Chapter Five
The Search for New Territories, 1958-1997

The final, and concluding, chapter will concentrate on Burroughs' writing from 1958 to the present day. The first section will address the final period in the writing of *Naked Lunch*, from 1958 to 1959, during which time Burroughs relocated from Tangier to Paris. Certain key themes in Burroughs' writing and correspondence developed in this period, including Burroughs' own personal struggles with his sexual identity and his interest in schizophrenic experience. These interests influenced the subject matter and form of Burroughs' writing. The period also saw a number of important transitions. In Tangier, Burroughs had produced an extraordinary amount of literary material. In Paris, Burroughs claimed to be having visions rather than producing routines, and he declared that he had lost interest in traditional forms of writing. At the end of this period, Burroughs also abandoned the analysis he had been undergoing, and adopted instead the methods of Scientology. These developments will be also be related to developments in Burroughs' writing.

Burroughs' interest in schizophrenia prefigured that of R.D. Laing, and Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*. Both Laing and Deleuze and Guattari share the view that schizophrenia offers potential liberation from constricting family structures. Laing argued in *The Politics of Experience* that "psychosis" can "*sometimes* break through" into "transcendental experiences".[1] Deleuze and Guattari, less cautious than Laing, claimed in *Anti-Oedipus* that the "great voices" of literature were "speaking from the

depths of psychosis", and were thereby offering "an eminently psychotic and revolutionary means of escape."[2] In these works, the borderline that separates madness from normality is questioned. In *The Return of the Vanishing American*, Leslie Fiedler incorporated the work of these "contemporary psychiatrists" into his frontier thesis:

> We have come to accept the notion that there is still a territory unconquered and uninhabited by pale faces, the bearers of 'civilization', the cadres of imperialist reason; and we have been learning that into this territory certain psychotics, a handful of 'schizophrenics' have moved on ahead of us.[3]

Fiedler proposes that the "dialogue" with the "mad" should act as a contemporary version of the meeting with the "aboriginal dwellers" in the "actual Western Wilderness."[4] This identification with the 'radical other', here the "borderline schizophrenic on the Lower East Side", as a means to escape from constricting societal repression certainly recalls, as Fiedler suggests, earlier identifications by white Europeans and Americans: the process of the white European becoming an Indian, for example, described in Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis, or Sal Paradise's wish to be a "Negro" in *On the Road*.[5] However, Turner's thesis made it clear who benefited from this dialogue with the 'racial other': the process of colonization which Turner termed the "Americanization" of the wilderness subdued or eradicated both the wilderness and the "primitive society" it encountered.[6]

Despite this somewhat questionable legacy, a number of critics, including Robin Lydenberg, Rob Latham and Brent Wood, have linked Burroughs to the schizophrenic deconstruction of identity proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, and have advocated a dialogue, to quote Lydenberg, with the "monstrous freedom of the carnival and the marginal world of the abject."[7] In the context of the liberatory claims made by these critics, however, and the ebullient advocacy of psychosis in *Anti-Oedipus,* Burroughs' interest in schizophrenia, which he described as "one of my hobbies", needs to be

treated carefully.[8] It is important, for example, to remember the dehabilitating and terrifying effects of actual mental illness, and the social and economic circumstances in which such illness is encountered.[9] In his earlier letters to Ginsberg, Burroughs had defined "madness" in terms that suggested its difference from liberatory experience. "*Madness*", he explained, is the "*confusion of levels of fact*. [...] I mean what I see in a nut house: beat, resigned, dim, diffuse, nowhere people. [...] Madness is not *seeing* visions but *confusing* levels."[10] This observation signals an important distinction between Burroughs' own interest in different "*levels of fact*" and the schizophrenic "*confusion of levels*": Burroughs' investigations into schizophrenic experience were therefore conducted with the self-awareness that the schizophrenic is denied.[11]

The second section will begin by discussing the next period of Burroughs' writing: the cut-ups. The cut-ups will be seen to reprise the psychological dynamics that continue throughout Burroughs' writing: the regressions to childhood and the thwarted attempts to escape from forms of control. In the case of the cut-ups, a particularly important source of control was the vast word and image banks of Henry Luce's *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune* magazines. Also discussed in this section is the problematic area of Burroughs' maternal and female identifications, another important aspect of the recurrent psychological dynamic in Burroughs' writing. Robin Lydenberg presents these identifications as liberatory, linking Burroughs' work to "radical feminist theory" in which the "intrusion of the ambivalent image of the maternal body into the patriarchal structures of Western thought is a disruption of the code, a scattering and disseminating of all that has been channelled, and controlled."[12] As Alice Jardine suggests in *Gynesis*, however, in previous explorations of unknown areas, for example "nature, Other, matter, unconscious, madness", the unknown area is always gendered feminine.[13] As has already been suggested, therefore, the French feminist theory adopted by Lydenberg falls within the same problematic tradition as

Turner's evocation of the far side of the frontier as female.

The last section of this chapter will focus on Burroughs' last major work, *My Education: A Book of Dreams*, which was published in 1995. Here, the positive aspects in Burroughs' construction of the frontier will be examined, principally the advantages of a deconstructed identity. However, it will be emphasized that the recurrent psychological dynamics in Burroughs' work do not suggest in practice an entirely deconstructed and flexible identity, but rather signals a repeated and unresolved vicious circle which leads back into the past, and particularly to the white upper-middle class American society in which Burroughs was born. While the continuities in Burroughs' later work will be noted, this period of his writing will also be seen as distinct, both in terms of its aesthetic, and in terms of its subject matter. It will be argued that this late work represents a renegotiation of the past, and that the tenderness and sentimentality that Burroughs had tightly controlled in his earlier writings emerges here with considerable force.

I 1958-1959: Naked Lunch

Returning to Tangier

As has been noted, Burroughs' trip to London in 1956 had a considerable impact on Burroughs' writing. His second trip to, and return from, the Old World, in the summer of 1957, also had a catalytic effect on the writing of *Naked Lunch*, since Burroughs' observations on the locales through which he travelled were recycled back into his work.[14] Alongside these developments in subject matter came important formal reconfigurations. In a letter dated September 1957, written on Burroughs' arrival back in Tangier, he expressed his relief at being able to "unpack, organize my life, and get started on enormous volume of work I have pending."[15] A number of key themes emerge in this period of Burroughs' correspondence.

Firstly, Burroughs was keen to clarify his intentions regarding the composition of his new work. Burroughs insisted to Ginsberg that "any attempt" at a "chronological arrangement" for his manuscript was "extremely ill-advised."[16] "To my way of thinking", Burroughs wrote, "*Queer* and letters have no place in the present work."[17] Under the "chronological arrangement" that Ginsberg had suggested, the "theme or plot" of the work would have been the "development, in time, of the ideas as they changed through 3-4 years, visible to the reader, one superimposed on the other, developing and integrating with each other as they did in the letters, accounting B's changes of psyche, and extension of fantasy".[18] Burroughs refused this temporal perspective, preferring instead a spatialised form. He argued that his "present work" was not a "novel", but rather a "number" of thematically linked "short pieces."[19] He felt the manuscript would "eventually grow into several novels, all interlocking and taking place simultaneously in a *majoun* dream."[20] Reprising Burroughs' claim, in 1955, that the "selection chapters" of his new work would form a "sort of mosaic",

this new formal configuration meant that the various plot-lines Burroughs was working on would also form a "sort of mosaic".[21]

The second key theme in the 1957 letters was the "General Theory of Addiction" that Burroughs had constructed, and claimed was "essential" to an "understanding of the work I am doing now."[22] Burroughs told Ginsberg that his theory contained the "key to addiction, cancer and schizophrenia."[23] The precise context for Burroughs' references to schizophrenia in his correspondence of this period was to clarify and explain the composition of his latest work. According to Oliver Harris, the references, in Burroughs' correspondence, and in *Naked Lunch*, to "schizophrenic experience" formed an "essential" part of the "theorization of Interzone" and of "*The Naked Lunch*'s aesthetic."[24] In a letter to Ginsberg, Burroughs explained that the abrupt spatial dislocations in his narratives by which "a character" moves "from one *place* to another" were related to "the shift from schizophrenia to addiction".[25] This explanation was offered as an alternative to the conventional novel form, in which "too much space is wasted in this transporting one's character here and there which, with the aid of American Express, they are able to do for themselves."[26] As Oliver Harris suggests, therefore, the adoption of this model based on the shifts "from schizophrenia to addiction" helped to fulfill Burroughs' "long-standing need to conceive a theoretical and technical coherence for his fragmentary material."[27]

Alongside its formal importance, however, this model also clarified the subject matter of the new work, by reprising the patterns of addiction and withdrawal found in *Junky* and *Queer*. In Burroughs' theories of this period, schizophrenia, withdrawal and addiction are closely interlinked. In *Naked Lunch*, Dr. Benway claims that various substances, including mescaline and LSD6, can "produce an approximate schizophrenia". (*Naked Lunch*/40) He also claims that prolonged use of morphine leads to "permanent backbrain depression and a state much like terminal

schizophrenia: complete lack of affect, autism, virtual absence of cerebral event." (*Naked Lunch*/40) The "similarity" between "withdrawal syndrome" and "intoxication with "Yage" or "LSD6" is also noted by Benway. (*Naked Lunch*/40)[28] These points of similarity between withdrawal and schizophrenia also reprise the hallucinatory "flashes of beauty and nostalgia" experienced in withdrawal. (*Naked Lunch*/190) As Oliver Harris suggests, Burroughs' "physical reconstruction" of his fragmentary materials, related to the shift to schizophrenia, "produced precisely such heightened flash-backs".[29] In describing the shifts from addiction to schizophrenia, Burroughs also strikingly described his new work's development into a "saga of lost innocence, The Fall, with some kinda redemption through knowledge of basic life processes."[30] Given Burroughs' theorization of the links between schizophrenia and withdrawal, and its formal adoption in constructing a "saga of lost innocence", the shift to schizophrenia once more recalls the "sharp nostalgia" brought on by "junk sickness", and, by Burroughs' own association, the memory of "lying in bed beside my mother". (*Junky*/125) Therefore, while Burroughs denied any "psychological" determinant for schizophrenia, just as he had for addiction, the psychological dynamic caused by the pull of nostalgia remained in place.[31]

In the same letter to Ginsberg which linked the "saga of lost innocence" to the "shift from addiction to schizophrenia", Burroughs clarified the effects his latest developments were having on his treatment of identity.[32] While Burroughs' previous works had "Lee" at their narrative centre, his new work appeared to have many different main characters. However, Burroughs told Ginsberg that his new work also had "only one main character: Benway and Carl [...] and Lee are, of course, all one person."[33] This declaration represented another transition in the relationship between author and protagonist. In "Word", the "author" had fought for control over his "multiple personalities". (*Interzone*/171) In *Naked Lunch*, however, the author's role

became less aggressive and less present as a separate identity. As Oliver Harris notes, in the "Atrophied Preface" to *Naked Lunch*, the "author" presents himself as a "schizo possession case"[34]: "As if I was usually here but subject to goof now and again ... *Wrong! I am never here* ... Never that is *fully* in possession, but somehow in a position to forestall ill-advised moves ... Patrolling is, in fact, my principal occupation [...] I am always somewhere *Outside* giving orders and *Inside* this strait jacket of jelly". (*Naked Lunch*/21, 174) The author was therefore, in Burroughs' account, an observer, disassociated from the events his protagonist was acting out. This disassociation recalls the description of Lee's "disembodied" state in *Queer*, where the "limitless ache of desire" creates a psychotic distortion of reality, in which Lee can "imagine himself in the body" of a young boy. (*Queer*/93-4) Disassociation from the body was also related to the writing of the text itself: in his letter to Ginsberg, Burroughs claimed that the "only way " he could "write narrative" was to "get right outside my body and experience it."[35] While Burroughs retained a degree of the self-awareness that the true psychotic relinquishes, his depiction of his creative strategies in this period suggests, as Harris claims, the "discarnate state" connected to "schizophrenic experience".[36]

Alongside the breakthroughs in the composition of his work, and his theories regarding schizophrenia, the third key concern of Burroughs' correspondence in this period was his evident anxiety over his sexual identity. Burroughs told Ginsberg he was coming "closer and closer to a resolution" of his "queerness".[37] At this particular point in his life, Burroughs conceived of his homosexuality as an "illness" or "horrible sickness", to which he felt he must "invoke a solution".[38] It should be stressed that this conception of homosexuality as an "illness" is specific to this particular point in Burroughs' life, and that these remarks are not typical of Burroughs' statements concerning homosexuality. However, this uncertainty about his sexual orientation is

repeatedly reflected in his writing of this period. As Burroughs' correspondence makes clear, the "Benway" section of *Naked Lunch* was originally part of what Burroughs termed, somewhat ironically, a "straight novel", concerning a "homosex conspiracy to take over the world".[39] Benway's purpose in this "conspiracy" was the "deliberate induction of homosexuality in healthy subjects".[40] This idea for a novel was in part inspired, Burroughs claimed at the time, by "concomitant insights into certain horrible facets of the homosexual mechanism".[41] This depiction of homosexuality, which was partially retained in *Naked Lunch*, perpetuated the association, within mainstream post-war American society, of homosexuality as a "festering and highly contagious disease".[42] Anxiety over sexual identity is also foregrounded in "The Examination" section of *Naked Lunch*, in which the protagonist is called Carl Peterson, an alternative version of Lee who claims to be heterosexual. "I have always interested myself only in girls", he says. "I have a steady girl now and we plan to marry." (*Naked Lunch*/152) In "The Examination", Carl is called by a vast bureaucratic organisation, the "Ministry of Mental Hygiene and Prophylaxis", to report for an appointment, and is examined by Doctor Benway.[43] The purpose of Benway's manipulations seems to be to convince Carl that he is homosexual, but Benway hides his precise intentions behind a bewildering variety of discourses and voice tones.[44]

Confirming Burroughs' observation that there was "only one main character" in his new material, Benway contains echoes of other characters encountered by Lee.[45] At one point in his conversation with Carl, for example, Benway's voice becomes "languid and intermittent like music down a windy street." (*Naked Lunch*/152) Here, Benway resembles the "Skip Tracer" in the Epilogue to *Queer*, another manipulative super-ego figure whose voice also fades in and out as he talks. The second distinct echo further helps to clarify the relation between these disparate selves. Benway,

using Carl's name to personalise their relationship, drags the name out "like a sweet con dick about to offer you an Old Gold [...] and go into his act ..." (*Naked Lunch*/155) The echo here takes the reader forward through *Naked Lunch* to its final extended sequence, "Hauser and O'Brien", which was derived from the "Chandler-style straight, action story" Burroughs told Ginsberg he was writing in February 1955.[46] The "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence can be read as the murderous resolution to the pursuit sequence with which *Naked Lunch* dramatically begins. This untitled opening sequence evokes the mysterious "they" who are "out there making their moves" (*Naked Lunch*/17), the nebulously described "fuzz" pursuing the fugitive Lee (*Naked Lunch*/21), and the main narrative of *Naked Lunch* ends with "Hauser and O'Brien", in which Lee confronts two distinctly described cops. Indeed, in *Dead Fingers Talk*, the opening sequence "I can feel the heat closing in [...]" and the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence are segued, suggesting, as Oliver Harris notes, the restoration of an "original continuity".[47]

Hauser and O'Brien form a "vaudeville team": O'Brien is the "conman", and Hauser the "tough guy." (*Naked Lunch*/166) Hauser hits his victim "before he said anything just to break the ice", and then O'Brien "gives you an Old Gold - just like a cop to smoke Old Golds somehow ..." (*Naked Lunch*/166) When O'Brien questions Lee, he drags out his name, as Benway does to Carl, "with an oily, insinuating familiarity, brutal and obscene." (*Naked Lunch*/167) The "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence begins with the cops having been called by the "Lieutenant" to pick up "William Lee", from his hotel. (*Naked Lunch*/166) This reference to the "Lieutenant", further links "The Examination" and "Hauser and O'Brien", since in "The Examination", the "con dick", who temporarily replaces Benway as Carl's interrogator, suggests that Carl should "make the Man a proposition", gesturing towards a "glowering super-ego who is always referred to in the third person as 'The

Man' or 'The Lieutenant'". (*Naked Lunch*/155) The presence of this mysterious super-ego figure also links "The Examination" and "Hauser and O'Brien", to the "Holy Man" dream, Burroughs' original "framework" for his novel.[48]

The "Holy Man" dream, which Burroughs wrote up in October 1954, promised the assassination of the super-ego. The protagonist brags to a Boy he encounters of his "marksmanship" and adds, with a Freudian flourish, that he doesn't "mind using a knife either."[49] The dream, however, ends with the protagonist lying as if in a "coffin", and with the Holy Man apparently entirely unaffected by his supposed assassination.[50] By February 1955, however, with the writing of the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence, the assassination of the super-ego figure had come that much closer.[51] The question posed by Lee's desperate act of violence in "Hauser and O'Brien", the murder of the "figures of paternal authority" who "symbolize the conditioning forces that demand submission to the reality principle", is, of course, what happens next?[52] As has been already noted, Burroughs provided two parallel answers to this question: the version presented in "Hauser and O'Brien", and an earlier version, titled "The Conspiracy", published in *Interzone*. The two different versions of Lee's escape are worth comparing in some detail, since they reveal a profound shift in Burroughs' thinking.

In the lengthy concluding sequence to "The Conspiracy", Lee, having decided to hide out with Mary, dramatically announces that he has "glimpsed the formula, the bare bones of life". (*Interzone*/111) His life-long search for "some secret, some key" by which to understand life had come, to his surprise, to fruition: "There *is* a secret, now in the hands of ignorant and evil men, a secret beside which the atomic bomb is a noisy toy." (*Interzone*/111) The secret is the means of "manipulating" the basic "factors" of life: pleasure, tension, relief, birth and death. "The Conspiracy" ends with a flourish, Lee claiming that he has "already ante'd his life" by committing it to the

struggle he has outlined. "I had no choice," he concludes, "but to sit the hand out." (*Interzone*/111) Intellectually, then, a position has been reached, but in terms of narrative momentum, "The Conspiracy" grinds to a halt.

In the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence in *Naked Lunch*, Lee again works through a series of possible people who could hide him: "Fuzz Lover", "Born Wrong", "Nice Cat But Chicken". (*Naked Lunch*/170) Lee, however, rather than deciding on Mary, reaches no explicit decision, and spends the evening in the "Ever Hard Baths". (*Naked Lunch*/171) In the "precise morning", Lee phones up "police headquarters", as he gets Mary to do in "The Conspiracy", and discovers that nobody has any idea who Hauser and O'Brien are. Taking a "taxi out of the area", Lee realises that he has been "occluded from space-time like an eel's ass occludes when he stops eating on the way to Sargasso ... Locked out ... Never again would I have a Key, a Point of Intersection ... The Heat was off me from here on out ..." (*Naked Lunch*/171) Where exactly has Lee's "taxi out of the area" taken him? A similar ambiguity surrounds the conclusion to "The Examination", and Carl's rejection of Dr. Benway: "It's just that the *whole thing* is unreal ... I'm going now. I don't care. You can't force me to stay." (*Naked Lunch*/157) "Where can you go, Carl?" Benway asks, but Carl's reply is cryptic at best: "Out ... Away ... Through the door ..." (*Naked Lunch*/157) The sequence ends with the doctor's voice becoming "barely audible", and the "whole room exploding out into space." (*Naked Lunch*/157) The following section will examine these ambiguous acts of violence and refusal in the light of the transitions Burroughs made in his writing between October 1957 and October 1959.

Leaving Tangier

Reading Burroughs' letters from October 1957 onwards, we can observe a subtle, but inexorable change in their tone. This shift in outlook reflects the

differences that have been noted between the two versions of the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence. "The Conspiracy" dates to the mid-period of Burroughs' stay in Tangier. Lee's fear of the "anti-dream drug", and his desperate wish to preserve the "symbol-making power", with its link to the fourth dimension, emerged, in part, out of Burroughs' positive and creative relationship with Tangier. (*Interzone*/108-9) In Tangier, as has been noted, Burroughs had observed the world of "dreams erupt" into the "world of three dimensional fact", observing, for example, that a "glass of mint tea" he saw in an Arab café was imbued with a "special significance".[53] However, through the period 1957 to 1959, Burroughs relationship with Tangier soured, and the exuberance of Burroughs' writing, fueled by these eruptions of the dream world, turned instead into an extreme scepticism. Throughout this period, Burroughs attempted to convey to Allen Ginsberg the nature of the intense, accelerated series of changes he felt he was going through. "Changes in my psyche are profound and basic", he wrote in November 1957.[54] "I feel myself not the same person."[55] If Burroughs' letters from 1955 to 1957 were characterised by wild mood swings, structured by cycles of addiction and withdrawal, the period 1957 to 1959 is best described as a rapid movement towards the end of one phase, and the beginning of another.

At one level, Burroughs was continuing his regressive movement back towards infancy. Burroughs related his "profound" inner change to psychoanalysis, and the continuing 'treatment' of his homosexuality. "Analysis", Burroughs announced, was "coming to a head."[56] He told Ginsberg, in a letter dated November 1957, that he had "reached a point" where he didn't "want boys any more", and related this change to an analytical breakthrough, concerning an incident from early childhood.[57] The "whole original trauma", he claimed, was "out now", although the "horror" involved in "bringing it out" made Burroughs feel "afraid" that his "heart would stop."[58] When

Burroughs traveled to Paris in January 1958 to meet Ginsberg, he explained that he "had gone so far in this process", but he perceived "something horrible" still lurking unacknowledged beneath his fantasies, "something to do with his nurse."[59] If Burroughs attempted to occupy this memory, he "would have such a feeling of fright that prickles would go up his neck and he couldn't continue."[60] In Morgan's words, it was "the memory of something so awful that he had suppressed it all his life, as if he had as a child murdered someone and blanked it out."[61] By July 1958, the details of this "original trauma" had, seemingly at least, become far more precise. "No doubt now", he told Ginsberg, "I witnessed a miscarriage, by Mary the evil governess, and the results were burned in the furnace in my presence. That is the 'murder.'"[62] While the finality of the "miscarriage" revelation is extremely questionable, the revelations produced by Burroughs' analysis did mark an important new phase in his writing, a violent breaking of old ties that began with the leaving of Tangier.[63]

Burroughs' relationship with Tangier had been in gradual decline since late 1957. "Tanger is completely dead", Burroughs told Ginsberg in a letter dated November 26, 1957. Burroughs explained that he saw "absolutely nobody", and that nothing held him in Tangier, except for the fact that it was a "convenient place to work."[64] By December 1957, Burroughs was claiming that there was a "strange malady" in Tangier, an "atypical form of virus hepatitis" that "destroys your sex desire".[65] The "dream town" had turned into a liability, the curious "virus" a suitable metaphor for its now lifeless pull,[66] and Burroughs felt he must "absolutely get out of here for my health".[67] Returning briefly in August, 1958, Burroughs reiterated that "Tanger" was "finished", adding that the "Ouab Days are upon us". Burroughs explained, in a later letter to Irving Rosenthal, that the "Ouab Days" were "the five days left at the end of the Mayan calendar", in which "all the bad luck of the year" was "concentrated".[68] This somewhat gnomic observation about the "Ouab Days" was

included in the "Atrophied Preface" to *Naked Lunch*, as was Burroughs' dream about setting fire to Arabs. While the Arabs were now identified only as a "group of natives", the close combination, within the same dense montage with which *Naked Lunch* concludes, of the oncoming "Ouab Days", and this act of repudiatory violence, suggests a decisive end to the brief idyll Burroughs had found in Tangier. (*Naked Lunch*/183)

Burroughs relocated to Paris, previously dismissed, only months before, as being "pretty nowhere".[69] The effect of the relocation was dramatic. Tangier, and Interzone, had produced a flow of words. "Interzone coming like dictation", Burroughs had written in January 1957, "I can't keep up with it."[70] From Paris, however, Burroughs announced that he was "completely dissatisfied" with the "whole medium" of writing.[71] Burroughs' editing of "Word" suggests his changing attitude towards language. While Kerouac's fictionalisation of the writing of "Word" in *Desolation Angels* should not be trusted as a precise record of Burroughs' intentions, Hubbard's claim that he will be as "pure as an angel" when he has finished the book, having got "rid of the shit", does coincide with some of Burroughs' own statements at the time.[72] Throughout "Word" itself, for example, the flood of language, the "word hoard" that has been held in "man and boy forty three years", is associated with passing faeces. (*Interzone*/144) "I will not be silent," proclaims the author, "nor hold longer back the enema of my word hoard, been dissolving all the shit up there [...]" (*Interzone*/144) Indeed, Burroughs' reference to an enema recalled the advertisement he had written many years previous for Cascade, a "high colonic": "Well done thou true and faithful servant - that is how many people feel about their Cascade. Immeasurable relief sweeps over them. The waste matter that has been accumulated for years is often swept away without a trace. You feel as if reborn."[73] "Word", sweeping away the waste matter of years, represented a further stage in Burroughs'

regressive journey: the movement backwards from the anal to the oral stage of development also signalled by the Sargasso Sea sequence in his correspondence.

