popular conception of what a madman is, and does:

When a person goes mad, a profound transposition of his place in relation to all domains of being occurs. His center of experience moves from ego to self. Mundane time becomes merely anecdotal, only the eternal matters. The madman is, however, confused. He muddles ego with self, inner with outer, natural and supernatural. Nevertheless, he can often be to us, even through his profound wretchedness and disintegration, the hierophant of the sacred. An exile from the scene of being as we know it, he is an alien, a stranger signaling to us from the void in which he is foundering, a void which may be peopled by presences that we do not even dream of (PE, p. 133).

Such controversial views as these have caused Laing to be attacked by many, especially by more traditional psychiatrists and psychologists. Yet I think we shall find that the renegade psychiatrist's definition of the hero is remarkably similar to that formulated by anthropologist and mythologist Joseph Campbell in The Hero with a Thousand
In this work Campbell has assembled a great number of folk tales and myths in order to present a composite portrait of the hero, and by means of a very modern method he hopes to redefine these ancient tales in modern terms: "The old teachers knew what they were saying. Once we have learned to read again their symbolic language, it requires no more than the talent of an anthologist to let their teaching be heard. But first we must learn the grammar of the symbols, and as a key to this mystery I know of no better tool than psychoanalysis" (Hero, p. vii). I shall attempt in this section to follow Campbell as he recreates his one hero in much the same way Frankenstein created his—out of the flesh and bones of many beings dead and forgotten.

More specifically, I hope to analyze in detail the position which the child hero enjoys within the family configuration in an attempt to provide myself with still more critical


26 I use the term "child" hero to refer not only to a character who is operating within physical childhood, but also to a character like Leopold Bloom who is often viewed as existing within a family context: Bloom, for example, faces his parents in the Circe episode of Ulysses, while his relationships with Molly, Milly, and the dead Rudy are developed throughout the novel.
approaches to specific novels.

Campbell defines the hero as one who is the possessor of exceptional gifts. He is sometimes honored by his society, but "frequently unrecognized or disdained" (p. 37). The people among whom he dwells suffer some catastrophic misfortune or face seemingly insurmountable odds—they are in dire need of deliverance. Campbell claims, however, that this great need for a savior may be symbolic, that the need may reside within all men, and within the hero himself in the form of some tragic flaw. The hero then must undertake a great journey into his own self in order to confront this inner shortcoming and repair it. We shall deal with the hero's journey in greater detail a bit later. It remains now to define the hero in a way which will allow us to apply the term to characters as diverse as Emma Woodhouse and Stephen Dedalus, or David Copperfield and Leopold Bloom. Campbell lists three key characteristics of the child hero, namely: (1) the miraculous childhood, (2) the infant exile and return, and (3) the despised or handicapped hero. It might prove helpful to relate these three recurring patterns to a few of the novels which will be discussed in depth in the following chapters.
Heroes often reveal their special talents to the world by means of a miraculous childhood "by which it is shown that a special manifestation of the immanent divine principle has become incarnate in the world." There subsequently develop, "in succession, the various life roles through which the hero may enact his work of destiny" (p. 320). These words call to mind R. D. Laing's description of the "unembodied" personality discussed above. But while Campbell's hero takes on a succession of "life roles" in order to accomplish his destined task, Laing's model is forced by a hostile family (other) to wear a "'personality', false self, mask, 'front', or persona" which Laing sees as an "amalgam of various part-selves, none of which is so fully developed as to have a comprehensive 'personality' of its own" (DS, p. 73). The hero's development, then, can be as protean as it is miraculous. The miracles themselves vary in intensity and frequency. Thus at the beginning of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*, Pip's encounter with Magwitch in a mysterious graveyard blurred by deep mist is presented as an incident approaching the miraculous. And Pip's being turned upside down by the criminal seems to point to the succession of roles the youth assumes in the course of the novel, when surrogate and symbolic parents
drastically alter his perception of the world. This symbolic "miracle" in the graveyard announces in effect Pip's candidacy for the role of hero—he is an orphan in search of his parents, and *Great Expectations* is a description of that search.

The childhood miracle may be no more than great coincidence—something which occurs often in the novels of Dickens and Jane Austen (though not as often in their works as in the novels of other writers of the earlier nineteenth century). Elizabeth Bennet's fortuitous trip to Pemberley and Darcy's equally fortuitous appearance there seem to me to be as miraculous in many respects, and certainly as symbolic, as the description of the Hebrew Abraham's childhood given by Campbell. Elizabeth Bennet is destined to win a measure of self autonomy, to battle past the limitations of her environment and the hostile powers wielded by others unsympathetic to her. She is herself armed with coincidence, a type of *Deus ex machina* not limited to the novel. But if a novel must by definition rely on a relatively realistic portrayal of life (with the emphasis on the word "relatively"), as I feel it must, then coincidence seems a way of breaking down for a while the confining walls of verisimilitude so that the hero can break through to his own "work of
Campbell claims further that the task of the hero is twofold: "the hero's first task is to experience consciously the antecedent stages of the cosmogonic cycle, to break back through the epochs of emanation. His second, then, is to return from that abyss" (p. 320). And as we have seen above, Laing too emphasizes the miraculous trip backward, or within: "This journey is experienced as going further 'in', as going back through one's personal life, in and back and through and beyond into the experiences of all mankind, of the primal man, of Adam and perhaps even further into the beings of animals, vegetables and minerals" (PE, p. 126). The journey itself will be discussed below; what I wish to establish at this point is that the miraculous occurrences with which we are dealing may be portrayed in the novel as deeply psychological--and mythical--ones. This is especially true in the case of so-called "modern" novels, works like James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses*, and *Finnegans Wake*. In these novels it is neither outright miracle nor a reliance on coincidence which announces the hero. Rather, Joyce probes the psychological depths of guilt, religious ecstasy, and dream fantasy in order to have his heroes reveal their own "immanent divine principle."
In *A Portrait of the Artist* Stephen Dedalus introspectively explores his relationship to his own family, and the resulting guilt which builds in the young man's soul finds partial release in the dream sequence of Nighttown in *Ulysses*. Leopold Bloom, too, is denied transcendence in "real life" only to be awarded a transcending dream vision of his son Rudy at the end of the chapter. Stephen and Bloom, then, can be viewed as travellers back through their past, back into the dream fantasy which represents the shared inner "experience of all mankind." Expanding the definition of childhood magic to include, in addition to coincidence, mythical appearances, dream-visions and psychological "time travel," enables us to see the essential difference between Pemberley and Nighttown as one of degree. The hero is given the opportunity to break away from the material world into a realm of separation and unreality. Admittedly, Elizabeth Bennet does not take a stick to her mother's ghost. Nor is Darcy's ancestral home the house of horrors Bella Cohen's becomes on the night Stephen and Bloom visit there. Elizabeth's stroll through Pemberley's gardens does, however, represent an initiation--and temporary escape--which is analogous to the initiation of Stephen and Bloom in Nighttown.
The miraculous childhood thus appears in the novel as the mysterious occurrences of a mist-obliterated childhood, the happy coincidences that befall the young hero, or the world of deeply psychological fantasy and dream, all three of which tend to destroy the boundaries of mundane "reality" to admit the inner world of self-realization and true knowledge.

The second characteristic which is the mark of the hero is the infant exile and return, a "prominent feature in all legend, folk tale, and myth" (p. 323). This exile is often presented in the novel as a flight from hostile or unsympathetic family members—siblings, parents, relatives, or both. In William Faulkner's *Light in August*, 27 for example, the orphan Joe Christmas is forced to flee, among others, his fanatical grandfather, Eupheus Hines, and his adopted father, Simon McEachern. The Reverend Gail Hightower seeks to flee the nightmarish memory of his grandfather's daring Civil War raid. And Lucas Burch, alias Joe Brown, is in

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27 Although the works of William Faulkner will not be dealt with in depth in this study, it should be pointed out that Faulkner utilizes the family symbol to a greater extent perhaps than any other major modern novelist, with the exception of Joyce.
flight from the demands of the family, in this case the insistent demands of the woman whom he has made pregnant, Lena Grove. Jane Austen's Elizabeth Bennet meets her destiny at Pemberley after being forced from her home by an interfering mother and a cynical father. Florence Dombey is driven from her father's house by an act of violence, while her brother is driven to the grave by cold family realities.

Stephen Dedalus, too, is driven from within the family circle into an exile of sorts. The nature of his relationship to his family, and especially to his mother, necessitates repeated attempts to break away, to struggle against all that would hold him from realizing his artistic potential. Stephen is obsessed by the guilt generated by his rejection of his mother's love. He is told by his school friend Cranly in A Portrait of the Artist that "whatever else is unsure in this stinking dunghill of a world a mother's love is not." These words return to haunt Stephen in Ulysses when Cyril Sargent comes to him for help with his lesson. Stephen realizes that though Sargent is "ugly and futile," still "someone had loved him, borne him in her arms

and in her heart." This causes him to recall and to anguish over the words of his friend Cranly: "Was that then real? The only true thing in life?" And Stephen later applies this idea of a mother's unrelenting love to his theories of Shakespeare's life: "Upon incertitude, upon unlikelihood. Amor matris, subjective and objective genitive, may be the only true thing in life" (Ulysses, p. 207). Thus dreams of a devouring mother, or the devouring, overwhelming love of a mother, haunt Stephen throughout these two novels. In many respects Stephen remains an infant long past the age of infancy; and he remains intent upon escaping from a family which would hold him in if it could.

The theme of exile is, according to Joseph Campbell, accompanied in myth and legend by the theme of the return from that exile. The novel Ulysses can be read, I believe, as a description of Stephen's return from exile (and perhaps the beginning of a new exile). Florence Dombey returns to her father, while Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy settle in close proximity to her family, and his. Emma Woodhouse and Anne Elliot discover that their journey for freedom from family must of necessity end where it began, deep within the exist-

ing social establishment of the small English town. If the hero cannot change the world, it seems, then he must change himself. As we shall see in the chapters to come, the theme of exile and subsequent return appears often in the novel, and is closely related to the theme of the hero's journey.

Campbell claims that the hero is often a handicapped or despised individual. And when this idea comes to be applied to a character in a novel, the handicap and the source of hatred are often inextricably bound up with the hero's relationship to his family.

Campbell states that "the folk tales commonly support or supplant this theme of the exile with that of the despised one, or the handicapped: the abused youngest son or daughter, the orphan, stepchild, ugly duckling, or the squire of low degree" (pp. 325-26). In short, a hero can be propelled on a journey outside of the family by crises originating within it, or by internal emergencies which the family is not able to handle. In many novels the hero is hated or misunderstood in his own family, a family which should be the respository of love and compassion. Stephen Dedalus' parents are not sympathetic to his desires to achieve artistic success. Elizabeth Bennet must strive for self-fulfillment against the
crass venality of her family and the society which it repre-
sents. Thus the hero leaves his childhood environment in
search of some self-knowledge, some small victory which will
enable him to exist in the real world once he returns.

Campbell claims that the hero may be an orphan or step-
child, and be despised for that reason alone. The hero in
the novel is often portrayed as an orphan--the novels of
Dickens abound in orphans and unfortunate stepchildren.
This orphanhood often symbolizes something greater, some
lack of perfection within the hero. Both Pip and David
Copperfield, to cite two example, embark on journeys which
become necessary partly because of their lack of true
parents, and partly because of their lack of experience and
self-knowledge. In their travels they encounter a number
of authority figures who take on the role of symbolic
parents. Pip enters into such a child-parent relationship
with his sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, Miss Havisham, Abel
Magwitch, and Jaggers. The search by the orphan or symbolic
orphan for his true parents is a recurring theme in the
novel.

We have seen, then, that the three chief characteris-
tics which Campbell provides to describe the hero in folk
tale and legend can be applied as well to certain aspects of
the hero in the novel. Having defined the hero by describ­
ing his chief traits I should like now to turn to an analy­sis of the heroic journey to which I have been alluding by presenting a necessarily brief summary of this journey toward transcendence.

The adventures undertaken by the hero, Campbell states, normally follow this general pattern: "a separation from the world, a penetration to some source of power, and a life-enhancing return" (p. 35). This cycle of separation, initiation and return comprises the heroic search for transcendence. The act of separation can be described in terms of a Jungian "night-sea" journey deep into self: "In a word: the first work of the hero is to retreat from the world scene of secondary effects to those causal zones of the psyche where the difficulties really reside, and there to clarify the difficulties, eradicate them in his own case (i.e., give battle to the nursery demons of his local culture) and break through to the undistorted, direct experience and assimilation of what C. G. Jung has called 'the archetypal images!'" (pp. 17-18). We have already discussed the journey inward as postulated by Laing and by Campbell. In the terms of the primary concern of
this study, the child is made aware of the simple humanity of his parents—he no longer is able to view them as gods—and realizes the necessity of establishing an autonomy of self. In order to accomplish this he must journey deep within his own psyche and there confront what Campbell calls the "unexorcized images of our infancy" (p. 11). Both Joseph Campbell and R. D. Laing, then, view the first part of the hero's journey, the separation from external reality and the entrance into the self, as a necessary step toward self-enlightenment.

The next step is the successful initiation which every young hero must complete. Campbell likens this initiation to the "rites of passage" or involved ritual ceremonies employed by primitive societies:

The so-called rites of passage, which occupy such a prominent place in the life of a primitive society (ceremonials of birth, naming, puberty, marriage, burial, etc.) are distinguished by formal, and usually very severe, exercises of severance, whereby the mind is radically cut away from the attitudes, attachments, and life patterns of the stage being left behind. Then follows an interval of more or less extended retirement, during which are enacted rituals designed to introduce the life adventurer to the forms and proper feelings of his new estate, so that when, at last, the time has ripened for the return to the normal world, the initiate will be as good as reborn (p. 10).
The hero-candidate must confront special forces during his retirement which enable him to gain a new knowledge, to be reborn. One of the results of this special knowledge should be, according to Campbell, an increase in the capacity for human love. We have already seen that R. D. Laing's vision of transcendence has to do with this same capacity. Campbell defines the true message of the hero Jesus as "that unconditioned love, synonymous with the effective conquest of ego, ego's world, and ego's tribal god" (p. 157). This love is both particular and universal in nature: "The good news, which the World Redeemer brings and which so many have been glad to hear, zealous to preach, but reluctant, apparently to demonstrate, is that God is love, that He can be, and is to be, loved, and that all without exception are his children" (p. 158). Thus the hero's retreat within his own soul initiates him into the company of those who know how to love selflessly, and the journey of the hero becomes a search for love. The hero must, ironically, break away from the smothering love of his own family in order to learn to love all men, and, just as ironically, he gains his saving vision by renouncing his ego. (We shall see in the following chapters whether potential heroes are successful in this search.)
The final phase of the cycle, the return, has been discussed in part above. The hero must return with his newfound knowledge in order to share it with others; he has learned to love and now must return to love in fact and deed. The hero has become educated, but his education must be put to use—he is not allowed to enter a Nirvana or a Forest of Arden. The circular movement which is the mark of the hero's journey, the trip away from the world of men into the soul and back again, is inextricably bound up with the hero's ties to his family. The family provides protection and love for him up to a point—beyond this point it can become a hideous monster which drives him out to seek his self-destiny. Joseph Campbell provides us with yet another critical approach to the novel: we have looked closely at ways in which one can be influenced by the other (particularly the family other), and now we see this self as the potential hero who must learn to exist in the family of man. We are now ready to attempt a definition of the novel of individuation, which is the fictional presentation of the relationship between the self and other, and the self and family.
The Novel of Individuation: "Dreamlike Figurations"

Put simply, the novel of individuation is a family drama. The hero plays a starring role in this drama, as do the parents and parent-figures who move to block his attempted transcendence. The focus in such a novel is always on the relationships existing within a family—especially the psychological, mythic, and political aspects of these relationships. The novel of individuation may be seen as a sub-group of the larger novel of education. But while the novels of education detail a character's journey from one state to another (usually from an uneducated to an educated, enlightened state), the novels of individuation portray a child as he grows older. This child seeks to escape from nursery and parents, yet remains deep within the family; unable to escape the contradictions generated by the need to flee family domination and the inevitability of remaining within the nexal web. Characters like Emma Woodhouse, Florence Dombey and David Copperfield, Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom all are forced to seek release from family obligations and family realities. All encounter the 'double-bind' checkmated trap, and suffer its attendant
paradoxes. And all fail to escape the family and achieve a total independent transcendence (although these characters, like Elizabeth Bennet, do achieve a measure of autonomy and self-knowledge). The only way out of the trap, as we see in such a novel of individuation as Ulysses, is to embrace the paradoxes in their totalities, and, as Leopold Bloom does, seek a temporary release through loss of ego—through love, compassion, and surrender.

Jung borrowed the term *enantiodromia*, a "running the other way," from Heraclitus. *Enantiodromia*, according to Joseph Campbell, refers to the knowledge that "the ultimate 'One' which cannot be named...is manifest in many forms, these appearing as pairs-of-opposites." An attempt to view only one element in a pair insures that the other will remain hidden, thus "the art is to learn of both, to recognize and come to a knowledge of both."³⁰ "There is no energy unless there is a tension of opposites" (*Two Essays*, p. 53), Jung claims. "Life is born," he states, "only of the spark of opposites" (*Two Essays*, p. 54). The ability

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to view all experience as a cohesive whole Jung terms the "individuation process" (Two Essays, p. 110).

The process of individuation involves a confrontation with the subconscious forces influencing the individual, and a psychological breakthrough to a higher level of self-knowledge: "Individuation means becoming an 'in-dividual,' and, so far as 'individuality' embraces our innermost, last, and incomparable uniqueness, it also implies becoming one's own self. We could therefore translate individuation as 'coming to selfhood' or 'self-realization'" (Two Essays, p. 173). Thus, like Laing and Campbell, Jung recognizes the need for a transcendent journey into self, a journey the completion of which allows a man to live in peace with the various "others," and in peace with his own "self." The novel of individuation focuses on a character's relation to himself. The novel of individuation is a children's story—the story of an endless childhood—replete with mythical ogres, monsters and magicians.

Many novelists have attempted to capture in their works that period of life during which attitudes and beliefs are first formulated. Proust, in Remembrance of Things Past, claims that sleep and dreaming are ways of recapturing a
lost youth: "while I was asleep I had returned without the least effort to an earlier stage in my life, now forever outgrown." 31 This "earlier stage" of life is the primary concern of the novel of individuation. Writers like Austen, Dickens, and Joyce (and many, many others) elevate the child hero to what Laing has called, as we have seen above, "a potential prophet, a new spiritual prince, a new spark of light precipitated into the outer darkness" (PE, p. 30). Each child is a potential savior to the world—he embodies the vital life-force which offers hope to those for whom youth has already gone. In many respects, the child becomes a potential hero because of his greatest natural talent, his youth and innocence. Characters like David Copperfield and Pip become vehicles whereby an author and reader are permitted to travel backwards into the past to a period filled with the magic and mystery—and often the horror—of youth. One might view the cult of the child which exists in the novel of individuation as a time machine of sorts in which man is permitted to leave a fragmented and empty world to travel to a vital youth: modern man recr -

ating his image into that of primitive man, struggling
against great odds and great dangers. Joyce conveys the
primitive nature of this lost world as experienced by
Stephen Dedalus in this simple nursery rhyme:

Pull out his eyes,
Apologise,
Apologise,
Pull out his eyes (Portrait, p. 8).

This children's rhyme is charged with the horror of a
terrible threat made to a young boy by his aunt. The lost
world of youth, as recaptured by Joyce and Proust, is not a
totally pastoral and idyllic world as we shall see in the
chapter on Joyce: inherent in childhood is the threat of a
barren and empty life to come.

The cult of the child is the result of the potential
to become a hero which each new being possesses; and trans­
cendence, which is as we have seen the badge of the
initiated one, stands as the thematic climax of the novel of
individuation. The transcending vision which the hero gains
(or fails to gain) after a long struggle against family and
surroundings can be an artistic one, as in the case of a
Stephen Dedalus; it can be a successful recapturing of the
past as accomplished by David Copperfield (or by Quentin
Compson in Absalom, Absalom!); or perhaps the special
knowledge which helps a person striving for perfection to live in an imperfect world, as is the case with Jane Austen's heroines. But in any case the specific nature of the vision allows the hero to love. Transcendence is love: the child hero seeks love at the expense of ego, and he wins it by ceasing to think of himself as the center of the universe. Whether or not a candidate for initiation is able to renounce the demands of family and ego will ultimately decide his fate.

Another characteristic of the novel of individuation is the hero's search for his true identity, which is often symbolically represented as a search for true parents. J. C. Flugel has argued that "there exists a very general association on the one hand between the notion of mind, spirit or soul and the idea of the father or of masculinity; and on the other hand between the notion of the body or of matter (materia--that which belongs to the mother) and the idea of the mother or of the feminine principle." The validity of such "general principle" is recognized by Joseph Campbell; in fact, he goes further in the identification of

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mother with matter and father with spirit--Campbell claims that a hero travels from the realm of his mother into that of the father during his journey into self:

When the child outgrows the popular idyl of the mother breast and turns to face the world of specialized adult action, it passes, spiritually, into the sphere of the father--who becomes, for his son, the sign of the future task, and for his daughter, of the future husband. Whether he knows it or not, and no matter what his position in society, the father is the initiating priest through whom the young being passes on into the larger world (p. 136).

The "sphere of the father" represents the spiritual prize toward which the hero must strive, but the mother's life-sustaining sphere is necessary to keep the body functioning. These two spheres reach out to influence the young hero, forcing him to choose, and the result is a 'double-bind' impasse in which both choices are wrong ones.

The view of the two spheres is extremely close to R. D. Laing's construct of the embodied and unembodied selves. When one is embodied, Laing claims, one "has a sense of being flesh and blood and bones" (DS, p. 67), while the unembodied individual is deprived of "direct participation in any aspect of the life of the world" (DS, p. 69).

I am arguing here that the hero's journey is often portrayed as a literal or symbolic search for a father with
the assistance of the mother. Stephen Dedalus, for example, is unable to recognize his artistic vocation until granted a liberating vision of a young girl wading in the sea:

A girl stood before him in midstream; alone and still, gazing out to sea. She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird. Her long slender bare legs were delicate as a crane's and pure save where an emerald trail of seaweed had fashioned itself as a sign upon the flesh. Her thighs, fuller and soft-hued as ivory, were bared almost to the hips where the white fingers of her drawers were like featherings of soft white down. Her slateblue skirts were kilted boldly about her waist and dove-tailed behind her. Her bosom was as a bird's soft and slight, slight and soft as the breast of some darkplumaged dove. But her long fair hair was girlish: and girlish, and touched with the wonder of mortal beauty, her face (p. 171).

This appearance before him, suffused with "the wonder of mortal beauty," is a feminine embodiment of the material world, a hymn to physical joy which enables Stephen to dedicate his life to the attainment of ideal beauty in art. The feminine material sphere has propelled him to seek out the male-spiritual. It is later, in Ulysses, when the godlike creature wading by the sea becomes Gerty MacDowell and the feminine beauty embodied by this vision has become the body of a decaying and dying mother, that Stephen realizes the feminine sphere has not released him. Bloom's
masturbatory vision in front of the crippled Gerty, and Stephen's suffocation at the hands of a dying mother are cruel parodies of Stephen's vision in the earlier novel. Stephen has attempted to reach spiritual and artistic perfection—but his rejection of Bloom's offered friendship underlines his continued orphanhood; he remains suspended between worlds defined by such contradictions as mother-father, home-exile, and freedom-bondage.

This would seem to be one of the most pervasive thematic patterns in the novels under discussion: that the heroic journey is seldom completed with any degree of lasting success. Stephen, like Florence Dombey, Gabriel Conroy, and even Elizabeth Bennet, finds himself trapped and unable to achieve a lasting vision of transcendence powerful enough to transform his life.

The final trait of the novel of individuation I wish to discuss is the thematic use of the family as myth. R. D. Laing has coined the phrase "nexal family" to refer to an internalized experience of family which is in some way a false one, or one in which the family as perceived does not conform to the family as it really is. The family takes on the dimensions and the qualities of a myth—it becomes bigger-than-life, surreal, immortal, grotesque. Laing
states that "'family' space and time is akin to mythic space and time, in that it tends to be ordered round a centre and runs on repeating cycles" (PF, p. 6). The family can be experienced as a "self-fulfilling fantasy and prophecy" (PF, p. 11); and according to Laing we as family members often find ourselves "acting parts in a play that we have never read and never seen, whose plot we don't know, whose existence we can glimpse, but whose beginning and end are beyond our present imagination and conception" (PF, p. 87). Thus modes of existence based on linear time and space do not and cannot contain so psychologically amorphous a construct as the family.

In speaking of the miraculous childhood I argued that the description of the hero's journey must often be a deeply psychological one, approaching at times the realm of pure fantasy. Campbell states that the "infantile consciousness" contains "all the ogres and secret helpers of our nursery...all the magic of childhood" (p. 17). In the novel, too, any attempt to portray the mythic family must fall back on such devices as the dream, fantasy, coincidence and caricature, psychological representations of the unconscious--anything, in short, which will describe a family of myth and magic. Campbell claims that "the hero moves in a dream
landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials" (p. 97), and that "in our dreams the ageless perils, gargoyles, trials, secret helpers, and instructive figures are nightly still encountered" (p. 101). Thus Finnegans Wake is in more than one sense a description of a family—H. C. Earwicker's wife, sons and daughter occupy a great part of his dreaming hours (or years?) and together the Earwicker family becomes an internalized nexal group from which each member seeks to extricate himself. I shall argue below that Pemberly, the firm of Dombey and Son, David Copperfield's dead father, and, particularly, the mother-goddess in the works of Joyce, are all attempts at a fictional representation of elements of the mythic family.

The novel of individuation, then, is a fictional work which portrays a hero at war with his family; it is a novel which contains one or more of these thematic patterns: (1) the cult of the child, (2) the search for true parents, real or symbolic, and (3) the family as a mythic, internalized structure.
We have learned from R. D. Laing of the dangerous internal landscapes which can exist within the family. And Joseph Campbell has described the hero's struggle to extricate himself from these family difficulties. In the following three chapters I would like to examine what I consider to be the major works of Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and James Joyce, in the hope that an analysis of the politics of the family seen in the light of a hero's struggle for freedom from the meaninglessness of a barren present will yield new critical interpretations of these novels.
CHAPTER TWO

"FAMILY PREJUDICE": THE NOVELS
OF JANE AUSTEN

"3 or 4 Families in a Country Village is the
very thing to work on."

--Jane Austen

Introduction

The reader who begins an investigation of the family
in the six novels of Jane Austen is immediately confronted
with a variety of possible critical approaches, as if he
has walked through one door only to discover a room con­
taining many doors, all of which are marked "family." For
the world of Austen is so totally a family world that a de­
tailed study of familial relationships in one of her novels
must take many critical directions; the critic must utilize
many tools. In Austen's portrayal of the family as an
economic and social dungeon, for example, the Marxist view
of the novel as a description of class struggle seems one
promising approach. Or in the presentation of a comic world

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of young men and women who seek release from the numbing clutches of their old and cold parents, and in the intense ironic treatment of heroines and heroes, the reader recognizes a need for the application to Austen's fiction of the principles and categories of genre criticism. The novels also contain portraits of the developing self seeking ontological security and the means to recognize, and to know, an inner reality, which seems to call for a particularly psychological interpretation and investigation. And the process by which an Austen heroine journeys through the levels of experience toward self-knowledge and love—the education of the heroine—can best be described in mythic terms. While I attempt to embrace all four of these approaches in the following chapter, I have chosen to emphasize the last two—by referring to R. D. Laing's psychological constructs of self, other, and family, and by applying Joseph Campbell's description of the mythic hero, I hope to view Jane Austen's novels in a new and, hopefully, useful way. I hope to show that an Austen novel often portrays a developing self which seeks both freedom from the intimidation of the other (and the family), and an heroic self-knowledge which enables this self to survive in a dark and rigid world. I shall briefly discuss family-related themes
in all of the novels before going on to a detailed analysis of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. I shall argue that Elizabeth Bennet encounters a hostile "other," her family, and as a result journeys from an "embodied," maternal state to an "unembodied," spiritual one. Her heroic quest consists of an external journey to Pemberley, and an internal, psychological one. It is this separation, initiation, and return which allows Elizabeth to escape, at least temporarily, the "double-bind" trap in which she finds herself in relation to her family. It is doubtful whether Emma Woodhouse ever achieves even a temporary transcendence. She gains Knightley, but duty to her family and to others is an inescapable responsibility. Both heroines, we shall see, do succeed in gaining love, but only at the cost of the exalted ego.

Marriage in an Austen novel represents an attempt at revolution. A character like Elizabeth Bennet, even a heroine as limited (and deluded) as Fanny Price or Catherine Morland, seeks to overturn the existing order by escaping from the financial prisons, the prisons of economics and caste, which are represented by the static, intimidating family nexus. These revolutionary sparks, though, are only sparks--an Austen heroine is a dismal failure as a political
radical, and must search for release from an oppressive system through compromise, self control, and loss of ego. For the heroines of Jane Austen are constantly, almost savagely, undercut, and are portrayed as being nearly as limited and flawed as the society in which they live. Fanny Price is naive enough to believe that a union with Edmund represents a victory which will last a lifetime. Anne Elliot and Emma Woodhouse are offered the possibility of escape (in the figures of Wentworth and Knightley) early on in their lives, but are unable to recognize fully such potential for victory until it is perhaps too late. Elinor and Marianne Dashwood are emblems of the two extremes of the title of the novel in which they appear and never really learn that sense cannot exist without sensibility, nor sensibility without sense, if personal victory is to be achieved.¹

¹Andrew H. Wright has already commented on the importance of paradox in the novel, noting that "there is disclosed a profound ambivalence" generated by the conflicting demands of sense and sensibility throughout the novel. He argues that while "Sense and Sensibility are desirable...for a whole life...they are mutually exclusive." Jane Austen's Novels: A Study in Structure, new ed. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), p. 30. As I have stated in the previous chapter, the hero in a novel of individuation is often confronted with the necessity of choosing between conflicting values, both of which are needed for a "whole life."
In addition to the ironic treatment of the heroine who attempts to escape from the family prisons of the English countryside, there are other thematic patterns, common to all the novels, which touch on family considerations. Each principal character undertakes a journey which appears as an actual, physical one (Fanny returns to Portsmouth and her family, Elizabeth Bennet travels to the woods of Pemberley, Catherine Morland visits first Bath and then Northanger Abbey), but which suggests a spiritual journey deep into self (Fanny develops a measure of autonomy and strength after beginning as a nearly egoless cipher, Elizabeth Bennet learns truths about herself at Darcy's ancestral home, Catherine Morland's romantic fantasies are chastened and brought under control in the sobering environment of Northanger). As we have said, these journeys are often precipitated by a heroine's checkmated situation within her family—what Laing (borrowing from Bateson) terms the "double-bind" situation—in which a child cannot survive within the family circle, and yet cannot leave it and break free. The child is then forced to seek release by confronting her own limitations of self by travelling deep within her own being in an almost ritual exorcism. Such journeys into self announce the Austen heroine as she travels from
innocence to a limited, but marked, realization of her own faults and an awareness of the harsh realities and personal indecencies which exist in an unfriendly universe. The heroine's inward journey cuts her off from family, and from anything else which might stand in the way of her growth. After her daughter's sudden return from the Tilney home Mrs. Morland remarks: "It is always good for young people to be put upon exerting themselves; and you know, my dear Catherine, you always were a sad little shatter-brained creature; but now you must have been forced to have your wits about you...."2 The heroine is made aware of the value of common sense, reserve, and compromise with the family nexus, and of the necessity of serving the other by being useful and compassionate. In opposition to these virtues are the primary vices of Austen's world--romantic sensibility and prejudice, exuberance and uncontrolled enthusiasm, and the intimidation of the developing, innocent self by the hostile ego of the other, or by the will of the family. The key virtue in the novels is balance--the heroine's extremes of personality and her revolt from family must be tempered and balanced before she is allowed a measure of transcendence:  

a character must undergo both a spiritual purification and an existential maturation before she is permitted to love and to marry.

