

# NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

1. Although I am aware that “literary journalism” is not the only terminology for designating the form, I prefer the term literary journalism over nonfiction because the works I assign to this literary form are not merely editorials, essays, or autobiographies, as conventionally defined. I also prefer it because much of the content of the works, say, by Whitman, London, Smedley, Le Sueur, and Agee comes from traditional means of news gathering or reporting. To be clear, this form, as practiced by the writers in this study, features the personal presence and involvement of a human witness, acknowledges its relationship to “fiction” while making a claim to reflecting the world of “fact,” and casts itself largely (but not exclusively) in a narrative mode. For a sample of various working definitions of the term, see Hartsock (1–13); Connery (1–5); and Yagoda (15–16).
2. *Narrating Class* will suggest how short essayistic and literary journalistic pieces by these writers are legible through their longer, more substantial work—and the contrary as well.
3. See E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978); David Montgomery, *Beyond Equality: Labor and Radical Republicans, 1862–1872* (New York: Knopf, 1967); Herbert Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* (New York: Knopf, 1976); Stephan Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1964).
4. See Stuart Hall, “The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees,” in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 25–46.
5. See for example Stuart Hall, “The Meaning of New Times,” in *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s*, ed. Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques (London: Lawrence, 1989), 116–134; Frederic Jameson, “Postmodernism; or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” *New Left Review* 146 (1984): 53–792; E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*; and Raymond Williams, *Culture* (London: Fontana, 1981).

6. For examples, see Fox, Lowe, Morrison, Ross, and Steedman.
7. See Roland Barthes's *Mythologies*, tran. James Stevenson (New York: Routledge, 1994).
8. See Michael Staub's *Voices of Persuasion: Politics of Representation in 1930s America* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994).
9. Countering such generalizations—or better, often subsuming them—are the issues of class and domesticity, class and race, class and gender, and the increasing attention being paid to the middle class as a vital object of study. See, for example, Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fictions* (New York: Oxford UP, 1987); David Roediger, *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness* (New York: Verso, 1994); Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (New York: Knopf, 1986); Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760–1900* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1989); and Christopher P. Wilson, *White Collar Fictions* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1992).

1 WHITMAN'S 1855 *LEAVES OF GRASS*:  
"HARD WORK AND BLOOD"

1. See Judith N. Shklar, *American Citizenship: The Quest for Inclusion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1991); Andrew Lawson, "'Spending for Vast Returns': Sex, Class, and Commerce in the First *Leaves of Grass*," *American Literature* 75, 2 (June 2003): 335–365; and Jason Stacy, "Containing Multitudes: Whitman, the Working Class, and the Music of Reform," *Popular Culture Review* 13, 2 (2002): 137–154.
2. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass: The First (1855) Edition*, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New York: Viking, 1959), 48. Subsequent references will be cited in the text as *Leaves*.
3. For the meaning of class consciousness in the nineteenth century, see William H. Sewall, *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980), 281–284. Sewall notes, "During the nineteenth century, class was increasingly used to designate groups in relations of superiority and inferiority, as in 'dominant class,' 'bourgeois class,' or 'working class.' But it also continued to be used for social categories of any kind, and workers frequently employed it as a synonym for 'trade' or 'profession.'" (281). Whitman's ontological and ethical vision in the 1855 *Leaves* reflects these designations, but Whitman also held that all classes in the production process equally contribute to the nation's economic and social health. This nonhierarchical, egalitarian vision positions the poet in *Leaves* as a figure of liminality that fluidly crosses class boundaries and incarnates various class identities and statuses.

At the same time, in the 1855 *Leaves*, Whitman's poetics, rhetoric, and physical affinities identify most forcefully with the lower–middle class, laborers, and those furthest from the dominant class. In *Leaves*, Whitman implores us to incarnationally imagine our bodies in the

bodies and geographical places of these others: slaves, Native Americans, women, the laboring masses.

4. See David S. Reynolds, *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1989); Jason Stacy, "Containing Multitudes: Whitman, the Working Class, and the Music of Moderate Reform," *Popular Cultural Review* 13, 2 (2002): 137–154; Jerome Loving, "The Political Roots of *Leaves of Grass*," 97–120; Richard B. Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis: Class Ethnicity, and Youth in Antebellum New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1990); Peter S. Buckley, "Culture, Class, and Place in Antebellum New York," in *Power, Culture, and Place: Essays on New York City*, ed. John Mollenkopf (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1988), 38–42; and Andrew Lawson, "'Spending for Vast Returns': Sex, Class, and Commerce in the First *Leaves of Grass*," *American Literature* 75, 2 (June 2003): 335–359. Lawson and Buckley provide the most nuanced reading of Whitman's class locations, doing so without embracing a homogenous working-class consciousness, and in Lawson's case, carefully tracing Whitman's anxious adaptations from an agrarian artisanship to an urban market economy.
5. Walt Whitman, "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads," in *Complete Poetry and Collected Prose*, ed. Justin Kaplan (New York: Library of America, 1996), 668; further references to *Poetry and Prose* will be cited parenthetically in the text as *PP*.
6. Whitman's daguerreotype was done by Gabriel Harrison, a Brooklyn daguerreotypist who specialized in portraits of working-class men. See Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), 705–711.
7. See for example M. Jimmie Killingsworth, *Whitman's Poetry of the Body: Sexuality, Politics, and the Text* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1989); Michael Moon, *Disseminating Whitman: Revision and Corporeality in "Leaves of Grass"* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1991); Terry Mulcaire, "Publishing Intimacy in *Leaves of Grass*," *ELH* 60 (1993): 471–501; Byrne Fone, *Masculine Landscapes: Walt Whitman and the Homoerotic* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1992); Tenny Nathansen, *Whitman's Presence: Body, Voice, and Writing in "Leaves of Grass"* (New York: New York UP, 1992); and Gary Schmidgall, *Walt Whitman: A Gay Life* (New York: Dutton, 1997).
8. Found throughout his nonpoetic writing, Whitman's antislavery feelings were usually subordinated to his unqualified support of the (white) working class and its multiple manifestations—a support that developed into the keynote of the 1855 *Leaves*:

Let them utter forth, then, in tones as massive as become their stupendous cause, that their calling shall *not* be sunk to the miserable level of what is little above brutishness—sunk to be like owned goods, and driven cattle! We call upon every mechanic of the North, East, and West—upon the carpenter, in his rolled up sleeves, the mason with his trowel, the stonemason with his

brawny chest, the blacksmith with his sooty face, the brown fisted ship-builder, whose clicking strokes rattle so merrily in our dock yards—upon shoemakers, and cartmen, and drivers, and paviors... upon the honest sawyer and mortar-mixer too, whose sinews are their own—and every hard-working man—to speak in a voice whose great reverberations shall tell to all quarters that the workingmen of the free United States, and their business, are not willing to be put on the level of negro slaves, in territory which, if got at all, must be got by taxes sifted eventually through upon them, and by their hard work and blood. (Gathering, 1:210–11)

9. On the level of fragmentation and movement, denying totality and wholeness, *Leaves* appears to anticipate Alain Touraine's argument that class has lost its significance in the contemporary world. "The concept of class," Touraine writes, "... must be replaced, as a central category of analysis, by the concept of *social movement*... [Social movements] are more concerned with active intervention, rather than simply with breaking the links of dependence; and above all, the social actor who resists domination now appeals more and more directly to the values and creations of change, which in the past seemed to be monopolized by the ruling groups, whereas the dominated ones were more inclined to envisage a return to the past and to condemn historical evolution as a fall from a golden to an iron age" (89). The most crucial element that *Leaves* might ascribe to social movement is its self-constituting capacity, and Whitman in the 1850s would certainly have favored, in Zygmunt Bauman's words, a "fluid, processual social setting with no clear cut distinctions between order and abnormality, consensus and conflict" (79). Each incarnational moment in *Leaves* is neither a necessary effect of the preceding moment nor a necessary indicator or adequate cause of the next one.
10. The "Bowery boy" was a journeyman or an apprentice in one of the traditional trades in the America of the 1830s and 1840s. For an extensive discussion of Whitman's Bowery boy identifications, see Andrew Lawson, "'Spending for Vast Returns' Sex, Class, and Commerce in the First *Leaves of Grass*," *American Literature* 75, 2 (June 2003): 335–365.
11. For the centrality of sexuality to citizenship, the public sphere, and the nation in nineteenth-century America, see Michael Millner, "The Fear Passing the Love of Women: Sodomy and Male Sentimental Citizenship in the Antebellum City," *Arizona Quarterly* 58, 2 (Summer 2002): 19–52. See also on this subject, Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, "Sex in Public," *Critical Inquiry* 24 (1998): 547–566.
12. To be clear, I would attribute this use of language to Whitman's incarnational stance, which supports Andrew Lawson's recent claim

that “in order to understand Whitman’s class politics, we are going to have to come to grips with his use of different kinds of language” (xv). Our respective arguments about Whitman’s combining “the plebian ‘blab’ of the ‘pave’ and the upper-class ‘promenade’” (104), however, come to very different conclusions. See Lawson, *Walt Whitman and the Class Struggle* (Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 2007), xi–xxiv; 1–28.

