

"A Beautiful Soul": Frederick Philip Grove's Re-Vision of
The Picture of Dorian Gray.


by

Sarah Dammermann

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RE-VISION OF THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

BY

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACTS

This thesis is concerned with the influence which Oscar Wilde's doctrine of aesthetic self-creation had on the life and writings of Felix Paul Greve/Frederick Philip Grove. It is well established that Greve not only translated Wilde's works into German but into life during the early years of this century. What is less well known is that this "translation" of art into life continued throughout most of Grove's Canadian career as well. The discovery of a previously unpublished short story written late in FPG's life seems to be the last word on Wilde's influence on FPG: this story, "A Beautiful Soul," is a re-writing of The Picture of Dorian Gray, and a radical departure from FPG's earlier admiration of Wilde.

The approach which will be taken in the analysis of this story is that of Roland Barthes, as demonstrated in S/Z. This particular mode of analysis is particularly useful in the case of this story by FPG for this is his only story which overtly "flouts all respect for origin, paternity, propriety" (S/Z 44). In others words, through the creation of a fictional author, Hugh Allister, who is a plagiarist, FPG is able to explore the concepts of "authority," "origin," and textual "naturalness" within his written text. In

addition, Barthes' analysis opens the text so that the reader is clearly aware that Hugh Allister creates his world by using the same means that FPG had employed in the creation of his Canadian identity: through Oscar Wilde's aesthetic theory of self-creation.

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

By now it is generally accepted that Frederick Philip Grove was not the Swedish immigrant that he claimed to be, but rather was born Felix Paul Greve to German parents. D.O. Spettigue's ground-breaking work, FPG: The European Years (1973), has caused Canadian scholars to re-examine the man they knew as F.P. Grove and his writings in light of his German experiences. One of the more exciting finds has been the extent to which FPG¹ was influenced by the life and writings of Oscar Wilde. This is the focus of this paper. Although FPG did not know Wilde personally, his extensive readings and translations of the English Decadents gave him a deep familiarity with Wilde and his aesthetic theory. That the young Greve took these theories to heart is amply demonstrated by his experiences in Germany around the turn of the century.

Born in 1879 to middle-class parents, FPG grew up in Hamburg, living with his mother after the separation of his parents in 1892 (Spettigue, FPG 39). Obviously bright, he

¹ In dealing with the complexities of this man's names/identities Felix Paul Greve will refer to the German period, as uncovered by D.O. Spettigue, Frederick Philip Grove refers to the man who lived in Canada, or appears in the "autobiography," In Search of Myself, while FPG will refer to the man who was both Greve and Grove, albeit at different times in his life.

attended school in the infamous St. Pauli district (Spettigue, FPG 39), then taught himself Latin and Greek in order to attend the Gymnasium des Johanneums for University preparation. He went on to attend Friedrich-Wilhelm's University in Bonn, but never completed his degree, either for financial reasons, or because it didn't seem to offer him the sort of life which he desired (Spettigue, FPG 63). When Greve left University it was to give himself time to function as a writer: between 1901 and 1909 he would publish two books of poetry and two novels as well as innumerable works of translation, but he earned neither a reputation as an artist nor a living wage.

In part this was because Greve had been living far beyond his means for several years in apparent emulation of Oscar Wilde. Like Wilde, Greve's excesses caught up with him, and in 1903 he was sentenced to a year in jail for fraud and debt (Spettigue, FPG 95-6). Despite an heroic effort, Greve was unable to free himself from his accumulated debt, and in 1909 he faked his suicide and emigrated to America. In 1912 he first appeared in Winnipeg, calling himself "Fred Grove" and applying for a job as a teacher (Spettigue, FPG 13). He did not write for seven years, devoting himself instead to teaching. In 1919 he began the essays which became Over Prairie Trails, and began to carve out a career for himself as a Canadian novelist.

Throughout his life FPG exhibited an impatience with the necessarily slow process of building a reputation. This characteristic showed itself in his tendency to quit midway through his projects. In this way he left University without a degree, abandoned a debt load in Germany and a wife in the United States, and quit teaching in order to become a novelist. He was, in his own words, "just a dilettante" (Pache 189). But he was not simply a dilettante in the normal sense of the word: he was a dilettante in the Decadent sense. Like Wilde, FPG was a "man who constantly mask[ed] himself, who experiment[ed] with different moral codes without subscribing to any. The dilettante [saw] his supreme achievement as an artist in the playful change of identities" (Pache 190). But for FPG this change of identities was anything but playful: it was, rather, a means of survival.

Among Spettigue's more important discoveries, for the purpose of this thesis, was the extent to which Greve was influenced by Oscar Wilde. During his years as a translator Greve translated nearly all of Wilde's works, as well as writing at least three essays on Wilde. In fact, Greve's first translations were of Wilde, and included The Picture of Dorian Gray. David Williams proposes that "Greve sensed in The Picture of Dorian Gray the validity of his own aesthetic theory of incarnation [For] [t]he picture of Dorian Gray is another portrait of contraries, of that which is and that which could be, united in the same figure" (45,

46). Like the portrait, Greve's--and later Grove's--own life is a composition of contraries. This is because FPG followed Wilde's dictum to make his life his art: the resulting suppression of his "nature" meant that FPG was never quite what he seemed to be.

Oscar Wilde, who was never quite what he seemed to be, either, was born in 1854, in Dublin, to parents of minor aristocratic claims.² Raised in relative prosperity, Wilde was tutored at home, and later, when he was only nine, was sent to boarding school (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 21). He would leave Ireland permanently in 1874 when he was accepted at Oxford, though he would remain proud of his Irish background. The years at Oxford gave him a firm footing in the public eye as an aesthete, and his years after graduation were spent attempting to cash in on his reputation. He published some poems, wrote a play, and in 1882 left for a lecturing tour of the United States and Canada. Upon returning to England he lectured occasionally, married and fathered two children, and worked as an editor of Woman's World for three years. In 1891 his break-through came as he published both Intentions and The Picture of Dorian Gray in the space of a few months. His reputation secure, he went on to even greater popularity with a string of successful plays. In 1895, at the height of his success, he brought charges

² The family had some medical ties--Wilde's father was a famous doctor--with several of the European royal families, including the British queen, who knighted Sir William in 1864 (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 11).

against his lover's--Lord Alfred Douglas'--father, the ninth Marquess of Queensbury. Queensbury had insulted Wilde by leaving a card addressed to "Oscar Wilde posing sodomite [sic]" at his club. Although Wilde had been a practicing homosexual since the age of thirty-two, at which time he had been seduced by the seventeen-year-old Robert Ross, he was insulted. Eventually there were three separate trials, Wilde was convicted of indecent acts, and sentenced to two years hard labour, which he served. On being released from prison he fled to France where he died, three years later, in 1900.

Greve was still quite young at the time of Wilde's death, and it is difficult to believe that he would remain faithful to Wilde's teachings for another forty-odd years.³ However, as late as 1945 he was still writing texts which bear the obvious imprint of Wilde's doctrines. It is only in his short story, "A Beautiful Soul," that FPG breaks with Wilde's aesthetic theory of self-creation. This story presents Hugh Allister, the aesthetic self-made man, in a very negative light. Hugh is an artist who, like FPG, worked in two modes: life and the written word. The negative quality of Hugh's production reflects on FPG's own artistic creations, including his persona Frederick Philip Grove.

³ As Wilde only lived to the age of forty-six, this means that FPG's devotion to his theories lasted as many years as Wilde had lived.

This thesis approaches "A Beautiful Soul" through the method of Barthean analysis demonstrated in his essay S/Z. Barthes' method is to identify the "codes" which inform the readings of every text in order to recognize how "in their interweaving, these voices ... de-originate the utterance [and] the convergence of the voices (of the codes) becomes writing" (21). Barthes is also interested in the way in which a "multivalent text can carry out its basic duplicity only if it subverts the opposition between true and false, if it fails to attribute quotations (even when seeking to discredit them) to explicit authorities, if it flouts all respect for origin, paternity, propriety, if it destroys the voice which could give the text its ('organic') unity, in short if it coldly and fraudulently abolishes quotation marks which must, as we say, in all honesty, enclose a quotation and juridically distribute the ownership of the sentences to their respective proprietors" (44-5). In other words, he argues against the notion of "naturalness" in writing, emphasizing instead the idea that a text is "composed" or structured by the author. FPG does the very same thing in his story in his portrayal of Hugh, especially as he rewrites Clare through his "letters." More importantly, both Barthes and FPG are concerned with revealing the ways in which authors seek to "de-authorize" their sources through the act of concealing them, or "flout[ing] all respect for origin." FPG does this openly by creating an author who is a plagiarist, but this is, as Barthes would point out, a covert activity of all "texts."

The method outlined by Barthes works through the careful examination of the text in small sections, called lexias, in order to expose the implicit codes by which the text is constituted. Barthes identifies five codes: "the Voice of Empires (the proairetics), the Voice of the Person (the semes), the Voice of Science (the cultural codes), the Voice of Truth (the hermeneutics), the Voice of Symbol" (21). Simply put, the proairetics (ACT) are the "voices" which forward the moments of the text, the semes (SEM) establish character, the cultural code (CUL) is the unstated text which underlies society and appears, often unnoticed, in the texts of every society, the hermeneutics (HER) raise and resolve enigmas, while the symbolic code (SYM) is the place of multivalence and reversibility (19).

The "step-by-step commentary" arrived at through this method results in a continual re-entrance into the text: each lexia provides the reader with another entrance into the fully open text (13). Such a method of opening a text is of particular use with a writer, such as FPG, who has carefully constructed a pose or mask within his text which is intended to keep the reader out. FPG used most of his texts to rewrite his life; until the self-parody of "A Beautiful Soul," they are as closed as he could make them. Every glimpse at the identity of the author in the remaining works is concealed by the artful construction of the author's persona. But with the Barthean method even FPG's "usual" sort

of text is forced open: he cannot keep the reader out any longer. For this reason, Barthes' method could be put to further use in the reading of FPG's longer works, especially his "autobiography" In Search of Myself, which serves as a culmination of all his masks in composing a single grand Künstlerroman (Williams 52).

Barthes insists that "the work of the commentary ... consists ... in manhandling the text, interrupting it. What is thereby denied is not the quality of the text (here incomparable) but its 'naturalness'" (15). This is, in a sense, exactly the opposite of what Hugh Allister does in "A Beautiful Soul." He is concerned with style over content, and even style to the exclusion of content. But in another way the two works are interested in demonstrating the very same thing: that a text contains far more than "style." Barthes advocates, and even demands, ruthlessness on the part of readers: we are to tear the text into pieces in order to understand the codes which inform our reading of that text. Likewise, FPG has written a text that dissects and re-writes another text: specifically The Picture of Dorian Gray. The result is that FPG strips away the style of Wilde's story, and clearly demonstrates that beneath the stylish pose of the aesthete lies an utter lack of substance.

FPG's Hugh Allister is most clearly a reworking of Lord Henry Wotton of Dorian Gray: both men are aesthetes who attempt to protect themselves from the "sordid perils of

actual experience" (Wilde, Intentions 174) through the contemplative life which has "for its aim not doing but being, and not being merely but becoming" (Wilde, Intentions 182). Thus, each makes his life into a carefully composed work of art which remains unchanged and unaffected by reality. They "live" only through the experiences of those around them, shaping the experiences of surrogates to complete their own self-creation. Lord Henry achieves his art not only in the creation of an "impersonal," aesthetically detached self, but also in his egotistical mirror-image, Dorian, who is supposed to be an objet d'art, morally sterile in his freedom from other living creatures. Hugh, on the other hand, suppresses the ego of his wife Clare, then uses the destruction of her ego as his text in "The Letters of Hugh Allister to His Wife." However, both artists fail to recognize the depth of their external "creations": Lord Henry denies Dorian's confession that he is a murderer with a laugh--"It is not in you, Dorian, to commit a murder" for murder is "vulgar," and suitable only to the "lower orders [as] a method of procuring extraordinary sensations" (235). Dorian, like Lord Henry, is expected to rely on art to achieve a wide range of experience. In the same way Hugh denies his wife's suffering throughout their marriage, eventually alienating her from everything she holds dear in order to use her experience to write his third book. But his book is also a denial of her experience; beginning with the words "Dearest Darling," it erases all that she experiences as he

re-writes her existence through his own eyes. Neither Clare nor Dorian truly exists for their aesthetic "creators": in becoming the "subjects" of these "artists" they are reduced to "objects."

That Grove has chosen to rewrite this particular text of Wilde shows that he has been forced to come to terms with the role that Dorian Gray played in his own artistic development. Not only was this novel one of Greve's earliest German translations, but it also served as a guide to his own aesthetic self-creation. When Greve met Andre Gide in 1904 he struck Gide as being "more English than German" (236). Like Dorian, Greve moved in both the highest and lowest social spheres that he was able to reach. And, most interesting perhaps, Greve was able to present a seemingly ageless face to the world: "I must tell you" he said to Gide, "that physically I looked exactly the same at sixteen as I do now," to which Gide comments "[t]hat is not saying so much, for today at twenty-six [sic: twenty-five] he looks scarcely twenty-two" (238). It seems that young Greve had discovered his own fountain of youth, for he would continue to seem younger than his "confessed" age for much of his life.⁴

⁴ In part this was due, no doubt, to the fact that when he immigrated into Canada he pushed his date of birth back seven years. He, therefore, not only seemed younger than he "was," but he was younger.

If FPG was able to subvert the process of aging by moving to Canada and adopting a new, albeit older, persona, he was not able to leave the example of Dorian Gray behind. In Canada Grove continued the art of self-creation as it was outlined in Wilde's aesthetic theories. Like Dorian, Grove is curiously orphaned: both seem to lack any parents, and so they rely on themselves for their own "birth." Both men are "self-made," neither admitting to any paternity outside of themselves, nor seeming to need any. Like Dorian Gray, Grove descends into the depths, among the dregs of society, in his travels as an itinerant labourer, although these experiences, which he describes in his novel A Search for America, may, or may not have actually taken place.⁵ Nevertheless, while living with Elsa in "Kentucky,"⁶ FPG plunged into the depths for a second time--the first occurring with his arrest and imprisonment for fraud--and for the second time freed himself only through "death" and rebirth into a new identity in western Canada. Like Dorian, Grove did not emerge unscathed from his experiences; perhaps this explains in part the addition of seven years to his less than youthful age.

⁵ There is a gap of two years in our knowledge of FPG, from the time he abandoned his first wife Elsa in "the county of Kentucky" around 1910 (Hjartarson, "Autobiography" 126), and his arrival in Winnipeg in 1912. At this time it is unknown how he spent these years, but he was willing to foster the belief that this "Search for America" was autobiographical.

⁶ The actual area where they lived remains, as of yet, unidentified.

When Grove began his autobiography in 1939 he was forced to review his life. In the introductory essay to In Search of Myself, also titled "In Search of Myself," Grove explains that the writing of his autobiography was sparked by the discovery of a biography of a contemporary, Andre Gide: "memories of my European youth had come back to me; and I had risen to pace the floor of the room ... [and] I had told anecdotes of our ardent association" (3). But it is difficult for Grove to maintain his pose as a promising young European poet in his "ramshackle house" in Canada. He begins a covert re-examination of the success (failure) of his mask by comparing his own achievements to those of Gide: "it ... struck me that, to earn the distinction of seeing his biography published within his own lifetime, he must have achieved things which had focused on him the eyes of [the] world ... whereas I " (4). Now this "I" is forced by his relative obscurity to force the eyes of the world on him, on the hidden "I," on the secret achievement of his aesthetic self-creation. Up to now, Grove has failed, not merely in "enforcing a collaboration between writer and audience" (ISM 6), but in allowing his audience to know that he was an "I": that he was a creation of the collaboration between audience and artist (Hjartarson, "Autobiography" 123).

Oscar Wilde is well-recognized as an aesthetically constructed "I," and it was in his image that FPG founded his

own persona. Thus, there are many points at which the lives of Oscar Wilde and FPG intersect, leading Spettigue to comment that "when [FPG] writes about Wilde he is never far from writing about himself" (FPG 115). To understand the extent to which this is true it is necessary to look at the lives and writings of all three men: Oscar Wilde, Felix Paul Greve, and Frederick Philip Grove. Once this has been demonstrated in Chapter 1, then it can be seen that "I" is not always "I," as Phil Branden would have it in A Search for America, but rather that "I" is often an amalgamation of many diverse elements. Wilde's aesthetic doctrine, as outlined in both Intentions and The Picture of Dorian Gray, is among the most important of those elements. For FPG took Wilde's injunction to "create yourself" to heart, along with the belief that this was best achieved through the suppression of nature by art. These would be among the beliefs that FPG would uphold nearly his entire life, until forced to confront the effects of this theory of aesthetic self-creation in his autobiography. It would be at this time that he would finally reconsider Wilde's theory, and this reconsideration would result in his short story, "A Beautiful Soul."

Chapter II

ART AND ARTIFICE: THE CREATION OF A WILDEAN "LIFE."

i

Knowing as we do that the young FPG translated most of Oscar Wilde's writings into German at a time when he, FPG, was desperately searching for a Master to emulate, it is not surprising that his later writings were strongly influenced by Wilde. What is surprising is the duration of this influence. In the 1890s Wilde wrote that "man is least himself when he speaks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth" (Intentions 191). Almost fifty years later, Grove echoed this sentiment in his "Author's Note" to the fourth edition of A Search for America. "Why ... did I choose a pseudonym for my hero? Well, while a pseudonym ostensibly dissociates the author from his creation, it gives him at the same time an opportunity to be even more personal than, in the conditions of our present day civilization, it would be either safe or comfortable to be were he speaking in the first person, unmasked." Written in 1939, this remarkable statement is FPG's most important

clue to the importance of the mask in his work. While Wilde more often affected a social mask, hiding his consternation at Queensbury's threats behind a mask of nonchalance, for example (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 399), FPG turned the mask into another mode of reality in his reincarnation as Frederick Philip Grove, itinerant labourer and scholar.