_Persuasion_, the last and in many ways the darkest of Austen's novels, opens with a description of Sir Walter Elliot as he pages through the Baronetage, a book which never failed to stimulate the old man: "there his faculties were roused into admiration and respect, by contemplating the limited remnant of the earliest patents; there any unwelcome sensations, arising from domestic affairs, changed naturally into pity and contempt, as he turned over the almost endless creations of the last century."³ This passage, in addition to exhibiting the extent to which Anne Elliot's father can smooth over the painful realities of the family present by applying a mythical, lost family past, serves to identify family concerns with social and economic concerns—an identification which is made and sustained throughout Austen's works. The jockeying for economic security through marriage which fills a novel like _Persuasion_ is present to as great an extent in _Sense and Sensibility_. In the brilliant comic chapter in which John Dashwood is gradually persuaded

by his wife to disregard his father's dying request that he support the family, Dashwood concludes finally that "it would be absolutely unnecessary, if not highly indecorous, to do more for the widow and children of his father, than such kind of neighbourly acts as his own wife pointed out." Like the entail of Pride and Prejudice (about which more will be said later), the economic realities which confront the Dashwoods have molded the idea of the family—a family which should be the repository of love and human communion—into a prison of cold political bartering and intimidation.

Fanny Price becomes the "selected child" of the Bertrams because of the financial situation of her natural family; this economic theme is as crucial to an understanding of Mansfield Park as the incest motif sustained by Fanny's relationship to her "brother," Edmund. Fanny's visit back to Portsmouth reveals to her the extent to which she is spiritually cut off from her actual family, and, at the novel's end, when her sister Susan becomes "the stationery


we are made to understand that this process is mythical and eternal, that all heroines in an Austen novel are orphans. The idea of the family as myth—a theme which plays a major role in the works of Dickens and Joyce—is suggested in *Mansfield Park* by Susan's entrance into the Bertram family circle. As noted above, Laing argues that "'family' space and time is akin to mythic space and time, in that it tends to be ordered round a centre and runs in repeating cycles (*PF*, p. 6). Susan's entrance at the novel's end suggests that a family cycle is about to be repeated. Austen (like Dickens and Joyce) seems to be saying that we are all, in one sense or another, orphans, alienated from our true parents by the human imperfections which keep us from realizing our potential for love and understanding.

Thus the novels of Jane Austen are concerned with the human relationships which can be established in the face of the anxieties and pressures of family politics and a materialistic universe. Austen's laboratory for the study of these relationships is often the family. It is in *Pride and Prejudice* and in *Emma* that Austen makes the most extensive

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6 *Mansfield Park*, p. 472.
use of the family as a microcosm and symbol, and it is therefore to these two novels that I shall now turn.

"We None of Us Perform to Strangers": Families and Heroes in *Pride and Prejudice*

Practically everyone who comments on *Pride and Prejudice* (or on any Austen novel, for that matter) feels obligated to say that on first glance the world of the novel appears a totally circumscribed and private one—that rather than standing back to admire the larger world picture of towns, cities, and entire countries, as Thackeray does in a novel like *Vanity Fair*, Austen moves a few steps closer to the canvas and focuses with a magnifying glass on a handful of families living in a small area of the English countryside. These commentators go on to claim that, to change the image, what Austen has called her two inches of ivory is in reality representative of something far greater, like scale miles on a map. But no one has, as far as I know, looked closely at what is one of the key thematic patterns in this novel, and in all of Austen's art: namely, the power of the family and a developing heroine's struggle to escape from its often harmful influences. This emphasis in *Pride and Prejudice* on the importance of the heroine's
relationship to her family lends to the novel an expansiveness capable of transforming the world of the small English town into an ironic universe peopled by women and men intent on seeking both to establish enduring ties to those around them, and to escape from the webs of human contact when such contact threatens their ontological well-being. This study is an investigation of the symbols of the family which Austen chooses to highlight in the novel. Utilizing the theories of Laing and Campbell, I hope to show that both Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy attempt to break away from families which move to restrict their freedom by means of the cruel social and economic realities of a circumscribed society. I shall look at these families and discuss their considerable powers and weaknesses, before detailing the steps on the heroic journey of separation, initiation, and return which Elizabeth and Darcy must make in their attempt at personal freedom and self-autonomy; and conclude by suggesting the existence of what I feel to be an ambiguous treatment of Mrs. Bennet which serves to severely limit the extent of the victory won by the two young lovers.

Families in *Pride and Prejudice* are webs reaching out to touch all the major characters, and the family, as a
social, economic, and psychological structure, is by far the most extensively employed symbol in the novel. Characters act in response to family actions, sins and virtues are to a great extent family sins and virtues, and figures in the novel seek either to escape or embrace the family—in short, a character can be judged on the basis of his or her behavior toward the family. Mrs. Bennet develops a strong dislike for Darcy because he has insulted her daughter at a ball: "'But I can assure you,' she added, 'that Lizzy does not lose much by not suiting his fancy; for he is a most disagreeable, horrid man, not at all worth pleasing.'"7 Mrs. Bennet's opinion of Darcy changes only after she learns that he is soon to become her daughter's husband: "Such a charming man!--so handsome! so tall!—Oh, my dear Lizzy! pray apologise for my having disliked him so much before" (p. 378). Darcy himself, reluctantly willing to accept Elizabeth early in the novel, is fully aware of the obstacles which her family represents to their marriage. He writes to her shortly after his first proposal: "The situation of your mother's family, though objectionable, was

nothing in comparison of that total want of propriety so frequen-
yly, so almost uniformly betrayed by herself, by your three younger sisters, and occasionally even by your father" (p. 198). Darcy is finding it difficult at this point to acknowledge Elizabeth as existing apart from her family--in fact, all characters in *Pride and Prejudice* seem unable to relate to others in a totally personal way. The family is a restraining force exercising control over the members of the society depicted in the novel.

When Wickham relates to Elizabeth his version of the story of Darcy's treatment of him, Elizabeth immediately weighs his accusations on family scales of justice: "To treat in such a manner, the godson, the friend, the favourite of his father!" (p. 80). For Wickham was a favorite of Darcy's father, and the Jacob and Esau motif is at work here--Darcy has stolen away his "brother's" birthright, in a sense. At least it seems so to Elizabeth. Wickham accuses Darcy, as do others, of possessing great pride, but in this case a special kind of pride: "Family pride, and *filial* pride, for he is very proud of what his father was, have done this. Not to appear to disgrace his family, to degenerate from the popular qualities, or lose the influence of the Pemberley House, is a powerful motive. He has also
brotherly pride, which with some brotherly affection, makes him a very kind and careful guardian of his sister; and you will hear him generally cried up as the most attentive and best of brothers" (pp. 81-82). And while Wickham views Darcy within a family context, it is precisely such political relationships within the family which help turn Darcy away from his "brother" for good. For Wickham has attempted to abduct Darcy's sister, Georgiana. It is only when Georgiana thinks of the consequences of such an elopement to her family that she refuses to go with Wickham--Darcy writes that "Georgiana, unable to support the idea of grieving and offending a brother whom she almost looked up to as a father, acknowledged the whole to me" (p. 202). Wickham functions in the novel as a family threatener, a dangerous figure in an Austen novel who comes from within a family and threatens to destroy it--a figure who represents some imperfection within the family itself; Wickham's counterpart in the Bennet family is, of course, Collins, about whom more will be said later.

There are many more examples of action precipitated by family images and definitions: Elizabeth's sister Jane, for example, considers Bingley's proposal as a gift to her family: "Oh! Lizzy, to know that what I have to relate will
give such pleasure to all my dear family!" (p. 347). One obstacle to the marriage of Darcy and Elizabeth is the fact that Elizabeth holds him responsible for persuading Bingley to leave Jane: "Had not my own feelings decided against you, had they been indifferent, or had they even been favourable, do you think that any consideration would tempt me to accept the man, who has been the means of ruining, perhaps for ever, the happiness of a most beloved sister?" (p. 190). There are more examples in the novel of the family's power over the individual than I am able to discuss, or even to list here. The point I wish to make is that the hushed world around Longbourn echoes with the demands of the family. In the language of R. D. Laing, characters like Mrs. Bennet, Darcy and Elizabeth become caught up in the "nexus." They have "interiorized" their families until false images within themselves alter their perceptions of the actual family, and of the world around them. In order to separate herself from the family image, Elizabeth must undergo a heroic journey: she must attempt a separation from family, from Longbourn, if she is to defeat this hostile, fantastic family within her. Before turning to a description of the two young heroes and their struggle to extricate themselves from these family webs I would like to comment on
the two central families, the Bennets and the Darcy family represented by Lady Catherine, in order to suggest the extent of the family powers which Elizabeth and Darcy must resist.

Within the Bennet family, social and economic considerations, and family considerations, are one—we are told early in the novel of a restriction placed on Mr. Bennet's inheritance: "Mr. Bennet's property consisted almost entirely in an estate of two thousand a year, which, unfortunately for his daughters, was entailed in default of heirs male, on a distant relation; and their mother's fortune, though ample for her situation in life, could but ill supply the deficiency of his" (p. 28). The Bennets' only hope was to have a son:

When first Mr. Bennet had married, economy was held to be perfectly useless; for, of course, they were to have a son. This son was to join in cutting off the entail, as soon as he should be of age, and the widow and younger children would by that means be provided for. Five daughters successively entered the world, but yet the son was to come; and Mrs. Bennet, for many years after Lydia's birth, had been certain that he would. This event had at last been despaired of, but it was then too late to be saving (p. 308).

The entail is a powerful symbol in *Pride and Prejudice*, binding together what should be the liberating comic vision
of the loving family with material necessity, and with a
mythical, historical family legacy. The Bennet family must
give itself over to plotting its survival in the face of
this threat from the past, and because of this necessary pre­
occupation with the marriage of survival many opportunities
for actual human relationship have been wiped away. The
entail also serves to introduce the inane Mr. Collins, who,
like Wickham, is a family threatener. Collins attempts to
destroy the best of the Bennet family by carrying off
Elizabeth to Hunsford, just as Wickham tried to carry away
Georgiana Darcy, and succeeded in stealing away a lesser
prize, Lydia. Like the entail, Collins represents all that
is wrong with the Bennet family--he is the external repre­
sentation of the dying relationships within the family.

Mr. and Mrs. Bennet have long ago lost any love, or even
respect, for one another, and their relationship has tightened
around Elizabeth like a noose: "Her father captivated by
youth and beauty, and that appearance of good humour, which
youth and beauty generally give, had married a woman whose
weak understanding and illiberal mind, had very early in
their marriage put an end to all real affection for her.
Respect, esteem, and confidence, had vanished for ever; and
all his views of domestic happiness were overthrown" (p. 236).
Mr. Bennet finds a measure of relief from such disappoint­ment in an extreme cynicism: "To his wife he was very little otherwise indebted, than as her ignorance and folly had contributed to his amusement" (p. 236). But Mrs. Bennet's ignorance and folly are not so amusing to Elizabeth, who finds them constant sources of embarrassment, especially when her mother serves as a painful reminder of the wide social gap separating the Darcy and Bennet families. Mr. Bennet too is often a source of shame and frustration to his daughter: "Elizabeth...had never been blind to the impropriety of her father's behaviour as a husband. She had always seen it with pain; but respecting his abilities, and grateful for his affectionate treatment of herself, she endeavoured to forget what she could not overlook, and to banish from her thoughts that continual breach of conjugal obligation and decorum which, in exposing his wife to the contempt of her own children, was so highly reprehensible" (p. 236). Thus with what appears to be an exceptionally foolish woman for a mother, and a cynical recluse for a father, Elizabeth comes to feel her family to be a prison in which she has been shut up: "she had never felt so strongly as now, the disadvantages which must attend the children of so unsuitable a marriage" (p. 236). Coupled
with the economic realities with which she must deal, this
dark vision of family life to which she is exposed represents
an apparently insurmountable obstacle which Elizabeth must
attempt to transcend in order to escape to a world of real
human values, personal relationships, and love.

The scenes in the novel in which Elizabeth and Jane are
shamed to silence by their mother have as a parallel the
visits which Elizabeth makes to Lady Catherine's residence
at Rosings. Lady Catherine proves a match for Mrs. Bennet
as an obtuse, unsympathetic parent figure threatening the
security and happiness of the young. A condescending gesture
made by Lady Catherine to the unfortunate Charlotte Lucas
Collins is not lost on Darcy, who is in the presence of
Elizabeth: "Mr. Darcy looked a little ashamed of his aunt's
ill breeding, and made no answer" (p. 173). In addition to
appearing foolish in the eyes of her nephew, Lady Catherine
wishes, as does Mrs. Bennet, to find a suitable mate for
her daughter. She wishes the girl to marry Darcy; and during
her visit to Longbourn to warn Elizabeth away from her nephew
she tells her that it is the wish of the families involved
that her daughter and Darcy should be married: "The engage-
ment between them is of a peculiar kind. From their infancy,
they have been intended for each other. It was the favourite
wish of his mother, as well as of her's. While in their cradles, we planned the union: and now, at the moment when the wishes of both sisters would be accomplished, in their marriage, to be prevented by a young woman of inferior birth, of no importance in the world, and wholly unallied to the family!" (p. 355). Just as her mother attempted to pressure Elizabeth into marrying someone like Mr. Collins for the good of the family, Lady Catherine wishes Darcy to consider any possible union in light of the benefit to his relations. And here too the ideal of the family is bound up in both material and historical considerations, rather than in the relationships established by the persons most directly involved. Lady Catherine serves as Darcy's parent figure, since, as she so ominously intones, "I am almost the nearest relation he has in the world, and am entitled to know all his dearest concerns" (p. 354). The right to direct Darcy's life, claimed by Lady Catherine in the name of the family, is a right Darcy must retake if he is to accomplish a lasting union with Elizabeth. When his aunt announces with majestic seriousness that "from his earliest hours he was destined for his cousin" (p. 355) we realize the full extent of the powers which a family can exercise over its members in the world of *Pride and Prejudice*. The struggle
with the mythical, internalized family monster which Darcy and Elizabeth must undertake will require a great effort then. I should now like to attempt an analysis of this struggle, especially in the case of Elizabeth, in order to assess the nature of the final union of the two lovers: to try to discover the extent of the victory won by Elizabeth and Darcy over the existing order.

Elizabeth's movement in the course of the novel is circular: she begins in the material, maternal sphere of balls and suitors during which she meets with a series of potential husbands, Darcy, Wickham, and Collins. But a number of psychological shocks, coupled with the resistance she meets within her own family, soon send her on two journeys, one under the care of the kindly Gardiners, who serve Elizabeth as surrogate parents—as wise, fairy godparents, in a sense—during her travels. These trips, the first to Hunsford and Rosings, and the second to the magic woods of Pemberley, represent the movement inward which Elizabeth undertakes; a movement from an embodied, physical existence to a reclusive, spiritual one, and back again. In a symbolic sense Elizabeth's journey of separation, initiation, and return takes her from her mother's world to
her father's, until she is finally permitted to escape from the negative influence of both parents by synthesizing and balancing the physical with the spiritual. Her final victory over family and self enables her to win the love of Darcy (no mean prize in Austen's world), but the victory cannot last, and Elizabeth's circular travels end for the most part where they began, within the established social order.

We have discussed above the shame which Elizabeth feels when she and her mother are before others. Mrs. Bennet's actions in the presence of Darcy, Bingley and his two sisters, and even Collins, along with the biting sarcastic wit Mr. Bennet directs at his wife and family, prove a great trial to Elizabeth. Her mother stands for the materialism (and, with Lydia, the blind sexuality) of the society of the novel, her father for the life-denying, dark spirituality which denies the material. We are given an indication toward the close of the novel of the full force of the collusive, family-generated pain directed at Elizabeth: "At that instant she felt, that years of happiness could not make Jane or herself amends, for moments of such painful confusion" (p. 337). Much earlier, during Bingley's ball at
Netherfield, Elizabeth had been made to feel great embar­
rassment before Darcy, Bingley, and the entire neighborhood:  
"To Elizabeth it appeared, that had her family made an agree­
ment to expose themselves as much as they could during the 
evening, it would have been impossible for them to play 
their parts with more spirit, or finer success" (pp. 101-102). 
In light of such powerful public displays, Elizabeth cannot 
help feeling trapped; she appears as a beautiful flower in 
a bad painting, influenced by the negative aspect of all 
that is around her. 

In addition to so much family shame, Elizabeth is 
forced to undergo several shocks which alert her to her real 
predicament and drive her to separate herself from it: 
Darcy insults Elizabeth at a ball; her sister Jane has been 
made unhappy by Bingley's hasty flight to London; Elizabeth 
rejects Collins, and loses her best friend, Charlotte Lucas, 
to him; Wickham, in whom Elizabeth has grown interested, 
forsakes her for Miss King, a plain girl "with only ten 
thousand pounds" (p. 153). The result of this constant 
buffeting is to force her away from contact with her real 
gamily, and from contact with any human beings other than 
er "foster-parents," the Gardiners. When Elizabeth rejects 
Collins, her mother claims that if she does not change her
mind and accept his proposal, she "will never see her again" (p. 111). At this point Mr. Bennet intervenes: "An unhappy alternative is before you, Elizabeth. From this day you must be a stranger to one of your parents.--Your mother will never see you again if you do not marry Mr. Collins, and I will never see you again if you do" (p. 112). As with everything Mr. Bennet says, a certain amount of desperate playfulness accompanies this statement. But it nevertheless points to the very real predicament in which Elizabeth finds herself. She is placed in a society and in a family from which there seems no course of action which will save her. She must marry, or she will starve; but she cannot marry Collins; she must seek release from her family, but can see no way out of the web. This double-bind position remains in effect until Elizabeth seems to reject all human company. She states that "there are few people whom I really love, and still fewer of whom I think well. The more I see of the world, the more am I dissatisfied with it" (p. 135). And she later tells Mrs. Gardiner, only half-playfully, that "stupid men are the only ones worth knowing, after all" (p. 154). When her aunt offers her a trip to the Lakes, Elizabeth declares that the trip will allow her to avoid human contact and seek a consolation in inanimate nature:
"Adieu to disappointment and spleen. What are men to rocks and mountains? Oh! what hours of transport we shall spend!" (p. 154). Although the full force of these remarks is blunted somewhat by her capacity for self-parody, such statements do seem to indicate that Elizabeth is becoming, in a sense, more like her father, cynical, reclusive and bitter. She has turned away from her mother after rejecting Collins to seek aid in the world of her father. But Mr. Bennet's world is too dark, his values too negative, for Elizabeth to be able to accept them for any length of time. Elizabeth undergoes an almost ritual "adoption" by the Gardiners, and is able to break out of the family circle through their aid.

The Gardiners seem to Elizabeth to be the only proper companions for such a journey. They appeal to her as perfect travelling mates for the trip: "One enjoyment was certain—that of suitableness as companions; a suitableness which comprehended health and temper to bear inconveniences—cheerfulness to enhance every pleasure—and affection and intelligence, which might supply it among themselves if there were disappointments abroad" (p. 239-40). In short, the Gardiners are everything Elizabeth's real parents are not; and they soon take on the role of parents to her during
the trip into Derbyshire. For the original plans have been changed, and Elizabeth will now be permitted to see Pemberley, the ancestral home of the Darcy family. This fortuitous change of plans, coupled with Darcy's equally fortuitous presence at Pemberley, allows the two lovers a chance to be together without the harmful interference of Elizabeth's family.

After Elizabeth has learned the true story of Darcy's treatment of Wickham, another of those severe mental shocks, she states "till this moment, I never knew myself" (p. 208). She is now prepared to journey to Pemberley, to respond to it as symbolic of the peaceful synthesis of the best of art and nature:

It was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills;--and in front, a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration; and at that moment she felt, that to be mistress of Pemberley might be something! (p. 248).

Elizabeth's vow to seek "transport" in the beauty of nature is now fulfilled, but the nature has in this case been enhanced by human effort and design. Pemberley functions
here as a symbol of ideal family relationships. Elizabeth has learned to balance the material with the spiritual, self with family, the things of value in her mother's world with what is positive and benign in her father's.

Once she is inside the house, the education of the heroine continues. Elizabeth learns from the talkative housekeeper that Darcy is an admirable family man, something which Wickham's description of him had obscured: "Whatever can give his sister any pleasure, is sure to be done in a moment. There is nothing he would not do for her" (p. 250). Pemberley's setting, and its master, are suddenly pleasing to Elizabeth. And when Darcy comes upon the party unexpectedly, Elizabeth is amazed at the change in his behavior. In front of her parents and family he had been excessively proud and inarticulate, but here in his own element Darcy is different: "Never in her life had she seen his manners so little dignified, never had he spoken with such gentleness as on this unexpected meeting" (p. 252). Darcy accepts Elizabeth's new parents, the Gardiners, in a way that he could never accept Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. His manner toward the Gardiners causes Elizabeth to be astonished once again, for Darcy was "now seeking the acquaintance of some of those very people, against whom his pride had revolted" (pp. 254-5),
and Elizabeth, for the first time in the novel, is permitted to feel comfortable with her relations: "Elizabeth could not but be pleased, could not but triumph. It was consoling, that he should know she had some relations for whom there was no need to blush" (p. 255). This scene represents Elizabeth's triumph over her family, and at the same time the beginning of her return to her former life: she has left the world of the body, of men and family, and journeyed deep into her own soul, but she is now to return with a new knowledge, the understanding and love of Darcy.

Within the woods of Pemberley, in "a spot less adorned" (p. 253) than any she had seen before, a place which Elizabeth and her guides can reach only by a significant water crossing, Elizabeth is at last allowed to escape the prison in which she had been placed. The journey away from mother and marriage, through the father and inanimate nature (or at least a flight from the world of men), and back again, has enabled her to discover truths about herself. But the novel does not end with the union of the two lovers in

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While the implications here are intriguing with respect to the Jungian "night-sea" journey, the point I wish to make is that Elizabeth and Darcy meet and come together in a place which is somehow apart from the world in which they live--a magical Forest of Arden, in a sense.
the surroundings of Pemberley. A final family crisis, the elopement of Lydia and Wickham, jolts Elizabeth and Darcy back into the world of men, and families. They are, however, spiritually united at this point, and with Darcy's help Elizabeth is able to overcome this final obstacle. Once Darcy's money has recovered Wickham and his bride, and once Lady Catherine (representing the negative aspects of Darcy's family) has been defeated by the power of Elizabeth's wit and Darcy's resolve, the cycle is complete. Elizabeth's travels from an embodied to a spiritual world, and back again, have apparently released her from the powerful web of the Bennet family.

One final point needs clarification here, however. The extent to which we can say that Elizabeth's and Darcy's victory is a lasting one influences our reading of the novel. It is my belief that Austen's treatment of Mrs. Bennet contains certain ambiguities which serve to limit the lovers' victory. Critics have been practically unanimous in their condemnation of Elizabeth's mother. Dorothy Van Ghent calls her "imbecilic,\(^9\) and Marvin Mudrick argues that

"she fears one thing finally: her own physical discomfort." I would like to suggest that Mrs. Bennet is too complex a character to be disposed of in such a manner.

I have argued that Collins and Wickham are presented in the role of family threateners, that they function as embodiments of the negative forces which are generated by the shortcomings of the family. And I have looked at other characters in light of their roles within the family, assessing their influence on the central characters through their roles within the family drama. Mrs. Bennet, when viewed outside the family circle, is a woman, as Austen describes her, "of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news" (p. 5). We are told at the novel's end that Mrs. Bennet "still was occasionally nervous and invariably silly" (p. 385).

But Mrs. Bennet is the embodiment of economic, family necessity in the novel. As much as Charlotte Lucas, she represents the power of material realities in operation

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around Longbourn. While her husband often locks his library
doors on the world's folly, Mrs. Bennet is very much sub-
merged in it. She is, admittedly, the representative of the
material family monster against which Elizabeth must struggle,
and as such she is a real threat to her daughter's happiness.
But she is also the extreme ego-renouncer, one who is totally
subsumed in the family, and as such, the almost pious attacks
made upon her by the narrator in such passages as I have
just cited, and the harsh criticism directed at her by her
husband, create a situation which is somehow reminiscent of
the Box Hill scene in *Emma*. Just as the reader's sympathy
for Miss Bates is aroused by Emma's attack on her, Mrs.
Bennet's treatment at the hands of her husband, Darcy, and
even the narrator, leaves us with the feeling that her only
sins are a certain stupidity, social clumsiness, and a
total submersion in the nexus, and that, in the final anal-
ysis she does not deserve such censure. If we can admit
that Mrs. Bennet is fighting for the survival of her five
daughters, then Elizabeth's victory over her seems muted,
and rather hollow.

Mrs. Bennet tells her husband early in the novel that
"when a woman has five grown up daughters, she ought to give
over thinking of her own beauty" (p. 4). She claims that
for her daughters she would "do anything" (p. 8). And when she learns that Bingley, a financially secure bachelor, is settling at Netherfield she vows that "if I can but see one of my daughters happily settled at Netherfield, and all the others equally well married, I shall have nothing to wish for" (p. 9). The submerging of her own ego into the family gives her a dignity which is not erased, I believe, by our exasperation over her social mistakes and obtuseness. Mrs. Bennet defends her family when it is insulted or threatened: she tells Mr. Bennet that, if the entail did not exist, "I should not mind any thing at all" (p. 130). Mrs. Bennet's life is lived totally within the family circle. After Lydia's elopement jeopardizes her hope of marrying her daughters, and after the Gardiners have taken on for awhile the role of Elizabeth's parents, she is defeated--she undergoes a period of inaction, a ritual death of sorts. Jane writes to Elizabeth that "my poor mother is really ill and keeps her room" (p. 275). Once Lydia and Wickham are recovered, however, and the family reputation saved, we are told that Mrs. Bennet "again took her seat at

11 Of course, in another sense, Mrs. Bennet is not an egoless figure. To the extent that she is the family, she is all ego.
the head of her table" (p. 310). And when we learn at the novel's end that Mrs. Bennet remains firmly entrenched in her household in spite of the union of Darcy and Elizabeth, Bingley and Jane, and Lydia and Wickham, Mrs. Bennet's victory seems complete. She has fought to see her daughters married in order that the family might remain intact, and she has succeeded.

I am not of course arguing that Mrs. Bennet should be considered the hero of *Pride and Prejudice*, or even that we should in any way underestimate the threat she poses to Elizabeth's development. She is, in many respects, the "magna mater" described by Jung. But it is apparent that Austen wishes us to see the daughter's triumph in its proper perspective. The fact that Elizabeth's mother remains unchanged at the novel's end, and that Lady Catherine too exists close by at Rosings to exert her own influence over the united couple, suggests that the young can never be totally free from the influence of the old--that family webs may loosen a bit, allowing a person a certain measure of autonomy, but that the web itself survives. In the world of this novel, the "rites of passage" which the young heroine undergoes, rites which reach a climax in Pemberley's woods, enable Elizabeth to gain only a measure of distance
from her family. Family remains to threaten self, but self has been strengthened (and family weakened, perhaps) as a result of the heroic struggle. We shall have occasion to examine further the eternal hold which a family can exercise over a character in Austen's world in the next novel to be discussed, Emma.

"Such a Development of Self, Such a Burst of Threatening Evil": Human Relationship in Emma

Jane Austen often celebrates in her novels the personal victories which can be won within the existing social order. Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy, as we have seen, are not forced to emigrate to an Algeria (Lady Catherine and the Bennet family are too near Pemberley for it to be Algeria), are not driven to anything like a belief in the efficacy of violence, because they can seek a refuge from family in marriage, in the establishment of a new family structure. This is not to imply that Austen's world is limited to engagement rings and baby showers; marriage is the metaphor, and rational action and perseverance are the values which impart a universality to it. Darcy and his bride have not really escaped the absurd materialism and cant represented by Lady Catherine and Collins, they have turned back the
attack of this hostile system by forming an alliance against it. Through the trials of their inner journey, Darcy and Elizabeth move toward each other, and their meeting at the end of the novel is their victory. Admittedly, this view of personal fulfillment dims perceptibly in the cruel and insensitive society portrayed in *Persuasion*; but related to the education motif in the earlier novels is the view that the self can find fulfillment in society as it exists. Compromise is the key to this fulfillment—the exalted, uncompromised ego never appears as the central character in an Austen novel (with the possible exception of Anne Elliot). The novel *Emma* is a prime example of personal victory tempered and defined by one's duty toward the family, a family which symbolizes existing social norms.

Related to the education motif in *Emma* is the theme of duty—the statement that a person should define the limits of his own personality, the limits of self, in terms of his usefulness to other (and to the family). The theme of duty as usefulness is conveyed in the novel both directly (by explicit references) and indirectly (by the fragmented family units in the society of Highbury). We shall view Emma Woodhouse, as we did Elizabeth Bennet, in a family context, and assess her attempts to extricate herself from the
powerful family ties which Austen weaves around her major characters.