Throughout Burroughs' writing of this period, there are recurrent images of stripping away, or throwing out, unnecessary elements of the self. In "Ginsberg Notes", for example, Lee recounts a "dream fantasy" in which, in an attempt to "make the Pass" in a plane, he tells his young travelling companion to:

> "Throw everything out."
> "What! All the gold? All the guns? All the junk?"
> "Everything." (*Interzone*/129)

Lee explains that to "throw everything out" is to rid the self of all "excess baggage": "anxiety, desire for approval, fear of authority, etc." (*Interzone*/129) Then the "psyche" can be stripped "down to the bare bones of spontaneous process [...]" and "you give yourself one chance in a thousand to make the Pass." (*Interzone*/129) There are distinct echoes here of Herman Melville's famous distinction, expressed in a letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, between those "men who say *yes* and are therefore liars", and those "who say *no*", and are therefore in the "happy condition" of "judicious, unencumbered travelers in Europe: they cross the frontiers into Eternity with nothing but a carpet-bag, - that is to say the Ego."[74] The "*yes*-gentry," who "travel with heaps of baggage," will, Melville firmly states, "never get through the Custom House."[75] In his letter to Hawthorne, Melville suggests that language is a "knot with which we choke ourselves."[76] "As soon", writes Melville, "as you say *Me*, a *God*, a *Nature*, so soon you jump off from your stool and hang from the beam. Yes, that word is the hangman."[77] Therefore, language is an important component of the "heaps of baggage" that burden the "*yes*-gentry".[78]

In Melville's account, to reach the frontier is to leave language behind. This intention appears to be at odds with the flood of language that we find in "Word". However, as James Grauerholz explains in his introduction to *Interzone*, very little

material from "Word" actually made its way into *Naked Lunch*. Indeed, it is possible to observe, in Burroughs' letters, the process of the gradual compression of the manuscript of "Word" down to virtually nothing. In July 1957, Burroughs wrote to Alan Ansen promising him an "amended version of 'Word' cut down to thirty pages."[79] By December 1957, *Word* was "down to twenty pages. Much better that way."[80] In April 1958, Burroughs instructed Lawrence Ferlinghetti to ignore "Word" altogether, since he had "finally cooked same down to three pages".[81] "Word" was, then, a transitional work, marking, as Grauerholz writes, a "breakthrough" into Burroughs' "own characteristic voice", while simultaneously being an experiment to be left behind, literally picked to pieces.[82] As Alan Ansen notes, "Word" ends in a "vast Moslem muttering."[83] Such an ending seems appropriate to a text so filled with the babble of voices. At the end they are, finally, completely indecipherable, all semblance of meaning gone, pure sound. In a paradoxical way, therefore, "Word" moves inevitably towards silence, its compression from its initial length down to "just three pages" being a vivid demonstration of Burroughs' changing intentions.[84] As such, the ending also represents a kind of disappearance. There are no more distinct voices, and therefore there are no more distinct identities.

This movement towards silence is fictionalised in the short sequence that ends the "Ginsberg Notes" section of *Interzone*.[85] Here, Burroughs announces his determination to leave his latest identity, the "International Sophistico-criminal Mahatma con", behind. (*Interzone*/130) The destination of this latest journey is familiar: "So I say, "Throw down your arms and armour, walk straight to the Frontier." (*Interzone*/130) There follows a dream-like sequence in which the protagonist reaches the frontier. The guard, an adolescent boy with "blank and greedy eyes", "eyes that never dream" , struggles to remove a mirror that is hanging round his neck. (*Interzone*/130) In the process he injures his larynx, and therefore loses his

voice. Ignoring the guard, the protagonist unhooks a chain that crosses the road and walks through. Juxtaposed with this dream-like sequence are a couple of sentences that begin to suggest an interpretation of what has proceeded them: "At times I feel myself on the point of learning something basic. I have achieved moments of inner silence." (*Interzone*/131)

In *Ah Pook is Here*, Burroughs would later argue that the "customs and passport control", brought in following World War I, had "greatly reinforced" the "IS of identity", which "assigned a rigid and permanent status" to the individual.[86] "Whatever you may be," he wrote, "you are not the verbal labels in your passport any more than you are the word 'self'."[87] Silence offered freedom from this "rigid and permanent status", since the "IS of identity" was a "virus mechanism" inherent in "syllabic Western languages".[88] Freedom from the "rigid and permanent" strait-jacket of identity was also freedom from the past.[89] Michael Paul Rogin recalls, in the context of Melville's image of the customs house, Freud's association between luggage and guilt. As Rogin suggests, while Freud's observation may not be a universal truth, it certainly applied to Melville, who "could only 'cross the frontiers,' his letters to Hawthorne imply, if he left the baggage of his inherited identity behind."[90] In Burroughs' frontier crossing, the movement towards silence was similarly a purgation of psychological detritus. In his essay "Remembering Jack Kerouac", Burroughs suggests that a writer must work through the "pressures" created by their "own conditioning from childhood", noting that his own particular conditioning had been "white Protestant American".[91] In this context, the reference, in Burroughs' "frontier" sequence, to discarding "arms and armour" is suggestive. (*Interzone*/130) The reference derives from Reich's notion of character armour which represents the physiological manifestation of neuroses. In a letter to Allen Ginsberg in 1954, Burroughs had implicitly linked Reich to the rejection of Christian morality, claiming

that while he was "not a Reichian", he did "feel very strongly that the Christian concept of sin is a blight on the earth that has occasioned incalculable misery."[92] The frontier crossed in silence therefore offered not only freedom from the virus mechanisms of language, and the burden of the past, but also from sin and guilt.

Visions and Transitions

The image of the protagonist crossing the frontier into silence reflected Burroughs' own increasing dissatisfaction with language. Having moved to Paris, Burroughs briefly planned to collaborate with Gregory Corso on a literary magazine, "INTERPOL"[93]. The collaboration, however, was, as Oliver Harris notes, "bound to fail."[94] Burroughs and Corso sent a joint letter to Ginsberg, to encourage his assistance in the project, but the letter, in fact, reveals a profoundly split purpose. Corso was clearly intending to push back the limits of literature in terms of "content".[95] He wanted to publish "the most sordid, vile, vulgar, oozing, seeping slime imaginable" , and to "review books [...] by junkies, fiends, cross-eyed imbeciles [...]".[96] Burroughs, on the other hand, made no mention whatsoever of writing, beyond his reference to the "New POLICE-POET", whose duty it was to "protect us from The Human Virus."[97] The key word in the curious manifesto Burroughs included in the letter was "dream", and its thesis, explained less gnomically in a later letter to Ginsberg, was that "life is literally a dream, or rather the projection of a dream."[98] This notion matched Burroughs' own experiences: responding to Ginsberg's description of his "nitrous oxide experiences", Burroughs claimed that he had "visions" on a continual basis.[99]

While Corso was wading in "disgusting far-outness"[100], Burroughs, was several steps ahead, the "frontiers of depravity" having been crossed by Burroughs sometime ago. (*Yage Letters*/39) He was now moving into a dream-world, inexpressible in even the most extreme language. A key transition had been made. Burroughs began having visions with the frequency and intensity with which he had once had routines.

Burroughs' descriptions of his visions recall the psychotic disavowal of "reality", enacted in the car's movement into "a dream beyond contact beyond the lives, forces and objects of the city", that was noted in "Driving Lesson". (*Interzone*/20)[101] Describing the sense of breakthrough on "basic levels", Burroughs claimed that the "image" of himself arriving "in Paris last year" was as "remote as an image from childhood. More so actually."[102] The fact that Burroughs felt closer to "an image from childhood" than to an "image" of himself from the previous year is telling. At one level, Burroughs felt he was exploring new territory: Burroughs the pioneer claimed to be in "a very dangerous place", with the "point of no return" left "way back yonder."[103] However, on another level, the visions Burroughs was having echoed the visions of his childhood, as presented in the Prologue to *Junky*: the "little men playing in a block house I had made", and the "recurrent hallucination" of "animals in the walls". (*Junky*/xi-xii)

By January 1959, Burroughs admitted that he had "been slow writing" to Ginsberg because of the "complex and fantastic events" of the previous month. Writing was no longer the central issue, and the "coverage" of these "fantastic events" was "difficult. Like covering events of ten crowded years."[104] The domain Burroughs had entered was pre-linguistic, and the "events" Burroughs described were "para-normal occurrences", some of which are catalogued in a letter to Ginsberg, dated January 2nd, 1959.[105] As Oliver Harris suggests, however, despite "dramatic advances on other fronts", Burroughs' writing seemed to have hit a dead end.[106] "I still can't get a

line on writing", he told Ginsberg in October 1958.[107] Burroughs stressed to Ginsberg that his visions were "difficult to put in words".[108] Instead, Burroughs had "suddenly" begun "writing in word-forms," and enclosed "samples" for Ginsberg's attention.[109] The "word-forms" were "calligraphic swirls" that blurred the distinction between literary and visual forms.[110] Burroughs told Ginsberg that he was "at the beginning in this medium."[111] An important catalyst for Burroughs' shifting approach was his relationship with Brion Gysin. Gysin, a painter who had links to the Paris avant-garde, was living in a hotel room next to Burroughs', and, according to Burroughs, had undergone a "similar conversion to mine".[112] "I see in his painting", Burroughs told Ginsberg, "the psychic landscape of my own writing."[113] Gysin, Burroughs observed, regarded his painting as a "hole in the texture of so-called 'reality', through which he is exploring an actual place in outer space."[114] Following Gysin, Burroughs announced in January 1959 that he had "taken to painting lately, seemingly at the end of verbal communication..."[115] As Oliver Harris points out, this was not the first or the last time Burroughs would make an "identification" with a "painter" as opposed to a writer.[116] Having taken yagé, Burroughs had written that if he "could only paint" then he could "convey it all".[117] He compared his yagé visions with Paul Klee's painting "Indiscretion", claiming it was an "exact copy of what I saw high on Yage in Pucallpa when I closed my eyes",[118] and quoted approvingly Klee's claim that the "painter who is called will come near to the secret abyss where elemental law nourishes evolution." (*Interzone*/128) However, Burroughs' experiences with yagé did emerge in a literary form, if a somewhat idiosyncratic one. The nature of Burroughs' experience in Paris defied the literary form, or at least, the literary forms that Burroughs had been employing up until that point.

Burroughs' childhood hallucinations, as evoked in the Prologue to *Junky*, had their darker side, the sceptre of the "supernatural horror" that "always seemed on the

point of taking shape." (*Junky*/xi) So too Burroughs' foray into this pre-linguistic domain of "visions" and "currents of energy".[119] In the briefest of letters to Peter Orlovsky, Ginsberg's boyfriend, Burroughs told him to "Thank whatever Gods may be, you don't have visions."[120] He then quoted Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: "Mistah Kurtz he dead."[121]

Burroughs' note to Orlovsky was included in a letter to Allen Ginsberg which concludes *The Letters of William S. Burroughs*. This letter is, as Oliver Harris suggests, like a bookend: the end of one phase of development.[122] In 1952, as was noted previously, Burroughs had been pressed by Ace Books to write a "biographical" note for the publication of *Junkie*. Burroughs wrote to Ginsberg, his literary agent, begging Ginsberg to "write the fucking thing" for him.[123] In 1959, prior to the publication of *Naked Lunch*, a similar request was made, and Burroughs responded with another letter to Ginsberg. In many ways the two letters, seven years apart, echo each other. Burroughs used both letters to complain that he "just can't write one of those autobiographical notes the way writers do, you know about where they live and their pets and ... I can't I can't I won't."[124] Burroughs did, however, enclose with the 1959 letter a "*Biographical* Note on William Seward Burroughs", although it was apparently written not so much for the publishers as for his closest reader, Ginsberg: "I think you should read it carefully", Burroughs told Ginsberg, "since I sometimes feel that you have me mixed up with someone else doesn't live here anymore."[125] "I have no past life at all", the "note" begins, "being a notorious plant or 'intrusion' if you prefer the archeological word for an 'intruded' artefact."[126] The "note", partly composed as a cut-up, refers in part to Burroughs' past: he was "allegedly born St. Louis, Missouri, more or less haute bourgeois circumstances".[127] It also refers to Burroughs' brief residency at "Harvard 1936", and refers obliquely to his time in Tangier: "He achieved a state of inanimate matter in Tanger with chemical assistant.

Resuscitated by dubious arts he traveled extensively in all directions open to him."[128] However, these shards of detail do not comprise an identity, but are part of a refusal to offer a coherent self: "Remember?" the note asks, having offered obfuscating details of Burroughs' background, "I prefer not to."[129]

The "*biographical* note" echoed Lee's disappearance into the world of "Telepathic Bureaucracies, Time Monopolies, Control Drugs," and "Heavy Fluid Addicts" at the end of the main text of *Naked Lunch*. Escaping from his pursuers, Lee disconnects himself from the world: "Never again", Lee claims, "would I have a Key, a Point of Intersection ..." (*Naked Lunch*/171) So too, the author of the "*biographical* note", who "wrote a book and that finished him."[130] The price for the escape into fiction is the author's own death: he will never again have a "Point of Intersection", and, as the "*biographical* note" gloomily concludes, "never the hope of ground that is yours".[131] With his concluding missive in *The Letters of William S. Burroughs*, the "*biographical note*" and its implicit rejection of the "friend", Ginsberg, one Burroughs phase can be seen in the process of ending, another in the process of beginning. Burroughs was, as Oliver Harris notes, "literally" enacting the "death of the author", being "inexorably pressed into the world of fiction."[132] (*Queer*/13)

Burroughs also used the letter that accompanied the note to advise Ginsberg to investigate "*Scientology*".[133] The adoption of the techniques of L. Ron Hubbard's crudely simplistic "science of mental health" was another key aspect of the transition Burroughs was making.[134] As has been suggested, Burroughs' negotiations with analysis formed an important, if partial, influence on *Naked Lunch*, and sections of the text bear the mark of the analysand. Indeed, Stephen Spender, on reading an early draft of the novel, claimed that it was "good only for psychiatric testimony."[135] Scientology, as Oliver Harris puts it, "slammed the door" on the "years of psychoanalytical treatment" that Burroughs had undergone.[136] In a unpublished

manuscript fragment, held at Columbia University and titled "Experimental Prose", Burroughs forcefully expressed his dislike of "Freudian psychoanalysis", claiming that it now stood "revealed as a communist formulated conspiracy, a fifty year plan to mislead and cripple the West", by creating and fostering "mental illness".[137] There is no mistaking the anti-Communist paranoia in this fragment: Burroughs argues that the "Freudian conspiracy", which had directed "research away from the precise neurological work of Pavlov and the early work of Janet and Charcot", and presented instead "placeless ids and super egos", had given "Russia a thirty year lead in the study of the human brain and nervous system".[138] However, Burroughs' repudiation of Freud also focused on certain key objections that have also been raised by more recent critics of Freudian analysis. Citing Robert Graves' *The Greek Myths*, for example, Burroughs argues that "Freudian psychoanalysis" had been based on a "complex perversion of the Oedipus myth".[139] The result was "Ma Freud's dream book and a jargon of disembodied concepts and misrepresentations of myth", a "sorry structure", which any "schoolboy" could have "demolished".[140] He also noted the economic subtext to analysis, contrasting the "fifty dollars an hour" con of psychoanalysis with Scientology, which could cure any neurosis "in a few weeks".[141] The simplicity of the new technique was part of its appeal: by "simply" running the "clearing tape back and forth", the "trauma", whatever its nature, could be "wiped off."[142] Scientology promised freedom from the pull of the past, the option of not remembering.

A number of additions and deletions were made to the manuscript of *Naked Lunch* between 1958 and 1959, and these changes were closely related to the important shifts in Burroughs' outlook. Firstly, new sections were added: "Coke Bugs", "The Exterminator Does A Good Job", "Black Meat" and "The Algebra of Need" and the "Atrophied Preface".[143] (*Naked Lunch*/159-165). None of these sections continuously featured Lee, or indeed Carl or Benway, and their inclusion thereby

further problematised a linear or consistent reading of the text as a whole.[144] As Oliver Harris notes, an examination of the 1958 manuscript of "Interzone" also reveals certain key deletions, particularly "specific details of biographical aetiology".[145] Deleted, for example, from the opening section of "Hospital" was the following: "Ho-Hum Dept. : Willy the Agent taking the cure in Hassan's Hospital ... Hassan's Hospital adjoining cemetery ... Cremations in the patio ... Professional mourners solicit relatives in the waiting rooms and corridors ..."[146] The crucial element to this deletion is the removal of "Willy the Agent" as the "I" of the narrative, which further breaks up the already tenuous narrative continuity of the "Interzone" manuscript, which was based on the intermittent presence of William Lee.

According to Allen Ginsberg, one key change was made to *The Naked Lunch* just prior to its publication: the "placement of the first passage on the detectives (Hauser and O'Brien) shifted toward the end."[147] In an earlier version of the manuscript, the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence had been part of "Hospital". Burroughs noted, in a letter to Ginsberg, that the quick preparation of the manuscripts of *The Naked Lunch* for the printers had "welded the book together into a real organic continuity which it never had before."[148] Since the only major change made prior to printing concerned the movement of "Hauser and O'Brien", Burroughs' reference to this "real organic continuity" apparently reinstated a linear narrative onto the manuscript. As Oliver Harris suggests, taking "Hauser and O'Brien" out of the "framing context" of "Hospital", in which it was one of "Lee's 'Withdrawal Nightmares'", apparently renewed its status as a "straight action story".[149] Unlike "Hospital", from which his presence had been deleted, Lee remains the protagonist of "Hauser and O'Brien", suggesting the continuity of his presence from the opening sequence to *Naked Lunch*.

The effect of the reinstatement of the "straight action story" at the close of the

main text of *Naked Lunch*, however, was complex. It now concluded, as Oliver Harris notes, with the "disappearance and derealization" of Hauser and O'Brien, and their "disappearance" also represented the disappearance of the "straight action story" they represented.[150] The effect of this double disappearance was to question, as Oliver Harris puts it, "the status of fictional narrative itself."[151] The reinstatement of "Hauser and O'Brien" also questioned the status of reality itself, recalling Burroughs' observation, in a letter to Ginsberg, that "So-called reality is only crystallized dream. It can be un-dreamed."[152] The *Naked Lunch* version of "Hauser and O'Brien" crosses the border into the domain of ontological uncertainty hinted at by "The Dream Cops" sequence, and by the construction of Interzone itself. As far back as November 1955, Burroughs had presented Interzone as a location in which "dreams can kill - Like Bangutot - and solid objects and persons can be unreal as dreams ... For example Lee could be in Interzone, after killing the two detectives, and for various dream reasons, neither the law nor the Others could touch him directly."[153] As Oliver Harris suggests, the "tendency for inside and outside, reality and fantasy to run together", as represented by Interzone and the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence, corresponds to R.D. Laing's "clinical observations on the disturbed relationship between self and object world in schizophrenia."[154] This tendency has important implications for the psychological model that was recurrent in Burroughs' writing during *Naked Lunch*. If the two cops Lee shot in "Hauser and O'Brien" represent the "conditioning forces that perpetuate submission to the reality function",[155] then their "disappearance and derealization" also suggests the "disappearance and derealization" of the psychological narrative that they represent.[156] Deleuze and Guattari, who perceive schizophrenic experience to offer a way out of the "daddy-mommy" Freudian family romance, note Freud's dislike of schizophrenics, and in particular their "resistance to oedipalization", their narcissism, and their disregard for "reality".[157] Lee, who crosses

the border into ontological uncertainty having shot the two cops, or Carl, who declares his interrogation by Dr. Benway to be "unreal" (*Naked Lunch*/157), are, like the "schizo" proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, "somewhere else, beyond or behind or below" the "problems" represented by the two cops and their psychological narrative, or Benway's interrogation, "rather than immersed in them."[158]

The ontological uncertainties of *Naked Lunch* problematises William Stull's reading of the text. In Stull's account, *Naked Lunch* conforms to Joseph Campbell's "basic pattern" of "separation, initiation and return".[159] Having wandered through the mythic wastelands depicted in *Junky*, *The Yage Letters* and *Naked Lunch*, the narrator of *Naked Lunch*, by unleashing his "word horde", brings a "new sense of vitality and innocence" to that wasteland.[160] However, Stull's employment of Campbell's work is insufficiently specific. Campbell's construction of a mono-myth is deliberately related to psychoanalytical theory, and key elements of the pattern of "separation, initiation and return" are related to the negotiation of infantile impulses and projections. For example, the "ultimate adventure" in Campbell's mono-myth is the "mystical marriage" of the hero with the "Queen Goddess of the World", who represents, in psychoanalytical terms, the infantile projection of the mother.[161] The hero must also achieve "atonement", or "at-one-ment", with the Father, who represents the "ogre" of the "nursery scene".[162] While Campbell's work, to quote Stull, is based on the "insights of Freud and Jung" and the "fundamental patterns of mythology",[163] Burroughs, as has been suggested, ridiculed the "disembodied concepts and misrepresentations of myth" found in "Ma Freud's dream book"[164] Lee's border-crossing into ontological uncertainty suggests not the acceptance of universal mythic patterns of birth and death advocated by Campbell, but a disbelief in the final reality of those patterns.[165]

However, while *Naked Lunch* may present the psychological narratives it enacts as "unreal", the continued reappearance of those psychological narratives in

Burroughs' later work suggests that the "problems" it represented were unresolved. The consequences of the border-crossing into ontological uncertainty on Burroughs' writing after *Naked Lunch*, and the continued presence of the unresolved psychological dynamics it avoided, will be examined in more detail in the following section.

