

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the representations of frontiers in the early writing and correspondence of William S. Burroughs. The thesis will place Burroughs' work in the context of the white, male, middle class American society into which he was born, and question whether the frontiers constructed and crossed in that work question or reaffirm the values of that society.

The central subject of the thesis is the writing of William Burroughs between 1945 and 1959. Through the course of the thesis, Burroughs' first five books will be examined in the order of their writing: *Junkie* (1953),¹ later published as *Junky* (1977) which was written between 1950 and 1952, *Queer* (1986),² written between 1951 and 1952, *The Yage Letters* (1963),³ written in 1953, and revised in 1955 and prior to its publication in 1963, *Interzone* (1989),⁴ written mostly between 1954 and 1957, and *Naked Lunch* (1959),⁵ written from 1954 to 1959. There is one additional Burroughs text that, although not a work of fiction, is vital to this study: *The Letters of William Burroughs 1945 to 1959* (1993).⁶ Burroughs' letters, crucial to the creation of his fiction in the period under discussion, will provide, to quote Oliver Harris, the "chronological" structure for the thesis.⁷

Throughout this thesis, Burroughs' work will be compared and contrasted with that of Herman Melville. The connection between Burroughs and Melville is partly one of literary history. Melville was an important figure to many writers in the 1950s, including Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and Burroughs himself.⁸ Kerouac, for

example, was influenced by the "quasi-autobiographical" form of *Pierre*,⁹ and by Melville's ventriloquism in *The Confidence Man*: "Melville in the *Confidence Man* is the strangest voice ever heard in America", Kerouac wrote to Neal Cassady, describing it as "partly Shakespearean with a beautiful interspersion of backwoods voices and nigger voices and all types [of] voices."¹⁰ Barry Miles notes that Burroughs had a copy of *Moby Dick* on his well-stocked shelves in his apartment on Riverside Drive in New York.¹¹ Burroughs was clearly very familiar with Melville's work, and there are a substantial number of references to Melville in Burroughs' writing, many of which will be central to this thesis.¹² However, it would be misleading to claim that Melville was a primary literary influence on Burroughs' work.¹³ While there is some evidence of a literary-historical connection between Melville and Burroughs, the purpose behind the comparison conducted here is to provide an antecedent to Burroughs in terms, to quote Susan Howe, of "family, history and ideology".¹⁴

Melville and Burroughs shared a similar class, race and gender. Their respective families had connections, however distant and tenuous, with the upper echelons of white American society, and the writings of both authors suggest an ambiguous response to the historical legacy they inherited, and an apocalyptic sense of the future for that legacy. William Burroughs' first sustained piece of serious writing was "Twilight's Last Gleamings", a satiric sketch of a sinking United States passenger liner written in 1938, which, as Oliver Harris notes, "follows in the tradition of dark humour of Burroughs' fellow Missourian, Mark Twain", specifically echoing "Twain's incomplete sketch of 1895, 'The Passenger's Story'".¹⁵ This sketch, acted out with his friend Kells Elvins, suggests, like the demise of the *Pequod* at the close of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851), an portentous vision of what Allen Ginsberg termed "the sinking of America": "Twilight's Last Gleamings" is intercut with lines from the United States national anthem.¹⁶ Both Melville and Burroughs' protagonists shared

the sense of living at the end of a cultural and historical tradition. Ishmael's survival, at the close of *Moby Dick*, leaves him an "orphan".¹⁷ Ann Douglas describes Ishmael as utterly lacking any "cultural roots".¹⁸ Similarly, Burroughs described his protagonist, Adrian Scudder, as the "last of a strange, archaic class, or, perhaps, the first. In any case he was without context, of no class and no place."¹⁹ However, the cultural and historical traditions from which Melville and Burroughs felt exiled were different in important ways, suggesting the transitions within white American middle-class society that have occurred between Melville's birth, in 1819, and Burroughs' recent passing, in 1997.