The novel begins with a portrait of self, a sketch of Emma's personality. We are told that "the real evils indeed of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself."\(^{12}\) Emma is imperfect, in that she represents at the novel's beginning the uncompromised ego; she is driven by what Mudrick terms "a wish to dominate."\(^{13}\) Or as Laing would have it, Emma is herself in the position of dominating "other," sinning by her repeated attempts to manipulate impressionable "selves." Her education--the process of defining her own self in terms of her usefulness to others--will finally allow her fulfillment in her relationship with Knightley. Emma is a novel which describes this journey to self-realization; the central value in the novel is duty (more specifically, the self's duty to the other), and a character sins either by ignoring his duty or by failing in it. Emma takes pride in her ability to help Mr. Woodhouse. She can bring together Mrs. Bates and her


\(^{13}\) Mudrick, p. 182.
daughter, and Mrs. Goddard, to dine with her father, and "happy was she, for her father's sake, in the power" (p. 22). We are told further that "she was delighted to see her father look comfortable, and very much pleased with herself for contriving things so well" (p. 22). Emma can make her father comfortable--she can be useful to him--because she recognizes her duty in this case. But more importantly, Emma is an artist. Like Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Ramsay (and even Clarissa Dalloway), she prides herself on her ability to arrange, and re-arrange, experience, but like Lily Briscoe, Emma is a flawed artist--her art lacks perfection because of a corresponding imperfection within the artist herself. Although Emma has attempted portraits, "not one of them had ever been finished" (p. 44). Her sketch of John Knightley is "only too handsome--too flattering" (p. 46). When Emma sketches her friend Harriet Smith she intends to "throw in a little improvement to the figure, to give a little more height, and considerably more elegance" (p. 47), and Knightley, whose judgment seems to coincide in most cases with Austen's herself, says to Emma concerning the sketch of Harriet: "You have made her too tall, Emma" (p. 48). Emma's powerful ego, her wish to transform experience into something else, is a potentially tragic flaw which must be
corrected if she is to be worthy of a union with Knightley. The remainder of the novel describes her gradual realization of her duty to self and to family—her ego is beaten down by a series of severe mental shocks until she has attained the vision of true moral responsibility toward society and until her abilities as an artist (and Austen wishes us to see Emma as a false artist at the novel's outset) are perfected.

When Emma meets Harriet Smith, she is despondent over the loss of Mrs. Weston (Miss Taylor), whose judgment she values, and with whom she has been very intimate. She sees in Harriet not a friend to whom she can bare her soul, but someone who needs her, someone to whom she can be useful: "Mrs. Weston was the object of a regard, which had its basis in gratitude and esteem. Harriet would be loved as one to whom she could be useful. For Mrs. Weston there was nothing to be done; for Harriet everything" (pp. 26-27). Emma's relationship to Harriet is defined in terms of duty and usefulness. In advising the girl against accepting Robert Martin's proposal, Emma tells her that "I thought it my duty as a friend, and older than yourself, to say thus much to you. But do not imagine that I want to influence you" (p. 52). Emma, of course, wishes very much to influence
Harriet--her ego demands that Harriet obey her. Knightley tells Emma that she appears to have improved Harriet, and Emma answers: "Thank you. I should be mortified indeed if I did not believe I had been of some use" (p. 58). Later, when Emma wishes Harriet to forget Mr. Elton, having failed to match him with the girl and creating for herself some painful experiences she would rather forget, she appeals to Harriet's sense of duty: "because for your own sake rather, I would wish it to be done, for the sake of what is more important than my comfort, a habit of self-command in you, a consideration of what is your duty" (p. 268). And Emma feels it her "superior duty" (p. 403) to inform Harriet of Frank Churchill's engagement to Jane Fairfax.

Harriet plays the role of victim to Emma's dominating ego, of child to Emma's mothering. She has little ego herself and appeals to Emma for just that reason. While Emma might view her relationship with Harriet in terms of utility ("As a walking companion, Emma had very early foreseen how useful she might find her," p. 26), it is Harriet's freedom from any desire, or ability, to manipulate which appeals to the artist in Emma: "Harriet certainly was not clever, but she had a sweet, docile, grateful disposition; was totally free from conceit; and only desiring to be
guided by any one she looked up to" (p. 26). Harriet looks to Emma for what Laing terms "confirmation," for a reinforcement of her very existence—she is a tabula rasa, or, in another sense, she is the empty canvas upon which Emma will create.

Emma and Harriet meet when Harriet is contemplating her own fulfillment—she is in love with Robert Martin, a farmer whose social standing Emma deplores. It is unthinkable to Emma that Martin should marry Harriet, for the Martins are of a class toward which a person of Emma's social position—and Emma's ego—cannot be useful. Emma tells Harriet that "the yeomanry are precisely the order of people with whom I feel I can have nothing to do. A degree or two lower, and a creditable appearance might interest me; I might hope to be useful to their families in some way or other. But a farmer can need none of my help, and is therefore in one sense as much above my notice as in every other he is below it" (p. 29). This is a false sense of duty, and a false view of self, which Emma exhibits, and Harriet and Martin are made to suffer as a result of such false distinctions of social class and Christian charity. Emma's idea of artistic power and responsibility—her wish to totally dominate and to recreate her child—can be a dangerous
impulse which threatens the malleable young girl.

Emma elsewhere exhibits this false sense of duty. In that curious passage in which she and Harriet visit a poor family—a passage which seems a denial of so many romantic ideals—Emma tells her friend: "I hope it may be allowed that if compassion has produced exertion and relief to the sufferers, it has done all that is truly important. If we feel for the wretched, enough to do all we can for them, the rest is empty sympathy, only distressing to ourselves" (p. 87). This reduction of Christian charity to such concerns as bare utility and the comfort of the giver points again to the extent to which Emma is deluded. The "rest" need not be "empty sympathy," and Emma will show at the novel's end that she realizes that this half-hearted attempt to help others is just that. When Emma attempts to match Harriet with Elton, her failure causes her friend much suffering; it would appear that Emma's incomplete commitment to the poor could conceivably cause them much pain as well. Emma will learn that duty is never-ending—that it does not cease when one walks from the door of suffering and encounters a Mr. Elton.

Since being truly useful to others is the primary virtue of the novel, a character can "sin" whenever the virtue is
violated. I have already indicated that Emma sins against Harriet when she attempts to impose her will on the girl. And after Emma has convinced Harriet that she must forget Martin, after she attempts and fails to match Harriet with Elton and even Frank Churchill (although, admittedly, she plays a lesser role here), and after she discovers that Harriet mistakenly entertains hopes of marrying Knightley, after so many mental shocks the realization comes to her that she has not been useful to Harriet at all: "Poor Harriet! to be a second time the dupe of her misconceptions and flattery. Mr. Knightley had spoken prophetically, when he once said, 'Emma, you have been no friend to Harriet Smith.'--She was afraid she had done her nothing but disservice" (p. 402). The heroine's movement is from delusion, a desire to manipulate the other in personal political confrontation, to initiation and enlightenment, a recognition of this desire and its correction to usefulness and compassion. Emma becomes morally responsible, Austen seems to say, while she repudiates the artistic voice within.14

14 But again, the artistic voice which Emma comes to repudiate is a false, flawed voice. She destroys the false artist within her when she recognizes her responsibility toward the other.
Other characters in the novel sin against the virtue of usefulness. At one point Knightley tells Emma: "There is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do, if he chooses, and that is, his duty; not by manoeuvring and finessing, but by vigour and resolution. It is Frank Churchill's duty to pay this attention to his father" (p. 146). Frank Churchill hesitates in visiting Mr. Weston because of his misconceptions of duty toward his family. He is torn between his real father and his foster-parents, and between them and Jane Fairfax, to whom he is engaged. Indeed, Frank Churchill's sin is magnified by his refusal to announce the engagement openly. Because he cannot decide precisely where duty lies—whether it be to Mr. Weston, his foster-parents, or Jane—he is forced to abandon openness and honesty and ends up being useful to no one. He has defined duty to the other as "knowing how to please" (p. 191) in a facile and automatic way, a definition as limited as Emma's view of duty as the intimidation of the other.

This is the second time we have seen Knightley speaking on the true nature of duty. He represents in the novel the moral voice; with the exception of the few times in which his judgment is influenced by love of Emma and jealousy of Frank Churchill, he is always right, and he can see short-
comings in other characters--especially in Emma. He recognizes from the beginning the nature of moral responsibility. He dances with Harriet at the ball, exhibiting the proper synthesis of utility and compassion; his kindness toward Mrs. Bates and her daughter sets an example for Emma to follow. And there are indications that Emma is beginning to recognize his example. At one point, upon hearing that Mr. Knightley had loaned his carriage to Miss Bates and Jane, Emma tells Mr. Weston: "I know no man more likely than Mr. Knightley to do the sort of thing--to do any thing really good-natured, useful, considerate, or benevolent" (p. 223). It is Knightley who scolds Emma for her treatment of Miss Bates at Box Hill, and who, as we have seen, recognizes Emma's hold over Harriet as something harmful. Knightley embodies the correct sense of duty, the compassion and openness, which Emma lacks, but toward which she moves. Emma's journey inward toward self-correction and perfection--and toward her father--is represented in the novel by her gradual movement toward Knightley

In addition to the many direct references in the novel to usefulness and duty, there is a more subtle way in which the theme of a character's responsibility to the other and
to the family is reinforced throughout. No one has, to my
knowledge, ever commented on the fragmented family units in
the novel.\footnote{R. W. Chapman notes that "the first fact that strikes
me is that in only two of the six novels is the central
family furnished with two living parents," \textit{Jane Austen:
186. But this is, obviously, a general statement about all
the novels, and it comes in Chapman's curious essay on
"heredity" in Austen--an essay in which he makes the statement
that "I am no biologist, and not much of a novel-reader."} When the story begins, all major characters
are a part of a family unit which has broken apart or is
otherwise incomplete. Emma lives alone with her father;
Miss Bates cares for her aged mother; Mr. Weston has just
married a second time--but he misses his son Frank; Mr.
Knightley is a bachelor; Harriet Smith was raised by Mrs.
Goddard (who is a widow) in a boarding school; and Elton
is unmarried and in search of a wife; there is no mention
in the novel of Robert Martin's father being alive; and
Jane Fairfax is an orphan. In fact, the only complete family
in the novel is the London family of Mr. John Knightley
and Isabella and their children. Emma's sister and
Knightley's brother represent the finished state, an island
of stasis in a world of flux. When Martin travels to London
to see Harriet, who is staying with the John Knightleys, his

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that "I am no biologist, and not much of a novel-reader."}
union with Harriet is finally allowed to be completed. And after Emma discovers the social position of Harriet's father, she has no objection to the match: "She had no doubt of Harriet's happiness with any good tempered man; but with him, and in the home he offered, there would be the hope of more, of security, stability, and improvement. She would be placed in the midst of those who loved her, and who had better sense than herself; retired enough for safety, and occupied enough for cheerfulness" (p. 482). Harriet could not hope to find such security and safety as an orphan: Martin offers her the love of a family and protection from the coercion of someone like Emma. And when Knightley visits his brother's family in London, he too decides finally that it is time to choose a wife: "There was too much domestic happiness in his brother's house; woman wore too amiable a form in it; Isabella was too much like Emma" (pp. 432-33). The John Knightleys represent, as I have said, a finished state, situated as they are "in the midst of every dearest connection" (p. 293). They embody the comic values of human communion and accommodation and serve as a benign family image in a novel which emphasizes the broken, disrupted nexus. If they have certain weaknesses taken singly--John Knightley is dour and iras-
cible, Isabella dull and foolish—when viewed as a warm and loving family they represent an alliance against the cold and bitter society of the novel.

The fragmented families in *Emma* give the characters the constant opportunity to be useful to one another, making everyone his brother's keeper, but not necessarily, as in the case of Emma and Harriet, his brother's helper. Emma spends much of her time caring for an invalid father and an orphan girl; Miss Bates cares for her mother; Knightley makes himself useful to Mrs. Bates, Miss Bates, and to Jane, to Mr. Woodhouse and Emma, and even to Mrs. Elton. Frank Churchill's sense of duty, as I have argued above, must be directed toward many people—his gift of the pianoforte to Jane, his visits to Mr. Weston, his desire to please his foster-parents, and even such a seemingly insignificant thing as his fixing Mrs. Bates' spectacles: "You find me trying to be useful" (p. 240), he tells Emma—all these actions mirror Frank Churchill's sense of moral responsibility. In fact, one of the lessons of *Emma* (and I think we can speak of "lessons" in an Austen novel) seems to be that duty is never-ending. This is especially true with respect to the family-focused ending of the novel and to the much-discussed Box Hill scene.
When Emma insults Miss Bates during the picnic at Box Hill, why is it that the reader's sense of justice is so offended? Miss Bates' seemingly invincible shield of garrulity extends over the entire novel, and she appears so insensitive to the delicate and subtle relationships which exist around Highbury, that we should be relieved, one would think, to see her finally defeated. But the fact is that Miss Bates is an extremely likeable—and extremely moral—character. In one important way she is like Mrs. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice:* she represents the totally submerged ego, living for and through—and in—those she loves. When she is first introduced, we are told that "she had never boasted either beauty or cleverness. Her youth had passed without distinction, and her middle of life was devoted to the care of a failing mother, and the endeavour to make a small income go as far as possible" (p. 21). Mr. Weston describes her as "a standing lesson of how to be happy" (p. 255). Miss Bates is one who understands the true nature of duty (as does Knightley), and she succeeds in being useful. Like Emma, she cares for a helpless parent; but unlike the protagonist she never oversteps the bounds of her own abilities. Emma attempts to assert her ego over Harriet; Miss Bates attempts no such thing. Thus,
when Emma insults her, we recognize at once that she is in
the wrong. As Frank Churchill says of Miss Bates: "She is
a woman that one may, that one must laught at; but that one
would not wish to slight" (p. 260). When Emma visits Miss
Bates and her mother after Jane's engagement becomes public,
she is made to see the value of the unexalted ego in terms
of compassion and love: "They were both so truly respectable
in their happiness, so disinterested in every sensation;
thought so much of Jane; so much of everybody, and so little
of themselves, that every kindly feeling was at work for
them" (p. 418). When Emma lashes out at Miss Bates she
exhibits the dangerous ego which is so harmful, in a less
overt way, to Harriet.

With respect to the ending, Emma gains a husband, and a
personal fulfillment, but she has not escaped her respon-
sibility as a daughter. Elizabeth Bennet was driven from
her home by demands made upon her by the family nexus, by the
horror of a hostile environment. Emma, on the other hand,
is placed in a checkmated position by the lack of a com-
pleted family unit--she is obliged to care for her father
because there is no one else to do so. Mr. Woodhouse's
lack of self-sufficiency is an albatross hanging around
Emma's neck, hindering her attempts at the attainment of
love. We are told that "she dearly loved her father, but he
was no companion for her. He could not meet her in conver-
sation, rational or playful" (p. 7). Mr. Woodhouse "was a
nervous man, easily depressed; fond of every body that he
was used to" (p. 7). He relies on Emma--makes demands upon
her--and embodies in the novel yet another example of the
exalted self: Mr. Woodhouse is, like Emma, all ego. He is
centered only with his own comfort, wishes no one to marry
if it will involve a change in his own life, and seems
entirely without joy. ("The sooner every party breaks up,
the better," p. 210.) As the senex in this comedy, the
old man standing in the way of the young--Mr. Woodhouse
blocks his daughter's marriage, and therefore her happiness.

As we saw above, Joseph Campbell speaks of"the various
life roles" (Hero, p. 320) acted out by a hero, while Laing
claims that the self often is forced by a powerful "other"
to wear a "mask" or a "false self" which consists of an
'amalgam of various part-selves, none of which is so fully
developed as to have a comprehensive 'personality' of its
own" (DS, p. 73). Emma's heroic education involves a change
in family roles. She must forsake the role of mother (to
her "children," her father and Harriet) in order to become a
wife (to Knightley). Miss Taylor had been Emma's governess,
and she tells Knightley that “I consider myself, you know, as having somewhat of the privilege of speech that Emma's mother might have had” (p. 40). When Emma loses the maternal love of Miss Taylor, and when she realizes that she is trapped into a mother's role in relation to her helpless father (just as Agnes Wickfield is pulled apart by the roles of daughter and mother in David Copperfield), she becomes caught between love—the feeling that she must protect her father—and a suffocating boredom. And just as Mr. Woodhouse's ego requires Emma's submission, Emma begins to manipulate Harriet's own self, out of revenge, in a way. Emma refuses to entertain thoughts of marriage for herself: “Marriage, in fact, would not do for her. It would be incompatible with what she owed to her father, and with what she felt for him. Nothing should separate her from her father. She would not marry, even if she were asked by Mr. Knightley” (p. 416). Thus again, a mistaken notion of duty, in this case an exaggerated sense of what she owes to her father, blocks Emma's own fulfillment, preventing her from considering marriage. Again, a false perception of family has influenced self.
As we have seen, Emma experiences a series of mental shocks, her failures to manipulate experience in the way that she intends, and she gradually loses the powers of ego which threaten Harriet. After she has been educated by failures with Harriet, by the happenings at Box Hill, and by such unexpected events as the announcement of Jane Fairfax's secret engagement, Emma is rewarded with Knightley's proposal, and his love, and her world is transformed: "They sat down to tea--the same party round the same table--how often it had been collected!--and how often had her eyes fallen on the same shrubs in the lawn, and observed the same beautiful effect of the western sun!--But never in such a state of spirits, never in anything like it; and it was with difficulty that she could summon enough of her usual self to be the attentive lady of the house, or even the attentive daughter" (p. 434). Thus Emma discovers "Pemberley" in her own back yard. But she does "summon

16 A Walton Litz describes this education as "a constant process of emotional miscalculations and rational corrections," Jane Austen: A Study of Her Artistic Development (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 134. While I would agree in principle with this argument, I feel Litz is incorrect in his insistence on the "rational" nature of Emma's "corrections." Surely something deeper, in a particularly psychological sense, is at work here--something deeper than a mere movement from irrationality to reason.
enough of her usual self" to remain the "attentive daughter."
The fact that Knightley moves to Hartfield at the novel's end suggests that Emma has finally learned to restrict herself to the existing world--she has learned to compromise, combining the roles of mother and bride. Her attempts to exercise her will by pairing off Harriet with men above her in social standing can be seen as attempts at revolution. But when she finally does achieve her personal victory, it is within Hartfield, and within her own family. She has learned that her duty lies in being truly useful to people, rather than asserting her will over them, and that duty to the other is never-ending.

*Emma* is, then, a novel about the inability of the uncompromised ego to function in a chartered society. The new society formed at the novel's end is very much like the old while the new, comic family contains the patriarch of the old. Although the major characters have been disposed of and have accomplished an expansion and completion of their previously unfinished states, Mr. Woodhouse remains to share Knightley with Emma, Miss Bates remains to try everyone's patience, and Mrs. Bates still lives, needing care. Society has not been destroyed, or even changed significantly, it has been accommodated; in a sense, an alliance
against it has been formed by Emma and Knightley, Jane and
Frank Churchill. Duty toward oneself has been sacrificed
to duty toward family. The union of Knightley and Emma has
created a selflessness and, at the same time, a completion
of self, which Austen seems to say is the only answer to an
unresponsive system. As in Pride and Prejudice and in all
of Austen, self has reached an understanding with family;
it has not succeeded in breaking free from family demands
and necessities. Emma remains in a family-centered dilemma;
as was the case with Elizabeth Bennet, however, she has
strengthened her position by joining forces with another
self. Austen, like Dickens and Joyce, offers love as a
weapon, as a means of mitigating the painful, contradictory
forces of the "double-bind" family prison.
CHAPTER THREE

"THE LITTLE IMAGE BY INHERITANCE": THE NOVELS OF CHARLES DICKENS

Introduction

One of the least controversial statements a reader of Dickens could make is that the novels are concerned to a considerable degree with the human relationships existing within the family nexus. And many critics have seen in the victimized, alienated children who people the novels the key to an understanding of Dickens' art. George Orwell speaks of Dickens' "preoccupation with childhood," claiming that "no novelist has shown the same power of entering into the child's point of view."¹ J. B. Priestley argues that "in Dickens's creative genius there is a direct access to childhood."² And a critic as sensitive about Dickens as Dorothy Van Ghent sees the parent-child relationship lying


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at the thematic center of his work: "Two kinds of crime form Dickens' two chief themes, the crime of parent against child, and the calculated social crime. They are formally analogous, their form being the treatment of persons as things; but they are also inherent in each other, whether the private will of the parent is to be considered as depraved by the operation of a public institution, or the social institution is to be considered as a bold concert of the depravities of individual 'fathers.'"\(^3\) We have seen this to be true in the novels of Jane Austen (and I hope to illustrate it in the works of James Joyce): Dickens' family politics are themselves major thematic elements in each of his novels, but they serve also as metaphorical statements about the total moral environments of these novels. By analyzing the politics of some of the families in Dickens' works, applying the theories of Laing and Campbell to the fictional hero's struggle with family, I hope to be able to enter into the thematic and symbolic world of a complex novelist. Novels of individuation like David Copperfield and Dombey and Son are to a large extent built around

family symbols. Like Austen and Joyce, Dickens portrays the hero's attempts to break free from a negative, destructive family.

This statement concerning the destructive characteristics of the families in his novels leads us to a major "problem" in Dickens, one which critics have been puzzling over for years. Are we to take Dickens' portrayal of "goodness" at face value? Agnes Wickfield, Esther Summerson, Amy Dorrit, and others, are presented as embodiments of an unbending, pristine spirituality. With respect to certain of Dickens' families, such relationships as that established between Tom Pinch and his sister, and Emily and Mr. Peggotty are portrayed as ideal family bonds. In the course of this chapter I shall suggest that when we view such an attachment as Mr. Peggotty has for his foster-child in the context of the self-against-nexus relationship spoken of by Laing, the benign family image becomes something less than ideal. In the same way, in light of the hero's position with respect to the family and the hero's need to break away from the ties that bind, characters like Agnes and Florence seem to alter perceptibly. Whether or not Dickens "intended" to create an ambiguity in his portraits of good characters and good families seems to me to be impossible to say. What
I am arguing is that from a family perspective such an ambiguity does exist. Florence Dombey is both selfless lover and defeated victim. In the same way, a "villain" as dark and evil as Uriah Heep gains at least a measure of the reader's sympathy when his family history is revealed.

Always present in Dickens' portrayal of the family is this acute ambivalence—the rose of family love and communion suffers a blight of human frailty and discord. Even the warm family symbol flowing from Dingley Dell in *Pickwick*, a novel James R. Kincaid terms "Dickens's one unequivocal comedy," is tainted. In front of the Wardles' hearth Mr. Pickwick "thought he had never felt so happy in his life, and at no time so much disposed to enjoy, and make the most of, the passing moment." Mr. Wardle too, sitting holding his mother's hand, responds to the glow of the family fire: "this is just what I like—the happiest moments of my life have been passed at this old fireside; and I am so attached to it that I keep a blazing fire here every evening until it actually grows too hot to bear it. Why, my poor old mother, here, used to sit

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before this fire-place, upon that little stool when she was a girl. Didn't you, Mother?"5 But the old clergyman present reveals the flaw inherent in the symbol of Dingley Dell when he recites "The Ivy Green," a poem which describes the ivy growing on the village church and alludes to the omnipotence of death and decay: "The wall must be crumbled, the stone decayed,/To pleasure his dainty whim:/And the mouldering dust that years have made/Is a merry meal for him" (p. 72). The most Dingley Dell can offer is a brief postponement of death. The Wellers, who along with Mr. Pickwick lie at the moral center of the novel, for all their ability to transform a bleak and rigid society into a living, comic world through their wit and resourcefulness, are powerless in the face of Mrs. Weller's sudden death. Along with the broken families of the macabre interpolated tales, Mrs. Weller's death serves to qualify the pastoral, enchanted circle around the Wardles' hearth.

The family which gathers about Old Martin in Martin Chuzzlewit is so intent on the material gain to result from the patriarch's death that even the considerable powers of a Pecksniff are useless: "And the company: the jealous,  

stony-hearted, distrustful company, who were all shut up in themselves, and had no faith in anybody, and wouldn't believe anything, and would no more allow themselves to be softened or lulled asleep by the Pecksniffs than if they had been so many hedgehogs or porcupines." Mr. Mould sits "surrounded by his household gods," but his sittingroom abuts "on a churchyard small and shady" (p. 405). "A good lad!" (p. 302), Anthony Chuzzlewit says of the son who will soon murder him. And Tom Pinch finds in a sister the love which can transform an entire world: "When they got back to the triangular parlour, and Tom's sister, bustling to and fro, busy about a thousand pleasant nothings, stopped every now and then to give old Tom a kiss, or smile upon him, Tom rubbed his hands as if all Islington were his" (p. 580). But he is a limited, almost circumscribed character, and it is a child's love, made perverse by age and time.

The case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce in Bleak House is in many ways a family affair; like Joyce's Ulysses, Bleak House emphasizes the mythical characteristics of family. When the

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High Court of Chancery meets on the raw, foggy afternoon that opens the novel, the solicitors, "some two or three of whom have inherited" the case "from their fathers" (p. 2), are ranged in a line. We learn further that "innumerable children have been born into the cause; innumerable young people have married into it; innumerable old people have died out of it. Scores of persons have deliriously found themselves made parties in Jarndyce and Jarndyce, without knowing how or why; whole families have inherited legendary hatreds with the suit" (p. 4). The court case, which, as Mr. Jarndyce tells Esther, "was about a Will when it was about anything" (p. 94), is a complex symbol for the lack of human relationships and understanding in the novel--like the symbol of the entail in *Pride and Prejudice*. The case is a family monster, grown to mythic proportions: "And thus, through years and years, and lives and lives, everything goes on, constantly beginning over and over again, and nothing ever ends" (p. 95). R. D. Laing's theories concerning the mythical and psychological aspects of the family, especially his claim that we as members of a family nexus often find ourselves "acting parts in a play that we have never read and never seen, whose plot we don't know, whose existence we can glimpse, but whose beginning and end are
beyond our present imagination and conception" (PF, p. 87), seem directly applicable to the participants in the case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce.

There are other family images in Bleak House. Mrs. Jellyby spends all her time with Africa ("We hope by this time next year to have from a hundred and fifty to two hundred healthy families cultivating coffee and educating the natives of Borrioboola-Gha, on the left bank of the Niger," p. 37), while her neglected children become stuck in railings and tumble from the tops of stairs. And Mr. Tulkinghorn has as his power base the family interests of his clients: "The old gentleman is rusty to look at, but is reported to have made good thrift out of aristocratic marriage settlements and aristocratic wills, and to be very rich. He is surrounded by a mysterious halo of family confidences" (p. 11). Tulkinghorn plays the role of family threatener in Bleak House, a parasite, in this case an external threat, infiltrating the family unit and subverting it; he is at the same time a symbol for the internal failures and sins of that family, as in the case of the Dedlocks. But it is in the victims, the alienated, sinned-against children of the novel that the thematic heart of the matter lies. Richard Carstone is sacrificed to the family monster--
his death and the release of Miss Flite's caged birds coincide after the case has ended. And Esther, one of Dickens' inviolate, purely good women (along with Florence Dombey and Agnes Wickfield and Little Dorrit), is the ego-renouncing, orphaned child who suffers most as a result of the family's sins. Readers tend to become easily bored with Esther. But she serves as a character (like Jane Eyre or Fanny Price, or like Dilsey in The Sound and the Fury) who, by totally submerging herself in another, or in a family, insures the survival of that "other." Esther is love, complete with jingling keys and smallpox scars—no matter how unpalatable and maddeningly ego-less she seems to our anti-sentimental, modern age.

When Louisa Gradgrind bursts into her father's room in Hard Times and demands of him: "How could you give me life, and take from me all the inappreciable things that raise it from the state of conscious death?" (p. 687), she asks a question many of Dickens' children could, with justification, ask. Characters like Pip, David Copperfield, and young Martin have also "grown up, battling every inch" of the way

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The ambivalence of the family symbol we spoke of before is present as well in Sleary's Circus. On the one hand the circus represents the ideal comic values of joy and love: "There were two or three handsome young women among them, with their two or three husbands, and their two or three mothers, and their eight or nine little children, who did the fairy business when required. The father of one of the families was in the habit of balancing the father of another of the families on the top of a great pole; the father of a third family often made a pyramid of both those fathers, with Master Kidderminster for the apex, and himself for the base; all the fathers could dance upon rolling casks, stand upon bottles, catch knives and balls, twirl hand-basins, rise upon anything, jump over everything, and stick at nothing. All the mothers could (and did) dance, upon the slack wire and the tight rope, and perform rapid acts on bare-backed steeds" (p. 520). We are told that "there was a remarkable gentleness and childishness about these people, a special inaptitude for any kind of sharp practice, and an untiring readiness to help and pity one another" (p. 520). But Sissy Jupe's father (who is, after all, a clown) deserts her, while Tom and Louisa and Stephen Blackpool, along with Sissy,
suffer a great deal as a result of painful family realities.

Amy Dorrit, another family-centered, ego-renouncing figure, holds the Dorrits together. As Mr. Dorrit says: "We should all have been lost without Amy. She is a very good girl, Amy. She does her duty." Little Dorrit "does her duty" with respect to her family, Arthur Clennan, and the grotesque orphan, Maggie, and she represents an almost other-worldly spirituality which Dickens offers as an escape from family prisons and webs. Arthur Clennan's family experiences are representative of the kinds of family ties, in a literal sense, which appear in the novels. His mother, a darkly pious old woman, sits on a "black bier-like sofa" and welcomes him home soon after his father's death. We are told that "she and his father had been at variance from his earliest remembrance. To sit speechless himself in the midst of rigid silence, glancing in dread from the one averted face to the other, had been the peacefullest occupation of his childhood" (p. 36). And when Arthur broaches the subject of possible misdeeds on his father's part Mrs. Clennam responds with a horrible family curse: "if you ever renew

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that theme with me, I will renounce you: I will so dismiss you through that doorway, that you had better have been motherless from your cradle. I will never see or know you more. And if, after all, you were to come into this darkened room to look upon me lying dead, my body should bleed, if I could make it, when you came near me" (p. 54). Little Dorrit, surely Dickens' darkest novel, relies in great part on the broken family nexus for its bitterness; and it offers as salvation from darkness the sacrificial act of the child-victim, Amy.

I have discussed in the first chapter the significance of the orphan-hero, and I have alluded to Pip's heroic quest in Great Expectations. 10 Pip is, from his earliest remembrance, concerned with his origins and his history: "As I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones" (p. 1). Dickens' orphan-heroes are by no means free from harmful, negative parental influences; on the

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contrary, their aged adversaries are more formidable a threat because they are unknown—the orphan is compelled to go out in search of his parents, and his personal history, in order to overcome it, and before he can overcome it. It is this psychological confrontation with missing or dead parents which causes the orphan to identify his past history with death and obliteration just as David Copperfield identifies the spiritual side of his life with his dead father. After Abel Magwitch has "started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch" and says to Pip "keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!" (p. 2), we are immediately struck by this unavoidable identification of a search for parentage with a search for death; we see the family influence which can be exerted from beyond the grave (we shall see more of this other-worldly influence in Dublin's Nighttown). Wemmick is a prime example of family man in Dickens—secretive, manipulated by Jaggers in London, he becomes a resilient, resourceful comic character in his castle at Walworth. Wemmick is split apart by the demands of society (represented by Jaggers, a kind of negative foster-father), and the needs of the Aged. From "a Walworth point of view" (p. 367) Wemmick is a devoted and happy family-centered character. In Dickens' world,
however, this can never be a permanent, complete mode of being. Wemmick encounters Jaggers, becomes Jaggers, whenever he leaves the castle.

