TENSION BETWEEN DARL AND JEWEL:

A Study of Structure in As I Lay Dying

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Arts

by

Elizabeth Simpson Tracy, B. A.

The Ohio State University
1972

Approved by

[Signature]

Adviser
Department of English
To

Edward Fitzball and David Hayes

to whom no one has ever before dedicated a thesis.
CONTENTS

Acknowledgement.................................. 11
Introduction...................................... 1
Text.................................................. 4
Conclusion......................................... 57
Bibliography....................................... 60
Addie Bundren, the ambiguous central character of *As I Lay Dying*, lies dying long after her death. Living or dead, she is the most powerful character in the novel, exerting an influence upon her family strong enough to force them not only to set out on the journey to Jefferson, but to continue the journey despite the difficulties they encounter. Just as the Bundrens are striving physically to bury Addie, so, too, are they striving to "bury" her on an emotional level: to assimilate the meaning of her death, to free themselves from the power of her influence upon them. The journey, then, represents a physical progression and a parallel emotional progression as well.

For certain characters, most notably Jewel and Dari, the emotional journey far outweighs the physical in significance. Of all the family members, these two (and Vardaman) are most affected by Addie's death. To Jewel, Addie's death means the loss of the only human being for whom he cares; he shows his despair by violently, furiously, forcing the family to carry out Addie's dying wish to be buried in Jefferson. Dari, on the other hand, becomes the saboteur of the journey, in part because his strange objectivity allows him to see the journey's ludicrous and macabre qualities, and in part because his major concern is to understand himself, something he seems to be able to do only through conflict with Jewel.

The conflict between Dari and Jewel creates the basic tension around which the journey is shaped. Such conditions of tension, suggests Walter Slatoff, are so common in Faulkner's novels that
"tension comes to be the dominant, even normal, condition of his [Faulkner's] world."¹ Slatoff's theory can be extensively documented by even the most cursory study of Faulkner's works, from "classics" such as The Sound and The Fury or Light in August, which abound with characters under extreme tension, to a humorous tale such as The Reivers, where the young hero experiences prolonged tension for the first time. In As I Lay Dying, Addie's death and burial journey create tension in individual members of the Bundren family, but most important, their relationships with one another are marked by tension. This latter type of tension is important in a novel where the main action is a cooperative group effort.

Of all the relationships between family members in the novel, that of Darl and Jewel is the most highly developed; indeed, one of the goals of the narrative technique seems to be to develop and maintain the tension between Darl and Jewel. The events of the novel are related in monologue form both by members of the Bundren family and by outsiders—neighbors or people with whom the family comes into contact during the trip to Jefferson. Faulkner's use of multiple observers creates a number of problems for the reader: how to weigh information, how to determine the reliability of each narrator, how to compensate for delayed or missing information. On the other hand, the use of many narrators broadens the basis of the information the reader receives, giving that information greater credibility than it would have if it were told through a single observer, and creates a

¹Walter J. Slatoff, Quest for Failure (Cornell Univ. Press, 1960) p. 52.
sense of immediacy, of involvement with the events and characters of the novel. Despite the fragmented presentation of information, the story emerges clearly: Faulkner orders the monologues carefully, both internally and sequentially, to present information to the reader at the moment he wishes the reader to have that information. Of all the elements comprising the story, the one that emerges most clearly is the tension between Darl and Jewel. Indeed, the ordering of the monologues seems in large part to be directed toward bringing out this tension. The importance of the Darl-Jewel relationship to the central meaning of the novel is emphasized by the preeminence that relationship holds in the structure of the novel.

A simple count reveals that, of the fifteen narrators in the novel, Darl contributes the most monologues (18), while Jewel contributes only one, a short one at that. As might be expected, the bulk of information about the relationship between Darl and Jewel comes to us through Darl. For this reason, both the corroboration (or lack of corroboration) of Darl’s information by other narrators, and the reliability of Darl’s interpretations of emotions, are important. Thus Darl himself — his personality, his character— becomes another focus of the narrative technique: Faulkner must establish Darl’s reliability so that the reader will accept Darl’s interpretation of his own relationship to Jewel. Darl, as both narrator and protagonist, is the key to our understanding of the novel.
By the beginning of the Bundren's journey to Jefferson, Faulkner has established Darl, if not as the reliable narrator, at least as one of the reliable narrators in the novel, and has subtly led us to give Darl's words nearly the credence we would give those of an omniscient observer. Faulkner is, in effect, laying the foundation for our acceptance of Darl's interpretations of the other characters' emotions, especially those of Jewel. Structurally, he does so through two means: Darl's character, and the corroboration Darl's statements receive from other narrators.

The opening lines of the novel show one of Darl's most distinctive traits, his startling objectivity toward himself and others. In the first scene, Darl is walking toward the house ahead of Jewel, yet he describes the action in the following manner: "Although I am fifteen feet ahead of him, anyone watching us from the cottonhouse can see Jewel's frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own"² (p. 3). He is the narrator, but he speaks as if he is a character in his own monologue, a pattern Faulkner maintains in Darl's sections throughout the novel. Lest we miss the abnormal objectivity of Darl's viewpoint, other narrators point it out to us in the novel, as in Cash's description of Darl's strange manner of speaking ("It was like he was outside of it too, same as you," pp. 226-7), or Aramstid's "he said it just like he was reading it outen the paper. Like he never give a durn himself one way or the other," (p. 181), or Tull's description of how Darl looks at people ("It's like he had got inside

of you, someway. Like somehow you was looking at yourself and your
doings outen his eyes," p. 119). The more objective a narrator seems
to be, the more we tend to trust his reliability: as we see in the
opening scene, Darl's observations do not seem to be clouded by
emotion, or to show any emotion at all, a characteristic of Darl's
monologues. For example, he describes in detail his mother's death
and the completion of her coffin with hardly a trace of emotion. The
fact that he is not present during those scenes only makes his objec-
tivity the more remarkable: if he is so preoccupied with Addie's death
and with the behavior of the family members that he can visualize the
events as if he were present, how can he remain so emotionally removed?
Despite the fact that he is obviously a character in the novel, Darl
often sounds surprisingly similar to an omniscient narrator -- a narra-
tor whose word is to be accepted as truth.

Like his objectivity, Darl's sensitivity is established early
in the novel. In his second monologue, Darl illustrates this quality
for us in two passages, one concerned with drinking water from a
bucket, and the other with a meeting between Jewel and his horse. Darl
is acutely conscious of the sensory. The taste of water drunk from
a bucket he describes as "warmish-cool, with a faint taste like the
hot July wind in cedar trees smells" (p. 10); of the sight of the
water in the bucket at night he says, "...before I stirred it awake
with the dipper I could see maybe a star or two in the bucket, and
maybe in the dipper a star or two before I drank" (p. 11). Placing
the descriptive section between a question and its answer, and more-
over between a question and answer not even remotely related to the
content or the mood of the description, Faulkner emphasizes both content and mood. The passage illustrates the sensitive, sensory quality of Darl’s perceptions, qualities Faulkner underscores in this monologue by forcing us to notice them.

Darl is acutely aware not only of physical sensations, but of the moods, emotions, and thoughts of the people around him. In the description of Jewel with his horse, we learn that Darl possesses a strange, almost psychic, knowledge of how the other characters feel. He cannot see Jewel and the horse, yet he imagines their confrontation in such vivid, realistic detail that the passage takes on the aura of fact.

Then Jewel is enclosed by a glittering maze of hooves as by an illusion of wings; among them, beneath the upreared chest, he moves with the flashing limberness of a snake. For an instant before the jerk comes onto his arms he sees his whole body earthfree, horizontal, whipping snake-limber, until he finds the horse’s nostrils and touches earth again. Then they are rigid, motionless, terrific, the horse back-thrust on stiffened, quivering legs, with lowered head; Jewel with dug heels, shutting off the horse’s wind with one hand, with the other patting the horse’s neck in short strokes myriad and caressing, cursing the horse with obscene ferocity (p. 12).

The violent, furious love between Jewel and the horse is no less emphasized than the sense of motion which forms the basis of the description; both illustrate Darl’s sensitivity and insight. Just as Darl can imagine and convey the violence of the physical action, so too can he comprehend and convey the violence of the emotional; Jewel’s love for the horse is shown through the physical actions described in the passage -- or so Darl implies. If he is correct
in his interpretation, and if Jewel does indeed meet the horse in
the way Darl describes, we would conclude that Darl’s poetic sensi-
tivity to the physical extends into the realm of the psychic.

In this novel, there is no omniscient narrator, nor even a con-
sistent, reliable point of view from which the events are presented.
Our only means of ascertaining the truth of a statement is to look
for corroboration from other narrators. In this way, the paleness
of Jewel’s eyes, Anse’s inertia, or Darl’s “queerness” are established,
for so many narrators mention those traits that we come to consider
them facts. The description of Jewel with his horse, though, is
never corroborated by another narrator. Paradoxically, that fact
alone forces us subconsciously to accept Darl’s description as
accurate, for since we are given this information nowhere else, we
must either accept it as valid or reject it. However, its very exis-
tence upon the page precludes our total rejection of the information,
for the description has been planted in our minds, and influences our
perception of Jewel’s relationship to his horse even though we may
discount the information as non-factual. Especially in stream of
consciousness novels, the psychological validity of a fact can be
just as important as the physical validity. We have to get infor-
mation from somewhere: if a fact is not uncorroborated --if it is not
proven false by the weight of contrary evidence-- but is left to stand
alone, we come to regard it, consciously or subconsciously, as fact.
Since Darl’s description of the violent meeting of Jewel and his
horse is nowhere contradicted, it assumes the stature of fact. We
thus believe that Darl understands Jewel’s feeling for the horse
without being told or perhaps even shown how Jewel feels, a type of understanding known as "psychic." Again, by subsuming qualities (here, omniscience) usually exhibited only by omniscient narrators, Darl's reliability is strengthened.

