

THE POLITICS OF INTERMEDIALITY:  
LATE MODERNIST CIRCULATIONS OF THE EVENT

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## Abstract

This dissertation examines late modernist, intermedial representations of events, considering art as an event and how art depicts and circulates events. Through cross-media close readings and interdisciplinary theories and methods derived from media studies, music and sound studies, intermedial theory, feminist theory, critical race theory, and literary theory, I study multimedia opera, civilian bombardments during the Spanish Civil War, the 1943 Harlem riot, and the atomic bombing of Japan in order to evaluate media practices from a range of cultural and historical contexts. Employing eventalization, my research illuminates intersections of media, gender, race, nation, and sexuality. Some of the artists I engage with include Gertrude Stein, Virgil Thomson, Virginia Woolf, Pablo Picasso, Dora Maar, Langston Hughes, Jacob Lawrence, Ann Petry, Mina Loy, John Hersey, Shōda Shinoe, and Nagai Takashi.

The four chapters comprising this project take up fluctuating interactions among sonic, verbal, and visual mediations that were produced between 1927 and 1949, juxtaposing various newer media (photojournalism, radio, and others) with works of art (poetry, fiction, and painting). Stein and Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*, transposed first into a staged opera and then as a radio broadcast, highlights how its many remediations offer formal innovation while reinforcing historical inequities. Picasso and Woolf's collage-like responses to war in Spain demonstrate hypermediacy and immediacy—remediation's twinned impulses—with each artist treating public and private divisions (as materials and as politics) differently. In their depictions of state violence against Black Americans, Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry draw differently on sonic, visual, and verbal modes. Hughes and Petry's fictional rioters publicly express dissatisfaction and challenge the containment strategies used during the actual riot. My concluding chapter also considers how intermediality resists containment, tracing the disparate

availability of media in North America and Japan. Simultaneously empty and excessive, these atomic media reveal the ways knowledge and power produce nuclear subjects.

My findings reveal that late modernism offers a particularly resonant set of texts and contexts from which to evaluate literature as a medium. Moreover, literature's porous borders enable multiple movements and engagements. The eventalization of these circulations reveal the political stakes and uses of intermediality.

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## Abbreviations

Citations from these texts are abbreviated as follows:

Walter Benjamin <i>Selected Writings</i>	SWB
John Hersey <i>Hiroshima</i>	H
Langston Hughes <i>The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes</i> <i>The Collected Works of Langston Hughes</i> <i>One-Way Ticket</i> (with Jacob Lawrence) <i>Selected Letters of Langston Hughes</i>	CP CW OWT SL
Jacob Lawrence <i>Jacob Lawrence: The Migration Series</i>	JL: MS
Mina Loy <i>The Lost Lunar Baedeker</i> <i>Stories and Essays of Mina Loy</i>	LLB SE
Ann Petry <i>Miss Muriel and Other Stories</i>	MM
Gertrude Stein <i>The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas</i> <i>Four Saints in Three Acts</i> , 1934 edition <i>Four Saints in Three Acts</i> , full published score, with Virgil Thomson <i>Geography and Plays</i> <i>How Writing Is Written</i> <i>Last Operas and Plays</i> <i>Narration</i> <i>Operas and Plays</i> <i>Picasso: The Complete Writings</i> “A Radio Interview” <i>Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein</i>	AABT FS [1934] FSS GP HWW LOP N OP P “RI” SW
Virginia Woolf: <i>The Essays of Virginia Woolf</i> <i>The Diary of Virginia Woolf</i> <i>Three Guineas</i>	E D TG

## Introduction

### Between Medium and Event

*“What else do the media dream of besides creating the event simply by their presence?”*

—Jean Baudrillard<sup>1</sup>

In a short article that would become one of her last pieces of writing before her death in 1946, Gertrude Stein begins “Reflection on the Atomic Bomb” (1947) flippantly: “They asked me what I thought of the atomic bomb. I said I had not been able to take any interest in it” (161). Such a casual response is shocking, even now, more than seventy-five years after the first atomic bomb detonations. Rather than focus on the technological development of creating such a weapon, the ethics of deploying it, or the people whom the bomb injured and killed, Stein nullifies the atomic bomb’s status as the main event of the twentieth century. The real problem, for Stein, is that “everybody gets so much information all day long that they lose their common sense” (161). Information, or media saturation, seems to have concerned Stein far more than the threat of nuclear war.<sup>2</sup>

Stein’s comments, or non-comments, about nuclear weaponry illustrate my dissertation’s two main concerns: the event, and responses to the event in various media. Throughout, I consider how different media shape, appropriate, and are constitutive of events, primarily considering intermediality—that is, the reference to or actual presence of more than one medium in another. To make my argument, I have chosen texts produced between 1927 and 1949, which suggests that late modernism is a particularly rich period (roughly 1930 to 1960) in which to study literature as a medium at play with others. In locating my project within this chronology, I acknowledge and want to continue Julian Murphet’s argument that modernism is a literary movement that marks an awareness of literature as medial phenomena, attending to the ways that

“relations among the media gover[n] the material complexities of modernist forms” (2). If modernism is synonymous with medial awareness, such as Murphet suggests, late modernism can be understood as re-evaluating modernist media constellations and as reflecting shifts in materials, technologies, and mass distribution. I further classify late modernist texts as constitutive of public participation and as marking a demonstrated change in artistic practices. Specifically, the intra- and intermedial references in the late modernist texts I have chosen indicate their historical moment: the materials, contexts, and/or approaches are different than their producer’s earlier (and sometimes also subsequent) works. As I will demonstrate, many late modernist texts offer a sustained and politically motivated engagement with widely distributed materials such as reportage, pamphlets, film, and radio, along with written textuality, visual arts, and music. In sum, writers and artists used multiple and various media in order to respond to events.

Two aims inform this dissertation: one, to politicize intermediality studies through an analysis of literature and other media roughly around the advent of current media studies, and just prior Dick Higgins’s first usage of the term “intermedia,” in 1965, to describe an artistic practice that had very real and intentional political messaging mixed with formal innovation; and two, to show how literature and other media represent the event, and, as such, examine how literary studies engages with the notion of the event. My project is informed by media studies and, more specifically, by intermediality, “a generic term for all those phenomena that (as indicated by the prefix *inter*) in some way take place *between* media” (Rajewsky, “Intermediality” 46). In response to Jens Schröter’s claims that intermediality, as a mode, has not been adequately analyzed in terms of its political or social capacity, I explicitly pair intermediality with events in order to mine this potential. The texts in my project are not merely

aesthetically engaged with other media, but rather respond aesthetically to then-contemporary political, economic, and social changes.

In considering modernism through multiple media, this project expands upon the critical directions and revisionist approaches in the new modernist studies.<sup>3</sup> My work differs from other recent modernist projects in its investigation of intermedial texts to show how permeable literature is, especially late modernist texts. I have chosen four specific and nuanced events that highlight an array of media choices and effects: Gertrude Stein and composer Virgil Thomson's opera, *Four Saints in Three Acts* (written in 1927; performed in 1934), and Stein's lecture tour of the United States from 1933–4; the bombing of Guernica (Basque: Gernika), Spain by German and Italian military forces in 1937; the Harlem riot of 1943; and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the American air force in 1945, which marks the atomic age. In each chapter, I pair an event with written texts and other media used to circulate and mediate that event, an arrangement that produces, vividly, an argument about the politics of intermediality. Rather than privilege literature, I want to show the various types of representations the events garnered. As a result of a close yet multifaceted analysis of these diverse proceedings, I will be able to clarify the political effects of media practices.

These particular historical events resulted from the intensifying connections made possible by a number of communication, reproduction, and navigation technologies. I am interested in the intersections tangible in the local and international conflicts that such connectivity relayed. The Spanish Civil War—a seemingly local conflict—involved actors from multiple nations. Although the 1943 Harlem riot was physically restricted to northern Manhattan, it reflected much more widespread issues of racism and segregation. Domestic and international press coverage, however, treated the riot as though it were a local, *containable* conflict. Placing

on the same interrogative field the riot, Stein and Thomson's opera, Franco's Moroccan troops, the American military's deployment of atomic bombs on Japanese civilians, and the internment camps in the United States and Canada demonstrates productively the ways in which intersecting issues of race, gender, and nation are present across many of these events.<sup>4</sup>

I am interested further in the ways writers and artists conceptualize these events and their own relationship to representation. Emblematic of the significant shifts in the role of art, in perception, and the uses of media in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin's seminal essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility" (1936), compellingly articulates the political uses of aesthetics: "*All efforts to aestheticize politics culminate in one point. That one point is war*" (269).<sup>5</sup> Many other writers, artists, and critics addressed the politics of art around this time. In a 1938 speech on global relations, Langston Hughes used a fictional example of a "child to the Tokio [*sic*] war-machine moving against China" (*CW* 9: 199).<sup>6</sup> Given these linkages between distant geographies and between fiction and the people it represents, Hughes claimed, "a creative writer has no right to neglect to understand clearly the social and economic forces that control our world" (*CW* 9: 199). Similarly, Ann Petry attested to the embeddedness of art and context:

Being a product of the twentieth century (Hitler, atomic energy, Hiroshima, Buchenwald, Mussolini, USSR) I find it difficult to subscribe to the idea that art exists for art's sake. It seems to me that all truly great art is propaganda, whether it be the Sistine Chapel, or La Gioconda, *Madame Bovary*, or *War and Peace*. ("The Novel as Social Criticism" 33)

In this essay, Petry's apt criticism addresses the artificial division between social realism and experimental fiction, suggesting that "art for art's sake" fails both to critique "the status quo" and to include the lived experiences of people whose race and gender have made them subject to

violence (33).<sup>7</sup> Even in the absence of direct statements such as Petry's, however, the texts themselves are entangled with their production. T. J. Clark, for example, suggests that "to talk of *Guernica* at all is inevitably to broach the issue of Picasso's contact as a citizen with the events of the twentieth century" (*Picasso and Truth* 237). Compellingly, Petry also refutes the influence of Marxism on her work in this 1950 essay; in the 1930s, however, she was one of many artists who worked with Popular Front and other socialist movements, including Hughes, Virginia Woolf, and Pablo Picasso.

The models of movement—as circulation, relocation, and mediation—adroitly sum up the events and producers within this dissertation. Broadly, and quite simply, media circulate modernism and have particular effects on late modernism. More specifically, my project concerns how and where these circulations occur, and why they matter—not only to modernist or intermedial scholars, but within our contemporary, "media-saturated" environment. Circulation can be understood in three ways: one, as relocations of media into each other (as in intermediality and intertextuality); two, as the medial movements of late modernist writers resulting from their work in multiple venues (such as film, news and magazine journalism, and radio); and three, as transnational awareness and response to seemingly local events (as in the circulation of events through mass media).

The tenuous division of the public and private spheres also shapes the movement of authors, artists, and texts. Some forms of violence—the economic and political subjugation of women, immigrants, and racialized communities, and the treatment of colonized land and people—have drawn less international intervention than, say, the Spanish Civil War did. Further, certain media and producers bridge this divide more prominently than others. Benjamin, for example, addresses how reproducibility enables art to reach the masses, whether they are an

assembled audience of filmgoers or individuals in private spaces listening to a gramophone. Picasso's public mural depicts the devastation of private homes destroyed by state actors. Woolf attends more directly to the ways separate public and private spheres result in disparate accumulations of wealth and political influence. Finally, Petry, who also depicts the economic subjugation of women, adds how multiple intrusions into the private sphere make it a particularly contested space for Black Americans. Circulation, in short, attends to a number of themes this dissertation will address, including the ways some events have been represented more than others.

All three articulations of circulation come into play in each chapter. That is, one or more of the objects I am studying involves relations among media, the transnational movements of the artists and their intermedial texts, and the global dissemination of events. Put simply, these events and artists were not isolated. Stein wrote about Picasso, the Spanish Civil War, race relations in America, and (albeit minimally) the atomic bomb. In late 1927, Mina Loy listened to Thomson preview his musical setting of *Four Saints*. Loy's early enthusiasm for technology, evident in her 1924 poem, "Gertrude Stein" (*LLB* 94), contrasts sharply with her responses to the atomic bomb in 1945. Woolf helped circulate Picasso's *Guernica* in England (and that painting's renown continues) and later described her own experiences of aerial bombing during the Blitz.<sup>8</sup> Petry's local movements within Harlem as a journalist generated her fiction, and reflect how "a mass-based, political culture emerged in Harlem in the 1930s" (C. L. Greenberg, "The Politics of Disorder" 400). Hughes wrote about and broadcast from the United States, Spain, and Japan because he either visited or lived in each location *and* because he recognized the shared social movements among national and international events.<sup>9</sup> Jacob Lawrence, well-known as the painter of *The Migration Series* (1940–41), provided illustrations for Hughes's collection, *One-*

*Way Ticket* (1949), and for a special edition of John Hersey's *Hiroshima* (published in 1983). Hersey, an American born in China, lived in and moved throughout multiple countries, especially as a war correspondent covering the Pacific War during World War II. Finally, many of these artists experienced and explored precarious relationships within the nation and to colonization. Such roving signals a commitment to transnational and transmedial projects.<sup>10</sup>

## **Critical Terms and Contexts**

### ***Late Modernism***

Late modernism has been understood as both a periodizing and aesthetic grouping.<sup>11</sup> Purposefully, I have chosen texts that were first produced between 1927 and 1949 to elucidate the effects of transnational movements, economic fluctuations, medial innovations relating to sound and image reproducibility and transmission, and shifting socio-cultural or political patterns (the nexus of fascism and racism in particular). My project's temporal specificity draws out the political and social significance of media choices, taking into account both what David Trotter terms "the first media age," when writers were confronted with "the power and the limits of written textuality an age busy producing alternatives to it" (26) and Robert Genter's assertion that American late modernism peaks in the 1950s. Although I consider the aesthetic distinctions among different phases of modernism to be somewhat arbitrary and fluid, critics frequently identify high modernist texts as those that were produced in the first two decades of the twentieth century and are formally experimental.<sup>12</sup>

Regardless of its various specific conceptions, however, late modernism necessarily entails a relationship with the end of modernism, at "the moment when modernism no longer recognizes itself" (T. Davis 11). Some critics contend that mass circulation and mass media



spelled the end of modernism—that is, once formal experiments become easily consumed and profitable, they lose their “make it new” impetus. Alternately, Marina MacKay suggests that “the Second World War marks the moment when ‘making it new’ could simultaneously be the rallying cry of experimental poetry, popular cinema and parliamentary politics” (20). Even more, Genter argues that “the ‘nuclear sublime’ did more than any other single event to shape the contours of mid-century modernism” (165). My dissertation examines late modernist intermediality, finding numerous attempts to create new representations and diverse responses. Each event I have chosen illustrates an argument about that which signaled or caused “the end” of modernism and of high modernism in particular: the rise of the cult of celebrity; mass media and propaganda over *l’art pour l’art*; the use of art to advocate for sociopolitical causes, including civil rights; the rise of fascism, which necessitated such advocacy; and, finally, the atomic bomb, which symbolizes the end of World War II (and the start of the Cold War).<sup>13</sup>

Tyrus Miller, one of the first critics to argue how late modernist literary texts could be distinguished productively from either modernism or postmodernism, chooses 1926 as his starting date for discernable aesthetic and cultural shifts that represent “a reaction to a nascent canon of modernist writers and the aesthetics they represented” (23). Although my period of study begins at roughly the same time as Miller’s, and we both take up the work of Loy, in many ways my analysis is significantly distinctive from his. Indeed, many of the writers in my project might more accurately be categorized as writing *during* the late modernist period rather than as late modernist writers. Further, defining late modernism has been productively complicated by contemporary scholars such as Susan Stanford Friedman, David James, Laura Marcus, Urmila Seshagiri, and others who have broadened the narrow, Eurocentric conceptions of what modernism is and who produces such literary texts. This is why, in my project, I consider each

artist as contending differently with modernism(s). Stated differently, I locate each artist within either her or his own changing artistic practices, as well as within more broadly shifting categories.

As stated earlier, I distinguish late modernism texts as those which demonstrate a particular public engagement, along the lines of Thomas S. Davis, who suggests that an “outward turn” is typical of such literature, tangible in concerns with nation, citizenship, war, and everyday violence (3). Part of these public concerns are revealed in connections with other media. Miller specifies how late modernist literature “sought to bind the restless, disturbing collective energies of recorded music, fashion, advertising, radio, and film,” and, as such, evince “the early-twentieth-century context of shifting hierarchies within the arts, intensive development of the mass media, and traumatic events of social and political history” (6, 24). Further, he explains that studying this literature more carefully can reveal productively “art’s relation to the past, its address to the public, and its stance toward the society and politics of the day” (10). I would add that critics have overlooked how modernists interact with the public through multiple media, including in intermedial texts that remediate the press. In particular, I want to emphasize how public discourse is productively complicated by intermedial artistic practice; these artists seemed to be attuned to how, as Lisa Gitelman has observed, “Media and their publics coevolve” (13).

### ***Representation, Medium, and Mediation***

Within my project’s media constellations, it is nearly impossible to delineate between representation *and* the event and representation *as* the event. In part, an event “has no fixed meaning,” as Stuart Hall has observed, “*until* it has been represented” (7).<sup>14</sup> Even more, he argues that “representation is not *outside* of the event, not *after* the event, but *within* the event

itself; it is constitutive of it” (8). Somewhat differently, W. J. T. Mitchell employs “representation” as a way of “simultaneously linking the visual and the verbal disciplines within the field of their differences and connecting them with issues of knowledge (true representations), ethics (responsible representations), and power (effective representations)” (*Picture Theory* 6). Throughout the dissertation, I will use representation purposefully to evoke Hall and Mitchell, specifically keeping in mind Hall’s implication that there are no “real” or “true” experiences that are then supplanted after-the-fact by any specific mediation.<sup>15</sup>

To differentiate between media (meaning the plural of medium) and mass media, I use phrases such as “the press,” “journalism,” and “the film industry” when referring to the latter. Thus, “media” refers to specific formal categories that entail “technological forms and their associated protocols,” and are “expressive of changeable social, economic, and material relationships” (Gitelman 7–8). Even more, it is useful to understand the first media age as a burgeoning awareness of mediation. Mediation, a term similar to representation but with emphasis on the material and/or transmissive qualities of the medium, encompasses both mass culture and specific media practices. Stated differently, significant technological and political changes altered the mediations—whether fiction, fine art, or critique—that came out of the mid-twentieth century. Accordingly, a number of writers and critics all contributed variously to theories of mass culture in media, offering competing ideas on the role of art in a time of social unrest, the function and value of art when it can be dispersed globally, and how changes in transmission alter what is being communicated. Carefully evaluated and synthesized, ideas addressed by Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Benjamin, Mikhail Bakhtin, and many of the artists I survey in this project, can be used to further my argument about modernist attention to mediation and circulation. These twentieth-century theorists and writers indicate that new

technologies were affecting more than just the materials of production and the global reach of the product.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, the increasing prevalence of telephony, radio, film, and sound reproduction affected the way written textuality interfaced with other media.