I have attempted this brief sketch of some of Dickens' families in order to provide a foundation for the following discussions of two of Dickens' major novels of individuation, *Dombey and Son* and *David Copperfield*. I should like to examine closely the character of the child-hero in these two works, and to assess the extent of the powers which an intimidating, older character is able to exert over the young family member. To an even greater extent than I did in the preceding chapter, I shall focus on particularly negative family images in the two novels. Warm, loving family ties do exist in Dickens, just as characters of apparent unvarying goodness people his novels. (Although, as I stated above, such characters—and such families—often contain inherent contradictions and ambiguities.) In *Dombey and Son* the family relationship established between Walter Gay and Old Sol is certainly a positive, benign one. In the same novel, the Toodles represent a loving family. It could of course be argued that all is not perfect with either of these families: both Rob and Walter
seem to mirror in certain aspects of their characters faults existing within the nexal family. But for the most part, these are families of comic affirmation and human communion. I shall suggest, however, that when viewed through the theoretical microscopes of Laing and Campbell, certain family ties which appear to be positive ones are seen to be, if not malignant, then at least flawed. I shall, for example, look closely at the relationship between Emily and Mr. Peggotty in *David Copperfield*, and those between Uriah Heep and his parents in that novel. The novel of individuation, we shall see, appears in every case to focus on imperfections within the family. I am convinced that the dangerous child-parent, youth-age confrontation which runs through the fabric of Dickens' novels is a central thematic thread which contributes to the overall pattern of Dickens' portrayal of man in his environment.

"A Chuckle of Misery": A Question of Influence in *Dombey and Son*

'Mama!' said the child. The little voice, familiar, and dearly loved, awakened some show of consciousness, even at that ebb. For a moment, the closed eyelids trembled, and the nostrils quivered, and the faintest shadow of a smile was seen. 'Mama!' cried the child sobbing aloud. 'Oh dear Mama! oh dear Mama!'
The Doctor gently brushed the scattered ringlets of the child aside from the face and mouth of the mother. Alas how calm they lay there; how little breath there was to stir them!

Thus clinging fast to that slight spar within her arms, the mother drifted out upon the dark and unknown sea that rolls round all the world.

In a novel of individuation like *Dombey and Son* a mother's death is an event of terrible importance. One need only call to mind other novels concerned to a large extent with the political and psychological relationships existing within the family--works like *David Copperfield*, Joyce's *Ulysses*, or Austen's *Emma*--to recognize the unspeakable horror generated by such an event as the death of Fanny Dombey described above. Steven Marcus calls *Dombey* "a domestic novel," but if the novel is "about" the family, it is as much "about" death. The deaths of the first Mrs. Dombey, her son Paul, and Mrs. Skewton are climaxes which impose a form on a narrative which comes dangerously close at times to rambling. More importantly, these deaths increase family pressures on the young by creating broken, crippled family structures, leaving the

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world of Dombey peopled with orphans and partial orphans who must struggle to survive. We have seen in Jane Austen's Emma the effect on the young hero of the broken, disrupted family nexus. Dombey and Son presents a society in which families are pulled apart by death, and children murdered spiritually and existentially by parents living and dead.

J. Hillis Miller speaks of the "mutual exclusion of diverse milieus" in the novel.¹² I think we could go further and say that the universe described in Dombey is essentially Manichaean: a split world of youth and age, made up of the comic, rejuvenating forces of children and child-like characters like Captain Cuttle and Susan Nipper, and the dark ironic forces of dominating parents and lifeless, materialistic concerns. The parent figures: Dombey, "Cleopatra," and Good Mrs. Brown, manipulate and influence the developing selves of their children, killing them spiritually. Characters like Paul and Florence Dombey, Edith Granger and Alice Marwood, to use the terminology of R. D. Laing, attempt to establish an "ontological security" in their relationships with adults and families. But through the intimidating powers of the older characters and

the collusive family nexus, by means of such family terro-
rist tactics as "petrification," the children are placed in
the "double-bind" situation we have referred to in the two
previous chapters: an ironic trap into which the developing
psyche falls and is held fast. Dombey and Son describes
the child-hero's attempt to break free from family webs--
the novel details a battle of the generations, the young
against the old. It would be too facile an analysis of
the novel to say merely that the forces of human communion
and love, exemplified by the selfless Florence Dombey, come
into contact with the cold business world of "things" and
ego represented by Dombey and Carker--Florence is too static
and deadening, Dombey too much a victim, for this to be
absolutely true. But the youth and age conflict does play
a major role in the thematic drama of the novel.

By looking at Dombey in four distinct ways, by discuss-
(1) the family "maps" of the Dombey, Skewtons, and Marwoods,
(2) the themes of education and influence which run through-
out the novel and which are related to and often bound up
in the family structure, (3) the image patterns of "people"
and "things," life and death, contrasted throughout:
patterns which are portrayed as existing both within and
outside of the nexal family units, and, (4) the resulting
split generated within the personalities of the major characters, I hope to describe in detail the total youth and age confrontation which lies at the heart of this novel and at the heart of all Dickens.

The split world of Dombey and Son is introduced in the novel's opening lines: "Dombey was about eight-and-forty years of age. Son about eight-and-forty minutes. Dombey was rather bald, rather red, and though a handsome well-made man, too stern and pompous in appearance to be prepossessing. Son was very bald, and very red, and though (of course) an undeniably fine infant, somewhat crushed and spotty in his general effect, as yet" (p. 1). In addition to announcing the parent-child theme with which the novel will concern itself, this passage hints at the webs of influence and intimidation already being woven about the child, Paul. For as an only son Paul strengthens considerably the assets of the firm Dombey and Son—as Dombey states to his dying wife: "The house will once again, Mrs. Dombey...be not only in name but in fact Dombey

and Son" (p. 1). And after announcing that the child will be named Paul, Dombey says: "His father's name, Mrs. Dombey, and his grandfather's! I wish his grandfather were alive this day!" (p. 2). As far as the child is concerned, of course, his grandfather, or at least the ghost of his grandfather, is alive. Dombey has become his own father, released by the birth of his own son from being thought of as the "Son" of the firm's title. And little Paul must, whether or not he wishes it, become his own father. Dombey senior will from this day on attempt to force his son into this complex role. I do not wish to be deliberately perverse here; nor am I attempting to inject a gratuitous mysticism into Dickens' novel. I wish to show by these arguments only that the family can be an historical, mythical, and a cyclical construct—a view of the family we shall encounter again in the works of James Joyce—and that this mythical family is operating in Dombey and Son.

Laing speaks directly to this problem of influence on children from beyond the grave: "As images of ghostly relations under the operation of projection, we induce others, and are ourselves induced, to embody them: to enact, unknown to ourselves, a shadow play, as images of images of images...of the dead" (The Politics of the Family and Other Essays, p. 78).
Dombey "had risen, as his father had before him, in the course of life and death, from Son to Dombey" (p. 2), we are told; yet the transformation from Son to Dombey cannot properly take place until Dombey fathers his own son. When Paul is born, he automatically inherits the name (Paul), title (Son), and role (heir), which will insure the continuance of Dombey and Son—the firm and the family. As Dombey intones over his son's cradle: "This young gentleman has to accomplish a destiny. A destiny, little fellow!" (p. 4). Such an overwhelming, automatic inheritance of role will generate an intense conflict within Paul—a conflict we shall have reason to discuss later on.

Paul is an only son but not an only child. Since Dombey wished his marriage to result in the production of "a new partner" (p. 2), an heir, the birth of Florence (and indeed, the death of Fanny after Paul's birth) was not an event of much consequence to him: "But what was a girl to Dombey and Son! In the capital of the House's name and dignity, such a child was merely a piece of base coin that couldn't be invested—a bad Boy—nothing more" (p. 3). In the eyes of her father Florence is nothing, a perfect cipher; she has become an ego-less victim, a nonentity struggling for an existence of her own. We have seen in
Jane Austen's fiction the powerful effects of the reduction of genuine, loving family ties to harsh, starkly economic relationships. To Dombey, the family is the firm; love has become business—a living world of beauty and human values has become a marketplace: "The earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in, and the sun and moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows gave them promise of fair weather; winds blew for or against their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre" (p. 2). In such a family the demands of the firm impose on a new-born child a rigidly-defined, tragic role in a particularly harsh family play, and deny the child's sister any part at all. Paul follows his father and grandfather without having had an opportunity to enjoy—or even to establish—his own identity. And Florence becomes nothing. In the course of the novel Florence and Paul will attempt to break free from their special family prisons, and both will, in markedly different ways, succeed.

Dombey is attracted to Edith Granger partly for her cold beauty and sexuality, and partly as a result of this blurred distinction between firm and family. He views
Edith as yet another valuable asset to his business: "it flattered him to picture to himself, this proud and stately woman doing the honours of his house, and chilling his guests after his own manner. The dignity of Dombey and Son would be heightened and maintained, indeed, in such hands" (p. 430). And if Paul and Florence are robbed of their youth by a predatory family thief, Edith's relationship to her mother is strikingly similar. As Major Bagstock puts it, there is "something of a division between 'em—or a gulf as the mother calls it" (p. 376). Edith too has never enjoyed a childhood—she accuses her mother of having destroyed her youth: "'A child!' said Edith, looking at her, 'when was I a child! What childhood did you ever leave to me? I was a woman—artful, designing, mercenary, laying snares for men—before I knew myself, or you, or even understood the base and wretched aim of every new display I learnt. You gave birth to a woman'" (p. 396).

Edith tells her mother that "there is no slave in a market: there is no horse in a fair: so shown and offered and examined and paraded...as I have been, for ten shameful years," and asks her: "Have I been hawked and vended here and there, until the last grain of self-respect is dead within me, and I loathe myself? Has this been my late
childhood? I had none before" (p. 396). Thus Edith, a marketable commodity in the eyes of her mother, joins Paul-heir and Florence-cipher in the dramatis personae of this drama.

The crucial point here is that the delicate selves of the children have been forced to follow directions dictated solely by parents--parents who attempt to live their own lives over again. Good Mrs. Brown (the old woman who abducts Florence during the ill-fated trip to Stagg's Gardens--an abduction which symbolizes the paralyzing hold the old are able to exert over the young in the novel) is guilty of the same misdirected behavior. Her daughter Alice says to Harriet Carker at one point: "I think I have a mother. She's as much a mother as her dwelling is a home" (p. 435). Alice accuses her mother of very Dombey-like crimes: "I don't know who began to harden me, if my own dear mother didn't" (p. 489). We see again the harm done a child by a dominating, insensitive parent: "The only care she knew," Alice says of herself, "was to be beaten, and stinted, and abused sometimes" (p. 490).
Thus much of the action of *Dombey and Son* (much more than can be outlined here\textsuperscript{15}) is motivated by family pride and politics: Dombey's two marriages, Edith's acceptance of his proposal; even the death of little Paul can be attributed at least in part to the boy's family situation. The active, powerful sphere of the older characters invades that of the children: adults influence and coerce children repeatedly in the novel. And in addition to power relationships in the family units of *Dombey*, a related theme of influence and education outside the family supports the overall youth-age thematic pattern.

Paul is a sickly child from birth, and the loss of his nurse, Richards, makes matters worse: "Naturally delicate, perhaps, he pined and wasted after the dismissal of his nurse, and, for a long time, seemed but to wait his opportunity of gliding through their hands, and seeking his lost mother" (p. 91). Mrs. Chick is closer to the truth than she realizes when she suggests to her brother that "a short absence from this house, the air of Brighton, and

\textsuperscript{15} I have not been able to mention, for example, the complex political relationships within the Carker family, or to refer to their family shame and hatred and its effect on the thematic structure of the novel.
the bodily and mental training of so judicious a person as Mrs. Pipchin" (p. 99) might be beneficial to Paul's health. But although Paul does need to escape the dangerous, suffocating environment of his home he cannot be expected to benefit from the care of Mrs. Pipchin, who is described as "a marvellous ill-favoured, ill-conditioned old lady, of a stooping figure, with a mottled face, like bad marble, a hook nose, and a hard grey eye, that looked as if it might have been hammered at on an anvil without sustaining any injury" (p. 101). She is described further as "a bitter old lady," an "ogress and child-queller" whose key to success in the management of children "was to give them everything that they didn't like, and nothing that they did" (p. 101). Mrs. Pipchin, like Paul's father, is a powerful manipulator, an absolute monarch ruling over a house full of children. The power she wields is further revealed when we learn that her niece, Berry, had fallen in love with a local grocer, but that Mrs. Pipchin had forbidden the match. And although "everybody said how laudable this was in Mrs. Pipchin...and what a staunch, high, independent spirit the old lady had," no one mentioned the niece, "who cried for six weeks (being soundly rated by her good aunt all the time), and lapsed into a state of hopeless
spinsterhood" (p. 139).

Paul's intimidation by adults continues in Brighton. He escapes Mrs. Pipchin's boarding school only to fall into the "great hothouse" of Dr. Blimber's establishment: "in which there was a forcing apparatus incessantly at work. All the boys blew before their time. Mental green-peas were produced at Christmas, and intellectual asparagus all the year round....No matter what a young gentleman was intended to bear, Doctor Blimber made him bear to pattern, somehow or other" (p. 143). Like the model school run by Mr. Gradgrind in *Hard Times*, and Mr. Creakle's Salem House in *David Copperfield*, Dr. Blimber's school exercises a stifling, deadening power over its students. "The system of forcing," we are told, "was attended with its usual disadvantages. There was not the right taste about the premature productions, and they didn't keep well. Moreover, one young gentleman, with a swollen nose and an excessively large head (the oldest of the ten who had 'gone through' everything), suddenly left off blowing one day, and remained in the establishment a mere stalk. And people did say that the Doctor had rather overdone it with young Toots" (pp. 143-44). This is Dickens' dark comedy at its best (or worst). Toots is a clown, and we are certainly meant to
laugh at him as he pursues "his own course of study: which
was chiefly to write long letters to himself from persons of
distinction, addressed 'P. Toots, Esquire, Brighton, Sussex,
and to preserve them in his desk with great care" (p. 155).
But like all great clowns--comic creations like Falstaff,
Jaques, even Leopold Bloom--Toots' comedy is tinged with an
undeniable tragedy. Throughout his trials at Blimber's,
his relationship with the Game Chicken, his love for
Florence and eventual marriage to Susan Nipper, Toots repre­
sents in the novel the spiritual and intellectual murder
which someone like Blimber can commit. Toots often displays
a pure, simple wisdom--he remarks to Captain Cuttle at one
point: "Oh, upon my word of honour...this is a most
wretched sort of affair this world is! Somebody's always
dying, or going and doing something uncomfortable in it.
I'm sure I never should have looked forward so much, to
coming into my property, if I had known this. I never saw
such a world. It's a great deal worse than Blimber's"
(p. 464). And he does possess more than a modicum of self­
knowledge. He tells Captain Cuttle: "You know I'm never
quite what I could wish to be, now. I don't expect that
I ever shall be any more" (p. 675). But Toots only "faintly
understands," half-realizing that there was once "a time
when he was sensible of being brighter and not addle-brained" (p. 579). Toots is living proof of the enormous power of the older generation. As much as Paul's death, the spiritual murder of Toots reveals the dangers inherent in the conflict between adults and children. He "fears that he is dull and stupid now, and good for little but to be laughed at" (p. 579). Like Paul, Florence, and Edith, Toots suffers at the hands of the adult egos which operate in the novel.

So much does the influence and education theme permeate *Dombey and Son* that even a minor character like Rob the Grinder is forced to undergo an extensive trial-by-education. He experiences an existence "more like that of an early Christian, than an innocent child of the nineteenth century" (p. 69) after Dombey secures for him a place at school in the costume of the Charitable Grinders. His teacher is "a superannuated old Grinder of savage disposition, who had been appointed schoolmaster because he didn't know anything, and wasn't fit for anything, and for whose cruel cane all chubby little boys had a perfect fascination" (p. 69). And after he has been "huffed and cuffed, and flogged and badged, and taught, as parrots are, by a brute jobbed into his place of schoolmaster with as much fitness for it as a hound"
(p. 281), there is "an influence established over the boy" (p. 311) by Carker. Even Good Mrs. Brown is able to manipulate Rob when she seeks information about the flight of Carker and Edith. Like the other malleable, easily-influenced characters in the novel--Toots, Paul, Florence and others--Rob serves as an example of the dangers inherent in the intimidation of the self by the demanding other.

Kathleen Tillotson describes *Dombey* as "a plea for children," a novel speaking out "against the wrongs done to them in the name of education." The narrative voice of the novel often speaks out forcefully against negative influences and harmful education. The "long train of nameless sins" of which the older characters are guilty is seen "creeping on, to blight the innocent and spread contagion among the pure" (p. 649). We are warned that "where we generate disease to strike our children down and entail itself on unborn generations, there also we breed, by the same certain process, infancy that knows no innocence, youth without modesty or shame, maturity that is mature in nothing but in suffering and guilt, blasted old age that is a

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scandal on the form we bear" (p. 650). Thus "the excellent and thoughtful old system, hallowed by long prescription, which has usually picked out from the rest of mankind the most dreary and uncomfortable people that could possibly be laid hold of, to act as instructors of youth" (p. 824), comes under a sustained attack in *Dombey*. Children become marionettes, and are forced to follow the lead of parents, educators, and other older figures.

A word needs to be said about the extensive image patterns in the novel. In a deservedly famous article Dorothy Van Ghent has analyzed the blurring of distinctions, in Dickens' fiction, between people and things. In *Dombey and Son*, adults representing the lifeless materialism against which children struggle are constantly described as inanimate objects. As we saw in the first chapter, Laing argues that, "as adults...we barely remember our dreams, and make little sense of them when we do; as for our bodies, we retain just sufficient proprioceptive sensations to coordinate our movements and to ensure the minimal requirements for biosocial survival--to register fatigue,

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signals for food, sex, defecation, sleep; beyond that, little or nothing" (PE, p. 26). In *Dombey and Son* Dickens repeatedly portrays adults as lifeless, inanimate objects maintaining only the basic human characteristics. Mr. Dombey turns in his chair "as one piece, and not as a man with limbs and joints" (p. 16). He "might have been hung up for sale at a Russian fair," we are told, "as a specimen of a frozen gentleman" (p. 58). Such descriptions of human beings as cold, inanimate "things" (descriptions which are made with such dizzying frequency they could never all be cited here) reinforce the idea in the novel that insensitive adults and parents often force children into emotional and psychological straight-jackets. A character like Dombey is capable of turning Florence to stone and contributing to the death of his son and heir because he denies the life embodied by his children. The leitmotifs of business terms and money; the images which are repeated to link the funerals of Fanny Dombey and Paul with Paul's christening and Florence's wedding and the marriage of Edith and Dombey; the time imagery which first foreshadows and then recalls the deaths of Fanny and Paul; the symbols of birds and cages which suggest the jails into which young victims are thrown; and the death imagery of the sea and water--all
these comprise complex layers of symbolic meaning which buttress the youth-against-age theme. *Dombey and Son* posits a horrifying world in which young heroes battle their parents, time, and society itself in order to survive. We shall not take a closer look at the results of this battle.

We have been considering the powers of intimidation adults in *Dombey* wield over their children. Autocratic figures like Dombey and Mrs. Skewton literally steal away a child's youth—as Edith remarks to her mother in a passage we referred to earlier: "You gave birth to a woman" (p. 396). The conflict between values in the family-centered world of this novel—a conflict pitting business deals and material concerns against human love—gives rise to a corresponding clash within the personalities of several of the key figures of *Dombey*. Paul (and, to a lesser extent perhaps, Florence) and Edith (and her mother), even Alice Marwood and Toots, are characters who are split apart inside. The split characters are emblems of the collision of the spiritual and material worlds we have been discussing. They stand as embodiments of the child’s struggle to escape of the fragmentation of the self caused
by an aggressive other; the split itself reveals the lasting psychological wounds inflicted in the attempt to escape.

The effects of Paul Dombey's education at home and at Brighton, and more importantly, the effects of his relationship with his senior partner in the firm, produce a "divided self," composed of the child as he really is, and the adult businessman his father wishes him to be. Paul is torn in half; split apart by youth and age, a comic gentleness opposed by a hoary, bitter irony. At the age of five Paul "was childish and sportive enough at times, and not of a sullen disposition; but he had a strange, old-fashioned, thoughtful way, at other times, of sitting brooding in his miniature arm-chair, when he looked (and talked) like one of those terrible little Beings in the Fairy-tales, who, at a hundred and fifty or two hundred years of age, fantastically represent the children for whom they have been substituted" (p. 93). When Paul and his father sit alone before the fire they provide a striking contrast: "Mr. Dombey stiff with starch and arrogance; the little image by inheritance, and in unconscious imitation. The two so very much alike, and yet so monstrously contrasted" (p. 94). That part of Paul which is Dombey-like is reinforced and strengthened at Brighton. Paul sits by the side of Mrs.
Pipchin, who "seemed to have a grotesque attraction for him." He tells her "I'm thinking how old you must be" (p. 105), and we are told that as Paul sits staring at the old woman, "the good old lady might have been... a witch, and Paul and the cat her two familiars" (p. 106). Paul refuses the services of "a ruddy-faced lad" who is to push his carriage down to the beach, and "selected, instead, his grandfather—a weazen, old, crab-faced man, in a suit of battered oilskin" (p. 110). The young heir to the Dombey name would sit by the seashore each day, "never so distressed as by the company of children—Florence alone excepted always" (p. 110).

It is, from one point of view, the love of Florence which opposes the "unconscious imitation" of Dombey in Paul's personality. Thomas H. Adamowski has argued that "rather than being isolated within their individuality, like their father," Paul and Florence "are able to rely on and feel for each other," and this is true to a certain extent. But it is also true that all three Dombey's are isolated—locked in a pattern of birth and genealogy. The

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18 "Dombey and Son and Sutpen and Son," Studies in the Novel, 4, No. 3 (Fall, 1972), p. 381.
very nature of the Dombey family configuration places Paul in an untenable position. Like Elizabeth Bennet, Emma Woodhouse and Stephen Dedalus, Paul Dombey is thrust into the 'double-bind' situation which Laing claims is the inevitable result of internal family warfare. There are indications, for example, that Florence's demands on Paul are as damaging as his father's. When Walter Gay comes to ask for money to save the Midshipman, Dombey advises Paul that such a loan should be made "as a great favour and obligation," whereupon "Paul turned up the old face for a moment, in which there was a sharp understanding of the reference conveyed in these words: but it was a young and childish face immediately afterwards, when he slipped down from his father's knee, and ran to tell Florence not to cry any more, for he was going to let young Gay have the money" (p. 135). When Paul comes under the tutelage of Dr. Blimber, a teacher who "regarded the young gentlemen as if they were all Doctors, and were born grown up" (p. 167), Florence helps him in his studies: "she sat down by his side, and showed him all that was so rough, made smooth, and all that was so dark, made clear and plain, before him. It was nothing but a startled look in Paul's wan face—a flush—a smile—and then a close embrace—but God knows how
her heart leaped up at this rich payment for her trouble" (p. 167). In spite of the love of Florence, and partially because of the anxiety produced by its intense nature, Paul "retained all that was strange, and old, and thoughtful in his character," and "the solitary child lived on, surrounded by this arabesque work of his musing fancy, and no one understood him" (p. 168). When the approaching holidays offer Paul the opportunity of spending more time with Florence, "the lions and tigers climbing up the bedroom walls, became quite tame and frolicsome. The grim sly faces in the squares and diamonds of the floor-cloth, relaxed and peeped out at him with less wicked eyes" (p. 184).

Still, Paul grows older and older at Brighton. As Cornelia Blimber writes in her "analysis of the character of P. Dombey" (p. 185), Paul "is singular (what is usually termed old-fashioned) in his character and conduct, and... is often very unlike other young gentlemen of his age" (p. 186). The comic side of Paul, evidenced by such things as his desire to "go away into the country with my darling Florence, have a beautiful garden, fields, and woods, and live there with her all my life" (p. 192), is ranged against his desire to placate his father. Florence is as responsible for Paul's death as Dombey, in this sense--the
war for his soul has resulted in the death of his body, and where Paul might have been able to survive as his father's son and heir, or as the loving, Tom Pinch-like brother of Florence, he cannot live as part-son, part-brother. The "double-bind" situation Laing sees as the direct result of political maneuvering within the nexal web is in Paul's case as much a physical, life-or-death situation as an existential one. When Paul sails out to meet his mother, light shining on him as he goes, he leaves as a family martyr—a victim of the internecine conflicts raging within the family. Paul's education—his initiation, and part of his "rites of passage"—has resulted in his death. He may have gained a special knowledge, and what Joseph Campbell terms "a penetration to some source of power," but a "life-enhancing return"19 is not possible. His quest for love may have been successful, but the benefits of such a quest end with him—there will be no redemption for others. Paul's death is proof of the potentially insurmountable barriers encountered by the hero in his search to know—and to escape—his family. The death of Dombey's heir, the

19 The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 35; And see the discussion of Campbell's definition of the hero in chapter one.
boy's "separation" from the world, can be read as a severe qualification of the "cult of the child" in the novel of individuation. But Florence, the eternal child, remains. She is the last hope of the Dombey family. The death of Paul ends the first part of the Dombey family saga; the development of Florence, who is released from the darkness of her brother's shadow (as he is from hers), will comprise part two.

Edith Granger is another of the novel's characters who is torn apart by conflicting values. We have already seen that from her childhood Edith has been "taught to scheme and plot" (p. 396) by her mother; she tells Mrs. Skewton: "my education was completed long ago. I am too old now, and have fallen too low, by degrees, to take a new course, and to stop yours, and to help myself" (p. 397). And she tells Carker after they have run away: "I am a woman who from her very childhood has been shamed and steeled. I have been offered and rejected, put up and appraised, until my very soul has sickened" (p. 762).

Cleopatra--certainly one of Dickens' greatest comic characters--is partly to blame for her daughter's sickness of soul and stone-like intransigence. We saw in Toots a child's mind imprisoned in an adult's body--a personality
pulled apart and rendered grotesque by contradictions. Mrs. Skewton is also split, attempting by sheer force of will to remain a child while her body ages and decays. She has created about herself a totally artificial world by which she is capable, for a while, of actually stopping time: "The discrepancy between Mrs. Skewton's fresh enthusiasm of words, and forlornly faded manner, was hardly less observable than that between her age, which was about seventy, and her dress, which would have been youthful for twenty-seven" (pp. 289-90). Although Mrs. Skewton "was not young, she was very blooming in the face—quite rosy—and her dress and attitude were perfectly juvenile" (p. 288). "What I want," she tells Dombey, "is frankness, confidence, less conventionality, and freer play of soul. We are so dreadfully artificial" (p. 291). But Mrs. Skewton is total comic artificiality. Just as Sam Weller, by the force of his wit and rhetoric, is able to weave about himself a new, comic world in *Pickwick*, Cleopatra has been reborn through her own considerable powers. But when this shapeshifter's maid appears to undress her for the night, we see just how flimsy the foundations of this comic world are: "Mrs. Skewton's maid appeared, according to custom, to prepare
her gradually for the night. At night, she should have been a skeleton, with dart and hour-glass, rather than a woman, this attendant; for her touch was as the touch of Death. The painted object shrivelled underneath her hand; the form collapsed, the hair dropped off, the arched dark eyebrows changed to scanty tufts of gray; the pale lips shrunk, the skin became cadaverous and loose; an old, worn, yellow nodding woman, with red eyes, alone remained in Cleopatra's place, huddled up, like a slovenly bundle, in a greasy flannel gown" (p. 395). This passage foreshadows Cleopatra's stroke and prepares us for her transformation from a comic seductress able to "set her face against death altogether" (p. 425) to a hideous cripple, an old woman who "lies upon the bed...crooked and shrunk up, and half of her is dead" (p. 586).

Mrs. Skewton claims that "my whole existence is bound up in my sweetest Edith" (p. 371), and she is correct. She has stolen her daughter's youth and attempted to hoard it as a kind of immortality, just as Dombey sees in Paul an assurance of the firm's continuation. Both Cleopatra and Dombey seek a very literal "confirmation" from their children: they depend on the potential immortality offered by their offspring. In this case, Cleopatra's own split
character has caused a split in her child. Edith responds to Florence much as Paul did: she is "so subdued and gentle" (p. 424) when Florence is near, yet she "fought her fate out, braved it, and defied it" (p. 425) with an unyielding pride and coldness when not in the girl's presence. Edith is "a woman with a noble quality yet dwelling in her nature, who was too false to her better self, and too debased and lost, to save herself" (p. 425). Yet she realizes the threat her mother represents to Florence, and warns the girl to come home after the wedding (p. 424). Like Paul, and Alice Marwood (whose gentle gratitude for Harrier Carker's kindnesses turns immediately to rage and hatred), Edith is a victim of family pressures and anxieties. The pride which eventually drives her to ruin is a defense against the attacks of her mother and the society her mother represents. Mrs. Skewton's vampire-like attachment for the child drives her to an early, loveless marriage; she loses her husband and child (pp. 292-93), then sells herself to Dombey, and after a while runs away. Edith remains torn, 20

20 John Carker, one of the novel's more positive figures, is another character who is wary of the harm older figures can do children. Carker the Junior attempts to "resist" the "frank approaches" of Walter Gay so that he might not contaminate the youngster (p. 286).
caught between comic and ironic worlds, at the novel's end. She tells Florence: "My better angel! Before I am mad again, before my stubbornness comes back and strikes me dumb, believe me, upon my soul I am innocent" (p. 872).

Like Paul, who is killed spiritually and then literally, Edith is an innocent victim in a family game--she becomes checkmated and is unable to save herself.

Paul, Edith and her mother, Toots, Alice Marwood--all these exhibit a divided sensibility, the split vision resulting from the other's invasion of the self. But Florence Dombey and her father give evidence of no such contradictory inner being--they are consistent throughout, and, as the novel's ending reveals, relatively unchanged.

Florence begins the novel a partial orphan, her mother having died "clasping her little daughter to her breast" (p. 9). Years later her brother too dies in her arms: "Sister and brother wound their arms around each other, and the golden light came streaming in, and fell upon them, locked together" (p. 227). She has always been rejected by her father ("'Girls,' said Mr. Dombey, 'have nothing to do with Dombey and Son,'" p. 135). Florence is, as far as her father, Mrs. Chick, Miss Tox, and Mrs. Skewton are concerned, a nonentity, living "in her wilderness of a home"
Like Austen's Fanny Price, and Esther Summerson of Bleak House, Florence is a Cinderella-victim who must fight to stay alive spiritually—with her only weapon herself. Florence is very close to Paul, as we have said, and after his death she attempts to break down the remaining barriers keeping her from her father: "in her one absorbing wish to be allowed to show him some affection, to be a consolation to him, to win him over to the endurance of some tenderness from her, his solitary child, she would have knelt down at his feet, if she had dared, in humble supplication" (p. 251).