Similarly, Addie's death, as related in Darl's fifth monologue, indirectly reveals a good deal about Faulkner's use of Darl as a reliable narrator. Since this version of Addie's death is the only one we are given, Faulkner forces us to accept Darl's narrative as accurate, by default, as it were. Darl, however, is not even present at Addie's deathbed, but only imagines the scene and the actions of the people present. Like the description of the imagined meeting of Jewel and the horse, the scene is described vividly and realistically, but in this description, a few of the facts are corroborated by other narrators. Peabody's monologue, which precedes Darl's, ends with Addie calling to Cash ("A minute later she calls his name, her voice harsh and strong. 'Cash,' she says; 'you, Cashi!'," p. 45), an event echoed in Darl's version ("'You, Cashi!' she shouts, her voice harsh, strong, and unimpaired. 'You, Cashi!'," p. 47). Unlike Darl, Peabody is present to witness the scene; the fact that Darl uses nearly the same words as Peabody gives an almost factual basis to Darl's account, especially since the event described --Addie calling Cash-- is neither an ordinary one, which Darl and Peabody might easily use the same words to describe, nor even an expected one, in view of the fact that Addie has not moved or spoken for ten days. The result is that we tend to disbelieve in simple coincidence as the explanation for Darl's using Peabody's words, and to credit Darl's psychic
ability to know without being present. If he can imagine this part of the death scene with such accuracy, we tend to believe that the rest of his narrative must be accurate as well. Since we are given no other version of Addie's death, and no evidence contradictory to Darl's description, we must either accept it as accurate or disregard it. Our tendency is to do the former, in part because the scene receives some corroboration, in part because we are given no other version of the scene.

Immediately following Darl's psychic conjecture about Jewel's feeling for the horse comes Jewel's only monologue. Situated where it is, prior to any mention by another narrator of the relationship between Jewel and Addie, the monologue forms our sole piece of verbal evidence that Jewel loves his mother and is deeply affected by her death. Equally important, it is a keystone in helping us assess the reliability of many narrators. Although Jewel is a man of action rather than of words, had this monologue been omitted, Faulkner would have allowed the reader incorrectly to interpret Jewel's actions as stemming from a lack of affection for Addie. For instance, in the monologue following Jewel's, Darl quotes Anse's statement to Jewel that "You got no affection nor gentleness for her. You never had" (p. 19); although such an interpretation of Jewel's actions is possible, in view of the evidence in Jewel's monologue it is not probable, and we tend to reject categorically Anse's reliability as an interpreter of Jewel's feelings. In the same way, when Cora says "I always said he [Darl] was the only one of them that had... any natural affection. Not that Jewel,..." (p. 20), we immediately question her reliability,
having just seen evidence that Jewel has a very strong "natural affection" for his mother. By the sixth monologue, Darl alone remains consistently reliable as an interpreter of Jewel. For example, when Jewel says "It's laying there, watching Cash whittle on that damn...", Darl interprets the breaking off of Jewel's sentence thus: "He says it harshly, savagely, but he does not say the word. Like a little boy in the dark to flail his courage and suddenly aghast into silence by his own noise" (p. 18), an interpretation that supports the evidence in Jewel's monologue of the strong bond between Jewel and Addie.

The outraged despair in Jewel's monologue, the concentration solely upon Addie's approaching death, and the expression of the wish to shield his mother from the prying eyes watching her die, all point strongly toward the interpretation that a deep bond exists between Jewel and Addie, and that Jewel's subsequent behavior is evidence of his love for her and despair at her death. Short and oblique as it is, the monologue is exceedingly important in establishing Darl as the most reliable interpreter of Jewel's emotions and actions. In his dream wish for solitude with Addie at the end of the monologue, Jewel unconsciously expresses the same union of violence and love that Darl brings out in the description of the imagined meeting between Jewel and the horse. Jewel wishes for quiet, solitude, peace, but a peace attained through violence:

It would just be me and her on a high hill and me rolling the rocks down the hill at their faces, picking them up and throwing them down the hill faces and teeth and all by God until she was quiet and not
Because this monologue follows Darl's description of Jewel's violent love for his horse, we are struck with the similarity between the expressions of Jewel's love for his horse and for his mother. To calm the animal, he kicks it, strikes it, shuts off its wind and pats its neck while "cursing the horse with obscene ferocity" (p. 12); to bring peace to his mother, he would roll and throw rocks down at people, "faces and teeth and all by God until she was quiet" (p. 15). In interpreting Jewel's violent actions toward the horse as evidence of affection, Darl seems, from the quasi-corroboration we receive in Jewel's monologue, to be correct, or at least to be more correct than Cora or Anse.

The sense of outrage, of fury, that Darl attributes to Jewel in later monologues is introduced in the tone of Jewel's monologue, a further corroboration of Darl's reliability. The monologue opens in mid-thought, an indication of Jewel's preoccupation with the subject matter of the section:

It's because he stays out there, right under the window, hammering and sawing on that goddamn box. Where she's got to see him. Where every breath she draws is full of his knocking and sawing where she can see him saying See. See what a good one I am making for you. I told him to go somewhere else. I said Good God do you want to see her in it (p. 14).

His sense of outrage over other people's actions toward Addie evidently stems from his love for her, and from his selfish wish to possess her; indeed, the sole thought presented in the monologue
is Jewel's wish that Addie might be left alone to die in peace.

Jewel may express himself through violent action, but the monologue clearly corroborates what Darl has already pointed out and will point out again: that Jewel is sensitive and emotional. Evidence of his sensitivity can be found in emphatic, emotion-charged descriptions such as the passage about Addie's hands: "Because I said If you wouldn't keep on sawing and nailing at it until a man can't sleep even and her hands laying on the quilt like two of them roots dug up and tried to wash and you couldn't get them clean" (pp. 14-15). The sudden shift from outrage to pity and despair at the thought of and love for his mother Addie's gnarled hands shows Jewel's sensitivity. Thus by its positioning, content, and tone, Jewel's monologue is vital in establishing Darl as a reliable, or the reliable, interpreter of Jewel's actions.

In the next two monologues, Dewey Dell's and Cora's, we see the reactions of other people to Darl, an important factor in assessing his reliability. Cora describes Darl as "the one that folks say is queer, lazy, pottering about the place no better than Anse..." (p. 23); Dewey Dell describes his "queerness" more explicitly when she says, "Darl,... that sits at the supper table with his eyes gone farther than the food and the lamp, full of the land dug out of his skull and the holes filled with distance beyond the land" (pp. 25-26). A part of this strangeness, she tells us, is that Darl can speak without words, and knows facts without being told: "... then I saw Darl and he knew. He said he knew without the words like he told me that ma is going to die without words" (p. 26). The
monologue ends with the imagined conversation to which she has
alluded, underlining what she has told us about Darl's strange
ability to communicate nonverbally.

"What you want, Darl?" I say.
"She is going to die," he says....
"When is she going to die?" I say.
"Before we get back," he says.
"Then why are you taking Jewel?" I say.
"I want him to help me load," he says (pp. 26-27).

We learn quite explicitly from Cora, however, that no such conver-
sation actually takes place. "He said nothing, just looking at her"
(p. 23), Cora says, and again, "He just stood and looked at his dying
mother, his heart too full for words" (p. 24). Although we mistrust
or reject Cora's reliability as an interpreter of emotions, we have
no reason to mistrust her reporting of an observable fact; indeed,
she asserts twice that Darl said nothing. In fact, the main point
of her monologue --that between Darl and Addie "the understanding and
the true love was" (p. 23)-- stems from Cora's interpretation of the
meaning of Darl's silent last look at his dying mother. She reports
Dewey Dell's words quite faithfully; it seems unlikely that she
should be mistaken about the occurrence of the "conversation," or
forget the last part of it while remembering the first line. The
most logical conclusion, then, is that the conversation reported by
Dewey Dell does not actually occur, yet it is so real to her that she
records it as if it does.

Nor is this wordless conversation between Darl and Dewey Dell
a singular occurrence, for upon the subject of her pregnancy which
occupies Dewey Dell almost continually, they exchange other non-verbal conversations. She says that he told her without words that he knows of her pregnancy, and that "I said 'Are you going to tell pa are you going to kill him?'" (p. 26). In his next monologue, Darl reports the same conversation: "She just keeps on saying Are you going to tell pa? Are you going to kill him?" (p. 39). He repeats her exact words, yet she has said that she did not speak them ("without the words I said it," ..." p. 26). Finally, in his fifth monologue, Darl imagines what Dewey Dell thinks as she looks at Peabody, the doctor: "...she looking at him, saying You could do so much for me if you just would.... I am I and you are you and I know it and you don't know it and you could do so much for me if you just would" (p. 50), thoughts strikingly corroborated by Dewey Dell's next monologue: "He could do so much for me if he just would....He is a big tub of guts and I am a little tub of guts.... He could do so much for me and he don't know it. He don't even know it" (pp. 56, 57). Darl does not need to hear spoken words; he is somehow able not only to understand how other people feel, but to project himself into their thought patterns as well, as evidenced by his accurate recreation of Dewey Dell's tone and manner of thought. He picks up her preoccupation with the pregnancy, her sense of the boundaries separating herself from other people, her wish for Peabody's help, and her inability to ask or tell Peabody; if he can understand Dewey Dell's feelings and thoughts so clearly without being told anything, why should Darl not understand those of Jewel, or of any other character? The effect of the wordless conversations and their corroboration in
other monologues is to further our tendency to believe that Darl is psychic, and thus to strengthen the similarities already brought out between Darl and the typical omniscient narrator. Since Darl knows certain facts and unspoken thoughts without being told, subconsciously we tend to generalize his abilities and believe in the reliability of his interpretations of Jewel's feelings.

Darl's imagined description of the night of Addie's death is not graced with even a few words of corroboration by another narrator. As in the deathbed scene, the description begins as if Darl were present, but while we learn in the second paragraph of the deathbed monologue that Darl is still loading wood with Jewel, we learn only at the very end of the death night monologue that Darl again describes events he is only imagining. So detailed and realistic is the description, and so accurate in its portrayal of the characters, that even when we discover that Darl is not present to witness what he describes, we accept the narrative as trustworthy. For example, Darl says of Anse:

Pa lifts his face, slack-mouthed, the wet black rim of snuff plastered close along the base of his gums.... again he looks up at the sky with that expression of dumb and brooding outrage and yet of vindication, as though he had expected no less.... He moves again and falls to shifting the planks, picking them up, laying them down again carefully, as though they are glass. He goes to the lantern and pulls at the propped raincoat until he knocks it down and Cash comes and fixes it... (pp. 72, 73, 74).

