

Dorothy Parker and New Yorker Satire

Martha Denham Bone

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Dorothy Parker and New Yorker Satire

Approved:

Graduate Committee:

*W. Gary Gentry*  
Major Professor

*William R. Kiser*  
Minor Professor

*Frank Stendani*  
Head of the Department of English

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of the Graduate School

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## Abstract

### Dorothy Parker and New Yorker Satire

by Martha Denham Bone

Satire is central to the New Yorker magazine, an influential arbiter of taste in American life for sixty years. This study analyzes the satiric voice of the New Yorker as exemplified in the works of Dorothy Parker and, secondarily, Ring Lardner and H. L. Mencken. The study is primarily concerned with Parker, an early and influential New Yorker writer who helped to invent the typical New Yorker satiric style. During the first fifteen years of its publication, 1925-1940, her satiric touch is present in nearly all of the 149 pieces she published in the New Yorker. The sophistication and style of the satire of the New Yorker are also evident, to a lesser extent, in the contributions of Lardner and Mencken.

Chapter I of this study is an analysis of Parker's New Yorker short stories, Chapter II an analysis of her poems, and Chapter III an analysis of her book reviews. Chapter IV compares the satire of Lardner and Mencken to that of Parker. Three appendices list the contributions to the New Yorker of each of the three satirists.

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## Introduction

The New Yorker magazine began publication on February 21, 1925, and is still published weekly. After a difficult start, the New Yorker was extremely successful. In its early years, before the advent of television, it was an influential arbiter of American taste, and its influence is still felt on a lesser scale. One area in particular in which the New Yorker was and is successful is that of satire. The art work and the tone of the magazine are in a satirical vein. Earl Rovitt gives this evaluation of the New Yorker:

From its beginnings the New Yorker was peddling sophistication, and its natural audience came from the white, educated mobile middle class--eager to clamber up the ladder of professionalism, trying to adapt to the frenetic pace of a changed America, and more than willing to learn the proper taste in furs, bourbon, automobiles, art, politics, and syntax. The weekly columns on theater, books, art exhibitions, sports, shopping, and New York City gossip; the smorgasbord mixture of fiction, profiles, causeries, poetry, reviews, and wisecracks blended with the glossy paper and the images of elegant advertising to mitigate anything too serious, too individualistic, too intellectual, too radical, or too vulgar. Wit, parody, and satire were central to the magazine's tone--as were poignancy and nostalgia if treated with a light enough touch. (366)

In the editorial pages of the first edition of the New Yorker, signed merely "New Yorker" and certainly at

least partially the work of editor Harold Ross, the following statement of purpose is given:

The New Yorker starts with a declaration of serious purpose but with a concomitant declaration that it will not be too serious in executing it. It hopes to reflect metropolitan life, to keep up with events and affairs of the day, to be gay, humorous, satirical but to be more than a jester. . . . It has announced that it is not edited for the old lady in Dubuque. By this it means that it is not of that group of publications engaged in tapping the Great Buying Power of the North American steppe region by trading mirrors and colored beads in the form of our best brands of hokum. (2/21/25, 4)

Thus the editors of the New Yorker report, in a satirical tone, that they intend to write and publish satire. The satiric statement that "It is not edited for the old lady in Dubuque" is the motto of the New Yorker. It is a statement which indicates that the editors and writers of the magazine intend sophistication and style to be the hallmarks of their publication. Ross includes a bit of satiric criticism of the American market, where "hokum" is traded for "mirrors and colored beads," much as the first Dutch settlers traded with the Indians for Long Island. This statement of purpose is characteristic of much that followed in the New Yorker. The tone is light, even flippant, but Ross uses that light tone to state a serious purpose. His refusal to burden the New Yorker with commercialism is serious, and he followed this noncommercial path rigorously.

Certainly, the New Yorker was and is a commercial success, but Ross never allowed the business office to affect his choice of material.

Harold Ross, the editor of the New Yorker from its inception in 1925 until his death in 1951, was the mind behind the magazine. The New Yorker was his idea. He mustered the financial resources, scanty as they were, to support the magazine until it became self-supporting. He found the writers, artists, and necessary staff to produce the magazine. For the entire twenty-six years he was editor, Ross had the final say on everything that was printed in the New Yorker. Following are some statements from Ross's prospectus for the New Yorker:

The New Yorker will be a reflection in word and picture of metropolitan life. It will be human. Its general tenor will be one of gaiety, wit, and satire, but it will be more than a jester. It will not be what is commonly called sophisticated, in that it will assume a reasonable degree of enlightenment on the part of its readers. It will hate bunk. (qtd. in Kramer 61)

In its reflection of metropolitan life, the New Yorker became one of the most important arbiters of taste in this country. Josephine Hendin writes that "the New Yorker has demonstrated that it is possible to face anything with style. With its elegance of observation and voice, it has set a standard of what it means to be 'civilized'" (450).

D. E. Houghton, in his dissertation entitled "The New Yorker: Exponent of a Cosmopolitan Elite," writes that the

New Yorker has been criticized for being against things rather than for things. Houghton writes that to say the magazine is completely negative "is to ignore the obvious truth that satire and criticism . . . can represent values that are no less positive for being implied" (265). The New Yorker began publication at a time when a large group of would-be sophisticated readers existed as a possible audience. William Peden paraphrases Walt Whitman and writes that "in order to produce great writers a country must possess great readers" (370). In the 1920's, just such a group of great readers bought the New Yorker. Peden writes:

Uncomfortable in a world whose values they could not and would not accept, suffering from the malaise of un-ease or ill-ease or alienation, the "new realists" of the Lost Generation rejected rather than accepted, questioned rather than acquiesced. (368)

The satiric lightness of the New Yorker, with its underlying seriousness, was a suitable vehicle for the doubt and alienation of the 1920's. A large audience absorbed the New Yorker's carefully articulated statements about current concerns, skillfully presented in an intentionally light tone. The magazine has always been intended for readers who are intelligent enough to recognize irony and satire and to understand the message behind the humor.

Many fine American writers have had their work published in the New Yorker magazine during the sixty years of its publication. This dissertation is concerned with the

first fifteen years of publication of the New Yorker, and with writers who clearly wrote in that satiric vein so openly avowed by the editors of the magazine. Because she was an early writer who wrote well over one hundred pieces for the New Yorker, and because she was so clearly a satirist, Dorothy Parker is the primary example of a New Yorker satirist in this dissertation. Dorothy Parker published poems, short stories, book reviews, and several incidental prose pieces in the New Yorker over a period of fifteen years. She brought with her to the magazine an established reputation derived from her work at Vanity Fair and from her association with the group of artists and writers later called the Algonquin Round Table. Parker was one of the "personalities" who helped to make the New Yorker famous. There were many such personalities, and the amount of good writing published in the New Yorker by these writers is considerable. It is impossible, in a limited framework, to analyze fully the writings of the satirists who wrote for the New Yorker in its early days. For this reason, Dorothy Parker's work is used as an example of New Yorker satire in this dissertation. In an effort to illustrate the scope of the magazine's satire and the number of writers who published in the New Yorker, other important writers are contrasted in Chapter IV of this dissertation.

Dorothy Parker was a significant contributor to the New Yorker in its early years. Included in the editorial board

from the first issue, she was part of that board for over five years. Her contributions were not at first, however, as helpful as Harold Ross wished. Dale Kramer tells this story about Parker's early days at the New Yorker:

Dorothy Parker was one of the few who got any money for her efforts, but she was not a dependable clock-puncher. One day Ross found her in a speakeasy at a time he thought she was working at the office.

"Someone was using the pencil," she explained.  
(61)

While there was actually more than one pencil at the New Yorker office, there were also significant difficulties with money. It took a while for the magazine to get off the ground. James Thurber reports that the "New Yorker was the outstanding flop of 1925" (20). John Keats describes exactly what Parker and her friends actually did and did not contribute to the New Yorker:

Dorothy Parker . . . did not contribute a single line to the magazine during its first year of publication, nor, to Mr. Ross's despair, did many of the others. Yet she and they were all a part of Mr. Ross's magazine in that their companionship helped to shape his thought. And Dorothy Parker's irreverence, her impudence, her hedonism, her flippancy, and her contempt for stupid, stuffy, and boring people and dull convention, all matched exactly with the attitude of the Algonquin group and with that of the magazine in its first days.

Dorothy Parker's acceptance at Jack and Charlie's; her acceptance there by the innermost group, the New Yorkers of gracious wealth; Harold Ross's thinking of her as a staff member of a new, sophisticated magazine of the city; her wide acquaintance in New York's publishing, journalistic, and theatrical worlds--all this testified to her central position in what the New Yorker magazine would call "goings on about town." She

and her friends lived in a pouring stream of thought; they floated, as it were, just ahead of the rushing flood crest of such a stream, aware of what was new before it came to the attention of most others. By the time the flood crest reached any particular point, they would have marked and bouyed the channel. (98-99)

Despite her dilatory beginning, Parker began to contribute more than just atmosphere to the New Yorker.

In the first fifteen years of publication of the New Yorker, Parker contributed 149 poems, stories, and articles to the magazine. Dale Kramer writes that Dorothy Parker was the New Yorker writer who best fit the mood of the times: "The New Yorker had nothing to do with her development, but her appearance in its pages coincided with the bloom of her fame" (115). James Thurber remembers that one of the most frequent questions asked of him after he began working for the New Yorker was "What is Dorothy Parker like?" (70). Brendan Gill writes that Dorothy Parker was "one of the handful of writers who helped form the character of the New Yorker" (The Portable Dorothy Parker xxiii, hereafter PDP).

In this dissertation Parker's work is divided into three chapters: short stories, poetry, and reviews. Prose pieces are included in the chapter about reviews, since these pieces are all concerned with writers. In them, Parker writes about the writer and his work. Parker's biography is considered when facts about her life are reflected

in her writing. Appendix A of this dissertation lists and describes all of the stories, poems, and articles which Parker published in the New Yorker, with the exception of nine drama reviews which Parker wrote from February 21-April 11, 1931, as a substitute for Robert Benchley. This appendix describes the full scope of Parker's writing for the New Yorker, and is not available elsewhere. Parker wrote the kind of sophisticated satire typical of the New Yorker. At the same time, she brought to the magazine her own peculiar style and point of view.

## Chapter I

### Short Stories

When Dorothy Parker selected those of her writings to be included in The Portable Dorothy Parker in 1944, she included eight of the twenty-one stories she had originally published in the New Yorker. Brendan Gill writes that Dorothy Parker was one of the writers who helped to invent what came to be called the New Yorker short story, "Though nobody who has written a short story for the New Yorker would ever admit that there was such a thing" (264). The New Yorker short story is most often a light bit of satire with an unexpected sting. The reader ambles along, enjoying a story which seemingly has very little serious purpose. Suddenly he is brought up short, and is made to realize that there is indeed a purpose. In many of Parker's short stories, the reader himself is the object of the satiric attack, as she attacks universal absurdities and hypocrisies.

Of the twenty-one short stories by Dorothy Parker published in the New Yorker, five are analyzed in this dissertation. The five stories included here have been selected because each attacks a different satiric target. These targets are representative of Parker's satire, and the same attack may be found in many of her other stories. The five

stories are "A Terrible Day Tomorrow," "Oh, He's Charming!," "The Cradle of Civilization," "Arrangement in Black and White," and "Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane." The satiric targets which they attack are, respectively, alcoholism, artistic affectation, American insularity, racial prejudice, and social hypocrisy.

In the story "A Terrible Day Tomorrow," published in the February 11, 1928, edition of the New Yorker, Dorothy Parker's satiric target is alcoholism, in particular the kind of drinking that was prevalent in the speakeasies of the 1920's during prohibition. This story is roughly autobiographical. Because of her own problems with alcohol, Dorothy Parker knew exactly what she was writing about. Parker began to have serious drinking problems in the 1920's, and through a long life she never conquered her alcoholism. John Keats, in his biography of Parker entitled You Might as Well Live, attempts to explain how Parker began drinking and why this was not regarded as a serious problem:

Everyone thought it perfectly natural that Dorothy should not have remembered the night before, and they saw no harm in this. That, they knew, was what often happened when one got drunk. What no one mentioned, probably because no one knew it, was that momentary amnesia could be one early symptom of alcoholism. The people of the twenties and the early thirties thought that drinking was fun. (170)

The world of Dorothy Parker as reflected in the glossy magazines of the times was a world of wonder and gaiety, but Parker herself was aware of the tawdry life sometimes

existing behind the world of the glossy magazine. One of her friends, Diana Sheean, believed that Parker drank to "blot out the horror of her vision of reality" (Keats 171). John Keats understands this vision of reality when he writes about Parker's satiric targets:

The stories reflected a good deal that was shoddy about that special little world she inhabited--the New York bottle, as Hemingway would say--and they also had something to say about the steadily darkening world outside it. (171)

Keats goes on to say that one of Parker's topics is the stupidity of drinking too much (171).

"A Terrible Day Tomorrow" is written as a dialogue between a man and a woman in one of New York's speakeasies. Neither of the characters is given a name. Only the bartender, Gus, is identified by name, and he never speaks in the story. This namelessness is a typical Parker device to universalize the characters in her stories, who can stand for all human beings in the stated situation. The satire in this particular story applies to all those who drink themselves blind while discussing going on the wagon, including Dorothy Parker herself.

The entire story of "A Terrible Day Tomorrow" is told in dialogue, with the man doing most of the speaking. Dialogue was Parker's primary narrative device, and she told an interviewer for the Paris Review in 1956: "My past stories make themselves stories by telling themselves through what people say. I haven't got a visual mind. I

hear things" (84). The reader hears the story revealed in "A Terrible Day Tomorrow," and the only time the author is heard is in a brief paragraph at the beginning of the story and a terse comment of three words at the end. In the short introduction to the dialogue Parker describes the woman as wearing a "leopard-skin coat," and the man as wearing a "gentian-blue muffler" (14). The hyphenated words indicate an attempted stylishness in the couple's dress. Parker, after describing the couple in this concise fashion, then writes that they "wormed" between the tables in the speakeasy. The animal imagery undercuts both the couple and the speakeasy.

The man in "A Terrible Day Tomorrow" orders "specials" for himself and his companion, telling the waiter that they are in a hurry because he has a terrible day tomorrow and they must get home early. This statement is repeated throughout the story. The woman refuses to take off her coat because they do not intend to stay long. The man also says, repetitively, that drinking "can't hurt anybody, if you just have one or two, and get to bed early" (14). This statement changes throughout the story to just having a couple and then just having a nightcap. In this story, Parker exactly captures the idioms, the rhythms, and the tone of voice of the alcoholic as he rationalizes. The movement of the story depends upon the number of drinks

served, the couple's removal of outer wraps as they drink, and the increasing slurring of the man's words as he speaks.

The man in "A Terrible Day Tomorrow" lists the things that he must do at the office on the following day, but he continues to drink. His drunkenness covers the entire range of maudlin self-pity, rudeness to the waiter, and finally momentary amnesia. The man says:

No, but seriously, sweet, I want to talk to you seriously about that. You know, you ought, seriously--what the hell was I going to say? Can you imagine that? I had something very important I wanted to talk to you about, and I can't remember what it was. (16)

The woman in the story speaks very little, but she denies drinking too much while getting quite as drunk as her companion. The conversation of this couple becomes quite tedious to the reader, and this is of course intentional. Drunks are, in fact, tedious, and Parker's story vividly expresses this.

The couple in "A Terrible Day Tomorrow" explain to one another that one or two drinks do not give them a good feeling because they are used to drinking much more. They believe that going on the wagon will allow them to get drunk more quickly when they fall off the wagon. Parker uses animal imagery in the latter part of the story. The man accuses his girl of wanting him to be a bulldog, and he begins to bark like one, over and over again. This animal imagery is quite appropriate, as the two people in the story are losing

control of themselves and behaving more like animals than human beings. Animal imagery is also a typical satiric technique, employed to undercut and diminish characters.

The structure of "A Terrible Day Tomorrow" is very tight, and each comment made by the man and woman reveals them as moving further into the nightmare of alcoholism. Arthur Voss writes that Parker had a good ear for recording common speech (276), and that ear is evident in this story. The reader is well aware that the man in "A Terrible Day Tomorrow" is not going on the wagon. The ironic distance in the story between what he says and what he does is the primary satiric technique of this story. This is a funny story, but it is also very sad in its picture of alcoholics who refuse to see their problem and who will probably not get the help they need in the foreseeable future. Parker ends the story with the cynical remark, "And so on" (16), leaving the reader without any hope for the future.