In addition to the failed attempt to establish a relationship with her father, Florence is made to assume the passive role of auditor, constantly made to overhear attacks on her dead mother. During one such occasion she hears Mrs. Chick blame her mother for Paul's death: "'Nothing shall ever persuade me,' observed the good matron, with a resolute air, 'but that if that effort had been made by poor dear Fanny, the poor dear darling child would at least have had a stronger constitution'" (p. 245). Such emotional shocks have their effect on the girl. We have discussed in the first chapter what Laing terms "petrification," a word he uses to designate one of the ways in which an
ontologically insecure person can meet with anxiety as a result of a direct self and other, or self and family, confrontation. Petrification results from a fear that a self can be turned to stone by the intimidating other; and in light of the overall structure of image patterns we outlined above—specifically, the use of inanimate objects to describe adults—Dickens seems to have anticipated Laing, by suggesting that the coldness and sterility of her father's world can be transferred to Florence. After all, half of Edith has petrified; and half of Paul turned to stone before he died. Thus Florence is in danger of being frozen, and petrified.

Her father is cold, a frozen skeleton. On the day Paul is to be christened, Dombey "stood in his library to receive the company, as hard and cold as the weather" (p. 53). At dinner after the company returns from the church "there was a toothache in everything. The wine was so bitter cold that it forced a little scream from Miss Tox, which she had great difficulty in turning into a 'Hem!' The veal had come from such an airy pantry, that the first taste of it had struck a sensation as of cold lead to Mr. Chick's extremities. Mr. Dombey alone remained unmoved" (p. 58). And Dombey's bitter-cold disdain is manifested in his
behavior toward Florence. On one of her late-night trips down to stand outside her father's rooms, Florence, "urged on by the love within her" (p. 257), enters the room in which he is sitting, and becomes petrified by his death-head stare: "If anything had frightened her, it was the face he turned upon her. The glowing love within the breast of his young daughter froze before it, and she stood and looked at him as if stricken into stone" (p. 258). After Paul's death, when Florence is living alone in the house, "the blank walls looked down upon her with a vacant stare, as if they had a Gorgon-like mind to stare her youth and beauty into stone" (p. 320). The gate in front of the house is "a monstrous fantasy of rusty iron, curling and twisting like a petrifaction of an arbour over the threshold" (p. 320). Thus just as Paul's father and Edith's mother deprive their children of the childhood and youth which is theirs by right, Dombey, and such psychological shocks as the deaths of her mother and brother, come close to robbing Florence of her youth and beauty, and the intense, unvarying love which is her one and only defense. But through a constant and selfless sacrifice, Florence is able to weather all such attacks—the amo ergo sum which
serves as her single response to the world furnishes her with a monotonous, unvarying resiliency. She has one desire after Paul's death, and that is that her father should accept the love she offers: "Nothing wandered in her thoughts but love--a wandering love, indeed, and cast away--but turning always to her father" (p. 256). Whether or not she succeeds in this desire, and whether we can see her marriage as a successful revolt from the suffocating political situation existing within her family, depends to a great extent on our interpretation of the ending of Dombey and Son.

When Dombey discovers that Edith and Carker have fled, he becomes so enraged that, upon meeting Florence in the hall, "he lifted up his cruel arm, and struck her, cross-wise, with that heaviness, that she tottered on the marble floor" (p. 667). Physical aggression of this type usually signifies a thematic climax in Dickens--one thinks of the blow by which Old Martin "conquers" Pecksniff, or the way in which young David strikes out at Murdstone by biting his hand--but Florence is in no way "educated" by the blow. After she has fled to the Midshipman, and into the comic world it represents, far from seeing her father in his true
light, she once again responds with that intransigent love with which she has always dealt with the harsh realities of the world: "Homeless and fatherless, she forgave him everything; hardly thought that she had need to forgive him, or that she did" (p. 682). In fact, Florence's overwhelming wish to be recognized by her father leads her to play her one remaining card, to make the ultimate sacrifice—she presents her father with an heir, a substitute for the son she helped him lose. When Florence and Walter Gay name their son Paul, and when, as we are told, the child asks Dombey: "What, Grandpapa! Am I so like my poor little uncle again?" (p. 880), we are meant to see the process repeating itself. Florence has offered up her own child to propitiate the family god, to exorcize what Joseph Campbell terms the "nursery demons" which possess her. The sequence of separation, initiation and return which marks the heroic journey enables Florence to drive out the last vestiges of ego and join the family: to become a part of the firm. The new little Paul can not help but be compared to, and named after, Dombey's son. Even though he is now "a white-haired gentleman, whose face bears heavy marks of care and suffering" (p. 875), and has lost his fortune and his firm, Dombey has triumphed—he has, finally,
his son and heir. Dombey is now in fact Dombey, and the
firm has filled the vacant position named in its title. And
Florence has both succeeded and failed--she lives, and
is needed, but the price has been high. Paul represents
her gift to her father; he is that gift, and he is the only
way she could reach Dombey. Her daughter, named, signifi­
cantly, Florence, atones for her father's sins of neglect
and hatred.

Thus the contentious striving of generation against
generation is cyclical and historical: Paul Dombey
escapes the threatening powers of the old only through his
own death. And Florence never does escape, choosing to
submit to the cruel demands of family in an act of love
and self-immolating sacrifice. The new Paul and Florence
will have to fight on, Dickens seems to say, in order to
break free from their own imposed "destiny."

"I Had Seen the Harvest, But Had Never Thought
of the Seed": The Hero and the
Family in David Copperfield

As in Dombey and Son, Martin Chuzzlewit, Bleak House,
Little Dorrit--in fact, most of Dickens' novels--children
in *David Copperfield* are depicted as victims of the crimes and corrupting influences of their parents and other adults. Like so many novels dealing with the hostile environment children are forced to accept, *David Copperfield* portrays the child, in his innocence and helplessness, as orphan, or partial orphan, falling prey to the greed and power of sinning adults. The orphans of this novel, confronted with a loss of equilibrium and balance caused by broken family configurations, are weak, developing selves caught in webs of coercion spun by "the other," the older characters. As we have noted above, the renunciation of ego, the attainment of a self-sacrificing love once the evil influences have been overcome, is offered as the child's only escape: characters like Fanny Price, Emma Woodhouse, and Florence Dombey (as well as such famous ego-renouncers as Jane Eyre, Esther Summerson, Sissy Jupe, Amy Dorrit, and even Christopher Newman) embody a spiritual love, a joyful capitulation, which removes a threatened self from the web of family intimidation. In *David Copperfield*, Agnes Wickfield is the emblem of the self-renouncing love which transcends a corrupt world. As we saw in *Dombey*, however, spiritual renunciation can be inextricably bound up with
physical death; in David Copperfield the search for the "disciplined heart" becomes a search for a lost parent, and finally, for death and obliteration. Both Paul and Florence Dombey are heroes who fight free of the family—and David Copperfield's love for Agnes, or his eventual realization of that love, represents both an attainment of the heroic knowledge that Joseph Campbell terms an "unconditioned love, synonymous with the effective conquest of ego," and an abdication of the material world with which the young candidate has concerned himself in the course of the novel. By looking at the family maps of the novel, viewing the influence exerted over children by parents and environment, and then going on to sketch the experiential journey undertaken by David, I hope to show that the hero of the novel searches for discipline and a mature love, and discovers along with this love a lost parent and an unqualified acceptance of death.

The orphan symbol which permeates David Copperfield arises from the broken family units of the novel. Like the

21 Hero, p. 157.

world of Emma, the society of Dickens' novel is comprised of broken families of orphans, widows, and widowers. David is born "a posthumous child" (p. 2), he tells us, his father having died six months before his birth. Because he is a partial orphan, raised by the selfless, simple Peggotty and the child-like mother Betsey Trotwood calls, with justification, "a wax doll" (p. 3), David is particularly susceptible to the influences of egoistic adults. The Murdstones, Mr. Creakle, Steerforth, and Miss Betsey are all able to "capture" David at one time or another, fulfilling the role of metaphorical foster parents. Figures like the Murdstones are so abhorrent to the reader precisely because of the helpless natures of David and his child-mother. Edward Murdstone is, as much as Mr. Collins and Wickham of Pride and Prejudice, or Blazes Boylan in Ulysses, the family threatener we have been discussing throughout this study—a negative, self-centered character who is able to disrupt the comic center of the family. The effect of Murdstone's irresistible powers of ego and sexual domination on the Copperfield family is immediate. David realizes that his new father has the ability to manipulate his mother: "I knew...that he could mould her pliant nature
into any form he chose" (p. 44); moreover, the new father succeeds in pulling apart the mother-son relationship. It now becomes "wrong" to express love within the family: "I was timidly following her, when she turned round at the parlour-door, in the dusk, and taking me in her embrace as she had been used to do, whispered me to love my new father and be obedient to him. She did this hurriedly and secretly, as if it were wrong" (p. 46). Under the banner of "firmness" the Murdstones enter into a conspiracy to infiltrate the Copperfield family, and by means of what Laing terms "collusion," they succeed in subverting David's ties to his mother. Murdstone tells Clara Copperfield: "yes, I had a satisfaction in the thought of marrying an inexperienced and artless person, and forming her character, and infusing into it some amount of that firmness and decision of which it stood in need" (p. 49); but such inculcated firmness soon destroys David's mother. Peggotty tells David that, under the collusive influence of the Murdstones, his mother "got to be more timid, and more

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23 Laing defines "collusion" as a role-playing in which family members take sides, as it were, and play at "counterfeiting a relation" (Self and Others, p. 109).
frightened-like of late; and...a hard word was like a blow
to her" (p. 130). When the family circle has been destroyed,
after David learns that his mother "died like a child that
had gone to sleep" (p. 132), and her second child with her,
he learns he must begin life over again, as an orphan:
"the little creature in her arms, was myself, as I had once
been, hushed, for ever on her bosom" (p. 132). The Copper­
field family becomes a childhood memory that will be resur­
rected over and over again in the course of the lone
survivor's lifetime.

Mr. Peggotty's boat at Yarmouth houses another of the
novel's families. Peggotty informs David that her brother
has adopted the orphans Emily and Ham, and has taken in
Mrs. Gummidge, and that Mr. Peggotty is "as good as gold
and as true as steel" (p. 33). But although Emily's foster­
father gives ample proof throughout the novel of his
generosity and kindness, all is not well at Yarmouth--in
fact, it might even be said that Mr. Peggotty's behavior,
especially his near-obsessive attachment to Emily, no
matter how well-intentioned it might be, is harmful to the
girl. In response to David's question about her uncle,
Emily claims that "if I was ever to be a lady, I'd give him a sky-blue coat with diamond buttons, nankeen trousers, a red velvet waistcoat, a cocked hat, a large gold watch, a silver pipe, and a box of money" (p. 35), a statement which suggests, beyond a child's wish to please, both a dangerous fascination for material possessions and their power to complement human relationships, and a sense of debt to Mr. Peggotty which Emily realizes she can never hope to pay. Mr. Peggotty dotes on the child; we are told that he, Ham, and Mrs. Gummidge react to the childish love attachment David and Emily form for each other in a peculiar manner: "They had something of the sort of pleasure in us, I suppose, that they might have had in a pretty toy, or a pocket model of the Colosseum" (p. 37). Emily becomes spoiled as a result of such treatment in her foster home, and, as Mr. Omer puts it, "she was rather what might be called wayward" (p. 303). Mr. Peggotty's hopes are bound up in his adopted daughter; he wishes to keep her inviolate, but his excessive attachment for her, and hers for him, is so pronounced as to be noticed by others. Ham tells David that Mr. Peggotty would never let Martha Endell come near Emily: 'he couldn't, kind-natur'd, tender-hearted as he is,
see them two together, side by side, for all the treasures that's wrecked in the sea" (p. 333). Mr. Omer notices Emily's behavior toward her uncle before she is to marry Ham, and while she is becoming involved with Steerforth: "to see the way she holds on to him, tighter and tighter, and closer and closer, every day, is to see a sight. Now, you know, there's a struggle going on when that's the case" (p. 436).

Mr. Omer does not realize the full extent of the "struggle" Emily is going through, of course. Mr. Peggotty has provided Emily and Ham with a home, and with the love of a parent. But he has also tried to hold Emily too tightly (just as Mrs. Dedalus holds Stephen, and Rudolph Virag holds Bloom): his love has formed walls around the girl. When he visits the house where she is to live with Ham, he sees her even in the inanimate objects which fill the place: "theer! I can't say more--if I doen't feel as if the littlest things was her, a'most. I takes 'em up and I puts 'em down, and I touches of 'em as delicate as if they was our Em'ly" (p. 446). Thus the excessive attachment for Emily which compels Mr. Peggotty to see the girl as a "pocket model of the Colosseum" forces her out of the house-
boat and into the arms of Steerforth, who, for all his ability to ruin Emily sexually still seems preferable to the stolid, simple Ham. When Steerforth trades a boat for Emily, he offers her an escape from the prison of family (in this case, foster-family) in which she has been shut up.

But Mr. Peggotty cannot allow this to happen—he vows to re-capture Emily ("I'm a going to seek my niece through the wureld. I'm a going to find my poor niece in her shame, and bring her back" p. 450). When, after much suffering, he finally finds her, he decides to emigrate with her to Australia: "No one can't reproach my darling in Australia. We will begin a new life over theer!" (p. 724). We learn at the novel's end, when Mr. Peggotty returns for a brief final visit to England, that although Emily "might have married well a mort of times," she has refused all offers. Emily lives her life doing perpetual penance for her sin: "Cheerful along with me; retired when others is by; fond of going any distance fur to teach a child, or fur to tend a sick person, or fur to do some kindness tow'ards a young girl's wedding (and she's done a many, but has never seen one); fondly loving of her uncle; patient; like by young and old; sowyit out by all that has any trouble. That's Em'ly!"
(p. 863). In one sense Emily has sinned against herself and against her kind and loving uncle by running away with Steerforth. This would seem to be the literal "meaning," the most accepted interpretation of her actions. But "from a Walworth point of view" (that is to say, when examined in a family context), in light of her orphanhood and the choice with which she is presented (to choose Ham or to remain always in the houseboat with her uncle), her flight with Steerforth seems an attempt to escape what she recognizes to be a confining love and bleak future. That she seeks to win absolution in Australia by serving others selflessly and is unable finally to escape her uncle, are facts which point to her ultimate defeat and debasement. As with David, Emily's orphanhood is a formidable obstacle. But where Emily is destroyed by it (or escapes from it by destroying herself) David seems to reach an accommodation and an eventual self-fulfilling victory in spite of it. Mr. Peggotty is not, of course, a black villain in this family drama. Like Mrs. Bennet of Pride and Prejudice, Mr. Woodhouse in Emma, even Mr. Dombey, he too is caught up in the dangerous realities of broken families, and ultimately, the failure of human relationships. Mr. Peggotty's
flight to the new world with Emily, Mrs. Gummidge, and another of the novel's orphans, Martha, stands as a condemnation of the society which encourages people to treat others as things, to rob them of their humanity. The demands of a comic structure (and the darkness of the themes which Dickens is touching on) make necessary the escape to the new society. But it looks as if Australia will turn out to be very like England.

Steerforth too is a child haunted by parents living and dead. He lives with his mother, and David notices the resemblance in mother and son: "it was very interesting to me to see them together, not only on account of their mutual affection, but because of the strong personal resemblance between them, and the manner in which what was haughty or impetuous in him was softened by age and sex, in her, to a gracious dignity" (p. 429). But like Emily, Steerforth is the object of an overpowering, suffocating parental attachment. Mrs. Steerforth, in her unyielding pride and in the intense devotion for her son which she manifests, has transmitted to him her powers of ego and will: "All the understanding that I had now of his mis-directed energy," David claims, "became an understanding of
her character, too, and a perception that it was, in its strongest springs, the same" (pp. 465-6). Thus the relationship of mother and son here goes beyond a question of influence--Steerforth is not only influenced by his mother, he has become his mother. Behind this unholy alliance there looms the spectre of a dead parent. Steerforth tells David, "I wish to God I had had a judicious father these last twenty years" (p. 318), a statement David could as easily make. If Steerforth is "engulfed" by his hungry mother, he himself is able to engulf others. Rosa Dartle, yet another influenced orphan, recognizes the power that Steerforth is able to exercise over her, yet is unable to free herself from his influence. David recalls a day during which Steerforth attempts to "charm this singular creature into a pleasant and pleased companion," and is successful: That he should succeed, was no matter of surprise to me. That she should struggle against the fascinating influence of his delightful art--delightful nature I thought it then--did not surprise me either; for I knew that she was sometimes jaundiced and perverse. I saw her features and her manner slowly change; I saw her look at him with growing admiration; I saw her try, more and more faintly, but
always angrily, as if she condemned a weakness in herself, to resist the captivating power that he possessed" (p. 430). A childhood incident, Steerforth's throwing a hammer at Rosa and scarring her for life, symbolizes the terror one soul can exercise over another. Just as a young Jason Compson tears up his idiot brother Benjy's paper dolls in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury,* foreshadowing a horrible castration in the future, Steerforth's hypnotic influence over Rosa is symbolized by an act of violence in childhood. But Steerforth, although he is sexually menacing and a negative, virile ego-figure, nevertheless becomes more complex and more sympathetic a character when viewed in a family light. Fatherless like David, driven to a desperate pride by an overbearing mother (Steerforth's situation in this sense is very close to Edith Granger's in *Dombey*), he confronts the world in the way he has been taught--through manipulation, coercion, and sheer force of will. Thus when Rosa accuses his mother of responsibility for his death ("'Now,' she said, 'is your pride appeased, you madwoman? Now has he made atonement to you--with his life!'" p. 793), we recognize yet another sacrifice to a graven family image. Although Steerforth is a destroyer, he is as much a victim as Rosa Dartle, or David.
Mr. Wickfield tells Betsey Trotwood, "I have only one motive in life" (p. 219), referring to his love for his daughter Agnes, David's "good angel." Wickfield's attachment to Agnes, while it does contain positive elements, is as harmful in certain respects as Mr. Peggotty's for Emily or Mrs. Steerforth's for her son. Agnes, after she has told David of Uriah Heep's growing "ascendancy" (p. 365) over her father, alludes to this harm: "I almost feel as if I had been Papa's enemy, instead of his loving child. For I know how he has altered, in his devotion to me.... I know what a multitude of things he has shut out for my sake, and how his anxious thoughts of me have shadowed his life, and weakened his strength and energy, by turning them always upon one idea" (p. 366). The feelings Wickfield has for Agnes, and his own drinking problems, are intensified by the fact that Agnes' mother has died, and Agnes has had to become, like Emma Woodhouse, wife and daughter.

When David first enters Wickfield's house he notices a portrait of a lady, "with a very placid and sweet expression of face" (p. 218); soon after, when he meets Agnes, he recognizes at once "the placid and sweet expression" (p. 222) he saw in the portrait. That Agnes resembles her mother is
not surprising, but it is soon apparent that there exists in the Wickfield family a confusion of roles—the substitution of a daughter for a dead wife—and that this confusion imposes a strain on Agnes. "My natural grief for my child's mother turned to disease; my natural love for my child turned to disease" (p. 573), her father admits at one point. Wickfield's "one motive" for living is the epitome of the strained, diseased familial relationship which can victimize a child.

Uriah Heep is certainly the "villain" of the novel—his hypocrisy and greed are harmful to many. But he is also an external symbol of the internal problems within the Wickfield family. Like Murdstone and Steerforth, he is able to influence, infiltrate, and subvert a family unit, but Heep would have little power over the Wickfields were it not for Wickfield's own failures and weaknesses. Agnes says that Heep "has mastered Papa's weaknesses, fostered them, and taken advantage of them" (p. 365), but Heep has, in a sense, become those weaknesses: he is a creation of the failures of Wickfield's relationship with Agnes.

There is indication in the novel that Uriah Heep is himself a victim. Although we are surely meant to view
Heep as a negative, dangerous figure who contaminates Wickfield, Agnes, David, and even Mr. Micawber, Uriah loves his mother (and therefore cannot be all bad!). Mrs. Heep views her son "with a mother's eye," and David claims that "she and her son were devoted to one another" (p. 166).

In one passage Dickens turns Uriah—who up to this time has repeatedly been described as an ugly, repulsive reptilian figure—into a complex, human family character, at once villain and victim; Uriah tells David:

Father and me was both brought up at a foundation school for boys; and mother, she was likewise brought up at a public, sort of charitable, establishment. They taught us all a deal of umbleness—not much else that I know of, from morning to night. We was to be umble to this person, and umble to that; and to pull off our caps here, and to make bows there; and always to know our place, and abase ourselves before our betters. And we had such a lot of betters! Father got the monitor-medal for being umble. So did I. Father got made a sexton by being umble. He had the character, among the gentlefolks, of being such a well-behaved man, that they were determined to bring him in. 'Be umble, Uriah,' says Father to me, 'and you'll get on. It was what was always being dinned into you and me at school; it's what goes down best. Be umble,' says Father, 'and you'll do!' And really it ain't done bad! (pp. 569-70).

David responds at this point, in the role of the reflective narrator, that "it was the first time it had ever occurred
to me, that this detestable cant of false humility might have originated out of the Heep family. I had seen the harvest, but had never thought of the seed" (p. 570). Uriah has been sinned against by parents, by educators, and by society, and is a product of the successes of materialism, and the failures of love within the family.

Dickens' elaborate patterns of theme and image impart to the reader the strong impression that all the myriad characters in the novel are in reality a handful of "types." The novel contains orphan-victims like David, Emily, Steerforth, Agnes, Martha, and Dora, Mr. Dick, even Traddles and the page who serves David and Dora after their marriage (pp. 684-85). These characters are intimidated and sinned against by the "influencers," like the Murdstones, Mr. Peggotty, Mrs. Steerforth, and Uriah. But as we have seen, this is a complex novel, and this typecasting far too facile an analysis of it. Uriah, Steerforth, and Mr. Peggotty are both victims and "influencers." David is victimized repeatedly in the novel, yet he too sins, especially against the child-like, vulnerable Dora.

The point I wish to make is that by peopling his novel with orphans and broken families, by repeating such related
themes as the problems caused by child-wives, Dickens has created a long epic--in fiction--of the family nexus, its relationships, and its often harmful effects on malleable children. As a statement of the power of family ties Mrs. Micawber's often-repeated protestation of love and fidelity, "I never will desert Mr. Micawber," is a short step away from Mrs. Steerforth's hold on her son. Emily's flight from her family, and Uriah's struggle for power, are closely related to David's search for a "disciplined heart"--a search to which we shall now turn.

In his struggle to establish a permanent identity and a consistent relationship with his environment, David, as the child-hero, seeks an existential stasis in a world of flux. The personal attributes which should accompany him on his heroic quest--his name, sex, age--are erased and blurred during his "miraculous childhood" and throughout the rites of initiation we discussed in the first chapter. Such personal confusions make him more vulnerable to the influence of others. Like Emma Woodhouse, David must enter into and subsequently discard a succession of "life roles" until, after a Jungian "night-sea journey," he penetrates
to what Campbell terms a "source of power" (Hero, p. 35).

David is born at the stroke of midnight—he tells us that "the clock began to strike, and I began to cry, simultaneously" (p. 1). He was born with a caul, a "magical" sign which serves both to announce the child-hero and to point out the mythic and existential difficulties he will encounter—ten years after he is born, when the caul is raffled off, David feels as if part of himself were being sold: "I remember to have felt quite uncomfortable and confused, at a part of myself being disposed of in that way" (p. 2). He is, throughout the novel, continually made aware of his youth and inexperience, even after he has grown out of physical childhood. Steerforth's servant Littimer never fails to make David feel young and foolish: "however far I might have been lifted out of myself over night, and advanced toward maturer years, by Steerforth's companionship, or Mrs. Steerforth's confidence, or Miss Dartle's conversation, in the presence of this most respectable man I became, as our smaller poets sing, 'a boy again'" (p. 297). Steerforth himself treats David "like a plaything" (p. 298). When David is reunited with Peggotty after a long separation he is again transported back in time: "I was troubled with
no misgiving that it was young in me to respond to her emotions" (p. 304). After Mr. Spenlow has introduced
David to the world of proctors at Court, when he and his
aunt leave the Commons, he begins "feeling very young"
(p. 348) when the clerks point him out to each other. David
is taken advantage of by a host of servants and waiters who
carry his shaving-water, eat his meals, and assign him to
inferior rooms. Littimer calls him "Young Innocence"
(p. 459) in conversation with Miss Mowcher; in his travels,
and especially during his brief marriage to Dora, his inno-
cence and naivete are constantly reinforced. Even Uriah
Heep, by referring to him always as "Master" Copperfield,
adds to David's feelings of enforced youth and innocence.

In addition to being locked in a perpetual childhood,
David is at times a distinctively androgynous hero. Aunt
Betsey expects a girl, and walks out of the house when
Dr. Chillip tells her "I apprehended you had known. It's
a boy" (p. 11). But his aunt's wish is somehow communicated
to the boy: "I lay in my basket, and my mother lay in her
bed; but Betsey Trotwood Copperfield was for ever in the
land of dreams and shadows, the tremendous region whence
I had so lately travelled" (p. 12). David is physically
attracted to Steerforth: "I thought of him very much after I went to bed, and raised myself, I recollect, to look at him where he lay in the moonlight, with his handsome face turned up, and his head reclining easily on his arm. He was a person of great power in my eyes" (pp. 86-87). Steerforth calls David "Daisy," and has him read aloud to him in the morning and evening, David claiming that "it was a tiresome thing to be roused, like the Sultana Scheherazade, and forced into a long story before the getting-up bell rang" (p. 92).

By being constantly reminded of his youth, by enduring attacks upon his sexual identity, and by being assigned a series of names (he is Trotwood, or Trot, to Aunt Betsey; Daisy to Steerforth; Doady to Dora), David is confronted with an environment of blurred distinctions, perverse and arbitrary realities which keep him off-balance and allow him to fall under the spell of a series of strongly influential characters. Aunt Betsey's is a powerful influence over David, but she recognizes his existential weaknesses, and seeks to correct them: "what I want you to be, Trot...is, a firm fellow. A fine firm fellow, with a will of your own." She attempts to save David from the
negative domination of someone like Steerforth by helping him develop a "strength of character that is not to be influenced, except in good reason, by anybody, or by anything" (p. 273). Aunt Betsey seeks to make David "firm and self-reliant" (p. 350). David himself feels the need to escape his ambiguous existence. He tells Agnes: "I get so miserable and worried, and am so unsteady and irresolute in my power of assuring myself, that I know I must want—shall I call it—reliance, of some kind?" (p. 562). But he does make continued progress toward this goal. His painful mastery of shorthand is responsible for "a patient and continuous energy which then began to be matured" (p. 601) in him. Aunt Betsey, after admitting to him that she deliberately misled him as to the true state of her finances in order to test him, states: "I wanted to see how you would come out of the trial, Trot; and you came out nobly—persevering, self-reliant, self-denying!" (p. 770). It is not until David recognizes his matured love for Agnes, however, after he has cleared away all ambiguities of self, age, and sex, and overcome the barriers of his orphanhood, that he succeeds in his quest for heroic knowledge and fulfillment. Agnes represents the spiritual prize he has been seeking.
In the first chapter I spoke of a general principle in novels of individuation which equates the sphere of the mother with material, life-sustaining concerns and that of the father with such spiritual ideals as mind and soul. In this context, David Copperfield's heroic journey, complicated as it is by his orphanhood and the hostile environment in which he must move, can be seen as a progression from a material world to a spiritual one—a journey away from the world of money, proctors, and possessions, into the self. It is also a quest for a father. In the terminology of R. D. Laing, David's movement is from the embodied self to the unembodied, a cyclical journey of spiritual growth and growing self-awareness. David's development of the artistic, literary legacy from his father and his acceptance of the other-worldly love of Agnes are metaphorical indications of the success of this quest.

Many novels deal with art as a major theme—Joyce Cary's *The Horse's Mouth*, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*, Joyce's *Portrait*—all these come to mind. But *David Copperfield* is concerned with art (more specifically, with literature and the written word) to as great an extent as any of these
works. The boys' initials carved on the school door at Salem House, David's crocodile book, Mr. Barkis' copy of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, Mr. Dick's *Memorial*, Dr. Strong's *Dictionary* and the letters of Mr. Micawber, all further this literary theme. David is introduced to his classmates at Mr. Creakle's school by means of the sign, "Take care of him. He bites" (p. 76). We have already alluded to the fact that the young hero learns shorthand in order to support himself and his aunt, and that before this he is commissioned by Steerforth to read aloud from the novels he has read at home. David claims that "whatever I had within me that was romantic and dreamy, was encouraged by so much story-telling in the dark" (p. 93). It is significant that his career as stenographer and court reporter, his later journalistic endeavors, and his final success as a novelist and autobiographer—in short, his interest in the written word—has as its beginnings the library at Blunderstone Rookery which was left him by his father (p. 54).

David's dead father is a noticeable spiritual presence in the novel. The "posthumous child" is aware of this presence early on: "There is something strange to me, even now, in the reflection that he never saw me; and something
stranger yet in the shadowy remembrance that I have of my 
first childish associations with his white grave-stone in 
the churchyard, and of the indefinable compassion I used 
to feel for it lying out alone there in the dark night, 
when our little parlour was warm and bright with fire 
and candle, and the doors of our house were--almost 
cruelly, it seemed to me sometimes--bolted and locked 
against it" (p. 2). David, in referring to his female 
other, and to "the land of dreams and shadows" where she 
dwells, alludes also to "the mound above the ashes and the 
dust that once was he, without whom I had never been" 
(p. 12), in an obvious reference to his dead father. What 
is spiritual, dark and mysterious in his character can be 
seen as a result of this childhood relationship to a dead 
father. David's response to this influence from the grave 
is complex. He recalls the "best parlour," where the 
g Family would sit on a Sunday evening, and he associates 
the "doleful air" of the room with his father's funeral: 
"One Sunday night my mother reads to Peggotty and me in 
there, how Lazarus was raised up from the dead. And I am 
so frightened that they are afterwards obliged to take me 
out of bed, and show me the quiet churchyard out of the
bedroom window, with the dead all lying in their graves at rest, below the solemn moon" (p. 14). When Peggotty tells David "you have got a Pa" when Clara remarries, he is petrified: "I trembled, and turned white. Something--I don't know what, or how--connected with the grave in the churchyard, and the raising of the dead, seemed to strike me like an unwholesome wind" (p. 42). But if this parental haunting at times horrifies the child, it can also serve as a comforting, pastoral reassurance: "There is nothing half so green that I know anywhere, as the grass of that churchyard; nothing half so shady as its trees; nothing half so quiet as its tombstones" (p. 14). This ambiguous response--the fear of and longing for a dead father and death itself is sustained throughout the novel. David is afraid of the innate spirituality and the restive powers of the imagination; yet at the same time this imagination offers him the means to escape the meaninglessness and rigidity of a bleak world of broken human relationships.