We would expect Anse to look and act as he does in Darl's description: the snuff coating his gums, the expression of outrage and vindication, the clumsy, bumbling efforts to help. We would expect Cash to work
on steadily in the rain, never hurrying, beveling the planks even though doing so is a time consuming task. Incidentally, Darl's description of Cash beveling the coffin receives corroboration of sorts when Cash states in his first monologue, "I made it on the bevel" (p. 77).

The contrast between Darl's monologue and the two that follow points up a subtlety in the establishment of Darl as a reliable narrator. In a novel where no narrator is omniscient and thus totally reliable, each narrator can only provide information on what he sees and how he interprets what he sees. His objectivity, mental set --world view, if you will-- all become important to the reader assessing that narrator's reliability. In this novel especially, where two of the characters around whom the primary action centers, Jewel and Addie, are largely revealed through the words of other characters, sensitive awareness of detail becomes a valued quality in a narrator, indeed, the quality upon which reliability is based. In most novels, one can usually detect a discernible difference between the speech patterns of the characters and that of the omniscient narrator, the latter sounding like a writer creating prose descriptions, the former sounding as much like real people conversing as the author's talent allows. This difference might be illustrated by the contrast between the following two passages:

...lifting and placing the planks with long clattering reverberations in the dead air as though he were lifting and dropping them at the bottom of an invisible well, the sounds ceasing without departing, as if any movement might dislodge them from the immediate air in reverberant repetition (pp. 71-2).
When they [voices] cease it's like they hadn't gone away. It's like they had just disappeared into the air and when we moved we would loose them again out of the air around us (p. 86).

Darl in the first passage and Tull in the second are describing the same phenomenon, but Tull's description is in a more conversational language and style than Darl's, which bears a strong resemblance to the prose of authorial intrusion (i.e. omniscient narration). That Darl should use such a style of rhetoric subtly reinforces the similarities between his voice and the voice of the author, thus by generalization reinforcing Darl's reliability. Secondly, the contrast between Darl's and Cash's modes of thought is made strikingly evident by the juxtaposition of Darl's sixth and Cash's first monologues, for we shift from "I dont know what I am. I dont know if I am or not. Jewel knows he is, because he does not know that he does not know whether he is or not" (p. 76), to "I made it on the bevel.

1. There is more surface for the nails to grip" (p. 77).

In this novel, we are more inclined to trust the narrator with a sharp sensitivity to moods, tones, expressions, details, feelings, than one concerned with reasons for beveling, because the former is more likely to be reliable in interpreting the actions and motivations of the characters than the latter. The types of things with which Darl is concerned --understanding relationships between people, understanding himself, understanding people's motivations-- inform our comprehension of the action of the novel as a whole more than the
types of things with which Cash is concerned, especially in regard
to the tension between Darl and Jewel. In this and in his next mono-
logue, Cash gives us no information about people's looks, voice tones,
or even actions; he simply records his thoughts about the coffin, or
the words people say: "'Pick up! Pick up, goddamn your thick-nosed
soul to hell, pick up!'' (p. 90). Darl, on the other hand, reports
words, actions, tones, looks:

In his face the blood goes in waves. In between them
his flesh is greenish looking, about that smooth, thick,
pale green of cow's cud; his face suffocated, furious,
his lip lifted upon his teeth. "Pick up!" he says. "Pick
up, goddamn your thick-nosed soul!" (p. 91).

How much more information germane to an interpretation of Jewel's
behavior we gain from Darl's account than from Cash's!

The most far-reaching corroboration Darl receives -- the seal on
the reliability of his psychic sensitivity -- does not come until Ad-
die's monologue two-thirds of the way through the novel. Early in his
monologues, Darl mentions the special treatment Jewel has received
from Addie since childhood: "I told them that's why ma always
whipped him and petted him more.... That's why she named him Jewel
I told them" (p. 17). Other narrators seem to recognize that Jewel
is special to Addie, for Dewey Dell asks Darl in their wordless conver-
sation why he is taking Jewel away if Addie is going to die, and Cora
speaks a number of times of Addie's partiality to Jewel, but Darl is
the only one to suggest the reason for Addie's favoritism. Darl's
narration of the events of the summer Jewel secretly earned his horse
ends with a description of Addie crying by Jewel's bedside, concluding
"And then I knew that I knew. I knew that as plain on that day as I knew about Dewey Dell on that day" (p. 129). The implication of his juxtaposition of the two enlightenments is that Addie and Dewey Dell share identical secrets: illegitimate offspring. This secret of Addie's, vital to an understanding of the novel, is corroborated by Addie herself; Jewel is illegitimate, and is the only one of her children except Cash that Addie considers to be "hers." When Darl, who has hypothesized the truth solely through his sensitive or psychic awareness of people, turns out to be correct in his interpretation of the meaning of Addie's feelings, he rises to the status of the narrator who has given us more reliable information about the characters of the novel than any other.

When we read Darl's second description of a meeting he imagines between Jewel and the horse, we realize how far the novel has progressed in establishing Darl as a reliable narrator. Like the first such description, this one creates a tone and a sense of violent motion:

He applies the curry-comb, holding himself within the horse's striking radius with the agility of an acrobat, cursing the horse in a whisper of obscene caress. Its head flashes back, tooth-cropped; its eyes roll in the dusk like marbles on a gaudy velvet cloth as he strikes it upon the face with the back of the curry-comb (p. 174).

We know from the outset that Darl is not present to watch Jewel, yet we barely question the validity of Darl's imagining. By this point in the novel --after Addie's monologue-- even Darl's most far-fetched hypotheses about people's actions and emotions have been at least partially corroborated, and we have grown accustomed to accepting the reliability of Darl's insights. This second description is actually
no better corroborated than the first; we have learned more about
Jewel and the horse since the earlier description, but our informa-
tion comes almost exclusively through Darl, and the interpreta-
tions of Jewel's feeling for the horse are no more than Darl's theories.
That we hardly notice consciously the fact that description #2 is
imagined underlines the fact that, by this point, we accept without
question the accuracy of many of Darl's statements about Jewel,
whether the statements are fact or merely theory.

Without Darl's establishment as a (or the) reliable source of
information about Jewel, the novel would lose much of its force and
meaning. Since Jewel's strong feelings about the journey largely
motivate its continuation -- and thus the events of the novel --
it is vital that we know what those feelings are. Moreover, since
Jewel's feelings place him in conflict with Darl, a conflict from
which stems the basic action of the novel, we need to understand both
Darl's and Jewel's feelings in order to appreciate fully the import
of the events which occur.

The tension between Darl and Jewel is the structural focal point
of As I Lay Dying. From the opening monologue of the novel, Faulkner
shows Darl's preoccupation with his relationship to Jewel. Although
Addie is dying, Darl does not mention her imminent death until the
close of the monologue, and then only obliquely ("Addie Bundren could
not want a better... box to lie in," pp. 4-5). It is Jewel whom Darl
describes; indeed, the first word of the novel is "Jewel." Because
the incident Darl relates in his first monologue is amusing yet
strange, our interest and attention are directed toward Jewel from the beginning of the novel:

Jewel, fifteen feet behind me, looking straight ahead, steps in a single stride through the window. Still staring straight ahead, his pale eyes like wood set into his wooden face, he crosses the floor in four strides with the rigid gravity of a cigar store Indian... endued with life from the hips down, and steps in a single stride through the opposite window and into the path again... (p.4).

Despite the unusual, almost burlesque pantomime he performs, Jewel does not appear to be in the least amused by his own action. On the contrary, he seems to defy anyone, including himself, to laugh at his stepping through the cottonhouse. When we learn that his mother is inside the house dying, Jewel's behavior appears even more curious because it seems out of keeping with the seriousness of the event about to occur. The association of Jewel with woodiness, with rigidity, an association made many times by many subsequent narrators, is brought out clearly in this first monologue by Darl's use of "wood," "wooden," rigid," and "endued with life from the hips down," but the meaning of this woodiness is only suggested here by the fact that Jewel seems to find his own humorous action quite unamusing. Jewel, throughout the novel, remains a character lacking in humor, a lack associated from the beginning with his woodiness.

We learn something of Darl as well from the structure of the opening monologue. At the end of his description of Jewel's actions and of Cash at work, Darl says, "Addie Bundren could not want a better one, a better box to lie in. It will give her confidence and comfort" (pp. 4-5). By having Darl introduce his mother's death in such
an unemphatic way after the detailed description of Jewel's behavior, Faulkner suggests that Darl is concerned with Jewel rather than with Addie, and further, that Darl has already faced and accepted the fact that Addie is dying; these suggestions subsequently shed light upon Darl's behavior when he asks Jewel to go with him to load wood. Finally, one other implication might be drawn from Darl's reference to Addie's death: that the relationship between Addie and Darl is distant enough for him to call her "Addie Bundren" instead of "Ma." Indeed, from his mention of her in the first monologue, we do not even learn that she is his mother.

Like Darl's first monologue, two-thirds of his second is devoted to a description of Jewel's actions. A measure of Darl's interest in his brother's behavior is the fact that Darl is not even present to observe Jewel and his horse, yet imagines in vivid detail what Jewel is doing.

Without looking back the horse kicks at him.... Jewel kicks him in the stomach; the horse arches his neck back, crop-toothed; Jewel strikes him across the face with his fist.... He reaches up and drags down hay in hurried armsful and cram it into the rack (p. 13).

Darl must think about the relationship between Jewel and his horse or watch them together frequently to be able to present such a detailed imagining.

Jewel's monologue provides the basis of evidence for what later becomes the driving force behind the journey to Jefferson: his strong love for his mother, his despair at her death, and his furious outrage at everyone else's treatment of her. These feelings merge and become
part of an unspoken, unreasoned, implacable drive to get Addie to Jefferson, placing Jewel in direct conflict with Darl. Even deeper than the conflict over the continuation of the journey, however, is the tension between Darl and Jewel which arises over Jewel's bond with his mother, a bond almost unmistakably implied in his monologue.