II: Burroughs' work, 1960-1990

The completion of *Naked Lunch* marked a profound shift in Burroughs' writing, as did the completion of *Moby Dick* for Melville. In the case of both authors, this shift was not necessarily a positive one: indeed, both authors referred to it as a form of death.[166] As Oliver Harris suggests, the "cathartic writing" of *The Naked Lunch* had signalled a "terminal point" for its author, as suggested by Burroughs' "*biographical note*":

> In any case he wrote a book and that finished him. They killed the author many times in different agents concentrated on the road I pass, achieving thereby grey-hounds, menstrual cramps and advanced yoga to a distance of two feet legitimate terrain ... And never the hope of ground that is yours[167]

The letters that Melville wrote during the writing of *Moby Dick* similarly suggest the profound ambiguity of the transition he felt he was making. In a letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, Melville compared himself to "one of the those seeds taken out of the Egyptian pyramids", which having been "three thousand years a seed and nothing but a seed," was "planted in English soil" and "developed itself, grew to greenness, and then fell to mould."[168] Melville, who now dated the start of his life from his "twenty-fifth year", expressed to Hawthorne the manner in which he had developed, "unfolded within himself."[169] "But", he continued ominously, "I feel that I am now come to the inmost leaf of the bulb, and that shortly the flower must fall to the mould."[170] Reborn, the ancient seed grown "to greenness", Melville now faced death, the flower's "fall to the mould."[171]

Melville followed *Moby Dick* with *Pierre*, which represented an anguished journey back home, following Melville's succession of South Pacific novels, and an unresolved confrontation with, to quote James Creech, the "rigidifying oedipal family structure of the bourgeois family" that had implicitly fueled his earlier writing.[172]

Burroughs' literary movements after *Naked Lunch* appear to be very different. Burroughs' final letter to Ginsberg in *The Letters of William S. Burroughs* signalled the adoption of a "new method of writing",[173] and this "new method" was, as Oliver Harris writes, the "prototype for a range of methods he would spend the next decade intensively exploring: cut-ups."[174] This period would also see Burroughs' partial adoption of the science-fiction genre. However, Burroughs' use, in the "*Biographical* Note on William Seward Burroughs", of Bartleby's four words of refusal, "I prefer not to", suggested Burroughs' kinship with Melville's most inscrutable protagonist.[175] Indeed, Burroughs' withdrawal from the world approached the withdrawal of Bartleby in its completeness. On meeting Ginsberg again in 1961, Burroughs' first question, according to Ted Morgan, was, "Who are you an agent for?"[176] Burroughs meant that Ginsberg's personality was a "composite of all the influences and viruses" that Ginsberg had picked up.[177] Burroughs, for example, accused him of having been "imprinted by Lionel Trilling" and by his father, Louis.[178] In Ginsberg's account, Burroughs, who had become "a hash-eating rambunctious machete-swinging holy laughing terror, cutting up all his prose and 'all apparent sensory phenomena", had begun to "assume gigantic solitary proportions as Artist alone in the universe, somewhat mysterious, somewhat dehumanized [...] more aloof, and later more outrageous than ever."[179]

Withdrawal from the World

While *The Letters of William S. Burroughs* ends with Burroughs' extraordinary denial of the author's relation to his most cherished reader, the final section of *The Yage Letters*, "Seven Years Later (1960)" provides us with another important communication from Burroughs to Ginsberg. The letter was a response to Ginsberg's plea for help after his nightmarish experiences with yagé.[180] However, if his

"*biographical* note" represented a refusal to write an autobiographical piece, Burroughs' "letter" of June 21, 1960 represented a refusal, at least in conventional terms, to take on the role of letter-writer. While the date is formally noted, it is accompanied by the words "Present Time Pre-Sent Time". (*Yage Letters*/59) No aspect of the conventional letter-form could be trusted at face value.

At one level, the letter was reassuring: it opened, for example, with the line "There is nothing to fear." (*Yage Letters*/59) However, Burroughs was quick to cut off Ginsberg's escape route from his yagé experience: the initial instinct to treat the yagé "consciousness" he had found so horrific "as a temporary illusion" and to "return to normal consciousness" when "the effects" of the yagé had worn off. (*Yage Letters*/55) Burroughs' response was to ask "Whose 'Normal Consciousness'" Ginsberg intended to return to. (*Yage Letters*/59) Burroughs' final yagé letter advocated complete scepticism. He instructed Ginsberg to take the letter itself and to cut "along the lines" and rearrange the text, "putting section one by section three and section two by section four." *(Yage Letters*/59) "Now read aloud", Burroughs commanded, "and you will hear My Voice." If Ginsberg had not understood first time, he was told to "Cut and rearrange in any combination." (*Yage Letters*/59) His attention was being directed not towards the words themselves, to the calm, sane advice of the experienced yagé user, but towards the gaps between the words, and towards silence. "IF YOU I CANCEL ALL YOURS WORDS FOREVER", promised Burroughs, in the staccato cut-up he included as an extension of his letter, you "WILL SEE THE SILENT WRITING OF BRION GYSIN HASSAN SABBAH. THE WRITING OF SPACE. THE WRITING OF SILENCE." (*Yage Letters*/60) In a P.S to the letter he advised Ginsberg that "NO ONE IN HIS SENSE WOULD TRUST 'THE UNIVERSE.'" (*Yage Letters*/60) In a letter written several months later, Burroughs further advised Ginsberg to "LOOK OUT TO SPACE. This means

kicking all habits. Word HABIT. SELF HABIT. BODY HABIT." Having kicked all these habits, what would be left? As Burroughs himself acknowledged, kicking junk was a "breeze in comparison."[181]

Closely linked to this withdrawal from the world was Burroughs' search for new territory in terms of literary technique. As Oliver Harris notes, Burroughs' own "understanding of the cut-up enterprise" betrayed his pioneering tendencies, his wish to "leave behind both his own writing and the writing of the past."[182] Writing in 1962, Burroughs made the following retrospective judgment on his initial experiments with cut-ups: "A breakthrough that knows exactly what it is breaking through into is not a breakthrough which is a step in the dark."[183] While Burroughs, as pioneer, resisted a systematic theory of the cut-up, Gérard-Georges Lemaire, in his introduction to *The Third Mind*, does provide a theoretical overview for the cut-up enterprise. Burroughs, claims Lemaire, was looking for a "new optic" which would be "capable of giving form to the accumulation of notes that were to have figured in *Naked Lunch*", and that "new optic", introduced to Burroughs by Brion Gysin, was the cut-up.[184] In a letter to Alan Ansen, recounted in Ansen's essay "Anyone Who Can Pick Up a Frying Pan Owns Death", Burroughs wrote that he was "tired of sitting behind the lines with an imperfect recording device ... I must reach the Front."[185] Such an urgent missive again suggests a pioneering desire for a breakthrough. However, while the cut-ups promised a "new optic", there are a number of important ways in which the cut-ups repeated the patterns inherent in Burroughs' earlier writings. As Alan Ansen reportedly said of the cut-up enterprise, when "you smash a mirror because you don't like what it reflects, the fragments continue to wink the old message."[186] One important reoccurring pattern in the cut-up novels is the presence of the "Ugly Spirit". Burroughs, it will be recalled, closely associated the "Ugly Spirit" with the American tycoon, and in particular the newspaper tycoon, the "word man, the original image-manipulator."[187] While

Burroughs hoped to reach the Front, to supersede his "imperfect recording device",[188] his attempts to "make a step in the dark" were to remain dependent on the "Ugly Spirit" he aimed to leave behind.[189]

In "Experimental Prose", Burroughs had distinguished his own interest in Scientology and control systems from the Surrealist's interest in dreams as sources of creative inspiration. Dreams, the divine fruits of the unconscious, had been eulogised by Breton as being outside the "control" of the reasoning mind, or in Freudian terms, the super-ego.[190] They therefore offered a new frontier to explore, untouched by civilized values. However, in Burroughs' statements of the post-*Naked Lunch* period dreams were only another area of control. While the Surrealists linked the "activity of writing" to the circumvention of control mechanisms, Burroughs increasingly associated it with, to quote Robin Lydenberg, the "parasitism of language."[191] In Burroughs' presentation of creativity, therefore, writing becomes a passive act, since it is the parasite or the alien other who writes, as in Burroughs' claim that his routines were "almost like automatic writing produced by a hostile independent entity who is saying in effect, 'I will write what I please'"[192], or his much later claims that, rather than writing *Queer*, he felt he "was being written in *Queer*". (*Queer*/12)

As Oliver Harris notes, Burroughs' critique in "Experimental Prose" of automatic writing, the Surrealist methodology for representing an unmediated dream-world, was based on this insistence on "the alien origin and alienating effect of language, as the external source determining dreams and the unconscious".[193] ""Where do dreams come from?" Burroughs asked rhetorically, answering:

> From some placeless Id? Of course not. They come from books magazines ads and conversation from THE Word ... They come from picture movies TV The image .. Word and Image is now monopolized and controlled and manipulated by Life Time and Fortune - to produce specified results by the controllers for the controllers."[194]

As Harris suggests, Burroughs' adoption of the cut-up technique made "explicit his

sense of the impossibility" of the "escape from the super-ego" promised by automatic writing and presented in the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence. The "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence was itself derived from "books magazines ads and conversation [...] picture movies TV".[195] As Burroughs' reference to "Chandler" in his original description of the "action story" suggests, the terse description of the shooting in "Hauser and O'Brien" borrowed from the hard-boiled genre.[196] The sequence also owes something to Kafka's presentations of "vast [...] conspiracies",[197] and as Oliver Harris notes, the two detectives "restage the intrusion that initiates *The Trial*, suggesting "the process of unconscious rewriting at work".[198] Although Burroughs would later celebrate literary theft in his essay "Les Voleurs", at the time of writing *Naked Lunch* he did not "see the full implications" of his borrowings.[199] Indeed, the recurrent references to silence in Burroughs' writing of this period suggests a Bartleby-like refusal to copy other people's documents, with silence advocated as the means to avoid ending up "with someone else's rusty load of continuity."[200]

According to Barry Miles, during the writing of the cut-up novels, Burroughs became "more and more convinced that some outside agency was manipulating events", that "their agents had infiltrated all levels of society", and that the "mediating factor" in the external control of the individual was "language".[201] In his adoption of the cut-up technique, Burroughs was interrogating language as he had interrogated Ginsberg. He "began to trace the word lines back to source", and identified the "huge word and image banks of *Time/Life/Fortune*" as "prime sources."[202] In an curious, but instructive, anecdote recounted in *The Third Mind*, Burroughs links the adoption of the cut-up technique to a visit by two journalists from 'Life' magazine.

The interview took place in 1959, "just after the publication of *Naked Lunch*."[203] In *The Third Mind*, Burroughs describes the interview as "a lunch with the *Time* police".[204] His confusion between 'Life' and 'Time' magazines is appropriate, since

'Life', 'Time' and 'Fortune' were owned by the same man, Henry Luce. Burroughs' use of the phrase "*Time* police" had another, associated meaning, as if the journalists were representatives of temporality itself. Burroughs draws explicit attention to this other meaning, observing that the "*Time* police" had put down "a con, old and tired as their namesake".[205] One of the two journalists, David Schnell, opened his interview by offering Burroughs an Old Gold, in a deliberate parody of the "Hauser and O'Brien" section of *Naked Lunch*.[206] There was, however, one important point of distinction between the interview with the "*Time* police" and the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence. The two American cops were sent to call Lee in, to bring him to the "Lieutenant." (*Naked Lunch*/166) The interview, however, resembled more a form of temptation by the devil, with Luce, a formidable off-stage presence like the "Lieutenant" in the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence, in the role of the white middle-class American devil. (*Naked Lunch*/166) The interviewers, who Burroughs recalls "were really creepy", offered Burroughs the world, or at least, all the comforts that American capitalism could offer: "Mr Burroughs, I have an intuition about you ... I see you a few years from now on Madison Avenue ... $20,000 a year ... life in all its rich variety ..."[207] Returning from this curious interview to his room in the Beat Hotel, Burroughs found "Brion Gysin holding a scissors, bits of newspaper, 'Life', 'Time', spread out on a table". Gysin read to Burroughs the "cut-ups that would later appear in *Minutes to Go*."[208] The fictional events of "Hauser and O'Brien" had repeated themselves in reality, albeit in somewhat different form. There had been, thankfully, no murders required this time round, and Burroughs did not take a taxi out of "space-time" and disappear into the far "side of the world's mirror".[209] Yet, something analogous to this fictional episode was taking place.

In a sense, Burroughs was to deny his relation to time, both in relation to Henry Luce's vast magazine network and in relation to chronological time. The adoption of

the cut-up technique was Burroughs' weapon against Henry Luce's control system. In the "Hauser and O'Brien" sequence, the act of violence takes place within the text, while in the cut-ups the act of violence is against the text. Returning to his room and finding Gysin inventing the cut-ups, Burroughs did indeed see his lifetime "spread out on a table."[210] Burroughs' experiments with cut-ups and montage left him in a paradoxical situation. As a writer, he was dependent on language, and as a collagist, he made great use of Henry Luce's vast word and image banks. He was, therefore, thoroughly contaminated by the "ugly spirit" he sought to escape from.[211]

While Burroughs was exploring new territory in terms of his writing practice, his subject matter was familiar: despite its occasional relocation into outer space, the carnival world of agents and sellers found in the cut-ups was not at all dissimilar to Interzone. As Burroughs confirms in a letter to Howard Schulman, the location for the cut-up novels was a "Barnum & Baily world".[212] In *The Soft Machine*, *The Ticket that Exploded* and *Nova Express*, "contemporary reality" is represented, as Tony Tanner writes, as an "exhibition or amusement park or garden of delights or cinema or vaudeville show or penny arcade or circus or game".[213] That is, reality is a carnival world in which the innocent, or not so innocent, spectator is manipulated. As Burroughs clarified to Schulman, however, the "Barnum & Baily world" of the cut-up novels demonstrated "what is broken not what is broken through into -"[214] Burroughs' intentions, however, were to leave this pre-programmed world behind and to "learn to see more of what's out there, to look outside".[215]

Despite their supposed murder at Lee's hands in *Naked Lunch*, and Burroughs' refusal of the *Life* journalists, the "tough cop and the con cop" nonetheless reappeared in *The Ticket That Exploded*, as the "old vaudeville act" of "birth and death - pleasure and pain" that was "the angle on planet earth".[216] Therefore, the cut-up novels reprised the "psychological conflict" of the Hauser and O'Brien sequence: the attempt to

circumvent the "figures of paternal authority" and reestablish the state that "existed prior to the division of subject from object".[217] Oliver Harris, quoting Norman O.Brown's description of the "separation of the child's body from the mother's body" as "the 'ego's primal act'", an act which "interposes the shadow of the past between itself and the full reality of life and death in the present", claims that the cut-ups were aimed "precisely at that dissolution of the shadow of the past".[218] In "St Louis Return", the narrator tells his assistant B.J. that once the "shadow" of the "pre-recorded word" has been circumvented, people could "see what is right under their eyes".[219] The examples given of this unmediated vision, the "bits of silver paper in the wind - sunlight on vacant lots [...] all the magic of past times like the song say",[220] suggest the reconstruction of the "nostalgic maternal memories" so recurrent in Burroughs' fiction.[221]

Burroughs and the "feminine"

The suppressed longing for and partial identification with the maternal figure in Burroughs' writing has been noted by a number of commentators, including Françoise Collin, Serge Grunberg, Neal Oxenhandler, Oliver Harris and Robin Lydenberg.[222] As Jonathan Paul Eburne notes, in 1950s American society, representations of mothers were often negative: Philip Wylie in *A Generation of Vipers* (1942) had set the tone by decrying "momism", which produced "psychologically damaged 'mother-lovers' destined to become criminals, drug addicts, or (worst of all) sissies."[223] Fiedler, in "The New Mutants", made a similar point when he linked Burroughs with the contemporary tendency towards feminization: the assimilation, by young men, of the "sum total of rejected psychic elements which the middle class heirs of the Renaissance have identified as 'woman'."[224] Recent critics, however, have been more positive about this assimilation.[225] In *Word Cultures*, Robin Lydenberg links

Burroughs to Deleuze and Guattari's notion of a "*devenir-femme*" or a "woman-becoming": a "writing process" which "produces an alchemical transformation" through which the writer is "aligned with the outside, with the margin, with the minority, with the female."[226] As Lydenberg also observes, Burroughs' cut-up texts also echoes Hélène Cixous's description of the writing of Jean Genet: "a text which divides itself, breaks itself into bits, regroups itself," displaying "an abundant, maternal, pederastic femininity."[227] Cixous cites Genet as an example of a male writer who can admit "the component of the other sex", and on the terms set by Lydenberg and Cixous, Burroughs too becomes a writer in whom the "feminine" is present.[228]

Lydenberg is retrospectively somewhat cautious in her attribution of the "feminine" to Burroughs, however, and she expresses her caution by referring to Alice A. Jardine's *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity*.[229] While Jardine makes reference to Burroughs, she places his writing in the context of the "violent refusal" of the "maternal" found in the "contemporary male American text": "a refusal to explore the fragile infrasymbolic spaces of language".[230] Jardine argues that these contemporary American texts remain "very male" because they shore themselves up "against the 'Nature'" that "threatens them": Jardine gives the specific example of the "virus" as the external threat within Burroughs' writing.[231] While Burroughs' work surely does not represent a "refusal to explore the fragile infrasymbolic spaces of language", Jardine's observations do have some relevance here, since they suggest the ambiguous response to the maternal figure in Burroughs' work.[232]

A central difficulty in the notion of the "feminine" as applied to male writers is suggested by Cixous' use of the term "maternal" to describe Genet's "abundant [...] femininity."[233] By using the term "maternal", Cixous suggests that Genet, refusing patriarchal "logocentricism", attempts to return instead to the pre-oedipal relationship to the mother.[234] In *Word Cultures*, Lydenberg also links Burroughs to Kristeva's

notion of "becoming-a-mother", which is explicitly associated with the "pre-oedipal phase of development" and to the "deterritorialized space of the mother's body, a realm outside of or anterior to patriarchal authority and regulation".[235] In this context, Cixous' use of the word "pederastic", alongside "maternal", is striking. The "pederastic" relationship to the maternal figure suggested by Cixous, whatever its other unfortunate connotations, is surely based on the sublimation, rather than the admission, of the "component of the other sex."[236] Indeed, while the mother's body may be, to recall Kristeva's description, a "deterritorialized space", it is also a site of conflict, dependency and the denial of difference.[237]

Reflecting the ambivalences of pre-oedipal experience, there was a profound paradox in the attitudes towards the "maternal" in the cut-up project, a paradox most forcefully expressed in the form of Burroughs and Brion Gysin's misogyny.[238] As Barry Miles notes, throughout the period in which the cut-up novels were constructed, Burroughs and Gysin perceived women as "the enemy, possibly even as agents from another galaxy."[239] According to Morgan, when the "Russians announced they were sending a woman into space", the two men responded with horror: they felt it was an "ominous threat to carry the matriarchy, the cunt, the bitch goddess, into Space."[240] While Burroughs' misogyny was encouraged by Gysin, the deep-rooted wish to exclude women is perceptible throughout Burroughs' earlier fiction, as has been suggested, and becomes more explicit from *Naked Lunch* onwards.

Throughout the cut-up novels and in Burroughs' later writings, the profound distrust of women is linked to a distrust of the birth-death cycle. Reflecting Burroughs' statement, in his final yagé letter to Ginsberg, that "NOONE IN HIS SENSE WOULD TRUST 'THE UNIVERSE'", in *The Ticket That Exploded* the universal patterns of birth and death become part of a sinister inter-planetary conspiracy, a cosmic con-trick: "Death *is* orgasm *is* rebirth *is* death in orgasm *is* their unsanitary Venusian

gimmick *is* the whole birth death cycle of action"[241] The concluding section of *Port of Saints* plays on this dialectic relationship between life and death: the sound and image of a "newborn baby" crying becomes a "death rattle and crystal skull", and two of the book's protagonists, "John Hamlin and Audrey Carsons", gleefully deliver their own judgment on the birth-death cycle: "THAT IS WHAT YOU GET FOR FUCKING."[242]

In *The Job*, Burroughs' collection of interviews with Daniel Odier, Burroughs argues that "the whole dualistic universe" evolved from the dualism division of male and female.[243] Closely linked to his clear discomfort with male-female dualism is a wish to do away with the conventional concept of childhood. The upbringing of children, Burroughs argues, is "basically controlled by women."[244] The view of childhood expressed in *The Job* is almost entirely negative. It is presented as a period of "helpless infancy", in which the child is "exposed to every variety of physical and psychical illness".[245] These theoretical concepts find their most insistent fictional expression in Burroughs' 'wild boy' novels. In *Port of Saints*, for example, it is explained that the wild boys have "put all thought of women from their minds and bodies", and that new recruits "must leave women behind."[246] When placed in the context of Burroughs' nostalgia for the body of the lost mother, the images of violence towards women in Burroughs' work, and the attempts to obliterate their presence, suggest a psychoanalytical version of Rosaldo's notion of imperialist nostalgia. Like the "agents of colonialism" who "mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed", Burroughs' work expresses the peculiar "yearning" for "the very forms of life" that have been "intentionally altered or destroyed" through its own misogynistic violence.[247]

Burroughs' distrust of language is, as Neal Oxenhandler suggests, also linked with his distrust of the "archaic authority" of the mother,[248] and the cut-ups therefore also further betrayed Burroughs' violent distrust of "maternal [...] femininity".[249] In

Gynesis, Alice A. Jardine notes the critical attention given to Louis Wolfson's *Le schizo et les langues*, the "remarkable textual account" of the "process" by which Wolfson, whose "mother's presence and voice" irritated him so much that he "learned four foreign languages and transcoded them into an elaborate secret language of his own, cutting up his maternal tongue in a mysterious and sophisticated way, so as to avoid having to speak or hear this 'maternal tongue' directly, from anyone."[250] As Jardine suggests, while this text was "heralded" as being "exemplary of modernity's rejection of the Cartesian subject, the sign and representation", its matricidal sub-text was not discussed by the text's critics. Jardine's observations about this "cutting up of the maternal tongue" also apply to Burroughs' cut-ups.[251] In Oxenhandler's account, having freed himself "from the pre-oedipal mother by becoming his own mother and feeding himself with words", the writer remains as dependent on language as he had been on the "pre-oedipal mother", and enacts a similar drama of need and resentment towards his words.[252] Burroughs has described the "bondage" of a writer's calling, which "keeps" the writer "laboriously transcribing cryptic messages in rapidly disappearing ink, like the traces of a dream, year after year".[253] Burroughs, as has been noted, had feminized junk, and his depiction of this literary "bondage" suggests that his dependency on the muse, the romantic feminization of creative inspiration, reprised his pharmaceutical addictions.[254]

While Brion Gysin repudiated the evils of "matriarchy", his description of the "entire worlds in miniature" he "envisaged" in his drawings is strikingly child-like: "Within the bright scaffolding appears a world of Little Folk, swinging in their flowering ink jungle gym [...]"[255] In his describing the collapse of distinction between the "real world" and the "world of myth and symbol" in his experience of Tangier, Burroughs had acknowledged that he perceived the world "with the child's eyes", and in "The Conspiracy" had connected the "symbolizing and artistic faculty" to

childhood. (*Interzone*/128, 109) In "Let the Mice In", Brion Gysin implicitly linked the cut-up technique to a similar regression to infancy: "Lighten your own life sentence. Go back to childhood."[256] Given Burroughs' later claim in *The Job* that childhood is "basically controlled by women", this wish to recreate childhood, closely linked to the cut-up project, seems paradoxical.[257] In a related paradox, while the denial of women is linked to a denial of the conventional birth-death cycle, summed up by Audrey and John's reaction to the "woman with a baby carriage" in *Port of Saints*, there are recurrent images of birth and death throughout Burroughs' fiction.

As Françoise Collin suggests, it is as if the "general horror of birth" found in Burroughs' writing betrays the "desire to be one's own origin".[258] By repetitively re-enacting, in sublimated form, the processes of life and death, Burroughs was therefore able to become "his own mother".[259] Read together, for example, *Junky* and *Queer* are accounts of Lee's transition from the deathly "insulation of junk" to "the land of the living", his frantic re-birth as an "inept Lazarus". (*Queer*/12) "Driving Lesson" is also a re-birth narrative, with its sudden push towards death, and the accident itself, the "squealing crash of metal", resembling a violent birth, an expulsion from the womb-like car. (*Interzone*/21) Part of the yagé experience is a speed-up movie of the birth-death process, including images in which apparent evolutionary dead ends become sources of growth: "stasis and death in closed mountain valleys where plants sprout out of the Rock and vast crustaceans hatch inside and break the shell of the body" (*Yage Letters*/44)

The push towards death, or a death-like state, is also a recurrent pattern in Burroughs' own life. In his interview with "Paris Review", for example, Burroughs recalls sitting in his room in Tangier in 1957, surrounded by "empty Eukodel cartons", having "spent a month [...] staring at the toe of my foot."[260] It was at this moment, Burroughs claims, that he "suddenly realized" that he wasn't "doing *anything*" apart

from "dying."[261] "I remember", Burroughs wrote of this period, "one account of someone who came to, after being catatonic for 20 years in the back ward of a state insane asylum."[262] This period of deathly addiction, however, gave way to the exuberance of Burroughs' *Naked Lunch* routines. Here, creativity, like the "plants" and "crustaceans" in Burroughs' yagé vision, emerged out of "stasis and death" to "break the shell of the body". (*Yage Letters*/44) As has already been suggested, another key transition, a drawing near to birth and death, was reached in 1959. Burroughs' Bartleby-like withdrawal, his preference not to use language, lead to the cut-ups, and to an enormous quantity of manuscripts and materials.

