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TITAN ON AN OVERGROWN TYPEWRITER:
A JUNGIAN APPROACH TO A. E. VAN VOGT'S NULL-A NOVELS

by

John B. Kiddell

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JOHN B. KIDDELL

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

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For Betty Anne
and David and Kelly

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Introduction:

The Critics' Ambivalence

In the 1940's Alfred Elton van Vogt was unflatteringly characterized by a young critic, Damon Knight, as "a pygmy who has learned to operate an overgrown typewriter" (61). Although it is difficult to determine exactly what Knight meant by this, it is clear that he did not intend to be complimentary. After more than fifty years of science-fiction writing, van Vogt's reputation is still unstable, with critics continuing to debate the quality of his work. It is my purpose to demonstrate that van Vogt's work is so compelling that he may be described as a master of the science-fiction genre. His precise writing style, thought provoking philosophies, clever perceptions of the future, and far-reaching plots are all indications of his superior stature, but they pale in comparison with the sheer emotional power generated by his archetypal figures.

As with all literature, van Vogt's writing belongs to the world in general, but his heritage is Canadian, and Canadians especially should be made aware of the strength of his work. In an interview with Leslie A. Croutch in 1942, van Vogt described his early years in Canada. He was born in the "north end" of Winnipeg on Saturday, April 26, 1912, to Dutch immigrant parents, and very soon after the family moved to Saskatchewan where his father practiced law. In 1922 the family moved to Morden, Manitoba, after a brief stay in Indiana, and then back to

Winnipeg, where he attended high school at Kelvin Technical School. In 1929, at the beginning of the Depression, van Vogt worked as a truck driver, a farm hand, and as a clerk at Eaton's, until he finally turned to writing. He wrote "true confession" style stories and trade-paper articles throughout most of the thirties and felt that they provided him with a good living. In 1931 he spent a year in Ottawa as a civil servant, but he returned to Winnipeg until 1941, when he moved to Toronto. 1939 was a big year for van Vogt, for he married E. Mayne Hull, who was to become a science-fiction writer in her own right, and he published his first science-fiction story, "Black Destroyer," in John W. Campbell's Astounding Science-Fiction magazine. In 1944 van Vogt and his wife moved to Los Angeles where he currently resides.

With the great interest that has developed in Canadian literature over the past two decades, it is regrettable that van Vogt is widely regarded as an American writer. Indeed, it may be his Canadian prairie background which accounts for his familiarity with open "space," and three of his most famous stories were written and published while he was in Canada. Slan, The Weapon Makers, and The Weapon Shops of Isher had all been published in serial form in Astounding before he moved to the United States. The need to reclaim van Vogt is not a frivolous one. Although there is a relatively large body of Canadian science fiction catalogued in the Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature, science fiction for the most part still remains in

its infancy in this country, and Canadian writers need some sort of role model to encourage further experimentation in the field. In addition, the Canadian cultural identity is best served by those artists, such as van Vogt, who have succeeded on the world stage.

To reclaim Van Vogt, however, first requires a re-evaluation of his literary merits, and some critics argue that his talents are limited. Van Vogt's popularity has steadily declined since the forties when he was an important part of the so-called "Golden Years of Science Fiction." Book stores carry only one or two copies of his work, if any, and they are usually his most recent novels, not his classics such as Slan (1940, 1945), The Weapon Shops of Isher (1942, 1949), or The World of Null-A (1945, 1948). In the past year alone, at least eight of his novels or short story collections have gone out of print. The general public is unaware of his name, much less his writing, and even young science-fiction fans are unable to make more than vague references to his work.

Two factors contributed to the decline of van Vogt's popularity with the general readership. The first had to be the Damon Knight article which appeared in the short run to have had little effect--the 1947 Beowulf poll designated him as science fiction's most popular writer that year--but which in the long run was quite destructive. In his introduction to The World of Null-A, van Vogt admits that his revision of the story was primarily due to the Knight criticism, and that he was bowing to

the power that Knight was later to hold as an influential science-fiction critic:

Why am I now revising World? Am I doing all this for one critic?

Yep.

But why? - you ask.

Well, on this planet you have to recognize where the power is.

Knight has it?

Knight has it. (7)

The opening remarks in Knight's essay, "Cosmic Jerrybuilder: A. E. van Vogt," a slightly revised version of his earlier article, "The World of van Vogt," are to the point: "The World of Null-A is one of the worst allegedly-science fiction stories ever published" (47). He attacks the plot for its lack of credibility, citing as one example Gosseyn's failure to ask the robo-plane who he is when the plane has stated that it will answer any questions that he wishes to ask (53). This criticism stung van Vogt into changing the scene in his revised World by having Gosseyn ask the question and having the plane reply, "I have no information about your past, only about your present situation" (67). Knight also criticizes van Vogt's seemingly weak characterization for, among other things, the error of double-take: a character's "inability to absorb a new fact until a ridiculously long time has elapsed" (53). He complains that when Gosseyn fiddles with the distorter and is transported to

Venus, it takes him half a page to identify where he is, in spite of having been there once before (54): "He recognized that he didn't feel as hopeless as that, in spite of his memory of miles of black tunnels. Because they wouldn't have focused a Distorter tube on just any part of this Venusian tree tunnel. It must be near some special point, easily accessible from where he was. He was about to climb to his feet when he realized for the first time the magnitude of what had happened. A few minutes ago he had been on Earth. Now he was on Venus" (World 146).

Knight's third criticism is that van Vogt's "choice of words and his sentence structure are fumbling and insensitive" (60), and he provides a page of what he considers to be the worst examples. Two of them: "His mind held nothing that could be related to physical structure. He hadn't eaten, definitely and unequivocally," and "His brain was turning rapidly in an illusion of spinning" (qtd. in Wonder 57).

Perhaps Knight's strongest attack lies in his condemnation of van Vogt for his habit of introducing

a monster, or a gadget, or an extra-terrestrial culture, simply by naming it, without any explanation of its nature. It is easy to conclude from this that van Vogt is a good and a profound writer, for two reasons: first, because van Vogt's taking the thing for granted is likely to induce a casual reader to do the same; and second, because this authorial device is used by many good

writers who later supply the omitted explanations obliquely, as integral parts of the action. The fact that van Vogt does nothing of the sort may easily escape notice. (61)

Knight is probably right in his argument, because there is no doubt that Enro, to name only one example, is dropped into World with virtually no explanation whatsoever.

In terms of the larger scope of the novel, which will be explained from the standpoint of primordial images later in this thesis, however, and in remembering that both of these stories were serialized in Astounding magazine, van Vogt can be defended. His readers were used to waiting for the next issue of the magazine to find answers to their questions, and it was probably not a major difficulty for them to wait for the sequel to World in order to find out who Enro really was and why he had suddenly appeared. If one believes that a book must be a cohesive whole capable of existing within its own right, then there is no doubt that Knight is correct. If, however, one believes that the story, or the myth as Jung would term it, is the important thing, even if it is spread out over three novels, then van Vogt should not be criticized.

The actual effect of Knight's article in forming readers' opinions is difficult to gauge, but if yesterday's readers were as guided by critics as today's, then a large number of individuals were probably discouraged from trying a first time experience with van Vogt. By creating a climate in which van

Vogt fell out of fashion, Knight effectively quelled the rising wave of interest in van Vogt's work, while two of his contemporaries, Isaac Asimov and Robert Heinlein, were able to ride their own growing popularity right into the eighties.

In addition to Knight, other critics were finding fault with van Vogt for much the same reasons: as Alexei Panshin has observed, "[His] graceless approximate style, his lack of plausibility, his grandiosity, and his hot formless passion were all held as defects by the intellectual critics of science fiction" (167). Neil Barron describes World as a "complexly and unsteadily plotted space opera full of pseudo-science, gadgets, and cardboard characters" (269). Brian Stableford claims that all van Vogt's plots are "utterly nonsensical" (82). Even Arthur J. Cox, an admirer of van Vogt, feels that the extensive use of sub-plots causes his stories to lose "all resemblance of order, all unity of appearance". There is another side to the coin, however, in the additional comments that these critics make. Cox comments that van Vogt's stories have "richness of content and variety" (Pt.1 4), Stableford feels that the storyline is not literature, but that "in its own sweet way, it's magnificent" (82), and Barron calls it "fascinating in its grandiose scale and audacity" (269). This is the paradox of van Vogt: his writing style and structure are often attacked, yet the overall effect of his stories is usually described in superlatives. This apparent contradiction requires some careful explanation in later chapters.

The second notable reason for van Vogt's continuing decline in popularity into the 1980's rests with the perception by his fans during the fifties that his stories lacked creative force. Many of the novels that he published at that time were derived from previously written magazine pieces and short stories, and his audience felt that this work lacked his usual electric energy (Panshin 167). Thus, it is not surprising that popular support should diminish and that it would be exceedingly difficult to recover former fans who had, in a sense, felt betrayed.

If van Vogt was thought to lack creativity, however, such a perception was very faulty. Most of van Vogt's major novels in the forties were "fixed up" from the installments that he had previously published in magazines or that he had originally written as short stories, yet no one had complained then about their lacking creativity. World and Players were both made into novels after their initial serialized magazine publications. Perhaps van Vogt's problem was the "self-fulfilling prophecy" syndrome, whereby readers expected the stories to be watered-down versions of the original plots and narrowly focused their analysis of the book on justifying their initial hypothesis. Yet The Weapon Shops of Isher, an amalgamation of two short stories and a novella that was published both in hard and soft covers during the fifties, lends solid evidence that a van Vogt "fix-up" during that time lacked nothing in terms of sheer emotional power and creativity.

One of many reasons for the need to re-awaken interest in

van Vogt is simply that he entertains so well. His stories are enjoyably complex, and the reader finds it extremely difficult to predict any future direction within the plot. It is not, as Knight would have us believe, the implausibility of the action that challenges us, but the appeal to our imagination through the intensity and variety of the scenes with which van Vogt confronts us. In his interview with Charles Platt, van Vogt claimed to have adopted his scene writing technique from a short story instructional manual by John W. Gallishaw which he found sometime in the 1930's at the Winnipeg Public Library. The main point of the book was that all scenes should be approximately eight hundred words in length, that each scene should provide a goal within the plot for one of the characters to try to achieve, and that by the end of the scene the reader should be able to determine whether or not the character had accomplished his or her goal. In effect, each scene would virtually stand by itself as a story, but it depended on the main plot to bring some sense of cohesion to the overall work.

Van Vogt has consistently used this technique throughout his writing career (Platt 134-35), but it is particularly well illustrated in Players where scene after scene shifts from one location to another: in one scene the protagonist "teleports" himself to Venus, in the next scene his body is transferred to a planet where the population has the ability to visualize the future, and in the following scene his mind is shifted into someone else's body on yet another planet. The common thread

running through each scene of about eight hundred words is the protagonist's determination to discover the identity of an individual interfering with his meeting allies on an enemy planet. Gosseyn, the protagonist, is unable to achieve his goal in any of the scenes, and this mystery encourages the reader to find out more. Redd Boggs claims that the mystery contained within van Vogt's stories actually makes them detective stories "employing a complex plot abounding in irrelevancies and false testimony and camouflaging all clues necessary to the mystery's solution till the very end" (11). The story-within-a-story aspect of van Vogt's writing technique certainly provides opportunities for a variety of unusual ideas to be contained within a "sub-story," and it also furnishes an explanation for the initial confusion that some readers feel when first encountering one of his novels.