13. *Leaves* contravenes Denise Riley’s point on the use of the future verb tense and its role in “gendering the social”:

If “women” can be credited with having a tense, then it is a future tense. It is true that the trajectory of “man” in the nineteenth-century human sciences often winds him backward to the riddles of his origins, or alternatively, reels him out towards the double question of his ends, in the senses of his purposes and extinction. (225)

Whitman, alternatively, groups men and women in the same teleology of the future, casting them as both agents and objects of reform in his program of spiritual social ascent.

14. On the question of class and racial inferiority, Whitman wrote in one of his notebook entries of the 1850s:

The learned think the unlearned an inferior race. The merchant thinks his bookkeepers and clerks and sundry degrees below him; they in turn think the porter and carmen common; and they the laborer that brings in coal, and the stevedores that haul the great burdens with them. (Daybooks 792)

15. See Jerome Loving, *Walt Whitman: The Song of Himself* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1999). The newspapers that Whitman wrote for or edited in the 1840–1850 period include the *Aurora*; the *Evening Tattler*; the *Statesman*; the *New York Sun*; the *New York Mirror*; the *Brooklyn Evening Star*; the *New Orleans Daily*; the *Brooklyn Freeman*, and the *Brooklyn Daily Times*.
16. See a comprehensive, detailed survey of such critics in *Whitman: The Journalism*, vol. 1, ed. Henry Bergman, Douglas Noverr, and Edward Recchia. (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), xxv–xxvii.
17. For a comprehensive argument about narrative form in historical writing and in history, see Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987).
18. Sometimes prone to fleeting editorial judgments, in an 1858 editorial for the *Brooklyn Daily Times*, Whitman wrote, “The most valuable class in any community is the middle class, the men of moderate means living at the rate of a thousand dollars a year or thereabouts,” Walt Whitman, *Walt Whitman, I Sit and Look Out: Editorial from the Brooklyn Daily Times*, ed. Emory Holloway and Vernolian Schwarz (New York, 1932), 145.

2 CLASS AND THE PERFORMATIVE IN REBECCA  
HARDING DAVIS'S *LIFE IN THE IRON MILLS*,  
AND STEPHEN CRANE'S *MAGGIE*

1. See Lee Clark Mitchell, *Determined Fictions: American Literary Naturalism* (New York: Columbia UP, 1989), 32–36.
2. This is not to say that literary genres and movements must conclusively result from a particular cause; as June Howard notes, “the ontological status of an ideal generic typology must always remain questionable, must always to some degree rely on our acceptance of arbitrary, a priori categories” (5). Even if a work belongs to a generic order, every feature of the work is certainly not generically bound. Nor does a generic classification prescribe or proscribe particular interpretive procedures or negate the value of a work if it does not conform to specific generic norms.
3. The issue of performative meaning is capacious. I am indebted here to, among others, H.P. Grice, “Meaning,” *Philosophical Review* 66 (1957): 377–388; Randall Knoper, *Acting Naturally*; Elizabeth Freund, *The Return of the Reader: Reader-Response Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1987); Steven Mailloux, *Interpretive Conventions: The Reader in the Study of American Fiction* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982); Douglass Oliver, *Poetry and Narrative in Performance* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1986); and Wolfgang Iser, *Prospecting*.

The meanings of the performative on which this chapter particularly draws include the notion that inaccessible realities can only be penetrated by staging them, by performing what is withheld. In Wolfgang Iser's words, “what can never become present to ourselves and what eludes cognition and knowledge and is beyond experience can enter consciousness only through feigned representations” (“Do I Write,” 313). There is in this approach an interconnection of author, text, and reader to be conceived as an “ongoing process that produces something that had not existed before” (Iser, “Play,” 325). There is also a direct conflict with the traditional notion of representation, if representation is defined as a mimetic description of a presupposed reality. This nonmimetic theory of literature points to, as Winifried Fluck has argued, the special place of the literary text: “if literature is not to be justified by truthful representation, the source of its special potential must be derived from the fact that it is, by definition, different and thus ideally suited to counter dominant ways of world making” (197). Instead of operating as a mirroring instrument, literature, in this model, serves to disturb preconceived cultural constructions of identity, invoking what otherwise cannot become present.

4. Aesthetically, for Crane, changing perspectives are part of the phenomenon Randall Knoper describes:

[N]ineteenth-century theater and novels were imbued with each other, novelists in particular writing for an audience in tune with stage conventions, echoing theatrical values of melodrama, burlesque, variety, spectacle, ‘situation,’ and ‘effect,’ and rehearsing a preoccupation with performance and role-playing. (9)

Although this is not the place to trace the rich social history of American forms of elite and popular “performance,” it is worth noting that *Maggie* certainly has roots in the nineteenth-century performative traditions—in such entertainments as Shakespearian plays, traveling shows, minstrelsy, and music halls. Crane frequently subordinated his skills of discovering and interrogating reality to those of show and spectacle, intermingling mimicry and mimesis, the performative and informative.

5. They did not remain immune from all of these assumptions. As Eric Schocket has suggested, class in mid-nineteenth-century America was never far removed from its ethnic and racial familiars. See his “‘Discovering Some New Race’: Rebecca Harding Davis’s *Life in the Iron Mills* and the Literary Emergence of Working-Class Whiteness,” *PMLA* 115, 1 (January 2000): 46–59. On the issues of race, gender, and naturalism’s common association with class polarization, see as well Amy Schrager Lang, “Class and the Strategies of Sympathy,” 128–142; Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993); and Catherine Jurca, *White Diaspora* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001).
6. The performative meaning in *Maggie* and *Life* never constitutes the *entire* meaning. As Ellen Spolsky puts it, “[p]erformative meaning will never provide enough meaning to satisfy, will never make consultation of the context unnecessary. The consultation of the context *will* provide additional meaning; it will not, however, cancel performative meaning” (421). Performance and its effects in both works do not prevent the authors from realizing their investments in reference and essence.
7. Stephen Crane, *Prose and Poetry*, 458. Subsequent references will be cited in the text as *PP*.
8. See Barbara Babcock, “Introduction,” in *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1978).
9. For one of the best accounts of the “sensationalism” of the 1890s, see Bill Brown, *The Material Unconscious: American Amusement, Stephen Crane, and the Economics of Play* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1996).
10. On the subjective quality of visual experience in nineteenth-century American culture, see Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990).

3 BODY TRAMPING, CLASS, AND  
MASCULINE EXTREMES: JACK LONDON'S  
*THE PEOPLE OF THE ABYSS*

1. On the conditions of nineteenth-century American cities and the urban poor, see Giorgio Mariani, *Spectacular Narratives: Representations of Class and War in Stephen Crane and the American 1890s* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 7–67; June Howard, *Form and History in American Literary Naturalism* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina UP, 1985); Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820–1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1978); and Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experiences in the American City, 1760–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989).
2. There is an astonishing consistency in the intimate entanglement of masculinity, emotion, and nationhood in the history of American culture, of which *Abyss* is an important representation. For studies of the relations and homologies between conceptions of race, sexuality, and nationality, see *Boys Don't Cry? Rethinking Narratives of Masculinity and Emotion in the U.S.*, ed. Milette Shamir and Jennifer Travis (New York: Columbia UP, 2002); George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996); *Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture*, ed. Mary Chapman and Glenn Hendler (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1999); E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*; Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996); and *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West*, ed. Matthew Basso, Dee Garceau, and Laura McCall (New York: Routledge, 2001).
3. As *Abyss* makes clear, class is differential in that it should always be measured against and within racial, ethnic, or gender designations. For issues on whiteness and class relevant to London, see *Whiteness: A Critical Reader*, ed. Mike Hill (New York: New York UP, 1997).
4. Jack London, *The People of the Abyss*, in *Jack London: Novels and Social Writings*, ed. Donald Pizer (New York: Library of America, 1982), 30. Further references to this work are given parenthetically.
5. *Abyss* furthered the early twentieth-century project of bringing the body and its senses more overtly into the ethical and social realm, what such critics as I. A. Richards, F. R. Leavis, and T. S. Eliot called “cultural health.” Even more importantly, London tried to imagine and render such health in the form of the body’s boundaries—alternately, as rigid, closed, and resistant to social appropriation, and as permeable, shifting, and open to fusion with the environment. Thus the emerging rhetoric of the body, as already evidenced in *Abyss*, was beginning to be used as a powerful tool



that had the potential both to reveal, disrupt, deny, and to bridge social hierarchies.