Another important phase in Burroughs' writing, closely related to the cut-ups, is the subject of Oliver Harris' essay "Cutup Closure: The Return to Narrative". As Harris notes, Burroughs' adoption of the cut-up technique went hand-in-hand with his adoption of the photomontage technique. Burroughs began using photo-montages in the "summer of 1961".[263] He linked the adoption of photo-montage to his unpleasant experience with the hallucinogen, "Dim-N", which he described as providing the "sensation of being in a white-hot safe".[264] The "following day", Burroughs describes a "sudden cool gray mist" which "came in from the sea and covered the waterfront".[265] The sensation of horrifying stasis that Burroughs had experienced lead, as if by magic, to his adoption of photomontage: "I spread some photos out on the bed with a gray silk dressing-gown from Gibraltar along with several other objects and I photographed the ensemble."[266] There are distinct echoes here of Burroughs earlier description of his prose work-in-progress as a "form of still life": the chapters would make a "mosaic", with the "dream impact of juxtaposition, like objects abandoned in a hotel drawer." (*Interzone*/126) The purpose of both photo-montage and the cut-ups was, in part, the denial of authorship. As Gysin wrote in *The Third Mind,* "You can't call *me* the author of those poems, now, can you?"[267] The process of disappearance, begun in the

sly shifting of the author's name from Burroughs to Lee, was continuing. Now even the text, into which the author had disappeared, was being continually dismantled and reconstructed. According to Rob Latham, the collage technique denied "paternity", since its "promiscuous mingling of materials" makes "authorship radically problematic; it is impossible to know who has fathered it."[268] The collage thereby enacts an "anti-Oedipal dynamic": replacing the paternal author with the "many mothers" of the text's "innumerable discourses."[269]

This process, evident in both the photo-montage and cut-up techniques, leads inexorably towards a vanishing point. In "Cutup Closure" Harris traces the ways in which Burroughs took the cut-up technique to its usable limits. As Harris notes, Burroughs' method of "superimposition" developed into a method of "distillation."[270] Burroughs, according to Brion Gysin, became ever "more intent on Scotch-taping his photos together", until they formed "one great continuum on the wall".[271] Harris quotes Brion Gysin's observation that Burroughs' experiments lead to a "sort of a *puddle* at the end, called Brownian movement in physics, where it was so [...] unpleasant, even painful to read, that it gave one psychic pain".[272] If the author himself had increased his own invisibility, the author's materials had multiplied, again repeating the pattern of Burroughs' *Naked Lunch* phase. By 1959, Burroughs had accumulated a "suit case full of manuscripts", which were converted into *Naked Lunch* and the cut-up novels.[273] By 1965, he had the vast range of materials that would make up the William Burroughs archive, as catalogued by Barry Miles. Burroughs claimed that, by 1967, he had done so much work with "tape-recorders, cameras and scrap books" that he could no longer "look at them".[274] He explained in the "Paris Review" that he was forced to "travel by boat and train" because of his vast personal archive, which he needed to continue his writing: "When I sit down to write, I may suddenly think of something I wrote three years ago, which should be in this file over here."[275]

Paradoxically, his attempts to free himself through past conditioning in his writing had, once more, lead towards a condition of enforced stasis.

This point of stasis, however, again became a point of re-birth. In 1964, Burroughs had described himself as a "cosmonaut of inner space", a "map maker, an explorer of psychic areas".[276] In the 1965 Paris Review interview, making an important distinction between the writing of Samuel Beckett and his own writing, Burroughs signaled a shift in direction. Beckett, Burroughs claimed, was headed "inward", whilst his own writing was now "aimed in the other direction - outward": he wanted to " learn to see more of what's out there, to look outside, to achieve as far as possible a complete awareness of surroundings."[277] Burroughs' interview was accompanied by a short piece titled "St Louis Return", an account of Burroughs' trip back to his home city after "a parenthesis of more than 40 years".[278] Importantly, the shift in direction was therefore linked to Burroughs' return home, to his place of birth, echoing Burroughs' earlier description of the eel's journey back to the Sargasso sea.

Simultaneous with this movement outwards, towards "what's [...] there", was a movement back towards the gentle reader, whom Burroughs had threatened with assault in "Word" and curtly dismissed with his transition to the cut-up technique.[279] Oliver Harris traces the various strategies by which Burroughs, in his own words, tried to "come back" from his "purely experimental" writing.[280] In *The Job*, Burroughs expressed his fear that "if you go too far in one direction, you can never get back, and you're out there in complete isolation."[281] As Harris notes, in the late 1960s, in an echo of the "nightmare impasse of emotional and creative energy" that had "motivated" the writing of *Naked Lunch*, Burroughs re-edited and rewrote sections for *The Soft Machine*, *The Ticket That Exploded* and *Nova Express*. His intention, in part at least, was to "restore or create narrative clarity or stability", to make the text more gentle for its gentle reader.[282] In *The Job*, Burroughs signaled this movement back towards

"conventional straight-forward narrative", though he also noted that he intended to continue "applying" what he had "learned from the cut-up and other techniques" to "conventional writing."[283] Therefore, while Burroughs' fiction began to restore the "generic expectations" that he had exploded in the cut-ups, the artificiality of those generic expectations was continually foregrounded.[284] The author had not returned to reassert his authority, he remained a ghostly presence, an ever-present absence.

The oscillations between birth and death also continued. *The Wild Boys*, for example, is subtitled a *Book of the Dead*. Burroughs' film-narrative, *The Last Words of Dutch Schulz*, is constructed around the flood of language uttered by a gangster just prior to his death. Burroughs claims that whole "sections" of *The Place of Dead Roads* "came to me as if dictated, like table-tapping." (*Queer*/14) The inspiration for the book was the "late English writer Denton Welch": it had been influenced, perhaps even, in Burroughs' account, partly written by, a dead man. (*Queer*/14-15) Yet there is also, in Burroughs' later fiction, a recurrent pull towards childhood, home, and birth. *The Wild Boys*, perhaps the Burroughs text most resistant to the conventional birth-death cycle, nonetheless continually returns to "St Louis", the "old broken point of origin"[285], a return heralded by the same nostalgic tunes that had lead back there in *Naked Lunch*: "Meet me in St. Louie Louie".[286] The opening sections of *The Place of Dead Roads* are set in Saint Albans, a village on the Missouri River near St. Louis. This increasing reliance on experiences of childhood and adolescence suggested, like the nostalgic images of "train whistles, piano music" and "burning leaves" in *Junky*, an attempt to mitigate what Oliver Harris terms the "loss of the original sense of oneness with the primal mother".[287]

Paternal Figures

While the recurrent nostalgia in Burroughs' writing suggests the absent, but

significant, figure of the mother, the depictions of paternal figures are also very ambivalent. *The Place of Dead Roads* is Burroughs' only sustained attempt to write about father-son relationships. In his interview with *Paris Review*, Burroughs recounted having had a dream in which he "returned to the family home and found a different father and a different house from any I'd ever seen before."[288] In *The Place of Dead Roads*, Burroughs tries, in writing the adventures of his protagonist Kim, to reimagine this new "family home" and the "different father".[289] Kim's father is a fantastic idealised anti-father. He allows Kim to withdraw from school since "he was so unhappy there", consoling his son that "they have nothing to teach you anyway".[290] He allows Kim access to his "extensive and eclectic library", containing a "number of medical books", and a "large collection of books on magic and the occult".[291] Kim's father opens up to Kim, to quote Leslie Fiedler, "a way of life hostile to the accepted standards of the American community: a counterfamily that can only flourish in a world without women or churches or decency or hard work [...]"[292] The "counterfamily" is, in *The Place of Dead Roads*, given a name: the "Johnson Family", which was to be the book's "original title".[293] Kim is living out, in Fiedler's words, "'life with father', or more precisely, 'life with foster-father.'"[294] However, this idealised "life with foster-father" continually fades out, to reveal the traces of a less satisfactory family relationship.[295] Despite Kim's apparently vital connection to this idealised "father", for example, it is also noted that Kim's father "seemed remote and veiled with an enigmatic sadness."[296] Beneath the creation of the ideal foster-father lies the far more ambivalent relationship towards father-figures suggested by Leslie Fiedler in *Love and Death in the American Novel*. His archetype, it will be recalled, feels "revulsion" for his "real father", who is perceived to be "brutal or ineffectual or effete".[297]

Kim's rejection of the conventional father-figure is based around two main

points. Firstly, the father is perceived as being ineffectual. For example, when Kim returns to his father's house, and tells him that he has learnt to fly, his father tells him "sadly" that they possess "no such powers, my son".[298] In "Astronaut's Return", one of the short prose pieces in *Exterminator!*, there is another version of this dream sequence.[299] Peter, the protagonist of the story, walking along a road with his father, rises "thirty feet in the air" and begins to fly, hoping to "surprise his family", but his father "only looked sad knowing that Peter would not stay now".[300] Peter also recalls being "torn and lacerated" by the "falls brambles and cuts of his childhood", and his father treating the cuts with iodine.[301] Peter's "indifference" to the "stings", his refusal to "play the old game of 'ouch'", was a "final sentence of separation."[302]

Secondly, the father has only a broken connection to primacy. In *The Place of Dead Roads*, Kim remembers his "father" pointing "to Betelgeuse in the night sky over Saint Louis".[303] Again, this is an echo of another, earlier dream sequence, included in Burroughs' childhood reminiscence, "Cobblestone Gardens" (1970), in which the father is again imagined pointing "to Betelgeuse in the night sky."[304] Olson, writing about Melville, claimed that Melville had a "pull to the origin of things, the first day, the first man, the unknown sea, Betelgeuse, the buried continent."[305] The father is, then, gesturing towards a point of origin. This memory takes place, however, in a "darkening backyard", sometime, somewhere, "Far away".[306] His father's "kind unhappy face", his "silver smile", has faded like an old flickering movie.[307] The "bungalow" is "ghostly".[308] From here, the syntax of the sentences is cut up, as if to reflect the grainy quality of old film. Images repeat themselves, but retarded each time. The first image, of the father pointing towards Betelgeuse, recurs, but in the reiteration of the first sentence, his father "points" not to Betelgeuse, but "to a gray crippled hand".[309] A dash precedes the next image of the "dusty 19th century antiques", as if his father also now points towards an image of a static past.[310] Another

dash precedes the words: "Too late. Over from Cobblestone Gardens."[311] The father seems to gesture towards Betelgeuse, towards space, but in fact points only to a "gray crippled hand", an image which suggests his own inability to make the connection with primacy.[312]

The psychological dynamic in *The Place of Dead Roads* is similar to that presented in Olson's reading of Melville in *Call me Ishmael*. Olson claimed the "ethic" of Melville was "mythic", since Melville thought himself an "exile" from the "paradise" of "Space."[313] Space is also Kim's intended destination. Burroughs, in his essay "'It is Necessary to Travel...'", describes space as "the new frontier", comparing it with the "vast frontier of unknown seas" explored by the fifteenth-century white European explorers.[314] In *The Place of Dead Roads*, Kim relates the movement into space to "moving westward", and claims that heading west ensures that one is "definitely a jump or a tick ahead of something ... the Blackout ... the countdown ... or the sheer, shining color of police".[315] The frontier invoked here promises escape from the entanglements, repetitions and horrors of the past.

According to Olson, in order to "acquire the lost dimension of space", Melville, through Ahab, declared himself "the rival of earth, air, fire and water."[316] So, too, Burroughs, through Kim, who thinks of himself in equally archetypal terms: "the Prince deprived of his birthright."[317] Kim "intends to become a god, to shoot his way to immortality".[318] In his pursuit of "immortality", Kim comes to resemble Ahab. Ahab contends that all "visible objects" are just "pasteboard masks", and behind this false veneer, the "unreasoning mask", Ahab perceives an "unknown but still reasoning thing".[319] Similarly, Kim claims, as Burroughs has often done, that human reality is "prerecorded and prefilmed".[320] Kim's mission is, therefore, an assault on the "master film", and "One hole is all it takes. With the right kind of bullet."[321] Ahab, likewise, demands that "man" should "strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner

reach outside except by thrusting through the wall?"[322] This scenario is at the centre of a surreal sequence towards the beginning of *The Place of Dead Roads*, in which Kim shoots a "hole in the sky" in defiance of the "spurious old father figures" who "rush on stage" and try to stop him.[323] "YOU'RE DESTROYING THE UNIVERSE", they shout, appalled, but Kim tells them that he is "No son of yours, you worthless old farts", before lifting his gun.[324] The "prerecorded and prefilmed" nature of the reality Kim is shooting into is suggested by the nostalgic tune that accompanies the scene: "It's only a paper moon [/] Flying over a muslin tree."[325] The narcissism inherent in Kim's mission is subtly suggested: Kim is described as having the "ambiguous marble smile of a Greek youth", a smile which is "smiling" at the reflection of "his own archaic smile."[326] As with Lee's glance in the mirror in "The Finger", and his adoption of the "supercilious mask of the eighteenth century dandy", these references to what Freud termed "primary narcissism" suggest a sublimated version of the infantile relationship to the mother.[327] The space lost and now longed for is therefore the "limitless space-time" of "uterine space", which Françoise Collins argues is the submerged location of Burroughs' fiction.[328]

The roots of Kim's instigatory acts of violence, however, are also linked to his father. At the age of twelve, Kim was "allowed to shoot his father's 36 cap-and-ball revolver."[329] Hitting the target "six times", Kim feels "death in his hands" and his "boy grin" lights up," dazzling, radiant, portentous as a comet, smelling immortality in powder smoke."[330] The use of a gun, then, allows Kim contact with "immortality", to feel contact with "death", and therefore to control life.[331] It also provides a feeling of safety, and Kim admits to his Uncle Kes that his "idea of heaven" is feeling "safer".[332] These are qualities that, as we have previously suggested, are more associated with the mother than the father. The link between the "foster-father" and the use of guns echoes Christoph Haizmann, Freud's eighteenth century painter, who summoned up a

devil which Freud explained as being a "substitute" for his "father", to help him regain his art.[333] Likewise, Burroughs' own recent painting technique, shotgun art, employs a gun, the ultimate symbol of phallic aggression. Burroughs uses a "shotgun blast" to hit "a pressurised spray paint" which is placed "in front" of a "plywood panel."[334]

Given the memory of Joan Burroughs' shooting, this technique has disturbing undertones, as if Burroughs were reenacting his own horrifying need to control. However, Burroughs' aim in practicing "shotgun art" is, paradoxically, not control, but the lack of control. He describes the technique as "an extension of the random principle since it's really practically impossible to foresee for yourself what will happen."[335] The burst of paint on the canvas, with colours mixed into each other, is to Burroughs the introduction of the "unknown, the unpredictable, the uncontrollable" into a "pre-recorded" universe.[336] He even speaks, with the innocence of a small child, of "releasing the little spirits" that have been "compacted into the layers of the wood".[337] It is as if Burroughs, like Freud's painter, requires a masculine devil, represented by the "shot-gun", to retrieve the memory of his own innocence, lost forever with the lost relationship to the mother. In *Visual and Other Pleasures* (1989) Laura Mulvey argues that greater attention should be paid to the "threat embodied" by the "primal, pre-Oedipal father".[338] Mulvey speculates that the shaky "repression" of this figure has ensured that "culture continues to be tinged with violence and institutions that claim to be guardians of the law and defence against chaos are maintained by the violence that lies behind patriarchal authority."[339] While Mulvey argues that the threat posed by the "pre-Oedipal father" is even greater than that posed by Kristeva's unspeakable and boundaryless pre-Oedipal mother, it is also useful to note the close links between these two figures, as suggested by the child-like innocence with which Burroughs describes his violent form of painting.[340] The "devil", the "ugly spirit", is therefore not only a father substitute, but also a mother substitute,

echoing the devil who appears before Christoph Haizmann with markedly maternal characteristics.

III: My Education: A Book of Dreams

My Education: A Book of Dreams, if it is to be Burroughs' last full-length project, is a fitting conclusion to his work. With its rich strata of dream material, it lays bare the subterranean mechanisms of Burroughs' fiction. It allows the reader to peep behind the Wizard of Oz's curtains at the distinctly human figure behind them. It does not therefore reveal the true "William Burroughs", of course: the text remains a performance, a means to conceal as well as reveal. However, the performance here is less frenzied. It represents, amongst the twists and turns of its subject matter, a return to Burroughs' past, and a re-negotiation of the events fictionalised in his early fictions.

Parallel to this investigation of *My Education*, the manner in which Burroughs represents frontiers will be compared with the representations found in the writing of Melville and Gloria Anzaldúa. The purpose is to discern whether Burroughs escapes, resolves or perpetuates the destructive dynamics that have always formed part of white American perspectives on the frontier. Initially, the positive possibilities of frontier mythologies, including Burroughs', will be examined, with particular regard to conceptions of identity, that are ably represented by Melville's Ishmael.

The Frontier Self

As Carolyn Potter writes, in *Moby Dick*, Melville created a narrator whose voice took up "residence *at* the boundary, occupying the marginal space between the familiar and the unknown".[341] "In other words", Potter continues, "the boundary itself is the locus of Ishmael's narrative voice."[342] It is his marginalized status that saves him at the climax of the book. Ishmael, "*floating on the margin of the ensuing scene*", is in "*full sight*" of the Pequod as it descends into the "*closing vortex*".[343] By the time he has reached the "*vortex*", however, it has "subsided to a creamy pool."[344] Ishmael's

survival, therefore, is linked to his relative detachment from the book's main narrative. Ishmael's detachment from the main narrative is by no means complete: he acknowledges, following Ahab's address to the crew, that his "shouts had gone up with the rest" of the whalers, that "Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine."[345] However, Ishmael reaches a crisis point, in "The Try-Works" chapter, in which he separates himself, in so far as it is possible for a member of the Pequod's crew, from the Pequod's destructive mission.

In "The Try-Works", the burning of the whale blubber on board the Pequod turns the ship into the "counterpart" of its "monomaniac commander's soul": "freighted with savages, and laden with fire, and burning a corpse, and plunging into that blackness of darkness".[346] Ishmael suddenly awakes from a "brief standing sleep", brought on by the "unnatural hallucination of the night", and only just manages to "prevent" the Pequod "from flying up into the wind, and very probably capsizing her."[347] Shocked by his experience, Ishmael issues a warning: "Look not too long in the face of fire, O man!"[348] The "redness" of the "artificial fire", he argues, "will make all things look ghastly", while the "natural sun", the "only true lamp", will "show" the world in "a far other, at least gentler, relief".[349] Ishmael does not end here, however. He also acknowledges that the "true lamp" of the "sun" cannot hide the sadness and terror of life: it does not "dodge hospitals and jails", "graveyards" and "hell".[350] Ishmael sums up his position by using the metaphor of the "Catskill eagle" that "can alike dive down into the blackest gorges, and soar out of them again and become invisible in the sunny spaces."[351] In the terms offered by Alfred Korzybksi's *Science and Sanity*, Ahab uses "'either-or', inflexible, dogmatic orientations", while Ishmael uses "degree orientations".[352] Ahab's world view is based on "Static, finalistic '*allness*'", with a "finite number of characteristic attitudes", Ishmael's on "Dynamic *non-allness*", with an "infinite number of characteristic attitudes."[353] In his refusal to

finally locate himself, or to finally fix his identity, Ishmael is one, to quote Melville's famous letter to Hawthorne, of the "men who say *no*", who "cross the frontiers into Eternity with nothing but a carpet bag".[354] The reduction of identity to this bare minimum, the "carpet bag" as opposed to the "heaps of baggage" carried by the "yes-men", is, as has been suggested, an important dynamic in Burroughs' writing.[355] Burroughs' essays in *The Adding Machine* present the positive possibilities of the unfixed self. In "Immortality", for example, Burroughs argues that it is the "illusion of a separate inviolable identity" that "limits" our "perceptions and confines" us "in time."[356] In "My Own Business", Burroughs suggests that dogmatic, self-righteous assertions, the sound of a fixed self declaring its limits, are caused by a "virus parasite", which Burroughs terms the "RIGHT virus".[357] The fixed self constructs itself with reference to, for example, nations, and religious movements, or to family structures. In "It is Necessary to Travel", however, Burroughs argues that the next generation of pioneers "must learn to exist with no religion, no country, no allies."[358] "With the RIGHT virus offset", Burroughs argues, "perhaps we can get the whole show out of the barnyard and into space."[359] Or, as Melville wrote of the "yes-gentry": "damn them! they will never get through to the Custom House."[360]

Ishmael's escape at the very close of *Moby Dick* raises the question: what does it mean to survive Ahab's quest for the white whale? Melville's epic narrative is suggestive of a number of different historical transitions. In Ann Douglas' account, Ahab becomes "a kind of cultural throwback" to Calvinism, and Ishmael, with his "utter lack of cultural roots", survives by understanding and accepting the historical legacy that Ahab represents.[361] Edward Said, in *Culture and Imperialism*, presents Ahab as the "allegorical representation of the American world quest", and his voyage as a microcosm of white American territorial expansion.[362] Said does not discuss the meaning of the conclusion to *Moby Dick*, since he prefers to find meaning in the on-

going white American imperialist quest rather than its end: he relates the depiction in *Moby Dick* of the "American empire preparing [...] to take after an imputed evil" to the United States involvement in the Gulf War.[363] Neither does Said discuss the novel's survivor, although the "exilic wanderer" he proposes elsewhere, who can cross into "forbidden territory with sympathetic adaptation rather than stubborn assertions of identity", bears considerable relation to Ishmael.[364] His "sympathetic adaptation" in the face of otherness can be perceived in his relationship with Queequeg, which forms a counterpoint to his relation to Ahab, and is vital to his survival.[365]

D.H. Lawrence's reading of *Moby Dick* extends the novel's meaning to encompass the apocalyptic demise of the "great white epoch": the sinking of the Pequod becomes the sinking of the "white American soul."[366] After the "last ghastly hunt", in Lawrence's view, came "Post-mortem effects".[367] What Lawrence termed post-mortem effects, other critics have termed postmodern effects: Robert Holton, in his essay "Keroauc Among the Fellahin", expresses the "sense that there is a finite amount of reality in white America, and that it is being consumed too rapidly by the culture industry", leaving only "empty signifiers such as Wild West Days" to "remind people of their relation to a past whose specificity will have utterly disappeared."[368] The process of the transcription of "reality into depthless signifiers" and "simulacra" can be discerned, as Patricia Limerick suggests, in the supposed reenactment of frontier life in Disney's "Frontierland".[369] Promising "authentic Native Americans" to paddle canoes carrying guests around the theme area, Disneyland "recruited employees from southwestern tribes" who, coming from a "desert" environment, had to be taught to use the canoes by Disneyland's white employees.[370]