In the monologue that follows, Darl implies that to Addie, Jewel is the most special of her five children. He obviously has been conscious of the relationship between Addie and Jewel for some time, for notices that she "always whipped him [Jewel] and petted him more" (p. 17), and believes that some significance is attached to the fact that she named him "Jewel." Interestingly, Darl calls Addie "ma" in this passage, a name he gives her only in a few other places in the novel, always in passages describing Addie's behavior toward Jewel. For example, in the description of Addie holding Jewel as a baby on a pillow, Darl says, "Ma would sit in the lamp-light, holding him..." (p. 137), but a few lines further on, "He [Cash] looks back and down at Addie." The greatest number of references to her as "ma" are found in the monologue where Darl narrates the story of Jewel's earning his horse. Throughout the monologue, Darl consistently calls his mother "ma," except in one place: "And that may have been when I first found it out, that Addie Bundren should be hiding anything that she did" (p. 123). Addie shows motherly affection for Jewel in these passages, something we never see her show for her other children. By calling her "Addie" or "Addie Bundren" in all other places, Darl underlines the difference he feels between her behavior toward him and her behavior toward Jewel. When he thinks of her in reference to himself,
as in the above passage (p. 123), she becomes "Addie" again, as
distant as if she does not have a personal relationship with him at
all.

In this third of Darl's monologues, another pattern is set up
which recurs in almost every remaining monologue of his in the novel.
The section opens with "We watch him come around the corner" (p. 16)
--gradually we learn that "him" is Jewel-- and ends with Jewel's
exit. Fifteen of the nineteen sections narrated by Darl begin or
end (or both) with a description of Jewel's actions, and the re-
maining four sections are devoted largely to narratives in which
Jewel figures as a central character; from none of Darl's monologues
is Jewel omitted. In light of such evidence, we can hardly avoid
the conclusion that Darl seems to be preoccupied with Jewel. Many
of the monologues, such as this third one, begin by referring to
Jewel only as "he," an indication that Jewel is in Darl's thoughts
so continually that Darl does not even need to specify who "he" is.
As the novel progresses, we learn more about this preoccupation with
Jewel, and how the relationship Darl sees between Addie and Jewel
affects his own relationship to Addie and Addie's death.

We begin, in the third monologue, to learn how Jewel feels to-
ward Addie's death. Although Tull, Cash, Anse, and Darl seem to have
accepted the fact that Addie is dying, Jewel seems not to have faced
the imminence of her death, as Darl realizes ("He says it harshly,
savagely, but he does not say the word [death]. Like a little boy
in the dark to flail his courage and suddenly aghast into silence by
his own noise," p. 18). Jewel will not even admit that Addie is on
her deathbed, for he says, "Ma ain't that sick" (p. 17) when Anse suggests that Addie might die before they return with the load of wood, and "Ah, shut your goddamn mouth" (p. 18) when Darl suggests the same thing. Anse accuses Jewel of a lack of affection for his mother, but Darl believes differently, crediting Jewel with great love for her. Sensing then Jewel's love for Addie and Addie's special feeling for Jewel, why would Darl choose to take Jewel away just at the moment of her death? This question is raised by Dewey Dell in her wordless conversation with Darl, but the only answer he gives is, "I want him to help me load" (p. 27). The fact that Darl seems affectionless and cruel to take Jewel with him raises questions of its own about Darl's feeling toward Addie and toward Jewel.

Further evidence of this cruelty is given in Darl's next monologue. He and Jewel are on their way to get the wood, but his thoughts center on what is happening at home, and on Jewel's reaction to Addie's death. He even describes the smell of the air in terms of the events at home ("...the light has turned copper; in the eye portentous, in the nose sulphurous, smelling of lightning. When Peabody comes... With the rope they will haul him... balloon-like up the sulphurous air," p. 39). The load of wood and the money it will bring are never mentioned, an indication that they are so far from his thoughts that they pale to insignificance. (One might note here the contrast between this monologue and Corea's first, where although she is sitting at the bedside of her dying friend, her thoughts rarely leave the subject of the unsold cakes she has baked; evidently the cakes are more important to her than Addie's death.) Darl is obviously very
conscious of the meaning of his taking Jewel away when he does. Moreover, he seems to taunt Jewel, repeating what he knows to be true but knows Jewel does not want to hear: "Jewel,... Do you know that Addie Bundren is going to die? Addie Bundren is going to die?" (p. 39). A partial explanation for his behavior is implied in the middle section of the monologue when his thoughts turn to a wordless conversation he has had with Dewey Dell: "The reason you will not say it is, when you say it, even to yourself, you will know it is true" (p. 39). Given his realization that Jewel has not yet faced Addie's death, Darl seems to be trying to force Jewel to face the fact, to admit that Addie's death is an imminent reality. Darl's trait of trying to force other people to admit realities is brought out in his relationship with other characters, most notably with Dewey Dell, but is especially evident in his relationship with Jewel.

Darl's fifth monologue tells us much about his preoccupation with Jewel through his use of italics. He breaks the narration of Addie's death in the middle to shift focus to the reality of Jewel and the broken wagon. "Jewel, I say," the first italicized section begins, followed by a description of the wagon and the water around Jewel's ankles; "Jewel, I say" the section ends (p. 48), with no punctuation after "say," followed by further narration of the death scene. The second italicized section immediately follows Darl's description of Dewey Dell smoothing the quilt over Addie's body and leaving the room; beginning "She will go out where Peabody is..." (p. 50), he imagines her thoughts regarding the help Peabody could give her, ending the section, as he does the previous italicized
passage, with no punctuation mark, to return once more to the
narrative of Addie's death. The final italicized section shifts
again to the reality of Jewel working on the wagon in the rain, the
last sentence of the monologue picking up the thought unfinished in
the first italicized section: "Jewel, I say, she is dead, Jewel.
Addie Bundren is dead" (p. 51); the monologue ends without a punctu-
ation mark. While the italics would seem to separate imagining from
reality, the italicized section projecting Dewey Dell's thoughts
breaks the pattern of italics representing reality. One could, how-
ever, interpret the italicized passages as "imagining" and the bold-
face sections as "reality;" thus, Darl's description of the death
scene would be "reality" while the broken wagon and Dewey Dell's
thoughts would be "unreality." Despite the fact that Darl imagines
the death scene and is literally present at the broken wagon scene,
there is a strange sort of logic in the above interpretation, for
to Darl the death scene is of much greater importance than the load
of wood or the broken wagon. Even though he is not present, he
imagines the actions, looks, and feelings of the members of his fam-
ily in such detail that we cannot help concluding that the death
scene is at least as "real" to Darl as are Jewel and the broken wagon.
So, too, are Dewey Dell's thoughts "real" enough to enable him to
recreate their exact tone, direction, and rhetorical pattern. The
continuity between "reality" and "imagining" is pointed up by the
lack of punctuation separating the italicized from the bold type
passages; the thoughts in italics seem to be segments of a longer,
fragmented, continuing thought.
While the italics set apart Darl's concentration on both Jewel and Dewey Dell, the structure of the monologue emphasizes the italicized passages concerned with Jewel. By beginning and ending the first passage with the words "Jewel, I say" but not completing the thought until the end of the passage ("Jewel, I say, she is dead, Jewel. Addie Bundren is dead"), Darl shows that much of the meaning of Addie's death, for him, lies in how Jewel is affected. The actual narrative of the death scene comes to sound like details interjected into the continuing, larger stream of Darl's thoughts about, and concern with, Jewel's reaction to Addie's death. He is interested in the reactions of all the members of his family, as evident from his vivid (albeit imagined) description of their behavior; curiously, the only two reactions we are not shown in this monologue are Jewel's and Darl's own. Darl would seem to be trying to elicit some response from Jewel by repeating that Addie is dead, almost as if to complete his album of family reactions -- yet totally absent are his own reactions, or even implications of his reactions, to his mother's death.

In his next narrative section, the one seemingly least concerned with Jewel, Darl describes in sensitive, minute detail the finishing of Addie's coffin the night of her death. When the imagining ends with the completion of the coffin as dawn breaks, the monologue returns to reality, and we discover that not only has Darl not seen the events he has just described, but they have not yet even occurred, as it is still night and Darl is trying to fall asleep. His thoughts turn from Addie's death to a problem introduced here but brought up again a number of times: he questions his own existence. Such thoughts as
these, expressed in such serious, complex, almost metaphysical prose, reveal the quality of Darl's efforts to understand himself and to come to terms with his world. We have already learned that Darl is "queer," strange, different from the other Bundrens; this passage gives us some understanding of Darl's strangeness, and of Darl's obsession with Jewel. After imagining at length the events of Addie's death night, Darl returns to Jewel and Addie, as if the meaning of her death lies somehow in that relationship, or in Jewel alone. On the night of his mother's death, he contemplates not, as we might expect, the meaning of existence, but whether or not he exists at all.

I don't know what I am. I don't know if I am or not. Jewel knows he is, because he does not know that he does not know whether he is or not" (p. 76).

Jewel never questions who or what he is; moreover, he never even thinks to question. The problem of his own existence is associated with Jewel's relationship to Addie, and to Addie's death, for Darl says,

Yet the wagon is, because when the wagon is was, Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel is, so Addie Bundren must be. And then I must be, or I could not be emptying myself for sleep in a strange room (p. 76).

The wagon exists because the rain and wind "shape" it and he and Jewel are conscious of its existence ("only the wind and rain shape it only to Jewel and me, that are not asleep," p. 76). Jewel exists, too, because he is conscious of his own existence; he knows he exists. If Jewel exists, then according to Darl's logic, Addie must exist as well, either because Jewel is conscious of her or because she gave
Jewel life.