The most fundamental difference between the two men seems to lie in their attitudes toward the whole premise of Intentions. For Wilde these essays were intentions, theories which he expounded until they had been proven or disproven (Cohen 107). For FPG, who translated them into German in 1902, they were a philosophy for living, a philosophy which he was eager to put into practice. Thus while Wilde freed himself from his theory almost as soon as he wrote it--particularly in the concurrent writing of Dorian Gray in 1890--it took Greve much longer to do the same.

The theories which Wilde relates in Intentions had been developing since his days at Oxford. As such, they are heavily influenced by Walter Pater whom, along with John Ruskin, Wilde admired greatly at this time (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 76). The most important concept which Wilde took from Pater was "l'art pour l'art." As well, both men believed that art was superior to life (Cohen 111). As a result, the key concept of Intentions had to do with the place of art in life, or with life in art.

"The Decay of Lying" makes four major assertions which lay the groundwork for all of Wilde's "new aesthetics" (Shewan 97). The first is that "art never expresses anything but itself" (54), or, to use the familiar phrase, "l'art pour l'art." Secondly, "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life." Thirdly, nature also imitates art. And finally, "lying, the telling of beautiful untrue things, is the proper aim of art" (56). Wilde supports these tenets with examples of how art has shaped our perceptions of life and art, dictating, in fact, how we see the world. His most persuasive argument concerns London fogs: "At present, people see fogs, not because there are fogs, but because poets and painters have taught them the mysterious loveliness of such effects. There may have been fogs for centuries in London, I dare say there were. But no one saw them ... [because] [t]hey did not exist until Art invented them" (42). No one saw them because they did not yet exist in popular consciousness. They did not exist because "one does not see anything until one sees its beauty" (42). Yet art is seen not merely as a basis of our perception of reality but is, more importantly, a refuge from that reality: "It is through Art, and through Art only, that we can shield ourselves from the sordid perils of actual experience" (174). What these perils are Wilde does not explain, but he does enjoin the reader, "Don't let us go to life for our fulfillment or our experience It makes us pay too high a price for its wares, and we purchase the meanest of its secrets at a cost

that is monstrous and infinite" (174). His life, at least, would prove him correct on this point.

This emphasis on art as the pinnacle of human experience still must not deflect the reader's attention from the fourth tenet, that "lying ... is the proper aim of Art." It is this point which links the first and second essays together. In "Decay" Wilde not only defends lying as an art, but insists that the liar is "the very basis of civilised society" (29) for, just as the artist completes "Nature's lack of design, her curious crudities, her extraordinary monotony, her absolutely unfinished condition" (3) by showing us a beauty which is realized only in art, so too the liar introduces us to beauty through the use of his/her imagination. The act of lying improves the liar's imagination until s/he can perceive beauty which s/he tries to instill in his/her audience (10). Thus the liar is an artist, and among the greatest of artists, because s/he loves beauty more than truth. This love of beauty over truth allows the liar to enter "the innermost shrine of Art" (53).

From the enthroning of the liar as the true type of the artist, it is a relatively small step to the lionizing of the criminal. "Pen, Pencil and Poison," the second essay in Intentions, does exactly this. Wilde chooses as his subject Thomas Griffiths Wainwright who was "not merely a poet and a painter, and art-critic, an antiquarian, and a writer of prose, an amateur of things beautiful and a dilettante of

things delightful, but also a forger of no mean or ordinary capabilities, and ... [a] subtle and secret poisoner" (61-2). In this introduction to Wainwright, Wilde contrives to make his criminal activities sound as creative as his artistic endeavors. This is not done in order to mislead the reader, but rather to create a positive impression of all of the achievements of this man. This positive impression is strengthened by Wilde's claim that Wainwright's crimes were not purposeless but rather served to give "a strong personality to his style, a quality which his earlier work certainly lacked" (91-2).⁷ In this way crime does pay, at least for the artist (Ellmann, "Critic" 99), because it is through his criminal activities that "Wainwright's personality achieves sufficient criminality to have artistic promise" (Ellmann, "Critic" 101).

Wilde continued his logical progression from liar as artist to the criminal as artist with the introduction of the sinner as artist in "The Critic as Artist." It is in this third essay of Intentions that he introduces his belief in sin as the ultimate source of artistic freedom. It is important to note that, in Wilde's terms, a sinner is not simply someone who transgresses one or more of the ten commandments. Sin, to Wilde, has more to do with self-expression than with self-repression (Ellmann, "Critic" 101). The act of

⁷ The cynic might claim that what impressed Wilde most about Wainwright was his excuse for murdering his sister: "she had very thick ankles." This was a bon mot which Wilde might have made, or would have liked to have made, himself.

sinning is as creative as the act of lying, or of criticizing art, since it involves the discovery of new possibilities of action (Ellmann, "Critic" 102). In fact, Wilde puts the cultural benefits of sin into a whole new moral perspective: "What is termed Sin is an essential element of progress. Without it the world would stagnate, or grow old, or become colourless. By its curiosity Sin increases the experience of the race. Through its intensified assertion of individualism, it saves us from monotony of type. In its rejection of the current notions about morality, it is one with the higher ethics" (134). Taking Wilde's theory of artistic creation to its logical conclusion, "the essence of thought [becomes] growth" and the only sin is stupidity (197, 208). Eventually, for the artist nothing is forbidden, because his/her soul has developed to the point at which all action is positive, even those experiences which appear ignoble to the uninitiated (222).

With his final essay, "The Truth of Masks", Wilde comes full circle in his Intentions. This essay, which "celebrate[s] art for rejecting truths, faces, and other paraphernalia in favor of lies and masks" (Ellmann, "Critic" 100), is obviously linked to "Decay" which celebrates the creative force of the liar. Both essays are concerned with the nature of "truth" in art. For Wilde truth can not be a stagnant thing, but rather must be fluid, a shifting concept which hides behind a variety of masks. Truth cannot be

defined any more clearly than "something whose contradictory is also true" (269) and as something independent of fact (251), just as a truly fine lie is "that which is its own evidence" (6).

As this essay is, ostentatiously, concerned with the use of costume in the plays of Shakespeare, it focusses more narrowly on the effects of dramatic art, rather than on visual or literary arts. It appears that drama is the form of art which most closely approaches life: "The stage is not merely the meeting place of all arts, but is also the return of art to life" (243); "The true dramatist ... shows us life under the conditions of art, not art in the form of life" (262). In this way drama is the form of art which most closely approximates life, yet remains beautiful by not stooping to realism (art in the form of life). The dramatist is the highest of artists because his art-form "is the meeting place of all arts." S/he is, therefore, the ultimate liar: s/he recreates life, or more exactly, life as art. This is confirmed in the essay when Wilde declares that "Of course the aesthetic value of Shakespeare's plays does not, in the slightest degree, depend upon their facts, but on their Truth, and Truth is independent of fact always, inventing and selecting them at pleasure" (253). The artist is finally freed from conventions of truth and reality because of his/her appreciation of beauty. The result is that "[although] the facts of art are diverse ... the essence of artistic effect is unity" (266).

The four essays of Intentions adequately round out Wilde's aesthetic theory. More dependent on beauty than on "truth," Wilde with his theory frees creative man from nature. In the process of allowing for such freedom three sets of oppositional forces are established: art and life, action and contemplation, and morality and amorality (Cohen 108). Such an aesthetics most obviously embodies those halves of the dyads which involve art, contemplation, and freedom from judgement (Cohen 108). And since Dorian Gray himself embodies these aesthetic qualities, his story becomes the sharpest test of the theories Wilde carefully outlined in Intentions.

When first published in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine, on 20 June 1890, The Picture of Dorian Gray created as great a commotion as its author could have wished. Rapidly attacked by its critics as "dull and tedious," immoral, and scandalously concerned with homosexuality (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 300-3), "the effect of Dorian Gray was prodigious. No novel had commanded so much attention in years, or awakened sentiments so contradictory in its readers" (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 305). Wilde was quick to respond to his critics, toning down the homosexuality as he revised the story to be republished in novel form in 1891. He also wrote a series of letters in response to the other attacks, including the charge of immorality, claiming that the novel had, in fact, too much moral rather than not enough: "The moral is this: All

excess, as well as all renunciation, brings its own punishment. The painter, Basil Hallward, worshipping physical beauty far too much ... dies by the hand of one in whose soul he has created a monstrous and absurd vanity. Dorian Gray, having led a life of mere sensation and pleasure, tries to kill conscience, and at that moment kills himself. Lord Henry Wotton seeks to be merely the spectator of life. He finds that those who reject the battle are more deeply wounded than those who take part in it. Yes; there is a terrible moral in Dorian Gray."⁸ (Nassaar 130). While Richard Ellmann prefers the moral that "to seek to become an aesthetic object, out of time, is to die" (Oscar Wilde 303), it should not be forgotten that Wilde was about to discover that his excesses would not be tolerated by a hypocritical society.⁹ In fact, his personal excesses would soon lead to his imprisonment and death.¹⁰

Dorian Gray as a story centres on a semi-romantic triangle of three men: Basil Hallward, the artist; Lord Henry Wotton, the critic; and Dorian Gray, their subject. Dorian is not merely the centre of the triangle, he is also the catalyst for the creative action of the novel, the villain

⁸ This is taken from a letter to the editor of the St. James Gazette, and is quoted by Nassaar in his essay.

⁹ Oscar Wilde was, of course, tried and sentenced for his homosexuality, a practice encouraged if not condoned by the English public school system.

¹⁰ It is very possible that Wilde's final illness was a direct result of the syphilis which he contracted from a prostitute while at Oxford (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 545, 88).

of the story, and also its hero. Initially innocent, Dorian displays an amazing faculty for corruption. Indeed, the novel opens with his transformation from innocence to corruption. He is introduced as a pastoral ideal: a handsome "lad" who is leafing through Schumann's "Forest Scenes." As well, Basil credits him with providing his art with new insight: "'He is all my art to me,' said the painter gravely 'Some subtle influence pass[es] from him to me, and for the first time I [see] in the plain woodland the wonder I had always looked for, and always missed'" (20). In this scene Dorian is presented as a piece of Basil's soul, a piece that the artist has lost touch with. According to Christopher Nassaar this missing piece is representative of Basil's lost innocence (109). Yet Basil recognizes that he is overlooking something in Dorian's makeup: he is dissatisfied with his paintings of Dorian but is not sure why (DG 19). The fact that he finally catches that elusive something and completes the portrait in the second chapter forces the reader to examine the chapter carefully to discover what element has hitherto been missing from Basil's image of Dorian Gray.

The scene in which Basil finishes the picture is the same scene in which Dorian is first introduced to Lord Henry. Nassaar regards Dorian as Wotton's masterpiece(129)--as his portrait is Basil's (DG 31)--and believes that Lord Henry begins to create his masterpiece on the same day that Basil finishes his. Thus, the two creations are interconnected;

Basil is able to complete his portrait because of an element of Dorian which Lord Henry exposes. That element is Dorian's latent egoism, or his innate capacity for evil. Basil's painting is rendered complete by the "faint flush of evil" which Lord Henry's words bring to Dorian's cheeks (Nassaar 109). Thus, just as Basil's picture is completed by the touch of evil, so the hint of egoism is the starting point of Lord Henry's masterpiece: Lord Henry, therefore, is the devil to whom Dorian sells his soul in return for "eternal" youth (Nassaar 108). In the end both men "create" Dorian, but whereas Basil's creation is a physical representation of Dorian, Lord Henry's creation is of a more or less moral nature. The two creators are intricately related not only because of their shared subject but also because of the way Basil's portrait reveals the successful corruption of Dorian's soul by Lord Henry.

The only flaw in this argument is that Lord Henry never accepts the true nature of his "creation." Wotton believes that Dorian has remained untouched by life because of his continued beauty: "Ah, Dorian, how happy you are! What an exquisite life you have had! You have drunk deeply of everything. You have crushed the grapes against your palate. Nothing has been hidden from you. And it has all been to you no more than the sound of music. It has not marred you Life has been your art" (239). This statement follows an attempt by Dorian to confess that he has been affected by

Wotton's life: that he has, in fact, even murdered in an attempt to hide the effects of this influence from himself (235). But Lord Henry's particular form of evil requires him to treat Dorian and his criminal actions as no more than objects of art: "I would say, my dear fellow that you were posing for a character that doesn't suit you. All crime is vulgar, just as all vulgarity is crime" (235). True action--criminal or otherwise--is inconceivable to this aesthete who lives at several removes from reality, and so he dismisses Dorian's claim as a vulgar bit of sensationalism. But Dorian, as the reader is aware, has already discovered the vital connection of art to life in the monstrous portrait which imitates his moral disfigurement. Only Dorian himself maintains the mask of art in which he was first cloaked, not by the painter, but by the aesthete Wotton.

Nor does Dorian become immediately evil as a result of Lord Henry's seductive talk. Although he likely sold his soul that day, he is still unaware of this until his experience with Sybil Vane. Until he meets Sybil he has merely explored his potential role in society, but he feels that this is not enough to challenge him. In Sybil he senses a potential of a greater experience; that of the theater. He will not love a single woman, but rather one who "is more than an individual" (67). The charm lies not only in loving a woman who is Juliet one night and Imogene the next, but in "mak[ing] Romeo jealous [in having] the dead lovers of

the world hear our laughter, and grow sad" (67). In this way he believes that he can transcend life itself (Cohen 137), and enter the timeless and perfect world of art. Unfortunately for her, Sybil recognizes what Dorian does not: that life is more real than art, or that "Art, when used as a means to multiply personalities ... becomes a prison" (Cohen 136). She casts off her art, which she recognizes as "hollowness ... [a] sham," for reality, that "of which all art is but a reflection" (114-5). But without her art she has nothing that Dorian wants, and he casts her off in turn, refusing to hear her prophesy.

With this act Dorian becomes aware of the deal which he has made; this first act of unmitigated cruelty does not affect his face but that of his portrait (103-4). He is freed from all bounds of convention, freed in other words, to become the artist as criminal--to drink deeply of life, even those things which seem ignoble to the uninitiated, and to profit from his experience. Dorian is determined to follow this course; to turn his life into art and to allow his portrait to be his conscience unmasked. But as his guide he chooses, not Basil who is morally superior, but Lord Henry, despite--or perhaps because of--his "subtle poisonous theories" (105). His portrait will become "the most magical of mirrors. As it had revealed to him his own body, so it would reveal to him his soul" (119).

Underlying these complexities of the novel is an equally complicated sexual tension. Each of the three main characters is clearly infatuated with Dorian's beauty; in Basil Hallward this is clearly love, as witnessed by his reaction to Dorian's engagement to Sybil Vane. His comment that "I don't quite forgive you for not having let me know about your engagement. You let Harry know" (86) has all the trappings of a jealous lover who knows that he is no longer the favorite. But Lord Henry's response is more difficult, he adores Dorian's beauty yet regards him as an experiment: "It was clear to [Lord Henry] that the scientific method was the only method by which one could arrive at any scientific analysis of passions; and certainly Dorian Gray was a subject made to his hand" (71). Not only does this deny Dorian any true passion, but it also indicates the serious limitations of Lord Henry's experience of the world. He is so far removed from reality that he is unaware of the gap: he is the artist as observer personified and, contrary to Wilde's Intentions, it is obvious that his aesthetic attitude deadens, rather than enhances, his character.

The turning point in the novel comes with the murder of Basil Hallward by Dorian Gray. Basil's only flaw appears to be his indecent attachment to Dorian, whom he blindly believes to be as innocent as the day they first met. Basil is fooled by beauty: "Dorian, with your pure, bright, innocent face, and your marvelous untroubled youth--I can't

believe anything against you" (167). Hallward is the more innocent of the two, for he believes that a person's face must represent his/her soul (166). When confronted by the truth, Dorian's portrait, Basil's innocence is shattered, and he is destroyed. When Dorian murders him it is almost an act of kindness: having learned his lesson Basil turns to Christianity as a last resort. Had he lived he probably would have never painted again; for, in turning from the worship of beauty to the worship of God the father, he has lost his art, and he is therefore already dead.

However, Dorian is not dead, nor has he lost his drive for criminality. He throws himself into experience, yet soon discovers that it is not as liberating to the imagination as he had expected. In the wake of Sybil's death he had gladly yielded to further temptation in an attempt at self-realization (Cohen 123). In the process, he seemed to fulfill Wilde's formula for freeing oneself from temptation through yielding to each temptation that might present itself. In this way, one could maintain a "residual freedom by not lingering with any single temptation long" (Ellmann, "Critic" 96-7). But after Basil's death Dorian realizes that this process of yielding leads not to self-realization but to self-damnation. He is finally aware of the validity of Basil's position (Nassar 128), but it is too late to change the course of events. He no longer has a friend who is willing, as Basil was, to help him escape the dark depths into

which he has plunged himself; left to his own devices he turns to opium to bring him inner peace. He still must learn that he cannot escape the past--which soon appears in the guise of Sybil's brother, Jim Vane.