6. For London's creation of female characters and his position on the "New Woman," see Andrew J. Furer, "Jack London's New Woman": 185–214 and Jeanne Campbell Reesman, "Jack London's New Woman in a New World: Saxon Brown Roberts' Journey into the Valley of the Moon," *American Literary Realism* 24, 2 (Winter 1992): 40–54.
7. See Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1986) for their ideological distinctions between the bourgeois and proletarian body and their views on the pervasiveness of the mind/body split and its political importance to the bourgeois culture.
8. On London's time (1870–1917) and the changing definitions of "civilization" and "progress," see Peter Conn, *The Divided Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), chapters 1–2, and pages 104–109.
9. London, in a letter (August 25, 1902) to Anna Strunsky, directly links his physical condition to what he was witnessing on the East End: "So, no matter how inadequately I may state what I wish to say, and no matter how cold I may appear, please remember that I am worn out and exhausted, and that my nerves are blunted with what I have seen and the suffering it has cost me" (*Letters* 1: 307).
10. See Peter T. Okun, "John Barleycorn's Body," *Arizona Quarterly* 52, 2 (Summer 1996): 63–84.
11. Although without London's nationalist overtones, the idea of the human body as a mirror of social identity (i.e., a victim of industrialization) and the fears this can entail, in a character or narrator, functions in a similar way in *Life*. When, for example, Mitchell enters the mill, Hugh "mark[s] acutely every smallest sign of [his] refinement" and then looks "back to himself, seeing as in a mirror his filthy body, his more stained soul" (30). Wolfe feels a fearful disgust for his "puny" (41) laboring body in contrast to Mitchell's "delicate, sinewy limbs, in harmony with all he knew of beauty and truth."
12. Turn-of-the-century imperialism is discussed in Tony Smith, *The Pattern of Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981); Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967); Mira Wilkins, *The Emergence of Multinational Enterprise: American Business Abroad from the Colonial Era to 1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1974); and David Healy, *U.S. Expansionism: The Imperialist Urge in the 1890s* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1970).
13. The gender dynamic regarding social reform in the second half of the nineteenth century is instructive. "Unlike their male counterparts," Schocket argues, "[the goal of Gilded-age female reformers] was to reform, not merely to pass through, the lives of the 'unknown'

class... Proving their status as New Women—as middle-class women who nonetheless worked outside the home—required them to articulate their identities as professional reformers within a traditional discourse of domestic ideology” (124). This rough female paradigm of “legitimacy through redemption,” while preserving class distinctions, served to create gender consciousness with the overlay of converting “‘working women’ into some semblance of middle-class morality” (123–124). London’s male paradigm, that of “regeneration through incorporation” (123) and his belief in the redemptive qualities of his own masculinity, problematizes such an engagement.

14. For London’s concern with contamination by disease, the poor and disease, and class and contagion, see David Raney (390–400).
15. For the varying positions on London and class in general, see the astute critiques of *Male Call*, 115–147; “Gazing at Royalty;” and Chris Gair, “‘The Beautiful and True and Good’: Culture, Race, and Nation in *The People of the Abyss*,” *Symbiosis* 3, 2 (October 1999): 131–142.
16. See Raney (390–399), Kershaw (269–270), and Sinclair (150–152) for detailed accounts of London’s various afflictions and diseases.
17. For a complete listing of London’s journalism, see James Williams, “Jack London’s Works by Date of Composition,” in *The World of Jack London*. [http:// www.jacklondon.net](http://www.jacklondon.net). Accessed November 26, 2007.
18. It must be noted that, as David Minter has argued, “London wrote in a period of rapid, uneven economic recovery. Between 1900 and 1910... [both] average per capita wealth and average persona income increased, as did the unevenness of distribution: in a period of strong economic expansion, the average real income of laborers fell. Investors, even those with modest capital to invest, were the winners, as both expansion and consolidation of industries pushed profits up... By 1910, the men in charge of the nation’s largest business firms possessed enormous political as well as economic power” (43).
19. See Bourdieu’s *Practical Reason*, in which he defines the habitus as a “generative and unifying principle which retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position into a unitary lifestyle, that is, a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices” (8). See as well his more qualified interpretations of this concept in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (85).
20. Where this can become problematic is in London assigning the working class a pure class conditioning, as in its functioning as a fixed point of reference to which other classes differentiate themselves. Their weight of necessity in London (*Abyss*, *How I Became a Socialist*, *The Scab*, and *Revolution* are good examples of this) appears to obviate any differentiation. The working class, for London, is more singularly unified and fixed than other classes.
21. If read autobiographically, London is most likely referring to his recent Klondike experience (1897–1898) with his brother-in-law,

- Captain James Shepard. Alongside the general class questionings and trajectory of the narrator, a description of his clothes indicates as such: “A fur cap, soiled and singed by many camp-fires. . . My foot-gear was of walrus hide, cunningly blended with seal gut” (2).
22. See Carolyn Johnston, *Jack London : An American Radical ?* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984).
  23. For a fictional version of a Mexican “superior individual” fighting for “the people,” see London’s portrayal of the fighter Felipe Rivera in “The Mexican,” in *The Night Born* (New York: The Century Co., 1913).

#### 4 “ALWAYS YOUR HEART”: CLASS DESIGNS IN JEAN TOOMER’S *CANE*

1. The phrase “Always your heart” is taken from Toomer’s poem “Honey of Being” (*Wayward* 204).
2. For Foley’s “historical” placement of Toomer, see for example “‘In the Land of Cotton’: Economics and Violence in Jean Toomer’s *Cane*” in which she criticizes Toomer for “establish[ing] only a partial connection between racial violence and the configuration of Georgia’s political economy” (194). This is due, Foley notes, to Toomer’s “shortcomings as an economic analyst” (194). Similarly, in this same piece, she writes that “*Cane* also failed in Part III to assign full material causality to racial violence” and cites “Toomer’s limitations in relating Kabnis’s internal dilemmas to the larger social forces” (194). My counterpart to her objection: History is “what hurts” but a writer does not always reflect, nor should be expected to do so, its actual pain.
3. See Barbara Foley, “The New Negro and the Left,” in *Spectres of 1919: Class and Nation in the Making of the New Negro* (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2003), 1–69.
4. Although I use the term “narrator” throughout this text, this is not to deny the possibility of *Cane*’s multiple narrators and narrative voices. In *Cane* first-, second- and third-person narrators and modalities freely alternate and conflate in fluid and interactive ways.
5. Toomer’s self-reflective or self-conscious moments are central to the structure and purpose of *Cane*. By the term “self-reflectiveness,” I mean the thought, consciousness, reflection, and awareness accompanying action. The self-reflective novel, in Alter’s words, is “a novel which systematically flaunts its own condition of artifice and by so doing probes into the problematic relationship between real-seeming artifice and reality” (x).
6. To be clear, the “you” in the text can sometimes function rhetorically—pointing to no person at all, the “you” simply being a term in a figure of speech—or signal various spoken idioms, but it most often does so as part of an ongoing “conversation” between narrator and narratee.

7. This is a crucial distinction in Toomer's "great design," particularly given his concepts of "race" and "racialism." Indeed, as George Hutchinson argues, Toomer should be reconsidered in terms of repudiating "essentialist assumptions that race is a natural category of identity" and for recognizing "the importance of racialization (the enculturation of identity along 'racial' lines enforced by racist domination) to American identity and thus to American writing" (vii).
8. Narratees in *Cane* may range from fictional characters to less obtrusive fictional addressees, but the various narratees generally shade into the textual reader. The discussion that follows reflects Genette's definition of the "extradiegetic" narratee: "the extradiegetic narrator . . . can aim only at an extradiegetic narratee, who merges with the implied reader and with whom each real reader can identify" (186).
9. "Toomer forces us," as Gates argues, "to abandon any definition of Afro-American literature that would posit the racial identity of an author as its principal criterion" (206). I would agree with Gates that in understanding Toomer's racial position, particularly as it pertained to himself, one must consider that "the critical difference for Toomer was not so much his race . . . as what he sought to represent and how he represented it" (209). But to suggest that Toomer, in his struggle to find the language that would not distort the subject he tries to represent, can best be understood as "postmodern," or as some kind of postmodern contemporary (Gates 209), does not cover Toomer's creation of a new "I-you" subjectivity and the inter-relational and racial features of his design.
10. In a 1930 letter to James Weldon Johnson, for example, Toomer writes: "My poems are not Negro poems, nor are they Anglo-Saxon or white or English poems. My prose, likewise. . . . I take this opportunity of noting these things in order to clear up a misunderstanding of my position which has existed to some extent ever since the publishing of *Cane*" (qtd. in Helbing 130).
11. Rather, Toomer's concern is with the "modernity" of ethnicity, which he believed could eventually lead to a "new race" (transethnic, polyethnic, and international) in which no "groups" exist, privileged or otherwise.
12. In this, he replicates Toomer's ideas on narration, as argued in "The Psychology and Craft of Writing" (1930):  

To spiritualize is to digest, assimilate, upgrade, and form the materials of experience—in fine, to form oneself. It is the direct opposite of sensualization, and of mechanization. It has to do with intensifying and vivifying both the writer and the reader. (Craft 44)
13. As Todd Lieber has argued, "*Cane* is designed to function in both objective and subjective terms. In an objective sense it is a chronicle of what the 'souls of slavery' were. In a personal sense it is a description of 'what they are to me' and, by inference, what they can be to

any man who accepts them and the heritage they represent: the substance of spiritual life and survival" (182).