In this thesis, the process of expansion and industrialisation that inspired Melville's vision of the sinking Pequod will be traced through into the twentieth century in which Burroughs has lived and written. In particular, the developments in the economy, family structure and foreign policy of the United States will be noted, thereby placing Burroughs' work in the context of the development and crises of white American history. The thesis will draw on the observations of Michael Paul Rogin's *Subversive Genealogy: The Politics and Art of Herman Melville* (1983), which provides a historical context for Melville's work.²⁰ Ann Douglas' two key texts, *The Feminization of American Culture* (1977) and *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* (1995), will be used to trace developments within white middle-class society through the Victorian period into the 1920s.²¹ The economic developments of the United States will be demonstrated by reference to Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (1986).²² The thesis will also examine the historical context within which Burroughs began writing: the United States in the 1950s. The primary sources for this period are John Patrick Diggins' *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace* (1988), David Campbell's *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*

(1992).²³

Attempting to place William Burroughs' writing within the context of white American history is not an unprecedented endeavor, although critics tend instead to place Burroughs in a American literary tradition. Reviewing Burroughs' *Cities of the Red Night*, for example, Peter Ackroyd insisted that Burroughs is "not a portentous avant-garde novelist in the Francophile tradition" but is rather "part of the American tradition of antinomianism and populism, and sounds in part like Whitman, in part like Poe."²⁴ However, in terms of direct literary influence, Burroughs' own acknowledgments of indebtedness suggest that the author does not regard himself as part of an white American tradition. Among the European novelists Burroughs often names as influences or important figures are Conrad, Genet, Beckett, Proust, and Denton Welch.²⁵ As Oliver Harris and Timothy Wu have suggested, the romantic writers, Coleridge, De Quincey and Wordsworth, are also important to Burroughs' work.²⁶ There are, however, certain American writers who Burroughs admires, such as T.S. Eliot, Hemingway and Fitzgerald, and certain key American texts that Burroughs has praised: for example, Jack Black's *You Can't Win* (1926) and Joseph Moncure March's *The Wild Party* (1928).²⁷ However, the purpose of this thesis is not to place Burroughs' work neatly within an American literary tradition, but rather to argue that his work enacts certain psychological and political dynamics that have been recurrent throughout the history of white America. These dynamics will be introduced in Chapter One.

Burroughs' writing is very much concerned with border-crossings, both geographical and metaphorical. As Oliver Harris suggests, while in his earlier texts, *Junky*, *Queer* and *The Yage Letters*, Burroughs was primarily concerned with crossing the "geographical frontiers" which took him into Mexico and South America, in his later work, and particularly in *Naked Lunch*, he presented the "traversing of

geographical frontiers as an analogue to the crossing of ontological borders."²⁸ However, Burroughs' reference, from within his correspondence, to the "glorious frontier heritage" of the United States suggests a definition of the frontier linked to a specifically white American construction of a mythic past.²⁹ In order to place Burroughs' various representations of frontiers within an historical and political context, Chapter One will provide an chronological overview of definitions of the term "frontier" within American history and culture, beginning with Frederick Jackson Turner's "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893), and drawing on the more contemporary representation of frontiers in *Trails: Towards a New Western History* (1989) and *The Oxford History of the American West* (1993).³⁰ The thesis will also draw upon the recent critical debates in which definitions of frontiers have been linked to the transitions between colonial and post-colonial study, and examine the non-white American perspective on the frontier found in Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands|La Frontera* (1987).³¹ It will be argued in the thesis that William Burroughs, whose writing traverses a period of crucial transition in the history of European and American expansion, represents the end of one frontier tradition, and that Gloria Anzaldúa's concept of the "borderlands", which offers a non-Eurocentric definition of a frontier zone, represents the beginning of a new frontier tradition.³²