Jim Vane is a melodramatic character whose one desire is to kill the man who killed his sister. He cannot kill Dorian, that much seems assured by Dorian's deal with the devil, but he does force Dorian to confront his past. Dorian turns for relief to Lord Henry, but finds none there. For since Lord Henry lives several removes from reality (Cohen 141) he can only offer Dorian escape from reality, he cannot help Dorian deal with reality. As well, Lord Henry has always counselled Dorian to lead a life of immorality--a life which he himself is afraid to lead (Cohen 147)--and nothing has happened to change Lord Henry from that opinion. He therefore scoffs at Dorian's confession, accusing him of striking a pose at the very moment when he is dropping all masks. As well, Lord Henry chides Dorian for the vulgarity of his "pose": "It is not in you, Dorian, to commit a murder Crime belongs exclusively to the lower orders. I don't blame them in the smallest degree. I should fancy that crime was to them what art is to us, simply a means of procuring extraordinary sensations" (235). This flies in the face of Wilde's earlier assertion that an artist could use crime to expand his/her experiences, yet is perhaps more accurate. Lord Henry is an artist, as he understands that word; he is

as passive and removed from reality as he believes all art to be: "Art has no influence on action. It annihilates the desire to act. Art is superbly sterile" (240). So too Lord Henry is sterile: married, but without children, he cannot love either his wife or any other person. He not only refuses to act himself, but he prevents others, namely Dorian, from acting as well. His is an art that kills all it touches; it is the negation of both life and nature. Interestingly, given Wilde's own fame as a conversationalist, Lord Henry's art is found in the spoken word: it is his ideas that corrupted Dorian, rather than anything he did.

In the end Dorian is left with only his portrait, the true image of his soul. And the image of this painting now negates a second of Wilde's arguments, that "life imitates art far more than art imitates life." While Dorian had attempted to transcend life by making his life into art, he learns finally that this is not possible because man is bound by time, whereas art is not. "Wilde's final tableau reveals Dorian's self-portrait, his study in life, lying almost unrecognizable on the floor, while Basil's study from life, the real portrait, stands inviolate beside it" (Shewan 128). In the end, art triumphs over life not only in its ability to transcend time, but also in the ironic twist which causes Dorian to be recognizable only through art--his rings and the portrait (246). The body decays, but art does not: that is the basis of the moral problem in The Picture of Dorian Gray.

When examining the influence which Oscar Wilde's writings had on Felix Paul Greve the danger lies not in overestimating but rather in underestimating their value (Spettigue, FPG 51). Traces of Wilde can be found throughout Greve's European career, from the translations and essays through to Greve's own lifestyle. While it is doubtful that Greve was responsible for the first Wilde craze in Germany, as Elsa Greve would later claim (Hjartarson, "Strangers" 277), there can be no doubt that Greve did contribute to this "craze" with his translations and essays. More interesting, however, are the ways in which Greve "translated" Wilde's writings into life, more particularly into his own life. In short, Greve did as Wilde advised when he said, "Create yourself. Be yourself your poem" (O'Sullivan 223). Greve's greatest achievement in Europe lay not in his poetry, or novels, or translations, but rather in the creation of a persona: in Felix Paul Greve.

From the available evidence it is clear that the young Greve was extremely close to, and dependent upon, his moth-

er. Thus, at the time of her death in 1898 he found himself alone in the world; he had had little contact with his father in over five years (Spettigue 45-6) and seems to have had no other family. He was just nineteen years old, and the prospect of being an orphan must have had its advantages along with its sorrow. After all, as Grove would note much later, "[n]o person is ever so isolated but he preserves some points of human contact" ("Rebels" 79). Among the contacts which Greve would have had at this time is Herman Kilian, and perhaps one reason for Kilian's continuous financial and emotional support lies in Greve's orphaned state. At any rate, Greve was now a young University student, and his attempt to move from the lower-middle class to the educated elite would have been hampered by his mother's social status. Orphaned, parentless, if not fatherless, Greve could now move from his class with greater ease.

In his recovery from his mother's death and his entry into his new life at the University no one was more important to Greve than Herman Kilian. Although Kilian's support was in part financial, there was an emotional aspect to their relationship as well: "[f]or years no influence in my life was greater than his. For a number of years we lived close together, in body and spirit," Grove would later write ("Rebels" 75). Setting aside the possible allusions to homosexuality,¹¹ clearly this was a formative relationship in

¹¹ Throughout Grove's autobiographical writings there are hints of homosexuality, as in his introduction to In Search of Myself where he claims to have been called,

FPG's life. Kilian was the son of a wealthy and respected doctor; he was born into the class and lifestyle that FPG craved. It is quite possible that Kilian assisted Greve in acquiring social skills, as well as in helping out whenever Greve asked him for money.¹²

During 1902 Greve published three books: two collections of his own poems, Wanderungen and Helena und Damon, as well as a translation of Wilde's aphorisms (Spettigue 73).¹³ All were published privately, the first two at great expense. Wanderungen was dedicated to Kilian, indicating that it was he who sponsored its publication (Spettigue, FPG 73), and he probably paid for the publication of Helena und Damon as well. While the value of the poems is debatable,¹⁴ it seems

along with Andre Gide, Castor and Pollux. Considering the intensity of his relationship with Kilian--and the fact that they did, as Greve and Gide did not, attend University together--perhaps this label was applied to Kilian and Greve. Whether or not this label was accurate is impossible to prove; certainly his confessional fictions give no indications that FPG was other than heterosexual.

¹² In his interview with Gide Greve claimed that "I know that if I had asked him for that amount, he would have given it" (237). In other words, Kilian was accustomed to giving Greve large sums of money. What exactly was the nature of this relationship? Obviously Greve was more than ordinarily dependent on his classmate.

¹³ Spettigue mistakenly assumes that the collection of Wilde's aphorisms was Greve's translation of Intentions. In fact, the pamphlet has been identified by Alex Knoenagel as a translation of Wilde's "Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young" with sundry aphorisms added (218).

¹⁴ I have not read these poems; for a comment on the nature and quality of the poetry see Peter A. Stenberg, "Translating the Translatable: A Note on a Practical Problem with F.P. Greve's Wanderungen," Canadian Review of Com-

that Greve came close with these poems to being accepted into the Stefan George circle. At this time Greve had once met with George, concerning a translation of George's poems by Daisy Broicher (Spettigue, FPG 72), but the response to Greve's poetry was only that "F.P.G. sent something ... but too little to be worth introducing him" (74). In other words, a concerted effort by Greve at this time might have earned him a place as a poet in 1902, changing his story completely (Spettigue, FPG 73-4).

During the years from his mother's death to the publication of his first books Greve had not been leading an exemplary life. D.O. Spettigue has estimated that during these years Greve was spending six times his father's annual salary each year (FPG 50). Greve was living "recklessly, extravagantly, trying to draw attention to himself" (FPG 69). As a result, Greve found himself deeply in debt, and he turned to translation as a means of escaping this debt.

On one level, FPG's extravagant lifestyle was merely an idiosyncrasy of his history, not a literary pose; his expensive taste was probably inherited from his parents who had also lived beyond their means (Spettigue, FPG 36). At the same time, he went so far beyond their excesses, that the poseur is revealed as an imitator of the English decadents, especially Oscar Wilde. Like Wilde he lived well at University, overspending on books, clothes, and luxuries. While he

apparently was assisted by Kilian in some of his expenditures (Greve also travelled extensively, considering his nonexistent budget), the greater part of his money must have come from unknown sources. The problem is, what sources?

This question will probably never be answered, though Spettigue points to some possible half-answers in FPG's "autobiography," In Search of Myself. One clue lies in his supposed work as an unofficial tour-guide in Italy; Greve probably spent 1901 in Italy and money was probably tight (Spettigue, FPG 60). As well, it is possible that Greve's mother's friend/lover (his role is not completely clear), August Hinrich Jacobsen, gave Greve some money in the years following Bertha's death (Spettigue, FPG 46). But most likely Greve followed the tried and true practice of "money makes money"; by acting wealthy he was able to extend lines of credit and to borrow money to allow him to live as he wished. Even Andre Gide was fooled into admiring his "wealth," and Gide was fully aware that Greve had recently been jailed for debt: "I saw that smooth face, looking as if it had been bleached with chlorine, that body too tall, for which all seats are too low. I wished ardently that it might be he. It was. Von M. had not exaggerated his elegance. [Greve] was perfectly dressed, [and] looked English rather than German" (236). Although Gide was sufficiently acquainted with Greve to worry that he would ask for money, and Gide had carefully planned his refusal!, he could not help but be

impressed by Greve's "sober and unpretentious elegance" (240).

A second contemporary who was impressed by Greve's appearance, although she fought her attraction at first, was his first wife, Elsa. Elsa believed that Greve was a millionaire who translated more for pleasure than for money (Hjartarson, "Strangers" 277). Although she would soon discover her mistake, as his lover, it is obvious that Greve's social mask was skillfully constructed. An interesting aspect of his disguise is that he used it to enter artistic circles not as an artist himself, but rather as a patron of the arts (Spettigue, FPG 68).

From this it seems that Greve's first career was neither as University student, nor as poet or translator, but rather as a militant liar. That he was already familiar with Oscar Wilde's Intentions and The Picture of Dorian Gray can be inferred from the fact that they were among his first translations (Spettigue, FPG 72). It seems that he was living out the theory expounded in "The Decay of Lying": Greve would revive the "dying art of lying" by nurturing his "natural gift for exaggeration." As a cultured liar Greve could find his place in the upper levels of society as one of those who form "the very basis of civilised society" (Intentions 29). To support this role Greve carefully constructed a persona entirely dependent on protracted and involved lying: "I should like to make you understand I feel the same need

for lying and the same satisfaction that others feel in telling the truth Take this, for example: when someone hears a sudden noise beside him he turns his head but I don't, or when I turn, I turn deliberately! I lie" (Gide 239). For Greve lying seems to equal "self-generation through absolute self-control" (Spettigue, "Fanny Essler" 53). It is thus pointless to wonder which came first, the lying or the persona; what came first was the desire for a persona that could take him out of his "natural" life and into a created one.

The other book which Greve published in his artistic debut of 1902 was actually a pamphlet: Lehren und Sprüche für die reifen Jungens (Knoenagel 215). Essentially a translation of Wilde's "Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young" and selections from his plays "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "An Ideal Husband," this pamphlet demonstrates that Greve had translated Wilde from the outset of his career. Axel Knoenagel suspects that the presence of the lines from these plays establishes Greve as the translator of the plays which were presented in Berlin in 1902 (218-9). But the more interesting possibility is that Greve was already using this translation as a stepping stone from the artist-as-liar to the artist-as-criminal. Wilde had found this pamphlet used as evidence against him in his trial; and, not entirely perversely, Greve might hope to "profit" from this pamphlet by sharing in Wilde's criminality: "He

would translate Wilde's sayings in the same spirit that Wilde had written them. Greve's participation in the creation would be almost as much as Wilde's and if he were attacked because of his publication, Greve might even be able to feel like a German Oscar Wilde" (Knoenagel 218). But, if this had indeed been Greve's plan, he was sadly disappointed; when he turned to translation full-time he neglected to list this pamphlet among his publications (Knoenagel 215).

The failure to be recognized as a criminal artist did not prevent Greve from translating all or nearly all of Wilde's writings in the course of his remaining years in Germany, aside from the probable exception of De Profundis. Beginning with Intentions and The Picture of Dorian Gray as well as the four plays in 1902, Greve's translations of Wilde continued to be published as late as 1918, the year in which "Der Junge König" ("The Happy Prince") was published. But Greve's most important work may lie in his involvement with The Collected Works of Oscar Wilde to which he contributed both translations and essays. He wrote at least three essays about Wilde, although they were as much about himself as they were about Wilde. Thus, these essays are of great interest to the student of FPG; as Spettigue says, "when [Greve] writes about Wilde he is never far from writing about himself" (FPG 115). Greve himself claims in his first pamphlet that "Oscar Wilde belonged with those people who

can only be approached through a biography," yet the biographer must concentrate not on Wilde but on "himself, his own psyche, and at the same time would limit himself to mere hints" (quoted in Spettigue, FPG 87). His meaning is plain: look at me, within my writing.

Nonetheless, Greve's first essay on Wilde, simply entitled "Oscar Wilde" and written in 1902 is an attempt to be scholarly in his assessment of Wilde (Spettigue, FPG 86). As such, he examines Intentions and Dorian Gray in order to distill the essence of Wilde's aesthetics. He concludes that "[t]he real artist is he who proceeds, not from feeling to form, but from form to thought and passion It is just because he has no new message, that he can do beautiful work. He gains his inspiration from form, and from form purely, as an artist should. A real passion would kill him" (quoted in Spettigue, FPG 88). As Greve was writing this in Palermo, where he had fled with his "wife" Elsa from her legal husband August Endell, one wonders whether or not Greve was aware of the irony of this statement as it applied to his own life. For, just as Wilde was destroyed by his love for Lord Alfred Douglas, and Dorian by the passion which caused him to kill first Basil Hallward and later the living portrait painted by Hallward, Greve would be destroyed by his own passion for Elsa; giving up his identity in 1909, he faked his suicide and fled to America. Yet in this essay there is little premonition of the future, only

fascination with Wilde and his display of assumed wealth, leading Spettigue to conclude that Greve's extravagant life-style during these years was based on Wilde (FPG 89, 58).

The second essay, "Randarabesken zu Oscar Wilde" ("Marginal Notes on Oscar Wilde"), was written in 1903 and differs from the first in both tone and content. This is a reluctantly written essay, and one in which Greve reveals far more of himself than he had previously. Spettigue describes it as "the last word on [Greve's] obsession with Wilde and ... on his attempt to answer for himself the nature of his response to Wilde" (FPG 110). The extent of this obsession can be gauged by Greve's claim that "he followed me across the sea and into my sweetheart's chamber" (FPG 111). What Greve has to say about Wilde Elsa would later say about Greve: "What I say still bears the stamp of human love and human hate--for I hate him at least as much as I love him" (FPG 112).¹⁵ At another point Greve writes that "his works are nothing, are only a pale glimpse of what he was in life; nevertheless they contain just so much of his essence as a person, this strangely complicated being, that reading him leads unfailingly to studying the man" (FPG 113). Which is where FPG's writings lead the reader: on an essential search for the man beneath the mask (FPG 113). Clearly it is difficult, if not impossible, then, to sort

¹⁵ In her autobiography Elsa wrote that her ten-year affair with Greve was the longest and most intense of her life, and that twenty years after he had abandoned her she still loved and hated him (Hjartarson, "Strangers" 275, 277).

out the threads in this second essay on Wilde: who is the "real" Greve apart from his remaking of himself in imitation of Wilde?

The most telling section of "Randarabesken" proves to be Greve's praise for Wilde's decision to stand trial when he could have escaped to France: "[He] knew exactly what awaited him ... knew that now his life, as he had led it thus far, this sublime dreamlife where he entered into a thousand phantom existences while no one knew his real personality ... this life, in which he believed he was sowing make-believe seeds, bore a real harvest ... all the trappings of pretence would be stripped from his body and he would be exposed in pitiless nakedness And that he went back there and did not flee: that is his greatest moment" (Spettigue, FPG 116). That Greve would later turn to face his accusers in Bonn in imitation of Wilde is predicted in this statement, as is the fact that neither criminal knew what punishment really meant. For both, the movement from "dreamlife" to "pitiless nakedness" would end only with death, that death coming after years of hardship.

While it is difficult to assign a date to Greve's third essay, "Oscar Wilde und das Drama," internal evidence¹⁶ points to a date of 1905 or later. Once again this essay is concerned with Wilde the man firstly, and with his writings

¹⁶ On pages 30 and 31 of this essay Greve refers to De Profundis which was first published (in German) in 1905 in a translation by Max Meyerfeld (Montgomery 465n).

secondly; yet it is also semi-veiled autobiography on Greve's part. Of major importance are Greve's statements on masks, or "poses": "A pose--what does that mean? The word doesn't really mean very much, because only a man whose individualism is too weak to show itself and become dominant in spite of himself can be a poseur for any length of time: his true character remains to be analyzed. A poseur can nevertheless be the best or most complicated human being in the world: and his very pose shows that he has something to hide" (29-30).¹⁷ Greve's pose was obviously used to hide his social background, or to justify the place which he had hoped to find in European artistic circles. Cut out of the life he desired by financial considerations, Greve nevertheless came close to attaining his goal, only to lose his place forever in the collapse of his pose with his trial. He shrugs off the failure of his pose as the result of too powerful an individualism, only to add that "[a]n intellect capable of dominating a human being to such an extent that he can keep up a pose throughout his lifetime would indeed be something superhuman, and we should admire such an intellect" (31). Greve seems, in fact, to be hinting at his planned "suicide" here, warning his audience to watch for a new incarnation. For that he possessed such an intellect would be proven in the new world, where he was known until 1972--nearly a quarter of a century after his death--as

¹⁷ I am indebted to Doctor Martin Kuester of the University of Augsburg for his translation of "Oscar Wilde und das Drama."

Frederick Philip Grove.

iii

The ultimate stage of FPG's career was that of the founder of modernism in the Canadian novel, though he had first appeared as a novelist in Germany. As such his career stretched from Fanny Essler in 1905 to Consider Her Ways published in 1947, the year before his death. In both his first and last novels, Fanny Essler and In Search of Myself,¹⁸ FPG paints a picture of his life in Europe. In each FPG takes a masked part, thus revealing, if not his true self, then at least the self he would have liked to be. Importantly, the same masked man appears in both, though he is somewhat younger in In Search of Myself, a man who has recreated himself in Wilde's image. This is to deny Spettigue's claim that in 1904 Greve "turned to Meredith and Wells in English, Gide and Flaubert in French," and away from Wilde (FPG 117). For, despite Greve's professed admiration for Wilde when he was "free from any posturing" (Spettigue, FPG 56), he was himself seldom so free.

¹⁸ Although this book was published before Consider Her Ways, it was in fact the last book which FPG wrote. He began CHW as early as the 1920s (Spettigue, FPG 209).

