URBAN GREEN SPACE AND GENDER IN ANGLOPHONE MODERNIST FICTION.

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Abstract

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Drawing upon the concept of Green Cultural Studies, this dissertation examines the way urban green spaces, such as parks and public gardens, function as heterotopic sites within Anglophone Modernist literature. The dissertation offers, like modern fiction itself, glimpses or snapshots of urban green spaces in their various incarnations and applications, hence presenting a collection of various encounters with and representations of urban green space. It focuses on authors who find themselves outside of the traditional white, Anglo, heterosexual male circle of writers and the dissertation investigates how they use green urban spaces within their fiction—to write against hierarchical social structures, to create heterotopic "other" spaces, or to interrogate ideas regarding normalcy and the concept of a “natural” order. These authors (including Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, Djuna Barnes, and E.M. Forster) use individual green places—be they parks, public gardens, suburbs, or urban wastelands—to imagine and create new urban spaces. Chapter one examines Virgina Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, locating her portrayal of shell shock in reference to the green space of Regent’s Park. In the following chapter, the discussion focuses on public gardens both in Great Britain and the European Continent,

and unearths the way women authors utilize these spaces to articulate their (sexual) autonomous identities. Short stories by Djuna Barnes and Katherine Mansfield form the focus for the chapter. Then, chapter three extends the analysis to suburban spaces at the beginning of the twentieth century; specifically, three texts by E.M. Forster provide a panoramic view of how suburban green space provides an entry into the imagined national community for the "Other" woman. Finally, Chapter Four formulates a theory of unplanned/spontaneous urban green space that provides the possibility for heterotopic spaces to occur. It examines Woolf's *Between the Acts* as well as Jean Rhys's *Quartet* and *Nightwood* by Djuna Barnes. By combining cultural and historical readings with literary analysis, I demonstrate how literary representations of urban green space open up a discussion about gender in conjunction with sexuality, nationality, and discourses of psychology and mental health.

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To my parents,

for giving me the best of them.

To Michael,

for always seeing the very best in me.

INTRODUCTION

> In modernity's Promethean project, the nature/society dialectic has always been at the center of efforts to create a better society by creating a better urban environment. From the attempts of the 18th and 19th century to create a "sanitized city", to the early 20th century's strive for a "rational city", to the contemporary quest for a "sustainable city", inspiration is sought for in ideas about the "greening" of the city and reducing pollutants of all kinds emanating from urban life.
>
> (Maria Kaika, *City of Flows: Modernity, Nature, and the City*, 15)

> Reading some of these histories you might almost believe—you are often enough told—that the eighteenth-century landlord, through the agency of the hired landscapers, and with poets and painters in support, invented natural beauty. And in a way, why not? In the same ideology, he invented charity, land-improvement and politeness, just as when he and his kind went to other men's countries, such countries were 'discovered.'
>
> (Raymond Williams, *The Country and The City*, 120)

In his somewhat heavy-handed allegory "The Other Side of the Hedge" (1904), E.M. Forster critiques the effect increasing industrialization and urbanization has had on modern bourgeois society. In the story, progress is a monotonous, dusty road, lined by a "brown crackling hedge on either side"(24), and the "people of the road" are preoccupied with maintaining continual movement forward and jeer at those who fall behind. The narrator of the story is bored with his journey and weary of the race that he has been part of, when he decides to take a rest and take a peek at what is behind the hedge which lines the road. What he encounters amazes him as he finds himself in lush, green parkland—a pastoral idyll:

> . . . I had never been in so large a space, nor seen such grass and sunshine. The blue sky was no longer a strip, and beneath it the earth had risen grandly into hills—clean, bare buttresses, with beech trees in the folds, and meadows and clear pools at their feet. But the hills were not high, and there was in the landscape a sense of human occupation—so that one

> might have called it a park, or garden, if the words did not imply a certain triviality and constraints. (25)

The edenic scene is furthered by the people he encounters, who are engaged in "rudimentary industries" such as haymaking or gardening, and singing or talking amongst themselves (26). Forster juxtaposes the jarring alienation of the modern city (as symbolized by the road) with a calm and carefree pastoral scene; nature, in the form of the parched hedge, becomes a surrogate for and signifier of the modern human condition.

This dissertation investigates the way complex ideas of nature are intricately linked to the design, use, and representation of urban green spaces within the literature of the early twentieth century, while widening the focus to transcend conventional ideas of green spaces such as parks and gardens. In Forster's short story, the metropolis of London is not explicitly mentioned, but the dusty road and its occupants are nonetheless urban subjects. One of the characters that the narrator encountered before his lapse is Miss Eliza Dimbleby, "the great educationist," who is scheduled to deliver a lecture and thence supposed to catch the train from Cannon Street Station (in London) to Tonbridge Wells. For Forster, the modern urban environment is barren and inhabited by a harried humanity, and he draws upon nature imagery to emphasize his point. In the short story, it is through the narrator's return to nature that he finds his long lost brother (and himself), ultimately surrendering to a slumber that is accompanied by "the magic song of nightingales, and the odour of invisible hay, and stars piercing the fading

sky" (29).[1] In much of Forster's fiction "nature" makes an appearance in one way or another, a sign, as David Leavitt has pointed out, of Forster's "preoccupation with the fundamental incompatibility of industrial progress and the human need for connection with the natural world" (xiv). Rather than simply look upon nature as an idealized pastoral, Forster's juxtaposition of nature and the city suggests a desire to reconcile the two into a new kind of space.[2]

When referring to "space," I am using the term in the sense that Michel de Certeau extrapolates in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, where he distinguishes between "space" and "place." He explains that while space implies movement,

> [a] place is . . . an instantaneous configuration of positions. . . . [and] implies an indication of stability. . . . [Furthermore], Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it. . . .In short, *space is a practiced place.* (117)

In "The Other Side of the Hedge," the place of the road is a stand in for different types of spaces. For one, it is a metaphor for modern bourgeois? First World? capitalist? society, a one-way street that pretends to be perpetually moving forward, while in reality it doubles on itself. Furthermore, the road also references modern, city life that (at least in Forster's view) was divorced from the natural world. The dried-up hedge with its thorny branches that tear at the narrator's

[1] Of course, "The Other Side of the Hedge" does not represent "real nature," but rather a stylized version of it, and Forster would return to the motif of a gentrified countryside and its possible function as a counterpoint to encroaching industrialization in his later work. One of these, *Howard's End*, forms the basis for chapter 3 of this dissertation.

[2] However, his fiction is not just a critique of nature's subjugation, but can also be read in the wider context of Forster's precarious position as a homosexual male in early twentieth century Britain. While I will try to abstain from too an extensive biographical literary analysis, it is the author's position as an outsider that I want to bring into focus in reference to urban green space and the "nature" it encapsulates.

clothes makes but a pitiful show of nature, yet it is also a reminder that spaces have borders that can be permeable. Indeed, the two spaces of the road and the Arcadian parkland are defined by each other, as the hedge is both a line of separation and a point of contact. Finally, both spaces incorporate different types of greenery, or symbols of nature, which contribute to the meaning of the space. Forster uses the hedge to symbolize the different characteristics of the spaces he imagines. The road, a hostile and competitive environment is fenced in by the hedge, which constitutes a physical barrier between busy city life and the restful countryside. On the other side, the hedge is lush and green, "wreathed over with dog-roses and Traveller's Joy" (25), and its roots are fed by a moat that follows the hedge.[3] Nature or, more precisely, green space, presents not just a setting for Forster's story, but rather becomes an agent of its own. In modern literature, urban green space creates its own story. De Certeau declares that narratives "carry out a labor that constantly transforms places into spaces or spaces into places"(118), and I would argue that modern fiction's use of places such as parks, public gardens, suburban developments, and even wasteland transforms them into green "spaces."

To further clarify what is meant by 'green', I want to position this dissertation in relation to "Green Cultural Studies," a concept discussed by Jhan Hochman in an essay of the same name (in *Literature of Nature. An International Sourcebook* 422-428). 'Green' refers to spaces that incorporate physical representations of nature, such as trees, grass, and other plants, while also serving

[3] The narrator actually falls into the water as he crawls through the hedge, and is fished out by man passing by. The obvious theme of rebirth (as symbolized by the water) further adds to the notion of nature as a rejuvenating and healing influence.

a cultural function that is linked to common ideas regarding nature. For example, nature is often seen to exert a calming influence—people talk about "recharging their batteries" through spending time in “nature”—and the most common form of urban green space, the park, is a result of the notion that nature can benefit a person’s mental and physical health. As Hochman further explains, “Green cultural studies is the study of nature once removed, a metastudy trained on nature study or, better, representation of nature” (422). It is this “representation of nature” that is of interest when examining green spaces within cities. Hochman does juxtapose Green Cultural Studies, or as he calls it GCS, with ecocriticism, a field that has grown significantly in literary studies as well as other disciplines over the last decade. However, according to Hochman, GCS’s primary concern is not to lobby for the preservation and conservation of nature. Instead it is focused on the way nature and its urban incarnations constitute a vital aspect of modernity, finding expression in a variety of media including literature. He writes that, “Culture’s double utilization of nature—its flesh as the basis of, or obstruction to, material construction; and its presence or being as ground of representation—necessitates a ‘green cultural criticism,’ or better, ‘green cultural studies’” (Hochman 422). It is exactly this phenomenon that Hochman describes, the use of “[nature’s] flesh as the basis of, or obstruction to, material construction; and its presence or being as ground of representation,” which is of interest to me. In the following chapters I demonstrate how the idea of nature constitutes a vital aspect of the construction of urban environments and how different representations of nature in turn function as representational ground within literature. As explained

above, ‘green space’ does not refer exclusively to the park, but encompasses other places that incorporate aspects of ‘nature’ purposefully or inadvertently deviating from the traditional, industrialized urban environment. Thus public gardens, wastelands (i.e. spaces not built upon) and suburbs all qualify as ‘green spaces,’ which can be read as representing gendered, political, racialized, nationalized, classed, and colonial sites within modernity.

There are a number of different definitions for ‘nature’, and a well-documented history of these differing ideas concerning nature find expression in English literature. Nature can refer to land that has not been developed for industrial or agricultural purposes. It can further signify the presence of plants—shrubs, meadows, trees, hedges, bramble—or it can refer to landmarks such as ponds, lakes, hills, mountains, forests and so on. Usually ‘nature’ evokes visions of greenery and verdure in various incarnations. However, it also signifies a specific place. In the English context, the “countryside,” which usually encompasses an assortment of the items named above as well as land that is used agriculturally, emerged as a concept that coincided with the urbanizing of English society. Donna Landry explores this development in *The Invention of the Countryside*. According to her, the term appeared between 1671 and 1831 and became a signifier for an ideological heartland of the nation (1).

> The countryside, by contrast [to the country], now began to evoke images of unchanging natural beauty arousing protective, patriotic sentiments in metropolitan minds, often from a considerable distance. From its beginnings as a linguistic signifier for the heart of the nation, the

> countryside needed protecting because it was ‘out there’, and perpetually endangered. The long agricultural revolution, spanning the late sixteenth to mid-eighteenth centuries, and devoted to extracting maximum productivity from the land and highest profits from the market, produced the timeless countryside as its imaginary Other. Not production, but consumption and pleasure, recreation and retreat, were the goods associated with the countryside. (2)

In the popular imagination, the countryside embodied ‘nature’ in a pre-industrial, pastoral state. These ideas regarding consumption, pleasure, recreation, and retreat, shaped the creation of official green spaces in towns and cities. Stylized concepts of nature came to represent all that was ‘good’ within English society. Green spaces such as parks and gardens embodied pastoral ideals of the countryside and implicitly nationalist ideas associated with it.

In “The Other Side of the Hedge,” the narrator cautions the reader that even though the place might look like a park or garden, “the words . . . imply a certain triviality and constraints” (25), which highlights some of the underlying principles of urban green spaces such as parks and public gardens. They presented either a place for leisure-time pursuits or private contemplation; however, the intended and practical uses of parks and gardens were heavily regulated. Parks were products of various movements reaching from social reformation to Great Britain’s imperial expansion. The latter often manifested itself in the flora and fauna that was used in the landscape design. The first public parks were established in London, in the early to mid-nineteenth century. Hazel Conway

explains in *People's Parks* that parks presented an idealized landscape (21) that was thought to exert a mitigating influence on the people who traversed it. More specifically, with increasing industrialization, the park was no longer reserved for the middle and upper classes, but became a site where working class people could be instructed in culture and engage in 'safe' activities. Indeed, the regulation of behaviors and activities suitable was anchored in a fear of anarchy and social unrest, which found its expression in attempts to regulate the behavior of the working classes. While commons had (and continued to) traditionally served as spaces where religious meetings and political gatherings occurred, parks were restricted in this respect (23-24).[4] Furthermore, even certain types of sports, such as soccer, were forbidden in an attempt to curb boisterous, "lower-class" behavior.

Nonetheless, the park was a venue for the local inhabitants and the enjoyment of their leisure time. The nineteenth-century landscape architect Charles H. J. Smith explains in great detail the design and purpose of the landscape in *Parks and Pleasure Grounds; or Practical Notes on Country Residences, Villas, Public Parks, and Gardens*. According to Smith, designed parkscapes should facilitate "the recreation and amusement of the inhabitants" (155). In the nineteenth century, the park rendered a vital service to the urban population, catering to everyone from the "pale mechanic" to "children with their nurses, or the sportive juveniles" (156). The greenery and seclusion of the space were seen to hold healing powers, and Smith adds that "Without doubt, it is also good for the mental health of those who are habituated to the wear and tear of the

[4] The exception to the rule would be Hyde Park, where even today people can be found on soapboxes.

busy haunts of men to be brought face to face with tranquillizing as well as suggestive works of god in the world of nature." Consequently, the park was supposed to be the perfect antidote to the stresses of mid-nineteenth century urban life, providing "a wide breathing space, or lungs" which could counteract the overcrowding and unsanitary conditions of the streets (158). Thus, another dimension of planned urban green space emerges: it can be a regulatory space, which is designed (and hence expected) to elicit certain types of behaviors. The authors I discuss in the subsequent chapters explore both the power of this regulation as well as the potential for resistance.

While urban green spaces could exert a subtly repressive social power, it could also provide a catalyst for a modernist revolution of subjectivity. In Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, the main character exclaims, "I love walking in London," . . . "Really it's better than walking in the country," as she crosses St. James's Park in London (6). Clarissa Dalloway's exhilaration and enjoyment of traversing the city captures the essence of a certain modernist sensibility. It exemplifies the rise of a new urban subjectivity that was closely linked to the individual's movement through the city. What makes Virginia Woolf's novel even more unique is that Clarissa's statement is emblematic of a shift in the consciousness of the city dweller during the early decades of the twentieth century. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, English society had increasingly become urbanized, and due to its roots in the industrial revolution the modern city was often seen to exist in opposition to nature. Indeed, many of the characteristics associated with modernist literature are intricately linked to the

modern, urban condition of the city dweller and their ostensible separation from the natural environment. Maria Kaika, in *City of Flows: Modernity, Nature, and the City*, explains how "modernity discursively constructed the modern city and the modern home as autonomous 'space envelopes' independent from natural and social processes"(4). She locates the origins of this nature versus society dichotomy in the Enlightenment movement: "Nature became separated from society in order to be scientifically studied, and ultimately tamed, and the world was separated into things natural (the objects of study of natural sciences) and things social (the objects of study of social sciences) (12). The city as the center of modern society thus became separate from nature, the natural environment, and the countryside. This shift manifested itself in the literature of the 19th and early 20th century, with both the author and the subject being shaped by an increasingly urbanized society.

In *The Politics of Modernism*, Raymond Williams explicates that the modernist shift was anchored in the urban environment itself: "Thus the key cultural factor of the modernist shift is the character of the metropolis. . . . The most general element of the innovation in form is the fact of immigration to the metropolis, and it cannot too often be emphasized how many of the major innovators were, in this precise sense, immigrants" (45). With an influx of immigration to Western metropolises and swelling urban populations, city planners sought to influence people's behavior by shaping the urban environment. 'Nature' played an important role in the creation of a morally sound cityscape. According to Kaika, modernist architecture displays a schizophrenic attitude in

regard to both nature and the city: “On the one hand, nature stands for the ‘uncivilized’, the dark and untamed wilderness that requires control and whose frontier has to be pushed outwards as ‘progress’ accelerates. On the other, nature is also perceived as inherently ‘good’, as the embodiment of some innate superior moral code that has been subverted and perverted through ‘civilization’ and ‘urbanization’ and needs to be restored (14). For many social observers of the time, it was the lack of nature within the city, or even a complete division between the two that resulted in an unhealthy environment with potentially detrimental effects on the urbanites. This uneasiness also found expression in the literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, which often illustrates how the divide between nature and society imbued social practices as well as cultural norms. For Kaika, the theoretical concept of a “nature/society dualism” is closely linked to actual social and spatial practices in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century. “Since this separation inevitably permeated social and spatial practices, these ideas often became politicized and were translated into spatial practices: from the production of nature in cities in the form of parks that would help produce better societies, to Nazi eugenics that would manipulate nature in order to produce the perfect human being” (13).

In his landmark text *The Country and The City*, Williams delineates the development of an ideological division between the two concepts; while the city came to be seen as corrupt, the country[side] was associated with innocence and imbued with the ability (by virtue of the ‘nature’ present) to have a mitigating influence on people troubled by the vulgarity of city life. Furthermore, the city

came to personify the emerging modern consciousness that had arisen in response to changing social relations:

> Struggle, indifference, loss of purpose, loss of meaning—features of nineteenth-century social experience and of a common interpretation of the new scientific world view—have found, in the City, a habitation and a name. For the city is not only, in this vision, a form of modern life; it is the physical embodiment of a decisive modern consciousness. (239)

As such, urban green space is but an extension of this new modern consciousness. If we recall the modernist 'schizophrenic attitudes' concerning nature, it is possible to detect the contradictory impulses that green space embodies. Just as nature has often been perceived as a wilderness needing to be tamed and domesticated, the term was used with similar connotation in reference to human beings. This alternate meaning of nature, as something that exists within a person and must be contained or civilized, introduces nuance to the current discussion, especially when applied to a gendered analysis of the city.

In fact, the distinction between the modern city and nature was often defined in gendered terms. While the city was a masculine space, nature was typically represented as inherently feminine, resulting in the exclusion of women from the public spaces of the city. In her landmark essay, "The Invisible Flâneuse," Janet Wolff declares that the literature of modernity was missing "any account of life outside the public realm, of the experience of 'the modern' in its private manifestations, and also of the very different nature of the experience of those women who *did* appear in the public arena" (…). In recent decades,

scholarship has sought to investigate women's experiences of modernity in greater detail, unearthing texts that attest to the extent the separation of spheres impacted the literature of the time. Griselda Pollock, for example, highlights the way both gender and class affected individuals' experiences of "modernity's spaces and sites." For Wolff, "Modernity breeds, or makes visible, a number of categories of female city-dwellers. Among those most prominent in these texts are: the prostitute, the widow, the old lady, the lesbian, the murder victim, and the passing unknown woman."[5] However, as Victoria Rosner demonstrates in her discussion of *Mrs. Dalloway*, in modern texts both the private and the public sphere merge and overlap. Indeed, women escape their homes and exhilarate in the traversing of urban spaces, resulting in a multitude of "female city-dwellers". In light of the close association of women with nature, this evokes an image of the women as 'mobile sites of nature'[6] that spill over into the public spaces of the city, unsettling traditional ideas of a separation of spheres. Furthermore, it also creates a new vision of the modern city with permeable boundaries that includes a subjective experience outside the predominantly white, male discourse.

The following chapters offer, like modern fiction itself, glimpses or snapshots of urban green spaces in their various incarnations and applications. Hence, this dissertation does not assume to be encompassing all kinds of experiences of modernity, but rather presents a collection of various encounters

[5] All these women could be categorized by their 'natural/biological' function or position within society. E.g. the prostitute lives a life dedicated to satisfying men's 'coarse nature', the widowed is defined by her lack of a husband and therefore lost position of a wife, the lesbian goes against a natural order, the old lady is past her biological prime, and he murder victim becomes an object of scientific study. The only unknown (and promising) quantity is the 'passing woman.'
[6] Credit is due to Jon Hegglund for this terminology.

with and representations of urban green space. I focus on authors who find themselves outside of the traditional white, Anglo, heterosexual male circle of writers and I investigate how they use green urban spaces within their fiction—to write against hierarchical social structures, to create heterotopic "other" spaces, or to interrogate ideas regarding normalcy and the concept of a "natural" order. These authors use individual green places—be they parks, public gardens, suburbs, or urban wastelands—to imagine and create new urban spaces. Even though gender lies at the center of my analysis, it does not constitute an exclusive analytical paradigm. Instead, this dissertation traces how literary representations of urban green space open up a discussion about gender in conjunction with sexuality, nationality, and discourses of psychology and mental health.

In Chapter One I focus on Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, often hailed as one of *the* modernist texts; my interest lies in its depiction of Regent's Park in London, particularly the role it plays in antagonizing Septimus Smith's shell shock. The park was supposed to be a healing space; however, Woolf questions the notion of nature as an ameliorating influence. By using Regent's Park as the site where Septimus experiences his mental breakdown (which ironically, is brought on by "too much nature") Woolf highlights the connection between discourses on mental health and ideas regarding a normal state of being as found in nature. Regent's Park, as a place, is supposed to serve urban inhabitants by providing a venue for recreation and relaxation. As a space it embodies cultural discourses that defines what kind of activities and behaviors are appropriate. It is a green space that exists in a dialectic relationship with the city—it represents a

stylized version of nature, which is meant to regulate the behavior of the urban dwellers. At the same time, these occupants bring their own expectations and motives to the space transforming and even counteracting the original purpose embedded within its design. Thus, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Regent's Park is not just a setting with trees and lawns, but an urban space that functions as representational ground; that is, an element from which the text derives its fundamental meanings. Apart from disrupting "moral considerations of rest and health," Woolf also interrogates the notion of the park as a safe haven for middle class women. Even though the park has been described as a "Bourgeois Haven," modernist fiction challenges this concept. While the parks in the novel do present an arena where women can freely move around, they also disrupt ideas of domestic bliss: at one point the beauty of the park is juxtaposed with Septimus's shell shock caused by his deployment in the first world war. Consequently, the text unsettles the idea that the park presents a safe space for women as Rezia, Septimus's wife, feels threatened by the simulated, natural environment rather than comforted. She sees the park as a sterile if not downright incapacitating environment, which is populated with invalids and other strange people. She compares it to her hometown Milan, and is only further put off by the alienation she feels within the space.

Chapter Two elaborates on the difference between the park as a space for social activity and the public garden as a space for quiet contemplation. As opposed to parks, public gardens are structurally more organized with more specific, inscribed functions. For example, botanical gardens are a site for

showcasing specimens of the natural world while positioning them within a set of scientific categorizations and definitions; amusement gardens designate a specific location for recreation and provide a distinct place that is appropriate for the consumption of "pleasure"; formal gardens adhere to prevailing ideas of beauty and art, representing aesthetic conventions. Because of their more rigid prescription of spatial practice, all of these spaces thus provide more opportunities for the transgression of societal boundaries. This chapter will examine literature situated both in London and the European continent, focusing on the sexuality contained within and/or fostered by these spaces. Griselda Pollock's study of Manet and Degas's paintings[7] will be of particular interest, since she argues that "spaces of modernity are where class and gender interface in critical ways, in that they are spaces of sexual exchange" (in Ogborn 16). In Djuna Barnes's short story "A Little Girl tells a Story to a Lady," the 'Tiergarten' in post-WWI Berlin exists as a place for women to move freely about and meet other women. The connection between the restriction of and ability for physical movement and the expression of sexuality also becomes apparent in stories by other female authors, such as Jean Rhys ("In the Luxembourg Gardens") and Katherine Mansfield ("A Dill Pickle"). Furthermore, what connects all of these authors is their position as outsiders, which translates to their stories. Traditional gardens are cloistered and quasi-domestic spaces, and even though public gardens share some of their common characteristics, they present a new type of social space. Drawing upon Henri Lefebvre's triad of social space, I explore how the women in these short stories utilize the urban green space to articulate autonomous gendered identities.