14. "Seventh Street" is "an invocation of the contrast between 'the white and whitewashed wood of Washington' and black inhabited Seventh Street" (Innes 158), but it is also a celebration of Toomer's modernism, a rejection of racial essentialism, and his prototypical "American" selfhood. In a letter (undated) to Waldo Frank, Toomer writes:
 

When I come up to Seventh Street and Theatre, a wholly new life confronts me. . . . For it is jazzed, strident, modern. Seventh Street is the song of crude new life. Of a new people. Negro? Only in the boldness of expression. In its healthy freedom. American. (qtd. in North 167)
15. This movement connects to Toomer's visualization of *Cane* as a starting point that would contribute to initiating "the adjustments, the health, and art and joy and beauty that, expanding, will determine the tone and content of the entire country" (qtd. in Helbing 144).
16. Toomer's ideal, of course, is that the future should not be constricted to confining binaries of the past, but should be driven by the prospects of a reconstituted and integrated individual connected to a viable community, as represented, for example, in "The Hill" (1934):
 

A man in his world. A world which has made, not found already made. No one group, no race, no nation could have built it for him. His function in life was not to fit into something that already existed but to create a new form by the force of his growth. (302)

"Racial strains," in America, Toomer wrote in 1934, "do not exist separately in a man but blend to form a new product. . . . They never understood that the real factors operating in the United States. . . . are creating a new people in this world, a people to whom all Americans, without exception, belong. . . ." (Eldridge and Kerman 80–81).
17. This ontology was internal to both Toomer's narration and to his modernism. For the deep connection of modernism to race consciousness, see, for example, Baker, Doyle, and Gilroy. It must be noted that Toomer's modernism, as *Cane* forcefully shows, goes against a racialized conception of culture and the grounding of difference in immutable notions of race and racial identity.
18. This is a technique that begins in "Theatre" but that Toomer uses throughout the rest of the text.
19. At the same time, the tension created among these (often conflicting) voices echoes Toomer's own multiethnic biological makeup, his unease over his connection to black America (weighed against his strong sense of the communal in *Cane*), and his unrealizable efforts to reach his goals of thematic and social unification.
20. On this subject Toomer writes, "There is no valid reason why an author should not project portions of himself into his characters. In fact there is a very definite artistic reason why he should. For this is the method of great creation" ("*Holiday*" 9).

21. This attempt appears to anticipate Toomer's later proclamation: "I stand for Mankind United. This perhaps is the largest and most significant single fact in my life" (Benson and Dillard 43).
22. All of this is consistent with the notion of Toomer's divided racial self, and the need to sometimes keep the division hidden from himself.
23. Lewis and Kabnis function as sources for Toomer's own racial reexamination and sense of integration. As Toomer stated in a 1923 letter to Horace Liverwright, Lewis possesses "the sense of direction and intelligent grip on things that Kabnis lacks, Kabnis . . . [has] the sensitivity and emotion Lewis does not have" (Jean Toomer to Horace Liverwright, March 1923, TP, Folder 6).
24. Nor does the narrator address readers as "undefined, anonymous, and conceived as responding in purely aesthetic terms" (Kroeber 99).

5 MERIDEL LE SUEUR'S *SALUTE TO SPRING*:  
"A MOVEMENT UP WHICH  
ALL ARE MOVING"

1. Le Sueur's work has received well-deserved attention in recent years, especially in Paula Rabinowitz's *Labor and Desire: Women's Revolutionary Fiction in Depression America* (1991), Constance Coiner's *Better Red: The Writing and Resistance of Tillie Olsen and Meridel Le Sueur* (1995), and Robert Shulman's *The Power of Political Art: The 1930s Literary Left* (2000). These studies perform the necessary and belated tasks of taking up neglected women writers of the left, documenting the conditions under which they produced their work, and locating Le Sueur's fiction in the context of proletarian, "womanist" (Roberts, *Three Radical* 53), and women's writing.
2. Much of the primary literature of the 1930s, including the writings of Le Sueur, Josephine Herbst, Richard Wright, Muriel Rukeyser, and Langston Hughes, continues to be pegged as "political" with negligible "aesthetic interest." For challenges to this view, see Robert Shulman, *The Power of Political Art* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2000); Barbara Foley, *Radical Representations* (Durham: Duke UP, 1993); and James F. Murphy, *The Proletarian Moment* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1991).
3. Based on psychological and emotional categories as "materialist," Le Sueur's political-cultural position, as I will argue here, tries to show and assert the importance of the social positionality of the individual, and how this comes through in problems of narrative texture and discursive idiom. Not coincidentally, all of the stories in *Salute to Spring* underscore the figurative or tropological determination of (class) consciousness.
4. See Bill Mullen and Sherry Lee Linkon, "Introduction: Rereading 1930s Culture," in *Radical Revisions: Rereading 1930s Culture*, ed. Bill Mullen and Sherry Linkon (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1996), 1–12; Alan Wald, "Introduction," in *Writers on the Left*:

- Episodes in American Literary Communism* by Daniel Aron (1961) (New York: Columbia UP, 1992), xiii–xxxi; and Laura Hapke, *Daughters of the Great Depression: Women, Work, and Fiction in the American 1930s* (Athens and London: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1995).
5. Le Sueur creates such a politics in *Salute to Spring* by focusing on mother–daughter relationships and by stressing the empowered communities of abandoned mothers and the value of women’s work.
  6. See Morris Dickstein, “Depression Culture: The Dream of Mobility,” in *Radical Revision: Rereading 1930s Culture*, ed. Bill Mullen and Sherry Linkon, (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1996), 224–242.
  7. See Fishkin, Connery, Lounsberry.
  8. See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 161–175.
  9. On the question of the moveable boundary between fact and fiction, Suzanne Keen notes, “When narrative audiences [to which we belong when we are ‘suspending disbelief’ to accept the truth claims of fiction] know that a fictional text is not real and authorial audience [to which we belong when we know that a fictional text is not real] hold identical beliefs about the truth of a text that happens to be fictional, then all the formal qualities that are supposed to distinguish fiction from nonfiction have failed to be discerned” (131–132). Of course the reader can belong to both audiences, but this does not alter “calling into question the very project of cataloguing fiction’s ostensibly distinctive traits” (132). In response to this long-standing quandary, this essay will follow Barbara Foley’s argument in her work on the documentary novel (*Telling the Truth*, 1986) in which she argues that factual and fictional forms of writing are not “immutable essences” but should be understood instead as “historically varying types of writing, signaled by and embodied in, changing literary conventions and generated by the changing structures of the historically specific relations of production and intercourse” (27). The documentary effect generated by *Salute to Spring* and *Daughter of Earth* fall under, I will argue, Foley’s category: “to represent reality by means of agreed-upon conventions of fictionality, while grafting into [their] fictive pact some kind of additional claim to empirical validation” (25).
  10. See Norman Sim, *The Literary Journalists* (New York: Ballantine, 1984), 8–12.
  11. For more on 1930s reportage, see Constance Coiner, *Better Red: The Writing and Resistance of Tillie Olsen and Meridel Le Sueur* (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1998), 27–28; Robert Shulman, *The Power of Political Art: The 1930s Literary Left* (Chapel Hill and London: The Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2000), 13, 27, 51, 67, 183; and John Hartsock, *A History of American Literary Journalism: The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 241–242. While Le Sueur was certainly working out of the “reportage” tradition of the 1930s (as Robert

Shulman puts it, she was the “Chekov of the form” 67), she also transcended this tradition, shaping her journalism into stories and sketches that incorporate narrative and rhetorical techniques generally attributed to fiction and not to reportage. As Elaine Hedges has remarked, “Many of Le Sueur’s pieces have been called both reportage and fiction” (10). For the Le Sueur works I discuss in this section, I favor the term “literary journalism,” following John Hartsock’s definition of the term, “in which it is understood that [the work] is written largely (but not exclusively) in a narrative mode” (11).

12. See Laura Hapke’s incisive comments on Le Sueur’s “party-line fiction” and female representation in *Daughter’s of the Great Depression* (Athens and London: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1995), 90–91.
13. See Warren I. Susman, *Culture as History*, xix–xxx.

6 CLASS, WORK, AND NEW RACES:  
ZORA NEALE HURSTON’S *THEIR EYES  
WERE WATCHING GOD* AND AGNES  
SMEDLEY’S *DAUGHTER OF EARTH*

1. Work is not, it must be noted, predicated on nor reducible to some universal fixity (racial or otherwise), or to some notion of a privileged historical subject. There is no security of a foundationalist epistemology. What I’m suggesting is that “work” can be a significant juncture from which to rethink concepts such as “identity,” “explanation,” and “determination” and romance. The category of work, then, is as much an instance of the “made-real” as an instance of “reality,” as much a theoretical enterprise as an empirical description of socio-racial groups.
2. From Jean Toomer’s *Cane* and W. E. B. Du Bois’s *The Quest of Silver Fleece* (1911) to Pauline Hopkin’s *Contending Forces* (1900) and Laurence Dunbar’s *The Sport of the Gods* (1902)—these texts define themselves by the creation and employment of artistic representations of labor. Similarly, Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* (1906), Mary Wilkins Freeman’s *The Portion of Labor* (1901), and Theodore Dreiser’s *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911) feature work as their primary concern. For these authors, as well as for Smedley and Hurston, work is a crucial mediatory concept.
3. For recent approaches to the relation of work and American culture and literature, see Nicholas K. Bromwell, *By the Sweat of the Brow: Literature and Labor in Antebellum America* (Chicago and London: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1993); David Sprague Herreshoff, *Labor into Art: The Theme of Work in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State UP, 1991); Michele Birnbaum, *Race, Work, and Desire in American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003); and Cindy Weinstein, *The Literature of Labor and the Labors of Literature in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995). This chapter is indebted to these studies.



4. Motherhood is not an issue for Janie. Marie casts a cold eye on mothering and motherhood as an institution. Both protagonists ultimately insist on their preference for being unencumbered: both do so that they might find equality in their affective relationships and in love. For Marie, though, gender and class oppression result in a troubled sexuality, beginning from her early childhood. Sexual and marital relations quickly spill over into class relations: the brutality and dominance she witnesses in marriage is in turn witnessed by her in American imperialism and the exploitation of the working class. For both Janie and Marie, knowledge of oneself and one's relationship to others comes foremost from day to day experiential knowledge.
5. According to Susan L. Mizruchi, "When major writers in the decades before and after the turn of the century wrote about women and work, they wrote invariably about the lower classes" (629). Although often eroding traditional understandings of work, Smedley and Hurston can be seen as following this tradition.
6. On her experience at the writers' colony, Yaddo, Smedley wrote to Malcolm Cowley (November 12, 1947): "You see, I lack the proper approach to writing. Instead of a perfectly balanced sentence with or without commas or periods, I see armies of barefoot peasant in China and other parts of the world reaching for the stars of humanity but being shot to death for their endeavors" (qtd. in MacKinnon and MacKinnon, *Life and Times* 319).
7. As *Salute to Spring* and *Daughter* demonstrate, alternative and oppositional politics can often resort to the romantic and nostalgic. See Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 122–123.
8. In a June 29, 1927 letter, Smedley wrote, "I have joined an 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft' for the study of Marxism and Imperialism... Our leader is a well-known Marxian economist. Within my own opinions I remain nonpolitical insofar as the Communist Party is concerned, and could never join it. I am more and more interested in economic action alone" (qtd. in MacKinnon and MacKinnon, *Life and Times* 121).
9. For more biographical detail on Smedley's arrest and these pieces, see Jan MacKinnon and Steve MacKinnon, "Agnes Smedley's 'Cell Mates': 531–533. Importantly, for Smedley's aspirations to be a journalist, these portraits of fellow prisoners "won [her] the respect and future support of liberal editors at the *Nation* and the *New Republic*" (MacKinnon and MacKinnon 65).
10. Although she did not write for the mainstream press, Smedley is part of the tradition of the participatory metropolitan newspaper women, which came into force in the early twentieth century. As Jean Marie Lutes has argued, "More likely than her male counterparts to be pictured along with her stories, more likely to inspire controversy by her physical presence at an event, the newspaperwoman was a conspicuous anomaly, hard to ignore even by those who wished she

would go away . . . For men, participatory journalism was a choice; for women, it was one of the few ways to break out of the women's pages" (2).

11. See William Stott, *Documentary Expression and Thirties America* (Chicago and London : Univ. of Chicago Press, 1986), 5–25.

7 CLASS "TRUTHS" IN JAMES AGEE'S  
*LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN*

1. Evans Chan, "Against Postmodernism, etcetera—A Conversation with Susan Sontag," *Postmodern Culture* 12, 12 (2001): 8.
2. Muriel Rukeyser, *A Muriel Rukeyser Reader*, ed. Jan Heller Levi (New York: Norton, 1994), 121.
3. Of course, Agee had to subvert standard documentary forms to try to make *Famous Men* succeed in reaching such an end. This chapter will explore several ways in which he does so. On this issue, see the excellent work of Michael Staub, *Voices of Persuasion: Politics of Representation in 1930s America* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 21–53.
4. See Alan Wald, "The 1930s Left in U.S. Literature Reconsidered," in *Radical Revisions: Rereading 1930s Culture*, ed. Bill Mullen and Sherry Linkon (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1996), 13–28.
5. For "the American pragmatism that constituted the philosophical basis of literary proletarianism" and the U.S. literary radicals' "antipathy to overt didacticism" and "an intense predilection for the real" as opposed to a materialist dialectic (143), see Barbara Foley's *Radical Representations*, 142–160.
6. On some of the "dangers" in describing "social others," see the incisive work of Paula Rabinowitz, "Voyeurism and Class Consciousness": 143–170.
7. See, for example, these place-based works, all of which involved contemporaneous commentary on the veracity of their descriptions: John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), Agnes Smedley's *Daughter of Earth* (1929), Mike Gold's *Jews Without Money* (1930), Meridel Le Sueur's *The Girl* (1936), and Edward Anderson's *Hungry Men* (1935).

Agee's and Rukeyser's forays into American places (*Praise's* Appalachia; and *The Book's* Gauley, West Virginia) mirror Dixon Wexler's observation on the sudden "rise of the region" in Depression-era culture, resulting, in part, from "the over 650, 000 miles of new road construction undertaken between 1935 and 1943 by the works Progress Administration (WPA)" and "the 378 books and pamphlets published in the *American Guide Series of the Federal Writers' Project* focusing on local histories, cultures, and traditions" (qtd. in Kalaidjian 71).

On art's potential for influencing mass opinion, see James Agee, "Plans for Work: October, 1937," in *Collected Short Prose of James Agee*, ed. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Ballantine, 1970), 160; most especially, the section, *Conjectures on how to get "art" back on a plane of organic human necessity*.

8. Virtually ignored by Agee critics is the 1939 *Partisan Review* questionnaire, entitled "Some Questions Which Face American Writers Today" and Agee's responses to it that appear in the center of *Famous Men*. Although the *Partisan Review* refused to publish his sardonic replies, Agee featured them in the "Intermission" section. His answer to question five is particularly significant:

5. Do you find, in retrospect, that your writing reveals any allegiance to any group, class, organization, region, religion, or system of thought, or do you conceive of it as mainly the expression of yourself as an individual? [...]

5. "I find in retrospect," that I have felt forms of allegiance or part-allegiance to catholicism and to the communist party. I felt less at ease with them and I am done with them . . . I am most certainly "for" an "intelligent" "communism"; no other form of theory of government seems to me conceivable; but even this is only a part of much more, and a means to an end: and in every concession to a means, the end is put in danger of all but certain death. I feel violent enmity and contempt toward all factions and all joiners. I "conceive of" my work as an effort to be faithful to my perceptions. I am not interested in "expressing" "myself" as an "individual" except when it is suggested that I "express" someone else. (305)

Agee's "'intelligent' 'communism'" is neither a contemporaneous Marxist party-line position nor that of a standard liberal line of thought. Self-directed to be true to his "perceptions" and drawn to an "intense allegiance toward certain shapes of fact" (*Praise* 305), Agee wished to suggest in *Famous Men* possibilities for a "perceptual solidarity" to his subjects and middle-class readers while at the same time criticizing a bourgeois subjectivity.

9. Agee was conversant with the early pragmatists and their doctrines. Jean Follansbee Quinn has noted, "As a student at Harvard, Agee was galvanized by I. A. Richards's conceptions of the emotive and instrumental qualities of language—ideas Richards drew from C.S. Peirce's semiotics, William James's psychology, and John Dewey's philosophy. But Agee adopted those ideas—as Dewey did in the 1931 William James Lectures on aesthetics at Harvard—by considering the political and social consequences of aesthetic discourse" (6). In what follows, I'm most interested in Agee's aesthetics on the

- nature of truth, especially in relation to the writings of William James and to *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.
10. Richard Wright's *Twelve Million Black Voices* (1941), a photo-documentary text, articulates a Marxist critique of the period's characteristic emphasis on collective identity while, in Jeff Allred's words, "enact[ing] a drama in which the *we* that narrates has something to teach an implied white readership about blackness" (557). Like *The Grapes of Wrath* (book and film), *Let us Now Praise Famous Men* is disturbingly silent on race and the "viewing" of race and poverty. See Allred, "From Eye to We: Richard Wright's *12 Million Black Voices*, Documentary, and Pedagogy," *American Literature* 78, 3 (September 2006): 549–583. See also Rabinowitz, "Voyeurism and Class Consciousness" 154–155.
  11. In a 1936 letter to his lifelong friend and correspondent, Father Flye, Agee writes: "I care mainly just about two things. Sometimes they seem identical or at least like binary stars, and sometimes they seem like a split which can completely destroy. They would be (1) getting as near truth and whole truth as is humanly possible, which means several sorts of 'Truth' maybe, but on the whole means spiritual life, integrity and growth; and (2) setting this (near-) truth out in the clearest and cleanest possible terms" (*Letters* 85).
  12. Walker Evans's retrospective comments on his "independent" but mutually beneficial collaboration with Agee in *Famous Men* characterize, as Stuart Culver notes, how "Agee provided Evans with an atmosphere or medium in which images of the sharecroppers emerged in response to the writer's efforts to represent them in language" (194): "I was really able to trail along and take advantage of an atmosphere that James Agee created with these people" (Evans 320). See Walker Evans, "Discussions with the Students of the University of Michigan," in *Photographic Essays and Images*, ed. Beaumont Newhall (New York: Museum of Modern Art Press, 1980), 311–320.
  13. On the importance of the tropological function of language and a text's symmetries, see Paul de Mann, "Introduction à la littérature allemande contemporaine," in *Wartime Journalism, 1939–1943*, ed. Werner Hamacher, Neil Hertz, and Thomas Keenan. (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1988), 200–201.
  14. For some of the voyeuristic and sexual implications of sleep involving the narrator and female characters, see Linda Wagner Martin, "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men—and Women: Agee's Absorption in the Sexual," in *James Agee: Reconsiderations*, ed. Michael A. Lofaro. *Tennessee Studies in Literature*, vol. 33 (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1992), 44–58.
  15. See Agee's tentative project for composing an "Anti-communist manifesto," in James Agee, *Plans for Work, 1937*, *James Agee: The Collected Short Prose*, ed. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Ballantine, 1970), 157.

