

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE CUT-UP AND FOLD-IN TECHNIQUES OF LITERARY  
COMPOSITION IN THE WRITINGS OF WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS

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The Cut-up and Fold-in Techniques of Literary  
Composition in the Writings of William Burroughs

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The cut-up and fold-in techniques of literary composition as used by William Burroughs are methods by which the author having written the original draft varies his original material in a systematic way to create and discover new and interesting permutations of that material which then may or may not be used in the final written product according to the author's discretion. Both techniques rely on what could be termed "planned accidents" in that the author deliberately allows fragments of his own or other authors' writing to fall into random juxtaposition wherein new and useful relationships, images, phrases and analogies may or may not be perceived. The artist's consciousness enters to select, rearrange and edit the cut-up fragments and creatively express his own thoughts by incorporating the fragments into various types of syntactical structures.

The cut-up and fold-in techniques, while having the same intent, involve slightly different procedures. The following is Burroughs' own description of one type of cut-up.

Take a page. Like this page. Now cut down the middle and across the middle. You have four sections: 1 2 3 4...one two three four. Now rearrange the sections placing section four with section one and section two with section three. And you have a new

page. Sometimes it says much the same thing. Sometimes something quite different...in any case you will find that it says something and something quite definite.<sup>1</sup>

The fold-in technique involves simply folding pages (of two different texts down the middle) rather than cutting them. Folded pages are then placed side by side and randomly aligned sentences are read and searched for images, phrases or sentences appropriate to the author's desires.

Another form of cut-up is to select certain images from a passage of writing, cut them out and piece them together in random fashion so as to see what new images appear.

Images shift sense under the scissors smell  
images to sound sight to sound sound to  
kinesthetic.<sup>2</sup>

The word "sense" has a double entendre for it connotes both "sensation" and "meaning". Images created by the cut-up method are often not only bi-sensual - having reference to two different senses simultaneously - but also are bi-referential - having reference to two different meanings or referents simultaneously. The concepts of simultaneity and succession<sup>3</sup> as they have been altered by the advent of relativity play an important part in the development of the cut-up and fold-in techniques. Since reading of written words demands a linear activity of the consciousness - reading progresses on a line from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom - writers in the history of Western civilization seem for the most part to have believed that an a priori necessity of linearity of narrative is required of them. Burroughs's use of the cut-up and fold-in is his

artistic and philosophic response to a necessity which he believes begs the question.

Interviewer: The one flaw in the cut-up argument seems to lie in the linguistic base on which we operate, the straight declarative sentence. It's going to take a great deal to change that.

Burroughs: Yes, it is unfortunately one of the great errors of Western thought, the whole either-or proposition. You remember Korzybski and his idea of non-Aristotelian logic. Either-or thinking just is not accurate thinking. That's not the way things occur, and I feel the Aristotelian construct is one of the great shackles of Western civilization. Cutups are a movement toward breaking this down.<sup>4</sup>

Burroughs is by no means alone in his assertion that the linear concept of consciousness enslaves or "shackles" the artistic imagination. His rebellion against Aristotelian, "either-or" thought is directed both at the imposing corpus of logical thought and at the unconsciously accepted tenets of linguistic communication as prescribed by European language. His artist-revolutionary predecessors were the Dadaists led by Tristan Tzara. The Dadaists were convinced that "life does not consist of logical and sequential events but a bewildering and disordered simultaneity".<sup>5</sup> Psychologist Ludwig Klages confirmed this opinion in his theory of simultaneous perception.<sup>6</sup> The Dadaist movement challenged Western man's irrational faith in logic and precise communication of thought through language. Futurist Filippo Marinetti proposed the use of parole in libertà - free words - communication without adverbs, adjectives, punctuation or syntax.<sup>7</sup>

For the Dadaists (and for Burroughs - his objections to

"control by language" will be discussed later in the examination of the cut-up and fold-in) language had become prescriptive rather than descriptive. Words gave meaning rather than aided in the perception of it. André Breton said of language:

In addition to the constraints of art, ordinary language is "the worst of conventions" because it imposes upon us the use of formulas and verbal associations which do not belong to us, which embody next to nothing of our true natures; the very meanings of words are fixed and unchangeable only because of an abuse of our power by the collectivity.<sup>8</sup>

It shall be demonstrated that many of Burroughs's political, social and metaphysical beliefs emanate from a similar distrust of such an "abuse of power" concerning the manipulation of words which exert control over human beings. The cut-up and fold-in techniques shall be seen as weapons with which the individual can subvert, thwart or in some manner forestall the impingement of this control over his or her life.

Another Dadaist poet, Hugo Ball, foreshadowed Burroughs's insistence that men should control words - their meaning - rather than be controlled by language (e.g. Someone says, "You cannot say that; it does not make sense", as if language had the ability to make sense of anything. Bertrand Russell's example - the daughter of Hitler -<sup>9</sup> makes grammatical and linguistic sense but it has no referent in actuality and is therefore in reality nonsensical. Words as abstract symbols are not efficacious in that material world but in the realm of human thought which may or may not be translated into physical action. To arbitrarily restrict and rigidify

the use of words, to demand that they "make sense" is for Burroughs and Ball a misunderstanding of the intention, purpose and proper function of language). Ball noted:

We should withdraw into the inner alchemy of the word, and even surrender the word; in this way conserving for poetry its most sacred domain. We should stop making poems second-hand; we should no longer take over words (not even to speak of sentences) which we did not invent absolutely anew, for our own use. We should no longer be content to achieve poetic effects with means which in the final analysis are but the echoes of inspiration.<sup>10</sup>

Burroughs similarly insists that cut-up and fold-ins may eventually lead to a "precise science of words"<sup>11</sup> with which a writer could control exactly what is said by his writing without unwanted literary allusions and linguistic - and as a corollary, metaphysical - resonances. By deliberately removing the exigencies of the syntactical structure and linearity of language as Hugo Ball did (indeed, he removed words altogether and dealt solely with an elemental "language" or rhythm, sound and intonation<sup>12</sup>), writers were freed to allow the creative commingling of images often theretofore separated by the artificial dictates of "common sense" as formulated more by the rules of language than the boundaries of imagination. Hence, artists could reinvent word usage "absolutely anew," for words were imprisoned more by the necessities of grammar and logic than by their inherent connotative and denotative meanings. The Imagist movement, also while not eschewing the rules of language completely, did promote freer modes of imaginative thought by creating metaphoric juxtapositions of images without the demand for verbally expressed

connections.<sup>13</sup> The desire to see the world without the Aristotelian, logical, cause-and-effect biases as inherited through languages founded upon and firmly rooted in those biases antedates Burroughs by nearly fifty years.

The experiments with words were contemporary with two other experiments in visual art: the photomontage and the collage painting. Kurt Schwitters created pictures consisting of many separate visual images which could be perceived simultaneously. The disparate nature of these images, at first seeming cacophonous, grow to form vivid units of associational thoughts. Collage paintings have at their base the concepts of simultaneity and succession coming from the theory of relativity. Collage artists felt that life was best mirrored as being a welter of sensual phenomena which seek perceptual recognition rather than as a teleological order. Photomontage, using the same fundamental ideas as collage but using photographs instead of the painted images, sought a similar aesthetic.

Burroughs has used the cut-up and fold-in in his writing to attempt to achieve the same effect of simultaneous image perception. Without the abstracting and categorizing processes of conscious sensual experience being exerted subliminally upon the mind by linguistic structure (which selects and organizes all aspects of perception, for it tells the listener/reader exactly what for the perceiver was the order or a particular moment of perception) images no longer separated by the arbitrary rules of language tend to be experienced as a collage - a group of simultaneous phenomena - rather

than a linear sequence of perceptual events. The cut-up, while not destroying the tripartite division of time (with its linear implications and assumptions) as created by the English language's three tense verb system, does provide a sufficient disturbance of perception so as to creatively recreate thought and perception in their undifferentiated and vital inclusiveness encompassing memory, sensation and symbolic abstraction as they are truly experienced in space-time, i.e. simultaneously. In printed excerpts from his St. Louis Journal<sup>14</sup> Burroughs has inserted photographs intended to provide a sensual (visual) dimension to a cerebral (written language as symbol) art form. Criticism of collage methods of creation has tended to argue that art produced by such means is chaotic because it presents no ordered insight into reality. However, because the picture at first appears chaotic it does not follow that the method was chaotic and without the motivating and directing force of an original insight. The fact of the matter is that the artist consciously chooses the images with which the painted or written work will be composed. As Burroughs notes:

People say to me, "Oh, this is all very good, but you got it by cutting up". I say that has nothing to do with it, how I got it. What is any writing but a cutup? Somebody had to program the machine; somebody has to do the cutting up. Remember that I first made selections. Out of hundreds of possible sentences that I might have used, I chose one.<sup>15</sup>

The insight is the choice. Only the final product is subject to legitimate and responsible criticism. Allen Ginsberg has written that the cut-up and fold-in methods are artistically viable because

the author controls the input of material and selection of the output product, "...[m]ethods which would be vain unless the author had something to cut up to start with...".<sup>16</sup> What goes into the cut-up and fold-in "machines" are fragments of Rimbaud, Shakespeare, Conrad, Eliot and others but mostly of Burroughs's own work which are arranged and rearranged much like music composed of motivic or thematic variations.

Any narrative passage or any passage, say, of poetic images is subject to any number of variations, all of which may be interesting and valid in their own right.<sup>17</sup>

The cut-up and fold-in techniques are simply techniques of revision which most writers use to some extent. As for an objection asserting that in art as well as in life the ends do not justify the means, it must be noted that words like ghosts have no physical reality and suffer no damage when they are folded in, cut up, pasted together or otherwise mutilated for some purpose.

...the idea of using any mechanical means for literary purposes seems to them [writers] some sort of sacrilege. This is one objection to the cutups. There's been a lot of that, a sort of superstitious reverence for the word. My God, they say, you can't cut up these words. Why can't I?<sup>18</sup>

The closest literary relation to the cut-up was an experiment performed by Dadaist poet, Tristan Tzara. Tzara's method was more theatrical and less methodical than that of Burroughs. He cut words out of a newspaper and picked them at random out of a hat to make a poem that he hoped would be refreshing if only because of the

element of chance which was fundamental to the poem's creation.<sup>19</sup>  
Tzara insisted that his method was open to anyone who had the  
desire to create poetry and that there was a definite procedure  
whereby poetry could be created.

To make a dadaist poem  
Take a newspaper  
Take scissors  
Choose in the newspaper an article  
as long as the poem you intend  
Cut out the article.<sup>20</sup>

Burroughs is considerably more conservative in his use of the  
products of cut-up and fold-in.

The cut-ups will give you new material but they  
won't tell you what to do with it.<sup>21</sup>

Some of them (products of cut-up and fold-in)  
are useful from a literary point of view and  
some are not.<sup>22</sup>

One tries not to impose a story plot or  
continuity artificially but you do have to  
compose the materials, you can't just dump  
down a jumble of notes and thoughts and  
considerations and expect people to read it.<sup>23</sup>

Burroughs has formalized the experiments of the Dadaists to a certain  
extent and he insists that the cut-up and fold-in are not experiments  
at all but practical, compositional methods which have been proven  
to be (in his own experience at least) legitimate methodologies.<sup>24</sup>  
Burroughs, like Tzara, does say that aided by cut-up and fold-in  
poetry can be created by anyone<sup>25</sup> although he also says that those  
techniques are not helpful for all artists.<sup>26</sup>

Tzara accompanied by Richard Huelsenbeck and Marcel Janco  
created a verbal collage in their "simultaneous poem" - three poems

in different languages read simultaneously colored with intermittent sections of rhythmic noise.<sup>27</sup> Again their art was intended to mirror the truth about reality, its disordered simultaneity. Burroughs's cut-ups and fold-ins reveal a disorderliness in what they represent but are not disordered themselves (the relationship of cut-up and fold-in to the "expressivistic fallacy" will be examined later in the discussion).

Dadaist and futurist experiments in noise music, bruitisme, in particular the creations of Filippo Marinetti and Edgar Varèse, characterize those movements' distrust of any rigid form of artificial order whether it was in the realms of linguistic communication, social regimentation or in the highly artificial rules of music composition. Harmony, steady pulse, tone and logical thematic or melodic development all were attacked as being "untrue" in the sense that any art work that hopes to render an emotional or intellectual insight into reality by means of ordering that reality which is inherently disordered is falsifying both its own truth and that of the thing about which it has its insight. John Cage's work in aleatoric and non-teleological music are extensions of the bruitisme impetus. His Music of Changes was produced by a method in which chance-like picking similar to the mixed newspaper clippings from Tzara's hat determined the materials (notes and tempos) to be used. Cage tossed a coin to make his structuring decisions and eventually came to the conclusion that his music required no structure or logic whatsoever.<sup>28</sup> Not confining himself to one medium of expression, in 1959 Cage recorded

Indeterminacy: New Aspects of Form in Instrumental and Electronic

Music, a series of ninety stories interspersed with fragments of electronic music. His notes on the recording state:

My intention of putting ninety stories together in an unplanned way is to suggest that all things, sounds, stories (and by extension, beings) are related and that this complexity is more evident when it is not over-simplified by an idea of relationship in one person's mind.<sup>29</sup>

For much the same reason Burroughs uses the cut-up and fold-in to achieve his desired effects. As no single person's mind could contain the myriad of interrelationships needed to relate ninety disparate stories to one another, so too no single person's mind could accurately and systematically rearrange more than a few verbal images although a single mind analyzes and consciously selects the regroupings when they are presented to it. (Burroughs believes his cut-ups and fold-ins could be conveniently produced by a computer but programming difficulties prevent the scheme. Again, the artist not the mechanical device chooses the final material and order to be used, the computer only quickly determining all the mathematically possible variations of regrouping).<sup>30</sup> Burroughs's two methods solve another problem, that of the unconscious seeking to establish a linear and teleological order even when the conscious mind rebels against such an order. The cut-up and fold-in do not allow the unconscious "brainwashed" by a life of Aristotelian-based thought and language to control the order in which the words are regrouped because the regrouping determining factor is chance. Burroughs credits Cage and another composer, Earle Brown, with having carried

the cut-up method much further in music than he, himself, has in his writing.<sup>31</sup> Like Cage, Burroughs has not restricted himself to one medium of expression but has ventured into film (Towers Open Fire),<sup>32</sup> tape recordings programmed to expand consciousness, journalism and theatrical performances accompanied by slides and tape recordings. Some of his work (St. Louis Journal and The Exterminator, co-authored by Brion Gysin) contain photographs, drawings and sketches which give visual realization to some of the images in the written text. However, all of these creations in the various media are typified by some use of cut-up or fold-in, those techniques seeming to be absolutely essential to Burroughs's creation in any field of communication.

In terms of more traditional artists, Burroughs is indebted to the work of James Joyce, Joseph Conrad, Ezra Pound, W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot. His relation to Pound and the Imagists has already been mentioned. Pound's experiments into the reduction of language to its absolute essentials, usually characterized by vivid sensual images, is directly related to Burroughs's cut-up fragments which contain only such sensual images (no abstract words are used in his cut-ups and fold-ins). Neither the Imagists nor Burroughs felt the need to make metaphorical connections explicit but rather would allow the reader the full range of his or her own imagination in experiencing the uniting and dissolution of the many possible image connections (Burroughs's "Penny Arcade Peep Show" segments of his latest novel, The Wild Boys, are characterized by a cut-up produced version of Imagism which will be examined later).

James Joyce's writing exerted an influence on Burroughs's adoption of the cut-up. Joyce's incredible "ear" for language and his large vocabulary granted him the ability to choose exactly the words he wanted to obtain an alliterative or onomatopoeic effect appropriate to what he was describing. These effects gave added sensual dimension to his writing and gave the written word an element of sensual reality. Ulysses comes alive with descriptive images realized in abstract symbols (written words) such as Molly Bloom's "wavyavyeavyheavyeavyevyevy hair uncombed", "dullthudding barrels", and the "endlessnessnessnessness of a chest note". The cut-up gives the writer without such an ear and vocabulary the technique whereby images can be created and recreated in different dimensions of sense both in what the words mean in reference to reality and how their meanings shift in reference to the inter-relationship of the words themselves. Cut-ups and fold-ins do not change the basic language as Joyce often did but provide a conscious and systematic way in which bi- tri- or multi-sensual images can be occasionally created by mechanical and imaginative rather than purely imaginative means.

The stream-of-consciousness technique employed by Joyce freed the artist's imagination so that an ever-metamorphosing narrative could approximate the complex associational patterns of the mind's thought processes. Again the tendency was to move away from teleological, linear writing which could not adequately express the meanderings of real modes of human thought. Molly's and Leopold's

interior monologues shift direction, subject and time - moving from analysis of present to reminiscence of past to projective contemplation of future - almost imperceptibly. Cut-ups and fold-ins produce a similar effect automatically. While much of Burroughs's writing is straight narrative the cut-up and fold-in sections are usually comprised of cut-up or folded in fragments of narrative segments which have either already appeared or will appear later on. The effect of these fragments is to produce a stream of images which remind the reader of what he has already read while hinting at what is to come. Burroughs says of Joyce and cut-up:

...things don't happen in logical sequence and people don't think in logical sequence. Any writer who hopes to approximate what actually occurs in the mind and body of his characters cannot confine himself to such an arbitrary structure as "logical" sequence. Joyce was accused of being unintelligible and he was presenting only one level of cerebral events: conscious sub-vocal speech. I think it is possible to create multilevel events and characters that a reader could comprehend with his organic being.<sup>33</sup>

In Finnegan's Wake Joyce does create "multilevel events and characters" by his use of puns and multi-sensual images. Joyce's creative and innovative "playing" with language, not simply employing it on its own linguistic terms but bending and breaking its rules to achieve his goals of expression, gives Burroughs the artistic precedent upon which he too could "play" with words in a less cerebral and abstract way, i.e. he could materialize them (write them on paper) and cut them up or fold them

in any way he chose or simply allow them to choose their own arrangements by chance. Joyce's conscious manipulation of motifs which are both retrospective and projective in Ulysses, motifs like "Plumtree's Potted Meat" and the "jingling keys", move the reader's mind through the intricate processes of recollection, contemplation and projection without forcing the author to continually state his "meaning", his purpose for introducing or reintroducing a particular image, or the temporal coordinates (memory, present, future) within which his narrative is operating. A similar freedom is achieved by cut-ups and fold-ins, for juxtaposed images of past, present, and future narrative are joined so as to produce an all-at-onceness of consciousness. Recollection, contemplation and projection are achieved simultaneously by the actual side-by-side presence of images from past, present and future narrative for the viewing of the reader who takes over the usual function of the narrator who can now concentrate his efforts on the production of suitable images rather than the creation of an explanation of why they coexist in the pattern they do.

Burroughs mentions T.S. Eliot as being an important influence on his adoption and usages of the cut-up and the fold-ins, and he asserts that The Waste Land was itself actually the product of a prototypic cut-up technique, "the first great cut-up collage".<sup>34</sup> Also Dos Passos is noted for having a similar idea in "The Camera Eye" sequences of his novel, U.S.A.<sup>35</sup> The Symbolist movement in writing with its advocacy of the use of private symbols which enrich literature with their power to suggest rather than explicitly state<sup>36</sup> also gives

an artistic precedent for Burroughs's use of recurring symbolic images as his cut-ups and fold-ins of images are intended to enhance their suggestiveness by allowing diverse images to form compositionally useful ambiguous "association blocks".<sup>37</sup>

The actual invention of the cut-up technique proper Burroughs credits to artist-poet-novelist, Brion Gysin. In 1959 Gysin's experiments with the substitution of arbitrary symbols for words led him to state, "I have found a way to rub out words".<sup>38</sup> Burroughs's own anthropological studies in Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mayan codices prompted him to analyze Gysin's claims. With the B.B.C. broadcast and subsequent publication of Gysin's cut-up poem, "Minutes To Go", Burroughs began to experiment with cut-ups himself.<sup>39</sup> Naked Lunch's publication precedes this experimental period, and it has been an error of critics to assert that Naked Lunch contains passages produced through the use of cut-ups. Actually Naked Lunch is a collage of what Burroughs has referred to as "routines", the prototype of which was a satirical piece entitled "Roosevelt After Inauguration".<sup>40</sup> The term "cut-up" is really more applicable to Naked Lunch in its slang meaning - to cut-up being to ridicule someone or something by fantasizing grotesque or absurd situations in which the object of ridicule must function - than it is in its technical meaning as a compositional process.

The cut-up method was used in (on?) Naked Lunch without the author's full awareness of the method he was using. The final form of Naked Lunch and the juxtaposition of sections were determined by the order in which material went - at random - to the printer.<sup>41</sup>

The above quotation is perhaps too free in its application of the term "cut-up", for Burroughs explicitly states that cut-up methodology requires the conscious control of the artist to be exercised on the organization of what comes out of the cut-up process.<sup>42</sup>

Discussions between Gysin and Burroughs led to the latter's adoption of the cut-up technique<sup>43</sup> and to collaborations such as The Exterminator and Time. Gysin's own novel The Process is characterized by a relatively straightforward narrative neither cut-up nor folded-in although the distrust of language Gysin and Burroughs shared is expressed in comments by the novel's hero, like:

...I know this whole business (ritualized actions)  
is a trap which may well be woven of nothing but  
words...<sup>44</sup>

Their collaborations, especially The Exterminator, tend to be directed assaults on traditional language that is referred to as being a "virus"<sup>45</sup> from which cut-ups can deliver the infected ones (all humanity). The enigmatic figure, Hassan i Sabbah, mentioned in all of Burroughs's novels appears in The Exterminator as a mythicized revolutionary adept in his use of random (chance-determined) action and verbal association which prevents unwanted alien control forces - in this case, linguistic - from usurping his individuality (Hassan i Sabbah was an actual historical personage, the leader of an Ismaili cult known as the Assassins.<sup>46</sup> Burroughs uses Sabbah as the symbol of a healthy aspostasy against all forms of alien control, a master of the cut-up [both meanings], an assassin of static systems of all kinds).

The Soft Machine, Ticket That Exploded, Dead Fingers Talk, Nova Express and The Wild Boys are novels which Burroughs wrote with

the aid of the cut-up and the fold-in techniques. Each employs to a varying degree these techniques and characters in all the books use the cut-up technique as a weapon against the forces of alien control of perceptual reality as typified by the intergalactic group of conspirators, the Nova Mob. Hassan i Sabbah is a hero, an assassin of the word and by extension language:

...Hassan i Sabbah who wised up the marks to space and said they [the marks] could be one and need no guard no other half no word -<sup>47</sup>

If the characters use the cut-up, as a weapon against intergalactic reality control then Burroughs's novels, while describing the possibility of ultimate victory over that control also proselytize for the "rubbing out of the word" by the very method which is used to create those novels.

## CHAPTER II

### Cut-Ups, Fold-Ins and Literary Composition

The effects of cut-ups and fold-ins on the most basic elements of literary composition - the phrase and the sentence - become obvious when simply viewing a cut-up or fold-in. Punctuation is usually dropped altogether, being replaced by the dash ( - ) which separates images, phrases and sentences. As periods tend to make the reader stop to contemplate the verity of the thought or description which have preceded them, dashes prompt the reader to continue reading as if the thought or description is still continuing. Actually the cut-up is producing a panorama of descriptions and thoughts each one compressed to its smallest possible size by the author who

selects certain images which best convey the sensual and cerebral content present in the original narrative (N.B. Cut-ups and fold-ins are very seldom done by Burroughs without a narrative context, i.e. they are not used by themselves but in conjunction with a more or less conventional narrative that usually precedes a cut-up or fold-in section, the narrative being the theme upon which the cut-up or fold-in bases its variations). The effect is atomistic or pointillistic. Logic or linearity (cause and effect) play no part in the organization of cut-ups because the cut-ups "declare" nothing, all declaration either precedes or follows the cut-ups in the narrative.

Sad hand down backward time track - Genital  
paw ticket peeled his stale underwear - Brief  
boy on screen laughing my skivies all the way  
down - Whispers of dark street in Puerto Assis -  
Meester smiles through the village wastrel -  
Orgasm siphoned back telegram: 'Johnny pants down'. -  
(That stale summer dawn smell in the garage - Vines  
twisting through steel - Bare feet in dog's  
excrement)<sup>48</sup>

The above paragraph belongs to a two-page cut-up entitled "I Am Dying, Meester?" from the book by William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg, The Yage Letters. It is one of the few examples of a contextless, prefaceless cut-up. However, in terms of the whole book this final chapter is an imagistic, poetic recapitulation of Burroughs's adventures as they were described through his letters. This does not mean that all the images, phrases and sentences can be found in the preceding letters (the letters were written between January 15 and July 8, 1953, while the last chapter was done sometime in 1960), although some of the images are directly attributable to

those letters.

Burroughs's homosexual encounters and thoughts described in several of his letters<sup>49</sup> recur in what becomes stylized images of those encounters and thoughts. "Brief boy on screen laughing my skivies all the way down," "Johnny pants down" and "Genital pawn ticket peeled his stale underwear" are characteristic of the encounters even though the images used are not necessarily the ones used in the original narrative descriptions. Fragments of those phrases properly belong to descriptions having little or nothing to do with homosexuality but have been transformed by the cut-up technique so that though they still contain their connotative significance (they retain the meaning with which they were imbued in the original narrative) they also possess a new denotative significance (a random juxtaposition of two disparate fragments creates a new image meaning which denotes something the author wishes to have expressed). Fragments gain meaning rather than lose it. The more an image is used in various cut-ups the more meanings it acquires, a poetic process of meaning accretion. The word "skivies" actually occurs in Burroughs's relation of the theft of his underwear by a boy who pretended to be a homosexual so as to facilitate such a robbery.<sup>50</sup> The image "stale underwear" seems to refer back to a description of a seedy looking priest who was a character in a documentary movie. Burroughs simply states his curiosity about the man's sex life making no reference to homosexuality.<sup>51</sup> There is only one reference to garage in the book and it is in conjunction with Burroughs's fantacised love affair with Billy Bradshinkel.<sup>52</sup>

Telegrams are an important source of communication in Burroughs's travels. His troubles with the law were solved by telegrams.<sup>53</sup> An orgasm seems to be representative of a peak sensual experience. That an orgasm is "siphoned back telegram" indicates that such a sexual, sensual experience is both an inter-personal form of communication and a liberating force. The telegram stating "Johnny pants down", seems to refer to the pidgin English spoken by the Indians and as it takes the ambiguous form of both a command (Johnny. Pants down) and a declaration (Johnny [has his] pants down) it could also refer to sexual extortion exacted by the hostile Policia National with which Burroughs felt threatened.<sup>54</sup>

Puerto Assis is described as being a loathsome town characterized by a degeneration of social and ethical standards. The town's "darkness" is well documented with instances of police hostility, bureaucratic inefficiency, a depressing environment, theft and illness.<sup>55</sup> Burroughs insists that the social situation of Puerto Assis could best be remedied by an armed take over.<sup>56</sup> His impressions of the town as they return to him in the relative calm of his memory are embodied in the ominous, poetic image, "Whispers of dark street in Puerto Assis".

"Meester" as used in the letters means a foreigner (a non-Peruvian) who has a great deal of money to spend. Usually the "meesters" are scientists, explorers or businessmen. Burroughs is approached by the locals, as being a wealthy man, a "meester". After five days in Puerto Assis Burroughs described himself as being well on the way to establishing himself as "a citizen in the capacity of village wastrel".<sup>57</sup>

The sentence that emerges from the union of a smiling "meester" and a village wastrel captures the image of the dissolute but moderately influential character Burroughs, himself, was.

"Vines twisting through steel" is an image motif to which Burroughs, although varying it often, returns again and again in his writing, using it as a symbol of the entropic flow of civilization in what the author pictures as its gradual de-evolution. Its use in this cut-up, along with "Sad hand down the backward time track", "Genital pawn ticket" and "Bare feet in dog's excrement", actually comes from the inclusion of non-determinate (non-textual) elements into the creation of cut-ups. Once the necessity of teleological pattern is removed from the narrative-directing rules of literary composition, the artist is granted an extended creative freedom wherein he is free not only to create a narrative without contingent reference to cause-and-effect, Aristotelian thought, but he is also free to create permutations of what could be termed "memory artifacts" (image fragments which the reader remembers as being part of that particular work's narrative) through addition of appropriate, non-determinate (non-textual) image fragments. The "memory artifacts" mixed with non-determinate image fragments creates an added dimension of desirable ambiguity. Images still retain their connotative value while being enhanced by their union with non-determinate but consciously selected image elements. In this way "I Am Dying, Meester?" becomes not a definitive recapitulation of Burroughs's eleven letters but an organic image system which generally summarizes the content of the letters by

fairly conventional impressionism although the linear time scheme is foregone and some new images are added to broaden the scope of the cut-up. The images that are added appear to be images conjured up in the author's mind by a rereading and re-experiencing of his own text. They are added as expressionistic commentary upon the images already experienced by the reader.

In his novels Burroughs uses cut-ups for various ends, some poetic, some hypnotic, some strictly narrative. The Ticket That Exploded is perhaps one of Burroughs's most accessible books in that it follows a fairly straightforward plot outline. Cut-ups are more determinate (based on textual elements) in this novel than the above-mentioned section from The Yage Letters.

The man was smiling, flapping vapor like  
rusty swamp smell - flicker back to a customs  
shed in South America - ("First we must write  
the ticket") - Feeling the quick pants of mummy -  
goosed his ass - carbine leaning against one wall -  
burning orgasm - wind voices beside masturbating  
pallet on the floor -58

This cut-up is a collage of images structured by a linear time system; there is a definite linear sequence of events as presented by the images. As to the image fragments used, they are solidly based in a narrative segment occurring four pages earlier.

"...i am a stranger here - i am sorry if - i do not  
know your laws" - The guard was smiling too - a  
slow familiar smile like: "Perhaps you don't go  
into the prison if" - flashed backed to customs  
shed in South America - Ali bent over a chair feeling  
quick pants of the young policeman on his naked back -  
The carbine leaning against one wall sharp and clear  
in the flash bulb of orgasm - "So" - he thought  
"things are not different here" -59

Slight changes are made in the images so as to give them the appearance of gradually fading memory pictures. The "guard" becomes the indefinite "man" who exudes a smell rather than speaking; "flashed back" changes to "flicker back"; "flash bulb of orgasm" is reduced to "burning orgasm"; the phrase "the young policeman on his naked back" metamorphoses to "mummy" indicative of a change in the experience as induced by a memory which tends to reduce complex experiential phenomena to image atoms (indeed, even the image of a "mummy" seems to embody the reduction of a multiplicity to a singularity). The adjectives "sharp and clear" describing the carbine are omitted altogether. "First we must write the ticket" is an enigmatic sentence which seems to echo some of Burroughs's thoughts on the nature of language and reality. The "ticket" referred to is the "ticket" that occurs throughout the novel<sup>60</sup> and that is symbolic of the admission ticket humans must purchase to enter into the life of the community (society in general), the purchase price being their submission to the rules of linguistic communication. Burroughs's own rejection of the body and its inherent "flaws,"<sup>61</sup> such as a desire for sensual pleasure as epitomized by the sex drive (hetero - or homosexual), is displayed as he depicts the sordid extortion of a sexual experience as being the result of the control power given to some people over others by the very existence of tickets - in this case, governmental papers of travel - which can permit or forbid human action (tickets [words] that make [or re-make] sense, meaning and reality). To purchase the correct ticket, the favorable words, Ali had to forfeit his freedom of will.

"Goosed his ass" is a detail not present in the original description of the event and is added to give concretion to the passage. The inclusion of such non-textual images indicates that the writer of any descriptive narrative is selecting details he at that particular moment feels best to convey the conscious (both sensual and cerebral) appreciation of his experience but that the selection could be altered to include additional details if the writer wishes to describe a re-experiencing of the event as through the workings of memory. In this manner, the writer using the cut-up technique can re-create any experience as a theme which, by the inclusion of extra images, is submitted to compositional variations as Burroughs has said, "all of which are interesting and valid in their own right".<sup>62</sup> The cut-up is inclusive rather than being exclusive of new images and image connections.

The final cut-up of images demonstrates how images "shift sense,"<sup>63</sup> for in "...wind voices beside masturbating pallet on the floor" the audial image of "wind voices" take on a physical location - "beside masturbating pallet" - giving the 'audial phenomenon a sensual or visual dimension. This cut-up's effect is coloristic; it colors the passage with an eerie ephemerality as suggested by "wind voices", placing the entire cut-up segment in the realm of a transitory dream, hallucination or memory. Burroughs has said of his writing shaped by cut-ups:

...I am quite deliberately addressing myself to the whole area of what we call dreams. Precisely what is a dream? A certain juxtaposition of word and image.<sup>64</sup>

That the cut-up is suggestive of the preceding passage of narrative which itself is a "flashback" sparked by Ali's encounter with the guard gives the reader the intimation of the cyclic and infinite nature of consciousness as perception, contemplation, memory and projection as it deals with reality. The cut-up creates precisely what Burroughs terms "association blocks".<sup>65</sup> Images extracted from a narrative and used in a cut-up conjure up the effect of the entire preceding narrative, the images "meaning" by association what the narrative explicitly has stated. Cut-ups therefore become a compositionally useful method for they provide Burroughs with a technique whereby lengthy narrative passages may be recalled by the random juxtaposition of several images which "mean" by association through the complex lines of memory what the original narrative "meant" or said. Burroughs can thereby create situations, characters and descriptions with vast associative resonances echoing back throughout the entire narrative and even to different works which have used similar images (the non-cut-up narrative quoted on page 23 contains traceable resonances of The Yage Letters and the poetic cut-up, "I Am Dying, Meester?"<sup>66</sup> thus giving the corpus of Burroughs's writing a type of organic unity). Cut-ups provide a convenient compositional method for the description of memory processes, the description being more "real" or mimetic than one tracing this kind of thought through a linear, cause-and effect sequence.

Cut-ups also provide Burroughs with a method of organizing his conventional narrative passages. Selecting from the welter of dialogue

words, phrases and sentences, Burroughs can recapitulate long sections of dialogue in the reader's mind by use of "association blocks" mentioned above. Burroughs often writes dialogue in which the speaker's voice shifts from character to character without any punctuation delimiting the extent of the different characters' speech. The narrator's comments enter and exit with no change being noted through traditional syntactical arrangements which denote such transitions from character to narrator. Burroughs's dialogues occasionally resemble his consciously performed cut-ups. Cut-ups can be employed to rearrange these dialogues into a linear form of verbalization without falsifying the original dialogues' effects and recapitulate by "association blocks" the preceding dialogues in an orderly fashion thereby restructuring those dialogues in the reader's memory.

So pack your ermines, Mary - Write back to  
the old folks at home - you see this happen before -  
three thousand years of that old ace in the hole -  
There was something had to happen and it happened  
somehow - The Public is gonna take the place apart -  
He went away but i'm here still - To quiet the marks -  
He just said "i'm tired of you and i'm checking out" -  
And they may flash the marks quiet - But boy the  
pipes and the pipes are calling - When you call Him  
just to raise the price of a ticket - Call the Doc  
twice? - He quiets you - Here's the Doc now - That  
old ace in the hole? Good bye old paint i'm a leaving  
Cheyenne - Ghost writing in the sky trip that you're  
gonna take - This "Green Deal" - Push me down the  
tone scale baby, down in the hole?? In the bread  
line, Jack - Pick up that heavy metal - Adiós -  
Don't want it -<sup>67</sup>

This segment of The Ticket That Exploded contains dialogue fragments from the five pages preceding it. Again while not all of the fragments of the cut-up are directly attributable to those

preceding pages, the effect of the passage due to Burroughs's careful selection of suitable fragments is the recalling of those five pages in a more linearly structured form than that in which they first appeared. Some of the fragments are lyrics from popular songs which Burroughs has a penchant for quoting for humorous effect. The following is the list of traceable fragments and their counterparts from those five pages.<sup>68</sup>

| <u>Cut-up</u>   | <u>Original Narrative</u>  |
|---|--|
| - So pack your ermines, Mary                          | - So pack your ermines, Mary (p. 140)  |
| - you see this happen before                          | - i've seen this happen before (p.140)<br>(I've seen this happen before)<br>on Mercury where we put out a<br>Cool Issue (p. 140) |
| - But boy the pipes the pipes<br>are calling          | - (But boy the pipes are calling),<br>Cuntville U.S.A. (p. 138)  |
| - three thousand years of that<br>old ace in the hole | - (three thousand years) in show<br>business (p. 140)<br>You can take your (old ace in<br>the hole) to Walgreen's (p. 139)       |
| - The Public is gonna take the<br>place apart         | - The public is gonna take the<br>place apart (p. 140)<br>They'll (take the place<br>apart) (p. 140)                             |

| <u>Cut-up</u>  | <u>Original Narrative</u>   |
|--|---|
| - To quiet the marks                                   | - Yes when the going gets really rough they call in the Old Doctor (to quiet the marks) (p. 140)  |
| - And they may flash the marks quiet                   | - Strictly from money that they've lost (and they may flash) a big word line (p. 139)   |
| - Call the Doc twice?                                  | - <u>Call the old doctor twice?</u> (p. 138)  |
| - He quiets you  | - Because if you call the Old Doctor twice (he quiets you) (p. 141)   |
| - Here's the Doc now                                   | - "Here's the Doc now" (p. 141)   |
| - Good bye old paint i'm aleaving Cheyenne             | - "Marks? What marks?" (i'm aleaving) Martin (p. 139)   |
| - Ghost writing in the sky trip that you're gonna take | - grade B Hollywood, (ghost writing in the sky). <u>The door</u> (p. 138)   |
|  | - And all the "Mr. Martins" won't do you a bit of good on the (trip that you're gonna take) (p. 138)  |
| - This "Green Deal"?                                   | - 'What's (this green deal?) (p. 141)   |
| - What's this from Florida up to the old North Pole?   | - ('What's this) green deal? (p. 141)<br>(From Florida up to the old North Pole)<br>cover your bets or take your welching two-bit business to Walgreen's (p. 138) |

| <u>Cut-up</u>   | <u>Original Narrative</u>  |
|---|--|
| - Push me down the tone scale baby, down in the hole??<br>In the bread line, Jack | - What's this ("Tone Scale"??) (p. 140)<br>You trying to push me down the tone scale, baby? (p. 141)<br>You got the Big Fix (down in the hole) (p. 138) be (in the bread line) (p. 138)<br>But as word dust falls they'll be (in the bread line) without clothes or a dime (p. 139)<br>Out (in the bread line) without clothes or a dime the whole sucking lot of you strictly from: Adiós (p. 139)<br>You see, son, in this business you always have to find an angle or you'll be (in the bread line) without clothes or a dime...(p. 142) |
| - <u>Adiós</u>  | - <u>Adiós</u> (p. 139)  |
| - Don't want it   | - We (don't want it) (pp. 139, 141)  |

Some words are not used in their original syntactical surroundings at all but provided with new ones altogether. The term "heavy metal" is used three times (pp. 138, 141, 143) in the five pages but Burroughs chose to use it in a different form in the cut-up. Heavy metal is an addicting substance which the Nova Mob has been

selling and as the police, the "Nova Heat", are chasing the mob off the planet it is being forced to gather its belongings together including its heavy metal. The planet's populace is rejecting the Mob and its drug, hence, "Pick up that heavy metal - Adiós - Don't want it - ". The name "Jack" is used only once (p. 141) in the five pages one sentence after, "You trying to push me down the tone scale, baby?" Two fragments are inserted between that sentence and "Jack" thereby retaining approximately the same textual relationship of "Jack" to the quoted sentence.

Song fragments are interpolated into the cut-up to give the segment a humorous tone. "Write back to the old folks at home", "But boy the pipes the pipes are calling", "Good bye old paint i'm aleaving Cheyenne" and "In the bread line" are all lyrics from popular songs. Fragments of these fragments occur in the text's five pages ("i'm aleaving" (p. 139); "In the bread line" (pp. 138, 139, 142)) while the others are non-textual fragments. "Ghost writing in the sky" also occurs in the text (p. 138) and it contains a pun on the song line "Ghost riders in the sky". The effect on the song fragment interpolation is to give the cut-up a greater dimension of colloquial diction than it theretofore would have had.

Several fragments have no basis in the text whatever and have been added by Burroughs to effect a greater linear coherence to the cut-up. "There was something had to happen and it happened somehow" asserts the fact that even the Nova Mob's techniques of control are fallible and that the mob is now being evicted as much because of their fallibility as because of the approach of the Nova Police. "He

went away but i'm here still" refers to the retreat of the mob's "Mr. Bradley Mr. Martin" who leaves his confederates to continue the mob's operations and possibly be arrested while he protects himself: "He just said 'i'm tired of you and i'm checking out'." The sentence fragment "When you call Him just to raise the price of a ticket" is indicative of some of the dialogue in which mob members were accused of inefficiency in their businesses (pp. 138-139) and how because of such failures one member calls "Him" (Mr. Bradley Mr. Martin) for transportation money to get him off the planet. These non-textual fragments are added to give a linear coherence to the cut-up.

The entire cut-up segment is introduced by a statement on how to conduct mob business efficiently. In the statement the one tenet a mobster is to keep in mind at all times is that he, himself, should not become tied (addicted) to doing business but that he should be prepared to leave his business and its profits at a moment's notice thereby protecting the most vital part of his operation, himself: "Keep your bag packed at all times and ready to travel on -"<sup>69</sup>. Thus the opening line of the cut-up is perfectly appropriate to the preceding paragraph's discussion. The cut-up summarizes the narrative up to that point in a relatively straightforward manner. A partial reversal has taken place in the usual application of the cut-up method, for the cut-up segment in this case is actually the linear narrative while the preceding five pages, although they are generally a linear progression of events, are variations on the elements presented in the cut-up. The cut-up fragments are diminutions or

truncations of the original fragment themes but these reduced elements are arranged in a manner which indicates the tightly controlled cut-up provided the themes on which the preceding narrative appears to be a sequence of elaborate variations. In evidence in this cut-up is the fact that cut-ups are not necessarily composed solely of images but of "abstract" words, as well, even though the words are only one and two syllables long ("aleaving" is three syllables) and are quite referentially concrete referring to physical actions: "write", "happen", "take", "went", "call", "leave". Burroughs has said that he controls what goes into a cut-up although he does not control what comes out,<sup>70</sup> meaning that the "planned accidents" are indeed accidents but that the accidents may or may not be chosen to be reincorporated into the narrative.

...I select a page (or pages) to cut-up and I have control over what I put in. I simply fit what comes out of the cut-ups back into a narrative structure.<sup>71</sup>

The selection and arrangement of materials is quite conscious but there is a random factor by which I obtain the material which I use then, select and work over into an acceptable form.<sup>72</sup>

...I follow the channels opened by the re-arrangement of the text. This is the most important function of the cut-up. I may take a page, cut it up, and get a whole new idea for straight narrative, and not use any of the cut-up material at all, or I may use a sentence or two of the actual cut-up.<sup>73</sup>

The result of the cut-up method in this example is that the narrative is outlined after-the-fact, the author having selected and pieced together the fragments with randomness or chance playing very little

part in the cut-up's creation. The effects of this type of cut-up are very much a part of the compositional intentions of an author like Ken Kesey who attempts to produce a narrative of concentric circularity rather than linear directedness (teleological order) of phenomena in his novel Sometimes a Great Notion. Cut-ups allow Burroughs to choose chance image relations or controlled ones, linearity or non-linearity, textual or non-textual fragments.

In the Introduction Burroughs's indebtedness to the collage and photomontage was mentioned. Burroughs occasionally creates verbal collages as poetic artifacts which are incorporated into the narrative as aesthetic objects in themselves as well as panoramic descriptions scanning past, present and future realities and consciousness and the interrelationships of words and images. The following is an example of this type of cut-up.

Ali dressed hastily and slipped out -  
Board members, look, the streets are empty -  
Young faces melted the law, turned slow circles  
on roller skates - Nova Police look at the  
wired color sunrise - Errand boy floating on  
eddies of red and green alighted in slow-motion  
flashes of clear atmosphere - The gravity pull  
was lighter - does not know the frequency of  
junk - marble streets and copper domes -  
Darkened eyes of page boys in elaborate physical  
skin put his financial status out in the  
streets - East St. Louis music on chirping call -  
His genitals were voices out into other dressing  
rooms - long silver thread that extended in  
flash erections back and forth - switch to  
office of a garage - sharp desire held the  
membrane - <sup>74</sup>

The cut-up, introduced by the sentence "Ali dressed hastily and slipped out", at first seems to carry on the sequence of events

beginning six pages earlier in which Ali awakes "in a strange bed".<sup>75</sup> An effect of déjà vu is achieved by repeating the action five pages later. Five pages before the cut-up are found the fragments, "Ali dressed hastily - Tucking his shirt he slipped out into the American suburb".<sup>76</sup> The cut-up reduces the fragments to atoms of meaning, two actions: dressing hastily and slipping out. Several of the fragments in the cut-up are directly traceable to the preceding six pages of text. However, others are not and the intermingling of textual and non-textual fragments in this particular cut-up combined with the further fragmentation of the original fragments (Burroughs cut some of his images into smaller pieces between one and three words long) gives the overall effect of a verbal image collage. There is no attempt made as there was in the previous cut-up to impose a linearity, a teleological order on this series of images, image fragments and double images. There is no attempt to recapitulate the preceding narrative as a function of conscious memory. The juxtaposition of certain image fragments being the result of randomness or chance seems designed to achieve the effect of the experience of a sensual, experiential totality rather than simply the presentation of an atomistic image collage. Burroughs's statement that images change "sense" under the cut-up scissors<sup>77</sup> is demonstrated by the cut-up-produced sentence, "His genitals were voices out into other dressing room", as the tactile "genitals" are transformed into audial "voices" in a visual location of "other dressing rooms". The non-linear, non-teleological sequence of images

in this cut-up composition is closer in intent to the aleatoric musical composers, Earle Brown and John Cage, whom Burroughs mentions as having "carried the cut-up much further in music than [he, himself, has] in writing".<sup>78</sup> This type of cut-up is a poetic object incorporated into the narrative more to focus the reader's attention on the aesthetic integrity of all images - not simply images collected in an arbitrary "aesthetic order" - than to further the narrative's plot.

Burroughs's most recently published novel, The Wild Boys, contains a variation on the cut-up technique in which small sections of linear narrative are juxtaposed by the use of described objects that precede each narrative section which itself may or may not be the product of a cut-up. This technique is similar to the fold-in technique. The following is one of five such cut-up chapters. It is quoted in its entirety so as to retain the cut-up's symmetry.

The Penny Arcade Peep Show

1. A round red Christmas tree ornament going away...Indian boy with bright red gums spits blood under the purple dusk of Lima.  
"Fight tuberculosis folks".  
Christmas Eve...An old junky selling Christmas seals on North Clark Street. The "Priest" they called him.  
"Fight tuberculosis folks".
2. Two round ornaments going away one blue one green...fading train whistles blue arc lights flickering empty streets half buried in sand...jelly in green brown rectal flesh twisting finger turns to vine tendril ass hairs spread over the tide flats...sea weed... green pullman curtains...blue prep school clothes.
3. Three ornaments going away red, blue, green...Holly wreaths, red ribbons, children bobbing for apples...It was getting late and no money to score he turned into a side street and the lake wind hit him like a knife...a lost street of brick chimneys and slate roofs...heavy blue silence...lawn sprinklers summer golf course  
...The Green Hat folded on her knee.

4. Four ornaments going away red, blue, green, gold...freckles, autumn leaves, smoky red moon over the river  
"When the autumn weather turns the leaves to flame  
And I haven't got time for the waiting game".

Cab stopped just ahead under a street light and a boy got out with a suitcase thin kid in blue prep school clothes familiar face the "Priest" told himself watching from a doorway reminds me of something a long time ago the boy there with his overcoat unbuttoned reaching into his pants pockets for cab fare...blue magic of all movies in remembered kid standing at the attic window waving to a train...a sighing sound the empty room...distant smell of weeds in vacant lots little green snakes under rusty iron...pirate chests pieces of eight on golden sands...urine in straw...the Traveller walks on and on through the plain of yellow grass. He stops by a deep black pool. A yellow fish turns in the dark water.

1. Red ornament coming in...red leg hairs rubbing rose wall paper ...Irish terrier under the Christmas tree...light years away the pale skies fall apart. T.B. waiting at the next stop. Spit blood at dawn. I was waiting there.  
"Doc Harrison. They called me".  
Led the way up...stairs worn red carpeting...smell of sickness is in the room.
2. Two ornaments coming in one blue one green...blue evening shadows a cool remote Sunday...dead stars drifting...twisting coming in green brown rectal flesh grass stains on brown knees.
3. Three ornaments coming in red, blue, green...smell of roses, carbolic soap...there was nothing for me to do. Spit blood at dawn. Agony to remember the words..."Too late"...German living room outside the China blue northern sky drifting clouds ...bad seascapes of the dying medical student.  
"A schnapps I think Frau Underschnitt".  
Room over the florist shop flower smell green curtains...He was a caddy it seems. His smile across the golf course.
4. Four ornaments coming in red, blue, green, gold...heart pulses in the rising sun...smell of raw meat...the heretic spits boiling blood...18th Century room...snow at a latticed window ...fire in the hearth...An old gentleman wrapped in red shawls is measuring laudanum into a medicine glass...  
Have you seen Patapon Rose?...blue shadows in the attic room...the boy's picture is framed in forget-me-nots...  
dust on the broken greenhouse...in the ruined garden a pool is covered with green slime...thin blond boy...sunlight in pubic hairs...I remember daffodils and yellow wallpaper ...a gold watch that played "Silver Threads Among the Gold"...

an old book with gilt edges...in golden letters...The Street  
of Chance.

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Dim far away the Star of Bethlehem from the school play.

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79

The five Penny Arcade Peep Show chapters are characterized by a symmetry of structure and imagery, all the chapters containing symbols similar to the moving colored ornaments (colored pin wheels; pyramids; copper coils; eggs; objects and scenes) or non-verbal symbols (◀▶; +"" ; ⊙). The title of these chapters indicates what they contain: a series of images which appear and disappear as if the images were a part of an arcade peep show. A collage effect is achieved by this juxtaposition of disparate images. However, the images are also balanced as to their colors and their relationships one to another and the central narrative passage framed by the two cut-up sections. The ornaments colored red, blue, green and gold of the first cut-up correspond to the colored ornaments of the second cut-up although the direction of their motion is opposite. The colors of the ornaments correspond to the colors of the images the ornaments introduce. A red ornament introduces images of red gums, blood and tuberculosis all associated visually with redness. Blue and green ornaments introduce blue arc lights, blue prep school clothes, green brown rectal flesh, vines, sea weed and green pullman curtains. This color association pervades the entire quoted chapter.

Many of the images are non-textual in source yet others are reminiscent of images already seen<sup>80</sup> or foreshadowing images not yet seen. The slate roofs and scenes from a golf course occurred earlier in The Wild Boys.<sup>81</sup> The essence of the cut-ups, itself, the juxtaposition of the aged and the young, the old junky and the "thin kid in blue prep school clothes," predicts the narrator, who pictures himself as aging, at first viewing the wild boys and finally joining them; he rejects the addicting life of aging with its "Man is made to submit and obey"<sup>82</sup> rule for the apparently destructive but actually vital, dynamic and evolutionary code established by Hassan i Sabbah by which the wild boys live, "Nothing is true. Everything is permitted".<sup>83</sup> The tone of longing that is captured by The Penny Arcade Peep Show is indicative of the narrator's own longing to escape the confines of his society and his language. Images like "a sighing sound the empty room" placed side by side create a reverie in which the "Priest's" flicker of memory takes on the touching quality of man who has lost his youth and who sees a glimpse of it in a passing boy.

...familiar face the "Priest" told himself  
watching from a doorway reminds me of some-  
thing long time ago the boy there with his  
overcoat unbuttoned reaching into his pants  
for the cab fare...blue magic of all movies  
in remembered kid standing at the attic  
window waving to a train...<sup>84</sup>

The cut-up technique providing Burroughs with an explored method of re-creating a collage of consciousness through images of recollection, contemplation and projection allows the author to create a poetic

sequence of images which are intended to transcend the exigencies of a linear narrative so as to provide a symbolic confrontation of youth and age through imagistic "association blocks" supplied by the image fragments used in that cut-up. A similar technique was used by Jean Toomer in the creation of his novel Cane<sup>85</sup> in which disparate narrative segments are interspersed with poems reflecting the mystical elements expressed throughout the narrative but using textual and non-textual symbols rather than explicit statement.

As approximately the first half of The Wild Boys is a series of "routines"<sup>86</sup> similar in their organizational effect to the routine series used in the composition of Naked Lunch but different in that a fairly comprehensible and soberly-treated theme runs throughout these dissimilar chapters in The Wild Boys, the cut-up sections become poetic nodes of image consciousness that permit the reader to formulate "association blocks" of thought rather than be forced to assimilate explicitly stated relationships. The advantage of this facet of the cut-up method is that Burroughs does not have to express his characters' relationships in terms of a psychology which may or may not be correct or a symbolism which may be too ambiguous due to unavoidable literary or religious allusions inherent in the words employed to describe that relationship. Cut-ups present such relationships and their correlations with images suggestive of these relationships as facts; explanation or justification of the relationships by psychological theories of motivation or the manipulation of archetypal symbols becomes unnecessary and irrelevant. The images

are facts; the relationships are facts, facts that Burroughs selects and edits and which the reader must accept as existing within the realm of the author's imaginary world created in the text. In this way the images become the focus of attention, focused upon by the removal of linear connections which would tend to require of the images a teleological justification for their relationships to one another. Focusing is achieved by the cut-up which thwarts the imposition of linearity or teleological order by its own randomness of forming image connections. This does not mean that The Penny Arcade Peep Show is simply a compilation of many images without an order of any kind - Burroughs's conventionality was demonstrated in the Introduction to the cut-up method - but that its order is contained within the images' similarities not their "meanings". Blue arc lights and blue prep school clothes do not have the same referents in reality; arc does not "mean" prep school and lights do not "mean" clothes. The blueness of the two objects, the objects' similarity, defines the limit of their relationship in terms of a linear order, yet to express this relationship in terms of the limiting factor is tautological: blue arc lights and blue prep school clothes are the same color. The expressed relationship is made redundant because of the objects themselves and that verbal expression of the relationship is hardly poetry or indeed expressive of anything at all. Burroughs's use of the cut-up juxtaposes two images with a similarity - their color - so as to verbally "paint" a mood indicative of the narrative. In that the first half of the novel is

composed of a series of narrative sections which themselves create a mood and which contain a similar theme - subversive rebellion - provided in a picaresque or episodic form, the cut-up "Peep Show" sections can be viewed as structurally transitional to the flow of the narrative but viable in that they continue the mood of that narrative in a different mode or dimension of verbal expression, i.e. symmetrical poetic collage.

The fold-in technique of literary composition is actually an offshoot of the cut-up, its only difference being that it is accomplished without scissors. Pages folded in half are placed side by side and intersecting lines are read. In practice this technique is seldom used and only one example of its use shall be examined. As with cut-ups, an opportunity for using images, phrases and sentences from other authors' works is provided by the fold-in. Thus literary allusions are transformed to compositional inclusions of materials from various authors. In the following example Burroughs makes no attempt to conceal the identity of the author whose writing he folds into his own but actually includes the author as a character in the novel. He also includes the fold-in as a teaching technique.

#### Brief for the First Hearing

Biologic Counselors must be writers that is only writers can qualify since the function of a counselor is to create facts that will tend to open biologic potentials for his client - One of the great early counselors was Franz Kafka and his briefs are still standard - The student first writes his own brief then folds his pages down the middle and lays it on pages of Kafka relevant to the case in hand - (It is not always easy to say

what is and is not relevant) - To indicate the method here is a brief for The First Hearing in Biologic Court: - A preparation derived from one page of Kafka passed through the student's brief and the original statement back and forth until a statement of biologic position emerges - From this original statement the student must now expand his case -

Quote from The Trial - Franz Kafka

"I fancy," said the man who was stylishly dressed, "that the gentleman's faintness is due to the atmosphere here - You see it's only here that this gentleman feels upset, not in other places -" Accustomed as they were to the office air felt ill in the relatively fresh air that came up from the stairway - They could scarcely answer him and the girl might have fallen if K had not shut the door with the utmost haste - He had already, so he would relate, won many similar cases either outright or partially - That was very important for the first impression made by the defense frequently determined the whole course of subsequent proceedings - Especially when a case they had conducted was suddenly taken out of their hands - That was beyond all doubt the worst thing that could happen to an advocate - Not that a client ever dismissed an advocate from the case - For how could he keep going by himself once he had pulled in someone to help him? - But it did sometimes happen that a case took a turn where the advocate could no longer follow it - The case and the accused and everything was simply withdrawn from the advocate - Then even the best connection with officials could no longer achieve any result - For even they knew nothing - The case had simply reached the stage where further assistance was ruled out - It had vanished into remote inaccessible courts where even the accused was beyond the reach of an advocate - The advocate's room was in the very top attic so that if you stumbled through the hole your leg hung down into the corridor attic in the very corridor where the clients had to wait -87

The above quoted section is the product of a somewhat diluted fold-in process wherein a group of sentences from The Trial were simply

incorporated into the text of Nova Express. The organization of these sentences into the form in which they are seen in the fold-in was achieved by the cut-up technique. Burroughs's narrative in Brief for the First Hearing states that the quote of Kafka he is about to make is "one page of Kafka" although that one page is actually composed of sentences from chapters three and seven - their sections on The Offices and Lawyer - which have been cut up to produce that page (the page numbers of the sentences quoted are the following: pp. 85, 86, 90, 143, 153, 154, 145).<sup>88</sup> In the following section, the student's actual fold-in-produced brief is quoted by Burroughs to demonstrate how a law student learns from one of the "great early counselors," Franz Kafka, by folding in his own brief with that of a master lawyer which subsequently "informs" the student's work with the master's structure and direction.

Brief for First Hearing //

Case of Life Form A

They sometimes mutate to breathe "here" - The gentleman is Biologic Court Building "here" - You see it's only "here" fixes any case for the Ovens - Not in other places - after buying the relatively fresh air - Life Form A arrives on worst thing that could happen to a space craft - Life Form A breathes from atmosphere of alien planet - Form A directs all behavior withdrawn from the advocate into channels calculated to no longer achieve health and interest of the host - The case had simply reached to space stage - Assistance was ruled out - Even the accused was beyond years - Life Form A's room was in the very top -

"I fancy", said the man who was on alien planet, "that crippled faintness was due to the 'oxygen' - There is no 'oxygen' this gentleman feels but by invading and occupying 'the office air' they can convert the 'oxygen' up from the stairway of Life Form B".<sup>89</sup> (see appendix one)

The student's brief - obtained by folding the Kafka quote and his own brief and reading the result for useful structural and descriptive sentences - is a parody of legalistic arguments by semantics. However, the Nova Mob controls populations and entire planets by precisely such manipulations of language which has become prescriptive rather than descriptive of reality and therefore the brief's "playing" with language (Kafka's original "true" brief) the student is able to "create" facts that "will tend to open biologic potentials for his client". The source of the fold-in in the case as presented within Nova Express establishes the verity of the fold-in produced brief by association. Fold-ins are therefore a useful device in terms of the novel's plot.

A similar effect is seen in the structuring of the novel as Burroughs' folding in sections of other authors' writing can create new permutations of meaning with well-known literary materials, thereby adding nuances to those materials. Fold-ins also provide his own writing with unambiguous literary allusions, unambiguous because the desired fragments of other authors' writing are directly but creatively incorporated into Burroughs's own narrative rather than alluded to second-hand by paraphrase or simply quoted verbatim for the sake of accuracy. In this way, too, the corpses of word images long entombed in the well-read pages of some author's writing can be revived, given new life by giving those images a new world (a written world) in which to live. Fold-in material, often regrouped by the cut-up technique before being used with Burroughs's narrative

text, like the cut-up technique becomes a viable method of composition, for it gives Burroughs new images, phrases, sentences and even thoughts as they are expressed in language with which he as a writer can create. Again, the technique does not determine what Burroughs will use in his writing but merely gives him a series of image variations that can be incorporated into the work or rejected.

The overall structure of a novel is determined by cut-ups and fold-ins only to the extent that they can possibly alter the author's original perceptions of situations, relationships, characters and actions and thereby redirect the work's thrust. Burroughs's own conception of novel structure was episodic or picaresque before he began using the cut-up and fold-in techniques (his novels Junkie and Naked Lunch have no guiding plot but are a series of narrative events) so any correlation between the use of those techniques and an episodic structure would be untrue; the techniques and the method of structuring a novel are simply parts of Burroughs's style and are related to each other as compositional mechanisms only in that they are both exemplified in some pieces of Burroughs's writing. To assert that the novels' structures are all products of cut-up and fold-in would be true depending on the broadness of meaning allowed the terms "cut-up" and "fold-in". If it is meant that Burroughs structures his novels by cutting up or folding in large sections of narrative thus allowing random juxtapositions of chapters to occur, such a definition of cut-up- and fold-in-structured novels is false

for Burroughs does not create in that manner<sup>90</sup> (the pre-cut-up Naked Lunch was as Brion Gysin noted "unconsciously" created in that manner for the novel was printed and organized as it was sent to the publisher, in small segments)<sup>91</sup> although he does not attempt to impose the structuring element of a linear plot, either (The Wild Boys is an exception to this statement although even in that novel the plot is rather obscure). Only the smaller elements of the novels such as chapters and paragraphs can be said to be structured by cut-ups and fold-ins. Again it should be noted that the techniques or methods, themselves, do not actually structure lengthy pieces of narrative like chapters but that the sections of writing produced by the techniques are factors in determining - determining meaning "predetermined" (i.e. the author determines the structure before writing a chapter) or "post-determined" (i.e. the author determines the structure of a chapter after the results of cut-ups and fold-ins have been evaluated) - the final structure of lengthy pieces of narrative. Paragraphs, sentences and phrases are the domain of the cut-up and fold-in techniques in terms of structure. It is only in the area of small compositional units such as sentences and paragraphs that these techniques actually structure the entire body of verbal expression for it is only upon these units that the techniques are exercised as conscious techniques. That is, Burroughs does not fold every page of an entire novel and place them side by side with an equal number of pages of his own writing to structure his novels. Nor does he cut-up entire novels and rearrange the

thousands upon thousands of images to create his novels. Only fragments of paragraphs, sentences and phrases are juxtaposed in the use of these techniques; therefore that which is structured by them are those elements of composition with which they deal, namely, paragraphs, sentences and phrases. In this way the cut-up and fold-in methods of literary composition is less a method of organization and structuring than it is a method of creating or generating compositional materials (new images, phrases, sentences and paragraphs) which Burroughs can use in his writing but which he, himself, as writers have always had to do, must still inform, organize and structure with the power of his own intellect and imagination.

### CHAPTER III

#### Cut-ups, Fold-ins and Their Effects on the Content of Literary Composition

Literary art presumes to communicate or express artists' perceptions or thoughts through the use of words. Not all writing is necessarily aesthetically pleasurable although the writing humans generally value is writing which communicates or expresses - means - something. Fundamental grammar is intended to be an aid for those who wish to use words for the purpose of communication or expression for it shapes language into "universally-accepted" structures of verbal meaning. Burroughs's use of the cut-up and fold-in techniques is a denial of the necessity of a rigid code of grammar, for in the code's place Burroughs asserts a new necessity for written "meaning" -

the concreteness of language. For Burroughs, concrete language replaces grammatical structure in importance as the prime requisite for communicative or expressive - meaningful - writing.

Burroughs's writings have been accused of being "non-books", "anti-novels" and generally incomprehensible gibberish,<sup>92</sup> most of this criticism emanating from some critics' violent aversion to writing produced by the cut-up and fold-in techniques which Burroughs uses eschewing conventional, linear narrative. However, to damn Burroughs because he does not write conventional, linear narrative is to deny that there can be artistic expression with a relativistic framework within which the art can be created. This is to say, if artistic expression or communication is not achieved through the description of a linear sequence of actions, situations, emotions or thoughts then it cannot express or communicate anything. This demand for linearity ("linearity" disguises in the above-mentioned hostile criticism the almost pathological need for grammatical and structural comprehensibility) contains the a priori assumption of the "truth" of an Aristotelian, cause-and-effect reality (i.e. linearity is supposedly descriptive of the way things are and the manner in which humans perceive those things). Yet since the advent of Einstein's Theory of Relativity the "truth" of an absolutist view of reality has been generally considered inaccurate and with that truth was vanquished the "truth" of linearity as being accurately descriptive of the way things are and the manner in which humans perceive those things. Burroughs knows this historical fact

of consciousness.<sup>93</sup> His writing assumes the "truth" of a relativistic reality. His difficulty in expressing or communicating his thoughts formed in a relativistic consciousness is that the rules by which he must use language to express or communicate those thoughts deny the existence of such a reality by an a priori assumption of cause-and-effect, either-or linearity rather than a reality of relative time-space coordinate systems. Hence the cut-up and fold-in techniques while still using language's words subvert and destroy the supremacy of the rules of grammar and syntax which imprison those words in a theoretical system of reality which is no longer "true" (see appendix two). In no sense does Burroughs wish to destroy all forms of verbal expression and communication. The cut-up and fold-in methods prevent the assumptions of the rules of language from prescribing what men experience and assert rather the describing, interpreting and possibly enlightening aspects of language as it accurately describes the artist's experiences and perceptions.

Burroughs is unique only in that he is attempting to reproduce in prose what we accommodate every day as a commonplace aspect of our life in the electric age. If the corporate life is to be rendered on paper, the method of discontinuous non-story must be employed.<sup>94</sup>

This form of non-linear ("non-story") writing is therefore simply a mode of literary realism.

Burroughs's war on the governing rules of language by using the cut-up and fold-in techniques of composition as his weaponry has important implications for literary artists. Burroughs is asserting a more realistic approach to the creation of aesthetic artifacts -

in this case works of literature - the term "realistic approach" meaning a mode or form of artistic expression or communication in tune with the insights of the Twentieth Century given the artists through fields of endeavor such as linguistics, semantics, psychology, philosophy and the non-literary arts like music, painting and the cinema. Burroughs has read the explorations of Ludwig Wittgenstein<sup>95</sup> and Alfred Korzybski<sup>96</sup> and has found revealing thoughts on the nature of language as it relates to the creation of perceptive art in those studies. Cut-ups and fold-ins are partially a result of Burroughs's attempt to relate the creation of an art formed of language with studies which have revolutionized the way men now look at that language.

In Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico - Philosophicus there is the statement: "A picture is a fact".<sup>97</sup> Inasmuch as language presents pictures (symbolic images) in an abstract way through words, words, too, are facts. The "picture" is not only visual but includes "pictures" for all the senses. Words as they can be "sensed" (experienced) with the eye or with the ear are facts, as well. Arrangements of words are facts. That words are generally not seen written on a page or heard spoken without such grammatical arrangements is also a fact. With a lifetime of encounter with the arranged language men find that the words (facts) are not randomly thrown together for if they were they would not "make sense," this, too, meaning fact. Such an argument begs the question. Are rules facts therefore rules can "make" facts (sense)?

'If a proposition is NOT NECESSARY it is MEANINGLESS and approaching MEANING ZERO'.<sup>98</sup>

Are the rules of grammar necessary for the existence of language facts (words)? If a picture is a fact cannot one word be a picture and therefore a fact? Words are facts as themselves and as referential symbols. Rules of grammar are only necessary for words if they aid the words in being what words are (the assumption being that words are generally accepted communicative symbols descriptive of personal experience). If symbols can on occasion communicate personal experience without being subjected to and ordered by the rules of grammar and syntax then those rules - as they are a proposition of fact - are in those instances not necessary and therefore meaningless. Cut-ups and fold-ins aid Burroughs in abandoning the governing principles of grammar and in reinstating the autonomous symbolic nature of words as facts. Marshall McLuhan says this particular mode of verbal expression makes Burroughs a symbolist writer.<sup>99</sup>

The key to symbolist perception is in yielding the permission to objects to resonate in their own time and space. Conventional pictorial and literary perception seeks to put diverse objects into the same time and space. Time and space themselves are subjected to the uniform and continuous visual processing that provides us with the "connected and rational" that is in fact (my emphasis) only an isolated fragment of reality - the visual. There is no uniform and continuous character in the non-visual modalities of space and time. The symbolists freed themselves from the visual conditions into the visionary world of the iconic and the auditory.<sup>100</sup>

Inasmuch as literature attempts to present a totality of reality to the reader, an aesthetic restriction requiring literature to represent

a reality of a "uniform and continuous character" - a linear, teleological reality - is in essence a demand that literature represent only one area of experience - the visual.

Cut-ups and fold-ins methodically recreate experience as a simultaneity of sense impressions because those techniques permit Burroughs to create at will the chaotic, chance impingement of sense data on the consciousness by deliberately creating a similar situation of image interrelationship with the symbols descriptive of those sense data while the artist still controls the materials and the final selection of that simultaneous, chance impingement on the reader.

Whether a man takes the road of junk or the road of art, the entire world must submit to his processing. The world becomes his "content". He programs the sensory order.<sup>101</sup>

An objection to the aesthetic validity of this recreation of experience is that an artistic description of chaos cannot itself be chaotic. The critical term used for the objection is the expressivistic or mimetic fallacy.<sup>102</sup> However, this objection is itself fallacious in that it assumes either that experience is a logical and rational order or that experience can only be comprehended if expressed or communicated in a logical and rational manner. Man does not experience reality as a logical and rational order and yet he does still supposedly comprehend the reality he experiences. As literature provides an artificial reality of experience by means of symbols, the demands of such arbitrary rules as logic and rationality which actually mean linearity can be seen as being unnecessary for creation of a "true" (i.e. accurately mimetic) work of art. As Burroughs's writing is visionary rather than narrative<sup>103</sup> the atomistic

or pointillistic descriptions provided by the cut-up and fold-in techniques should be aesthetically valid as they are realistically true as fact. The thrust of artistic mimesis for Burroughs is not the mirroring of the world's reality because that reality has been tainted by the rules of language - syntax, grammar, subject, predicate, either, or - which create rather than describe that reality, Burroughs is concerned with the presentation of the reality itself in the words used in writing the words being (facts). For Burroughs if words are to be real (facts) then they must act and interact realistically and these realistic actions are achieved through cut-ups and fold-ins which assert the factuality of images. The cut-up and fold-in techniques allow Burroughs to reassert the primacy of images in the experiential life of consciousness.

Another aesthetic consideration Burroughs is concerned about is the "meaning" of his writing. The previously mentioned hostile criticism leveled against the products of the cut-up and fold-in compositional techniques were that they were chaotic not only in their effect on the reader but in their content, as well. The second chapter of this paper provides sufficient examples to prove that cut-ups and fold-ins are chaotic in their fragment content only to those who have not read the narrative text carefully and who are not sensitive to sympathetic poetic images. The fragments (content) of the cut-ups and fold-ins are either taken directly from the narrative text with little or no alteration (occasionally a pronoun, an article or an adjective will be changed to fit the sense of the cut-up or

fold-in more accurately) or they are created by Burroughs to add a sympathetic, emotive dimension to the textual image fragments. However, the "meaning" of Burroughs's writing is for Burroughs not only subject to the scrutiny of its physics (i.e. the images relate to one another in an artistic recreation of the collage of sense data humans experience in reality while reflecting the artist's own personal perceptions [descriptive, interpretive, critical] and reactions to those images) but of its metaphysics, as well. The image relationships in cut-ups and fold-ins must have aesthetic value - expressive or communicative - or meaning for Burroughs but so, too, must the images of which the cut-ups and fold-ins themselves are composed.

This consideration led Burroughs to explore the nature of abstract and concrete words with the aid of the cut-up technique. He discovered that images composed of concrete words, words having referents in reality, were the only images that could be used in cut-ups and fold-ins if he hoped to produce writing which "meant" something. That is, the images used in the writing produced by the two techniques had to have a sensuous value that created a mental sense experience - for the writing to express or communicate (mean). Cut-ups and fold-ins composed of non-referential (abstract) words produce true chaos. The following is an excerpt from a passage produced by both the cut-up and fold-in techniques of composition using non-referential words as fragment material.

Relations between human beings sexualizing  
congruent accessibility ambivalently fecundate

with orifices perspectives is I feel to beg the question of contributory latent configurations reciprocally starved of direction or vector by the recognizable human remembrance of such approximate exasperations a desperately effete societal somnolence supine negation by any reputable informed latent consensus inherently commissioned with customary human techniques interweaving re-enactments of necessary correspondence interderivational from complementary internalizations confluently communicated reciprocal analogous metaphors with this relentlessly successful diagrammatic schema delinquently recognizable juxtapositions to traduce or transfigure a pulsating multiplicity of contradictions inherent in linguistic engagements disproportionately failing gritty colloquialisms edged with grammatic outrage...104

These abstract fragments of prose randomly pieced together mean nothing; the passage is truly chaotic for it recreates no thought, perception, emotion, or "sense". If pictures and words are facts then such abstract words as the ones used in the preceding cut-up and fold-in passage are facts only because they exist on the page. Referential words as they were previously described both exist of themselves while also symbolically "meaning" experiential facts. Non-referential words mean only themselves; they refer only to themselves and are therefore referentially (and for Burroughs's creative purposes, aesthetically) solipsistic and consequently unuseable because they do not express or communicate. Non-referential words have no experiential co-relative and as such are worthless to the creation of poetic (aesthetic) art.

If you see the function of words as extension of our senses to witness and experience through the writer's eyes then this (the above-quoted passage) may be dubbed blind prose. It sees nothing and

neither does the reader. Not an image in a cement mixer of this word paste. As a literary exercise I pick up the Penguin translation of Rimbaud and select images to place in congruent juxtaposition with this colorless vampiric prose which having no color of its own must steal color from the readers such contractually accessible linguistically structuralized preparations on blue evenings I shall go down the path in a dream feeling the coolness on my feet starved of direction or vector by derivationally confluent exasperations five in the evening at the Green Inn huge beer mug froth turned into gold by a ray of late sunshine perspective of illiterate human beings would traduce or transfigure fecundate with orifices potential the Watchman rows through the luminous heavens and from his flaming dragnet lets fall shooting stars and precisely reciprocal latent consensus if societal flailings stridently congruent from pulsating mangrove swamps riddled with pools and water snakes diagrammatic contrapunctual...<sup>105</sup>

(see appendix three)

Such a literary exercise indicates the care with which Burroughs must select his words to express or communicate that which he wishes to express or communicate. Some words are not appropriate for cut-ups or fold-ins, and therefore, conceivably, some cut-ups and fold-ins could be aesthetically good and some aesthetically bad.

The cut-up and fold-in techniques of composition themselves are beyond the realm of criticism on purely aesthetic grounds, for as in the case of the "intentional fallacy"<sup>106</sup> both the author's methods of composition and his intentions for composing a particular work are not necessarily present in that work and are therefore irrelevant criteria on which to appreciate and assess that work. Only the products of the two compositional techniques are present in Burroughs's writing not the actual techniques and only the products of those techniques can be legitimately criticized as artistic

artifacts of aesthetic value.

Burroughs's use of the writings of non-literary figures such as Ludwig Wittgenstein and Alfred Korzybski to direct his use of the cut-up and fold-in techniques is also beyond the realm of criticism on aesthetic grounds for at no time does Burroughs directly incorporate or paraphrase the ideas contained in those men's writings in his own literary works in order to debate the validity of their claims. Burroughs uses those men's writings as philosophic, linguistic and semantic assumptions upon which his writing (as some of it is produced by the cut-up and fold-in techniques) operates. As Milton's Paradise Lost is predicated upon the "truth" of the Bible, Burroughs's writing is predicated upon the "truth" of Wittgenstein's and Korzybski's writings. The "truth" of Wittgenstein's and Korzybski's writings is not in question for their writings merely provide a variant on the mode of mythological assumptions many writers use, in this particular case the mythological assumptions are philosophic, linguistic and semantic (scientific) not religious as Milton's assumptions were. As the cut-up and fold-in techniques of composition have literary ancestors known to Burroughs that pre-date Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus and Korzybski's Science and Sanity, even Burrough's rejection of those two gentlemen's works would have no appreciable effect on his continued usage of the techniques or on the aesthetic merits of compositions created by those techniques. In the realm of aesthetics the cut-up and fold-in techniques of literary composition are both useful and constructive

for the creation of literary art (expressive or communicative) and in tune with some insights of the Twentieth Century provided by philosophy, physics, psychology, linguistics and general semantics. Burroughs's use of those techniques represents a facet of a return to the concretion of word content used in the composition of literature. Prompted by the insights of the above-mentioned fields of thought, Burroughs has found through experiments with cut-ups and fold-ins that abstract words (words without referents in reality; words which refer to subjective modes of reality which are not what could be termed part of empirically verifiable phenomena) are not useful in the composition of literature, especially passages composed by means of the cut-up and fold-in techniques. The result is an eschewing of abstraction and a mode of prose fiction thoroughly entrenched in the Twentieth Century American tradition of imagist poetry - especially the poetic theory of Ezra Pound - and the vast majority of contemporary "poetry of experience" (as opposed to "poetry of idea or argument").

#### CHAPTER IV

##### Cut-ups, Fold-ins and Perception Reformation

Inasmuch as any art offers its audience a perception - whether it be of a physical body, an interrelationship of sounds, a mystical experience, a dramatic conflict or anything else - that art to varying degrees alters its audience's perception. Burroughs's novels offer a fragmented, discontinuous vision of a world which

threatens humanity with hideous forms of control over consciousness and behavior. As these controls are perpetrated by obviously fictional beings such as the Nova Mob, an intergalactic crime syndicate, Burroughs's audience might tend to view these villains as entirely fictional creations of the author's imagination.

I (Burroughs) do definitely mean what I say to be taken literally, yes, to make people aware of the true criminality of our times, to wise up the marks. All of my work is directed against those who are bent, through stupidity or design on blowing up the planet or rendering it uninhabitable. Like the advertising people...I'm concerned with the precise manipulation of word and image to create an action, not to go out and buy a Coca-Cola, but to create an alteration in the reader's consciousness.<sup>107</sup>

Burroughs is actually "fictionalizing" threats he, himself, believes are very real and very dangerous. In this manner the "fictionalized" perceptions his writing offers the audience are deliberately intended to alter the audience's perception of reality. The cut-up and fold-in techniques have several roles to play in the reformation of perception.

Burroughs's use of cut-ups and fold-ins are manifestations of his reaction against what he believes is a mechanistic interpretation of reality fostered by the nature of the English language, which demands a logical, cause-and-effect interpretation of reality. If the language demands a subject and a predicate and if one wishes to speak or write about reality, thoughts about reality - if they are formulated in language - must conform to similar demands and by extrapolation soon consciousness reverses itself demanding that

reality manifest separate phenomena in a logical order of actor (subject) and action (predicate). Even the thoughts about reality are then ordered according to the rules of language, thus blurring the nature of reality, itself. Burroughs realizes that his language's demands for logicity and linearity alter men's perception of reality which itself is neither logical nor linear. In his attempt to communicate this realization to his audience through his writing Burroughs does not want to fall into an alliance with that language which will tend to falsify the conscious realization by making that thought part of language's logical, linear, unreal reality. The rules of language cannot accommodate such a realization, and therefore Burroughs must find a means of communicating using a universal set of symbols while not adhering to those rules.

Cut-ups and fold-ins allow Burroughs to still use the universal set of symbols (words) without having to resort to arbitrary and unrealistic grammatical rules. The result is the subversive use of language to negate the controlling system of word usage and to assert a liberating, truly descriptive (as opposed to prescriptive) language. Those who read these words freed of the exigencies of the linguistic system begin to have their own perception of reality "re-formed" as they realize that cut-up and folded-in words describe the artist's perception as well as, if not more accurately than syntactically and grammatically ordered words. Those readers who take things "literally" (i.e. as the words say things are) will have their perception of literal-ness reformed. Thought becomes

liberated from Aristotelian logic in paralogical structures of complexity which approximate the complexity of modern consciousness and experience. Thought becomes freed of language, image thought replacing word thought. Reality, itself, as it is now perceived by the readers reading a cut-up or fold-in, becomes an inclusive organism rather than an exclusive set of coexisting, mechanical causes and effects. Reality's images are described mimetically in cut-ups and fold-ins as existing in a synchronicity rather than a linearity.

"Reality",...not being equatable with this thought-language bundle, is necessarily incomplete, fragmented, twisted, made to conform to limits that have nothing to do with basic "nature". By exploding and reforming the thought-language patterns a totally new "reality" is formed, ungrammatical (anti-grammatical), syntaxless (anti-syntaxed), anti-sequential, anti-logical. The "new" page becomes a "new" world. You approach it and let it break down the programmed mind that you bring to it, experience a guerrilla interaction between the free-fall poem (world) and your slightly conformist, already "controlled" mentality. The page, then, becomes a cultural liberation device, a mind free-er.<sup>108</sup>

Burroughs is not simply interested in the reformation of a reader's perception of reality, though. As a subversive writer he is interested in the reformation of reality, itself, and to the extent that human perception dictates the limits of reality through thought-language, cut-ups and fold-ins can be used as offensive weapons against that "criminal conspiracy" which seeks to control both humanity and reality through the manipulation of word and image. In Nova Express the Nova Mob controls planets' populations by the manipulation

of words and images which, once absorbed by those populations, control thought by "association blocks" that cause the people to think in "association blocks" determined by the Mob who control the communication media and even the language. For Burroughs such a thought-reality control is not as far fetched as those who consider his work purely science fiction might suppose. He states that inasmuch as words are often taken to "be" the things which they symbolize, manipulations of words can be misinterpreted by "literal-minded"<sup>109</sup> humanity to "be" the truth presented by reality. Threatening words are transformed by the literal mind into a threatening, concrete reality. Burroughs declared a cut-up and fold-in warfare on the language-equals-reality syndrome of thought.

LISTEN TO MY LAST WORDS ANY WORLD. LISTEN ALL YOU BOARDS SYNDICATES AND GOVERNMENTS OF THE EARTH. AND YOU POWER POWERS BEHIND WHAT FILTH DEALS CONSUMMATED IN WHAT LAVATORY TO TAKE WHAT IS NOT YOURS. TO SELL THE GROUND FROM UNBORN FEET. LISTEN. WHAT I HAVE TO SAY IS FOR ALL MEN EVERYWHERE. I REPEAT FOR ALL. NO ONE IS EXCLUDED. FREE TO ALL WHO PAY. FREE TO ALL WHO PAIN PAY. WHAT SCARED YOU ALL INTO TIME? WHAT SCARED YOU ALL INTO YOUR BODIES? INTO SHIT FOREVER? DO YOU WANT TO STAY THERE FOREVER? THEN LISTEN TO THE LAST WORDS OF HASSAN SABBAAH. LISTEN LOOK OR SHIT FOREVER. LISTEN LOOK OR SHIT FOREVER. WHAT SCARED YOU INTO TIME? INTO BODY? INTO SHIT? I WILL TELL YOU. THE WORD. THE-THEE WORD. IN THEE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD. SCARED YOU ALL INTO SHIT FOREVER. COME OUT FOREVER. COME OUT OF THE TIME WORD THE FOREVER. COME OUT OF THE BODY WORD THEE FOREVER. COME OUT OF THE SHIT WORD THE FOREVER. ALL OUT OF TIME AND INTO SPACE. FOREVER. THERE IS NO THING TO FEAR. THERE IS NO THING IN SPACE. THAT IS ALL ALL ALL HASSAN SABBAAH. THERE IS NO WORD TO FEAR. THERE IS NO WORD. THAT IS ALL ALL ALL HASSAN SABBAAH. IF YOU I CANCEL ALL YOUR WORDS FOREVER. AND THE WORDS OF HASSAN SABBAAH I AS ALSO CANCEL. ACROSS ALL YOUR SKIES SEE THE SILENT WRITING OF BRION GYSIN HASSAN SABBAAH. THE WRITING OF SPACE. THE WRITING OF SILENCE.<sup>110</sup>

The reference to the Bible's, "in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God..." is made by Burroughs to demonstrate what he believes is a traditional correlation between language and the creation of reality. Fear of the word frightened humanity into time, body and excrement; the word controls that humanity. Words out of the control of humanity control that humanity by fear and ignorance. Words that produce images of the things to which they refer are easily controlled. It is the words that do not produce images which control humanity.

Opinion control is a technical operation extending over a period of years. First a population segment - "segment preparation" - is conditioned to react to words rather than word referents. You will notice in the subsidized periodicals a curious prose without image. If I say the word "chair" you see a chair. If I say "the concomitant somnolence with the ambivalent smugness of unavowed totalitarianism" you see nothing. This is pure word-conditioning the reader to react to words. "Preparations" so conditioned will then react predictably to words. The conditioned "preparation" is quite impervious to facts.<sup>111</sup>

In the passage above "opinion" can be read "the way one perceives something". Perception is controlled by words which are often beyond the control of the general public. Burroughs attacks jargon not merely as being a flaw in verbal communication but as a fear - and ignorance - inducing weapon used to control the way populations perceive things, public opinion and by extension reality.

One purpose (of using jargon or "blind prose") is to protect a camouflaged thesis from the embarrassment of factual testing. If I say "England is an island" I can produce evidence to support my statement should anyone call it in question. If they write an article attacking

the Olympia Press as sexualizing congruent accessibility to its heart of pulp fecundate with orifices perspectives in the name of human privacy they have placed their thesis beyond the realm of fact since the words used refer to nothing that can be tested. The words used refer to nothing. The words used have no referent.<sup>112</sup>

Once any thesis, thought or motive is camouflaged behind a wall of verbal incomprehensibility those wishing to control other people by means of such a thesis can simply verbally intimidate those people who are already convinced that words are in reality the things which they symbolize and that an argument of words concluding something means that reality must concur with a similar phenomenological fact.

Burroughs has suggested that the cut-up and fold-in techniques provide an accessible method for anyone who would care to destroy such "word magic" and thereby reform their own consciousness and perception of the language-thought-reality complex. Detach units of language from their habitual usage patterns, their linguistic environment, by means of cut-ups and fold-ins and one may view whether or not these units have self-contained, communicative meanings or whether they derive their meaning from their normal syntactical, grammatical environment. Cut-ups and fold-ins thereby allow Burroughs and anyone else who cares to investigate their language to retaliate against the abuses of language, especially jargon, by exposing the abuses in their native absurdity.

Anything they (any abusers of language as communication) can do you can do better.  
Pick up The Concise Oxford Dictionary mix your own linguistic virus concentrates fire burn

and cauldron bubble mix it black and mix it  
strong folks hereabouts have done you wrong  
return confluently the complement: e.  
Fristic elite impacted banal limitorphic  
imposture impotently flailing effluvial grout  
mud incumbent MN grume intervolving abrasively  
affricative incubus interpositional inconsummate  
lubricious investiture decommissioned exter-  
nalized incodite anastrophe increassate...113

If this cut-up communicates no image to the reader's mind it is because the words contained in it have no referents in the experiential world. Such non-referential language is personal and highly abstract for it symbolizes in words modes of experience which are not part of phenomenological reality and therefore the meanings of these words are ambiguous. In the hands of malevolent factions these types of words because of their referential ambiguity can be made to say or "prove" anything - "create facts" - and thereby control those gullible enough to believe that all words actually symbolize reality and that a verbal proof is contingent upon a necessity of reality. Burroughs's novels The Ticket That Exploded and Nova Express are about the criminal Nova Mob which creates a "reality film" that dictates to the general public what is permitted to be perceived. This control is achieved through words and pictures. The narrator in The Ticket That Exploded asks:

...what is word and to whom is it addressed? -  
Word evokes image does it not? - Try it - Put  
an image track on screen and accompany it with  
any sound track - Now play the sound track back  
alone and watch the image track fill in - So?  
What is word? - Maya - Maya - Illusion - Rub out  
the word and the image track goes with it...<sup>114</sup>

The capacity of a man to "de-sensitize" his consciousness to the pro-

gramming and controlling facets of the language-thought-reality complex is a function of his to perceive uncategorized reality. As artists and writers have a certain ability to communicate their personal perceptions inspite of the language-thought block which attempts to enforce a universal "objectivity" upon those who would communicate or think within Western civilization's construct of reality, the "reality film" is called into question by the very existence of those creators' personal visions. Burroughs's cut-ups and fold-ins have a two-fold effect, for firstly they do assert Burroughs's personal perceptions and secondly they express or communicate those perceptions without submitting to the linearity and logic demanded by his language, thereby directly challenging the ties of language, thought and reality. Burroughs's attack on Aristotelian logic therefore has resonances not only in the field of literary composition but in the realms of thought, perception, physics and metaphysics for all are inextricably related.<sup>115</sup>

For Burroughs to speak (write) is to lie<sup>116</sup> and any means of communication which subverts verbalization such as mental telepathy and pictographs (Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mayan codices which allow the viewer to register the symbolized idea without sub-vocal verbalization) is an aid to self-realization and self-control apart from the prescriptive influences of language. Burroughs's interest in a variety of communicative media has prompted him to extend his cutting up from typewritten sheets to films and tape recordings. Cutting up films and tape recordings - alternately referred to as "splicing" or "editing" - is the commonest of procedures in any movie

or television studio; there is nothing experimental or innovative in such a procedure. That Burroughs incorporates this "editing" or "splicing" method into the creation of literature is not an indication that Burroughs is an artistic revolutionary but that, as an artist, he is very much alive to and conscious and aware of the phenomena he experiences in everyday reality and that he is not superstitiously afraid of incorporating what he learns from his experiential reality in the creation of his art. Those who would criticize Burroughs for his literary "editing" or "splicing" are those who are unaware that in daily life they unconsciously experience and consciously accept and "understand" precisely what Burroughs creates through cut-ups and fold-ins. In films and recordings images are juxtaposed visually and audially rather than symbolically as images are in entirely verbal art. With pure visual and audial images the need for "sub-vocal speech" (i.e. the mind's silent use of words to describe reality) is diminished and the images register in the consciousness in silence. The desirability of silence is that as cut-ups and fold-ins reform the perception of reality by effecting a reformation of language's rules in the language-thought-reality complex, silence as a reaction to experience frees the consciousness of language, itself. Perception is thereby entirely "reformed" as it responds to an experience as an experience and not as a part of a category of phenomena.

Telepathy communicates experience in silence and thus escape prescriptive language.

The only cure for what Burroughs terms the "word virus"<sup>118</sup> is silence which denies the power of language but instead asserts the primacy of subjective experience. Cut-ups and fold-ins of writing produce a reverence for the image-communicating ability of some units of language and a distrust of non-referential words which are supposedly descriptive of universal, "objective" experience. Insofar as cut-ups and fold-ins produce these effects they create a "writing of silence" for they demonstrate how language is symbolic of reality's variety of images and they allow those symbols to exist in a similar space-time system (and not an arbitrary, teleological order) in symbolic terms as the images exist in space-time in reality. Burroughs's writing

...demands Silence from The Reader. Otherwise  
he is taking his own pulse...<sup>119</sup>

Cut-ups and fold-ins like Hassan i Sabbah, "wise up the marks" who equate language with reality. In Nova Express covert activity by those who resist the prescriptive influence of language on thought brings about the destruction of the parasitic "reality film" and frees the doorways to creative perception of experience through the destruction of prescriptive words by means of cut-ups.

The message of Total Resistance on short wave  
of the world - This is war to extermination -  
Shift linguals - Cut word lines - Vibrate  
tourists - Free doorways - Photo falling -  
Word falling - Break through in grey room -  
Calling Partisans of all nations - "Towers,  
open fire" - 120

The cut-up and fold-in techniques are simply that, techniques. Whether they be used in the creation of literature, music, film or the other arts, the effects of deconditioning the audience from its unconscious bias in favor of the Aristotelian, Newtonian construct of reality and a sensitization to more representative and "true" modes of expression and communication seem to be the result. Burroughs is well aware that his own writing, his own use of language may be mistaken for the "truth" about the universe rather than being a perception of what he sees.

...Stop - Shut off - No more - My writing  
arm is paralyzed - No more junk scripts, no  
more word scripts, no more flesh scripts -  
He all went away - No good - No bueno -  
Couldn't reach flesh - No glot - Clom Fliday  
- Through invisible door - Adios Meester  
William, Mr. Bradly, Mr. Martin - 121

Cut-ups and fold-ins reform the reader's perception and consciousness because they force him to read and absorb words in a new way. Burroughs's warning does not mean that there should be no more written expression or communication but the implicit caveat emptor which should be in the reader's consciousness is that words are not "true" of themselves; only reality possesses this truth. However, words as symbolic of images present "facts" useful in the expression or communication of personal perception. The perceptual, aesthetic and compositional freedom provided Burroughs and his readers via his writing by the cut-up and fold-in methods is what Burroughs terms the freedom to travel in space and to escape the destructive entropy - the "stasis horrors" - imposed by the language-thought-reality complex of

traditional human existence. The cut-up and fold-in methods create a new "space" in which the imagination can travel without restrictions.

To travel in space you must learn to leave the old verbal garbage behind; God talk, priest talk, mother talk, father talk, love talk, party talk, country talk. You must learn to exist with no religion no country no allies. You must learn to see what <sup>is</sup> in front of you with no preconceptions. <sup>122</sup>

The fact that the cut-up and fold-in techniques of composition have the ability under the guiding consciousness of Burroughs to express or communicate perception without recourse to the "order" of all of language's syntactical and grammatical rules demonstrates that the preconceptions of how writing must express or communicate the writer's thoughts or perceptions can be dispensed with, without detrimental effects to the perception or the writing. Such a demonstration effects an important reformation in the way in which one can perceive the roles of language and literature as shapers of consciousness, perception and reality.

To characterize William Burroughs as an eccentric literary artist is to completely misunderstand Burroughs, contemporary literature in general and some of the major experimental thrusts of Twentieth Century writing. For critics to criticize Burroughs's techniques of composition is an arrogant trespass into an area of artistic creation which is none of their business as critics are to interpret art after it has been created not to dictate how it is to be created, which is solely the domain of the artist, himself. Contemporary literature, especially that of Samuel Beckett and Alain Robbe-Grillet and of

the vast majority of modern poets, does not seek to describe reality so as to extract a moral, a precept, a mythology or a cosmology from that reality. That is, much of contemporary writing is about nothing at all. Rather the writing is the thing the writing is about.

Beckett's Play is not about heightened awareness (which is never mentioned or even alluded to in the drama), it is heightened awareness for as the dialogue repeats itself the audience is already aware of exactly what has, is and will happen. Robbe-Grillet writes of the "New Novel":

...not only does each of us see in the world his own reality, but...the novel is precisely what creates it. The style of the novel does not seek to inform, as does the chronicle, the testimony offered in evidence, or the scientific report, it constitutes reality. It never knows what it is seeking, it is ignorant of what it has to say; it is invention, invention of the world and of man...<sup>123</sup>

In such a mode of composition verisimilitude is irrelevant for when writing is the thing it is about, the writing simply exists representing accurately exactly what it, itself, is. Allegory, too, is unnecessary, for the contemporary author feels no longer constrained to create an artificial reality in his writing which half-mirrors the "truth" about that which the author really wants to say. Cut-ups and fold-ins, while they represent the operations of perception more accurately than linear narrative, are not allegorical studies of perception but create the perceptions, themselves.

...a new kind of narrator is born: no longer a man who describes the things he sees, but at the same time a man who invents the things around him and who sees the things he invents.<sup>124</sup>

With an understanding of the facts (factum - that which is done; that which is) of contemporary art and life, Burroughs, his consistent view of reality and his use of the cut-up and fold-in techniques which help him create his literature seem anything but peripheral. Quite the contrary, Burroughs has succeeded where many have failed and is thus at the very heart of contemporary literature and consciousness. William Burroughs creates literature, aided by the conscious and conscientious use of the cut-up and fold-in techniques of composition, which is in the best modern "tradition" simultaneously imaginative (emanating from the imagination) and realistic (being that which "is"). He attempts to impose no Gestaltist "pattern" on a world - the world in his writing - which is entirely self-sufficient and self-sustaining. This is William Burroughs's contribution to the evolution of literature.

APPENDIX ONE

Only two paragraphs of the fold-in have been quoted in the body of the discussion as the whole fold-in would be too long to be incorporated into the paper. The following is the rest of the fold-in quoted in its entirety. The fragments in block type indicate that their original source was the quote from Kafka already quoted in the paper. Source: William Burroughs, Nova Express. (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1965), pp. 122-125.

THE FIRST IMPRESSION MADE DETERMINES WHOLE COURSE OF SUBSEQUENT "oxygen" supply - A shocking emergency case - FOR HOW COULD HE KEEP Form A?? - Sees someone to help him but it debarred action in turn - Could scarcely answer the people of Minraud - Brain directs all movement - Use a filter screen that scans the door with intentioned lunacy - WON MANY SIMILAR CASES operating through telepathic misdirection - There has been DISMISSED AN ADVOCATE from Minraud - Pulled in and replaced - WORST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN to present heads - SOMETIMES HAPPENED THAT A CASE TOOK total weapons - The principal NO LONGER FOLLOW IT - THE CASE HAD SIMPLY REACHED molten core of a planet WHERE ASSISTANCE WAS RULED OUT -

"I FANCY," SAID THE MAN, "THAT THIS GENTLEMAN FEELS white hot blue skies - Haste he had already so?"

Even so there is a devious underground EITHER OUTRIGHT OR PARTIAL misdirection - THE OFFICE AIR are heads in bottles - BEYOND ALL DOUBT intend to outthink and replace the advocate - A client revolution - FOR HOW COULD HE KEEP fallen heads TO HELP HIM? - Metal shimmering heat from the stage WHERE FURTHER ASSISTANCE melts at noon INTO REMOTE INACCESSIBLE COURTS -

"Word falling - Photo falling stylishly dressed - THE GENTLEMAN'S insane orders and counter orders 'here' - YOU SEE IT'S ONLY 'HERE' - ACCUSTOMED D.C. FELT ILL IN THE RELATIVELY FRESH AIR, what? - British COULD SCARCELY ANSWER HIM - SHUT THE DOOR WITH THE UTMOST HASTE - "

"Mindless idiot you have WON MANY SIMILAR CASES - "  
Electric defense FREQUENTLY DETERMINED THE WHOLE civilization and PROCEEDINGS - ESPECIALLY WHEN A CASE

fear desperate position and advantage SUDDENLY TAKEN OUT OF THEIR HANDS - THE CASE HAD SIMPLY REACHED incredible life forms - EVEN THE ACCUSED WAS BEYOND altered pressure - The very top operation - The client of mucus and urine said the man was an alien - Unusual mucus coughing enemy "oxygen" up FROM THE STAIRWAY - Speed up movie made such forms by overwhelming gravity supply - Flesh frozen to supply a shocking emergency case - Amino acid directs all movement - won code on Grey Veil - To be read telepathic misdirection - "OFFICE AIR" they can convert in dirty pictures of Life Form B - liquidate enemy on London Space Stage - Tenuous air debarred action of yesterday - Coughing enemy pulled in and replaced -

"The gentleman in body prison working out 'here' - You see it's only 'here' he ever saw even for an instant - Not in other places - Switched our way is doomed IN THE RELATIVELY FRESH AIR - That's us - Planning to use the host could scarcely answer him - Of course Life Form B WITH THE UTMOST HASTE WOULD SHUT THE DOOR THAT WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR our 'oxygen' lines - So what else? Defense FREQUENTLY DETERMINED the life form we invaded - "

ESPECIALLY WHEN A CASE marked for invasion and manipulation SUDDENLY TAKEN OUT OF THEIR HANDS - DISMISSED AN ADVOCATE FROM Biologic Need ONCE HE HAD you PULLED IN TO prepare briefs - The trial of The Nova Mob WITHDRAWN FROM THE ADVOCATE - THE CASE HAD SIMPLY REACHED rigged any place - Pain and pleasure to squeeze the "OFFICE AIR" felt contradictions of biologic STAIRWAY - Crippled in such convenient advocate - FOR HOW COULD HE KEEP means during many years of SOMEONE TO HELP HIM? -

"I FANCY FAINTNESS IS DUE TO THE ATMOSPHERE offered by Life Form A is inadequate - THAT this GENTLEMAN feels necessary to investigate the original 'OFFICE AIR' story of Life Form A on location - A CAME UP FROM THE STAIRWAY - He had already counselor willing to handle 'this horrible case' EITHER OUTRIGHT OR PARTIALLY - YOU SEE IT'S ONLY 'HERE' fixes nature of absolute need - A question of food supply not alien planet - Form A direct claws intimidate and corrupt advocate into channels calculated to squeeze host - Assistance back to our medium - "

Life Form A's ROOM WAS on Ward Island - Crippled in such convenient Life Form B - Minraud an intricate door to cut off "oxygen" of life - SIMILAR CASE operating through arrangements that could liquidate Life Form B by cutting off advocate from Minraud -

"Life Form A was totally alien," SAID THE MAN WHO WAS an alien -

"Have what they call 'emotion' due to the 'oxygen.' "

"Was not the purpose supply Life Form A prior to intervention directing all movement?"

"Pleader a diving suit back to our medium - SCARCELY ANSWER HIM - Be destroyed by alien conditions - Ally detestable to us - FOR HOW COULD HE KEEP Form A seen parasite?"

The best criminal counselor was SIMILAR CASE operating through metal - IMPRESSION followed to present interview - He got Sammy advocate from Minraud - Pulled in and replaced history of Life Form A on location -

Clearly this is a difficult case to defend particularly considering avowed intention of the accused to use the counselor as a diving suit back to their medium where counselor would be destroyed by alien conditions - There is however one phrase in the brief on which a defense can be constructed - "They sometimes mutate to breathe here"

- That is if a successful mutation of Life Form A can be called in as witness - Clearly the whole defense must be based on possibility of mutation and the less said about "absolute biologic need" to maintain a detrimental parasitic existence at the total expense of Form B the better chance of a compromise verdict suspended pending mutation proceedings -

APPENDIX TWO

A discussion of literature and aesthetics does not provide a place for a full examination of the "truth" of Einstein's Theory of Relativity as opposed to Aristotle's cosmology. Nor does such discussion provide a place to fully examine the ability of language to describe those realities for an intricate epistemological, linguistic and ontological discussion would be necessary for that examination. Suffice it to say that the English language's demand for intelligibility of verbalization in terms of Newtonian physics (i.e. one universal space-time coordinate system) is a falsification of what is now known about the universe because of Einstein's theory and a number of other important scientific discoveries. Because Burroughs uses the English language to create a "world" of imagination, he feels that it is a significant factor in the creation of his "world" that it be as accurately representative of his imagination's perception and his perception of the "real" world as possible. This is not simply for the sake of a journalistic accuracy but it is because such a world accurately portrayed in words will enable the audience to perceive their own "realities" with fewer of the prescribed preconceptions enforced at the subliminal level of consciousness by their language which to a certain extent blinds men to "what is there" in their world.

Every language is a special way of looking at the world and interpreting experience...One sees and hears what the grammatical system of one's language has made one sensitive to, has trained one to look for in experience. This bias is the more

insidious because everyone is so unconscious of his native language as a system. To be brought up to speak a certain language, it is part of the very nature of things.<sup>1</sup>

Each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas, but rather is itself a shaper of ideas.<sup>2</sup>

The use of cut-ups and fold-ins challenges the necessity of logic and linearity in expression and communication as logic and linearity are themselves dependent on language for their objectification. Therefore Burroughs assumes that expressive and communicative language can exist and function without those dependents which most of humanity assumes are linguistic necessities. Cut-ups and fold-ins demonstrate that logic is an artificial categorization of experience, for there are many ways of assimilating and comprehending experience without recourse to logic's operations (a mystical experience is usually non-logical) and as logic is a vital part of the Aristotelian world construct cut-ups and fold-ins give concrete proof that language need not submit to that construct to express or communicate.

We cut up nature, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significance as we do largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way...this agreement is, of course, an implicit and unstated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees.<sup>3</sup>

Cut-ups and fold-ins express and communicate inspite of such an agreement and thereby belie the necessity of the agreement. Relativity is alien to thought formed by language as the language assumes a

similar space-time "agreement" which relativity denies. Cut-ups and fold-ins, by allowing the past, the present and the future to coexist simultaneously in the described consciousness (the narrative), give relativity a point of incursion into the "agreement" of language and thus the "truth" of Aristotelian language is shown to be an invalid necessity for linguistic communication.

1. Clyde Kluckhohn, Mirror of Man (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1949), p. 159.

2. Benjamin Lee Whorf, Language, Thought and Reality ed. John B. Carroll (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), p. 212.

3. Ibid., p. 213.

APPENDIX THREE

The rest of the cut-up, too long to be profitably quoted in the body of the discussion, is quoted here in its entirety. For source see footnote 102.

...ving desperately the poverty of image shea...  
in bronze from scorned or pillage consensus of  
contributory configurations...like a flock of  
doves shivering of Venetian blinds and the yellow  
blue awakening sexualizing contingent accessibility  
informed hideous wrecks at the bottom of brown  
gulfs where the giant snakes devoured by lice fall  
from the twisted trees with black odors communicated  
suburban orifice re-enactments of infantile genitalia  
contributory internalized contradictions blue waves  
golden singing fish foam of shadow flowers would  
traduce or transfigure banal privatization con-  
centrates latterly risen from violet fogs through  
the wall of the reddening sky ambivalently supine  
contractually inaccessible black cold pool where a  
child squatting full of sadness launches a boat  
fragile as a butterfly in May between starved confluent  
exasperations communicated linear derivations from  
reciprocal engagements spat blood concomitantly  
irrelevant hysteria at the foot of dark walls beating  
the skinny dogs internalized vector misinformed  
preparation it is raining softly on the town moonlight  
as the clock was striking twelve concentrates of  
otherness with orifices bitter perspectives the road  
without sound is white under the empty moon a slight  
cesspool of dirty blood internalized infantile dia-  
grammatically necessary piercing cry in the darkened  
square spat blood confluently stinging like the salt  
of child's tears sexualizing interdependence latterly  
contingent upon a motionless boat in ashen waters  
concordantly infantile misinformed perspectives North  
wind across the wreckage perish power justice vanish  
ambivalently supine fecundately human there are  
brothers dark strangers if we began bubbling beneath  
indispensably banal privatization concentrates blond  
soldiers from the think bracken the wilderness the  
meadows the horizon are washing themselves red in the  
storm delinquently pulsating oppositional colonnades  
under blue light railway stations wind from the sky

three sheets of ice across the ponds vector  
latterly communicated the question of inter-  
nalized direction at four o'clock on a summer  
morning the sleep of love the wind comes in to  
wander about under the bed reputedly such con-  
tractually accessible human concordance is I feel  
to beg the question then they will have to deal  
with the crafty rat ghastly will-o'-the-wisp  
comes like a gunshot after vespers configurations  
of internalized congruencies

Saharan blue where a thousand blue devils  
dance in the air like flowers of fire supine  
oppositionally pillaged inaccessible jackals  
howling across deserts of thyme stridently mis-  
informed preparations communicated the question  
of pillaged consensus it is raining internalized  
concordance dawn rising like a flock of doves  
softly on the town shivering of Venetian blinds  
at four o'clock and the yellow blue awakening  
concentrates the sleep of love on orifices summer  
accessibility the skinny dogs internalized flowers  
of fire

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>William S. Burroughs, "The Cut-up Method" in The Moderns ed. Leroi Jones (New York: Corinth Books, Inc., 1963), p. 346.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 347.

<sup>3</sup>Marx W. Wartofsky, Conceptual Foundations of Scientific Thought: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1968), pp. 332-334.

Alfred N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (Toronto: The New American Library of Canada, Ltd., 1964), p. 114.

<sup>4</sup>Conrad Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs" in Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews ed. George Plimpton (New York: Viking Press, Inc., 1968), p. 156.

<sup>5</sup>C.W.E. Bigsby, Dada and Surrealism (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1972), p. 28.

<sup>6</sup>Martin Esslin, Theater of the Absurd (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), p. 356.

<sup>7</sup>Bigsby, Dada and Surrealism, p. 27.

<sup>8</sup>Robert Motherwell, ed., The Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology (New York: Wittenborn and Schultz, 1951), pp. xxvii - xxviii.

<sup>9</sup>David F. Pears, Bertrand Russell and the British Tradition in Philosophy (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 50.

<sup>10</sup>Motherwell, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. xx.

<sup>11</sup>Daniel Odier, The Job: Interviews with William Burroughs (New York: Grove Press, 1970), p. 14.

- <sup>12</sup>Bigby, Dada and Surrealism, p. 27.
- <sup>13</sup>M.H. Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms (Toronto: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), p. 78.
- <sup>14</sup>Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," pp. 151, 152, 155.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 159.
- <sup>16</sup>Allen Ginsberg as quoted by Brion Gysin, "Cut-ups: A Project for Disastrous Success" in Evergreen Review, vol. VIII, no. 32 (April-May, 1964), (New York: Grove Press), p. 57.
- <sup>17</sup>Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," p. 154.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 153.
- <sup>19</sup>Bigby, Dada and Surrealism, pp. 16, 28.
- <sup>20</sup>Tristan Tzara Sept Manifestes dada (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1963), p. 64 as quoted and translated by Ihab Hassan, The Dismemberment of Orpheus: Toward a Postmodern Literature (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 67.
- <sup>21</sup>Odier, The Job, p. 18.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 14.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 39.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 16.
- <sup>25</sup>William Burroughs, "The Cut-up Method," p. 346.

- <sup>26</sup> Pierre Dommergues, "Recontre avec William Burroughs" in Langues Modernes, vol. LIX, no. 1 (January-February, 1965), (Paris: n.p.), p. 83.
- <sup>27</sup> Bigsby, Dada and Surrealism, p. 28.
- <sup>28</sup> John Cage, Silence (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), pp. 21-22.
- <sup>29</sup> John Cage as quoted by David Boyden, An Introduction to Music, 2nd edition, (New York): Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 526.
- <sup>30</sup> Odier, The Job, pp. 18-19.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 19.
- <sup>32</sup> "The Drug Revolution" in Playboy, vol. 17, no. 2 (February, 1970), (Chicago: HMH Publishing Company, Inc., 1970), p. 53.
- <sup>33</sup> Odier, The Job, p. 21
- <sup>34</sup> Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," p. 153.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 153.
- <sup>36</sup> Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms, p. 170.
- <sup>37</sup> Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," pp. 150, 154, 159.
- <sup>38</sup> Odier, The Job, p. 169.
- <sup>39</sup> Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," p. 153.

<sup>40</sup> Publisher's and Ginsberg's notes in William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg, The Yage Letters (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1971), pp. 42, 60.

<sup>41</sup> Gysin, Cut-ups, p. 57.

<sup>42</sup> see supra footnote 23.

<sup>43</sup> Gysin, Cut-ups, p. 57.

<sup>44</sup> Brion Gysin, The Process (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), p. 3.

<sup>45</sup> William Burroughs and Brion Gysin, The Exterminator (San Francisco: The Auerhahn Press, 1960), p. 37.

<sup>46</sup> James M. Ethridge ed., Contemporary Authors: A Bio-Bibliographical Guide to Current Authors and Their Works (Detroit: Gale Research Company, The Book Tower, 1964), vols. 9-10, p. 63.

<sup>47</sup> William Burroughs, Nova Express (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1965), p. 72.

<sup>48</sup> Burroughs and Ginsberg, The Yage Letters, p. 66.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 8, 9-11, 14, 15, 24-25, 38-39, 40-41, 42, 44.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 14-15, also referred to in William Burroughs, The Ticket That Exploded (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1968), p. 37.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 22-26.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>58</sup>Burroughs, The Ticket That Exploded, p. 41.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 21, 65, 92, 132, 135, 171, 176, 184, 200, 201.

<sup>61</sup>Odier, The Job, p. 90.

<sup>62</sup>Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," p. 154.

<sup>63</sup>see supra footnote 2.

<sup>64</sup>Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," p. 149.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 150. also see Burroughs, The Ticket That Exploded, p. 139.

<sup>66</sup>see supra in thesis text, p. 21.

<sup>67</sup>Burroughs, The Ticket That Exploded, p. 143.

<sup>68</sup>all page numbers refer to edition of The Ticket That Exploded noted in footnote 65.

<sup>69</sup>Burroughs, The Ticket That Exploded, p. 143.

<sup>70</sup>Odier, The Job, p. 16.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>74</sup>Burroughs, The Ticket That Exploded, p. 40.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>77</sup>see supra footnote 2.

<sup>78</sup>Odier, The Job, p. 19.

<sup>79</sup>William Burroughs, The Wild Boys: A Book of the Dead  
(New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1971), pp. 68-70.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., pp. 65-66.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., pp. 28, 52, 83, 85, 102-105, 107, 109, 120.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>85</sup>Jean Toomer, Cane (New York: Harper and Row Publishers,  
Inc., 1969).

- <sup>86</sup> see supra footnote 38.
- <sup>87</sup> Burroughs, Nova Express, pp. 120-122.
- <sup>88</sup> Franz Kafka, The Trial trans. Willa and Edwin Muir (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1969).
- <sup>89</sup> Burroughs, Nova Express, p. 122.
- <sup>90</sup> Odier, The Job, pp. 15-17, 39.
- <sup>91</sup> see supra footnote 39.
- <sup>92</sup> George Elliot, "Destroyers, Defilers and Confusers of Men" in Atlantic Monthly, vol. 222, no. 6 (December, 1968), (Concord, New Hampshire: The Rumford Press), pp. 78-80.
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- <sup>93</sup> Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," pp. 156-157.
- <sup>94</sup> Marshall McLuhan, "Notes on William Burroughs" in The Nation, vol. 199, no. 21 (December 28, 1964), (New York: Nation Magazine Company), p. 517.
- <sup>95</sup> Burroughs, Naked Lunch, p. xlvi.
- <sup>96</sup> Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," p. 156.
- <sup>97</sup> Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico - Philosophicus ed. C.K. Ogden (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, Ltd., 1922), p. 39 (2.141).

<sup>98</sup> Burroughs, Naked Lunch, p. xlvi and Wittgenstein, Tractatus, pp. 57 (3.328), 129 (5.47321).

<sup>99</sup> McLuhan, "Notes on William Burroughs," p. 517.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp. 517-518.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 517.

<sup>102</sup> Elliot, "Destroyers, Defilers and Confusers of Men," pp. 79-80.

<sup>103</sup> Richard Kostelanetz, "From Nightmare to Serendipity: A Retrospective Look at William Burroughs" in Twentieth Century Literature, vol. 11, no. 3 (October, 1965), (Denver: Allan Swallow), p. 127.

<sup>104</sup> Odier, The Job, p. 96.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp. 97-98.

<sup>106</sup> William K. Wimsatt, The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry (University of Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1954), pp. 3-18.

<sup>107</sup> Knickerbocker, "Interview with William Burroughs," p. 174.

<sup>108</sup> Hugh Fox, "Postscript: Cut-up Poetry and William Burroughs" in West Coast Review, vol. 4, no. 2 (Fall), (Victoria: Morris Printing Company, Ltd.), p. 18.

<sup>109</sup> Odier, The Job, pp. 51, 132.

<sup>110</sup> Burroughs and Ginsberg, The Yage Letters, p. 61.

<sup>111</sup> Odier, The Job, p. 132.

112 Ibid., p. 100.

113 Ibid., p. 99.

114 Burroughs, The Ticket That Exploded, p. 145.

115 Lengthy discussions of the relationships between language, consciousness and reality (as accounted for by language and thought) and how perception is dictated to a significant degree by language are contained in Benjamin Lee Whorf's collection of writings, Language, Thought and Reality (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1969). The arguments are too complex to be profitably summarized in this paper's discussion of the cut-up and fold-in techniques of composition. The segments of Whorf's writings appropriate to the discussion of Burroughs's attack on language are the following: pp. 1-34, 57-87, 134-159, 233-270.

116 Burroughs, Nova Express, p. 14.

117 Ibid., p. 58.

118 Ibid., p. 48.

119 William Burroughs, Naked Lunch, p. 224.

120 William Burroughs, Nova Express, p. 63.

121 Ibid., p. 154.

122 Odier, The Job, pp. 188-189.

123 Alain Robbe-Grillet, For a New Novel: Essays on Fiction trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1965), p. 161.

124 Ibid., pp. 162-163.

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