Understanding literature's interactions with other media necessitates articulating more precisely the connections among terms and conceptions such as intertextuality, mediation, and representation. In her notion of intertextuality, Julia Kristeva cites Bakhtin's transgredient reading approach, which considers "the literary text as an intersection of other texts" (446). Further, for Kristeva, "by showing how much the inside of the text is indebted to its outside, interpretation reveals the inauthenticity of the writing subject: the writer is a subject in process, a carnival, a polyphony without possible reconciliation, a permanent revolt" (446). Mediation, understood through Kristevan intertextuality, is an ongoing process with "permanent revolt" revealing its political potential. In 1887, Walter Pater provided an important early conception of the relationships among different artistic practices: "each art may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art, by what the German critics term and *Anders-streben*—a partial alienation from its own limitations, through which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of each other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces" (105). Within this description, Pater suggests the motivation for such intermedial relationships while also maintaining that there remains something unique to each medium. Finally, in a compellingly different figuration, Woolf imagined, in 1927, a coming era in which written textuality would engage with other media as the following: "That cannibal, the novel, which has devoured so many forms of art, will by then have devoured even more" ("The Narrow Bridge of Art" 18). In this way, Woolf posits literature as exceptionally intertextual and intermedial, a form capable not merely of adapting to newer media, but as actively consuming them.

Although their work focuses mainly on the twenty-first century, Bolter and Grusin acknowledge that modernists contended with mediation: “it was not until modernism that the cultural dominance of the paradigm of transparency was effectively challenged. . . . Collage and photomontage in particular provide evidence of the modernist fascination with the reality of media” (38). Competition between any one medium’s ability to represent its subject matter is also clear in the following passage from John Hersey: “among all the means of communication now available, imaginative literature comes closer than any to being able to give an impression of the truth” (“Novel” 25).<sup>17</sup> Yet, “media are reflexive historical subjects,” as Gitelman has articulated, “Our sense of history—of facticity in relation to the past—is inextricable from our experiences of inscription, of writing, of print, photography, sound recording” (20–1). Phrased differently, mediation is “inextricable” from that which it mediates.

Grusin’s concept of “radical mediation” accounts for the multiple operations of mediation: “media and media technologies,” he suggests, “operate epistemologically as modes of knowledge production, they also function technically, bodily, and materially to generate and modulate individual and collective affective moods or structures of feelings,” and, finally, he proposes that “mediation must also be understood ontologically as a process or event prior to and ultimately not reducible to particular media technologies” (125–6). In the first instance, one can discern how certain media shape knowledge. In the second instance, Grusin alludes to the affective role of spectacles. “The spectacle,” as Guy Debord has argued, “is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images” (12). Henry A. Giroux further elaborates: “The main pedagogical function of the spectacle is to promote consent (though it has also functioned coercively), integrate populations into dominant systems of power, heighten fear, and operate as a mode of social reproduction” (28). Spectacular mediation is certainly evident in

the atomic age, particularly in representations of simulated and actual nuclear blasts. Although the modes of mediation are not uniform within my project, the idea of mediation is taken up by each of the artists considered.

An understanding of mediation necessitates a more substantial definition of medium. I specify my own use of “medium” by borrowing the parameters of my definition of the term from these and other media and intermedial theorists, including Gitelman and William Uricchio, who each emphasize “cultural practices” in their own definitions of medium (7; “Historicizing” 24).<sup>18</sup> Marshall McLuhan posits much too broad a definition for my purposes: a medium he suggests, is “any extension of ourselves,” or “any new technology” (*Understanding Media* 7). In contrast, Lars Elleström’s multimodal redefinition of medium is perhaps too specific for my purposes because he distinguishes the different material, sensorial, spatio-temporal, and semiotic modalities, in addition to differentiating between the “contextual” and “operational qualifying aspects” that operate within each medium (15–25).<sup>19</sup> A more encompassing definition is supplied by André Gaudreault and Philippe Marion: “a medium implies a relatively specific semiotic configuration supported by a technology of communication, in relation to social and institutional practices of producing and appropriating public messages” (15). They further specify how, when defining any single medium, one must account for its “relationship to an institution, its semiotic configuration, its means of transmission and the technological possibilities of this means, the ways it is disseminated, the communicative and relational devices that are put in place or induced” (Gaudreault and Marion 15). Unlike McLuhan and Mitchell, who define media as inclusive of both their materials and their modes of transmission, I differentiate between modes throughout my dissertation in determining what is communicated and how.

Further, these modal differences are articulated in compelling ways when one medium is adapted into a different one. While some critics might categorize all print media under the same umbrella, I have learned from Elleström, Woolf, Stein, and Hersey that journalism operates using different modalities than, say, a novel. Attending to the distinctions between material and mode is key to a project that incorporates a variety of materials as well as intermedial references to materials—there are actual *and* notional photographs, actual *and* notional sounds. As Gitelman emphasizes, “media are very influential and their material properties do (literally and figuratively) matter, determining some of the local conditions of communication amid the broader circulations that at once express and constitute social relations” (9). Within each chapter, I will use intermedial theorists, principally Bolter, Grusin, Rajewsky, and Werner Wolf, to probe specific differences.

### ***Intermediality***

Rajewsky suggests that intermediality offers the potential to uncover what media are, what they do, and how media borders have been constituted and transgressed. Gaudreault and Marion posit that any medium starts out as intermedial until it becomes a distinctive new medium, thus, “it is through intermediality, through a concern with the intermedial, that a medium is understood.” (15–6). Bolter and Grusin are among those critics who suggest that all media is inherently mixed or intermedial: “a medium is that which remediates” (68).<sup>20</sup> The concept of “remediation,” which is, simply, “the representation of one medium in another” (Bolter and Grusin 45), is a broad intermedial category, covering seemingly all representations. I use this term as a general way of discussing the various mediations of different events. Within this concept, Bolter and Grusin discuss the “double logic of *remediation*,” which “wants both to

multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation” (5). Media representations of events betray these two impulses: both to proliferate the event and to give a sense of immediacy or intimacy. I take up these specific contradictory distinctions particularly in Chapter 2. Because my materials include news reports and nonfiction as well as forms of art, remediation usefully encompasses this diversity.

One aim of this dissertation is to understand more precisely what literature, as a medium, does. Exploring these different medial configurations, I will attend to specific aspects of intermedial literature and literary media. To do so, I rely on Rajewsky’s more specific terminology. Rajewsky considers remediation to be too broad a term for studying literary intermedia, proposing instead three distinctive relationships: (1) medial transposition (such as film adaptations of novels); (2) media combination (or mixed media, such as opera, collage, film, comics, and radio); and (3) intermedial reference (such as the musicalization of fiction and *ekphrasis*) (“Intermediality”). Each of these three distinct and articulated modes of intermediality (medial transposition, media combination, and intermedial references) cover all of the material under discussion—that is, they account more precisely for all the remediations studied. Wolf’s distinction between extracompositional and intracompositional intermediality—the adaptation of Hersey’s “Hiroshima” into a radio broadcast falls within the former category; opera’s direct and indirect involvement of multiple media falls within the latter—is further clarifying (“Intermediality” 253–4). Combining the work of Rajewsky with that of theorists such as Bolter and Grusin, Elleström, Mitchell, and Wolf (and sometimes pitting her against them) helps to develop a much more nuanced approach to the material and cultural practices of intermediality.

Rajewsky also advises that “it becomes necessary to define one’s own particular understanding of intermediality more precisely” (“Intermediality” 45). My exploration of



intermediality varies from Rajewsky's, Wolf's, and others' because my materials are different. To specify the numerous media studied in my project, I want to situate each chapter medially, geographically, and chronologically: in Chapter 1, I examine opera, radio, written textuality, and lectures in the United States and France, from 1927–35; Chapter 2, painting, collage, photojournalism, and photo-essays in England, France, and Spain, 1936–9; Chapter 3, poetry, short fiction, photojournalism, musicalized fiction, and illustration in Harlem (New York City), 1943; Chapter 4, poetry, essay, journalism, fiction, film, and photography in the United States, Japan, and Canada, 1945–52. This list shows how quickly intermedial analysis turns any conventionally distinct medium into a multifarious, overflowing array of phenomena.<sup>21</sup> In Chapter 2, for example, I examine how Woolf's nonfiction text (a media combination) and Picasso's painting (which employs intermedial reference) each remediate the Guernica massacre in their own media-specific ways. Each work reveals different intertextualities, and each uses visual and verbal elements differently. Rather than only juxtaposing the different media, I wish to explore the entire media constellation that results from putting *Three Guineas* (1938) and *Guernica* (1937) into conversation.<sup>22</sup> Because this media configuration includes newspapers, remediation alters the circulation of that daily medium. Phrased differently, I am interested in looking at how materials affect the global and local movements of media, and how different modernist artists use media accordingly.

### ***The Event***

Throughout the dissertation, I understand the event to encapsulate both broad and specific meanings. Although I differentiate between phenomena that generate abundant press coverage—such as Stein's lecture tour—and “the event” in a more specific, philosophical usage, the two

meanings are often intertwined. In terms of theorizing the event more specifically, there are numerous voices to consider, including those of Alain Badiou, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Paul Virilio. Derrida begins his own explication by suggesting that events are anything surprising, that which “bursts onto [his] horizon of expectations” (451). Rather simply, he suggests further, “The event, if there is one, consists in doing the impossible” (449).<sup>23</sup> Badiou offers a similar explanation: “an event is something that brings to light a possibility that was invisible or even unthinkable” (*Philosophy* 9), and he draws examples from “the constellation of events that reoriented things at the beginning of the twentieth century” (75).<sup>24</sup> Unlike Derrida and Badiou’s conceptions of what constitutes an event and their analyses of specific events, Foucault’s “*évenementialisation*” (“eventalization”) offers a method rather than an explanation: “It means making visible a *singularity* at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant,” according to Foucault, and “analysing an event according to the multiple processes that constitute it” (“Questions of Method” 76). Foucault emphasizes the stakes of such a method, claiming that eventalization is a process whereby “connections between mechanisms of coercion and contents of knowledge can be identified” (“What is Critique” 59).<sup>25</sup>

Claude Romano describes how an event can only be articulated retrospectively, much like how, “A work of art cannot be understood within the artistic context in which it is born, which it necessarily transcends if it is an original work” (62). Works of art can illustrate paradigm shifts, to use Thomas Kuhn’s term, but they can also be events in their own right. Formal or aesthetic innovation is often aligned with the event: “Artistic events are great mutations that almost always bear on the question of what counts, or doesn’t count, as form,” Badiou suggests, citing Arnold Schoenberg’s atonal music and Picasso’s “non-figurative

painting” as examples (*Philosophy* 68–71).<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Rancière describes the effect of an artistic event:

The images of art do not supply weapons for battles. They help sketch new configurations of what can be seen, what can be said and what can be thought and, consequently, a new landscape of the possible. But they do so on condition that their meaning or effect is not anticipated. (*The Emancipated Spectator* 103)

Framed this way, the artistic event necessarily involves questions of aesthetics and ethics, which are, to Rancière, linked fields.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, media themselves are sometimes events. “The cinematograph’s arrival,” Gaudreault and Marion suggest, “constituted an event” (12), elaborating how film in particular obscures its mediation—that it is a composition of numerous still images.<sup>28</sup> Benjamin also distinguishes film, specifically the use of montage, suggesting how it has radically reoriented perception and that it has the potential to foment revolution and counterrevolution.<sup>29</sup>

My attention to the ways materials mediate is informed by Virilio’s synthesis of war and the multiplying perceptual media representing it: “alongside the ‘war machine’, there has always existed an ocular (and later optical and electro-optical) ‘watching machine’” (*War and Cinema* 3).<sup>30</sup> Susan Sontag criticizes the specific mediation of war photography, arguing that “public attention is steered by the attentions of the media—which means, most decisively, images” (*Regarding 77*). Together, Virilio and Sontag demonstrate the interrelated technologies of film, photography, and weapons. My project, however, questions the immediacy seemingly offered by war photojournalism and newsreels. Intermedial literature contends appositely with what Sontag characterizes as “a world saturated, no, hyper-saturated with images” (*Regarding 77*) without reproducing or valorizing the technologies that both cause and document violence.

How can one define literature as an artistic event, or correspondingly, define an event using intermedial literature? To some extent, I distinguish events by their reportability and transmission, which obviously excludes certain experiences while highlighting others. Three basic questions are at work in my distinctions. Does the text reach a public audience? Where, when, and how? What relations can be articulated at their irruption and subsequent transmissibility?

My approach to the event is certainly informed by multiple disciplines and critics, but many of the writers and artists in my dissertation also put forward compelling ideas about the significance of the events they witnessed. The event's impossibility is very evident when Stein proclaims that she and Picasso did the hard work of re-envisioning artistic practice, reiterating their work's importance as a model for future artists: "when you make a thing, it is so complicated making it that it is bound to be ugly, but those that do it after you they don't have to worry about making it and they can make it pretty, and so everybody can like it when the others make it" (*AABT* 22). Stein suggests that a new artistic mode is an event in its producing a new sense of relations among the thing represented and the representing medium. Alternately, Woolf suggests that it was a change in character that demanded a new type of art: "on or about December 1910 human character changed" ("Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" 4). Even further, she argues, "when human relations change there is *at the same time* a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature" (5; my emphasis). The emergence of modern fiction, for Woolf, discloses a wholesale change in all aspects of life, and literature must play an important role by attempting to represent these changes. Even more, Woolf makes both modern fiction and the state of "human character" an event *and* the result of an event by specifying the date, somewhat facetiously, as December 1910.<sup>31</sup>

Compellingly, Woolf traces public politics to domestic relations in *Three Guineas*; what some might experience as unexpected, irruptive “events” are, to her narrator, extensions of a private authoritarianism already experienced. *Three Guineas* and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown” thus elucidate the ways Woolf connects the everyday, the event, and literature. Rancière (who uses and extends many of Woolf’s arguments in his criticism), explicitly links public exclusion and political subjugation: “Traditionally, in order to deny the political quality of a category—workers, women and so on—all that was required was to assert that they belonged to a ‘domestic’ space that was separated from public life” (*Dissensus* 38). Countering such separation entails a transformation in what Rancière calls *le partage du sensible*, translated as either the distribution or partition of the sensible (“partager” meaning both sharing and separating) (*The Politics of Aesthetics* 13). This politicizing process echoes Foucault’s concept of eventalization. Similarly, *Three Guineas* can be understood as performing eventalization.

Although I will elucidate further in each chapter, I should explicate one bearing intermediality might have on politics. Extending Foucault’s observation—“The body is the inscribed surface of events” (“Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” 83)—I would suggest that the body is a productive nexus through which to analyze intermediality, mediation, and event. Media, as Foucault suggests, “produce effects of power” (*Power* 338). Further, given how “power and knowledge directly imply one another” (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 27), this project necessarily aims to make articulable the fields of knowledge constituted by media practices. Returning again to Hersey’s 1950 essay, he outlines what fiction has the potential to do: “The task of this kind of novel, however, is not to illuminate events: it is to illuminate the human beings who are caught up in the events” (“The Novel” 27).<sup>32</sup> Modifying Hersey’s words, I would say that the objective of examining the politics of intermediality “is to illuminate the

human beings who are caught up in” representations of events, which includes those producing them. The dissertation considers whose bodies are used in various media and to what purpose. In Chapters 1 and 3, I address the hypervisibility of racialized bodies against voices and sounds; Chapter 2 contrasts women and children’s bodies with photographs of politically powerful men; Chapter 4 concerns the ways certain bodies are made invisible in the atomic age’s spectacularizing, excessive uses of film. Overall, the goal of my dissertation is not only to theorize the event in relation to late modernism, but also to understand how distinct medial configurations play a key role in representing, mediating, and circulating the event.

## **Method**

Because I examine a wide array of media objects, my methodological approach will necessarily be multifaceted and rhizomatic, pieced together from various disciplines and from several methods. This project is largely intermedial, but, as a burgeoning mode of analysis, intermediality studies presents no defined, singular approach. In part, this non-specificity results from two distinctive understandings of intermediality. As Rajewsky has outlined, one conception treats “*intermediality as a fundamental condition or category*,” which follows “Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism and Julia Kristeva’s theory of intertextuality” (“Intermediality” 47–8). The second viewpoint “*approaches intermediality as a critical category for the concrete analysis of specific individual media products or configuration*” (47). Within each of these approaches, there are categorical distinctions that direct research methods. Rajewsky suggests that different disciplines study intermediality differently:

Literary, or so-called media-philological studies primarily emphasize the forms and functions of intermedial practices in given media products or medial constellations. By contrast, approaches derived from media studies tend not to focus on already medialized

configurations (such as individual films, texts, paintings, etc.), but instead on the very formation of a given medium, on the process of mediation or medialization as such, and on medial transformation processes. (49)

My project incorporates both media-philological and media-genealogical approaches, which is to state that I attend to the convergences and contradistinctions within specific media constellations while also considering the contestation among media at the emergence or “newly found dominance” of a particular medium (Rajewsky, “Intermediality” 47 n9). Relating to the latter, my project takes into account the development of multimedia performance, radio broadcasting, photojournalism, and the multiple technologies that captured nuclear tests.

On the whole, I take an eventalization approach, by which I evoke Foucault’s framework to trace how events are treated in discourse and what subjects and objects are discursively produced as a result. As has been suggested by Maria Tamboukou and others, Foucault purposefully does not offer a specific set of analytical modes to perform these genealogical lines of inquiry. Certain parameters are suggested, however: eventalization should start “from a question posed in the present” (Foucault, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture* 262), but its aim should be neither to reinterpret the past through the present nor treat any historical moment as “the causal source of a present formation” (Tamboukou 210). Too, such a method requires abundant research materials that, again, Foucault purposely does not define but rather suggests that archival, academic material be amended with new, multiplying, and diverse research materials (Tamboukou 208; Foucault, “Nietzsche” 76). My question is: what are the politics of intermediality practiced by writers and artists during late modernism? Relatedly, how might different media constellations reveal the co-constitutive domains of truth, power, and subject differently, thereby producing sites to analyze the power relations and knowledge production in

any event? Ultimately, the aim of discussing events and their multiple mediations is not to uncover the truth of these events (if such a thing exists), but rather to analyze how such events are possible.<sup>33</sup>

Broadly speaking, I will consider each text's production and dissemination, taking publication and transmission history into account. For literary texts, this process involves analyzing manuscripts, different versions of texts, and their publication histories. This approach entails two types of bibliographical analysis: historical bibliography and textual criticism. The former tracks printing histories, the book-trade market, and larger social or historical concerns linked with the printing industry. Textual criticism examines "the transmission of texts" and "must also deal with the relations between different states and versions of a text" (Williams and Abbott 12). Bibliographical analysis is particularly critical for an intermedial approach to literary studies: considering how Woolf accounted for images in her manuscripts, and the history of her inclusion of newspapers, are important at all stages of composition (not only in the text's published version). Similarly, variations in Stein's libretto for *Four Saints* demonstrate important resonances and discords between her text and Thomson's musical setting. Reading Hughes's poem with or without Lawrence's illustration has material and interpretive implications, particularly as Hughes was adamant about their inclusion. The publication history of *Hiroshima* is significant in that it reveals startlingly different power/knowledge relations between the countries that contributed to the bomb's development and use (the United States, Canada, and England) and Japan. Finally, published versions of any intermedial text reveal the challenges of producing certain media more than others. Put simply, intermedial texts can be limited by material matters and economics, and it is important to consider the impact of these limitations.



Drawing on Gillian Rose, I employ critical visual methodology when analyzing images and visual writing. As Rose posits, visibility produces social differences, and, as a consequence, one should consider three “sites”: the image’s production (its context), the image itself (its formal composition and content), and its reception (how and where the audience views it). Within each of these three sites, one can investigate the technological, compositional, and social (which includes economic, political, institutional, and other considerations) modalities contained therein. Such a method entails tracing the visual representation’s materials, production, and its circulation through institutions—whether as books, in museums, or in other public and private spaces. For Picasso’s *Guernica*, for example, I attend to the intertextual field informing Picasso’s artistic practice, examine the way the painting represents gender and violence on the canvas, contextualize the mural’s commissioned production and its reception as part of the International Exposition in Paris in 1937, and then detail movement around the West following its production. This approach to images, however, is productively complicated in each chapter because many of my visual examples are part of media combinations, such as Woolf’s *Three Guineas*. Similarly, photojournalism requires attending to its textual *and* visual sites. Alternately, each of Lawrence’s illustrations for Hughes’s poetry collection *One-Way Ticket* can be evaluated in relation to a specific poem, to the entire collection of poems, and as part of the series of images in the text.

I also consider various sonic media throughout my project, such as music, aurality, and soundscapes more generally. For conceptions of music, I employ Werner Wolf’s foundational study, *The Musicalization of Fiction* (1999), which remains the most thorough intermedial analysis of musicalized literature. Wolf’s ideas can be applied and expanded through Stein and Thomson’s opera, Hughes’s poetry, and Petry’s fiction, all of which use strategies of music *in* literature and music *and* literature. Jonathan Sterne’s careful analysis of the “plasticity of sound

media” (205), and the ways “technicized listening” and telecommunications create private and public sonic experiences, attends to the social influences within sound production technologies at the beginning of the twentieth century. I also draw on Farah Jasmine Griffin’s discussion of jazz fiction and Jennifer Stoever’s more specific examination of how Petry’s fiction exemplifies the segregated listening practices constituting Black American soundscapes.

My project’s timeline is contemporaneous with radio’s “Golden Age.” Indeed, Hughes, Stein, Woolf, and many others contributed to radio programming during the 1930s and 1940s. Although Virilio specifically attends to cinema in his analysis of twentieth-century global conflict, he does mention radio: “To pictorial logistics (photographic or cinematographic) war added a logistics of sound and then of music, thanks to the ‘popular radiophonics’ which took off between the wars [World War I and II] in huge auditoria and public broadcasts” (*War and Cinema* 23). As Cohen, Coyle, and Lewty argue, “Radio changed the relation of authors and poets to their work; it transformed readers into audiences, and in doing these things it served as a catalyst for the reconfiguration of the relations between writers and readers that is so important a part of the Modernist project” (7). Susan Douglas maintains that the “many listening publics” discernible in 1920s coalesced as radio programming began “forging a national culture in the 1930s and ‘40s” (62). The formation of nation-wide broadcasting networks in the 1920s was a major factor in radio’s burgeoning dominance.<sup>34</sup>

Douglas, Gitelman, Stoever, and Michele Hilmes all variously describe how the radio’s audiences were particularly gendered and racialized. Thus, in accounting for the tangible and intangible dispersions of texts that recount events by including radio broadcasts and associated radio technologies as part of this study, I consider radio as being both heterogeneous and homogenizing, and as having public and private distribution and effects. For example, I argue in

Chapter 3 that Hughes and Petry provide alternative forms of transmission in their literary remediations of the 1943 Harlem riot. During the riot, public officials and community leaders attempted to pacify the crowds in the street by speaking from police cars outfitted with loudspeakers and to assuage those at home through radio broadcasts. Radio, in sum, significantly contributed to efforts to contain the public unrest, efforts which Hughes and Petry resist. Two years after the riot, most Americans heard the atomic bomb news over radio airwaves before it was printed in newspapers. Hersey's *Hiroshima* was transmitted over the radio in multiple countries (revealing that text's transnational spread), and it details how the survivors gathered around a loudspeaker in Hiroshima on 15 August 1945 to hear Emperor Hirohito's voice, for the first time on radio, announcing that the war was over (*H* 64).<sup>35</sup>

Finally, and as part of this project's method, I employ intersectionality as an analytical tool. Drawing on the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw, Sirma Bilge, Patricia Hill Collins, and Andrea J. Ritchie, this approach means tracing "intersections of power" (such as racism and sexism) "across domains of power" (structural, disciplinary, cultural and interpersonal) (Collins and Bilge 27). Media, I would suggest, fall within the latter category, and my project treats intermediality as a way of exposing and potentially unsettling intersecting power relations. Analyzing media in this way is similar to eventalization. Intersectionality, however, is distinct in two crucial ways: first, according to Collins and Bilge, intersectional approaches are most effective when used as both critical inquiry and critical praxis; and second, these approaches expressly foreground the politics of identity.<sup>36</sup> In this sense, intersectionality reminds me to attend to the various social justice movements and other acts of resistance within and around the events that my project focuses on. Throughout my dissertation, I aim to illuminate the ways intermediality informs some of the artists' and writers' critical praxes.

Further, I take seriously claims made by Crenshaw, Bilge, Collins, and Ritchie that intersectionality has far too often been evoked to flatten difference, distracting, in effect, from the operations of racism. In response, my project takes up intersectionality in the following ways: I analyze the intersection of race and gender in my discussion of *Four Saints*'s medial transpositions; I trace the contestations and coalitions among various groups (and outsiders) during the Spanish Civil War and in Popular Front activities;<sup>37</sup> I analyze the intersectional, intermedial riot accounts of Hughes and Petry—and follow Sara Blair's excellent analysis in order to understand the complex representations of agency, resistance, and policing; and in my final chapter I acknowledge the multiple operations of disparately distributed knowledge—such as the effects of radiation toxicity on Indigenous people and lands, on workers and communities around uranium mines—and see in *Hiroshima* the differing after-effects of the bombing according to gender, class, and citizenship. Finally, as a way of refining my methods and my materials, intersectionality reveals numerous potential sites of inquiry within these events, including avenues that have yet to be fully analyzed.<sup>38</sup> Ultimately, evoking these critics and this analytical tool is a reminder to foreground the lived experiences of historically marginalized producers and actors within this project's sundry media constellations.

### **Chapter Synopses**

As a way of introducing several crucial themes, the first chapter, “Gertrude Stein in Surround Sound,” considers the writer's texts and lectures in the United States from the mid-1930s as both mass media spectacle and artistic event.<sup>39</sup> Stein and Thomson's experimental opera *Four Saints in Three Acts* is an example of how works of art constitute events: The opera's combination of multiple media, the contributions of notable collaborators—including, particularly, the race-specific casting—made the opera into an event. Or rather, these elements

generated headlines and continue to be a factor in the opera's many remediations. Attending specifically to sound, I examine the differences among the libretto, the musical setting, the 1934 staged opera, and a 1934 national radio broadcast of a portion of the opera to demonstrate the effects of medium in representing intersecting subjectivities. The opera's surrounding sounds are also critical to such an analysis; public statements from and private exchanges between Stein and Thomson enable a delineation between two closely associated terms: events and spectacles. The opera's eventalization—analyzing how it was and continues to be a “landmark,” according to Barbara Webb, Steven Watson, and others—necessarily involves considering the intersection of medium and race.

Statements made by Stein in and around the opera—such as in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933) and during her 1934–35 lecture tour of the United States—demonstrate the writer's interest in other media, specifically radio. As Benjamin figured this historical moment, “Radio and film are changing not only the function of the professional actor but, equally, the function of those who, like the leaders, present themselves before these media” (“The Work of Art” 277 n27). Stein's presence in multiple venues in the mid-1930s shows her transformation from a rarely read writer to a cultural icon. Stein's American tour promoted her brand, in Pierre Bourdieu's sense of the term, as much as to promote *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. This text represented her first and most substantial commercial success, but Stein gradually found this achievement to be an implicit criticism of her work's value: “Since the autobiography [of *Alice B. Toklas*],” she admitted, “I had not done any writing . . . if my writing was worth money then it was not what it had been” (*Everybody's Autobiography* 84). This statement highlights a major tension between avant-garde practices, heightened public interest, and marketability. Furthermore, Stein was expected to comment on then-contemporary news and

politics. Interviewers at *The New York Times*, for example, asked her to comment on Hitler, modes of government, and foreign relations. Whereas the subsequent chapters concern more violent, shocking events, Stein's tour demonstrates how artists negotiated the struggle between mass distribution and formal innovation amid massive political upheaval.

In the second chapter, "The Collage-like Revisions of *Guernica* and *Three Guineas*," I focus on the April 1937 bombing of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War (1936–39). The Guernica attack was the first recorded instance of aerial bombs being used on civilians in Europe, a tactic of the "total war" that would come to define World War II. Further, this conflict, as Sontag states, "was the first war to be witnessed ('covered') in the modern sense" (*Regarding* 21): photography, newsreels, and radio broadcasts circulated images and news of the war in unprecedented ways.<sup>40</sup> Although both Picasso and Woolf believed their earlier work to be critical of war and other violence, the Spanish Civil War and its coverage pushed both artists into two kinds of responses: explicitly public, political works (as in, direct statements condemning the rise of fascism) and creative experiments using multiple media.

Overall, *Three Guineas* and *Guernica* attend respectively to remediation's two impulses, that of hypermediacy and immediacy. More specifically, I will argue that Picasso and Woolf employ collage techniques to reflect the brutality of military tactics that expressly target civilians. Picasso's massive painting—a reaction to "listening to the shocking news on the radio, reading the emotionalized words of the highly partisan newspapers" (Chipp 38)—contains no overt references to war except for in its title. Picasso's covert intermedial references to photography, wallpaper, and newspapers deflect from the painting's mediation, making its subject matter, or its affect, more immediate than its material influences. In *Guernica*, the horror of aerial bombardments is represented through the bodies of subjugated beings—women,

children, and animals—made victims of war’s intrusion into private spaces. As a result, Picasso’s mural reinforces women’s inextricable link to the home and to motherhood, to apolitical “‘domestic’ space” (Rancière, *Dissensus* 38).

*Three Guineas*, Woolf’s hypermediated, “Anti fascist Pamphlet” (Woolf, *D* 4: 282), takes the form of three public letters that incorporate and reference money, newspapers, legal documents, and photographs. Importantly, this combination of “official” and household materials suggests that civic engagement should not come at the cost of negating the domestic altogether. Domination, as Woolf compellingly argues using clippings from British newspapers, has entailed the division of private and public spaces and consequently subjugates women in Britain. Even more, *Three Guineas* uses other media reflexively to make interjections about media. Although Woolf comments on photographs of the Spanish Civil War’s devastation, the pictures she reproduces are of British authorities from various institutions, men in regalia. The pictures and the guineas, a particularly charged representation of wealth and subjugation, exemplify how Woolf combines media to argue that the will to dominate so obvious in the fascisms of Franco, Mussolini, and Hitler is also a recognisably local problem.

Within the chapter, I will also examine Picasso and Woolf’s uses of their own renown to contribute to the Republican cause. *Guernica*, Picasso’s studies for it, and other works—including *Songes et Mensonges de Franco (The Dream and Lie of Franco)* (1937) and *Weeping Woman* (1937)—moved from country to country in the late 1930s and 1940s. Published in June 1938, *Three Guineas* became publicly available at roughly the same time as Picasso’s mural was on display in England. Because the international distribution of propaganda during the Spanish Civil War was crucial for garnering support, the convergence of Woolf and Picasso’s work in London is significant. *Guernica*’s English sojourn, I suggest, contextualizes and is

contextualized by *Three Guineas*, and both texts circulated in tandem with Spanish Civil War propaganda.

My analysis in Chapter 3, “Transmitting the Detained Voices of the 1943 Harlem Riot,” is also informed by transnational efforts to combat fascism, such as the Popular Front. In the 1930s and 1940s, Harlem was a center of Popular Front activity in the United States; the careers of Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry reflect their various affiliations with this and other similar groups.<sup>41</sup> As a daily Popular Front publication, *PM* typifies how the social movement attended to issues of race, but primarily treated it as one facet of class struggles. *PM* featured the first large-scale photographic depiction of the Harlem riot of 1943, which resulted from a rumour that a White police officer had shot and killed an African American military officer in front of his mother. *PM*’s visual and textual coverage, as I will demonstrate, sought to “contain” the riot: the reports (incorrectly) allege that the rioters were made up of only a small, delinquent group of Harlemites, while the images show police in control, detained and injured rioters, and interracial camaraderie. Only a few of those depicted in *PM* were women. In contrast, Hughes’s poem, “The Ballad of Margie Polite,” (1943, 1949), the accompanying illustration by Lawrence, *The Ballad of Margie Polite* (1948), and Petry’s short story, “In Darkness and Confusion” (1947), all figure the riot as being uncontrollable.

This chapter investigates the coalescences and juxtapositions among sonic media, written textuality, and visual media. Each text uses distinctive media combinations and references, and as a result each remediates the event to different aesthetic and political effects. Rather focus on the historical figure of the soldier or his mother, Hughes’s poem emphasizes and even celebrates Margie Polite’s (rumoured) role in starting the riot. Polite’s voice and those of other rioters are transposed in the poem, textually muting the way the images and voices of people like Mayor



Fiorello La Guardia and NAACP leader Walter White were transmitted in the press and over the radio.

Lawrence's chaotic illustration of Hughes's poem cuts the ironic distance of its source, stressing the riot's violence and the police's complicity in it. The drawing's figures of women and children operate marginally and in distinction to the men and police at the center.

Lawrence's artwork is a medial transposition of Hughes's poem with further intermedial reference; his illustration is in the *style* of a woodcut. As a combination, Hughes's poem and Lawrence's illustration can be read as a single media constellation that responds to both a specific instance and a broader pattern of police violence against Black Americans.<sup>42</sup>

Petry medially transposes press photographs and intermedially references jazz music in her fictional account of the riot. In the short story's focalized narrative form, wherein the reader experiences the riot through one character's sensations and thoughts, the rioters' actions can be interpreted as resistance against personal and historical inequities—not acts of hoodlumism or opportunistic looting. This portrayal contrasts with press and radio coverage of the riot, which virtually erased women's participation in it, including the various ways women were policed in public and private spaces. Petry and Hughes, in creating literary texts that reference sonic and visual media, both suggest that Black women played important roles in resistance movements, representing female rioters as being affected by various injustices and as responding in public. These literary riot participants, much like the historical rioters, were actively expressing frustration with the state's disparate treatment of its citizens. Overall, this chapter's intermedial texts—Hughes's poem, Lawrence's illustration, Petry's short story, and *PM*'s coverage—call attention to the policing of Black Americans within the United States.

In the final chapter, “Populating the Atomic Void,” I unpack the excesses and absences generated by the atomic age’s mediation. The significance of circulation in this chapter relates not only to how the event is mediated but to where media are available. Although nuclear weapons tests were recorded extensively, the limited information available relating to the effects of radiation on people and the environment shapes much of the public and artistic responses to this event. This chapter deals with the period during which the full devastation of atomic bombs was restricted knowledge, unknown to the people living in the countries that first contributed to manufacturing the bombs and in the country where the bombs were first used in combat. The relationship between visual representation and information, I suggest, plays out in a paradox central to the atomic age: it is synonymous with both hypervisibility and invisibility, abundance and emptiness.

President Harry S. Truman’s description of the nuclear weapon in the first public announcement of the bomb—which was simultaneously celebratory and threatening—was reiterated over the radio and in newspapers, magazines, and films. Many publications covered atomic issues exhaustively but, like Truman, barely acknowledged the civilian victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Particularly in early visual depictions of the atomic age, portraits of American military and government officials, scientists, mushroom-shaped clouds erupting from blasts, and unpopulated ruins predominate press coverage. Further, the spectacle of the atomic age was exemplified at the Los Angeles Coliseum in October 1945, when the motion picture industry helped organize an interactive, multimedia recreation of the atomic bomb’s detonation. Alongside these examples, I consider the irruptive impact of the atomic age such as evidenced by Mina Loy’s poem, “Time-Bomb” (1945; 1961) and manuscript, “Tuning in on the Atom Bomb” (written *c.* August 1945). Loy populates her atomic texts somewhat similarly to other depictions:

when the press depicted the use of nuclear weaponry, it was often through describing a fictional, hypothetical threat that loomed over North American cities. Whereas “Tuning” relocates the atomic bombing, internalizing its effects within a single person’s experience, “Time-Bomb” is completely absent of people, reflecting the frequent use of unpopulated images in representations of the event. Combined, Loy’s texts, Truman’s announcement, and spectacular representations of the bomb exemplify the anxiety of the atomic age while also eliding the people whom the bombs were actually terrorizing.

One of the most circulated texts in relation to the atomic bomb is Hersey’s pictureless magazine article, “Hiroshima,” initially published in a single issue of the *New Yorker* magazine on 31 August 1946, one year after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The issue quickly sold out and Hersey’s account was subsequently published as a book, *Hiroshima* (1946). Readings of Hersey’s text were conducted over the radio in multiple countries. In stark contrast to *Hiroshima*’s immediate mass distribution throughout the West, the book was not permitted to be published in Japan until 1949. The American-led occupation of Japan following the bombings involved censoring any media that referenced the bombs, especially those that showed the devastating effects of radiation on humans. Hersey’s “Hiroshima” supplies the narratives and experiences of the atomic bomb’s first intentional civilian victims, thereby populating the void left by other representations of the atomic bombs during the occupation.<sup>43</sup>

In both Hersey’s “Hiroshima” and Loy’s “Tuning in on the Atom Bomb,” the tension between secrecy and excess, between hypervisibility and invisibility, is expressed through written textuality alone. Both writers offer an alternative to what Sontag describes photography as presenting: “The ultra-familiar, ultra-celebrated image—of an agony, of ruin—is an unavoidable feature of our camera-mediated knowledge of war” (*Regarding 16*). As a contrast to

the chapters which precede it, Chapter 4 troubles the idea of any medium's impenetrable singularity or separability from other media. In its title, Loy's "Tuning" alludes to radio in a text that is visually evocative without ever describing anything that is actually visible or tangible.<sup>44</sup> This intangibility reflects the speaker's limited access to nuclear knowledge. Because there are no photographs or other filmed images in "Hiroshima," Hersey repudiates the inescapable link between technologies of war and technologies that capture image and sound. Using a single medium, "Hiroshima" translates into text six survivors' narratives of the bombing.<sup>45</sup> In sum, if the first three chapters are about the interactions of written textuality with other, newer media, the final chapter concerns how literature operates apart from other media, implicitly asking to what ends does such a conception of written textuality serve.