David's legacy from his father--his books--helps the child endure the evils of the Murdstone household: "They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time" (p. 54). The "something" beyond his present physical suffering is a weapon which allows him to
transcend his own limitations. This benign parental influence continues as David's literary powers increase. J. Hillis Miller claims that "David Copperfield...is before anything a novel of memory." During the course of his autobiography, the incidents David relates are transformed, from memory, to a heightened, more animated reality—charged with an imaginative, almost physical quality, David is able to recreate the past, in other words, just as Proust recreates it, or in the same way Quentin Compson "lives" history in Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom! David resurrects his mother's burial: "It is over, and the earth is filled in, and we turn to come away. Before us stands our house, so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my mind with the young idea of what is gone, that all my sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow it calls forth" (p. 130). In this case he presents us with a memory, specifically a memory of the burial of his mother; this in turn recalls the early happiness he enjoyed with her, and both memories then become present influences on the author, who is of course writing in the "present."

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24 Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels, p. 152.
When David flees his job at Murdstone and Grinby's and sleeps one night outside the walls of Salem House, he tells us that "never shall I forget the lonely sensation of first lying down, without a roof above my head," an observation made in the present--as the author remembers. But while the boy David is sleeping outside Mr. Creakle's he dreams of another past, "of lying on my old school-bed, talking to the boys in my room" (p. 181). These layers of imaginative memory are directly related to David's father and to his influence over his son. Memory becomes a resurrecting force, an instrument of that imagination which seeks to recapture lost time. There exists a direct line, I am arguing, connecting the white grave in the churchyard, the literary development of the child and his powers of memory and recreation of experience, and his eventual heroic attainment of self-discipline and personal fulfillment. Against the physical existence of childhood (the beating he suffers at the hands of Murdstone and his retaliation for that beating point out the real dangers of this physical existence), the financial problems encountered by David and his aunt, the problems generated by his ties to his child-mother, David pits the spiritual
talents and resources he has inherited from his father.

When David chooses Dora Spenlow—a simple-minded girl who calls to mind Rosamond Vincy of *Middlemarch* or Gerty MacDowell in *Ulysses*—he does not yet recognize the full extent of the inheritance we have been discussing. He chooses in Dora a woman like his mother, a weak child-wife whose immature character reinforces his own naivete. But, with the dark irony of which Dickens is capable, David's bride becomes deathly ill as a result of what is apparently an aborted pregnancy: "I had hoped that lighter hands than mine would help to mould her character, and that a baby-smile upon her breast might change my child-wife to a woman. It was not to be. The spirit fluttered for a moment on the threshold of its little prison, and, unconscious of captivity, took wing" (p. 692). It is Dora's death which drives David deep into his own soul, propelling him on a journey to pastoral Switzerland, and eventually to Agnes. After numerous psychological jolts—the deaths of Dora, Ham and Steerforth, the emigration of Emily, Mr. Peggotty, Mrs. Gummidge and Martha, and the Micawbers—David is "haunted by the ghosts of many hopes, of many dear remembrances, many errors, many unavailing sorrows and regrets"
In a valley in Switzerland he finds once again the mysterious beauty of the green cemetery: "In the course of my descent to it, by the winding track along the mountain-side, from which I saw it shining far below, I think some long-unwonted sense of beauty and tranquillity, some softening influence awakened by its peace, moved faintly in my breast. I remember pausing once, with a kind of sorrow that was not all oppressive, not quite despairing" (p. 808). It is here that David undergoes his final initiatory experience and is made aware of the full extent of his spiritual legacy: "In the quiet air, there was a sound of distant singing--shepherd voices; but, as one bright evening cloud floated midway along the mountain's-side, I could almost have believed it came from there, and was not earthly music" (p. 809). This description recalls the beautiful stasis of his father's grave--David's three-year sojourn in the lovely valley represents a mythic "death" of the soul, a ritual purification and education.

While he is in this spiritual exile, reminiscent of Mr. Pickwick's stay in the Fleet and young Martin's in America, David reflects on his relationship with Agnes,
whose "sisterly affection" (p. 811) he has come to depend on. He has throughout the novel used markedly spiritual terms to describe her—he refers to "her constancy and fortitude" (p. 812), and calls her his "good angel." He is ready now to accept his spiritual bride. If Dora was an avatar of his mother and represented his involvement with the material world, his love for Agnes, in its pristine spirituality, points to his acceptance of his father's gifts: David now chooses a woman like his father. He has matured, endured suffering and psychological shocks, and experienced a "long and gloomy night" (p. 807) away from all human contact. The various personae he has had to project are now destroyed. By accepting his father's legacy, David inherits a history and a name, and is able to withstand existential attacks on his age and sex. Ambiguities of self have been cleared away, and the young hero, no longer an orphan, breaks through to the mythic region Campbell terms the "land of dreams and shadows."

Or at least that would appear to be the case: a young hero has gained fulfillment and love, and society is redeemed. But when David's winning of Agnes is placed in its proper context, viewed in the light of the novel's overall
comic resolution, a darker picture develops. For Creakle's prison still exists, and its two model prisoners, Heep and Littimer, are "perfectly consistent and unchanged" (p. 850). The new comic society, as James R. Kincaid has pointed out, is bleak indeed: "a collection of the most distinctly misfit: the imprisoned, the alienated, the mad, and the dying."²⁵ If Agnes is David's reward, she is as much his penance and punishment. Just as Emily will spend her life doing penance in Australia, David seeks in Agnes' other-worldliness an expiation for his own sins, the most horrible of which is his responsibility for Dora's death. David has found his dead father, and death itself, in Agnes. The ego-renouncing, selfless woman, another Esther Summerson or Florence Dombey, exists as a source of strength and spiritual energy for David, but she also represents his dark failures of love and will. Aptly, the autobiography ends with a hymn to Agnes' spirituality and purity, and a plea for death:

Oh Agnes, Oh my soul, so may thy face be
by me when I close my life indeed; so may I,
when realities are melting from me like the shadows which I now dismiss, still find thee near me, pointing upward!

²⁵Dickens and the Rhetoric of Laughter, p. 162.
Dickens' ambiguous treatment of such ego-less characters as Agnes and Florence Dombey, and his equally ambiguous portrayals of family ties, serve to create novels of individuation which detail a hero's contradictory relationship with his own family. David Copperfield and Florence Dombey remain suspended between antithetical family symbols, caught by a need to rest within the family walls, yet driven to seek a personal transcendence outside. When viewed in a family context, David Copperfield and Dombey and Son are novels without endings or resolutions, novels about the persistence of family.
CHAPTER FOUR

"A MAN'S WORST ENEMIES": THE FAMILY IN THE FICTION OF JAMES JOYCE

"A Prisoner for Life": Self and Family in Dubliners

I know of no more useful introduction to Joyce's novels than his book of stories, Dubliners. Although I am concerned primarily with novels in this study, Dubliners—like Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio, Hemingway's In Our Time, and Faulkner's The Unvanquished and Go, Down, Moses—is a unified piece of fiction so nearly approaching the structure, thematic texture, and symbolic architecture of what we refer to as "novel" as to permit its inclusion here. In addition, Dubliners introduces the reader to most of the major themes dealt with in Joyce's later work, especially that basic confrontation between the developing self and egoic other (and ultimately, the demanding family) which appears with such dizzying frequency throughout Joyce's fiction. The world of Dubliners is people by timidly sensitive, aesthetically precocious heroes forced to re-define their limits of self in an intense moment of education.
and revelation. This painful re-structuring of psyche and soul is brought about by a direct head-to-head clash with an older, darker other, with an oppressive family master, or, in a more general sense, with a hostile universe and intolerable environment. We see in *Dubliners* an outline of the broken family maps and the failures of human love which serve as primary themes in Joyce's later work.

As Harry Levin has stated about the stories, "in every one of these fifteen case histories, we seem to be reading in the annals of frustration."¹ The heroes of *Dubliners*² undergo a forced existential retreat, a limiting or re-grouping of their emotional and aesthetic forces. Self reaches out in an all-too-human act of love, or trust, and is punished, made to turn back after a blinding flash of self-awareness. In the sense that they struggle against an established system or a family, these heroes are all children. Inherent in the moment of revelation are the ideas of education, initiation, and influence (especially

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² James Joyce, *Dubliners* (New York: The Viking Press, 1967). All references are to this edition, and will appear in the text.
the influence of old over young) we have traced through the novels of Austen and Dickens. The impressionable child-heroes of the first two stories in Dubliners, "The Sisters" and "An Encounter," are initiated into the "real" world of adult imperfection, sin and guilt through the efforts of two older others who act as educators, and spiritual father-figures, to the boys.

In "The Sisters" Mr. Cotter cautions the young narrator against associating with "the simoniac," Father James Flynn, claiming that "when children see things like that, you know, it has an effect" (p. 11). But as the boy's uncle puts it, "the old chap taught him a great deal" (10); this fallen priest with the mysterious past has introduced the child to a new world of knowledge. The boy himself describes this education: "he had taught me a great deal. He had studied in the Irish college in home and he had taught me to pronounce Latin properly. He had told me stories about the catacombs and about Napoleon Bonaparte, and he had explained to me the meaning of the different ceremonies of the Mass and of the different vestments worn by the priest. Sometimes he had amused himself by putting different questions to me, asking me what one should do in certain circumstances or whether such sins were mortal or
venial or only imperfections" (13). But the boy's education goes deeper than this. In a dream which carries the child to "some pleasant and vicious region" (11), "some land where the customs were strange--Persia, I thought" (13-14), a region which anticipates the dream landscape of Nighttown and of Finnegans Wake, the old priest appears to the boy: "I drew the blankets over my head and tried to think of Christmas. But the grey face still followed me. It murmured; and I understood that it desired to confess something" (11).³ Thoughts of the childhood joys embodied in Christmas are not sufficient to keep away the priest's insistent advances; Father Flynn's sins, his physical paralysis and madness, are adult mysteries which initiate the boy into the dark magic represented by the confessional. The symbol of the confession box, reinforced in the story by the repeated images of drapery, vestments and clothing,

³The boy's dream is similar to Stephen's thoughts of his confessor-friend Cranly, in the Portrait: "Why was it that when he thought of Cranly he could never raise before his mind the entire image of his body but only the image of the head and face?" See A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), p. 178. Subsequent references to the Portrait are to this edition, and will appear in the text.
which suggest the covered window of the confessional and the confessor's garb, becomes the central image of a story replete with religious symbolism.

Whether the priest's sins were "mortal of venial or only imperfections" his death imparts to his young pupil a knowledge which is at the same time redeeming and confining. The boy feels strangely elated by Father Flynn's death: "I found it strange that neither I nor the day seemed in a mourning mood and I felt even annoyed at discovering in myself a sensation of freedom as if I had been freed from something by his death" (12). One of the priest's two sisters, Eliza, explains the mysterious "sins" committed by her brother: "It was that chalice he broke.... That was the beginning of it. Of course, they say it was all right, that it contained nothing, I mean. But still.... They say it was the boy's fault. But poor James was so nervous, God be merciful to him" (17). The broken chalice "affected his mind" (17), and one night Father Flynn is found "sitting up by himself in the dark in his confession-box, wide-awake and laughing-like softly to himself" (18).

Thus the boy's dream and the mental collapse of the old priest both revolve around the powerful symbol of the
sacrament of confession—a symbol in which is inherent the idea of a one-sided "communication" between two selves, and the influence of age over youth. Father Flynn "confesses" to the child in a dream and educates him during the time the two spend together; the child in turn becomes father to the man—a repository for such secrets of adulthood as imperfection, decay, and inevitable death. The boy learns of guilt and sin (two topics about which all of Joyce's heroes receive instruction), and is both freed and trapped by the knowledge. While at the story's end he may sit "unstirred by anything in the natural world," the boy has undergone a spiritual journey from youth to age. The rites of initiation which take place in the psychological arena of the confessional influence the child toward old age, luring him away from the pleasant ignorance of childhood.

"An Encounter" is another story of an old man's influence over a child. On a journey of separation, initiation, and return in which the boy-narrator crosses

water (the Liffey) accompanied by a mysterious palmer figure ("a little Jew with a bag," p. 23), school, family, childhood itself, and the structured discipline such institutions represent, are exchanged for a dangerous confrontation with a dark man bearing secrets. If the lesson of "The Sisters" involved a hellish vision of madness, paralysis and death, the teacher of "An Encounter" impresses upon the malleable psyche of his young pupil a knowledge of sexual power, furtive adventure, and the uncertain nature of human love. The hero's movement in the story is from order and discipline inward to chaos, to a charged psychological confrontation with self.

Like the old man the boys will encounter later, Joe Dillon is a symbol of the wild freedom the narrator seeks. It is he who "introduced the Wild West" (19) to the other children. Joe Dillon always triumphed in the childhood games and battles ("all our bouts ended with Joe Dillon's war dance of victory," 19), and he is, in the eyes of the other boys, the very embodiment of the Wild West: "But he played too fiercely for us who were younger and more timid. He looked like some kind of an Indian when he capered round the garden, an old tea-cosy on his head, beating a
tin with his fist and yelling: 'Ya! yaka, yaka, yaka!'" (19). The "restraining influence of school" (20) is balanced against a hunger for excitement: "A spirit of unruliness diffused itself among us and, under its influence, differences of culture and constitution were waived" (20). One day, after Joe Dillon's clumsy brother Leo is reprimanded for reading an adventure story in class, the narrator begins "to hunger again for wild sensations" (21). He has already admitted to a fascination for "some American detective stories which were traversed from time to time by unkempt fierce and beautiful girls" (20), and he now feels a need to attain "the escape which those chronicles of disorder alone seemed to offer." But since to hunger for adventure and disorder is not to experience it the boy decides to actively seek an escape from "the routine of school," habit, and a regimented existence: "But real adventures, I reflected, do not happen to people who remain at home: they must be sought abroad" (21). Unfortunately, like all would-be Jasons in Joyce's fiction, the boy-voyager is unable to realize his wish fully--the "wild sensations" for which he will search take the form of a frightening encounter with a pathetically lonely old man.
Instead of travelling "abroad" in search of reality the young hero will travel within himself, where, like the hero of "The Sisters," he will experience under the tutelage of a dark other a flash of self-knowledge.

As the journey progresses and the two children approach the river the narrator refers again to "the restraining influences" of home and school: "Mahony said it would be right skit to run away to sea on one of those big ships and even I, looking at the high masts, saw, or imagined, the geography which had been scantily dosed to me at school gradually taking substance under my eyes. School and home seemed to recede from us and their influences upon us seemed to wane" (23). After crossing the Liffey they meet the old man in a deserted field. It is during this meeting that the boy is punished for attempting to exceed the limits of his own self. After talking of literature and becoming agitated while speaking to the boys "about girls," "saying what nice soft hair they had and how soft their hands were and how all girls were not so good as they seemed to be if only one knew" (26), the old man masturbates. Like Bloom's onanism on the beach in the presence of Gerty Macdowell, the old man's act symbolizes
an overwhelming personal alienation, a state of painful isolation from the rest of mankind. Mahony witnesses this act, and although the narrator does not he nevertheless seems to know what has happened. He has learned from this demonstration of futility--to signify his new knowledge he takes a new name. Just as David Copperfield's various names were emblematic of his continuing education at the hands of others, the young hero of "An Encounter" changes his name to Smith: the boy becomes man, but more importantly, as his new name suggests, he becomes an Everyman. The "unkempt fierce and beautiful girls" who fascinate him early in the story become, in the nightmare surroundings of this inward journey, a dream vision of an old man's lonely act, of perverse love and broken human relationships. But what is to the boy more unsettling than the sexual lesson he witnesses is the old man's reaching out to him for sympathy and understanding. The man "grew almost affectionate and seemed to plead" that the child "understand him" (27), and the lesson in alienation, old age, and frustration is complete. Not before the boy, however, like other of Joyce's heroes, experiences an epiphany of shame and penitence. As shabby and twisted as they appear to be, the old
man's acts of love awaken the boy to his own lack of compassion and humanity. As he calls out to Mahony-Murphy he recognizes the failures of self and of his own attempts at human love and understanding: "My voice had an accent of forced bravery in it and I was ashamed of my paltry stratagem. I had to call the name again before Mahony saw me and hallooed in answer. How my heart beat as he came running across the field to me! He ran as if to bring me aid. And I was penitent; for in my heart I had always despised him a little" (28). The boy has encountered himself there on the deserted field.

The hero of "Araby," like the narrators of "The Sisters" and "An Encounter," is an artist-child of Proustian sensitivity who is granted a sudden vision of his own imperfections of self. Like the encounters in the confessional and in the lonely field on the other side of the river, the moment of vision in "Araby" takes place in dream-like surroundings—in this case a bazaar held in "a large building which displayed the magical name" (34) of "Araby," a name which "cast an Eastern enchantment" (32) over the child. The new knowledge offered to the boy as
part of his initiation rite concerns sex and love—the vision of Mangan's sister (and we shall say more about such visions in the second section of this chapter) suffuses him with a transcending, over-powering desire to break free from childhood and its confining discipline: "I answered few questions in class. I watched my master's face pass from amiability to sternness; he hoped I was not beginning to idle. I could not call my wandering thoughts together. I had hardly any patience with the serious work of life which, now that it stood between me and my desire, seemed to me child's play, ugly monotonous child's play" (32). He promises to bring the girl a gift, and after this solemn oath is given, and after his drunken uncle nearly causes him to miss the bazaar entirely, the boy arrives at the darkened building and the stage is set for the explosive moment of love and futility: "Nearly all the stalls were closed and the greater part of the hall was in darkness. I recognized a silence like that which pervades a church after a service" (34). The child is shamed by an English girl who half-heartedly waits on him, and when the lights in the hall go out completely he experiences an inner illumination of his own folly and failure: "Gazing up into
the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity: and my eyes burned with anguish and anger" (35). The darkness of the hall becomes a cosmic, all-pervasive darkness which drives a child from the safety of youth into the bleak adulthood of retreat and limitation.

The opening trilogy of Dubliners depicts the dangers inherent in the developing soul's confrontation with the other or with society itself. The retreat into shame and guilt detailed in these stories is a recurring image throughout the book. The pattern of a hero's movement from stasis to confrontation to correction, imposes a structure on many of the stories. After an intense family confrontation, Little Chandler experiences such a moment of self-correction in the story "A Little Cloud:" "Little Chandler felt his cheeks suffused with shame and he stood back out of the lamplight. He listened while the paroxysm of the child's sobbing grew less and less; the tears of remorse started to his eyes" (85). After enduring a day of frustration Farrington, the protagonist of "Counterparts," just before he goes home and savagely beats his son, undergoes a similar ritual of retreat: "He was full of smoldering anger and revengefulness. He felt humiliated
and discontented" (96). Even Duffy, the stoic hero of "A Painful Case," having learned of the death of Mrs. Emily Sinico, and encountering "some human figures" (117) embracing in the dark night, is made to look inward in guilt and remorse: "Those venal and furtive loves filled him with despair. He gnawed the rectitude of his life; he felt that he had been outcast from life's feast" (117).

When Martin Cunningham echoes the "Credo" of John MacHale there in Tom Kernan's sickroom in the story "Grace," he conjures up in the minds of his audience the discipline and self-abnegation demanded by the church: "Mr. Cunningham's words had built up the vast image of the church in the minds of his hearers. His deep, raucous voice had thrilled them as it uttered the word of belief and submission" (170).

During the sermon Father Purdon delivers at the retreat—a retreat which is itself an image of the penitential inward vision we have been discussing—the priest alludes to man's inherent limitation and his responsibility to correct past sins: "Well, I have looked into my accounts. I find this

5In the Portrait, for example, Father Arnall warns the boys "to put away from your minds during these few days all worldly thoughts, whether of study or pleasure or ambition, and to give all your attention to the state of your souls" (110).
wrong and this wrong. But, with God's grace, I will rectify this and this. I will set right my accounts" (174).

In "The Dead," Gabriel Conroy, having learned of his wife's love for the dead Michael Furey, immerses himself in shame and guilt: "He saw himself as a ludicrous figure, acting as a pennyboy for his aunts, a nervous, well-meaning sentimentalist, orating to vulgarians and idealising his own clownish lusts, the pitiable fatuous fellow he had caught a glimpse of in the mirror" (220). Thus the sensitive heroes of Dubliners who dare to move forward in a well-intentioned act of love or compassion, or even those who seek only to live their lives isolated from the deadness of their surroundings, are beaten back and forced to seek safety in a retreat of self-correction. The intimidation of the self by an aggressive other announces the hero's shortcomings--his powerlessness in the face of an overwhelming blackness.

The world of Dubliners is indeed a bleak one when viewed in the light of the self-against-other and hero-against-environment confrontations upon which we have been focusing throughout this study. When we attempt to move from the self's position in relation to the other to the self's political situation within the family, the overall
picture becomes darker still. At the very center of Joyce's art lies the microcosm of the individual within the family. The dark family maps of *Dubliners*, like the broken, cluttered family landscapes of the *Portrait*, *Ulysses*, and *Finnegans Wake*, serve as highly-charged, complex emblems of despair, pointing out the inevitable enslavement of a would-be hero.

"Eveline" portrays the power of the family as it reaches out to trap the developing self and place it into the "double-bind" situation we have alluded to several times before. It is not enough to say, as William York Tindall does, that "Eveline...is a girl too moribund to abandon the dust of her native city for the good air of exile."\(^6\)

Eveline looks backward to a softer past, a childhood which, for all its emotional dangers, is nevertheless more attractive than both an unhappy present with her father and the uncertain future she faces with Frank in South America. Memories of her father and family come to mind as she contemplates this future: "Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick; but usually little Keogh used to keep nix and call out when he saw her

father coming. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then. Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up; her mother was dead" (36-37). Eveline cannot help viewing her elopement in a family context, seeing her departure as yet another step in the family's gradual disintegration: "Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home" (37). Family, and especially the memory of it tempered by a yearning for lost childhood, seems a definite security: "She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to weigh each side of the question. In her home anyway she had shelter and food; she had those whom she had known all her life about her" (37). In the course of this study we have often encountered the effects of familial influence from beyond the grave—a formidable link connecting a hero to a historically rigid, established family pattern. Eveline Hill is the victim of such an influence. She is trapped inside her mother, slowly becoming her mother as surely as Emma Woodhouse and Agnes Wickfield were forced to adopt the role of mother (and father's bride) in their respective family
dramas. Eveline feels that "in her new home, in a distant unknown country" things would be different: "Then she would be married--she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father's violence" (37-38).

It is a similar influence from the grave which keeps her father from beating her--an influence which seems to the girl to be weakening. We are told that "latterly he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother's sake" (38).

But in spite of her father's threatened violence and his drinking, the "invariable squabble for money on Saturday nights" (38), and the other indignities the partial orphan is made to suffer (and which should, one would think, make her decision an easy one), Eveline is not able to accept the idea of flight from the family: "It was hard work--a hard life--but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life" (38). Laing claims that, "in some families parents cannot allow children to break the 'family' down within themselves...because this is felt as the break-up of the family" (PF, 13). Eveline
feels a definite responsibility to "save" the family. The girl is caught, faced with an intolerable situation within the family which demands flight, yet at the same time aware of the fact that she is the family which, without her, would cease to exist. Her father has forbidden her to see Frank after he has learned of the affair, and she is to elope with Frank that evening. But in these last few moments thoughts of her dead mother serve to tie her more tightly to the family. Hearing a street organ playing below, Eveline recalls a pledge she made to her dying mother during a deathbed meeting which anticipates Stephen Dedalus' last audience with his mother: "Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could" (40). In an intense moment which transports Eveline back in time to "the close dark room at the other side of the hall" where her dying mother lies "in final craziness," the girl is terrified by her mother's voice "saying constantly with foolish insistence: 'Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!'" (40).

The meeting with her mother's ghost fills her with the immediate desire for flight: "She stood up in a sudden
impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her" (40). But her mother's words have caught her and hold her fast--family has woven itself so tightly around her she can never hope to escape. Unable to remain within the family and unable to escape, Eveline is at the story's end reduced to a dumb withdrawal by these anxieties generated by the family which transfix her on the dock and prevent her from following Frank "beyond the barrier": "He was shouted at to go on but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition" (41).

"After the Race" is a story which, like "Eveline," portrays the enormous power of the family--more specifically, the family as political history and myth; it is a story which details the perversion of a joyous festival of youth into a nightmare of lost innocence and of history. "After the Race" contains numerous references to, and images of, movement, momentum, and mobility, which have the cumulative effect of delineating a vigorous, youthful mode of being which is, in turn, undercut by the static sphere of Jimmy's father and his father's country. As the story opens, we get
both a description of the racing cars as they approach Dublin and a statement of the dominant theme. The cars are described as "scudding," "running," and "careering," while Irish spectators are passively "gathered in clumps" (42). We are told that "through this channel of poverty and inaction the Continent sped its wealth and industry" (42). Ireland represents here (and throughout *Dubliners*) the sterility, docility, and the spiritually dead qualities of "the gratefully oppressed," and the Irish sightseers warmly cheer the victorious French. One of the French cars contains "a party of four young men whose spirits seemed to be at present well above the level of successful Gallicism." Indeed, these four men "were almost hilarious" (42).

Opposed to the movement and gaiety of the opening is the description of Jimmy's father, a man who "had begun life as an advanced Nationalist" but had "modified his views early" and "made his money as a butcher in Kingstown" (43). Evolving from a youthful political idealist to an aged "merchant prince" (43), Jimmy's father exemplifies another element in the total deadness which is Ireland. When we learn that he began in Kingstown, had been able to
"secure some police contracts" (43), and had become a butcher, we recognize the bitter irony with which Joyce portrays Irish nationalism. Like his father Jimmy exhibits a shallowness of character and an inability to resist the influences of money and the good life. When he is sent to college in England and later to Dublin University, the boy "did not study very earnestly and took to bad courses for a while" (43). Jimmy "had money and he was popular; and he divided his time curiously between musical and motoring circles," and after he is sent to Cambridge "to see a little life," he is brought home by a father who is "remonstrative, but covertly proud of the excess" (43) and who pays his son's bills.

But still "the car ran on merrily with its cargo of hilarious youth" (44). And "rapid motion through space" (44), along with "money" and "notoriety" succeed in adding to Jimmy's excitement (the notoriety refers to the fact that Jimmy had been seen by many Irish friends "in the company of these Continentals," 44; the money to his father's wealth). The automobile race "laid a magical finger on the genuine pulse of life" (45) and when the car stops in the city Jimmy and his friend get out and push
"through the knot of gazers" (45), who are fascinated by the shiny symbol of all things non-Irish. Later Jimmy's father "expressed a real respect for foreign accomplishments" (46) to his son's guest, Villona. At dinner the conversation turns to English madrigals and French "mechanicians" (46), two topics which Jimmy himself appreciates in light of his fascination with music and motoring. But in the company of the Continentals the boy undergoes that type of transformation we saw in "Eveline"--Jimmy becomes his father for one brief moment during a discussion of politics emphasizing the familial influence which the young hero confronts: "Here was congenial ground for all. Jimmy, under generous influences, felt the buried zeal of his father wake to life within him" (46) and "there was even danger of personal spite" (46).

The danger passes since like his father Jimmy is an ineffectual patriot; after this parody of a father's compromise with political ideals has been enacted the youths continue their gay movement through Dublin's static surroundings. They "strolled along St. Stephen's Green in a faint cloud of aromatic smoke," they "talked loudly and gaily and their cloaks dangled from their shoulders" (46).
But Dublin only "wore the mask of a capital" (46) that night. The youths encounter Farley, an American, and they all get "up on a car, squeezing themselves together amid much laughter" (47). After taking a train to Kingstown Station--the name of which further establishes the invisible presence of Jimmy's father--the party approaches the harbor, which "lay like a darkened mirror at their feet" (47). A rowboat takes them out to Farley's yacht, where "there was to be supper, music, cards" (47). And once there, after the same significant water crossing which played a part in "An Encounter," the revelry intensifies with a blurring of the boundaries which distinguish sex from sex, and the real from the surreal: "Villona played a waltz for Farley and Riviere, Farley acting as cavalier and Riviere as lady. Then an impromptu square dance, the men devising original figures" (47).

After the sustained movement described in the story, the racing cars, the passenger car in Dublin, train ride and boat ride, and after the youth-ending Walpurgistnicht aboard Farley's yacht, the time is ripe for a final dramatic movement--that of the sun as it breaks into view through the yacht's door: "The cabin door opened and he
saw the Hungarian standing in a shaft of grey light: 'Daybreak, gentlemen!'" (48). Joyce has utilized the father-son relationship to reveal the imprisonment of young Jimmy within the family structure and pattern, and to show as well Ireland's continued subservience to its foreign masters. Aboard an American's yacht the sun breaks through partially obscured by a foreigner. Although Jimmy and friends have attempted to transform the static landscape of Dublin through the strength of their exuberance and youth, Jimmy is one of the two "heaviest losers" (48)—the other being the American of Irish ancestry, Farley. The son searches for, and is forced to play the role of, the father, while Ireland must play the role created for it by outsiders. Family becomes history, and heredity the costume and mask of tragedy—a theme which is repeated and expanded upon throughout Joyce's later works.