Van Vogt's scenes are further enhanced by his careful diction. His words and sentences are not as Knight would have us believe, "fumbling and insensitive," but rather carefully selected and intended to clarify the plot which is his main focus. There is not a wasted word in van Vogt's writing, and his style is the kind that appeals to many who feel that lengthy descriptions of setting or of character are intrusive and distract from the main thrust of a story. The prosaic quality of van Vogt's writing in no way diminishes the impact of his sentences, as the following illustration demonstrates: "Now swallowing hard he looked at the photographic reproduction. It

was a head view only, and it was his face all right. But there was something wrong with it. Seconds passed before he realized what it was. They had taken a photograph of the corpse of Gilbert Gosseyn 1" (World 135). The lack of poetic language in this selection makes the sentences crisp and enforces in the reader a sense of the ruthlessness in the gang which makes them determined to discredit Gosseyn and the Games Machine. Cox comments that van Vogt's style is "diamond hard and bright Metallic words, crisp phrases, compact sentences ... fashioned a style, which, despite its faults, represented the most distinctive science-fiction writing published during those years that van Vogt's creative efforts were at their height" (Pt.1, 3).

Van Vogt's preference for "superman" characters also appeals to readers. These characters are ordinary human beings each gifted with one extraordinary power: one has the ability to transport himself from one location to another while another has the ability to read minds. Because the characters are otherwise so ordinary, a reader finds it easy to identify with them and to derive vicarious enjoyment from their unique abilities . The identification with the protagonist is also helped by van Vogt's ability to write in the third person as if he were writing in the first (Cox Pt.1 10). The events in World are depicted as they are seen and experienced by Gosseyn, as this passage describing the death of Gosseyn 1 reveals: "The unbearable part was that he clung to consciousness. He could feel the unrelenting fire and the bullets searching through his writhing body. The blows and

the flames tore at his vital organs, at his legs, his heart, and his lungs even after he had stopped moving. His last dim thought was the infinitely sad, hopeless realization that now he would never see Venus and its unfathomed mysteries" (50-51).

Van Vogt may also be enjoyed for the different philosophies that he presents in his novels. In the Null-A books he primarily stresses General Semantics, a process of thought outlined by Count Alfred Korzybski in his book Science and Sanity, which enhances the ability to foster harmony between individuals and groups of people (van Vogt, Intro., World 7). It is presented in the novels as a multi-value or non-Aristotelian system which encourages people to see problems not in terms of right or wrong, but in terms of many solutions. An important part of the philosophy is the "cortico-thalamic pause," a process whereby an individual who is feeling a strong emotion, such as anger, from his thalamus, the emotional side of his brain, consciously hesitates in his reaction, allowing the cortex, the rational part of the brain, to step in and overcome the emotional impulse. For example, when a young boy is about to faint from fear at some veiled threat that the villain has implied, the protagonist, who has temporarily occupied the boy's body, has to make constant use of the "cortico-thalamic pause" to prevent the adopted body from collapsing. The triumph of the rational over the emotional is a Null-A, non Aristotelian, victory because the rational has the ability to recognize several alternative ways of approaching a problem, while the emotional response is usually a single one.

Van Vogt illustrates the value of the General Semantics philosophy in his description of the battle between the Null-A Venusians and invading forces. The Venusians had no weapons to resist the surprise attack, so they had but two alternatives if they followed traditional Aristotelian thought: flee or surrender. Because they were Null-A trained, however, they were able to use their cortico-thalamic pause to control their initial fear and to determine what other alternatives of action they might have. The final result was to attack the troops at night in defiance of the Aristotelian logic that said unarmed people would not attack the most sophisticatedly armed troops in history. By swarming down the tunnels created by the massive bark of the immense Venusian trees, the Null-A's were able to enter the enemy's camp before they could awaken, and through using terrible screams and short clubs, they were able to intimidate and defeat the unsuspecting troops in close-order combat. The scene took place at the same time throughout all the armed camps on the planet, and constituted a complete Null-A victory. Throughout the three novels van Vogt continually promotes the General Semantics philosophy both figuratively, as in the preceding example, and in straight comments from Science and Sanity.

A political philosophy to which van Vogt adheres in his fiction is the belief that there must be a dichotomy in the government of a people. Essentially elitist, such a view argues that there should be a strong central authority for most of the

population, while for a more favoured group self-determination should be maintained. This philosophy is developed in the Null-A novels with the apparent contradiction of the individualism of Null-A co-existing with a central arbiter, the Games Machine. Although one of the Machine's responsibilities is to weed out people who are not capable of managing the Null-A philosophy, it is also the single dictatorial authority for the government of Earth. The Null-A's are the favoured few who are allowed to inhabit Venus where there is no fixed government structure. The Null-A philosophy promotes individual responsibility and response to the needs of the people as a whole, so a central government would be restrictive and redundant. The unlucky people remaining on Earth are not accorded this freedom, however. In a completely undemocratic fashion, they are manipulated by their president under the direction of the Games Machine.

This dichotomy is even more pronounced in two other van Vogt novels, The Weapon Shops of Isher and The Weapon Makers both of which deal with the same political system. Again there are two groups: the masses who are ruled by a ruthless female monarch, and the members of the weapons shops who are able to buy weapons in order to maintain their independence from the central government. The credo of the weapons shop members is "The Right to Bear Arms is the Right to be Free." Unfortunately, since only members of the exclusive weapon shops are able to buy weapons, presumably everybody else loses their right to freedom. Although this peculiar fascist philosophy does not necessarily indicate

van Vogt's own views on government, it does indicate a possible indifference to the plight of the politically disadvantaged and may partially explain his current lack of popularity.

Many science-fiction writers make accurate predictions about the future, Jules Verne and his submarine being one example, and van Vogt is no exception with his Null-A novels. In the Science Fiction Writers of America Bulletin he claimed, with justification, that "The universe - out there - always seemed so vivid to me, it was almost as if I could feel its reality - and that included the ideas that I evolved about it for science fiction" (9). In World, Dr. Kair explains that Gosseyn's extraordinary ability results from a very active extra brain which "exists in embryo in every normal human brain. But it can't develop under the tensions of conscious life" (187). Van Vogt's premonition about the presence of an extra brain in human beings was validated in March 1987, when researchers at Stanford University in California found that babies have a "little brain within a brain." The "proto brain," as the researchers called it, "begins to evolve at the time of birth to be replaced by the brain the baby takes into adulthood" ("Study Finds ..." 29). The parallels with Dr. Kair's embryonic brain are fascinating when one considers the time span of forty years between van Vogt's initial hypothesis and the researchers' actual discovery.

It is Van Vogt's extensive use of archetypal symbolism, however, which is primarily responsible for his impact despite some possible faults in his plotting. In fact, reading his work

can be compared to experiencing a dream sequence, because although the logical connections are not always there, the experience is always a rich one. The appeal of van Vogt's writing is an affective one, and this appeal is not so much to the consciousness as to the personal unconscious of the reader. Charles Platt describes opening a van Vogt book as opening the subconscious (134), and asserts that the story is enjoyed viscerally, "just as a dream can be savoured so long as one's logical skepticism is held in temporary abeyance" (qtd. in Hartwell 123). Knight's failure to deal with the emotive and psychological appeal of van Vogt severely limits the value of his criticism.

That van Vogt does write in dream-like sequences is not surprising, given his methods of composing his books. In one interview he explained that, rather than deal with an idea immediately, he preferred to let it dwell in his unconscious for a few days, and then when he confronted it again, it would have grown and solidified (Cox 6). He also explained that he would use an alarm clock to wake himself at different hours of the night when he was working on a story. He would have a sign beside his bed explaining what particular problem he was working on, and invariably after a few awakenings he would come up with a solution to that particular writing problem (Drake 46). The relationship between his writing and his unconscious is fully developed in an interview with Jeffrey Elliot and Al Flynn: "As an adult, trying to penetrate the unconscious by means of,

first, hypnosis and, then, psychotherapy, I discovered that such comatose states, when mentally poked at, give off clouds of fantasies and hallucinations. My science-fiction writing is the brain's effort to stabilize, rationalize, and make sense out of this endless stream of images" (23).

Van Vogt has suffered through much negative criticism over his past sixty or so years as a storyteller and much of this results from ignorance of Jungian depth psychology and its influence on van Vogt's writing. A careful consideration of van Vogt's three Null-A novels, The World of Null-A, The Players of Null-A, and Null-A Three, will go some distance towards rebutting Knight and will hopefully generate a Canadian interest, as it attempts to show that van Vogt is a "giant" who uses archetypal symbolism in his world of science fiction to evoke powerful reader response. These novels are a suitable selection for a study of van Vogt for they comprise a trilogy with one protagonist whose growth develops through the stories, they contain van Vogt's most popular novel, World, and they cover a period of forty years between their publishing dates while maintaining a consistency in style.

My first chapter argues that the protagonist in the three novels comes to learn about his unconscious self and is involved in the process of individuation. The second chapter points out the frequent use of archetypal personification in the books, and the third chapter reviews the readers' response to the symbolism. Appendices summarizing the plot for each of the novels are found

at the end of the thesis.

Chapter One

Identity and Individuation

By focusing on characters who are in pursuit of their own identities throughout the three Null-A novels, van Vogt dramatizes the psychological concept that what a person remembers about himself/herself constitutes that particular individual's identity (van Vogt Intro. 9). For example, Gilbert Gosseyn (pronounced "go sane") in the first chapter of World finds himself in all sorts of trouble because he claims to be the husband of the daughter of the Earth's president. His memory, which he later finds to be false, provided him with that identity. In another incident, this time in The Players of Null-A, a priest, Secoh, finds himself in the position of having to reject his god. Because the god had been a dominant part of his life since childhood, the priest must reject all those memories. His complete mental collapse occurs when he loses all sense of the self with which the lost memories had provided him.

The goal of Gosseyn throughout the novels is to find out who he is by abstracting his identity from his immediate environment. Van Vogt repeatedly uses the phrase "to abstract" as a term that indicates how one gains information through perceiving a portion of what other people's reactions are to certain events (Intro. 8). One can abstract that he/she is an important person if everybody bows when he/she passes. Gosseyn, therefore, tries to determine who he is by interpreting other people's

responses to him.

From a Jungian point of view, Gosseyn's search for self is the "process of individuation." According to Jung, the process involves the attempt to become a "psychological 'individual,' that is, a separate, indivisible unity or 'whole'" (Archetypes 275). In order to achieve this wholeness there must be an integration of the unconscious into the conscious (40). By abstracting to find out who he is, not just at the conscious level but also at the levels of the personal unconscious and collective unconscious, Gosseyn develops his own memories and uniqueness. Ultimately, he is trying to harmonize the conflicts between what his consciousness tells him and what his unconscious contains, to have his identity equal his memory, and to achieve what Jung describes as "self" (Archetypes 142).