While considerable attention will be given to the precise historicization of the representations of the frontier examined, this thesis will also draw on psychoanalytical theory, and its relationship to mythological and psychological representations of the frontier. Following Nancy Chodorow, writing in *Feminism and Psychoanalytical Theory* (1989), the implicit assumption of this thesis is that "psychoanalysis describes a significant level of reality that is not reducible to, or in the last instance caused by, social or cultural organization", and therefore "deterministic primacy" will not be

given to "social relations that generate certain psychological patterns or processes".³³ Rather, it will be argued that "psychology itself is equally important to, constitutive and determinant of, human life."³⁴ The model for the psychological analysis conducted in this thesis will adapt the work of earlier male-centred psychoanalytical readings of American culture, such as Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* and *The Return of the Vanishing American*, and Richard Slotkin's *Regeneration Through Violence*, by drawing on the work of recent feminist critics, such as Jane Flax, Annette Kolodny, Ann Douglas, Susan Stanford Friedman, Julia Kristeva, Laura Mulvey and Alice A. Jardine.³⁵

Although the thesis will intermittently employ Leslie Fielder's "archetypal" analysis of American literature, it does not do so in order to confirm the Jungian theory of archetypes from which Fiedler derives the term.³⁶ While, following Chodorow, "deterministic primacy" will not be granted to "social relations", the issues of race, class and gender that are implicit, though often silenced, in Fiedler's archetypal analysis, will here be made explicit, and their complex interaction with the psychological patterns Fiedler presents will be suggested.³⁷ Neither will the application of Freudian theory within the thesis unproblematically confirm Freud's insistence on the centrality of the Oedipal complex. It will be argued here that the Oedipal complex represents a simplistic and culturally specific model for a child's psychological development, and that Freud's theories concentrate primarily on male, and post-oedipal, experience, at the expense of female, and pre-oedipal, experience.

It should also be stated from the outset that this thesis does not attempt to explain William Burroughs' writing by revealing a singular event within his own infancy and childhood, the "primal scene" Neal Oxenhandler refers to in his psychoanalytical essay on Burroughs, "Listening to Burroughs' Voice".³⁸ It is certainly reasonable to speculate, as Alan Ansen does, that an "early traumatic experience"

affected Burroughs' later life and his career as a writer.³⁹ However, the precise nature of that "traumatic experience" is impossible to fathom, either from Burroughs' own writings, or from the work of his critics and biographers. Ted Morgan, in his biography of Burroughs, *Literary Outlaw: The Life and Times of William S. Burroughs* (1988), describes the exasperation of one of Burroughs' analysts, Dr Federn, who "lost his patience" with his analysand: "What IS this that affected you your whole life?"⁴⁰ It would be arrogant, and misguided, to attempt to reconstruct, or to insist on the centrality of, a single traumatic incident which its victim will not or cannot recall. Indeed, it would be misguided to base any analysis of Burroughs' writing on the specific details of his childhood, which even within the two biographies of Burroughs' life are sketchy and contradictory.⁴¹

However, an implicit assumption is made within the thesis that patterns of behaviour formed in early infancy often repeat themselves throughout adult life. The plurality of these patterns of behaviour should be emphasised. Since no single primal scene can be identified within Burroughs' writing, the patterns of infantile behaviour enacted there are dispersed and contradictory. They derive from various periods of infantile development, and suggest a variety of responses towards parental figures, rather than simply replicating attitudes formed in the singular moment of the primal scene. Yet, while the plurality and complexity of these patterns of behaviour will be noted, their recurrence will also be insisted on.