In "After the Race" the family operates as political metaphor. In a story like "The Boarding House," political family relationships become entangled with economic and social concerns, establishing an Austen-luke caste system which operates as an adult-imposed barrier to children.
Mrs. Mooney married her father's foreman, and "as soon as his father-in-law was dead Mr. Mooney began to go to the devil" (61). The husband has gone as far as threatening his wife with bodily harm ("one night he went for his wife with the cleaver," 61), and after that the couple separates. Mrs. Mooney opens a boarding house which, like Todgers's in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, serves as a microcosm of the external world and all its imperfections. Mrs. Mooney gains custody of the children, one of whom is Polly, a girl who exhibits scars from the conflict between father and mother: "Her eyes, which were grey with a shade of green through them, had a habit of glancing upwards when she spoke with anyone, which made her look like a little perverse madonna" (62-63); she sings to the guests in the front drawing-room on Sunday nights: "I'm a...naughty girl./You needn's sham:/You know I am" (62). Polly was sent to work as a typist in the office of a corn-factor, but when "a disreputable sheriff's man," Polly's father, comes to the office daily to beg an opportunity to speak to her, Mrs. Mooney "had taken her daughter home again and set her to do housework" (63). "The Boarding House" is a story which describes Polly's attempt to escape from her
mother, but it also details the steps taken by Mrs. Mooney to insure that this will not happen--Polly is a puppet and her mother her master, just as Mrs. Kearney dictates her daughter's actions in "A Mother." When Doran and Polly enter into an affair Mrs. Mooney is confident that she will be able to force Doran to marry her daughter: "She was sure she would win. To begin with she had all the weight of social opinion on her side: she was an outraged mother" (64). Such cool calculation suggests the extent to which Mrs. Mooney has become a businesswoman. As in Dombey and Son and "After the Race" business is here a symbol of the lack of human feeling and love. Mrs. Mooney is aware that "some mothers would be content to patch up such an affair for a sum of money," but she would not do so--the loss of her daughter's "honour" requires "only one reparation" (65), and that is marriage. This "honour" is no more than an economic and social construct however, the sum total of a column in a ledger. Like Austen's Mrs. Bennet, who comes to view Lydia's elopement with Wickham as a piece of good fortune, Mrs. Mooney is satisfied when she thinks of "some mothers she knew who could not get their daughters off their hands" (65).
Doran, for his part, is also motivated by considerations other than love for Polly. His family—and hers—become the measure against which he weighs his love for her: "He had money enough to settle down on; it was not that. But the family would look down on her. First of all there was her discreputable father and then her mother's boarding house was beginning to get a certain fame" (66). The point of the story is not, as Robert Martin Adams claims, "the trapping of decent, timid Bob Doran into a marriage with a slut." The point is that Polly has been robbed of self-autonomy, of her right to decide her own future.

By means of the bargaining that will take place in the room below between her mother and Doran, Polly's life will be arranged for her, and, more importantly, she will become more tightly bound to her mother even though her physical presence will vacate the boarding house. Polly however seems oblivious of the full import of what is taking place downstairs, that this deal will insure her lifelong dependence on her mother: "She waited on patiently, almost

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cheerfully, without alarm, her memories gradually give place to hopes and visions of the future. Her hopes and visions were so intricate that she no longer saw the white pillows on which her gaze was fixed or remembered that she was waiting for anything" (68). When her mother's call announces the closing of the bargaining session, Polly "remembered what she had been waiting for" (69). The love and compassion which should reside in the family symbol is driven out by caste and finance, by an empty "honour."

Other stories in *Dubliners* present a family image which serves to embody an absence of love and understanding and to portray the waste land that is Dublin. Little Chandler in "A Little Cloud" regards himself as a potential artist trapped inside Dublin, his family, and the material world: "He felt how useless it was to struggle against fortune, this being the burden of wisdom which the ages had bequeathed to him" (71). The "minute vermin-like life" (71) of the city rises to stifle his artistic sensibility. "There were so many different moods and impressions that he wished to express in verse" (73), we are told, but he feels that "if you wanted to succeed you had to go away. You could do nothing in Dublin" (73). "A Little Cloud" is
yet another initiation story—while Ignatius Gallaher introduces him to a new way of life, Little Chandler is reminded at the story's conclusion, as his son's screams fill him first with anger and then with "remorse" (85), that he is locked securely inside his family, and securely inside himself: "It was useless. He couldn't read. He couldn't do anything. The wailing of the child pierced the drum of his ear. It was useless, useless! He was a prisoner for life" (84).

The family portrayed in "Counterparts" operates by intimidation, coercion and violence: Farrington's wife "was a little sharp-faced woman who bullied her husband when he was sober and was bullied by him when he was drunk" (97). The story's powerful ending stands as an emblem of the destructive force of the family in all its potential for abject horror and psychological terrorism. After Farrington had that day been "administered a severe correction" which "gradually made him unsure of his manliness," he beats his defenseless son: "O, pa! he cried,

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Don't beat me, pa! And I'll...I'll say a Hail Mary for you..." (98).

Part of what alerts us to Mr. Duffy's total isolation in "A Painful Case" is his avoidance of family ties--ties which would help to "locate" him and anchor him within the community: "He had neither companions nor friends, church nor creed. He lived his spiritual life without any communion with others, visiting his relatives at Christmas and escorting them to the cemetery when they died. He performed these two social duties for old dignity's sake but conceded nothing further to the conventions which regulate the civic life" (109). Duffy is a dangling man, and although from what we have seen of the family ties which Joyce's characters do establish Duffy might be better off dangling, we are meant to view his avoidance of kinship as an avoidance of the world itself.

A father-son motif runs throughout "Ivy Day in the Committee Room." Old Jack is concerned over his drinking, recalcitrant son: "Only I'm an old man now I'd change his tune for him" (120); and after the delivery boy has finished off one of the bottles of stout, the old man, still thinking of his son, claims "that's the way it begins" (129).
Mr. Henchy speaks of the time Richard Tierney's father "kept the hand-me-down shop in Mary's Lane" and claims that "tricky Dicky's little old father always had a tricky little black bottle up in a corner" (123). And Henchy reminds the company that Hynes' father "was a decent, respectable man" but that these qualities had not been handed down to his son: "Poor old Larry Hynes! Many a good turn he did in his day! But I'm greatly afraid our friend is not nineteen carat" (124). It is Henchy again who claims that "you must owe the City Fathers money nowadays if you want to be made Lord Mayor" (127). Such repeated allusions to fathers and sons set the stage for the comparison between England's King Edward and Ireland's "Uncrowned King" (134), Parnell. As "fathers' of England and Ireland Edward and Parnell have family responsibilities toward their subjects as their subjects have toward them. Hynes' poem to Parnell takes the father-son relationship one step further—-Ireland has in reality three fathers, Edward, Parnell, and Christ. Moreover, Parnell is Ireland's father, its king, and at the same time the Christ-like son betrayed by Irish Judases: "Shame on the coward, caitiff hands/That smote their Lord with a kiss" (134). Paternity in "Ivy Day in the Committee
"Room" is an exploding metaphor; it is expanded to include father, king and god; the paternity motif utilizes the family symbol as myth, as a microcosm of state and universe.

Thus the personal confrontations which occur within the family in *Dubliners* can be symbolic of an artistic revolt against an established parental Phillistinism, a political break with an oppressive state, or even the overturning of a deity by the god's disillusioned devotees. *Dubliners* presents the self's revolt from the other and the family in all its bloody intensity; the collection of stories stands as a telling introduction to Joyce's world of self, family, state and universe.

"The Tree of My Family": A Note on the Family Maps of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*

It would be no exaggeration to say that a comprehensive analysis of the family symbol in *A Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses* would take many full-length studies. In the following section, therefore, I have isolated the mother-wife archetypal manifestation in Joyce's works in the hope that a discussion of this one aspect of the
fictional family will provide insights into Joyce's mythic family method as a whole. This is not to say that the father-son motif running through the novels is at all unimportant, or that family themes and symbols of a more general nature do not play a major role in these works. But an in-depth study of one recurring family pattern, the operation of the mother-goddess, seems to me to be a more valuable approach to Joyce's fiction than a necessarily superficial examination of the "family" in general.

In order to provide a broad context for the discussion of the family goddess which follows, I shall outline briefly the major family maps of the Portrait and Ulysses. It is my belief that the self-family split detailed by Laing and Campbell's description of the heroic struggle with the family are major thematic elements in all of Joyce's fiction. We have already read the maps of family relationship in Dubliners. We saw in that work the psychological, political and sexual images of family encountered by the would-be hero. These essentially non-mythic characteristic of the family are present in the Portrait and Ulysses, although as I have said before the major family symbols in Joyce's works would seem to be mythic ones.
We spoke above of Freud's theories concerning the personal and mythic (or historical) manifestations of the Oedipal configuration, and of Jung's distinctions between the "personal" and "collective" unconscious. Joyce's portrayal of the family appears to mirror this personal-historical distinction. So often in the *Portrait* and *Ulysses* the family's mythic characteristics—the "archaic heritage" which is the birthright of a family member in these novels—produce within the hero an intensely personal experience. Stephen's painful guilt, for example, is often generated by such mythic manifestations of the family as his mother's ghost, or the Virgin. Joyce's heroes, I am arguing, become ensnared in the family traps we have been discussing in this study on at least two levels: the personal (corresponding to a particular childhood) and the mythic (corresponding to a racial, historical childhood).

Stephen's feelings of anxiety and guilt arise in large part from family relationships, while his operations outside of the family circle are often translated into the language of the family. We saw in *Pride and Prejudice* the extent to which the actions of a member of a nexal group are influenced by family considerations. In the same way Stephen's
actions are often placed in a family context. In the *Portrait* his experiences with mortal sin outside the family force him to become an orphan, an outcast from his family: "He saw clearly too his own futile isolation. He had not gone one step nearer the lives he had sought to approach nor bridged the restless shame and rancour that divided him from mother and brother and sister. He felt that he was hardly of the one blood with them but stood to them rather in the mystical kinship of fosterage, foster-child and fosterbrother" (*Portrait*, p. 98). While sin cuts him off from positive family relationship, the inexorable financial decline of his family (and Stephen's relationship to his father, Simon) provides an obstacle to his movement toward artistic transcendence. As Stephen sits at breakfast rifling "the box of pawntickets at his elbow," a box "speckled with lousemarks" (*Portrait*, 174), we are made to see the dangers, to him, inherent in the fall of his family. In the *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, Stephen struggles with his family (a family representing religion, Irish nationalism, and a suffocating materialism). As I shall argue in the following section, he seems never to escape the "double-bind" trap. Even in exile, Stephen remains a family member,
bringing his father's country and his mother's religion with him and attempting to exorcize both ghostly companions through his art.

In the Nighttown section of *Ulysses* Bloom (like Stephen) becomes a child again. As Joseph Campbell argues, "the hero's first task is to experience consciously the antecedent stages of the cosmogonic cycle" (*Hero*, 320). Bloom does travel back in this way, encountering a gallery of family members: father and mother, wife, son, daughter. Like Stephen-hero, Bloom must do battle with "the nursery demons" which haunt him. He must confront such family-generated pain as his wife's infidelity, his father's suicide, and the death of his only son. Bloom too remains at the close of *Ulysses* a victim of family crimes. His unsatisfactory relationship with Molly qualifies severely the echoing "yes" of the final section of the novel.

There are, of course, moments of family transcendence in Joyce's fiction. Even *Ulysses* contains such moments of human love and communion. But while Bloom's tender feelings for Milly and his golden vision of Rudy are family images of exceptional beauty, such occurrences are the exception, and are almost always fleeting. The positive
family symbol in the Portrait and Ulysses is never of sufficient power to negate (or even to balance) the darker aspects of the family.

Stephen and Bloom are trapped within family webs, permitted only momentary escapes and flashes of freedom. An analysis of one aspect of the Dedalus and Bloom families—the mother-wife archetype—will show the extent to which Stephen and Bloom are suspended within rigid family structures.

"Argumentum ad Feminam": Goddess and Family in the Fiction of James Joyce

The universal goddess makes her appearance to men under a multitude of guises; for the effects of creation are multitudinous, complex, and of mutually contradictory kind when experienced from the viewpoint of the created world. The mother of life is at the same time the mother of death; she is masked in the ugly demonesses of famine and disease.

The Hero with a Thousand Faces, pp. 302-303.

Rude brutal anger routed the last lingering instant of ecstacy from his soul. It broke up violently her fair image and flung the frag-
ments on all sides. On all sides distorted reflections of her image started from his memory....

A Portrait of the Artist, p. 220.

Years and years I loved you, O my son, my first-born, when you lay in my womb.

Ulysses, p. 581.

Be happy, my love! My little mother, take me into the dark sanctuary of your womb. Shelter me, dear, from harm!

Letter from Joyce to Nora Barnacle Joyce, December 24, 1909.

Joyce's heroes frequently encounter the universal family goddess. In the role of passive, adoring voyeurs they are granted a transcending vision of a divine Everywoman who is at once ethereal virgin and earthy seductress, loving mother and demanding bitch, Mary and Lilith. These glimpses of mythical woman are described in similar terms and embellished with recurring patterns of image and symbol, and such repetition serves to create an "argumentum ad feminam," a secular mariolatry, in Dubliners, A Portrait

of the Artist, and Ulysses. A litany of symbol and theme announces the initiation of the male hero into a special knowledge of the erotic mysteries of the shapeshifting goddess, a goddess who represents art, fecundity, sensuality--and death. The visions of Dubliners delineate the painful ritualistic transitions from childish innocence to experience. In the Portrait Stephen Dedalus desires a meeting with the white goddess ("He would fade into something impalpable under her eyes and then in a moment, he would be transfigured," p. 650) while being pursued by the furies of church, country, and family. As we see in Ulysses Stephen remains suspended between these antipodal myths, driven to seek out eternal beauty yet hounded by age, decay, and guilt. Leopold Bloom experiences a similar dilemma, trapped as he is in a world of deceit and sexual betrayal while longing for the stasis of an ideal love and constancy. The two most important "realities" of Ulysses--the death of Stephen's mother and Molly's betrayal of Bloom--are family realities reinforced thematically and symbolically by the visionary appearances of the eternal feminine, a "Venus Metempsychosis" (490) who takes on the form of withered crone or virgin inviolate or lusty temptress--or all of these.
The visions are usually accompanied by music, song or dance. They are spiritual and deeply psychological, but occur in the presence of intense physical sensation: smell, taste, color, and light. The tandem **leitmotiv** of phallic symbol and eyes is an integral part of most visions, as is the symbol of a bird or bird-like creature, such as the eagle and the bat. Many visions include allusions to the sea and to water; several take place in an Eastern setting; and there is infrequent mention made of the heavens, stars, and the moon. The apparition of the composite woman is a predominantly spiritual one, and almost always intensely religious, yet the observer is moved to both an aesthetic and a sexual excitation after viewing the mysterious icon. Stephen is inspired to write after a vision, and is at the same time physically moved. Bloom's audiences with the

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goddess invoke a transforming joy and a terrible fear—the visions can be benign or threatening in nature—and cause him to respond bodily and spiritually. This dual nature—the mating of spirit and body—defines the inherently contradictory nature of the visionary goddess. Every heavenly goddess or crone appearing to Stephen is an avatar of his earthly mother; every feminine myth encountered by Bloom points to his frustration and betrayal. In other words, these ghostly women arise from a troubled personal life, from a family imbalance. Both heroes seek an eternal world of form and ideal but are held captive in a limited sphere of painful imperfections. In *Ulysses* the visions help unite Stephen and Bloom thematically, since the two are granted similar visions—in some cases they witness the same vision at the same time. It would be impossible to provide a detailed description of every appear—

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11 Edmund Wilson has commented on the extent to which Bloom and Stephen are driven by family considerations in all that they do: "Both men, we become aware, are constantly accompanied and oppressed by ideas which they have tried to dismiss from their minds: the family situation of each really lies back of and explains all that he does that day." See *Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930* (New York: Scribner's, 1969/1931), p. 196.
ance of the goddess in the three works to be discussed;
but I would like to point out what I feel to be the major
occurrences of this mystical mother in Dubliners, the
Portrait, and Ulysses, in order both to identify an extended
pattern of image and theme and to suggest ways in which
these visions function thematically within their contexts.

To the worshipping protagonist of "Araby" Mangan's
sister is an ethereal goddess with a markedly sexual side.
For one frozen moment of epiphany she stands on the door-
step, a statue on a pedestal: "She was waiting for us, her
figure defined by the light from the half-opened door."
Yet in the next moment she sways seductively in dance:
"Her dress swung as she moved her body and the soft rope
of her hair tossed from side to side" (30). The girl's
cold beauty clashes with her innate sexuality on another
occasion. "The light from the lamp opposite our door
caught the white curve of her neck," the young observer
reports, "lit up her hair that rested there and, falling,
lit up the hand upon the railing." But the light also
"fell over one side of her dress and caught the white border
of a petticoat" (32), and as the girl stands there "at ease
(32) we are alerted in a more direct, yet still symbolic, way to the physical appeal she holds for the boy: "She held one of the spikes, bowing her head towards me" (32), he states. These visions of a madonna-venus cause the boy, whose "eyes were often full of tears" (31) when he thought of her, to respond with violent emotions. To him the girl's name "sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises" and he feels uncertain about telling her of his "confused adoration" (31). The young man is held in passive bondage by the power of these visions, fascinated by the girl and unable to escape her influence: "my body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running over them" (31).

Farrington, the protagonist of "Counterparts," is granted a similar vision of sex and spirit during a night of drinking:

Farrington's eyes wandered at every moment in the direction of one of the young women. There was something striking in her appearance. An immense scarf of peacock-blue muslin was wound round her hat and knotted in a great bow under her chin; and she wore bright yellow gloves, reaching to the elbow. Farrington gazed admiringly at the plump arm which she moved very often and with much grace; and when, after a little time, she answered his gaze he admired her large dark brown eyes. The oblique
staring expression in them fascinated him. She glanced at him once or twice and, when the party was leaving the room, she brushed against his chair and said, *pardon!* in a London accent (95).

He too is fascinated by the goddess who is a mixture of sensuality ("the plump arm," "the immense scarf," etc.) and sensitivity ("the oblique staring expression"); and the appearance of this woman alerts Farrington to the squalor and bitter futility of his life. This enchanting vision is parodied in the horrible litany to another goddess which Farrington's child screams out at the story's end: "I'll say a **Hail Mary** for you, pa, if you don't beat me...I'll say a **Hail Mary**..." (98).

Polly Mooney in "The Boarding House" takes on the dual role of scarlet woman and sacred woman: "Her eyes, which were grey with a shade of green through them, had a habit of glancing upwards when she spoke with anyone, which made her look like a little perverse madonna" (62-63). The eyes of Mrs. Emily Sinico in "A Painful Case" reveal a fascinating depth and beauty: "The eyes were very dark blue and steady. Their gaze began with a defiant note but was confused by what seemed a deliberate swoon of the pupil into the iris, revealing for an instant a temperament of
great sensibility" (109). In "A Little Cloud," Little
Chandler comes face to face with his own personal failures
by staring at his wife's photograph: "He looked coldly into
the eyes of the photograph and they answered coldly. Cer­
tainly they were pretty and the face itself was pretty. But
he found something mean in it. Why was it so unconscious
and lady-like? The composure of the eyes irritated him.
They repelled him and defied him: there was no passion in
them, no rapture" (83). It is in "The Dead" that an
epiphany of the family goddess who threatens and inspires
reveals to the passive Gabriel Conroy painful mysteries of
beauty, love, and death. As the Misses Morkans' annual
party is coming to a close, Conroy gazes in wonder at a
beautiful figure standing on the stairs listening to
music: "Gabriel had not gone to the door with the others.
He was in a dark part of the hall gazing up the staircase.
A woman was standing near the top of the first flight, in
the shadow also. He could not see her face but he could
see the terracotta and salmonpink panels of her skirt which
the shadow made appear black and white. It was his wife"
(209). The woman becomes a divine symbol of art and beauty,
and Conroy visualizes a portrait of the woman in a timeless,
frozen pose: "He stood still in the gloom of the hall,
trying to catch the air that the voice was singing and gazing up at his wife. There was grace and mystery in her attitude as if she were a symbol of something. He asked himself what is a woman standing on the stairs in the shadow, listening to distant music, a symbol of. If he were a painter he would paint her in that attitude. Her blue felt hat would show off the bronze of her hair against the darkness and the dark panels of her skirt would show off the light ones. *Distant Music* he would call the picture if he were a painter" (210). Such a vision has the power to bring Conroy to instant life: "She was standing right under the dusty fanlight and the flame of the gas light up the rich bronze of her hair which he had seen her drying at the fire a few days before. She was in the same attitude and seemed unaware of the talk about her. At least she turned towards them and Gabriel saw that there was colour on her cheeks and that her eyes were shining. A sudden tide of joy went leaping out of his heart" (212). The goddess possesses a beauty which is as physical as it is timeless: "But now, after the kindling again of so many memories, the first touch of her body, musical and strange and perfumed, sent through him a keen pang of lust" (215). "The Dead" is
built around these portraits of the goddess Gretta, and she prepares Conroy for the intrusion of Michael Furey's ghost into the charmed circle of artist-subject. Gretta is wife, beauty—and death. But her image also serves as a balance to the ugly vision of death which Gabriel Conroy conjures up at the story's end: “His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead” (224). In her beauty and the effect she has upon her husband, Gretta is of the living, and her warmth has the power to melt snow.

* A Portrait of the Artist contains numerous incarnations of the divine feminine. It is a novel which, as Tindall argues, portrays “man alone—alone yet surrounded by shades.”¹² The trinity of Stephen’s mother, the Virgin Mary, and a threatening harridan figure who embodies death, sterility and decay, provides the sources for the intense visions of inspiring, yet threatening, beauty. This protean goddess first appears as Eileen Vance, becomes Mercedes, then

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¹² *A Reader's Guide to James Joyce*, p. 50.
Emma Clery, and then appears as the white image on the beach, "one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird" (171). Each vision is a new one, yet each goddess retains the characteristics of those of previous visions. As the "adept" who attracts such apparitions, the sensitive family member and vulnerable artist-victim, Stephen Dedalus passively witnesses the appearances of these several women, who are in fact various aspects of a single, archetypal feminine figure—the many women with whom Stephen comes into contact in the course of everyday life are fused by his symbol-making imagination into a composite Woman, a "magna mater" who holds the power to inspire, castrate, seduce, and nurture. *A Portrait of the Artist* is as much a portrait of the goddess, presenting the artist as dependent on the living beauty of the model posing for him.

Edmund L. Epstein is surely correct in seeing an "archetypal story" of "symbolic father-son relationships" in *A Portrait*.13 But Stephen's relationship to his mother

seems to me to be of equal importance in the novel.
Stephens earliest childhood impressions include contra-
dictory feelings toward the primary source of all his
visions, his mother--her love sustains him, yet poses a
threat to his development of self and artistic soul.14
"His mother had a nicer smell than his father" (7), we are
told, and Stephen feels she is a "nice mother" for warning
him "not to speak with the rough boys in the college" (9).
But when Mrs. Dedalus cries as she leaves her son at the
outset of his stay at Clongowes Wood College, Stephen "had
pretended not to see that she was going to cry" and feels
that "she was a nice mother but she was not so nice when
she cried" (9). When he becomes ill after Wells has
shouldered him into the slimy water of a ditch Stephen
"longed to be at home and lay his head on his mother's lap"
(13), and later in the infirmary he composes an imaginary
letter to his mother asking her to "come and take me home,"
which he signs "your fond son, Stephen" (23). But the real

14 Hugh Kenner argues that as the "mother as muse and
guardian," Mrs. Dedalus assumes a favorable aspect; but as
the "mother of restrictive duty," she exhibits a "malignant
shadow self" which threatens her son. She "The Portrait in
Perspective," in James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism,
dilemma of Stephen's relationship with his mother is brought out when the antagonistic Wells inquires of him, "tell us Dedalus, do you kiss your mother before you go to bed?" and Stephen replies, "I do" (14). Wells then claims "O I say, here's a fellow says he kisses his mother every night before he goes to bed," and "the other fellows stopped their game and turned round, laughing" (14). Stephen then denies that he kisses his mother and Wells says, "here's a fellow says he doesn't kiss his mother before he goes to bed," whereupon the boys "all laughed again" (14). Stephen is puzzled by this: "He felt his whole body hot and confused in a moment. What was the right answer to the question? He had given two and still Wells laughed (14). He wonders whether it is "right to kiss his mother or wrong to kiss his mother" (14-15), a question for which he will never really be able to find an answer. When Cranly employs an argumentum ad matrem to attempt to persuade Stephen to make his Easter duty for his mother's sake, claiming that "whatever else is unsure in this stinking dunghill of a world a mother's love is not" (241-42) he echoes Wells' questions and points again to Stephen's problem. While recognizing the sacredness of "amor matris" Stephen feels a need to cast off the suffocating influence
of his mother—a woman who represents church and family. There is no answer, no satisfactory answer, to such questions: Stephen is unable to strike a compromise between duty to mother and family and duty to art, and even after he refuses to kneel at her deathbed, and after he has smashed the gaslight through her ghost-body, he remains haunted by her presence. The "den of monstrous images" (90)—out of which issues the threatening spectre of the devouring mother who has the power to reduce Stephen the artist to Stephen the "foetus" (89)—is foreshadowed in the ditch filled with slimy water at Clongowes. The woman who can claim that "years and years I loved you, O my son, my firstborn, when you lay in my womb" (Ulysses, 581) holds Stephen in thrall—he is imprisoned by his inability to make a choice, to leave her memory or to embrace it, and he is caught within the walls of his own guilt.

The Virgin Mary is closely associated with Mrs. Dedalus throughout the Portrait. The litany of the Blessed Virgin, replete with such symbols as "Tower of Ivory" and "House of Gold" (35), causes Stephen to pose to himself questions which relate directly to the appearances in the novel of the transcendent goddess: "How could a woman be
a tower of ivory or a house of gold?" (35). During the period of Stephen's sexual experimentation, he keeps "on the wall of his bedroom" "an illuminated scroll, the certificate of his prefecture in the college of the sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (104). Although his sexual dark night of the soul has driven him to bitter self-examination, "the glories of Mary held his soul captive," and he dwells on "her emblems, the lateflowering plant and lateblossoming tree, symbolising the agelong gradual growth of her cultus among men" (104). We are told that "his sin, which had covered him from the sight of God, had led him nearer to the refuge of sinners" (105). Yet Mary's appeal to Stephen is as contradictory in nature as his mother's. In the following description of Stephen's fascination for Mary we see a prototype, and one of the direct sources, for the visions of the goddess Stephen is granted, complete with eyes, music, the morning star, and a marked sexual atmosphere: "Her eyes seemed to regard him with mild pity; her holiness, a strange light glowing faintly upon her frail flesh, did not humiliate the sinner who approached her. If ever he was impelled to cast sin from him and to repent the impulse that moved him was the
wish to be her knight. If ever his soul, reentering her
dwelling shyly after the frenzy of his body's lust had
spent itself, was turned towards her whose emblem is the
morning star, bright and musical, telling of heaven and
infusing peace, it was when her names were murmured softly
by lips whereon there still lingered foul and shameful words,
the savour itself of a lewd kiss" (105). Mary is inviolate,
yet somehow associated in Stephen's mind with the erotic
softness of an other-than-platonic love, and with sin.
This physical reality residing in the spiritual ideal mani-
fests itself again, when Stephen and Cranly hear a servant
girl "singing as she sharpened knives" (244). The common
woman sings a common song ("Rosie O'Grady"), yet when
Cranly says "mulier cantat" (244) the servant girl is trans-
formed in Stephen's mind into the Virgin: "The figure of
woman as she appears in the liturgy of the church passed
silently through the darkness: a whiterobed figure, small
and slender as a boy and with a falling girdle" (244).
The virgin goddess presents Stephen with another dilemma:
when he asks "how could a woman be a tower of ivory or a
house of gold" he seeks an answer to the seemingly irrecon-
cilable differences between a timeless, absolute virginity
and a decaying, corporeal reality--between faultless art and the imperfect artist.

All of which leads us to the final major source for the succession of images witnessed by Stephen--the crone, or figure of sin, castrating guilt, and sexual delights. Dante is the first of these intimidating older women (Stephen's mother having been considered under another category); we see her early in the Portrait threatening the young artist with a horrible blindness: "the eagles will come and pull out his eyes" (8). It is significant that the baby artist composes his first poem in response to the threats hurled at him by his aunt, for, as we have seen, the divine feminine figure is capable of evoking some active response from the enchanted subject. Stephen's "pull out his eyes,/Apologise" (8) is an example of such a response.

On another occasion Stephen listens as Mr. Casey describes another threatening crone--a woman he met who was part of an anti-Parnell crowd in Arklow: "They called us all the names in the world. Well there was one old lady, and a drunken old harridan she was surely, that paid all her attention to me. She kept dancing along beside me in the
mud bawling and screaming into my face: Priesthunter! The Paris Funds! Mr. Fox! Kitty O'Shea!" (36). Casey explains that "she stuck her ugly old face up at me" (36) and that he spit "right into her eye" (37). The old woman, like the milkwoman in the Telemachus episode of Ulysses, represents Ireland and the church--she screams out, "O Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! I'm blinded!" (37). And once when Stephen is seated "on the backless chair of his aunt's kitchen" (67) he suddenly "became aware of something in the doorway" (68), a something which turns out to be the ghostly apparition of an old woman: "A skull appeared suspended in the gloom of the doorway. A feeble creature like a monkey was there, drawn thither by the sound of voices at the fire" (68). This creature is Ellen, who, like Stephen's mother in Ulysses, confronts him with the vision of his own death, just as the "mad nun screeching in the nun's madhouse" (175) warns him of the potentially terrible price exacted by the church. When Stephen meets a woman selling flowers he is attracted by "the blue flowers which she lifted toward him" and is fascinated by "her young blue eyes" which "seemed to him at that instant images of her guilelessness" (183). But this pleasant vision is replaced in the next instant: "he halted till
The image had vanished and he saw only her ragged dress and damp coarse hair and hoydenish face" (184).

The key to this repulsive figure of imperfection and decay becomes apparent when Stephen, driven to a violent jealousy after having seen Emma Clery in conversation with Father Moran, reflects on a succession of common, unattractive women he has come upon, women who seem directly analogous to the crone figure we have been discussing: "Rude brutal anger routed the last lingering instant of ecstasy from his soul. It broke up violently her fair image and flung the fragments on all sides. On all sides distorted reflections of her image started from his memory: the flower-girl in the ragged dress with damp coarse hair and a hoyden's face who had called herself his own girl and begged his handsel, the kitchengirl in the next house who sang over the clatter of her plates with the drawl of a country singer the first bars of By Killarney's Lakes and Fells, a girl who had laughed gaily to see him stumble when the iron grating in the footpath near Cork Hill had caught the broken sole of his shoe, a girl he had glanced at, attracted by her small ripe mouth as she passed out of Jacob's biscuit factory..." (220). These "distorted reflec-
tions" of female beauty which frighten and threaten Stephen (yet never cease to fascinate him), women like the prostitute he visits, offer him furtive sexual adventure while serving as maps of both the mythical family nexus and the broken landscape of physical human frailty. The crone or coarse virago, like W. B. Yeats' Crazy Jane, is a figure who represents the sobering "real world" of love, reproduction, and death.

Thus the three distinct images which confront Stephen--a mother who generates a warm love and a bitter guilt, the Virgin who is at once an ivory tower of purity and an appealing seductress, and the common woman or crone who can castrate, blind, and destroy art while pleasing the senses--are themselves visions of woman as myth; yet they also function in the Portrait as source material for the more elaborate and sustained visitations of the goddess which Stephen witnesses. This family trinity is the collection of graven images out of which issues the powerful figures of art, beauty, and sexual transcendence.