What are these images that van Vogt is so good at evoking? The answer lies with Jung and his concept of the collective unconscious and the archetypes which are contained within it. Archetypes are the sources of our subjective reactions to events that take place in our lives. These archetypes, and our reactions to them, have been passed on from generation to generation and are, therefore, remnants of our ancestral, emotional life. They are not the actual recollection of past events, but the emotional recollection (Jung, Archetypes 4-5). Erich Neumann, once a student of Jung, explains the emotional power of the archetypes in his book, The Great Mother:

The dynamic, the effect of the archetype, is manifested

in energetic processes within the psyche, processes that take place both in the unconscious and between the unconscious and consciousness. This effect appears, for example, in positive and negative emotions, in fascinations and projections, and also in anxiety, in manic and depressive states, and in the feeling that the ego is being overpowered. Every mood that takes hold of the entire personality is an expression of the dynamic effect of an archetype, regardless whether this effect is accepted or rejected by the human consciousness: whether it remains unconscious or grips the consciousness. (3-4)

The powerful emotional response that van Vogt develops in his readers seems to be derived from a remarkable access to archetypal symbols, and when one recognizes how frequently van Vogt is able to personify these archetypes in his writing, then one can best appreciate his achievements. Van Vogt has the ability, as Barry Malzberg puts it, "to tap archetypal power, archetypal 'them,' and open up veins of awe or bedazzlement" (5). Alexei Panshin provides a counter-argument to Knight's criticism of van Vogt's characterization by indicating that the characters, in many cases, are pure archetypes and, as such, need no further elaboration (166). John W. Campbell, editor of Astounding magazine during van Vogt's most productive years, seems to be describing a reaction to the archetypal imagery when he describes World as "something like a 550 volt A. C. power line;

it looks innocent, but once you get hold of it you can't let go till somebody shuts off the power" (qtd. in Knight Wonder 203). I want to expand upon the ideas of these perceptive men and show how Jungian theory can be applied to character development within the Null-A novels and how readers react to these characters from the collective unconscious.

Each of the three books in the trilogy seems to focus on a different archetype which Gosseyn projects from his own unconscious. Jung explains that projection "is an unconscious automatic process whereby a content that is unconscious to the subject transfers itself to an object, so that it seems to belong to that object (Archetypes 60). In World Gosseyn comes to terms with a Father archetype which he projects upon his creator, the scientist Lavoisseur. Lavoisseur had perfected cloning to such an art that he had produced copies of himself, Gosseyn being one of them. The Shadow is the dominant archetype in Players where a priest on the planet Gorgzid does evil when he transforms himself into a black shape with no material substance. The last novel, Null-A Three, provides Gosseyn with the opportunity to confront his Anima in the form of the gentle, sensuous Queen Strala. By projecting his own archetypes onto others, Gosseyn is eventually able to recognize their characteristics within himself, for as Jung points out in Archetypes, "In the individuation process what were originally projections stream back 'inside' and are integrated into the personality again" (374).

Another thread which ties the three novels together is the

pervasiveness of the Non-Aristotelian or Null-A philosophy. As I pointed out above, Van Vogt adopted this philosophy from the work of Count Korzybski who named his ideas General Semantics (Intro. 7). According to the basic tenet of this belief, revealed in van Vogt's work, the world tends to see things simply in terms of black or white rather than in areas of grey or different gradation. Capable of seeing many alternatives to a problem rather than the one or the other options on which the less sophisticated thinker deliberates, a follower of Null-A is a superior thinking person and a survivalist. In the novels, followers of Null-A are an elitist class allowed to be the sole inhabitants of the colony on Venus where there is no government but the dictates of their philosophy. Gilbert Gosseyn, of course, is a Null-A.

World was the first of the Null-A trilogy and the most interesting of the three. In this novel Gosseyn's individuation and growth in identity slowly progress as he tries to establish who he is and what his origins are and as he becomes more aware of the needs of his own personal self in contrast with the needs of the chess player, Lavoisseur, and the Machine. Gosseyn's search to discover himself begins at the outset, when he presents himself at the hotel, is accused of being a liar, and then undergoes a lie detector test. The test shows that he is not what he says he is, but worse, "he himself seems to be unaware of his own identity" (18). Gosseyn's implanted memory had indicated that he was the husband of Patricia Hardie, but now he finds that

he has no identity because the memory he had was faulty. His consciousness is that of the newborn and he does not have the capacity, at this point, to make any connections with his unconscious. Later when he meets Patricia in the guise of Teresa Clark, he tries to validate the true information in his memory by questioning her about the Semantics Institute and its director. She is unable to remember much but she does provide an important bit of information when she comments:

"But I saw the bearded man -- what's his name--the director?"

"Lavoisseur?" Gosseyn frowned into the darkness. "I thought he was killed in an accident a few years ago. When did you see him?"

"Last year. He was in a wheel chair."

Gosseyn frowned... It seemed odd, though, that whoever had tampered with his mind had not wanted him to know that the almost legendary Lavoisseur was still alive.

(24-25)

Lavoisseur, as we know from the end of the novel, had created Gosseyn's memory, so what was his purpose in having his clone think that he was dead? From the standpoint of the plot, the purpose was to be able to use Gosseyn as a pawn who would make the forces of the Greatest Empire more cautious in their invasion plans because of their fear of his "superman" status. As long as Gosseyn did not know who he was, Lavoisseur could manipulate him through his need to find out more about his own identity. It is

this need that causes Gosseyn to go to the Games Machine. From a depth psychology point of view, Gosseyn is being put in the position of having to seek out his Father archetype which he will have to bring into his consciousness as part of the individuation process.

When Gosseyn does go to the Machine for the first time, he is asked for his name, gives it, and then receives the unusual comment, "For the time being ... I'll accept that name" (30). Again he is put in a position of feeling that his memory is somehow defective and therefore that he cannot establish his identity.

His situation becomes even more complicated after he is killed trying to escape from Patricia's apartment, and then awakes to find himself on Venus. His problem develops around the conflict between his memory of dying and the recognition that he is still alive: "He was a man who claimed not merely similarity of structure but identification with the dead man. In effect, he was maintaining that because he had the memory and general physical appearance of Gilbert Gosseyn 1, he was Gilbert Gosseyn 1" (63). The roboplane provides no assistance in solving the puzzle, because its reply to Gosseyn's question about "Who am I?" (66) is, "I have no information about your past, only about your present situation" (67). Finally, after being captured in Crang's apartment where he had had time to question himself about "Who was he that he was so important?" (72), he is shown the corpse of his former body and realizes, as Patricia points out

that, "This second body of yours ... actually knows nothing more than the first. You're really just a pawn" (81).

It is understandably shocking for Gosseyn to have to recognize the presence of at least one and maybe more identical bodies, but at least he is now able to comprehend that someone was responsible for his resurrection. Because he had a primary responsibility for Gosseyn's existence, that person, the chess player or Lavoisseur, is a father figure.

After Dr. Kair has examined Gosseyn and made detailed studies of his extra brain, the doctor finds himself enthralled by the incredible scientific achievement of Gosseyn's creator. Gosseyn shows a further development in his understanding of his creator when he explains to Dr. Kair that, "The miracle of my strange immortality was a product of somebody who opposes the group that owns the Distorter. And yet, Doctor, my side--our side--is afraid. It must be. If it had comparable strength, it wouldn't play this hidden game" (110). Gosseyn, in a sense, is experiencing what every son has to undergo with his father: the realization that one's father is not omnipotent and that he carries basic human frailties (Jung, Archetypes 67). This recognition by Gosseyn of Lavoisseur's weakness is a sign of developing psychological maturity and a step in the way towards becoming individuated.

Gosseyn's frustration at not having control over his own life comes to a head when he is on the plane with Dr. Kair heading for a cottage on Lake Superior where the doctor can

continue his research into the extra brain. While in flight and with his companion sleeping, Gosseyn decides it is time to confront his own destiny and he exits the plane using an "ingravity parachute." His thoughts express a further step in becoming an individual and creating his own identity when he comments to himself as he leaves, "A man who could in thirty minutes realize that the enticing easy path was not for him had come a long distance toward domination of his environment" (111).

Unfortunately, his grand designs are quickly thwarted by the Machine who commands him to kill himself. The Machine explains that in order to activate the third Gosseyn body which will have superior ability to Gosseyn 2, the latter must first be dead. Gosseyn 1, who had a minimal sense of his own identity, might have meekly acquiesced to this directive, but Gosseyn 2 shows that he has distanced himself from his earlier self in a response which shows a sense of individuality: "He wasn't killing himself--just like that" (121). Although he does eventually attempt suicide, he is making a statement about the value he places on his own self, an important point in the growth to become a well adjusted individual.

He reaches an understanding with either his personal unconscious or the collective unconscious when Patricia accuses him of venturing into the palace for the Distorter in order to have the gang kill him rather than doing it himself. He clearly understands that "No sane man could commit suicide or let others kill him without resisting. And so his subconscious had tried to

find a way out" (127). This relating of conscious thought with the contents of the unconscious is part of the process of individuation and shows Gosseyn's further development of self. When he eventually does try to commit suicide, he realizes that his unconscious sense of survival will not allow it. In order to circumvent this inner impulse, he takes a hypnotic drug and listens to a tape recorder convincing him that "I'm nobody. I'm not worth anything. Everybody hates me. What's the good of being alive? I'll never make anything of myself. No girl will ever marry me. I'm ruined ...no hope...no money...kill myself..." (128). Fortunately, the Machine intervenes with the news that the gang has found and destroyed the third body, so Gosseyn must not shoot himself.

Gosseyn now decides that he can no longer count on others but must take action against the army of the Greatest Empire all by himself. He has made a major break from the psychological dependence that being a pawn necessarily implied, and has acquired the self-reliance, independence and uniqueness that are assets of an individual responsible for his own actions. He is, however, still unaware of the person responsible for his existence.

Through reading about the philosophy of Null-A, Gosseyn comes to a further understanding of his own identity formation and individuation when he summarizes as follows: "What was involved was a greater awareness of that which made up a person's identity: the memory stored in the brain and elsewhere in the

body. The more he strove for perfect memory, the more clearly demarcated an individual he would be" (138). This explanation accords with Jung's theory that the process of individuation involves an individual's discovery of harmony by becoming aware of the archetypes stored within his/her unconscious.

Later, when Gosseyn is trying to recover the Distorter from the Games Machine, he shoots the guards that have been assigned to protect the area from looting by the huge crowds: "He who had so frequently refused to kill--merciless now. The guards were symbols, he decided bleakly, symbols of destruction. Having taken on unhuman qualities, they were barbarous entities, to be destroyed like attacking beasts and forgotten" (140). From one point of view, Gosseyn is demonstrating his growth in personal identity; he has established his own ground rules for killing and has rejected the earlier thoughts that had been implanted in his original memory. There is also another viewpoint, however. Gosseyn is revealing part of his Shadow by projecting it onto the guards who are trying to prevent him from achieving his own ends. In describing the guards as "attacking beasts," he is actually describing himself, as he mows down the forces in front of him. This is significant because the identification of the Shadow within oneself is the first step in the process of individuation: "Since the shadow is the figure nearest his consciousness and the least explosive one, it is also the first component of personality to come up in an analysis of the unconscious. A minatory and ridiculous figure, he stands at the very beginning

of the way of individuation" (Archetypes 271). Gosseyn has not recognized his Shadow within himself and has only projected it onto others, but in Players he will finally come to terms with this archetype. Towards the end of the novel, the Null-A Venusians are able to defeat the forces of Thorson's army without Gosseyn's help. This causes both Thorson and Gosseyn to be puzzled by the motivation of the Chess Player for creating Gosseyn in the first place: "In the final issue you seem to have served no useful purpose. The attack has been defeated not because of anything you did but because of the philosophy of a race" (162). Gosseyn is again put in a situation where his memory is lacking and therefore his own sense of identity is weak. Thorson, however, finally provides him with the explanation for his creation. Thorson realizes that if he can find the Chess Player, he too will be able to achieve the immortality that Gosseyn has. He makes a deal with Gosseyn that if Gosseyn helps to locate the Chess Player, then he will not destroy all the Null-A's with atomic power. Lavoisseur, the Chess Player, had achieved his purpose, but, unfortunately, Gosseyn was still unaware of his actual identity.