Lawrence is careful to stress that the demise of the Pequod was the demise of the American "soul": the American "bodies", however, could "rise again" to continue every-day life, although "without souls."[371] Burroughs' later fictions show signs of

these post-mortem or post-modern effects. In *The Western Lands*, Burroughs' final protagonist, his last fictional hero in the desperate search for immortality, Joe the Dead, wanders around his house, exhaling a "sound of almost unbearable pain" from his lips.[372] In the answer to the question "What is wrong?", we are told that Joe does not have "any position from which anything can be seen as right."[373] This means he cannot "conceive of a way out", since "he has no place to leave from."[374] His "self" is "crumbling away to shreds and tatters, bits of old song, stray quotations, fleeting spurts of purpose and direction sputtering out to nothing and nowhere".[375] Joe, echoing Lawrence's vision of white America, is "like a body deserted at death by one soul after the other."[376] Appropriately, *My Education*, the book that followed *The Western Lands*, has very little narrative momentum, and there is no continuously present protagonist, whose adventures can be followed from page to page. Kim, anti-hero of *The Place of Dead Roads*, whose pursuit of immortality provided considerable narrative propulsion, has gone. In the opening pages of *The Western Lands*, he is described as the "escape child of a frightened old man", a "heartless" figure "striking histrionic poses on the buckling deck of a doomed planet", who reflects a "flawed unbearable boy image in an empty mirror."[377] His replacement, Joe the Dead, fades out with *The Western Lands*, and is never referred to in *My Education*. The text itself, however, composed as it is of "shreds and tatters, bits of old song" and "stray quotations", bears the faint marks left behind by Joe's disappearance.[378]

However, it is not accurate to suggest that *My Education* has no narrative momentum, since the book enacts a similar narrative movement to all Burroughs' writing: the movement towards the frontier. In this context, the frontier is the Western Lands, a destination for which a number of different, but interrelated, associations are made. In *The Western Lands*, for example, the search for immortality is compared to the exploration of the seas: the "Old World mariners" had "suddenly glimpsed a round

Earth to be circumnavigated and mapped", as "awakened pilgrims" now caught "hungry flashes of vast areas beyond Death to be created and discovered and charted".[379] The Western Lands is therefore associated with the "kingdom of death", the "underworld", which as Richard Slotkin notes, has been connected with westward movement from the time of the "Old World mariners" and before.[380] The Western Lands are also described as a "land of dreams",[381] echoing Slotkin's association of the West with "dreams" and the "unconscious".[382] The extraordinary propulsion of Kim's mission towards the Western Lands does continue in *My Education*, since many of the dreams recounted are set in "The Land of the Dead".[383] The mission continues, however, in far more fragmented form.[384]

The purpose behind the recording of the multitude of dream-fragments found in *My Education* once again reveals the author's pioneering tendencies and the wish to escape the pull of the past, which haunts him even in the land of the dead. According to Burroughs, the "conventional dream," as "approved by the psychoanalyst," is limited by the "dreamer's waking life, the people and places that he knows, his desires, wishes, and obsessions."[385] Such dreams, in Burroughs' account, "radiate a special disinterest."[386] The "special dreams" that it is the book's purpose to present are lent a heightened reality by the presence of "unfamiliar scenes, places, personnel, even odors."[387] That is, they are unknown, unmapped territory. What emerges, however, from the endless juxtaposition of dream-fragments in *My Education* is not an unfixed self, free from the pull of past conditioning, exploring unmapped territory. Instead, the vast majority of the book is made up of dreams of familiar "scenes, places, personnel": old territory.[388] Indeed, Burroughs describes the land of the dead, populated by familiar ghosts from Burroughs' life, and set in "three or four blocks" of familiar city-scape, as a "dreary claustrophobic area".[389]

As has already been noted, Robin Lydenberg, in *Word Cultures*, links

Burroughs to the "high tech utopia of desire envisioned in *Anti-Oedipus*", in which there are "no fixed identities or totalities which might impose a hierarchy or a center."[390] In Lydenberg's account of Deleuze and Guattari's work, the "free and uncertain subject", liberated by "schizoanalysis", can escape "the claustrophobic enclosure of the family to pursue nomadic wanderings in an uncertain wilderness."[391] In *Anti-Oedipus*, however, Delueze and Guattari acknowledge that while the male writers they refer to, including Ginsberg and Kerouac, knew "how to leave, to scramble the codes, to cause flows to circulate", and managed to "overcome a limit", they "fail to complete the process, they never cease failing to do so."[392] The "neurotic impulse again closes - the daddy-mommy of oedipalization".[393] The dreams presented in *My Education* suggest that these observations can also applied to Burroughs, since they are not free of the "daddy-mommy" of the Freudian family romance. Indeed, as Burroughs' writing through the "Interzone" period returned compulsively to a primal scenario, the exact meaning of which continually shifted, so too do the dream fragments recorded here. So frequently do these dreams lead back to Burroughs' childhood locations that the reader is provided, early in the book, with a verbal map of the house at Price Road, the "large house" in the "suburbs" referred to in the Prologue to *Junky*.[394]

In the following section, one representative dream sequence from *My Education,* located at the "house at Price Road", will be examined.[395] Present at the house is a "figure in a black monk's caul", a figure of fear.[396] The response of the protagonist in the dream is to walk towards the figure and to attempt to grab its wrist, upon which the figure "slips back down the back stairs."[397] The protagonist then calls out for his mother, but is unable to "get the words out."[398] Retreating into his room once more, the protagonist notices a "light on in the bathroom" and calls out again to his mother.[399] Here the dream stops, and a "Herr Professor", a mock Freudian analyst,

delivers his verdict: "It is coming up from the basement of the mind. Up from the Id ... the Unconscious."[400] This "obvious point", however, does not help identify the "figure", who has "appeared before in dreams," leaving the protagonist "paralyzed with fear so that I cannot even cry out."[401] The dream is typical of others in *My Education* in two key ways. Firstly, the presence of the mother should be noted. In this dream, she is not actually located, but, as in many of the childhood dreams, she is powerfully present, if off-stage, echoing her powerful, yet invisible presence in "Driving Lesson". Many of the dreams in *My Education* record a close, but curiously tense relation to the mother, minor dramas of affection and fear. In one dream, again set in "the house at Price Road", the protagonist tries, unsuccessfully, "to lumber a boy past Mother."[402] Mother tells the protagonist that he is "the typical agent."[403] A further "Price Road" dream involves the protagonist embracing his Mother and telling "her I love her."[404] In another dream, the protagonist laughs and is accused of "laughing at Mother. Fear in the dark room."[405]

The second recurrent aspect of these dreams is the presence of the frightening intruder. This pattern in introduced by a dream in which the protagonist has the sense that the "old family ghost is in the front room".[406] He asks himself, at the dream's conclusion, who the ghost is, and how can he "distance" himself and "confront it?"[407] Other dreams in *My Education* record his presence: the protagonist wakes up to "find someone in bed with me", and sees his "ugly wooden face."[408] In another, similar dream, a "stranger" enters the room, moving "with a strange gliding motion", leaving the protagonist "paralyzed by fear."[409] If the room is understood as a symbol of the protagonist's identity, the psychological dynamic causing the dreams becomes clearer. The problematic, but close, relationship to the mother has already been noted: while she is always nearby, and is heard speaking, she is never actually seen. The father, however, seems even more absent. He appears in a small number of the dreams, but

he does not play a major role. However, the "old family ghost"[410], the frightening figure from the "basement of the mind",[411] reminds us of the "Ugly Spirit" that Burroughs has evoked in his introduction to *Queer*. (*Queer*/18) In this context, it is tempting to recall Freud's judgment on the devil that haunts the painter Christoph Haizmann: the devil is a "substitute for the father" that Haizmann had lost.[412] However, the "Ugly Spirit", if it is a substitute for the lost father, is a terrifying one. In *The Place of Dead Roads*, Kim, pondering on the meaning of the story of the Hounds of Tindalos, expresses his horror of the "bloody hounds", and helplessly calls out, like the protagonist of the dreams in *My Education*: "Mother, save me from the hounds".[413] From the psychoanalytical perspective suggested by Laura Mulvey, the "primal, pre-Oedipal father", symbolized by the intruder and the hounds, causes the protagonist to wish for his mother's protection.[414] Therefore the protagonist occupies a position of close, though extremely problematic, proximity to the mother.

This position is further suggested by two dreams, closely related in content, that are recorded in *The Cat Inside* (1986) and *My Education*. In both dreams the location is in "an oval cul-de-sac at the end of a long soft tunnel."[415] At "the far end of this chamber" is the womb, which has a "strong magnetic pull."[416] In both dreams there are also "archetypical dog packs"[417], echoing the terrible hounds, who "have been released in the tunnel to force us back into the womb."[418] The relationship to the "womb" is strongly ambivalent, echoing the ambivalence of the relationship to the mother in the "Price Road" dreams: its "strong magnetic pull" is a threat, and if the protagonist gets "too close", he will be pulled back "into" it.[419] While the protagonist can "wrench free" of the womb's "pull", he still must face the hounds. In *The Cat Inside*, the hounds are linked to "Ugly, senseless, hysterical hatred [...] in animals or people."[420] Allen Ginsberg is present in both dreams, in *My Education* with a "nosebleed",[421] and in *The Cat Inside* singing a mantra: "Closing that old Womb Door, don't wanna go back no

more."[422] In neither dream, however, is an escape route found, nor is the vicious circle of contradictory impulses resolved.

This vicious circle, which, as has been suggested at some length in this thesis, is central to Burroughs' writing, is analogous to the basic struggle that Richard Slotkin claims underwrites American frontier mythology: the "psychological tension" between "passivity and absorption in the mother", and the father's world of "activity and responsibility".[423] Leslie Fiedler, in *Love and Death in the American Novel*, contends that the "quest" of American fiction is to "heal the breach" between the binary oppositions presented by Slotkin: "consciousness and unconsciousness, reason and impulse, society and nature."[424] The oppositions in Burroughs' dreams are somewhat more complex than Fiedler suggests: the father, as "ugly spirit", is, as has been noted, closely associated with the "Unconscious", supposedly the domain of the mother.[425] However, it can nonetheless be argued that the psychological dynamic implicit in Burroughs' dreams of his childhood home does not suggest a healing of the breach. Rather, they recall the powerlessness of a small, frightened child, afraid of the dark, haunted by a "supernatural horror" that seems "always on the point of taking shape" (*Junky*/xi). In this sense, Burroughs' adult perception of evil reprises his perception of evil as a child.[426]

My Education also continues, in fragmented form, a related, aspect of Kim's search for immortality, as depicted in *The Place of Dead Roads*. Kim had theorised that the Western Lands could only be reached by the "contact of two males", in which the "myth of duality is exploded and the initiates can realizes their natural state."[427] In *My Education*, there are a number of dreams in which the protagonist attempts to enter "a room where no females are allowed", a "permanent location" in which "the whole male/female world" is left behind "forever."[428] However, when, in a dream, the protagonist attempts to walk into a "room in which no females are allowed", he hears

"female voices saying they do not agree" to his "departure."[429] Ironically, for a text which is so concerned with leaving women behind, the dreams in *My Education* are populated by a large number of female characters. In the opening dream of *My Education*, for example, the protagonist is in an airport. There is a "gray woman" at a desk, "with the cold waxen face of an intergalactic bureaucrat."[430] When the protagonist goes up to the desk, the woman tells him: "You haven't had your education yet."[431] In another dream, the protagonist is informed that "some woman named Pollyanna will come the following day at 7:00pm to the Bunker kitchen, to 'educate me in revolutionary theory and practice.'"[432] There is also a set of related dreams in *My Education* in which the protagonist is confronted by an other self who claims to be his "other half".[433] For example, a character in one dream says "I am a woman who looks like a man. I am your dead self."[434] The protagonist is left to ponder who, or what, "this dead self" is, and whether he is a "woman or a man".[435] In another dream, a copy of R.D. Laing's *The Divided Self* is left "on the breakfast table", and the protagonist turns to "the story of David, an eighteen-year-old patient with a compulsion to act out female roles in front of a mirror."[436]

Burroughs also refers, towards the close of *My Education*, to his own "need to be needed".[437] He wonders why he cannot "face and eliminate this abject need".[438] As Oliver Harris notes, Burroughs' routines and letters had "served as emissaries seeking the [...] recognition of some 'great Camerado'", or, in Alan Ansen's words, the "perfectly spontaneous, perfectly responsive companion".[439] The wish for the perfect companion recalls D.H. Lawrence's observations on Melville in *Studies in Classic American Literature*: "to the end [Melville] pined for this: a perfect relationship; perfect mating; perfect mutual understanding. A perfect friend. Right to the end he could never accept the fact that *perfect* relationships cannot be."[440] Allen Ginsberg observed that, in intimate sexual situations, Burroughs underwent an "amazing

transformation" from being a "reserved, sardonic, masculine man" to become a "gushing, ecstatic, passionate woman": a "mushily romantic, vulnerably whimpering female persona".[441] Given this unacknowledged element to Burroughs' personality, the protagonist's uncertainty about whether he/she is a "man or a woman", and the reference to acting out "female roles in front of a mirror", can be tentatively placed in an autobiographical context.[442] Perhaps this "passionate woman", then, is the "dead self" that the protagonist refers to, the other William Burroughs who has been repressed, regarded as a liability, but who nonetheless returns.[443]

This inner duality suggests the extent to which Burroughs, who, according to Ted Morgan, contained within himself "the personalities of both sexes", was split by the bifurcations of American culture.[444] Melville also expressed the dismay and yearning caused by his own bifurcation in "After the Pleasure Party": "Why hast thou made us but in halves - [/] Co-relatives? It makes us slaves. [/] If these co-relatives never meet [/] Selfhood itself seems incomplete."[445] As Joseph A. Boone suggests, Melville's expressed wish to "remake" himself signals an "inner journey toward a redefinition of self that defies social convention and sexual categorization."[446] However, in *My Education*, Burroughs claims that, in his own case, "no solution is possible" for this bifurcation, since "the split here is too profound for mending."[447] He quotes De Quincey: "a chorus of female voices singing 'Everlasting farewells.'"[448] However, if Burroughs' other half is a "passionate woman", then such "farewells" are surely wishful thinking.[449] Despite Burroughs' own attempts to repress his own femininity, his writing nonetheless presents us with it, if in sublimated form. This process of simultaneous denial and recovery echoes the split Ann Douglas perceived in Hart Crane: the Ishmaelian attempt to "transmember, or reconstitute", what the Ahabian self has "dismembered."[450]

Ties to the World

The Ishmaelian unfixed self risks not only stasis and the absence of meaning, but also profound isolation and loneliness. In *Moby Dick*, however, under Queequeg's expert tutelage, Ishmael begins to understand his profound ties to the world. In "The Grand Armada" sequence, watching the "enchanted pond" of nursing whales, Ishmael announces that, in "the tornadoed Atlantic" of his "being", he feels, "deep down and deep inland", an "eternal mildness of joy."[451] In another therapeutic sequence, in "A Squeeze of the Hand", Ishmael bathes his "hands" in the "soft, gentle globules" of whale spermaceti, imagining that he was cleansing himself in the "very milk and sperm of kindness."[452] This understanding of "kindness" links, not separates, Ishmael with his fellow isolatoes. He senses, in direct opposition to Ahab, that "man must eventually lower, or at least shift, his conceit of attainable felicity", so that it is placed not in "the intellect or the fancy", but in "the wife, the heart, the bed, the table, the saddle, the fireside, the country".[453] The unfixed self, then, is not necessarily an exploded or decentred self. Such links to the world, however, seem very distant, if present at all, in the truncated flicker of Burroughs' cut-up novels. In *The Ticket That Exploded* (1962), for example, the reader is told that "There are no good relationships - There are no good words -"[454]

There are, however, signs of a distinct shift in perspective in Burroughs' later writing, the blossoming of a long suppressed tenderness, and an increasing concern for, and negotiation of, the past, both personal and collective.[455] This shift in Burroughs later writing has, perhaps not coincidentally, occurred in parallel with the release of unpublished material written by Burroughs in the 1950s: *Letters to Allen*

Ginsberg 1953-1957 in 1981, *Queer* in 1985, *Interzone* in 1989, and *The Letters of William S. Burroughs 1945-1959* in 1992.[456] The reemergence of this old material, perhaps *Queer* especially, takes us back to the events of Burroughs' life that had caused Burroughs to become a writer in the first place. There are also clear signs that Burroughs has been reassessing these events. In his curiously detached introduction to *Letters to Allen Ginsberg*, Burroughs claimed that leafing through his own letters written during the fifties gave him the "ghostly sensation of being called upon to comment on someone else's old literary letters".[457] He views his own letters from a considerable distance, and views himself, as he had done several times before, in the third person: the old letters constituted, he felt the "ancient saga of the moaning man of letters".[458] Burroughs, in constructing his introduction, interspersed snippets from his own letters with quotes from letters written by F.Scott Fitzgerald and Coleridge, whines of complaint at mounting addictions and the threat of isolation, as if the letters of writers were somehow interchangeable. By contrast, Burroughs' reading of *Queer* allowed its author no such sense of amused detachment: "I glance at the manuscript of *Queer*", he writes, "and I feel that I simply can't read it. My past was a poisoned river from which one feels fortunate to escape, and by which one feels immediately threatened, years after the events recorded." (*Queer*/14)

The dynamic of remembrance and regret in Burroughs' writing suggests its relation with that, for example, of Thomas McGuane or William Kittredge. Clearly, there are important points of distinction to be made here: McGuane and Kittredge write about the after-effects of white American frontier mythology on the American West, Burroughs writes about the frontier in Space. The former writers are explicitly rooted in American history, the latter explicitly is keen to escape from all history. However, these writers, disparate in terms of style and attitude, share the same basic subject matter: the anxiety of inheritance. All three writers, to quote McGuane's back-

cover testimony for Kittredge's *Hole in the Sky* (1992), are the children "of the people who conquered the land"[459], and the inheritance they are forced to negotiate is closely linked to the "American tycoon", the "ugly American".[460] While McGuane writes about the American West, many of his characters also exist in a limbo-like space, disconnected from the world around them. In *Keep the Change* (1990), for example, Joe Starling, who had "struck a void" and "no longer knew what he was doing", tries to explain his rootless wanderings across the continent by telling his grandparents that he has a "deal going with the space program".[461] There are, of course, distinct echoes here of Burroughs' own 'space' program, though in McGuane's novel, to be in space is to be dislocated, homeless. McGuane has acknowledged that his characters live in a world where the "adhesion of people to place has been lost", and that this sense of dislocation can be "just ruinous."[462] In *Beyond the Frontier*, Harold Simonson argues that the most recent generation of writers in the America West, including McGuane and Kittredge, have attempted to reestablish, or perhaps more accurately to begin, a relationship with their immediate environment based on mutuality. Kittredge, in *Hole in the Sky*, claims that "we cannot live [...] without connection both psychic and physical, and we die of pointlessness when we are isolated, even if some of us can hang on for a long while connected to nothing but our imagination."[463] Simonson, drawing on Lawrence's emphasis in *Studies in Classic American Literature* on the spirit of the place, describes this "sense of place" as "ontological orientation."[464] "We call", Simonson writes, "such a place home."[465] As has already been suggested, Burroughs' fiction is more concerned with ontological disorientation, and the denial of a place to call home. In *My Education*, Burroughs draws attention to the "basic misconception" he finds in Ted Morgan's *Literary Outlaw*.[466] To "be an outlaw", Burroughs explains, "you must first have a base in law to reject and get out of. I never had a place I could call home that meant any more than a key to a house, apartment, or

hotel room."[467] There are distinct echoes here of the "*Biographical* Note on William Seward Burroughs", with its haunting final line: "And never the hope of ground that is yours".[468]

However, Burroughs' later work has seen a subtle shift in tone. As Robin Lydenberg writes of *The Western Lands*, "creativity is no longer depicted as violent aggression, sexual exhilaration or hallucinatory fantasy", but now has "a peculiarly domestic, almost maternal quality."[469] Two of Burroughs' recent shorter works, *The Cat Inside* and *Ghost of Chance*, suggest the extraordinary innocence and tenderness, and indeed sentimentality, that Burroughs had always managed, in the main, to protect from his readers. In *Queer*, Lee had "snuggled close" to Allerton's body, and felt a "deep tenderness" that "flowed out" at the "warm contact." (*Queer*/109) Clearly, Burroughs relationship with his cats provides a similar deep tenderness, a tenderness that seems overpowering, perhaps because it also seems underdeveloped. In *The Cat Inside*, for example, Burroughs recounts a dream in which he cuddles a "dream cat, with a very long neck and a body like a human fetus, gray and translucent".[470] The cat's resemblance to a "fetus" is suggestive, as if its tenderness is linked to its newness to the world.[471] In *Ghost of Chance*, where Burroughs' sense of innocence and wonder once again appears pre-lapsarian, he draws "a parallel" between the "rift" he claims is "built into the human organism", the separation between "the two hemispheres", and the "rift that divided Madagascar from the mainland of Africa."[472] While Madagascar "drifted into enchanted timeless innocence", Africa "moved inexorably towards language, time, tool use, weapon use, war, exploitation and slavery."[473] Captain Mission, the book's hero, finds traces of "enchanted timeless innocence" in his relationship with the lemurs of Madagascar: he watches the lemurs "gambol, leap and whisk away into the remote past before the arrival of man on this island, before the appearance of man on earth, before the beginning of time."[474] However, the *Ghost of*

Chance is an elegy to last moments: the innocence Captain Mission perceives is always on the verge of destruction or extinction. Mission's plan to set up a peaceful settlement in Madagascar is destroyed by Bradley Martin, representative of "language, time, tool use, weapon use, war, exploitation and slavery", the book's ugly spirit.[475]

In *Word Cultures*, Lydenberg argues that John Vernon's reading of Burroughs, which centres on "Burroughs' *reinforcement* of the polarities of hierarchical, binary thought", in fact projects the "binary grid" of Vernon's "own psychoanalytical" approach onto Burroughs' work.[476] However, Burroughs often does explicitly employ dualistic formulations in his writing. For example, in *Ghost of Chance* Burroughs describes the "rift" built into the "human organism" in physiological terms, as a split between the two brain hemispheres.[477] In a discussion with Victor Bockris, Burroughs proposed this physiological model as an alternative to the Freudian model of ego, superego and id, whereby the Freudian "unconscious" is replaced by the "nondominant brain hemisphere".[478] In his essay "Freud and the Unconscious", the "nondominant brain hemisphere" is linked to spatial thought and to creativity.[479] In *Ghost of Chance*, Burroughs suggests that "any attempt at synthesis must remain unrealizable in human terms."[480] It is hard to imagine a formulation more dualistic in character: that it is expressed in physiological, rather than psychological, terms only serves to harden the bifurcation into a fact of the "human organism".[481]

Burroughs' later work has seen a noticeable shift in aesthetic that is closely related to this dualistic formulation. Several critics have argued for a post-structualist approach to Burroughs' aesthetic. Robert Sobieszek, for examples, relates Burroughs' notion of pre-recordings to Barthes' claim that "what is left to the writer is no more than an activity of variation and combination",[482] and to Jean Baudrillard, who wrote, "by way of Walter Benjamin", that "the very definition of the real has become: *that of which it is possible to give an equivalent reproduction* ... The real is not only what can

be reproduced but *that which is already reproduced*."[483] However, Sobieszek also notes the "romantic" basis of Burroughs' aesthetic, "since he is utterly convinced there is a possibility of creating something with his painting that is not a reproduction, recording or copy."[484] Sobieszek quotes, in this context, Burroughs claim that all "serious and dedicated artists [...] attempt the miraculous: the creation of life."[485] In "The Retreat Diaries", Burroughs explains creativity as the explosion of the "unknown, the unpredictable and unexplainable" into the "totality of conscious existence", again reflecting an aesthetic at some remove from the poststructualist notion of the always already written text.[486]

This quasi-romantic aesthetic also has implications for political readings of Burroughs. In a discussion with Victor Bockris, Burroughs refused any explicitly political agenda for his writing, arguing against Susan Sontag's notion that writing emerges out of "some kind of objection or admonitory impulse":

> A great deal of my writing which I most identify with is not written out of any sort of objection at all, it's more poetic messages, the sad still music of humanity [...][487]