Walking through the Art Gallery of Ontario's summer 2015 *Camera Atomica* exhibit, which so purposely and carefully showed how the atomic bomb is both a visually recorded and reproduced spectacle and a terrifying devastator of human and ecological life, I kept returning in my thoughts to Hersey's picture-less book, and how it stands out because of its exclusion of actual images of mushroom clouds, deformed bodies and landscapes, and death. Certainly the text is visually evocative—even sensationally so in parts—but it never supplies the pictures, an interesting choice because there were multiple images taken of any and all nuclear bomb explosions. Discussing the transformation of forts and bunkers into war museums after 1945, Virilio suggests that "the public was supposed to feel like spectators-survivors of the recent battlefield" (*War and Cinema* 48).<sup>46</sup> At the end of the AGO's exhibition, having been led into an enclosed space ("designed to evoke a fallout shelter" ["Exhibition Overview"]) and being supplied with pencils and paper, patrons were asked to inscribe their thoughts about nuclearity,

to reflect on our region's specific history in the production and use of nuclear power and weapons, and whether learning about the effects of such technology—through film, stories, photographs, and curation—challenges any previously held opinions on the topic. Essentially, the exhibit asked its audience to consider our subjectification, how we have been made into subjects by and subjected to nuclear energy. However unsettling this might have been, the faux bunker supplied a performative (and effectively cathartic) mobilization: we could write something down, and then we could leave.

*Camera Atomica* demonstrates that reactions, remediations, and references to the events and authors studied in this dissertation do not stay contained within their specific geographic and temporal locations. Indeed, as I will discuss in the dissertation's Conclusion, these events carry palpable resonances into the twenty-first century. Overall, I do want to imply that employing intermedial artistic practices resolves any of the issues raised in these various events, nor that they respond to events most truthfully or ethically. Rather, I want to suggest that literature is one permeable medium in conversation with other media, and that this conversation often involves acknowledging the attendant political, social, cultural, and economic issues that are both caught up in the technologies themselves and made legible as a result of these media constellations. In each chapter, a number of circulations occur: writers, artists, and their products move throughout the world and media move into each other as radio, film, and the increasingly visual newspaper emerge. Following events through various materials allows me to focus on a specific argument about the politics of mediation in the twentieth century. As such, my dissertation argues against the "great divide," which asserts a "distinction between high art and mass culture" (Huyssen viii), to show how many writers and artists in the late modernist period were invested in

contemporary mass media and politics. Indeed, this investment meant reaching a broad public alongside more specific audiences.

## Chapter 1

### Gertrude Stein in Surround Sound

*“Around is a sound around is a sound around is a sound and around”*  
—Gertrude Stein

On a coast-to-coast radio broadcast on 12 November 1934, Gertrude Stein was interviewed by NBC reporter William Lundell in New York City. Amid discussion of college football, celebrities, and language, Stein was asked about the merits of her work. In a combative exchange—albeit one scripted by Stein—Lundell inquired, “I should like to ask if you sincerely believe that English literature can in any way be improved by such experimentation as you, Miss Stein, have made in *Four Saints in Three Acts*?” (“RI” 91). Stein retorted: “There is no question of improving English literature,” she claimed, “there is only a question of English literature going on and now American literature going on and I do think that my work and *Four Saints in Three Acts* is an important part of it, is an important very important element in English literature’s going on” (“RI” 91). Her response to Lundell emphasized the vitality of American literature while also affirming her role in producing it. The opera, which Stein created in collaboration with American composer Virgil Thomson (1896–1989), is “important” not because of its “experimentation” but because it is an example of “literature going on.” Indeed, *Four Saints* goes on along multiple vectors, and the opera’s intermediality enables such continuance.

Throughout the radio interview with Lundell, Stein characterized herself as both an insider and an outsider as she expressed enthusiasm for the nation and its people. “Coming back to the United States after thirty-one years everything seizes my interest and seizes it very hard,” she exclaimed, and expressed being “deeply moved and awfully happy” with the way random Americans interacted with her (“RI” 87). Proclamations such as these likely endeared her to the audience—described as “normal Americans” (97)—while promoting the release of Stein’s

*Portraits and Prayers* (1934) and discussing *Four Saints*. The opera's brief Chicago run had ended on 10 November 1934, but perhaps there would be more performances if enough interest could be generated. Stein asserted "anybody can know" what her writing means and that "there are lots quite normal who do see" and "enjoy" it (97). Reiterating that her work is accessible to the masses, while speaking to the radio program's national audience, is merely one example of the ways Stein used various media to reach mainstream American audiences. Indeed, remediations of Stein's texts, particularly as performances and broadcasts, allow her work to continue in other media, genres, and historical moments.

Further, as I will argue, notional surround sound is evident across Stein's texts and intertexts, and especially in *Four Saints*, one of her most remediated works. Until the publication of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* in 1933, the stage performances of *Four Saints* in 1934, and a six-month lecture tour of the United States in 1934–35, Stein's work had had limited audiences. Many of her book publications had been self-financed, and, until the 1930s, her writing appeared in magazines mainly through the influence of friends and acquaintances. Despite her reputation as a difficult writer—a reputation perpetuated through newspaper cartoons, book reviews, and interviews—Stein wanted her work to be experienced. As she explained over the radio, "all you have to do with *Four Saints* is enjoy it . . . lots of people have enjoyed it" ("RI" 89). Regardless of whether theatregoers really did enjoy *Four Saints*, the opera helped broadcast widely Stein's work and reputation.

Although it is difficult to summarize *Four Saints*, Stein and Thomson conceived of the opera together as an allegory for the work and dedication of artists. Beyond discussing the opera, they worked almost entirely independently. Stein completed the libretto in 1927 while living in France, and the text-only version of *Four Saints* had a public life of its own before it was ever



performed: it was published in *transition* in late 1928, in *Operas and Plays* in 1932, and as a single volume in 1934 (SW 578). In late 1927, Thomson adapted the libretto into a vocal score, and he first performed sections of it in 1928 (Allmer and Sears 9). The opera opened in Hartford, Connecticut on 7 February 1934 at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, alongside the first Pablo Picasso retrospective ever held in America. After a short run in Hartford, the opera opened on Broadway at the 44<sup>th</sup> Street Theatre on 20 February 1934, becoming “the first opera to be staged on Broadway” (Allmer and Sears 23). One month later, on 17 March, the show closed. In April, it re-opened for two weeks at the Empire Theatre (also on Broadway). In November 1934, the opera traveled to Chicago and Stein attended on opening night. Following that five-show engagement, *Four Saints* was not staged again during Stein’s lifetime.

Stein’s libretto for *Four Saints* is a sonically rich diffusion of stereophonic voices. With no conventional narrative or assigned speaking roles, the libretto offers no clear indications of how it should be performed, leaving Thomson and the other contributors—what Carolyn Abbate would call a “performance network”—to make the production’s staging possible. The resulting collaborative opera was a hit: it sold well, and attracted, as one 1934 reviewer put it, “Every snob and poseur in town” (Downes, “Stein-Thomson Concoction”). Audiences were drawn in by various elements of the multimedia production, such as: the combination of Stein’s “challenging” avant-garde text with Thomson’s “easy” colloquial music; Stein’s popular culture presence; and Thomson’s opportunistic decision to cast Black performers (he explained to Stein that they would “add to our spectacle” [“Letters” 62]).<sup>47</sup> The casting generated substantial press coverage, marking the first time an “entirely black cast performed a work not written in dialect and unrelated to traditional themes of black life” (Webb 447). Other aspects of the operatic

network garnered attention, such as Florine Stettheimer's innovative cellophane set design, the dances, and Maurice Grosser's painterly tableaux that added narrative shape to Stein's "landscape" or "static" libretto. Karen Leick remarks that, initially, "the opera primarily attracted attention as a spectacle. *Four Saints* was considered escapist entertainment, but not lasting, serious art" (160). Certain audiences and producers, however, are still drawn to the opera.

That the 1934 performances of *Four Saints* made words into music is perhaps the most obvious example of how Stein's attention to sound is especially apparent in the mid-1930s. Stein's transmission and reception can be traced through *Four Saints* and its afterlives, which includes the opera's multiple iterations, its legacy for other artists, and the works that the opera's success impacts, such as the *Autobiography* and Stein's lecture tour.<sup>48</sup> Specifically, I will compare her libretto with its earliest representations in other media: the staged opera, which ran intermittently from February to April 1934, and one of two radio broadcasts of the opera that aired in February 1934. By articulating distinctions of intertextuality, intermedial reference, and remediation in this comparative analysis, I purposefully foreground medium and mediation. To do so, I employ the following terms, following Irina Rajewsky's definitions: intermedial reference (such as is found in Stein's libretto and *Autobiography*), media combination (such as the performed opera), media transposition or transformation (the process of turning the libretto into a score). More broadly, I also use remediation to refer to the general "representation of one medium in another" (Bolter and Grusin 45), and intertextuality, a more encompassing term for the appearance of or reference to one text in another with no specific attention to medium.

To achieve widespread reverberation, Stein's texts experienced diffusion through multiple media that required different materials than writing—using various bodies, landscapes, technologies, and modes. I discuss how the libretto is remediated, that is, made into other media,

by Thomson, the performers, and the opera's other collaborators. The movements from a body-less libretto to an embodied stage performance and then again to a vocal radio performance reveal how remediation impacts subjectivities; performances of nationality, race, and gender depend on medium and social context. In particular, I highlight how the opera's two principal saints, Therese/Teresa and Ignatius, produce sound differently in these various iterations from 1934.

Following my discussion of *Four Saints*, I will then compare the opera's use of voice and aurality to that of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933), which was written after Stein had finished the libretto but before the opera was ever performed in public. The *Autobiography* was "written in a voice entirely different from her own," suggests Ulla Dydo, and is representative of the texts Stein referred to as "'open and public' books, or as 'audience writing': books written to satisfy demands of an imagined or real audience" (4–5). More specifically, using Alice Toklas's voice to reach the general public contributed to the book's commercial success. While ample critical space has been devoted to the *Autobiography* as an example of the relationship between visual art—specifically Cubism—and writing, the text's sonic properties are productively amplified when paired with *Four Saints*.

Throughout the chapter, I will draw on statements Stein made during and around her lecture tour of the United States, from October 1934–May 1935. The tour, which served as promotion for the opera and the *Autobiography*, was yet another register through which Stein made herself publicly audible; she spoke to audiences in multiple cities, as well as from newspapers, magazines, newsreels, and over the radio. These statements on concepts of events, listening, and masterpieces illuminate Stein's use of sound in her writing. As a conclusion to this chapter on the effects of remediating sound, I will address how Stein's tour was arranged by

publisher Bennett Cerf as part of a larger publicity campaign that courted a specifically American audience through a variety of new media, such as film and radio (Leick 166; Jaillant 158–9). Stein’s lectures, as Barbara Will has argued, were shaped by her friendship with Bernard Faÿ, whom she met in the 1920s (not long before she met Thomson): “it was by listening to Faÿ lecture at the Collège that Stein said she learned how to speak in public” (“Strange Politics”). In my analysis, I will take into account the troubling connection between Faÿ, a member of Marshal Philippe Pétain’s Vichy government, and Stein.

Before discussing how *Four Saints* constitutes an artistic event, I want to illustrate the historical context and media landscape the opera emerged amid; the year of the opera’s conception is particularly salient. Highlighting several media developments, Trotter suggests that 1927 is a pivotal moment in “the first media age” (26). By this time, “an awareness that the technological mediation of experience had become both widespread and irreversible” (Trotter 37).<sup>49</sup> Cellophane, the synthetic material Stettheimer used to construct the opera’s screenlike sets, was one such invention from this year. Further, global and near-instantaneous transmissions, made possible by telephony, telegraphy, television, loudspeakers, and radio, were increasingly shaping citizenship and the public. William Uricchio describes the 1920s and 30s as showing “the interworkings among various media technologies in pursuit of a particular goal: the attempt to extend being beyond the site of its physical embodiment, to extend real-time participation in distant events, and in the German case, to redefine the *Volkskörper* [national body]” (“Storage” 133).

Stein seems to have been aware of the tension between literary and newer media, of what Trotter calls “the power and the limits of written textuality in an age busy producing alternatives to it” (26). While on tour, Stein actively employed intermedial references to promote her own

work. In a 1935 *Cosmopolitan* magazine article, “I Came and Here I Am,” Stein asserted that once she became familiar with radio as a medium, she understood how radio’s mode of transmission paralleled her own writing: “In writing *The Making of Americans* I said I write for myself and strangers and this is what broadcasting is” (71). Stein’s enthusiastic application of broadcasting demonstrates an interest in the radio and its broad audience. Consider, too, Stein’s use of the gerund form—broadcasting—rather than the noun. In her usage, broadcasting is an ongoing process rather than a fixed system, much like how many early broadcasts were live and not recorded. In a separate article, “How Writing Is Written,” also composed and published in 1935, Stein compared her writing to cinema: “All my early work was a careful listening to all the people telling their story, and I conceived the idea which is, funnily enough, the same as the idea of the cinema” (158). Interestingly, Stein comments on the sonic qualities of cinema rather than its visual ones. “What I was after,” asserts Stein of her writing, “was this immediacy. A single photograph doesn’t give it” (“HWW” 159). This statement is similar to Bolter and Grusin’s explanation of artists’ impetus for innovation: “In digital media today, as in modern art in the first half of the century, the medium must pretend to be utterly new in order to promote its claim of immediacy. It must constitute itself as a medium that (finally) provides the unmediated experience that all previous media sought, but failed to achieve” (270). Strikingly, Stein did not propose a new medium, but rather she suggested that her transmedial writing practices—its “careful listening”—expresses lived experiences as well or better than newer media. In these comparisons to other media and sound, Stein characterized herself as not only someone who utilizes techniques typically associated with other media, but also as a writer who was always already producing such cinematic and radiophonic audio effects.<sup>50</sup>

The promotion of *Four Saints*, the *Autobiography*, and the tour shaped Stein's relationship with her audience, which was larger and more diverse than ever. In a lecture delivered in 1935, Stein stressed simultaneous transmission and reception: "That is what genius is to be always going on doing this thing at one and at the same time listening and telling really listening and really telling" (N 34). Importantly, Stein emphasized a participatory quality of sound—one that involves both listening and telling—near the end of her first American publicity tour, which had put her in front of live audiences. In these public lectures, as well as over the radio, in Pathé newsreels, and in magazine and newspaper articles, Stein participated in public spaces by both generating sound and receiving feedback in real time.

Given these statements from 1935, I argue that "surround sound broadcasting" describes Stein's writing, drawing attention to radio's mode of transmission. In part, radio demonstrates simultaneity more than cinema (Uricchio, "Storage" 134), but also because Stein aligned her work with radio techniques at a significant moment in the development of radio broadcasting and stereophony.<sup>51</sup> Many early experiments in what is now termed stereophonic sound transmitted opera. In 1881, for example, music from an opera being performed at the *Palais Garnier* was transmitted to listeners at the *Palais de l'Industrie* through two telephone receivers, one for each ear. The promotional demonstration gave listeners a sense of the singer's movements without seeing the stage, which was two kilometers away. This experiment developed into the Paris Théâtrophone, a subscription service that broadcast operas and other music and theatre events until it ceased operations in 1925 (Sterne 192–3).<sup>52</sup> Telephone broadcasts such as these demonstrate that stereophonic broadcasting was possible before it was synonymous with radio, exemplifying what Jonathan Sterne calls the "plasticity" of new sound media at the turn of the twentieth century—how burgeoning modes of transmission operated flexibly, being not yet

defined or constrained to any single technology or media practice. Around 1920, broadcasting became an established radio feature as a few stations in the started reaching regular audiences with programming that consisted primarily of music (Douglas 64). In 1935, when Stein used “broadcasting” to describe her work, the term was still inexact, but its associations with music, with collapsing distances between audience and performer, and of connecting the public and private spheres were already established features of it (Sterne 195, 199).

Stereophonic, a term that first emerged in the same year as Stein wrote *Four Saints*, characterizes sound transmitted using two or more channels, imitating human binaural hearing to reproduce sound that is not fixed or uniform, but rather moves and surrounds the listener. More extensively, Théberge, Devine, and Everett define stereophony as “a set of relations between audio technologies, acoustic spaces (physical and virtual), listening techniques, scientific and commercial discourses, economic conditions and reception contexts” (3). In 1931, “binaural sound” was registered by Alan Dower Blumlein “in a paper which patented stereo records, stereo films, and also surround sound” (Shankleman). In these technological developments, the aim was to convey auditory perspective through differentiated sounds.<sup>53</sup> Stereophony, I suggest, connects Stein’s “surround sound” more explicitly to radio and music, attending to radio’s boom in the 1920s, its omnipresence in the 30s, and to the possibility of multichannel sound.

Because of the intermediality of *Four Saints*, it is necessary to draw on a range of disciplines—literature, music, photography, theatre, and media studies—when discussing the opera’s surround sound. Stein’s literary texts generally convey multiple perspectives and are attentive to the quality of voices and sounds; a number of critics stress Stein’s orality and musicality. I draw on musico-literary critics such as Brad Bucknell, Elicia Clements, Michel Delville, and Sarah Posman to discuss the opera’s music.<sup>54</sup> Emphasizing sound’s technological

production, Sarah Wilson and Adam Frank consider Stein's texts within radio studies.<sup>55</sup> Lisa Barg's intersectional analysis is particularly useful; she considers music, photography, and film to examine "the critical role [that] race and sexuality played in shaping the opera's production and reception" ("Modernism" 65). Finally, Patricia Allmer's study of photography in and around *Four Saints* provides a model for "ostensibly subverting the 'invisibility' that tended to accrue to African Americans working in conventionally 'white' cultural spaces like opera" (43). In using surround sound broadcasting, I also aim to highlight how the opera's many media obscure and amplify intersecting subjectivities differently, comparing specifically the performances of Teresa and Ignatius in the opera's highly visible tableaux against the aural radio broadcasts.

Ultimately, the multiple media in and around *Four Saints* amplify Stein's presence. Beginning in the mid-1920s and culminating in 1934, Stein's texts were published in larger quantities and utilized diverse platforms—her words were heard on stages and during radio broadcasts, and she was filmed and photographed. Stein "broadcasted" on multiple channels, creating a stereophonic and headline-generating presence. The lectures, radio appearances, and the opera allowed Stein to interact with her audience, and specifically her American audience, more than ever before. This ability both to send and receive signals reflects Stein's portrayal of herself as an artist not only *in* the twentieth century but as one who can write *about* that century. Tracing Stein's work from one medium to another attends to specific media developments in the 1920s and 30s, while also yielding a productive analysis of sound, race, and intermediality. Stereophonic broadcasting is not simply a metaphor through which Stein's work can and should be read; understanding Stein's intermedial practices as stereophonic productively reveals the sonic and cultural dimensions informing her texts during her most commercially successful period.



### **Art as Event: *Four Saints in Three Acts*, 1934**

After *Four Saints* closed on Broadway in April 1934, Thomson wrote a letter to Stein exclaiming, “there wasn’t anybody who didn’t see that the ensemble was a new kind of collaboration and that it was unique and powerful” (“Letters” 67). Carl Van Vechten agreed, saying of the opera: “It stands alone, in fact. There is nothing else in the least like it” (“A Few Notes” 6). Thomson, it seems, achieved his intention “to create a new American operatic mode” (Clements, “How” 55). Stein, too, presented the opera as groundbreaking: “*Four Saints* was written about as static as I could make it. The saints conversed a little, and it all did something. It did something more than the theatre which has tried to make events has done” (*HWW* 158). For her part, Stein asserts that her writing and the performance made the opera notable, suggesting that this doing “something” was the result of challenging narrative conventions. In the same 1935 article, Stein also described her broader work as profoundly “contemporary” and, therefore, “a revolution” (*HWW* 158).

To propose that Stein’s work is an event, and, indeed, that literature can constitute an event, means that the opera is both a mass media event and an artistic event. Stein and the opera generated headline news, making it, as Steven Watson claims, “the most widely reported cultural event of the decade” (“Visitable” 137). Although many theorists discuss “the event,” in this chapter I draw on Michel Foucault, Alain Badiou, and Claude Romano alongside Stein’s own characterizations of her work.<sup>56</sup> Rather simply, Romano suggests that the event entails change with surprise and novation, and that the significance of an unprecedented work of art is due to “the refashioning it brings about in the forms, themes, and techniques of the period” (62). The 1934 performances were certainly innovative in terms of casting, collaboration, and in the use of

media. Considering the opera's embeddedness in media history as well as social and artistic movements, I trace how *Four Saints* came to be "a landmark" (Webb 447). This method—what Foucault might call the opera's "eventalization"—uncovers a number of politics and underscores how the opera's avant-garde reputation is an effect of its producers' social status.<sup>57</sup>

The 1934 performances of the opera, and specifically the employment of racialized bodies, generated significant attention from audiences and critics, helping *Four Saints* circulate and, in Stein's words, "d[o] something" (*HWW* 158). "Thomson's bold casting may be interpreted as the most radical tactic in the opera's overall avant-gardist aesthetic of disjuncture," Barg suggests, except that the cast members were ultimately treated "as symbolic objects" ("Modernism" 79, 81). Bucknell, too, suggests that the casting represents the composer's "attempted 'integration' of black popular performance, or at least, the *spectacle* of such performance for the white viewer" (219). Following more than a decade spent living abroad—and having completed the piano and vocal score—Thomson deliberately chose Black performers for his cast only after returning to America ("Four Saints in Three Acts Collaborate"). Drawing on Harlem as a site of inspiration, the show's rehearsal space was located there, and the opera's cast was scouted from the neighbourhood's nightclubs, music halls, and from the choir of a prominent African American conductor, Eva Jessye, who also served as the *Four Saints*'s choral director in 1934 (Allmer and Sears 3–4). Jessye spoke favourably of the opera in retrospect, referring to it as a "departure" from typical musical opportunities and as an economic breakthrough because she had "demanded that her singers be paid for rehearsal" (Watson, *Prepare* 245). Despite the ways Thomson tried to limit Jessye and the performers' contributions to the opera by overseeing choir rehearsals (Watson, *Prepare* 251), the performers, as Clements argues effectively, "shaped the presentation in ways that went far beyond Thomson's notion that

they were mouldable subjects (or objects)” (“How” 48). Without question, Beatrice Robinson Wayne (St. Teresa I), Bruce Howard (St. Teresa II), Edward Matthews (St. Ignatius), and the other cast members are integral collaborators who exercised agency and artistry. Yet, the performers’ *race* was what the press deemed newsworthy. Thomson frequently spoke to the press about the casting—not the cast members themselves, nor about the interplay among performer, music, and text—and correspondingly, the reviews also comment at length about the race-specific casting.

In looking at how the opera came to be an event, it is important to note its silences. “Considering the buzz in the white press and on the streets of New York that surrounded the opera’s opening and Stein’s visit to the United States,” Barbara Webb finds that “surprisingly little reaction to the opera appeared in the black press during the show’s run” (465). The opera’s limited presence in the history of Black theatre results from Stein and Thomson’s restricted attention to race, as first evidenced in the libretto when the speaker is unable to imagine either “five thousand chinamen [*sic*],” or “a negro . . . with a beard” (*FS* [1934] 22, 25). Further, statements made on the radio and in other mass media show that Thomson and Stein’s understanding of being Black in America was decidedly uninformed. In a newspaper article published the day after she arrived for her lecture tour, Stein claimed, “‘Negroes cannot see the difference in two faces in a photograph’” (“Gertrude Stein Arrives”).<sup>58</sup> Neither Thomson nor Stein made public comments on the mounting racial inequities and anti-Black violence that precipitated the Harlem Riot of 1935.<sup>59</sup> In response, Black audiences and critics devoted their attention to theatre that considered such contexts, such as John Wexley’s *They Shall Not Die* (1934) about the Scottsboro Trial of 1931 (Webb 465). That the opera did and does not resonate with Black audiences and artists is not merely tangential; it reveals the limits both of Stein’s

“genius” ability to generate surround sound and of imagining literary media as being race-neutral or genderless.

*Four Saints*, however, survives as an important example of multimedia collaboration. Although Badiou’s articulation of the event is limited—being, somehow, both too specific and too broad—his description of the artistic event clarifies which elements of *Four Saints* make it a significant text: “Artistic events,” he maintains, “are great mutations that almost always bear on the question of what counts, or doesn’t count, as form” (*PE* 68). *Four Saints* challenges generic conventions, opening in its wake a new set of formal possibilities for future artists. According to Clements, the opera offers a lesson in the praxis of remediation (“How” 67–8). The 1934 production of the opera, suggests Watson, “prefigured the large-scale interdisciplinary performance works of the 1980s” (*Prepare* 300–1), and continues to be an important intertext for artists such as John Cage, Robert Wilson, Heiner Goebbels, and others. Further, that Stein influences artists working in a variety of genres suggests that her methods can be expressed across media, or rather, transmedially.

The intertextual and intermedial qualities of the opera were reiterated early on. In addition to the inclusion of many notable collaborators when preparing *Four Saints*, the publicized connections between the opera and Picasso’s visual art practices demonstrates how Thomson, Stein, and other promoters curated this type of relationship. In Van Vechten’s short introduction to the 1934 publication of the libretto, he mentions Picasso three times, relaying how Mabel Dodge Luhan claimed that the opera did ““what the painting of Picasso does to Kenyon Cox”” (“A Few Notes” 6). The opera premiered at the “opening of the first architecturally modern museum interior, the Avery Wing of the Wadsworth Atheneum,” an art space that was also showing “the first large retrospective of Picasso in the United States” and “a

newly acquired collection of Italian baroque paintings” (Watson and Morris 250–1 n1; Barg “Black Voices” 122). Such a congruence reinforced Stein’s reputation as an avant-garde writer, and further suggests similarities among the baroque paintings, Picasso’s work, and Stein and Thomson’s opera. The association persists: as part of the 2012 exhibition, *The Steins Collect: Matisse, Picasso, and the Parisian Avant-Garde*, Rebecca Rabinow reiterated the connection between the opera and the Cubist painter’s radical reimagining of art.<sup>60</sup>

The connection arose out of Stein and Picasso’s portraits of each other. Stein composed multiple texts on Picasso, including her most popular book, the *Autobiography*, which describes their friendship, the changing artistic practices of the early 1900s, and Picasso’s *Portrait of Gertrude Stein* (1905–06).<sup>61</sup> The association between Stein and Picasso provides a compelling contrast between Stein’s understanding of her own work as “important” and Badiou’s understanding of the artistic event, which privileges certain bodies, experiences, and art forms over others. Badiou argues that “the shifts towards abstraction in painting or towards modifications of tonality in music” occurring at the beginning of the twentieth century qualify as “artistic events” (*Philosophy* 68). Picasso, Richard Wagner, Arnold Schoenberg, and Georges Braque are among Badiou’s examples of artists who produced significant changes in music and painting (68). In contrast, Stein describes her own work as an event in the *Autobiography*, using a dual-voiced narration to align her own writing with the Cubist works of Picasso and Braque. Not only does she brand her writing as being as experimental as Picasso’s paintings, but she also maintains that she introduced a new way of writing: “You see that is why making it the *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* made it do something, it made it be a recognition by never before that writing having it be existing” (*N* 62). Characterizing it as never having been imagined or produced before, Stein established her own writing as a significant emergence.

That *Four Saints* and the *Autobiography* create an artistic and mass media event marks a specific moment in modernism, in which the modernist writer becomes a celebrity and when modernism enters the mainstream. Stein was one of many modernists gaining wider audiences in the 1920s and 30s: Ernest Hemingway's frustrations about his "private life being an open sewer" after the publication of *A Farewell to Arms* in 1929 (Alberge), and Virginia Woolf's appearance on the cover of *Time* magazine in April 1937 both indicate a wider, public interest in modernist writers. Leick specifies that "1933–34 can be recognized as the moment that modernist writers became truly popular" (2).<sup>62</sup> Stein's 1933 *Time* magazine cover and her 1934 national radio interview reflects this popularity, as does her 1934–35 tour of the United States. Richard Bridgman describes these two years as "Stein's most active period of theorizing. In successive books she tried to clarify her intentions as an experimental artist without compromising her principles" (243). To create both a mass media presence and an artistic event, Stein needed to appeal to different groups of listeners, using multiple "channels" to relay simultaneously her work to both general and erudite audiences. *Four Saints* and its afterlives—its remediations, the *Autobiography*, and the lecture tour—represent Stein's attempts at reception; Stein had been writing for decades but, in the 1930s, she demanded surround sound broadcasting.

### **Stein's Resounding Libretto**

In the opera's first solo line, St. Stephen sings, "In narrative prepare for saints," alluding to the performance's textual origins (Thomson and Stein *FSS* 6). Of course, "narrative" is misleading here; any clear plot in *Four Saints* is exchanged in favour of verbal landscape, "as static as I could make it," according to Stein (*HWW* 158). As a result, *Four Saints* launched new possibilities for the dramatic arts, especially in breaking away from narratives containing a

distinctly (and Aristotelian) beginning, middle, and end. “After *Four Saints*,” argues Watson, “it became possible to conceive of a performance as ‘a landscape,’ without a single focus or narrative progression. Physical relations between objects and sounds might supersede conventional drama” (*Prepare* 303). As Posman details, Stein’s landscape plays, including *Four Saints*, draw on melody to express temporality. Of her innovations in the 1920s, Stein applied musical terms: “I worked at these things then with a great deal of concentration and as it was to me an entirely new way of doing it I had as a result a very greatly increased melody” (“Portraits and Repetition” 197). Extending Posman’s excellent analysis, I would emphasize how the libretto’s sequenced sounds, its melodies, make Stein’s work “new.”<sup>63</sup>

In the notes to his 1996 production of *Four Saints*, Robert Wilson describes the opera as being both enduring and intermedial: “It is like a Cubist painting. It is a work that is of no time—not timeless, but full of time—of no conclusions, of no beginning, no end. It is part of a continuous line” (“Director’s Notes”). Wilson’s version premiered nearly seventy years after Stein wrote the libretto: the line to which he gestures references both time within the opera and its continual performances. I would argue that it is precisely its intermediality that makes the opera “timeless.” Though he compares Stein’s work to Cubism in this instance, Wilson also describes the musicality of the libretto: “Gertrude Stein’s text is not just literary. Her words are constructed musically in the way a composer would write. Virgil Thomson’s music parallels the lyrical composition of Stein’s libretto, allowing the two to reinforce rather than merely illustrate one another” (“Director’s Notes”). The libretto, according to Wilson, is musical even without Thomson’s score and Cubist as text alone. Accordingly, Stein’s writing has influenced many musicians, filmmakers, and visual artists.

Those who saw the opera in 1934 praised, in particular, the collaboration, including Stein. The *Autobiography* describes the partnership between composer and writer genially: “Virgil Thomson had asked Gertrude Stein to write an opera for him. . . . And it is a completely interesting opera both as to words and music” (281). Thomson had put Stein’s words to music before *Four Saints*, which resulted in the writer being “very much interested in Virgil Thomson’s music” (Stein, *AABT* 279).<sup>64</sup> After seeing the opera in Chicago on 7 November 1934, Stein declared, “I am completely satisfied with it” (“Stein Likes Stein Opera”). Van Vechten claimed in the *New York Times* that “Stein’s words always sound better than they look, and they sound especially well when projected through the sensitive medium of Thomson’s music” (“Words and Music”). Van Vechten, a friend of Stein and Thomson’s, was promoting the opera, but other critics (such as Olin Downes) also applauded the performance network even when disparaging individual contributions.

In the years between the completion of the opera’s words and music and the full premiere of *Four Saints*, Thomson either made or approved of almost all production decisions related to the performance. The six-year process of transforming the libretto into a live musical event involved multiple collaborators, each of whom was Thomson’s selection, and each of whom altered the source libretto. Although Thomson and Stein discussed the production in letters, most of Stein’s input consisted of writing the libretto and using her reputation to promote the opera. As a libretto, *Four Saints* thematically concerns (among other things): the lives of saints; bonds between women; medium-specificity; ontology—specifically concerning gender and race; and the nature and possibility of peace. The libretto also references narrative and various arts and crafts. Each remediation of the libretto, with its corresponding historical moment and contextual space, reveals different social, political, and artistic aspects of Stein’s original text; the opera is



shaped by its productions, by the physical spaces, media, and bodies that are employed. I will examine how these various themes and elements of Stein's libretto are performed—or not—on the page, stage, and, to a lesser extent, over the radio.

Although many of Stein's texts contain intermedial references, *Four Saints* was conceived as opera—a media combination—from the outset.<sup>65</sup> Opera is a distinct intermedial category. Linda and Michael Hutcheon describe how opera “continues to be an archetypal adaptive art form, ever expanding and diversifying” (“Contribution”). Werner Wolf emphasizes opera's “overt intermediality,” as in, it is art in which “both media [drama and music] are directly present” and “each medium remains distinct” (40). Further, unlike other intermedial genres—such as comic books or film—these various media elements were combined live in the 1934 performances of *Four Saints*. As she is figured in the *Autobiography*, Stein enjoyed opera before she met Thomson. While a student at Radcliffe, “Gertrude Stein had been going to the opera every night and going also to the opera in the afternoon” (Stein, *AABT* 97). In the 1920s and 30s, Stein composed works in multiple genres and media—plays, lectures, portraits, and libretti—and was attentive to the musical and aural qualities of words: “it has been so often said that the appeal of her work is to the ear and to the subconscious” (*AABT* 92). In an early review of the opera, Downes suggested that Stein's libretto “genuinely, was written to be sung” (“Stein-Thomson Concoction”). Looking at Stein's aural and musical references in the libretto reveals the limits and extensions of media-specificity.

Multiple overt and covert combinations play out in the opera, resulting in a densely layered text. *Four Saints* focuses on the daily lives of saints using the adapted historical figures of Saint Teresa of Ávila and Saint Ignatius of Loyola—both of whose texts Stein read.<sup>66</sup> Thomson claimed he and Stein chose saints because they “saw among the religious a parallel to

the life we were leading” (“About ‘Four Saints’”).<sup>67</sup> The allegory of saints underscores the opera’s potential as an artistic event: the creative process is figured as visionary and therefore monumental. More specific to Stein’s libretto, the conception of *Four Saints* involved the remediation of photography. The “inspiration for her saint,” Josephine Nock-Hee Park finds, came from Stein walking in Paris and seeing a series of photographs showing the transformation of a young girl into a nun (35). Allmer and John Sears reiterate the centrality of photography to understanding *Four Saints*, not only as source material for Stein, but also as materials that demonstrate the visibility and invisibility of the opera’s performers in 1934.

Although I will consider the performance tableaux and other visual elements, my analysis focuses on “surround sound broadcasting,” in part because Stein aligned her work with radio techniques at a significant moment in the development of stereophonic transmission and recording. In particular, I demonstrate how Therese/Teresa and Ignatius make sound differently. *Four Saints*, in all its forms, makes notions of voice and sound explicit, and certain passages and formal elements of the libretto amplify the “stereophonic” features of Stein’s text. Combined, the libretto’s repetitions and descriptions of sound demonstrate the effect of multiple aural perspectives. Further, whereas Stein’s text offers many similarities between Ignatius and Therese, the possibility of queer relationships, and brief but troubling references to race and ethnicity, Thomson’s setting assigns more arias (or solos) to Ignatius than to any other performer, sensationalizes the libretto’s references to race, and adds heteronormative romantic elements.

Thomson’s music for *Four Saints* highlights intersections of subjectivity and medium. Even in Stein’s writing, however, sound is a way of marking difference. In works such as “France” (1913), “Italians” (1908–10), “England” (1913), and “A Sweet Tail (Gypsies)” (1912),

Stein interrogates sound in relation to country of origin. In “Italians,” Stein equates ontology with a way of speaking: “There are very many being existing who are ones who are talking quite often and they are sounding as they are looking, as they are acting, as they are being” (*GP* 52). In this passage, “sounding” is linked to “being” and “existing.” Stein’s nationalist essentialism is compelling due to shifting classifications of race, especially in conjunction with nation.<sup>68</sup> In “A Sweet Tail (Gypsies),” Stein uses sound as a trait that groups people, like the Romani, who exist outside of a single nation (*GP* 65). In “England,” the English are characterized as having distinct sounds and silences. Taken together, these examples show that Stein’s codification of different voices is driven by nationality as well as race and ethnicity. It is difficult to imagine that Stein—who experienced anti-Semitism and whose parents were German-Jewish immigrants—would have been unaware of how nationalism, racialism, and ethnicity operated.

Again, Stein offered no specific instructions for the performance of her libretto: there are no assigned speakers, no staging directions, and no clear narrative. Stein’s libretto does not offset character names with parentheses (unlike in “Do Let Us Go Away. *A Play*” [1916]), but a character’s name often begins a line of text, such as, “Saint Therese something like that” (*FS* [1934] 20).<sup>69</sup> Thomson appears to have followed these names as a guide when composing the vocal score. Throughout the libretto, however, it is difficult to distinguish between lines that reference a name and lines that might be spoken by a named character. The phrase “Saint Therese” occurs more than three hundred times in the libretto, which is three times more than “Saint Ignatius,” and it happens overwhelmingly at the beginning of a line (in what would be the speaker’s designation were the libretto a straightforward script). Saint Therese’s textual primacy is further illustrated: she is the first saint named in the libretto; the anaphoric repetition of “Saint Therese” occurs nine times before “Saint Ignatius” is mentioned; and, in “Act One,” the

character of Saint Therese conceivably appears first while Saint Ignatius, conversely, is “not there” (21).