But Darl does not extend his theory to the conclusion that if Addie exists and is his mother, too, then he, Darl, must exist. Instead, he concludes that he exists because he knows he is "emptying himself for sleep," a process impossible if he did not exist. Darl makes a connection between Jewel's and Addie's existences, but not between his own and Addie's, a curious omission. The missed connection seems less curious, though, in light of the fact that Darl refers to his mother as "ma" only when speaking of her motherly relationship to Jewel, and always as "Addie" when speaking of her in regard to himself; on an emotional plane, she is a mother to Jewel, but not to him. Jewel knows he exists, Darl is not sure he does; Jewel has a mother, Darl does not; Jewel's existence verifies Addie's -- somehow the strong bond between Addie and Jewel assures Jewel of his existence. For Darl, struggling to understand himself, to determine his own existence, the bond between Jewel and Addie becomes of utmost importance, for if he can discover what this bond is and how it affects Jewel's understanding of himself, perhaps he can achieve an understanding of himself and his own place in the family. Thus Jewel's feelings become of primary interest to Darl.

The passage about the wagon, in which Darl draws a connection between existence and consciousness, offers an explanation of Darl's constant taunting and probing Jewel, other than that Darl simply dislikes his most successful rival for Addie's love. Dorothy Tuck suggests that "Darl forces an awareness of himself on others in an
attempt to assert the reality of his self, a theory that would seem to support Darl’s implicit belief that a person exists if other people are conscious of him. If Jewel, who knows he exists, is made conscious of Darl, then Darl too must exist. In his efforts to understand the bond between Jewel and Addie, and in order to make Jewel aware of him, Darl probes Jewel’s emotional limits, trying to elicit some response from his brother. This confusing, metaphysical paragraph, situated as it is at the end of Darl’s narration of the completion of Addie’s coffin, leads us to draw a connection between Addie’s death and the problem of his own existence that Darl is struggling to resolve.

In his seventh monologue, Darl introduces a new idea: that an emotional connection exists between Jewel’s relationship to Addie and Jewel’s relationship to his horse. Even though he knows that Jewel hates him for probing, he tries to discover what the connection is by pushing Jewel, reminding him repeatedly of the buzzards circling above the house in the distance. "It’s not your horse that’s dead, Jewel," he says, to which Jewel replies, "Goddamn you.... Goddamn you" (p. 88). Darl knows that he is hurting Jewel; he shows his understanding of the emotional substitution Jewel has made by the words, "I cannot love my mother because I have no mother. Jewel’s mother is a horse" (p. 89). Jewel has a mother, and thus can love her, but he substitutes his horse for Addie, showering upon the animal the fierce and violent love he feels for his mother. Jewel is not a

loquacious fellow, especially about his emotions. Instead, he expresses them through violent action, or daydreams of violent action ("rolling the rocks down the hill at their faces," p. 15), a form of expression possible in regard to the horse but not to his mother. Darl, however, cannot love his mother "because I have no mother," a statement untrue on a strictly physical level, but from Darl's viewpoint, true on an emotional level. The implication of his confused thoughts about existence is clarified by this statement, for he evidently feels that he cannot define his existence in terms of the mother-son bond as Jewel can, because no such bond exists between Darl and Addie.

In this short section, the adjective "wooden" is used four times to describe Jewel ("wooden-backed," p. 88; "wooden face," p. 88; "wooden-backed," p. 89; "wooden-faced," p. 89). The only words he speaks, however, are "Goddamn you" (p. 88), indicating anger at and hatred of Darl's taunts. The woodenness, then, far from showing a lack of emotion, would seem to be a manifestation of that emotion. We never see Jewel expressing his despair over Addie's death, but from what we have learned of Jewel's active and violent manner of showing love, we would expect Jewel to express sadness in a similarly violent manner. The polar opposite to violent action is tense rigidity, a state accurately represented by the repeated use of the word "wooden" to describe Jewel. Slatoff points out that "Faulkner characters almost never smile, laugh, or frown. Their faces are mobile, or they are still, ...the stillness a rigid cover for exasperation
or fury. Such would seem to be the case with Jewel.

Aware of Jewel's despair and anger, Darl nevertheless taunts him about the buzzards. He knows Jewel hates him for doing so, for at the end of the monologue he imagines Jewel in the barn saying, in reference to Darl, "Goddamn him. Goddamn him" (p. 89). Although an element of cruelty is certainly present, Darl's probing seems to stem as well from his attempts to understand himself, as in the other monologues where he repeatedly reminds Jewel about Addie's death.

Dorothy Tuck suggests that even though Darl realizes Jewel hates him for probing, "hate is as much a response as love and acceptance, and Darl's reality is defined in terms of [Jewel's] hatred of him." Thus by probing, he can not only discover what mysterious bond between Jewel and Addie makes Jewel sure of his own existence (a sureness Darl envies), but he can force himself into Jewel's consciousness, thereby assuring himself that he exists.

Darl's beliefs that a strong bond ties Jewel to Addie, and that Jewel's woodenness masks his emotions, receive support in his next monologue. The Jewel of violent action presents a marked contrast to the "wooden" Jewel: "He heaves, lifting one whole side so suddenly that we all spring into the lift to catch and balance it before he hurls it completely over" (p. 91). Most striking of all are his physical features, which Darl describes:

In his face the blood goes in waves. In between

4Slatoff, p. 51.
5Tuck, p. 38.
them his flesh is greenish looking, about that smooth, thick, pale green of cow's cud; his face suffocated, furious, his lip lifted upon his teeth (p. 91).

Darl interprets Jewel's violence and fury as manifestations of his great sorrow at his mother's death. As often as he used the word "wooden" to describe Jewel in his seventh monologue, he repeats the words "suffocating," "furious," and "despair" (pp. 91, 92, 93) in this description. The connection between violence and sorrow emerges clearly when Darl says "It seems... as though it [the coffin] coasts like a rushing straw upon the furious tide of Jewel's despair" (p. 92), and again, at the end, "... looks back at me, his face suffused with fury and despair" (p. 93). A further connection between Jewel's woodiness and his violent actions might be inferred from the last line of the section, when Jewel says to Darl, "Goddamn you. Goddamn you" (p. 93), the same words he uses to express his emotions while he is wooden. As Darl implies in this monologue, the only release Jewel finds for his fury and despair is in violent action.

We learn more about Darl's self-understanding in Vardaman's next monologue. For the second time in the novel, Darl says that he has no mother, and that "if I had one, it is was. And if it is was, it cant be is" (p. 95). True enough in physical reality, but Darl's feelings of emotional distance from Addie clearly underlie the statements. Darl's conversation with Vardaman continues:

"And if it is was, it cant be is. Can it?"
"No," I said.
"Then I am not," Darl said. "Am I?"
I am. Darl is my brother.
"But you are, Darl," I said.
"I know it," Darl said. "That's why I am not in. Are is too many for one woman to fool" (p. 95).

Again, as in the "emptying for sleep" passage, Darl's sense of his own existence is inextricably bound to Addie's existence or reality: he has no mother, and therefore he does not exist. Ironically, in playing upon Vardaman's use of the word "are," Darl suggests what later occurs when, at the end, he becomes dissociated (schizophrenic). Perhaps he senses a personality split within himself arising from his tenuous grasp of the reality of his own existence.

At the start of the journey, Jewel returns to woodiness.

Darl's ninth monologue opens with the paragraph "He goes on toward the barn, entering the lot, woodenbacked" (p. 97), illustrating once more Darl's preoccupation with Jewel by the reference to Jewel as "he" and by the setting off of the sentence as a separate paragraph. Although the others believe that Jewel means to stay behind ("It ain't right," pa says. "It's little enough for him to do for her." "Go on," Cash says. "Leave him stay if he wants," p. 98), Darl correctly interprets Jewel's actions ("He'll catch us," I say. "He'll cut across to meet us at Tull's lane," p. 98). Darl realizes what the others do not: that Addie's emotional bond with Jewel is the major motivating force behind the journey. Despite his own --and Cash's-- sense of the ludicrousness of the journey, they are forced to set out, and to continue, by Jewel's furious despair. As they pass the sign to the nearby New Hope cemetery, Cash reveals his feelings toward the journey by spitting and saying, "In a couple of days now it'll [the coffin] be smeling." "You might tell Jewel that," Darl replies
(p. 102). Whether or not Jewel is aware of the unwillingness of some of the others we never learn, but Darl is acutely conscious of the force Jewel exerts upon them all. In Darl's description of Jewel on his horse by the cemetery signboard, Jewel's woodenness takes on the quality of rigid implacability: "He is motionless now,... upright, watching us, no less still than the signboard that lifts its fading capitulation opposite him: (p. 102). Jewel seems to be guarding the turnoff to the cemetery, forcing the wagon to continue down the road which "lies like a spoke of which Addie Bundren is the rim" (p. 102). He is the driving force behind the continuation, a fact which places him in opposition to Darl.

Although most of the tension between Jewel and Darl is developed in Darl's monologues, Dewey Dell's next monologue corroborates the existence and direction of the conflict. Clearly, she feels a tension between Darl and herself over the fact that Darl knows of her pregnancy and thus poses a threat to her secret ("...Darl's eyes ...swim to pinpoints. They begin at my feet and rise along my body to my face, and then my dress is gone: I sit naked on the seat...", p. 115). The effect of this tension upon Dewey Dell is brought out in the dream she relates: "I rose and took the knife from the streaming fish still hissing and I killed Darl" (p. 115). Even though her primary concern is with the tension between Darl and herself, she recognizes, or at least reports, the tension between Darl and Jewel.

Darl says, "Look, Jewel." But he is not looking at me. He is looking at the sky. The buzzard is as still
as if he were nailed to it... "Look, Jewel," Darl
says. Jewel sits on his horse like they were both
made out of wood, looking straight ahead (p. 116).

Since her primary concern is with her own problem, she is relatively
uninvolved as she reports this incident, yet even so, Darl's re-
peated mention of the buzzard takes on the tone of a taunt. Jewel's
response, as Dewey Dell points out, is to return to woodenness, re-
fusing to answer Darl or look at the buzzard. Darl's distaste for
the journey is evident; Jewel's implacability is just as evident.