Just as Parker exactly captures the voice of the alcoholic in "A Terrible Day Tomorrow," she captures the voice of the second-rate artist in "Oh, He's Charming!," published in the New Yorker on October 9, 1926. This story is also a dialogue, in this case between a writer, Freeman Pawling, and an admirer at a party. The admirer, Miss Waldron, has read Pawling's books and wishes to hear Pawling talk about them. The title of the story is obviously ironic, as Pawling is anything but charming. He tells Miss Waldron

that he is "stuck" at the party, and verbalizes his contempt: "God, I'm tired," said the author. "Dead, I am. Terrible party, this is. Terrible people. Everybody here's terrible. Lot of lice" (22). Mr. Pawling ducks out of the party at the end of the story, rudely avoiding his hostess. Parker chose his name because of its sound. Certainly Mr. Pawling is an appalling person. Parker's name also implies the pawing of a dog and an overly aggressive male. This animal imagery works with the lice previously mentioned as normal satiric imagery. In addition, Pawling's name calls to mind the word bawling, which is a good description of his conversation.

"Oh, He's Charming!," like Parker's other stories, is a short short story. If one were to make some designation of the number of words making up a short story, Parker's stories would surely be on the low end of the scale. But her stories are tight and technically precise. Each word is chosen for its place in the story. There is the economy of the poet in Parker's prose writing which, in Arthur Kinney's words, makes "her contracted space perhaps the most misleading thing about her fiction" (129). Slight at first glance, the stories open to analysis. W. Somerset Maugham described Parker as a writer who "knows exactly where to begin and where to end" (qtd. in Untermeyer 1458). Louis Untermeyer writes:

Her ear is tuned to the sound of human speech and her eye is on the lookout for the unguarded moment when a person reveals himself. In her serious stories, as in her most quick-witted verse, her aim at man's dimwittedness is accurate and deadly. (1458)

Mr. Pawling, whose novels are titled Some Ladies in Agony and Various Knights and a Lady, gives his explanation for his knowledge of women: "Oh, my God, I've known a million of them. All over the world" (22). Pawling has revealed his arrogance and his contempt for women in these few, sparse words. The view of women indicated in Pawling's speech and in the titles of his books is sadistic. Pawling admits that he has left broken hearts wherever he has gone. He also admits to his admirer, Miss Waldron, that one of his books is based on the tragic suicide of a girl he once knew. The implication is that Mr. Pawling drove the young girl to kill herself and then wrote about it for money.

Dale Kramer writes that "Oh, He's Charming!" "flayed the hide off self-satisfied young intellectuals" (120). The central part of "Oh, He's Charming!" is Mr. Pawling's view of three contemporary writers:

"I was in at the library yesterday," she said. "Isn't it funny, I was just asking them if you had anything new out, and they said no. They said no, you didn't. I always ask them what's good, and they sort of save out books for me. I got a lot. There's one of them by Sherwood Anderson. The Dark something, or something."

"Don't read it," he said. "It's a louse. Poor Anderson's all through."

"Oh, I'm awfully glad you told me," she said. "Now I won't have to waste my time over it. Then I got this Dreiser thing, only it's in two books, and it looks terribly long."

"Dreiser trying to write," he said. "That's one of the funniest things in the world. He can't write."

"Well, I'm glad to know that," she said. "I won't have to bother with it. Let's see--oh, I got this new Ring Lardner book. Short stories or something."

"Who?" he said.

"You know," she said. "He used to write funny things. You know, all those funny things. Everything spelled wrong, and everything."

"What's his name?" he said.

"Lardner," she said. "Ring Lardner. It's a funny name, isn't it?"

"It's a new one on me," he said. (22)

Parker admired Anderson, Dreiser, and Ring Lardner and wrote reviews of their work. Her contemptuous view of the arrogant young author is one of her finest pieces of satire. Pawling has condemned himself by denigrating the work of Sherwood Anderson, one of the most influential twentieth-century American novelists. His failure to recognize the ability of Theodore Dreiser, and his complete ignorance of Ring Lardner, a master of the short story, add to his self-condemnation in the eyes of the readers of the time.

"Oh, He's Charming!" is framed by two short paragraphs at the beginning of the story and two even shorter paragraphs at the end. In these paragraphs, the hostess introduces Mr. Pawling and Miss Waldron, reiterating how charming he is, and the end of the story describes Miss Waldron telling her hostess how charming Mr. Pawling is. This repetition of the word charming serves to underline the satire and point out how little charm Pawling has. Parker keeps

her authorial distance from the story. She allows her characters to speak for themselves. Thus she creates a satirical distance between the character and the reader which allows the reader to share Parker's ironic view of the self-satisfied and arrogant young writer.

"The Cradle of Civilization," published in the New Yorker on September 21, 1929, begins with a much longer description which sets the scene for the rest of the story. "The Cradle of Civilization" satirizes American insularity. In order to create her scene, Parker first describes the two young Americans sitting on a terrace on the Mediterranean:

They were dressed, the girl and the young man, in identical garments; but anyone could easily have distinguished between him and her. Their costumes seemed to have been assembled in compliment to the general region of their Summer visit, lest any one district feel slighted; they wore berets, striped fishing-shirts, wide-legged cotton trousers, and rope-soled espadrilles. Thus, a Frenchman, sum-  
mering at an American resort, might have attired himself in a felt sombrero, planter's overalls, and rubber hip-boots. (24)

The second paragraph of Parker's description describes the bay and gives historical setting for the area. Parker mentions the Man in the Iron Mask, the Phoenicians, Vauban, Napoleon, and Caesar. This historic background, an unusual element in Parker's work, points up the ignorance and insensitivity of the two Americans visiting France.

The young man and young woman in "The Cradle of Civilization" are not named, but they reveal in their conversation

the poor behavior of Americans visiting in France. The young woman discusses a car accident: "You should have seen that poor nut Bill and I crashed into, driving back from the casino at four o'clock this morning. My God, all we did was bust his bumper a little, and you'd have thought we'd killed him" (23). The young man recalls his revels of the night before:

"I don't remember much about it," he said. "I must have barged all around. There was one place where I got up and led the orchestra--I guess that must have been at the Splendide. Oh, yes, I remember now. And Bob Weed got this idea in his head he wanted to play a violin, and this Frog violinist they have in the orchestra wouldn't let him have his, and the thing got broken in the struggle, and the Frog cried. Honestly. Cried his head off. Bob gave him five hundred francs."  
(23)

The two New Yorkers are behaving as if France were a playground created specifically for them. As Bob's name illustrates, they are weeds invading French soil. Parker also satirizes here the wealthy young men who believe that money will pay for everything and is the answer to every problem.

The young woman reveals her contempt of the French in her conversation: "I wish we'd gone," she said. "But Bill couldn't have made it. He couldn't have kept on his feet for the President of France--whoever that may be" (24). Later she and the young man reveal how completely the Riviera has been taken over by tourists:

"This Riviera gets them all," he said. "It's a darned good little dump. I think I'll stay another week, if the life doesn't get me."

"I'm getting sort of fed," she said. "These French people get on my nerves."

"Where did you see any French people?" he said.

"Oh, you can't help knowing they're all around," she said. "It gets on your nerves. They're so damn dumb, they make me sick. Why, they don't even speak English in the post-office." (24)

That anyone who doesn't speak English is stupid is a common idea of the stereotypical American abroad. Parker has, one hopes, exaggerated this stereotype, but the fundamental truth of the insensitive American cannot be denied. The two New Yorkers have merely moved their social life to France. They are not appreciative of the people or the country. One wonders why they have bothered to travel so far. At the end of the story, the two Americans are even contemptuous of the Mediterranean itself:

The sheet of Mediterranean caught his eye.

"Hey, look at that damn mill-pond, will you?" he said. "Blue as a fool. Know what they used to call that puddle? The cradle of civilization, they called it. How's that--am I educated, or aren't I?"

"Oh, you're a knockout in every line," she said. She glanced over her shoulder at the sea. "I don't think I'll go in swimming again."

"What?" he said. "Not in the cradle of civilization?"

"Oh, shut up," she said. "I suppose you'll be pulling that for the next year. No, I'm not going in. The water's rotten today."

"You're right, at that," he said. "It's lousy." (24)

Parker gives the reader an image of the American girl with her back to the Mediterranean. Dorothy Parker never states

her objections to the behavior of her characters, instead she merely implies them. Arthur Kinney writes: "Her stories are, like Swift's, implicit in their satire: the terms for judgment remain outside the works. By asking us to supply the proper terms, she makes collaborators of us, enforces our involvement" (143). The short stories of Dorothy Parker require an intelligent, involved reader. Brendan Gill points out that Parker has written her stories with "grave care," and there is "no need for her to flutter around in the foreground and call attention to her cleverness" (PDP xix). Parker keeps her distance from her story in "The Cradle of Civilization," and the same distance is obvious in "Arrangement in Black and White," where there is even less authorial intrusion.

"Arrangement in Black and White," published in the New Yorker on October 8, 1927, has as its satiric target the prejudice against black Americans which was so evident in Parker's day. John Keats writes that Parker was a political liberal who fought for people who were, in her opinion, deprived of their rights (see 199, 207, 227). Franklin P. Adams, in his introduction to the 1942 edition of Parker's Collected Stories, discusses Parker's satiric targets:

It seems foolish of me to write a foreword to the stories, the satires, the concentrated hatreds of stupidity, pretentiousness, and hypocrisy contained in this volume. Nobody can write such ironic things unless he has a deep sense of injustice--injustice to those members of the human race who are the victims of the stupid, the

pretentious, and the hypocritical. These victims, my mathematics assure me, are in the majority. Therefore Dorothy Parker likes more people than she hates. (viii)

The main speaker in "Arrangement in Black and White" can be considered stupid, pretentious, and hypocritical, and Dorothy Parker is not sparing in her condemnation of this woman, who is typically in Parker's stories not given a name. In her usual biting style, Parker introduced the dialogue between a female guest at a party and her host. "The woman with the pink velvet poppies twined round the assisted gold of her hair traversed the crowded room at an interesting gait combining a skip with a sidle, and clutched the lean arm of her host" (19). Ross Labrie calls this introduction "sharply visualized" with an atmosphere which conveys "a sense of awkwardness and self-consciousness" (49). There is also animal imagery in this introduction, with the woman having a gait rather than a walk, and moving with a "sidle," like a horse. The poppies twined in her hair work with her gait and the verb "sidle" to remind the reader of a show horse. Finally, the description of the woman's hair as being the color of "assisted gold" is one of the more vicious short phrases in Parker's work, a crowning satiric touch.

The party attended by the poppy woman is given for Walter Williams, a famous black singer. Arthur F. Kinney believes that the germ of this story came from musical

evenings at the studio of Neysa McMein. Paul Robeson, an eminent black bass singer, often attended these musical evenings, as did Dorothy Parker (38). The poppy woman in "Arrangement in Black and White" is the main speaker in the story, with a few short comments from her host. The woman has come to the party to speak to the black singer, but first she tells her host: "Well, I think you're simply marvelous, giving this perfectly marvelous party for him, and having him meet all these white people, and all. Isn't he terribly grateful?" (PDP 19). The tone of the woman's conversation is obvious, and her host makes only the shortest of replies. When the host speaks, Parker writes "he said," she never uses words to guide the reader. The tone of his replies is obvious. The poppy lady's conversation to the host reveals her true feelings:

"I haven't the slightest feeling about colored people. Why, I'm just crazy about some of them. They're just like children--just as easygoing, and always singing and laughing and everything. Aren't they the happiest things you ever saw in your life? Honestly, it makes me laugh just to hear them. Oh, I like them. I really do. Well, now, listen, I have this colored laundress, I've had her for years, and I'm devoted to her. She's a real character. And I want to tell you I think of her as my friend. That's the way I think of her." (20)

The poppy lady discusses whether she should shake Walter Williams' hand. She decides to do so, and Parker gives the following description: "The woman with the pink velvet poppies extended her hand at the length of her arm and held

it so for all the world to see, until the Negro took it, shook it, and gave it back to her" (21). During her discussion with the singer, "She spoke with great distinctness, moving her lips meticulously, as if in parlance with the deaf" (22). During their conversation, the poppy lady makes part of the comment that he looks black as the ace of spades, and almost says that another singer, Katherine Burke, looks just like a nigger.

The story ends with the poppy lady talking of her husband, who had refused to attend the party because it was in honor of a black man. She says, "Oh, wait till I tell Burton I called him 'Mister'!" (23). Burton has at least been honest about his feelings, but his wife is just as prejudiced--and hypocritical to boot. Parker allows the reader to see the considerable distance between the way the character sees herself and the truth perceived by the reader. The lack of authorial intrusion in this story exhibits Parker's belief that the artist must select only those facts which "added up to a meaning" (Keats 148). If this were done correctly, "the meaning would emerge from the facts and enter the reader's mind" (Keats 148). Parker's economic, tight structure allows one to use Parker's description of Hemingway, that his writing was "prose stripped to its firm, young bones" (PDP 460), to describe Parker herself.

"Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane," published in the New Yorker on July 15, 1933, is also written with great economy, but the topic of its satire is social rather than racial hypocrisy. There is no frame to this story, and Parker's only intrusions into the dialogue between Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane are a single sentence at the end of the story and her short comments between the sentences of the dialogue. Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane spend an hour gossiping about their friends. They criticize the drinking habits of others, while they drink themselves silly in the process. They criticize the emptiness of parties while discussing all the parties they have attended and are going to attend. Mrs. Carrington sums the plot up rather well early in the story:

"The emptiness," Mrs. Carrington needed to tell her. "And the silliness. And the eternal gossip, gossip, gossip. And all the talk about the clothes they have and the clothes they're going to get, and what they do to keep thin. Well, I'm fed up with it, that's all. No, thanks, dear, I don't dare take another sandwich; I'll have to roll all day tomorrow as it is." (11)

The verb needed here adds to the irony that the women are gossiping about gossip. The remainder of the story is a picture of the emptiness and the silliness of the lives of these two women.

Dorothy Parker had little compassion for society women with empty lives and even emptier minds. She was raised in the social class typified by Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane,

but she denied the life of that class as soon as possible.

John Keats describes the early Dorothy Parker:

She was set apart by her intelligence, by her education, and as would soon be seen, by her talent. She ardently identified with the feminists who were demanding parity with men and the right to vote. . . . She also smoked cigarettes, wrote verses about love, had opinions of her own, and wanted her own apartment and a job. In Dorothy's youth, such girls not only were rare but were also viewed with alarm. To borrow words from the time, young women with advanced ideas were suspected of being fast, chiefly by people who had not met them. (32)

The two wealthy women in Parker's story eat caviar and buy designer clothes. They party, they drink, and they gossip. That is the sum of their lives. Parker knew of that kind of life; she found it contemptible and she condemned it without qualification in this story. Ross Labrie writes that, although Dorothy Parker was a feminist, she saw women not only as victims, but "inasmuch as women welcome the roles which society has ordained for them, as gullible destroyers of themselves" (52). Louis Untermeyer writes that Parker had a "unique ability to portray, sympathetically but without compromise, empty lives in a bustling modern world" (1457-58). Parker vividly portrays the empty lives of Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane. The dramatic irony in this story, the contrast between the way Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane see themselves and the way the reader sees them, is the primary satiric technique. In condemning their friends, they are also condemning

themselves. The authorial voice does not intrude into the story, which consists almost completely of dialogue, but the reader is never in any doubt about Parker's view of her characters. Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane do the very things they criticize in others, and their hypocrisy is added to their other faults.

The five short stories analyzed in this chapter are representative of Dorothy Parker's satire. The five satiric topics, alcoholism, artistic affectation, American insularity, racial prejudice, and social hypocrisy, are indicative of what Ross Labrie calls the "prevailing theme in the stories: the disintegration of American culture, the petrifying meretriciousness of modern American life" (50). Parker uses spare, economic language to express her themes. Her stories are written with clarity, and they illustrate the workmanship of a careful artist. Parker told an interviewer for the Paris Review, "It takes me six months to do a story. I think it out and then write it sentence by sentence--no first draft. I can't write five words but that I change seven" (83).

Parker always keeps her distance from her characters in her short stories. A part of her satiric method is to accept characters at face value and then allow them to destroy themselves with their own words. The characters do this so well that there is no need for further discussion of themes; it would be superfluous. Parker's ear for

conversation is extremely realistic. Her primary satiric techniques, dramatic irony and exaggeration, are evident in each short story. While some of Parker's stories are dated and parts of others reveal their date, these stories live for us because they are about living, realistic people who reveal themselves in their conversation. The distance between the affectation and the reality provides telling satire.

Alexander Woollcott considered Dorothy Parker's work a "potent distillation of nectar and wormwood, of ambrosia and deadly nightshade" (144). Ross Labrie defines her "vision" as brittle and satiric (56). Louis Untermeyer describes Parker's satire as follows:

Famous for her wit, she was a desperately serious person, a satirist, as she said herself, not a humorist. She was gifted with the "light touch" and the ability to turn a phrase or a rhyme; but she had, too, a sardonic understanding of people which inevitably emerged through the surface of her writing. (1457)

In her short stories, Dorothy Parker often amuses the reader. She also performs the job of the satirist: to hold up a mirror to the follies of the human being. In doing so, she influenced an entire generation, and the New Yorker magazine was one of the vehicles which carried Parker's satire to her public. This satire is present not just in her short stories, but in her poems and reviews as well.

## Chapter II

### Poetry

If the lethal tongue of Dorothy Parker is present in her short stories, it is even more evident in her poems. Parker's poetry cuts through sham and pretension with the sharpness of a finely honed knifeblade. In the 1920's, Parker's poems were part of the popular culture. They were so frequently quoted that at least one of the poems has become one of those with which everyone is familiar, even though the source is usually forgotten. The poem was first published in Vanity Fair, and is entitled "News Item": "Men seldom make passes / At girls who wear glasses" (PDP 109). Edmund Wilson calls Parker's poetry "popular irony," and gives this analysis, quoted in the introduction to the Portable Dorothy Parker:

It is true that Mrs. Parker's epigrams have the accent of the hotel Algonquin rather than that of the coffee houses of the eighteenth century. But I believe that, if we admire, as it is fashionable to do, the light verse of Prior and Gay, we should admire Mrs. Parker also. She writes well: her wit is the wit of her particular time and place, but it is often as cleanly economic at the same time that it is flatly brutal as the wit of the age of Pope; and, within its small scope, it is a criticism of life. (xix)

Parker's wit is the wit of the Algonquin Round Table, but it is surprising how easily its messages can be applied to the present day. Parker's poems are also much more personal than her short stories.

Twenty-one of Dorothy Parker's poems were published in the New Yorker from 1925-1940. Many of these poems were reprinted in the three volumes of Parker's poetry and in the Portable Dorothy Parker. In her poetry, Parker examines the life of Americans in New York in the 1920's. These poems may be thematically divided into topical poems about the twenties, poems about love and sex, and poems which satirize life itself. This last group of poems is designated "cosmic satire" in this paper, because they satirize the entire scope of life and death. A further group of poems published in the New Yorker are placed in a separate division, made according to style rather than theme. This last group consists of poems written as dramatic monologues. Only those poems published by Dorothy Parker in the New Yorker which provide the best examples of her work and her satire are included. Other New Yorker poems by Parker are listed in the appendix of the dissertation.

Two poems may be used as examples of Dorothy Parker's topical poems about life in the twenties. They are "Cassandra Drops Into Verse" and "Bohemia." "Cassandra Drops Into Verse" was published in the New Yorker on February 28, 1925. This poem is Parker's reply to the

sentimental music and poetry which pervaded the popular culture of the twenties. The speaker, Cassandra, gives a pessimistic view of the pastoral ideal of living in the country, one man and one woman, happy without the trappings of the city to interfere:

We'd break the city's unfeeling clutch  
 And back to good Mother Earth we'd go,  
 With birds and blossoms and such-and-such,  
 And love and kisses and so-and-so,  
 We'd build a bungalow, white and green,  
 With rows of hollyhocks, all sedate.  
 And you'd come out on the five-eighteen  
 And meet me down at the garden gate.

We'd leave the city completely flat  
 And dwell with chickens and cows and bees,  
 'Mid brooks and bowers and this and that,  
 And joys and blisses and those and these.  
 We'd greet together the golden days,  
 And hail the sun in the morning sky.  
 We'd find an Eden--to coin a phrase--  
 The sole inhabitants, you and I.

With sweet simplicity all our aim,  
 We'd fare together to start anew  
 In peace and quiet and what's-its-name,  
 And soul communion, or what have you?  
 But oh, my love, if we made the flight,  
 I see the end of our pastoral plan. . . .  
 Why, you'd be staying in town each night,  
 And I'd elope with the furnace man. (5)

The title alludes to Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, King of Troy, who was given the gift of prophecy but was fated never to be believed. The name has come to be used for anyone who predicts disaster and misfortune. Parker's poem describes the typical view of a wonderful life in the country, but at the same time the image is undercut. The poem is actually a parody of the typical pastoral romance. In

the first verse, Parker's use of "so-and-so" and "such-and-such" indicates that the speaker really has no idea of the kind of things she will find in the country. This is repeated in stanza two with "this and that" and "those and these," and in stanza three with "what's-its-name" and "what have you." Lines three and four of each stanza end with these meaningless phrases which undercut the superficial theme of the poem. Parker's strong rhyme emphasizes these phrases to undercut the pastoral ideal which is being parodied. The picture, in stanza two, of living with the chickens and cows in the country, is also an image used to undercut the superficial theme.

The last two lines of "Cassandra Drops Into Verse" contain a surprise ending which contradicts the words of the rest of the poem. The reader discovers, however, that Parker has prepared for this surprise ending: it surprises, but it does not shock. The last two lines of the second stanza contain the words "We'd find an Eden," and Parker goes out of her way to call attention to this cliché by using another, "to coin a phrase." The reader is surprised, but the ground work for the surprise ending has been laid during the entire poem. This parody of the "perfect love in the country" pastoral theme was appropriate for the alienated realist of the nineteen-twenties.

"Bohemia," published in the New Yorker on September 17, 1927, is a second example of Parker's topical poems about

the twenties. This poem takes a satiric look at the people with whom Dorothy Parker spent much of her time, at the Algonquin and elsewhere within New York's artistic circles:

Authors and actors and artists and such  
 Never know nothing, and never know much.  
 Sculptors and singers and those of their kidney  
 Tell their affairs from Seattle to Sydney.  
 Playwrights and poets and such horses' necks  
 Start off from anywhere, end up at sex.  
 Diarists, critics, and similar roe  
 Never say nothing, and never say no.  
 People Who Do Things exceed my endurance;  
 God, for a man that solicits insurance! (25)

Parker effectively uses alliteration in this poem. The repetition of the a in line one, the n in line two, the s in lines three and four, and the p in line five add to the rhythm of the poem and also provide emphasis. The words used alliteratively are those words which signify the kinds of people Parker is satirizing; that is, the inhabitants of Bohemia: authors, actors, artists, sculptors, singers, playwrights, and poets. The s sound dominates the poem, appearing twenty-five times in ten lines, and prepares the reader for the word asses to end line five; however, Parker tricks her reader, substituting the word necks for the vulgar word expected by the reader. She then rhymes sex, the expected word, with necks. This rhetorical maneuver emphasizes sex. Also, the short poem contains thirteen plural forms, indicating Parker's grouping of types of people. It is not individuals, but these types that Parker is satirizing. The rhymes are quite forced, an element

which enhances the playful tone of the poem. Lines two and eight contain parallel double negatives, which underline the speaker's negative view of the inhabitants of Bohemia. The obviously intentional bad grammar is a reflection on the human subjects. The speaker also compares the Bohemians to animals, in line five as "horses' necks," and in line seven as "roe." The animal imagery is not strong in the poem, but it works well with the comic rhyme to emphasize the emotion of the speaker. Parker's final technique is the capitalization of "People Who Do Things," as if that phrase were a proper name. This capitalization places a large group of people into one class, and Parker's criticism of that class is obvious. The capitalization also suggests a self-conscious class.

Parker's satiric targets in "Bohemia" are those people who are generally considered to be interesting because they are creative. Ironically, the persona of the poem considers these artistic people boring. They do not know much, they talk about themselves, they talk too much about sex, and they are incapable of saying no. The persona is bored with these cultured people and wishes to meet an ordinary man, symbolized by the insurance salesman mentioned in the last line of the poem. This is a type that would horrify and offend her sophisticated subjects. Just as she did in "Cassandra Drops Into Verse," Parker puts her satiric punch in the last line of the poem. The techniques and poetic

devices used throughout the poem prepare the reader for the satiric twist of the last line. The theme is closely integrated with the techniques of the poem.

In both "Cassandra Drops Into Verse" and "Bohemia," the reader discovers the sure craft of a careful and deliberate artist. This craftsmanship is equally evident in Parker's poems about the eternal war of the sexes. Parker takes a cynical and satiric view of this inevitable conflict, and she states her view with concise sharpness. Kramer takes a serious view of this kind of cynical writing by Parker:

Though Dorothy Parker's work may not have been great literature, there was no real flippancy in it. She lived it to the last dregs of its bitterness. When she loved, she loved furiously; and when there were disappointments she suffered deep pain. She distilled her sorrow for the light quaffing of a flippant generation. (116)

One does not have to read a biography of Dorothy Parker to discover that she had sad and bitter love affairs. This is all too evident in her poetry. But she never offers suffering or sentimentality to her reader.

Three poems published in the New Yorker have been chosen as examples of Parker's cynical poetry about the battle between the sexes: "Fairy Story," "Little Words," and "Pour Prendre Conge." "Fairy Story" was published in the New Yorker on November 12, 1927, along with four other poems about love under the title "Songs for the Nearest

Harmonica." "Fairy Story" begins with a typical fairy tale opening but ends with a typical Parker twist:

Oh, there once was a lady, and so I've been told,  
Whose lover grew weary, whose lover grew cold.  
"My child," he remarked, "though our episode ends,  
In the manner of men I suggest we be friends."  
And the truest of friends ever after they were--  
Oh, they lied in their teeth when they told me  
of her! (28)

The first five lines of this poem, especially the opening "there once was a lady," suggest a parody of the limerick, a sub-literary form. This parody is used to undercut the content of the poem, and the title "Fairy Story" is ironic and consequently adds to the undercutting of the content. A limerick is a five-line poem, and the first five lines of "Fairy Story" work much like a limerick. Although this poem is written in fairly long lines, there is a caesura in the middle of each of the first four lines, giving the poem a short, clipped sound for those lines. In these four lines, Parker sets the scene for the outrageously romantic statement in line five. Parker reverses the point of view of the poem when she gives her cynical, realistic answer to the limerick in line six.

The rhyme is in couplets, and all of the rhymes are true rhymes. This rhyme scheme is traditional and rather stilted, and it encourages the reader to accept the traditional, romantic view of the first five lines of the poem. Parker also uses assonance, here a repetition of the o in lines 1, 2, 3, and 6, to enrich the lines of this short

poem. The lady in the poem is involved in a love affair, but her lover grows cold. His emotions are emphasized with the two parallel relative clauses in line two. The lover regards the lady as a "child," a well-chosen word here, since it is typical of a certain kind of man to wish his lover a child and to treat her as one. The lady may also be a "child" because she believes what he says to her.

"Fairy Story" is a representative Parker poem. She often writes of the woman whose lover has left her. Parker's satiric target is not so much the behavior of men and women as it is the inevitability, even the predictability, of that behavior. Given the differing perceptions of men and women, there is no hope for what Parker calls the "sex situation." Spiller writes that Parker "specialized in the comically woeful war of the sexes" in her humorous verse, which contains "plenty of mordant wit but also such penetration into the grief of being woman that she is obviously a good deal more than a pert humorist" (756). For purposes of comparison, a poem titled "Experience," published in the Portable Dorothy Parker, gives a short, epigrammatic statement of Parker's views:

Some men break your heart in two,  
Some men fawn and flatter,  
Some men never look at you,  
And that cleans up the matter. (PDP 117)

Parker's view of love is satiric and cynical. There is no happily ever after in Parker's work. She never even allows

a relationship, either in her poems or her short stories, to mellow into affection.

"Little Words" is another poem about the woman betrayed. This poem, published in the New Yorker on August 24, 1929, is a parody of exaggerated, sentimental love poetry. The parody, in typical Parker style, does not become explicit until the last line:

When you are strayed, there is nor bloom nor leaf  
 Nor singing sea at night, nor silver birds.  
 And I may only stare, and shape my grief  
 In little words.

I cannot conjure loveliness, to drown  
 The bitter woe that racks my chords apart.  
 The staggering pen that sets my sorrow down  
 Feeds at my heart.

There is not mercy in the shifting year;  
 No beauty wraps me tenderly about.  
 I turn to little words--so you, my dear,  
 Can spell them out. (14)

The first eleven lines of this poem are an exaggeration of the emotions the persona feels when her lover strays. The repetition of the word "nor" in the first two lines emphasizes all of the things which the persona has lost from her world because her lover has strayed. Each of the stanzas ends with a short line which brings the reader to a halt. This develops a rhythm which is sustained in the final stanza of the poem.

The exaggeration in the poem can at first be taken seriously, especially as much traditional poetry exaggerates the beauty of the loved one and the horrors of the lover

betrayed. But Parker reveals that the poem is a parody in the last two lines, where the persona turns from sentimentality to reality. The ending of this poem is a Parker surprise, but in this poem it does shock the reader. The poet has not prepared the reader for the surprise ending. The poem has no comic rhyme. There is no guide to the ending of the poem except in the title and the fourth line, where the phrase "little words" is used. Parker gets the reader off balance with the evident seriousness of the poem, and moves in with the knifeblade for the kill in the last line.

The attitude of the persona to her lover in "Little Words" is vicious. She discards the sentimentality of the first stanzas and attacks her lover's intelligence in the last two lines of the poem. This is a realistic view of broken love affairs, when a woman is much more likely to criticize her lover than to discuss the extent of her sorrow. Parker has an intimate understanding of the way women react, and this is evident in "Little Words."

Dorothy Parker's satiric poetry often gets the reader off balance with what seems to be sincere sentiment, but the final effect is an assertion of her satiric view. However sorrowful the persona might be in "Little Words," she is not too sad to attack her lover. This technique is comparable to that in "Fairy Story," where she again disposes of her

optimistic thesis in one short, quick ending. Corey Ford analyzes Parker's penchant for the reversal of point of view:

Her poems were exquisite cameos, poignant and haunting, but, perversely, she insisted on tripping herself up in the last line, reducing the effort to comic verse. Generally they pictured a hapless lass, the victim of unrequited love, whose golden boy goes galloping off over the horizon while she utters a final taunt. . . . The disillusioned lady asked no sympathy. (53)

Parker's persona is indeed disillusioned, but the bravery and grit she shows while admitting her sorrow attract the sensibilities of the reader.

The last poem in this group of three about the battle between the sexes is entitled "Pour Prendre Conge," which may be loosely translated "notice to quit." In this poem, published in the New Yorker on July 16, 1927, Parker writes about writing about love:

I'm sick of embarking in dories  
 Upon an emotional sea.  
 I'm wearied of playing Delores  
 (A role never written for me).

I'll never again like a cub lick  
 My wounds while I squeal at the hurt.  
 No more I'll go walking in public,  
 My heart hanging out of my shirt.

I'm tired of entwining me garlands  
 Of weather-worn hemlock and bay.  
 I'm over my longing for far lands--  
 I wouldn't give that for Cathay.

I'm through with performing the ballet  
 Of love unrequited and told.  
 Euterpe, I tender you vale;  
 Good-by, and take care of that cold.

I'm done with this burning and giving  
 And reeling the rhymes of my woes.  
 And how I'll be making my living,  
 The Lord in His mystery knows. (PDP 237)

Stanza one of this poem alludes to Delores, the stereotypical suffering woman. Stanza two uses animal imagery and exaggerates the old saying about wearing one's heart on one's sleeve to "My heart hanging out of my shirt." Lines five and seven end with a double rhyme, "cub lick" and "public," which adds a comic dimension to the exaggeration of the lines. Lines nine and eleven repeat this double rhyme with "garlands" and "far lands." The hemlock and bay in stanza three are traditional plants, the hemlock, a poison, often used for suicide, and the bay leaf as a crown for poets. The speaker of the poem is tired of making garlands of poetry and death. Stanza four is Parker's farewell to Euterpe, the Greek god of music.

"Pour Prendre Conge" is a poet's wry look at herself. Dorothy Parker spent much of her time writing satirically about love. In this poem, she turns the satire upon herself. She is tired of writing about heartaches, but the problem is that this will leave her nothing to write about. The final complication for the poet, as stated in the last two lines of the poem, is the satiric twist of the poem. As in the previous poems about the battle of the sexes, the last lines are the most important lines. In "Pour Prendre Conge," Parker recognizes that the sexual battle is one of

her most successful themes, but she also recognizes that exploiting that theme is done at the cost of much heartache for the poet. Her emotion is exaggerated, but it is real nevertheless.

Another of Parker's obsessive themes must have cost her much emotional stress, also. This theme is her cosmic satire about life and death. The term "cosmic satire" is used here because Parker, in her poetry about death, is not satirizing one part of the lives of human beings which might be corrected if human beings changed the way they behave. Instead, she satirizes the entire cycle of life and death--cosmic satire, in fact. Clark and Motto note that satire does not provide the catharsis prevalent in other literary modes. Instead, the reader is left with "a keen sense of dissatisfaction" which "prevents any conclusion or satisfactory resolution whatever" (19). This dissatisfaction is certainly felt in Parker's cosmic satire, where no resolution is possible.

Parker's view of death is even less sentimental than her view of love. On at least two occasions, Parker attempted suicide, and some of her friends have written that there were five such attempts. John Keats writes, "In 1922, when all the world seemed full of laughter, her laughter was sardonic. She seemed determined to pursue unhappiness" (90). Parker had an abortion late in 1922 and soon after attempted suicide for the first time (Keats 93).

She put blue ribbons around the bandages on her wrists and joked about the attempt, but she began drinking heavily. Her friends accepted the drinking as normal. John Keats writes:

Everyone thought well of her for this, because the ability to hold one's liquor was also a criterion of the twenties. No one was willing then to state that excessive smoking and drinking are slow ways of committing suicide.

Perhaps none of her friends except Mr. Benchley would have understood her perfume. She ordered soaps and perfumes from Cyclax of London, and her favorite scent was tuberose. Mrs. Parker's and Mr. Benchley's researches into the world of the undertaker would have at once disclosed that undertakers use the heavy scent of tuberose to mask the reek of the corpse. (94)

The research that Parker and Benchley did into the undertaking business has about it an aura of sickness. Dorothy Parker's view of life always included more of the bad than the good. Vincent Sheean once called her a "terrified soul" (Keats 127), and certainly her fear of life can be seen in many of her poems. Brendan Gill writes that "she was one of the wittiest people in the world and one of the saddest" (xxvi).

Dorothy Parker's best known poem, with the exception of "News Item," is probably "Resume." John Keats appropriately used the last line of this poem for his biography of Parker. "Resume" was not published in the New Yorker, but it is an appropriate introduction to her cosmic satire poems published in that magazine:

Razors pain you;  
 Rivers are damp;  
 Acids stain you;  
 And drugs cause cramp.  
 Guns aren't lawful;  
 Nooses give;  
 Gas smells awful;  
 You might as well live. (PDP 99)

There is a kind of wry irony in this poem which makes it amusing. Life is only worth living because the alternatives are worse. Keats analyzes this aspect of Parker's poetry: "Her lines were fastidious enough, but there was a quality of desperation about them; her mood was wary, grimly gay, sweetly sour" (131). This air of desperation is present in many of Parker's poems about men and women, but it is much more starkly evident in her cosmic satire about death.

There are twelve poems about death which Dorothy Parker published in the New Yorker. Four of them are discussed here as representative of her cosmic satire. The first is a polemic on death entitled "Rhyme Against Living," published in the May 26, 1928, edition of the New Yorker:

If wild my breast and sore my pride,  
 I bask in dreams of suicide.  
 If cool my heart and high my head,  
 I think, "How lucky are the dead!" (20)

This poem has absolutely no hope about it. When the persona is unhappy, as described in the first couplet, she thinks of suicide. But even when things are going well, as in the last couplet, death still seems attractive to her. Parker uses a parallel structure for both couplets, and this structure works well with the theme that there is no

significant difference between the good times and the bad times. Parker's cosmic satire is valuable in a study of satire because it reveals the mind of the satirist to the reader. Leonard Feinberg, in The Satirist, writes that the essence of satire is a persistent revelation and exaggeration of the contrast between reality and pretense (7). Parker rejects the convenient amnesia with which most human beings confront life and ignore death. She refuses to pretend that death is not a central fact of life, and she forces her pessimism about life and death upon her reader. Clarke and Motto write in Satire--That Blasted Art that "acne and acid combine in generating the creative nihilism and ugly beauty that are, after all, the principal features of satire" (22). There is certainly creative nihilism, and ugly beauty in the poetry of Dorothy Parker.

"Swan Song," the second poem in this group of cosmic satire is, like "Rhyme Against Living," about suicide. Published in the New Yorker on April 2, 1927, "Swan Song" is lighter than "Rhyme Against Living," and more amusing. It tells cynically of the inevitabilities of life and death:

First you are hot,  
 Then you are cold;  
 And the best you have got  
 Is the fact you're old.  
 Labor and hoard,  
 Worry and wed;  
 And the biggest reward  
 Is to die in bed.

A long time to sweat,  
 A little while to shiver  
 Is all that you will get--  
 Where's the nearest river? (23)

In this poem, Parker's satiric target is the entire human condition. It is truly cosmic satire. Parker uses the technique of contrast throughout the poem. In "Swan Song," the tone is light; nonetheless, the depression of the persona is certainly there, hidden as it is under the cloak of humor. The reader may compare this poem to Keats's view of Parker's frame of mind after her second attempt at suicide in 1925:

This living was no project of hers. For all that it might consist of the companionship of witty, talented, wealthy, and charming people, life was not clearly preferable to death. In the end, everyone died anyway, so there was no point to anything. It did not matter if people wrote plays or started magazines or had Long Island estates or said funny things at Jack and Charlie's, for the plays would close and no one would remember them and the magazines would run their moment in the sun and then fold someday, and the Long Island estates would eventually become ruins, and wit was just doing calisthenics with words. Love was supposed to be wonderful, but love could hurt, and in the end love died, too. Love was a permanent flop. Nothing really mattered. (107)

It is ironic that Parker, who wrote so much about death and attempted suicide so many times, lived to be seventy-three years old and outlived most of her friends.

Even more realistic and cynical than "Rhyme Against Living," "Thought for a Sunshiny Morning" contains Parker's most vivid image of the human being's destiny. Published

in the New Yorker on April 9, 1927, this short poem is about the death of a worm:

It costs me never a stab nor squirm  
To tread by chance upon a worm.  
"Aha, my little dear," I say,  
"Your clan will pay me back one day." (PDP 226)

The title of this poem is clearly ironic, as the reader cannot imagine a more horrible thought for a sunshiny morning, or any other kind of morning, for that matter. This poem is also satiric in its ironic look at the balance of nature. The satiric target is the human being, master of this world, whose final destiny is to be eaten by worms. Parker has again used a very effective surprise ending. The surprise ending is not as shocking in a four-line poem as it is in longer poems, but it dominates the poem more clearly in short poems.

Comparable to "Thought for a Sunshiny Morning," one epitaph in a collection of six published under the title "Tombstones in the Starlight" is a representative Parker poem. This epitaph, entitled "The Very Rich Man," was published in the New Yorker on May 4, 1929. The rich man satirically gets what he wants:

He'd have the best, and that was none too good;  
No barrier could hold, before his terms.  
He lies below, correct in cypress wood,  
And entertains the most exclusive worms.  
(PDP 301)

Parker satirizes here the human condition, but she also satirizes those who are rich and proper and will have only

the best. Like all human beings, this rich man cannot escape the human condition. The barrier of death does not hold before his terms, and the second line of the poem is clearly ironic. The cypress wood casket in line three is appropriate because cypress trees are often planted in cemeteries, and are also expensive. The technique of the poem is very correct and controlled, and Parker uses assonance in her repetition of the o sound throughout the poem. The controlled technique works well with the topic of the correct, rich man. Again, Parker uses an effective surprise ending which satirically reveals the emptiness of worldly wealth, which can only end in an expensive coffin.

In her satire of life in the twenties, the sexual situation, and the human condition, Dorothy Parker recognizes the ridiculous and the hypocritical in her targets, and she exposes them. Leonard Feinberg writes that this exposure is an indispensable characteristic of satire (6). Parker reveals her targets' faults and failures to her readers.

Parker wrote four dramatic monologues under the ironic title "The Beloved Ladies," and in these monologues she allows each woman to expose herself. The dramatic monologue, a poem in which the speaker is usually addressing a listener in a particular setting, allows the poet to reveal the inner mind of the character. This method is often ironic; the speaker's interpretation of events is opposite

to the influence of the reader from the situation presented in the poem. Perhaps the most famous dramatic monologues are those written by Robert Browning. Other poets who have used the dramatic monologue form include Tennyson, Thomas Hardy, Kipling, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, and Robert Frost. It is a major form in modern poetry.

Dorothy Parker exploits the dramatic monologue with penetrating irony. The four "Beloved Ladies," published on December 14, 1929, in the New Yorker, are about legendary women: Salome, Guinevere, Lesbia, and Ninon de L'Enclos. In these poems, the four women are perceived by the reader as grasping, manipulating women who are contemptuous of men, an opinion directly opposite to the view which the woman intends to give. Each woman condemns herself unknowingly through her own words. Thus the poems employ dramatic irony. The reader is given a deep insight into the character of the speaker, but the speaker never realizes what she is revealing.

The first poem, "Salome's Dancing Lesson," is about Herod's step-daughter, who in the biblical story asked for John the Baptist's head on a platter. Herod promised her, after she had pleased his guests with a dance, that she could have anything she wanted. In the poem by Parker, Salome says:

She that begs a little boon  
(Heel and toe! Heel and toe!)

Little gets--and nothing, soon.  
 (No, no, no! No, no, no!)  
 She that calls for costly things  
 Priceless finds her offerings--  
 What's impossible to kings?  
 (Heel and toe! Heel and toe!)

Kings are shaped as other men.  
 (Step and turn! Step and turn!)  
 Ask what none may ask again.  
 (Will you learn? Will you learn?)  
 Lovers whine, and kisses pall,  
 Jewels tarnish, kingdoms fall--  
 Death's the rarest prize of all!  
 (Step and turn! Step and turn!)

Veils were woven to be dropped.  
 (One, two, three! One, two, three!)  
 Aging eyes are slowest stopped.  
 (Quietly! Quietly!)  
 She whose body's young and cool  
 Has no need of dancing-school--  
 Scratch a king and find a fool! (27)

The satiric targets in this poem are Salome and King Herod. Salome is the speaker, and she presents herself as grasping and cruel. In the biblical story, Mark 6: 17-28, Salome asks for John the Baptist's head because he has criticized her mother's illegal marriage to Herod. In Parker's version, she asks for John's head because it is a rare prize. Salome is contemptuous of Herod. She says that kings are like other men, and therefore you can scratch even a king and find a fool. Salome is contemptuous of all men, including her own lovers, whose kisses pall and who whine. Salome uses her body to manipulate men. The implication in Parker's line, "Veils were woven to be dropped," turns Salome's dance into a strip show. There is no indication in the biblical story that Salome's dance was indecent,

although that assumption has traditionally been made. Parker's view of the cruel and indecent Salome is stronger because Salome, as the speaker, presents her ideas as the merest common sense. She does not realize how horrible her view of life is; she regards her philosophy as sensible. This is clearly dramatic irony. The vivid satire in "Salome's Dancing Lesson" is underlined by the rhythm, which is emphasized by the parenthetical refrains. Salome gives her horrible philosophy in the rhythm of a dance, and consequently the reader's distaste is heightened.

"Guinevere at Her Fireside" is the second of the dramatic monologues published under the title "The Beloved Ladies." In this poem, the satiric target is Queen Guinevere, who tells the story of her adultery with Lancelot:

A nobler king had never breath--  
 I say it now, and said it then,  
 Who weds with such is wed till death  
 And wedded stays in Heaven. Amen.

(And oh, the shirts of linen-lawn,  
 And all the armor, tagged and tied,  
 And church on Sundays, dusk and dawn,  
 And bed a thing to kneel beside!)

The bravest one stood tall above  
 The rest, and watched me as a light,  
 I heard and heard them talk of love;  
 I'd naught to do but think, at night,

The bravest man has littlest brains;  
 That chalky fool from Astolat  
 With all her dying and her pains! --  
 Thank God, I helped him through with that.

I found him not unfair to see--  
 I like a man with peppered hair!  
 And thus it came about. Ah, me,  
 Tristram was busied elsewhere. . . .

A nobler king had never breath--  
 I say it now, and said it then,  
 Who weds with such is wed till death  
 And wedded stays in Heaven. Amen. (27)

The frame of this poem, the first and last verses, consists of Guinevere's reiterated dedication to King Arthur. This is, of course, ironic, since Guinevere committed adultery with Lancelot, and thus helped to destroy Arthur's kingdom. Parker's source for the story in this poem is Alfred Lord Tennyson's The Idylls of the King. The second verse, enclosed in parentheses, is Guinevere's view of her life at the nunnery where she was forced to live the remainder of her life after the adultery was discovered. Her disgust that bed is now "a thing to kneel beside" is one of the most revealing lines in the poem. Her description of Lancelot in the third, fourth, and fifth verses is partly complimentary, but Guinevere, like the other women in this series, is contemptuous of the intelligence of men. Guinevere is proud of her manipulation of Lancelot. The "chalky fool from Astolat" is Elaine, who loved Lancelot and died of grief. At her own request, Elaine's body was floated down the river to Camelot, where it was discovered by Arthur and Lancelot. Tristram, mentioned in the fifth verse, also committed adultery. He was killed by his lover's husband. The entire disaster--encompassing the

deaths of Arthur, Elaine, and Tristram; and entailing the retirement of Lancelot to a monastery and Guinevere to a nunnery--was due to Guinevere's admiration for "a man with peppered hair." Like Salome, Guinevere has caused disaster and grief for those around her, particularly the men, because of her own selfish desires. This dramatic monologue tells the story of Guinevere to reveal her true feelings in her own words, with which she condemns herself.

The third poem in the group called "The Beloved Ladies" is entitled "From a Letter from Lesbia":

. . . So, praise the gods, Catullus is away!  
 And let me tend you this advice, my dear;  
 Take any lover that you will, or may,  
 Except a poet. All of them are queer.

It's just the same--a quarrel or a kiss  
 Is but a tune to play upon his pipe.  
 He's always hymning that or wailing this;  
 Myself, I much prefer the out-door type.

That thing he wrote, the time my sparrow died--  
 (Oh, most unpleasant--gloomy, tedious words!)  
 I called it sweet, and made believe I cried;  
 The stupid fool! I've always hated birds. . . .  
 (27)

Lesbia is the speaker in this epistle, a variation of the dramatic monologue, and she is comparable to Salome and Guinevere in that she is contemptuous of the man who loves her. It is ironic that Lesbia's only claim to immortality is that she was the object of the poetry of Catullus. She is nonetheless critical of her lover and of his poetry. Lesbia is the satiric target in this poem, but Catullus is

also a target. He is foolish enough to be manipulated by Lesbia, and therefore does not deserve the respect of the reader.

The fourth dramatic monologue in the group "The Beloved Ladies" is entitled "Ninon de L'Enclos, On Her Last Birthday." The narrator is addressing a servant:

So let me have the rouge again,  
And comb my hair the curly way.  
The poor young men, the dear young men--  
They'll all be here by noon to-day.

And I shall wear the blue, I think--  
They beg to touch its rippled lace;  
Or do they love me best in pink,  
So sweetly flattering to the face?

And are you sure my eyes are bright,  
And is it true my cheek is clear?  
Young what's-his name stayed half the night;  
He vows to cut his throat, poor dear!

So fetch my scarlet slippers, then,  
And bring the powder-puff to me.  
The dear young men, the poor young men--  
They think I'm only seventy! (27)

Ninon de L'Enclos was a Frenchwoman of the seventeenth century who was famous for her literary salon and for her liaisons with famous men of the day. She was also famous for her infidelity, which she made no attempt to hide from any of her lovers. She once gave a written promise of fidelity to a lover, and broke it almost immediately:

The marquis de La Chatre, her lover, on leaving her for the army, obtained from her a written promise (billet) that she would be faithful to him. Her first infidelity occasioned her gay exclamation, "Le bon billet qu'a La Chatre!",

an expression which has become proverbial for an illusory promise. (Encyclopedia of French Literature, 408)

Ninon is the speaker in Parker's poem, and like the other three women in this group of "Beloved Ladies," she is contemptuous of men. The poem illustrates her extreme vanity on her last birthday, which was her seventy-fifth. Ninon cannot remember the names of her lovers, and is not bothered about the possible suicide of one of them. She uses men because they fulfill her need to be admired. Ninon likes men more than Salome or Lesbia, but all four of the women in this group of poems use men for their own ends. All four women reveal their characters through the satiric technique of the dramatic monologue.

The reader of Dorothy Parker's satire can look behind the poems and the short stories and see a satirist who, in the derivative words of John Keats, "loved mankind in general and despised her neighbors in particular" (312). Especially in regard to women, Dorothy Parker is a paradox: the woman who fought for women's rights and lived the life traditionally reserved for men was the woman who was also most critical of her own sex. She recognized the hypocrisies and stupidities in the women she knew, and she did not fail to point out these faults in her satire. John Keats gives this picture of the paradox of Dorothy Parker, the writer and the satirist:

This tiny, big-eyed, feminine woman with the mind of a man; this truth-teller who told some of the damndest lies; this lover who was terrified of the responsibility of being loved; this user of four-letter words who once coupled with a man in the presence of party guests; this "sour little girl who always went about slashing her wrists and having abortions"; this excellent poet and short story writer "who was a genius"; this mixed-up person who said if she wrote an autobiography she would call it Mongrel was, as a mourner at her funeral said, "a great lady." Perhaps any woman who lives her life all the way up qualifies for the epithet, just as a man may be defined as one who actually lives his life. Dorothy Parker lived in a love-hate tension. But she did live intensely all the loving-loathing while, and whenever she could bring herself to do so, she made very competent use of a first-rate talent. (313)

Parker used her first-rate talent carefully and with penetrating imagery. Her techniques are chosen to blend with her themes. As there is paradox in her theme, so there is paradox in her technique, especially in the satiric twist at the end of many of her poems. Her carefully planned traditional lines end paradoxically in a reversal of traditional modes of thought. She uses this technique to undercut the traditional ideas that she satirizes. Parker's surprise endings are evident in her poems about the twenties, the sexual situation, and the general human condition. The dramatic monologues do not use surprise endings because the irony is constant throughout the poems. Dorothy Parker could not accept traditional values, and she twisted the self-satisfaction of those who could, much as she twisted the endings of her poems. Parker's New

Yorker poetry questions traditional values in an intentionally light tone; she both helps to establish and reinforces the New Yorker style.

## Chapter III

### Book Reviews

From October 1927 until May 1928, Dorothy Parker wrote a weekly column signed "Constant Reader" for the New Yorker. There were additional book reviews signed the same way but appearing only occasionally until 1933. In all, forty-three of these Constant Reader columns appeared in the New Yorker. Thirty-one of these articles have been reprinted, in whole or in part, in The Portable Dorothy Parker and in the collection Constant Reader, published in 1970.

Dorothy Parker had written theater criticism in Vanity Fair before the founding of the New Yorker. Parker had been fired from Vanity Fair for what Corey Ford called her "notoriously caustic" reviews (32). The review which finally caused her dismissal was one in which she criticized Billie Burke, the actress wife of Florenz Ziegfeld, who threatened to remove his advertising unless Parker was fired (Ford 32). The New Yorker magazine supported what it published, and never allowed complaints to interfere in the editorial business of the magazine. Dale Kramer writes, "Ross was convinced that a major tenet of editorial freedom was freedom

from decision by the business office" (46). She also wrote theater criticism in the New Yorker as a substitute for Robert Benchley. Parker's criticism and the New Yorker produced a winning combination.

Dorothy Parker's book reviews are important in a study of satire in the New Yorker, and certainly in a study of Parker's satire. The introduction to the Constant Reader notes that Parker's reviews were "a new and very personal kind of book reviewing" (v). The critical book review is by nature satirical, and is therefore a suitable genre for the satirist. Parker made the book review a satiric vehicle from which she could criticize popular taste and sentimentality. She was also very particular in her criticism of faulty style in writing. Parker created a persona for her book reviews which Arthur Kinney describes as follows:

The mannerisms of her drama reviews appear only in her persistent self-portrait as a feckless, lazy reader whose self-doubt concerning popular taste lead her to nausea, but her criticism generally is prompter, more efficient, and more particular in its standards than that of her drama reviews. Talent and taste remain the fundamental prerequisites for good writers. (156)

The persona in Parker's Constant Reader columns is herself exaggerated. The difficulties that she had in writing are exaggerated, as are her physical responses to bad writing. She also exaggerates her financial situation, stating at times that the bill collectors are after her. Partying and drinking are also exaggerated. All of these things which

are characteristic of the persona are also characteristic of Parker herself, but the exaggeration creates the persona.

In the book reviews, Dorothy Parker clearly reveals herself as a satirist. She takes obvious pleasure from criticizing poor writing, but is often unable to express what she feels about good writing. This is, of course, the personality of the stereotypical satirist. Alexander Woollcott describes this personality in While Rome Burns:

It will be noted, I am afraid, that Mrs. Parker specializes in what is known as the dirty crack. . . . In her writing--at least in her prose pieces--her most effective vein is the vein of dispraise. Her best word portraits are der- vish dances of sheer hate, equivalent in the satisfaction they give her to the waxen images which people in olden days fashioned of their enemies in order, with exquisite pleasure, to stick pins into them. Instead, disparagement to Mrs. Parker is so habitual that she has no technique for praise, and when she feels admiration, can find no words for it. (150)

Corey Ford describes Dorothy Parker as "a demure little lady with the tongue of an adder" (32). The reader of the book reviews finds revealed the satiric personality of Dorothy Parker, a personality which blended well with the New Yorker's intention of being sophisticated and funny, but serious about excellence in all the forms of life and art. John Keats writes that by 1927 the New Yorker was "a publication whose humor was becoming increasingly subtle, and the bulk of its content quite serious" (131).

Eleven of the forty-three Constant Reader book reviews are considered in this dissertation. The other thirty-two are annotated in the appendix. The eleven reviews are selected because of the satiric dimensions and their contribution to the satiric tone of the New Yorker. The satiric targets of these eleven book reviews are snobbery, hypocrisy, stupidity, bad taste, and gratuitous sex in literature. Many of these satiric targets are the objects of Parker's short stories and poems, and the reader finds the same values in her book reviews which she implied in her other writing. The book reviews are grouped according to satiric targets. A final grouping, containing reviews and prose pieces written about Ernest Hemingway and Ring Lardner, two writers whom Parker greatly admired, demonstrates the contrast in tone and style between her satiric and positive reviews.

Two book reviews have been selected to illustrate Parker's satire of snobbery. The first is a biting satiric review of Lay Sermons, by Margot Asquith. This review, published in the October 22, 1927, edition of the New Yorker, is one of the most quoted of all Parker's writings. Parker's satire drips like acid through the entire review. She writes of Asquith:

Her perfect confidence in herself is a thing to which monuments should be erected; hers is a poise that ought to be on display in the British Museum. The affair between Margot Asquith and

Margot Asquith will live as one of the prettiest love stories in all literature. (98)

Parker calls Asquith's book of essays one "which has all the depth and glitter of a worn dime" (98).

Parker also attacks Asquith's virtual mania for dropping names:

Through the pages of "Lay Sermons" walk the great. I don't say that Margot Asquith actually permits us to rub elbows with them ourselves, but she willingly shows us her own elbow, which has been, so to say, honed on the mighty. "I remember President Wilson saying to me"; "John Addington Symonds once said to me": "The Master of Balliol told me"--thus does she introduce her anecdotes. And you know those anecdotes that begin that way; me, I find them more efficacious than sheep-counting, rain on a tin roof, or alanol tablets. (99)

The review ends with Parker suggesting a change in the title: "Happier I think it would have been if, instead of the word 'Sermons,' she had selected the word 'Off'" (100). While it is true that many of the books Parker reviewed have not stood the test of time, it is certainly interesting that many of those she applauded (such as the stories of Hemingway and Lardner) have become classics. Her reviews of quite silly books, which were often on the best seller list, are some of the funniest of her writings, and her standards of good taste and good writing are as applicable today as they were in the 1920's.

The second book review attacking snobbery appeared in the New Yorker on October 1, 1927. This was the first book

review that Dorothy Parker published under the name Constant Reader, and the snobbery is apparent in the book, Caste, by Cosmo Hamilton.

Hamilton's snobbery in Caste is more distasteful than that of Margot Asquith because it has overtones of anti-semitism, and Parker's review is merciless. The review, published in the New Yorker on October 1, 1927, begins:

In advertising "Caste," the latest fantasy of that dreamer of dreams, Mr. Cosmo Hamilton, the publishers state not only that it is "a superb love story," but that it is "a biting social satire." In either of which cases, I am the entire Hannefored family [the family in the novel], including the nice white horsie.

It is but fair to remark that this is my virgin try at any of the works of Mr. Hamilton; and perhaps it is necessary to eat seven before acquiring the taste. Until today, I walked square-shouldered among my fellows, looked them in the composite eye, and said in unshaken tones: "Anyway, there are two things I have never done. I never resisted an officer, and I never read anything by Cosmo Hamilton." Today only the first half of that ringing boast is true. I made, as usual, the wrong selection.  
(86)

Parker's tone in this book review sets the pace for the ones to follow. She establishes her persona, creates a personal relationship between the writer and the reader, and uses many of the techniques which recur in subsequent reviews. Parker often criticizes the advertisements for books and again and again states that there are authors one should never read. The technique of exaggeration, evident in the introduction above, is a typical Parker device. Her reaction to books is often exaggerated also.

Caste is a book which Parker finds especially distasteful. She tells the reader satirically that the book is about "the love of a fair young flower of the most exclusive New York society for a--put your head down a moment, while I whisper--for a Jew" (86). Ironically, Parker describes the author as "crazed with liberalism," although the novel ends with the Jewish lover leaving the young girl because he knows that she can never be happy with a "J-w." Dorothy Rothschild Parker, herself a Jew, obviously does not care for Hamilton's brand of liberalism.

The review goes on to criticize Hamilton's "inimitable, please God, style" (89) by giving several quotations from the novel. Parker ends the review, "but my favorite, oh, my true favorite, is the chummily recurrent phrase, 'the hoi polloi.' Oh, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Hamilton! Is that what you learned on the cricket field of Eton?" (89). Parker's use of the word chummily to describe a term which designates most of the human race as inferior is a fine example of her use of exactly the right word in the right place. Chummily implies Parker's satiric view tellingly, but without undue emphasis. Ironically, Parker implies that Hamilton's work is not really cricket, and is anything but liberal.

Dorothy Parker's criticism of snobbery in literature, as seen in her reviews of Lay Sermons and Caste, can easily be related to the themes of many of her short stories. In

"Arrangement in Black and White" and "Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane," Parker was attacking the empty lives of society women and the racial prejudice so prevalent in America during her day. She satirized these themes when she found them in other writers' literature, also. Parker's satire of stupidity in literature is closely related to her satire of snobbery.

Two book reviews have been chosen as examples of Parker's satire of stupidity, the review of A. B. See's Schools, and the review of Happiness, by William Lyon Phelps. Dorothy Parker reviewed A. B. See's Schools in the New Yorker on May 26, 1928. The reader suspects a joke in an article about a book named Schools by a man named A. B. See who wishes only the alphabet taught, but Parker treats this book with apparent seriousness. See was an elevator builder who published this book, with his plans for saving the nation and its children, at his own expense. Parker writes that he "has mistaken his ire for talent and has written a book" (104). See's book is concerned with what is wrong about the United States. He is especially angry about women and college professors, and he gives his program for saving the country. In Parker's words:

In Schools he sets forth his plans for all that saving of the nation that we have to do. The saving is to be accomplished, so far as I can tell, by having nothing taught in the schools but the alphabet, a bit of simple spelling, and

just a dash of English; by gathering up all the college professors and burning them in the nearest public square; and by having every husband in this broad land rise up and sock his wife in the eye. Then everything will be just great, and Mr. See can sit back and take his collar off, in the sweet rest of a mission faithfully done. (104)

The satiric target in this review is obviously See and his simplistic belief that a few changes will cure the ills of the American education system. But Parker is also satirizing, by extension, all of those people who have simplistic remedies for complex problems. Two other aspects of her satiric target are See's prejudice against college professors and women. See's view of college professors is so extreme and illogical that it lends itself to ridicule:

They are all bolshevists, he affirms . . . and, "like all bolshevists, they hate the money that others have and adore the money they have themselves"; they don't know anything; they all have mental wanderings; they injure the minds of the young; and, most horrifying indictment of all, they are almost entirely destitute of refinement. One feels that there must be deep and ancient roots to this bitter hatred of professors. Could it be that one of them ever beat him at marbles? (105)

Parker's question at the end of her list of what See finds bad about college professors uses the satiric technique of reduction. She has reduced See's ideas to the absurd fit which a child throws when he loses a game of marbles. Thus the illogic of his book is satirically revealed to the reader. Parker does much the same thing when she writes about See's view of women:

"The men should recognize the fact that the reasoning capacity of the women is but slightly above that of the children, and learn to treat them again as children, not harshly or roughly, but even with tenderness." There are many things in Schools that enchant me, but that little word "even" is my favorite, out of the whole book. (105)

Parker uses the word enchant ironically to good effect. It is quite as important a word here as the word even is in See's writing. Parker uses the word as one might when discovering an outlandish or even supernatural thing. Enchant is used here as it is used in fairy tales.

Parker is just as enchanted with Happiness, by William Lyon Phelps. The review in the November 5, 1927, edition of the New Yorker has nothing good to say about the book. As in the review of Schools, the satiric target in this review is the stupidity and simplicity of the content of the book. Parker describes the book as "an opus the size of a Christmas card" (90) and applauds Phelps's self-confidence in attempting to discuss his subject in such a short, small book. Parker writes:

I give you my word, in the entire book there is nothing that cannot be said aloud in mixed company. And there is, also, nothing that makes you a bit the wiser. I wonder--oh, what will you think of me--if those two statements do not verge upon the synonymous. (92)

In this book review, Parker also takes occasion to criticize President Lawrence Lowell of Harvard University. Lowell was appointed to serve on a committee to investigate the fairness of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial. The Fuller

committee found in favor of the court, and their finding was unpopular with liberals. Sacco and Vanzetti were executed on October 22, 1927, just two weeks before this edition of the New Yorker appeared on the newsstands. Since Phelps, the author of Happiness, was a professor at Yale, Parker wrote:

These are the views, this is the dogma, of Professor William Lyon Phelps, the pride of New Haven. And, of course, at Harvard there is now--and it looks as if there might be always--President Lowell, of the Fuller Committee. I trust that my son will elect to attend one of the smaller institutions of higher education. (92)

Parker did not, of course, have a son, but she has stated her opinion of both Harvard and Yale pretty clearly. One may not agree with Parker about the Sacco-Vanzetti trial, but her criticism of the Fuller Committee is indicative of the liberal opinion of the day. Her criticism of Phelps' stupidity in attempting to cover the entire topic of happiness in one small book is characteristic of her contempt for clichés and simplistic answers.

Just as she attacked the stupidity of such books as Happiness and Schools, in her review published in the New Yorker on February 25, 1928, of In the Service of the King, Dorothy Parker attacks the hypocrisy of Aimee Semple McPherson. McPherson was a popular evangelist, and In the Service of the King is her autobiography. Parker directs her satire against the truth of this book as she writes,

"It may be that this autobiography is set down in sincerity, frankness, and simple effort. It may be, too, that the Statue of Liberty is situated in Lake Ontario" (Constant Reader 69, hereafter CR). McPherson was reportedly abducted but escaped in 1927. Parker writes, "And so she got back to Los Angeles, and--as was later developed at the trial--her shoes were not only kept from wearing out, but were not even scuffed" (CR 71). Parker satirically questions the very basis of McPherson's career as an evangelist by defining her as "that Somewhat Different Entertainer" (CR 69). The implication that McPherson's evangelism is more of a business than anything else is evident in Parker's statement that McPherson's second husband left the world of evangelism for the world of business: "I can only hope that he has enjoyed a fraction of the success in his world of business that his wife has in hers" (73). Finally, McPherson's sincerity is questioned by Parker in this review, but the question is rhetorical. Parker has already formed her opinion of McPherson, and the question of money is emphasized when Parker writes, "Heaven . . . seems, from Mrs. McPherson's personal testimony, to be a sort of gold-paved mail-order house" (74). Parker's satiric target in this review is the hypocrisy by which McPherson makes a lot of money, and the satire is swift and lethal.

Parker's satire is just as incisive when she reviews books which she considers to be in bad taste. This group

of reviews of books which are in bad taste is rather arbitrarily assigned, because all of Parker's caustic reviews attack bad taste in literature. However, these reviews focus directly on literary decorum. In the New Yorker on January 7, 1928, Parker uses the sentence "Maybe it isn't only me" (77) and goes on to explain that she does not use the correct form "Maybe it isn't only I" because "these days, if you use studiously correct grammar, people suspect you of homosexual tendencies" (77). The review is about a book of poetry which was written in response to a contest initiated after Charles A. Lindbergh's solo flight across the Atlantic. Parker objects to the contest as "the farthest point south in belles lettres" (77). One hundred out of the four thousand poems entered were published in a book entitled The Spirit of St. Louis. Parker writes: "I have it here. I have it in my left hand now. With my right hand, I am guiding the razor across my throat" (77). The judges for the contest were three men who, according to Parker, love attending literary gatherings. She adds, "And if you are thinking of attending a literary gathering, yourself, I can only say to you, as the girl said to the sailor, 'Don't'" (78). The review ends with a summation of Parker's opinion, which the reader can only applaud:

Oh, why did they do it? What made them get up  
a contest like this? Cannot they let a glorious  
thing, a shining thing, go without such stuff?  
I can only hope that Colonel Lindbergh--for  
what with banquets and bull fights and addresses

of welcome, surely he has enough troubles-- will never see this volume of sickly, saccharine, inept, ill-wrought tributes to his deed. And I think, for the first time in more than thirty years, that here I have a hope that is sure to be realized. (79)

The poetry contest honoring Lindbergh's flight was an example of bad taste of the part of everyone concerned. Parker sees the same bad taste in celebrity exposes, which were just beginning to become popular in the 1920's.

In the New Yorker on October 15, 1928, the object of Parker's satire was The President's Daughter, by Nan Britton. Britton was the lover of Pres. Warren G. Harding, and the mother of his illegitimate child. This book is in the mode of the celebrity expose, a form with which the American public has unfortunately become very familiar. Parker is not very complimentary about this form of literature:

It is the story of the affair between Nan Britton and Warren Gamaliel Harding; and Miss Britton takes you through their romance in a glass-bottomed boat, as it were. The book bears the sub-title "Revealing the Love-Secret of President Harding," which is but a mild statement. For when Miss Britton gets around to revealing, Lord, how she does reveal. She is one who kisses, among other things, and tells. (105)

In the preface to the book, Britton described the attempts to suppress the book and the seizures of the plates, to which Parker responds: "'Lady,' you want to say to the author, 'those weren't policemen; they were critics of literature dressed up'" (105). Harding and Britton are

described as "a road company Paolo and Francesca" (106), and Parker feels that the story of so "bare and shabby a love . . . should be a pathetic thing" (107). It is not, however:

But so smug is Miss Britton's style, so sure of himself does she make Harding appear, that one can look on this affair only as a comic, and a slightly horrid, matter. There was no wistfulness in either the practical young lady or her pompous lover. (107)

The reader feels the underlying seriousness of much of Parker's work. She is attempting to point out faults in taste which are prevalent in the publishing world. Parker states that this book will make money, and believes that it will become a great popular favorite. She writes, "This is, you remember, America" (107). In this review, the satiric target is not so much the author as it is the public which will pay for such worthless and indecent gossip and call it literature.

The group of reviews satirizing bad taste in literature is closely related to the group of reviews which satirize sex in literature. Of the three reviews in this group, the first, appearing in the New Yorker on November 26, 1927, pans the novel It, by Elinor Glyn. This novel is a rather silly love story of a poor but aristocratic girl who is finally forced to offer herself to a wealthy but lower-class man because her brother has stolen from the man's company. The girl, Ava Cleveland, discovers that she loves

the common millionaire, John, and that he loves her and wants to marry her. Larry, the brother, is saved from jail, and the usual happy-ever-after ending occurs. Parker, in the character of her persona Constant Reader, swears that it will be the last book she ever reads. Her satiric technique in this review is ironic exaggeration:

And this, ladies and gentlemen, is the finest day that has yet broken over the bloody and bowed head of your girlfriend. On this day there first fell into these trembling hands The Book, the Ultimate Book. There is grave doubt that I shall ever be able to talk of anything else. Certainly, I have read my last word. Print can hold for me nothing but anticlimaxes. It, the chef d'oeuvre of Madame Elinor Glyn, has come into my life. And Sherman's coming into Atlanta is but a sneaking, tiptoe performance in comparison. (104)

Parker continues the hyperbole by relating the plot of It in ironically exaggerated terms. Madame Glyn's explanation of "it" as a "strange magnetism which attracts both sexes" (104), to which Parker responds with "Pul-ease, Madame Glyn, Pul-ease," is also treated in an ironic manner. During the time between Ava's first refusal of John until her acceptance of his proposal, Parker writes that "It goes on for nearly three hundred pages, with both of them vibrating away like steam launches" (106). Parker does not need to criticize the absurd romanticism, the offensive snobbery, or the blatantly prurient sexuality of the book, because she has disposed of these targets quite easily in her satiric approach. Her overstated, ironic mode conveys

her feelings quite strongly to the reader. The book edition of Constant Reader, the collection of some of Parker's reviews, gives a footnote to this review which calls Elinor Glyn a writer of "sultry romances" and quotes the following popular jingle of the time:

Would you like to sin  
With Elinor Glyn  
On a tiger skin  
Or would you prefer  
To err with her  
On some other fur? (27)

The second review which satirizes sex in literature is entitled "Sex Marks the Spot," published in the New Yorker on October 10, 1931. Parker immediately attacks the writers and publishers of three books in the first paragraph of the review:

By the respective courtesies of the Vanguard Press, Mr. Rudolph Field, and Mr. William Faro, Inc., all of whom, I should think, ought to go out and get more exercise, it has been my privilege to read, in their named order, Young and Healthy, by Donald Henderson Clarke; Moon-blind, by Theodore Wilde; and Lady Chatterley's Husbands, by one who prefers to remain rosily anonymous. So it was, as you surely gather, a sort of Behind-the-Barn Week for Baby. And if Baby ever has to see or hear that little word "sex" again, Baby is going to let loose the cookies, no matter where she happens to be standing. (89)

Parker writes in her review that sex is perhaps of vital importance: "If it were not for sex, I am repeatedly and triumphantly asked, where would you or I be today?; and that Echo answers, 'Better off,' only slightly impairs the rhetorical effect" (89). The fact that everyone tries his

or her luck at sex, writes Parker, is why "they put erasers on lead pencils" (89). Her objection to the sex books of Clarke, Wilde, and "the coy Unknown" is that they have no proportion. If everyone spent a corresponding amount of time on sex as do the characters in these three novels, writes Parker, "who, living life as they cry it should be lived, would ever have a spare minute to go buy their dirty little books?" (89). Parker is satiric about the dedication of one of these novels:

The dainty dedication of Young and Healthy, which reads, "To Gladys: who says she's glad an author doesn't sleep with his typewriter," not only draws the reader into immediate sympathy with the chivalry and reticence of Mr. Clarke, but serves to establish the mood of the book that follows.  
(89)

Parker's ironic approval of the "chivalry and reticence" of the author implies very strongly that there is no such thing in the dedication or the novel. In his new novel, writes Parker, Clarke has "hit a new low in skill, taste, and conception" (90). About Lady Chatterley's Husbands, Parker writes:

That someone snakily clad in anonymity should see nothing but filth in the great, earth-scented work of a dead genius, and should dare a sequel--well, let's not talk about it. You'd hate to have a sick woman around. (90)

Parker ends her review with a satiric exaggeration which is also one of the wittiest statements in her book reviews:

After this week's course of reading, I'm good and through with the whole matter of sex. I say it's spinach, and I say the hell with it! (90)

The third book review which satirizes unfortunate uses of sex in literature is subtitled "Hard-Boiled Virgins are Faithful Lovers," published in the New Yorker on May 19, 1928. This review is a strong criticism of Dead Lovers are Faithful Lovers, by Frances Newman. Parker begins the review with a discussion of a hypothetical book for children which is supposed to explain the facts of life. In this book, two children go for a walk with their Uncle Henry in the woods. They see meadows, woodlands, barnyards, all the beauties of the countryside. But, writes Parker, not for one moment would Uncle Henry "wrench his mind away from thoughts of sex and what to do with it" (92). Parker goes on to write that the reader is indebted to Dead Lovers are Faithful Lovers for this account, because the novel reminds her of that book for children. She explains that Miss Newman's heroines resemble Uncle Henry:

Their minds work in the very same way. The world goes on all about; men fly the seas, men talk through the air to other men a hemisphere away, the illustrious and the unwanted live and die and suffer and toil, lovely words are set down on fine paper, flowers blow on sunny slopes, mighty buildings mock at the sky; and Miss Newman's heroines disregard the entire works. They see nor hear nor recall nor ponder nor speculate upon anything but sex. (92)

Dead Lovers are Faithful Lovers is one of those romantic, sentimental books which cover rampant sexuality with a glaze of sweetness and light. Parker always attacks such books, and her view of Dead Lovers are Faithful Lovers may be

compared to her review of Elinor Glyn's It. When writing of one of Newman's main characters, who wakes up before her husband each morning and changes her gown, combs her hair, and perfumes her body with lilac powder and perfume before returning to bed, Parker notes: "She does this every day of her married life, which lasts for twelve years. It seems, to the reader, rather longer" (93). Of another main character, Parker writes, "He dies at the end of the book. It was a toss-up, as I staggered toward the conclusion, as to whether it would be him or me" (93).

Parker takes occasion in her review of Dead Lovers are Faithful Lovers to quote from a newspaper interview in which Newman:

announced that she was leaving the country before her new book appeared, because she did not wish to be annoyed by the sight of the forthcoming reviews of her work. America is a vast critical desert, she asserted. She dismissed some who had not revered her works as "half-wits," deplored the "terrific amount of log-rolling" among the reviewers, shuddered at the influence exercised by Mencken, and announced that Thornton Wilder is overpraised. (94)

Parker ends her review with her opinion of both the novel and the author when she writes "Bon voyage, Miss Newman. And many of them" (94).

The exaggeration, the reversals of expected statements, and the often described nausea of the persona are three of the satiric devices which Parker uses effectively here and in other reviews. She uses these devices to satirize

snobbery, hypocrisy, stupidity, bad taste, and inappropriate sexual description whenever she finds them in literature. Parker also satirizes American taste. Her personal condemnation of poor writing is evident in these reviews, but so is her personal appreciation of good writing.

In her review of The House at Pooh Corner in the October 20, 1928, edition of the New Yorker, Parker accuses A. A. Milne of "whimsy." She discusses the origins of the hum which is often sung in the book and ends her review with the words, "And it is that word 'hummy,' my darlings, that marks the first place in The House at Pooh Corner at which Tconstant Weader Fwowed up" (98). Jane Grant describes this line as "the most hypersensitive literary criticism the magazine [the New Yorker] ever published, and the best known" (9). Parker is also often quoted as writing about Sinclair Lewis' Dodsworth that "it is our national joy to mistake for the first-rate, the fecund rate" (NY, 3/16/29, 107). Corey Ford writes that it is Dorothy Parker's "cross to be best known today for her tart epigrams" (54). Parker's witty put-downs are remembered more than anything else in her book reviews, but her taste was sure, and she expressed her admiration for good writers. It is a true test of Parker's critical skill that those writers she admired have become classics in American literature.

In the New Yorker of April 25, 1931, Parker reviewed The Glass Key, the third mystery novel of Dashiell Hammett.

The review of this mystery is not completely without negative remarks, but Parker applauds Hammett's ability to create character:

He sets down only what his characters say, and what they do. It is not, I suppose, any too safe a recipe for those who cannot create characters; but Dashiell Hammett can and does and has, and, I hope, will. (92)

It is interesting in this review that Parker applauds Hammett for using the same technique which Parker herself uses in her short stories--letting the characters speak and act without authorial intrusion. Parker also applauds the short stories of Ring Lardner for his collection entitled Round-Up. In her review, published on April 27, 1929, in the New Yorker, Parker describes Lardner as a great artist, and reserves her satire for those who had previously failed to recognize Lardner's talent:

The exquisite "Golden Honeymoon" was turned down by the noted editor of a famous weekly--which act should send the gentleman down to posterity along with that little band whose members include the publisher who rejected Pride and Prejudice, the maid who lighted the hearth with the manuscript of Carlyle's French Revolution, and Mrs. O'Leary's cow. (CR 114)

Parker writes, in this review, of the difficulty of reviewing great literature. She writes that the stories included in Round-Up are "spare and beautiful" (CR 114), and that the reader must feel Lardner's qualities as he reads the book. As a satirist, she can attack with more skill and confidence than she can praise.

The writer about whom Dorothy Parker wrote more positive criticism than any other is Ernest Hemingway. The Constant Reader, reviewing Hemingway's Men Without Women in the New Yorker on October 29, 1927, surveyed Hemingway's career in a review particularly satiric toward American taste. Parker describes the reception given The Sun Also Rises, using the satiric overstatement:

Ernest Hemingway wrote a novel called The Sun Also Rises. Promptly upon its publication, Ernest Hemingway was discovered, the Stars and Stripes were reverentially raised over him, eight hundred and forty-seven book reviewers formed themselves into the word "welcome," and the band played "Hail to the Chief" in three concurrent keys. All of which, I should think, might have made Ernest Hemingway pretty reasonably sick. (92)

Parker is critical of the reception of The Sun Also Rises because it appeared a year after the poor reception of In Our Time, a book which, Parker writes, "caused about as much stir in literary circles as an incompleting dogfight on upper Riverside Drive" (92). Parker blames part of the poor reception of In Our Time on H. L. Mencken, who called Hemingway's stories "sketches" and set the tone for the criticism of the book, but she also blames American readers' prejudice against short stories: Americans measure literature by a yardstick, and thus feel cheated by a volume of short stories.

In one of the best positive criticisms of literature which Dorothy Parker wrote, she says of Hemingway's work:

"Mr. Hemingway's style, this prose stripped to its firm young bones, is far more effective, far more moving, in the short story than in the novel" (93). Parker goes on to describe Men Without Women as "a truly magnificent work" (94). This review is particularly interesting because it establishes Parker as a serious literary critic who wishes to inform and reform the taste of the American reading public.

In her satire of snobbery, hypocrisy, stupidity, bad taste, and sex in literature, Dorothy Parker is a vivid satirist. In her reviews where she shows positive appreciation for literature, Parker is a penetrating and perceptive critic. Her reviews are personal, and her persona is intentionally funny, but Dorothy Parker's criticism consistently calls for good taste and good writing. Her influence upon the American reading public during the first fifteen years of the publication of the New Yorker is a positive statement for what is fine and lasting in American literature.

## Chapter IV

### Other New Yorker Satirists

During the sixty years of its publication, the New Yorker played a large part in the careers of many American writers. Dorothy Parker is only one of these writers. James Thurber, E. B. White, Clifton Fadiman, Edmund Wilson, Corey Ford, Brendan Gill, and other writers of note all wrote for the New Yorker at some time during their careers. In the early years of the New Yorker, there were other satiric voices besides that of Dorothy Parker. Two of these voices were those of Ring Lardner and H. L. Mencken. These two writers have different satiric manners, and both are different from Parker's satiric manner. Lardner and Mencken wrote non-fiction prose pieces for the New Yorker rather than short stories and poems. In addition to a range of free lance prose pieces published by these two writers in the New Yorker, both men also wrote a named column which appeared regularly in the New Yorker, as did Parker's Constant Reader column. Mencken wrote two such columns, "Onward and Upward with the Arts," a satiric look at the world of art and drama in New York, which appeared seven times in the New Yorker, and "Foreign Parts," a

satiric look at some of the countries and cities Mencken visited, which appeared nine times in the New Yorker. Ring Lardner wrote twenty-four "Over the Waves" columns, which were reviews of the music and commentary on the radio. These two writers form a good comparison-contrast to the satire of Dorothy Parker, and help to express the great range of satire to be found in the early New Yorker.

Ring Lardner's satire ranges from the mildly amusing to the really vicious. Clifton Fadiman believes that the key to Lardner is to be found in his "ability, even talent, for hating" (Thurber 76), but Harold Ross had a great personal affection for Lardner. Ring Lardner began to write for the New Yorker during the last years of his life, and his "Over the Waves" column was written almost completely from one hospital bed or another. Lardner suffered from chronic alcoholism and lung problems due to excessive smoking. He had a large family to support, and his articles for the New Yorker brought in a much-needed income. Three of Lardner's New Yorker articles are discussed in this dissertation. Each article has been chosen as characteristic of Lardner's satire. No article from Lardner's "Over the Waves" column is used here because the column is perhaps even more dated than the music it criticizes.

"Large Coffee," published in the New Yorker on September 28, 1929, is an article about Lardner's summer in a

hotel, where he stayed to be near his doctors and to try to cure his alcoholism. This article has a typical Lardner introduction:

Readers of the daily papers will recall a paragraph printed earlier this week to the effect that the body of a Mr. Lardner was found in a New York hotel room by a house officer who had broken in after the chambermaids had reported that they had rapped on the door every day for over a fortnight and had received no response, and were disposed to believe that the occupant of the room would need a clean towel if living, and perhaps two of them if dead. The occupant was in the last-named condition or worse. Dressed as usual in pajamas, he was sprawled out on the floor, his head crushed in by a blow from some blunt instrument, probably another hotel. At the time the item appeared, there was mention of the discovery of a dairy. It now develops that one really was unearthed and turned over to the police. . . . We have acquired the mechanical rights to the balance and herewith publish extracts from it as a human document of particular interest to men and women who, like the writer thereof, have been battered and broken by an insensate world. (26)

The entire introduction is, of course, a spoof, and yet it expresses Lardner's depression at his condition, and especially at his separation from his wife and children. The article following the introduction lists Lardner's difficulty in getting a large pot of coffee with only one cup from room service. At the end of the article, he discovers that the hotel has fired the one person who had understood his order. With the exception of the coffee problem, Lardner feels that his hotel room is a real bargain because it has a window: "You can look right into other people's

room on the courtyard if they don't keep their shades down. O diary, I hope it's a hot summer" (26). The entire article is a satiric look at Lardner's summer. The tone of the article is ironic, but it is entirely without self-pity or bitterness, emotions which Lardner surely must have felt in such circumstances. Published in the New Yorker on July 7, 1928, a "Profile" entitled "Dante and --." is one good example of the characteristic and elaborate Ring Lardner spoofs, or "deadpan gags" (76), as Thurber describes them. The profiles were published almost every week in the New Yorker and were intended to be personality biographies of prominent New Yorkers. Lardner's profile is about Beatrice Kaufman, wife of a wealthy New Yorker and a social and fashion leader of the day. The profile is excessive in its flippancy and satire. Lardner writes of Mrs. Kaufman's parents:

They rented a humble cottage in South Orange, next door to the home of the Marx Brothers' grandfather, Baddo Marx, so called by his teachers in school. It was here, two years later, that the girl baby was born, and christened Beatrice, after the Bison City Quartette.  
(16)

The Kaufman engagement, according to Lardner, was "marked by considerable venom on one side and another" (16). Mrs. Kaufman's hobbies are "taxidermy and the teasing of blooded sheep" and "Her negro dialect stories have kept many a drawing-room in a state of stoicism" (16). The entire article is an insider sort of joke, as the Kaufmans and Lardners

were good friends. Ring Lardner was quite fond of Mrs. Kaufman, but the reader really has no way of knowing this. The only real clue is that the article is so exaggerated that the reader knows it must be a joke. Lardner was famous for this kind of put-on, and his attitude was so friendly that no one took offense at his jokes. He once described a friend's living room as "the Yale Bowl--with lamps" (Yardley 279). Many people have written that Dorothy Parker could never resist that final cutting remark which insulted her friends, but Lardner used his personal satire so kindly that no one was insulted. The reader wonders, however, if he was not serious about some of the criticism he hid under the mask of flippancy.

Another article characteristic of Lardner's satire was published in the New Yorker on September 10, 1927. This article is a parody of sports writing, the very writing for which he was so famous. Lardner writes about an imaginary tennis match, the United States Women's National tennis championship, played between Mrs. Wallace Gruger Tuttle and the winner, Miss Millicent Sawyer. Lardner believes that the crowd watching the match was large because "Miss Sawyer's birthplace in Portugal gave the match an international odor" (23). The use of the single word "odor" is the satiric technique in this sentence. Miss Sawyer, according to Lardner, took up tennis six months before the

championship game. Lardner describes her victory, and adds, "In addition to which, she has grown into blooming young womanhood and can play three musical instruments, all ukuleles" (25). The two remarkable things about Miss Sawyer's victory are her age, because "very few women tennis players reach the peak of their game until they are well into their seventies" (23), and her status as a schoolgirl, because "the large majority of successful net experts of the opposing sex are former laundresses" (23). This article is, of course, purely for fun, but Lardner attacks at the same time the low intellectual level of most sports writing. His satire is not particularly serious, but it was effective and popular with New Yorker readers.

Unlike Lardner, H. L. Mencken does not use parody or "spoofs" in his satire, which is generally on a higher intellectual level than the satire of either Parker or Lardner. Mencken was a friend of New Yorker editor Harold Ross, and his articles for the New Yorker were written on the basis of this friendship rather than out of any need of money or a publisher for his work. In addition to his named columns, Mencken also wrote various prose pieces for the New Yorker in the early 1930's. Chosen because they illustrate the characteristics of his satire, two of these prose pieces are analyzed in this dissertation. Two of his "Foreign Parts" articles are analyzed because of their

characteristic satire, but none of his very dated "Onward and Upward with the Arts" columns are used.

Mencken's column for the New Yorker, "Foreign Parts," was written in 1934, during his rather extensive foreign travel. These columns are less a travel guide than they are a wry look at some of the places Mencken saw and the people he met. In his column about Gibraltar, published in the New Yorker on June 16, 1934, Mencken writes that it is the safest place on earth, since it is protected by "two hundred twelve-inch cannon, not to mention three battleships, five cruisers, twenty destroyers and ten submarines" (71). Mencken's satire in this article is directed toward the British:

The guests seem to be nearly all English. Sir Marmaduke Beasley, Bart., nursing his hereditary sinus infection. Lady Vi Snodgrass recovering from a hound's bite. (72)

The satiric targets are the conferring of titles because of heredity, since Sir Marmaduke just inherited a sinus infection, and the hunting proclivities of the British, seen in the image of Lady Vi's wound. Mencken also describes Americans at Gibraltar as "lower fauna." This satiric look at the British on their rock is not as amusing as the satire of Ring Lardner, and it is written in an entirely different style. The scope of the New Yorker was and is able to encompass the varying styles of many American writers.

Mencken wrote a "Foreign Parts" column on Jerusalem and the holy land, published on June 23, 1934, in the New Yorker, in which he satirizes the commercialization of religion, calling the Church of the Holy Sepulchre "the headliner of the show" (30). Mencken writes that one may take a hired car from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, "a dirty-gray, dried-up village on a steep hillside, unanimously devoted to the souvenir business" (30). In the Church of the Nativity, "silver of any coinage is thankfully received" (30). Mencken also criticizes the terrible violence which surrounded Jerusalem.

During the twenties, Mencken was the ultimate authority on American English, and not surprisingly several of his articles for the New Yorker are satires about various linguistic habits of Americans. One of his satiric targets was the often attempted simplification of spelling, and he wrote about this subject in an article entitled "The Dizzy Rise (And Ensuing Bust) of Simplified Spelling," published on March 7, 1936, in the New Yorker. In this article, Mencken satirizes the Simplified Spelling Board, which was founded in New York in 1906. Several eminent scholars worked on this board, and "old Andy Carnegie stood behind it with his millions unleashed," and "Roosevelt I . . . hollered for it in a deafening manner" (37). One of the spellings which this board recommended was the changing of

tongue to tung. The result of this attempt to simplify spelling was failure, as Mencken satirically remarks:

There is no evidence that it was ever actually adopted by any periodical above the grade of a Theosophist monthly, or by any seminary recognized by Oxford, the Sorbonne, or the Amateur Athletic Union. (37)

Mencken writes that "the great campaign was thus a flop, and the Simplified Spelling Board is now hardly more than a fly embalmed in amber" (38). Mencken's article includes a description of various attempts to simplify the spelling of English. His thesis is that the simplification of spelling by groups or individuals is impossible. Such simplification can come only through normal changes in language usage over a long period of time. The only exception is the work of Noah Webster, who, in the publication of his spelling book, did simplify some English spellings. Mencken gives the example of the omission of the u in the honor words. The British spell the word honour, but because of Noah Webster, Americans spell it honor. Mencken, himself of German descent, can never resist a slap at the British, and he writes that the Concise Oxford Dictionary is "almost as English as moral indignation or boiled mutton" (44). Mencken's satire is wryly amusing, and his wit is peculiarly his own.

Mencken's article entitled "Ordeal of a Philosopher," in the April 11, 1936, edition of the New Yorker, is about

an old "man of color" named Wesley (21). As the title indicates, Mencken in fact considers Old Wesley a philosopher, but he satirizes those people who do not understand Wesley's philosophy. One of these men is the pastor of a Methodist church, who wishes Wesley to marry Lily, the woman with whom he lives. Wesley explains that he cannot do this, as Lily is already married to "two other husbands, both of them united to her by impeccable Christian rites" (21). The force of this argument seems to Mencken to be inescapable. Wesley, an agnostic, had "a long argument to prove that there was not enough coal and wood in creation to stoke the fires of the Methodist Hell" (21). Wesley is a genial man who allows Lily to go out cooking to support him because he can no longer work, due to an injury from heavy lifting. He lives, in fact, a very comfortable life and refuses to listen to anyone who wishes to change him. Mencken considers Wesley's common-sense philosophy to be much superior to strict religious philosophies. Part of the article is a very funny description of the death of Lily and Wesley's response to her death, but the satire in the article is directed against those, especially ministers, who attempt to change other people.

## Conclusion

The New Yorker magazine was and is a platform for many kinds of writers. This dissertation has demonstrated that satirists especially have found, in the New Yorker, a place to display their material. As shown through the works of Parker, Lardner, and Mencken, the satire of the New Yorker magazine is various and covers a wide topical range, from the very trivial to the very serious. The satire in the New Yorker is evident in poetry, short stories, articles, and reviews.

Parker, Lardner and Mencken were three of the most published and most read periodical writers of the 1920's and 1930's. All three writers had established reputations previous to their work on the New Yorker, but each also made a strong contribution to the magazine. Parker influenced the New Yorker much more than the other two writers. This is evident simply in the number of articles which she published in the magazine, and in her early contributions, which helped establish the New Yorker short story. In addition, Parker's style and the style of the New Yorker magazine blend together much better than do the styles of Mencken and Lardner.

A short analysis of Lardner's and Mencken's contributions to the New Yorker demonstrates clearly that their contributions are not as influential as those of Parker. Ring Lardner's established reputation is in the areas of sports writing and short stories using dialect. The only sports writing which Lardner did for the New Yorker were parodies of sports articles, and he uses dialect sparingly in only a few of his New Yorker articles. The most characteristic Lardner techniques found in the New Yorker are his use of parody and exaggeration. Except for these techniques, Lardner's articles for the New Yorker may be considered atypical Lardner work.

H. L. Mencken's articles in the New Yorker are quite different from those of Lardner because the articles are typical of Mencken, but not typical of the New Yorker. Mencken chose to write in the wryly humorous, intellectual format which had made him one of the most respected newswriter/editors of the early twentieth century. The New Yorker magazine has always published, when possible, the works of significant American writers, writers such as Mencken, but these writers do not typify the New Yorker style as Dorothy Parker does.

One reason that Parker typifies the New Yorker magazine more than Lardner and Mencken do is that she is a native New Yorker. Lardner was raised in the middle west

and did not move to New York until he was in his thirties. Mencken lived all of his life in the same house in Baltimore, Maryland in which he was born. When the New Yorker magazine began publication in 1925, it had the express purpose of presenting the kind of sophisticated city life which Dorothy Parker lived. Parker knew most of the people written about in the New Yorker. She attended the theatres, frequented the shops and speakeasies, and was familiar with all the activities described in the magazine. Parker helped form the character of the New Yorker, just as the city of New York had helped to form her character.

Parker is as sophisticated and stylish as the New Yorker, and she thought in the funny, satiric vein which the New Yorker vowed to follow. John Keats writes:

Her poems and her stories are often funny, wry, and mocking--and youth will always find these qualities refreshing. But there is something else in her writing that is peculiarly her own: Dorothy Parker was forever unable to say that a human situation was either tragic or comic. Instead, she saw both elements present at once in every situation, and therefore her poems and her stories are not only youthful but poignantly so.

The magical quality she had of defying definition may have been traceable to this insistence on seeing life as an inextricable tangle of disaster and joy. (11)

This ability to see the tragic and the amusing at the same time is an intrinsic ability of the satirist. Parker saw the contemptuous, the arrogant, and the petty in human beings, and she found them both distressing and funny. One

only has to select any copy of the New Yorker magazine to find the same kind of outlook. The magazine regards serious things seriously, but it always notes, too, the amusing qualities of every situation.

Lillian Hellman described Parker's writing as "a valuable record of [that] time and place" (219). Certainly Parker's writing expresses the alienation of the twenties, but little of her writing is permanently dated. Parker's disciplined style and her understanding of human beings makes her a writer of permanent interest. W. Somerset Maugham described Parker's writing as follows:

In her stories Dorothy Parker has a sense of form which in these days, to my old-fashioned mind, is all too rare. . . . She has a tidy mind and leaves no loose ends. She has a wonderfully delicate ear for human speech and with a few words of dialogue, chosen you might think haphazardly, will give you a character complete in all its improbable plausibility. Her style is easy without being slipshod and cultivated without affectation. It is a perfect instrument for the display of her many-sided humor, her irony, her sarcasm, her tenderness, her pathos. (14-15)

This disciplined style is as characteristic of the New Yorker magazine as it is of Dorothy Parker. This is evident not only in the stories, poems, and articles published in the New Yorker, but also in the art work of the magazine. Often the drawings in the New Yorker convey a thought with only a few lines, placed for maximum effect. The short stories and poems of Dorothy Parker convey the same maximum effect with but a few words.

In her book reviews, Parker's criticism follows the ideals of the New Yorker magazine, as well as her own. The satiric targets in Dorothy Parker's book reviews cover a wide range. She is satiric about pomposity, tastelessness, and bad writing. Parker's satiric targets are not just writers and books, but are often the public itself. The reading public, according to Parker, should be intelligent enough to recognize faults in writing and in taste. It is an indictment of this public that worthless and even offensive books are well received. Parker's reviews made many writers look foolish, but the primary impact was intentionally upon the readers of the New Yorker. It is not surprising that Dorothy Parker's reviews were widely read. They are amusing, certainly, but they have an underlying purpose whose seriousness is apparent. Parker wished to improve American letters by weeding out faulty writing, pomposity, arrogance, imitation, and bad taste. This is, of course, impossible, but Parker's attempt, like the New Yorker's attempt to improve general taste, is a commendable effort in the fight to improve the human condition.

The satirist is a critic of human life and conventions. Parker, Lardner, and Mencken all found in the New Yorker a vehicle for this criticism. They chose to analyze American life in the twenties and thirties. Often they found it wanting, but they approached their criticism with humor and

style, both characteristic of the New Yorker as well as these satirists. The realities behind the facade of human life as discovered by the satirist are often disturbing, but the New Yorker satirist is rarely nihilistic or despairing. Katz and Richards describe the New Yorker as "the best general magazine in the world" (444), and the stylish satire of the magazine is one of the things which contribute to this evaluation. And, as is true of any cooperative relationship, the effectiveness of the New Yorker and the effectiveness of New Yorker writers are inseparable.

## Appendices

## Appendix A

### Works of Dorothy Parker published in the New Yorker

The following is a list of the works of Dorothy Parker which were published in the New Yorker magazine, divided into short stories, poems, incidental prose pieces, and Constant Reader book reviews:

#### Part I. Short Stories

"Arrangement in Black and White." 8 Oct. 1927: 22-24.

"But the One on the Right." 19 Oct. 1929: 25-27.

"Cousin Larry." 30 June 1934: 15-17.

"The Cradle of Civilization." 21 Sept. 1929: 23-24.

"Dialogue at 3 in the Morning." 13 Feb. 1926: 13.

"The Diary of a Lady." 25 Mar. 1933: 13-14.

"The Garter." 8 Sept. 1928: 17-18.

"Just a Little One." 12 May 1928: 20-21.

"The Last Tea." 11 Sept. 1926: 23-24.

- "The Little Hours." 19 Aug. 1933: 13-14.
- "The Mantle of Whistler." 18 Aug. 1928: 15-16.
- "Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane." 15 July 1933: 11-12.
- "Mrs. Hofstadter on Josephine Street." 4 Aug. 1934: 20-26.
- "Oh, He's Charming!" 9 Oct. 1926: 22-23.
- "Out of the Silence." 1 Sept. 1928: 28-32.
- "The Road Home." 16 Sept. 1933: 17-18.
- "Soldiers of the Republic." 5 Feb. 1938: 13-14.
- "A Terrible Day Tomorrow." 11 Feb. 1928: 13-14.
- "Travelogue." 30 Oct. 1926: 20-21.
- "The Waltz." 2 Sept. 1933: 11-12.
- "You Were Perfectly Fine." 23 Feb. 1929: 17-18.
- "A Young Woman in Green Lace." 24 Sept. 1932: 15-17.