Therese and Ignatius are both associated with moments when sound is theorized or thematized. For example, “Saint Ignatius. . . . Do and doubling with it at once left and right” (*LOP* 467), and “Saint Therese. Nobody visits than they do visits them Saint Therese. As loud as that as allowed as that” (Stein *FS* [1934] 23). Whether Therese performs these lines or not, she is textually connected to the effect of sonic saturation due to the position of her name at the beginning and end of these lines. Distinctions exist between the typography of these repeating words and how they are heard (whether voiced out loud or in the reader’s imagination): the near-homophonic “loud” and “allowed” draws attention to differences in spoken and written words; distinguishing between these two terms would be difficult for audiences during a vocal performance. Using this passage, it is possible to interpret Therese as “loud”—or, at least as loud as is “allowed”—and as someone generating sound. She is also characterized as a listener:

Saint Therese having heard.

In this way as movement.

In having been in. . . .

Saint Therese settled and some come. Some come to be near not near her but the same.

Surround them with the thirds and that. (*LOP* 449)<sup>70</sup>

Therese is thus a character who makes and listens to sound. The final line also contains one of the libretto’s more obvious allusions to music: “thirds” connotes intervals, such as a major or minor third. In performance, this reference is amplified. Clements suggests that Thomson “picks up on the polysemy” and “sets the phrase for the sopranos and altos of Chorus II: a third apart”

(“How” 61). In this example, one can hear how Thomson’s musical setting adds layers to Stein’s language.

Even more, Therese and Ignatius are associated with sound that surrounds; “around” and “surround” occur frequently and tellingly in Stein’s text. The libretto illustrates surround sound in the following passage:

Saint Ignatius. Once in a while and where and where around around is a sound and around is a sound and around is a sound and around. Around is a sound around is a sound around is a sound and around. Around differing from anointed now. Now differing from anointed now. Now differing differing. (*FS* [1934] 51)

This segment echoes and loops: the reverberating “sound” and “around” indicate a specific quality of sound, one that is mobile and encircles the reader or listener. This passage demonstrates how stereophonic sound relays output through multiple channels and speakers to mimic the experience of binaural sound reception. That the “sound” is “around” indicates a suffusion or saturation of noise. Despite the silence of the page, the transmission of sound in *Four Saints* is immersive.

This passage, Stein’s “around is a sound,” also plays with the distinction between written and spoken dialogue. The words themselves are all actual, definable terms, but they also perform a sonic function in the libretto. That words make sound becomes more evident through repetition. The meaning of “around,” when transmitted *as* a sound, is different from its textual denotation. The passage also uses assonance, creating noise and rhyme through repeating vowels. Rhythm comes from prosody, the repetitions and variations of stressed and unstressed syllables. In the first of two very similar phrases, the conjunction “and” separates the rhythmic units (made up of iambs and anapests) (*FS* [1934] 51). In the second variation, without the

conjunction creating clause breaks, the phrases could be divided as, “around is a sound around,” or, “a sound around is a sound,” or even an interrogative, “is a sound around” (*FS* [1934] 51). Rhyme and rhythm are all enhanced through what Stein calls “insistence”: “I am inclined to believe there is no such thing as repetition,” she expressed, adding “there can be no repetition because the essence of that expression is insistence” (“Portraits and Repetition” 167). Every utterance creates nuance; the sixth time “sound” comes around differs from its first instance. One effect of the repetition and diffusion of the same words and phrases is the isolation of sounds from meaning (semantic satiation), but this example also shows the subtle ways repetition can alter meaning. As Delville suggests, Stein’s libretto uses the “literary loop,” which destabilizes the meaning of words and phrases (78).<sup>71</sup>

The “around is a sound” passage is an equally compelling sonic passage. It demonstrates the libretto’s quality of sound while also providing a cogent example of how Therese and Ignatius’s musical treatment differs. Thomson assigned the entire passage to Ignatius, but the ambiguity of Stein’s libretto, however, allows for this passage to be adapted differently, such that multiple voices could sing these lines. Indeed, Thomson handled many of Stein’s repetitive phrasings or longer passages by either omitting lines or dividing them between two or more characters, a decision that accords with Stein’s heterogeneously voiced libretto. Joseph Cermatori insists on the dialogic nature of Stein’s text: “Much of *Four Saints* unfolds in this way,” he claims, “not a single poetic speaker but a multitude in polyphonic responsiveness with itself” (360). In contrast to the libretto’s profusion of possible voicings, “around is a sound” is performed monophonically—by a single character—in Thomson’s setting. This choice also contrasts with the lines themselves, which suggest a diffuse and surrounding sound that would be difficult to reproduce using only one voice. Whereas Thomson’s score retains every line that

includes the word “sound” from this section of the libretto, his distribution of the lines to a single character reveals how Thomson downplays the importance of “around” in Stein’s sonic description. That is, he included the content of this key intermedial passage but created a monologic rather than a dialogic quality of sound.

The libretto’s dialogism is used to discuss ontological and ethical themes—memorable and key aspects of both the written text and its subsequent productions. I would argue that three interrelated interrogatives are put forward in the libretto: 1, metatextual, “How many acts are there in it” (*FS* [1934] 54) and “ask Saint Therese how much of it is finished” (39); 2, on subjectivity, “Can women have wishes” (25), and “Could a negro be be with a beard” (25); and 3, ethical, “If it were possible to kill five thousand chinamen [*sic*] by pressing a button would it be done” (22). Questions of medium, violence, gender, and race are framed in the text somewhat equally, as though the value of each question is as important as the others. As I will demonstrate, these interrogatives all involve Saint Therese. Investigating the inclusion of these questions helps qualify the politics of intermediality: what is voiced and how it is significant. Ethically, the technological capacity to “kill five thousand chinamen” ought to be shocking, and, in hindsight, Therese’s understated reaction is similar to Stein’s in “Reflection on the Atomic Bomb” (1946). Stein’s libretto introduces questions of subjectivity and being that are taken up yet left unresolved in the performed opera.

Cermatori suggests that “Stein’s plural poetic voice is in conversation with itself” (360), and this conversation is *about* itself, too. This passage on surround sound in the libretto is one of many reflexive interrogations. Jane Bowers understands Stein’s plays as “metadramas”; it is useful to consider *Four Saints* as a metafictional dialogue on the nature of medium. As part of this dialogue, there are numerous arts and crafts in the libretto, including references to porcelain

figurines, photography, painting, nursery rhymes, and Americana. In these examples, there are no distinctions between high art and popular culture, between saints and artists and crafts. The effect is one of medium-parity: “My Country ‘tis of Thee” is on par with photography in the libretto. And yet, Stein only uses words to create intermedial effects in the libretto. Indeed, throughout Stein’s body of work, there are abundant examples of intermedial and cross-genre experimentation. Her writing evokes visual arts, broadcasting, and music, but she never uses the actual materials of another medium—her written textuality, “the referencing medium” as Rajewsky terms it, is the only medium “that is materially present” (53).

Given Stein’s attention to the relations among nation, being, and language, it is useful to try to understand how she imagined the voices in *Four Saints*. The opera was nationally transposed during its creation: Saint Teresa of Ávila and Saint Ignatius of Loyola were Spanish; Stein wrote the play in English while living in France and changed the spelling of Saint Therese’s name from Spanish to French (almost—Stein presented it without accents, as was her typical practice); and it was performed in the United States with Black cast members from Harlem. Because, as I will argue, race was sensationalized in the 1934 performances of *Four Saints*, I want to examine the libretto’s references to racial identity. The only explicit racial references are to “negro” (twice) and “chinamen” (once). There are no clear indications that the saints are conclusively racialized in Stein’s libretto. One could assume, however, that the line “never to have seen” a “negro with a beard” (Stein *FS* [1934] 25) indicates the speaker’s unfamiliarity with Black bodies. Presumably, there is also distance between the speaker and people from China. It is therefore unlikely that Stein imagined Chinese or Black performers voicing the libretto.



Even more, Stein had to be convinced by Thomson that an all-Black cast would work. In a letter to Thomson, Stein declared, “I do not care for the idea of showing the negro bodies” (qtd. in Watson, *Prepare* 207). This concern reveals how she must have envisioned different bodies—and perhaps different voices—from the outset. In his reply, Thomson persuaded Stein:

If it can be realized inoffensively, the bodies would merely add to our spectacle the same magnificence they give to classic religious painting and sculpture. One could not easily use this effect with white bodies, but I think one might with brown.

My Negro singers, after all, are a purely musical desideratum, because of their rhythm, their style, and especially their diction. Any further use of the racial qualities must be incidental and not of a nature to distract attention from the subject-matter . . . Hence, the idea of painting their faces white. Nobody wants to put on just a nigger show.<sup>72</sup> (“Letters” 62)

The exchange between Thomson and Stein reveals both the unstated Whiteness of the libretto and how “the [racialized] bodies would merely add to our spectacle.” Race-specific casting contributed to the opera’s appeal, and Thomson seems to be aware of this. This letter also reveals Thomson’s racist essentialism, treating his “negro singers” as ornamental yet inherently musical. It is worth noting, as other critics have, that this letter reveals Thomson’s desire to use “brown” bodies along with their presumed vocal qualities. Even if it was not explicitly stated in the libretto, the presumed White characters of her text are revealed as such in the opera’s media combination, which requires actual bodies to make sound.

Moreover, this correspondence reveals how Thomson made his casting decision with White audiences in mind. The casting was almost revolutionary; it nearly suggested that the performers could achieve crossover success and that roles in major Broadway productions need

not be segregated. And yet, as Barg argues, “the original production gave black artists an unprecedented opportunity to play white roles but only *because* they were black” (“Modernism” 79). The final line in Thomson’s letter highlights how little Thomson (and perhaps Stein) valued theatre that focused on Black lives, and further emphasizes that Thomson, it seems, did not consider Black theatregoers to be among the opera’s potential audience.<sup>73</sup>

The casting of *Four Saints* in 1934 shapes how Stein’s libretto has been understood. Nina Sun Eidsheim demonstrates how the opera was interpreted by the press as being influenced by African American speaking patterns: “Commentators ran with the idea that Gertrude Stein’s libretto played with racialized speech” (657). Although Eidsheim refers to Stein’s language, the conflation of the libretto and the performance indicates how the production affects interpretations of the source text. Stein had written African American characters and perceived speech patterns before the opera, notably in “Melanctha” (*Three Lives*, 1909). Further, statements in the *Autobiography*, the 1934 radio interview, and in *Everybody’s Autobiography* (1937) indicate how the writer associated the nation with racial conflict. Overall in Stein’s oeuvre, however, references to race and even to Jewish identity occur peripherally. Therefore, even though the libretto ostensibly concerns Blackness only minorly—a position reinforced by Stein’s hesitation about Thomson’s casting—the 1934 opera’s Black performers amplify her broader work’s references to race, ethnicity, and nation.

Early press about *Four Saints* reproduced Thomson’s repeated statements about Black Americans being essentially spiritual and musically inclined—merely bodies that project certain sounds. Explaining his casting, Thomson expressed: “They sing the ‘Nonsense’ of the libretto with straight faces, and sing it beautifully. . . . and put themselves into the religious and fanciful moods of the opera a thousand times better than any white singer could” (“Four Saints in Three

Acts Collaborate”).<sup>74</sup> Following this, Van Vechten repeated almost wholesale Thomson’s view, calling the casting—not the cast—“genius” due to “a simplicity and a distinction about this singing, a clearness in the enunciation, a complete lack of self-consciousness in the involved and intricate action of the piece” (“Words and Music”). Even when repudiating Thomson’s statements, critics emphasized Thomson and Stein rather than the performers. For example, Downes calls out Thomson’s “assumption that [the singers’] naïveté and presumptively unsophisticated minds would enable them to do more with the Stein text,” calling it “a complete injustice” in his 1934 review of the opera (“Stein-Thomson Concoction”). Downes also labelled Stein’s libretto “a specimen of an affected and decadent phase of the literature of the whites” (“Stein-Thomson Concoction”).<sup>75</sup> The libretto’s Whiteness and the producer’s racism or racialism were known to audiences and critics at the time, as evidenced by Downes’s review.

### ***Four Saints Performed***

According to Clements, “Stein’s first libretto leaves ample room, if not abundant space, for its composer Virgil Thomson to shape the text in the process of putting sounds into particular bodies on the stage” (*Resonant* 100). Using race-specific casting for the 1934 performances (and later performances, too) is significant, especially considering how remediations affect representation. As Barg argues, “Thomson’s casting decision or, more precisely, the ensuing racial spectacle crucially mediated perceptions of the work at the time (and its subsequent existence)” (“Black Voices” 124). However, as Clements differentiates, the performers’ contributions are “integral” to how the opera’s “intermedial exchanges—fraught with tensions, ambiguities, and coalescences—generate *Four Saints in Three Acts*” (“How” 67). Therefore, I examine the interrelated effects of intermediality in my investigation of *Four Saints* as a

collaborative performance, focusing primarily on the 1934 stage and radio performances but also considering later iterations of the opera.

The libretto's openness also creates space for the incorporation of other media into the staged opera. While the effects of collaboration sometimes conventionalize the characters and narrative of Stein's avant-garde writing, the opera's cast and crew enhanced the source libretto's intermediality. The 1934 performances demonstrate how such innovation results from Stein, Thomson, the other contributors, and the performers, each of whom "mediated" the opera: Thomson's music accompanies Stein's melodic text; Jessye provided choral direction; Frederick Ashton choreographed the movements and dances; and there were added theatrical elements, such as costuming, makeup, lighting, and Stettheimer's "painterly" and impressive sky blue cellophane backdrop.<sup>76</sup> Scenarist Grosser incorporated eight intermedial tableaux to shape the opera's narrative (Lister 5). The choice of a race-specific cast enabled the collaborators of *Four Saints* to incorporate and reference Black American arts. For example, Ashton "drew on the traditions of black social dance" he encountered in Harlem, including the Charleston, Snake Hips, and the Lindy Hop (Harris 124–5). David Harris further suggests that these dances "were the only acknowledgement in *Four Saints*—with the possible exception of the Gospel music quality (itself a sort of quotation style)—of the traditions of the black performers" (124). These allusions indicate that the performers "add to [Stein and Thomson's] spectacle" (Thomson, "Letters" 62) a corpus of cultural references the casting facilitated.

Of the opera's collaborative elements, Thomson's music, his characterization choices, and Grosser's tableaux affect the libretto most significantly in relation to race and gender. In the libretto, the appellation "Saint Therese" occurs in passages that reference gender, race, and metatextuality. These associations are intensified on stage. Further, Therese is characterized as

being “interest[ing]” in the libretto (Stein *FS* [1934] 33); other characters are drawn to her. Whereas Therese is never “interested” in anything—and, as I will discuss, notably “not interested” in the question of killing “chinamen” (22)—Ignatius is interested in her: “Saint Ignatius to be interested fortunately. Fortunately to be interested in Saint Therese” (33).<sup>77</sup> The libretto’s Therese both attracts audiences and acts as a listener. She is, using Stein’s definition, a genius. When the lines are performed on stage and over the radio, however, what of Therese do audiences hear?

In examining representations of Black women in popular culture, Kimberlé Crenshaw advocates for an intersectional analysis that considers how “racial and sexual subordination are mutually reinforcing, that Black women are commonly marginalized by a politics of race alone or gender alone, and that a political response to each form of subordination must at the same time be a political response to both” (1283). Thomson’s composition and production decisions specifically alter Saint Therese. More precisely, the intersection of subjugated identities is tangible in Thomson’s translation of Stein’s Saint Therese into two roles, St. Teresa I and II, played by Black women.<sup>78</sup> The collaborative opera does offer other intersections, such as: religion and race (Stein’s Jewishness, the saint’s Catholicism, Thomson’s assertions that African Americans are inherently religious); or of sexuality, race, and gender (Stein, Thomson, and other collaborators were in same-sex relationships).<sup>79</sup> Recent critics such as Collins and Bilge have pointed out, however, how intersectionality has too often been co-opted in ways that erase the lived experiences of race and of Black women’s lives in particular. In order to put intermediality and intersectionality into conversation, I address how gender, race or ethnicity, and sexuality appear in Stein’s libretto, Thomson’s score, and the 1934 performances of the opera.

Musically, Thomson's score makes the libretto's avant-garde use of language easier to comprehend by making narrative, character, and meaning legible in conventional ways. After attending the 1934 Hartford premiere, critic Henry McBride called the music "'really adorable'" (249). In contrast, Stein's writing was described as "experimentation" by Lundell in the same year ("RI" 91). In his review of a 1996 performance of *Four Saints*, Bernard Holland simultaneously praised and belittled Thomson's contribution: "With elegance and economy, Virgil Thomson copied the music of his middle-American, churchgoing youth. One was invited to swing his musical surfaces on their hinges, look behind and contemplate nothing" ("4 Saints"). Rather than further Stein's literary experiments, and rather than compose in a style closer to other modernist musicians such as Alexander Scriabin or Arnold Schönberg, Thomson's score—which features standard time and key signatures—is familiar. The recognizable music demands little from the audience. Although Thomson took some musical cues from Stein's text, such as the inclusion of the tune to "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" to match the libretto's use of the song (Stein *FS* [1934] 20), at many points, "[t]he music does not seem to listen to the words, or if it does, it does not really care what they are saying. It keeps on moving as if there were no possible discord between language and scene" (Bucknell 201). Although simplicity might also be a type of innovation, on its own, Thomson's music offers nothing particularly new or radical.

Despite their dissimilarities, the avant-garde words and tonally conventional music do work in tandem: "the opera is made *socially acceptable*," Bucknell argues, by "Thomson's conventionality" (199). Bucknell further remarks that Thomson is the libretto's "ideal reader;" not only did Thomson have a "deep admiration" and "deep *understanding*" of Stein's work, but his remediation involved the sort of simultaneous and participatory listening that Stein championed (181, 163). Clements argues that Thomson "put words centre stage" at the same

time that his music “determines and directs Stein’s insistence” (“How” 54). Even critics of the 1934 performances heard how Thomson was, in many ways, attentive to Stein’s words. Downes, for example, disparaged Thomson and Stein’s individual contributions but praised the collaboration: “Thomson’s music is no more revolutionary than last year’s hat,” he claims, but the composer “obviously [has] a real knowledge of prosody and a great skill in combining music and text” (“Stein-Thomson Concoction”).<sup>80</sup>

Regardless of how the libretto and the musical setting do and do not clash, the opera enhanced Stein’s status. “The current impression of your work,” suggested Lundell to Stein in their radio interview, “is founded largely upon the tremendous publicity attained by *Four Saints in Three Acts*” (“RI” 88). From her public statements, it appears that Stein welcomed such broad appeal that the opera enabled; she wanted her work to be enjoyed. The ways in which Thomson “Americanizes” the libretto also makes the opera and Stein’s work more approachable. “Thomson’s music,” as Delville suggests, “turns Stein’s text into a merry myriad of American melodies,” making the libretto’s words easier to remember and consume (76). Alex Ross demonstrates how “Thomson filled his scores with Americana—Sunday-school hymns, village-square marches, lazy waltzes suitable for a bandstand on a summer evening” (139). Recall, too, Holland’s classification of Thomson’s musical arrangement as “middle-American.” Further, that Thomson cast only Black performers was a specific decision to emphasize (or co-opt) what he perceived to be essential qualities of African Americans. This decision limits the mobility of the characters. Whereas the saints in Stein’s libretto are nationally transferable, the saints in Thomson’s version of the opera are geographically fixed by both nationality and race.

Although Thomson curbs Stein’s expansive notions of gender and language, some of his choices do amplify the libretto’s intermedial, stereophonic qualities. Thomson modifies St.

Teresa's transmission sonically and visually by splitting the role into two characters. Thomson could have created this effect with St. Ignatius, who, in the libretto, is associated with surround sound at multiple points—for example, “Saint Ignatius and left and right laterally be lined,” and, “Saint Ignatius. . . . Do and doubling with it at once left and right” (Stein *FS* [1934] 56, 46). Yet, St. Ignatius frequently performs solo in the opera. Indeed, it is somewhat surprising that the musical setting of “around is a sound” is singly voiced. Dividing what could have been one female principal into two roles means that Teresa I and II are each assigned fewer arias than Ignatius. Another effect of this bisection, however, is that it allows for St. Teresa's stereophonic performance. That is, St. Teresa broadcasts from two sources (or bodies) in the opera and is doubly projected. Having two performers enact one character could reflect Stein's many assertions that a genius is someone who can speak and listen at the same time. St. Teresa I and II dialogue with each other at many points. For example, in Act I, the two characters have a short conversation; Teresa I speaks from the main stage and Teresa II responds from the tableau stage (*FSS* mm. 85–8).

Throughout the opera, lines are performed “stereophonically” when repetitions are voiced by multiple speakers. The passage “why should ev'ry one be at home,” for example, is sung five times by different voices: St. Settlement, St. Sarah, St. Stephen, St. Plan, and the altos from Chorus 1 (*FSS* Prologue mm. 122–7). In this example, there are five separate locations, or bodies, from which sound is produced. This multi-channel way of dividing lines manages the libretto's repeating phrases by having various performers sing duplicate lines. The performed opera thus enacts the effect of stereo in its use of multiple voices who sing or speak from different places on the stage. Whereas Stein's repetitions in her libretto are silent—at least until a reader interacts with the text—the shows feature actual voices making sound. Performances of



*Four Saints* amplify this particular intermedial quality, a vividly effective result of Thomson's setting. When staged, the performers create audible surround sound.

Thomson frequently assigns Stein's instantiations (or repetitions) to multiple performers, but he divides Therese's lines more frequently than Ignatius's. Take, for instance, the following example from the libretto:

Saint Therese seated and not standing half and half of it and not half and half of it seated and not standing surrounded and not seated and not seated and not standing and not surrounded and not surrounded and not not not seated not seated not seated not surrounded not seated and Saint Ignatius standing standing not seated Saint Therese not standing not standing and Saint Ignatius not standing standing surrounded as if in once yesterday. (Stein, *LOP* 446–7)

In the score, this passage is shortened and the word “surrounded” is performed five times in different vocal combinations; it becomes a polyvocal, surround sound performance of being “surrounded not surrounded” (*FSS* mm. 132–46).<sup>81</sup> This lengthy section could have been performed by Saint Therese alone; her name is at the beginning of the section, much like how “Saint Ignatius” begins the “around is a sound” passage. Instead, Therese is tempered by Thomson's distribution of Stein's repetitions.

Although much of my dissertation concerns how different forms of media transmit events, a medium-focused analysis of this opera would be incomplete without also discussing the effect of using certain bodies to do the work of surround-sound transmission. The status of *Four Saints* as an artistic event is the result of its transition from a written libretto to a visual and sonic opera, and by the aesthetic use of Black performers. Thus, the opera shows how intermedial elements change and are changed by various generic *and* identity categories. Webb describes

how Stein's literary sound experiments are affected when presented in another medium: "Stein is primarily concerned with the music resulting from the manipulation and repetition of sounds and words. In the medium of physical performance, such a concern with pliability and rearrangement finds itself in tension with the dynamics of the visual—the citational quality of raced and gendered bodies" (451). The movement of Stein's libretto from a body-less text to an embodied medium such as performance reveals how remediations render subject positions differently.

In the 1934 performances of *Four Saints*, the intersections of race and gender qualified how sounds were produced. Clements illustrates how decidedly music affects characterization: "The materiality of musical sounds (note intervals, instrumental choice, high pitch versus low, rhythm, tempo, dynamics) is the mechanism by which Thomson's music acts as a force of containment on St. Teresa's subjectivity" (*Resonant* 222). St. Teresa's musical treatment differs from St. Ignatius's, whose frequent solos and non-doubled characterization result in sonic space and individuality. Before I articulate further the specific ways Thomson treats the opera's principals differently from each other, I should note that St. Teresa I and II, played by Beatrice Robinson Wayne and Bruce Howard respectively, are not the only characters constrained by the opera's remediations; St. Ignatius, played by Edward Matthews, is also limited by Thomson's casting. The opera, argues Eidsheim, "reproduce[d] stereotypical ideas about African American culture, music, and voice, and oblige[d] African American performers to be molded into 'natural' portraits of the stereotypes, which the performers themselves thereby unwillingly reinforce" (658). The 1934 performances for *Four Saints* intensified stock characterizations of Black women in particular. Webb argues that Wayne, who portrayed St. Teresa I, "is even remembered today as the 'eternal, unchanging black woman'" (454). The music, even though an invisible element in *Four Saints*, intensifies racial and gendered stereotypes. Such cultural memory is

likely also an effect of the cast's treatment in the press: "Performers' names were often omitted from reviews" as news outlets instead attributed the opera's triumphs to Stein, Thomson, and the crew (Allmer 43). Further, *Four Saints* did not necessarily propel the careers of its principals, particularly those of Howard and Wayne's.<sup>82</sup>

Because all racial references are allocated to St. Teresa and St. Settlement in Thomson's score, these specific characters contribute more pointedly to the opera's "spectacularization." In Stein's libretto, the following passage is formally indistinct, but noteworthy in Saint Therese's non-response:

No saint to remember to remember. No saint to remember. Saint Therese knowing  
young and told.

If it were possible to kill five thousand chinamen by pressing a button would it be  
done.

Saint Therese not interested.

#### Repeat First Act

A pleasure April fool's day a pleasure. (*LOP* 445)

In contrast, the performance of this passage features distinctive voicing, instrumentation, and staging. Even more, it introduces St. Teresa I to the audience for the first time (St. Teresa II first appears in Tableau 1 but does not sing or speak). In Act I, following a choral crescendo, St. Settlement sings, "If it were possible to kill five thousand chinamen by pressing a button would it be done" (*FSS* mm. 32–4). The solo line contains an audibly notable change in volume and voicing, and, in some performances, the curtain to the tableau stage closed immediately after St. Settlement sang it, enhancing its dramatic effect.<sup>83</sup> Immediately following, the Commère responds "*fortissimo*" (very loudly) and "*severely*": "Saint Teresa not interested" (m. 35).

Thomson’s arrangement causes these two lines to stand out: not only do the words reference mass violence, but they are voiced using one repeating and audible note (middle G). Further, there is a significant decrease in orchestration accompanying St. Settlement’s line: in the preceding line, fourteen instruments and Chorus I perform simultaneously (mm. 30–2). Then, after a slight pause, St. Settlement is accompanied only by accordion and violoncello, with dynamic markings of *poco a poco accelerando* and *crescendo ed accelerando sempre* building momentum for St. Teresa I’s first entrance onto the stage (mm. 32–7). Her entrance is further emphasized by shifts in key (from C major to E $\flat$  major when St. Teresa I starts singing “Not April fool’s day a pleasure” [m. 38]) and instrumentation (from the accordion and violoncello to the string quartet and oboe [mm. 37, 38]). By making these lines sound distinct, the music draws attention to the content and makes St. Teresa’s disinterest prominent.

The image displays a musical score for Act I, "Saint Therese not interested," mm. 28–40. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (mm. 28–37) features a large ensemble including Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horns, Trumpets, Timpani, and Chorus I. The second system (mm. 38–40) features a smaller ensemble including Oboe, Accordion, Trombone, Chorus II, and a string quartet (Violins I & II, Viola, Cello). The score includes lyrics for St. Settlement, St. Teresa I, and the Chorus. Performance instructions such as "poco rit.", "a tempo", "poco a poco accel.", "cresc. ed accel. sempre", and "poco rit." are present throughout the score.

Fig. 1. *Four Saints* [score], Act I, “Saint Therese not interested,” mm. 28–40.

Thomson's setting amplifies the libretto's content, using themes of mass violence for audience reaction; figuratively killing "chinamen" is like Thomson's use of Black bodies to create a "spectacle" (Thomson, "Letters" 62). Moreover, this line was played as a joke. "A black woman-saint uninterested in the figure of China is intended to be the central punchline," and, as Tze-Yin Teo further describes, "the visibility of black bodies comically, even absurdly grounds the invisibility of Chinese subjectivity, becoming the prosaic and sentimentalized weapons for telling a joke at the pleasure of white liberal America" (10). Barg reproduces a 1934 *New Yorker* cartoon that depicts this moment in the opera to demonstrate how the passage exemplified "the opera's comical absurdity" ("Black Voices" 145, 148). Stein even recalled the audience's amused reaction in *Everybody's Autobiography* (89–90). In the libretto, "Saint Therese not interested" is written as a single line and paragraph; Nock-Hee Park argues that Stein "invokes the Orient only to cast it aside" (33).<sup>84</sup> Rather than have St. Teresa I and/or II sing or speak "Saint Therese not interested" or even "not interested" (Stein *FS* [1934] 22), however, Thomson's score paradoxically amplifies St. Teresa's disinterest by silencing her. Both writer and composer contentiously use violence against racialized bodies. Rather than resolve the ambiguity of Stein's libretto, Thomson's musical choices characterize St. Teresa alone as being ethically ambivalent.<sup>85</sup>

The "chinamen" passage marks a disjuncture in Stein's use of "broadcasting." The writer purportedly embraced a global communications system that enabled participatory radio programming, yet the vast distance between the opera's 1934 producers and the people of China remains. Further, this section demonstrates the disconnect between medium and ethics; radio technologies were used not only for the purposes of connecting people across distances, but also in weapons of war. Blumlein, an early innovator in stereophony, was instrumental in the

development of aerial radio navigation systems (radar) in the late 1930s and 1940s (Alexander 319).<sup>86</sup> For Stein to claim she enjoys and even uses broadcasting while concurrently expressing disinterest in the way radio makes mass murder from a distance possible, is suspect. At the very least, Stein's use of "broadcasting" reveals a desire to separate aesthetics and politics that, as Walter Benjamin is making clear at the same time audiences are watching and hearing *Four Saints* on stages and radios, is an impossibility. This passage demonstrates how technologies of communication enable distance as much as they collapse it.

Due to the musical arrangement, any performance of Thomson's score for *Four Saints* will highlight the "Chinamen" line and Teresa's response. In the opera's references to "negro" and "women," however, the performers' bodies also prescribe the audience's interpretation of Stein's text. After singing "Can women have wishes" in unison, St. Teresa I and II perform a two-channel exchange interrogating ontological matters:

St. Teresa I: She is to meet her.

St. Teresa II: Can two saints be one.

St. Teresa I: Very many go out as they do.

St. Teresa II: And make him prominent.

St. Teresa I: Could a negro be be with a beard

St. Teresa II: to see and to be.

St. Teresa I: Never to have seen a negro with it there

St. Teresa II: and with it so. (*FSS* Act One, mm. 255–70)

This duet, as in the previous example, shapes Teresa's characterization and marks the first time the audience would have heard St. Teresa II's singing voice on its own.<sup>87</sup> As designated by Thomson, these questions of gender and race were performed by two Black, female performers.

Again, this passage is performed in dialogue or stereophonically. As Bucknell demonstrates, the soprano and contralto Teresa I and II “trade triadic arpeggios,” creating a “musical debate” that is interrupted by the Compère” (204–5). In Thomson’s setting, St. Teresa transmits ideas of “negro” and “women” both visibly and vocally. When performed by Wayne and Howard, these lines are either absurd or they forestall potential criticism of Thomson and Stein, thus making the performers complicit with the opera’s limited understanding of Blackness. Regardless, the effect of these lines is decidedly different depending on who performs them.

Fig. 2. *Four Saints* [score], Act I, “Could a negro be be,” mm. 254–75.

Musically, subjectivity and race are connected through the arrangement of “Could a negro be be with a beard.” The word “be” is sung on the highest note in the melody; this second iteration of “be” is held longer than other words in the phrase (*FSS* Act I m. 264). There is almost no other instrumentation during these phrases—no competing sounds. In “to see and to

be,” “be” is again a half note and low, sung at either F4 or possibly F3 (m. 266).<sup>88</sup> “Never to have seen a negro with it there” uses almost the exact same melody as the preceding line shifted one half-step up, causing “negro” to occupy the place of “be be” in the pattern (m. 268). The effect is an immutable connection between being and race—a connection that recalls Stein’s understanding of nationality, sounding, and being in “Italians.” Further, Bucknell suggests that this section is an example of the ways Thomson’s “Melodic continuity” serves to clarify and project the language being performed (205).

The libretto suggests similarly inflexible boundaries of racial distinction: the possibility of bodily differences within “negro” is quickly dismissed because it has not been seen. There is, in both the libretto and Thomson’s opera, tension between visibility and being. This conflict could be resolved through media that operate without visible bodies—like literature and music—especially given Webb’s assertion that “the performative dimension of black people singing these words makes successful defamiliarization even less likely” (464). Neither Stein’s text nor Thomson’s music, however, uses sound to expand this limited interpretation of race. As demonstrated earlier, the occurrence of “sound” six times and “around” ten times in one section of the libretto results in the terms’ disassociation from any single, stable meaning. It also creates an intermedial, stereophonic effect. Stein does not, however, employ the same insistence for the term “negro,” which occurs only twice. If anything, Stein’s references to race and ethnicity are downplayed in the libretto. In contrast, Thomson’s music draws attention to “negro,” as does his casting. Thomson’s score includes every reference to race from the libretto and renders them easily audible.

Sonically and visually, subtly and spectacularly, the 1934 performances draw attention to gender and race without ever challenging how these categories are sustained; “Chinamen” and



“negro” remain fixed. The tableaux, too, are simultaneously innovative and normative intermedia. Providing visual narratives to accompany the opera’s words, the photographic tableaux attend to the libretto’s intermedial references.<sup>89</sup> The tableaux contain layered references to the arts: the first three tableaux incorporate painting, photography, and music, and Cermatori interprets Tableau VI as “an obvious homage to Bernini’s sculpture,” a photograph of which was featured on the premiere’s programme (361).<sup>90</sup> St. Teresa appears in each of the seven tableau (whereas St. Ignatius appears in two), making her connection to the visual arts more emphatic. St. Teresa’s characterization as an artist in these tableaux could be interpreted as defying stereotypes about gender, race, and artistry. Predominantly, however, the tableaux render St. Teresa as the subject of someone else’s art or affection. Teresa II paints in the first tableau; in the subsequent tableaux she is photographed by St. Settlement, serenaded (in pantomime) by Ignatius, and then given “a heart-shaped bouquet of bright, cellophane flowers” by Ignatius (Harris 113). In the final tableau, Teresa II “rocked an imaginary child” (Harris 113). In the libretto, Saints Therese and Ignatius are similarly figured in relation to visual arts: “Saint Therese could be photographed” (*LOP* 447) and “Saint Ignatius could be in porcelain actually” (450)—indeed, this latter assertion is repeated six times. Yet, despite this association, the 1934 tableaux did not depict St. Ignatius as the object of another character’s artistic practice.

The aestheticized *tableaux vivants*, which freeze the action of the opera and silence the performers within them, demonstrate how Blackness and Black womanhood were intensely visible in the 1934 opera. As part of a larger discussion on the centrality of the Black performers and social context to *Four Saints*, Barg specifically addresses the tableaux: “Much of the dramatic force in the original production rested on a visual economy that objectified the cast through what in film theory is referred to as spectacularization” (“Black Voices” 149). That is,

the tableaux specifically depicted racialized bodies as objects, as materials through which the opera made meaning. Although Grosser's tableaux objectify Teresa II more often than Ignatius, both characters and performers are subject to the White gaze and the male gaze. Again, and because she appears in every tableaux, St. Teresa II—played by Howard—is visibly reified in the tableaux at the same time her and Wayne's vocal performances are sonically shaped by Thomson's musical setting. The layers of mediation operate multifariously.



Fig. 3. White Studio, tableau 2, St. Teresa I being photographed by St. Settlement.

Regardless of Thomson's motivations, the effect of the opera's casting contributed to its headline-news status. "Perhaps because of its exotic racial allure," Ross explains, "*Four Saints* turned out to be a surprise hit, running for sixty performances" (140). "In retrospect," Ross suggests further, "Thomson's decision to use an all-black cast seems more a commercial calculation than a musical necessity. Some of the composer's comments were condescending, bordering on racist" (141). There is certainly evidence of racism in Thomson's private correspondence (see again his letter to Stein), but even among his published comments he reveals essentialist ideas about race and physicality. "I had chosen them purely for beauty of voice, clarity of enunciation, and fine carriage," Thomson wrote, and added that his cast's

“surprise gift to the production was their understanding of the work” (Thomson, “About”). His “surprise” at the actors’ comprehension betrays how Thomson hired the performers not for their intellectual or artistic abilities but for what their bodies signified. Again, the tableaux intensify such a signification.

*Four Saints* was an artistic and popular culture event that continues to be performed and remediated. In 1934, the opera generated considerable publicity, enhanced by the collaborators, performers, and the noteworthy incorporation of multiple intermedial elements. As Webb explains, *Four Saints* “is a landmark in the history of American performance” primarily because of casting and sound: “Broadway had never before showcased a work in which words served the usual function of music, not telling a story or communicating meaning in a traditional fashion, but primarily *sounding*. The casting was also revolutionary” (447). At the end of the Hartford premiere, “the Avery theater broke into pandemonium,” according to Watson; “Van Vechten wrote Gertrude Stein that he had not witnessed a crowd more inflamed since the legendary premiere of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, in 1913. Fortunately, Chick Austin had warned the police captain on duty” (*Prepare* 279).<sup>91</sup> The strong response from the audience seems to have been what Stein and Thomson wanted the opera to elicit.

The use of Black performers to achieve this effect, however, exposes the different relations to power—particularly to police—between the producers of the opera and the performers in 1934. Overall, the opera demonstrates the differing effects of intermedial collaboration. The opera’s remediations reveal uneven exchanges between bodies in performance, bodies in the audience, and the bodies in creative control. In Stein’s libretto—like in much of her creative work and commentary—surrounding, multi-channel sound is figured as important, something “genius[es]” do. I would argue, therefore, that how and where Stein and

Thomson's opera fails to make sound is critical. As an experiment in medium combination, *Four Saints* continues to reverberate; as a breakthrough for the inclusion of Black performers in lead roles in major Broadway productions, *Four Saints* has had limited frequency.