So determined is Jewel to bury his mother as she wished that
he is willing to risk his horse to assure the continuation of the
journey. When the Bundrens reach the swollen river and debate what
to do, Jewel, wooden up to this point, is moved to action. Tull
describes him in similar terms/Darl's in the coffin-carrying scene:
"His face is kind of green, then it would go red again and then green
again" (p. 120). As Jewel urges his horse forward into the river,
Darl seems to taunt his brother by saying, "Jewel's going to risk
his horse.... Why won't you risk your mule, Vernon?" (p. 120). In
the monologue immediately following Tull's, Darl explains exactly
what Jewel is risking.

This section, the longest of Darl's monologues, describes how
Jewel earned his horse. The focus of Darl's memory, however, is Addie's
reaction to Jewel's mysterious tiredness and to the discovery of how
Jewel had worked to earn the horse. The events surrounding the earn-
ing of Jewel's horse are significant to Darl for what he learns of the
bond between Addie and Jewel, and for the knowledge he gains of his
mother's rejection. Addie's concern for Jewel stands out clearly in Darl's narrative. So strong is her feeling for Jewel that she is led to practice deceit for the first time in Darl's memory. The paradox Darl notices is that while Addie "had tried to teach us that deceit was such that in a world where it was, nothing else could be very bad or very important" (p. 123), she herself, for love of Jewel, is forced to deceitful actions, such as getting Dewey Dell and Var-daman to do Jewel's chores, fixing and hiding special things for Jewel to eat, or sitting in the dark by his bedside. The nature of Addie's love for Jewel is, Darl seems to realize, very like Jewel's love for his horse in that each love contains an element of hatred. ("And I knew that she was hating herself for that deceit and hating Jewel because she had to love him so that she had to act the deceit," p. 123). She hates the actions she performs -- must perform-- because she loves Jewel, and hates the pain inherent in opening herself to emotional responses. Perhaps in Darl's understanding of this love-hate bond we see the germ of his probing and taunting Jewel, for if he believes that both hatred and love result from one person breaking through another's defenses to elicit an emotional response, hatred would serve as well as love.

The climax of the narrative is his memory of Addie's reaction to Jewel riding up on the horse:

"Jewel," ma said, looking at him. "I'll give -- I'll give...give..." Then she began to cry. She cried hard, not hiding her face, standing there in her faded wrapper, looking at him and him on the horse, looking down at her...

That night I found ma sitting beside the bed where he
was sleeping, in the dark. She cried hard, maybe because she had to cry so quiet; maybe because she felt the same way about tears she did about deceit, hating herself for doing it, hating him because she had to. And then I knew that I knew. I knew that as plain on that day as I knew about Dewey Dell on that day (pp. 128, 129).

The bond between Addie and Jewel, Darl realizes, stems from the fact that Jewel is the product of an adulterous union. Ironically, when he learns why Addie loves Jewel, he simultaneously learns why she has rejected him. The events Darl narrates in this monologue are important to him not for what he learns about Jewel, as we might expect, but for what he discovers about Addie and the light that that discovery sheds upon his understanding of the bond between her and Jewel.

So strong is the bond between them that, as a direct result, the Bundren family find themselves on the bank of the river, and Jewel prepares to risk his emotional substitute for the sake of his real mother. The crossing of the river is the most developed single episode in *As I Lay Dying*. The first half of the novel sets up the characters and the action, in effect leading up to the crossing, while the second half narrates the completion of the journey. The crossing, the factor which determines whether or not the journey will continue, is thus a turning point in the novel. The chief force behind the continuation is, of course, Jewel, who is willing to risk losing his horse, the only being, aside from his mother, for whom he seems to care. By positioning the monologue narrating Jewel's earning of the horse as he does, Faulkner subtly supplies us with a good deal of information.
Breaking the narrative thread completely to insert the long, detailed flashback emphasizes the importance of the events the monologue narrates. Further, since Darl is the narrator chosen to relate the story, the importance of those events to Darl is emphasized; thus, the story is used to bring out Darl’s discoveries about the relationship between Addie and Jewel. Finally, by placing the monologue just prior to the attempted river crossing, the relationship Darl sees between the horse and the crossing is underlined.

The relationship among Jewel, Addie, and the horse is further supported in Darl’s next monologue, which describes the actual crossing of the river. As Jewel urges his horse into the water, saying, "I aint going to let nothing hurt you. Go on, now" (p. 137), Darl relates the following conversation:

"He can swim," I say. "If he’ll just give the horse time, anyhow..." When he was born, he had a bad time of it. Ma would sit in the lamp-light, holding him on a pillow on her lap. We would wake to find her so....

"That pillow was longer than him," Cash says.... "I ought to come down last week and sighted. I ought to done it."

"That’s right," I say. "Neither his feet nor his head would reach the end of it. You couldn’t have known," I say (p. 137).

Jewel’s words to his horse, and the danger in which Jewel is placing himself, remind Darl of Addie protecting the baby Jewel, a memory seemingly shared by Cash. The context, however, indicates that Cash might not actually speak the words Darl attributes to him, for he would be replying to a statement Darl does not voice, but only thinks. If Cash does verbally remember the incident Darl relates, it must
have been significant enough that they should both remember it
simultaneously; if Darl interprets Cash's glances at Jewel and voice
tones as evidence that Cash is also remembering the incident, it must
have made a very strong impression upon Darl, strong enough for him
to attribute the memory to Cash as well. The protective feeling love
engenders is the focus of Darl's memory, and is equated to motherli-
ness to the extent that, describing Addie's behavior toward Jewel,
Darl refers to her as "ma," while shortly thereafter, describing her
in relation to himself, he refers to her as "Addie."

Not until Addie's monologue do we receive corroboration for what
Darl has sensed all his life: that Addie has rejected Darl as her
child, but accepted Jewel ("I gave Anse Dewey Dell to negative Jewel.
Then I gave him Vardaman to replace the child I had robbed him of.
And now he has three children that are his and not mine," p. 168).
Addie's character and behavior profoundly influence the development
of Darl, probably the most sensitive of the children.

Again and again in her monologue she states her deep-seated mis-
trust of words: "That was when I learned that words are no good;
that words don't ever fit even what they are trying to say at," (p.
163); "I knew that that word was like the others: just a shape to fill
a lack," (p. 164); "that sin and love and fear are just sounds that
people who have never sinned nor loved nor feared have for what they
never had and cannot have until they forget the words," (p. 166).
Paralleling this rejection of words is a belief in the importance of
actions to bridge the gap between herself and other people, shown in
her whipping of the school children (p. 162), her feelings when Cash
was born (p. 164), her thoughts about sin and salvation (pp. 167-8). Only through actions can a person come to exist in someone else's consciousness; as Addie says when she whips the children, "Now you are aware of me! Now I am something in your secret and selfish life" (p. 162).

In Darl's "emptying for sleep" monologue we see evidence of the same belief in the need to impinge upon the consciousness of others. Darl's incorporation of this idea of Addie's would seem to have contributed to his feeling that he does not exist, for if Addie has never admitted or never admits Darl to her consciousness, then by his (and her) definition, he does not exist. Toward Jewel, Darl notices, Addie manifests her affection in actions ("whipped and petted more"; "would fix him special things to eat and hide them for him," p. 123, etc.), but toward Darl she shows nothing. In her monologue, the reason for her behavior is implied when she says that the very reality of Darl, and even of Cash (her second favorite child, after Jewel), would sometimes fade and disappear ("And when I would think Cash and Darl that way until their names would die and solidify into a shape and then fade away, I would say, All right. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what they call them," p. 165). Moreover, she corroborates his feeling of rejection by making clear that she did not want Darl when she found that she was pregnant with him ("At first I would not believe it. Then I believed that I would kill Anse," p. 164), nor did she ever accept him as "her" child, a part of herself ("And now he has three children that are his and not mine," p. 168). Darl is correct: Addie has virtually barred him from her consciousness.
Another factor, though, is involved in Addie's rejection of Darl. We learn in her monologue that the dichotomy she sees between words and actions causes her to "kill" Anse, the man of words, by removing him from her consciousness ("I would be I; I would let him be the shape and echo of his word," p. 166). Darl, like Anse, is primarily a man of words rather than of action, as shown clearly in the description of his inactive participation in the events occurring just after the crossing of the river. Perhaps Darl's contemplative inactiveness developed as a result of Addie's rejection; regardless, he sees in active, non-verbal, unreflective Jewel his opposite, especially in their respective behavior during the days following Addie's death. To achieve an understanding of what her death means, he must first understand his relationship with her, yet she has rejected him so totally that not only does no mother-son bond exist, but he himself hardly exists for her. He knows that she loves and has not rejected Jewel — that a very strong bond exists between Jewel and Addie. The key to all his questions, then, is the bond between Addie and Jewel. If he can understand Jewel's relationship to Addie, he will understand what his own is not; if he understands what qualities Jewel has that he does not, he can begin to understand himself. Furthermore, if a person exists only when he impinges upon other people's consciousness, Darl's constant probing of Jewel's emotions can achieve two ends: lead him to an understanding of Jewel's bond with Addie, and assure Darl that he exists, at least for those moments when Jewel is aware of his probing. The probing,
which creates (in part) the tension around which the journey revolves, is thus a necessary part of Darl's behavior.

Cora's and Whitfield's monologues, placed respectively before and after Addie's monologue, are, like Addie's, emphasized by their position in the narrative sequence. To stress the information they contain, Faulkner interrupts the narration at the turning point of the journey in order to insert the three monologues. We are forced to take note of the information so presented, and can hardly fail to see the bearing such information about Addie has upon the sequence of events being narrated. Cora's monologue introduces the topic of sin so prominent in Addie's monologue, and provides an important revelation of what Jewel means to Addie: "He is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me" (p. 160). Jewel's illegitimacy, the crucial fact in her love for him, is corroborated in Whitfield's monologue. This triad of monologues set into the middle of the narration contains, then, information vital to an understanding of the basic tensions of the novel.