Finally, at the end of the novel, when Gosseyn shaves the beard off Lavoisseur, he recognizes that, except for the age difference, his appearance is identical to his creator's. Gosseyn, in effect, has found his own father and has satisfied part of his lust to find out who he is by abstracting his own identity from the appearance of Lavoisseur. He realizes that

Lavoisseur created him through cloning and that he was activated with a false memory, and therefore a false identity, in order to catch the immediate attention of the ever-surveillant gang. Through personal experiences and through information derived from Patricia Hardie, the Machine, Thorson, and, finally Lavoisseur, Gosseyn has developed a foundation of memories. It does not matter whether or not he is in the body of Gosseyn 1, 2, or 3; it is the personal memories that give him his identity. It is this underlying theme that van Vogt will continue to develop throughout his trilogy.

In Jungian terms, Gosseyn has undergone a "Spiritual transformation, i.e., a fundamental change of the personality and consciousness, occur[ing] only through the crucial emergence of an archetype" (Archetypes 78). Lavoisseur is more than just a Father; he is also a personification of the Wise Old Man archetype: "the superior master and teacher, the archetype of the spirit, who symbolizes the pre-existent meaning hidden in the chaos of life" (Archetypes 35). The Wise Old Man archetype always appears "in a situation where insight, understanding, good advice, determination, planning, etc., are needed but cannot be mustered on one's own resources" (Jung, Archetypes 216). When one encounters such a character in literature, there is an unconscious emotional reaction to it. Lavoisseur, as the "cosmic chess player," is responsible for planning the direction of the Gosseyn lives, and in his wisdom uses them to save the Null-A philosophy both on Earth and on Venus. Without Lavoisseur,

Thorson and his gang would have eventually managed to conquer Venus in spite of the Null-A's because the Greatest Empire would be able "to supply virtually endless armies and if necessary exterminate every Null-A on Venus" (160). Probably the most powerful scene in World occurs at the conclusion when Gosseyn finds the dying Lavoisseur. Lavoisseur reveals his role in the action against Enro's gang, thus carrying out the Old Man role of imparting his knowledge of the world to his son. Because Gosseyn is part of him, Lavoisseur finds it very easy to comprehend his anxieties and to dispell them. When he is lying on the floor after being mortally wounded and in great pain, he asks for a blaster in order to kill himself, but Gosseyn refuses. Instead of reacting in anger, Lavoisseur shows his insight by recognizing Gosseyn's need for an explanation, "'Want information, eh?' he mumbled. He laughed, a curious, amused laugh. 'All right, what do you want?'" (186). Lavoisseur provides a detailed report on his manoeuvres from behind the scenes and finally, in his death, gives Gosseyn the ultimate proof of who he is. After the beard is shaved off and Gosseyn notices the similarity between his own face and the dead man's, he recognizes that, "Here beyond all argument was the visible end reality of his search" (190). Psychologically, therefore, van Vogt is indicating that Gosseyn has come to terms with the archetype of the Father and with the Wise Old Man, and has made a step in the individuation process by recognizing those archetypes within himself.

To a lesser extent the computer of the Sleeping God in Players and Gosseyn 2 in Three are symbols of the Wise Old Man archetype. Both give advice and direction to the Gosseyn protagonists who, being relatively new to the universe, are eager to gain as much knowledge as possible from their elders' experiences. The computer's ruthless but sound advice to Gosseyn for saving the other galaxies from destruction is, "You must kill the priest who possesses this power" (182). Secoh, the computer points out, had been an ordinary sweeper, until the distorter mechanism had been put into his hands by accident and not into the hands of a genuine priest: "This device automatically attuned itself to the body of the priest, a result of precaution taken by the builders to insure that the instrument would always be under the control of a human being" (181). This information and advice allow Gosseyn to save millions of people from the Secoh directed attacks of the Greatest Empire.

In Three Gosseyn 2 also plays the Wise Old Man figure, but to a lesser extent than the two mentioned previously. At first Gosseyn 3 frequently turns to the other Gosseyn for advice, as he does after his rejection of Strala's advances. He tries to rationalize his unwillingness to participate by claiming that his refusal was based on an unwillingness to be involved in any "commitments until this entire situation was clarified in some reasonable way." When he presents this hypothesis to the Wise Old Man figure, the reply "had the same doubtful quality that was there in the back of his own mind" (83). This scene can be

considered as a father/son scene with the son asking for reassurance and the father being reluctant to hurt the younger person's feelings but wanting to be truthful at the same time. By the end of the novel Gosseyn 3 is no longer so insecure and no longer needs the other's advice. In fact, when the two of them finally meet each other face to face, it is 3 who controls the situation by asking 2, "Do you need any help?" (241), and by stating, "Looks like it's going to be all right, and that we will be able to collaborate at close quarters, or otherwise" (242).

Gosseyn continues his search for individuality into the sequel of World, The Players of Null-A. In this novel Gosseyn 2 is still the major character, but he finds himself switching bodies with a younger man. Although Gosseyn takes the body of Ashargin, van Vogt makes it quite clear that Gosseyn's identity remains the same, for he retains all of his own memories.

The focus of the memory/identity pattern is on the characters of Ashargin/Gosseyn and Secoh. Although Gosseyn frequently resides in Ashargin's body thanks to the Sleeping God's computer, we never think of him as anybody but Gosseyn. Because we are fed his thought processes and memories, we recognize only his identity, but Gosseyn's own reaction to occupying Ashargin is not quite so clear cut, for he has to reject his initial response: "I am Ashargin ... The idea was nonverbal, an automatic awareness of self, a simple identification that squeezed up out of the organs and glands of his body and was taken for granted by his nervous system. Not

quite for granted. Gilbert Gosseyn rejected the identification with amazement that yielded to a thrill of alarm and then a sense of confusion" (23). Throughout the story, Gosseyn's personal identification with himself is often momentarily confused when he abstracts information from people who identify him as Ashargin. As readers, however, we often wonder in which particular body he resides at any particular time, but we are always able to identify him as Gosseyn.

Gosseyn continues to individuate his psyche through his interaction with the Follower, also known as Secoh, who is a personification of the Shadow archetype and is described as such: "a shadow, made of shadow stuff, made of blackness through which the street lamp was visible" (5). The Shadow represents the basic, morally inferior, animal side of one's personality (Jung, Dreams 251), and is often represented in literature by Satan or the "evil one" (Monte 287). Van Vogt frequently describes the Follower as a Shadow for his black appearance and his ability to maintain a permeable form, "a shape was taking form a dozen feet to his right. It grew black, and yet he could see the wall beyond it. It thickened, but it was not substance" (67). As a result, Gosseyn's battle with the Follower seems to be more of a battle between his Self and his Shadow. As readers we react to the Follower in a powerful way because we can identify in him a depiction of the Shadow within ourselves.

The Follower in this novel plays a similar role to that of the Chess Player in World because he too manipulates Gosseyn from

afar, making him unsure about his identity and the reasons why anyone would be so interested in him. Crang points out to Patricia, "You forget that Gosseyn always assumed that beyond him, or behind him, was a being he called, for want of a better name, a cosmic chess player. That's, of course, a wild comparison, but if it had any application whatsoever, then we've got to assume a second player. Chess is not a game of solitaire" (9). The Follower is the second chess player, and for his own ends, he had persuaded Enro to attack Venus in order to start a war with the Galactic League. His ultimate goal was to be high priest of "a Universal State, centrally controlled, and held together by military force" (38). This obsession with power no matter what the cost seems to reflect the qualities that are inherent within the Shadow (Archetypes 123).

The Follower tempts Gosseyn's better self to succumb to material desires in the same way that the shadow archetype tempts man's basic self to follow its animal urges (Archetypes 125). When the Follower, whom Gosseyn himself also refers to as the "Shadow," appears in front of Gosseyn on Leej's spacecraft, he tempts Gosseyn by stating, "You and I can dominate the galaxy" and also threatens, "If you refuse ... then you and I are enemies, and you will be destroyed without mercy" (70). This symbolic representation of Christ's temptation by Satan in the desert has the Follower appealing to man's baser instincts--cowardice and greed--but Gosseyn rejects both and battles to a stand-off with Secoh. By rejecting the Follower's offer to

become a partner, Gosseyn temporarily triumphs over the appeal to the shadow part of his unconscious and moves a step further in his individuation. The battle with the Follower is not over, however, as Secoh withdraws from the ship to confront Gosseyn at a later time.

Gosseyn then has further problems in trying to establish his own identity when he becomes aware of the Great Migration which brought travellers from their doomed planet to the planets of the Galactic League. Gosseyn surmises accurately that Lavoisseur was one of the travellers who, with his years of experience and scientific background, would be able to carry out the cloning process. Unfortunately, his next connection is inaccurate: he predicts that the Sleeping God is actually one of the space travellers, "and that this was a Gosseyn body. If such was the madness that built up around Gosseyn bodies, then he who was immortal by means of a series of such bodies, would have to reconsider the whole problem of his immortality" (127). This problem with his identity is resolved when Secoh allows him to view the sleeping spaceman and to see that there is no physical comparison with himself: "It was the face of a moron. There was not even a faint resemblance to Gilbert Gosseyn. The Sleeping God of Gorgzid was a stranger" (128).

Toward the end of the novel, Gosseyn becomes more aware of the process by which the Follower was able to create his immaterial shape and of the method through which he was able to travel. The distorters that he used were also those that he used

to manipulate Gosseyn in his switching with Ashargin's body. As this evidence is presented, Gosseyn's understanding of previous events is altered, and his memory and, therefore, identity, adjusts to the change. He is now able to recognize that the Shadow is only human and not a supernatural being who has power to travel and to change his material form. In Jungian terms Gosseyn recognizes the presence of the Follower as a projection from his unconscious, something that is natural and not something that he has particularly to fear as long as he recognizes the possibilities of danger within it.

The final scene in the novel demonstrates both van Vogt's theme that memory equals identity and the process of individuation in which Gosseyn vanquishes any threat that the Shadow presents to him. As the figure of the spaceman/Sleeping God moves down the steps towards Secoh, it threatens him: "Secoh--traitor--you must die" (190) and this results in Secoh's transformation into his Follower shape:

the strain of watching one's god walk towards one with hostile intent must be a mind-destroying experience. In a very frenzy of terror, the Follower protected himself by the only method at his disposal.

Energy poured from the shadow shape. In a flare of white flame, the god-body dissolved into nothingness. In that instant Secoh became a man who had destroyed his god. No human nervous system trained as his had been could accept so terrible a guilt.

So he forgot it. (191)

Secoh rapidly regresses into the fetal position and passes from a sobbing stage into a silent one, for "A baby that has not yet been born does not cry" (192). Van Vogt is clearly pointing out the same idea in the character of Secoh that he has demonstrated in his portrayal of Gosseyn: that one's identity is clearly based upon one's memories and not upon one's physical being; it is psychic not somatic. Secoh rejects all memories of his god and, in doing so, casts aside his sense of identity. All that is left of Secoh after his refusal to face reality is a lump of protoplasm.