It should also be emphasised that the purpose here is not to reveal a singular essence of personality, the true "William Burroughs" who resides behind his fictions. If, as will be suggested, Burroughs' writing recurrently enacts certain patterns of infantile behaviour, the transformation of that behaviour into fictional material ensures that the reader can only examine displaced or sublimated versions of that behaviour. As Neal Oxenhandler rightly claims, "ambivalence and indeterminacy" is central to

Burroughs' aesthetic, and the "ambivalence or bipolarity" of Burroughs' writing is generated in considerable part by the "tension" created between two impulses: "the desire to hide and the desire to reveal."⁴² This observation, it will be noted here, applies even to Burroughs' earliest fictions in which his aesthetic was only partially formed. The "desire to hide" described by Oxenhandler ensures that the reader will never learn the "truth" that the writing "simultaneously *wants* us to know."⁴³ Therefore, Burroughs, who "seems to be telling us 'everything'", paradoxically remains "the most secretive of persons."⁴⁴ The "desire to reveal", however, ensures that the attempt to divulge the "truth", the unrevealable essence of self that is "William Burroughs", continues throughout his writing.⁴⁵ In order to demonstrate the validity of this observation, Chapter 5 will conclude with an examination of Burroughs' final full length work, *My Education: A Book of Dreams*⁴⁶(1995), in which the psychological dynamics that recur throughout Burroughs' writing are most clearly revealed.

*

William Burroughs died on August 2, 1997. While small changes have been made to this thesis following this sad event, the tense of the thesis has not been changed. The thesis was written when its subject was still alive, and it would be inappropriate to shift the judgments made in it in retrospect.

- 1 William S. Burroughs, *Junky*, with intro. by Allen Ginsberg, [1953] (London: Penguin Books, 1977). First published as William Lee, *Junkie* (New York: Ace Books, 1953), then as William Burroughs, *Junkie* (Paris: The Olympia Press, 1957) as part of the "Traveler's Companion Series". Parts of the original manuscript of *Junkie*, titled "Junk" and ascribed to "William Dennison", are held at Stanford University (Stanford University Department of Special Collections: "Ginsberg Papers", Call no. M733, Box 2, Folder 41). A full manuscript of "Junkie" is held at Columbia University (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Ms. Coll. Ginsberg).
- 2 William S. Burroughs, *Queer* [1985] (London: Pan Books, 1986). Portions of the original manuscript for *Queer* are held at Stanford University (Stanford University, Department of Special Collections: "Ginsberg Papers", Call no. M733, Box 2, Folder 41). Manuscript corrections for *Queer*, dated July 1953, are held at Columbia University (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Ms. Coll. Ginsberg)
- 3 William S. Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg, *The Yage Letters* [1963], (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1975). An original manuscript version of *The Yage Letters*, titled "Yage", is held at Columbia University (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Ms. Coll. Burroughs). A partial manuscript version of *The Yage Letters*, untitled, is held at Stanford University (Stanford University, Department of Special Collections: "Ginsberg Papers", Call no. M733, Box 2, Folder 41).
- 4 William S. Burroughs, *Interzone* [1989] (London: Penguin Books, 1990).
- 5 William S. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, with intro. by J.G. Ballard (London: Flamingo Modern Classic, 1993). First published as William Burroughs, *The Naked Lunch* (Paris: Olympia Press, 1959). References in the text will be to *Naked Lunch*, unless referring specifically to the Olympia Press publication. An earlier manuscript of *Naked Lunch*, titled "Interzone" and dated 1958, is held at Columbia University (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Ms. Coll. Ginsberg).
- 6 William S. Burroughs, *The Letters of William S. Burroughs 1945-1959* ed. and with intro. by Oliver Harris (London: Pan Books, 1993). Hitherto referred to in footnotes as *Letters*. Also referred to throughout the thesis is William Burroughs, *Letters to Allen Ginsberg 1935-1957* (New York: Full Court Press, 1981), and the unpublished correspondence held at Columbia University: William Burroughs, Unpublished Correspondence (Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Keroauc, Ginsberg, Pa'Lante, Miles and Matson Colls.).
- 7 Oliver Harris, "Introduction" (1991), *The Letters of William S. Burroughs* (London: Pan Books, 1993), xvi.
- 8 The influence of Melville was partially due to Ginsberg and Kerouac's enrollment at Columbia University. Raymond Weaver, the "author of the first biography of Melville, *Mariner and Mystic*" was teaching at Columbia. According to Barry Miles, in the course of his research, Weaver "had discovered the manuscript of *Billy Budd* in Melville house". Ginsberg later commented: "I mean a man who discovered posthumous manuscripts of Melville. That's *really* a professor!" Barry Miles, *Ginsberg: A Biography* [1989] (London: Viking, 1990), 38.
- 9 Ann Charter's notes to Jack Kerouac, *Selected Letters 1940-1956*, ed. by Ann Charters (New York: Viking Penguin, 1995), 310. Kerouac was directly influenced by Henry A. Murray's work on Melville. This subject is returned to more fully in Chapter One.
- 10 Jack Kerouac, *Selected Letters 1940-1956*, 233. Letter to Neal Cassady, dated Oct. 6, 1950. Kerouac decided, partially on the basis of his reading of Melville, that "the voice is all" and decided to "let the voices speak for themselves. I'm going to write one book in nigger dialect, another in bum dialect, another in hip-musician dialect, another in French-Canadian-English dialect [...]" This multitude of voices is most present in the "Imitation of the Tape" section of Keroauc's *Visions of Cody*, where, as Gerald Nicosia notes, there are a "multitude of voices", including "parodies of Leo Kerouac's movie column in the *Spotlight*; of the opening paragraph of *The Town and the City*; of *On the*