The narration of the journey resumes following the break for Cora's, Addie's, and Whitfield's monologues, and immediately refocuses upon Darl's consciousness of Jewel: every sentence of part of a sentence referring to Jewel is italicized ("He was sitting the horse before the gate. Armstid was waiting at the gate. We stopped and he got down and we lifted Cash down...." p. 173). Darl is even more conscious of the horse in relation to Jewel. All but one of the italicized segments of the monologue concern Jewel's action in
regard to the horse (for example, "On the horse he rode up to
Armstid's and came back on the horse, leading Armstid's team," p.
172), and the monologue ends with an italicized section describing
a meeting Darl imagines between Jewel and the horse similar to his
earlier imagined description. Again Darl describes the fierce,
vviolent actions that define Jewel's love-hate, but in the mono-
logues intervening between the two imagined descriptions, we have
gained a much broader understanding of the emotional factors in-
volved in Jewel's relationship to the horse. Darl, too, has learned
a good deal during the journey of the nature of the bond between Ad-
die and Jewel; the italics in this passage seem to indicate that
Darl is sharply conscious that an understanding of the relationship
between Jewel and the horse is important to his understanding of
the relationship between Jewel and Addie, and thereby to his under-
standing of himself.

Vardaman's sixth monologue, which echoes Darl's use of italics
in passages referring to Jewel and his horse, gives support to this
theory. In previous monologues, Vardaman's confusion of his mother
with a fish has been established, as well as his belief that Jewel's
mother is a horse. Here, his preoccupation with trying to under-
stand the similarity between his relationship to his fish-mother and
Jewel's relationship to his horse-mother is brought out by the use
of italics: "That's why Jewel and I were both in the shed and she
was in the wagon because the horse lives in the barn and I had to
keep running the buzzards away from" (no punctuation) (p. 186).
Vardaman's and Darl's similar use of italics in speaking of Jewel
and the horse implies, by association, a similar preoccupation with Jewel, for both are trying to understand their own relationships to Addie through an understanding of Jewel's relationship to her.

Darl's fifteenth monologue relates the pouring of cement on Cash's leg, detailing the actions and words of all the members of the family; not until the very end does Jewel appear, who has not been seen since he rode off to deliver his horse in trade for the new mules. Darl has until this point in the monologue carefully recorded by name the person of whom he is speaking, but when Jewel arrives, Darl never makes clear that he is now speaking of Jewel, simply saying, "Then we all turn on the wagon and watch him. He is coming up the road behind us, wooden-backed, wooden-faced, moving only from his hips down" (p. 198). The words "wooden-backed, wooden-faced" cue us that Darl is describing Jewel; Darl seems to have been waiting for Jewel's return, to have had Jewel so constantly in mind that he never thinks to refer to him directly by name.

Darl knows by psychic intuition that the strength of the bond between Addie and Jewel lies in the fact that Jewel is not Anse's son. He probes into that mystery in his next monologue, by repeatedly asking "Jewel,... whose son are you?", and later, "Your mother was a horse, but who was your father, Jewel?" (p. 202). Addie's monologue confirms for us Darl's suspicions that Jewel is both illegitimate and her favorite child, but since Addie is presumably dead when she gives her monologue, we assume that this information is imparted only to the reader and not to Darl or the other narrators. It is after Jewel allows his horse to be traded for new mules that the
question of Jewel's paternity becomes important to Darl, for he realizes then how much Jewel is willing to sacrifice as the result of the strong mother-son bond. The fact that Jewel's father means something to Addie that Darl's father does not is vital to Darl's understanding of why Addie has rejected him. Even the structure of the monologue emphasizes the importance of the question to Darl. He opens the section with "Jewel, whose son are you?", shifts to a description of the coffin, returns to the question "who was your father, Jewel?" and Jewel's reply ("You goddamn lying son of a bitch"), continues with other events of the day, but abruptly returns to the same question at the end, italicizing the question and Jewel's reply for further emphasis: Jewel, I say, Who was your father, Jewel? Goddamn you. Goddamn you. (p. 203).

The context indicates that the last question and answer are not spoken, but rather are imagined by Darl. Again, Darl seems to be trying as much to force himself upon Jewel's consciousness as to receive an actual answer to his question.

Darl's vivid description of the fire scene in his next monologue centers around his consciousness of Jewel's activeness. From the opening line ("Against the dark doorway he seems to materialize out of darkness," p. 208) to the closing ("This time Jewel is riding upon it [the coffin], clinging to it, until it crashes down and flings him forward and clear," p. 212), the focus of Darl's narrative is Jewel saving the animals and finally, Addie's coffin from the burning barn. The style of the section combines the finest aspects of Darl's narrative technique --his eye for detail, the sense of movement he is
able to convey, the tension or suspense he creates, the vivid words
and figures of speech with which he makes the scene sharply real
and alive with sound and motion— to present a startlingly clear
account of the fire:

For an instant longer he [Jewel] runs silver in the
moonlight, then he springs out like a flat figure cut
leanly from tin against an abrupt and soundless explo-
sion as the whole loft of the barn takes fire at once,
as though it had been stuffed with powder (p. 208).....
for another instant it [the coffin] stands upright while
the sparks rain on it in scattered bursts as though they
engendered other sparks from the contact. Then it
topples forward, gaining momentum, revealing Jewel and
the sparks raining on him too in engendered gusts, so
that he appears to be enclosed in a thin nimbus of
fire (p. 212).

Jewel's activeness stands out in this narrative, as does, to a lesser
extent, Jewel's anger at Darl's inactiveness, an anger of which
Darl is fully aware. The narrative focuses upon "the square squat
shape of the coffin on the sawhorses like a cubistic bag" (p. 209)
around which the action takes place, both literally and symbolically.
Jewel, the chief proponent for continuing the journey, braves the
fire to save the animals and Addie's coffin; the only breaks in
Jewel's frantic activeness come as he pauses, twice, by the coffin
(pp. 209, 210) before plunging again into action. Although we do
not learn until later in the novel that Darl set the fire, here in
his own monologue Darl indicates that his actions are not directed
toward helping Jewel save the coffin. Darl mentions Jewel's anger
twice: "He pauses at the coffin, stooping, looking at me, his face
furious" (p. 209); later, Jewel returns to the burning barn despite
Darl's efforts to stop him, and pausing by the coffin before up-ending it, calls to Darl ("I can see his mouth shape as he calls my name," p. 211). Apparently Jewel's anger stems from his awareness that Darl does not want to save the coffin, for his anger is mentioned only in connection with Darl, and is directed only toward Darl (and toward Gillespie, who tries to prevent Jewel's returning to the barn to save the coffin, although the word "anger" is not used in connection with Gillespie).

While Jewel's feelings about the fire and the rescue of the coffin are evident, Darl never relates or even implies his own feelings, a striking example of Darl's objective manner of describing scenes in which he is involved. We are, however, given clues to Darl's feelings by other narrators. In the monologue just prior to the fire scene, Darl tells Vardaman that Addie in her coffin is speaking to God:

"She wants Him to hide her away from the sight of man..."
"Why does she want to hide her away from the sight of man, Darl?"
"So she can lay down her life" (pp. 204-5).

When Vardaman relates Darl's behavior following the rescue of the coffin ("He is out there under the apple tree with her, lying on her.... 'You needn't to cry,' I said. 'Jewel got her out. You needn't to cry, Darl," pp. 214-5), we are reasonably certain that Darl is crying not with relief that the coffin has been saved, but with sorrow and frustration. In addition to the absence of direct information about Darl's feelings, we receive from Darl's description of the fire no indication that he acts in any way strangely, for he,
like the others, enters the burning barn to save the animals, according to his own narration. Cash, however, informs us plainly that even if Gillespie had not somehow learned that Darl set the fire, "he would a suspicioned it sooner or later. He could have done it that night just watching the way Darl acted" (p. 222). How far we can trust Cash’s statement is debateable, for with his broken leg, he must have been lying in Gillespie’s house during the fire and could not have watched Darl’s actions, but the evidence Vardaman gives concerning Darl’s lying on the coffin, weeping, would seem to support Cash’s judgment. Thus we are given an account of the tension between Darl and Jewel which underlies this important scene in a backhanded way: as manifested by Jewel’s behavior interpreted to us by Darl, with no mention of Darl’s own feelings. It seems that Darl’s feelings and behavior have relevance to Darl himself only in how they affect Jewel. Darl, like Jewel, exists in a state of unresolved tension, evident from his behavior as reported to us by other narrators, yet he interprets only Jewel’s feelings to us, never his own.

Darl’s eighteenth monologue, narrating the Bundrens’ approach to Jefferson, provides a contrast to the compact, fast-paced description of the fire. The wagon moves on; Vardaman asks a question and watches the buzzards; Dewey Dell calls a halt in order to change her clothes; Anse and Jewel argue over digging the grave. As they enter town, the focus of the monologue shifts to Jewel as he reacts furiously to the "shock and instinctive outrage" (p. 219) three men show
as the coffin passes them. When Jewel and another man they pass nearly come to blows, Darl holds Jewel back, convinces the man to sheath his knife, and manages to bring about a truce which saves everyone's pride. Throughout this scene, Darl seems to represent the voice of reason. As in his previous monologue, he includes none of his own feelings toward the events he relates; his emotional distance contrasts strongly to Jewel's intense involvement so clear in his furious reaction to the men's words, and in his burlesque action at the end of the monologue. As if to emphasize his state of tension, Jewel returns to rigid woodleness, performing a clown-like act with no trace of humor or amusement, similar to his action in the opening monologue of the novel.

But he does not get in. Instead he sets his foot on the turning hub of the rear wheel, one hand grasping the stanchion, and with the hub turning smoothly under his sole he lifts the other foot and squats there, staring straight ahead, motionless, lean, wooden-backed, as though carved squatting out of the lean wood (p. 221).

Jewel acts as if he were bordering upon insanity, while Darl seems to be quite rational.

Thus we are shocked, or at least surprised, to learn from Cash's next monologue that Darl has been sent to a mental institution in Jackson, but not surprised to learn the part Jewel plays in Darl's deportation. Jewel's feelings toward Darl are related matter-of-factly by the relatively impartial, level-headed Cash:

We went on, with Jewel squatting on the tail-gate, watching the back of Dari's head. He looked like one
of these bull dogs, one of these dogs that don't bark none, squatting against the rope, watching the thing he was waiting to jump at" (p. 225).