16. See Perloff, "'Creative Writing' among the Disciplines," *MLA Newsletter* 38, 1 (Spring, 2006): 3–4. Instead of assuming separate essences for fictional and factual discourse—as Perloff does—and this does not mean that fictional discourse and nonfictional discourse are indistinguishable—we would do well to scrutinize the correspondences between the two, the ontologies behind their respective truth claims, and the interdependent correlatives to their respective powers.
17. Paul de Man argues: "All philosophy is condemned, to the extent that it is dependent on figuration, to be literary and, as the depository of this very problem, all literature is to some extent philosophical" (50). See de Man, "The Epistemology of Metaphor," in *Aesthetic Ideology*, ed. Andrzej Warminski (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1996), 34–50.
18. This chapter interrogates not only those distinctions, but Frus's interpretations of the categories of "literature" and "nonfiction."
19. See *James Agee: Selected Journalism*, ed. Paul Ashdown (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2005).
20. See Theodore W. Adorno, "The Position of the Narrator in the Contemporary Novel," in *Notes to Literature*, vol. 1, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia UP, 1991), 30–36.
21. See Jon-Christian Suggs, "Marching! Marching! and the Idea of the Proletarian Novel," in *The Novel and the American Left: Critical Essays on Depression-Era Fiction*, ed. Janet Galligani Casey (Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 2004), 159–161.
22. For a feminist "focus on gender not as a predetermined condition of the production of texts, but as a textual effect," see Robyn Warhol, "Guilty Cravings: What Feminist Narratology Can Do for Cultural Studies," in *Narratologies: New Perspectives on Narrative Analysis*, ed. David Herman (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1999), 342–348; and Sally Robinson, *Engendering the Subject: Gender and Self-Representation in Contemporary Women's Fiction* (New York: State Univ. of New York, 1991).

#### CONCLUSION

1. See, for example, Barbara Foley, *Telling the Truth*; Paula Rabinowitz, *They Must Be Represented: The Politics of Documentary* (New York: Verso, 1994); William Stott, *Documentary Expression and Thirties America* (New York: Oxford UP, 1973); and John Hartsock, *A History of American Literary Journalism* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2000).
2. See John Hartsock, *A History of American Literary Journalism: The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 1–20.

3. See Marjorie Perloff, "'Creative Writing' among the Disciplines," *MLA Newsletter* 38, 1 (Spring, 2006): 3–4.
4. For an astute discussion of the materiality of aesthetics and aesthetic practices, see Paul Gilmore, "Romantic Electricity, or the Materiality of Aesthetics," *American Literature* 76, 3 (September 2004): 487–494.
5. See Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Critical Theory Since 1965*, ed. Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle (Tallahassee: Florida State UP, 1986), 240–252.
6. Presently there is no word or concept that is more off-limits to U. S. mass culture than class. By contrast, the U.S. society has rapidly progressed over several generations in developing a common language to talk about differences of gender, race, and sexuality. But in U.S. mass culture, class remains the stalled subject. Recently, however (May 2005), the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* ran front-page articles that launched major new series on class inequality and the disappearing American Dream. Class appears to be coming back, though, of course, it has always been with us.

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# INDEX

(Please note that page numbers appearing in *italics* indicate end notes.)

- Abrams, M.H., 151  
Adorno, Theodore, 133  
aesthetics  
    Agee, James and, 2, 15, 187–188, 191, 193, 196–198, 202–205, 207  
    Bourdieu, Pierre and, 5  
    class and, 220–223  
    Crane, Stephen and, 45, 47, 56, 64, 69–71  
    Davis, Rebecca Harding and, 45, 48, 50–53, 69–71  
    Hurston, Zora Neale and, 169  
    Le Sueur, Meridel and, 13, 134, 144, 150, 151, 156–157  
    London, Jack and, 82, 87, 91, 96–97  
    Smedley, Agnes and, 2, 169  
    Toomer, Jean and, 2, 12, 108, 113  
    Whitman, Walt and, 27, 29, 36–37, 42  
Agee, James, 187–217, 242–244  
    aesthetics and, 2, 15, 187–188, 191, 193, 196–198, 202–205, 207  
    atmosphere and, 189–191  
    camera in works of, 199–202  
    on class divisions, 210–213  
    “Havana Cruise”, 189, 208, 212–213, 216–217  
    language and, 14–15  
    Le Sueur, Meridel and, 160  
    *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, 14–15, 160, 185–217  
    literary journalism, 102, 207–209, 225  
    narrative method, 191–199, 220–222  
    rehistoricizing and, 162  
    “Saratoga”, 189, 208–212, 217  
    satire, 213–217  
    second-person narration, 209–210  
    settings and writings, 151  
    sleep in works of, 202–206  
    Smedley, Agnes and, 185  
    studies of, 2  
Agnew, Jean-Christophe, 69  
Algren, Nelson, 137  
Allred, Jeff, 244  
Alter, Robert, 235  
*American Literature and Culture Wars* (Jay), 1  
*American Working Class Literature* (Coles and Zandy), 3  
Anderson, Sherwood, 12, 109  
Ashdown, Paul, 208, 209, 217  
*At Emerson’s Tomb* (Rowe), 1, 22  
Auerbach, Jonathan, 80, 88, 93, 97  
  
Babcock, Barbara, 69  
“Backward Glance o’er Travel’d Roads, A” (Whitman). *see* Whitman, Walt  
Bakhtin, Mikhail, 79  
Barnard, Rita, 180  
Bauman, Zygmunt, 228  
Baxter, Sylvester, 41  
“Becky” (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean

- Bell, Michael, 64  
 Bellamy, Edward, 41  
 Benjamin, Walter, 200  
 Benson, Brian J., 238  
 Bentley, Nancy, 188  
*Beyond Equality* (Montgomery), 4–5  
 “Blood Burning Moon” (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean  
 Blumin, Stuart, 7  
 Bourdieu, Pierre, 5, 93–94, 98, 151, 161  
   aesthetics and, 5  
 Boynton, Robert, 161–162  
 Brasher, Thomas, 35, 37  
 Bright, Edward, 64  
 Brooks, Peter, 84  
 Browder, Laura, 99, 153  
 Brown, Bill, 46, 66, 67, 68, 73, 76  
  
 Cain, William, 99, 101  
*Call of the Wild. see* London, Jack  
 Campbell Reesman, Jeanne, 99  
*Cane* (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean  
 “Carma” (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean  
 Carnegie, Andrew, 39  
 Cassuto, Leonard, 99  
*Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class* (Wilentz), 5  
 Civil War, 5, 40, 49  
 class  
   critical history of, 4–6  
   fixed ideologies and, 6  
   language and, 1–4, 7–9, 219–221, 222  
   vocabulary of, 221–223  
*Class and Its Others* (Gibson-Graham), 7  
 Coiner, Constance, 134, 136, 141, 148, 149, 158  
 Coles, Nicolas, 3  
 Colvert, James, 64  
  
*Communist Manifesto* (Marx and Engels), 15  
 Conlon, Stephen, 84  
 Connery, Thomas, 217  
 Conover, Ted, 161  
 Conroy, John, 136, 137, 152, 162  
 Coviello, Peter, 29–30  
 Crane, Stephen, 45–73  
   aesthetics and, 45, 47, 56, 64, 69–71  
   Boynton and, 162  
   class and, 2, 3, 75, 220, 222  
   “Experiment in Misery, An”, 54–55  
   grotesque in works, 61–62  
   “In the Depths of a Coal Mine”, 67, 69–70  
   *Letters*, 64  
   literary journalism, 65–73  
   London, Jack and, 97, 101, 102  
   *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, 10–11, 46–48, 50, 52, 53–66, 75, 231  
   melodrama in works, 59–61  
   “Mexican Lower Classes, The”, 70, 71–72, 97, 101  
   narrative method, 10–12  
   “On the Boardwalk”, 66–67  
   “Parades and Entertainments”, 67  
   performative in works, 62–64  
   performative unreality and structure in works, 56–59  
   *Prose and Poetry*, 66–73  
   reality and, 230–231  
   as stylist of performance, 64  
   “When Man Falls, a Crowd Gathers”, 69  
 critical history, class and, 4–6  
*Cruising Modernism* (Trask), 1  
 Cunningham, Brent, 96  
 current criticism, class and, 6–16