Duncan Wu, in his essay "Wordsworth in Space", notes the illusion to Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey", again suggestive of a romantic, rather than post-structualist aesthetic. Alongside Burroughs' insistence that a "verbal argument" will never lead anywhere "except in circles", this representation of his work as "poetic messages" inevitably problematises a direct politicization of his work.[488] His distrust of rational thought, and its effectiveness in political terms, does have precursors. As Michael Taussig notes in *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*, Walter Benjamin also did not "place much faith in facts and information in winning arguments, let alone class struggle", and argued instead that it was "necessary to act" in the "less conscious image realm and in the dreamworld of the popular imagination".[489] Richard Wolin describes Benjamin's belief that "dreams" were the "refuge for those desires and aspirations that are denied to humanity in material life", quoting Adorno's observation that, for Benjamin, "the dream becomes a medium of unregimented experience, a source of knowledge opposed to the stale superficiality of thinking."[490] However, as Wolin goes on to suggest, while the somewhat conflicted Benjamin did intermittently believe with Burroughs that the translation of "dream experience" into "reality" could "achieve" a "desired utopian end point", he was also concerned with "*awakening*" from this dream state.[491] In this other perspective, the "dream experience" becomes a "type of collective delusion - or better still: a 'spell' - from which humanity must be awoken": the "dream" being "history under capitalism".[492] Burroughs' late work seems more concerned with the reconstruction of a lost dream, an "enchanted moment",[493] "purple patches, time eddies by the side of the river."[494]

Frederick Nolan links Burroughs' work to the "nostalgic - and quintessentially American - notion of freedom as the discovery of an empty space, a place of innocence outside history where the fundamentally new and original may at last emerge".[495] This observation clarifies both his aesthetic, and his political positioning. For example, while Burroughs' concerns, in *Ghost of Chance* in particular, have widened to include ecological issues, his own version of ecology seems curiously abstract. The "lemurs" he eulogises in *Ghost of Chance* resemble symbols of lost innocence: the "black monkey" sings "a black song, a harsh melody of a blackness too pure to survive in time."[496] The only way Burroughs can imagine the return of this innocence is through a form of apocalypse. At the close of *Ghost of Chance*, he pictures the world thrown into "total chaos" by a series of plagues and viruses, causing deaths "by the millions."[497] The "Four Horsemen ride through ruined cities and neglected, weed-grown farms."[498] In the desolation caused by the plagues, the people at last return "to their source in spirit, back to the little lemur people of the trees and leaves, the streams, the rocks and the sky."[499] Before long, "all sign, all memory" of "wars" will "fade like dream traces."[500] Like Burroughs' "shot-gun blast" of colour, which "releases the little spirits compacted into the layers of wood"[501], the apocalypse which closes *Ghost of Chance* enacts a transformation of opposites, echoing Ahab's aggressive harpoon, which at the close of *Moby Dick* becomes an umbilical cord, linking him to the target of his rage, or Burroughs' own intimate transformation from "reserved sardonic man" into "gushing, ecstatic, passionate woman."[502]

In *Word Cultures*, Robin Lydenberg presents the "narrator" of *The Ticket That Exploded* bidding a "courageous goodbye to his lost innocence and youth, his dreams, his very self" in the piercingly beautiful sequence with which the main text concludes:[503]

I lived your life a long time ago ... sad shadow whistles across a distant

> sky ... *adiós* marks this long ago address ... didn't exist you understand ... ended ... stale dreams Billy ... worn out here ... tried to the end ... there is a film shut up in a bureau draw ... boy I was who never would be now ... a speck of light that seemed to catch all the light left on a dying star ... and suddenly I lost him ... my film ends ... I lost him long ago ... dying there ... light went out ... my film ends.[504]

Lydenberg is correct to see the sequence as an "alternation between the draw of nostalgia and the determination to maintain detached control."[505] The text certainly signals the impossibility of nostalgia's intentions to reconstruction a lost childhood: it is insisted, for example, that the yearned for singularity of self, the "boy I was who never would be now", "didn't exist".[506] As Steven Shaviro notes, the "nostalgia for a missing concreteness", which is "continually evoked in Burroughs' work", is undercut by its "radical affirmation of illusion", which "does not allow for any recovery". Nostalgia, Shaviro argues, "refers less to that which has been lost than to the repeated experience of loss itself" and is "predicated upon the very distance which it endeavours to overcome.[507] Yet in *The Ticket That Exploded* sequence, the replacement of this lost and yearned for "long ago address" by an "*adiós*" suggests that this moment of innocence "ended", that it may yet exist in the "film" which is "shut up in a bureau drawer".[508] Nostalgia may only lead to the "repeated experience of loss",[509] to a "worn out [...] film" rather than the moment itself, but its pull in Burroughs' writing is more profound and recurrent than Lydenberg or Shaviro suggest.[510] While Lydenberg argues that the "poetic quality" of Burroughs' "lyricism without sentimentality" signals "the courage to give up the self, to move beyond boundaries", her reading of Burroughs' very next work, *Nova Express*, refers to another "final leave-taking" from "sentimental gropings".[511] Given that Burroughs' later work is even more insistent in its recurrent reconstructions of lost innocence, it seems reasonable to conclude that his work demonstrates the impossibility of recreating the past, but also suggests that the pull of that past was never finally transcended.

1 R.D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience* and *The Bird of Paradise* (London: Penguin, 1967), 108. It should be emphasised that *Politics of Experience* is a singular text within Laing's work, and that its expressions of potential liberation through psychosis are not repeated in Laing's earlier and later work.
2 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 134.
3 Fiedler, *The Return of the Vanishing American*, 186.
4 Ibid., pp 186-7.
5 As has been already noted, Turner argued that at the frontier, the white colonist turned "native", planting "Indian corn", shouting the "war cry" and following the "Indian trail". Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", 201. Kerouac also wished to be a "Denver Mexican" or even a "poor overworked Jap". Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*, 180.
6 Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", pp. 201, 200.
7 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 176. See also Brent Wood, "William S. Burroughs and the Language of Cyberpunk", *Science-Fiction Studies* (Vol.23, 1996), Rob Latham, "Collage as Critique and Invention in the Fiction of William S. Burroughs", *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* (vol.5, 1993), and Robin Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, pp. 174-176. Lydenberg's account of the "free and uncertain subject" who escapes "the claustrophobic enclosure of the family to pursue nomadic wanderings in an uncertain wilderness" is particularly problematic. Where precisely is this "uncertain wilderness"? Is the "free and uncertain subject" homeless? Or in an institution? Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 176.
8 Burroughs, *Letters*, 334. Letter to Oct.13, 1956.
9 Burroughs' first reference to schizophrenia in his correspondence, for example, was a response to the "improvement" in the condition of Allen Ginsberg's mother, whose "mental condition was serious enough to warrant a prefrontal lobotomy." Ibid., 321. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated June 18, 1956 and Miles, *Ginsberg: A Biography*, 95. In fact, as Harris notes, Naomi Ginsberg had just died. Harris, footnote 18, *Letters*, 321. In her son's account of her mental illness, Naomi Ginsberg would claim that "there were wires in the ceiling listening to every word she said and reporting them back to President Roosevelt." The voices she would hear, transmitted along these wires, would tell her she was "a bad woman, a whore," and would order "their agent to kill her." Ginsberg's childhood experiences with his mother, Miles notes, left him with "an enormous empathy and tolerance for madness, neurosis and, psychosis": According to his secretary, Ginsberg would "go through the day's mail and, before dealing with the letters from academics and friends, read instead, with obvious relish and not a little anguish, one written in colored crayon on sixteen pages of torn note-book paper." Miles, *Ginsberg: A Biography*, pp.31, 25-6.
10 Burroughs, *Letters*, 128. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated June 4, 1952.
11 Burroughs did intermittently use the language of madness and sanity to describe his own states of mind. In a letter to Ginsberg, Burroughs claimed that his "disregard of social forms" was "approaching psychosis". Burroughs, *Letters*, 337. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.29, 1956. In a retrospective account in "Literary Autobiography", Burroughs, recalling the "very dim period" between 1954 and 1955, compared his return to the world to that of a "catatonic": "I can hardly see the words on a page from this distance. I remember one account of someone who came to, after being catatonic for 20 years in the back ward of a state insane asylum." Burroughs, "Literary Autobiography", Folio No. 110, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the William S. Burroughs Archive*, 77.
12 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 171.
13 Jardine, *Gynesis*, 88.
14 In a letter dated July 30, 1957, for example, Burroughs noted the "nightmare horror" of a "Turkish bath" in London which resembled "one of the more undesirable naborhoods of the Inferno". Burroughs, *Letters*, 361. Letter to Alan Ansen, dated July 30, 1957. By October 1957, Burroughs had introduced a "Turkish Bath" underneath his

increasingly expanded fictional "CITY", and described his work as a "sort of queer inferno". Ibid., 372. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.19, 1957. In Copenhagen, Burroughs provided another précis of his "Great Work", claiming only "Scandinavia could have catalyzed" the "larval" fragments of his writing into a "pattern." In this version, the primary subject of the novel is an "addicting virus that is passed from one person to another in sexual contacts." Ibid., 365. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated August 28, 1957.
15 Burroughs, *Letters*, 367. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept.20, 1957.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Allen Ginsberg, "Recollections of Burroughs Letters", *Letters to Allen Ginsberg 1953-1957*, 9.
19 Burroughs, *Letters*, 367. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept.20, 1957.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid. pp. 288-9. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.21, 1955.
22 Ibid., 369. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.8, 1957.
23 Ibid., 372. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.19, 1957. As Gérad-Georges Lemaire would observe of Burroughs' employment of the cut-up technique, the close relationship in *Naked Lunch* between Burroughs' "General Theory" and his creative output served as a "negation of the frontier that separates fiction from its theory." Gérard-Georges Lemaire, "23 Stitches Taken", *The Third Mind*, 18. Appropriately, then, this "General Theory" does not exist as a block of text in Burroughs' work, but related comments about the links between schizophrenia, addiction and cancer are scattered throughout *Naked Lunch*, and in particular can be found in the "Benway" section.
24 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 103.
25 Burroughs, *Letters*, 375. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.28, 1957.
26 Ibid., 367. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept.20, 1957.
27 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 105.
28 In the "Letter from a Master Addict to Dangerous Drugs", Burroughs notes that "drugs and methods of treatment", such as "antihistamines, tranquilizers, apomorphine" and "shock", that "give results in schizophrenia are also of some use in withdrawal." Burroughs, "Letter from a Master Addict to Dangerous Drugs", *Naked Lunch*, 195. In a footnote, Burroughs also notes that "Yage" contains "LSD6". Burroughs, footnote, "Letter from a Master Addict to Dangerous Drugs", *Naked Lunch*, 199.
29 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 109.
30 Burroughs, *Letters*, 375. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.28, 1957.
31 Ibid., 321. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated June 18, 1956. Burroughs wrote: "Convinced that it [schizophrenia] is as much a disease of disturbed metabolism as diabetes. In my opinion psychological treatment is not only worthless but absolutely contra-indicated, certainly while the disease process is in operation". Burroughs' theory was that "anxiety" produced "adrenaline" which in turn produced "histamine", and the adrenaline and histamine "break down into the S [schizophrenic] substance", which in turn produced more histamine and adrenaline. The schizophrenic substance was therefore produced as a response to the "metabolic products of anxiety." Ibid. This account does explain why Burroughs considered a psychological approach as inappropriate: it would not treat the physiological effects. The question it also raises, though, is what causes the anxiety in the first place. To this question, a psychological explanation still seems valid.
32 Ibid., 375. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.28, 1957.
33 Ibid.
34 In the opening section of *Naked Lunch*, a character called "The Vigilante" is described as having "copped out as a schizo possession case":

> "I was standing outside myself trying to stop those hangings with ghost fingers ... I am a ghost wanting what every ghost wants - a body - after the Long Time moving through odorless alleys of space where no life is only the colorless no smell of death [....]" Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, pp. 21-

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35 Burroughs, *Letters*, 375. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.28, 1957.
36 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 112.
37 Burroughs, *Letters*, 369. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.8, 1957.
38 Ibid. Burroughs explained to Ginsberg that he had "just experienced" the "emergence of my non-queer persona as a separate personality." This "separate personality" had emerged in a dream, in which Burroughs entered a room and saw himself as "an adolescent" who "looked" at him "with hate":

> I said "I don't seem to be exactly welcome," and he say: "Not welcome!!! I hate you!" And with good reason too. Suppose you had kept a non-queer young boy in a strait-jacket of flesh twenty five years subject to continual queer acts and talk? Would he love you? I think not. Ibid.

39 Burroughs, *Letters to Allen Ginsberg*, 190. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated August 1957.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 Jonathan Paul Eburne, "Trafficking in the Void: Burroughs, Kerouac and the Consumption of Otherness", *Modern Fiction Studies* (Spring 1997), 60.
43 In "The Examination", a link between bureaucracy and anxiety over sexual orientation is suggested by the opening sequence. On his way past the "Town Hall" Carl passes "sixty feet high" nude statues with "brass genitals", and catches the glance of a "homosexual American tourist", who "dropped his eyes and fumbled with the light filters of his Leica". Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 149.
44 Benway uses a mysterious telepathic technique on Carl, which leaves him feeling "suddenly trapped" as if he were in a "silent underwater cave of a room, cut off from all sources of warmth and certainty." Burroughs, *Naked Lunch* pp. 150-1.

In a letter to Ginsberg dated October 19, 1957, Burroughs enclosed an early version of "The Examination" that it is instructive to compare alongside the version in *Naked Lunch*. This brief sequence again suggests some relationship between Carl and Benway, and some relationship between Benway and the enforcement of homosexuality. In the same letter Burroughs described his recent work as a "sort of queer Inferno", and announced that he had "introduced a vast Turkish bath" underneath Interzone. Ibid., 372. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.19, 1957. It is this "Turkish bath", the symbolic "queer Inferno", that Carl descends into. Following a boy with "calm, clear young eyes", he walks past a series of nostalgically homosexual images, a mosaic featuring "Greek wrestlers" and a "discus thrower", which gives way to Burroughs' ubiquitous motifs of "Train whistles, smell of burning leaves, harmonica music", and to images of childhood homosexuality: "Two boys masturbate each other in swimming pool change cubicle - smell of chlorine on the hard, young flesh." Having traveled back into an fantasised past, the text cuts immediately to the "queer Inferno": Carl runs down a green-lit corridor, hearing the "bestial nuzzlings, whimpers, groans" of the "Turkish bath steam room". Carl then opens a "green door" that leads into "The Room", and sees his own body "lying on a straw pallet." The floor is "littered with dried excrement and crumpled shit-stained pages of bright color comics." Outside can be heard the "dry husking sound", the sound, of insects, another ominously familiar motif in Burroughs' writing, found also in the "Holy Man" dream. It is linked here, as elsewhere, to the terror of lust. Carl's body has been "eaten to the bone with the sores of rancid lust", and from it emerges a monstrous creature with a "purple suppurating ass-hole": "The thing is gibbering and whimpering in some vile phantom embrace. The abdomen swells to a great pink egg covered with veins. Inside, something black, legs and claws stirring." Having quickly reached its horrific climax in the Turkish bath, the narrative cuts again, to a soliloquy from Dr. Benway: "'The broken spirits of a thousand boys whimper through my dreams [...] "'Let me out. Let me out.' I can hear their boy images scream through the flesh. Always boy crying inside and the sullen averted boys' eyes and those who still love me, and say: "What have you done to me? Why did you do it? WHY??'" "Incidentally", Burroughs adds in a note to Ginsberg, "I know the 'why' now. But that is

getting ahead of the story." Clearly, Burroughs at this stage linked the resolution of his sexual uncertainties with the completion of his literary work. "In short" Burroughs told Ginsberg, "I am ready to deliver a complete novel", and presumably also the complete "story" of his homosexuality, "in a few months." Ibid., 373.
45 Burroughs, *Letters*, 375. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.28, 1957.
46 Ibid., 262. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Feb.7, 1955.
47 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 93. See Burroughs, *Dead Fingers Talk* [1963] (London: W.H. Allen, 1977), pp.7-29.
48 The presence of the superego is also discernible in *Junky*. When Lee, in the long drunken sequence towards the conclusion of *Junky*, confronts a cop in a bar, he does not see a "solid three-dimensional cop", but rather the "recurrent cop" of his dreams": an "irritating, nondescript darkish man" who rushes in "when I was about to take a shot or got to bed with a boy." Burroughs, *Junky*, 130.
49 Burroughs, *Letters*, 236. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Early Oct., 1954.
50 Ibid.
51 Burroughs' explanation to Jack Kerouac of his Chandlerseque "action story", with its link to the creation of an "anti-dream drug", had clarified the "allegorical" implications of 'Hauser and O'Brien' more thoroughly than the published text in *Naked Lunch*. Ibid., pp. 262, 267 . Letters to Allen Ginsberg, dated Feb.7, 1955, and to Jack Kerouac, dated Feb.12, 1955. This "allegorical" significance was somewhat obscured during the editing of *Naked Lunch*, since the only explicit mention of this vital sub-text to "Hauser and O'Brien" within the text itself is a reference to "being a subject for experiments with ST (6)", which is presumably the mysterious "anti-dream drug". Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 169.
52 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 85.
53 Burroughs, *Letters*, 300. Letter to Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, dated Nov.1, 1955.
54 Ibid., 376. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Nov. 10, 1957.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., 393. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated July 24, 1958.
57 Ibid., 378. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Nov.26, 1957.
58 In the course of its revelation, he suffered from "a severe intercostal neuralgia and sciatica." Ibid.
59 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 282.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Burroughs, *Letters*, 393. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated July 24, 1958. This extraordinary revelation bears the marks of an "original trauma". It certainly works, for example, as an original source for the "marshmallow" dream, with its image of burning wicks. It also explains the sense of horror related to birth, that, as will be noted later, becomes more and more insistent in Burroughs' later fiction. Ted Morgan's autobiography, however, offers a radically different "original trauma": the suggestion that Mary Evans forced the young Burroughs to fellate her boyfriend. This version of events is backed up by a reference, in *My Education*, to an "early sex trauma involving fellatio". Burroughs, *My Education*, 169. In Barry Miles account, far less descriptive than Morgan's, it is the departure of Mary Evans that "greatly" upsets "the little boy." Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 24.
63 Burroughs, *Letters*, 393. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated July 24, 1958.
64 Ibid., 378. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Nov. 26, 1957.
65 Ibid., 379. Letter to Jack Kerouac, dated Dec.4, 1957.
66 Ibid., 300. Letter to Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, dated Nov.1, 1955.
67 Ibid., 385. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Jan.9. 1958.
68 Burroughs, letter to Irving Rosenthal, dated July 20, 1960, quoted in Harris, footnote 22, *Letters*, 395.

69 Burroughs, *Letters*, 367. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept.20, 1957.
70 Ibid., 349. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Jan.23, 1957.
71 Ibid., 398. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.10, 1958.
72 Kerouac, *Desolation Angels*, 315.
73 Burroughs, quoted in Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 80.
74 Melville, "Reviews and Letters by Melville", *Moby Dick*, 555. Letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, dated April 16, 1851.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 "Take God out of the dictionary", Melville continues, "and you would have him in the street." Ibid.
78 Ibid.
79 Burroughs, *Letters*, 360. Letter to Alan Ansen, dated July 18, 1957.
80 Ibid., 379. Letter to Jack Kerouac, dated Dec 4, 1957.
81 Burroughs suggested that it now "be the beginning," and that its "title [...] be *Have You Seen Pantapon Rose?* [...]" Ibid., 388. Letter to Lawrence Ferlinghetti, dated April 18, 1958.
82 Grauerholz, "Introduction", *Interzone*, xxii. It is perhaps instructive that Burroughs uses the language of the junk addict ("finally cooked same down to three pages") to describe this process of compression.
83 Ansen, "Anyone Who Can Pick Up A Frying Pan", 23.
84 Burroughs, *Letters*, 388. Letter to Lawrence Ferlinghetti, dated April 18,1958.
85 This sequence also appears, more or less identically, in Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 57. As has been already noted, the juxtaposition of materials in "Ginsberg Notes" may have been retrospective.
86 Burroughs, *Ah Pook is Here*, 154.
87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
90 Rogin, *Subversive Genealogy*, 98.
91 Burroughs, "Remembering Jack Kerouac", *The Adding Machine*, 180.
92 Burroughs, *Letters to Allen Ginsberg 1953-1957*, pp.49-50. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated August 18, 1954. The context was Burroughs' surprise at Neal Cassady's advocacy of Cayceism, Edgar Cayce's spiritualist philosophy.
93 Ibid., 396. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept. 28, 1958.
94 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xxxvi.
95 Burroughs, *Letters*, 396. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept.28, 1958.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid., 397.
98 Ibid., 398. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.10, 1958.
99 Ibid., 397. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept.28, 1958.
100 Ibid., 396.
101 Freud, "Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis", *The Essentials of Psycho-Analysis*, 568.
102 Burroughs, *Letters*, 398. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.19, 1958.
103 Ibid., 406. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Jan.2, 1959.
104 Ibid., 405.
105 Jacques Stern, the mysterious con-man whom Burroughs had briefly fêted as a "*great writer*", had, according to Burroughs, felt the "touch" of Burroughs' hand on "his arm across six feet of space..." Having written the "Fats Terminal" section of *Naked Lunch*, Burroughs himself claimed to see Fats himself in a Arabian "amber bead" that Brion Gysin showed him. He had also looked into a "mirror", and seen his "hands" had become "completely inhuman, thick, black-pink, fibrous, long white tendrils growing from the curiously abbreviated finger tips as if the finger had been cut off to make way for tendrils ..." Ibid., 405. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Jan.2, 1959. In a letter dated

April 2, 1959, Burroughs explained to Ginsberg that he had visions of an "underwater medium" with "strange enclosed spheres moving through it." Ibid., 411. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated April 2, 1959.

Like Faust's descent into the "Realm of the Mothers", another descent into a "secret abyss", where "elemental law" nourished "evolution", Burroughs investigations into this pre-linguistic realm took place, for the most part, off stage. Burroughs, *Interzone*, 128. (According to Richard Noll, when Goethe himself was questioned about "Faust's experiences in the underworld", he "enveloped himself in mystery", in "his usual manner", and "looked" at his interviewer "wide-eyed", "repeating the words: 'The Mothers! The Mothers! It sounds so strangely weird!" Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement*, 173.)

A few scattered clues are left, however, in Burroughs' letters to Ginsberg. Burroughs claimed to be seeking, in true Faustian fashion, "something definite and usable" from the "visions" and "strange currents of energy" he was experiencing. He felt, however, that "the Key", the "one piece that could make it usable", was missing. Burroughs, *Letters*, 415. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated May 18, 1959. Burroughs also told Ginsberg that he become "convinced" of the existence of, and indeed had "SEEN", "literally billions of other worlds." He wondered how "people could ever have been so limited as to think otherwise." He also informed Ginsberg that he now knew for "sure" that "so-called 'death' is not final", even though "a powerful lobby or interest group presumes to know what Life and Death is, and give out with their bulletins of 'scientific' horseshit". Ibid., pp. 415,420. Letters to Allen Ginsberg, dated May 18, 1959, and Late July, 1959.

106 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xxxvi.
107 Burroughs, *Letters*, 399. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.10, 1958.
108 Ibid., 411. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated April 2, 1959.
109 Ibid., 405. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Jan.2, 1959.
110 Harris, *Letters*, footnote 3, 406.
111 Burroughs, *Letters*, 405. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Jan.2, 1959.
112 Ibid., 398. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.10, 1958.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid.
115 Ibid., 407. Letter to Brion Gysin, dated Jan.17, 1959.
116 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xxxvii.
117 Burroughs, *Letters*, 180. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated July 8, 1953.
118 Ibid., 290. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct. 21, 1955.
119 Ibid., 415. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated May 18, 1959.
120 Ibid., 432. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.27, 1959.
121 Ibid.
122 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xviii.
123 Burroughs, *Letters*, 119. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated April 22, 1952.
124 Ibid., 432. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.27, 1959.
125 Ibid., 431. Burroughs also enclosed a "recent snapshot" with his "*biographical* note". In a letter written three months previous, Burroughs had described his arrest in Paris for possession of junk. He spent a "horrible junk-sick day in a vast Kafkian building" waiting while "they typed out forms and took my picture", but "when they went to develop the picture there was nothing on the plate ... Not for nothing am I known as "The Invisible Man". Three tries and two hours before they got a picture." Burroughs, *Letters*, 419. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Late July 1959. One wonders if the "recent snapshot" Burroughs sent to Ginsberg was also, in keeping with the "*biographical note*", the picture of an "Invisible Man".
126 Ibid., 433.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid.