Cash gives a different interpretation of Jewel's burlesque action than what Darl describes. Typically, Jewel's implacable rigidity is broken by violent action when he jumps Darl, fighting him to the ground, saying "Kill him. Kill the son of a bitch" (p. 227).

Our surprise at the sudden turn of events results partially from the structure of Cash's monologue, for we learn that Darl has been sent off before we learn even that the family had considered or decided that he should be sent. Secondly, we are surprised because Darl, usually so aware of the feelings and so able to predict the behaviors of the members of his family, seems to be taken completely by surprise when everyone jumps him. Darl is perfectly conscious of the tension between himself and Jewel and between himself and Dewey Dell, as he is of Jewel's hatred for him, yet his psychic sensitivity fails him at this crucial moment.

Perhaps, though, we should not be quite so surprised at Darl's unawareness. Throughout the novel, Darl has shown himself to be acutely conscious of other people's emotions and relationships, but not, in many cases, conscious of their reactions to him. Although he knows that Addie has rejected him and that Jewel hates his probing, he seems unaware of any other reactions toward himself and his behavior. Dewey Dell reacts toward him with hatred, as evident in her third monologue (p. 115), but from Darl we receive no information to that effect. We learn from Cash and Vardaman, not from Darl, that
in other people's opinions, Darl acts strangely during the fire. Even about the particular question at hand, Darl's insanity, we are given no information during the novel from Darl himself, despite the fact that nearly every other narrator mentions Darl's "strangeness." Cora (pp. 20, 23), Dewey Dell (pp. 25, 26), Anse, (pp. 35-6, 99), Tull (pp. 68, 119), Samson (p. 107), Armstid (p. 181), Cash (pp. 222, 223, 226-7), all speak of Darl's strange way of looking at and talking to people, Anse even seeming to imply that the question of institutionalizing Darl has arisen before ("it wasn't till that ere road come... that they begun to threaten me out of him, trying to short-hand me with the law," p. 35-6). Yet Darl himself gives no indication of an awareness that people consider him strange, much less that they consider him a candidate for a mental institution. His sensitivity does not seem to encompass other people's reactions to him.

Nor does it encompass his own reactions to, or thoughts about, himself. During his descriptions of the fire, Addie's death, the river fording, Darl never reveals his own feelings. Even in so important a matter as his being sent to an institution, Darl voices no feelings, no assessment of self in the particular situation, but relies upon the assurance and the decisions of other people. When they jump him, he fights back until Cash, who seems to be Darl's final court of appeal, in effect turns on him too:

But I tried to tell him and he quit laughing, looking up at me.
"Do you want me to go?" he said.
"It'll be better for you," I said.... "It'll be better for you, Darl," I said.
"Better," he said. He begun to laugh again. "Better," he said. He couldn't hardly say it for laughing. He sat on the ground and us watching him, laughing and laughing" (p. 228).

When Cash agrees that he could go, Darl ceases to fight, and allows himself to be taken away.

Perhaps Darl's need to rely upon others stems from his shaky sense of his own reality. If he doubts that he even exists, how can he possess a firm sense of which behaviors are "correct" or "better" for him? This tenuous grasp upon the reality of his own existence might also weaken his awareness of other people's reactions to him, for if he does not exist, as he suspects, his feelings about himself, and other people's feelings about him, would be unimportant.

Cash interprets Darl's laughter as evidence of amusement, but such an explanation seems unlikely. In his final monologue, Darl asks himself, "Why do you laugh?... Is it because you hate the sound of laughing?" (p. 243). His laughter would seem to be the opposite reaction to what he feels, and to be evidence of the state of extreme tension in which Darl has for so long existed, to which he succumbs in the end. Perhaps he laughs for the same reason he probes Jewel; even though such actions cause pain and hatred, they arouse some feeling, thus assuring Darl that he exists.

Throughout the novel Darl has used Jewel as his sounding-board. By probing, taunting, and questioning Jewel, Darl has impinged
himself upon Jewel's consciousness, and measured the reality of his own existence against Jewel's unquestioning self-assuredness. Darl has no sense of his own reality, a fact underlined by the last monologue when he speaks to himself, of himself:

...Darl has gone to Jackson. They put him on the train, laughing, down the long car laughing, the heads turning like the heads of owls when he passed. "What are you laughing at?" I said. "Yes yes yes yes yes yes" (p. 243).

His extreme objectivity here breaks the limits of sanity, and Darl views himself not objectively, but as a separate human being. In his probing Jewel, his pushing Dewey Dell, to admit her selfish reason for wanting to go to Jefferson, his asking Cash "Do you want me to go to Jackson?" Darl uses other people's reactions to shape his own behavior and to define his own limits. Removed from the family tensions that allow him to measure his own reality, Darl, as shown in his last monologue, loses his sense of the real, and cannot separate himself from the objects of his world. In addition, by sending him away to Jackson the family is denying his very existence, for by his definition, if he is no longer part of their consciousness, he does not exist. His last description is an imagined one of his family after he has been taken away:

The wagon... looks no different from a hundred other wagons there; Jewel standing beside it and looking up the street like any other man in town that day, yet there is something different, distinctive. There is about it that unmistakable air of definite and imminent departure... (p. 244).

They are obviously departing without him; furthermore, they seem to
be totally unconscious of his existence, unconcernedly eating bananas from a paper bag. "Is that why you are laughing, Darl?" he asks himself again. The laughter that causes pain is now the only measure of existence he has. In his final paragraph, he describes himself as his family will picture him in the future: "Our brother Darl in a cage in Jackson where, his grimed hands lying light in the quiet interstices, looking out he foams" (p. 244).

The ambiguity of the passage --indeed, of the whole monologue-- indicates that Faulkner prefers not to resolve the questions raised about Darl's sanity or insanity. Although Darl sounds quite mad in the last monologue, until that point he does not appear to be what we might call insane. Cash at one point defines insanity as a person not being able to "see eye to eye with other folks. And I reckon they aint nothing else to do with him but what most folks say is right" (p. 233); insanity would thus be a judgment made upon a man's behavior by a majority of his fellows. Cash's line of demarcation between sanity and insanity --the willful destruction of another man's property-- is never set forth as the definition of insanity in the novel; instead, the definition is left ambiguous, and the question of whether or not Darl is insane is left unresolved. Nor are the questions Darl raises about his and Jewel's relationships to Addie ever resolved. Darl never achieves a full understanding of the nature of Jewel's bond to Addie or to the horse, nor of his own relationship to Addie; nor, as we see in the end, of himself or of his own existence. He does, however, learn much about Jewel's emotional bonds in the course of the journey, through the tension
between himself and Jewel that so affects the journey.

Faulkner continually emphasizes tension: Jewel's state of tension resulting from the bond between himself and his mother, Darl's state of tension resulting from Addie's rejection and his loss of control over the extended objectivity of his world-view, the tension between Darl and Jewel caused by their rivalry for Addie's love, by the journey itself, and by Darl's probing, the tension between Darl and Dewey Dell, the tension between Anse and Jewel, and other tensions. The multiple narrators and the disordered time sequence effectively develop and maintain these tensions by presenting diverse interpretations of actions covering a long time span, but such a narrative technique is not designed to resolve the tensions. As Slatoff suggests, Faulkner wishes "to strain toward and even beyond extremities, to press against customary limits and barriers," not to resolve tensions and ambiguities.

Because Darl is the major narrator of the novel, the questions that concern him become central issues in the novel as a whole. Because Darl is a major protagonist, the relationships in which he is involved, and the ambiguity his behavior points up, are touchstones to the themes developed in the novel. As narrator and as protagonist, Darl's primary concern is to understand the effect Addie, living and dead, has upon him and upon the members of his family, especially Jewel, the person other than himself whom Addie most deeply affects.

\[\text{Slatoff, p. 82.}\]
In his efforts to understand the strong bond between Addie and Jewel which motivates the journey, Darl places himself -- or finds himself placed -- in conflict with Jewel.

The relationship of tension between Darl and Jewel is central to the events and the themes of *As I Lay Dying*. Since Darl the protagonist is concerned with Jewel's feelings and Jewel's relationship to Addie, and since Darl the narrator is the primary interpreter of Jewel's emotions, Darl's interest in Jewel, and the tension that that interest generates, becomes the structural focal point of the novel. One of the aims of the narrative technique, then, is to bring out the tension between Darl and Jewel; to establish Darl as a major protagonist. At the same time, Darl must be established as a reliable narrator, in order to give credibility to Darl's interpretations of Jewel's emotions from which the basic tension of the novel evolves. To achieve both these ends, Faulkner gives Darl certain qualities that lend credence to his interpretations of behavior, as well as provide a basis for the tension between Darl and Jewel: extreme objectivity, psychic sensitivity to people's moods and feelings, sharp awareness of relationships between people. Once Darl is established as reliable, Faulkner can use the very qualities that contribute to his reliability to create the sequence of events which occur, and to raise the central issues of the novel.

The sequence and ordering of the monologues are designed to bring out these qualities of Darl's and to show how they contribute to the tension upon which the novel is based. By various means -- italics, strategically corroborated passages, strategically
uncorroborated passages, Darl's identification of characters, the positioning of monologues in the narrative sequence—Faulkner establishes Darl's character and emphasizes the tension between Darl and Jewel. Since Darl is sensitive, he realizes that Addie has rejected him, and is profoundly affected by her rejection. Since he is psychically aware of people's feelings, he knows that a deep bond exists between Addie and Jewel, and wants to understand why no bond exists between Addie and himself. His strange objectivity contributes to his unsureness of his own reality as a person, a reality that he/ she could assert only through other people's consciousness of him. When his objectivity and sensitivity become extreme, he is labelled insane for trying to burn Addie's coffin, probably one of the sanest actions performed in the novel.

Thus Darl not only serves as a narrative technique, but embodies the central issues, ambiguities, and tensions raised in the novel. As a narrator and as a protagonist, Darl brings out the structural cornerstone of the novel: the tension between Darl and Jewel stemming from their relationships to their mother. It is this tension which creates the central action of *As I Lay Dying*.
LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED


