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THE POETICS OF HUNGER, THE POLITICS OF DESIRE: WOOLF'S DISCURSIVE TEXTS

> All this should be discussed and discovered; all this is part of the question of women and fiction. And yet, I continued, approaching the bookcase again, where shall I find that elaborate study of the psychology of women by a woman?
>
> Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

> For as Professor Grensted gave his evidence, we, the daughters of educated men, seemed to be watching a surgeon at work—an impartial and scientific operator, who, as he dissected the human mind by human means laid bare for all to see what cause, what root lies at the bottom of our fear. It is an egg. Its scientific name is 'infantile fixation'.
>
> Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*

Instead of "that elaborate study of the psychology of women by a woman," the narrator of *A Room of One's Own* finds "at the very end" of her bookshelf *Life's Adventure,* the first novel by Mary Carmichael, Woolf's representative contemporary woman novelist and Lily Briscoe's successor in *Room.*[1] Like Lily's painting, *Life's Adventure* redefines the subject of narrative: "'Chloe liked Olivia,' I read. And then it struck me how immense a change was there. Chloe liked Olivia perhaps for the first time in literature. Cleopatra did not like Octavia. And how completely *Antony and Cleopatra* would have been altered had she done so!" (86). Mary Carmichael also breaks the narrative sequences established by her foremother Jane Austen, yet her novel stands at both the end and the beginning of a female line: "[O]ne must read it as if it were the last volume in a fairly long series, continuing all those other [women's] books. . . . For books continue each other, in spite of our habit of judging them separately" (84). The new work of fiction generates a discourse of merger and rupture that stands in the place of a feminine psychoanalysis.

By invoking and unmasking that discourse, *Room* "continues" *To the Lighthouse* and breaks with it. The later text both theorizes and challenges the mother-daughter story Lily narrates as she paints. In *To the Lighthouse,* as in object relations theory, the ambivalence that emerges with the mother's narrative centrality is located benignly in the negotiation of boundaries and finds resolution in a work of art. Through the

1920s, however, Woolf's texts reverse the sequence of psychoanalytic history by proceeding toward increasingly primitive, passionate, Kleinian renditions of ambivalence toward the mother. By articulating a plaint about material nurture, *Room* discloses retrospectively what Lily's discourse of boundaries has failed to address: that only men are represented eating at the dinner in *To the Lighthouse,* for example; that although Mrs. Ramsay is depicted alternately nurturing her husband until he is "filled with her words, like a child who drops off satisfied," and starving him until he is "the very figure of a famished wolfhound," Lily represents her longing for the mother only in the language of merger, never hunger.[2] The polemical framework that simplifies *Room*'s representation of maternal origins paradoxically permits the analysis of conflicts that Woolf's poetics of detachment banished from her fiction.

Room is Woolf's most complete and complex interpretation of matrilineage; it is also her last. In its sequel, *Three Guineas,* the mother as both origin and feeder disappears; women in this text no longer have nor are mothers. The boundary discourse jeopardized in *Room* by hunger is transformed in *Three Guineas* by sexuality and recentered in a father who assimilates the mother. From representing patriarchy's other, the mother shrivels to the "egg" that figures patriarchy's source. The mother's contamination diminishes Woolf's argument with Freud: the search for a female-authored psychology of women yields to the discourse of "infantile fixation."

Read together, *Room* and *Three Guineas* disclose some of the pressures on the figure of the mother that mediated Woolf's encounter, across two decades, with the fictions of psychoanalysis. The two texts also recast the traditional division of Woolf's career between the "tug to vision" in the 1920s and the claims of "fact" in the 1930s.[3] By outlining the forces guiding Woolf's trajectory from matrilinear to patrilinear definitions of the daughter, the discursive texts resituate her career, and its diverse intersections with psychoanalysis, within the social history of gender. To highlight and to explicate the break in this career, this chapter proceeds from the feminization of origins through which Woolf counters Freud's authority in *Room* to the reversals *Three Guineas* performs; it then returns to *Room* to disturb this opposition by uncovering an ambivalent discourse of nurture that qualifies the celebration of maternal origins; the chapter concludes by exploring how *Three Guineas*'s redefinition of the female subject as the "daughter of an educated man" allies Woolf, in the late 1930s, problematically with Freud.

I

For a text on women and fiction, *Room* presents surprisingly few scenes of writing. Except for the description of Jane Austen hiding her manuscripts under the blotter, the only representation of a text in production is Pro-

fessor von X's treatise, *The Mental, Moral, and Physical Inferiority of the Female Sex,* which stands synecdochically for the masculine discourses the narrator discovers in the British Museum. The narrator's sketch of the German professor links the act of writing with fury: "His expression suggested that he was labouring under some emotion that made him jab his pen on the paper as if he were killing some noxious insect as he wrote, but even when he had killed it that did not satisfy him; he must go on killing it; and even so, some cause for anger and irritation remained" (31). Writing proceeds from a surplus of anger that motivates and exceeds the flow of signifiers. This parody of a psychoanalytic theory of the text is the site of the text's one (parodic) allusion to Freud: "Had he [Professor von X] been laughed at, to adopt the Freudian theory, in his cradle by a pretty girl?" Invoking Freud against a Freudian text on sexual difference, *Room* links the scene of writing with a retaliatory masculinity.

Woolf's account of contemporary fiction, typified by Mr. A, Professor von X's counterpart from the opposite end of the alphabet, contextualizes the professor's private history. In her description of Mr. A's new novel, the scene of writing dissolves into the subject it re-presents. The pen has become the authorial ego—"a straight dark bar, a shadow shaped something like the letter 'I' "—incarnate in the protagonist, Alan, who obliterates the heroine, Phoebe, in the "flood of his views" and his passions (103–4).[4] The erotic scenes, like the scene of writing, are tinged with sadism, for in contrast to "Shakespeare's indecency," which expresses and evokes "pleasure," Alan's phallic mastery of Phoebe betrays his author's aggressive purpose: "He is protesting against the equality of the other sex by asserting his own superiority" (105). Exposing its origins in a decade when "the Suffrage campaign . . . must have roused in men an extraordinary desire for self-assertion," Mr. A's novel discloses the political unconscious of the professor's gender theory (103).[5]

Room attempts to counter, while it tries to describe, a defensively misogynist construction and conflation of gender and textuality. Woolf challenges the written text's authority by insisting on *Room*'s status as a lecture to women and (in a way reminiscent of Lily Briscoe's painting) by privileging the visual arts as metaphors for writing. It is no accident that a drawing discloses the truth of Professor von X's text or that literary forms are represented architecturally as structures "built now in squares, now pagoda shaped, . . . now solidly compact and domed like the Cathedral of Saint Sofia at Constantinople" (74). Woolf quite explicitly regenders textuality by figuring fiction as "a spider's web, attached ever so lightly perhaps, but still attached to life at all four corners" (43). The weaving that Freud contemporaneously translates from a conventional trope of women's generative primacy, of (in Bachofen's words) the "labour of great material primordial mothers," into a compensatory cultural achievement

motivated by the desire to conceal an "original sexual inferiority," is reclaimed by Woolf as a feminized figure of the text.[6]

Texts are mothered, not authored, in *Room,* although Woolf opposes textual maternity to biological maternity. "Masterpieces are not single and solitary births; they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common, of thinking by the body of the people" (68–69). A potential masterpiece typically miscarries, since "[e]verything is against the likelihood that it will come from the writer's mind whole and entire. . . . [P]robably no book is born entire and uncrippled as it was conceived," yet birth figures an ideal textual autonomy (53–54). Unlike the pen that serves authorial self-expression, the mind-as-womb separates texts from their creators; eluding its author's ego, the externalized text assumes an embodied and autonomous position in the world. The maternal metaphor reconciles Woolf's disdain for confessional works with her privileging of subjectivity.[7] Successfully giving birth to a text is synonymous, finally, with the androgyny *Room* openly propounds.[8] For the formal expression of androgyny, epitomized by the plays of Shakespeare—"the type of the androgynous" and the antitype of Mr. A—is the purging of the authorial self from the "whole and free" text generated by the "naturally creative" mind (102).

The weighting of androgyny toward the maternal is in fact implicit throughout Woolf's discussion. The very sexuality on which her language insists—the "intercourse" and "marriage" of masculine and feminine that qualifies the meaning of their "collaboration"—returns to the metaphor of birth. The site of textual production is figuratively the womb: the taxicab into which the man and woman enter in Woolf's allegory of the androgynous mind; the imaginative chamber whose "curtains must be close drawn" so that the mind can "celebrate its nuptials in darkness" and the "marriage of opposites . . . be consummated" (108). Androgyny is proposed as a corrective to a masculinization of discourse represented, at one end of the decade, by the pen's attack on the female body and, at the other, by the "horrid little abortion. . . . [t]wo heads on one body" that reflects the fascist poem's double paternity (107). In practice, if not in theory, androgyny entails the assimilation of maternal generativity—and not some more general notion of the feminine—consistently contrasted with "the dominance of the letter 'I' and the aridity that, like the giant beach tree, it casts within its shade" (104).

Woolf's privileging of the maternal metaphor rests, however, on her discomfort with biological maternity, a discomfort already implicit in *To the Lighthouse,* where it is Lily (not Cam) who thinks back through Mrs. Ramsay, who is not her biological mother, whom she reimagines in terms that gravitate from biology to art. In *Room* Woolf historicizes the rhetoric of gender: as she locates exaggerated claims for masculinity in the context

of the suffrage victory, she contextualizes the maternal metaphor within postsuffrage feminism. Biological motherhood in *Room* disqualifies literary maternity: childlessness, the narrator observes, is the only link among the four great nineteenth-century women novelists; Judith Shakespeare's suicide reiterates the fate of Mary Hamilton (the unnamed Mary of the Child ballad from which Woolf draws her narrative persona), who went to the scaffold for murdering her illegitimate child.[9] Through her choice of authors for *Life's Adventure,* Woolf situates *Room* in relation to the birth control movement that emerged in England in the 1920s, for Mary Carmichael (whose name is mandated by the Child ballad—"Call me Mary Beton, Mary Seton, Mary Carmichael or by any name you please" [5]) is also the pseudonym under which Marie Stopes, the most famous birth control advocate in England, had published her novel, *Love's Creation,* the year before *Room* came out.[10] *Life's Adventure* is politically more adventurous than *Love's Creation,* but the echoes in title and setting, as well as in the authors' names, affiliate women's literary production with a social discourse in which issues of reproduction have shifted from the margins to the center. In marked contrast to the single-minded focus on political equality that galvanized the suffrage movement, postsuffrage feminists endorsed the birth control movement, economic support for mothers, protection in the workplace, and family allowances in order to redress the social penalties that women incur biologically. Fueling the maternal metaphor that opposes masculine authorship is the position of the mother in the "new feminism" of the 1920s.[11]

Through Mary Carmichael's fiction of Chloe and Olivia, which shares Alan and Phoebe's emblematic status, Woolf suggests a further context for the oppositional figure of the mother: a female intimacy intensified in the postwar world by a disenchantment with masculinity.[12] The figuration of Chloe's affection for Olivia intimates an originary space constructed and inhabited by two women: "For if Chloe likes Olivia and Mary Carmichael knows how to express it she will light a torch in that vast chamber where nobody has yet been. It is all half lights and profound shadows like those serpentine caves where one goes with a candle" (88). Jane Marcus has uncovered the lesbian implications of Woolf's having prefaced the statement that "'Chloe liked Olivia'" with a reference to Sir Chartres Biron, who presided over the obscenity trial Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness* had provoked the preceding year, and of Woolf's alluding to the *Well* in Fernham's female pastoral.[13] The romantic "cave" of Chloe and Olivia, and the garden world of Fernham, where daffodils and bluebells wave in the wind and purples and golds "burn in windowpanes like the beat of an excitable heart," are pockets of exclusive and impassioned femininity that substitute for the heterosexual couple a fantasy of double motherhood (16).

Woolf elaborates this fantasy by asymmetrically feminizing the concept of androgyny. For despite her declaration that "some marriage of opposites has to be consummated," she calls into question the heterosexual prototypes of women's literary maternity (and hence of androgyny) by never representing a marriage with the masculine, by including no women in her list of androgynous writers, and by implying through her epithets that "powerful and masterly" but infertile feminist texts require some intercourse with the *feminine* (108). When she rewrites from a contemporary feminine perspective the vision of sexual difference that underlies androgyny—an "illustrious man" renewed by "her" as the "centre of some different order and system of life" in the "drawing-room or nursery"—both the room and its viewer are feminine (90). It is the sight of sameness, not difference, that now refreshes and invigorates, the sight of a femininity that craves articulation in the public world but no insemination by the masculine. A vision of illicit linguistic birth registers the circumvention of paternity: "[W]hole flights of words would need to wing their way illegitimately into existence before a woman could say what happens when she goes into a room" (91).

Suggestions of parthenogenesis also write men out of the figures of birth pervading *Room.* The narrator's purse, for example, supplied with money by her aunt, procreates autonomously: "[I]t is a fact that still takes my breath away—the power of my purse to breed ten-shilling notes automatically. I open it and there they are" (37).[14] Parthenogenetic or lesbian, the mothers that figure origins in *Room* are not mothers who reproduce biologically. When biological maternity was glorified by fascism in the 1930s, an oppositional maternal metaphor became untenable. In consequence, Woolf's antipatriarchal figure shifted from the (nonbiological) mother to the chaste daughter, the heroine of *Three Guineas.*

II

The itinerary of Woolf's argument to and within *Three Guineas* can be condensed to a route first followed in *Room:* the construction of a cultural text's human origin. The "text" in *Three Guineas* is pictorial: a 1936 photograph from the beleaguered Spanish government illustrating the horrors of war. The adult body, whose mutilation obliterates any trace of gender, the dead children, and the bombed-out house form a meeting place for the narrator and her male correspondent, a text they interpret identically. At her letter's end, however, the narrator draws an image of this picture's origin, foregrounding difference rather than commonality. The horrors of war recede into the background.

> For . . . another picture has imposed itself upon the foreground. It is the figure of a man; some say, others deny, that he is Man himself, the

> quintessence of virility, the perfect type of which all the others are imperfect adumbrations. He is a man certainly. . . . His eyes are glazed; his eyes glare. His body, which is braced in an unnatural position, is tightly cased in a uniform. Upon the breast of that uniform are sewn several medals and other mystic symbols. His hand is upon a sword. He is called in German and Italian Führer or Duce; in our own language Tyrant or Dictator. And behind him lie ruined houses and dead bodies—men, women, and children.[15]

Both iconographically and formally, this "figure of a man" that generates and consequently explicates a violent text recalls a predecessor: "the face and the figure of Professor von X . . . jab[bing] his pen on the paper as if he were killing some noxious insect." The pen that figuratively killed its female subject has been converted to a sword.

The decade that has intervened, however, has altered the gender ideology. By the mid-1930s the feminist movement was too depleted to excite retaliation against women's bodies. Woolf's footnote in the passage quoted above to "he is Man himself" explains: "The nature of manhood and the nature of womanhood are frequently defined by both Italian and German dictators. Both repeatedly insist that it is the nature of man and indeed the essence of manhood to fight. Hitler, for example, draws a distinction between 'a nation of pacifists and a nation of men.' Both repeatedly insist that it is the nature of womanhood to heal the wounds of the fighter" (186n. 48). Unlike the defensive and punitive rhetoric of Professor von X, these paraphrased male voices are calm and assured; the "mental, moral, and physical inferiority of women" has yielded to a discourse of "natural and eternal law" that acclaims a biologically grounded female power of nurturance which serves, rather than interrogates, masculine heroics.[16] The sword is lifted against men instead of women, whose solace and assistance it presupposes.

In this footnote Woolf quotes from two items in the three volumes of newspaper clippings she compiled between 1931, when she first envisaged a sequel to *Room,* and 1938, when she published *Three Guineas.*[17] A recurrent motif in this compendium of pronouncements on gender and social institutions is the fascist ideology of sexual difference as an innate and immutable polarity enjoined by nature and ratified by providence. "The Natural and Eternal Law in Germany" is her title for a *Times* clipping that reports a speech by Dr. Woerman, counsellor of the German embassy, justifying Hitler's expulsion of women from the professions in 1933: "It was the aim of National-Socialism to let man's work be done by men and not by women. To believe that a woman's principle work was family life and bringing up the young generation was simply to return to natural and eternal law."[18]

Intended to legitimate the complementary figures of warrior hero

and prolific mother that Hitler's imperial mission required, the Nazi rhetoric of sexual difference, as biologistic as its racial rhetoric, celebrated women's procreative power. As a Nazi propaganda pamphlet designed by and for women succinctly declares: "In woman's womb rests the future of the people."[19] The Third Reich officially acknowledged maternal valor in 1938 by designing the Medal of Honor for prolific German mothers (bronze for more than four children, silver for more than six, gold for more than eight), entitling its possessor to mandatory respect and the privileges accorded special military groups, since the mother "risks her body and her life for the people and the Fatherland as much as the combat soldier does in the roar and thunder of battle."[20] Giving birth is thus represented as tantamount to, not (as in Freud) compensatory for, the hero's sword. Designed to counteract the falling birthrate that the dissemination of birth control and the spreading aspiration for a higher standard of living (hence smaller families) had produced in the 1920s, the Nazi glorification of maternity served the expansionist goal implied in the other clipping from which Woolf draws—Hitler's speech, at the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Rosenheim branch of the Nazi party, extolling Germany's new military resolve by representing the Fatherland as no longer "a nation of pacifists but . . . a nation of men."[21]

Woolf's political agenda in *Three Guineas* is less to articulate a pacifist response to the fascist threat, her stated goal, than to bring the impending war home, to resituate the battlefield in the British family and workplace. Her most iconoclastic gesture is to subvert the distinction between political antagonists by discovering the mystique of gender difference, represented as fascism's core, in democratic England. Characterizing the British revival of domestic ideology as a response to the postwar depression and record unemployment that England shared with Germany and Italy, *Three Guineas* quotes three newspaper articles whose authors complain that the First World War afforded women "too much liberty" and who proclaim that "[h]omes are the real places of the women who are compelling men to be idle" (51). Pair these declarations with another one, Woolf directs, drawing again from her notebooks to quote Hitler's 1936 speech to the Nazi women's association: "There are two worlds in the life of the nation, the world of men and the world of women. Nature has done well to entrust the man with the care of his family and the nation. The woman's world is her family, her husband, her children, and her home." Woolf then insists, "One is written in English, the other in German. But where is the difference? Are they not both saying the same thing?" (53).[22]

The fascist promotion of two gender worlds contaminates the maternal metaphor that Woolf could differentiate from biological maternity in *Room.* The discourse of natural and eternal law disqualifies her strategy of reversal: the more profoundly other the mother, the more she now serves the interests of the same. Instead of marking a position anterior

or exterior to patriarchy, the mother has become, in Oswald Mosley's words, "one of the main pillars of the state."[23] Woolf translates Hitler's two gender worlds, and their counterparts in England, into variants of a single world: a private house and a public house that are equally paternal, that afford no uncontaminated place of residence. A new geography articulates these changes: for the room that had delineated a private feminine space Woolf substitutes a bridge that affords an anthropologist's perspective on social institutions perceived at a distance but not from any native ground. The bridge demarcates a liminal zone "between the old world and the new," between "the private house and the world of public life" (16, 18). But the private house is no longer maternal; the "final slam of the door" behind the Ibsenesque daughter seals a point of origin that is always already paternal, the epitomizes patriarchy rather than opposing it (138). *Three Guineas*'s topography of doubled fathers, prefigured in the twofold paternity of the fascist text, inverts *Room*'s fantasy of double mothers, a fantasy sustainable only in a context that permitted new ways of envisaging maternity.[24]

Woolf's metaphors linking fascism to England signal her anxiety about maternal complicity. In the newspaper clippings assigning women to the home, she insists, "is the egg of the very same worm that we know under other names in other countries. . . . Dictator as we call him when he is Italian or German. . . . And he is here among us, raising his ugly head, spitting his poison, small still, curled up like a caterpillar on a leaf, but in the heart of England" (53). By consistently figuring the origins of fascism in England as an egg, Woolf implicates the mother in her own appropriation.[25] The insect that in *Room* represented the unambiguous victim of misogyny has metamorphosed into the egg-laying caterpillar-fascist (elsewhere called "insect" and "worm") who figures the collapse of the sexual polarities that his discursive "eggs" propound. *Room*'s sequel hints at a monstrously literalized androgyny that furthers, rather than tempers, the achievements of masculinity. The literalization is consistent with the diminished faith in imagination suggested by Woolf's embrace of an aesthetic of fact in the 1930s; but the reconstruction of androgyny as a patriarchal appropriation of maternity also demonstrates the problem of merger under the aegis of the father. "Husband and wife are not only one flesh; they are also one purse" in the domestic arrangements the text criticizes by insisting on women's economic autonomy (54). But although Woolf devises strategies for separating incomes, the text is haunted by the vision of the single flesh, which returns in a pervasively eroticized rhetoric that assimilates the single purse (no longer breeding parthenogenetically) to an image of sexually appropriated, and acquiescent, femininity.

Three Guineas emphasizes economic tactics for dismantling England's protofascist social structures. Designating 1919 a "sacred year" not because of the suffrage victory but because it was the year of the Act of

Parliament that unbarred women's entry into the professions (the antithesis to Hitler's expulsion of women from the professions), the text privileges an entry to the public sphere that subverts, rather than inverts, the cultural construction of sexual difference. To guide the daughter beyond the private house, Woolf maps the discourse of female sexual conduct onto the novel economic terrain, but the erotic rhetoric eclipses the economic framework it should serve. Woolf presents as uncomplicatedly figurative the chastity she recommends: "By chastity is meant that when you have made enough to live on by your profession you must refuse to sell your brain for the sake of money" (80). The body that should serve as a transparent vehicle repeatedly asserts its own distracting literality, however: "[T]o sell a brain is worse than to sell a body, for when the body seller has sold her momentary pleasure she takes good care that the matter shall end there. But when a brain seller has sold her brain, its anaemic, vicious and diseased progeny are let loose upon the world to infect and corrupt and sow the seeds of disease in others" (93).[26] The dangers of economic seduction pale beside those represented as reproduction, which in the imagery of this text inevitably breeds disease. *Three Guineas* argues that the daughter must penetrate the public world to break her economic dependence on her father and unsettle a repressive and deceptive separation of spheres; a fixed opposition between the virgin and the whore conversely proscribes the reproduction of the private sphere, for an invariant language of sexual revulsion assimilates the mother (present in this text only as a sexual being) to the whore.[27] Losing control over the object of her irony, Woolf implicitly sanctions the discrimination she condemns against married women in the government: "As for 'Mrs.,' it is a contaminated word; an obscene word. The less said about that word the better. Such is the smell of it, so rank does it stink in the nostrils of Whitehall, that Whitehall excludes it entirely. In Whitehall, as in heaven, there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage" (52).

The smell that both signals and confirms a masculine fantasy is a symptom of a pervasive social illness Woolf diagnoses variously as misogyny and incest (variations on one theme, as we shall see) but figures consistently as female reproductive sexuality. Traced ultimately to the eggs laid by caterpillars curled in the "heart of England," the rank smell calls attention to the text's other site: the garden that represents the "heart" of the city, whose buildings and processions, seen from a distance, constitute the foregrounded urban spectacle.[28] The nostalgic discourse of the garden "heart of England" seems to contradict the text's emphatic cosmopolitanism, but the garden that (like Fernham) might situate some unfallen sexual or national identity rehearses, instead of opposing, the politics of the urban sphere. If the garden heart is a passive feminized body invaded by the phallic caterpillar-dictators, it also displays an unruly female sexuality; the leaves on which the caterpillars lay their eggs have been

destroyed through sins of prostitution as well as through predation. The "glory . . . of war lies curled up in the rotten cabbage leaves of our prostituted fact-purveyors"—that is, of the daughters Woolf charges with "adultery of the brain" while she images a bodily unchastity that recasts the invading caterpillars as the prostitutes' progeny (97, 93). *Three Guineas*'s ruined garden echoes *Hamlet*'s "unweeded garden / That grows to seed," possessed by "[t]hings rank and gross in nature" (1.2.135–36); both texts invoke the garden trope to write the mother's guilt into a charge ostensibly against the fathers. *Room* revises *Antony and Cleopatra* through Chloe's affection for Olivia; *Three Guineas* borrows, without changing, *Hamlet*'s vision of corruption—a vision, as Janet Adelman argues persuasively, of a maternal sexuality indistinguishable from adultery.[29]

Like *Hamlet,* moreover, *Three Guineas* displays, in a nightmare parody of androgyny, great anxiety about the power of sexuality to obliterate difference. The loss of Hamlet's idealized father, Adelman suggests, removes Hamlet's defense against archaic fears of the engulfing mother, whose sexuality (newly confirmed for Hamlet by her adultery) threatens to erase all boundaries; hence Claudius appears to Hamlet, "My mother—father and mother is man and wife, man and wife is one flesh, and so, my mother" (4.3.50–51). In *Three Guineas* the confrontation with maternal heterosexuality—the loss, that is, of the idealized, autonomous mother—evokes a parallel fear of merger, but for the daughter, the father is dominant: "Husband and wife are" both "one flesh" and "one purse." The protective responses are also akin. Woolf's charge of chastity to the daughter echoes Hamlet's to Ophelia, at times quite literally. "I say we will have no more marriage," Hamlet declares (3.1.150). Woolf's rhetoric is similar, though somewhat unpersuasively disowned: "In Whitehall, as in heaven, there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage."

In the fantasy Woolf elaborates in *Room* two women regender origins; in *Three Guineas* origins are equated with disease; the later text exhorts an end to paternal power more urgently than it does a new beginning. As the sexual and political ideologies of the 1930s underscored for Woolf both the intractability of patriarchy and the mother's position in perpetuating it, her feminism shifted from valorizing mothers to confronting "the infantile fixation of the fathers," now "massed together in societies, in professions," and "even more subject to the fatal disease than the fathers in private" (137–38).[30] Before following Woolf's turn to the fathers, however, we must return to *Room* to uncover its own criticism of the mother. Simply to polarize the feminist texts would undervalue their complexity, for the matrilineage acclaimed by *Room* conceals—though imperfectly—the ambivalence triggered by the problem of maternal nurture.

III

The mind in *Room* is both a womb and a stomach; writing is digestion as well as birth. Contesting the representation of texts gestating within an enclosed interior is an insistence on the mind's need to feed on something exterior, "to absorb the new into the old without disturbing the infinitely intricate and elaborate balance of the whole" (89). If the mind's self-enclosure privileges the figure of the mother, however, digestion privileges an access to the world that has been the male writer's prerogative.

To give birth to texts in *Room,* one must eat. *Room* locates discourse consistently in a particular relation to the body: "[A] good dinner is of great importance to good talk" (18). Not altogether playfully criticizing fictional conventions for emphasizing language ("something very witty that was said") or action ("something very wise that was done") over "what was eaten," the scenes of eating that precede the scenes of reading launch an argument about representation and an account of literary production that are repeatedly declared in terms of money and dramatized in terms of food (10). Hunger and the anger it generates, however, are gendered impediments to writing in *Room.* For men such as the "well-nourished, well-educated" Mr. A, and even for his less coddled predecessors, Woolf depicts the obstacles to "free and unimpeded" creation as a wounded and intrusive ego which must be purged by an incandescent flame that leaves "no foreign matter unconsumed" (103, 58). But the metaphorics of eating, problematized for women, activate the secondary meaning of the word "consume" and suggest a different ecology of writing. By enabling "the more profound, subtle and subterranean glow, which is the rich yellow flame of rational intercourse" to vanquish "that hard little electric light which we call brilliance, as it pops in and out upon our lips," the scene of lavish eating at Oxbridge contextualizes incandescence as an effect of consumption rather than its cause (11).

Leaving "no foreign matter" textually unconsumed always requires adequate consumption, but appetite's object is shaped historically. The nineteenth-century woman writer hungered catastrophically for experience: when Charlotte Brontë "remembered that she had been starved of her proper due of experience," *Jane Eyre* miscarried; Brontë "will never get her genius expressed whole and entire. Her books will be deformed and twisted" (76, 72). In the postsuffrage present of the narrative, however, the object of women's hunger, and anger, has changed. The new woman represented by Mary Carmichael's Olivia "sees coming her way" precisely what Brontë hungered for: "A piece of strange food—knowledge, adventure, art" (89). Woolf preserves the suffrage movement's privileging of hunger as a figure of feminine desire; but whereas the suffragettes made hunger, theatricalized through hunger strikes, a metaphor of women's intellectual starvation and a sign of their resistance to patriarchal food, of

refusal to accept nurture for the body when the spirit went unfed, Woolf situates the hunger of the postsuffrage woman in a different register.[31] In contrast to Judith Shakespeare, who escaped to the city from the advantageous marriage arranged by her father because "her genius was for fiction and lusted to feed abundantly upon the lives of men and women and the study of their ways," or to Jane Eyre, who, in the passage Woolf cites, escaped to the roof "when Mrs. Fairfax was making jellies and looked over the fields at the distant view"—in contrast, that is, to an intellectual hunger that exceeds and repudiates material sustenance—the women at Fernham, to whom the fathers have granted food for thought, hunger instead for material food they (illogically) blame their mothers for withholding (50, 71). In a reversal produced by women's new cultural location, Woolf literalizes hunger and returns it to its original relation to "our mothers," now charged with the task of feeding daughters recently admitted to cultural institutions that both stimulate and frustrate the longing for maternal nurture.

In *Room*'s complex representation of the present, a chasm between two female generations simultaneously promotes a celebration of matrilineage and aggravates a complaint about nurture. To protect the mother as origin from anger at the feeding/withholding mother (the least rational and most deeply prohibited anger in the text), Woolf separates the discourses of descent and hunger, locating each in one of the Marys that constitute her narrative persona. Through Mary Carmichael she identifies the changes that made it newly attractive for a writing daughter to celebrate a relationship to mothers whose lives she had recently been safeguarded from reproducing. The subject Woolf proposes for Mary Carmichael's next novel, "a very ancient lady crossing the street on the arm of a middle-aged woman, her daughter, perhaps. . . . No biography or history has a word to say about it," underlines the emergence of a distinctive mother-daughter plot, for the first time in literary history, in women's fiction of the 1920s (92–93).[32] Woolf outlines this narrative in the context of literary history through Mary Carmichael's continuation of, and rupture with, Jane Austen. To protect the narrative's benign dynamics, Woolf systematically depicts the writing daughter only as negotiating issues of difference and continuity with her female precursors, not as hungering for sustenance from them. Reading is eating only if the substance is provided by men: "Lately my diet has become a trifle monotonous; history is too much about wars; biography too much about great men," the narrator complains, to exhort her female audience "to write all kinds of books." But her discourse swerves from eating to genealogy to characterize the female tradition: every exemplary woman writer of the past "is an inheritor as well as an originator, and has come into existence because women have come to have the habit of writing naturally" (112–13).[33] Unlike Lily Briscoe, *Room*'s narrator does investigate what the discourse of descent

excludes, but she concentrates her investigation in the reproaches she addresses on her own behalf and that of Mary Seton, a science don at Fernham, to Mary's mother, Mrs. Seton, a Victorian mother of thirteen.

Represented iconically through a photograph on Mary Seton's mantlepiece, Mrs. Seton, the only biological mother in *Room*'s cast of fictional characters, assumes a generic character. In a text that employs portraiture almost exclusively for feminist satire (the sketch of Professor von X is a typical example), the unusual visual image of a woman, enforcing a pause in the narrative, calls attention to the portrait of "a homely body; an old lady in a plaid shawl" sitting, with her dog, in a basket-chair (21). Vivid but silent, Mrs. Seton cannot answer the questions she attracts about the "reprehensible poverty" of "our mothers" (23). Instead, she is a vehicle for Woolf's translation of maternal poverty into insufficient feeding: "If only Mrs. Seton and her mother and her mother before her had learnt the great art of making money and had left their money, like their fathers and their grandfathers before them, to found fellowships and lectureships and prizes and scholarships appropriated to the use of their own sex, we might have dined very tolerably up here alone off a bird and a bottle of wine" (21–22). The preoccupation with "our mothers" that hunger exacts is regressive, not progressive, an obstacle, not an alternative, to the newly available and valued masculine discourses: if Mrs. Seton "had left two or three hundred thousand pounds to Fernham, we could have been sitting at our ease tonight and the subject of our talk might have been archaelogy, botany, anthropology, physics, the nature of the atom, mathematics, astronomy, relativity, geography"—instead of mothers (21).

The narrator recognizes that "our mothers" are not to blame for their culturally inflicted inability to feed. In the language of economics she reasons that "in the first place, to earn money was impossible for them, and in the second, had it been possible, the law denied them the right to possess what money they earned" (23). But the images provoked by hunger reinscribe maternal poverty in the register of feeding. The figuration of the scanty meal at Fernham simultaneously exonerates the mothers by examining how culture has constructed the relation between food and money and articulates the anger that has been disavowed. The imagery evoked by the tasteless meal about which the narrator insists "there was no reason to complain" is that of emotional as well as economic meanness, of a voluntary rather than imposed withholding (18). Resentment speaks loudest during the dessert that should gratify desire rather than need. "[S]tringy as a miser's heart and exuding a fluid such as might run in misers' veins who have denied themselves wine and warmth for eighty years and yet not given to the poor," the prunes that constitute dessert figure a withered and implicitly masculinized heart. The sources of this desiccated mothering are intimated by the meal's main course: beef, greens, and potatoes, "a homely trinity, suggesting the rumps of cattle in a muddy market, and sprouts

curled and yellowed at the edge, and bargaining and cheapening, and women with string bags on Monday morning" (17). The dinner refers us to a prior scene: the marketplace, a scene of scarcity and exchange that positions women as consumers rather than producers. As the string bags evolve into the stringy hearts, women are written out of the picture entirely. Collapsed with the images evoked by the prunes, the scene recurs as "*lean* cows and a muddy market and withered greens and the stringy hearts of old men" (19; emphasis added). The loss of the status of nurturer imposed by the shift from production to consumption implies a final degendering, depicted as a violation of and by the mothers.[34]

The scene of exchange has a counterpart at Oxbridge. During the discussion of maternal poverty in Mary Seton's room, the narrator confesses: "While these things were being said, however, I became shamefacedly aware of a current setting in of its own accord. . . . [T]wo pictures, disjointed and disconnected and nonsensical as they were, were for ever coming together and combating each other and had me entirely at their mercy" (19). The two pictures the narrator sees at Fernham—one of lean cows and a muddy market, the other of kings and nobles pouring treasure under the Oxbridge earth—echo and revise the Tennyson and Rossetti poems she "hears" at Oxbridge when listening "not entirely to what was being said, but to the murmur or current behind it" (12). The two pictures translate sexual difference into an economic frame by pairing images of founders instead of lovers, shifting the frame of reference from the phallus, linked with the poems through the narrator's speculation on the Manx cat's missing tail, to the "chest" in which food passes through the circuit of money. If the Fernham scene implies that at some hypothetical moment in history the marketplace has intervened in the transmission of food from mother to child, the Oxbridge scene, elaborated through the luncheon, reveals that this intervention has constituted fathers as, lamentably, the better nurturers, the more effective mothers.

The complete account of the founding moment of Oxbridge, quite literally the construction of its foundation, describes a flow of gold and silver that transforms nature to culture: "Once, presumably, this quadrangle with its smooth lawns, its massive buildings, and the chapel itself was marsh too, where the grasses waved and the swine rootled. . . . An unending stream of gold and silver, I thought, must have flowed into this court perpetually to keep the stones coming and the masons working" (9). The represented moment of cultural origins depends, however, on some prior ones: the privatization of property, the accumulation of wealth, and the creation of gold and silver as a means of exchange. Subsequent economic developments simply displace the flow from one paternal chest to another: "[T]he gold and silver flowed now, not from the coffers of the king, but from the chests of merchants and manufacturers, from the purses of men who had made, say, a fortune from industry" (9). Juxtaposed

scenes transpose the ceaseless flow of money into the ceaseless flow of food in the lavish Oxbridge luncheon, distinguished not only by its bounty and excellence but by the magical nature of its provenance, the sense of a return to some originary plenitude now produced under the aegis of the fathers. Gratification is known before desire is felt. With no command uttered, and agency scarcely revealed, course follows course in a prelinguistic economy of desire. "Meanwhile the wineglasses had flushed yellow and flushed crimson; had been emptied; had been filled" (11). In an unruptured trajectory from chest to glass, the two-colored flow of wine highlights the aridity of biscuits, cheese, and water with which Fernham dinner unceremoniously terminates. The meals perform a symmetrical regendering: mothers dispossessed by the marketplace shrivel into the stringy hearts of aged men; paternal chests metamorphose into breasts that reconvert gold and silver to wine and food.

That the luncheon fleetingly reconstitutes a prelapsarian moment is further suggested by the barred return that frustrates the narrator's first attempt to enter the Oxbridge sanctum. As she opens the door of the library "instantly there issued, like a guardian angel barring the way with a flutter of black gown instead of white wings," a gentleman denying women access (7). After the luncheon that suspends the banishment from Eden, the narrator is gently but decisively expelled from a campus whose description telescopes the dining hall and library: "Gate after gate seemed to close with gentle finality behind me. Innumerable beadles were fitting innumerable keys into well-oiled locks; the treasure-house was being made secure for another night" (13). The drama of women's exclusion from the sanctuaries of culture also images a lost maternal Eden, for the scene of prohibited reading shares the feminization of the scene of gratified eating. In contrast to the accessible British Museum, under whose "vast dome" the narrator feels like "a thought in the huge bald forehead which is so splendidly encircled by a band of a famous [male] names," the Oxbridge library, "with all its treasure safe locked in its breast" is figured not as a masculine brain but as a maternal "treasure-house" possessed and guarded by the fathers (26, 8). The image of hoarded maternal treasure recalls Lily Briscoe's fantasy that "in the chambers of the mind and heart" of the unresponsive Mrs. Ramsay "were stood, like the treasures in the tombs of kings, tablets bearing sacred inscriptions, which if one could spell them out, would teach one everything, but they would never be offered openly, never made public."[35] Mrs. Ramsay's enigma in this scene, however, is not produced by her submission to the fathers but by a discourse of knowledge that Lily rapidly rejects for the language of mother-daughter merger. The surfacing of hunger in *Room* generates a new perception of maternal withholding.

Room's insistence on hunger for and anger at a mother kept from feeding constitutes the historicized terrain on which Woolf intersects with

Klein. Through the figure of Mrs. Seton, Woolf examines the constriction of maternal nurture in a context *Room* images as the marketplace but analyzes more precisely as a postindustrial economy that divides material production from human reproduction.[36] The long list of wishful clauses that follow the conditional "If only Mrs. Seton" and her foremothers "had learnt the great art of making money" concludes abruptly with "there would have been . . . no Mary" (22). Mrs. Seton can either bear children or earn the wages that enable her to feed them: to give birth to children is to starve them; to feed them is to forgo bearing them. Instead of inhabiting and consecrating the reproductive mother, as in contemporaneous sentimental anthropological theories, the nurturant mother has become her antithesis.[37] Lacking liquid treasure to pour into the earth, the founding mothers of Fernham exhaust their resources giving birth to buildings: "To raise bare walls out of the bare earth was the utmost they could do" (23).

The imaginative solution *Room* proposes to this split returns us to the fantasy of the double mother, but from the vantage point of lack instead of plenitude. This fiction of the double mother both echoes and revises Klein. Reversing the projections of the Kleinian infant—who splits the inevitably frustrating maternal body into an idealized "good" breast and a withholding "bad" breast that, by drawing anger to itself, protects the fantasy of the "good" mother—Woolf compensates for a socially inflicted maternal failure by constructing the woman who *can* feed: the woman who is *not* biologically a mother. *Room*'s narrator inherits a legacy of five hundred pounds a year from the third Mary, her aunt, Mary Beton, "for no other reason than that I share her name" (37). *Room* suggests, however, that the namesake is as much an effect as a cause of the legacy, a way of registering a maternal descent produced by nurture rather than by birth. That the narrator bears the name of neither her mother (represented in the text by the generic Mrs. Seton), nor her father (whom the text does not represent), but of her father's sister—a single woman, presumably, since she shares her brother's last name and leaves her money to her niece—constitutes her as the daughter of two mothers: the one who bears her, and therefore cannot nurture, and the one who feeds her, but does not give birth.[38] The aunt is the mother's necessary cultural complement: her legacy enables the narrator not only to write, the function Woolf describes, but also to eat, the function that Woolf dramatizes. The legacy is introduced during the text's third scene of eating, which mediates between the paternal lavishness of Oxbridge and the maternal penury of Fernham. Situated in a restaurant near the British Museum, and costing precisely "five shillings and ninepence," this modest luncheon of chicken and coffee redeems the conversion of food into money by providing nourishment "in return for a certain number of pieces of paper which were left me by an aunt" (37). Enabling the negotiation of hunger in society, the aunt pays

the deficit incurred by reproduction; the purse in which the legacy money "breeds" translates generation into nurture. Although the declared value of the legacy is freedom from corrosive work and thus from anger and bitterness toward men, the dramatized value is freedom from hunger and thus from anger and bitterness toward women.[39] The last scene of eating, at the end of chapter 2, clears the way for the construction of the literary matrilineage that dominates the next three chapters, a task performed more safely after the management of appetite, gratified and regulated by a small fixed income, has been staged.

Protecting the literary mothers as points of origin, however, displaces the dynamics of hunger and anger through the text, colonizing distant arenas. The question "what food do we feed women as artists upon?," a question whose explicit reference to "that dinner of prunes and custard" seems to require by analogy some account of a maternal literary tradition, is rigidly segregated from that tradition (54–55). The answer is drawn instead from the textual food produced by the literary fathers, and specifically by the patriarchs studied earlier that day at the British Museum: Lord Birkenhead, Dean Inge, and Mr. Oscar Browning. Comparing the textual nurture of women and men to "the effect of ordinary milk and Grade A milk upon the body of the rat. . . . [O]ne was furtive, timid and small, and the other was glossy, bold and big," the narrator undoes the opposition between the breast of the Oxbridge library and the forehead of the British Museum by representing misogyny in the language of maternal food (54). Literary fathers, not mothers, feed their daughters inferior milk, a displacement less astonishing, perhaps, in view of one function of the chapter on the British Museum: to deflect onto the fathers the anger at the mothers with which the preceding chapter concludes. Literal fathers who repeat the words of Mr. Oscar Browning to legitimate their own attempts to keep their daughters from leaving home participate in the politics of feeding that will be replaced by sexuality in *Three Guineas,* where the father-daughter dyad acquires its own dynamics. In *Room,* through a certain poetic justice, the fathers are subsumed to the economy of eating they appropriate.

Room incorporates contrary currents, of course. The legend of Judith Shakespeare, which fits the classic pattern of the traffic in women, depicts the daughter exchanged by men and undone by masculine desires. But this fiction is circumscribed historically. Judith's vulnerability resides in her body, not (in contrast to *Three Guineas*) in her sexuality. This body, *Room* suggests, has been recently protected by the development of contraception, and Judith's story has been less recently revised by that of Aphra Behn, whose life is represented as an exemplary text that (like Judith's) "outweighs anything that she actually wrote" (67). Aphra Behn succeeds, where Judith Shakespeare fails, in "com[ing] to town and . . . mak[ing] her living by her wits" and proving the factitiousness of chastity.

Demonstrating women's erotic and economic autonomy, Behn should be *Room*'s heroine, her life a pattern for her literary daughters. But *Room* grants Behn no literary heirs, even when Woolf's imagination has free reign; Mary Carmichael's novel is affiliated instead with Behn's opposite, Jane Austen, who "never travelled; . . . never drove through London in an omnibus" and had the gift "not to want what she had not" (71). Behn's victories are compartmentalized as *Room*'s own undigested foreign matter because they are not the issues with which this text, despite its declarations, is concerned: sexuality is not yet the problematic female desire (and chastity is therefore represented as a constraint rather than a choice); autonomy is not yet the economic goal. For despite Woolf's claim that women should earn five hundred a year by their wits (69), a proposal that Behn's life explicitly authorizes, she chooses to dramatize the legacy rather than a salary, to figure money not as the earned and consequently "chaste" sixpence that in *Three Guineas* represents economic and erotic freedom from the fathers but as the magically inherited self-reproducing ten-shilling notes that situate money within the problematics of mothering. Hence the economic event that in *Room* overshadows the suffrage victory is not (as in *Three Guineas*) the 1919 Act unbarring the professions but the receipt of the aunt's legacy "about the same time that the act was passed that gave votes to women" and "infinitely the more important" (37).

"A solicitor's letter fell into the post-box and when I opened it I found that she had left me five hundred pounds a year for ever," the narrator explains, the "for ever" signaling the fairy-tale character of this text's economic strategy. The distancing of the aunt's death "by a fall from her horse when she was riding out to take the air in Bombay" removes any sense of loss from the fulfillment of the wish for sustenance (37). But even the fantasy enacts, rather than resolving, the dynamic of hunger and anger, for it is Woolf herself who must murder the aunt to gratify her narrator's desire. Although hedged with irony, the narrator's acknowledgment that "this writing of books by women . . . leads to the murder of one's aunts" articulates one of the text's most profound unconscious fears: that the daughter's hunger will annihilate the mother (112).[40]

The reproduction of the problem of hunger within its solution does not engender new inquiries, however. *Three Guineas* is profoundly split from *Room*. Woolf never mentions hunger in the later text, never hints that her final disillusion with the reproductive mother is anticipated by that mother's inability to feed. Instead, the failure of maternal nurture fuels Woolf's shift of attention from the mother to the father. Weakened by the unresolved problem of hunger and undermined politically by fascism, the figure of the mother disappears as an antidote to the father, whose resurgence in Woolf's discourse in the late 1930s both promotes and reflects her new engagement with Freud.

IV

"Began reading Freud last night," Woolf noted in her diary late in 1939; "I'm gulping up Freud" she confessed the following week; "Freud is upsetting: reducing one to whirlpool; & I daresay truly. If we're all instinct, the unconscious, whats all this about civilisation, the whole man, freedom &c?" she grudgingly conceded the following day in deference to the evidence of irrationality afforded by world politics in the late 1930s.[41] But the politics of sexuality, rather than of nations, defined the terms of Woolf's encounter with Freudian theory a few years earlier. The unconscious represented in *Three Guineas* is not a generalized whirlpool of instinct but a product of explicitly Oedipal relationships. A medical discourse prevails at the end of *Three Guineas:* cases, symptoms, and diagnoses supersede the discussion of unemployment; "infantile fixation," "castration complex," "Oedipus complex" become the critical terms. It is to investigate father-daughter sexuality that Woolf for the first time turns openly to Freud.

"A good deal of p[sycho]. a[nalysis]. talked; & I liked it. A mercy not always to talk politics," Woolf noted about a dinner party given by Adrian and Karin Stephen in 1936; the "talk" similarly shifts to psychoanalysis in the political text she began composing two weeks later.[42] Near its end *Three Guineas* returns to its beginning to reopen a question it has not resolved: the question of discourse between the sexes, the question posed by the book's epistolary form. The return initiates the explicitly psychoanalytic moment of the text. The form of *Three Guineas* itself, however, is imbricated in a dialogue with psychoanalysis. Woolf opens her text with a question posed by a letter she claims to have received three years before: "How in your opinion are we to prevent war?" (3). The question echoes one posed to Freud five years earlier: "Is there a way of delivering mankind from the menace of war?" Albert Einstein had written to Freud in accordance with an epistolary project sponsored by the League of Nations to foster international exchange among intellectuals. Freud begins his response, published with Einstein's letter in a League of Nations pamphlet entitled *Why War?* (1933), by protesting his surprise and uncertainty: "[T]he question which you put me—what is to be done to rid mankind of the war menace?—took me by surprise. And, next, I was dumbfounded by the thought of my (of *our,* I almost wrote) incompetence."[43] Woolf begins similarly by expressing hesitation: "A whole page could be filled with excuses and apologies; declarations of unfitness, incompetence, lack of knowledge, and experience"; but she decides to reply nevertheless, "since when before has an educated man asked a woman how in her opinion war can be prevented?" (3). By both writing and departing from Freud's position, while recasting a discussion across disciplinary boundaries into an

exchange across gender lines, Woolf inscribes the question of war in a dialogue conducted with psychoanalysis across and about the sexual division.[44]

This dialogue becomes explicit when, after characterizing women's proposed double membership in society and the Society of Outsiders as "a movement . . . among educated men's daughters against the Nazi and the Fascist," the text quietly returns to its beginning in the midst of what should be its conclusion (119). The return occurs at a moment when the economic discourse falters, when the narrator admits the inadequacy of her earlier definition (and dismissal) of feminism as the completed struggle for "the only right, the right to earn a living" (101). Feminism returns in a psychoanalytic guise that, in contrast to *Room,* replaces, rather than parallels, the economic frame; Woolf marks the return by quoting her original account of the abyss that divides her from her male correspondent. A veil still intervenes in discussions between men and women even when they "talk, as we have boasted, about 'politics and people, war and peace, barbarism and civilization,'" the issues raised by her correspondent's letter (120, 4). She reproduces the ellipsis that had undermined the already achieved economic parity by "mark[ing] a precipice, a gulf so deeply cut between us that for three years and more I have been sitting on my side of it wondering whether it is any use to try to speak across it" (4). The gap widens in the repetition: ". . . Again there are three dots; again they represent a gulf—of silence this time, of silence inspired by fear" (120). Each time the narrator elects to approach the gulf obliquely, by choosing someone else through whom to speak. Her first interpreter is Mary Kingsley, whose comments on the differential education of daughters and sons introduces the economic perspective according to which "the noble courts and quadrangles of Oxford and Cambridge often appear to educated men's daughters like petticoats with holes in them" (5). The second interpreter is the 1935 Report of the Archbishops' Commission on the Ministry of Women, whose appendix by Dr. Grensted, an eminent professor of theology at Oxford, introduces a (sub)version of Freud that translates possession and lack into the psychoanalytic language that informs the supplement to Woolf's own text.

Charged with presenting the psychological reasons for the church's refusal to admit women to the ministry, Dr. Grensted iconoclastically invokes psychoanalysis to diagnose, rather than to apologize for, patriarchy. Insisting that the resistance to admitting women to the ministry is evidence of a "powerful and widespread subconscious motive" connected to the "infantile fixation," Dr. Grensted improvises a psychoanalytic explanation of misogyny: "'[W]hatever be the exact value and interpretation of the material upon which theories of the "Oedipus complex" and the "castration complex" have been founded, it is clear that the general acceptance of male dominance, and still more of feminine inferiority, resting

upon subconscious ideas of woman as "man manque," has its background in infantile conceptions of this type. These commonly, and even usually, survive in the adult, despite their irrationality'" (126). In Grensted's reconstruction, the perception of woman as a man manqué—for Freud the precondition for a credible castration threat and hence for normative male sexuality—becomes the source of a pathology whose pervasive symptom is women's exclusion from positions of authority.

Dr. Grensted's reading of Freud not only offers a clinical rendition of Woolf's own claim in *Room* that "women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size" (35) but also provides the psychoanalytic materials for constructing a theory of the masculine desire that produces the dominant gender ideology. Grensted's intervention allows Woolf to reinterpret three Victorian "cases" that illustrate "these very ancient and obscure emotions . . . which the Professors have only lately brought to the surface and named 'infantile fixation,' 'Oedipus complex,' and the rest" (130). The well-known cases of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Charlotte Brontë are relatively straightforward, although their relation to psychoanalytic theory is oblique: the father opposes his daughter's marriage, struggling to manage her erotic life and implicitly to be its exclusive object. The case of Sophia Jex-Blake is less familiar and more subtle, for the father overtly opposes his daughter's economic rather than erotic autonomy. Yet "we will call it a case of infantile fixation," because Mr. Jex-Blake's final aim is to maintain erotic power: "The case of Mr. Jex-Blake shows that the daughter must not on any account be allowed to make money because if she makes money she will be independent of her father and free to marry any man she chooses" (131, 133). The desire of the father is fundamental to the Jex-Blake case and to the section of *Three Guineas* it epitomizes; the daughter's desire to marry is represented as incidental to the narrative. If history interpreted psychoanalysis through the figure of Professor von X, psychoanalysis interprets history through the figure of Dr. Grensted, who—in contrast to his predecessor—distinguishes male dominance from male superiority. Woolf's case histories, read through Grensted's lens, suggest that the object of adult male desire is not the procreative wife, totally absent from these accounts, but the daughter kept at home for covert erotic motives that are screened, in particular historical situations, by domestic ideology. Freudian theory—reconstructed—has acquired new truth-value. Extending Dr. Grensted's equation of the infantile fixation and the castration complex (redefined as belief in women's castration), Woolf intimates a theory of male desire that reorders the Oedipus and castration complexes. Rather than terminating incestuous desire (as in Freud), the perception of female "castration" seems in Woolf's account to fixate desire on an image of inferiorized femininity most fully realized in the daughter.[45] Misogyny and father-

daughter incest are twin faces of the same, and conspire in constructing the home as woman's sphere. The infantile fixation has come to signify fixation on, not of, the infant—or, rather, the chain that links the son's eroticized perception of maternal lack to the father's eroticized investment in his daughter.

Woolf's reading of the Victorian family romance returns psychoanalysis to its preanalytic origins in the seduction theory, which locates desire in the father rather than in the daughter.[46] Woolf's embrace of Freudian theory restores its proto-feminist prehistory. The anger and fear that Woolf insists inhibit conversation between women and men attest to the explosiveness of this restoration, for simple claims to sexual equality would be too familiar by the 1930s to produce such violent emotions. Fear definitely intervenes in Woolf's dialogue with Freud. To complete the "bisexual private conversation" (128) enacted by the epistolary form that links *Three Guineas* to Freud, the narrator proposes: "[L]et us lower the veil of St. Paul between us—in other words take shelter behind an interpreter" (120). Dr. Grensted is the interpreter who allows Woolf to work her revision of Freud obliquely; but the psychoanalytic veil entangles as well as shelters her, delimiting as well as enabling her revision.

Dr. Grensted is juxtaposed overtly against Saint Paul, the archbishops' authority for barring women from the church, and played covertly against Freud; but the veil metaphor itself is Paul's, and also Freud's. Woolf is of course in mock compliance with Paul's command that women veil their heads in public to mark their deference to male authority, but she cannot quite sustain ironic mastery of the figure. Her selective quoting from and gloss on the Letter to the Corinthians highlights the echoes between Paul and Freud, especially in the context of the discourse on castration. Veiling, for Paul as for Freud, is the sign that both conceals and reveals woman's secondariness. Veils reproduce in culture the natural function of women's hair, which "'is given her for a covering'" (167n. 38); the "shame" of unveiling is the exposure (and defiance) of female secondariness—or, as Freud would explain in less veiled terms, the shame of the "genital deficiency" which has provoked women to excel at weaving. Freud's reversal of Bachofen actually repeats the reversal Paul adapts from *Genesis:* "'For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man . . . : for this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head'" (166–67n. 38). However, whereas *Room*'s privileging of the text as web reverses Freud's reversal, *Three Guineas*'s adaptation of the psychoanalytic veil unexpectedly complies with the presumption of female lack.

Woolf invokes Grensted's veil to unveil paternal sexuality by deriving it from the son's sight of the mother's genitals. But she never questions that the son perceives a lack. The mother's body in *Three Guineas* is the site of both a horrifying excess and a lack; whether disgustingly prolific or

castrated—extremes that collapse into each other—it consistently fails to possess positive attributes of its own. Woolf can criticize the father's sexuality, but she cannot redeem the mother's.

The loss of the mother as a specific term of difference both situates Woolf on Freud's terrain and constricts her remapping of that terrain. A certain specularity haunts *Three Guineas:* father and daughter, Freud and Woolf, male and female correspondents face each other across an abyss that can be negotiated only in the discourse of the father. Grensted's veil enables Woolf to redesign the ethics but not the structure of the father-daughter exchange. Resituating desire in the father is an insufficiently radical act. Although Woolf reverses the reversal that founded psychoanalysis, she safeguards the libidinal economy that locates desire in either the daughter or the father; her theory of paternal desire at once excludes the mother and precludes (a theory of) the daughter's desire.[47]

Such asymmetries are unstable. In her final novel, Woolf implicates the daughter in the structure of desire without, however, exonerating the father: *Between the Acts* transforms aversion toward the father into ambivalence. As the father, who now overshadows the mother as a point of origin, comes to join her as an object of ambivalence, Woolf's transition from Kleinian to Freudian fictions is complete.

contained Augustus Carmichael, which Lily imagines "said something about death; . . . very little about love," flourishes during the First World War, whose devastations are rendered synechdocally by Mrs. Ramsay's death (290).

23. In "Mirror-role of Mother and Family in Child Development" (*Playing and Reality*), Winnicott insists on the importance of seeing oneself mirrored in the mother's face. Seeing is constitutive of subjectivity in object relations theory (as language is constitutive of a different subjectivity in Lacan). Winnicott does not gender the relation to the mother's face (although all the examples in the essay concern women); Woolf, however, suggests that the daughter's creativity is enduringly embedded in the mother's (recollected) gaze.

24. Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 81.

25. In "'The Deceptiveness of Beauty': Mother Love and Mother Hate in *To the Lighthouse*" (*Twentieth-Century Literature* 23, no. 3 [October 1977]: 345–76), Jane Lilienfield details the stages of mourning Lily works through in her painting. For other accounts of the novel's elegiac features, see Gillian Beer, "Hume, Stephen, and Elegy in *To the Lighthouse*," *Essays in Criticism* 34, no. 1 (January 1984): 33–55; and Joan Lidoff, "Virginia Woolf's Feminine Sentence: The Mother-Daughter World of *To the Lighthouse*," *Literature and Psychology* 32, no. 3 (1986): 43–59.

26. In his Oedipal reconstruction of the past in "The Lighthouse," James literally elides this scene by imagining that Mrs. Ramsay, in response to her husband's demand, had "gone away and left him [James] there, impotent, ridiculous, sitting on the floor grasping a pair of scissors" (278). In "The Window," however, Mrs. Ramsay does not leave James for her husband; James is taken to bed by a nurse and Mrs. Ramsay enjoys her orgasmic communion with the lighthouse beam before she joins her husband. Although James does not himself observe his mother's solitary scene, its omission from his narrative is not innocent, for it reiterates Freud's erasure of maternal subjectivity from the Oedipal exchanges between father and son.

27. On the relation between Lily's brushstrokes and Mrs. Ramsay's solitary scene, see Gubar, "The Birth of the Artist as Heroine," 47–48.

28. For some representative readings of Lily's painting as an androgynous work of art, see Ralph Freedman, *The Lyrical Novel: Studies in Hermann Hesse, André Gide, and Virginia Woolf* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), 226–43; Alice van Buren Kelley, *The Novels of Virginia Woolf: Fact and Vision* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 114–43; and Nancy Topping Bazin, *Virginia Woolf and the Androgynous Vision* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1973), especially 45–46. For a contrary reading that instead sees men as Lily's instruments, see Spivak, "Unmaking and Making in *To the Lighthouse*," 323–24.

29. Winnicott, "The Location of Cultural Experience," 115.

30. Ibid., 119.

Chapter 5

1. Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1929), 83; hereafter cited in the text.

2. Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1927), 60, 297.

3. Critics have almost uniformly followed Woolf's account of her career: "What has happened of course is that after abstaining from the novel of fact all these years—since 1919—& N[ight]. & D[ay]. indeed, I find myself infinitely delighting in facts for a change, & in possession of quantities beyond counting: though I feel now & then the tug to vision, but resist it. This is the true line, I am sure, after The Waves" (2 November 1932, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf,* ed. Anne Olivier Bell, 5 vols. [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977–84], 4:129). For a comprehensive study of the historical issues structuring Woolf's career in general, and the discursive texts in particular, see Alex Zwerdling, *Virginia Woolf and the Real World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), especially chaps. 8 and 9. Rachel Blau DuPlessis offers a different interpretation of the shape of Woolf's career as a shift from the critique of the romantic plot in the novels of the 1920s to the exploration of "postromantic relations" through multiple protagonists in the fiction beginning with *The Waves* (see *Writing Beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth Century Women Writers* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986], chaps. 4 and 10).

4. Woolf frequently associates the ego with the phallus, for example, in this comment to Ethel Smyth: "[T]he state of reading consists in the complete elimination of the *ego;* and it's the ego that erects itself like another part of the body I dont dare to name" (Woolf to Smyth, 29 July 1934, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf,* ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautman, 6 vols. [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975–80], 5:319). Nelly Furman distinguishes between Mr. A's "I"—which represents "an individual psychological and historical being" that, in the context of *Room,* is "a specifically gender-marked male subject," an ego—and the explicitly fictive and depersonalized female "I" that the narrator assumes and that designates "a convenient term for somebody who has no real being" ("Textual Feminism," in *Women and Language in Literature and Society,* ed. Sally McConnell-Ginet, Ruth Borker, and Nelly Furman [New York: Praeger, 1980], 50–51; and see "*A Room of One's Own:* Reading Absence," in *Women's Language and Style,* ed. Douglas Butturff and Edmund L. Epstein [Akron, Ohio: University of Akron Press, 1978], especially 99–105). In her chapter on Woolf in *Crossing the Double-Cross: The Practice of Feminist Criticism* ([Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986], 89–114), Elizabeth A. Meese elaborates on Furman's comments to outline a theory of the fictive "I" in Woolf's feminist discourse. In *Virginia Woolf and the Problem of the Subject* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1987), Makiko Minow-Pinkney argues that Woolf's feminism anticipates a postmodern deconstruction of the subject.

5. Woolf anticipates (and corrobates) the argument first put forth by Kate Millett in *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), and elaborated by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century,* vol. 1, *The War of the Words* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988), about the impact of the suffrage movement on masculine discourse in the early twentieth century. For a broader argument about the impact of egalitarian political discourse on the theorization of gender and sexuality, see Thomas Laqueur, "Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology," *Representations* 14 (Spring 1986): 1–41.

6. J. J. Bachofen, *Myth, Religion, and Mother Right,* trans. Ralph Manheim (1861; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), 56; and see Freud, "Femininity," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* trans. and ed. James Strachey, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth Press, 1953–66; New York: Macmillan; 1953–74), 22:133; hereafter the *Standard Edition* will be cited as *SE*. In a text contemporary with "Femininity" and indebted to Bachofen, Helen Diner explains: "All mother goddesses spin and weave. In their concealed workshops, they weave veins, fibers, and nerve strands into the miraculous substance of the live body. Everything that is comes out of them" (*Mothers and Amazons: The First Feminine History of Culture,* ed. and trans. John Philip Lundin [New York: Julian Press, 1965], 22). In "Unmaking and Making in *To the Lighthouse*" (in *Women and Language in Literature and Society*), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak argues that Woolf's novel reverses the values Freud assigns the phallus and (in Spivak's words) "the workshop of the womb" (324). For a brilliant reading of Arachne as a figure of the woman writer, see Nancy K. Miller, "Arachnologies: The Woman, the Text, and the Critic," in *The Poetics of Gender,* ed. Nancy K. Miller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 270–95. Woolf's preoccupation with weaving and knitting as feminine figures of textuality (Mrs. Ramsay's knitting is an outstanding example) is reflected in the titles of some germinal essays on her poetics: for example, Erich Auerbach, "The Brown Stocking," in *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature,* trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953), 525–53; and Geoffrey Hartman, "Virginia's Web," in *Beyond Formalism: Literary Essays, 1958–1970* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970), 71–84.

7. As a text that theorizes the practice of many of her contemporaries, *Room* is a central document in the shift that Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar disclose from phallic to maternal metaphors of literary creativity in the early twentieth century. See Gubar, "The Birth of the Artist as Heroine: (Re)production, the *Künstlerroman* Tradition, and the Fiction of Katherine Mansfield," in *The Representation of Women in Fiction,* ed. Carolyn G. Heilbrun and Margaret R. Higgonet (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 25–26; and Gilbert, "Potent Griselda: 'The Ladybird' and the Great Mother," in *D.H. Lawrence: A Centenary Consideration,* ed. Peter Balbert and Phillip L. Marcus (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985), 130–61. For a comprehensive account of the differences between male and female uses of the childbirth metaphor, see Susan Stanford Friedman, "Creativity and the Childbirth Metaphor: Gender Difference in Literary Discourse," *Feminist Studies* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 49–82. In *Virginia Woolf and the "Lust of Creation": A Psychological Exploration* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), Shirley Panken traces the childbirth metaphor through Woolf's autobiographical texts.

8. The tension between the discourses of androgyny and maternity, both active discourses in the 1920s, is a much-debated feature of *Room.* Claims for androgyny have recently been revived by feminist scholars in American studies and French literary theory. For example, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, in "The New Woman as Androgyne: Social Disorder and Gender Crisis, 1870–1936" (in *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985], 245–96), distinguishes between the maternal discourse appropriated by the first generation of New Women and the androgynous ideal of

Woolf and her female contemporaries. *Room* suggests, however, that Woolf conflates the mother and the androgyne in ways that privilege the maternal. In *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* ([London: Methuen, 1985], 1–18), Toril Moi endorses Woolf's concept of androgyny by reading it (incorrectly, I believe) through the lens of Julia Kristeva. For early arguments pro and con androgyny in Woolf, see Carolyn G. Heilbrun, "The Bloomsbury Group," in *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); and Elaine Showalter, "Virginia Woolf and the Flight into Androgyny," in *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), 263–97.

9. See Harvena Richter, "Virginia Woolf and Mary Hamilton," *Virginia Woolf Miscellany* 24 (Spring 1985): 1; and Alice Fox, "Literary Allusion as Feminist Criticism in *A Room of One's Own,*" *Philological Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 145–61.

10. In "The Birth of the Artist as Heroine," Susan Gubar notes Marie Stopes's pseudonym and argues for a pervasive connection between the birth control movement and female modernism. However, Gubar paints a broad picture of changing attitudes toward women's role in reproduction (beginning in the middle of the eighteenth century in Germany and gathering momentum in England and America toward the end of the nineteenth century), whereas I wish to emphasize the politics of birth control in England in the 1920s, and the relation of these politics to a new emphasis within British feminism. On the intensification of the birth control movement in the 1920s, and on Marie Stopes's problematic role in this evolution, see Robert E. Dowse and John Peel, "The Politics of Birth Control,"*Political Studies* 13, no. 2 (June 1965): 179–97; Jane Lewis, "The Ideology and Politics of Birth Control in Inter-War England," *Women's Studies International Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (1979): 33–48; and Richard Allen Soloway, *Birth Control and the Population Question in England, 1877–1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

11. On the new feminism, see Jane Lewis, "Beyond Suffrage: English Feminism in the 1920s," *Maryland Historian* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1975): 1–17; and Sheila Rowbotham, *A New World for Women* (London: Pluto Press, 1977).

12. "Certainly it was a shock (to women in particular with their illusions about education, and so on) to see the faces of our rulers in the light of the shell-fire. So ugly they looked—German, English, French—so stupid" (15). For a different interpretation of the effects of the First World War on women's attitudes toward masculinity, see Sandra M. Gilbert, "Soldier's Heart: Literary Men, Literary Women, and the Great War," *Signs* 8, no. 3 (Spring 1983): 422–50.

Woolf's willingness to consider female bonding as a legitimate response to the postwar masculinization of culture had changed dramatically in the four years since the publication of *Mrs. Dalloway.* The obvious cause was Woolf's relationship with Vita Sackville-West, which had begun in 1925, after the completion of *Mrs. Dalloway,* and lasted through 1929. For Woolf's representation of this relationship in *Orlando,* published the year before *Room,* see Sherron E. Knopp, "'If I Saw You Would You Kiss Me?' Sapphism and the Subversiveness of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando,*" *PMLA* 103, no. 1 (January 1988): 24–34. For the broader context of the lesbian culture and literature that flourished in London and Paris in the 1920s, see Blanche Wiesen Cook, "'Women Alone Stir My Imagination': Lesbianism and

the Cultural Tradition," *Signs* 4, no. 4 (Summer 1979): 718–39; Susan Gubar, "Sapphistries," *Signs* 10, no. 1 (Autumn 1984): 43–62; Esther Newton, "The Mythic Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman," *Signs* 9, no. 4 (Summer 1984): 557–75; Lilian Faderman, "Internalization and Rebellion" and "Writing Lesbian," in *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: William Morrow, 1981); Shari Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986); and Ellen Bayuk Rosenman, "Sexual Identity and *A Room of One's Own:* 'Secret Economies' in Virginia Woolf's Feminist Discourse," *Signs* 14, no. 3 (Spring 1989): 634–50.

13. See Jane Marcus, "Sapphistry: Narration as Lesbian Seduction in *A Room of One's Own*," in *Virginia Woolf and the Languages of Patriarchy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 163–88. Marcus gives a thorough and illuminating account of Woolf's reaction to *The Well of Loneliness,* her role in the obscenity trial the novel provoked, and the reverberations of this trial in *Room*. The passage from *Well* (1928; New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974) to which the Fernham scene alludes occurs in a love scene between Mary and Stephen: "A star fell[,] . . . and something in the quality of Mary's youth, something terrible and ruthless as an unsheathed sword would leap out at such moments and stand between them" (308). Woolf's anxieties about *Room*'s lesbian innuendoes are suggested in her concern that she would be "attacked for a feminist and hinted at for a Sapphist" (23 October 1929, *Diary* 3:262). For Woolf's description of the obscenity trial and its presiding magistrate, see her diary entry of 10 November 1928, *Diary* 3:206–7. For an account of the role of homoerotic friendships among college women, see Martha Vicinus, "Women's Colleges: An Independent Intellectual Life," in *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

14. Parthenogenesis was a trope of feminist discourse in the 1920s and 1930s. In *Mothers and Amazons: The First Feminine History of Culture,* for example, Helen Diner reverses classical theories of embryology: "In the beginning, there was woman. She parthenogenetically severed activity from herself and made it into flagellum cilium: the male" (110; see n. 6 above). In *Herland* (1915; New York: Pantheon, 1979) Charlotte Perkins Gilman describes a utopian feminine community in which women reproduce parthenogenetically. In *Independent Women,* Martha Vicinus quotes Jane Harrison's description of her collaboration with Gilbert Murray: "Thoughts are self-begotten by some process of parthenogenesis, but there comes a moment when alone I cannot bring them to birth. . . . then, you want the mind of a man with its greater power of insulation" (153).

15. Woolf, *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1938), 142; hereafter cited in the text.

16. Woolf's next sentence cites the phrase "natural and eternal law" (186n. 48). See also the description within the text of *Three Guineas* of the male need for replenishment, "or, as Herr Hitler puts it, the hero requiring recreation, or, as Signor Mussolini puts it, the wounded warrior requiring female dependents to bandage his wounds" (111). In her note to this description Woolf claims: "This particular definition of woman's task comes not from an Italian but from a German source. There are so many versions and all are so much alike that it seems unnecessary to verify each separately" (178n. 18). One source, however, is Hilary Newitt,

Women Must Choose: The Position of Women in Europe To-day (London: Victor Gollancz, 1937), who quotes an official Nazi propagandist, the president of the Catholic National Women's Council: "The life of man is based on struggle[;] . . . woman's task must be to heal his wounds" (130). Woolf copied this sentence into her reading notes on Newitt's text (Holograph Reading Notes, vol. 26, Berg Collection, New York Public Library).

17. These volumes of clippings form part of the twelve volumes of notes Woolf produced between these years from her reading of newspapers, magazines, biographies, and histories. For a thorough catalog and analysis of Woolf's reading notes, see *Virginia Woolf's Reading Notebooks,* ed. Brenda Silver (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983). Silver notes that Woolf had to become "a systematic reader of her culture" to produce her sequel to *Room* (22).

18. *Times* (London), 16 December 1937, cited in *Reading Notebooks,* 299. Woerman's recourse to natural and eternal law typifies Nazi pronouncements on sexual difference. In his address to women at the Nuremberg Parteitag on 8 September 1934, for example, Hitler declares: "Man and woman must therefore mutually value and respect each other when they see that each performs the task which Nature and Providence have ordained." The speech is quoted extensively by Newitt in *Women Must Choose,* 40–41. Woolf insisted that "the woman question" was of central importance to the fascists. When Princess Bibesco, who solicited Woolf's support for an antifascist exhibition initiated by the Cambridge Anti-War Council, challenged this centrality by commenting sarcastically, "I am afraid that it had not occurred to me that in matters of ultimate importance even feminists cd. wish to segregate & label the sexes," Woolf replied, "What about Hitler?" (6 January 1935, *Diary* 4:273).

19. Paula Siber, *Die Frauenfrage und ihre Losung durch den Nazionalsocialismus,* quoted (along with a score of quotations from official Nazi propaganda pamphlets written by women recruited to the cause between 1933 and 1934), in Newitt, *Women Must Choose,* 42. Hitler describes this "one single point[,] . . . the Child" in his speech at Nuremberg on 8 September 1934, also quoted in Newitt, *Women Must Choose,* 40. For similar claims, see Hitler's speech to Die Frauenschaft on 13 September 1936, quoted in George L. Mosse, *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural, and Social Life in the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1966), 39. For a thorough account of the Nazi co-optation of the German women's movement, see Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family, and Nazi Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), and the essays collected in *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany,* ed. Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossmann, and Marion Kaplan (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984).

20. Speech of Reich physician leader Dr. Wagner, announcing the award, quoted in Mosse, *Nazi Culture,* 45–46; trans. Salvator Attanasio. See also Tim Mason, "Women in Germany, 1925–40: Family, Welfare, and Work," *History Workshop* 1, no. 2 (Spring–Autumn, 1976): 74–113, 5–32. Joined to a program of marriage loans whose principal was reduced by 25 percent for each child born (contingent on the wife's withdrawal from the workplace and on neither partner being a Jew), to the closing of birth control centers, and to an increase in legal penalties for abortion, the ideology of motherhood had for the Nazi regime the multiple benefits of opening jobs for men in a severely depressed economy, pro-

moting racial purity, and insuring a large future generation of Nazis loyal to the Third Reich. Despite obvious political differences between England and Germany, certain common demographic and economic problems fostered a British version of maternal ideology. In *The Twilight of Parenthood* (London: Watts & Co., 1934), Enid Charles notes that the advances of birth control in England through the 1920s were slowed in the 1930s by concern over the declining birthrate.

21. *Times* (London), 12 August 1935, 9; and see *Three Guineas,* 186n. 48.

22. Hitler's speech is quoted in the *Sunday Times* (London), 13 September 1936. Woolf doesn't identify the quotation, presumably to emphasize its generic status. For similar claims see Hitler's speech at the Nuremberg Parteitag on 8 September 1934, in Newitt, *Women Must Choose.* Explaining that he has translated "very few extracts from the speeches made to women by Hitler: all such speeches run on the same lines and each adds little to those which have preceded it," Norman H. Baynes offers several more examples of this claim in *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler: April 1922–August 1939,* ed. and trans. Norman H. Baynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 527–33. For a broader spectrum of Nazi pronouncements on sexual difference, see the documents collected under "The Ideal of Womanhood" in Mosse, *Nazi Culture,* 39–47. For the effects of Nazi ideology on British economic policy, see Winifred Holtby, *Women and a Changing Civilization* ([London: Bodley Head, 1934], 151–69), a text Woolf very likely had read.

23. Oswald Mosley, *The Greater Britain* (London: British Union of Fascists, 1931), 42. In a letter to Quentin Bell, 24 January 1934, Woolf writes: "They [the Labour party] think Mosley is getting supporters. If so, I shall emigrate" (*Letters* 5:273). Woolf's understanding of the mother's contamination by fascism divides her from the contemporaneous perspective of the Frankfurt school, which shares her identification of fascism and patriarchy but which tends to represent the mother as a positive site of alterity. See, for example, Max Horkheimer, "Authoritarianism and the Family," in *The Family: Its Function and Destiny,* ed. Ruth Nanda Anshen (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949); and Erich Fromm, "The Significance of the Theory of Mother Right for Today," in *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Holt Rinehart Winston, 1970), 79–109, and "The Oedipus Complex and the Oedipus Myth," in *The Family.*

24. Louise Bernikow discusses the impact of fascism on the lesbian culture of the 1920s in *Among Women* (New York: Harmony Books, 1980), chap. 5.

25. The egg was a trope of the fascist discourse on gender roles. For example, Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi minister of propaganda, explains: "The mission of woman is to be beautiful and to bring children into the world. This is not at all as rude and unmodern as it sounds. The female bird pretties herself for her mate and hatches the eggs for him" (*Michael: Ein deutsches Shicksal in Tagebuchblattern* [1929]; quoted in Mosse, *Nazi Culture,* 41; trans. Salvator Attanasio). Hatching (as opposed to laying) the eggs characterizes the female role as auxiliary. Note also Hitler's rhetoric in his speech of 8 September 1934, which Woolf would have read in Newitt: "That which man sacrifices in the struggles of his people, woman sacrifices in the struggle to preserve the single cells of this people" (*Women Must Choose,* 40). The discussion of the breakfast egg in *Three Guineas* (140) offers a parable of the circumscription of maternity in the 1930s.

26. For a different evaluation of the prostitute as a metaphor of the woman writer's definition through the marketplace, see Catherine Gallagher, "George

Eliot and *Daniel Deronda:* The Prostitute and the Jewish Question," in *Sex, Politics, and Science in the Nineteenth-Century Novel,* ed. Ruth Bernard Yeazell (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 39–62.

27. For the antithetical equation of maternity and chastity in fascist ideology, see Maria-Antoinetta Macciocchi, "Female Sexuality in Fascist Ideology," *Feminist Review* 1 (1979): 67–82. Macciocchi's analysis and its precursor, Wilhelm Reich's *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (1933), provide an interesting comparison to *Three Guineas* by advocating the fulfillment of sexual desire (in contrast to the strict identification of sex and reproductive roles) as an antifascist, antipatriarchal act. *Three Guineas* envisages *no* form of heterosexuality as free from complicity with patriarchy.

28. The word "rank," which the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines as "grossly rich, heavy, or fertile," "having an offensively strong smell," and "lustful, licentious, in heat," emphasizes the association between the sexual female body and the garden. For the psychoanalytic association of the olfactory sense with female sexuality, see Jane Gallop's reading, in *The Daughter's Seduction: Feminism and Psychoanalysis* ([Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982], 27–30), of two footnotes in Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents.* On the immediacy of the "odor di femina," the anxiety it produces, and the function of representation in stabilizing this anxiety, see Michèle Montrelay, "Inquiry into Femininity" (*m/f* 1 [1978]: 83–101); and the commentary on it by Gallop in *The Daughter's Seduction,* 27–30, and by Mary Jacobus in *Reading Woman: Essays in Feminist Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 241–45.

29. See Janet Adelman, "'Man and Wife Is One Flesh': *Hamlet* and the Confrontation with Maternal Sexuality," in *Suffocating Mothers: Some Consequences of the Female Site of Origin* (forthcoming from Routledge). It is likely that Woolf would have had *Hamlet* on her mind while working on *Three Guineas.* John Gielgud's *Hamlet* played in London for 155 performances between 14 November 1934 and 23 March 1935. Woolf saw it on 23 January 1935. For her awareness of the extraordinary success the play was having, see her entry for 19 January 1935 in *Diary* 4:275. In her entry of 1 January 1935, Woolf notes the resurgence of her desire to write "On Being Despised," the current title for *Three Guineas* (see *Diary* 4:271).

30. Fascism confirmed an anxiety visible in Woolf's novels from the mid-1920s. Sally Seton's evolution into the complacent mother of "five great boys" and Mrs. Ramsay's dual role as her husband's antithesis and his agent suggest a latent recognition that the mother ultimately sustains, and is contained by, patriarchy, but in the 1920s Woolf highlights the moments of erotic and emotional autonomy.

31. Martha Vicinus's chapter in *Independent Women* on the suffrage movement offers a powerful and thorough account of the metaphorics and staging of hunger as spiritual resistance by the suffragettes. Vicinus also comments on the literalization of the body in the postsuffrage generation; although Woolf confines her discussion to attitudes toward sexuality, an analogous literalization of appetite is suggested by *Room.* Woolf's familiarity with the emancipation discourse on hunger is obvious in her extensive discussion, in the University of Sussex Library typescript draft of *Room,* of Florence Nightingale's *Cassandra,* first published in 1928 as an appendix to Ray Strachey's *The Cause: A Short History of the Women's*

Movement in Great Britain (1928; London: Virago, 1978). The following passage of Nightingale's text typifies this discourse: "To have no food for our heads, no food for our hearts, no food for our activity, is that nothing? If we have no food for the body, how we do cry out, how all the world hears of it, how all the newspapers talk of it, with a paragraph headed in great capital letters, DEATH FROM STARVATION! But suppose we were to put a paragraph in the 'Times,' *Death of Thought from Starvation,* or *Death of Moral Activity from Starvation,* how people would stare, how they would laugh and wonder! One would think we had no heads or hearts, by the indifference of the public towards them. Our bodies are the only things of any consequence" (407–8). In *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830–1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), Elaine Showalter interprets the upsurge of anorexia nervosa among women in the late nineteenth century (the illness was named in 1873) as a form of cultural protest. See also Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *Fasting Girls: A Social and Cultural History of Anorexia Nervosa* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).

32. In *Literary Women* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), Ellen Moers describes as a defining feature of female modernism the shift from the courtship narrative to the mother-daughter narrative produced by Woolf, Cather, Stein, Colette, and Mansfield. For an account of the historical pressures shaping the emergence of the mother-daughter narrative in the early twentieth century, see Marianne Hirsch, *Unspeakable Plots* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989). In "The Domestic Politics of *To the Lighthouse,*" in *Virginia Woolf and the Real World,* Zwerdling describes the evolution among women in the postwar decade of nostalgia for the Victorian past that feminism had contributed to bringing to a close. See also Jane Lilienfeld, "Reentering Paradise: Cather, Colette, Woolf, and Their Mothers," in *The Lost Tradition: Mothers and Daughters in Literature,* ed. Cathy N. Davidson and E. M. Broner (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1980), 160–75. The emergence of the mother-daughter plot in the 1920s suggests links between narrative and history analogous to those which shaped the Oedipal plot of nineteenth-century fiction by men.

33. In "'Forward into the Past': The Complex Female Affiliation Complex" (in *Historical Studies and Literary Criticism,* ed. Jerome J. McGann [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985], 240–65), Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue persuasively, through readings of several of Woolf's essays on women writers, that Woolf *was* ambivalent toward her female precursors and that this ambivalence typifies the dilemma of the twentieth-century woman writer, who for the first time encounters an established literary matrilineage. However, I see in the various repressions and displacements of *Room* an attempt to protect the "complex female affiliation complex" from the more explosive narrative of hunger. Gilbert and Gubar record a culturally erased etymological source of the word "affiliation" given by the *American Heritage Dictionary:* the Indo-European *dhei,* "to suck." Woolf is complicit in this erasure. If Jane Marcus is correct that the source for Woolf's theoretical claim that "we think back through our mothers if we are women" is Colette's image in *My Mother's House* of a "chain of mutually sucking cats" (*Virginia Woolf and the Languages of Patriarchy,* 7), this transformation of nurture into literary geneology is simply a dramatic instance of the repression generally at work in Woolf's discourse on matrilineage. For a contemporaneous

interpretation of reading as eating, see James Strachey, "Some Unconscious Factors in Reading," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 11 (July 1930): 322–30.

34. There is, of course, an objective basis for the sense of starvation at Fernham. "Starved but valiant young women" is Woolf's description of the Girton students to whom she delivered one of the papers on "Women and Fiction" that were published as *Room* (27 October 1928, *Diary* 3:200). Martha Vicinus claims that "Reminiscences from all of the colleges echo Virginia Woolf's comments about the appalling food at Newnham in the 1920s" (*Independent Women,* 130). It is revealing to compare the imagery in one of these reminiscences with that of *Room,* however. Joan Evans recalls: "Never in my life have I eaten so much reasty ham and over-salt salt beef, more wooden carrots and more tasteless milk puddings[,] . . . and there was a mysterious sweet that appeared on Sunday evenings, apparently made from the remains of other puddings stuck together with custard, that the whole College knew as the Ancient of Days" (quoted in Vicinus, *Independent Women,* 130–31). Woolf's imagination translates poor cooking into a distinctively maternal stinginess.

35. Woolf, *To the Lighthouse,* 79.

36. Defining patriarchal power in economic rather than erotic terms, *Room* anticipates recent feminist historians and anthropologists who find in the sexual division of labor, deepened in western Europe by the development of industrial capitalism, the primary source of women's devaluation. In *Room* Woolf uses the separation of spheres to explain women's inability to produce and to reproduce at the same time. In *Three Guineas* she challenges the need for that division, revising the amount of time required for exclusive mothering from five years per child in *Room* to "a fraction" of a lifetime, approximately two months per child, in *Three Guineas.* She also dares, in a footnote to *Three Guineas,* to report the "bold suggestion . . . that the occupation is not necessarily maternal, but should be shared by both parents" (186n. 47). For some overviews of recent feminist arguments about the separation of spheres and the contraction of feminine power and authority, see Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, "Woman, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview," in *Woman, Culture, and Society,* ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974), 17–42; Nancy Chodorow, "Mothering, Male Dominance, and Capitalism," in *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism,* ed. Zillah R. Eisenstein (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979), 83–106; and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History," *New Left Review* 133 (May–June 1982): 5–29.

37. See Robert Briffault, *The Mothers: The Matriarchal Theory of Social Origins* (1927; New York: Macmillan, 1931) which makes "mothercare" the focus of nostalgia for a matriarchal past.

38. The biographical background here is the legacy of twenty-five hundred pounds left to Virginia by her father's unmarried sister, Aunt Caroline Emelia Stephen (the "Nun"), who cared for Virginia in the critical period after her father's death and whose special bond with Virginia is evidenced by the contrast between this legacy and the one hundred pounds she left both Vanessa and Adrian. Woolf's letter to Clive Bell, 13 April 1909, suggests that she felt considerable guilt over this preferential treatment (*Letters* 1:391). In *Room,* however, she reconstructs

these facts as a fantasy solution to the economic constraints on motherhood. For Caroline Emelia's spiritual influence on her niece, see Jane Marcus, "The Niece of a Nun: Virginia Woolf, Caroline Stephen, and the Cloistered Imagination," in *Virginia Woolf: A Feminist Slant,* ed. Jane Marcus (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 7–36.

39. For the importance of an independent income in freeing the writer from the need to cater to publishers and popular taste, see the chapters on "Class and Money" and "Virginia Woolf's Feminism in Historical Perspective" in Zwerdling, *Virginia Woolf and the Real World.* While in no way disputing Woolf's sense of the aesthetic benefits of economic autonomy, I want to foreground the context in which she dramatizes the inheritance in *Room.*

40. By "unconscious" I mean that rather than theorizing this fear, the text acts it out by repressing or magically assuaging a hunger that threatens to generate both rage and guilt. It would be easy to make a biographical argument about Woolf's own relationship to hunger. According to Leonard Woolf, "There was always something strange, something slightly irrational in [Virginia's] attitude toward food. It was extraordinarily difficult ever to get her to eat enough to keep her strong and well. . . . [T]here was . . . at the back of her mind or in the pit of her stomach a taboo against eating. Pervading her insanity generally there was always a sense of some guilt, the origin and exact nature of which I could never discover; but it was attached in some peculiar way particularly to food and eating" (*Beginning Again: An Autobiography of the Years 1911 to 1918* [New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963], 162–63). Virginia's refusal to eat during her breakdowns, her conviction that the punitive voices she heard came from overeating (see, for example, her letter to Violet Dickinson, 22[?] September 1904, *Letters* 1:142–43), testify abundantly to her association of appetite and guilt. Although Leonard refrains from interpreting the "taboo" and guilt he repeatedly notes in Virginia's relationship to food, it seems plausible to connect them to an unconscious equation of hunger and oral rage. For evidence of Woolf's pervasive association of aggression and orality, see Panken, *Virginia Woolf and the "Lust of Creation."* In *All That Summer She Was Mad: Virginia Woolf, Female Victim of Male Medicine* (New York: Continuum, 1982), Stephen Trombley reports that Dr. Miyeko Kamiya, a Japanese psychiatrist planning a psychoanalytic study of Virginia Woolf, diagnosed Virginia as anorexic. Trombley interprets the anorexia as "a rejection of male sexuality" (63). *Room,* however, strongly suggests that Woolf located the question of hunger in the context of mothering. For a theorization of hunger's vicissitudes within this context, see Kim Chernin, *The Obsession: Reflections on the Tyranny of Slenderness* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981) and *The Hungry Self: Women, Eating, and Identity* (New York: Random House, 1985). Chernin's claim that eating disorders erupt among women most powerfully in periods of rapid cultural change, when the sense of the mother's inability to nurture is especially acute, helps contextualize the generational issues Woolf dramatizes in *Room.*

41. Woolf, 2, 8, and 9 December 1939, *Diary* 5:248–50. See also the entries for 17 December 1939, 9 February 1940, and 27 June 1940 (*Diary* 5:251–52, 265–66, 299). For a thorough analysis of Bloomsbury's pessimism in the 1930s as a critical factor in determining Woolf's response to Freud, see Alex

Zwerdling's chapter "Pacifism without Hope," in *Virginia Woolf and the Real World.*

42. Woolf, 11 November 1936, *Diary* 5:32. On 24 November, she notes: "Began 3Gs. yesterday. & liked it" (35). Although she had been preparing to write *Three Guineas* for years, she did not begin composing it until November 1936.

43. Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud, *Why War?* (Paris: International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, 1933), 11, 23.

44. Woolf writes gender similarly into a masculine exchange in a sentence she adapts from an earlier Freudian text on war, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" (1915), which was collected with *Why War?* and selections from *Civilisation and Its Discontents* (1929) in *Civilisation, War, and Death,* published by the Hogarth Press in 1939, and edited by John Rickman, one of the analysts Woolf met at Adrian's and Karin's dinner party. Freud writes in "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death": "Science herself has lost her passionless impartiality and makes weapons. . . . The anthropologist is driven to declare the opponent inferior and degenerate" (1). *Three Guineas* declares: "Science, it would seem, is not sexless; she is a man, a father, and infected too. Science, thus infected, produced measurements to order: the [female] brain was too small to be examined" (139). The echoes between these texts suggest Woolf had read the essays Rickman collected before the volume's publication. Leonard Woolf's involvement with the League of Nations makes it especially likely that she had seen *Why War?* by 1935, the date she assigns the fictive letter that elicits *Three Guineas,* and the year she devised the text's epistolary form and shifted its focus from misogyny to war. For Bloomsbury's investment in the League of Nations, see Alex Zwerdling, "Pacifism without Hope," *Virginia Woolf and the Real World,* especially 292–95; for the evolution of the form and focus of *Three Guineas,* see especially Woolf's diary entries from 15 October 1935 and 30 December 1935 (*Diary* 4:346–47, 361), and 3 January 1936 (*Diary* 5:3).

45. For a similar argument that "the father needs the daughter because she is a suitably diminished 'milk giver,' a miniaturized version of the mother whom patriarchal culture absolutely forbids him to desire," see Sandra M. Gilbert, "Life's Empty Pack: Notes toward a Literary Daughteronomy," *Critical Inquiry* 11, no. 3 (March 1985): 355–84.

46. Freud presents his fullest discussion of his shift from the seduction theory to a theory of infantile desire in *An Autobiographical Study* (1925). The Hogarth Press published James Strachey's translation of this text in 1935, the critical year in Woolf's formulation of the focus of *Three Guineas. An Autobiographical Study* offers the following account, particularly resonant in light of Woolf's own experiences of seduction: "[T]he majority of my patients reproduced from their childhood scenes in which they were sexually seduced by some grown-up person. With female patients the part of seducer was almost always assigned to their father. I believed these stories. . . . My confidence was strengthened by a few cases in which relations of this kind with a father, uncle, or older brother had continued up to an age at which memory was to be trusted. . . . When I had pulled myself together, I was able to draw the right conclusions from my discovery: namely, that the neurotic symptoms were not related directly to actual events but to wishful phantasies, and that as far as the neurosis was concerned psychical reality

was of more importance than material reality. . . . I had in fact stumbled for the first time upon the *Oedipus complex,* which was later to assume such an overwhelming importance." Seduction retained a minor role in the evolution of neurosis, Freud continues, "But the seducers turned out as a rule to have been older children" (*SE* 20:33–34).

For some reports of the controversies surrounding this altered explanation of paternal seduction, see Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, *The Assault on Truth: Freud's Suppression of the Seduction Theory* (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1984); Judith Lewis Herman, with Lisa Hirschman, *Father-Daughter Incest* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981); Christine Froula, "The Daughter's Seduction: Sexual Violence and Literary History," *Signs* 11, no. 4 (Summer 1986): 621–44; David Willbern, *"Filia Oedipi:* Father and Daughter in Freudian Theory," in *Daughters and Fathers,* ed. Linda Boose and Betty Sue Flowers (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 75–96; and Sandra Gilbert, "Life's Empty Pack: Notes toward a Literary Daughteronomy." For the biographical context of Woolf's own experience(s) of seduction, see Louise A. DeSalvo, *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on her Life and Work* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).

47. The context of French feminism, Jane Gallup argues in *The Daughter's Seduction,* enables us to see how desire drives a wedge between the father's penis and the phallus, disempowering the father as fully as the daughter; desire thus poses few theoretical or practical problems for the daughter. The Anglo-American tendency (apparent in Woolf) to censor or disavow female heterosexual desire appears puritanical from this perspective; from the Anglo-American perspective, the French disembedding of paternal desire from its economic and political supports appears naive. Woolf's anxiety about the daughter's desire should be seen in the larger cultural context of Freud's reception by British feminists in the 1930s. For example, Winifred Holtby in *Women and a Changing Civilization* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1935) holds "the whole force of the Freudian revelation" responsible for making women slaves of sexual desire, and therefore of men (161).

Chapter 6

1. Virginia Woolf, *Between the Acts* (1941; New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969), 199; hereafter cited in the text.

2. Freud introduces the concept of the death instinct (thanatos), which can be turned outward as aggression, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* [1920] (*The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* trans. and ed. James Strachey, 24 vols. [London: Hogarth Press, 1954–66; New York: Macmillan, 1953–74], 18:3–64; hereafter the *Standard Edition* will be cited as *SE*); his fullest discussion of the son's conflicting love for and rivalry with his father occurs in *Totem and Taboo* (*SE,* vol. 13); for the daughter's ambivalence toward the mother, see "Female Sexuality" (*SE,* vol. 21) and "Femininity" (*SE,* vol. 22).

3. Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being: Unpublished Autobiographical Writings,* ed. Jeanne Schulkind (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985), 108. The text is part of the seventy-seven-page typescript (dated 19 June 1941) discovered in 1980, which links the typescript and the

manuscript portions of "A Sketch of the Past"; it is included in the "Sketch" in the second edition of *Moments of Being,* 107–24.

4. In "Theater of War: Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts,*" (in *Virginia Woolf: A Feminist Slant,* ed. Jane Marcus [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983]), Sally Sears provides a particularly compelling account of this world's emptiness (although she explains it differently): "When the characters are not spectral they are mechanical, false, lifeless. . . . Silence, distance, isolation, remoteness, vacancy, incoherence, absence; 'disembodied voices,' 'bodiless eyes'; inaudible, broken, 'abortive' communications; pursuits of persons pursuing others (all in vain); ritualized gestures and unconsummated desires: these are the qualities, attributes, and activities that 'fill' the characters' world, shape their experience, reflect their spiritual state" (222).

5. Alex Zwerdling, *Virginia Woolf and the Real World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 308.

6. *The Letters of Virginia Woolf,* ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautman, 6 vols. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975–80), 6:346. I am grateful to Gillian Beer for bringing this letter to my attention.

7. Paul Ricoeur offers the best summary of the "impressive number of hazardous hypotheses" in *Moses and Monotheism;* see *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation,* trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970), 245–47. See also Marthe Robert, *From Oedipus to Moses: Freud's Jewish Identity,* trans. Ralph Manheim (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976), chap. 5. For Freud's own doubts about the historical accuracy of his argument, see his letter to Arnold Zweig, November 1934, and his letter to Lou Salome, January 1935, cited in Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud,* ed. and abr. Lionel Trilling and Steven Marcus (New York: Basic Books, 1961), 504–5.

8. Freud, *Totem and Taboo, SE* 13:149.

9. On the contest between the Mosaic father God and the goddesses worshipped among the Canaanites, see Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1967); Steve Davies, "The Canaanite-Hebrew Goddess," in *The Book of the Goddess, Past and Present: An Introduction to Her Religion,* ed. Carl Olson (New York: Crossroad Press, 1983), 68–79; Bruno Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds: Puberty Rites and the Envious Male* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 158–59; and Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection,* trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), chap. 4. In "The Meaning of Anxiety in Rabbinic Judaism" (in *Judaism and Psychoanalysis,* ed. Mortimer Ostow [New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1982], 77–109), Richard Rubenstein interprets the Jewish father God as a defense against the terrifying mother goddesses who threatened to return cosmos into chaos.

10. First presented by Anna Freud on her father's behalf at the Paris International Psycho-Analytical Congress, August 1938, "The Advance in Intellectuality" was subsequently published in the *Int. Z. Psychoan. Imago* 24, nos. 1–2 (1939): 6–9. It is to this section of *Moses and Monotheism* that most general psychoanalytic commentary refers. See, for example, Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982), 59.

11. Freud, *Moses and Monotheism: Three Essays, SE* 23:103; hereafter cited,