[7] Griselda Pollock *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism, and the Histories of Art.*

Chapter Three extends the definition of 'urban green spaces' to suburban spaces, which are intrinsically linked to the city, as they are supposed to combine the best of country living with easy access to urban amenities. They represent urbanized space in so far as they impose order upon the natural environment while retaining stylized renditions of nature. Traditionally, suburbia has been regarded as a homogenous space firmly invested in the reproduction of the social order. Robyn Dowling, in "Suburban Stories, Gendered Lives," aims to disrupt this idea by documenting "the diversity of genders, and specifically femininities, [that] lived in suburbs"(69).[8] Particularly interesting to the discussion of the gendered construction of suburban green spaces is her assertion that

> many evocations of the geographical construction of suburban gendered identities are themselves limited, however, for they rely upon an essentialist or unitary conception of place, insofar as they assume that the meanings and social relations circulating within a place like a neighborhood are singular rather than multiple, that all residents share a similar relation to, and sense of, that place. (74)

E.M. Foster's *Howard's End* and John Galsworthy's *The Man of Property* both demonstrate how the space of the suburban home is defined in relation to the city and its urban inhabitants, resulting in the creation of the suburb as an urbanized space. However, more importantly, the experience of this urbanized space differs, specifically in respect to the way gender and class intersect. In *The Man of Property*, Soames Forsythe envisions his home in the suburban area of Robin Hill as a refuge from the demands of urban life, but even more importantly as a way to

[8] In Ruth Fincher and Jane M. Jacobs, eds. *Cities of Difference.*

contain his elusive and distant wife, Irene. The construction of the suburban home comes to represent Forsythe's wish to create a controlled, and ultimately gendered environment, in the face of modernity's disruption of social structures. Ironically, Irene's affair with the architect of the house shatters his dreams and undermines his patriarchal power. The house's location within its natural environment plays an important role in both Soames's vision for an idyllic life and Irene's transgression; while the former envisions the lush surroundings to act as a mitigating influence on his relation with his wife, the latter utilizes the space provided to engage in an adulterous relationship. A different vision is provided in *Howard's End*. While the men of the novel see the eponymous country house tainted by the approach of "suburbia," for the novel's women, particularly Margaret Schlegel, the suburban garden provides a transformative and healing space. Nonetheless, it is also once again a gendered space, with the Schlegel sisters ultimately taking possession of the house, the garden, and the future of the nation.

It is the fourth and final chapter that establishes a discussion of planned/unplanned and official/spontaneous urban green space. It extends the discussion of urban green spaces to include spaces that are tangible but at the same time also representational of imaginative ones. This section draws upon Henri Lefebvre's *The Social Production of Space* as well as Kevin Hetherington's *The Badlands of Modernity*, both of which are concerned with spaces on the margins of society, their transformative powers, as well as the idea of representative/representational space. Correspondingly, the texts discussed vary in

regard to the types of greenery/spaces that are represented, but they all function as ways for the women to negotiate their position within the urban setting.

In Virginia Woolf's posthumously published novel *Between the Acts*, Mrs. Swithin, an elderly lady who spends part of the year with her brother and his wife in the country, imagines the urban space of London as a pre-historic wilderness. Awakened by bird song and "forced to listen," she passes the early morning hours with "her favourite reading—an Outline of History," which prompts her to spend "the hours between three and five thinking of rhododendron forests in Piccadilly," which are

> populated by elephant-bodied, seal-necked, heaving, surging, slowly writhing, and she supposed, barking monsters; the iguanodon, the mammoth, and the mastodon; from whom presumably, she thought, jerking the window open, we descend. (8-9)

Her musings are interrupted by the arrival of morning tea which is carried by Grace the maid, whom Mrs. Swithin has difficulty to separate in her mind from "the leather-covered grunting monster who was about, as the door opened, to demolish a whole tree in the green steaming undergrowth of the primeval forest" (9). What makes this scenario so compelling is the merging of a metropolitan landmark and a prehistoric wilderness, which at the same time locates a woman as the central agent.[9] This can be read in a number of ways: on the one hand it can be firmly located within discourses on the city as a jungle, inhabited by savages (or leather-covered monsters), with Grace representing nineteenth-century bourgeois

[9] This is not the only instance of Woolf using prehistoric imagery in conjunction with urban spaces; in *Mrs. Dalloway*, a similar moment occurs outside Regent's Park tube station.

anxieties regarding the mixing of the classes and races. On the other hand, it also opens up the possibility of gender being at the center of the urban space, if not its origins. Grace's alter ego, the "leather-covered grunting monster," who is demolishing a whole tree in middle of Piccadilly Circus, is at the center of the urban space.

This chapter is concerned with how such spaces—i.e. spaces not officially designated green spaces—function as sites of alternative histories and heterotopia. The latter is a concept advanced by Hetherington, who argues "the issues of social ordering as an uncertain process has to be at the heart of our thinking about the character of modernity" (9). Indeed, he envisions modernity to be "defined by the spatial play between freedom and control," a process which "is found most clearly in spaces of alternative ordering, heterotopia"(18). The concept of spaces of "alternative ordering" or otherness provides a useful lens for the examination of the green, in-between, spaces of the modern city. Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*, for example, opens up green spaces in the city as spaces of otherness, with the nighttime wanderings of the protagonist Robin adding extra significance to what would normally seem a quotidian and banal environment in the daytime. In *Quartet* it is the spontaneous green spaces, which crop up on Marya Zelli's journeys across Europe and Paris that chronicle her lonely, and intransient position. She remembers Brussels disconnectedly, with images of "the sun on the red-striped umbrellas in the flower market" or "the green trees of the Avenue Louise"(145). In Paris, it is the arrival of spring in the Luxembourg Gardens that make her ponder her husbands' imprisonment (for embezzling money): "Fancy

being shut up in a little dark dirty cell when the spring was coming. Perhaps one morning you'd smell it through the window and then your heart would nearly burst with the longing for liberty" (158). However, it is her who is trapped in her situation and the image of a blooming, green Paris stands in stark opposition to her increasing desperation. For these women, the various spaces constitute both imaginary and imaginative sites, which reflect and potentially transform their gendered positions within the city.

Ultimately, this dissertation illustrates that modern literature provides an intriguing perspective on the interaction between the ascribed functionality of urban spaces and their other dimensions; particularly, how gender presents a determining factor in the portrayal/ function of these spaces. It also becomes apparent that these spaces demonstrate the re-negotiation between the private and public sphere. The main concern of the present study is the extent to which modern literature both represents and redefines these spaces of "bourgeois order," while also exploring those spaces that defy or subvert categorization. These modernist representations break with previous notions of urban green spaces while also creating new sites within the city.

CHAPTER ONE

"No sense of proportion": Urban Green Space and Mental Health in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Fig. 1: "St James's Park, Kew Gardens," by Walter E. Spradbery, 1929. Published by Underground Electric Railway Company Ltd, 1929. Printed by Dangerfield Printing Company Ltd.

. . . [O]n or about December, 1910, human character changed. I am not saying that one went out, as one might into a garden, and there saw that a rose had flowered, or that a hen had laid an egg. The change was not sudden and definite like that.

"Character in Fiction" (1924)

Mrs. Dalloway, in particular, is a novel obsessed with the ordinary as a source of knowledge about another person.

(Olson 44)

Part of the pleasure in following Virginia Woolf's London pattern comes from noting how in one book a scene is a mere sketch, in another a fully pictured background, and in another that same street or square or garden is a major influence in the solution of human problems. (Brewster 39)

Given the diagnosis that Septimus Warren Smith receives in Virginia Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, a stroll in the park would seem to be the perfect cure. Recently returned from the battlefields of World War I he feels listless and alienated, and his physician advises him to distract himself. However, as his behavior becomes more disruptive and worrisome, his wife Rezia takes him to a doctor for nervous diseases. Sir William Bradshaw, a well-known specialist on Harley Street[10], calls his condition "not having a sense of proportion" and prescribes rest, gentle exercise, as little excitement as possible, and ideally, a retreat in the country. Ironically, this analysis takes place after Septimus experiences hallucinations while in Regent's Park, a space that is supposed to provide a respite from the busy city life and its possibilities for the overstimulation of the senses. As Georg Simmel explains in "The Metropolis and Mental Life," the city creates a milieu in which an individual's emotions are intensified "due to the swift and continuous shift of external and internal stimuli (in Bridge and Watson 11). According to Simmel, this necessitates a "blasé attitude" as a person will otherwise expend all his or her energy in attempting to keep up with city life. However, Septimus is unable to operate in a rational (as defined by Simmel) manner; his behavior ranges from apathy and a semi-catatonic state to outbursts of feverish activity. Septimus being "out of proportion" —he is not a "metropolitan type" as defined by Simmel and hence at odds with his urban surroundings—constitutes a threat to the natural order of things and it is his disruptive behavior (rather than his mental state) that elicits a

[10] Harley Street is (and has been since the mid-nineteenth century) a Mecca for private medical practices.

response from his concerned wife and physician. Still, Woolf is not simply critiquing the subjugation of the individual by a cruel, modernized society but using Septimus's mental breakdown to open a discussion of the possibility for public space to provide a cure for private psychopathologies. Indeed, Woolf's use of the term "proportion" underscores the idea that in *Mrs. Dalloway* urban green space is not just aesthetically pleasing or functional, but also embodies a belief that a properly planned urban green space can foster healthy minds among city dwellers. What becomes clear in the case of Septimus is that the aesthetically designed environment does not aid in regaining his sense of proportion, but instead worsens his condition.

In this chapter, I examine how Woolf constructs a complex discussion of the human mind and its modern surroundings by locating key parts of her narrative in the Royal Parks of London. As *Mrs. Dalloway* illustrates, these urban green spaces are contradictory. They are supposed to administer small doses of nature in a relaxing and recreational space; however, in the novel they fail to do so. Their designation as a "green space" existing outside of the urban, built environment suggests a separation from modern city life and their function is to provide a refuge from the onslaught of metropolitan stimuli. However, in *Mrs. Dalloway* the park is anything but a safe haven. I am particularly interested in how Woolf merges her exploration of the human mind with the green spaces of the Royal parks and the values of proportion that they embody. These spaces can be read as reflective of the modern city: its spaces are misappropriated, or perhaps re-appropriated, in response to the changing environment of the modern city; they

function as both public and private places; they are manifestations of a paternalistic approach to urban planning that is contested by changing socio-economic circumstances; and finally, they reflect, rather than ameliorate, the psychological alienation of the urban population. The conclusion (if one can call it that) Woolf offers is that the cure of nature administered in the setting of organized, urban green space does not work. Parks and gardens, as envisioned by the literature of the early twentieth century, are not sources of rejuvenation or healing; they are complicated entities of their own that resist categorization. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, green spaces are no longer "a mere sketch" or a "fully pictured background" but have moved into the foreground as an integral narrative element in her critique of the modern imperial metropolis.

Woolf was very much concerned with the question of human character, a preoccupation that manifests itself in *Mrs. Dalloway* and much of her other work.[11] My second epigraph, taken from Woolf's famous paper "Character in Fiction," which was partly derived from her essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," has probably become one of Woolf's most frequently cited passages. Part of the popularity has been due to Woolf's decisive comments regarding the advent of a modern consciousness. In the paper she sets out to answer some of the criticisms leveled against the young novelists of her day, by authors such as Arnold Bennett, who accused the new generation of writers of not being able to capture character.

[11] On (or about) January 16, 2009, Fred Shapiro, the editor of the *Yale Book of Quotations*, initiated a brief e-mail exchange on the Virginia Woolf list serve. His query to Woolf scholars was whether the first quote in the epigraph, as found in *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* was correct, as his publication had been publishing a version that substituted "human nature" for "human character." After a couple of responses by notable scholars such as Stuart N. Clark, it quickly became clear that indeed the "less reliable Bartlett's Familiar Quotations [sic.]" was and had been correct.[11]

In her own work, Woolf was most concerned with rendering and unearthing the internal processes of her characters, but this privileging of the internal glosses the essential relationship between the inner life of a person and their external experiences. Indeed, Dorothy Brewster declares that Woolf was repeatedly challenged by the "artistic problem" of how to combine the external with the internal (11). To render the latter, she would draw upon her experiences of London, resulting in an exploration of "the relationship between the myriad impressions of London crowds and streets and parks, and the mind and the imagination of the observer—herself, and by transference, the characters in her novels" (Brewster 7-8). It can be surmised, then, that in Woolf's fiction, the external plays an important part in the development of character, and even though the settings of *Mrs. Dalloway*, for example, might appear ordinary or even arbitrary, they are everything but incidental.

In the case of Septimus, Sir William comes to the conclusion that the bustle of London has become too much to bear and, therefore, Septimus should be taken to a rest home in the country where he can regain his "proportion." Implicit in this diagnosis is the idea that nature, as found in the countryside, can have a restorative effect on the human mind. Furthermore, this "nature" (greenery, trees, fields, quiet) stands in binary opposition to the city. As I will explain in greater detail later, public parks were born out of the conviction that nature could and should be administered to the urban population, to bring about physical as well as mental well-being. This line of thought forges a relationship between "external"

nature and human nature, with the latter being malleable and subject to manipulation.

The concept of "human nature" implies an original, primal condition that can account for any human subjectivity, regardless of culture or context. In addition, it cannot be divorced from the formation of character; however, connotations of the term also imply a binary construction that locates a person's uncivilized nature in opposition to his or her cultured character. Furthermore, character is often seen as something that can be measured (or even "captured"), reflecting a scientific approach to the human mind that emerged during the Enlightenment. In contrast, when applied to human beings, the term "nature" implies something primeval, something that is predetermined as opposed to character, which can be built, influenced, honed, and ultimately altered. Nature—as in the natural world and all its manifestations—forms the basis of scientific exploration and by the twentieth century, a plethora of scientific discourses had set out to dissect and conquer the natural world, including the human mind through the discipline of psychology and psychoanalysis.[12] The scientific revolution resulted in a shift of perspective, which Woolf acknowledges when she asserts that, "[a]ll human relations have shifted – those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when the human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics,

[12] Incidentally, The Hogarth Press published the papers of the International Psychoanalytical Society from 1924 onwards, and was also the first press to publish Freud's *Collected Papers* and other works in English. Quentin Bell, in his biography of Woolf, reports that she never read Freud's work; however, other scholars have argued that she would have nonetheless been familiar with his theories due to her circle of family and friends, many of whom were devoted followers of psychoanalysis.

and literature." (422) However, while she appears to advocate a linear progression, I would argue that this is a symbiotic, simultaneous process. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf unearths the ways in which the built environment was used not only to shape "character" but also to regulate individual behavior within the bourgeois social order of the city.

The Diagnosis

The ordinary and the everyday are at the very core of *Mrs. Dalloway*, and it is Septimus's inability to participate in everyday activities that earn him the diagnosis of being "out of proportion." In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the ordinary becomes such an overpowering organizing concept that events that are everything but conventional seem to just flit by as incidental details within the broader sweep of the narrative. Marital discord, post-World War I trauma, and suicide are all incorporated seamlessly, without being narratively privileged as more important than Mrs. Dalloway deciding to "buy the flowers herself" (3). Septimus Warren Smith's inability to connect and interact with the ordinary is what sets him apart and renders him unable to cope. Initially, since he is listless and uninterested in what goes on around him, his physician, Dr. Holmes, advises him to socialize more and tells him to "[t]hrow [himself] into outside interests"(91). As Dr. Holmes sees it, "health is largely a matter in our own control" (91); therefore, Septimus only needs to physically engage with the material world and his mind will follow. Holmes repeatedly assures Septimus's wife, Rezia, that there is

"nothing whatever the matter" (90, 92) with her husband and that he only needs to be distracted with what the city has to offer—for example the music hall—for him to reconnect with his surroundings. In spite of the physician's efforts, Septimus's alarming behavior escalates and the Warren Smiths seek out the help of Sir William Bradshaw, a specialist for nervous disorders. Contrary to Holmes, it takes Bradshaw only a couple of minutes to determine what is wrong with Septimus:

> He could see the first moment they came into the room (the Warren Smiths they were called); he was certain directly he saw the man; it was a case of extreme gravity. It was a case of complete breakdown—complete physical and nervous breakdown, with every symptom in an advanced stage, he ascertained in two or three minutes (writing answers to questions, murmured discreetly, on a pink card). (95)

Sir William, however, does not use the term "mental illness" when referring to cases such as Septimus's: indeed, he "never spoke of 'madness'; [but] he called it not having a sense of proportion" (96). For Sir William, the absence of what he calls "sense of proportion" has both psychological and physical effects—the breakdown of the mind is closely tied to a degeneration of the body. Correspondingly, the cure prescribed by Sir William reflects this relationship: he suggests plenty of rest, no excitement, no physical exertion, plenty of food, and above all, solitude.

> Health we must have; and health is proportion; so that when a man comes into your room and says he is Christ (a common delusion), and has a message, as they mostly have, and threatens, as they often do, to kill

> himself, you invoke proportion; order rest in bed; rest in solitude; silence and rest; rest without friends, without books, without messages; six months' rest, until a man who went in weighing seven stone six comes out weighing twelve. (99)

Here, proportion does not just refer to the physiological manifestation of health, but it also dictates an appropriate way of perceiving and interacting with the world.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the idea of "proportion" is naturalized and used as an evaluative tool for human beings, as Sir William links it to a physical state that is desirable and occurs within the natural world (i.e. health or beauty) and can be measured (i.e. in weight), but at the same time it is also something that can be manipulated and artificially induced. According to this approach, the mind and the body are linked, and by regulating one the other can be influenced. Implicit in this definition is that an objective measurable standard exists by which people can be accurately assessed and categorized. To be proportionate is to be healthy and, by extension, to be normal. In addition, it locates human beings within a social order that is based upon the law of proportion as it is seen to occur within nature. Thus proportion is used to signify the "natural order of things."

This "order of things" extends to the physical world in which pathological subjects, like Septimus, might find themselves. "Proportion" thus defines a spatial position within the built environment as well as a metaphorical place within a social order. While it disguises itself as natural, however, the discourse of proportion advances an essentially conservative, hierarchical ideology. In the

novel, the physicians embody a paternalistic, prescriptive approach to human nature that subscribes to this normalizing discourse. Dr. Holmes—the picture of health and wholesomeness: "Large, fresh coloured, handsome"(91)—determines that Septimus suffers from being in a "funk." He meets Septimus's listlessness with a fatherly admonition to "not make that charming little lady his wife anxious about him" and not neglect his duty as a husband and loyal Englishman (92). For Dr. Holmes, Septimus's behavior is not troublesome because it is potentially fatal to himself, but because it deviates from the norm: "He had actually talked of killing himself to his wife, quite a girl, a foreigner, wasn't she? Didn't that give her a very odd idea of English husbands? Didn't one owe perhaps a duty to one's wife?" (92) According to standards of normalcy, Septimus is bound to perform his duty to both wife and country—as a representative of the nation he should set an example of both conjugal and domestic bliss. Also, as a member of the educated class he ought to engage with the culture the city has to offer, while as a husband he ought to take his obligations seriously and procreate. Dr. Holmes believes that by going through the motions Septimus will find physical as well as mental release, and instead of locating the origin of Septimus's apparent ennui, he prescribes a therapy of distraction.

While Dr. Holmes sees mental stimulation as the cure for Septimus's nervous condition, Sir William Bradshaw takes an ostensibly opposite approach. He determines that Septimus's illness is brought on by over-stimulation and needs to be counteracted by repose in the countryside and removal from modern life. On the surface the two remedies proposed by the medical professionals appear to be

at odds with each other, but closer inspection reveals that they are located along a continuum. They both represent a school of thought that privileges a paternalistic and prescriptive approach to health, which seeks to normalize the behavior of the patient instead of curing his illness. Woolf shows this approach to be inadequate and ultimately detrimental for Septimus by her placing Septimus within the very green space that Holmes (implicitly) and Bradshaw (explicitly) prescribe. Regent's Park plays a central role in her critique of normalizing discourses. The space of the park *should*, at least according to the ideas embodied by the physicians, have a meliorating effect on him. Instead Septimus experiences a complete mental breakdown, which makes a potent statement about the limitations of the normalizing discourse that the park and the physicians stand for.

Woolf drew upon her own experience of psychological diagnostics as well as treatments in her portrayal of the physicians and their prescribed treatment in *Mrs. Dalloway.* It is important to note that I do not seek to enter into a discussion of Woolf's mental health and the validity of her "madness". Instead, I hope that providing background information regarding her experiences will help to extrapolate the relationship between the green space of Regent's Park and Septimus's condition.[13] Hermione Lee, in *Virginia Woolf*, discusses Woolf's symptoms, which included depression, anxiety, headache, backache, high-temperature, physical exhaustion, and a rapid pulse rate. She further states that "[a] reluctance to eat and . . . weight loss was one of the extreme of these physical

[13] For detailed discussion of her symptoms, breakdowns, and diagnoses, see Quentin Bell's biography, Douglas W. Orr's *Virginia Woolf Illnesses*, and the more controversial *"My Madness Saved Me": The Madness and Marriage of Virginia Woolf* by Thomas Szasz. All three texts contain ample information about the cures and treatments Woolf was prescribed.

manifestations"(175). Just like Woolf, Septimus experiences both physical and psychological symptoms: he is despondent, unwilling to eat, and exhibits signs of anxiety. Even though the novel is not autobiographical, Woolf's own "condition" nonetheless colored the narrative and plot. Lee states that, "the named illness is also 'her' illness in that it took the material of her life as its subject-matter. It, and the treatment she received for it, affected her personality, her behavior, her writing and her politics" (176). Nonetheless, Lee also stresses that Woolf was wary of using herself as subject matter for her essays. Apparently, Woolf was anxious to ensure that "'Egotism' must be countered by narrative 'control'," and that "Septimus should not only be 'founded on me' but 'might be left vague – as a mad person is – not so much character as an idea'" (in Lee 192). Woolf does successfully communicate that Septimus is diagnosed as being "out of proportion" because he does not conform his behavior to bourgeois standards. According to Lee, at the turn of the century insanity was seen as "anti-social or non-conformist behaviour" (183)[14] and "[t]here is no doubt that the development of [Woolf's] political position, her intellectual resistance to tyranny and conventionality, derived to a great extent from her experiences as a woman patient" (184). It should come as no surprise, then, that the portrayal of the physicians is very unfavorable; Lee defines Woolf's characterization of Bradshaw as "a political reading, ahead of Foucault, of the conspiracy between social engineering, the restraint of the mentally ill, and the patriarchal self-protection of the establishment

[14] Some people might argue that it still is. Indeed, mental illness is (partly) diagnosed through the presence or absence of certain behaviors.

[a reading which] takes revenge on all the diagnoses that his type has made of her" (193).

The treatment that Woolf underwent was a combination of medication and bed rest, and Douglas W. Orr declares that "[t]he portrayal of the insanity of Septimus Smith is doubtless derived in part from Virginia's own experience, including especially that with consultants whose knowledge of psychiatric treatment was limited to the rest cure" (98). The rest cure, first administered by S. Weir Mitchell, became popular in the late 1880s and was mainly prescribed for women who had been diagnosed to be suffering from neurasthenia which, according to Diana Martin in "The Rest Cure Revisited," was "a catch-all diagnosis for the host of nonpsychotic emotional disorders that were not understood and not responsive to medical therapies"(737).[15] As the name suggests, the cure consisted of three elements, which were isolation, rest, and feeding. Once the patient had been stabilized on a diet of up to several gallons of milk a day, meat and eggs were introduced as well as light exercise. The purpose of the treatment was to bring about "placid contentment" (Martin 373), accompanied by a cessation of all intellectual functions, which ultimately was supposed to result in childlike acquiescence on part of the patient. In 1910 and 1912, Woolf went to a private home for women with mental problems at Burley Park, Twickenham, where she was treated with "rest cures". Indeed, her treatment

[15] Orr points out that in Woolf's case the "medical therapies" administered, i.e. the bromide and other medication, might actually have caused some of the symptoms thought to be indicative of her illness. Furthermore, it is important to note that medical terms such as neurasthenia or hysteria were often used to pathologize women's behavior that did not conform to societal norms and expectations. Szasz also problematizes the way abnormal behavior was (and still is) used to diagnose a mental illness in psychiatry. In regard to Woolf this approach has led to much speculation on and fetishization of her "madness".

never really changed and between the 1880s and the 1930s she was treated with different varieties of the rest cure: "All her doctors recommended rest cures, milk and meat dishes for weight gain, fresh air, avoidance of excitement and early nights" (Lee 182-3).[16] The reader will recognize this regimen as the cure suggested by Sir William in *Mrs. Dalloway* for Septimus's condition. However, by the time the physician convinces Rezia to send her husband to a rest cure home in the country, Septimus has already been—and unsuccessfully so—exposed to various components of the cure. In fact, one could argue that the park should represent a perfect environment for Septimus to recover from his madness: It provides fresh air, little excitement, benches to rest on, and the opportunity for light exercise.

The park is supposed to offer both nature and distraction—especially the park that Woolf chooses for her narrative: Regent's Park. It was designed like a country estate, yet also offers distractions ranging from a zoo to a boating lake. Nonetheless, for several of the characters in the novel it is an uncanny if not downright hostile place. By locating a pivotal aspect of the narrative within Regent's Park, Woolf transforms the green space into an entity of its own. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, urban green space both informs and transforms the development of the various characters.

[16] She was also treated for a continually high temperature by having three teeth pulled in June 1922 (Lee 186). This was very common as it was thought to reduce fever-inducing bacteria that collected at the roots of teeth.

The Cure

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, proportion refers to a desirable state of mind, which in turn is linked to proper ways of conducting oneself. As I mentioned earlier, Septimus's problem is that his behavior does not match up with the expectations of those around him. By using "out of proportion" instead of "insane" to describe his state, Woolf highlights his inability to function within the parameters of "normal" social behavior. Conventionally, the term "proportion" is used within architecture, referring to an inherent order existing within the natural world, which in turn should be reproduced by architectural design. In architecture, proportion is often closely related to the beauty or the aesthetic appeal of a building. Furthermore, the concept itself has been applied to a variety of subjects considered in one way or another to be art: music, literature, and painting. For several centuries, both architects and philosophers sought to unlock what they saw as the natural code of proportion and studies in proportion can be traced back to antiquity.[17] In the context of the present discussion it is important to distinguish between proportion as a means of making a building structurally sound, and the idea that perfect proportion equals perfect beauty. The two are most certainly connected—after all, beauty is created if the design of an object completely caters to its purpose. Nonetheless, Woolf is concerned with the individual being certified "structurally sound" and therefore fit to operate within modern society. Septimus

[17] P.H. Scholfield gives an outline of the theory of proportion, noting that the only surviving work from antiquity is that of Vitruvius. He points out that most of the work on proportion from the Renaissance was based upon his work. One of the difficulties of using Vitruvius's work is that he does not actually formulate a theory of proportion, but rather supplies his readers with an "encyclopedic account" of architectural practices of the antiquity (14, 15, 16).

is neglecting his duties as husband and as a loyal subject, and his disproportionateness is symbolized by his refusal to eat and engage in sexual relations with his wife. He declines to perform what could be termed "natural" human behaviors, and it is his refusal that makes him unfit in the eyes of the physicians.

Woolf was not the first to apply the concept to human beings. The Roman architect Vitruvius is famous, amongst other things, for using the human figure as an exemplum for proportionality, creating a connection between the human figure, nature and the built environment. P.H. Scholfield, in *The Theory of Proportion in Architecture*, extrapolates that this use has often been misinterpreted, resulting in the notion that the human figure is a perfect example for nature's "own favoured system"(21), instead of being a metaphor Vitruvius used for functionality. Still, no matter what interpretation one leans towards, this approach is useful in highlighting how ideas regarding proportion have functioned as a regulating, normalizing idea for both architectural design and human subjects.

During the nineteenth century, proportion did not just refer to the fitness of a building, but took on new meaning. First of all, inquiries into the nature of proportion were motivated by an interest in the origins of aesthetic beauty. Traditionally, proportion has defined beauty and in landscape design this is an especially important factor. Scholfield is concerned with "visual proportion," which he defines as "the relationship of the shapes and sizes of objects [that] please the eye" (3). Since proportion is seen to be a defining feature of beauty,

discussions on proportion were prevalent in the literature on architecture as well as landscape design during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some were quite dismissive of its relevance to architecture and the general planning of the built environment. Edward Lacey Garbett, in *Rudimentary Treatise On The Principles of Design In Architecture, As Deducible From Nature And Exemplified In The Works Of The Greek and Gothic Architects,* goes so far as to declare that "I have never been able to discover what [proportion] means in the writings of architects, and shall therefore use it only in its plain mathematical sense" (note on 14). For Garbett, proportion merely represents a tool rather than an idea to be applied to architecture; in fact, he is outright dismissive of its merits:

> A proper understanding of the nature of physical harmony, whether in sound or colours, will guard the reader against the immense abuse which mystics make of this plain common sense principle, in the theories of what is called *proportion* in architecture;—a sort of beauty made easy, an artistic philosopher's stone, by which baser productions are to be transmuted into works of art—expressions of thought—without the trouble of thinking, only by applying mathematical rules. (38)

While he appears to disagree with the importance that the idea of proportion was accorded, Garbett's preoccupation nonetheless testifies to the prominence theories of proportion took.

When the term proportion is applied to a person, it can signify both their internal, mental state as well as their position within a wider, societal context. Hence, the idea that proportion will magically fix whatever is wrong—whether it

is in regard to a building or a person—warrants further investigation. The parks movement, both within Europe and the United States, was heavily influenced by ideas regarding the beneficial effect of nature on people as well as the existence of proportion within nature and its proper expression in architecture. During the nineteenth century, the modern shift caused the park to be envisioned not just as a recreational facility, but also as a site for other activities. As Paul Waley points out, the park was not only supposed to cater to people's moral and bodily well-being, but their cultural and intellectual improvement; further serving as a site that commemorated collective memory and the imperial past, as well as representing aestheticised nature and the sciences ("Parks and landmarks: planning the Eastern Capital along western lines" 4).

Regent's Park in London is a perfect example of this convergence between architectural and social uses of proportion. The Park was named after the Prince Regent and it was under his patronage that John Fordyce and John Nash created it. The area, then known as Marylebone Park encompassed "500 acres of undeveloped land on the northern boundary of the expanding metropolis." John Fordyce, the new surveyor general, saw this as an opportunity for the Crown to profit financially (Saunders 76). John Nash was originally trained as an architect, but his greatest achievement was the creation of the Regent's Park and the resulting metropolitan improvements. His design philosophy had been influenced by his friendship with a group of landowners and landscape gardeners who "endeavored, not to regulate nature, but to release the latent possibilities into the grounds of the country estates" (80). His plan for Regent's Park reflects this

aesthetic. Nash wrote that “Mary-le-bone Park shall be made to contribute to the healthfulness, beauty, and advantage, of that quarter of the Metropolis: [. . .]” (qtd. In Saunders 82).

Fig. 2: “Regent’s Park, 1833.” Improved map of London for 1833, from Actual Survey. Engraved by W. Schmollinger, 27 Goswell Terrace.

When Regent’s Park was initially conceived it presented a unique approach to urban park design marking “the end of a great tradition in English architecture and the beginning of something new” (Saunders 9). The Park is distinctive insofar as it was designed as a residential area, which utilized landscape design to create the illusion of its inhabitants living in the countryside.

Over its history, however, the space has taken on a variety of functions—ranging from private neighborhood to public recreational area—and housed a number of institutions: the Royal Botanical Society, the Zoological Society of London, the St Dunstan’s Institute for the Blind, as well as the Royal Hospital of St Katherine’s. The latter had moved to the Park in 1825 from its previous

location near the Tower of London, and during WWI it functioned as a hospital for British and American officers, subsequently becoming the West London Hospital for Nervous Diseases (Saunders 163). With a rich history closely linked to the history of London, Regent's Park incorporates many contradictory elements. As Saunders explains, the park "served […] many purposes—as foraging-grounds for pigs, as a royal hunting park, as a mortgage for a king in need, as farmland supplying the capital, and as the finest of the 'metropolitan improvements,' . . . which [makes it] at once both town and country" (177). Regent's Park was conceived as a space incorporating aspects of genteel country living within a private park located centrally within a city,[18] but also a public place, designed to provide little enclaves of nature to its visitors. Yet it is precisely this "proportionate" mediation of spaces that has allowed a repurposing of the park to uses far from the designers' intentions.

Nature, in a controlled, aesthetically pleasing setting thus contributed to the mental and physical well-being of its occupants. In general, the parks movement that arose in the nineteenth century was guided by this underlying assumption. Geoffrey Tyack explains that the newly created parks, such as Victoria Park, Kennington Park, and Battersea Park, exemplified prevalent ideas regarding the beneficial influence of green space.[19] These parks were designed in the suburbs of the time in order to grant a more diverse population access to green space, as

[18] In fact, Nash ensured ready access to the park from other urban areas by building Regent's Street.

[19] Tyack's *Sir James Penenthorne and the making of Victorian London*, charts the history of several royal parks in the eastern and southern parts of London, including the never built Albert Park.

> [i]t was generally believed that the lack of fresh, pure air and open space contributed to a deterioration in public health and to that restless *anomie* which has always affected some of the poorer inhabitants of the central areas. This frame of mind could discourage self-improvement and, at worst, fed those disorderly impulses which threatened social stability and harmony. By encouraging 'rational amusements' in discreetly supervised surroundings, parks could contribute to the creation of a balanced and orderly society. (87)

Especially striking is that Tyack's wording recalls Scholfield's definition of the objective of architectural proportion as "the creation of visible order" (6). Proportion counteracts chaos, organizing the visual information (e.g. by having similar shapes) and hence creating mental order.

Therefore, it can be argued that a "balanced and orderly society" depends upon the individual's sense of proportion, which is composed of a person's recognition of his or her position within the whole and their commitment to act according to it. Nineteenth and early-twentieth century discourses on architecture and the emerging profession[20] of landscape design recognized how the built environment could contribute towards an individual's sense of proportion.

George Burnap's 1916 text, *Parks. Their Design, Equipment, and Use,* nicely showcases how proponents of the emerging profession of landscape design sought to position themselves within a scientific framework that catered towards

[20] During the 18th century, the only people who could afford to landscape their properties were the landed gentry and hence landscape design was but a fledgling profession, with architects often performing the task. In the 19th century, as urban planning became more prevalent, landscape design also underwent a revolution. Nonetheless, landscape design was seen as an art and the exclusivity of the profession only furthered this perception.

the betterment of society. He uses examples from both Europe and the United States to address different aspects of park design, and specifically dedicates his work to the urban administrators in charge of park development. In the preface, he stresses the fact that "Park Design is governed by principles of composition and not by personal caprice of the designer,"[21] and expresses his hope that "this book may establish the fact there is a definite law and order to be recognised in the shaping of the parks quite as in other forms of art—laws which may not prudently be violated or ignored" (17). Burnap places great importance on what he calls "the constant companion of civic growth" (25) that is park development, and supports a professionalization of the function of the park designer.

For Burnap, the park exists in a symbiotic relationship with its urban surroundings—"Parks are organic, not isolated, units" (36)—and he is very particular in his view that the park, including the architectural details contained within it, exerts a noticeable influence on the visitors and inhabitants of the city. He views a park as a part of a larger civic project that embodies the ideals and conventions of a society.

> It is too generally thought that gardening knowledge of any sort fits a man sufficiently for designing a park. A park is not a unit in itself, and may not be developed independently of civic design; therefore it must be handled by one of specific training who will understand the relation of park areas to the civic development as a whole. (36)

Thus, the park must both reflect and endorse prevailing conventions; Burnap actually goes so far as to state that in order for a park to successfully thrive, its'

[21] Italicized in original.

visitors must be properly "brought up." In chapter two he writes, "Bringing up a park in the way it should go more frequently means bringing up people the way they should go" (42). People need to be instructed in how to use the space, which can be achieved through both the design of the space as well as actual verbal instruction. Burnap explains that, "the first step in park improvement should be the offering of public lectures on the general subject of park design." This is necessary because, "[o]nly by the 'bringing up' of the residents, and by the enlistment of their active coöperation [sic] in the development of parks, will the best sort of work be accomplished" (44). Presumably, the best work accomplished refers both to successful design, but also the education of the individual.

A closer look at Burnap's words highlights an inherent contradiction of park design: a park is an urban space that is supposed to be natural; a natural space that seeks to educate, even manipulate; and a space that appears to be at once democratic and hierarchical. It is a wonderful example of the anxieties that saturated late nineteenth and early twentieth century English society. To return to Edward Lacey Garbett, architecture (and by extension landscape design) functions "as a means not only of affecting, but of exalting or improving." And when this purpose is realized "it deserves to be called a *high,* a *poetic* art," which aims "to TEACH" (30). Therefore, parks are not just sites for recreation and relaxation, but they fulfill a vital function within society. Burnap takes a very paternalistic approach, which is reflected in his treatment of the citizens but also the park itself: "A park is the city's child, needing to be nourished, trained and educated exactly like a human being" (53). The park has two main prerogatives, beauty and

utility. Indeed, Burnap states that the purpose of the park is to "radiate beauty," a beauty which I would argue, is determined by a sense of proportion that is dictated by societal conventions. For Burnap, proportion within a park is determined by scale. Figure 3 and 4 show Lincoln Park in Washington, D.C., before and after Burnap redesigned it. His aim was to increase the impact and aesthetic appeal of the space since, as he explains "Narrow walks, devious and irrelevant, fritter away the dignity of a park, belittling its features, decreasing its importance" (69). By widening the walkways and changing the approach to the sculpture, the park's features are "exhalted." In addition, Burnap uses symmetrical arrangement of shrubs and plants to create a balanced design. Hence, he deems what could be described as a naturalistic design (note the irregularly planted grasses and the curved paths in figure 1) as inferior to a rigid symmetrical design.

Fig. 3: "Lincoln Park, Washington—Before" George Burnap, *Parks. Their Design, Equipment, Use,* 1916.

Fig. 4: "Lincoln Park, Washington—After." George Burnap, *Parks. Their Design, and Equipment, and Use,* 1916.

What is striking when one compares the two images above is the way that the improved park manifests a very strict, hierarchical organization. The space privileges the statue and its commemorative values; here, proportion is concerned with establishing an order within a space. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Septimus struggles with exactly this type of organizing proportion. He is unwilling to submit to "human nature," as embodied by Dr. Holmes, who wants to regulate Septimus's behavior. In regard to Septimus, Dr. Holmes uses proportion to signify a desirable physique, as well as mental state. Just as there is a "right" way of organizing a space—preferably in a linear and symmetrical manner—for Holmes there is an appropriate manner of being that Septimus must adhere to. An important part of this desirable behavior is the ability to suppress any kind of horrible thoughts an individual might have and they park embodies this desire for a streamlined manner of thinking.

The park is supposed to be a harmonious, beautiful space that teaches and instructs citizens according to principles that are defined by societal norms and ideals, yet the very democratic ideas upon which the public park is founded necessarily admit a disorderly hodgepodge of all types and classes of people. It is this merging and overlapping that is a reoccurring theme in *Mrs. Dalloway*. In the novel, the public spaces, for example the street or the park, become both public and private. This process is signified by the presence of nature in the urban topology of the novel. Saunders further explains that even though "[Nash's] components were all old and well-tried. . . . [he] showed that it was possible to combine urban architecture with a country landscape, to achieve in fact an ideal

rus in urbe" (86). This urban, green space was the result of a blend between countryside and city, rather than the former being recreated in an isolated space. "Nash combined the orderliness of Georgian London with the openness, the wildness, of the countryside. He mated the town with the country, the palace with the ordinary dwelling house, and made a new London of an old park"(Saunders 87). As part of the development Regent Street was created, connecting Regent's Park with Piccadilly Circus, Green Park, Trafalgar Square and Whitehall. Thus the Park, even though a self contained, town-like entity was also part of the grander map of west London, and in conjunction with the other already established parks formed a pattern of urban, green space.

The various green spaces in *Mrs. Dalloway* represent the idea that a man-made, urban space could be designed to contain "nature" and impart its beneficial influence upon the inhabitants. As I discussed earlier, landscape designers believed that they were able to import nature into the city, and that the green spaces they thus created still subscribed to a nature versus city binary. The portrayal and role of Regent's Park in *Mrs. Dalloway*, however, illustrates that instead they created a new type of urban space that took on a dynamic of its own. Even though, other Royal Parks (Green Park, St. James') make an appearance, Regent's Park is the most striking and crucial to the novel. Because of its history and many different functions, it exemplifies the way normalizing discourse came to be critiqued and transformed by the everyday use of the man-made environment.

What can be observed during the nineteenth century is the tendency to view the built environment to be an influence on and a determinant of people's physical and psychological well-being. Pennethorne proposed that "rational amusements" would have a meliorating effect upon the "lower orders" (Tyack 95). In the early nineteenth century, the royal parks catered to a very select audience only due to their location and accessibility, but by the time Woolf wrote *Mrs. Dalloway*, the park was accessible to a variety of people. Access for all members of society was vital, since it aided in the reinforcement of the predominant societal structure. Hazel Conway, in *People's Parks*, explains that one benefit was that parks provided opportunities for the "mixing of the classes" and therefore fostered a "recognition of and respect for class and social order" (34). In addition—and one might dispute the causality here—mixing with people of different rank also encouraged an individual's cleanliness, neatness, and overall better appearance (36).

With the arrival of the parks movement and the application of landscape design to public spaces, the notion of a "sense of proportion" took on a new meaning. The individual person's experience of the environment depended on their own sense of proportion and the spaces were designed so as to locate the individual within both the local and by association the wider, societal space. For example, in the case of Regent's Park the residential spaces of the park created a clear hierarchy[22],

[22] The upscale villas, designed to blend into the landscape while giving the inhabitants an illusion of privacy were supposed to be reminiscent of country estates, while some of the other terraced homes obviously catered towards the upper middle classes. However, due to the presence of the various types of housing, Regent's Park's deviated from traditional park designs. Saunders remarks that the French designer Claude-Nicholas Ledoux, who believed that "social factors must govern architecture," might have influenced Nash in his transformation of "Marylebone Park into a complete little town" (84). Essentially,

and class-based activities were supposed to foster contentment with one's position within society. The park was supposed to present little parcels of nature that, if consumed appropriately, could help the urban inhabitants in counteracting the stresses of modern, urban life. However, Virginia Woolf problematizes this concept in *Mrs. Dalloway* by using Regent's Park as the space that escalates Septimus's mental illness.

Although Regents Park was intended as a rehabilitating space, in *Mrs. Dalloway* we see a slippage from the meliorating effects intended—in fact, it becomes a nightmarish space for Septimus. Instead of regaining a sense of proportion (at least in the manner desired by Sir William), he starts to have visions and hear voices, at times being unable to open his eyes because he is paralyzed with fear (69). His agony stands in stark opposition to the intended use of the park. During World War I, the park was used for rehabilitating blind and disabled soldiers. Specifically, the "St Dunstan's Institute for the Blind" was established and another building, St John's Lodge, was turned into a hospital for disabled officers. Most significantly to the current study the Royal Hospital of St Katherine's "was used throughout the war as a hospital for British and American officers" and "after the war it became the West London Hospital for Nervous Diseases" (163). The various medical institutions in the park are a physical manifestation of ideas regarding public health that are already imbedded in its design. Furthermore, it renders the park a quintessential modern space, as "in the

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"[Nash] had brought the picturesque to town and had created the first garden city. The Park was to be an entity in itself, intended primarily for 'the wealthy part of the Public' but with proper accommodation provided for every class in society, from the prince himself down to the humblest tradesmen" (86).

context of urban modernization, parks can be seen as spatial affirmations of new values, imposing on existing practices of recreation moral considerations of rest and health. They are a part of growing commodification of time and functionality in the use of space." (Waley 1) Thus, Woolf can be deemed to be critiquing at least some of these "new values" and their spatial affirmation when she portrays Regent's Park as an unhomely and unhealthy place.

This point is further underscored by the fact that inherently, the park should be a comforting place for the middle classes, since its creation very much draws upon values commonly associated with the bourgeoisie. Paul Waley explains that parks were both "a point of entry for the bourgeoisie into a landscape that reflected the proprietorial instincts and revenues of the landed gentry," and "spaces of bourgeois incursion and conquest of the ideal of a higher caste" (3). However, even though Waley describes the park as a "Bourgeois Haven," modernist fiction challenges this concept. *Mrs. Dalloway* is one example: whilst the parks in the novel do present an arena where women can freely move around, they also disrupt ideas of domestic bliss and the beauty of the park is juxtaposed with Septimus's shell shock caused by his deployment in World War I. Consequently, the text unsettles the idea that the park presents a safe space that provides respite from the stressors of modern, urban life. Septimus experiences a complete nervous breakdown, while Rezia, his wife, feels threatened by the simulated natural environment, rather than comforted. Indeed, she feels exposed and tortured by Septimus's alienating behavior, and Woolf uses the image of a startled bird to communicate Rezia's vulnerability: "She was like a bird sheltering

under the thin hollow of a leaf, who blinks at the sun when the leaf moves; starts at the crack of a dry twig." (65)

It is important to note that Woolf is doing more than constructing a critique of the modern city and its inhabitants' alienation from nature. She employs symbolic imagery of crushed flowers and maimed animals that can be interpreted as a manifestation of this fissure, and Justyna Kostkowska explains that in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf conducts "an ecological critique of science, especially sociology," which ultimately condemns "[sociology's] insistence on human superiority to and exploitation of the natural environment" (186). Kostkowska's approach still subscribes to a romantic city versus nature binary, in so far as that she ascribes Septimus's demise to his disconnect from nature. In her point of view, the main characters, especially Septimus, fall victim to the new, mechanized, modern age, and "[in] the novel, Woolf shows how society's isolation of an individual from nature has […] a deadening effect, and leads to various degrees of emotional or physical death" (192). According to this reading, nature becomes a mythical entity that has healing and restorative powers. However, in the same line of thought, green spaces such as parks were designed to contain and disseminate this type of nature. Therefore, it would stand to reason that the main characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* should be able to reconnect with nature within the confines of the designated green spaces. A closer look at the different characters' experiences of the green spaces actually illustrates that there is a wide range of reactions that do not neatly fit into a bad city/ good nature binary.

Much critical work has been done on the different images of nature within the novel—water, trees, flowers—but nobody has examined in any great detail the actual green spaces that Woolf positions her characters in and what role they play in Woolf's depiction of "interiority" Three characters in particular stand out: Rezia Smith, Septimus Smith, and Peter Walsh. Woolf contradicts the idea that the space exerts a meliorating effect upon people through its representation of nature. Instead, the normalizing space presents an uncanny and often unsettling space. It is an entity of its own that provides a variety of unique experiences: it threatens Rezia's already insecure position, for Septimus it further enhances the disconnect between him and his surroundings, while in the case of Peter Walsh, it becomes a safe, domestic space (he falls asleep on a park bench).

Rezia's position is precarious for a number of reasons. She is not only a foreigner, but also vulnerable due to her husband's mental instability and inattentiveness. Her unsettled position becomes apparent when Septimus tells her he is contemplating suicide:

> People, she thought, looking at the crowd staring at the motor car; the English people, with their children and their horses and their clothes, which she admired in a way; but they were "people" now, because Septimus had said, "I will kill myself"; and awful thing to say. Suppose they had heard him? . . . But failure one conceals. She must take him away into some park. (15-16)

In order to escape the notice of other people and conceal what she interprets as their marital failure, Rezia takes Septimus into Regent's Park, a choice that is

significant in a number of ways. In this instance, the public space of the park becomes a private enclave for the couple to attempt to resolve their domestic issues. Earlier, they had consulted a physician and according to Dr. Holmes, Septimus has nothing wrong with him but is just "out of sorts" and needs to "take an interest in things outside himself" (21).

The park, then, presents a way of coaxing Septimus out of his shell, and given the healing properties often attributed to nature and proposed as a cure by Sir William (and by association any green space), should alleviate his condition. Septimus suffers from shell shock brought on by the loss of his commanding officer during the war. His initial reaction had been one of numbness; indeed "Septimus, far from showing any emotion or recognizing that here was the end of a friendship, congratulated himself upon feeling very little and very reasonably. The War had taught him. It was sublime. He had gone through the whole show, friendship, European War, death, had won promotion, was still under thirty and was bound to survive." (86) Septimus's perception of how the war has "educated" and benefited him illustrates his emotional detachment, a flaw that he hopes to remedy by marrying Rezia. He proposes to her "one evening when the panic was on him—that he could not feel" (86). With her laughter, frivolous occupation as a hat-maker, and general appreciation of beauty, he hopes that Rezia will fill the void that the war has left in him. But to no avail:

> "Beautiful!" she would murmur, nudging Septimus, that he might see. But beauty was behind a pane of glass. Even taste (Rezia liked ices, chocolates, sweet things) had no relish to him. . . .He looked at people

> outside; happy they seemed, collecting in the middle of the street, shouting, laughing, squabbling over nothing. But he could not taste, he could not feel. In the teashop among the tables and the chattering waiters the appalling fear came over him—he could not feel. . . .his brain was perfect; it must the fault of the world then—that he could not feel. (88)

His rational, mechanical abilities are sound—"he could read . . . he could add up his bill"—yet he experiences beauty with detachment. Like a butterfly collector examining his specimen case, he is physically unable to connect to the visual stimuli. Ultimately, the park only accentuates his detachment instead of rendering him fit for city life.

Still, there is another facet to this: it highlights the existence of different kinds of proportions. If we recall, the term in its original application functioned as a measure and determinant of beauty. Perfect proportion equals perfect beauty. It is not surprising, then, that even though Septimus is trying to vocalize "messages about beauty" (87), he is unsuccessful because he has literally no senses to do so. Since he lacks a sense of proportion, he lacks a sense of beauty. However, this also means that the beauty that Rezia points out to him and the beauty he experiences in the Park are quite different. Similarly, the two physicians are more concerned with the first way of seeing, and it is not Septimus's inability to sense conventional beauty that concerns them, but rather the threat he embodies to the order and proportion within society that they represent. To briefly return to P.H. Scholfield and his discussion on architectural proportion: he distinguishes between "fitness" (which combines both structure and utility), "custom or

convention" (which refers to the predominant fashion in architecture at any given time) and "visual proportion" (which is the aesthetic pleasure derived thereof) (4). These terms prove useful in a discussion of the way proportion is addressed in Woolf's text. Parks are designed for fitness and visual proportion, and Septimus's problem is that he, too, is being evaluated according to these criteria. Arguably, he has lost his "fitness for purpose," and his struggle with regaining mental proportion is also unearthing the way green spaces in the city are deviating from their purpose as normalizing spaces.

It is in Regent's Park that Septimus begins to feel some kind of emotion. He is exhilarated by the display of trees, but the incoming sensory experience is almost too much to handle for him:

> A marvellous discovery indeed—that the human voice in certain atmospheric conditions (for one must be scientific, above all scientific) can quicken trees into life! Happily Rezia put her hand with a tremendous weight on his knee so that he was weighted down, transfixed, or the excitement of all their leaves alight and the colour thinning and thickening from blue to green of a hollow wave, like plume's on horses' heads, feathers on ladies', so proudly they rose and fell, so superbly, would have sent him mad. But he would not go mad. He would shut his eyes; he would see no more. But they beckoned; leaves were alive; trees were alive. And the leaves being connected by millions of fibres with his own body, there on the seat, fanned up and down; when the branch stretched he, too, made that statement, The sparrows fluttering, rising, and falling in

> jagged fountains were part of the pattern; the white and blue, barred with black branches. (22)

Rezia functions as his anchor to the real world, yet she also serves as a reminder that in this reality he is unable to function rationally. As he takes in the colors and the movement he comes to realize his position within a greater framework. Regent's Park is a provocative setting for this episode: the presence of societies dedicated to the scientific study of the natural environment becomes profound when juxtaposed with Septimus's attempt to observe the surroundings in a scientific manner so as not to be mentally overwhelmed. Ironically, this is a feat he only achieves by closing his eyes and seeing "no more." Like the disabled veterans being treated at the St Dunstan's Institute for the Blind, his wartime experiences have left him with only limited faculties.

Furthermore, Dr. Holmes's diagnosis that Septimus lacks "a sense of proportion" plays interestingly off the latter's metaphysical experience in regard to his connectedness with the trees. It appears that instead of having no sense of proportion, Septimus suffers from a heightened sense, which he is unable to communicate coherently to his wife (or anybody else) and that ultimately leaves him cut off from his surroundings. This futile hypersensitivity sits in stark contrast with his wife's isolated yet loyal position. "I am alone; I am alone! . . .[she] would never, never tell that he was mad"(24). Woolf uses the tree of life metaphor to expand Septimus's vision in which he declares that "Men must not cut down trees," and in which he imagines sparrows telling him about "trees in the meadow of life beyond a river where the dead walk, [and] how there is no

death" (24-25). Further irony lies in the fact that while Septimus feels connected to the birds and trees, Rezia feels isolated and perceives him to be cut off from reality.

For Septimus, the green space of the park provides an excess of stimulation, and for Rezia it is an alien and hostile one. Her unsettledness is mirrored in Maisie Johnson's description of Regent's Park as uncanny: The couple [Septimus and Rezia] "gave her quite a turn," Rezia "seeming foreign," Septimus "looking queer," and everything else is sterile, with "the stone basins, the prim flowers, the old men and women, invalids most of them in Bath chairs." (26) It appears that for some of the women, the park is not a fertile, rejuvenating place, but rather a sterile, decaying one. On closer inspection though, it becomes clear that gender is not the sole determining factor in this—class and nationality are, too. After all, Clarissa Dalloway's experience of the Royal Parks only elicits a slight sense of nostalgia, personified by her encounter with Hugh Whitbread; apart from that she immensely enjoys walking in London and through the parks. "I love walking in London. . . .Really it's better than walking in the country," she tells Whitbread (6). When she first enters St. James's Park the atmosphere is subdued: "the silence; the mist; the hum"(5), but Mrs. Dalloway envisions the park in a different manner than Rezia and Maisie Johnson do. Her class membership colors her experience of the park and serves to position it within a fluid urban landscape. For the other two women, the park is an isolated, constrictive space, while for Clarissa Dalloway it is smoothly linked to the rest of the city. These easy transitions are also facilitated by her incessant internal

monologue—she is never really exposed to the environment, but always experiences it through the filter of her thoughts.

Conclusion

Virginia Woolf's use of terms such as "sense of proportion" and "divine proportion" in relation to human character, warrants an analysis of the terminology and its significance in regard to urban spaces. *Mrs. Dalloway* employs the park as a springboard for its narrative: The space becomes instrumental in propelling forth the character development while also providing a counterpoint to the urban environment that physically surrounds it. The park, with its structured and simulated nature constitutes a normalizing space, especially when it is examined in conjunction with the two medical professionals. Woolf illustrates the multi-faceted role green space plays in the modern city; specifically how parks make visible structures of power within a given culture. For Woolf, the notion of proportion is not necessarily a positive one, at least when it becomes the non plus ultra:

> But Proportion has a sister, less smiling, more formidable, a Goddess even now engaged—in the heat and sands of India, the mud and swamp of Africa, the purlieus of London, wherever in short the climate or the devil tempts men to fall from the true belief which is her own—is even now engaged in dashing down shrines, smashing idols, and setting up in their place her own stern countenance. Conversion is her name and she feasts

> on the wills of the weakly, loving to impress, to impose, adoring her own features, stamped on the face of the populace. At Hyde Park Corner on a tub she stands preaching, shrouds herself in white and walks penitentially disguised as brotherly love through the factories and parliaments; offers help; but desires power; . . .loves blood better than brick, and feasts more subtly on the human will. (100)

Septimus chooses to not conform to the ostensibly benign concept of proportion—which, was Woolf demonstrates, merely masks a "less smiling," more coercive power,--and refuses to have his will broken. Before he is taken away to an asylum in the country, he commits suicide.

The park, as an urban green space, transcends categorization: It can be both a nurturing and an uncanny place. In a sense, *Mrs. Dalloway* demonstrates what happens when an environmental sense of proportion does not match up with the psychological idea. Still, Woolf does limit herself to romanticizing a lost past and she is not just trying to juxtapose artifice with nature and thereby commenting on the subjugation of the latter. Instead, she is transcending the nature versus city binary by showing both how the creation of parks constitutes a new type of urban space, and how that space can have very different effects on different people. Nature, as produced in the park, does not necessarily heal. Neither is it benevolent or comforting. Nor is it inherently threatening. By using the setting of the park for an exploration of her characters' internal state, Woolf shows the values imbedded within a space that is touted as innocently, benignly "natural." Essentially, the

green spaces within the novel—both planned and spontaneous—underscore the characters' emotional alienation from their modern surroundings.

Woolf's modernism was borne out of her experiences, and in *Mrs. Dalloway* this manifests itself in her portrayal of Septimus Warren Smith and his "condition." Similarly, the authors I discuss in the next chapter were also influenced by their experiences of modern, cosmopolitan life. Contrary to Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and Djuna Barnes led more transitory lives and their unsettled position as "women out of place" manifests itself in their fiction. I will show how these women writers use the space of the public garden, in both England and on the continent, as a way to formulate their sexual and political identities.

CHAPTER TWO

"Mythical and mundane": Gender and the public garden in Katherine Mansfield and Djuna Barnes's short fiction.

Fig.5: "In a Shoreham Garden."
Samuel Palmer, 1829.

Fig. 6: "The Tuileries Gardens, Paris."
Maurice Prendergast, 1895.

Itself the outcome of past actions, social space is what permits fresh action to occur, while suggesting others and prohibiting yet others. Among these actions, some serve production, others consumption (i.e. the enjoyment of the fruits of production). Social space implies a great diversity of knowledge. (Lefebvre 73)

Visible boundaries, such as walls or enclosures in general, give rise for their part to an appearance of separation between spaces where in fact what exists is an ambiguous continuity. The space of a room, bedroom, house or garden may be cut off in a sense from social space by barriers and walls, by all the signs of private property, yet still remain fundamentally part of that space. (Lefebvre 87)

Drawing on the traditional correspondence between nature and human nature, novelists often employ the garden image as an index to character, as a metonymic mise-en-scène, or as a metaphoric reflection of an ethical code. The garden's particular explicative and symbolic potential lies in the fact that every garden image can be seen to exist along a continuum between nature and art or culture and to tend toward one or the other of these extremes. In general, the figurative significance of the image depends on which pole of the continuum its portrayal emphasizes, and this emphasis is determined by the kind of environment with which the garden is contrasted in the novel. (Finney 3)

Gerald Gillespie defines the garden as an idealized projection of nature (130); and, as became apparent in the last chapter, this representation carries with it ramifications for the human beings that utilize urban green space. As I discussed, parks are spaces that cater to both the physical and psychological needs of the urban inhabitants of the early twentieth century. They are social spaces designed to provide areas for recreation—physical activity that would nurture healthy citizens. Winding paths offer the opportunity for exercise in the form of walking, driving, or riding, while other areas accommodate sporting activities such as cricket, football, and boating. The park as a whole is a hub of activity, and is designed to supply space for movement. Public gardens, on the other hand, function differently. The walkways are designed to exhibit the contents of the flowerbeds, while also leading towards structures that house further specimens of flora and fauna—green houses and lily ponds, for example. Even though the visitor still has to move through the space, it is for a different purpose. The flowers and plants embody societal systems of knowledge, and the public garden calls for quiet contemplation and reflection rather than excessive, noisy traffic. On one level, gardens can be seen to "fend off the ever-threatening wilderness" (147), and I am interested in what happens when this metaphor is extended to urban spaces. What exactly and who does the garden contain and what does it protect against? At the same time, who is left outside of its gate?

As a subject for artistic representation, the garden has proven to be very successful. Jemima Montagu, the curator of the 2004 "The Art of the Garden" exhibition at the Tate Modern in London, which charted two hundred years of

Landscape painting, offered this analysis: “Gardens have also played a talismanic role in British culture, offering fertile imagery for art and literature across the centuries, and acting as a barometer for the country’s changing social and cultural landscape.”[23] One of the paintings featured was “In a Shoreham Garden” by the Romantic artist Samuel Palmer (Fig.5). The painting features what might be considered a proto-Impressionist technique with the outlines and colors of the objects being somewhat blurred. It depicts a private garden, with a flowering apple tree prominently placed in its center and its branches hang over a female figure below. Other plants shown appear to be vegetables and flowering shrubs, yet the colors indicate that this is not merely a utilitarian garden but also an aesthetically designed one. The garden is meant for consumption: visually, as an aesthetically pleasing object, but also as a sustenance-producing entity. What makes this painting further noteworthy is the female figure: she is framed by the tree, and even though the viewer's eye is drawn to her, the surrounding nature engulfs and dominates her. The shrubs and plants encase the woman, and her clothing further accentuates this relation. The woman’s white blouse and red skirt echo the colors of the apple tree, while also conjuring Edenic connotations. The image of the flowering tree could be described as pre-lapsarian, which is further accentuated by the woman’s position within the garden. The setting appears ‘natural’; the woman does not stand out. She is securely located within the garden, on an equal level with the apple tree, yet at the same time firmly anchored to the setting.

[23] “Earthly Delights” in *Tate Etc.* Issue 1, Summer 2004.

The painting illustrates some of the prevailing social and cultural ideas regarding women and nature at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The setting is private, and the woman is perfectly at ease within the garden, which indicates that it is part of her "natural" domain. Just like the flowering apple tree, the female figure is an object that is supposed to aesthetically please the observer. The garden secures her and showcases—symbolized by the flowering tree—her innocence and emerging womanhood. Thus, the garden is a woman's sphere, both entertaining for the observer and containing for the woman. The literature of the period also reflects this sentiment, but as we move through the nineteenth century, the garden becomes a deeply contested space. One of the most famous examples, perhaps, is Flaubert's *Madame Bovary,* in which the female protagonist seeks to escape her unhappy marriage (and boredom with provincial life) by receiving lovers in her garden. Just like the female figure depicted in Palmer's painting, Monsieur Bovary idealizes his wife due to her aesthetic appeal, yet never realizing that she does not return the sentiment. In the novel, the garden becomes a symbol for nuptial transgressions and the decay of the marriage.

With increasing industrialization, many urban inhabitants could not afford the luxury of a private garden. This development conjoined with emerging reformist movements in the latter half of the nineteenth century resulted in an increase of public gardens, which opened to metropolitan inhabitants. The following chapter traces how the urban green space of the *public* garden, such as Kew Gardens in London, straddles the middle ground between nature and culture and how female authors transform it into a new social space for women. In many

nineteenth-century texts[24] the garden comes to be a refuge for female characters because it presents a space outside of socially prescribed roles of femininity. Consequently, women are often shown to be at home and comfortable within a garden. In *Jane Eyre,* for instance, the garden at Thornfield is a space where Jane and Rochester can meet as equals. At the same time, a garden can also represent a nostalgic, pastoral space. One famous example is Wemmick's suburban garden in *Great Expectations*. It is a refuge, in which he can celebrate and impose an idealized order that stands in stark opposition to the violence and squalor that he encounters on a daily basis. Yet, these gardens are private and located outside of the urban centers. What happens when the garden becomes public?

Towards the close of the nineteenth century, public gardens had become a favorite recreational spot for urban dwellers. Not every residence had space enough for a private garden and public gardens came to be extensions of the domestic sphere as they provided a space for women and children to spend their afternoons. In London (and Great Britain) many of the gardens were initially established as private entities during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Then, during the second half of the nineteenth century, as part of the reform movements, many of the spaces were expanded, renovated, and opened to the public. On the continent the establishment of several nation states during the nineteenth century had similar results. An 1895 painting by Maurice Pendergrast illustrates this development (Fig. 6). "The Tuileries Gardens, Paris" presents a strikingly different image to the romantic one by Palmer. The woman is still

[24] This is not limited to only the nineteenth century. In fact, there is a far-reaching tradition of associating gardens with women.

present; indeed she has moved to the foreground of the picture. However, the dark clothing distinctly separates the woman from her surroundings and she is no longer alone. The garden is more than ever a domestic sphere; it is a contained space for women and children that provides a safe environment within the otherwise threatening public spaces of the city. While Palmer's painting depicts protected, virginal sexuality embodied by the apple tree in bloom, Pendergrast's imagery showcases female, reproductive sexuality fulfilled, personified by the children. Both images represent traditional gender roles: the first celebrates the containment of female sexuality, while the other represents placid and dignified motherhood. Both forge a connection between women's sexuality and the garden. In the eyes of these male artists, even though the garden has become public, it more than ever represents existing social mores and gender norms.

The public garden was most certainly a fertile subject for nineteenth century artists, a subject that often included a feminine presence. Griselda Pollock, in *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the Histories of Art*, explains that the garden was a favorite theme for Impressionist painters, "not as a piece of private property but as the place of seclusion and enclosure" (63). The object to be enclosed was woman, and Pollock conducts a feminist critique of how male and female artists approached the subject of woman in their paintings. She unearths the way in which many male painters exhibited a dualistic approach to modernity, which aligns women with a concept of nature that stands in opposition to a masculinized city. Pollock's examination of nineteenth century Parisian women artists aims to illustrate the necessity of "deconstructing

masculine myths of modernity" (50), since modernism and modernity are often positioned as synonymous with an exclusively male viewpoint. Indeed, Pollock goes so far as to propose that it is impossible to include women in the concept of modernism. She writes: " Sexuality, modernism, or modernity cannot function as given categories to which we add women. That only identifies a partial and masculine viewpoint with the norm and confirms women as other and subsidiary. Sexuality, modernism or modernity are organized by and organizations of sexual difference" (56). Hence an analysis of women's fiction usually defined as "modernist" requires an awareness of the effect the social construct of sexual difference has on their work.

The experience of what women were exposed to in the modern city most certainly affected what they would write about. Pollock explains that these orders of sexual difference, which were socially constructed, "determined both what and how men and women painted" (55), and I would argue that this also applied to women writers, and hence we can pose the same question "what did women write about and why?" It would appear that the public garden as a setting and the short story as an art form were particularly attractive to a number of female authors in the first few decades of the twentieth century. The public garden provides a non-domestic space, a space where the women can operate outside the "prescribed limits of bourgeois codes of femininity"(63), but at the same time it is also separate from traditional representations of the modern city where women are positioned as "other". In the short stories of Katherine Mansfield and Djuna Branes, the public garden becomes a new social space, where women can define

their own identities and establish autonomous positions. Furthermore, the short story provides a means by which these female authors can distinguish themselves from their male colleagues.

Literary [private] gardens have been the subject of much critical work, while public gardens have been somewhat neglected.[25] One reason might be that modernist narratives do not solely center around these spaces, but that they instead make sometimes-fleeting appearances. Nonetheless, the public garden carries with it potent associations, which in part are related to its kin the common garden. Shelley Saguaro's explanation of the multi-faceted associations that gardens conjure also rings true for public gardens: "Gardens mythical and mundane, are extremely various: Edenic, Arcadian, pastoral, orchard, arboretum, allotment, walled, country, city, park – each of these terms is familiar in relations to gardens; each gives rise to other issues, such as: myth, cultural specificity, historical context, nation, topography, class, race, religion, gender" (ix). As with any other urban green space, the public garden constitutes an intricate blend of

[25] In literature, as in life, the garden has been both highly politicized and sexualized. The garden has functioned as a metaphor for religion, politics, and sexuality, embodying everything from sexual desire to nationalism. While private, landscaped gardens were the precursors to modern day parks, they also served as examples for public gardens that emerged in the urban centers of nineteenth century Europe. Gardening had become a favorite pastime of the moneyed, aristocratic elite who used their country estates to establish spatial narratives that could be read just like a painting or a poem. Stephanie Ross discusses the "symbolic powers" of eighteenth-century English gardens in "Gardens, earthworks, and environmental art," and declares that definitions and purposes of gardens differ as they can fulfill many diverse functions: "[G]ardens can serve spiritual or practical ends, offer places for retreat or arenas for activity, stoke pride, yield profit, or serve the public good" (159). During the eighteenth century, gardening was considered a high art and pursued by the aristocracy. More importantly, gardens bore political significance as the owners sought to implement "more natural and irregular layout[s] that would celebrate English tolerance and liberty in opposition to French autocracy" (162). Hence, gardening became "an ideological enterprise," and the image of the garden in literature carries with itself common associations that illustrate this development. The garden is a powerful representational space, which ranges from traditionally Christian connotations of the garden as a symbol of paradise to "primitive associations [such as] sexuality and fertility, death and regeneration, the cycle of the seasons" (Ross 163).

these ideas. It is a representation of nature within the city; wild nature enclosed in a garden plot; the private sphere made public. Saguaro is particularly interested in the representation and function of gardens in Modernist fiction and wants to highlight "the ways in which gardens and landscapes are used to explore complex issues of power, class, racism, and war." (3) She discusses both Virginia Woolf[26] and Katherine Mansfield, stating that they do not use the garden as "a shorthand for conventional tropes about Eden or Arcadia, nor certainly, as archetypically womb-like, romanticized feminine spheres." Instead, they utilize this setting to disrupt "the conventional": "[The authors] problematise any notion that a garden is simply a garden – or that it is conveniently and familiarily symbolic" (3). The female authors that I discuss represent the public garden as urban green space: a driving force and agent of its own.

Simon Pugh, in *Garden-nature-language*, explains how the garden can become a site for articulation of one's own identity:

> The garden inherits from art an uncensored ease, a permissive that accompanies representation because the garden is, essentially, a linguistic concept, a geographical and topographical no-place. As a representation of pleasure, it puts order into pleasure, fixes it by confining it within the walls of the garden. . . . Representation shuts off the world it represents, permits travesties of that world, but neutralises those travesties as well. . . .

[26] Saguaro discusses Woolf's "Kew Gardens" in quite some depth and perhaps I should explain why I omit this story from my discussion. I focus on Barnes and Mansfield because of their unsettled positions as authors. Saguaro herself admits that Katherine Mansfield's "itinerant uprootedness" is very much opposite "to Virginia's ancestral network" (23), a network that provides Woolf with a privileged position that is quite different to that of Rhys or Mansfield. This advantaged position manifests itself in the stories: While in "Kew Gardens" Woolf experiments with narrative form to provide impressionistic snapshots, Mansfield and Barnes adhere to a different narrative so as to be able to articulate their critical positions.

> In the garden, we are our own narrator. What we permit ourselves 'in the garden' is what we refuse to permit in real life. (9)

While Simon Pugh's sentiment might hold some truth in regard to private gardens, it takes on new significance when applied to public gardens, especially if we envision them as Lefebvrian social space. The public garden is never "shut off from the world it represents," but exists in a dialectic relationship with it. The idea of a "garden" and its ramifications as a linguistic concept are important to recognize as they affect an individuals interactions with the space, and modern authors do draw upon some of the connotations attached to the word.

According to Saguaro, short stories lend themselves nicely to Modernism, since they provide a snapshot, an impressionistic representation, and hence "[g]ardens themselves, in early twentieth-century Britain and America at least, are rather like short fiction. The 'small plot' of the short story form could be seen as correlating with the small plot of the urban and the suburban gardens of which there was such an increase in the early twentieth century" (3). What Saguaro neglects to adequately address is the public garden, especially in light of authors such as Katherine Mansfield, Djuna Barnes, and Jean Rhys. These were women who did not have permanent homes and attached "urban or suburban gardens" and hence draw upon the space of public gardens to "disrupt the conventional" in their narratives. Saguaro does not distinguish between public and private gardens, a distinction that I think is vital. The fact that these authors use gardens that are urban and public is significant. It most certainly true that they relate to issues of power, and I am particularly interested in the way that the public garden is a site

for knowledge and power within the short fiction of modernist women writers. Public gardens fit into urban, green space and the authors use it to define their characters position as different from, what Andreas Huyssen has called, "the emergence of a male mystique in modernism" (5). It is within the public garden that women can take charge of articulating their own identities and develop autonomous, urban positions.

In a letter to John Middleton Murry[27] dated May 7th, 1915, Katherine Mansfield describes how she happened upon a small garden behind Notre Dame during her exploration of Paris. Attracted by the flowering trees, she had proceeded to take a seat on a bench and observe the activity around her. The garden, lush in its spring glory and filled with busy, bustling children and their caretakers, attracts Mansfield, but ultimately only serves to emphasize her position as an outsider.

> In the middle of the garden there was a grass plot and a marble basins. Sparrows taking their baths turned the basins into a fountain and pigeons walked through the velvety grass pluming their feathers. Every bench and every chair was occupied by a mother or a nurse or a grandfather and little staggering babies. . . . And there came a chinese [sic] nurse trailing 2 babies. Oh, she was a funny little thing in her green trousers and black tunic, a small turban clamped to her head.
>
> . . . But after I had watched a long time I realised I was in the middle of a dream. Why haven't I got a real "home", a real life—Why haven't I got a

[27] Murry was the editor of the literary journal *Rhythm*. Mansfield met him in 1911, and after becoming lovers the next year they eventually married in 1918.

> Chinese nurse with green trousers and two babies who rush at me and clasp my knees—Im [sic] not a girl—Im [sic] a woman. I *want* things. Shall I ever have them? (319-20)

For Mansfield, the public garden becomes a representational space of the domestic life that she lacks and yearns for. The frolicking animals and toddlers symbolize fertility and the cycle of life, imagery that is very much in line with traditional associations of gardens. The garden is a safe, welcoming space for the animals, the babies and even the "funny little" Chinese woman. They are very much "at home" and the activities they engage can even be characterized as domestic: the sparrows and pigeons are busy with their morning toilette; the babies are making mud pies with their spades and buckets; and the Chinese nurse is darning. However, Mansfield is left out of the merry proceedings, and her lament, "Why haven't I got a real 'home,'" exemplifies her precarious position as a foreign and single woman within a modern, urban environment.[28] By defining a "real life" as having a home and children, Mansfield uncovers the societal norms at work, but because of her position as an outsider she also illustrates the shifting realities that women faced in the cities of the early twentieth century. She achieves this by using the green space of the garden both to embody traditional gender norms and to define her own position in relation, and potentially, opposition to those norms. The green space helps her both grasp and vocalize her situation, and ultimately formulate a critical response to the forces at work.

[28] Critical work has focused on Mansfield's biography to explain her lingering sense of alienation. Some critics have suggested that she was bisexual and (perhaps? check validity of this) suffered from infertility.

The following chapter combines a number of approaches to investigate the intricacies of urban, public gardens and their function as urban green space. Since I focus on short stories written by women, issues of gender and sexuality lie at the core of my analysis. Both Mansfield and Barnes explore the manner in which the public garden can represent a new social space for women. The public garden sits at an intersection of nature and culture, two concepts that were also used as defining paradigms for women in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Paradoxically, women were often seen as purveyors of culture, as well as pure products of nature, both unaffected by the artifice of modern society and, at the same time, in danger of running rampant. Andreas Huyssen, in "Mass Culture as Woman," explains how modernism came to be viewed in a male/female dichotomy that drew upon nature imagery. Huyssen is particularly interested in why "mass culture is somehow associated with women while real, authentic culture remains the prerogative of men," as it is "indeed striking to observe how the political, psychological, and aesthetic discourse around the turn of the century consistently and obsessively genders mass culture and the masses as feminine, while high culture, whether traditional or modern, clearly remains the privileged realm of male activities" (3). Mass culture came to be epitomized by the image of the crowd, which was described in characteristics usually reserved for women: "The fear of the masses in this age of declining liberalism is always also a fear of woman, a fear of nature out of control, a fear of the unconscious, of sexuality, of the loss of identity and stable ego boundaries in the mass"(6). It should come as no surprise that many male artists idealized the garden as a spot where woman

could be contained and be surrounded by civilized nature. However, at the same time, the use of the public garden as a setting in modern fiction written by women complicates the frequent association of women with nature.

Gail Finney, in *The Counterfeit Idyll*, proposes that "the garden image exists along a continuum between nature and culture, [and] in this era of unprecedented movement from country to city it often functions as a barometer of sociocultural conditions" (4). If the public garden combines aspects of both then it should function as a "natural" habitat for women within the city. Instead, in the texts that I discuss, the public garden highlights the contradictions the women face and their attempts at negotiating their identity in relation to modern society. As I will demonstrate, a key function of the public garden is its role as a site for knowledge. In modern literature, it becomes a space in which women can take on the role of detached observer. The public garden is a "social space" that incorporates different cultural meanings and in the short stories by Katherine Mansfield and Djuna Barnes it constitutes pivotal representational spaces that contest traditional approaches to gender and sexuality.

I am borrowing the terms "social space" as well as "representational space" from Henri Lefebvre's triangle of "lived space" (78). He defines representational space as the result of the interaction between spatial practice and representations of space, and hence social space consists of the physical locale, the actions that people perform in this space, and the way this space is constructed within a given cultural discourse. In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre sets out to formulate a theory of "social space" by "[discovering or constructing] a

theoretical unity between 'fields' which are apprehended separately." These three fields consist of "first, the *physical* – nature, the Cosmos; secondly, the *mental*, including logical and formal abstractions; and, thirdly, the *social*" (11). He goes on to clarify that his concern is "logico-epistemological space, the space of social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias" (11-12). Public gardens found in cities of the early twentieth century are a good example of the intricacies of social space. They incorporate and order "things produced" taken in the figurative sense (73), such as plants and flowers, as well as structures that house the botanical knowledge on display. Lefebvre defines social space thus:

> (Social) space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity – their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder. It is the outcome of a sequence and a set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object. At the same time there is nothing imagined, unreal, or 'ideal' about it as compared, for example, with science, representations, ideas or dreams. (73)

Public gardens draw upon objects (e.g. plants) that can be located within the imagined field of botany, thus embodying a system of classification that privileges certain desirable characteristics. For example, one basic distinction would be that of a weed versus a proper plant. Public gardens are space for the latter as they fulfill an aesthetic function. Public gardens hence represent a

complex interplay of the objects themselves, the ideas they might represent, and people's interactions with and responses to them. An example that illustrates the above point effectively is Kew Gardens, the botanical gardens located just outside London. Initially created as a pleasure ground for the aristocracy, during the nineteenth century Kew Gardens became a flagship for botanical gardens all across the British empire embodying the far-reaching effects of scientific categorization

In her short story "A Dill Pickle" (1917), Katherine Mansfield paints a complex psychological picture of a woman negotiating both her own sexual identity and the modern city. In refusing to be (again) "roped in" by her former lover's rhetoric, Vera (the protagonist) establishes her independence based upon her ability to take the role of an observer, a position that was usually the prerogative of men in the modern city. As Griselda Pollock explains, "seeing" equaled "knowing" (78), and women moving through the modern city were at all times subject to the male gaze: "Women did not enjoy the freedom of incognito in the crowd. They were never positioned as the normal occupants of the public realm. They did not have the right to look, to stare, scrutinize or watch." (71). Mansfield reverses this dynamic by placing her female protagonist in the position of observer. Even though Vera emotionally responds to her ex-lover's adulations, she is ultimately able to pick out his behavioral traits that have remained unchanged and thence might (again) threaten her autonomy. It is her recollection of a day they spent together in Kew Gardens that enables her to assume the role of observer and hence become the locus of knowledge. By having Vera adopt this

role, Mansfield creates what Griselda Pollock calls “the very possibility that texts made by women can produce different positions within this sexual politics of looking” (85).

The defining episode is recounted when Vera glimpses her unnamed former lover sitting at a table in a restaurant six years after their last meeting. He invites her to sit down and have coffee with him—Vera declines the food he offers—and they proceed to reminisce about their past relationship, particularly the first afternoon they spent together, at Kew Gardens. The way each of the characters remembers the day shows just how differently women might actually experience urban, green space. One of the key differences is the type of memories the two have and hence what experiences made the most impression. Vera’s lover recalls the afternoon at Kew Gardens because of Vera’s voice:

> I don’t know what it is—I’ve often wondered—that makes your voice such a—haunting memory. . . . Do you remember that first afternoon we spent together at Kew Gardens? You were surprised because I did not know the names of any of the flowers. I am still just as ignorant for all your telling me. But whenever it is very fine and warm, and I see some bright colours—it’s awfully strange—I hear your voice saying: “Geranium, marigold and verbena.” And I feel those three words are all I recall of some forgotten, heavenly language. . . . (117)

Vera’s voice, the bright colors, and the warmth of the sunshine are what proved to be memorable for the man. He focused on his sensory experiences and consequently recalls that day very favorably. For him, the setting was not

necessarily important; even though it provided the sensory input, its social aspects were not important and nature (both in the form of flowers and women) dominated his experience.

Curiously, the visit to Kew Gardens almost constitutes a visit to an exotic country—the names of flowers a "forgotten, heavenly language" that only women speak. By its definition a botanical garden lies within the realm of scientific exploration, an area traditionally seen as masculine. By the early twentieth century, Kew Gardens had become an essential agent in the maintenance of the British Empire; it was a center for scientific research and dissemination of botanical knowledge. Indeed it constituted the centerpiece in a global web of botanical gardens placed throughout the British colonies made accessible to the metropolitan crowd by the arrival of the railways. As such, it constituted an urban, green space that physically embodied systems of scientific knowledge. The distinct areas that comprise Kew Gardens function as individual exhibits would within the setting of a museum, albeit on a more implicit level. An example of this is the rose garden, which showcases British horticultural as well as social history. A garden traditionally found at estates of the landed gentry and aristocracy, it is a physical testament to the social and cultural hierarchies of British society. It is a space for the aesthetic appreciation of roses, but it is also a space for the exhibition of an aesthetic that is closely tied to the prevailing social order. Shelley Saguaro aptly captures the social implications when she states that, "Kew Gardens functions […] as a metonymy for complex ideological and historical determinants" (11). She further explains:

> Re-designated as The National Botanic Gardens in the 1840s, Kew was a botanical testament to the inter-relation of science, economics, and colonialism that characterised the nineteenth century. . . . Kew was to be the metropolitan 'hub' in an enterprise which would oversee a world-wide colonial network of satellite gardens and institutions. (13)

Kew Gardens presents a complex amalgamation of private, localized and public, international forces. Because it is a "garden" it conjures associations of the domestic, private sphere. Therefore, it promises to be a space that provides refuge from an increasingly industrialized world, from the hum-drum of city life, but at the same time, the different areas that make up the gardens have very specific functions that hold wider social meaning. Saguaro summarizes this when she states that "[I]n many ways Kew is less a garden and more a national monument and institution" (11). It contains greenhouses filled with exhibitions of plants from all parts of the world, buildings designed for previous monarchs, and structures that reflect the varied, imperial expansion of the British Empire. After it had been neglected in the years leading up to 1841, Kew Gardens experienced a renaissance with extensive restructuring and the building of new greenhouses up to 1885. In the two decades before World War I it was at the height of its imperial significance. In "A Dill Pickle," however, the man is ignorant of the knowledge on display, and in addition is shown to be a creature of emotion and sensation. Consequently, the gardens become a central agent in the emancipation of Vera. She is able to hone her powers of observation and reasoning within its space,

which then later serves her well in objectively assessing her relationship with her ex-lover.

It is a space that invites aesthetic appreciation, a place where through the act of seeing the individual is able to locate herself within a wider network of knowledge. For Vera, the visit takes on nightmarish proportions during an event that she vividly recalls as "an absurd scene over the tea table" (117). Yet again, there is a blending of spheres: "the tea table" evokes a domestic scene and the fact that they (presumably) were not married and hence living outside of social conventions explains her mortification at his ridiculous behavior:

> A great many people taking tea in a Chinese pagoda, and he behaving like a maniac about the wasps—waving them away, flapping at them with his straw hat, serious and infuriated out of all proportion to the occasion. How delighted the sniggering tea drinkers had been. And how she had suffered. (117) [29]

The episode only exposes Vera to the ridicule of the gleeful spectators, rendering the space of the garden once again uncomfortable. It also shows that even though the garden should be a place where she feels naturally at home and at ease, she is still feels subjected to the social mores and convention of her peers. Nonetheless, it is the man who is the subject of the ridicule and not Vera. She is able to observe the events from an external—though not completely detached—position, a

[29] On a curious side note: The Refreshment Pavilion at Kew Gardens had been burnt down in 1913 by Suffragettes who had ten days earlier also smashed glass panes and destroyed orchids in one of the green houses. The Pavilion Restaurant (still present today) was not built until 1920, which means that Vera and her lover would have been taking their tea in a temporary pavilion erected in 1914. This "displacement" would have been effected by the demonstrative efforts of female emancipation.

process that is facilitated by the setting of the garden. The space enables her to participate in a reversal in gender conventions, as she realizes her position as an individual entity and is able to analyze her emotions. The public garden fosters ways of seeing and thus ways of knowing—and for Vera it presents the opportunity to be confronted with the ridiculously hysterical behavior of her male companion. She "had suffered" during the ridiculous incident, but this is a realization she comes to through her use of the space of the public garden. The presence of the multitude of "sniggering tea drinkers" within the public garden signals a departure from a traditional, private garden that would have provided an intimate arena for two lovers to interact--a setting that would have encouraged traditional gender norms.

The recollection of this episode reminds Vera (and by association the reader) why the relationship did not work out. However, just as Vera prepares to depart, her ex-lover endeavors to explain himself in a manner that functions to reinforce Mansfield's reversal of gender roles effected in the space of Kew Gardens:

> 'What I really wanted then,' he said softly, 'was to be a sort of carpet—to make myself into a sort of carpet for you to walk on so that you need not be hurt by the sharp stones and the mud that you hated so. It was nothing more positive than that—nothing more selfish. Only I did desire, eventually, to turn into a magic carpet and carry you away to all those lands you longed to see.'

> As he spoke she lifted her head as though she drank something: the strange beast in her bosom began to purr. . . .
>
> 'I felt that you were more lonely than anybody else in the world,' he went on, 'and yet, perhaps, that you were the only person in the world who was really, truly alive. (120-21)

In response to this alluring confession, Vera begins to question her decision to leave her lover all those years ago. He adds that the fact that she never had many friends was something he could relate to and in response to his question whether it is still the same Vera answers in the affirmative: "'Yes,' she breathed. 'Just the same. I am as alone as ever.'"(121) However, instead of this exchange leading to a renewed passion between the two, Vera's former lover exposes himself to be just as foolish as before with his assessment of their previous condition: "It is simply that we were such egoists, so self-engrossed, so wrapped-up in ourselves that we hadn't a corner in our hearts for anybody else."(121) Before he has time to finish his train of thought, Vera decides to leave. What is striking is the fact that this illustrates another aspect of the gender role reversal and Vera's subsequent emancipation. Her lover's admission that he wished nothing more than to be a "sort of carpet for [her] to walk on," places him in the traditionally, female role of submission. According to his analysis, what made the relationship ultimately fail was their egotism and, implicitly, her unwillingness to cater to his whims. In line with contemporary gender norms it would have been absolutely normal for the man to be "self-engrossed" and "wrapped-up" in himself, and convention would have demanded of the woman to adjust her life and aspirations

to those of the man. In "The Dill Pickle," Vera refuses to do just that. Instead of letting her former lover manipulate her, she asserts herself and declines to be defined by his assessment of their joint narcissism.[30]

It is important to note that in the case of Mansfield, the public garden is not a "pleasure-filled" retreat but rather a reminder of a woman's position as an outsider. By using these green spaces in her fiction, Mansfield reveals the intricate social forces that shaped women's experiences of modernity. Furthermore, her writing is very much focused on the women's experiences. Her narrative style centers on relating the woman's perspective. In "A Dill Pickle," we never learn the name of Vera's ex-lover, nor do we gain insight into his internal monologue. Vera, on the other hand, is presented to the reader multi-dimensionally. The "strange beast" that begins to purr in her bosom conveys to the audience Vera's struggle of reconciling her affective impulses with her rational assessment of the situation. By her own admission, she is "as alone as ever," stranded in a metropolitan modernity and located outside of traditional marital and familial ties. On an emotional level, her ex-lover appears enticing, however due to her intellectual emancipation she is able to see and know him for what he really is.

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, the perception of the public garden as a civilized and nurturing space comes under scrutiny by women authors. Mansfield's work reflects the ambivalent nature of the space—in "A Dill Pickle," the public garden has a positive on Vera's comprehension of her position as a single woman in the modern metropolis. However, Mansfield also is

[30] Indeed, this obliviousness of her needs and willingness to include her in his diagnosis appears to be just another example of his egotism and self-centeredness.

cognizant of the fact that the public garden does not always constitute a safe environment for her female protagonists. In "The Little Governess" (1915), "Der Englischer Garten"[31] in Munich is the location for the main character's proverbial fall, which highlights her insecure position as an English governess traveling by herself to Germany, and illuminates dangers to both her class status and gendered position. Vera, in "A Dill Pickle," was able to utilize the space of Kew Gardens to articulate her newly emancipated position; unfortunately, the governess's experience of urban green space in the next story starkly highlights the potentially detrimental effects that not seeing, not watching, and not scrutinizing can have for women in the modern city.

Much of Mansfield's fiction focuses on single women and their interactions with various urban spaces, some of which are located outside Great Britain. The governess, whose name we are never told, is traveling to Munich to start a position with a German family in nearby Augsburg, and her story is significant as it exemplifies the precarious position a single woman might find herself in an alien, urban setting. Mansfield identifies the governess through her occupation and gender, and as such the governess becomes a surrogate for any woman that might be traveling alone in a city. Read in conjunction with the previous short story, it becomes apparent that the public garden is a space where women must pay attention to their surroundings and apply their skills of observation in order to secure their positions. Public gardens are urban spaces and

[31] The English Garden is a park in the center of Munich that bears some resemblance with Kew Gardens insofar that it holds a Pagoda and greenhouses with exotic plants.

hence do not offer the security of a private, domestic space[32], a point that "The Governess" emphasizes; indeed, most of the story is infused with the governess's anxiety and unpleasant encounters with men. However, it is the public garden where she lets her guard down and hence seals her fate.

As advised by the Governess Bureau, the governess takes the overnight ferry and train from London to the continent, a journey that causes her much anxiety. One reason is the time of day; the story begins with the governess' anguished thought "Oh dear, how she wished it wasn't night-time"(51). Another reason is her status as a woman traveling alone—*une Dame Seule*. On the ferry she finds solace in the presence of a female stewardess and other women in the Ladies' Cabin. However, once she reaches what is presumably Calais, her nightmare begins. She is bullied by the train porter at the port, frightened by four boisterous youths on the train, and finally harassed by the hotel waiter in Munich. The one person that appears to be comforting is the old man that the train porter placed in the women's compartment out of spite, and the governess is reassured by his grandfatherly appearance. She lets him persuade her to show her around Munich for a few hours before her appointment with her future employer. In her naïveté, the governess does not realize that her behavior might be misinterpreted and she happily embarks upon the sightseeing trip with "her grandfather who had asked her to spend the day"(59). They go to a picture gallery, have lunch, and then go to the Englischer Garten.

[32] Of course this means that they also hold the potential to be more liberating than the enclosed space of a garden.

In contrast to "The Dill Pickle," in which Mansfield showed Vera to be able to utilize the space of Kew Gardens to formulate a critical assessment of her mate, it is here where the governess falls prey to the old man's scheming. Momentarily, she is concerned about the time—she forgot to wind her watch the previous night—yet the old gentleman accuses her of not having enjoyed herself as she feels that "it must be quite late"(60) and convinces her to have ice-cream and stay a little while longer. Reassured by his friendly demeanor she lets herself relax:

> So she was happy again. The chocolate ice cream melted—melted in little sips a long way down. The shadows of the trees danced on the table cloths, and she sat with her back safely turned to the ornamental clock that pointed to twenty-five minutes to seven. 'Really and truly,' said the little governess earnestly, 'this has been the happiest day of my life. I've never even imagined such a day.' In spite of the ice cream her baby heart glowed with love for the fairy grandfather. (60)

This is the moment where the governess's judgment lapses: her appointment was at 6 o'clock and she misses it because she surrenders her powers of observation to the sensual delight of melted chocolate ice cream.[33] What is significant here, is the event of eating in public. During the nineteenth century, a respectable (read bourgeois) woman about town would not have been able to go to a restaurant by herself (at least if she was at all concerned for her reputation), and it was even

[33] As I am writing this I wonder whether part of the problem is also that the Englischer Garten masquerades as home turf (in a linguistic sense) and lulls the governess into a false sense of security. If the space is "English" then she as an educator and upholder of English culture should be safe. Good point.

unheard of for middle class women to accompany their husbands to dining establishment. As it incorporates characteristics of both the public and the private sphere, the public garden is a space that can allow women to transgress societal boundaries. Nonetheless, the space can be deceptive and potentially dangerous, a fact Mansfield illustrates in “The Little Governess.” As a woman, and according to contemporary societal norms, the governess is not supposed to observe and pay attention to her surroundings. Consequently, she is unable to understand and correctly assess the situation she finds herself in.

The story ends as it must, yet not as gravely as it could have: the “fairy grandfather” lures her into his apartment where he tries to kiss her, pressing “his old hard body and twitching knee” against her (61); she makes a successful escape, but arrives at the hotel too late for her appointment. The gleeful waiter tells her that, “ the lady has been here [and he] told her that [she] had arrived and gone out immediately with a gentleman” (62). The reader does not find out what happens to the governess, but it is clear that the episode has severely, if not irreparably damaged her reputation. By using the occupational term “governess” to refer to the woman all through the story, Mansfield draws upon a number of social constructs. A governess’ function is to educate the young and make sure they, and this applies especially to her female charges, uphold propriety. In addition, the position can be a socially and sexually precarious one. Governesses usually considered themselves superior to common servants—hence the aloof behavior of the governess in the story towards both the porter and the waiter—but as young, single women they also inhabited an ambivalent position within the

household. Presumably Frau Arnholdt, upon hearing of the governess' willingness to enjoy a gentleman's company all by herself, will not be thrilled about admitting her to her household since she could potentially pose a threat to marital harmony.

Mansfield shows that the governess falls prey to her own prejudices; the German man is able to reassure the young woman through his gentlemanly behavior and class membership; thence she is oblivious to any sexual advances that he might be plotting. This is also due to the locality of the rendezvous: the early twentieth-century public garden presents itself as a safe space for the single woman. As a governess it might actually be an appropriate space for her to take her charges and she has no reason to feel the need for extra caution. However, it is here that her fate is decided, when the old man distracts her with chocolate ice cream. In a somewhat humorous take on the Edenic lapse, the governess fails to realize the old man for the treacherous snake that he really is and willingly laps up the sweet treat he offers her. Instead of the playing her assigned role, i.e. that of the responsible caretaker, the governess believes she has found the grandfather she never had. For her the garden constitutes a playground where she can shrug off all responsibilities. However, since it is not a private garden (and hence isn't attached to a safe domestic sphere) it is also a dangerous space as it does not provide the security that comes with containment and protection from its urban surroundings. Mansfield further accentuates this by using the figure of a governess and placing her in a city abroad. As a governess, the woman is already pathologically home-less, and because she is in a foreign country she is also removed from the domestic setting of her own nation. In the case of the "little

governess" the public garden proves to be fatal—at least to her professional life. Thus, the public garden brings to the surface the complex social relations that women face at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the importance of being able "to read" a space. The public garden, by making knowledge accessible, can function as an empowering and revelatory space for women. However, it too has its pitfalls. Mansfield shows that since the space embodies social hierarchies and expectations, especially in regard to gender and sexuality, it can also be an ambivalent space. It is up to the individual patroness to use her faculties and utilize the space.

Modernist women authors most certainly demonstrate an awareness of the complicated dynamics of urban spaces and Katherine Mansfield is not the only author who tells the story of single women leading solitary, and at times lonely, lives in the metropolises of the Europe. Equally, she is also not the only one to recognize the potential of urban green spaces. Djuna Barnes's "A Little Girl Tells a Story to a Lady" (1925) explores the extent to which the public garden can be a space for women to explore their sexuality outside of hetero-normative constraints. Her short story is set in Berlin and recounts the experience of a young Russian émigré aspiring to be an actress, who meets an older married woman and begins a peculiar relationship with her. In this instance, the Tiergarten, a public garden in central Berlin, provides the setting for the meeting. This location is unique as it constitutes a deviation from the traditional public garden setting. The Russian girl goes to the "Zelten"[34], an area within the Tiergarten which houses

[34] In yet another intriguing twist, the nearby street (called "In den Zelten") housed the "Institut für Sexualwissenschaft" or the Sexology Research Institute from 1919 to 1933. The institute was

tents where one can eat and drink food. This is a variation of the traditionally German "Biergarten," but the narrator calls it a café. It is here that she meets the woman whose name is Elvira and who is very striking in appearance. "'She was thin and tall, and, how the Germans say, *temperamentvoll*, *kraftvoll*,[35] and worn." Apart from an arresting physique, her clothing also stands out as it seems to be in a perpetual disheveled state: "She must have been forty then, and she dressed richly and carelessly, and she wore many jewels, and she could not keep her clothes on, always her shoulders would be coming uncovered, or her skirt would be hanging on one hook . . . ." Elvira's unconventional look is furthered by her behavior, as "all the time she was splendid and remorseless and dramatic as if she were the center of a whirlwind and her clothes a temporary debris, and she talked sometimes to the sparrows and sometimes to the *Weinschenk*,[36]"(in Rainey 939).[37] On occasion a "dainty little man" who is "quite blonde and uncertain" accompanies the eccentric woman, who likes to talk to the birds as well as the staff working at the café. Elvira is quite exceptional as she neither cares about her appearance nor whether other people might regard her as indecent. In the setting of the public garden she is able to behave outside of gender conventions, taking on masculine traits that distinguish her from her "dainty little" husband.

The public garden comes to symbolize the young woman's emancipation; by first facilitating her relationship with the woman and then, later, providing a

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founded by Magnus Hirschfeld, who was the first person to coin the term "transsexual," and it was devoted to researching the sexual habits as well as tendencies of the general populace. The institute was looted and burned in 1933 by the Hitler Jugend.

[35] "Full of temperament and strength," in German

[36] The "wine-waiter" in German, not to be confused with a sommelier

[37] *Modernism. An Anthology.* Ed. Lawrence Rainey

place for reflection when she decides to move on. Indeed, it provides a fostering setting, in which the women can interact without constraints. One week, due to the audition schedule at the theatre, Katya, a young Russian woman, neglects to visit the café. When she returns after her longer than usual absence, the lady approaches her to let her know that she missed the young woman's presence: "And when I came in [Elvira] got up immediately and came over and said: 'Why, how do you do, I have missed you so much, why did you not tell me that you were going away, and I should have seen what I could do about it.'" She then proceeds to offer her a place to stay in her house by the Spree[38], since it is "very large" and the young woman could have the room adjoining hers. The narrator is not surprised by the offer and promises to meet the lady at some point in the future: "And somehow it did not seem funny that she spoke to me, and I said that I would meet her again some day in the garden and go home with her, and she was clever and did not show surprise."(939) Barnes does not explicitly state why it might be "funny" that Elvira would talk to the young woman, or why it might be odd that she promises to meet her in the garden and "go home with her." Contrary to the previous example where the public garden led to the corruption of the governess, this story pictures urban green space as a welcoming and nurturing arena—a starting point—where two women can enjoy each other's company without it being "funny." The garden provides entertainment for the couple, and one evening after listening to a fiddle player together, the Katya goes home with Elvira.

[38] The main river that runs through Berlin

Barnes elaborates on the unconventional gender roles when she describes Elvira's house, which is presented in a disordered state: The furniture is very clunky, with everything being "tall and massive"; the china stove is "enormous and white"; and the books on the shelves are "heavy," with "intricate and oppressive" coats of arms stamped on their covers (939). The bedroom further symbolizes the clash of feminine and masculine forces:

> 'A great war picture hung above the bed and the picture and the bed ran together, for the huge rumps of the dappled stallions rained almost into the pillows, the generals with their foreign helmets and dripping swords, and the rolling smoke and the torn limbs of the dying seemed to be fighting with that bed, it was so large, so torn, so rumpled, so devastated.' (939)

The "devastated" nuptial chambers are a powerful image, and attest to the potential violence of male/female sexual relations. Significantly, the relationship between the women is marked by the absence of explicit, sexual intercourse. Elvira shows the young girl into a room adjoining hers, provides her with a night gown, and, after loosening Katya's hair, "[plaits] it into two plaits." They pray together and then the girl gets into bed recounting that "'I loved her very much because there was nothing between us but this strange preparation for sleep" (940). This girl becomes the woman's companion, and they live together for a year, taking long walks in the gardens of the Imperial Palace.

In Barnes's story, the public garden provided a meeting point for the two women, a place where they could meet regardless of gender role expectations. However, when Elvira asks the Katya to move into her room, telling her that she

"must sleep here now," and that she will bring her meals, feed her, hold her on her lap, rock her to sleep, and cover her with kisses, the girl makes the decision to leave (941). After taking her leave from Elvira—"Good-by me love"—Katya departs, since as she tells her audience "now there was something else in my heart, and now it was a passion to see Paris" (942). At the end of her story she returns to the Tiergarten, "so I went for the last time to my little garden and ate an egg and drank a cup of coffee," bidding a fond farewell to the garden and the city. Ultimately, Barnes illustrates that the public garden fulfills a vital function in the modernist city. It is a space where women can explore their own identities, a space which has the potential to function as an amplifying and nurturing force. For Katya, it is a space for reflection and exploration, where she can eat and drink, plan her future exploits, and be "happy in the heart" (942). Djuna Barnes, as other modernist women writers, places a young woman at the center of her narrative who puts the public garden to good use.

The public garden in the modern city constitutes a complex entity which can be conducive to women's formulation of their autonomous identities. Simon Pugh's assertion that the garden as metaphor has dualistic qualities highlights the complicated processes at work in the public garden. He writes that, " [t]he metaphoric reference point of gardens is the idea of the garden as paradise, the site of travesty, a falling away from bliss, but also the site of childhood, of both precultural bliss and of acculturation" (2). According to him, desire represents a powerful and vital characteristic of the space, and most certainly can be applied to the public garden. In each of the short stories discussed above, desire plays a

prominent role. The public gardens represented within the individual texts provide a means of exploring the character's desire as well as highlighting the way it is governed by social hierarchies. Pugh is mainly concerned with 18th century gardens, but some of his observations nonetheless translate to public gardens of a later period. As he points out, "[t]he image of the garden is perpetuated through representations of nature as good and wholesome and beautiful"(1), and "nature [subsequently] becomes a tool in a complex struggle for economic and political power, at the centre of the redefinition of social meanings" (3). This can be seen in places such as Kew Gardens, which represent institutions that are invested in ordering and categorizing society as a way of exerting power. The women writers I discussed in this chapter rewrite and redefine the public garden as a site where women can take control and reposition themselves outside of the sexual politics of looking described by Griselda Pollock. In modernist fiction, women who move through the green spaces of the public gardens are no longer fixed in any one location and hence they remove themselves from the gaze of the observer. Nonetheless, this also introduces new pitfalls; by moving about and out of the space women give up the security that such an enclosed space provides—after all the walls that keep things inside also regulate who is allowed inside.

CHAPTER THREE

Neither "British to the backbone" nor "German of that dreadful sort": Gender, the nation and [sub]urban green space in E.M. Forster's fiction.

Fig. 7.: "Golders Green," by unknown artist, 1908. Published by Underground Electric Railway Company Ltd, 1908. Printed by Johnson, Riddle & Company Ltd.

Geographically considered, the country of Suburbia is prettily disposed in zones or rings. You have a big city, with the proper sections, commercial, residential, and fashionable, appertaining to a big city, and outside that—inexorably ringing it round—you have the eternal and entirely Godforsaken suburbs. Put together, they make the country which is the very saddest and most dreary and least delectable on all the maps. It is a country devoid of graciousness to a degree which appalls. Deserts of sand, or alkali, or scrub were paradise by comparison. For it is a country wherein nothing is, save villas; where no bird sings except in front-windows; where the principal objects of cultivation are the stunted cabbage and the bedraggled geraniums; where everybody's portion is soot and grime and slush; where the only streams and sewers, and the gardens are all black, and the principal population appears to consist of milkmen, postmen, busguards, scavengers, butcher's boys, nursemaids, drapers's assistants (male and female), policemen, railway-porters, Methodist ministers, and sluttish little girls who clean doorsteps.

(Crosland, *The Suburbans* 15-16)

T.W.H Crosland's scornful description of the suburban landscape refers to what at the beginning of the twentieth century had become the most common way of living for most of the middle classes. By the time he wrote his disdainful account of suburban life in Great Britain, the suburbs had been developing for a century and Crosland exemplifies the horrified and often contemptuous reaction many members of the intelligentsia displayed in response to the rise of newer suburbs. While in the early nineteenth century it was mainly the wealthier middle class who relocated to greener and less urban spaces just outside of London, creating the first "old-style" suburbs, towards the late nineteenth century more compact and crowded suburbs were created to house the many white-collar workers occupied as clerks in the city. John Carey discusses this development in *The Intellectual and the Masses*, pointing out that the suburbs were desirable because they gave access to "unspoiled country"(46). F.M.L. Thompson, in *The rise of suburbia*, also attributes the desire for access to green space as one of the main motives for many of the people who moved to the suburbs. Indeed, he states that the suburban garden could be viewed as "the roots of the demands for suburban living" as it "brought the possibilities of privacy and seclusion with it" but also constituted "a piece of tangible evidence, however minute, that the dream of being a townsman living in the country was something more than just an illusion" (15). Hence, "The essential quality of the suburbs was that they were on the edge of the country with open views beyond, even if the subsequent

development leapfrogged past them and hemmed them in as inner suburbs."[39] (15) Ideologically speaking, the suburb incorporates a variety of green spaces—gardens, communal greens, and gentrified countryside. Apart from the actual physical components, it is also characterized by the possibility of access to both the countryside and the city. As such it inhabits a borderland between urban and rural, with the explicit task of providing a rarified essence of both. However, in the eyes of many the suburb did not live up to its potential, instead proliferating in blackened streams, squalid gardens, and mutilated countryside.

The unattractive and often monotonous appearance of suburbia was also seen as indicative of the inhabitants' state of mind. It elicited a strong, and often negative, response from authors. By the time E.M. Forster was writing *Howard's End*, different types of suburbia had developed in Great Britain. Thompson dates the bulk of the development to the years between 1815 and 1939 (2), and states that by the beginning of the twentieth century suburbs were "generally viewed with distaste, ridicule, or contempt." The main reason for this sentiment was that they

> appeared monotonous, featureless, without character, indistinguishable from one another, infinitely boring to behold, wastelands of housing as settings for dreary, petty, lives without social, cultural, or intellectual interests, settings which fostered a pretentious preoccupation with outward

[39] In 1824 Nash created the Park terraces, "villages which were indeed an aristocratic garden suburb in miniature, rusticated cottages, each one different, each one in its garden, planted in an urban context." . . .this "transmuted middle-class yearnings for a whiff of the country, which had hitherto seemed unacceptable and inappropriate in town dwellers, into a positive and respectable demand."

> appearances, a fussy attention to the trifling details of genteel living, and absurd attempts to conjure rusticity in garden plots. (3)

Carey also discusses the reaction of the intellectual elite to the urban sprawl, and explains that many of them saw the newer developments as "spoiling the suburbs," a "process by which established and largely green middle-class suburbs were engulfed by new development." Many authors, who belonged to the intellectual and financial elite of the time period, had grown up in the "old-style green outer suburbs" which were then altered by later housing developments (47). Consequently, the term "suburbia" often reflected social snobbery, combining "topographical with intellectual disdain" (53).

In addition, gender played a crucial in the ideological construction of suburbia. Linked to this was the notion that triviality, specifically female triviality was the defining characteristic of the suburb. The list of the "principal population" furnished by Crosland attests to the way suburbia was typified in terms of female, middle-class domesticity and the related occupations and pastimes. As Carey explains, the term "suburb" came to be associated with the masses, specifically the female characteristics assigned to the mass by the male intelligentsia, which resulted in "a tendency to identify the suburbs as the site not just of triviality but specifically female triviality"(52). Suburban spaces promised a safe environment, away from the dirt and crime of the city, for middle-class women. Martin Daunton, in the introduction to *The Cambridge Urban History*, explains that suburbia was appealing because of its separation from the city and any associated dangers. For most residents "Suburbia was a place of peace and

order to shelter wives and children from the stresses of the city, and for men to return to a haven of tranquility at the end of the day, from the competitive strains of the working world and cultivate a garden or to socialise in a way that was not intrusive or a threat to privacy"(30). John Armstrong echoes this sentiment and explicates, in "From Shillibeer to Buchanan: transport and the urban environment," that "[t]he 'vulnerable' wife and children were placed in safety, leaving the 'stronger' patriarch to do battle with the corrupting city" (244). Depending on their class status, women were left to organize their lives around household chores, social calls, and leisure time activities such as playing whist or golfing—a clear separation from the masculinized city. Another result of this gendering was that the suburbs came to represent low-brow culture, a feminine prerogative that was situated in opposition to masculinized high culture located within an urban environment.

Modernist fiction frequently privileges a masculine, urban viewpoint, which results in an erasure of female experiences of urban spaces. In *The Gender of Modernity*, Rita Felski poses the following question: "How would our understanding of modernity change if instead of taking male experience as paradigmatic, we were to look instead at texts written primarily by or about women?" (10). As I have shown in the previous two chapters, women authors of the early twentieth century use urban green space to articulate alternative renditions of modernity and their depictions of these spaces provide a unique insight into their experience of the modern city. It has become clear that discourses on gender and sexuality form a crucial part of the way urban spaces are

constructed in literature. Parks and public gardens are often represented as enclaves of nature, independent and unaffected by the modern urban spaces they are adjacent to. Since they are representations of nature they are often seen as normal settings for women in urban centers. While the modern city was constructed as the territory of the solitary male, parks and public gardens are safe and accepted habitats for women. Felski explains, "the modern individual is assumed to be an autonomous male free of familial and communal ties" (2), and within this framework women do not have a place within the modern metropolis. In addition, many other "key symbols of the modern in the nineteenth century—the public sphere, the man of the crowd, the stranger, the dandy, the flâneur—were indeed explicitly gendered" (16). Consequently, women were often located outside male, urban spaces. In regard to urban development this meant that the suburbs came to be a "woman's place." Felski explains that since "woman" was seen "to be less specialized and differentiated than man, located within the household and an intimate web of familial relations, more closely linked to nature through her reproductive capacity, [she] embodied a sphere of atemporal authenticity seemingly untouched by the alienation and fragmentation of modern life" (16). The suburbs were seen to be the perfect setting for middle class women; a closed society were women could be secluded from the dangers of the city. However, while suburban spaces did definitely subscribe (and exist because of) "prevailing structures and logics of modernity," women experienced them in a myriad of ways, depending on their class, sexuality, and race as well as their varied roles other than wives and mothers. According to Felski, the claim that "an

extended historical period can be reduced to the manifestation of a single, unified, masculine principle. . . . does not allow for the possibility that certain aspects of modernity may have been or could potentially be beneficial for women" (17). Suburban green space can provide the opportunity for women to articulate an individual, autonomous position outside of the role of wife and/or mother.

E.M. Forster negotiates this possibility more or less successfully in his fiction. Most of his earlier work is set in suburbia and features female protagonists. His early novels, read in succession, illustrate the process by which middle-class women of the early twentieth century might endeavor to articulate their positions within an environment that, at least on the surface, had been created in response to a masculine organizing principle. At the center of Forster's stories are women who often find themselves in green, suburban spaces, and while his vision privileges a suburban pastoral it explores the possibility of women benefiting from the opportunities offered by suburban green space. In her essay "A Passage to E.M. Forster," Elizabeth Bowen recounts her experience of discovering Forster's fiction when she was fifteen years old. In Bowen's view, three of Forster's early novels—*Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), *A Room with a View* (1908), and *Howard's End* (1910)—stand out due to his masterful way of writing. She attributes his "brisk, enticing, and shapely" style to his being an Edwardian, since "[t]he desideratum for the Edwardian novel was, that it could be read easily and enjoyably" (274 in *People, Places, and Things*). However, this attention to style does not mean a lack of substance. On the contrary, the novels present enticing and inciting subject matter, packaged in Forster's charm and wit.

For Bowen, the novels are not only attractive due to their individual merit, but also because "their virtue is, in the highest sense, communal." She adds that, "from each sprang not only the impetus but the necessity for the one to follow. What was yet to be written would have been nascent, latent, in what was being written at the time; equally, what already had been written (or created) was present in what *was* being written, adding to the comprehensibility in depth" (277). One of these communalities is the presence of strong, assertive female characters whose stories are often played out in relation to the thematic strain of the tension between ever-expanding London and old-style suburbia. Other people, most notably Virginia Woolf, felt less enthusiastic about Forster's and other Edwardians' work. Her main qualm was that he substituted the description of house for the description of character. Given that many of his narratives take place in the suburbs, the focus on houses and buildings is actually quite appropriate. More importantly, upon closer examination it becomes clear that even though houses play a prominent role in Forster's descriptions, his female protagonists find themselves mostly outdoors moving through the various suburban green spaces. It is with the help of these spaces that the women explore and articulate subjectivities that lie outside accepted suburban feminine domesticities.

In the following chapter I look at two of the novels mentioned above, *A Room with a View* (1908) and *Howard's End* (1910), as well as the short story "The Other Kingdom" first published in 1909. Read in chronological order, these three pieces present an intriguing view of suburban green space and the role of

gender in the construction of a national narrative. When read as a collective, it becomes apparent that Forster constructs a complicated image of suburbia, which does not necessarily follow the male/female, city/country, high brow/low brow dichotomy. This is especially evident in *A Room With A View* where the male character who is explicitly associated with the city is a foppish and narrow-minded snob. What further complicates Forster's characterization of the female protagonists is that all are connected, in one way or another, to a "foreign influence." Even though Forster locates his narratives in what could be termed the heartland of English middle-class society, he introduces tensions by "othering" his female protagonists. In *A Room With A View*, Lucy Honeychurch has "benefited" from her time abroad, as Italy has not only brought out the light in her but also "the shadow." In "The Other Kingdom," Hartcourt Worters has imported the Irish Miss Evelyn Beaumont to be his bride because of her "native charms." The solutions that Forster offers are not always satisfactory and it is in *Howards End* that he articulates the most complete resolution. The Schlegel sisters, whose father was German, inherit the house Howard's End and the possibility for reshaping the English home country.[40]

By characterizing his female characters as both British and Other, Forster disrupts the idea of a unified suburbia. Laura Tabili's work on British women and exogamy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century provides an intriguing perspective to the representation of Forster's women as well as their position within the home-country of England. Tabili explains how the British

[40] However, here too, Forster's vision can be problematized since it privileges a very specific group of people excluding people of the lower classes.

concept of nationality historically included both biological and territorial ideas of nationality. This means that a person who was born on British soil would become a citizen, while children born abroad to British parents would enjoy the same privilege. Tabili is mainly concerned with the exclusion and marginalization of British women who married non-British nationals. She illustrates how local ideas of belonging differed from the women's lost status as British. Given that Forster persistently characterizes his protagonists as foreign, Tabili's discussion of the disparate ideas of belonging in regard to the national and local level is useful in an examination of the female protagonists within Forster's fiction. Tabili explains that "[b]uilding the nation . . . thus entailed processes of marginalization, exclusion, surveillance, and silencing along multiple social axes: not only origin and race, but also gender, sexuality, and class" (799), a statement that is also pertinent in regard to suburbia. Suburban space—as an expression of modernizing impulses as well as a physical manifestation of ideologies of separate gender roles—played a key role in the construction of a national identity. It combines some of the ideals of English gentility, while also being firmly entrenched in the national, imperialist project. For example, while the first wave of suburbia housed people whose wealth had been in part acquired in imperial projects, the rise of the clerks between 1860 and 1910 was due to "the emergence of the imperialist and international economy of the late nineteenth century"(58). Furthermore, the construction of a suburban, feminine domesticity was instrumental in constructing a national ideal of womanhood. Suburbia advanced the separation of spheres as it spatially disconnected women from the city, the culturally constructed locus of

masculinity and empire-building work. Women were relegated to the home and in charge of managing the domestic sphere and raising the children. As a consequence, their position was defined as pure, untainted domestic creatures who were upholders of the British culture and values. Elizabeth Wilson, in *The Sphinx in the City*, describes how the city was constructed as a dangerous, polluted place in Victorian literature, which was usually juxtaposed to the country (26). She further explains that it was the condition of women that defined both, seen by many to provide a "touchstone of the state of civilization and progress" (28). Suburbia represented the perfect antidote for the dangerous city, and a place for women to act out their roles as upholders of British culture. So, while men managed the financial and logistic side of advancing Britannia at home and abroad, women inhabited the suburban fringe, embodying the ideals that pervaded the very fabric of Britishness.

In his writing, Forster expands upon the narrowly defined gender roles of suburban femininity and his heroines negotiate these within the setting of suburban green space. One of the most dramatic developments within the progression of the three texts is the articulation of a suburban femininity that locates the protagonists at the center of the core of the British mother country. Lucy Honeychurch, from *A Room with a View*, is only able to fully achieve her potential by rejecting both metropolitan London and British suburbia—at the conclusion of the novel she returns to Italy with her lover; Miss Evelyn Beaumont of "Other Kingdom" manages to remove herself from the domineering and colonizing efforts by her fiancé, doing so, however, at the expense of her own

subjectivity; finally, in *Howard's End* the Schlegel sisters take over the suburban home and firmly establish themselves within the British heartland. Due to the proliferation of female heroines within Forster's fiction and in conjunction with the publication of *Maurice* in 1971, much of the recent critical work on E.M. Forster has focused on recovering Forster as a homosexual author.[41] As Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein explains in *Forster's Women: Eternal Differences,* "Forster's greatest characters are women, and his novels closely examine the problems of women in society; but his overall theme is a larger one in which women function as representatives of all humanity" (vii). Nonetheless, Finkelstein stresses that both *A Room With A View* and *Howard's End* deal with women's sexuality and their equality to men. The issues Forster raises are applicable to a wider group of people and he places the articulation and resolution of these issues within suburban green space.

Forster's 1908 novel *A Room with a View* constitutes Forster's first foray into questions of female suburban subjectivity—hence questions of a communal nationhood and female agency are somewhat less developed than in the two following pieces. Nonetheless, a thematic trajectory can already be discerned. Lucy Honeychurch, the main female character, faces the dilemma of trying to develop her own identity while avoiding being subsumed into a suburban female domesticity. Finkelstein declares that one of the central themes of the novel is the

[41] David Leavitt and Mark Mitchell point out in their introduction to Forster's Selected Stories, several of his female characters "serve as surrogates for the homosexual hero Forster longed to invent," including Helen Schlegel in Howard's End and Lucy Honeychurch in Room with a View (viii). See also Parminder Kaur Bakshi, in *Distant Desire: Homoerotic Codes and the Subversion of the English Novel in E.M. Forster's Fiction*, who argues that "the desire for male love is integral to Forster's writing, and pervades the language, structure, technique and style" (xi).

question of freedom and the demands that "being ladylike" place on women (67). Indeed, "Forster recognizes that women are not allowed to live full lives, that 'masculine' does not equal 'alive' but is rather, in this society, a necessary precondition to it" (68). In a sense, the suburbs were meant to preserve women in a state of pre-lapsarian innocence. Women were able to travel to the city and partake in the urban offerings, however only such as were deemed appropriate and safe. Lucy's fiancé Cecil demonstrates this sentiment when he praises her upbringing in a conversation with his mother: "'Do you know, mother, I shall have our children educated just like Lucy. Bring them up among honest country folks for freshness, send them to Italy for subtlety, and then—not until then—let them come to London.'" For Cecil, the countryside, which in *A Room with a View* is the gentrified old-style suburb, is an ideal setting to preserve a woman's innocent charm. Even though he himself had been educated in the city, he declares: "'I don't believe in these London educations. . . . At all events, not for women.'" (141) The gentile suburb is the perfect place for women to be "educated" and readied for marriage. However, Forster deconstructs this attitude by placing Lucy outside the suburban home and letting her articulate her own subjectivity with the help of the green space around her.

In the novel, the impetus to reconsider her options is initiated by Lucy's meeting with the Emersons, as father and son duo who do not fit into the neat suburban middle class category. As Finkelstein explains, Lucy's encounter with the Emersons presents her with the opportunity to take "her first step toward accepting their view that people are not supposed to behave according to

arbitrary, prescribed rules" (75). It is these "prescribed rules" as embodied by her fiancé Cecil that Lucy ultimately transcends. After dismissing Cecil, Lucy comes to realize that she is indeed in love with George. However, "George is functioning in the novel as "freedom"—not just another man, but another style of life" (Finkelstein 84), and hence it is significant that Lucy's encounters with him take place in suburban green space. Her choice for "another style of life" is juxtaposed with the artifice and snobbery of London life that Cecil has to offer. Lucy's desire for a different approach to life is attributed to a foreign influence; her trip to Italy has brought out the best in Lucy, "a certain light, and shadow." It is this depth of character that Lucy needs to develop further, something which she will not be able to achieve in the stifling atmosphere of London. Ultimately, Lucy manages to break out of the confines of her suburban upbringing, yet instead of creating a new space for herself she has to relocate to another country to fully live life outside of the norm of her social circle.

While in *A Room with a View*, nature and suburban spaces play a role in facilitating Lucy Honeychurch's maturation, Forster's short story "The Other Kingdom" (1909), utilizes suburban green space more explicitly to articulate the problematic position of women within the "natural" environment of suburbia. The story is set in Hertfordshire, which was (and still is) part of the London commuter belt.[42] Located in the north of London it was one of the first areas to undergo suburban development. Harcourt Worters, a middle-class 'gentle-man' who commutes to the city, exemplifies the prevailing ideas of the separation of spheres. His fiancé, a young Irish woman, spends her days at his suburban home

[42] *Howard's End* is set near Stevenage, which is also in Hertfordshire.

under the tutelage of a classics instructor and the patronage of his mother. Similarly to Lucy Honeychurch's relationship with Cecil, Miss Evelyn Beaumont embodies the feminine (mass) intellect being educated by her superior—the modern male. However, Forster adds another twist when he locates Evelyn and her education within a colonizing discourse. At the beginning of the story, Mrs. Worters, Harcourt's mother, questions what good learning Latin and studying the classics will do Evelyn. The tutor's response unearths the way in which the suburbs functioned as a homogenizing cultural force that excluded any type of otherness: "'Miss Beaumont is—in a sense—new to our civilization. She is entering it, and Latin is one of her subjects in her entrance examination also. No one can grasp modern life without some knowledge of its origins'"(49). Thus, the suburb is a space where an "uncivilized" woman can be instructed in the ways of the modern world with the aid of some classic literature. This seems highly ironic given that the ideological space of suburbia is diametrically opposed to that of the modern city. One day, upon finding the group sitting on the lawn studying Latin, Harcourt exclaims: "'Let us cherish our dreams!'. . .'All day I've been fighting, haggling, bargaining. And to come out on to this lawn and see you all learning Latin, so happy, so passionless, so Arcadian—'" (49). His enraptured response to the pastoral scene very much illustrates the way that middle-class suburbia was perceived as a safe haven from the dank and dirty city.

Furthermore, by making Evelyn Irish, Forster illustrates how colonization and discourses on sexuality are intertwined. On the one hand, it is definitely Evelyn's physical charm that enticed Harcourt: "There was something attractive

about Mrs. Beaumont. I was not surprised that Harcourt had picked her out of 'Ireland' and had brought her home, without money, without connexions, almost without antecedents, to be his bride." However, it is also the potential for her to be molded into what he wants her to be—as he tells his mother "'in time Evelyn will repay me a thousandfold'"—which attracts him to her (54). Appropriate to the suburban setting it is her untouched nature and unspoiled character that makes her the ideal candidate for his colonizing impulses. However, her "Irishness" also implies a certain level of condescension on part of Harcourt. The English viewed the Irish as socially and culturally inferior, and in the story Evelyn displays some behavioral characteristics that might be deemed unladylike and inappropriate for middle-class womanhood. When Harcourt informs her of his purchase of the adjacent beech wood, she proceeds to imitate a beech tree by "[twitching] up her skirts so that for a moment they spread out in great horizontal layers, like the layers of a beech tree." Her company is scandalized, however after glancing at the house and making sure that none of the servants witnessed Evelyn's behavior, everybody "laughed, and said that she ought to go on the variety stage" (50). Of course, given Harcourt's social position the proposal is ludicrous. However, at the same time it also hints at Evelyn's precarious position as "Other" due to both her ethnicity and gender.

In "Other Kingdom," the suburban green space becomes symbolic of the woman's fight for her own subjectivity and independence. Harcourt's purchase of the beech wood was meant to be an engagement present. For Evelyn, ownership of the wood promises the freedom that she craves: "'Other Kingdom Copse'"---

"'It's mine! I can walk there, work there, live there. A wood of my own! Mine forever.'" (51) It is a space away from the house that Harcourt designed and built, a structure that she finds aesthetically unpleasing and constrictive. However, for Harcourt ownership of the wood symbolizes the opportunity to enclose and maintain Evelyn's purity as well as their privileged position. Chanting her initials, Harcourt celebrates the pending enclosure of the wood as well as his nuptial union with Evelyn: "'E.B., Eternal Blessing. Mine! Mine! My haven from the world! My temple of purity. Oh, the spiritual exaltation—you cannot understand it, but you will! Oh, the seclusion of Paradise. Year after year alone together, all in all to each other—year after year, soul to soul, E.B., Everlasting Bliss!'" Enclosing the wood will shut out the general public, but also limit access to Evelyn, a process which carries both sexual and racial overtones. Also, Harcourt's relationship with Evelyn is very paternalistic, as he tells the tutor: "'In many ways Miss Beaumont's practically a child. She has everything to learn: she acknowledges as much herself. Her new life is so different—so strange. Our habits—our thoughts—she has to be initiated into them all." (58) In his story, Forster unearths the way gender, sexuality, and nationality intersect within the setting of suburban green space.

In the end, Evelyn has to escape the confines of the pastoral suburban setting, which promises to stifle rather than nurture her. Harcourt assumes that she has escaped to London, however the reader is free to imagine a more fantastical resolution. Unable to fit into the new civilization, she can only return to primordial state—as a sylvan creature in the wood. The resolution Forster offers

here is quite bleak, and the solution, if one wants to call it that, is not really a constructive one. Woman returns to nature, forever enclosed and conveniently accessible by an asphalt path. Evelyn is unable to connect and reconcile her otherness with the suburban femininity desired by Harcourt. While the green space of the copse offers her an opportunity to express herself and develop her own subjectivity, it also makes the disconnect between her and Harcourt more visible. The question of connection is a recurring theme within Forster's fiction and he persistently links it with the suburban green spaces surrounding the city of London.

Howard's End continues with this theme; as Finkelstein explains "[s]ocially, connection must take place in an atmosphere of equality between the sexes, and Howard's End attempts to resolve that problem also"(89). The epigraph—"Only Connect . . ."—clearly marks Forster's intent in regard to the novel and sets up the parameters for the narrative. Spatially speaking, the connection between all three texts is the role suburban green space plays in Forster's engagement with the role of women both within the domestic sphere of suburbia and the nation as a whole. In *Howard's End*, the "other" woman finds a place at the very heart of suburbia and takes over a threatened dynasty. Len Platt, in *Aristocracies of Fiction*, focuses on the suburb and how it figured within the popular imagination as a place of "sameness". Hence, fiction such as *Howard's End* "imagined a homogenized future from which distinction would be entirely vanquished"(14). Platt explains that the way this erasure would be accomplished was through the absence of the "mass." As Huyssen illustrated, the mass was

often equated with women, and thus imbued with characteristics coded as "feminine." Forster, however, locates women at the center of his suburban narratives and opens up the spaces to a heterogenous group of people.

The novel begins with a portrait of Howard's End and the Wilcox family. Helen's description in her letter to Margaret emphasizes the house's location within nature and its organic link to the natural surroundings. The structure of the house itself appears to be favored over the inside—the house is given a view of the house within its setting. Helen is at one of the upstairs windows viewing the family from above and inside. She describes in her letter to Helen the family's movements through the outside space surrounding the house.

> I looked out earlier, and Mrs. Wilcox was already in the garden. She evidently loves it. No wonder she sometimes looks so tired. She was watching the large red poppies come out. Then she walked off the lawn to the meadow, whose corner to the right I can just see. Trail, trail, went her long dress over the sopping grass, and she came back with her hands full of the hay that was cut yesterday—I suppose for rabbits or something, as she kept smelling it. The air here is so delicious. Later on I heard the noise of the croquet balls, and looked out again and it was Charles Wilcox [the eldest son] practising; they are keen on all games. Presently he started sneezing and had to stop. Then I heard more clicketing, and it is Mr. Wilcox practising, and then, "a-tissue, a-tissue": he has to stop too. The Evie [the daughter] comes out, and does some calisthenic exercises on a machine that is tacked on to a greengage tree—they put everything to

> good use—and then she says “a-tissue,” and in she goes. And finally Mrs. Wilcox reappears, trail, trail, still smelling the hay and looking at the flowers. (4)

The family appears to be embedded within the surrounding green space rather than the domestic interior of the home. Yet, only Mrs. Wilcox is truly at home, since she is able to be in the natural surroundings without an allergic reaction. Also, she is the one with the least intrusive approach to her surroundings, as the other members of the family “put everything to use.” Implicit in this remark is a critique of Charles and Mr. Wilcox’s occupations. The males of the family are engaged in various nation-building enterprises. Mr. Wilcox is a budding industrialist, whose business profits from British imperial expansion. Charles, the eldest son, works for the business, while the younger son is preparing for missionary work (the ideological support pillar of imperialism) in Africa. The portrayal of the Wilcox family situates them within a national narrative that stresses the organic origins of the English heritage (and character). Howard’s End provides a pivotal link between the land and the family (the country and the city) in the shape of Mrs. Wilcox, who functions as the organic link between rural and industrial society. When Helen starts a short-lived romance with the youngest son, Paul, the men are disconcerted. Paul is supposed to soon be leaving England, and the Wilcoxes’ apprehension of Helen’s potentially detrimental influence can be read in the context of Paul’s participation in the colonial project. Her interference might distract him from his duty, or yet worse contaminate his efforts.

Brackette F. Williams discusses how gender plays a vital role in the construction of national identity, and specifically points out that sexual respectability is intricately linked to nationalism. For example, scientific discourse of the Victorian age set out to forge a connection between perceived characteristics such as promiscuity and race, which then in turn would legitimize the civilizing (read colonizing) mission. At the time "race" was often used as a substitute for nation or ethnicity, and the English race obviously had to be superior for the colonial project to be seen as legitimate. Consequently, the suppression and control of female sexuality was of utmost importance, something that the suffragettes of the early twentieth century challenged. This conflict is reflected in the anxieties expressed by the male Wilcoxes—Helen's forwardness and supposed entrapment of Paul threatens their security.

The meanings and fates of the "home-country" are contested in a number of ways in the novel *Howard's End*. Specifically, the notion of domestic, both in a local and national sense, is explored through the homes of the Schlegels and Wilcoxes. The novel explores the sometimes paradoxical relationship between local filiations and national affiliations (to borrow a term from Edward Said). The homes, and especially the suburban ones, play an important role in establishing and maintaining local links, at times more or less successfully. The various homes embody the characters' positions within the English home country, and their location as well as the inner state of the homes is intimately linked to the way nationality is portrayed in the novel. The Schlegel sisters' identity is split into English versus German, with an emphasis on their "not quite Englishness." In

addition, their heritage appears to be split into a "spiritual" versus biological one. Their father's Germaness is repeatedly emphasized in regard to the philosophical and artistic accomplishments of the Germans. In public, they are able to pass as English, however it is their home that highlights their multiple identities. Specifically, the feminine character of their house illustrates how their home projects a different type of the English home-country, one that includes non-traditional people and ideas.

As Rosemary George points out, the notion of a "home-country" is constructed as both a person's physical location as well as their affinity for the place they inhabit. However, as *Howard's End* illustrates, discrepancies between the meaning of local and national belonging do exist. One might be perfectly at home in a place that one does not have any familial ties to. The opposite is also true: national identity does not necessarily result in physical ties to a specific place. Even though George proposes that literary narratives mainly focus on the idea of home (12), *Howard's End* clearly deals with the nation through the portrayal of the various home within the novel and the domestic affairs of the two families are linked to national concerns within the home-country of Great Britain. In his study of Forster's novel, *Howard's End—E.M. Forster's House of Fiction*, Alistair M. Duckworth proposes that "the novel's epigraph 'Only Connect . . .' might as well have been addressed to a whole society in which unionists and nationalists, management and labor, men and women, English and Germans, seemed incapable of conciliation" (4). It is the novel's focus on such oppositions that speaks to wider national concerns of the time. For example, the Schlegel's

sisters' genteel bohemian lifestyle is juxtaposed with more sober approach of the Wilcox family, which serves to highlight issues of both gender and nationality. The homes portrayed within the novel do not just symbolically enclose the home-country of England, but rather expand and ultimately modify the concept of English nationality. Howard's End and the Wilcoxes represent a traditional English family, which is engaged in the building and perpetuation of national identity. Rosemary George's ideas regarding the home as a space that is mainly defined by its exclusiveness rather than inclusiveness is very applicable to the type of home the Wilcoxes envision Howard's End to be. Particularly, the men of the family see the home as a place that should not just be open to anyone. Their apprehension of intruders takes on xenophobic dimensions when it is applied to the Schlegel sisters.

Ultimately it is the character of Margaret that embodies Forster's attempt at presenting a solution. Once again Finkelstein is useful here in her assertion that "Margaret is Forster's quintessential androgynous hero and connects the themes of all his novels: the acceptance of sexuality, the role of women . . . in society, and the importance of fraternity." All these themes unfold within the suburban green space of Howard's End. The Schlegel sisters—coded as half-German, half-English—take over the endangered old-style suburban space that Howard's End is located in and it their success is partly due to their unique heritage. Their identity is accounted for in terms of their father's heritage. They are not "Germans of the dreadful sort," instead their character is explained through the description of their father's heritage: he was neither aggressive nor domestic, but a philosophical

idealist. This positions the sisters in direct opposition to the Wilcoxes, who are aggressively engaged in industrial as well as imperial expansion. The difference is further illustrated by their home, Wickham Place and Margaret's assertion that even during their father's time the house was "irrevocably feminine"; she stresses the fact that it is their duty to keep it from being effeminate. The relationship between the father and the notion of femininity forges a connection to his (and their) nationality, especially since Margaret comments on the Wilcoxes house and its "masculinity"(45). Hence the domestic spaces in the novel are both gendered and related to ideas of nationality. Yet discourse leading up to WWI and also between the wars, generally attributes masculine characteristics to Germans, while using genteel, feminine qualities to describe the British national character.

George uses Edward Said's distinction between "filiation" and "affiliation" to explore the relationship between nationalistic narratives and the equation of a place with a home (16). Even though George questions the natural filiations, the idea that the first is based upon geo-biological factors while the latter is socially constructed is particularly interesting in view of the two protagonists in *Howard's End*. The Schlegel sisters are clearly coded as German, descendants of a German father and an English mother. Peter Edgerly Firchow agrees in *The Death of the German Cousin*, proposing that *Howard's End* is Forster's "Anglo-German novel," since the two main protagonists are recognizably German (61). One could argue that the intermingling of German and English culture has resulted in stronger individuals (62); yet, throughout the novel

the repetition of German imagery—be it in the form of references to composers, musicians, landscapes, or potential mates—emphasizes their otherness.

The ending of *Howard's End* presents an ambivalent picture in regard to the meaning of "home-country" and how it relates to both the local and the national. Most importantly, the solution Forster offers is placed within the surroundings of Howard's End rather than the house itself. In the final pages, Margaret Schlegel finds out that her husband will bequeath the house to her upon his death, a decision his children from a previous marriage disagree with. As a stranger—in both senses of the word—Margaret presents a deviation from traditional ideas regarding British nationhood. In addition, it is significant that Forster envisions the future of the home-country within a rural rather than urban setting, albeit one within view of the creeping "rust" of suburbia. Howard's End and its surroundings have been returned to a pre-Wilcox era. Margaret and Helen have transplanted their female-dominated household to Howard's End, as all of the male characters of the Wilcox family have been disabled in one way or another. Thus a new type of home-country is created—one that is more inclusive and whose potential for survival us linked to the rural setting of the home itself. Indeed, the closing paragraph is a testament to the future to come; a future that is intricately linked to the preservation of suburban green space: "'The field's cut!' Helen cried excitedly—'the big meadow! We've seen to the very end, and it'll be such a crop of hay as never!'" (359). This phrase holds the promise of what the green space of suburbia can afford the modern woman: A space to grow and create a place of her own.

While the Schlegel sisters' incorporation into Howard's End could be read as a return to their English roots which entails the abandonment of their German, cosmopolitan heritage, the ending does not present a return to the status quo. Helen's son, the result of her union with Leonard Bast, the lower middle class clerk, is set to inherit Howard's End. Instead of presenting a static image where the suburban home is portrayed in a nostalgic sheen and returned to its rightful heirs, Forster offers a future where a diverse populace inhabits and utilizes suburban green space.

CHAPTER FOUR
"Increasing the bounds of the moment by flights into past or future": Re-writing, re-imagining, and re-presenting women's histories in Woolf's *Between the Acts*, Barnes's *Nightwood*, and Rhys's *Quartet.*

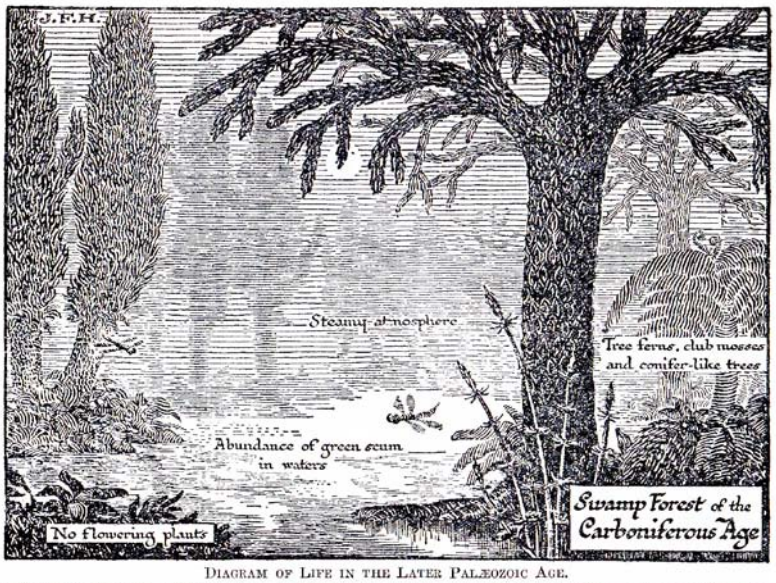

DIAGRAM OF LIFE IN THE LATER PALÆOZOIC AGE.
Life is creeping out of the water. An insect like a dragon-fly is shown. There were amphibia like gigantic newts and salamanders, and even primitive reptiles in these swamps.

Fig. 8: "Life in the Later Palæozoic." J.F. Horrabin. In H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History.*

I look at modernity, then, not as a utopia, nor even as a dystopia process – a utopia gone wrong. Instead, I want to look at process; the ordering of modernity within this in-between space that I call heterotopia. . . . Heterotopia are not quite spaces of transition – the chasm they represent can never be closed up – but they are spaces of deferral, spaces where ideas and practices that represent the good life can come into being, from nowhere, even if they never actually achieve what they set out to achieve – social order, or control and freedom. Heterotopia, therefore, reveal the process of social ordering to be just that, a process rather than a thing . . . . That, I would argue is how we should look at modernity, not as a social order, as has tended to be the sociological convention, but as a social and indeed spatial ordering.

(Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity* ix)

The later Palæozoic Rocks of the northern hemisphere give us the materials for a series of pictures of this slow spreading of life over land. Geographically, all round the northern half of the world it was an age of lagoons and shallow seas very favourable to this invasion. The new plants, now that they had acquired the power to live new aerial life, developed with an extraordinary richness and variety.

There were as yet no true flowering plants, no grasses nor trees that shed their leaves in winter; the first "flora" consisted of great tree ferns, gigantic equisetums, eyead ferns, and kindred vegetation. Many of these plants took the form of huge-stemmed trees, . . . As we ascend the higher levels of the Later Palæozoic record, we find the process of air adaptation has gone as far as the appearance of the true reptiles amidst the abundant and various amphibia.

. . .

They were now in many cases absolutely land animals. . . . The earliest known reptiles were beasts with great bellies and not very powerful legs, very like their kindred amphibia, wallowing as the crocodile wallows to this day; but in the Mesozoic they began to stand up and go stoutly on all fours . . . ." (H.G. Wells *The Outline of History* 22, 24, 26-8)

In the introduction to *The Outline of History*, originally published in 1920, H.G. Wells sets out to represent what he calls a "universal history." At the heart of his project lies the belief that "there can be no common peace and prosperity without common historical ideas." Writing in response to the events of World War I, Wells is concerned with communicating what he views as "general facts of human history," since in the absence of such ideas and "with nothing but narrow, selfish, nationalist traditions, races and people are bound to drift towards conflict and destruction" (vi). Hence, a "sense of history as the common adventure of all mankind is as necessary for peace within as it is for peace between nations" (vi). Some of Wells's ideas might seem idealistic and his rendition of history, if scrutinized according to current critical traditions, might appear outdated and paternalistic. Nonetheless it illustrates the extent to which current events permeates and infuse contemporary literary production. It might come as no surprise, then, that almost twenty years later, on the eve of World War II, Virginia Woolf would draw upon Wells's ideas in her posthumously-published novel *Between the Acts* (1941). By this time it had become abundantly clear that nationalist traditions had only prospered further, bringing Europe once again to the brink of war. Woolf re-writes portions of Wells's *Outline*, creating a pre-historic urban green space that has women at its core. Furthermore, she also genders the re-telling of history by positioning one of the female characters—Mrs. Swithin—as both the reader and narrator of this alternative history. The novel takes place over the course of a twenty-four hour period—"on a June day in 1939" (75) to be precise—and is set in rural England. Most of the narrative

focuses on a play put on by the local villagers and attended by the gentile population from the surrounding areas. The location is Pointz Hall which, "did not rank among the houses that are mentioned in guide books. It was too homely. But with this whitish house with the grey roof, and the wing thrown out at right angles, lying unfortunately low on the meadow with a fringe of trees on the bank above it so that smoke curled up to the nests on the rooks, was a desirable house to live in." (6). Even though the house itself is unremarkable, it location is significant: The occupants of the house, the Olivers, play host to an annual pageant that features the local village population in a play about the history of England. It is the house's position within the natural surroundings that creates a perfect stage for the festivities and recurring references to nature and the adjoining countryside form a persistent refrain within the narrative.

Throughout the text, Woolf interweaves snapshots of the English countryside with morsels of English history, and thus creates an alternative type of history. One instance of such a re-writing of history is the representation of the center of London as a pre-historic wilderness. On the morning of the pageant, Mrs. Swithin, an elderly lady who spends part of the year with her brother and his son and daughter-in-law in the country, finds herself awakened by bird song and unable to return to sleep.

> But it was summer now. She had been waked by the birds. How they sang! attacking the dawn like so many choir boys attacking an iced cake. Forced to listen, she had stretched for her favourite reading—an Outline of History—and had spent the hours between three and five

> thinking of rhododendron forests in Piccadilly; when the entire continent, not then, she understood, divided by a channel, was all one; populated, she understood, by elephant-bodied, seal-necked, heaving, surging, slowly writhing, and, she supposed, barking monsters; the iguanodon, the mammoth, and the mastodon; from, she whom presumably, she thought, jerking the window open, we descend. (8-9)

Woolf is (presumably) referring to H.G. Wells's *The Outline of History* (1920) which, since she had been "forced to listen" to bird song, Mrs. Swithin spent the morning reading. Her musings are interrupted by the arrival of morning tea which is carried by Grace the maid, whom Mrs. Swithin has difficulty to separate in her mind from "the leather-covered grunting monster who was about, as the door opened, to demolish a whole tree in the green steaming undergrowth of the primeval forest" (9):

> It took her five seconds in actual time, in mind time ever so much longer, to separate Grace herself, with blue china on a tray, from the leather-covered grunting monster who was about, as the door opened, to demolish a whole tree in the green steaming undergrowth of the primeval forest. Naturally, she jumped, as Grace put the tray down and said: 'Good morning, Ma'am.' 'Batty,' Grace called her, as she felt on her face the divided glance that was half meant for a beast in a swamp, half for a maid in a print frock and white apron. (9)

What makes this scenario so compelling is the merging of a metropolitan landmark and a prehistoric wilderness, which at the same time locates a woman as

the central agent.[43] This can be read in a number of ways: on the one hand it can be firmly located within discourses on the city as a jungle, inhabited by savages (or leather-covered monsters), with Grace representing nineteenth-century bourgeois anxieties regarding the mixing of the classes and races. On the other hand, it also opens up the possibility of gender being at the center of the urban space, if not its origins. Grace's alter ego, the "leather-covered grunting monster," who is demolishing a whole tree in middle of Piccadilly Circus, is at the center of the urban space.

As Mrs. Swithin glances out of the open window she catches a glimpse of a thrush hopping along the window sill, and is "[tempted] by the sight to continue her imaginative reconstruction of the past [as] she was given to increasing the bounds of the moment by flights into past or future. . . ." (9). The whole novel (and arguably most of Woolf's work) is structured according to this paradigm. By inserting glimpses of past and future, Woolf increases her representation of the present—and she uses green space (both urban and otherwise) to re-write the past and envision the future. In the following pages I broaden my discussion to a variety of [re-]imagined urban green spaces and to what extent their presence within a text increases "the bounds of the moment." I draw upon Henri Lefebvre's *The Social Production of Space* as well as Kevin Hetherington's *The Badlands of Modernity*, both of which are concerned with spaces on the margins of society, their transformative powers, as well as the idea of representative/representational space. Correspondingly, the texts discussed vary in regard to the types of

[43] This is not the only instance of Woolf using prehistoric imagery in conjunction with urban spaces; in *Mrs. Dalloway*, a similar moment occurs outside Regent's Park tube station.

greenery/spaces that are represented, but they all function as ways for women to negotiate their positions within specific urban locations as well as broader cultural networks. I extend the discussion of urban green spaces to include spaces that are tangible but at the same time also representational of imaginative ones. This chapter is concerned with how such spaces—i.e. spaces not officially designated green spaces—function as sites of alternative histories and heterotopia. The latter is a concept advanced by Hetherington, who argues "the issues of social ordering as an uncertain process has to be at the heart of our thinking about the character of modernity" (9). Indeed, he envisions modernity to be "defined by the spatial play between freedom and control," a process which "is found most clearly in spaces of alternative ordering, heterotopia"(18). This concept of spaces of "alternative ordering" or otherness provides a useful lens for the examination of the green, in-between, spaces of the modern city. Re-imagining and representing these urban green spaces becomes a way for women writers to create heterotopia; in the process they reposition women at the center of historical, cultural and national narratives.

Hetherington defines heterotopia as "[places] of Otherness, sites [that are] constituted in relation to other sites by their difference" (viii). Urban green space, because it is frequently defined in opposition to its surroundings, can function as heterotopic space. As I am have shown in the previous chapters, modernist authors use these sites to unearth the processes at work within modernity. Hetherington proposes that it is the "alternate ordering [that] marks heterotopia as Other and allows them to be seen as an example of an alternate way of doing

things"; furthermore, it is this different approach to both space and social order that "modernity has always been about (viii)." As a quintessential modern space, urban green space—both real and fictitious—presents the possibility of an "alternate way of doing things," and the authors I have included in this study realize this in their writing. By re-imagining and representing green spaces that transcend the boundaries of the traditional urban environment, the women writers I discuss on the following pages create heterotopic spaces. Their re-writing of urban green spaces is the process that Hetherington characterizes as modernity—indeed, he is concerned with "the processes expressed through these sites more than the sites themselves" (ix). Within modernist fiction, the representation of urban green space embodies a fluid rather than static type of modernity, which incorporates a number of social and cultural processes. Hetherington's approach to heterotopic space provides a useful lens through which urban green space can be examined. He writes that "Heterotopia have an ambivalence within them that allows us to focus on the idea of process rather than structure. In particular, it allows us to consider modernity in terms of an ordering that never comes to rest but which vacillates between ideas of freedom and control." (139) The three texts I discuss in this section were all written in the 1930s during a time that saw the rise of fascism in Europe, with the threat of impending war becoming more tangible. With the threat of such large-scale violence, women's positions within the city also became more precarious. The green spaces these authors create represent their attempts at forging spaces that can accommodate them. They approach urban green space in different ways and utilize it for different purposes.

All of them place women at the center of their narratives: In *Between the Acts*, urban green space functions as a way of re-writing women's role within accepted historical discourses; Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*, on the other hand, opens up green spaces in the city as spaces of otherness, with the nighttime wanderings of the protagonist Robin adding extra significance to what would normally seem a quotidian and banal environment in the daytime; and in Jean Rhys's *Quartet* it is the spontaneous green spaces, which crop up on Marya Zelli's journeys across Europe and Paris, that chronicle her lonely, and intransient position as a woman within the modern city.

In *Between the Acts*, Virginia Woolf weaves together the past and the present—as she re-writes and re-imagines both she creates a fluid matrix of space and time. Woolf places women at the center of her narrative and uses different layers of green space (both urban and otherwise) to re-envision a national British heritage that locates women at its core. The majority of the narrative centers on a pageant that is performed by the local villagers and which traces several hundred years of British history. Indeed, the whole text is concerned with different types of histories, ranging from the local to the national. Kristina Busse in "Reflecting the Subject in History: The Return of the Real in *Between the Acts*," declares that the novel "exhibits Woolf's increasing awareness of history at the same time as it continues to focus on the protagonists' inner lives by addressing the changing role of the individual against a tenuous political and historical backdrop." (75) It is important to note that Woolf does not only focus on the experience of the individual, but specifically on women's encounters with history. In *Between the*

Acts, the imagined urban green spaces serve as a way for Woolf to infuse her text with multiple layers of history. Busse writes that by "forcing the reader to encounter the horror and the void of the real in place of safe alternatives, *Between the Acts* becomes a text that disrupts and interrogates various understandings of the subject at the same time as it questions our conceptions of history" (79). Woolf rewriting of Wells's *The Outline of History* disrupts predominant understandings of history by conflating the "leather-covered monster" with the female servant while locating both of them at the center of the city. Furthermore, Mrs. Swithin's vision of London as a primeval forest frames the narrative, and as such it signifies Woolf's intent to shift the focus towards a female experience of history. There are three instances of the prehistoric past intruding upon the present. The first one, quoted in length above, sets the tone for the narrative. The second one, functions in two ways. For one, it reinforces the theme of a "time before time," when England itself was not that separate from the rest of the world. In addition, it also introduces the idea of a fluid and changeable concept of history. In a response to Isa Oliver's enquiry regarding the distance of Pointz Hall from the sea, Mrs. Swithin declares that "'Once there was no sea,' . . .'No sea at all between us and the continent. I was reading that in a book this morning. There were rhododendrons in the Strand; and mammoths in Piccadilly.'" (29-30) Her statement reminds the reader of England's pre-historic past, of a time when its landmass was still connected to its European neighbors and the indigenous flora and fauna were the same. However, this was also a time when humans had not yet

evolved and populated the land. Isa's reply remedies this, while also showcasing the way history is malleable depending on who writes it:

> 'When we were savages,' said Isa.
>
> Then she remembered; her dentist had told her that savages could perform very skillful operations on the brain. Savages had false teeth, he said. False teeth were invented, she thought he said, in the time of the Pharaos. (29-30)

Clearly, Isa is conflating several historical time periods, placing "savage humans" in the Palæozoic age while also equating them with the Egyptian civilization. However, Woolf is making a decisive statement about how history is "made" as well as who or what is worthy of historical proclivity.

The entire text of *Between the Acts* is permeated by historical as well as current events, which play out against the backdrop of the English countryside. As Busse notes, the novel's overt historical content might prompt readings that solely focus on the historical subject matter: "Of course, the text's historical situatedness and its repeated reminders of current events establish *Between the Acts* as socially self-conscious and invite historicized readings." However, it is the idyllic, rural setting as well as the overlapping of individual histories with broader, national concerns that calls for a more complex analysis. Once again Busse writes, "Still, the overall pastoral setting, the constant repression of history, and the emphasis on subjectivity and linguistic concerns demand a more nuanced approach to the novel's treatment of the past" (90). In fact, it is Woolf's use of green space that highlights the discrepancies between re-presented and re-imagined history. The

house, Pointz Hall, is very much imbedded within its natural surroundings. It is located in a hollow, surrounded by trees that loom over the terrace and whose roots break through the grass, among which there are "green waterfalls and cushions of grass in which violets grew in spring or in summer the wild purple orchids." Woolf creates an atmosphere where the green spaces of nature form an ubiquitous presence which utterly engulfs the human inhabitants. Isa is unable to catch the attention of the two nurses traversing the terrace with the children, as "the drone of the trees was in their ears; the chirp of birds; other incidents in garden life, inaudible, invisible to [Isa] in the bedroom, absorbed them. Isolated on a green island, hedged about with snowdrops, laid with a counterpane of puckered silk, the innocent island floated under [Isa's] window." (14) Indeed, nature is in continual attendance at Pointz Hall, and its occupants as well as their visitors are immersed in the lush greenery.

Woolf uses the nature imagery to symbolize the way the house and its inhabitants are rooted within an organic history: "There had always been lilies there, self-sown form wind-dropped seed, floating red and white on the green plates of their leaves. Water, for hundreds of years had silted down into the hollow, and lay there four or five feet over a black cushion of mud." (43) Indeed, nature accommodates the activities of the humans, catering to their needs:

> Beyond the lily pool the ground sank again, and in that dip of the ground, bushes and brambles had mobbed themselves together. . . .
>
> It was the very place for dressing-room, just as, obviously, the terrace was the very place for a play. . . .

> "There the stage; here the audience; and down there among the bushes a perfect dressing-room for the actors." (56-7)

Woolf weaves together the past and the present, re-writing and re-imagining both as she does so. Her history is one that merges both domestic and national concerns, which is embodied by the household items the pageant actors use as costumes and stage props: "The clothes were strewn on the grass. Cardboard crowns, swords made of silver paper, turbans that were sixpenny dish cloths, lay on the grass or were flung on the bushes. . . . The dresses attracted the butterflies. . . .Red Admirals gluttonously absorbed richness from dish cloths, cabbage whites drank icy coolness from silver paper." (62) In *Between the Acts*, common household items are the fabric of history and by utilizing them as historical signifiers Woolf locates women at the center of history. In her rendition of universal history, Woolf erases boundaries of both class and gender.

> Everyone was clapping and laughing. From behind the bushes issued Queen Elizabeth—Eliza Clark, licensed to sell tobacco. Could she be Mrs. Clark of the village shop? She was splendidly made up. Her head, pearl-hung, rose from a vast ruff. Shiny satins draped her. Sixpenny brooches glared like cats' eyes and tigers' eyes; pearls looked down; her cape was made of cloth of silver—in fact swabs used to scour saucepans. She looked the age in person. And when she mounted the soap box in the centre, representing perhaps a rock in the ocean, her size made her appear gigantic. She could reach a flitch of bacon or haul a tub of oil with one sweep of her arm in the shop. For a moment she stood there, eminent,

dominant, on the soap box with the blue and sailing clouds behind her. (83)

During the day, Eliza Clark is the village grocer and supplies the surrounding households with common necessities. However, with the help of some cleaning cloths and a soap box she is transformed into one of the most powerful women in British history, Queen Elizabeth. Woolf expands upon Wells's intention to create a common, universal history and she achieves this by including women, as well as people from different classes, in her version of history.

Woolf's focus is on the contributions women have made to the nation as well as their vital function within the history of humankind. When Mrs. Swithin takes one of the visitors on a tour of Pointz Hall, she shows him the nursery as well as the room she was born in, thus re-claiming women's position at the center of historical [re-]production. "'The nursery,' said Mrs. Swithin. Words raised themselves and became symbolical. 'The cradle of our race,' she seemed to say." (71) Instead of showcasing hunting trophies and portraits as other, more conventional tour guides might have done, Mrs. Swithin focuses on the contributions women have made to British history. To a certain degree, Mrs. Swithin functions as Woolf's surrogate when she reminds the reader of the transience of life: "'That's what makes a view so sad,' said Mrs. Swithin, lowering herself into the deck chair which Giles had brought her. 'And so beautiful. It'll be there,' she nodded at the strip of gauze laid upon the distant fields, 'when we're not.'" (53) By utilizing green space (both urban and rural) to move beyond the traditional boundaries of historical discourse, Mrs. Swithin's

character is the mouthpiece for an alternative and universal history within the narrative. Indeed, she provides the last spoken words of the novel, once again rewriting H.G. Wells's work:

> The darkness increased. The breeze swept round the room. With a little shiver Mrs. Swithin drew her sequin shawl about her shoulders. She was too deep in the story to ask for the window to be shut. 'England,' she was reading, 'was then a swamp. Thick forests covered the land. On the top of their matted branches bird sang . . .'
>
> . . . . Lucy turned the page, quickly, guiltily, like a child who will be told to go to bed before the end of the chapter.
>
> 'Prehistoric man,' she read, half-human, half-ape, roused himself from his semi-crouching position and raised great stones.' (218)

The closing lines of this passage provide the glimpse of a possible future that might differ from the present course that has been set. Earlier in the evening, the pageant had cycled through a variety of time periods—The Enlightenment, Victorian England—ending with a segment titled "The present time. Ourselves." Significantly, this part of the play is concluded—quite accidentally—by a squadron of bombers flying over the assembled audience, which presents a stark reminder of the looming war. "A zoom severed it. Twelve aeroplanes in perfect formation like a flight of wild duck came overhead. *That* was the music. The audience gaped; the audience gazed. Then zoom became drone. The planes had passed." (193) Undoubtedly, this intrusion of historical reality presents the most dramatic moment of the evening. However, by returning to a re-imagined passage

of Wells's, Woolf refocuses her reader's attention on the broader, universal picture and message of her work. The act of "raising great stones" presents the possibility of a different future for mankind. A future that is borne out of the great swamps and thick forests that once covered England, and that is connected to a communal rather than individualistic and nationalistic past.

It is important to note that Woolf writes from a privileged position, which allows her to focus her attention on the broader picture. Mrs. Swithin, from the safety of her armchair, has the luxury of finishing her "bed-time story" before retiring to the comfort of her private room. Other authors were less fortunate, and their writing reflects this. Specifically, the urban green spaces they imagine are closely tied to the aliented positions of their female protagonists. In Jean Rhys's second novel, *Quartet* (1931), the spontaneous green spaces that crop up on Marya Zelli's journeys across Europe and Paris chronicle her lonely and intransient position. She remembers Brussels disconnectedly, with images of "the sun on the red-striped umbrellas in the flower market" or "the green trees of the Avenue Louise"(145). In Paris, it is the arrival of spring in the Luxembourg Gardens that make her ponder her husbands' imprisonment (for embezzling money): "Fancy being shut up in a little dark dirty cell when the spring was coming. Perhaps one morning you'd smell it through the window and then your heart would nearly burst with the longing for liberty" (158). However, it is her who is trapped in her situation and the image of a blooming, green Paris stands in stark opposition to her increasing desperation. One marked difference between Virginia Woolf and Jean Rhys's writing is the position of the narrator and, by

association, the reader. Woolf writes from a privileged class position and even though she might portray women from different class backgrounds in her fiction, a decidedly upper-middle class slant can always be detected. Rhys on the other hand provides intimate portraits of women who are down on their luck and live lonely, isolated lives.

Indeed, Rhys is a master at communicating the nitty-gritty emotions her heroines experience in the face of utter desolation. Judith Kegan Gardiner, in "Good Morning, Midnight; Good Night Modernism," declares her to be "one of the great novelists of alienation"(233). A recurring theme in her writing is the modern woman's lack of a home and this focus manifests itself in her treatment of urban green space. As Gardiner explains, Rhys's "heroes are women alienated from others and themselves because they are female, poor, and sexually active. They are also misdefined by a language and literary heritage that belong primarily to propertied men." (233) Thus, the women's position within the city is defined by the intersections of class, sexuality, and gender. Because Rhys's women are non-propertied they have no choice but to haunt the streets of the cities they inhabit. Mrs. Swithin, in *Between the Acts*, is free to imagine the city of London from the safe location of a country estate. Her re-writing of London as a pre-historic swamp reveals Woolf's position of privilege as much as it does Mrs. Swithin's. Her vision of urban green space is coherent and safe, as the closing scene illustrates. She can from the safety of her reading chair, "like a child" (218), indulge in the alternative history that Woolf constructs. Marya Zelli, however, is not afforded the same luxury.

After her husband is taken to prison, Marya Zelli drifts through Paris, at first living off what meager savings she has and then later depending upon friends and acquaintances to pay her way. Even though she is free to move about and go wherever she chooses to, Marya is imprisoned by her situation. As a "dame seule" without financial independence, she is at the mercy of other people's whims and fancies. Dark rooms—in hotels, restaurants, and the prison that her husband Stephen is incarcerated at—come to signify her precarious situation. Rhys uses fragmented imagery of urban green space to further emphasize Marya's alienated position. As the reader comes to realize, her memory of Brussels, which is dominated by images of the flower market and tree-lined avenues, is deeply skewed and flawed. It was in Brussels, that Marya's husband first started his fraudulent career, yet Marya was unable to perceive the real situation. While the ability to discover alternative spaces within the city can be extremely productive, in *Quartet* it isn't so. As the narrative progresses, it becomes apparent that Marya's construction of an alternative urban reality is not necessarily beneficial to her.

In *Quartet*, Rhys makes visible the process of creating an alternative cityscape; as Richard E. Zeikowitz explains, in "Writing a Feminine Paris in Jean Rhys's *Quartet*," Rhys "articulates the process by which Marya *constructs* her own Paris—one at odds with the ordered, stable, masculine city that oppresses her" (1). Drawing upon Michel de Certeau's essay "Walking in the city," Zeikowitz proposes that Rhys uses Marya's traversal of the city as a way of constructing a female—and what I would call heterotopic—cityscape. He further

adds that by "periodically wandering major Paris boulevards, not recognizing or utilizing their practical purpose, Marya is 'interrupting' and 'resignifying' normative urban space" (4). Her disjointed memory of green spaces that she has encountered signifies her creation of heterotopia. Marya repeatedly constructs cityscapes that run counter to the inscribed, dominant discourses (6, 9), yet ultimately she is unsuccessful in making the spaces work in her favor: "The city Marya writes is disorderly. The streets she walks cannot be contained in a greater whole because they are endless paths of vague space, light, or water; . . . [However, in] *Quartet*, Rhys stages a feminine Paris that is doomed to fail because it is fragile, incoherent, and ultimately unable to resist orderly urban discourse" (15). Woolf vision of a different feminine urban history works because it is envisioned from the outside. In Rhys, Marya's vulnerable position makes it difficult for her to articulate a viable alternative—all she has left are her disjointed memories.

In Rhys, as in the other authors' work that I have discussed up to this point, women's movement through urban space is a key issue. In Woolf, the leather-covered grunting monster uprooting trees is a powerful image, and it is its decisive movement that makes it so. Rhys's women inhabit a variety of urban spaces, which they appropriate in various ways. From the wife whose domestic ally is the cat to the woman who sides with the prostitutes in a Paris brothel, the women find various ways to appropriate and disrupt the metropolitan spaces. Deborah L. Parsons, in her detailed analysis of Rhys's work in *Streetwalking the Metropolis*, asserts "Rhys's Parisian world is that of the marginal social spaces of

society. Although no longer an exclusively male domain, it is an urban landscape in which women are still dubiously respectable figures" (140). Even though the women are actively engaged in claiming the city as their own, they still inhabit an ambiguous and precarious margin. In addition, Zeikowitz proposes that

> *Quartet* propels us to reexamine other urban novels, identifying how city walkers, particularly those who are marginalized because of their gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or social status, strive to write/live a transversal urban text. Although Rhys's novel illustrates the failure of an oppressed, female urban inhabitant to write an enduring oppositional city text, it depicts a series of disruptive walking/writing practices that deconstruct the myth of the ordered, stable city. (15-16)

Rhys's writing of urban green space is disruptive as it embodies the disordered live her protagonist leads. By taking the form of disjointed, impressionist glimpses, it mirrors Marya's constantly shifting and ultimately intransient position. In *Between the Acts* on the other hand, the green spaces reflect the novel's larger project of creating an inclusive, universal history. Even though Woolf's work can be described as high-modernist, the intrusion of the pre-historic urban green space takes a structured and rhythmic form that provides a set framework for the narrative.

[Re-]Imagined urban green space can reflect both constructive and deconstructive female experiences of the city. As Hetherington points out, "Heterotopia are not quite spaces of transition – the chasm they represent can never be closed up – but they are spaces of deferral, spaces where ideas and

practices that represent the good life can come into being, from nowhere, even if they never actually achieve what they set out to achieve – social order, or control and freedom." Both Woolf and Rhys create such spaces in their writing. Woolf utilizes urban green space to open up the possibility for an alternate, matriarchal, communal history, while Rhys signifies the constraints Marya faces through her use of urban green space. *Nightwood* (1936), by Djuna Barnes, adds another nuance to the way women writers re-imagined urban green space during the 1930s. The novel is set (mostly) in Paris, and its most striking character is Robin, who wanders the streets of Paris at night and whose long pilgrimages become symbolic of her wandering (sexual) affections. Its relevance to this discussion is due to Robin's transgression of and transformation of the urban spaces for her purposes. After the birth of her son, she leaves her husband Felix and commences to live with different women. Still, they too cannot stop her walking through the streets of Paris at night. Therefore, her wanderings are not simply a symbol for her sexuality rather they come to stand for a modern spirit that is at home anywhere in the city.

One night, Robin's lover Nora is waiting for her return when she notices Robin outside by a statue in the garden: "Waking she began to walk again, and looking out into the garden in the faint light of dawn, she saw a double shadow falling from the statue, as if it were multiplying." Robin emerges from the shadows, but "Nora [sees] the body of another woman swim up into the statue's obscurity, with head hung down, that the added eyes might not augment the illumination; her arms about Robin's neck, her body pressed to Robin's, her legs

slackened in the hang of the embrace" (56). The space created by the statue and the shadow it casts provides a site for Robin to engage with her new lover, while thwarting the old one.

Walking through the city is one of the main ways that women in early twentieth century fiction transform and disrupt metropolitan spaces. In all three texts I discuss above, the act of walking and moving through the city becomes a pivotal issues in the re-imagining of urban green space. Since the term flâneur was born in the mid-nineteenth century, and also due to recent Feminist criticism highlighting the problematic inherent in the application of the term to women, it cannot be used to refer to female characters in modernist fiction. Janet Wolff in her landmark, 1985 essay "The Invisible Flâneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity" declared that there was no flâneuse (41), because women unable to stroll through the city by themselves. Even though that changed somewhat by the time Woolf, Rhys, and Barnes were writing, their female characters do more than 'just' stroll through the city. They disrupt, appropriate and manage the metropolitan spaces they traverse. Hence, while the various female characters, in the stories discussed above, stroll through the city they make use of urban green space to create their own urban realities and identities.

When examined as a trio, the stories highlight how urban green space can make visible processes of social ordering that dictate the way women experience modernity and all its spaces. For these women, the various spaces constitute both imaginary and imaginative sites, which reflect and potentially transform their gendered positions within the city.

CONCLUSION

Elizabeth Bowen, in her 1949 essay "Regent's Park and St. John's Wood," writes that "Regent's Park is something more than an enclosed space; it has the character of a terrain of its own – almost, one might feel, a peculiar climate. . . .[Upon entering the] first thought is, 'can I be, still, in London?' – for in this enclave as nowhere else in London, British unostentatiousness drops away, to be succeeded by something stagey, bragging, foreign; none the less drenched in and tempered by northern light." (100) In the preceding pages I have endeavored to give an account of such different "terrains" within the urban centers of Europe. As Bowen explains, parks, as well as other green places, represent more than just "an enclosed space." They are what I define as urban green space, which can be a site where nature meets the city, a space that embodies various scientific epistemologies and taxonomies, as well as other cultural ideals. I see these spaces as quintessentially modern spaces. Indeed, Bowen illustrates the way urban green space is the result of complex cultural, social, and historical processes: "Thus, if one were to tip the present-day Park map into the vertical, one would see it as a flat-bottomed Regency cup, filled to the brim with green, with a modern lid" (100). The image of the park as an early-nineteenth century teacup filled with delicious greenery and sealed with a "modern lid," presents an intriguing take on the genealogy of the park. It is a cultural product created for the consumption of the public, but at the same time it also transcends the confines of traditional boundaries. It merges the old and the new—the Regency style with a modern trim—as well as containing something that is not usually containable.

In the popular imagination as well as in academic discourses the term "green" is most commonly associated with issues of ecology, environmental sustainability, and nature preservation. While I do not disclaim the validity and importance of such perspectives within the field of literary studies, I think it is important to extend the concept of green cultural studies and take into account the role space plays in regard to the construction of ideas regarding nature within literature. Bonnie Kime Scott's chapter titled "Green," published recently in *Modernism and Theory* (2009), exemplifies the current movement to reclaim modernism as eco-friendly. Scott declares that "modernism takes an abiding interest in nature, human interdependencies with it, and even in preservation . . ." (219). According to her, the meaning of the word "ecology" diametrically opposes characteristics traditionally ascribed to a predominantly masculine modernism, which is linked to "urban modernity, scientific epistemologies, mechanical, technical, and experimental forms." (219) She declares that "Theoretical turns toward gender and material analysis, and a heightened concern for the environment in an era of global warming, however, warrant another look." (219) While Scott is quick to list the different types of nature images that crop up in modernist authors works such as trees and flowers, she neglects the representation of actual green spaces and the way they function as both representative and representational grounds. Her statement that "There is also an under-acknowledged modernist fascination with non-human life, particular animals and tress, that overlaps an interest in the primitive world, locus of vital sexual and spiritual energies, and access to ancestors" (221), is particularly

interesting in regard to E.M. Forster's fiction which I discuss in chapter three. The beech tree copse in "Other Kingdom" can be read as a symbol for Evelyn's sexuality as well as her position as a colonized woman. Given that Forster locates it in the idyllic suburban space in the north of London, it takes on further meaning. It comes to act as a surrogate for women's endeavors to articulate tenable positions within a modernity that sought to operate along binary distinctions. Scott also explains that authors such as Woolf satirized the "collecting, classifying culture of natural history" in their writings (222). I demonstrate the way Woolf formulates a critique of such discourses through her portrayal of urban green space in chapter one. In addition, "There is hope that, by returning to the primordial, the semiotic, or material, as many of Woolf's characters do, a different cycle of human nature may arise" (222). This is particularly true in regard to *Between the Acts*, in which Woolf re-writes parts of H.G. Wells's *Outline of History*, a discussion of which forms the basis for chapter four.

Overall, my dissertation examines how urban green space is represented within modernist texts. While I have not solely focused on the experience of women, gender lies at the core of my analysis. I am interested in how female authors approach and female characters interact with urban green space. In chapter one, I approach Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* from a material, socio-historical perspective through which I highlight the way she uses the space of Regent's Park in London to formulate a critique of medical as well as scientific epistemologies. By locating Septimus Smith's nervous breakdown within the

setting of the Park, she interrogates the validity of nature as an ameliorating and beneficial entity that is solely defined in opposition to a mechanized and technical modernity. The park provides an arena for physical activities and is designed to serve as a site for surveillance as well as regulation of the city inhabitant's behaviors. As such, the space does not encourage the characters' development of an autonomous position. Rezia is unable to intervene on behalf of Septimus and the park only serves to emphasize her alienated situation within the city. Indeed, the focus on Septimus's ailment and his inability to cope with the environment of the park removes her from the center of the narrative and consequently robs her of any agency that she might have had. In contrast, the public garden presents the possibility for women to develop their analytical faculties through their observation of the systems of scientific taxonomy that are on display. Hence, Chapter Two extends the discussion to public gardens, which constitute quite a distinct type of urban green space. In the park people are on display and subject to surveillance, however the public garden makes visible these systems of power and knowledge and in the process presents the opportunity for women to articulate their individual, autonomous positions. Chapter Three focuses on suburban green space; since "Suburbia" constitutes a modern space that emerged in relation to the city it can be described as a type of urban space. E.M. Forster uses it to construct narratives of both national identity and gendered agency. He does locate women at the center of the British heartland, however at the same time he quite literally puts them "back in the garden" potentially foiling their emancipatory attempts. Finally, Chapter Four juxtaposes Virgina Woolf's *Between the Acts* with Jean

Rhys's *Quartet* (1931), illustrating how class privilege plays a vital role in the way women authors re-imagine and re-write their female characters' histories. Through the character of Mrs. Swithin, the reader is given a panoramic view of London, and it is her class privilege that enables her to take the role of the detached observer. Jean Rhys's protagonist, Marya Zelli, on the other hand is not afforded the same luxury. She cannot take a step back and objectively assess her situation from the vantage point of a country house. Instead, she wanders the streets of Paris, providing the reader with an experience of the city that runs counter to a traditionally panoptic birds-eye view of the city. By refusing to create a clearly mapped journey across the city, Rhys opens up a space of for an alternative, individualized history of the city and Marya herself. This last chapter illuminates how ways of seeing as well as the issue of visibility is crucial in women's experiences of the city. The reader is unable to see Marya's journey in traditional terms, but this also means that Marya's trips highlight the connection between visibility and knowledge, as by denying full disclosure of her movements, Rhys also makes it difficult for the reader to completely "know" Marya. Urban green space presents a complex social and cultural construct that can function as a heterotopic site within modernist fiction. Especially women writers, but also other authors located outside the Anglo, heterosexual literary tradition, utilize different kinds of green spaces to articulate alternative positions—both gendered and otherwise—for their characters.

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