Part II. Poems

- "The Beloved Ladies." 14 Dec. 1929: 27.
- "Bohemia." 17 Sept. 1927: 27.

- "Cassandra Drops into Verse." 28 Feb. 1925: 5.
- "Daylight Saving." 2 July 1927: 26.
- "The Evening Primrose." 24 Aug. 1929: 14.
- "A Fairly Sad Story." 8 Jan. 1927: 20.
- "Frustration." 23 July 1927: 25.
- "If It Be Not Fair." 24 Aug. 1929: 14.
- "Little Words." 24 Aug. 1929: 14.
- "Parable for a Certain Virgin." 23 Apr. 1927: 27.
- "Pour Prende Conge." 16 July 1927: 21.
- "Rainy Night." 26 Sept. 1925: 10.
- "Rhyme of an Involuntary Violet." 15 May 1926: 16.
- "Song of Americans Resident in France." 1 May 1926: 18.
- "Songs for the Nearest Harmonica." 7 Jan. 1927: 21.
- . 12 Nov. 1927: 28.
- . 26 May 1928: 20.
- "Swan Song." 2 Apr. 1927: 23.
- "Thought for a Sunshiny Morning." 9 Apr. 1927: 31.

"Threat to a Fickle Lady." 26 Mar. 1938: 20.

"To a Lady, Who Must Write Verse." 18 June 1927: 22.

"Tombstones in the Starlight." 4 May 1929: 22.

"Why Not She - Friends?" 19 Sept. 1925: 35.

### Part III. Incidental Prose Pieces

"The Artist's Reward." 30 Nov. 1929: 28-31. A profile of Ernest Hemingway.

"A Certain Lady." 28 Feb. 1925: 15-16.

"GBS Practically in Person." 7 July 1928: 28-30. A profile of George Bernard Shaw.

"Hemingway, E." 18 Feb. 1928: 76-77.

"Hemingway, E." 30 Nov. 1929: 28-31.

### Part IV. "Constant Reader" book reviews

"Adam and Eve and Lilith and Epigrams--Something More About Cabell."

19 Nov. 1927: 116-117.

Adam and Eve by John Erskine

"Ah!"

15 Sept. 1928: 100-102.

The Cardinal's Mistress by Benito Mussolini

All Kneeling by Ann Parrish

"An American De Barry--A Biography of Henry Ward Beecher."

15 Oct. 1927: 105-108.

The President's Daughter by Nan Britton

Henry Ward Beecher: An American Portrait by Paxton  
Hibben

"And Again, Mr. Sinclair Lewis."

16 Mar. 1929: 106-107.

Dodsworth by Sinclair Lewis

"Back to the Book-Shelf."

25 Aug. 1928: 60-62.

The Lion Tamer by E. M. Hull

"A Book of Great Short Stories--Something about Cabell."

29 Oct. 1927: 92-95.

Men Without Women by Ernest Hemingway

Something About Eve by James Branch Cabell

"Collapse of a High Project."

4 Apr. 1931: 84-85.

Damned Little Fool by Cosmo Hamilton

Cobwebs and Cosmos by Paul Eldridge

The Rain Girl: the Tragic Story of Jeanne Eagles

by Edward Doherty

"The Compleat Bungler."

17 Mar. 1928: 102-103.

The Art of Successful Bidding by Geo. Reith

Home to Harlem by Claude McKay

"Ethereal Mildness."

24 Mar. 1928: 93.

Appendicitis by Thew Wright

Art of the Night by Geo. Jean Nathan

"Excuse It, Please."

18 Feb. 1928: 78-79.

The Great American Band Wagon: A Study of

Exaggerations by Charles Merz

Disraeli by M. Andre Maurois

"Far From Well."

20 Oct. 1928: 98-99.

The House at Pool Corner by A. A. Milne

Elegant Infidelities of Madame Li Pei Fou

by Charles Pettit

Love by William Lyon Phelps

"A Good Novel, and a Great Story."

4 Feb. 1928: 74-77.

The Last Post by Ford Madox Ford

"Hard-Boiled Virgins Are Faithful Lovers."

19 May 1928: 92-94.

Dead Lovers are Faithful Lovers by Frances Newman

"Hero Worship."

27 Apr. 1929: 105-106.

Round-Up by Ring Lardner

"The Highly Recurrent Mr. Hamilton--Al Smith, and How He Grew--Bad News of May Sinclair."

1 Oct. 1927: 86-90.

Caste by Cosmo Hamilton

Alfred E. Smith: A Critical Study by Henry F. Pringle

History of Anthony Waring by May Sinclair

"Home is the Sailor."

24 Jan. 1931: 62-64.

Forty Thousand Sublime and Beautiful Thoughts

by Chas. Noel Douglas

"How it Feels to be One Hundred and Forty-six."

29 Sept. 1928: 86-88.

Francois Villon by D. B. Wyndham Lewis

The Strange Case of Miss Annie Spragg by Louis

Bromfield

"Kiss and Tellegen."

21 Feb. 1931: 56-58.

Women Have Been Kind by Lou Tellegen

"Madame Glyn Lectures on It With Illustrations."

26 Nov. 1927: 104-105.

It by Elinor Glyn

"The Most Popular Reading Matter."

3 Dec. 1927: 127-128.

A review of popular comic strips in New York  
newspapers.

"Mr. Lewis Lays It On With a Trowel."

7 Apr. 1928: 106-107.

The Man Who Knew Coolidge by Sinclair Lewis

"Mr. Morley Capers on a Toadstool--Mr. Milne Grows to be  
Six."

12 Nov. 1927: 104-106.

I Know a Secret by Christopher Morley

Now We are Six by A. A. Milne

"Mr. See Sees It Through."

26 May 1928: 104-106.

Schools by A. B. See

"Mr. Vanderbilt, and Other Entertainers."

31 Jan. 1931: 57-59.

Palm Beach by Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr.

Love, Marriage, and Divorce by Louis Harris

Celestine: Being the Diary of a Chambermaid

by Octave Mirbeau

Lady Chatterley's Lover by D. H. Lawrence

"Mrs. Colby's Second Novel--The Private Papers of the Dead--  
The Philosopher Takes a Long Look at Himself."

8 Oct. 1927: 94-95.

Black Stream by Nathalie Colby

The Journal of Katherine Mansfield by Katherine

Mansfield

Transition by Will Durant

"Mrs. Norris and the Beast."

14 Apr. 1928: 97-98.

Beauty and the Beast by Kathleen Norris

"Mrs. Post Enlarges on Etiquette."

31 Dec. 1927: 51-53.

Etiquette by Emily Post

"Not Even Funny."

18 Mar. 1933: 64-66.

An American Girl by Tiffany Thayer

Background by Mabel Dodge Luhan

"Oh, Look--Two Good Books!"

25 Apr. 1931: 92-93.

The Glass Key by Dashiell Hammett

The Island of Penguins by Cherry Kearton

"Our Lady of the Loudspeaker."

25 Feb. 1928: 79-81.

In the Service of the King by Aimee Semple McPherson

"Poor, Immortal Isadora."

14 Jan. 1928: 69-71.

My Life by Isadora Duncan

"The Professor Goes in For Sweetness and Light--Short  
Stories From One Who Knows How to Do Them--Sketches,  
Mostly Unpleasant--A Biography of a Much-Talked-  
About Lady."

5 Nov. 1927: 90-92.

Happiness by William Lyon Phelps

Yellow Gentians and Blue by Zona Gale

Ideals by Evelyn Scott

George Sand by Marie Jenney Howe

"Re-enter Margot Asquith--Something Young--A Masterpiece  
from the French."

22 Oct. 1927: 98-100.

Lay Sermons by Margot Asquith

Crude by Robert Hyde

The Counterfeiters by Andre Gide

"Re-enter Miss Hurst, Followed by Mr. Tarkington."

28 Jan. 1928: 75-77.

A President Is Born by Fannie Hurst

Claire Amber by Booth Tarkington

"Sex Marks the Spot."

10 Oct. 1931: 89-90.

Young and Healthy by Donald Henderson Clarke

Moonblind, n.a.

Lady Chatterley's Husbands, n.a.

"The Short Story, Through a Couple of the Ages."

17 Dec. 1927: 109-111.

The Best Short Stories of 1927 Ed. by Edward

O'Brien

"The Socialist Looks at Literature--A Lyricist Looks at  
His Neighbors."

10 Dec. 1927: 122-124.

Money Writes by Upton Sinclair

"These Much Too Charming People."

21 Apr. 1928: 104-106.

Debonair by G. B. Sterne

"Two Lives and Some Letters."

14 Mar. 1931: 78-82.

Savage Messiah by H. S. Ede

"Unfinished Endeavors."

10 Mar. 1928: 82-84.

Perhaps I Am by Edward W. Bok

Deluge by S. Fowler Wright

The Girl Everybody Knew by James Farrell

"A Very Dull Article, Indeed."

31 Mar. 1928: 989.

Mr. Hodge and Mr. Hazard by Elinor Wylie

Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing by Samuel  
Hoffenstein

"Wallflower's Lament."

17 Nov. 1928: 108-110.

Favorite Jokes of Famous People comp. by Frank  
Nicholson

The Technique of the Love Affair by A Gentlewoman

"Words, Words, Words."

30 May 1931: 64-66.

Dawn by Theodore Dreiser

## Appendix B

### Works of Ring Lardner published in the New Yorker

The following is a list of the works of Ring Lardner which were published in the New Yorker magazine, divided into his named column, "Over the Waves," and his incidental prose writings:

#### Part I. "Over the Waves"

"Allie Bobs Opp Again." 30 July 1932: 24-27.

"Announcer's Prep School." 3 Dec. 1932: 30-31.

"Comics Fact Starvation." 8 July 1933: 41.

"The Crooner's Paradise." 16 July 1932: 22-27.

"The Crucial Game." 22 Oct. 1932: 32-34.

"Deacon Gets Tilt for Tat." 20 Aug. 1932: 26-32.

"An Epistle of Paul." 3 Sept. 1932: 30-34.

"Hail to the Chief." 27 May 1933: 35-41.

"Heavy Da-dee-dough Boys." 25 June 1932: 30-35.

"Herb and Frank Panic "Em." 5 Nov. 1932: 46-48.

"I Am a Fugitive." 18 Mar. 1933: 55-57.

"An Infant Industry?" 25 Feb. 1933: 57-58.

"Life of the Boswells." 17 Sept. 1932: 55-58.

"Lyricists Strike Pay Dirt." 19 Nov. 1932: 53-55.

"The Old Man." 8 Apr. 1933: 63-65.

"The Perfect Radio Program." 26 Aug. 1933: 31-32.

"Pu-leeze Mr. Hemingway." 1 Oct. 1932: 34-38.

"Radio's All-American Team." 17 June 1933: 39-40.

"Ricardi to the Rescue." 5 Aug. 1933: 43-44.

"Ring In!" 14 Jan. 1933: 50-51.

"Rudy In anirate Mood." 4 Feb. 1933: 45-46.

"Some Short-Selling." 17 Dec. 1932: 74-75.

"The Truth About Ruth." 2 July 1932: 26-28.

"We're All Sisters." 6 May 1933: 33-35.

## Part II. Incidental Prose Pieces

"All Quiet on the Eastern Front." 27 June 1931: 14-16.

"Asleep on the Deep." 4 Oct. 1930: 23-24.

"Br'er Rabbit Ball." 13 Sept. 1930: 73-77.

"The Constant Jay." 18 Apr. 1925: 20.

"Dante and --." 7 July 1928: 16-18.

"From a Zealous Non-worker." 29 Nov. 1930: 26-27.

"The Higher-Ups." 1 Nov. 1930: 15.

"Jersey City." 2 Nov. 1929: 24-25.

"Large Coffee." 28 Sept. 1929: 26-27.

"The Master Minds." 16 Jan. 1932: 15-16.

"Miss Sawyer, Champion." 10 Sept. 1927: 23.

"Odd's Bodkins." 7 Oct. 1933: 17-18.

"Old Man Liver." 3 Jan. 1931: 17-19.

"Over the Waves." 18 June 1932: 30-36.

"A Pause." 26 Dec. 1931: 51-52.

"Quadroon." 19 Dec. 1931: 17-18.

"A Reporter in Bed." 26 Sept. 1931: 45-48.

"Sit Still." 19 Apr. 1930: 23-24.

"Tables for Two." 18 Oct. 1930: 23-24.

"X-Ray." 5 July 1930: 15.

## Appendix C

### Works of H. L. Mencken published in the New Yorker

The following is a list of the works of H. L. Mencken which were published in the New Yorker magazine, divided into his named column "Onward and Upward With the Arts," his named column "Foreign Parts," and incidental prose pieces:

#### Part I. "Onward and Upward With the Arts"

"The Advance of Honorifics." 17 Aug. 1935: 54-57.

"The Advance of Municipal Onomastics." 8 Feb. 1936: 54-57.

"The Advance of Nomenclatural Eugenics in the Republic."  
11 May 1935: 44-52.

"The Advance of Onomatology, the Art and Science of Naming Babies." 25 May 1935: 32-40.

"The Dizzy Rise (And Ensuing Bust) of Simplified Spelling."  
7 Mar. 1936: 37-44.

"Euphemism." 31 Aug. 1935: 31.

"Report on the Progress of Euphemism." 31 Aug. 1935: 31-34.

Part II. "Foreign Parts"

"Athens." 27 May 1934: 39-40.

"Cairo." 28 July 1934: 51-52.

"Gibraltar." 16 June 1934: 71-72.

"Grenada." 2 June 1934: 68-69.

"Istanbul." 19 May 1934: 72-73.

"Jerusalem." 23 June 1934: 30-32.

"Madeira." 14 July 1934: 61-62.

"Rabat." 21 July 1934: 51-52.

"Venice." 30 June 1934: 37-38.

Part III. Incidental Prose Pieces

"Brief Dust of Glory." 5 Aug. 1939: 25-32.

"In the Footsteps of Gutenberg." 14 Oct. 1939: 30-34.

"Innocence in a Wicked World." 20 Feb. 1937: 16-18.

- "The Larval Stage of a Bookworm." 23 Sept. 1939: 28-32.
- "Memoir of Deceased Pedagogues." 3 June 1939: 26-31.
- "Memoirs of Gormandizing." 26 Aug. 1939: 26-33.
- "Ordeal of a Philosopher." 11 Apr. 1936: 21-24.
- "Reactions of a Reactionary." 4 Nov. 1939: 56-60.
- "Recollections of Academic Orgies." 17 June 1939: 29-34.
- "The Ruin of an Artist." 27 May 1939: 23-26.
- "The Schooling of a Theologian." 8 July 1939: 31-39.

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- . "Cassandra Drops Into Verse." New Yorker 28 Feb. 1925: 5.
- . "Caste." New Yorker 1 Oct. 1927: 86-88.
- . "The Cradle of Civilization." New Yorker 21 Sept. 1929: 23-24.
- . "Dodsworth." New Yorker 16 Mar. 1929: 106-107.
- . "Fairy Story." New Yorker 12 Nov. 1927: 28.
- . "The Glass Key." New Yorker 25 Apr. 1931: 91-92.
- . "Happiness." New Yorker 5 Nov. 1927: 90-92.
- . "Hard-Boiled Virgins are Faithful Lovers." New Yorker 19 May 1928: 92-94.

- . "House at Pooh Corner." New Yorker 20 Oct. 1928: 98.
- . "It." New Yorker 26 Nov. 1927: 104-106.
- . "Lay Sermons." New Yorker 22 Oct. 1927: 98-100.
- . "Little Words." New Yorker 24 Aug. 1929: 14.
- . "Men Without Women." New Yorker 29 Oct. 1927: 92-94.
- . "Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Crane." New Yorker 15 July 1933: 11-12.
- . "Oh, He's Charming!" New Yorker 9 Oct. 1926: 22-23.
- . "The President's Daughter." New Yorker 15 Oct. 1928: 105-108.
- . "Rhyme Against Living." New Yorker 26 May 1928: 20.
- . "Schools." New Yorker 26 May 1928: 104-106.
- . "Sex Marks the Spot." New Yorker 10 Oct. 1931: 89-90.
- . "The Spirit of St. Louis." New Yorker 7 Jan. 1928: 77-79.
- . "Swan Song." New Yorker 2 Apr. 1927: 23.
- . "A Terrible Day Tomorrow." New Yorker 11 Feb. 1928: 14-16.

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