- Daughter of Earth* (Smedley). *see* Smedley, Agnes
- Davis, Rebecca Harding, 45–73  
aesthetics and, 45, 48, 50–53, 69–71  
class and, 2, 3, 10–11, 220–222  
Le Sueur, Meridel and, 133  
*Life in the Iron Mills*, 10–11, 46–47, 48–53, 154  
London, Jack and, 75–76, 84  
Dawahare, Anthony, 149  
Deleuze, Gilles, 28  
*Democratic Vistas*. *see* Whitman, Walt
- Denning, Michael, 207, 217  
Dewey, John, 192, 196, 243  
di Donato, Pietro, 153  
“Dignity of Dollars, The” (London). *see* London, Jack
- Dillard, Mabel M., 238  
Dimock, Wai Chee, 5  
*Distinction* (Bourdieu), 5, 93–94, 98  
Dos Passos, John, 137, 153, 154, 217  
Dowling, Robert M., 61  
Dreiser, Theodore, 55, 240  
Duplessis, Rachel Blau, 177
- Eason, David, 97  
Eldridge, Richard, 237  
Eliot, T.S., 51, 206, 232  
Ellis, Jacqueline, 160  
*Emergence of the Middle Class, The* (Blumin), 7  
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 19–23, 42  
“American Scholar, The”, 22  
“Fate”, 22  
*Nature*, 19–22  
“Poet, The”, 20, 22  
Empson, William, 181  
Engels, Frederick, 15, 94  
Erkkila, Betsy, 24  
“Esther” (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean
- “Evening in a Lumber Town” (Le Sueur). *see* Le Sueur, Meridel  
“Experiment in Misery, An” (Crane). *see* Crane, Stephen
- Fabre, Genevieve, 130  
Fantasia, Rick, 4  
Farrell, James T., 137  
“Fate” (Emerson). *see* Emerson, Ralph Waldo  
Feied, Frederick, 77  
feminism, 13, 15, 135, 138, 149, 245  
“Fern” (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean  
Finnegan, William, 161  
Fisher, Philip, 55, 66  
Fishkin, Shelley Fisher, 35, 37, 97  
Fitzgerald, Robert, 208, 216  
Fluck, Winifried, 230  
Foley, Barbara, 1, 105–106, 120, 131, 235, 239  
Follansbee Quinn, Jeanne, 190, 243  
Frus, Phyllis, 208  
Furer, Andrew, 101
- Gandall, Keith, 4, 62  
Gates, Henry Louis, 236  
Gellhorn, Martha, 136  
gender  
Agee, James and, 217  
class and, 1, 7, 8, 14, 17–18, 220–223  
Davis, Rebecca Harding and, 49  
Hurston, Zora Neale and, 163–165, 168, 175–176, 179  
Le Sueur, Meridel and, 140–142, 158  
London, Jack and, 76, 79, 82, 91, 95  
Smedley, Agnes and, 167, 183  
Toomer, Jean and, 106, 108  
Whitman, Walt and, 32–33, 39, 42  
Genette, Gérard, 123, 236



- Gibson-Graham, J.K., 7  
 Gilmore, Michael T., 7  
*Girl, The* (Le Sueur). *see* Le Sueur, Meridel  
 Gliserman, Martin, 78  
 Gold, Michael, 137, 152, 154  
 “Golden Age” of American journalism, 96–97  
 Gould, Philip, 11  
 Gray, Richard, 97  
 Greenspan, Ezra, 40  
 Gusdorf, George, 96  
 Gutman, Herbert, 4
- Hall, John R., 219  
 Hall, Stuart, 6  
 Halliburton, David, 57, 60  
 Hanley, Lawrence, 153, 189–190, 211  
 Hapke, Laura, 149, 158, 165, 185  
 Harris, Sharon M., 48  
 Harrison, Gabriel, 227  
 Hartsock, John, 11, 99, 240  
 “Havana Cruise” (Agee). *see* Agee, James  
 Hedges, Elaine, 240  
 Helbing, Mark, 12, 109, 123, 126  
 Hendricks, King, 100  
 Herbst, Josephine, 136, 157, 183  
 Hicks, Granville, 153, 154  
 Hobsbawm, Eric, 4  
 Hoffman, Nancy, 176–177, 181, 182  
 Hollinger, David A., 192  
 “How I Became a Socialist” (London). *see* London, Jack  
 Howard, June, 66, 71, 72, 230  
 Huntington, Collis P., 73  
 Hurston, Zora Neale, 2, 3, 14, 163–185, 220–222, 241  
   aesthetics and, 169  
   form, work, and fragmentation of self, 169–174  
   frame narratives and, 165–169  
   on labor, 174–176  
   *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, 14, 164–169, 172, 176–179  
   work and being, 177–179  
   work and race, 176–177
- I Hear Men Talking* (Le Sueur). *see* Le Sueur, Meridel  
 “I Sing the Body Electric” (Whitman). *see* Whitman, Walt  
 “I Was Marching” (Le Sueur). *see* Le Sueur, Meridel  
 “Illusions” (Emerson), 21  
 immersion, 13, 89, 152–160, 162, 165, 179, 182–184, 188, 200  
 “In the Depths of a Coal Mine” (Crane). *see* Crane, Stephen  
 incarnational  
   classed body and, 25–28  
   gender and, 32–33  
   language and, 28–32  
 Innes, Catherine L., 237  
*Iron Heel, The* (London), 11, 89  
 Iser, Wolfgang, 50, 52, 58, 230
- Jackson, Bruce, 197  
 James, Henry, 131  
 James, William, 188, 191–192, 194–198, 200, 243–244  
 Jameson, Frederic, 6  
 Janowitz, Anne, 220  
 Jay, Gregory S., 1  
*John Barleycorn*. *see* London, Jack  
 Johnson, James Weldon, 236  
 Jones, Gareth Stedman, 5  
 Jones, Robert B., 125
- “Kabnis” (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean  
 Kalaidjian, Walter, 242  
 Kaplan, Amy, 99  
 Kaplan, Cora, 6, 46, 223  
 “Karintha” (Toomer). *see* Toomer, Jean  
 Keen, Suzanne, 239  
 Kerman, Cynthia Earl, 237

- Kimmel, Michael, 79  
 Kloppenburg, James T., 192  
 Knoper, Randall, 230–231  
 Kreig, Joann, 41  
 Kroeber, Karl, 238
- Labor, Earle, 99  
*Labor and Desire* (Rabinowitz), 1  
 Lang, Amy Shrager, 1, 7–8, 56, 223  
*Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History* (Jones), 5  
 Lawson, Andrew, 227, 228  
 Le Sueur, Meridel, 133–162  
   1930s Left and, 135–137  
   aesthetics and, 13, 134, 144, 150, 151, 156–157  
   Agee, James and, 207  
   class and, 2, 13, 219–222  
   critical commentary on, 149–150  
   “Evening in a Lumber Town”, 153, 154, 156–158  
   everyday experiences and, 163  
   *Girl, The*, 13, 139, 144, 146–147, 149  
   *I Hear Men Talking*, 13, 156  
   “I Was Marching”, 133, 137, 139, 144–146, 149, 154–155, 160, 221  
   immersion and, 152–153  
   language and, 137–139  
   literary journalism, 150–152, 225, 239–240  
   London, Jack and, 102  
   movement and, 144–149  
   narrative vision, 139–141  
   rehistoricizing of, 160–162  
   *Salute to Spring*, 13, 133–162, 163, 180–181, 238–239, 241  
   setting and, 13  
   settings, immersions, circumstances, 153–160  
   Smedley, Agnes and, 164, 181  
   studies of, 238  
   text and body, 141–144  
   “What Happens in a Strike”, 153, 156  
   “Women Are Hungry”, 154, 157–158  
*Leaves of Grass* (Whitman). *see* Whitman, Walt  
 LeBlanc, Nicole, 161  
*Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (Agee). *see* Agee, James  
 Levenson, J.C., 54  
 Lewis, Sinclair, 134  
 Lieber, Todd, 128, 236  
*Life in the Iron Mills* (Davis). *see* Davis, Rebecca Harding  
 Lipsitz, George, 1, 3  
 literary journalism  
   Agee, James and, 207–209  
   Crane, Stephen and, 65–73  
   Le Sueur, Meridel and, 150–152  
   London, Jack and, 96–103  
   Smedley, Agnes and, 179–185  
 Liverwright, Horace, 106, 238  
 London, Charmian-Kittredge, 77, 94  
 London, Jack, 75–103, 232–233, 234  
   aesthetics and, 82, 87, 91, 96–97  
   “Americanness” and, 90–93  
   autobiographical forms, 94–96  
   body narratives, 94–96  
   *Call of the Wild*, 11, 80  
   class and, 3, 11–12, 219–222  
   “Dignity of Dollars, The”, 12, 97–98  
   direct address and, 88–90  
   “*How I Became a Socialist*”, 11, 77–79  
   *John Barleycorn*, 11, 85, 96, 102  
   language and, 84–86  
   Le Sueur, Meridel and, 133, 141, 152  
   literary journalism, 96–103  
   “Mexico’s Army and Ours”, 12, 97, 99–102  
   narrative, 79–81