A Jungian analysis reveals that Gosseyn has dealt with the Shadow, and that, by facing up to its temptations, he has become more individuated by integrating "the unconscious into consciousness" (Archetypes 40). By bringing the Shadow into his consciousness, the archetype is no longer a threat to him, in the same way that Secoh no longer poses a risk for him within the story. Gosseyn recognizes that there will be times when the Shadow will want to control the consciousness but, because he knows his enemy, he will not be taken by surprise. Secoh's complete impotence at the conclusion parallels the failure of the Shadow to control Gosseyn.

The Gosseyns have been involved in a search for identity throughout the three novels, and the process comes to a strong conclusion in Null-A Three when Gosseyn 3 finally has a sexual encounter. When the opportunity is first offered, his refusal

can be explained in psychological terms as an absence of adult sexuality based on an inability to differentiate his own ego from that of his parents (Glover 127). In this case his psychological parents are Lavoisseur and, perhaps, "that long, long, long ago mother [who] still permeated his subconscious memories" (77). Although in chronological age he is an adult, in personality he is in a pre-puberty stage with no concept of adult sexuality and no sense of individual ego. He feels that in some way he is still a part of Lavoisseur's grand plan that included Gosseyn 1, and his entrance into the General Semantics Institute merely confirms the feeling. It is important, however, that individuals see themselves as distinct from their parents rather than being mere appendages to them. This change in Gosseyn 3 occurs when he stops continuously asking advice from another father figure, Gosseyn 2, and begins to act independently by making his own decisions about moving to another galaxy and marrying Strala. When Gosseyn finally yields to Strala, he is asserting his own sexuality and stressing the independence of his own ego from his father.

Because Gosseyn 3 was created by accident while Gosseyn 2 was still living, they have identical memories and therefore identical personalities. Gosseyn 3 realizes quite rapidly, however, that his memories are going to change from those of his brother because they are going to have different experiences: "It was a thought with a significant implication ... In terms of experience we're going in different directions, moment by moment.

Soon, we will not be duplicates, one of the other--" (86). This thought is further iterated when the two Gosseyns are discussing emergency procedures in the case of a surprise Dzan attack, and Gosseyn 2 suggests that the party who are visiting the Dzan warship--Patricia and Eldred Crang, Leej, the Prestcotts, and Enro--should be protected from attack by "similarizing" them to a safe location. The end result of their discussion is a comment on their identities by Gosseyn 2 who asks the other Gosseyn, "Please notice that we are mentally separating the two of us. No longer is it 'alter ego' but 'my' and 'your.'" It will be interesting to see how that comes out. Perhaps we shall presently become two different people" (91).

Gosseyn 3's search for a separate identity is furthered when his slightly defective extra brain accidentally transfers him to Earth where he joins Enin. Earth has a special appeal for him, and it provides a sense of deja vu: "The inner good feeling seemed to be there so naturally that many moments went by before he identified it: ... It's as if I've come home--" (116). The feeling that is welling up from his unconscious reveals a heredity of which he has been ignorant, and the once forgotten memories help him to identify as more than just a freak born in a capsule, but as an Earthman. The feeling is reinforced when he has his first sleep: "when he had lain down on this bed, earlier, it had seemed so natural, so--ordinary--that the uniqueness of it in his own existence had not occurred to him" (120). Gosseyn 3 is obviously tapping into the unconscious mind of Lavoisieur

whose psyche had been duplicated within him, and the penetration provides memories which will allow him to further delineate his own individual character, separate from Gosseyn 2's identity.

In terms of his memory/identity pattern, van Vogt in this novel is examining the question of whether or not two physically identical individuals with identical memories are identical. The answer initially, of course, is yes--but only for the briefest time. Both the Gosseyns have the same identity when Gosseyn 3 is activated, but as 3 experiences different situations from those of 2 he becomes a unique identity. The differences result from the periods of time during which Two and Three are not in contact and, therefore, their memories have to differ as a result of the different experiences that each has had. Gosseyn 3 spends time down on Earth and has to deal with the President, while Gosseyn 2 remains on a spacecraft trying to keep the Troogs and the Dzans from killing each other. The result of this difference in experience becomes quite clear at the end of the book when Gosseyn 2 finally meets Gosseyn 3 face to face, and van Vogt compares their lives to the lives of identical twins who have been raised apart: "Some similarity, of course, existed between twins. But the diversity that began immediately after conception, and the variation of experience after birth, quickly created innumerable differences, first, on a minute level but finally they were merely look alike, with their own personalities" (241). Although the Gosseyns' memories may be similar, they are not identical, and by the end of the novel they have established

different personalities or identities. The final scene in which Gosseyn requests his brother to focus his attention elsewhere is evidence of this. No Gosseyn had ever been intimate with a woman, but now, since Gosseyn 2 was to enjoy that experience, the memories of the lovemaking would establish him as quite separate from the Gosseyn who remains pure in deed.

In World, Gosseyn dealt with the personification of the Wise Old Man, in Players with the Shadow, and in Three with the Anima. Although there are other archetypal figures in the three novels, their discussion will be left to Chapter Two, since in this chapter I focus only on these primary archetypes and their relevance to Gosseyn's individuation.

The Anima/Animus archetypes are developed in the novels but are restricted somewhat by the scarcity of prominent female characters: the only three being Patricia Hardie, Leej, and Queen Strala. Neumann defines the Anima this way: "The anima is the vehicle par excellence of the transformative character. It is the mover, the instigator of change, whose fascination drives, lures, and encourages the male to all the adventures of the soul and spirit, of action and creation in the inner and the outward world" (33). The Anima is the feminine unconscious part of the masculine psyche, while the Animus is the masculine unconscious part of the feminine. "The feminine unconscious of a man is projected upon a feminine partner, and the masculine unconscious of a woman is projected upon a man" (Jung, Archetypes 177). Both men and women are made up of characteristics of both sexes, some

more than others. For example, a man may have a nurturing characteristic which would be classified as a feminine trait and the result of the influence of his Anima, while a woman might be assertive, considered a masculine characteristic, and, therefore, might be considered to be Animus dominated. Men and women are unconsciously attracted to members of the opposite sex who by projection seem to correspond in traits with their respective Anima or Animus archetypes. Neumann makes this point quite clearly: "The projection phenomenon plays a special role because the elements of the opposite sex in the [individual's] own psyche, the anima in the man and the animus in the woman are experienced as the reality of the opposite sex" (24).

Gosseyn's Anima does not seem to mesh with the personality of Patricia Hardie, for they both have opportunities to develop their relationship, but it always remains at a very static level. In fact, after Gosseyn is similarized to Venus by the Games Machine's distorter, he spends two weeks imprisoned in the same apartment with her, yet their relationship remains a civil one only, nothing more. He is frustrated in his relationship with her for, "Again and again, when he reached the point where he could identify the individual emotions of the men, Gosseyn strained to make contact with Patricia's nervous system. In the end he had to conclude that a man could not tune in on a woman" (172-73).

His conclusion suffers a complete reversal when he meets Queen Strala. Jung points out in Archetypes that the Anima "is

ready to spring out and project itself at the first opportunity, the moment a woman makes an impression out of the ordinary" (69). That Queen Strala makes an impression on Gosseyn is, perhaps, an understatement: "As he went with her, he could see once again that she had unusually good features, and a splendid female body" (76), and her proposal that they immediately go to the bedroom and make love causes him to be "utterly surprised. I feel as if I have been taken off guard the way no one with General Semantics training ever should be" (75). By refusing Strala's request and by trying to avoid the issue, Gosseyn 3 shows that he is not prepared to deal with his Anima and prefers to lock the archetype away in his unconscious. This procedure is the opposite of individuation and makes the Anima only more persistent in its efforts to reach consciousness (Archetypes 63). Jung makes the statement that "infantile man generally has a maternal anima; an adult man, the figure of a younger woman. The senile man finds compensation in a very young girl, or even a child" (200). This may explain why Gosseyn has such enormous difficulty in coping with the very natural demands and needs of the queen. The key seems to lie in his description of her as a mother rather than as a young woman. Gosseyn has been alive in a purely physical sense for only a very short period of time and has adopted the memories of the previously activated Gosseyns. Lavoisseur had deliberately erased huge portions of their memory--"A lie-detector type of instrument is set to cut off certain unnecessary thoughts--in your case nearly all thoughts were blotted out, so

that you wouldn't know too much" (World 187)--and therefore the Gosseyns are childlike or immature in many of their worldly attitudes. Gosseyn's enjoyment of "Scroob," a children's game, is an example of this attitude. This lack of experience would explain his refusal of Strala; he would have a "maternal Anima" contained within the psyche of an infantile adult. He would respond to Strala as a mother figure and would not be capable, one hopes, of seeing her as a possible sexual partner.

Although initially he is too immature to make love to her, his psyche continues to find her fascinating and his Anima changes as he becomes more experienced in the ways of the world. By the end of the novel, he may be defined as an adult man because he has undertaken adult responsibilities: personally transforming Enin from being a spoiled brat to being a selfless, considerate, future king; reinstating the Null-A philosophy on the Earth; and returning two races of people to their former civilization. As an adult man, he may be expected to have developed an Anima which corresponds with the "younger woman" about which Jung writes. When Queen Strala once again indicates her desires at the end of the novel, we perceive an entirely different attitude in Gosseyn from his earlier reaction. His response to her--"I think we'd better go into my bedroom and close and lock the door"--is an enthusiastic one. Gosseyn seems to have come to terms with his Anima and is no longer trying to prevent its penetrating into his conscious state. By moving with the queen into the bedchamber he shows that he is comfortable

with the archetype and that it no longer frightens him.

For her part, the queen's Animus seems to have correlated well with Gosseyn's personality, as she states during her first meeting with him, "I need very badly to be made love to by the first man I've met since [my husband's] death, who has instantly and automatically aroused in me feelings of desire. Come!" (76). There seems very little doubt that van Vogt, in his creation of the Strala character, is catering, deliberately or not, to the Animas of his adult male readers.

The reaction of a reader's Anima or Animus to the different characters in the story is a very personal one, in the same way that the balance of masculine-feminine characteristics in an individual is unique. However, an educated guess would be that for most male readers of this story, their Animas would be drawn to Strala for her "feminine" characteristics such as sentimentality, rather than the "masculine" attributes such as intellectuality that characterize Patricia. Women readers could find their Animi drawn to any number of strong male characters, with Enro probably possessing the greatest quantity of sheer "masculine" traits. The main point being made is that readers will be unconsciously drawn to certain characters from these stories by the presence of the Anima/Animus archetype within the readers themselves.

In terms of the process of individuation, at the conclusion of the trilogy Gosseyn has now reached the point where he has consciously recognized the Wise Old Man, the Shadow, and the

Anima as separate archetypes from his unconscious, and he has a more integrated personality as a result. Although there is no evidence that Van Vogt was familiar with Jungian concepts, he must have been partially aware of the contents of the collective unconscious and his own personal unconscious in order for his characterization to tie in so well with Jung's comment that "The shadow, the anima, and the wise old man--are of a kind that can be directly experienced in personified form" (Archetypes 37).

As a result, van Vogt provides a "dual track" for Gosseyne's personal quest for identity: the first track being a search for personal memories in order to find out who he is from a literal level and the second track being the Jungian process of individuation that he undergoes. Van Vogt may be read and enjoyed at the superficial level but, in order fully to appreciate and enjoy his considerable talent, an understanding of Jung's theories on personality is essential. Whether or not van Vogt was conversant with Jungian analysis is irrelevant to the issue; the archetypal influences from the collective unconscious are very much a part of his writing.

Chapter Two

Further Archetypal Personification

There are seven main archetypes described by van Vogt in the Null-A trilogy: those of the Wise Old Man, the Shadow, the Persona, the Anima, the God/Christ, the Trickster, and the Self. As the Wise Old Man, Shadow, and Anima archetypes have been discussed at some length in the previous chapter to do with Gosseyn's individuation, I shall confine my description in this section to the remaining four.

Although Enro, especially in Players, shows elements of the Shadow, he is more of a Trickster Figure. According to Jung in Archetypes: "The Trickster is a primitive 'cosmic' being of divine-animal nature, on the one hand superior to man because of his superhuman qualities, and on the other hand inferior to him because of his unreason and unconsciousness" (264). Enro is sensual, overbearing, crude, and selfish: every quality that the animal side of the Trickster should have. Enro sensually bathes with a minimum of four women to soap and caress him, and when he sees the beautiful Queen Strala, he immediately dismisses Gosseyn's relationship with her and decides to marry her for her sex appeal and, incidentally, for her empire. He is a creature who is driven instinctively by his basic animal urges, and it is his lack of reason that allows Secoh to control him so effectively.

Secoh wanted to create "A Universal State, centrally

controlled, and held together by military force" (Players 38) in order that he could spread the religion of the Sleeping God to billions of captive listeners. As a first step in developing the Universal State, he found it easy to convince Enro that it would be expedient to order the destruction of "Null-A because it would be the simplest method of starting a galactic war" (36). When on later reflection Enro finally reasons that destroying Venus will destroy his sister Reesha, known primarily to us as Patricia Crang, he tries to call a halt to the battle plan. Secoh, however, is too clever for him. He once again takes advantage of Enro's inability to reason clearly by challenging his manliness: "It would be unfortunate ... if the League powers discovered your weakness, and spread the report that Reesha was on any one of thousands of League planets" (37). Enro completely misses the point that he knows Reesha can be in only one of two places, Venus or Earth, because he is reacting to Secoh's implied accusation of cowardice. He gives in to Secoh's demand for the invasion with a weak, "Good old Secoh" (37).

In addition to having the animal requirement, Enro also fits the "superior" definition of the Trickster, as he has qualities of the "superhuman" within him. He has the ability to "know what was going on where he could neither see nor hear in a normal fashion" (34). This special ability gives Enro the power to know what others are saying and doing immediately when the action takes place and when he is at some distance from them. He shows this power when he has left the bathroom for the dining room, and

Ashargin/Gosseyn remains behind with Nirene, one of Enro's bathers. Ashargin notices that her contemplation of him was not "contemptuous but pitying" (33), and that she remains behind to talk to him when the other bathers had left. She seems genuinely to care for the plight of Ashargin when she wistfully comments, "So this is what's been done to you" (33), but she realizes the danger that he will be in if he does not immediately rejoin Enro, "My name is Nirene -- and you'd better get in there, my friend " (33). Enro has been in the dining room for the duration of the proceedings between Ashargin and Nirene, yet he knows all: "So Nirene is taking an interest in you ... That's a possibility I hadn't considered" (34). This superhuman power surprises Gosseyn, "who found himself listening in amazement. Here it was again, the dictator's uncanny ability" (34). It is this superior ability combined with the basic animal characteristics that describe Enro as a personified symbol of the Trickster-figure and which creates an emotional response to him from within our unconscious.

Another major archetype found within these novels is the Persona, which refers to the outward appearance which one presents to the public and which may not be a reflection of the individual's true personality (Jung, Archetypes 122). The Persona that Gosseyn presents to Games Machine competitors at the beginning of World is an example of the Persona not agreeing with the personality. Gosseyn's Persona for the group is that of an individual who is somehow trying to cheat in the Games by

pretending to have been Patricia Hardie's husband: "Well, ladies and gentlemen, you can judge for yourselves. He says that Patricia Hardie was his wife. That's a marriage I think we would all have heard about if it had ever taken place" (World 17). Unfortunately, Gosseyn's consciousness truly believes that he really does have that relationship: "Hardie ... was the maiden name of my late wife. She died about a month ago. Patricia Hardie. Does that strike any chord in your memory?" (17). Eldred Crang's Persona within the gang is that of trusted ally when, in fact, he is a highly moral character who is determined to defeat them. Patricia Hardie, the president's daughter, is a Persona for her real self, Reesha, sister of Enro. A final example is the Persona of the wretched spaceman in the capsule who, as a result of his crash landing on Gorgzid, provides an opportunity for the religion of the Sleeping God to be created. The development of Persona within the context of the novels allows the readers to enjoy the uncovering of the real identities of the characters as well as respond to the archetype itself.

The Hero type, in the form of a God/Christ image, and the Self type are the last of the archetypes that van Vogt presents in his work, and can be considered together because of the close inter-relationship between the two: "There is always a compensating tendency in our unconscious psyche to produce a symbol of the Self in its cosmic significance. These efforts take on the archetypal forms of the Hero myth such as can be

observed in almost any individuation process. (Jung, Transformation 172)

The discussion of the individuation process in chapter one emphasized the need for an individual consciously to create harmony between the different archetypal components of the unconscious. The harmonizing agent is the Self which tries to reconcile opposites within the personal unconscious, such as the Shadow and the Persona, in order to create a psychological wholeness within the individual's personality (Transformation 142). A relationship exists between the Self and the God/Christ Hero type because "Within human history, the self has been mythologically prefigured by the Hero archetype, and most eminent of the hero myths is the Christ figure as the God-man.... God/Christ is the ultimate example of self because he is the unification of the divine and the earthly" (Monte 307).

Gilbert Gosseyn becomes a Christ figure with not one but two resurrections. He is resurrected as Gosseyn Two after being shot by the gang outside Patricia's apartment, and he goes through a form of resurrection when he recovers from the hypnotic drug that he was using to help kill himself: "He had nearly killed himself. It was so close that it was as if he had died, and this was resurrection" (World 135). Sam Moskowitz points out that because the unknown chessplayer, Lavoisseur, is involved in Gosseyn's destiny and in the destiny of mankind, he becomes a God figure, and when "Gosseyn learns that he and the unknown Chess player are one and the same; theosophically interpreted, he equates himself

with 'The Son of God'" (227). Donald Wollheim also recognizes the God/Christ image in van Vogt's work when he comments that "one of van Vogt's abiding characteristics is to make his heroes so invulnerable, so omniscient, so gifted with superhuman powers as to encourage the suspicion that his heroes are really God in disguise" (145).

The God/Christ figure provides a "Unification of the divine and the earthly" in the same way that the Self tries to unify the consciousness and the unconscious. Gosseyn, as a personification of these archetypes, accomplishes a similar feat of unification. All three novels concern themselves with the problem of how man developed on Earth and in the surrounding galaxies. The legend of the Great Migration is later found to be fact based on the evidence of the spaceship surrounding the Sleeping Giant and the story that the computer recounted about the Migration. In Three Gosseyn acts as the unifying element between the humans of his present world and the humans of his past world, in much the same way as Christ was a part of Heaven and a part of Earth. At the end of the novel, he uses his extraordinary ability to similarize the Dzans, the Troogs, and himself back to the planets from which the Great Migration had originated: "First went the Troog ship. And then, after the Dzan battlecraft moved near his capsule, it also was instantly returned to where it had come from. Two million light-years away, in another galaxy" (248). The unification of the two groups with their homeland is now complete. As Christ returned to Heaven after his time on Earth,

so Gosseyn 3 returns to his ancestral home. He will remain there while Gosseyn 2 resides in Earth's galaxy, but in the same way that Christ has the ability to make a "Second Coming" to Earth, it is implied that Gosseyn 2 with his remarkable ability can also return to Earth whenever he wishes:

"As I understand it, your alter ego will remain in the Milky Way galaxy; and you will stay here." She sounded suddenly distracted to him: "Are you still, uh, connected to your alter ego?"

"Moment by moment I'm aware of him out there, and I can get his thoughts, or what he's doing, if I concentrate on him."

"At two million light years."

"Distance has no meaning in a nothingness universe."

(249-50)

When these four archetypes are combined with the three mentioned in the process of Gosseyn's individuation, the total number indicates quite clearly that van Vogt is drawing on the collective unconscious for his creative material. Because there is no evidence to indicate a familiarity with Jung's work, I must conclude that van Vogt's peculiar system of waking himself at regular intervals throughout the night allows him to generate ideas by tapping into the unconscious part of his psyche. Readers, therefore, respond to van Vogt's characters so strongly because their identities are drawn out of the same emotional pool as the readers': the collective unconscious.

Chapter Three

Criticism of the Critic

Damon Knight does not comment on the effect of these primordial images or archetypes and it is a pity, since they are the primary components of van Vogt's plot/myth. His major attack on van Vogt is the lack of credible connections between certain characters and events in the story, but an understanding of the archetypes and of their effect on the reader provides a reason for the gaps. Van Vogt points out that in his stories "Each paragraph--sometimes each sentence--of my brand of science fiction has a gap in it, an unreality condition. In order to make it real, the reader must add the missing parts. He cannot do this from past associations. There are no past associations. So he must fill in the gaps himself" (qtd. in Searles 182). By "no past associations" one must assume that he is writing about the lack of references earlier in the work which could make a bridge over the "unreality condition." Enro's sudden appearance in World has no past associations, yet it does not seem to be a problem for the reader's enjoyment of the story, and a possible cause might be the representation of Enro as the Trickster. The reader "fills in the gaps himself" by relating emotionally to the character and unconsciously viewing Enro in the same terms as the Trickster: a "superman" figure but with the most basic of animal instincts. The reader may not be aware that he has made the unconscious connection, but he still feels

satisfied with the role of Enro and does not feel distracted by the lack of a credible connection with the previous parts of the story. Knight makes the comment that, "If you can only throw your reasoning powers out of gear - something many van Vogt fans find easy to do - you'll enjoy [his work]" (Wonder 62). Knight in this criticism is unintentionally complimenting the skill of van Vogt by suggesting that traditional analysis of plot is just not appropriate to the examination of his stories. He is right about the plot inconsistencies, but he is wrong to suggest that they weaken the novel; in fact, they may very well strengthen one's enjoyment of it when they provide the opportunity for personal involvement through the unconscious.

A similar case for reader response through association with the archetypes of the unconscious may be made for Gosseyn 1's re-appearance as Gosseyn 2. The procedure through which this process takes place is not fully explained until much later in the story, but most readers would have already unconsciously made the connection between Gosseyn, the Christ symbol, and the Hero archetype. As a result of this connection with one of the primordial images, they would have felt satisfied with Gosseyn's re-appearance and would have continued reading.

It is this ability to evoke primordial images among other things which makes van Vogt such a talented writer. The interesting question about the Knight article, however, is whether or not the author really felt that van Vogt was such a poor writer, or whether he was reacting to his Shadow and was

motivated by other desires such as those of a young man needing to build his reputation by attacking someone famous. On the other hand, the very strong emotions that are expressed by Knight in his article may very well be related to his response to the archetypes within World.

There is some evidence that Damon Knight was actually an admirer of van Vogt's work. In "Cosmic Jerrybuilder" Knight provides an addendum to his original article in "Destiny's Child," and compliments van Vogt that his "single-minded power maniacs exert their usual fascination," and that "the man does work on a grand scale: the magnitude of his backgrounds, and their massive movement, are engrossing in themselves" (62). He describes van Vogt as an "innovator" (236) and an "old master" (218) who, unlike most writers who "use the same story pieces, and only try to put them together in mildly novel ways, [uses] pieces [that] are all different" (236). In a letter to a friend, John Mason, he confesses that van Vogt "has an awful lot of lovely ideas, which is why I keep on reading his stories" (____[sic] 4). Finally, if imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then Knight pays van Vogt the ultimate compliment by adopting a van Vogt Persona. According to Panshin, "Even [van Vogt's] first and most powerful critic, Damon Knight, tried to walk in van Vogt's shoes to discover the source of his power, in Knight's 1964 novel Beyond the Barrier" (167-68). It seems obvious that Knight was far more appreciative of van Vogt's writing than he had originally indicated in his critical essay.

Van Vogt was not hurt immediately by Knight's article because he was named the 1947 winner of the Beowulf Poll as science fiction's most popular author, edging out such notables as Robert Heinlein and H. P. Lovecraft (Moskowitz 54). However, the long term effects were serious enough to cause van Vogt to revise passages in World as a response to the criticism of one man, because as van Vogt put it in his introduction to the book, Damon Knight had acquired power and "on this planet you have to recognize where the power is" (7).

A few critics, however, were to turn on Knight and were to support van Vogt's work for its complexity and powerful imagery. In 1970 Wollheim wrote about Knight's critical essay and made the point that,

It was the sort of jugular dissection that Mark Twain made of the work of James Fenimore Cooper -- and with much the same result: nothing. Van Vogt is still among the two or three best-selling authors of science fiction in America. Whatever may be said of his plotting, he is always read compellingly, he is fascinating, and one gains a sensation of having had one's brain exercised. (146)

Although I heartily agree with Wollheim's sentiments in the latter half of the paragraph, I must point out that Knight's "jugular dissection" was more debilitating than Mark Twain's for van Vogt himself states that it was entirely Knight's criticism which caused the revision of World. It is also unfortunate that

since Wollheim's article, sales of van Vogt's novels and short story anthologies have dropped to such an extent that in this decade his name is barely recognized except by those most interested in science-fiction literature. The other side of the coin, however, is that in my personal experience when people are introduced to van Vogt's writing, they invariably wish to borrow and read more. A publisher's promotion of van Vogt, by Daw Books perhaps, would do much to revive interest in this fascinating author by making his name more widely known with the general public.

Charles Platt was another critic who responded to Knight: "Damon Knight complained that van Vogt's plots didn't make logical sense, and consequently his books were failures. This seems as foolish as calling a dream a failure because it lacks logical consistency. Dreams are powerful because they are so full of change and contradictions, and they violate the laws of everyday life" (136).

Van Vogt's Null-A novels are powerful stories that require readers to become participants in them through the subconscious forces of their own psyches. Van Vogt evokes symbols that are archetypal and the response to them by the reader is an emotional one from his or her unconscious. It is this response to the dream-like sequences of van Vogt's work that must account for the wide ranging popularity he once held, and also for the appeal he holds for modern readers who are able to "discover" him. Although critics like Damon Knight felt that van Vogt's work was

flawed because of plot inconsistencies, they were unable to explain their own enjoyment of "one of the worst allegedly-science fiction stories ever published." The answer comes from the primordial images within their own unconscious states.

Conclusion

Van Vogt's fiction is mythic. The powerful primordial images in his writing develop a universal appeal from mankind's collective unconscious and make his work vibrant and compelling. My focus has been on the Null-A novels, but the archetypal imagery seems to be present in all his novels, particularly the God/Christ archetype which is present in Slan, The Rogue Ship, and Renaissance to name a few. In Slan Jommy Cross is the protagonist whose unusual feature is the presence of tendrils at the hair line which allow him to read minds. Unfortunately, they also make him the target of a paranoid public who fear the Slans primarily for their physical differences. He ends up being captured by a wonderfully characterized female "wino" who traps him in a living death until he is able to achieve a form of resurrection by escaping. Once he has escaped he ultimately helps to liberate the other Slans. In Rogue Ship a space craft is trying to return to Earth after its speed of light drive capacity has been found to be inoperative. The journey takes so many years to return from a far-off galaxy to the solar system that the captains seem to undergo resurrection. They are repeatedly dying off and being replaced with younger ones who all hold the same fascination with exerting power. Finally, in Renaissance van Vogt creates a hero with special inventive powers who has managed to escape the control of occupying aliens on Earth by accidentally breaking his glasses. The aliens use the

glasses to control the Earth people's minds and to make men subservient to women. Much of the novel describes his descent into a sort of hell within the earth where the aliens have their secret headquarters, and his return to the surface is a triumphant resurrection, as he achieves sex equality and dispatches the aliens to their home planet.

Thus, the personification of the God/Christ figure is present in many of van Vogt's novels and represents, as Jung pointed out, a projection of the Self archetype, a reconciler of all the diverse and sometimes contrary archetypes. All these novels contain Shadow figures who threaten to overcome the civilized Personas of such societies as the Slans and the Null-A's, and who are thwarted though not destroyed, by the Self figures. Perhaps van Vogt has not quite individuated himself, and his unconscious need is to write about the process of individuation and to use his narrative as the vehicle for his collective unconscious. Whatever the reason, Van Vogt's primary strength lies in his ability to evoke a response in the unconscious of his readers.

Canadians would be wise to pay close attention to one of their former countrymen because van Vogt's concern with identity, as it is expressed through Gosseyn's search, is what we as a nation are also concerned with. Our sense of identity is "abstracted" from the way other countries view us, and as a nation we need to develop our own concept of who we are. Robertson Davies argues in his 1977 address to the Association

for Canadian Studies in the United States that :

it is in poetry and fiction that the questers [for a Canadian national identity] repose their greatest hopes. A Canadian literature, recognizable as such at home and abroad is what they want. But the creation of a national literature is almost as slow as the building of a coral atoll; toil as we may, the recognizable island will not rise above the waves in a very great hurry. But we are working at it, and we have made rather more progress than some of our most anxious, Canadian watchers seem to understand. (280)

If we are to develop a concept of who we are through our literature, it is essential that we recognize van Vogt as one of our own. He is a Canadian who provides excellent material for pushing our "coral island" above the waves and into national and international prominence.

Appendix A

Summary of The World of Null-A

The narrative begins with Gosseyn, the protagonist, entering the city of the Games Machine in order to compete for a position on Venus. The Games Machine is a computer which rules the world in a very fair and judicious manner, and once a year it tests all Earth inhabitants for their Null-A capabilities. Gosseyn stays at a hotel, is called to a meeting for all participants in the games, is denounced by a lie detector for not being what he says he is, and is cast out onto the streets. Here he meets Patricia Hardie who is the actual daughter of President Hardie and the woman to whom Gosseyn thought he was married. Planning to meet her later in the day, Gosseyn goes to the Machine and finds out that false information was planted in his mind and that he must be X-rayed to determine whether he has developed an extra brain. Before he can undergo this examination, he is captured by President Hardie's security guards, under the direction of Patricia Hardie, and is taken to Hardie's palace.

At the palace, while undergoing torture, he is able to abstract that he is a Null-A and that his extra brain makes him a dangerous man to Hardie and to the real power behind the President. This real power is given Thorson and his henchmen who are out to destroy the Machine because they feel that it restricts their ruthless abilities and does not allow them the power which they feel they deserve. Patricia sneaks down into

the basement and allows Gosseyn to escape to her apartment, but not before disturbing his concept of evolution with her announcement that "This plot is bigger than Earth, bigger than the solar system. We're pawns in a game being played by men from the stars.... I don't even know how men got to Earth. The monkey theory seems plausible only when you don't examine it too closely.... I assure you the Machine can do nothing" (48).

When Gosseyn first encounters Eldred Crang in Patricia's apartment, he overhears that Crang is Patricia's lover and is a "fifth columnist" within the gang, being in actual fact a Null-A detective. Gosseyn has to escape through the bedroom window when guards prepare to search the rooms, but he is noticed and, under a hail of machine gun bullets, he is killed.

He awakens in a meadow on Venus, naturally puzzled that he has the same memories that he had before he was killed. If his memory is the same, he falsely assumes, his person must be the same, although he bears no scars. He walks to an isolated hospital run by John and Amelia Prestcott, ties them up, having heard through Crang that John is a possible member of the gang, and calls for a roboplane to help him escape the area. The plane takes him into the air, but when Gosseyn asks it, "Who am I?" it is unable to reply except to indicate that there may have been two Gosseyn bodies. The plane also informs him that he must allow himself to be captured so that the gang can have a "close look at a man whom they know to be dead" (69). The gang had apparently stopped its conspiracy against the Machine while they

tried to fathom who was the guiding force behind Gosseyn's sudden presence on Earth.

Gosseyn is dropped off at the same place as that where he had re-awakened, and he enters Crang's huge, tastefully decorated apartment built into the trunk of one of the giant Venusian trees. No one is home but, as he prepares for sleep, he is consumed with the question from which he is unable to abstract any answer: "Who was he that he was so important?" (72).

The situation becomes even more mysterious when Crang, playing his gang role, captures Gosseyn and takes him back to Earth. In secret separate meetings with Patricia and with Michael Hardie, he is given the further information that Thorson is under orders from Enro, leader of the Greatest Empire, which is located in some distant star system. Enro himself has given orders to halt an invasion of Null-A populated Venus, until some estimate of Gosseyn's danger can be undertaken. Michael Hardie also informs Gosseyn that he not only believes that there were two Gosseyn bodies, but that there might even be three. Gosseyn rejects all thoughts of extra bodies, until he views his former, badly mutilated and charred corpse.

With the help of Prestcott and some sleeping gas, Gosseyn escapes from the gang, but not before Prestcott has killed President Hardie for being involved with the murder of Prestcott's wife, Amelia. Gosseyn is accused of being responsible for the assassination and escapes to the home of Dr. Kair who points out to him, "You don't seem to realize, Gosseyn,

that you're the important person in all this" (101). Again Gosseyn is perplexed by the lack of information relating to his identity, but Dr. Kair does show him photographs of his extra brain and informs him that the extra is a third the size of his regular brain. Although there are no electrical impulses moving between the two, the extra brain can become active with training and has so much potential that "there just aren't enough objects in the macrocosm to ever engage the full potential control power of the automatic switches and relays now in your brain" (103).

Gosseyn is again captured, but in a surprising twist the gang releases him because they are aware of a third Gosseyn body waiting to be activated if the second body is killed. They fear the third Gosseyn body because they understand that the extra brain will be more developed and therefore more dangerous. Gosseyn Two is now more important to them alive than dead.

Gosseyn visits the Games Machine, and the message is reinforced when the Machine tells him that he must kill himself in order to release Gosseyn 3. The transfer of memories from one body to the other is accomplished through a procedure called "twenty decimal similarization" which means that if "two energies can be attuned on a twenty-decimal approximation of similarity, the greater will bridge the gap of space between them just as if there were no gap, although the juncture is accomplished at finite speeds" (123). The "Chess player" who is controlling Gosseyn is responsible for this similarization taking place. Gosseyn receives more bad news when he becomes aware that the

Machine has been compromised in its ability to make Null-A decisions. The gang has used a "Distorter" to fix the Games so that Thorson is in the lead to become President of Earth. Adding a final piece of woe, the Machine informs Gosseyn that Venus is under attack from the Greatest Empire.