Road and voices in it such as the Mexican girl's and Remi Boncoeur's; of Shakespeare, Dickens, Yeats, Twain, Gertrude Stein, Hemingway, and Steinbeck; of Jesus Christ, Sherlock Holmes, W.C. Fields, Milton Berle, and Billie Holliday." Gerald Nicosia, *Memory Babe: A Critical Biography of Jack Kerouac* [1983] (London: Penguin Books, 1986), 373. This ventriloquist performance prefigured the multitude of voices in Burroughs' "Word" and *Naked Lunch*.

11 Barry Miles, *Ginsberg: A Biography*, 48.

12 For example, see the references to Melville in Burroughs' correspondence. In a letter to Allen Ginsberg, Burroughs corrected Ginsberg's "semantics" by reference to Melville's *Moby Dick*: "How can you arrive at criteria of 'actuality' in experience of feeling? Neither Melville nor his Ahab were concerned with validity of experience." Burroughs, *Letters*, 128. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated June 4, 1952. In writing his "Biographical Note on William Seward Burroughs" in 1959, Burroughs included a reference to Bartleby's famous four words of refusal: "I prefer not to." *Ibid.*, 433. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated Oct.27, 1959.

There are also many references to Melville's in Burroughs' published works. In "Word", for example, the stylistic precursor to *Naked Lunch* later published in *Interzone*, Burroughs includes a brief précis of Melville's *Billy Budd*. Burroughs, *Interzone*, pp.149-150. In the "Atrophied Preface" section of *Naked Lunch*, the author compares him to Captain Ahab: "I, William Seward, captain of this lushed up hashhead subway, will quell the Loch Ness monster with rotenone and cowboy the white whale." Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*, 178. Material from the conclusion to *Moby Dick* is cut-up into the montage of "Unfinished Cigarette", included in Burroughs, *The Burroughs File* [1984] (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1991), pp.29-33. In *Ah Pook is Here*, Mr. Hart's fated search for immortality is suggested by his misreading of the Mayan books: "Hart cannot read the Mayan books. He is reading them as one who reads *Moby Dick* to find out about whaling and to hell with Ahab, White Whales, Queeqod [sic] and Ishmael". William Burroughs, *Ah Pook is Here and Other Texts* (London: John Calder, 1979), 27. The naming of the ship "The Great White" in *Cities of the Red Night* also suggests a tip of the hat to Melville. William Burroughs, *Cities of the Red Night* [1981] (London: Pan Books, 1982).