129 Ibid.
130 Ibid. The author also quoted, or more accurately, and entirely typically, misquoted, Lee's line at the close of *Naked Lunch*: "The heat was off me from here on out". Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 171. In his correspondence, Burroughs put the quote in the present tense: "The heat is off me from here and out." Burroughs, *Letters*, 429. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.7, 1959. The context was Burroughs' attempt to cover himself from legal prosecution over the publication of *The Naked Lunch*. Burroughs wrote: "I am not worried about any fuzz, black or otherwise." The reference to "black" fuzz also recalls Burroughs' description of his own transformation into a "human creature" with a "face [...] full of black boiling fuzz". Burroughs, *Letters*, 419. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Late July, 1959.
131 Ibid. In a sense, Burroughs' "Holy Man" dream had come true. By refusing the "Holy Man", who, as has been noted, is linked to the Freudian "super-ego", Burroughs had disappeared into the world of fiction, imaged in the dream as the "florist's shop". Ibid., 236. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Early Oct., 1954. The "friend" in the dream, who Burroughs links with Ginsberg, his most cherished reader, stands beside Burroughs, who is hiding "under a case of flowers", as if Burroughs were dead "in a coffin."
In the dream, the death-like state beneath the "case of flowers" is linked to a loss of identity. Initially, Burroughs decides "the Friend" was "Rex Weisenberger", but remembering that Weisenberger, who Burroughs had "seen in years", owed him "$10", he recalls that Ginsberg owes him "$10" also. "So the Friend is you too", he writes. "Funny", he continues, "I thought it *wasn't* you at all, but Rex, and the first thing I think of is the $10." Ibid. Earlier, the protagonist had been given his mail by a "fatuous fairy", and finds that all the mail "*has been opened*" and he is faced with a jumble of "typewritten pages", so that he can't "*tell whose letter it is*": "I keep shuffling the pages, looking for *the end of the letter* and a signature." Ibid., pp.234-5. As Oliver Harris suggests, the inability to find a "signature" prefigures Burroughs' adoption of the cut-up technique, which would further deconstruct his sense of identity. Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xxxii. The "Holy Man" dream also clarifies the terror of this process. It ends with the "friend [...] wringing his hands and crying and begging me to give up the idea". While the protagonist is "crying" too, his "tears falling into dry, yellow dust", he "won't give up." Burroughs, *Letters*, 236. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Early Oct., 1954.
132 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xl. Lee goes on to say that he is on the far side "of the world's mirror, moving into the past with Hauser and O'Brien ... clawing at a not yet of Telepathic Bureaucracies, Time Monopolies, Control Drugs, Heavy Fluid Addicts [...]" Lee was "clawing" at the future, or at least the future subject matter of Burroughs' fiction, the science fiction, cut-up trilogy that Burroughs worked on through the 1960s: *The Soft Machine*, *The Ticket That Exploded* and *Nova Express*. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 172. As Oliver Harris suggests, another important transition taking place in this period was the "transfer from one genre to another": from detective fiction to science fiction, with an attendant shift from "epistemological to ontological" concerns. Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 100.
133 Ibid., 431.
134 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xxxix.
135 Spender quoted in Allen Ginsberg, *Journals Mid-Fifties, 1954-1958*, ed. Gordon Ball (London: Viking, 1995), pp.338-9.
136 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xxxix.
137 Burroughs, "Experimental Prose", (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library), 1.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid., 4.
140 Ibid.
141 Ibid.

142 Burroughs, *Letters*, 431. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.27, 1959.
143 The versions of "Coke Bugs", "Black Meat", "The Exterminator Does a Good Job" and "The Algebra of Need" held at Columbia University are dated July 1959. In his correspondence, Burroughs refers to "writing the 'Fats Terminal' section" in a letter to Ginsberg, dated Jan.2, 1959.
144 The "Atrophied Preface" does begin with references to "Lee the Agent", and briefly reprises *The Yage Letters*: "Gains and Lee burned down the Republic of Panama [...] Gains went back to Mexico City [...] And Lee went back to sex and pain and time and Yage, bitter soul vine of the Amazon ..." Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, pp.172-173. However, the narrative then shifts to a third person "I", who may or may not also be "Lee the Agent", and then to expressions of authorial intent: "There is only one thing a writer can write about: *what is in front of his senses at the moment of writing*". These disjunctions do not clarify the relationship between "Lee the Agent", the third person "I" and the "writer", and therefore do not represent a linear narrative reinstating Lee's presence as protagonist.
145 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 61.
146 William Burroughs, "Interzone" manuscript (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Ms. Coll. Ginsberg, 1958), "Hospital", 1.
147 Ginsberg, "Recollections of Burroughs' Letters", *Letters to Allen Ginsberg, 1953-1957*, 10. Another important change was the addition Burroughs' introduction to the text: "*deposition: testimony concerning a sickness*". As with the preface to *Junky*, this addition to the text was written, in considerable part, to ease publication. Oliver Harris argues that it was "intended as much to anticipate legal complications as clarify his attitudes towards pornography or addiction for his readers." Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 117. The Introduction does, however, effect a reader's response to the main text, through its strident, though contradictory, retrospective approach to the writing and the subject matter of the text. The contradictions in "*deposition*" relate to its depiction of the writing of *Naked Lunch*. The author attempts both to disown responsibility for the material ("I have no precise memory of writing the notes which have been published under the title *Naked Lunch*") and to provide precise authorial intentions for the material: "Certain passages in the book that have been called pornographic were written as a tract against Capital Punishment in the manner of Jonathan Swift's *Modest Proposal*. These sections are intended to reveal capital punishment as the obscene, barbaric and disgusting anachronism that it is." Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, pp. 7, 12. Burroughs' "Afterthoughts on a Deposition", added in 1991, provides a certain distance from the original "*deposition*": "When I say I have no memory of writing *Naked Lunch*, this is of course an exaggeration, and it is to be kept in mind that there are various areas of memory." Ibid., 15.

The "*deposition*" is a repudiation of junk, and a celebration of the apo-morphine cure. It presents the text as "notes on delirium and sickness", and its authorial voice claims to "have no precise memory of writing" these "notes". (*Naked Lunch*/7) The notion that the author "awoke from the Sickness at the age of forty four", with the notes for *Naked Lunch* scattered around him, scribbled in his delirious and now forgotten frenzies, implicitly constructs the text as a rites of passage from addiction and delirium to cure and sanity. As Michael Leddy suggests, the Deposition, by invoking the "authority of the Author in the interests of closure and detonation", leaves the author in the contradictory position of "seeking to confine a text" that signals its own refusal of closure: "This book spill off the page in all directions". Michael Leddy, "'Departed Have Left No Address': Revelation/Concealment Presence/Absence in *Naked Lunch*", *Review of Contemporary Fiction* (Summer 1984), 35 and Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 180. Again, this allowed the author the required distance from his own past, even the very recent past of the text's composition.
148 Burroughs, *Letters*, 418. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Late July, 1959.
149 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 97.

150 Ibid.
151 Ibid.
152 Burroughs, *Letters*, 397. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept.28, 1958.
153 Ibid., 300. Letter to Jack Keroauc and Allen Ginsberg, dated Nov. 1, 1955. This ontological uncertainty recalls the "insane overwhelming rape of the senses" Burroughs experienced with yagé. Ibid., 180. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated July 8, 1953. Michael Taussig claims that the "deepest insight of yagé" is that "its visions may be false", and yagé is described paradoxically by Taussig as the "great liar" which is "necessary to gain clear vision". Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*, 457. While Lee, in "Hauser and O'Brien", does not, as in "The Conspiracy", deliver his lecture on the "anti-dream drug", there is an implicit link to yagé, the "antidote" to the "anti-dream drug", in the depiction of Lee's decision-making process. Burroughs, *Interzone*, pp.108-9. In the 1955 "Yage" article, the narrator, under the effects of yagé, realises that he must "give up the attempt to explain, to seek any answer in terms of cause and effect and prediction", indeed "leave behind the entire structure of pragmatic, result seeking, use seeking, question asking Western thought." "I must", the narrator concludes, "change my whole method of conceiving fact." Burroughs, "Yage" article, (Columbia University: Rare Book and Manuscript Library), 17. Similarly, faced with the decision about his next move, Lee sits back, "letting" his "mind work without pushing it." He contrasts his approach, in which the "mind" will "answer" if you "learn to relax and wait", with the "special horror", peculiar to "Americans", of "letting things happen in their own way without interference." Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 170. As Oliver Harris suggests, this refusal of the "Aristotelian epistemology of causality and non-contradiction" is vital to "the novel" as a whole. Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 110.
154 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 103.
155 Ibid., 85.
156 Ibid., 97.
157 Ibid., 23.
158 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 23.
159 Stull, "The Quest and the Question", *The Beats: Essays in Criticism*, 15.
160 Ibid., 28.
161 Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With A Thousand Faces* (New York: M.J.F. Books, 1949), 109.
162 Ibid., pp. 130, 129.
163 Stull, "The Quest and the Question", *The Beats: Essays in Criticism*, 14.
164 Burroughs, "Experimental Prose", (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library), 4.
165 Campbell argues that the hero of his mono-myth must accept both the "good" and "bad" aspects of the "Universal Mother": she is the "womb and the tomb", and the "devotee is expected to contemplate the two with equal equanimity." Campbell, *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*, 114. Burroughs, by contrast, claimed that "so-called 'death' is not final, though a powerful lobby or interest block presumes to know what Life and Death is, and give out with their bulletins of 'scientific' horseshit - *I know what I have seen, being strictly from Missouri*." Burroughs, *Letters*, 415. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated May 18, 1959.
166 In what may, or may not, be an echo of Burroughs' experience of the writing of *Naked Lunch*, the "old writer" in *The Western Lands* had written, "about thirty years ago", a "book called *The Boy Who Whittled Animals Out of Wood*", which "concerned a crippled boy who fashioned animals in wood and finally animated his creations by means of masturbatory rites. When his creatures reverted to wood, he achieved one final animation through his death, and the animals scampered away." The book, which "made him famous", was "bitterly attacked and extravagantly praised", but "Hall never wrote again." Burroughs, *The Western Lands* [1987] (London: Pan Books, 1988), 250.

167 Burroughs, *Letters*, 433. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.27, 1959.
168 Melville, "Reviews and Letters by Melville", *Moby Dick*, 559. Letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, dated June 1?, 1851.
169 Ibid., 560.
170 Ibid.
171 Ibid.
172 James Creech, *Closet Writing, Gay Reading*, 150.
173 Burroughs, *Letters*, 434. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.29, 1959.
174 Harris, "Introduction", *Letters*, xxxviii.
175 Burroughs, *Letters*, pp. 431, 433. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.27, 1959.
176 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 372.
177 Ibid.
178 Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 140.
179 Ginsberg, "Recollections of Burroughs Letters", *Letters to Allen Ginsberg 1953-1957*,
180 Ginsberg had written in his June 10, 1960 letter to Burroughs that he "did want to hear from you, Bill so please write and advise me whatever you can if you can. I don't know if I am going mad or not and it's difficult to face [...] Ginsberg, *The Yage Letters*, 55.
181 Burroughs, Unpublished correspondence, (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Ginsberg Coll.). Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Sept. 5, 1960
182 Oliver Harris, "Cut Up Closure: The Return to Narrative", *William S. Burroughs At the Front: Critical Reception 1959-1989* ed. Jennie Skerl and Robin Lydenberg (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), 251.
183 William Burroughs, Correspondence (Columbia University, Rare Books and Manuscript Library: Ginsberg Coll.) Letter to Howard Schulman, dated Aug. 31,1962.
184 William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin, *The Third Mind* (London: John Calder, 1979), 13.
185 Alan Ansen, "Anyone Who Picks Up a Frying Pan Owns Death", *The Burroughs File*, 23.
186 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 373.
187 Ginsberg, "Exorcising Burroughs", *The Observer*, magazine, (26th April 1992), 30.
188 Alan Ansen, "Anyone Who Picks Up a Frying Pan Owns Death", *The Burroughs File*, 23.
189 William Burroughs, Unpublished correspondence (Columbia University, Rare Books and Manuscript Library: Ginsberg Collection). Letter to Howard Schulman, dated Aug. 31,1962.
190 Quote is from Breton's definition of surrealism, first made in *Surrealist Manifesto* (1924) and repeated in "What is Surrealism?": "SURREALISM, n. Pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express, verbally, in writing, or by other means, the real function of thought. The dictation of thought in the absence of all control exercised by reason and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations." André Breton, "What is Surrealism?", *What is Surrealism?* ed. and with intro. by Franklin Rosemont **[details needed]**.
191 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 130.
192 Burroughs, *Letters*, 262. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Feb.7, 1955.
193 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 141.
194 Burroughs, "Experimental Prose" (Columbia University: Rare Book and Manuscript Library), 4.
195 Ibid.
196 Burroughs, *Letters*, 262. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Feb.7, 1955.
197 Ibid., 269. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Feb.19, 1955.
198 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 95. The brief appearance of Hauser and O'Brien in "The Examination" also rewrote a sequence in *Junky* in which

Lee is questioned by two detectives, and which contains certain key phrases that recur in *Naked Lunch*: "Why don't you make the man a proposition?" asks the "old Irish cop" in *Junky* (84), prefiguring the "glowering superego" in *Naked Lunch* who is "always referred to in the third person as 'The Man'" (155). While Burroughs' correspondence links Dr. Benway in "The Examination" to "the Grand Inquisitor in *Brothers Karamozov*", Burroughs' later essay "Cutting Up Characters" also notes the precise parallels between "The Examination" and a scene in Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*. Burroughs, "Cutting Up Characters", *The Adding Machine*, 189.
199 Burroughs, "Les Voleurs", *The Adding Machine*, 19.
200 Burroughs, *Letters*, 434. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.29, 1959. However, as Burroughs suggests in "Les Voleurs", the "whole sublime concept of total theft was implicit" in the cut-up and montage techniques adopted by Burroughs in this period. Burroughs, "Les Voleurs", *The Adding Machine*, 19.
201 Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 137.
202 Ibid.
203 Burroughs quoted in Bockris, *With William Burroughs*, 194.
204 Burroughs, *The Third Mind*, 28.
205 Ibid.
206 In *With William Burroughs*, there is a fuller version of the same anecdote. Schnell, incidentally, claimed that *Naked Lunch* was "the greatest book since *Moby Dick*, maybe a greater book." Burroughs quoted in Bockris, *With William Burroughs*, 195.
207 Burroughs, *The Third Mind*, 28.
208 Ibid.
209 Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 171.
210 Burroughs, *The Third Mind*, 28. It is hard to conceive of Burroughs, at this curious stage of his life, as anything else but a fictional character, a Bartleby for the media age, hunched over his scrapbooks, making odd connections between disparate newspaper articles, awaiting "transport out of the area, out of Time and into Space." "It all reads", Burroughs has written in *The Western Lands*, "like sci-fi from here. Not very good sci-fi, but real enough at the time." Burroughs, *The Western Lands*, 252.
211 Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 265.
212 William Burroughs, Correspondence (Columbia University, Rare Books and Manuscript Library: Ginsberg Collection). Letter to Howard Schulman, dated Aug. 31,1962.
213 Tony Tanner, *City of Words*, 135.
214 William Burroughs, Unpublished correspondence, (Columbia University, Rare Books and Manuscript Library: Ginsberg Collection). Letter to Howard Schulman, dated Aug. 31,1962. The distrust of 'reality' was not in itself a new dimension for Burroughs' writing. In a prose fragment titled "An Advertising Short for Television", written before *Naked Lunch* and later included in *Interzone*, Burroughs had presented an apparently uncharacteristic vision of paradise: "two young kids", lying "naked" in a "jungle clearing" beneath the "great, cheesy moon", surrounded by the "myriad sounds of the jungle night", have "founded the Lost City in each other's arms." However, this vision of paradise is being dictated by an advertising man: the kids wake up "in the magic of a jungle morning" free from mosquito bites not because their "love" protects them, but because they have used "new DuPont 8-hour B-22 Insect Repellent". Even this commodifed vision of paradise risks censorship from the "Hays Office". Burroughs, *Interzone*, pp. 95-6.
215 Burroughs, "The Art of Fiction XXXVI", *Paris Review* (Fall 1965), 23.
216 Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded*, 107.
217 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 85.
218 Ibid.
219 Burroughs, "St Louis Return", *The Burroughs File*, 83.
220 Ibid.

221 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 85.
222 See Neal Oxenhandler, "Listening to Burroughs' Voice", *Surfiction*, pp. 181-201, Oliver Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", pp.81-85 and Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, pp.167-174. Lydenberg refers to Collins and Grunberg in *Word Cultures*, pp. 190-1.
223 Jonathan Paul Eburne, "Trafficking in the Void: Burroughs, Kerouac and the Consumption of Otherness", *Modern Fiction Studies* (Spring 1997), 63.
224 Fiedler, "The New Mutants", *Partisan Review* (Fall 1965), 516.
225 The subject of the feminine in male authors remains a potential minefield, however. Alice A.Jardine, quoting Barthes, suggests the "feminine" has become "a metaphor without brakes." Alice A. Jardine, *Gynesis*, 34. Susan Howe, in *The Birth-mark*, claims that the presence of the "feminine" in Melville is "a subject I would truly love to write on - but I know its way too much and I never will". However, her attempt to define the "feminine" in Olson and Melville has distinct echoes for Burroughs' writing, and the cut-ups in particular: "It has to do with the presence of absence. With articulation of sound forms. The fractured syntax, the gaps, the silences [...]" Howe, *The Birth-mark*, 180. In *The Errant Art of Moby Dick*, William Spanos suggests that the search for the father in *Moby Dick*, suggested by Olson's *Call me Ishmael*, concludes not with the handing down of a patriarchal inheritance, but with the discovery of the "presence of absence" Howe refers to. In Spanos' account, at the close of *Moby Dick*, Ishmael comes to understand and acknowledge "mortality", imaged by "Queequeg's coffin", as "the absence of presence at the center of being", and this discovery "liberates himself from whatever remaining hold the 'abiding' patriarchal Word has on him." Spanos also notes that Ishmael is "picked up by the 'devious-cruising Rachel', a whaling ship of males hitherto on Man's [phallic] business, but now acting under the sign of women", a signal that he has "divested himself of the vestigial remains of the coercive patriarchal genetic structure". William V. Spanos, *The Errant Art of Moby Dick*, 151.
226 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 167.
227 Hélène Cixous, "Sorties", *Modern Literary Criticism: A Reader*, ed. David Lodge (London: Longman, 1993), 293.
228 Ibid., 292.
229 Lydenberg expresses her caution in a somewhat retrospective footnote: "Since this book went to press I have read Alice A. Jardine's fascination study, *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity*". Lydenberg acknowledges, in this footnote, that her reading of *Gynesis* questioned, in retrospect, her own designation of Kristeva and Cixous as "radical feminist theorists", and further claims that the "phenomenon" she had observed in Burroughs "would be more accurately designated as what Jardine calls 'gynesis'": the "acutely interior, unabashedly incestuous exploration of [...] new female spaces", and a "metaphor" for "confronting the breakdown of the paternal metaphor". Jardine, *Gynesis*, 34. Susan Howe also writes: "I think Alice Jardine's *Gynesis* should be read by every person who is interested in critical theory." Howe, *The Birth-mark*, 170.
230 Ibid., 236.
231 Ibid.
232 Ibid.
233 Hélène Cixous, "Sorties", *Modern Literary Criticism: A Reader*, 293.
234 Ibid., 289.
235 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 172.
236 Hélène Cixous, "Sorties", *Modern Literary Criticism: A Reader*, 293. Burroughs, it should be noted, had described himself, in a letter to Allen Ginsberg, as the "eternal pederast". The context for this remark was his invention of a "Rejection Dance," an "Anti-Sex" "mambo":

> The man turns towards the woman with a hard-on that subsides as he digs her. The sex organs are artificial, huge papier machè constructions. As the dance progresses, they become more realistic

> until we get to the real thing. The woman does a mocking dance showing her cunt and her ass in rapid, whirling succession as if to say 'it's all one to you the Eternal Pederast.'

Burroughs describes this "Ballet of Rejection Desecration and Repression of Life" as "unbearably depressing". Burroughs, *Letters*, 247. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Dec.30, 1954. As Kristeva notes, the "confusion of anus and vagina" that is central to Burroughs' "Ballet" is a "denial of sexual difference", and it has it root in an infantile scenario: the "small boy usurps the role of the mother, by denying his difference," in order to put "himself in her place". Kristeva, "About Chinese Women", *The Kristeva Reader*, 147.

237 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 172.

238 Ted Morgan describes Gysin as the "Great Misogynist" Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 301.

239 Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 146.

240 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 394.

241 Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded*, [1967] (London: Paladin, 1977), 45. This version of *The Ticket That Exploded* differs from the original version, Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded* (Paris: Olympia Press, 1962)

242 Burroughs, *Port of Saints*, 173.

243 Burroughs, *The Job*, 116.

244 Ibid., 119.

245 Ibid., 126. Burroughs argues that the conventional childhood, as fostered by the "biologic family unit", creates a "drearily predictable yield of infantile trauma", thus ensuring that "many potentially talented and useful citizens" spend their lifetimes occupied only by "protesting against" their "early conditioning." Ibid., 126. Burroughs proposes that "all male children should be raised by males and all female children be raised by women." The "less the two sexes have to do with each other," Burroughs claims, "the better, I think." Ibid., 125. Burroughs' misogyny in *The Job* is almost unbelievable. For example, this on "Artificial insemination": "All right, you pick your donors and your women, the women become pregnant, they're kept in a hospital till the baby's born - don't want them wandering around, because there's all sorts of things that can happen to a child before birth." Ibid., 120. As with Burroughs' frontier-lifestyle letters, there is clearly an element of performance here, but how much, exactly?

246 Burroughs, *Port of Saints*, 97. The attempt to exclude women becomes one of the central plots in *The Place of Dead Roads*. Kim Carsons believes that the route to immortality is "sex between males", since it "is possible to resolve the dualistic conflict in a sex act in which dualism need not exist." Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 155.

247 Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*, 69.