Gosseyn re-enters the Palace, seizes the Distorter, and sends it to the Machine. Unfortunately, he is not aware that the Machine is now under atomic attack from the gang for broadcasting news about the attack on Venus. He prepares to commit suicide with a hypnotic drug. The Machine, however, suddenly penetrates his semi-conscious state to warn him that the gang has destroyed the third Gosseyn body and that he now must live. With the help of Dan Lyttle, a Null-A hotel clerk, he is able to overcome the drug's effects, sneak into the basement of the destroyed Machine, and recover the Distorter. The Distorter has on it the interesting forwarding address of the General Semantics Institute, the Null-A organization which was responsible for the work of the Machine, and which was led by a man called Lavoisseur. As Gosseyn fiddles with one of the knobs on the Distorter, it instantaneously transports him to Venus and, once again, the gang captures him.

Thorson interviews Gosseyn and convinces him to help determine who the mysterious "chess player" is who has been responsible for activating the bodies. Gosseyn agrees only after viewing the defeat of the Greatest Empire troops by the weaponless Null-A Venusians and on condition that the gang help

him to train his extra brain. Gosseyn also realizes that Enro, the leader of the Greatest Empire, has shown such an interest in him because of the possibilities of acquiring the same form of immortality that Gosseyn seems to have. After weeks of training, Gosseyn is able to "similarize" himself from one area to another in an instant of time. He is unable to escape, however, because the gang uses a "vibrator" to adjust his brain waves, making similarization impossible.

The conclusion to the story occurs when Patricia Hardie is allowed to visit Gosseyn in his apartment and reveals that the "chess player," later revealed as Lavoisseur, is at the General Semantics building, and that Gosseyn must try to entice Thorson and the gang into that building. As they are walking down the halls of the building, Lavoisseur makes telepathic contact with Gosseyn urging him to seek immediate safety in an alcove. Thorson and the gang are then killed by massive bolts of electricity. Gosseyn finds a mortally wounded Lavoisseur, injured by his own electrical weapons, who reveals his method of cloning bodies and who indicates that there are a number of bodies of different ages waiting to be activated. He also reveals that "similarity" causes all the memories of the active Gosseyn to be stored by the inactive Gosseyns. After Lavoisseur dies, Gosseyn shaves the dead man's beard to discover an eighty-year-old man with the same face as his own. "Here beyond all argument was the visible end reality of his search" (190).

Appendix B

Summary of The Players of Null-A

The narrative begins with the introduction of a strange being called the Follower whose real name is Secoh, a priest and advisor to Enro on the capital planet of the Greatest Empire. The Follower initially tries to prevent Gosseyn from reaching Venus because he does not want him to accompany Crang and his new wife, Patricia Hardie, from Venus to Enro's planet. We later find out that Patricia's real name is Reesha and that, much to our surprise, she is sister of the tempestuous Enro! The Follower fears the power that Gosseyn holds and worries that it might affect his own subtle domination of Enro. Crang correctly deduces that if there had been one chess player, Lavoisseur, then there had to be a competitor to play with; that person is later found out to be a computer beneath the Sleeping God whose body is located on Gorgzid, Enro's home planet.

By using his special ability, Gosseyn is able to similarize himself to Venus, but the Follower is waiting for him. Through trickery he is able to send Gosseyn's body to Yalerta, the planet of the Predictors where, as their name suggests, the inhabitants are able to see into the future. The Sleeping God, however, transfers Gosseyn's mind out of his body and into the body of Ashargin, a spineless young prince. Gosseyn struggles to keep Ashargin's body from collapsing with fear when he is summoned to become part of Enro's court, but he is only partially successful

because the body has been so conditioned to the fear response that it is difficult to control. Just as Ashargin/Gosseyn is about to use a Distorter lever to reach his new position on a space craft, Gosseyn's mind is re-united with his body.

Gosseyn has been trapped in a cell with Leej, a Predictor woman who has had a falling out with the Follower. Gosseyn uses his power to help Leej and himself escape and they end up on Leej's space vehicle where the Follower eventually confronts Gosseyn. The Follower uses secret Distorters to give the impression that he has the same natural ability as Gosseyn, and he suggests that they put their powers together, form a partnership, and control the universe. Gosseyn, being a highly moral Null-A and believing in every man's right to self-determination, rejects the Follower's offer, and a power struggle develops between the two using energy blasts similarized from generators located on Yalerta. The fight ends as a stalemate and the Follower leaves muttering curses.

The Sleeping God then causes Gosseyn to slip back into Ashargin's body and, at a dinner meeting with Enro and Secoh, Gosseyn finds out that the Sleeping God is observed only by Secoh and new initiates to the religion of the Temple of the Mound. Through careful questioning Gosseyn deduces that the Sleeping God is actually a spaceman kept in a form of suspended animation. This spaceman remains inside his spaceship where all kinds of mechanical devices look after his physical well-being. Gosseyn makes an accurate jump in logic to determine that the same

technology that keeps the Sleeping God in fine fettle might be the same method that is used to keep the Gosseyn bodies healthy and ready for activation. By pretending to become a follower of Secoh's religion, Gosseyn is given the opportunity to see the Sleeping God, but he is deeply disappointed to see that the spaceman bears no resemblance to Gosseyn at all.

Meanwhile, Enro has found out that Crang, after taking over the leadership of the forces of the Greatest Empire from the dead Thorson, had ordered a halt to the attack on Venus. Enro recognizes this as a traitorous act, but he cannot punish Crang, because Reesha, Crang's wife, holds the same power on Gorgzid as Enro himself. Punishment is still meted out, however, when Enro orders Venus destroyed, using Predictors on each space craft. The Predictors can tell what the Venusian defenders are going to do, but the Null-A defenders thwart their attacks by using robotic satellites that cause everyone on the attacking ships to black out. The Venusians realize that theirs is only a holding action against the might of the Greatest Empire, and they therefore decide to abandon Venus.

After helping the Venusians with their defence, Gosseyn similarizes himself back to the Temple of the Sleeping God on Gorgzid. Unfortunately, his mind is once again placed in Ashargin's, and he has to enter the Temple and hide his own body, which is lying unconscious at the base of the spacecraft. Deciding to hide his body in the space capsule of the Sleeping God, Gosseyn finds that the vessel is equipped with spaces for

two men and two women. Needing rest, Gosseyn falls asleep and his personal unconscious is contacted by the nurturing machine located below the Sleeping God but within the capsule. This computer informs Gosseyn that it, not the sleeping spaceman, is the cause for the switching of his mind. The machine describes the Great Migration, during which people from a distant star system escaped catastrophe by fleeing in the same type of spacecraft as the Sleeping God's. Some arrived on Earth memoryless and began the human race, while the others scattered throughout the universe. The machine was able to contact Gosseyn only because of his extra brain, and it needed him to kill Secoh whom it identified as the Follower. While Secoh had been a young sweeper in the temple, he had accidentally received from the machine the power to make himself formless. Because of this ability, Secoh felt that he had been possessed by the Sleeping God, and the powerful thoughts corrupted him into creating on Gorgzid a ruthless religion which the machine felt had to be destroyed.

The story ends with the Sleeping God being activated by the machine and accusing Secoh of being a traitor. As the God approaches him, Secoh panics and obliterates his God with a blast of energy, but the reality of what he has done is too much for him, so he tries to forget it. Forgetting a god who has been so much a part of his life for so long means abandoning all memories. Unfortunately for Secoh, this means the elimination of a sense of identity. Secoh regresses so far that he returns to

the fetal stage of his development and is carried away silent
because "a baby that has not yet been born does not cry" (192).

Appendix C

Summary of Null-A Three

Gosseyn, through the use of his extra brain, and in company with the Crangs, Enro, and the Predictor woman, Leej, attempts a massive similarization jump from Gorgzid to the Planet Zero in Galaxy One, a galaxy from whence their forebears escaped. Unfortunately, their attempt fails, but it does cause the activation of another Gosseyn body which has been floating in space. Gosseyn 2 and Gosseyn 3 initially have identical memories because their thoughts flow telepathically from one to the other without any conscious effort. Another strange result of the failed similarization jump is the presence of numerous Dzan warships which have been accidentally brought to the area around Gorgzid from the planet that Gosseyn 2 had originally hoped to reach.

Assuming that he has caused their galactical transfer, the warships capture Gosseyn 3 in his capsule. The Dzans are ruled by a boy-king, Enin, who has the power to "burn" people with electricity, but when he is about to use his power on Gosseyn, Gosseyn similarizes him to the capsule from which he had been recently released. With Gosseyn's help, Enin returns to his warship, and begins a friendship with the first man who has stood up to him. Later, Gosseyn is introduced to Enin's mother, Queen Strala who, without any undue earthly modesty, states that she wants to make love to him. In spite of her beautiful face and

fabulous figure, Gosseyn feels no desire and is quite bewildered by the whole experience. He diplomatically escapes the situation, leaving no bad feelings with Strala, but sensing a certain amusement in the thoughts of Gosseyn 2. At this point, all Gosseyns are virgins.

Enin is similarized to Earth as a result of the damaged nerve endings in Gosseyn 3's extra brain. Until Gosseyn learns to control this new power, it will cause similarization to occur accidentally as a result of even the most random thoughts. Gosseyn joins Enin and they walk down to the house of Dan Lyttle, the hotel clerk who had helped Gosseyn escape his suicide attempt in World. While there, he learns from Gosseyn 2 that he is also responsible for the transference of a Troog warship to Gorgzid. The Troogs are enemies of the Dzans, and they had been fighting each other before Gosseyn inadvertently similarized them to their new location. Lyttle shows Gosseyn that he holds the computer brain of the Games Machine and indicates that it would not be difficult to restore the Machine to its former position. The current head man, President Blayney, would, however, have to agree. Blayney does acquiesce, after his heavily armed guards are similarized to the top of a mountain, but he feels that it will be difficult to convince the other members of his government. While Blayney does his best with them, Gosseyn and Enin go to the badly damaged and vandalized Institute of General Semantics where Lavoisseur and Thorson had met their ends.

As Gosseyn is examining the building, he is suddenly

similarized by the Troogs to their ship, where they hope he will be able to help them return to their own planet. While there, he also learns that the Troogs are humans who were unable to participate in the Great Migration resulting in their mutation by the malignant gases. After finding out that the Dzans and the Troogs have agreed on a truce, he promises to help them and returns to the Institute.

There he convinces President Blayney to make Dan Lyttle responsible for the re-creation of the Games Machine. He also arranges to meet with Dr. Kair to see if his damaged nerve endings can be healed, but the nerves are not that badly damaged, giving off such an aura of energy that Dr. Kair feels no need to take action. After receiving this comforting thought, Gosseyn 3 teams with Gosseyn 2, Enro, and Leej to return the Troog and Dzan warships, with Enin now back on board, to their home planet in Galaxy One. Gosseyn then uses his extra brain to travel the same two million light years and is reunited with Queen Strala. As Gosseyn takes Strala to the bedroom to consummate what he had initially refused, he asks Gosseyn 2, back on Earth, to turn his thoughts elsewhere.

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