13 Allen Ginsberg, in an interview with John Tytell, clarified that Melville was Kerouac's "interest", rather than Burroughs'. Ginsberg also clarified here that Burroughs did not introduce him to Melville. Allen Ginsberg, "A Conversation with Allen Ginsberg", with John Tytell, *Partisan Review* (Vol.41, 1974), 254.

14 Susan Howe, *The Birth-mark: unsettling the wilderness in American literary history* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1993), 163.

15 Oliver Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs" (Ann Arbor: Dissertation-Abstracts-International, 1989), 3. "Twilight's Last Gleaming" was first written in 1938, in collaboration with Burroughs' friend Kells Elvins. As James Grauerholz points out, the version of "Twilight's Last Gleamings" published in *Interzone* (pp.3-12) was not the original text, but a later reconstruction of it, probably dating to Burroughs' stay in Tangier. Grauerholz also notes that "shorter versions" of the piece have "appeared throughout" Burroughs' "writings", suggesting the importance of its apocalyptic vision to Burroughs' writing as a whole. James Grauerholz, "Introduction" to William S. Burroughs, *Interzone* [1989] (London: Penguin Books, 1990).

16 Ginsberg describes "Twilight's Last Gleamings" as "the whole key of all his work": "the sinking of America, and everybody like frightened rats trying to get out". Allen Ginsberg, "The Art of Poetry VIII" (Paris: Paris Review, vol.16, no.37, Spring 1966), 18.

17 Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, ed. Harrison Hayford and Hershel Parker [1851] (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1967), 470.

18 Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* [1977] (London: Papermac, 1996), 308.

- 19 Burroughs, *Letters*, 272. Letter to Allen Ginsberg, dated April 20, 1955.
- 20 Michael Paul Rogin, *Subversive Genealogy: The Politics and Art of Herman Melville* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1983).
- 21 Ann Douglas, *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* [1995] (New York: The Noonday Press, 1996).
- 22 Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986).
- 23 John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace* (London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988), and David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).
- 24 Peter Ackroyd, review of *Cities of the Red Night*, *Sunday Times* (March 29, 1981), p.43, quoted in Oliver Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", v.
- 25 In *The Job*, Burroughs describes Conrad as "one of my favorite writers" and states that he admires "Beckett and Genet [...] without reservation. They're both incredible writers, I think." Burroughs, *The Job: Interviews with William S. Burroughs* [1974] (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), pp. 54,55. Burroughs has written an essay, in *The Adding Machine*, titled "Beckett and Proust", in which he claims to be "very much closer to Proust than to Beckett". Burroughs, *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays* (London: John Calder, 1985), pp.182-186. According to Ted Morgan, Burroughs "identified with Denton Welch, thinking of him almost as an alterego, and memorizing passages of his books." Ted Morgan, *Literary Outlaw: The Life and Times of William S. Burroughs* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1988), 200. In his introduction to *Queer*, Burroughs claimed to be in "spiritual contact" with Denton Welch while writing *The Place of Dead Roads*, and used Welch "as a direct "model" for the novel's protagonist, Kim Carsons. Burroughs, *Queer*, pp.14-15. Another important writer for Burroughs is Céline, who Burroughs acknowledges has "very much" influenced his work, particularly in his use of the "picaresque" form. Burroughs, "The Last European Interview", with Philippe Mikriammos, *The Review of Contemporary Fiction* (Elmwood Park, IL.: 4:1, Summer 1984), 15.
- 26 Oliver Harris argues that Burroughs' representations of addiction reprise those found in Coleridge and De Quincey. Oliver Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", pp.31-85. Timothy Wu claims that while the "inspired anarchy of William S. Burroughs' work can make him appear scornful of mainstream literary thought," he "has in recent years become increasingly concerned with his literary forebears - notably the English Romantics," and particularly Wordsworth. Timothy Wu, "Wordsworth in Space: The Fantasies of William S. Burroughs", *Twentieth Century Fantasists: Essays on Culture, Society and Belief in Twentieth Century Mythopoeic Literature*, ed. Kath Filmer (New York: St. Martins Press, 1992), pp.121-134.
- 27 What is striking about these texts, particularly those written by Fitzgerald, Black and March, is that they reconstruct the period of Burroughs' childhood: the 1920s in America. That is, rather than serving as precise literary influences, they act as keys to the importance of nostalgia in Burroughs' writing.
- Allen Ginsberg argues, in an interview with John Tytell, that Burroughs shared with Eliot his "St. Louis origins", his stays in England, and the "same banker look". John Tytell, "A Conversation with Allen Ginsberg", *Partisan Review* (Vol.41, 1974), 254. However, Burroughs insists on Eliot's status as a "verbal innovator", arguing that "The Wasteland" is "in effect, a cut-up, since it's using all these bits and pieces in an associational matrix". Burroughs, "The Last European Interview", *Review of Contemporary Fiction* (Summer 1984), 14. Burroughs writes on Hemingway and Fitzgerald in *The Adding Machine*. Burroughs, "Hemingway" and "The Great Gatsby", *The Adding Machine*, pp. 66-73. Burroughs seems more interested in Hemingway for his writing technologies, the removal of the "I" from the narrative, than in his subject matter. In his essay "Hemingway", Burroughs writes: "There's more of the 1920's in

one page of Fitzgerald than in the whole of Hemingway. [...] He wasn't trying to evoke a period the way Fitzgerald was." Burroughs, "Hemingway", *The Adding Machine*, 67. In his Introduction to *The Wild Party*, Art Spiegelman recalls Burroughs' response when he mentioned the book to him. "'The Wild Party?' he mused. '... It's the book that made me want to be a writer.'" Art Spiegelman, "Intoxicating Rhythms", introduction to Joseph Moncure March, *The Wild Party* [1928] (London: Picador Books, 1994), vi.

28 Harris, "The Last Words of William Burroughs", 29.

29 Burroughs, *Letters*, 61. Letter to Jack Kerouac, dated Jan.1, 1950.

30 Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1893* [1894] (University Microfilms, 1966), *Trails: Towards a New Western History* ed. Limerick, Milner, Rankin (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1991), and *The Oxford History of the American West* ed. Milner, O'Connor, Sandweiss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

31 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands | La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987)

32 However, it will be also be suggested that this distinction between 'end' and 'beginning' is overly simplistic, and that in certain key ways, Burroughs' work prefigures Anzaldúa's.

33 Nancy Chodorow, *Feminism and Psychoanalytical Theory* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), 7.

34 Ibid.

35 Leslie Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* [1960] Second Edition (London: Palladin, 1970), and Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1800* [1973] (New York: HarperPerennial, 1996). The feminist psychoanalytical texts will be introduced in the thesis as they are referred to.

36 Fiedler acknowledges his debt to "Jungian revisionism" and the concept of "archetypes" in the "Preface to the First Edition" of Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, pp.15-16.

37 Ibid.

38 Neal Oxenhandler, "Listening to Burroughs' Voice", *Surfiction: Fiction Now ... And Tomorrow* ed. Raymond Federman (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1975), 197.

39 Alan Ansen, "Anyone Who Can Pick Up a Frying Pan Owns Death", in Burroughs, *The Burroughs File* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1984), 17.

40 Ted Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 31.

41 The contradictory explanations, in Ted Morgan and Barry Miles' biographies, of Burroughs' childhood trauma, which almost certainly involved Burroughs' nanny, are examined briefly in Chapter Five.

42 Oxenhandler, "Hearing Burroughs' Voice", *Surfiction*, pp. 199, 184.

43 Ibid., 182.

44 Ibid., 184.

45 Ibid., pp. 184, 182

46 William S. Burroughs, *My Education: A Book of Dreams* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1995).