Although Fanny Essler is blatantly the story of Greve's wife Elsa¹⁹ and her early "career"--it ends with her death soon after leaving her husband for Reelen (Greve)--it also serves to record Greve's personal reaction to Wilde. Opening as it does with a "programmatically and seemingly paradoxical declaration which at first glance seems to be a misquotation of one of Wilde's aperçus" (Riley, 58), Greve's act of quoting serves to force Wilde to the fore of the novel, along with its heroine, Fanny, and FPG himself. The motto is a disarming misquotation of one of Wilde's lines from his Preface to Dorian Gray: "The moral life of man forms part of the subject-matter of the artist, but the morality of art consists in the perfect use of an imperfect medium" (Riley 58). Greve rewrites this to read "All true art addresses itself to the masses: even when its 'public' is not a part of the masses. No true art betrays a judgement on the part of the artist. All true art is, in the strictest sense of the word, moral." The concern with the moral nature of art is taken from Wilde, as Riley noted, but the attempt at pinning down his audience is pure FPG. Over thirty years later he would still be wrestling with the nature of his audience as he wrote his "autobiography": "The effect of a book is the result of collaboration between writer and audience. That collaboration I had failed to enforce But even the

¹⁹ In a private letter Marcus Brehmer commented that "Fanny Essler is really incredible: if Elsa Ti wasn't a whore before, despite her whorish nature, she has surely found her Louis who prostitutes her more [blatantly by publishing Fanny Essler] than if he let her be mounted at 50 cents a ride" (quoted by Spettigue, "Fanny Essler" 51).

lack of an audience is not the important thing. The important thing is that you have such an audience in mind when you speak" (ISM 6, 11). In Search of Myself is not so much a search for the self as it is a search for an ideal self as reflected in the eyes of an imagined audience. For his audience Grove chooses Andre Gide, "my friend the young French man who was now a man of seventy or more" (11). But, as Grove himself has acknowledged, it does not matter who is the audience, so long as an audience does exist. As Hjar-tarson suggests, "in the interrelation of discourse, power, and the self" it is the composition of the self, the "I" of the discourse, that defines and confirms the identity of that self ("Autobiography" 117). In other words, "I tell, therefore you are" ("Autobiography" 123), the "you" of the audience being the mirror (portrait) which reflects the author back upon himself ("Autobiography" 117). Thus, Grove's "autobiography" will inevitably reflect back his soul, just as Dorian's picture did. And, like Dorian, Grove will be horrified by what he sees.

In Fanny Essler Greve had created "Reelen" to be his alter-ego; much like Greve, Reelen has the added attraction of having plenty of money to back up his social persona. He is a "strikingly tall and thin, strikingly blond, strikingly elegant young man of about 30 who definitely appeared not to fit into this group of semi-bohemians" (134). His behavior and dress serve to intimidate others, he "frighten[s] everyone off" (134) because of his obvious superiority.

Set in direct contrast to this "secret portrait of Dorian Greve" (Williams 48) is Fanny, a type of anti-Wilde. "Fanny Essler differs from the portrait in one essential point: she only lies from necessity, and her virtue, pathetic as it is, is a sincerity through which the shallow kinds of tragedy of the decadent life are exposed" (Blodgett 29). Unlike Wilde, or Reelen, Fanny is incapable of posing, although she is able to see through social poses easily (Blodgett 29). It is her inability to conform to social "norms"--poses--that leads to her death.²⁰ Ironically, she falls in love with Reelen for whom all of life is one prolonged pose. Their relationship is, on his part, one of "cold politeness" to which he expects her to respond in kind (205). He has fallen in love, one supposes, with Fanny's naturalness, but he demands that she assume a pose outside of the bedroom (205). Even within the bedroom he does not drop his mask, approaching her bed "almost as if he had been going to work" (195). Interestingly, this cold approach to sensuality allows him to be the first man to fulfill Fanny's sexual needs, but he does not even begin to meet her emotional ones.

More important than the difficult relationship between Fanny and Reelen, which in all probability echoes that of Greve and Elsa, are the numerous connections between Reelen and Wilde. As Reelen is also a portrait of Greve this serves

²⁰ Although Fanny ostentatiously dies of malaria, and her death scene is remarkably similar to that of Wilde who died of encephalitic meningitis, her preoccupation in the last section with Reelen's disregard for her emotional needs points to this as an underlying cause of her death.

to indicate just how closely Greve was "modeling his life on certain qualities of [Wilde]" (Spettigue, FPG 51). In many ways Reelen is Wilde; from his treatment of his wife to his skill in working a party.

The relationships between Wilde and Constance and Reelen and Fanny are equally based on mutual attraction, and there is evidence to show that Constance and Fanny loved their husbands passionately. Yet the men seem unable to deal with their wives' emotional needs: Reelen forbids Fanny to dwell on the past (FE 205), while Wilde commented, in regards to Constance, that he "could not be bored with people who went to their childhood for their personal tragedies" (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 221). Despite this attitude, both women look up to their husbands as gods (FE 194, Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 232), and submit meekly to being made over in dress and in hair (FE 212-3, Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 244-5). "For Constance [and Fanny], her first season after marriage, as she tried to keep up with her husband's dizzy pace, was painful" (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 239). Constance found refuge in pregnancy and motherhood, little realizing how her swollen body disgusted her aesthetic husband--a state which gave her an excuse to stay at home--while her husband began spending increasing amounts of time away from home (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 250-1). Fanny's disease is somewhat more fatal than Constance's, for she dies within a year after running away with Reelen. But Reelen's reaction parallels that of Wilde,

at least in the early stages of Fanny's illness: he finds her illness more an annoyance than a cause for concern. He, like Wilde, avoids his ill wife by going out and entertaining his guests, leaving his wife behind (FE 222). Interestingly, when Fanny dies it is seen as a positive event, for, "[t]hus a calm death saved Fanny Essler from the greatest disappointment of her life" (232), the disappointment of learning that her "half-god" has "'earthen' feet" (Hjartarson, "Strangers" 277). It was a disappointment that neither Elsa nor Constance was to be spared.

The similarities between Reelen and Wilde extend beyond their relationships with their respective wives. Both are minor aristocrats, a point which Greve had emphasized about Wilde (Spettigue, FPG 52). Both take extraordinary pleasure in expensive cigarettes: one of Reelen's early gifts to Fanny is fifty "extremely fresh Greek cigarettes" (156), while Wilde insisted on smoking only the finest gold-tipped cigarettes, even in his final days (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 542). The men both earn praise for their manner, especially their ability to work a party. Finally, both are inordinately concerned with appearances, as witnessed by Wilde's aesthetic theory, and by Reelen's treatment of Fanny.

Clearly then, Greve drew inspiration for his "portrait of Dorian Greve" from Wilde. However, even more striking is the "portrait of Dorian Grove" (Williams 49) which appears in In Search of Myself. There are literally dozens of parallels

which link Wilde and Grove, the most obvious of which may be the close relationship between the boys and their mothers. Once again, both are born into families with slight claims to aristocracy, to a physically strong and somewhat domineering mother and a subdued (in the presence of the mother at least) father. The families are landowners, yet the fathers mortgage the property to the extent that it is lost to the sons as a source of potential income. Yet, throughout their lives, the mothers continue to survive financially and to surround themselves with circles of clever, artistic people. Both mothers are artists: Lady Wilde was an author, while Grove's was a talented pianist. But whereas Lady Wilde encouraged her son's forays into the artistic world, Grove's mother demands that he be more practical. The end result was that, although both Wilde and Grove were awarded University scholarships, Wilde for Oxford and Grove for "some recognized European University" (ISM 191), only Wilde ever completed his degree.

The two young men both attend University and share a similar success in "forming the centre of certain groups," both finding themselves surrounded by adoring younger men (ISM 161). And there are hints of homosexuality in this experience, even in the tale of the "definitely, finally heterosexual" Grove (162): "I went through one strange experience. A young man, very slightly my senior in years, was, in certain small circles, already regarded as a coming light.

While at first avoiding and even discouraging my advances, he suddenly veered around and, incredibly, subordinated himself to me. It is true, in public he acted more or less as my mentor; but in private he professed that he was nothing, I everything. It was only in the course of weeks or even months that I began to realize with dismay the nature of my attraction for him. When my eyes were opened, I saw clearly that not an inconsiderable fraction of these new, artistic friends of mine--many of whom have since left their mark on France and even on the world--suffered from the taint of homosexuality. The thing meant nothing to me ... but it explained many things: the fierce jealousies, for instance, the incessant quarrels by which I was surrounded" (ISM 161). The reference would appear to be to Gide, with whom, Spettigue speculates, Greve attempted to begin a homosexual relationship in order to advance his cause within artistic circles (FPG 126). It is an attempt outlined in Gide's "Conversations with a German," an attempt which failed miserably (Spettigue, FPG 126).

In his autobiography Grove reverses the role played in "Conversations" (the roles are also reversed in the Introduction to the autobiography), perhaps out of shame for having ever attempted such a thing. For, as Elsa remarked, such a relationship was probably physically impossible for FPG (Hjartarson, "Strangers" 279). In any event, Grove is spared such a fate by his "purer" affair with a married woman.

Wilde, on the other hand, made the fatal choice of becoming involved with a number of young men, beginning with Robert Ross when Wilde was thirty-two. Eventually his love for one of these men, Lord Alfred Douglas, would lead to Wilde's destruction.

Another, albeit slight, connection between Grove and Wilde is their brief interest in rowing. Wilde took up rowing while at Oxford, but was quickly cut from the crew for his refusal to change his "gentlemanly and unhurried pace" (Ellmann, Oscar Wilde 38). Wilde was notably unathletic, and it is more surprising that he took up rowing at all than that when he did so it was for so brief a time. But Grove prided himself on his athletic ability as an adult, and he took up rowing with his mother's apparent lover, abandoning the sport only after his mother's death, when his relationship with the man grew awkward (ISM 90, 130-1).

The major link between the two men lies in their social manners and concern with externals. Both paid extremely close attention to their dress and accessories, surrounding themselves with beautiful, expensive things. Neither was practical, but rather spent vast sums of money until Wilde was deeply in debt and Grove had been forced to change his lifestyle due to the death of his father. Wilde was well known for his extravagant lifestyle, and "no doubt it [was] in his image that [FPG] dressed so elegantly and behaved so extravagantly," according to Spettigue (FPG 58). Grove flit-

ted from place to place, playing the dilettante, purposely "toy[ing] with everything and master[ing] nothing--in the practical field" (ISM 159), much as Wilde had done before him. It is not until the death of their respective fathers that the young men come to see that they will have to support themselves: Grove's reaction is to sell his clothes, hop on a train, and support himself in a variety of menial ways. Of course this decision was rendered necessary by the fact that he was trapped in America with no notable job skills. Wilde managed to elude the more sordid aspects of (relative) poverty by sponging off his friends, and later living off his wife, and by lecturing and writing. It is at this final point that the two lives come closest to intersecting: both men went on successful lecturing tours in North America, and it was during their tours that both basked in being lionized. Unfortunately for Grove this was a fleeting experience, although for Wilde it was the beginning of a successful career.

In Search of Myself opens with the curiously ironic sentence that "[i]f, in a state of prenatal existence, human beings-to-be could deliberately choose those to whom they wish to be born, taking into account, of course, what they intended to do with their earthly lives, then a future writer like myself could hardly, according to outward appearances, have chosen better than determining destiny did choose for me in the matter of parents. To what extent reality bore

out appearances is the subject of the first part of this book." This is ironic not only because the choice of parents does not, in fact, prove successful, but also because Grove later would choose such parents in his "pre-natal stage" as Felix Paul Greve; this statement provides a useful clue to the importance of his art in reinventing his life. For FPG had already taken to heart Wilde's injunction to "Create yourself. Be yourself your poem" in the earlier creation of his European persona. In North America his creative energies would find an even greater outlet in turning his art into his life, whereas earlier his life had been his art.

Between the lines of his "autobiography" lie many hints that Grove was using his book to create a personal space in which he could safely live. He uses the novel to create new boundaries for his experience: Castle Thurow becomes an autonomous world in itself (24)--much like the modernist work of art--and even new places strike familiar chords, such as when the Canadian prairies remind Grove of Siberia (150). To a large degree this is because Grove's external landscapes are often no more than internal creations: "the whole globe [is] a palimpsest" he claims in his autobiography (86), and so he proceeds to write his new life on the Canadian prairies on top of the "palimpsest" of his old life in Europe. In this way he is able to maintain all of his "selves" within his (single) person (Williams 52). In other words, there was no Castle Thurow in the life of the young

FPG, just as there may not have been any practical Search for America. Yet this does not mean that they did not exist. They simply exist, unseen, until he is willing to reveal them in his imagination.

Creating and overlaying such landscapes in his mind, Grove peopled them with the characters who would later appear in his novels. Thus, "the reader of In Search of Myself experiences a ... shock [of recognition] on finding Neils [Lindstedt of Settlers of the Marsh] to be the resident farm inspector of the Castle Thurow, and Len Sterner of The Yoke of Life to be an old fisherman who comes to blackmail the squire's wife over a boat lost once in a novel, not on the Sound but on Lake Manitoba" (Williams 51-2). Not only in his "autobiography" but also in his "life" are these characters to be found, exerting pressures on his experience: "I lived my life, [Abe Spalding] his. As I grew older, he did, slowly maturing, slowly changing, slowly shaping his life as best he could" (ISM 261). Although Grove treats Abe Spalding as a separate entity in this sentence, Abe, in fact, lived only in his mind. The implication is that Grove also lived peculiarly in his own imagination, "slowly maturing, slowly changing, slowly shaping his life as best he could." The result is an autobiography which is not so much a search for the self as a "quest journey ... to people his beginnings with other versions of himself, to make his 'life' imitate his previous art in one grand, self-contained

Künstlerroman" (Williams 52). In this book, Grove has revised all his stories of origin, real and otherwise, in order to be able to live purely in his art (Williams 52). In other words, the methods have changed, as has the medium--it is now art rather than life that Grove wishes to make into his poem--but the aim has not. FPG evidently still seeks in his writing to create himself, to be himself his own poem.

Chapter III

A Barthean Analysis of Frederick Philip Grove's Unpublished "A Beautiful Soul."

i

One of Grove's most revealing "autobiographical" stories, "A Beautiful Soul," has a good deal to say about his life-long literary relationship with Oscar Wilde. Still unpublished, it exists only as a typescript in the Grove Collection at the University of Manitoba. The story is, unfortunately, undated; however certain evidence points to a date of composition no earlier than the early-1930s and no later than 1945. That the story could not have been written before 1929 is clear, as it is set in Ontario, while the handwritten corrections by Grove on the typescript show that it was completed before his crippling stroke of 1945. It also seems likely that the story was written after FPG completed his "autobiography"; for in that particular work FPG is still trying to make his aesthetic creation of himself into a single, unified whole (Williams 52), while in this

story he is rejecting Wilde's theory as untenable. Thus, although the story is undated, it seems likely that this was one of the last stories that FPG wrote before his death in 1948.

This chapter will examine "A Beautiful Soul" through the use of the Barthean method of analysis. This method involves extreme disruption of the text,²¹ through the use of lexias, or chunks of text of varying length. The result is not a smooth re-rendering of the text in a structuralizing "explanation" of the text, but rather a choppy identification of the codes which inform the reading of the text. Barthes was primarily interested in showing that there was no such thing as a "natural" text, or a "natural" reading of a text because of the "artificial nature" of the codes which inform every text. This type of reading of texts is necessarily disjointed, as each lexia is examined in turn in order to uncover the codes. However, the overall effect is of unity because, after all, there is a limited number of codes with which to work.

The theme of FPG's story is similar to the goal of the Barthean analysis; in "A Beautiful Soul" FPG is demonstrating that the "nature" of his "author," Hugh Allister, is not "natural" but rather a self-construct. Hugh is, in fact, an aesthete, and his social pose becomes a work of aesthetic self-creation. The story is a curious re-writing of Oscar

²¹ For greater ease in reading the text it is included as an appendix.

Wilde's novel Dorian Gray, curious not because FPG has chosen to re-work this story--for FPG's entire life can be read as a re-working of this story--but curious for the savagery with which the author rejects Wilde's doctrine of aesthetic self-creation within his own story. In his story FPG has created a "multivalent text" which seeks to "carry out its basic duplicity [through] the subver[sion] of the opposition between true and false, [by] fail[ing] to attribute quotations ... [by] flout[ing] all respect for origin, paternity, propriety" (Barthes 44), through the creation of an author who is a plagiarist overtly subverting his sources, and thus "de-authorizing" them. In this story, plagiarism is the ultimate form of appropriation of the "text" of another for one's own aesthetic self-creation. But what Grove finally demonstrates is that it is not possible to "consume" the life of another without becoming grossly "unnatural" in the process. Thus, Grove's portrait of the artist is as damning as is Wilde's portrait of Dorian Gray who kills off his "author," or of Lord Henry Wotton who tries to avoid responsibility for the murder committed by his aesthetic surrogate.

(1)"A Beautiful Soul"* HER: who is this "beautiful soul," and how did s/he earn this appellation?* SYM: soul: refers to the higher element found in man, that which connects him to God (ie, the spiritual aspects of man). beautiful: implies possession of a trait which is better or more attractive than the norm. So a "beautiful soul" implies that the possessor of said soul is separated from common men by his/her spirituality.

(2)"When Hugh Allister's wife Clare was taken to that exclusive nursing home at Mt. Brisco"* ACT: wife enters nursing home.* HER: a. why is she there? b. who are Hugh and Clare Allister?* SYM: Clare: means bright or clear, while Hugh: means inspiration or spirit. Thus HER: answers 1: Hugh is probably the beautiful soul.* CUL: a. exclusive: indicates expense, and therefore wealth on the part of the Allisters. b. nursing home: is a place where people go to be treated for a medical problem which is not serious enough to warrant hospitalization.* SEM: Clare is identified by her relationship to a man; in this case her husband.

(3)"with his friends, both male and female, saying under their breath that there was not a ghost of a chance of her ever coming out again,"** HER: a. where are Clare's friends?

b. how long will she be in the nursing home? c. what is wrong with Clare?* SYM: ghost: an essence which does not exist; Clare will not leave the nursing home.* CUL: gossip: one person's tragedy is another person's entertainment. Spoken quietly so that Hugh won't hear.* SEM: Hugh is extremely popular, with both sexes, whereas Clare is not. Already Clare is being identified as an absence.

(4)"everybody pitied him most sincerely."** HER: a. why is Hugh, and not Clare, the object of pity?* SEM: Hugh fosters strong loyalties, but Clare does not, and thus is given little sympathy when she falls ill.* SYM: Clare has done something to alienate her husband's friends.

(5)"For, whatever you might think of Clare, she had at least been a model hostess in his ever hospitable house."** HER: a. what are we to think of Clare? b. what has Clare done? c. what type of marriage is this?* SYM: model: not the real thing, but a representation of the real thing. Clare was playing a role in her marriage to Hugh.* CUL: marriage in which the male is master (ie, owns the house and everything in it) and wife is servant (ie, his hostess versus his partner). These are the traditional social roles of the upper class, of which the wealthy Allisters would most likely be a part.* SEM: Clare is unpopular in her social group, and seems to have no intimate friends. She is therefore possibly either cold or unfriendly or both.

(6)"For a quarter of a century Hugh had been the social and literary lion"*** HER: what has Hugh done to earn this role?* SYM: lion: is the king of the beasts, indicating that Hugh occupies the highest position his social group has to offer.* CUL: Hugh is a good person to know in this social circle.* SEM: Hugh is a middle-aged artist who has achieved recognition for his work.

(7)"of materialistic Arbala, that industrial center of the steel and implement trade of Ontario."** SYM: materialistic: the real lion/king in this society is money, and Hugh is an artistic shield of this truth.* CUL: the implication is that the money earned by the social elite of this city comes from manufacturing; such wealth is "dirty" and the inheritors desire to mask the origins of their wealth behind a shield of culture.* SEM: thus the social and financial elite of this city will be extremely snobbish toward others, especially others who don't observe social niceties.

(8)"In lionizing Hugh, the plutocratic upper circles of society in the city had felt that they were paying due homage to achievement in the realm of letters."** SYM: plutocratic: supports SYM 7: money is king to these people. They even pay Hugh, with homage. A society of shopkeepers.* CUL: in society only the elite are counted, and they create a closed social group (circle) to maintain this situation.

(9)"Ever since his first two books had found that amazing echo in the British Isles and throughout Europe, they had looked upon him as the man who refuted the charge of Canada's intellectual and artistic sterility."** HER: a. how many books has Hugh written? b. why were these books so popular with Europeans?* CUL: North Americans regard Europe as the cultural centre of the world, and Canada is seen as a cultural backwater. Therefore, for Canadian literature to be regarded as valid it must become popular in Europe. In achieving this Hugh will have simultaneously gained respect in his own country.* SEM: Hugh is an internationally respected author, and presumably this means that he is talented.

(10)"The lionizing capacity of American society is proverbial."** SYM: Hugh may not have deserved all of the fame he has received.* CUL: we need heroes so much that we do not hesitate to create some where there are none.* SEM: society is not necessarily selective in whom it worships; this implies a lack of depth in character assessments.

(11)"In Hugh Allister's case it was assisted by the fact that he was well-born, well-bred, and immensely rich. Even in England his beautiful manners had been admired;"** SYM: manners are so perfect that they separate him from other men. Implies an ability to assess a situation before reacting to it.* CUL: it is easier to respect a man who is your equal or superior; Hugh's birth sets him above most men, and

his training above the rest.* SEM: Hugh was born into the social elite.

(12)"and whenever, after the publication of his first book, he had gone to Europe, he had been greeted there as the outstanding representative of American art in literature."** HER: how often did Hugh travel to Europe, and why?* SYM: universalizes Hugh's achievement (American versus Canadian) and intellectualizes it (art rather than fiction).* CUL: Hugh has reached highest level of intellectual success--recognition in Europe.* SEM: Hugh seems to enjoy traveling, especially to Europe.

(13)"The present disaster had made him something worse than a widower."** HER: a. why is this an especially awkward situation? b. To whom is the situation a disaster, Hugh or Clare?* CUL: Hugh is neither married nor single, but is caught in marital limbo (answers HER 13.a). This is an awkward social situation.

(14)"Had Clare died instead of becoming mentally deranged,"** HER: answers 2.a: Clare has had a mental breakdown.* CUL: insanity is a form of social death; Clare no longer counts in her social group.* SYM: Clare is a non-entity in the story because she is insane.

(15)"there were many, young girls as well as full-blown divorcees and widows, who would have jumped at the chance of comforting this 'beautiful soul'"** HER: a. will another

woman "comfort" Hugh? b. why is Hugh considered a "beautiful soul"?* SYM: comfort: contains sexual overtones; Hugh could have sex with a number of women if he wanted to.* CUL: Hugh's qualities make him a "good catch" for a woman, and many are sexually attracted to him/his position. Notion that a woman gains socially by whom she sleeps with.

(16)"--though, when he was spoken of in that strain, the French or German language was commonly used--they called him une belle âme or eine schoene Seele." ** SYM: strain: implies stress: is it a stress to one's credibility to accept that Hugh is spiritually superior to other people?* CUL: Continental European languages are privileged over our own. Thus, to use them reflects upon the user, separating the educated from the uneducated.* SEM: Hugh is not only popular, he is also a popular subject of conversation. This robs him of a private life.

(17)"And, besides being the great celebrity of Arbala, Hugh was distinctly the 'handsome man'."** SYM: handsome: versus beautiful: a distinction is being made between physical (and readily validated) attributes, and the more vague spiritual ones.* CUL: Hugh has all the characteristics of a good catch--looks, money, respect, social position...* SEM: Hugh is physically attractive.

(18)"It is true,"** SYM: what is truth? Oscar Wilde would say that truth is that "whose contradictory is also

true" (Intentions 269), while Grove says elsewhere that "Truth is that which at any given stage of knowledge we cannot successfully contradict" ("Rebels" 74). These two statements suggest the sort of hidden code which calls the nature of truth into doubt.

(19)"that, long before the catastrophe happened, there had been occasional disturbing rumours. Very soon after their marriage it had been said that Hugh and Clare were not 'getting on'."**HER: What is wrong with their relationship?* SYM: a. catastrophe: implies that Clare's breakdown will have long-lasting and far-reaching effects. Also, this is the term which Greve applied to Oscar Wilde's trial and imprisonment (Spettigue, FPG 116). b. rumours: are disturbing because they lead to the questioning of Hugh's qualities.* CUL: at the time divorce was not a valid option, and bad marriages were a risk of life.

(20)"She had brought him plenty of money; but money is not everything: and besides, Hugh did not need it."** SYM: marriage was a financial transaction, but Clare turned out to be a bad bargain.* CUL: money is only not everything when you have plenty of it.* SEM: Clare is identified through relationship with a man: specifically, the money she brought to her husband with marriage.

(21)"Once, a year or so after the marriage, Clare left him for nearly a year, returning to her parents at Toron-

to."** ACT: wife abandons husband 1.* HER: why did Clare leave her husband, and then return?* SYM: first year is the period known as the honeymoon; if this time is unhappy then the marriage will probably be unhappy.* CUL: if a wife deserts her husband it implies that he was a difficult man to live with: casts a bad light on Hugh.* SEM: Clare seems to be in control of her life, making decisions on her own. Hugh doesn't seem to be perfect after all--he is a poor husband.

(22)"The rumours which tried to account for this absence had, however, been stoutly contradicted by Hugh;"** HER: a. why does he defend his wife's actions? b. what were some of these rumours?* SYM: a. absence: Clare is an absence throughout the story, made overt here. b. stoutly: Hugh is passing himself off as the loyal husband, the victim in this unfortunate situation. Clare becomes the "bad guy." (This answers HER 22.a: Hugh is casting blame on Clare.)* CUL: appears to be a simple case of a husband trying to make the best of a bad situation.* SEM: Hugh knows how to manipulate public opinion.

(23)"and when Clare had returned to Arbala and observed a dead silence with regard to her stay in Toronto, they gradually died away,"** SYM: a. dead silence: is a deadly silence; it not only kills the rumours, but also through it Clare condemns herself to public opinion formed without her side of the story, killing her social reputation. b.

observed: a society in which everything is observed, and judged.* SEM: Clare does not have close friends to whom she can confide. She is probably lonely.

(24)"at least in the circles in which Hugh moved. Hugh had borne it all so beautifully."** HER: Where does Clare fit in socially?* SYM: beautifully: implies spiritual, the area in which Hugh excels. Reminds the reader of the title, "A Beautiful Soul", answering (in part) 1: Hugh earns the title through his behavior.

(25)"Even when, after another year, Clare went off to Europe without her husband, he treated her desertion as the most natural thing in the world."** ACT: a. desertion of wife 2. b. Clare journeys to Europe.* HER: what does Clare do in Europe?* SYM: desertion: calls attention to who the "victim" is in this situation.

(26)"Why should a wife be bound by her husband's domesticity?"** HER: a false enigma, Hugh is not a domestic person, in fact, lexias 11 and 12 make it clear that the opposite is true.* SYM: again, Hugh is being cast in the light of the victim.* CUL: social norms are being transgressed; wife should be the domestic partner, husband ought to be the rover.* SEM: Hugh is quite capable of lying when it is to his benefit to do so.

(27)"Once, at the time, he had unexpectedly come upon a group of men who were discussing Clare."** CUL: very awkward

situation.* SYM: once: only happens one time, but once is enough to get the message across.

(28)"Nobody had noticed his approach."** SYM: Hugh sneaked up on the group--sneaky little bastard.* SEM: Hugh is not to be trusted.

(29)"Somebody had just remarked that a friend of his had seen Clare at the Opéra Comique in Paris in the company of a strange young man,"** HER: answers 25: Clare has gone to Europe to enjoy herself.* SYM: language of gossip: the story is full of holes. Cannot be verified.* CUL: according to this report Clare has again transgressed the laws of social behavior twice; not only is she cheating on her husband, but she is doing so with a man from outside of their social circle (a stranger). * SEM: Clare must be physically attractive for this story to be accepted as true.

(30)"a foreigner,"** SYM: a. man outside of their social group--was a double transgression, this triples it. b. a foreign (French) lover implies passion, which multiplies the magnitude of the scandal still further.

(31)"with whom she had conversed on terms of evident intimacy."** SYM: a. language of gossip, vague, contains little verifiable data (ie, great potential that it is not true). b. intimacy: contains sexual implications. c. conversed: probably spoke in French, the "language of love," further implying that this is a sexual relationship.* CUL:

Clare will be punished for breaking social rules of conduct (married women don't behave as she is said to have behaved).

(32)"Hugh had stepped forward and smiled at the consternation betrayed on half a dozen faces."** ACT: Hugh physically confronts six men who are gossiping about his wife.* HER: a. which is more distressing to the men; Clare's behavior or Hugh's? b. what or who is being betrayed here?* SYM a. betrayed: something or someone is being betrayed here, and as Clare is the topic of conversation it is probably her. b. consternation: implies sudden dismay: these men are embarrassed at being caught gossiping about Clare by Hugh. c. smile: indicates that Hugh is enjoying what he is doing.* SEM: Hugh is in power here, we will learn much about him by his next actions.

(33)"'The young man in question,' he had said, 'is a very dear friend whom I have urgently asked, being myself unavoidably detained on this side of the Atlantic, to take Clare in tow.'"** ACT: Hugh verbally confronts six men who are gossiping about his wife.* HER: answers 32.b: Clare is being betrayed here by her husband.* SYM: manipulation of language; says one thing but implies another. By "defending" Clare he reinforces the belief that she is guilty of having an affair.

(34)"This statement, gentlemen, should remove all of your difficulties.' It had done so;"** ACT: verbal confrontation

2.* SYM: statement clears the way for an unpleasant portrait of Clare.* CUL: use of the term gentlemen reminds the group of social rules and obligations. Also points out who the real gentleman is: real gentlemen don't gossip.* SEM: Hugh knows how to manipulate his audience with carefully chosen words.

(35)"for, as one of the half dozen had remarked later, 'if a married man knows about his wife's escapades and chooses to connive at them, it is entirely his own affair.'"* HER: reinforces 32.b: Clare has been betrayed by Hugh. But is Clare in fact having an affair?* SYM: a. connive: implies a conspiracy; in fact Hugh is conspiring not with but against Clare. b. affair: reminds the reader of the sexual nature of Clare's "escapades."* CUL: the "wronged husband" is defended by his peers; men stick together in unpleasant situations.

(36)"The embarrassing incident had redounded entirely to the credit of Hugh's angelic disposition."* HER: answers 15.a: Hugh is a beautiful soul in part because of his angelic disposition.* SYM: a. embarrassing: because they were caught, but Hugh benefited by not embarrassing them further. b. credit: a reminder of the monetary nature of the society; Hugh is paid by his supporters.

(37)"On another occasion, it is true, when Clare's misbehavior, as it was called, was again discussed among men,"*

SYM: gossip about Clare not stopped by her husband's intervention.* HER: where are the women's voices in this story?*

CUL: men discuss the bad woman among themselves--acts as a warning to other women not to follow Clare's example.

(38)"one of them, older than the rest,"** SYM: man isolated by his age.* CUL: the generation gap 1: difference of opinion between the old and the young.

(39)"gave it as his opinion that Hugh, 'if he were a man', would first horsewhip the other fellow and then divorce his wife."** SYM: words to live by--at least this way the truth would be revealed about both Hugh and Clare.* CUL: older generation lived in a stricter society with harsher forms of punishment.

(40)"But the younger members of the group had laughed him out of court as an old fogey:"** SYM: in this society people are "tried" in a gossip court.* CUL: generation gap 2: the older generation is out of touch with current thought, their opinions are no longer viewed as valid.

(41)"'Such things aren't done any longer these days.'** HER: what are the new forms of punishment?* CUL: generation gap 3: new ways have replaced the old.

(42)"There had come a time, and it had lasted fully a decade, when Hugh's patience and forbearance had justified themselves."** HER: what changes took place?* SYM: justi-

fied: just=law. Clare plays by the rules for a decade (answers HER).* CUL: to operate in society one must play by the rules, or else you are made an outcast.

(43)"Apparently fully reconciled to her marriage, Clare had given in and, to all appearances, had suddenly become a model wife to Hugh."** SYM: a. this is the second stage of the marriage. b. model: see SYM 5: Clare playing a role. c. implication that there was something about the marriage which Clare did not expect, and it took her some time to re-adjust her goals/desires.* CUL: Clare becomes the good wife; now she can enter society.* SEM: Clare can play the game as well as anyone else.

(44)"She had stayed at home, had, with dignity and even brilliance, presided at his many social functions,"** SEM: brilliance: "Clare-ity": Clare now fits in perfectly.* CUL: the attributes of a good wife in this social group.

(45)"and never given even the slightest occasion for scandal or gossip. Many members of the present jeunesse dorée had never know her otherwise."** SYM: a. jeunesse dorée: implies a group twice blessed--by both youth and wealth. b. otherwise: Clare changed, otherwise they wouldn't have known her at all.* CUL: Clare active member of society because she plays by the rules now. But, generation gap 4: difference between what the younger group sees and what the older group remembers. In this case the older group is privileged.

(46)"One or two shrewd observers of the older generation,"** CUL: generation gap 5: older generation is privileged by memory. These people are more difficult to fool because they remember Clare before she was a "good wife."

(47)"it is true,"** SYM: see 18: question of the nature of truth.

(48)"had thought they detected a slightly ironical intonation in her expressions of solicitude for Hugh's comfort and welfare."** SYM: a. ironic: requires a double audience, one which merely sees and one which also perceives. b. expressions: robs her words of meaning, by implying that they are merely words. Clare using words to manipulate public opinion, as Hugh has done.

(49)"Thus Hugh was subject to excruciating headaches on the day after a dinner party prolonged into the small hours of the night; and,"** CUL: headaches from overindulgence, indicates that these parties are both long and luxurious. An indication of great wealth that the Allisters have both the time and money for such parties.* SEM: Hugh's health is poor.

(50)"to most, it was touching to see"** CUL: generation gap 6: differentiates between those who see (younger) and those who perceive (older, privileged).

(51)"how Clare watched over him and insisted on his retiring at what she called a reasonable hour."** SYM: Clare is taking over the reins of power 1: Hugh is being forced to retire by his wife.* CUL: a. example of how a good wife takes care of her husband. b. wealth allows the Allisters to set hours differently than others; what exactly does Clare consider to be a reasonable hour?

(52)"When the group to which the Allisters belonged went for an outing, long strings of exquisite motor cars threading on the newly paved high-ways of the province"** SYM: a. image of sewing; ie, the mending of Clare's social position and of the Allister's frayed marriage. b. first time Hugh and Clare are labeled as a married couple, the Allisters-- indicates the extent of Clare's new-found social position. c. terms such as motor car and newly paved high-ways serve to date the story in the early decades of this century.* CUL: the Allisters are part of a wealthy group; this is indicated by their possessions and abundance of leisure time.

(53)"she saw to it, often in the face of his protests,"** SYM: Clare is taking over as the dominant force in this marriage 2. But he is not giving in easily: this is a battle for power.

(54)"that the footman"** CUL: a.indication of extreme wealth: a footman is a fairly extravagant type of servant,

his duties are light, indicating that there is more than the one servant. b. an archaic term: there are few footmen now, this helps to date the story.

(55)"put overcoats and rugs in the car, so that, on the return trip in the chill of the night, he would not catch a cold."** SYM: story takes place before cars had heating systems; early days of cars.* CUL: Clare is a good wife, taking care of Hugh's delicate health: very socially acceptable.

(56)"She treated him like a child entrusted to her care and made an excellent mother."** SYM: Clare has seized the reins of power in this marriage 3.* CUL: it is more acceptable for a wife to baby her husband than for a wife to abandon her husband.

(57)"But even through this latter decade the marriage had remained sterile."** SEM: a. latter: last: this will be the last period of potential sexual contact between husband and wife. b. sterile: this marriage is sterile in several ways: they produce no children, and they produce no love either.* CUL: marriages should produce children; this one is a failure because it does not do so.

(58)"When, in the fortieth year of Clare's life, the catastrophe came" ** HER: what is the nature of this catastrophe?* CUL: forty years is the end of the child-bearing period (or at least end of the safe child-bearing period): Clare is now without any biological value.* SYM: catastro-

phe: indicates that there will be long-lasting repercussions arising out of this event.

(59)"and, on an excursion to Niagara Falls, she made an exhibition of herself, it was quite unexpected."** ACT: Clare's breakdown.* SYM: Niagara Falls: a honeymoon resort, underlining the fact that theirs was an unhappy marriage.* CUL: breach of propriety; Clare went to see an exhibition, not become one. Unexpected: because Clare had played the game well for ten years.

(60)"Hugh acted promptly;"** ACT: Hugh reacts to breakdown 1.* SYM: promptly: indicates that perhaps her breakdown was not so unexpected, not by Hugh anyway.* SEM: part of Hugh's beautiful manners includes being prepared for any emergency.

(61)"he called in the most prominent alienists and, with tragic face, accepted their verdict that a temporary confinement in a nursing home was indispensable."** ACT: Hugh reacts to breakdown 2. Clare confined.* SYM: a. verdict: returning to legal language, last used when alluding to Clare's presumably sexual exploits in Europe. This indicates that her breakdown was sexually motivated. b. alienists: an archaic term for someone who cares for--rather than treats--the insane. Also, Hugh is seeking to "alienate" Clare from her world. c. tragic face: ie, a mask. Hugh is playing a part in Clare's drama. d. indispensable:

cannot be put aside: which is exactly what is happening to Clare.* CUL: all of the proper forms are carried out to make sure that Clare receives the care she is thought to need.* SEM: Hugh knows how to act in any given situation.

(62)"His male friends were appalled; the women vied with each other to make him forget his loss."** ACT: social reaction to Clare's breakdown.* HER: which, if any, woman will take Clare's place? 2* SYM: men and women react differently to news; they react in such a way that it becomes clear that Hugh is popular with both sexes, but Clare is severely disliked by her own.* CUL: women are cruel when another woman is in trouble.

(63)"II"** SYM: the continuity of the story has been broken, indicating that the story will change in focus.* HER: what will the focus of this section be?

(64)"It was a week after Clare had been taken away, and Hugh was sitting in his sumptuously furnished study and pondering over a letter that had just arrived from Clare."** ACT: Hugh's reaction to breakdown 3: re-establishing contact.* HER: a. how will Hugh react to this letter? b. what did Clare write?* SYM: a. study: a male/rational room, probably without any reminders of Clare. The room in which he writes. b. ponder: implies heaviness; Hugh will treat Clare heavy-handedly.* CUL: difficulty of knowing how to react to a tragedy, requires thought.

(65)"He was bowed under a sense of tremendous responsibility. The letter was a piteous appeal of Clare's."** HER: answer 64.b: Clare wrote an appeal to Hugh. How will Hugh react to this letter? 2* SYM: appeal: Clare is now the weaker member of the couple, Hugh is strong.* CUL: the relationship between husband and wife has been complicated by Clare's insanity: Hugh is now doubly responsible for her.

(66)"She begged, yes, implored him to take her away: only he could do it. He knew, she said, that she was perfectly sane."** HER: a. is Clare sane? b. what exactly is Hugh's role in Clare's sudden confinement?* SYM: a. sanity: the issue is what constitutes sanity: who is the insane character, Hugh, Clare, or the society that determines the nature of sanity? b. begged: Clare has been reduced to the role of a beggar, seeking crumbs of charity from people who were once her peers.* CUL: Hugh is now doubly powerful: he is male, and he is deemed "sane" by his society. On the other hand Clare has been ruined: female and insane, she is left without any control over her body whatsoever.

(67)"Nobody else could possibly know how justifiable had been that outbreak of hers."** HER: how are her actions justifiable?* SYM: a. justifiable: again legal language enters the story, but as the law court is the gossip court Clare's appeal is doomed already. b. nobody else: Clare is reminding Hugh and the reader of the secret knowledge which exists between husband and wife. c. outbreak: Clare has

been repressed for ten years: in this relationship repression is the source of power.

(68)"If he would make himself responsible for her further good behavior,"** HER: will Hugh help Clare?* SYM: Hugh has been the reason for Clare's ten years of socially acceptable behavior. She is offering Hugh the chance to be the power broker in their marriage.* CUL: women must submit to the rules established by (male)society.

(69)"Dr. Davidson, the superintendent, had said, they would let her go."** SYM: she is being held against her will, and is aware who gives orders to the jailor (ie: Hugh).* CUL: doctors are the rule-makers of our society.

(70)"She would give him her solemn promise that never would she let herself go as she had done on that deplorable occasion."** HER: answers 58: catastrophe lies in Clare's dropping of the mask she has worn for ten years. She has shown emotions.* SYM: a. solemn: has religious overtones: a solemn promise is one made to God, thus Hugh is God. b. deplorable: indicates scandal, which implies a moral offence: the breakout was probably sexual in nature.* CUL: language of repentance: someone has done wrong, and is humbly asking "God" for forgiveness.

(71)She would honestly call him, yes, consider him, her benefactor. Or, if that were more to his taste, he might assign her a place of residence, in Canada or abroad,"**

HER: will Clare get out of the nursing home?* SYM: a. benefactor: Clare is begging Hugh to show her some charity: she has nothing left, not even self-respect. b. taste: appealing to Hugh's aesthetic code of the mask; she is willing to play by the rules again. assign: Setting up Hugh as the assigner, the sign-giver, "God." Clare is appealing to Hugh's ego, hoping that he fancies himself to be God, and will use his power to grant her her freedom.

(72)"and she would promise to stay within the territory defined by him; she would never trouble him again; nobody in Arbala need even know that she was no longer confined;"** SYM: a breathless character to this sentence, as if she is tripping over her words. She is anxious, for she knows that her case is hopeless. Answers 71: no, she will not leave the nursing home, and she knows it.

(73)"she would never give a sign of life to any common friend or acquaintance. She asked for nothing but the permission to live out her life"** SYM: a. they no longer have any common friends, for Clare "died" socially when she was declared insane. So she is no threat to Hugh in his area (see the third lexia; from the moment of her confinement Clare has been a nonentity).

(74)"in that comparative freedom which would permit her to move about, within limits defined by him, unhampered and unobserved."** SYM: the freedom which Clare is proposing is

no different from what she has at the nursing home. Therefore she is not to be trusted; if allowed out of the home there is no guarantee that she will abide by the stated conditions. For Hugh, it is better to do nothing.

(75)"Hugh read and reread the letter; and for hours he pondered over it. While engaged in his meditations, he refused to see callers;"** HER: how long does this process take?* SYM: a. meditations: religious connotations; Hugh is engaged in thought about himself (77), thus he is making himself God. b. engaged: language of law: refers to past commitments. Hugh is delayed by the consideration of all that is involved in his decision. c. callers: he is sought, petitioned, by others; the "sign-giver" is an acknowledged legislator in his world.* CUL: he ponders: because this is a serious decision, takes careful thought. Hugh is being presented as a man making a difficult decision.

(76)"he had a lunch brought up to his study, declining to descend to the dining room."** HER: how well does Hugh eat?* SYM: a. lunch: the fact that Hugh orders lunch implies that he is hungry. Yet as a man previously diagnosed as being of poor health (49), if he were truly upset he should have no appetite. Therefore it is clear that Hugh is not really upset, rather he is playing the role of an upset man. b. declining: Hugh is declining to deal with the real issue at hand, Clare, spending his time instead eating and

engaged in thought about himself.* CUL: declining: declining to descend implies his superior status, and his refusal to "lower" himself for anyone, particularly his wife. He can also pay people to take care of him.* SEM: Hugh is shown here as a man playing a part, and playing it well. He knows all of the right things to do, and he plays the part well, but the fact that he eats while reading this piteous letter indicates that he is devoid of emotions.

(77)"He reviewed his whole life"* ACT: turning, in thought, from Clare to himself.* HER: a. how old is Hugh? review of life implies that his age is great. b. what are we going to learn about Hugh?* CUL: confessional mode of writing: we have certain expectations that review of one's life will give the reader insight into the character of the reviewer. In turn, this implies that the issue at hand, Clare's sanity, is far from simple.* SEM: Hugh is essentially self-centered, thus placing Clare's situation in a new light, for Hugh may have something to hide.

(78)"His career had been a surprise to himself."* HER: answers 77.b: We will learn about Hugh's literary career. Raises issue: why was his career a surprise?* CUL: as an extremely wealthy man Hugh did not need to work; why did he?

(79)"When, nearly thirty years ago, he had been in Holland, he had, at a bookstall in Amsterdam, picked up an old frayed volume and casually glanced at it."* ACT: finds book

1: skims contents.* HER: what is the significance of this book?* SYM: a. thirty is a mystical number, usually a time of change. b. Amsterdam is a (trading) port city, a place where unique items might be found. Also in Europe, already established as intellectual mecca of this story.* CUL: the book is either old and beloved (frayed from many readings) or old and forgettable (for sale versus in a place of honour). b. casual glance: indicates that the book is probably a "buried treasure" accidentally discovered.

(80)"It had been a novel written by a forgotten author and dealing with the peculiar case of a marriage between two intellectually harmonious but temperamentally opposed personalities which ended in estrangement and ultimate disaster."** ACT: finds book 2: describes book.* HER: a. is this plot synopsis a clue to the Allister's own marriage? b. why has this author been forgotten? c. Who is the author?* SYM: a. the description of the marriage within the novel foreshadows the difficulties which the Allisters will experience. intellectually harmonious: both Clare and Hugh are capable of creating social masks, but temperamentally opposed: Clare does not wish to live that way, although Hugh does. b. ultimate: indicates final stage; which is where Hugh's story is slowly headed. c. estrangement: to turn away emotionally; what has happened in the Allister's marriage.* CUL: the problem with marriage is that matches which work well outside of marriage often do not work well as marriages. A common story.

(81)"He had bought the book and convinced himself that it was psychologically sound and that it anticipated much of the modern criticisms of the institution of marriage."** ACT: finds book 3: evaluates it.* HER: why must he convince himself of the merits of this book?/ what is wrong with the book?*SEM: Hugh fancies himself to be a literary critic.

(82)"He had made enquiries about the author who had been dead for fifty years or longer."** ACT: finds book 4: tries to find the author.* HER: a. what did Hugh learn about the dead author? b. why does he feel the need to find out about this author, who wasn't very good?* SYM: fifty years is two generations; plenty of time to obscure the works of a good author, and to render an undistinguished author completely invisible.* SEM: Hugh is secretive, and his motives are unclear.

(83)"The book had interested him profoundly, partly for the reason that, in conjunction with amazing psychological insight"** HER: one reason for interest listed, what are others?* SYM: his interest is profound, which hints at a subtext; what motivates such interest?* CUL: in the early 20th century psychology was a common literary theme.

(84)"it exhibited an almost childish inability to 'put the thing over'. He was sorely tempted to rewrite the story."** HER: answers 83: book is poorly written. Will he rewrite the story, and with what consequences?* SYM: a.

childish: is a derogatory term here, especially when compared to the praise of 83. It reduces the author's achievement to almost nothing. b. exhibited: a word connected with Clare's breakdown (exhibition). Linking of two failures, two moments when Hugh has a chance to seize power. c. sorely tempted: Hugh is making a moral choice here. d. rewrite: to rewrite a novel is to displace the author; Hugh will seize power through rewriting this unnamed author's novel.* CUL: Hugh has justified his rewriting of the story by indicating that the author was an artistic failure--an aesthetic justification.* SEM: Hugh is evidently Wildean in his aesthetic outlook, elevating style over substance.

(85)"At the time he had been strangely disillusioned about himself."** HER: a. why is he disillusioned, and why is this odd or inappropriate (strange)?* SYM: a. strange: implies an unusual state. b. disillusioned: implies that he is freed from false images of himself. In other words, Hugh sees himself as he really is.* CUL: too much self-knowledge is a frightening thing.

(86)"He had never done anything to attract the attentions of any large or small circle of his fellow man."** CUL: attracting the attention of others is success in this world.* SYM: circle/fellow: would refer to a social group made up of Hugh's peers; Hugh wants to be recognized as of a group and yet above the same group (better than the rest).* SEM: Hugh's wealth does not satisfy his egoistic needs, it provides him with status, but not with fame.

(87)"Yet, to do so, had been his devouring ambition. His wealth was inherited, but" ** HER: who, or what, will be devoured by this ambition? * SYM: a. devouring: a negative term; his ambition is a destructive force. At the moment it is directed inward but if directed outwardly (ie, toward this novel) it will eat anything that gets in its way. b. but: this is an attempt to undermine the importance of his father in Hugh's life. He wants to owe nothing to anyone, including gratitude or allegiance (doesn't bode well for Clare) * CUL: this is the story of the aesthete who wishes to create him/herself out of nothing. Hugh will follow Wilde's injunction to "Create yourself. Be yourself your poem."

(88)"in order to excel in some way he would have gladly set out to double or treble his inheritance. He knew only too well that he lacked the gift." ** HER: how does he know that he lacks talent in business, has he tried and failed? * SYM: a. the real god in this world is fame, which is best achieved through art. b. excel: parallels his devouring ambition; he won't accept being as good as others, he must be better. c. gift: Hugh will accept the book as a gift, just as he accepted his father's money as a gift. But, at the same time, lacking the creative "gift," he will use his style to improve on the gift, just as he hopes to increase his inheritance through publishing this book. * SEM: Hugh is not a businessman in the "Trumpian" sense of the word; he cannot make money out of money.

(89)"In art or literature he knew himself to be a mere dilettante yet fame in either field would have satisfied his cravings. The trouble was that he had no ideas."** HER: answers 84: yes, he will rewrite this book.* SYM: a. cravings: appetite, a reminder of the devouring nature of his aesthetic ambition. b. no ideas: the opposite problem of the Dutch book which has the ideas but cannot express them. c. dilettante: a French word--privileged language--implying amateurism.* CUL: Hugh is a rich boy seeking an easy access to fame. Because he is rich he will probably succeed (a "golden boy").* SEM: real problem is a lack of depth: Hugh is all style and no substance.

(90)"At last he did rewrite the book and, thinking it good, began to consider publication."** HER: answers 84: he has rewritten the book, and 87: the unnamed author is the first victim of Hugh's ambition.* ACT: finds the book 5: rewrites the book.* SYM: a. consider: studied casualness, hides the importance of what he is about to do. b. rewrite: stole another's book, and made it his own. Breaks many laws, moral and legal.* CUL: this is plagiarism, a crime. Affects our impression of Hugh, he becomes unsavory.* SEM: emphasizes that Hugh is an aesthete, elevating style over substance, and raising himself above the original author.

(91)"For a long while he never thought of anything but the necessity of acknowledging his debt to the defunct

author. But another year went by and"*** HER: a. how long, exactly, is "a long while"? b. what causes Hugh to change his mind?* SYM: a. debt: if Hugh credits the original author he will be in his "debt": he will no longer be a self-made man, but a man dependent on the patrimony of another. b. defunct: "having ceased to exist": once Hugh rewrites the novel the original author will be rendered defunct.* CUL: passing of time wears away the edges of emotion. Hugh planned to do the right thing--give credit where credit is due--but with the passing of time his ambition devours his good intentions (survival of the strongest).* SEM: Hugh is dangerous because he will do anything to satisfy his ego; anything, that is, that he can get away with.

(92)"he read his manuscript to a few friends; and when they expressed their enthusiasm and admiration extravagantly, this taste of public applause was sweet to his palate."*** ACT: sharing the manuscript.* SYM: a. continuation of use of eating metaphors: taste and palate paralleling the use of devouring (87) and cravings (84) in conjunction with Hugh's aesthetic code. b. his manuscript: manuscripts are handwritten, which in this case erases the presence of the original author, as does the qualifier "his."* CUL: Hugh is not discovered, so he continues on his path.* SEM: fond of praise; this is quite immature behavior (seeking out praise and responding so completely to it).

(93)"He sent the work to an English publisher and received a prompt and flattering reply."** ACT: submission of the manuscript.* SYM: a. English publisher: this choice of a foreign publisher serves several purposes: 1. if Hugh is caught plagiarizing, the news might not reach home (Canada). 2. intellectual hierarchy: England more prestigious than Canada (a cultural backwater). 3. If his book succeeds in Europe it will automatically succeed in Canada. 4. Separates Hugh from his past. b. work: this is his first job, writing. Wealthy, doesn't have to work to support himself (separates him from the masses).* CUL: the book must be good to receive quick acceptance.* SEM: Hugh can write well.