248 Oxenhandler, "Listening to Burroughs' Voice", *Surfiction*,192.

249 Cixous, "Sorties", *Modern Literary Criticism*, 293.

250 Jardine, *Gynesis*, 116.

251 Ibid., 117.

252 Oxenhandler, "Listening to Burroughs' Voice", *Surfiction*, 192.

253 Burroughs, "Un Homme de Lettres. Un Poéme Moderne", *Letters to Allen Ginsberg 1953-1957*, 3.

254 Ibid.

255 Brion Gysin, *Let the Mice In* (West Glover, Vermont: Something Else Press, 1973), quoted in Sobieszek, *Ports of Entry: William S. Burroughs and the Arts*, 94. The narrator of a Burroughs prose fragment, "Unfinished Cigarette", published in *The Burroughs File*, describes the advice given to him in his attempt to navigate a "space craft" through a "long tunnel of old photos stretching back to his childhood". This advice suggests a dualistic conflict between the tendency to navigate "left" and "right":

> "HERE" he indicated the right side of the dial "is total engagement. You fall back into body - that

> is if you are fortunate - Worse things can happen - and HERE" he indicated the left side of the dial - "you lose yourself - your direction - No this is NOT good to lose the self before it is yours again

The advisor then differentiates his own advocacy of a "MIDDLE" course, from that of Brion Gysin, who, it is suggested, favours the left direction, which leads to the loss of self. This dangerous option is linked to Gysin's child-like eulogies to the "Little Folk": "Here I would seem to disagree with Mr. Gysin - I am no enemy of the little people but their place is certainly not at the controls of a space craft". Burroughs, "Unfinished Cigarette", *The Burroughs File*, 29.
256 Brion Gysin, "Let the Mice In", *The Third Mind*, 61.
257 Burroughs, *The Job*, 119.
258 Françoise Collins paraphrased in Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 190.
259 Burroughs, *Port of Saints*, 173.
260 Burroughs, "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview", *Paris Review* (Fall 1965), 18.
261 Ibid.
262 Burroughs, "Literary Autobiography", Folio no. 110, *The Descriptive Catalogue of the William Burroughs Archive*, compiled by Miles Associates for William Burroughs and Brion Gysin (London: Covent Garden Press, 1973), 77.
263 Oliver Harris, "Cut Up Closure: The Return to Narrative", *William S. Burroughs at the Front*, 252.
264 Burroughs, "Literary Autobiography", *A Descriptive Catalogue of the William Burroughs Archive*, 78.
265 Ibid.
266 Ibid.
267 Burroughs, *The Third Mind*, 45.
268 Rob Latham, "Collage as Critique and Invention in the Fiction of William S. Burroughs and Kathy Acker", *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* (1993), pp. 50-51.
269 Ibid.
270 Oliver Harris, "Cut Up Closure: The Return to Narrative", *William S. Burroughs at the Front*, 253.
271 Gysin, *The Third Mind*, 43.
272 Terry Wilson and Brion Gysin, *Here to Go: Planet R-101* (San Francisco: RE/SEARCH, 1982), 192. Quoted in Harris, "Cut Up Closure", 253.
273 Burroughs, "Literary Autobiography", *A Descriptive Catalogue of the William S. Burroughs Archive*, 78.
274 Ibid., 80.
275 Burroughs, "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview" *Paris Review* (Fall 1965), 34.
276 Mottram, *Snack* (London: 1975), also quoted in Mottram, *The Algebra of Need*, 13.
277 Burroughs, "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview", *Paris Review* (Fall 1965), 23.
278 Burroughs, "St. Louis Return", *Paris Review* (Fall 1965), 51.
279 Ibid.
280 Burroughs, *The Job*, 55.
281 Ibid.
282 Harris, "Cutup Closure", *William S.Burroughs at the Front*, 256.
283 Burroughs, *The Job*, 55.
284 Harris, "Cut-up Closure", *William S.Burroughs at the Front*, 256
285 Burroughs, *The Wild Boys*, 99.
286 Ibid., 100.
287 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 85.
288 Burroughs, "The Art of Fiction XXXVI: An Interview", *Paris Review* (Fall 1965), 49.
289 Ibid., 49.

290 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 24.
291 Ibid., 25.
292 Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, 351.
293 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 7.
294 Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, 327.
295 Ibid.
296 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 61.
297 Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, 327.
298 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 62.
299 The sequence is also repeated in Burroughs, *Port of Saints*, pp. 49-50.
300 Burroughs, *Exterminator!* [1973] (London: Penguin Books, 1979), 22.
301 Ibid., 23.
302 Ibid.
303 Ibid., 19. The image also reoccurs in Burroughs, *Port of Saints*, 47.
304 Burroughs, "Cobblestone Gardens", *The Burroughs File* [1984] (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1991), 213.
305 Olson, *Call me Ishmael*, 15.
306 Burroughs, *The Burroughs File*, 213.
307 Ibid.
308 Ibid.
309 Ibid.
310 Ibid.
311 Ibid.
312 In *The Wild Boys*, "St. Louis" is referred to as the "broken point of origin." Burroughs, *The Wild Boys*, 99.
313 Olson, *Call me Ishmael*, pp. 83, 85.
314 Burroughs, "'It is Necessary to Travel...'", *The Adding Machine*, 137.
315 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 264.
316 Ibid., 85.
317 Ibid., 110.
318 Ibid., 45.
319 Melville, *Moby Dick*, 144.
320 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 195.
321 Ibid.
322 Melville, *Moby Dick*, 144.
323 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 17.
324 Ibid.
325 Ibid.
326 Ibid.
327 Freud, "The 'Uncanny'", *Art and Literature*, 357.
328 Collins paraphrased in Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 190.
329 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 61.
330 Ibid., pp. 61-2. The dangerous, uncontrollable nature of Kim's quest soon becomes clear, as he indulges in some western gun-slinging, killing a series of people with less and less cause to. "Killing" has "become an addiction." Like a heroin addict, Kim "wakes up thin. He's gotta get it one way or another." Ibid., 77.
331 Ibid., pp. 61-2.
332 Ibid., 54. While admitting that a "poisonous snake" may not be "really safer [..] in the long run", he insists that the snake "must feel real good after he bites someone." Ibid., 54.
333 Freud, "A Seventeenth Century Demonological Neurosis", *Art and Literature*, 396.
334 Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 248.
335 Burroughs, quoted in Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 248.
336 Burroughs, from a statement printed in the catalogue of Burroughs' exhibition at

Cleto Polcina, in May 1989, quoted in Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 253.
337 Burroughs, quoted in Miles, *William Burroughs: El Hombre Invisible*, 248.
338 Laura Mulvey, "The Oedipus Myth: Beyond the Riddles of the Sphinx", *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 199.
339 Ibid.
340 Mulvey notes, in this context, that the "image of the primal *father* confuses the neat polarisation between pre- and post- Oedipal that reproduces a polarisation between mother and father." Ibid.
341 Carolyn Potter, "How to Make Double-Talk Speak", *New Essays on Moby Dick*, 80.
342 Ibid.
343 Melville, *Moby Dick*, 470.
344 Ibid.
345 Ibid., 155. Later in the book, Ishmael, having made out his will, even rolls "up the sleeves" of his "frock", and steadies himself "for a cool, collected drive at death and destruction, and the devil fetch the hindmost." Ibid., 197.
346 Ibid., 354.
347 Ibid.
348 Ibid.
349 Ibid.
350 Ibid., 355.
351 Ibid.
352 Korzybski, "Introduction to the Second Edition", *Science and Sanity*, xxv.
353 Ibid.
354 Melville, "Reviews and Letters by Melville", *Moby Dick*, 555. Letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, dated April 16, 1851.
355 Ibid.
356 Burroughs, "Immortality", *The Adding Machine*, 132.
357 This "virus", which occupies "a certain brain area which we may term the RIGHT centre", manifests itself in its host's need to be "RIGHT RIGHT RIGHT." The "Christian Church", Burroughs argues, has needed to be "RIGHT RIGHT RIGHT" from "the Inquisition to the Conquistadors, from the American Indian Wars to Hiroshima." Ibid., "My Own Business", pp. 16-17.
358 Ibid., "'It is Necessary to Travel ...'",137.
359 Ibid., "My Own Business", 18.
360 Melville, "Reviews and Letters by Melville", *Moby Dick*, 555. Letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, dated April 16, 1851.
361 Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*, 308.
362 Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 349.
363 Ibid., 357.
364 Melville, *Moby Dick*, 45. Ishmael acknowledges, before meeting Queequeg, that he is "quick to perceive a horror", but nonetheless could "still be social with it", since, as he himself points out, it is "well to be on friendly terms with all the inmates of the place one lodges in." Ibid., 16. Initially, Ishmael perceives that Queequeg is "a horror": indeed, he confesses that he would not have been more afraid "if it was the devil himself who had broken into my room at the dead of night." Ibid., 29.
365 The importance of their relationship is suggested by the one of the novel's final images: following the Pequod's demise, Ishmael is "Buoyed up" by Queequeg's "coffin life-buoy" for "almost one whole day and night". Ibid., 470.
366 Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, 169.
367 Ibid., pp.169-70.
368 Robert Holton, "Kerouac Among the Fellahin: *On the Road* to the Postmodern", *Modern Fiction Studies* (Summer 1995), 273.
369 Ibid.

370 John M. Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture after 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 93-4, quoted in Limerick, "The Adventures of the Frontier in the Twentieth Century", *The Frontier in American Culture*, pp.70-1.
371 Ibid., 171.
372 Burroughs, *The Western Lands*, 255.
373 Ibid.
374 Ibid.
375 Ibid.
376 Ibid.
377 Ibid., 13.
378 Ibid., 255.
379 Ibid., 115.
380 Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence*, 28.
381 Burroughs, *The Western Lands*, 165.
382 Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence*, 28. The final, and linked, association made by Burroughs is with "creative thought", and with the imaginative creations of "poets and writers". Burroughs, *The Western Lands*, 165.
383 Burroughs, *My Education*, 11.
384 There is a quest narrative in *My Education* which continues sporadically throughout the dreams, though it is only a distant relation of Kim's violent pursuit of the status of a god: it concerns the "difficulty" the dreamer has "in obtaining breakfast" in the land of the dead. Ibid.
385 Ibid., 2.
386 Ibid.
387 Ibid.
388 Ibid. The continuous and unfulfilled search for breakfast clarifies that the land of the dead itself is not the final destination.
389 Ibid., 11.
390 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 176.
391 Ibid.
392 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, pp.132-3.
393 Ibid., 133.
394 Burroughs, *Junky*, xii. The verbal map is in Burroughs, *My Education*, 47. "Since a number of the dreams are set in the house at Price Road, 700 South Price Road, I will indicate how that house was, and probably still is, laid out [...]"
395 Burroughs, *My Education*, 99.
396 Ibid.
397 Ibid.
398 Ibid.
399 Ibid.
400 Ibid.
401 Ibid.
402 Ibid., 52.
403 Ibid.
404 Ibid., 30.
405 Ibid., 137.
406 Ibid., 25.
407 Ibid.
408 Ibid., 48.
409 Ibid., 67.
410 Ibid., 25.
411 Ibid., 99.
412 Freud, "A Seventeenth Century Demonological Neurosis", *Art and Literature*, 396.

413 Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*, 215.
414 Mulvey, "The Oedipus Myth: Beyond the Riddles of the Sphinx", *Visual and Other Pleasures*, 199.
415 Burroughs, *My Education*, 74.
416 Burroughs, *The Cat Inside* [1986] (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 64.
417 Ibid.
418 Burroughs, *My Education*, 75.
419 Burroughs, *The Cat Inside*, 64.
420 Ibid.
421 Burroughs, *My Education*, 75.
422 Burroughs, *The Cat Inside*, 64.
423 Ibid., 11.
424 Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, 315.
425 Burroughs, *My Education*, 99.
426 In psychoanalytic terms, the protagonist of these dreams can neither face his mother nor his father. His closeness to his mother betrays his fascination with, and dependence on her: she offers safety from the terrible aspects of the father, and in her earliest incarnation, she offers creativity and even immortality. Similarly, the recurrent appearances of the "ugly spirit" also suggest the protagonist's dependency on the terrible father. He can offer his own twisted and sublimated variation of the safety, love, creativity and immortality once offered by the mother. In this context, it is worth noting that the mother and the "ugly spirit" never appear together within the same scene in these dreams. Burroughs, *Queer*, 18. They are both implicitly present, though, suggesting, again with echoes of Freud's Christoph Haizmann, the link between the protagonist's need for infantile bliss and the ugly spirit's appearance.
427 Burroughs, *The Western Lands*, 75.
428 Burroughs, *My Education*, 106.
429 Ibid.
430 Ibid., 1.
431 Ibid.
432 Ibid., 72.
433 Ibid., 157.
434 Ibid., 101.
435 Ibid., 102.
436 Ibid., 169.
437 Ibid., 177.
438 Ibid.
439 Oliver Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 19 and Alan Ansen, "Anyone Who Can Pick Up a Frying Pan Owns Death", *The Burroughs File*, 21.
440 Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, 151. Melville's depictions of "objects of male admiration and desire", such as Jack Chase in *Redburn* and Billy Budd, have been noted by a number of critics, including Creech, *Closet Writing, Gay Reading*, 131, and Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, 337. As has already been noted, Melville's intense relationship with Hawthorne, signalled in his correspondence, also suggests this need for a perfect companion.
Lawrence's further observation that the "desire for a 'perfect relationship' is just a vicious, unmanly craving" suggests, as James Creech notes, Lawrence's own conflicted nature. James Creech, *Closet Writing, Gay Reading*, 129.
441 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 230.
442 Burroughs, *My Education*, pp. 102, 169.
443 Ibid., 101.
444 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 230. As has already been suggested, these problematic bifurcations are written into the fabric of white middle class American culture. Burroughs' own initiation into the world of the father, his hunting trips and the time

spent at the Los Alamos ranching school, were supposed to facilitate his separation from the world of the mother. However, this initiation lead only into a deadened world, which offered no substitute for the nurturing relationship with the mother. The psychological dynamic in Burroughs' childhood dreams offers no escape from childhood. Destined to remain a child, the protagonist is able to retain his innocence, but is also consigned to reenact the terror of his childhood throughout his adult life. In his negotiation with the "Ugly Spirit", Burroughs is repeating one of the wider patterns of his own white American middle-class culture. Burroughs, *Queer*, 18.
445 Melville, "After the Pleasure Party", *Selected Poems of Herman Melville*, ed. Henig Cohen (Carbondale, IL.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964), 134, quoted in Joseph A. Boone, "Male Independence and the American Quest Genre: hidden sexual politics in the all-male worlds of melville, twain and london", *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, 962.
446 Boone, "Male Independence and the American Quest Genre: hidden sexual politics in the all-male worlds of melville, twain and london", *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, 962.
447 Burroughs, *My Education*, 102.
448 Ibid.
449 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 230.
450 Douglas, *Terrible Honesty*, 229.
451 Melville, *Moby Dick*, 326.
452 Ibid., 349.
453 Ibid.
454 Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded* [1967] (London: Paladin, 1977), 67.
455 One important example of Burroughs' re-negotiation of the past is his participation in a shamanic ceremony, referred to in *My Education* as an attempt to ""evict the ugly spirit." Burroughs, *My Education*, 94. The word "evict" has a finality about it which is perhaps misleading. It suggests, to quote Frederick Nolan, an "obsession with isolating and purging 'responsibility for evil'". Nolan, "The Poetics of Postmodern Subversion", *Contemporary Literature*, 550. In fact, as Burroughs explained to Victor Bockris, simply attempting to isolate or purge the ugly spirit did not work: first it had to be accepted. "You can't oppose something intellectually," Burroughs told Bockris, "that is overpowering you emotionally." Burroughs' technique was to "detach yourself and allow this to wash through instead of trying to oppose, which you can't do." Miles, *El Hombre Invisible*, 260. There are nonetheless distinct cultural ironies implicit in Burroughs' shamanic ceremony: the American writer from a upper-middle class, WASP background goes to a Navajo Indian shaman in order to be healed of his upper-middle class, WASP demon. These ironies recall Taussig's observation that "going to the Indian for their healing and killing them for their wildness are not so far apart." Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*, 100. However, as Taussig also suggests, the sorcery of shamanic ritual is a complex negotiation of the past and the patterns of history. Taussig argues that "the blocking of experience by political repression and psychic repression can entail a subsequent process by which that experience becomes animated and conscious by the means of myth." Ibid., 368. For example, Taussig notes that in the Putamayo region frequent reference is made to afflictions caused by the "*evil wind*." Taussig also notes that the "*evil wind*" is often linked to the "dead pagans" who lived before the "violent arrival and colonization" of the area by the Spanish, and suggests that the "*evil wind*" therefore takes on some of the character of the Putamayo region's unexhumed ghosts. Ibid., pp. 373, 372. Robert Hertz, in his essay "The Collective Representation of Death" (1907), suggested that ghosts were often people who had "died a violent death" or had undergone a serious "accident". Robert Hertz, "The Collective Representation of Death", *Death and the Right Hand*, (Aberdeen: Cohen and West, 1960), 78. Quoted in Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*, 371. Such people, who had by their experience been

"torn" out of the bonds that hold societies together, "were endowed with a sacred character of such strength that no rite will ever be able to efface them" and exist as "unquiet, spiteful souls roaming the earth". Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*, 372. When these acts of violence or transgression affect an entire society, the "unquiet souls" enter that society's mythic patterns: hence the "*evil wind*", caused in part by the unquiet ghosts of the "preconquest [...] dead". Ibid., pp. 372-3. This "process", not dissimilar to Freud's notion of the return of the repressed, is negotiated in the shamanic ritual, since through the ritual the dead are invoked and can return.

Burroughs' writing also bears comparison to shamanic practice, and to the process of healing that Taussig draws our attention to. In his introduction to *Queer*, Burroughs wonders why he had chosen, in writing *Queer* itself, to "chronicle so carefully these extremely painful and unpleasant and lacerating memories?" He provides his own answer: "writing as inoculation. As soon as something is written, its loses the power of surprise". By "writing" his "experience down", Burroughs "achieved some immunity" from further "perilous ventures". Burroughs, *Queer*, 12. In his introduction to John Giorno's poetry, Burroughs claims that the "harshness and cruelty of some of the voices speaking through the lines" of Giorno's writing "point a bright flashlight into your soul, as you recognize those ugly thoughts." This act of recognition drains the words of their "ugliness", and leads the "hearer in the right direction, towards non-attachment." Burroughs, "Voices in Your Head", Introduction to John Giorno, *You Got to Burn to Shine: New and Selected Writings*, (New York and London: High Risk Books, 1994), pp. 4-5. Burroughs' observations on Giorno also apply, of course, to Burroughs himself. Ideally, these acts of recognition might happen on a cultural level, since as Slotkin notes, a "people that is unaware of its myth is likely to continue living by them", and myths, like unexhumed ghosts, can "reach out of the past to [...] strike down the living." Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence*, 5. Burroughs' fiction is, like shamanic practice, also a site for the return of the repressed. This is perhaps particularly true of Burroughs' dream book, since the author's role of consciously imposing continuity and subject matter are minimal, and therefore repressed material can emerge.

456 There may be a number of different reasons both for the shift in tone, and for the emergence of early material. Certainly, the release of *Queer* was part of a entirely business-like publishing deal made in 1984. See Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, pp. 596-599. Another reason might be Burroughs' relocation to Lawrence Kansas, which, in James Grauerholz's description, has taken Burroughs into a "more quiet, tranquil environment" among "real decent, level folk." An environment in which "his imagination can take him anywhere." James Grauerholz quoted in Nicholas Zurbrugg, "Burroughs, Grauerholz, and *Cities of the Red Night*: An Interview with James Grauerholz", *Review of Contemporary Fiction* (Summer 1984), 29. Another reason might be the approach of old age, and the shifts in perspective it can bring: In "Exorcising Burroughs", Ginsberg argues, and Burroughs agrees, that "after a certain age, the motives for success, pride or oppressing people or getting power [...] the desire to have power dissolves. The desire to dominate people for love dissolves. On the other hand its a relief to release that you can let go." Ginsberg, "Exorcising Burroughs", *The Observer* magazine (26th April 1992), 30.

457 Burroughs, "Un Homme de Lettres. Un Poème Moderne.", *Letters to Allen Ginsberg 1953-7*, 1.

458 Ibid.

459 Thomas McGuane, back-cover quote for Kittredge, *Hole in the Sky: A Memoir* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992).

460 Miles, *William Burroughs El Hombre Invisible*, 265.

461 McGuane, *Keep the Change* [1990] (London: Minerva, 1991), 66.

462 McGuane, "The Art of Fiction LXXIX", *Paris Review*, 44. Closely related to his protagonist's sense of dislocation is their problematic relationships with their fathers. Clearly, this psychological dynamic has personal roots for McGuane, since he has

revealed that he had "very much of an adversarial relationship" to his own father. Ibid., 46. However, this personal difficulty is also a wider cultural one. As Lawrence suggests, the roots of this problem of inheritance go right back to the start of the white American story, to the "savage fight" with which the continent was taken. This "brutal" struggle, Lawrence argues, "broke something in the human soul": the "heart" of "the American pioneer". The "price that was paid" can be discerned in the emotional struggles depicted in McGuane's fiction. Lawrence, "Bottom Dogs", *Selected Literary Criticism*, 408. Joe Starling's father, in *Keep the Change*, for example, "was a coldblooded Westerner at heart." McGuane, *Keep the Change*, 5. It can also see be seen, of course, in Burroughs' fiction, and in the "ugly spirit" that haunts it. Burroughs, *Queer*, 18.
463 Kittredge, *Hole in the Sky: A Memoir*, 234.
464 Simonson, *Beyond the Frontier: Writers, Western Regionalism and a Sense of Place*, 140.
465 Ibid.
466 Burroughs, *My Education*, 7.
467 Ibid.
468 Burroughs, *Letters*, 433. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.27, 1959.
469 Lydenberg, "'El Hombre Invisible'" [review of William S. Burroughs' *The Western Lands*], *William S. Burroughs at the Front*, 234.
470 Burroughs, *The Cat Inside*, 7.
471 While it may have no basis in 'reality', the horrifying image of the miscarried baby burning "in the furnace", recounted by Burroughs as the revelation of his analysis, would serve as a kind of explanation for the underdeveloped sense of tenderness and innocence suggested here. Burroughs, *Letters*, 393. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated July 24, 1958.
472 Burroughs, *Ghost of Chance*, 49.
473 Ibid.
474 Ibid., 15.
475 Ibid., 49.
476 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 182.
477 Burroughs, *Ghost of Chance*, 49.
478 Burroughs, *With William Burroughs*, 138.
479 Burroughs, "Freud and the Unconscious", *The Adding Machine*, 88.
480 Burroughs, *The Ghost of Chance*, 49.
481 Ibid.
482 Roland Barthes, "Preface", *Critical Essays* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1972), xvii, quoted in Sobieszek, *Ports of Entry*, 132.
483 Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), 146, quoted in Sobieszek, *Ports of Entry*, 132.
484 Sobieszek, *Ports of Entry*, 132.
485 Burroughs, *Painting and Guns* (Madras and New York: Hanuman Books, 1992), 18, quoted in Sobieszek, *Ports of Entry*, 132.
486 Burroughs, "The Retreat Diaries", *The Burroughs File*, 191. This notion does bear some relation to Barthes' "third term", which is "greater than the pure, upright, secant, legal perpendicular of the narrative" and "seems to open the field of meaning totally" by extending "outside culture, knowledge, information". Barthes, "The Third Meaning", *Image, Music, Text*, pp.54-55.
487 Burroughs, *With William Burroughs*, 3.
488 Burroughs quoted in Ginsberg, "Exorcising Burroughs", *The Observer* magazine (26th April 1992), 27.
489 Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*, 369.
490 Adorno, *Über Walter Benjamin* (Frankfurt, 1970), pp.53-4, quoted in Richard Wolin, "Experience and Materialism in Benjamin's *Passagenwerk*", *Benjamin:*

Philosophy, Aesthetics, History, ed. Gary Smith [1983] (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 217.
491 Richard Wolin, "Experience and Materialism in Benjamin's *Passagenwerk*", *Benjamin: Philosophy, Aesthetics, History*, 220.
492 Ibid.
493 Burroughs, *The Cat Inside*, 89.
494 Burroughs, *The Western Lands*, 252.
495 Frederick Nolan, "The Poetics of Postmodern Subversion: The Politics of Writing in William S. Burroughs' *The Western Lands* (Contemporary Literature, Winter 1991), 548.
496 Burroughs, *Ghost of Chance*, 18.
497 Ibid., 54.
498 Ibid.
499 Ibid.
500 Ibid.
501 Miles, *El Hombre Invisible*, 248.
502 Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 230.
503 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 93.
504 William Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded*, 149.
505 Ibid.
506 Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded*, 149.
507 Shaviro, "Burroughs' Theater of Illusion: *Cities of the Red Night*", *William S. Burroughs at the Front*, 206.
508 Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded*, 149.
509 Shaviro, "Burroughs' Theater of Illusion: *Cities of the Red Night*", *William S. Burroughs at the Front*, 206.
510 Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded*, 149.
511 Lydenberg, *Word Cultures*, 100.