- London, Jack—*continued*  
*People of the Abyss*, 11–12,  
 75–103, 133, 152, 232–233  
*Road, The*, 77, 85  
 on social hierarchy, 81–84  
 sociological writings, 77–79  
 solutions for alleviation of  
 poverty, 93–94  
 tramp identity, 86–88  
 “What Life Means to Me”, 78–79
- Lounsberry, Barbara, 9
- Loving, Jerome, 18, 35
- Lowe, James, 189
- Lumpkin, Grace, 183
- Lutes, Jean Marie, 241
- MacKinnon, Janice, 181, 183, 241
- MacKinnon, Stephen, 181, 183, 241
- Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*  
 (Crane). *see* Crane, Stephen
- Markels, Julian, 6
- Marxism  
 Agee, James and, 15, 190, 192,  
 206, 243  
 class and, 5–6, 7  
 Le Sueur, Meridel and, 135, 138,  
 141  
 London, Jack and, 90  
 Smedley, Agnes on, 241  
 Wright, Richard and, 244
- McCarthy, Mary, 136
- McKay, Nellie Y., 124, 127
- “Mexican Lower Classes, The”  
 (Crane). *see* Crane, Stephen
- “Mexico’s Army and Ours”  
 (London). *see* London, Jack
- Mieszkowski, Jan, 8, 187
- Miller, Nancy, 167
- Minding the Machine* (Rice), 7
- Minter, David, 234
- Mizruchi, Susan L., 241
- modernism, 2, 13, 15, 82, 95, 105,  
 131, 137, 141, 188, 192, 195,  
 206–207, 217, 222
- Monster, The* (Crane), 66
- Montgomery, David, 4–5
- Morton, Heather, 35
- Myerson, Joel, 35
- naturalism  
 Agee, James and, 15, 207  
 class and, 2  
 Crane, Stephen and, 57, 59–61,  
 62, 64–65, 67, 71  
 Davis, Rebecca Harding and,  
 45–48  
 London, Jack and, 12, 87
- Nature* (Emerson). *see* Emerson,  
 Ralph Waldo
- “Nebraska’s Bitter Fight for Life”  
 (Crane), 70–71
- New Journalism, 97, 161–162
- Norris, Frank, 60, 65
- North, Michael, 237
- Olsen, Tillie, 154, 157, 164, 180,  
 217
- “On the Boardwalk” (Crane). *see*  
 Crane, Stephen
- Orlean, Susan, 161
- Outline of a Theory of Practice*  
 (Bourdieu), 234
- “Parades and Entertainments”  
 (Crane). *see* Crane, Stephen
- Parisi, Peter, 98
- Parker, Dorothy, 136
- Peirce, Charles S., 197–198,  
 243
- Peluso, Robert, 84, 85, 91
- People of the Abyss* (London). *see*  
 London, Jack
- performative mystery, 53–56
- performative unreality, 56–59
- Perloff, Marjorie, 207, 245
- Pfaelzer, Jean, 49–50
- “Poet, The” (Emerson). *see*  
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo
- Posnak, Ross, 188
- Poverty and Progress* (Thernstrom), 5
- Practical Reason* (Bourdieu), 234
- Pratt, Linda, 155

- Raban, Jonathan, 152  
 Rabinowitz, Paula, 1, 49, 94, 142, 149, 168, 182  
 race  
   class and, 1, 7, 9, 13–15, 220–223  
   Hurston, Zora Neale and, 164–165, 168, 174  
   London, Jack and, 81–82, 85, 91, 95, 101–102  
   New Journalism and, 161  
   Smedley, Agnes and, 164–165  
   Toomer, Jean and, 105–110, 112, 119, 128, 130  
   Whitman, Walt and, 27, 29, 36, 39, 41–42  
   work and, 176–177  
*Radical Representations* (Foley), 1  
*Rainbow at Midnight* (Lipsitz), 1  
 Raney, David, 234  
 realism  
   Agee, James and, 15, 195, 202, 207, 217  
   class and, 2, 220  
   Crane, Stephen and, 47–48, 57, 64–65, 68, 73  
   Davis, Rebecca Harding and, 47–48  
   Le Sueur, Meridel and, 135, 137, 141, 150, 153–154  
   London, Jack and, 97, 98, 99  
   Smedley, Agnes and, 183  
   Toomer, Jean and, 116, 119, 130  
   Whitman, Walt and, 45  
*Red Badge of Courage, The* (Crane), 66  
 Reed, T.V., 189  
*Rethinking Class* (Dimock and Gilmore), 7  
 Reynolds, David S., 18, 35, 37, 39, 41  
 Rice, Stephen, 7–8, 9  
 Ricoeur, Paul, 108  
 Riley, Denise, 229  
 Roberts, Nancy, 154  
 Roberts, Nora, 136, 184  
 Robertson, Michael, 66, 70  
 Rockefeller, William D., 73  
 Roggenkamp, Karen, 37  
 Rorty, Richard, 220  
 Rosenfelt, Deborah, 136  
 Rotundo, Anthony, 79  
 Rowe, John Carlos, 1, 22  
 Rukeyser, Muriel, 137, 187, 207  
*Salute to Spring* (Le Sueur). *see* Le Sueur, Meridel  
 “Saratoga” (Agee). *see* Agee, James  
 Schleuning, Neala, 136  
 Schneider, Isodore, 154  
 Schocket, Eric, 80, 83, 231, 233  
 Schoenbach, Lisi, 196  
 Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, 18  
 Seltzer, Mark, 53  
 Sequin, Robert, 4  
 Shulman, Robert, 135, 138, 143, 240  
 Siegle, Robert, 123  
 Sinclair, Upton, 152  
 Slesinger, Tess, 153, 183  
 Smedley, Agnes, 163–185  
   aesthetics and, 2, 169  
   Agee, James and, 207, 217  
   class and, 2, 3, 14, 220–222  
   *Daughter of Earth*, 14, 152, 163–169, 171–173, 175–181, 183–185, 239  
   Le Sueur, Meridel and, 152–154, 157, 162  
   literary journalism, 98, 179–185, 241  
 Spiegel, Alan, 195, 204  
 Spivak, Gayatri, 6  
 Spivak, John L., 154  
 Spolsky, Ellen, 231  
 Stacy, Jason, 18, 40  
 Staub, Michael, 180, 188  
 Steinbeck, John, 207, 217  
*Stephen Crane: Letters* (Crane). *see* Crane, Stephen  
*Stephen Crane: Prose and Poetry*. *see* Crane, Stephen  
 Stott, Richard B., 18

- Stott, William, 193  
 Stutfield, H.M., 60  
 Symonds, John, 41  
*Syntax of Class, The* (Shrager), 1,  
 7–8, 223
- Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
 (Hurston). *see* Hurston, Zora  
 Neale
- Thernstrom, Stephen, 4–5  
 Thompson, E.P., 4, 6, 219  
 Tichi, Cecilia, 49  
 Toomer, Jean, 105–131, 235, 236,  
 237, 238  
 absolutions of seeing, 108–119  
 aesthetics and, 2, 12,  
 108, 113  
 “Becky”, 13, 110–115  
 “Blood Burning Moon”, 118–  
 119  
*Cane*, 12–13, 105–131, 133, 159,  
 235–237  
 “Carma”, 13, 110–111, 113–115,  
 128  
 class and, 2, 3, 12–13, 220, 221,  
 222  
 “Esther”, 116–119  
 “Fern”, 13, 110–112, 114–117,  
 128  
 “Kabnis”, 107, 127–130  
 “Karintha”, 13, 110–117, 128  
 Le Sueur, Meridel and, 133, 159  
 Touraine, Alain, 228  
 Trask, Michael, 1, 222
- Unpossessed, The* (Slesinger), 153,  
 183
- Walcott, Charles, 55  
 Wald, Alan, 190  
 Walker, Dale, 99  
 Ward, J.A., 201  
 Warhol, Robyn, 110, 129  
 Weinstein, Cindy, 179
- “What Happens in a Strike” (Le  
 Sueur). *see* Le Sueur, Meridel  
 “What Life Means to Me”  
 (London). *see* London, Jack  
 “When Man Falls, a Crowd  
 Gathers” (Crane). *see* Crane,  
 Stephen
- Whicher, Stephen, 22  
 Whitman, Walt, 17–43, 225, 226,  
 227, 228–229  
 aesthetics and, 27, 29, 36–37, 42  
 “Backward Glance o’er Travel’d  
 Roads, A”, 10, 24  
 class and, 2, 3, 9–10, 220–222  
 class and mass, 33–34  
 class religion and common  
 people, 23–25  
 Crane, Stephen and, 45, 46, 47,  
 66  
 Davis, Rebecca Harding and, 45,  
 46, 47  
*Democratic Vistas*, 29, 40–41, 42  
 form and, 34–39  
 gender and, 32–33  
 “I Sing the Body Electric”,  
 25–27  
 incarnational and classed body,  
 25–28  
 language and incarnational,  
 28–32  
 Le Sueur, Meridel and, 133, 141  
*Leaves of Grass*, 9–10, 17–43, 53  
 London, Jack and, 80  
 move from journalism to poetry,  
 34–39  
 secular faith and, 19–23  
 Smedley, Agnes and, 185  
 Toomer, Jean and, 125  
*Whitman: The Political Poet*  
 (Erkkila), 24  
 Wilentz, Sean, 5  
 Williams, James, 102  
 Williams, Raymond, 4, 6, 38–39,  
 146

- Wilson, Christopher P., 10  
Wolfe, Tom, 161, 162  
“Women Are Hungry” (Le Sueur).  
    *see* Le Sueur, Meridel  
Wright, Richard, 238,  
    244
- Yagoda, Ben, 225  
Yesierska, Anzia, 162
- Zandy, Janet, 3  
Ziff, Larzer, 61  
Zinn, Howard, 100