(94)"It appeared under his sole name and swept the world."** ACT: book published, successful (sales).* HER: will Hugh be caught? (we already know the answer is no because he is well respected in first part of the story).* SYM: sole/soul: book will lead to his epithet, "a beautiful soul." Ironically, by printing the book under his "sole" name Hugh demonstrates that he has no "soul"; he is utterly ruthless.* CUL: qualifications of a great book: must be internationally respected. Also helps if it sells well--making the author well known.

(95)"within a year"** SYM: the same amount of time that it took Hugh to admit that he would not acknowledge the original author.

(96)"it had been translated into twenty-seven languages and had made him internationally famous."** ACT: book translated, sells well.* SYM: twenty-seven languages: an improbable number, indicates the author's (Grove's) grandiose idea of international fame, and--within the story--the incredible reception of the book.* CUL: fact that the book is translated into many languages, and sells well, indicates that Hugh has hit a nerve with the story: the defunct author's psychology was correct. Also overwhelms the reader; who can attack an author who is so popular?

(97)"Once more he had gone to Europe,"** ACT: return to Europe.* HER: why does he return to Europe at this time? supports 26: Hugh is not a domestic soul, at least not before his marriage.* SYM: a. Europe as intellectual center. b. once again: serves to remind the reader of the events of Hugh's last trip (when he found the book).

(98)"this time with the express though never-avowed purpose of finding another obscure work on which to base a work of his own."** ACT: looking for second novel.* HER: answers 97: looking for second novel.* SYM: a. work: Hugh is living off the labour of others, using someone else's work on which to base his reputation. b. his hidden agenda is stated here, but his stated agenda (what did he give as his reason for the trip?) is hidden. c. avowed: religious word: Hugh's ambition is his religion. d. obscure: is something which is not readily understood: Hugh is justifying his pla-

giarism as an act of translation. e. express: hurry: Hugh needs a second novel to cement the reputation which he established with the first novel.* CUL: one-book novelists are one-hit wonders: they shoot to fame, then descend even more rapidly into obscurity. Without second novel Hugh's fame will be fleeting.* SEM: Hugh is not content with short-term fame, wants longevity.

(99)"Strange to say, he had found a second novel by the same forgotten author,"** ACT: finds second book.* HER: a. will he rewrite this book with equal success? (again, question answered in first part of story, yes he will succeed). b. how many books will Hugh write? c. what is this book like?* CUL: "truth is stranger than fiction" which makes the discovery of this book credible.

(100)"this time in a bookstall at Constantinople."** SYM: Constantinople: as a location has several implications. 1. Hugh has gone further afield to find this book, perhaps in order to avoid being recognized (and caught). 2. Constantinople is the gateway to the East, an exotic location, at the end of the (western) world. 3. another trading/port city, making the presence of the book possible.

(101)"Again it was, psychologically, a most remarkable piece of work and, artistically, an utter failure."** HER: answers 99.c: book just like the first one.* SYM: a. the discrepancy between soul/art and body/nature; Hugh, like

Wilde, privileges art over nature. b. work: reminds the reader that Hugh doesn't work, but lives off the work of others.* CUL: justification of Hugh's behavior; book is an artistic failure because it doesn't communicate the author's vision (it has no style).

(102)"Hugh had undertaken considerable research; but not one of the half dozen histories of Dutch literature in existence even mentioned so much as the name of the author; not one of the great libraries in the capitals of Europe contained a single copy of his books."** SYM: historically this author doesn't exist--thus it is safe for Hugh to steal from his books. It is as if the books had not been written until Hugh rewrote them.* HER: answers 99.b: he will not be caught.

(103)"Hugh, with a vastly improved technique, rewrote this book as well;"** ACT: rewrites second book.* HER: answers 99.a: yes, he will rewrite the book.* CUL: demands progress from elite: Hugh improves writing ability between first and second books, ensuring that his second book will be successful.* SYM: a. no sign of hesitation on Hugh's part, "a river once bridged is easily crossed," making use of the "bridge" built with "his" first book. b. rewrote: Ensures that unnamed author will not re-emerge: he no longer exists as neither of his books exist.

(104)"and when he published his version,"** ACT: publishes second book.* HER: will this book be as successful as first?* CUL: "river once bridged"...* SYM: version: translation, see 98.d.

(105)"his fame as the only American author who produced works that not only counted in international literature but also profoundly influenced the most advanced European thought was assured."** HER: answers 104: yes.* SYM: Hugh is declared an American author, rather than a Canadian; this divorces him from his past. Important that he influences European thought because Europe=intellectual center; this cements Hugh's reputation as an artist.* CUL: list of what constitutes success: international recognition, and influence on modern thought.

(106)"He was openly called the greatest living genius of the century."** CUL: to be recognized during lifetime is great achievement; most geniuses are recognized only after their death.* SYM: genius: a loaded term: a genius is a "god of birth" but Hugh has only given birth to himself; even "his" book is not his own creation, a dead author is his true genius. Then again, a genius is one who has power over another: when Hugh has this type of power (ie, over Clare) the result is terrible. So it is a negative thing if he is a genius.* SEM: Hugh has achieved what he sought, social recognition. Raises HER: is he satisfied?

(107)"It had been at this stage that he had married Clare Reichert, only daughter of the millionaire manufacturer of pianos in Toronto."** ACT: Hugh marries Clare.* SYM: Clare is again described in terms of her relationship to a certain man--in this case her father--robbing her of identity. She is an appropriate choice for Hugh for two reasons: her wealth will increase his own (see 88: to increase inheritance is important step in gaining social recognition), and the wealth comes from the sale of pianos: a symbol of culture in the bourgeoisie world.* CUL: Clare is just another object possessed by Hugh, rather than his wife and equal.

(108)"III"** HER: what will happen to the Allister's marriage in the third, and final, stage of the story?

(109)"If, during the first decade of his married life, Hugh had connived at Clare's vagaries, there had been two chief reasons."** HER: what are these two reasons, and what will they reveal about Hugh? b. vagaries: "flight of fancy": is Clare the creative force in this marriage?* SYM: division of the marriage into three periods each lasting ten years (ten years of Clare's rebellion, ten years where Clare obeyed the rules, and--presumably--ten years when Clare is confined to the nursing home).* CUL: Hugh is rationalizing here; in our culture we have a reason for everything.

(110)"In the first place, he knew that his young wife had soon come to suspect that, as a literary genius, he was 'a

fraud';" ** HER: half answers 109, still remains to be seen what the second reason is.* SEM/SYM: this is a statement without proof. It may be that Hugh is afraid of being caught and so displaces his fear onto Clare.* CUL: cannot hide secrets from your spouse: a married couple share a special, intimate knowledge of each other.* SEM: if this is true, then Clare is revealed to be an observant and bright young woman.

(111)"and in the second place, having acquired, not only fame, but also the reputation of the most advanced thinker of the age," ** HER: can Hugh's ambition be satiated?* SYM: acquired: myth of the self-made man: Hugh has earned a new identity for himself through his writing.

(112)"he felt under an obligation to justify that reputation. The consequence was that a third epithet was soon applied to him:" ** HER: completes answer to 109. What is third epithet?* SYM: a. pattern of threes: three stages of marriage, three epithets, he needs a third book to complete the pattern. b. epithet: can refer to an abusive term, or to an abused term.* CUL: once something is acquired the real task--of holding on to that thing--begins. Hugh is a slave to his aesthetic self-creation.

(113)"that of 'a beautiful soul'." ** HER: answers 112: but how did he earn this third title?* SYM: beautiful soul: better than the best in spiritual matters. Hugh's achieve-

ments are in the fields of social skill, literature, and spirit (theme of three).

(114)"Henceforth his every action had been deliberate; before he took any step, he invariably decided within himself what effect it would have on the image which lived of himself in the public mind."** SYM: explains/justifies his previous actions 27-40: Hugh is perfectly capable of betraying his wife's reputation in order to enhance his own.* SEM: to the aesthete one's image in society is everything. In his attempt to suppress nature through art Hugh has schooled himself not to act spontaneously.* CUL: Clare would have discovered after marriage that she had married an "old man," a man so deliberate that she rebelled by acting wildly. In this relationship, the male is rational/art, the female irrational/nature.

(115)"He thought of that now in pondering over Clare's letter."** SYM: functions to bring the reader back to the beginning of the story (Clare's confinement). Also reminds the reader that Hugh is rational, considering the costs of freeing his wife.

(116)"It was at once clear to him"** SEM: clear has replaced Clare.* SYM: makes it obvious that Hugh's decision has nothing to do with Clare and everything to do with Hugh. Also, this was an easy--or predetermined--decision, he has been bluffing by pretending to think about it.

(117)"that this letter as well as anything else she might write to him must be burned."** HER: answers 87: Clare will be the second victim of his ambition. What will be the result of this suppression of Clare?* SYM: Clare's letters will be the source of his third book, and all evidence of plagiarism must be destroyed. Answers 109.b: Clare is the more creative person in this relationship. CUL: Hugh is destroying the evidence: if Clare's letters are lost no one will be able to prove that his own writings are merely palimpsests.

(118)"No eye but his must ever see a line of Clare's."** SYM: a. makes the connection between Clare and the unnamed author specific: their writing suppressed to provide for Hugh's. b. eye/I: the only person who counts in Hugh's calculations is Hugh.* SEM: Hugh is completely self-serving.

(119)"But his answer--that was a different matter. He would write it on a typewriter and retain a copy."** HER: why is Hugh's writing privileged (rhetorical question).* SYM: he is rewriting Clare, as he rewrote the unnamed novelist. Since Clare=nature and Hugh=art then art is inspired by, or borrows from, nature and not the opposite, as Wilde claimed in Intentions, but it will seek to erase all trace of these borrowings.* CUL: copy: documentation of his output; as an author his words are valuable.

(120)"He made many drafts. At last he wrote."** ACT: answering Clare's letter.* SYM: many drafts: emphasises the deliberate nature of what Hugh is doing and has done in creating himself.* CUL: art as an effort requiring care.

(121)"Dearest Darling,"** CUL: language of a love letter: here it begins a story within a story.* SYM: demonstrates yet again that Hugh is a master at the social game.

(122)"You can imagine my surprise and delight when the mail carrier brought your unexpected letter this morning."** SYM: surprise: a clue to Hugh's true feelings: he had probably hoped not to hear from Clare at least temporarily.* CUL: language of a love letter: two lovers separated physically employ a go-between (mail man) to keep them in touch/their love alive.

(123)"I hope that you are improving. Do not be impatient and try to force matters;"** HER: in what way can Clare improve? Does she even need to improve?* SYM: there is a veiled threat in second sentence; he is warning her that she cannot force matters, he holds all of the cards.* CUL: a. language of love letter: showing proper concern for her health (implication being that without her he must die, so he hopes that she lives!). b. male/female binary: as a woman she is to remain passive; let men take care of her, art/nature binary: as "natural" woman Clare ought to be perfected by the efforts of the "artistic" man, but instead Hugh is

destroying "nature" in order to create his "art." SEM: demonstrates Hugh's ability to play social game.

(124)"but hasten the recovery along as much as you can. Already you must have picked up wonderfully:"** CUL: language of a healthy person speaking to an ill one: false bravado, empty sentiments.* SYM: picked up: a clue to her to "pick up" the hidden message in his letter: ie, a thinly veiled threat.

(125)"and things can surely be only a matter of time now. This is convalescence at last;"** SYM: a. time: double meaning: may be a clue that if she is patient she will eventually be released, or that the waiting game has begun. If the latter, then he who lives longest wins. b. convalescence: hints that she has been ill for a long time: here a lie, intended to win sympathy for Hugh as the long-suffering husband. Requires a double audience--if Hugh is to win sympathy with this stance--which supports 117: Clare will serve as a source for Hugh's book.

(126)"and we have to thank God for it."** SYM: we: seems to say that they will tackle the problem as a couple. Here, a lie, gained to win sympathy for Hugh. This sentiment rings hollow because Hugh is his own aesthetic creation, and therefore self-sufficient.

(127)"I hope that you are not tiring yourself in writing too much. Do take care."** SYM: again a veiled threat, Hugh

will not stand for Clare's continued bad behavior. Her writing will lead her to destruction via Hugh.

(128)"At this point he stopped and pondered again. Yes, he said to himself at last, that is the right note,"** ACT: pause during the act of writing to Clare.* SYM: a. ponders: Hugh is taking this letter very seriously, much depends on his control of language. In fact, the writing is more difficult than his decision to suppress Clare, which he decided "straight away." b. note: a pun: musical note/harmony; the need to make language beautiful, so that people will enjoy it, and not probe beneath the surface (style over substance).

(129)"it must touch even her heart; and there is that delicate hint of previous troubles ... "** SYM: a. Hugh is writing to a double audience, and is desirous of getting a separate message across to each. b. delicate hint: just enough so that readers know that Hugh is not to blame, but not strong enough to allow Clare to fight back.* CUL: the ability to manipulate language is a writer's task and greatest achievement.

(130)"He went on:"** SYM: returns the reader--mentally--to Hugh's letter, the story within the story.

(131)"Let us not too strictly count the days or dwell on what they have brought or will bring."** SYM: a. double audience; sounds nice, but the privileged reader can see the

threat which is aimed at Clare. b. dwell: to reside: Clare will dwell in the hospital for ten years, and if she does pay too much attention to the passing days and what they are bringing her she will go insane.

(132)"In the present of our love, there is no Future or Past."** CUL: language of a love letter, no substance to what he is writing, but sounds nice.* SYM: a warning to Clare that she is not present, but already written out of his life (no future).

(133)"I have written a few trifles, nothing big. I am writing for you, so we can read it together one day."** CUL: language of love letter: looking forward to the time when they will no longer be physically separated.* SYM: a. he is literally rewriting Clare, and she can read her revised self in his letters. b. trifles: her life/nature, which he seriously undervalues (as he undervalued the worth of the unnamed author's writing).

(134)"I will not make this letter a long one, either;"** SYM: the letter is the trifle he has written, not long=not very valuable: all style and no substance.

(135)"the doctor told me not to. Yet the news that I have sounds satisfactory; and we must hope for steady progress."** HER: has he truly spoken with the doctors and if so, what did they tell him?* SYM: a. doctors: a symbol of authority, they possess a knowledge which sets them apart

from other men. Their knowledge protects them from being challenged by laymen. b. satisfactory: to whom? Hugh most likely; the doctors will allow him to keep Clare confined.

(136)"The first difficulties are naturally far and away the worst and lengthiest."** SYM: reminds the reader (and Clare) of the early difficulties within the Allister marriage.* CUL: language of a wise man: allying himself with the doctors (wise men) so that he cannot be challenged.

(137)"Don't allow yourself to feel lonely"** SYM: Clare is obviously all alone now.

(138)"always tell yourself that you are getting better, better, better. That will help."** SYM: theme of threes ("better"), the third stage=the final stage, death.* CUL: language of healthy person writing to an ill one: false bravado, the power of mind over body. This is an attitude which Hugh has used to suppress others, especially his parents and now Clare, in order to be free to create himself.

(139)"these letters are necessarily unsatisfactory; but the privilege of writing to you at all is precious."** SYM: warning Clare that she can lose the right to write.* CUL: language of a love letter: written communication precious because there is no physical contact.

(140)"Heaps of love. God be with you."** SYM: empty conclusion to an empty (devoid of feeling)letter.

(141)"Hugh"** SYM: essentially a cold ending, no pet names, no secret love words ... little to show that they shared an emotional life. Letter didn't say anything that the world couldn't read.

(142)"Having read and reread and erased and corrected his lines"** ACT: preparing the letter's final form.* SYM: act of creating a work of fiction: labour-intensive and methodical rather than spontaneous.* CUL: sounds like an actor perfecting his lines, or an aesthete perfecting his mask.

(143)"He sighed with relief,"** SYM: not an easy or pleasurable task, but unpleasant and difficult.

(144)"opened the portable typewriter concealed in the side of his desk, inserted paper and carbon, and made a clean copy."** ACT: typing the final draft of the letter.* SYM: a. hidden typewriter points to the secrecy surrounding the source of his novels. b. paper and carbon: double audience intended here; Clare gets only one copy of the letter, the other is saved for his book in the making.* CUL: as an author, Hugh's words are precious, worthy of being kept safe (copied). Also typing versus longhand indicates a piece of work (fiction) rather than a personal letter.

(145)"When that task was finished,"** SYM: task rather than privilege: reveals Hugh's true reaction toward the letter, and in turn toward Clare.

(146)"he carefully gathered every scrap of his tentative drafts as well as Clare's letter and took them to the fireplace to burn."** CUL: a. hiding the evidence: of both his labour (the drafts) and of his source (Clare's letter). b. image of the phoenix: springing from the ashes of its parent, as Hugh did in creating himself.* SEM: demonstrates Hugh's attention to detail. He is careful to cover his tracks.

(147)"IV"** SYM: epilogue to the pattern of threes: this section will quickly sum up the story.

(148)"Clare held out for another ten years during which, according to her husband, she had been disintegrating steadily."** HER: was Clare ill?* SYM: a. supports 109: the third stage does last for ten years. b. according to her husband: calls his judgement into doubt. Reader is already suspicious of Hugh, this serves to confirm that suspicion.* CUL: steady decline: a natural, rather than artful, reaction to her suppression.

(149)"When the alienist connected with the institution saw how much worse she was every time she had received a letter, he asked even Hugh to discontinue the correspondence."** HER: a. did Hugh stop writing upon request? b. who

else was writing to Clare?* CUL: alienist: with this order he completely alienates Clare from the outside world.* SEM: Hugh wrote frequently to Clare, like a devoted husband.