Eileen Vance is the first girl to inspire the young artist. Stephen claims that "when they were grown up he was going to marry Eileen" (8), and an indication is given
that Eileen is involved in the boy's first recorded sin—the next sentence describes how he "hid under the table" and heard his mother say, "O, Stephen will apologise" (8). We learn later that Dante warns Stephen not to play with Eileen "because Eileen was protestant and when she was young she knew children that used to make fun of the litany of the Blessed Virgin" (35). Stephen elsewhere associates the girl with Mary, and with sexual excitement: "Eileen had long white hands. One evening when playing tig she had put her hands over his eyes: long and white and thin and cold and soft. That was ivory: a cold white thing. That was the meaning of Tower of Ivory" (36). Again Stephen experiences a vision of the girl which evokes the lyric chant of the litany, and which includes sexual imagery and an iconic moment of epiphany: "One day he had stood beside her looking into the hotel grounds. A waiter was running up a trail of bunting on the flagstaff and a fox terrier was scampering to and fro on the sunny lawn. She had put her hand into his pocket where his hand was and he had felt how cool and thin and soft her hand was. She had said that pockets were funny things to have: and then all of a sudden
she had broken away and had run laughing down the sloping curve of the path. Her fair hair had streamed out behind her like gold in the sun. *Tower of Ivory. House of Gold.* By thinking of things you could understand them" (42-43).

Eileen is a composite goddess who entices Stephen physically and aesthetically; and she represents to him as well the dangerous threat of castrating blindness and crippling guilt—she is a prime source of his art and a threat to its creation.

When he spends a summer in Blackrock, after having "pored over a ragged translation of *The Count of Monte Cristo*" (62), Stephen recognizes in the "figure of that dark avenger...whatever he had heard or divined in childhood of the strange and terrible"; "there would come to his mind the bright picture of Marseilles, of sunny trellises and of Mercedes" (62). Stephen compensates for the anxious thoughts about his father's growing financial troubles by conjuring up visions of Mercedes: "He returned to Mercedes and, as he brooded upon her image, a strange unrest crept into his blood" (64). The artist "wanted to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld," and he is confident that he will encounter
this image, which is a feminine amalgam of Mercedes and eternal beauty: "He did not know where to seek it or how: but a premonition which led him on told him that this image would, without any overt act of his, encounter him. They would meet quietly as if they had known each other and had made their tryst, perhaps at one of the gates or in some more secret place. They would be alone, surrounded by darkness and silence: and in that moment of supreme tenderness he would be transfigured. He would fade into something impalpable under her eyes and then in a moment, he would be transfigured. Weakness and timidity and inexperience would fall from him in that magic moment" (65). The goddess appears "without any overt act of his." She has not only the power to inspire, she becomes art in a moment of religious transfiguration. When Stephen returns to Dublin and walks along the quays and docks "the vastness and strangeness of the life suggested to him by the bales of merchandise stocked along the walls or swung aloft out of the holds of steamers wakened again in him the unrest which had sent him wandering in the evening from garden to garden in search of Mercedes" (66). And during his sexual dark night he encounters two female images who reach out to trap him. A goddess of sexual
delights, an Acrasia, instills in him guilt and painful remorse: "By day and by night he moved among distorted images of the outer world. A figure that had seemed to him by day demure and innocent came towards him by night through the winding darkness of sleep, her face transfigured by a lecherous cunning, her eyes bright with brutish joy. Only the morning pained him with its dim memory of dark orgiastic riot, its keen and humiliating sense of transgression" (99). Yet "in the pauses of his desire, when the luxury that was wasting him gave room to a softer langour, the image of Mercedes traversed the background of his memory" (99), and he dreams of that "holy encounter" during which "weakness and timidity and inexperience were to fall from him" (99). Mercedes is a goddess of art then, and is, like the Virgin, a precursor of the girl wading on the seashore. She represents as well an attempt on Stephen's part to justify the ways of love to sex, and to counteract the physical thorns about a heavenly rose.

Stephen is granted an epiphany of Emma Clery during and immediately after "a children's party at Harold's Cross" (68), where "amid the music and laughter her glance travelled to his corner, flattering, taunting, searching,
exciting his heart" (69). After the party the girl "had thrown a shawl about her" and "sprays of her fresh warm breath flew gaily above her cowled head," a description which calls to mind statues of the madonna. The horses pulling the tram "shook their bells" to provide the music for the vision, and "the green light of the lamp" and "a few coloured tickets" furnish the altered light which accompanies such moments in Joyce's fiction. Stephen and Emma engage in a dance on the tram's steps, with Stephen the passive partner: "She came up to his step many times and went down to hers again between their phrases and once or twice stood close beside him for some moments on the upper step, forgetting to go down, and then went down. His heart danced upon her movements like a cork upon a tide" (69). Stephen "heard what her eyes said to him from beneath their cowl and knew that in some dim past, whether in life or in revery, he had heard their tale before." During the dance of courtship and seduction, "he stood listlessly in his place, seemingly a tranquil watcher of the scene before him" (69), yet the next day Stephen is inspired to write a poem to Emma: "During this process all these elements which he deemed common and insignificant
fell out of the scene....The verses told only of the night and the balmy breeze and the maiden lustre of the moon" (70). The artist succeeds in spiritualizing Emma, transforming her into a mythic Diana who is removed, ethereal, untouchable. It should come as no surprise that Stephen prefaces the poem with the inscription "A. M. D. G." and follows it with "L. D. S.," as this moment of creation is a markedly religious one. And after he finishes he "went into his mother's bedroom and gazed at his face for a long time in the mirror of her dressingtable" (71), an act which completes the symbolic identification of Emma and the Virgin with his mother.

Ten years after this poem is written Stephen is moved to write the villanelle, and the phantom-like portraits of Emma which inspire him are similar in nature to the formulaic visions we have been discussing. Music, light, water, and a combination of religious and sexual imagery combine to portray the goddess, and her effects on the artist: "Towards dawn he awoke. O what sweet music! His soul was all dewy wet. Over his limbs in sleep pale cool waves of light had passed. He lay still, as if his soul lay amid cool waters, conscious of faint sweet music. His
mind was waking slowly to a tremulous morning knowledge, a morning inspiration. A spirit filled him, pure as the purest water, sweet as dew, moving as music" (217). At this moment that "windless hour of dawn when madness wakes and strange plants open to the light and the moth flies forth silently" (217), Stephen begins to compose his poem to Emma. During such an "enchantment of the heart" as this, woman is made art: "O! In the virgin womb of the imagination the word was made flesh." And "that rose and ardent light" which surrounds Stephen "was her strange wilfull heart, strange that no man had known or would know, wilful from before the beginning of the world" (217). The dawn breaks as he writes, and more images arise to portray this mythic woman: "A bell beat faintly very far away. A bird twittered; two birds, three. The bell and the bird ceased: and the dull white light spread itself east and west" (218). Stephen's active imagination conjures up past meetings with Emma, including the epiphany which led him to write a poem ten years earlier: "Ten years before she had worn her shawl cowlwise about her head, sending sprays of her warm breath into the night air, tapping her foot upon the glassy road" (222). In the
afterglow of this wet, dream-like moment of inspiration the poet's sexual revery mingles freely with thoughts of art and spirit: "Her nakedness yielded to him, radiant, warm, odorous and lavishlimbed, enfolded him like a shining cloud, enfolded him like water with a liquid life: and like a cloud of vapour or like waters circumfluent in space the liquid letters of speech, symbols of the element of mystery, flowed forth over his brain" (223). Emma Clery is another apparition of the inspiring seductress, a statue with eyes "humbled and saddened by the dark shame of womanhood" (223).

The climax of the vision motif in the novel occurs when Stephen meets the "angel of mortal youth and beauty" (172) wading on the seashore. Stephen carries "a pointed salteaten stick" (170) and hears "voices childish and girlish in the air" (171). The artist's imagination captures the girl in a pose of suspended, timeless beauty: "Her thighs, fuller and softhued as ivory, were bared almost to the hips where the white fringes of her drawers were like featherings of soft white down. Her slateblue skirts were kilted boldly about her waist and dovetailed behind her. Her bosom was as a bird's soft and slight,
slight and soft as the breast of some darkplumaged dove. But her long fair hair was girlish: and girlish, and touched with the wonder of mortal beauty, her face" (171). While the "ivory" and "slateblue skirts" remind us of the Virgin, the "darkplumaged dove" represents the bird image we have seen several times before. The girl's eyes "turned to him in quiet sufferance of his gaze, without shame or wantonness," and just as Emma had appeared "tapping her foot upon the glassy road," the girl on the shore begins "gently stirring the water with her foot hither and thither" (171), while "the first faint noise of gently moving water broke the silence, low and faint and whispering, faint as the bells of sleep." This is a vision Stephen has seen many times before; yet he cries out "Heavenly God!" and walks "far out over the sands, singing wildly to the sea" (172).

This "envoy from the fair courts of life" transports the immature apprentice into the world of art. The girl is a divine vision embodying the sum total of Stephen's relationships with women. If the crone figure, and certain aspects of the artist's mother, confront him with a hideous vision of his own death, the girl on the seashore "carries
him beyond the fear of mortality." She is a vision of sex, undecaying beauty, and the world of art. It is this powerful goddess who drives Stephen abroad into exile in an attempt to forge "the uncreated conscience" of his race; and it will be another avatar of the goddess, a darker, more threatening figure (one whom we have already seen) who will call him back again by her death. Joyce's mythic technique details Stephen's family odyssey from mother to goddess—and back again.

_Ulysses_ is replete with allusions to a host of goddesses: Eve, Helen, nympha Mary, and many others, are introduced and re-introduced in a dense texture of symbol and theme. Most of the appearances of the goddess are fleeting, fragmentary, offered to the searching reader in small bits of statuary and broken pottery. The novel does however contain the sustained visions of the sacred family woman we have been discussing, and it is to these visions that I should now like to turn.

In the opening section of _Ulysses_ the ghost of

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Stephen's mother appears to him in a way which echoes previous incarnations of the goddess in Joyce's fiction. As he stands looking out to sea he both remembers and experiences a dark, threatening dream-vision: "Silently, in a dream she had come to him after her death, her wasted body within its loose brown graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath, that had bent upon him, mute, reproachful, a faint odour of wetted ashes" (5). While a cloud sends shadows across the bay (9) Stephen continues his audience with the magna mater: "Her glaring eyes, staring out of death, to shake and bend my soul. On me alone" (10). Mrs. Dedalus carries a "ghostcandle" in her hand, and her appearance is accompanied by music—the Latin prayer which appears several times in the novel ("Liliata rutilantium te confessorum turma circumdet: jubilantium te virginum chorus excipiat," p. 10) contains allusions to flowers and song. Weldon Thornton gives the following translation of this prayer for the dead, as it appears in the Irish Rituals of the church: "May the lilied throng of radiant Confessors encompass thee; may the choir of rejoicing Virgins welcome thee." 16

the sea, of eye and phallus, of powerful stimuli directed to the senses (the odors, light, the "cored apple, filled with brown sugar," the "hoarse loud breath rattling in horror," etc.), a "birdcage hung in the sunny window" (10)—these form a pattern of image we have seen before in *Dubliners* and the *Portrait*. The sensitive observer is again passive: in this case Stephen stares at the sea and recalls a dream he has had. Mrs. Dedalus is a vision of physical death; she is a cannibal "ghoul," a "chewer of corpses" (10) who is also capable of murdering her son spiritually as she offers him a preview of his own death: "All must go through it, Stephen. More women than men in the world. You too. Time will come" (580). He seems powerless in the face of such an aggressive, bloodthirsty apparition.

The Circe episode is itself an epic peopled by crones, viragos, and threatening female figures (not to mention ghosts from the family album). In addition to Bella Cohen, Nighttown houses a number of these destroyers—the opening of the section announces their combined presences. We meet "a pigmy woman" who "swings on a rope slung between the railings, counting" (429), a "crone" and
a "slut" (430), a "hoarse virago" (430) and an "elderly bawd" (431). This then is a nightmare world of active, potentially dangerous manifestations of the goddess all representing direct threats to Stephen and to Bloom. Stephen is haunted by his mother whenever he appears in Ulysses, but it is in Nighttown that the passivity he has exhibited during previous visions is destroyed. Stephen is driven to action by his mother's appearance in Bella's house, although as we shall see his smashing of the gaslight is more a gesture of defiance than an indication of a lasting break with his mother. And the epiphany of the goddess—the entrance of Stephen's mother into the revelry of Bella's house—is described in the usual way, accompanied by the usual images.

Music and dance precede the entrance of the ghost:

"The pianola, with changing lights, plays in waltz time the prelude to My Girl's a Yorkshire Girl. Stephen throws his ashplant on the table and seizes Zoe around the waist."

The ashplant, the music and dance, and the "changing lights" seem talismans which summon up the goddess. Zoe's sleeve falls from her shoulder to reveal "a white fleshflower of vaccination" (575), and as "the twilight hours advance,"
"languideyed," they are dressed "in grey gauze with dark bat sleeves" (576). The dance becomes a "dance of death," and Mrs. Dedalus finally appears wearing a "wreath of faded orange blossoms" (579). She "fixes her bluecircled hollow eyesockets on Stephen" while "a choir of virgins and confessors sings voicelessly."

Leopold Bloom is a witness to several appearances of the feminine, family deity in all her many aspects. When he encounters Mrs. Breen early in the Lestrygonians section the images of eyes and phallus, sensory impressions and song are woven into the description. When Mrs. Breen asks Bloom about his mourning clothes, it causes him to call to mind a comic song: "Your funeral's tomorrow/While you're coming through the rye." And as the two old friends speak together "hot mockturtle vapour and steam of newbaked jampuffs rolypoly" are in the air. Bloom notices Mrs. Breen's "womeneyes," and think, as she opens her purse: "Opening her handbag, chipped leather, hatpin: ought to have a guard on those things. Stick it in a chap's eye in the tram." When Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdale Farrell passes them, he is described as "staring with a rapt gaze into the sunlight through a heavy stringed
glass" while "a stick and an umbrella dangled to his stride." Bloom warns his companion to make way for Farrell by saying "watch him." Bloom sees a "barefoot arab... breathing in the fumes" of the food which issue out of Harrison's, and this mysterious man, attempting Bloom thinks to "deaden the gnaw of hunger" (157), alerts us to an important characteristic of nearly every vision which Bloom views—namely, the portrayal of the mysterious East: an integral component of his audiences with the goddess.

References to the East are made throughout Joyce's fiction, and usually seem to designate a romantic, far-away land of mystery, beauty, and feminine sexuality. In *Dubliners*, as we have seen, the two boys who play hooky from school cross the Liffey in a ferryboat "in the company of...a little Jew with a bag" (23). The dream in which the priest appears to the protagonist of "The Sisters" takes place "in some land where the customs were strange—in Persia, I thought" (13-14), while the "syllables of the word Araby" are capable of casting "an Eastern enchantment (32) over the hero of "Araby." Little Chandler in "A Little Cloud" thinks of "what Gallaher had said about rich Jewesses, those dark Oriental eyes...how full they are of passion, of
voluptuous longing!" (83). In "Counterparts" Farrington is drawn to "the moist pungent perfume" of Miss Delacour, a "middle-aged woman of Jewish appearance" who sits in Mr. Alleyne's office "in an aroma of perfumes, smoothing the handle of her umbrella and nodding the great black feather in her hat" (90).

In the Portrait Stephen walks "into a maze of narrow and dirty streets," which may be the Nighttown district of Dublin, and wonders "whether he had strayed into the quarter of the Jews" (100). During the retreat Father Arnall speaks to the boys of the garden "in the plain of Damascus" into which God had placed Adam and Eve: "that lovely garden resplendent with sunlight and colour, teeming with luxuriant vegetation" (117). When Davin relates to Stephen his story of the young country woman who offers herself to him the two friends are walking "through the dark narrow streets of the poorer Jews" (181).

17 It should be noted here that Stephen is on his way to the whore's house where he will lose his virginity ("He was in another world: he had awakened from a slumber of centuries," p. 100); and that the Circe episode of Ulysses, where he meets other whores--and eventually the ghost of his mother--takes place in the same district: Nighttown.
Such associations of the East with an opulent, feminine beauty, a fecundity and mysterious, seducing loveliness, are continued in *Ulysses*, especially during Bloom's encounters with the goddess. Bloom is of course a Jew himself, a "bowing dark figure" (200) who is a foreigner in Dublin. As he walks to Dlugacz's butcher shop in the Calypso episode, Bloom watches the sun "nearing the steeple of George's church" (57), and the "happy warmth" causes him to think of the East: "Somewhere in the east: early morning: set off at dawn, travel round in front of the sun, steal a day's march on him. Keep it up for ever never grow a day older technically" (57). The East is associated with an eternal state, family immortality and golden childhood: "Fading gold sky. A mother watches from her doorway. She calls her children home in their dark language. High wall: beyond strings twanged. Night sky moon, violet, colour of Molly's new garters. Strings. Listen. A girl playing one of these instruments what do you call them: dulcimers. I pass" (57). Bloom's eastern fantasy contains the "damsel with a dulcimer" of Coleridge's poem. But Bloom is no effusive romantic (and neither is Coleridge, for that matter) -- his visions of mysterious beauty are soon deflated...
("Probably not a bit like it really," p. 57); and almost always when they appear they are balanced by an antipodal dream of the terrible, arid sterility of an altogether different East. He takes up a sheet of paper in the butcher shop and reads of "the model farm at Kinnereth on the lakeshore of Tiberias" (59), and his thoughts alternate between his former job in the cattlemarkets and a sexual fantasy involving the woman in the shop with him ("The crooked skirt swinging whack by whack by whack"). Bloom "held the page aslant patiently, bending his senses and his will, his soft subject gaze at rest" (59). And as he leaves Dlugacz's shop he reads the advertisement of the planter's company concerning the "orangegroves and immense melon fields north of Jaffa" (60) and he thinks of oranges and citrons: "Nice to hold, cool waxen fruit, hold in the hand, lift it to the nostrils and smell the perfume. Like that, heavy, sweet, wild perfume" (60). But his eastern dreams are shattered when suddenly: "a cloud began to cover the sun wholly slowly wholly. Grey. Far" (61). We learn later that this "matutinal cloud" (Matuta being the Roman goddess of the dawn, called by Jung "the mother of the dead") was seen by Stephen and Bloom that morning
"from two different points of observation" (667). We have already seen the cloud's effect on Stephen: it causes him to think of his mother's sick room and to go over once again the visit he was paid by her ghost. The cloud's appearance causes a corresponding response in Bloom: it abruptly calls him away from thoughts of fertility and life to thoughts of an eastern world of death:

No, not like that. A barren land, bare waste. Vulcnic lake, the dead sea: no fish, weedless, sunk deep in the earth. No wind would lift those waves, grey metal, poisonous foggy waters. Brimstone they call it raining down: the cities of the plain: Sodom, Gomorrah, Edom. All dead names. A dead sea in a dead land, grey and old. Old now. It bore the oldest, the first race. A bent hag crossed from Cassidy's clutching a noggin bottle by the neck. The oldest people. Wandered far away over all the earth, captivity, to captivity, multiplying, dying, being born everywhere. It lay there now. Now it could bear no more. Dead: an old woman's: the grey sunken cunt of the world (61).

Again the symbol of Ireland, the "bent hag," appears. Bloom's vision of "desolation," the bitter transformation of the girl with the dulcimer into the "grey sunken cunt of the world," is brought about when the sun is covered up by this cloud, which is described as being "at first no bigger than a woman's hand" (667).
Bloom meets the mystical goddess again in the Ormond Hotel; and this time she is an enchanting siren of sex and pleasure. As Ben Dollard sings *The Croppy Boy* Bloom stares at Lydia Douce who stands in a frozen pose of seductive beauty: "A liquid of womb of woman eyeball gazed under a fence of lashes, calmly, hearing. See real beauty of the eye when she not speaks" (286). Lydia is in turn entranced by Dollard's singing, and as she listens she is transformed into a feminine myth: "On the smooth jutting beerpull laid Lydia hand lightly, plumply, leave it to my hands. All lost in pity for croppy. Fro, to: to, fro: over the polished knob (she knows his eyes, my eyes, her eyes) her thumb and finger passed in pity: passed, re-passed and, gently touching, then slid so smoothly, slowly down, a cool firm white enamel baton protruding through their sliding ring" (286). Images of "bright stars" and a "rose" embellish the vision, which we recognize as another instance of a female incarnation. "Thanks, that was heavenly" (286) is Bloom's response to the song and the vision as he leaves the hotel.

Gerty Macdowell is an imperfect, yet powerful, manifestation of the goddess who appears to man. She reveals
herself to Bloom while in a nearby church the "litany of Our Lady of Loreto" (354) is chanted to honor "her who is in her pure radiance a beacon ever to the storm-tossed heart of man, Mary, star of the sea" (346). Gerty's eyes exhibit "a strange yearning tendency" (348). Her "very soul is in her eyes" (351), and when she "ventured a look" at Bloom "the face that met her gaze there in the twilight, wan and strangely drawn, seemed to her the saddest she had ever seen" (356). "There was meaning in his look" (357), we are told, and Bloom's eyes "burned into her as though they would search her through and through, read her very soul" (357). When the litany is concluded, singing is heard coming from the church, and as "the choir began to sing Tantum Ergo" Gerty "swung her foot in and out in time as the music rose and fell" (360), an act reminiscent of Emma Clery's tapping foot and the movement of the wading girl as she stirs the water, in the Portrait. Exotic smells are in evidence during the vision: "Through the open window of the church the fragrant incense was wafted and with it the fragrant names of her who was conceived without stain of original sin, spiritual vessel, pray for us, mystical rose" (356). "Something queer was flying
about through the air, a soft thing to and fro, dark" (366) we learn; this "soft thing" is a bat that "flew forth from the ivied belfry through the dusk, hither, thither, with a tiny lost cry" (363). The bat calls to mind Davin's description, in the Portrait, of the lonely country woman—a description we have alluded to earlier. When Davin finishes his story Stephen thinks of "the peasant women whom he had seen standing in the doorways at Clane," and he goes on to describe the figure in Davin's story as "a batlike soul waking to the consciousness of itself in darkness and secrecy and loneliness" (Portrait, 183). And the "twilight hours" which precede Mrs. Dedalus in the Circe episode are dressed, as we have seen, "in grey gauze with dark bat sleeves" (Ulysses, 576).

Gerty's appearance to Bloom contains the phallic images we have seen before. "A long Roman candle" goes up into the sky and Gerty leans back to watch it ascend—revealing herself to Bloom—until "it went out of sight" (366). Again: "And then a rocket sprang and bang shot blind and O! then the Roman candle burst and it was like a sigh of O! and everyone cried O! O! in raptures and it gushed out of it a stream of rain gold hair threads and they shed and ah! they were all greeny dewy stars falling with
golden, O so lively! O so soft, sweet, soft!" (366-67). As Bloom's "dark eyes fixed themselves" on Gerty, "literally worshipping at her shrine" (361), he masturbates. This act, like the old man's masturbation in "An Encounter," is a symbolic gesture of alienation; loneliness, and the frustration of Bloom's family situation, are written in the sand during this encounter with the lame and lovely goddess. Bloom's onanistic rite is, as Stanley Sultan argues, "an act symbolic of the complete denial of the wife and family he covets and recognizes as necessary to him."18 But it is also true that Bloom's gesture points to his continuing subjugation to Molly and his family. As Stuart Gilbert points out, Bloom sits alone after Gerty's departure "in a mood of calm reaction," and "each phase of his monologue is "rounded by a thought of Marion."19

There are other visions witnessed by Bloom. In the Oxen of the Sun episode he recalls a time when he attended a garden party given by Mat Dillon at Roundtown. Bloom meets Molly, the "darker friend" of Dillon's daughters

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whom he also describes as "Our Lady of the Cherries" (422). This appearance of the goddess is doubly significant since Bloom sees a young Stephen Dedalus "standing on the urn secured by that circle of girlish fond hands" (422) and watches Stephen "glance at whiles towards where his mother watches from the piazzetta giving upon the flower-close with a faint shadow of remoteness or of reproach (alles Vergängliche) in her glad look" (422). Bloom's introduction to his family obsession is thus expanded to include Stephen and his spectral goddess--the two heroes are united by a vision. Still another example of the divine appearance of mythic woman--and the last I shall mention--occurs in Ithaca as Stephen and Bloom prepare to part company. This vision too serves to unite Stephen and Bloom thematically, and to point to the similar household anxieties they both suffer from.

Eyes and phallus are present at this manifestation: the two men urinate, "their organs of micturition reciprocally rendered invisible by manual circumposition, their gazes...elevated to the projected luminous and semi-luminous shadow" (702) of Molly's bedroom. A falling star, "precipitated with great apparent velocity across the firmament" (703), is visible in the heavens. Molly is the goddess who
appears to Bloom and Stephen after they have studied the heavens and Bloom has cited the "special affinities" which "appear to him to exist between the moon and woman" (702).

But it is Molly's "invisible person" which is revealed to the two passive observers. The "visible luminous sign" (702) of "a paraffin oil lamp" attracts Bloom's attention: Molly's presence is "denoted by a visible splendid sign" (702). As the two men part "the sound of the peal of the hour of the night by the chime of the bells in the church of Saint George" (704) causes both Stephen and Bloom to react in a significant way. The "echoes of that sound" heard by Stephen are the Latin words of the prayer for the dead (704) he associates with his mother's death; while Bloom's response is the "Heigho, heigho" (704) of sadness associated with his frustrating life in the house on Eccles Street. Stephen leaves Ulysses hounded by a ghost, and Bloom will have his breakfast prepared for him next day by an unfaithful wife. Much has happened in the novel; and at the same time, in a family sense, nothing has happened. But Ulysses is a great novel perhaps because we have been made to see the nothing as it happens.
As I have attempted to make clear (attempted too many times, perhaps) there are in Joyce's work more visions of a goddess who is mother, wife, lover, model, and Woman, than I could ever hope to discuss here. And more could surely be said concerning the family "meaning" of such appearances. I have had to content myself with detailing the major occurrences of the dream-vision in *Dubliners*, the *Portrait*, and *Ulysses* (*Finnegans Wake* is another story, another study); with analyzing the recurring patterns of image and theme which Joyce employs to describe the goddess; and with suggesting ways in which the visions fit into their family contexts.

Most importantly (for my purposes in this study), I have tried to show the effects which mythical woman has on the heroes of Joyce's fiction. It is my belief that Joyce utilizes the archetype of the divine feminine figure in order to portray the family as a mythic monster: a nursery demon grown to monster proportions which wages a psychological warfare against the child, and the child grown to adulthood. We have seen hints of this fantastic family ogre in the works of Austen and Dickens. But Joyce presents us with as complete a picture of the total horror
inherent in the developing self's struggle against the family as is to be found in literature. As John Eglington states in the National Library section of *Ulysses*, in response to Stephen's theories of Shakespeare's family: "The ages succeed one another. But we have it on high authority that a man's worst enemies shall be those of his own house and family" (206).
EPILOGUE

We have moved from a definition of "family" which isolated the relationships within the family, through the complex theories of Freud, Jung, Laing and Campbell, and a definition of the family novel of individuation, to a number of novels by three major writers. We have, it must be admitted, come a long way.

But there exist of course several threads which tie all this together, which give it shape and unity. There is the progression from family relationship (such as father-son, or brother-sister) to Laing's self and other, self and family, and Campbell's hero and other, models. And there is the idea of paradox--the contradictory "messages" a family member receives from the family itself. These paradoxical impulses can be seen in the movements between the embodied and unembodied states (a particularly psychological map of the hero's journey), in the "double-bind" prison in which a sensitive self may be held captive, and in the Jungian idea of "individuation"--the attempt to reconcile paradox by embracing it in its totality. Thus
Stephen Dedalus can be seen as an intimidated "self," as a hero who journeys through experience, and as a family member who attempts to reconcile the demands made upon him: that he remain within the family circle, and that he break free from it.

And just as we move freely from the first chapter to each of the other three, we proceed from novelist to novelist. In Austen we focused predominantly on the family as social caste, and on the female hero's trial-by-family. With Dickens we emphasized the family structure from the point of view of the child. In Joyce's fiction political family maps and the family goddess came under our scrutiny. But in all cases a study of the self's relationship to the family is our primary concern. The self-family cornerstone supports the structure of each chapter, and is the foundation of the entire study. Of course, we have had to omit, or to take for granted, many major family considerations in each chapter. Thus in Austen's *Emma* the mythical implications of the family are not dealt with to any great extent, while in *Ulysses* we emphasize myth to the exclusion of practically everything else. And while we concentrate on David Copperfield's ties to his dead father in the Dickens chapter, we are unable to include Stephen Dedalus' ties
to Simon in our discussion of Stephen as hero. Bloom as husband and lover takes precedence over Bloom as father or son. The method has been to include as much as we could comfortably deal with between the covers of this study, and within individual chapters.

All the novels we have dealt with are novels of individuation--novels which portray a hero in relation to his family, and which describe the hero's attempts to break free from the family, and from the trap of paradox and contradiction in which he is placed. Emma Woodhouse and Elizabeth Bennet, Paul and Florence Dombey, David Copperfield, and Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom--all these heroes do battle with their families. And all are eventually checkmated: placed in an untenable position in which each choice of a route to escape and victory turns out to be no choice at all. "The family as paradox" might have been a fitting title for this investigation.

The only escape from the external family prison is for the hero to attempt to destroy the prisons within--to exorcize the family demons dwelling inside. Austen's heroines gain a measure of victory in love and union after a series of painful self-corrections. This journey within
is, as we have seen, a dangerous one: Paul Dombey dies, and his sister is, to a certain extent, defeated. Emily in *David Copperfield* is forced to emigrate to Australia, to seek safety in political exile. In fact, it might be said that not one hero of all those we have studied actually breaks free of family, or succeeds in the quest for transcendence. Stephen Dedalus is haunted by his mother even after he leaves Nighttown. And Bloom is still (and will continue to be) a cuckold. Elizabeth Bennet Darcy will find it necessary to contend with her mother and her mother-in-law, even after she and Darcy are united.

Yet these heroes struggle to break free, and it becomes apparent as we look at so many novels of individualization that it is the struggle itself which, in the end, matters. Stephen Dedalus will go on to create novels, to continue his struggle; and Bloom will have his breakfast prepared for him in the morning, and will continue to love. David Copperfield has won Agnes, and her spirituality will enable him to become a great writer. Elizabeth Bennet will now face her family (and Darcy, his) from a position of strength.
Thus the hero in a novel of individuation is never able, finally, to break free from family nets and prisons. The reason for this failure seems to lie in the fact that the family has become internalized, has become a part of the hero's own psyche. The only sure escape is Paul Dombey's. But the continued attempts to break free--to go over the wall--and the constant attempts at rebellion, impart to the hero a great internal strength. Austen's women, Dickens' children, and Joyce's artists confront the family, do battle with it, and, whether they realize it or not, they are the family.
Adamowski, Thomas H. "Dombey and Son and Sutpen and Son." Studies in the Novel, 4, No. 3 (Fall, 1972), 378-89.