(150)"She wrote pitiable appeals to her friends both at Arbala and Toronto;"** HER: who are these friends, and where were they earlier in the story?* CUL: a. pitiable: first arouse pity, but later pity turns to contempt. Dangerous to write such letters, leaves one open to contempt. b. appeals: meaning that Clare is powerless and begging from those who are powerful: this also arouses contempt.* SEM: Clare seems to have lost all self-respect.

(151)"in the beginning, these friends made enquiries at the institution; after a while, they ceased to pay attention to even the most heart-rendering effusions."** HER: answers 150: these people are social friends, but not real friends as demonstrated by their course of action (never approached Clare directly).* CUL: proper channels are followed by these friends, but they never probe beneath the surface. This is an example of the negativity of "style" over "substance."

(152)"Then,"** SYM: passage of time.

(153)"as the consequence of a paroxysm following the receipt of one of Hugh's most masterful missives, her death ensued,"** HER: answers 149: no, Hugh did not stop writing. What exactly was contained in that final letter?* CUL: power of language: it can kill.

(154)"relieving her of her sufferings."** HER: how much did Clare suffer during those ten years of confinement?* CUL: an empty platitude concerning death: "she's out of pain now."

(155)"Three years after the sad event, Hugh published the last and greatest of the three books on which his fame rests."** SYM: confirms and completes the pattern of threes.* CUL: three years: one year is the generally expected period of mourning; by delaying the publication for longer than the required period Hugh will gain added respect and sympathy (it will appear as if he had loved Clare very much).

(156)"As is well known, 'The Letters of Hugh Allister to His Wife' are a classic; and if his two other novels had not already done so, this volume alone would assure him of his place among the immortals"** CUL: belief in the possibility of achieving immortality through art.* SYM: confirms theory that Hugh would "re-write" Clare, thus sacrificing her to his aesthetic self-creation.

(157)"as 'a beautiful soul'."** SYM: calls the value/meaning of the epithet into question because Hugh has no soul (94).

iii

The parallels between this story and Dorian Gray centre on the two aesthetes in the stories: Hugh Allister and Lord Henry Wotton. The two men are both distanced from the events of the stories, for they decline to act in propria persona, preferring the role of the observer. Yet each is the catalyst of the action of the novel or story, for their very failure to act has great repercussions on the events of the narratives. In "A Beautiful Soul" this appears in Hugh's relation to his "sources"; his failure to credit the original author is initially less a malicious act than a simple failure to act. It would have been relatively easy for him to acknowledge his debt at the time that he first showed the manuscript to his friends. Having failed to have done so at the moment, the act becomes more difficult, and finally--when the book is published--impossible. The same is true of his treatment of Clare; his one act is to have her confined; after that he simply allows events to play themselves out. Likewise, Lord Henry is not incapable of action, physically, but he prefers to observe, or to talk rather than act. It is his speech which is dangerous: he opens worlds of artistic possibility to Dorian, but leaves Dorian to travel these worlds alone, unguided and unassisted. Both "create" an art

which kills all that it touches; theirs is an art which "is superbly sterile" (Wilde, DG 240), for not only does it not reproduce, but it actually prevents others from acting/reproducing as well.

There are numerous minor parallels between the characters of Hugh Allister and Lord Henry, including the fact that both have marriages which involve the suppression of the wife. The two women escape their suppression through an expression of their sexuality; in Clare's case this results in further suppression and eventually death, while Victoria leaves marriage to one man only to enter into a marriage with another. The two men are consummate performers who make excellent social partners but terrible husbands. But perhaps most important are the ways in which each lives only through surrogates. Dorian acts as a surrogate for Lord Henry who is fascinated by, but unattached to, Dorian as a person. Lord Henry prefers to observe Dorian scientifically rather than to become emotionally entangled as is Basil Hallward. Thus, although Lord Henry lives vicariously through Dorian, he does not probe too deeply, preferring to experience Dorian's life--like his own--only superficially. In the same way, Hugh does not even explore the texts that he has chosen to rewrite--if he had he would have found a pointed warning in the first novel about the dangers of an uneven marriage--but rather paints his own "style" over their "substance." Likewise, he finds it easier to deal with his wife as an absent

source for his third book than to live with her as her husband. Although he projects his own insecurities onto her--assuming that she thinks of him as a "fraud" though there is no evidence to support this--he refuses to delve beneath the events which lead to her "catastrophe," preferring to lock her away, out of sight and out of mind.

The unpleasantness of these two aesthetes reveals the ultimate attitude of the two authors to the notion of the "self-made man." Unlike the other characters in both stories, including Dorian himself, no mercy is shown to the aesthetes, perhaps because they themselves show none. Bearing in mind that Grove himself was an aesthetic creation of "FPG," this attitude toward aesthetes becomes even more disturbing. In addition, if we are to read In Search of Myself as the final attempt of Grove to solidify his aesthetic existence (Williams 52), then the narrator of the "autobiography" becomes a "Hugh Allister"--an observer--whose passive art poisons all that it touches.

That Grove himself reached such a conclusion about his own "nature" is uncertain. But he did, without a doubt, come to mistrust the very doctrines that he had used to structure his life, both as Felix Paul Greve and as Frederick Philip Grove. Had he searched deeply enough he would have discovered that all texts, even living ones, depend on similar codes in their creation. Or, as Wilde had realized fifty years earlier: "It is a humiliating confession, but we are all of us made out of the same stuff" (Intentions 15).

Wilde, of course, repudiated his doctrine only in the depths of Reading Gaol. Roland Barthes, in reviving Wilde's ideas in more contemporary, poststructural dress, revives as well the amorality of the aesthete whose "authors" are exposed, all the same, by his method. Barthes himself thus condones the act of erasure--of hiding one's true origins--even as he makes those origins available to the careful reader. FPG, who was an "artificial" construct, if there ever was one, proves himself just as ready, in "A Beautiful Soul," as Barthes to expose what he had always presented as being "natural"--his artistic self. In this brief, but devastating, story of Hugh Allister,²² he comes closest to exposing his own "authors"--including the person of Felix Paul Greve, the German author of two novels which Grove would mine heavily in the writing of his Canadian novels, as well as Oscar Wilde--in an attempt to establish his own autonomous existence. In so doing he anticipates Barthes' own understanding of our society's dependency on the "deceptive plenitude ... of all the codes [which] constitute me" (10). In that sense, FPG's only true self would seem to consist in the very plenitude of codes which he has taken from the culture of the Decadence.

²² I believe that this is one of a very few, if not the only, "fictional" story in which FPG writes about a writer. This further emphasizes the deeply personal nature of this story.

APPENDIX:
A Beautiful Soul
by
Frederick Philip Grove

When Hugh Allister's wife Clare was taken to that exclusive nursing home at Mt. Brisco, with his friends, both male and female, saying under their breath that there was not a ghost of a chance of her ever coming out again, everybody pitied him most sincerely. For, whatever you might think of Clare, she had at least been a model hostess in his ever hospitable house. For a quarter of a century Hugh had been the social and literary lion of materialistic Arbala, that industrial centre of the steel and implement trade of Ontario.

In lionizing Hugh, the plutocratic upper circles of society in the city had felt they were paying due homage to achievement in the realm of letters. Ever since his first two books had found that amazing echo in the British Isles and throughout continental Europe, they had looked upon him as the man who refuted the charge of Canada's intellectual and artistic sterility.

The lionizing capacity of American society is proverbial. In Hugh Allister's case it was assisted by the fact that he was well-born, well-bred, and immensely rich. Even in England his beautiful manners had been admired; and whenever, after the publication of his first book, he had gone to Europe, he had been greeted there as the outstanding representative of American art in literature.

The present disaster had made him something worse than a widower. Had Clare died instead of becoming mentally deranged, there were many, young girls as well as full-blown divorcees and widows, who would have jumped at the chance of comforting this "beautiful soul"--though, when he was spoken of in that strain, the French or German language was commonly used--they called him une belle âme or eine schoene Seele. And, besides being the great celebrity of Arbala, Hugh was distinctly the "handsome man".

It is true that, long before the catastrophe happened, there had been occasional disturbing rumours. Very soon after their marriage it had been said that Hugh and Clare were not "getting on". She had brought him plenty of money; but money is not everything; and besides, Hugh did not need it. Once, a year or so after the marriage, Clare had left him for nearly a year, returning to her parents at Toronto. The rumours which tried to account for this absence had, however, been stoutly contradicted by Hugh; and when Clare had returned to Arbala and observed a dead silence with

regard to her stay in Toronto, they had gradually died away, at least in the circles in which Hugh moved. Hugh had born it all so beautifully. Even when, after another year, Clare went to Europe without her husband, he treated her desertion as the most natural thing in the world. Why should a wife be bound by her husband's domesticity? Once, at the time, he had unexpectedly come upon a group of men who were discussing Clare. Nobody had noticed his approach. Somebody had just remarked that a friend of his had seen Clare at the Opéra Comique in Paris in the company of a strange young man, a foreigner, with whom she had conversed on terms of evident intimacy. Hugh had stepped forward and smiled at the consternation betrayed on half a dozen faces. "The young man in question," he had said, "is a very dear friend of mine whom I have urgently asked, being myself unavoidably detained on this side of the Atlantic, to take Clare in tow. This statement, gentlemen, should remove all your difficulties." It had done so; for, as one of the half dozen had remarked later, "if a married man knows about his wife's escapades and chooses to connive at them, it is entirely his own affair." The embarrassing incident had redounded entirely to the credit of Hugh's angelic disposition. On another occasion, it is true, when Clare's misbehavior, as it was called, was again discussed among men, one of them, older than the rest, gave it as his opinion that Hugh, "if he were a man", would first horsewhip the other fellow and then divorce his wife. But the younger

members of the group had laughed him out of court as an old fogey: "Such things aren't done any longer these days."

There had come a time, and it had lasted fully a decade, when Hugh's patience and forbearance had justified themselves. Apparently fully reconciled to her marriage, Clare had given in and, to all appearances, had suddenly become a model wife for Hugh. She had stayed at home, had, with dignity and even brilliance, presided at his many social functions, and never given the slightest occasion for scandal or gossip. Many members of the present jeunesse dorée had never known her otherwise. One or two shrewd observers of the older generation, it is true, had thought they detected a slight ironical intonation in her expressions of solicitude for Hugh's comfort and welfare. Thus Hugh was subject to excruciating headaches on the day after a dinner party prolonged into the small hours of the night; and, to most, it was touching to see how Clare watched over him and insisted on his retiring at what she called a reasonable hour. When the group to which the Allisters belonged went for an outing, long strings of exquisite motor cars threading the newly-paved highways of the province, she saw to it, often in the face of his protests, that the footman put overcoats and rugs into the car, so that, on the return trip in the chill of the night, he would not catch a cold. She treated him like a child entrusted to her care and made an excellent mother. But even

through this latter decade the marriage had remained sterile.

When, in the fortieth year of Clare's life, the catastrophe came and, on an excursion to Niagara Falls, she made an exhibition of herself, it was quite unexpected. Hugh acted promptly; he called in the most prominent alienists and, with tragic face, accepted their verdict that a temporary confinement in a nursing home was indispensable. His male friends were appalled; the women vied with each other to make him forget his loss.

II

It was a week after Clare had been taken away, and Hugh was sitting in his sumptuously furnished study and pondering over a letter which had just arrived from Clare.

He was bowed under a sense of tremendous responsibility. The letter was a piteous appeal of Clare's. She begged, yes, implored him to take her away: only he could do it. He knew, she said, that she was perfectly sane. Nobody else could possibly know how justifiable had been that outbreak of hers. If he would make himself responsible for her further good behavior, Dr. Davidson, the superintendent, had said, they would let her go. She would give him her solemn promise that never again would she let herself go as she had done on that deplorable occasion. She would honestly call him, yes, consider him, her benefactor. Or, if that were

more to his taste, he might assign her a place of residence, in Canada or abroad, and she would promise to stay within the territory defined by him; she would never trouble him again; nobody in Arbala need even know that she was no longer confined; she would never give a sign of life to any common friend or acquaintance. She asked for nothing but permission to live out her life in that comparative freedom which would permit her to move about, within limits defined by him, unhampered and unobserved.

Hugh read and reread the letter; and for hours and hours he pondered over it. While engaged in his meditations, he refused to see callers; he had a lunch brought up to his study, declining to descend to the dining room.

He reviewed his whole life.

His career had been a surprise to himself. When, nearly thirty years ago, he had been in Holland, he had, at a bookstall in Amsterdam, picked up an old frayed volume and casually glanced at it. It had been a novel written by a forgotten author and dealing with the peculiar case of a marriage between two intellectually harmonious but temperamentally opposed personalities which ended in estrangement and ultimate disaster. He had bought the book and convinced himself that it was psychologically sound and that it anticipated much of the most modern criticism of the institution of marriage. He had made enquiries about the

author who had been dead for fifty years or longer. The book had interested him profoundly, partly for the reason that, in conjunction with amazing psychological insight, it exhibited an almost childish inability "to put the thing over". He was sorely tempted to rewrite the story.

At the time he had been strangely disillusioned about himself. He had never done anything to attract the attention of any large or small circle of his fellow-men. Yet, to do so, had been his devouring ambition. His wealth was inherited; but in order to excel in some way he would have gladly set out to double or treble his inheritance. He knew only too well that he lacked the gift. In art or literature he knew himself to be a mere dilettante; yet fame in either field would have satisfied his craving. The trouble was that he had no ideas.

At last he did rewrite the book and, thinking it good, began to consider publication. For a long while he never thought of anything but the necessity of acknowledging his debt to the defunct author. But another year went by and he read his manuscript to a few friends; and when they expressed their admiration and enthusiasm extravagantly, this taste of public applause was sweet to his palate. He sent the work to an English publisher and received a prompt and flattering offer of publication. It appeared under his sole name and swept the world; within a year it had been translated into twenty-seven languages and had made him internationally famous.

Once more he had gone to Europe, this time with the express though never-avowed purpose of finding another obscure work on which to base a book of his own. Strange to say, he had found a second novel by the same forgotten author, this time in a book stall at Constantinople. Again it was, psychologically, a most remarkable piece of work and, artistically, an utter failure. Hugh had undertaken considerable research; but not one of the half dozen histories of Dutch literature in existence even mentioned so much as the name of the author; not one of the great libraries in the capitals of Europe contained a single copy of his books.

Hugh, with a vastly matured technique, rewrote this book as well; and when he published his version, his fame as the only American author who produced work that not only counted in international literature but also profoundly influenced the most advanced European thought was assured. He was openly called the greatest living genius of the age.

It had been at this stage that he had married Clare Reichert, only daughter of the millionaire manufacturer of pianos in Toronto.

III

If, during the first decade of his married life, Hugh had connived at Clare's vagaries, there had been two chief reasons. In the first place, he knew that his young wife had

soon come to suspect that, as a literary genius, he was "a fraud"; and in the second place, having acquired, not only fame, but also the reputation of being the most advanced thinker of the age, he felt under an obligation to justify that reputation. The consequence was that a third epithet was soon applied to him: that of "a beautiful soul". Henceforth his every action had been deliberate; before he took any step, he invariably decided within himself what effect it would have on the image which lived of himself in the public mind.

He thought of that now in pondering over Clare's letter. It was at once clear to him that this letter as well as anything else she might write to him must be burned. No eye but his must ever see a line of Clare's.

But his answer--that was a different matter. He would write it on a typewriter and retain a copy.

He made many drafts. At last he wrote.

"Dearest Darling, you can imagine my surprise and delight when the mail carrier brought your unexpected letter this morning. I hope you are improving. Do not be impatient and do not attempt to force matters; but hasten the recovery along as much as you can. Already you must have picked up wonderfully; and things can surely be only a matter of time now. This is convalescence at last; and we have to thank God for it.

"I hope that you are not tiring yourself in writing too much. Do take care."

At this point he stopped and pondered again. Yes, he said to himself at last, that is the right note. It must touch even her heart; and there is that delicate hint of previous troubles... He went on:

"Let us not too strictly count the days or dwell on what they have brought or may bring. In the Present of our Love, there is no Future and no Past.

"I have written a few trifles, nothing big. I am writing for you, so we can read it together one day.

"I will not make this letter a long one, either; the doctor told me not to. Yet the news I have sounds satisfactory; and we must hope for steady progress. The first difficulties are naturally far and away the worst and lengthiest.

"Don't allow yourself to feel lonely; always tell yourself that you are getting better, better, better. That will help.

"These letters are necessarily unsatisfactory; but the privilege of writing to you at all is precious.

"Heaps of love. God be with you.

Hugh."

Having read and reread and erased and corrected his lines, he sighed with relief, opened the portable typewriter concealed in the side of his desk, inserted paper and carbon, and made a clean copy. When that task was finished, he carefully gathered every scrap of his tentative drafts as well as Clare's letter and took them to the fireplace to burn.

IV

Clare held out for another ten years during which, according to her husband, she had been disintegrating steadily. When the alienist connected with the institution saw how much worse she was every time she had received a letter, he asked even Hugh to discontinue the correspondence. She wrote pitiable appeals to her friends both at Arbala and Toronto; in the beginning, these friends made enquiries at the institution; after a while, they ceased to pay attention to even the most heart-rendering effusions.

Then, as the consequence of a paroxysm following the receipt of one of Hugh's most masterly missives, her death ensued, relieving her of her sufferings.

Three years after the sad event, Hugh published the last and greatest of the three books on which his fame rests. As is well known, "The Letters of Hugh Allister to His Wife" are a classic; and if his two other novels had not already

done so, this volume alone would assure him his place among the immortals as "a beautiful soul".

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