### **The Afterlives of *Four Saints***

In 1934 there were two notable radio broadcasts of the opera. The first was on 8 February, when "Columbia radio had planted microphones in the cellophane" for a live broadcast of the Hartford premiere (Watson, *Prepare* 278). The second was on 24 February, when three minutes of the opera's third act were performed live on air at the WABC studios, as part of a regular and popular program, *The March of Time*.<sup>92</sup> The broadcast featured Edward Matthews (Ignatius), Abner Dorsey (Compère), and forty cast members (likely the full chorus). As a result of broadcasting nationally this particular section of Act III, it became the most well-known and cited passage of the entire opera. As Barg explains, the section containing "Let Lucy Lily" (which is shortly after "Pigeons on the grass") "almost immediately became a kind of pop culture textual synecdoche for the opera" ("Black Voices" 148).

Because the radio audience would have been substantially larger and likely more diverse than the opera's theatre audiences, broadcasts potentially shaped Americans' perception of Stein's opera more than any other medium.<sup>93</sup> "The most hermetic of operas," suggests Watson "managed to enter the broad stream of American popular culture" through the radio (*Prepare* 286). Further, without visibly gendered or racialized bodies, there is potential for radio to perform subjectivities more flexibly than the opera—indeed, Sarah Wilson argues this pliability is why the radio appealed to Stein (268). Yet, *The March of Time* broadcast seems not to have included either Wayne (who had performed on the radio many times before she was cast in *Four*

*Saints*) or Howard; their names are not included in the press announcement.<sup>94</sup> Of *Four Saints*, it is likely that radio audiences would have heard Black women's voices briefly and only as part of the full chorus during the program. In contrast, St. Ignatius's solo, "Pigeons on the grass," was not only heard but remembered—so much so that Stein was asked to discuss the passage during her own radio appearance, months later. The significance of this medial transposition is that Stein's initial libretto gives Saint Therese textual primacy, then two St. Teresas perform stereophonically in the opera, but what was transmitted to the radio program's national audience was the monophonic voice of St. Ignatius.

In the 1930s, most speaking voices on national radio belonged to White men; *The March of Time* was no exception (Lawrence 18). The "ideal radio voice" of the early twentieth century "was a baritone" (McKay 24). St. Ignatius, as composed by Thomson and performed by Matthews, is also a baritone. In the 1920s—the beginning of radio broadcasting in the United States—"female sopranos, who sang arias from operas" performed often on air, as did contraltos (the ranges of Teresa I and II). Beginning with the Radio Act of 1927, broadcasts of live and recorded jazz performances were disproportionately censored (Douglas 91–2).<sup>95</sup> Although the voices of Black speakers and musicians were increasingly segregated and regulated on radio, imitations of perceived African American speech patterns were commonly heard on shows. "In the 1920s and 30s," asserts Michele Hilmes, "radio employed the figure of the blackface minstrel more consistently than any other one ethnic character" (32). Such programming indicates that there was an expectation that Blackness sounded a particular way. Thomson, too, perpetuated notions of racialized vocal qualities. While *The March of Time*'s broadcast of *Four Saints* did feature Black artists—and Matthews in particular—their voices were mediated by Thomson's control over the score and the singers, the opera's content, and the radio audience's expectations.

Like *Four Saints*, which created space for Black performers paradoxically, only because they were Black, the radio, too, both allowed and restricted the opera's racialized voices.

As previously mentioned, the years surrounding the conception and premiere of *Four Saints* coincide with early experiments in stereophonic radio broadcasting and recording that bridged increasingly far distances accurately and immediately. Popular radio programs of the era often featured discussions between radio presenters and a responsive listening audience, programs that invited listeners to participate by calling into the station (S. Wilson). Stein's use of the radio, according to Wilson, "suggests that she presciently sensed the pertinence of mass media forms to modernist formal experimentation. Radio in particular was a powerful formal model for an intellectual and expressive moment that valued the broadcasting of multiple voices" (275). The opera, too, utilized multiple voices from different stage locations and over the radio. As I have argued, the two Teresas perform polyphonically, turning the libretto's notional stereophony into rudimentary surround sound using two different performers. Further, although Stein's broadcasting is figurative, it is worth noting how, beginning in 1925, a handful of radio stations broadcast in stereo. Stations in Connecticut—the state where *Four Saints* premiered—were using binaural sound transmission to reproduce the experience of live musical performance in the 1930s. Cost restrictions, however, meant that American radio audiences were listening primarily to monoaural broadcasts.

Radio programs were instrumental in the promotion of *Four Saints* during and after 1934. After the opera closed in Chicago, audiences would have heard *Four Saints* primarily as a radio oratorio. Abridged versions of *Four Saints* were produced especially for the radio in the 1940s, and one 1947 performance was recorded by RCA.<sup>96</sup> These broadcasts, which productively complicate the tensions among representations of voices in the libretto and opera, warrant further

attention. Analyzing the way the libretto's Therese is silenced in the tableaux and on the short radio broadcast—attending to the nodes brought out by considering both intermediality and intersectionality—can be useful in evaluating the opera's more recent remediations.

Beyond radio, *Four Saints* has been discussed, recorded, and performed in various media during the past century. After 1934, the opera was not staged until 1952, when Thomson produced a short-lived Broadway production that subsequently traveled to Paris for a brief run. In 1981, a concert performance of *Four Saints* was put on at Carnegie Hall and the first major recording of the opera was made. The show featured a Black cast, including Betty Allen, Benjamin Matthews, and Gwendolyn Bradley (Henahan). Robert Wilson staged shortened productions of the opera in 1996 and 2002. Mark Morris revived the opera in 2000 (in London, England), 2005 (in Berkeley, CA), and most recently, in 2012 (in New York City). Concert performances of *Four Saints* have been staged recently, in 2013 and 2016 (Boston, MA; Minneapolis, MN). In 2011, an “opera installation,” featuring video projections and performance by Kalup Linzy, ran for four nights as part of an exhibition of Stein's art collection (“SFMOMA Presents”).<sup>97</sup> Another medial transposition, *Gertrude Stein SAINTS!*, was staged in 2013 and 2014 in New York City.

Even with periods of inactivity, “the opera achieved a cultlike status as a landmark event in the history of the American avant-garde. It became a model of performance to come later in the century” (Watson, *Prepare* 303). Looking at the various examples of artists and productions who have taken up or cited the opera, there are abundant experiments in multiple media. Wilson and Philip Glass have claimed that Stein and Thomson's opera “provided their *only* model for multimedia opera” (*Prepare* 305; emphasis added).<sup>98</sup> Yet the people spearheading such projects are rarely Black. In contrast to the opera's importance to artists like Cage, Wilson, Glass, and

others, “the production has survived as no more than a footnote in histories of black theatre in the U.S.” (Webb 465). Linzy represents a notable exception, but his involvement was sought after the opera had already been chosen in hopes that it “would resonate both with the original *Four Saints* all-black cast and with Stein’s and Thomson’s homosexuality” (Winn). Linzy did not, on his own accord, opt to produce *Four Saints*. Although Thomson employed African American performers to create an artistic event, and although *Four Saints* may have affected how Stein thought and wrote about race and nation long after the opera closed, *Four Saints* did not have a significant impact on Black American theatre.<sup>99</sup> The opera continues to account for race in each new production, whereas Black American theatre bothers very little with *Four Saints*.

### **Surrounding *Four Saints***

Without Stein’s promotional appearances in print, on the radio, and in lecture halls, *Four Saints* may not have elicited the same intrigue. Watson claims that the *Autobiography* “most directly affected the success of *Four Saints in Three Acts*. The opera would not have achieved its notoriety had it not been preceded by the extraordinary publicity that greeted *The Autobiography*” (Prepare 128). I would contend, however, that the two works influence the success of each other with equal weight; Stein’s “surround sound transmission” required her work to be heard in multiple venues. Despite the five-year gap between the writing of the libretto for *Four Saints* and the *Autobiography*, the near simultaneity of the opera’s staging and the publication of Stein’s radical autobiography allows the sonic qualities of both works to be interpreted together.

The *Autobiography* definitely enhanced Stein’s avant-garde reputation. Sharon Kirsch, for example, characterizes the text “as a rhetorical act of public relations and self-



advertisement—the beginning of the expansion of her brand” (261). And yet, the voice of the book, as much as its engagement with Cubism, resulted in Stein’s first commercial success: “Stein’s prose in the *Autobiography* is relatively easy and bears resemblance to conversation” (Olson 350). Indeed, many critics suggest that the *Autobiography* is easier to read than earlier texts, such as *The Making of Americans*. The book’s readability is evidenced by its selection for the Book of the Month club and the appearance of an excerpt in the *Atlantic Monthly*, a widely circulated American magazine. Stein’s reputation, however, was already significant before the text’s popularity: “The publication of *Autobiography* was considered such news that Stein appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine” (Leick 147). The cover indicates both Stein’s and modernism’s broad appeal. These mass media examples do not reflect Stein’s arrival on the literary scene, but rather how the performances of *Four Saints* and the publication of the *Autobiography* allow her work to reach wider and popular audiences in the 1930s.

Within the text, Stein, Picasso, and Alfred North Whitehead are grouped together as the “three first class geniuses” among all the “great people” Toklas has met (*AABT* 5). In the *Autobiography*, Stein insists on her place in the history of art movements of the early twentieth century, and of Cubism in particular.<sup>100</sup> Rather than a document of the movement and its artists, however, Stein insisted that the *Autobiography* was groundbreaking: “You see that is why making it the Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas made it do something, it made it be a recognition by never before that writing having it be existing” (*N* 62). Fittingly, the *Autobiography* is genre-defying: Mark Goble insists it “is an autobiography almost wholly void of psychological reflection, an autobiography that confesses to almost nothing that cannot be observed with the eye or ear” (98). In particular, the “linear narrative” Stein used intentionally to

“woo the conventional reading public” makes *Autobiography* a departure from her other work (Malcolm, *Two Lives* 16–7).

Even more, Stein’s attention to surround sound is a significant feature of the *Autobiography*; its narrative style complicates the sources of voices as it relays the shift from realist to abstract modes of representation in the early twentieth century. Toklas is ostensibly the narrator, and it is her speaking patterns that Stein mimics. I would suggest that this writing method can be understood as stereophonic: Stein writes through Toklas—as if Toklas is a medium that allows Stein’s words to transmit—and this method obscures any single “source.” This obfuscation is also apparent at other points in the text: “Oh, said the voice. And then Mildred said, and they have a new big Matisse. Come up and see it. I don’t think so, said the voice” (*AABT* 251). Although sculptor Janet Scudder and journalist Mildred Aldrich were likely the two participants in this conversation, the narrator employs disembodied voices rather than proper nouns. Stein also uses Toklas to characterize her own relationship to sound: “Gertrude Stein sat by the stove talking and listening and getting up to open the door and go up to various people talking and listening” (15). Presented this way, Stein speaks through Toklas to describe the simultaneous speaking and hearing that Stein would reiterate during a 1935 lecture (*N* 34). The importance of participatory surround sound is thus reinforced by Stein in multiple texts and appearances in the 1930s.

The incorporation of Toklas as narrator amplifies Stein’s attention to sound both because *Autobiography*’s style is conversational and because Stein figures Toklas as being interested in music and voices. Throughout the text, Toklas (via Stein) describes people by their voicing: “I met Gertrude Stein. I was impressed by the coral brooch she wore and by her voice” (*AABT* 5); Marie Laurencin’s “high pitched beautifully modulated voice” (75); “Doctor Whitehead’s gentle

voice” (180); Lytton Strachey’s “faint high voice” (185); and the “husky” voices of soldiers (294). In contrast to Toklas, Stein is figured as being largely interested in words and images. Yet, Stein must have been aware of sound because she is conscious of Toklas’s perception of sound and voices. The *Autobiography*, amid descriptions of painting, sculpture, and writing, carefully tracks Stein’s “desire to express the rhythm of the visible world” (145). In a playful diffusion, Toklas’s voice is the method that allows such expression. Sound and vision, I would suggest, are therefore mutually influential in Stein’s intermedial references.

Stein’s lecture tour of the United States, the promotion of *Autobiography*, and performances of *Four Saints* all occur around the same time (1934–35), allowing Stein to generate “surround sound.” In the *Autobiography*, much like in the performances of *Four Saints*, Stein’s words are transmitted using someone else’s voice. Offering a different mediation, the lectures and other live public appearances amplify Stein’s own voice directly to audiences. During her tour, Stein “used her numerous newspaper and radio interviews as opportunities to shift her relations with the public and the public’s relationship with her writing” (Kirsch 260). Stephen Meyer further suggests that Stein “perceived the tour as her great opportunity to persuade Americans to read the daunting pieces of writing she had been producing for the preceding thirty years” (“RI” 86). Indeed, Stein’s work did reach newer audiences. As Jaillant argues, this was possible due to a marketing campaign that simultaneously promoted the writer’s more difficult texts (like *Portraits and Prayers*), advertised less expensive editions of her more accessible texts (like the Modern Library’s 1933 edition of *Three Lives*), and arranged for appearances in newspapers, film, and radio to highlight her celebrity status. Appealing to both

popular and specialized audiences (the result of a kind of “dual-voicing”), Stein’s tour attracted wide and varied audiences.

Kirk Curnutt suggests that Stein was aware of how lecturing is a distinct method of mass communication: “her lectures underscore the inescapable reality that writing in an age of celebrity is an act of public performance” (302). Without question, Stein’s lectures display an awareness of her own performance. She carefully decided on her outfit choices, audience sizes, and, of course, lecture content and delivery. Of the latter, Thornton Wilder claims that Stein’s language in these lectures “reposes upon an unerring ear for musical cadence” (*N* v). Many of these lectures concern how poetry and fiction operate, comparing favourably the way her own writing, for example, captures “existing,” which is unlike that of the newspaper, which “makes it [comprehension, closure] too easy” (*N* 38). The lectures also concern the ways sound and voicing are key elements of her work. As Clements finds, “musical and aural concepts saturate the lectures” (“How” 50). Relatedly, Stein emphasized the importance of interactive production and reception throughout the lectures: “Everybody always has to be listening to something” (*N* 34), and “I cannot come back too often to telling and hearing to talking and listening” (*N* 38). Of course, in making these comments, Stein was stressing the significance of her readership as well as her live audience. Of literature specifically she claimed, “of course there is an audience . . . Undoubtedly that audience has to be there for the purpose of recognition” (*N* 60). Stein’s public performances in lecture halls are reminders of how her work’s meaning is generated “live,” resulting from a kind of sonic or musical interaction between producer and receptor.

Although the lecture tour was marked throughout by appearances in multiple media, Stein preferred interactive sound—being *heard*—to a recorded voice on film. In her 1935 *Cosmopolitan* article, Stein characterized her arrival in the United States simultaneously with her

appearances in mass media. “The first thing that happened was what they called a newsreel,” recounted Stein. Hearing her own filmed voice, however, “upset [Stein] very much” (*HWW* 68). In contrast, she went on to describe her 1934 radio interview favourably: “you were saying and you knew, you really knew, not by what you knew but by what you felt, that everybody was listening . . . I never had liked anything as I had liked it” (*HWW* 72). This final statement—of liking radio more than other newer media—reiterates the importance of reception in Stein’s enthusiasm for “broadcasting.” Stein’s discomfort at hearing her own voice in the newsreel indicates that she did not merely want to appear on screens (although she wanted that, too), but that she wanted an engaged and responsive listening audience.

From the outset of her return to the United States, Stein managed the public’s expectations by constantly redirecting discussions back to her work, eschewing interpretation. In a 1934 *New York Times* article documenting Stein’s arrival, the writer is described as such: “She could not be drawn into a discussion of politics and would say nothing about Hitler, Mussolini, or art under dictatorships” (“Gertrude Stein Arrives”). As mentioned earlier, in this same article, Stein claimed that Black people could not distinguish between faces in photographs. This appalling statement may have been included to show either Stein’s frankness or ignorance, perhaps making her oddly appealing to the average (White) reader of the *Times*. When read in the context of her lectures—which were influenced by her close friendship with Faÿ, a “Royalist anti-Semite” who would later become a member of the Vichy government (Malcolm, *Two Lives* 74)—Stein’s refusal to comment is deeply suspicious.

As part of how Stein makes collaborative sound in the 1930s, it is necessary to acknowledge that Faÿ, a “scholar, academic, Americanophile, high modernist aesthete, Gestapo agent,” helped Stein “find her own public voice” (Will, *Unlikely* 11, 69). Faÿ’s connections at

American universities secured these venues for Stein's lectures, and Faÿ provided guidance on Stein's performance (Malcolm, *Two Lives* 73). Moreover, after advancing Stein's lectures in the 1930s, Faÿ's personal and professional networks also offered Stein and Toklas relative security from persecution in the 1940s. Beyond mutual professional admiration, Stein and Faÿ also shared, as Will has argued, conservative political convictions. This finding is significant: during World War II, Faÿ played a key role in the Vichy government's oppression and imprisonment of Freemasons, and he was culpable for hundreds of their deaths (Malcolm, *Two Lives* 99). How much Stein was aware of the specifics of Faÿ's role at the time is debatable, perhaps conspicuously so. Regardless, he certainly played a role in Stein's success and livelihood before during, and after the war; Stein and Faÿ remained friends throughout her life.

In conclusion, Stein's intermedial experiments with sound illustrate and generate the multi-directional relationships among her writing and other media, artists, and audiences. Stein's transmedial conceptions of sound, especially when considered in conjunction with bodies and other sound-producing media, remain a potent site for investigating the politics of intermediality. Because Stein's sonically rich language produces different effects in different contexts, the mediated sounds in *Four Saints*, *Autobiography*, and the lecture tour could be further analyzed to understand how intersecting subjectivities (of race and gender, or of gender and sexuality) are voiced, embodied, and otherwise represented in Stein's other texts and their subsequent remediations.

On the radio in 1934, Stein declared that her own work is "an important part of [literature's] going on" ("RI" 91), specifically referring to *Four Saints* and *Autobiography*. Indeed, *Four Saints* remains a "landmark," according to Webb, Watson, and many other critics.

In part, and as I have argued, Stein's work constitutes an event because of the writer's continued intertextual presence. Ongoing remediations in both high-art and popular culture contexts result from Stein's attention to sound particularly in the 1920s and 30s—both in the content she produced and in the marketing strategies that allowed her to be seen, read, and heard by popular crowds and academic audiences alike.

Throughout the past fifty years, Stein's life and writing have been the subject of narrative and documentary films, fiction, illustrated literary texts, dance, and musical theatre works.<sup>101</sup> Many of these remediations have been produced by feminist and/or LGBTQ+ artists, and many of them situate Stein as a feminist and explore the relationship between Stein and Toklas. In *Four Saints* especially, one can see how Stein's intertextual presence is a continuous process carried out by certain practitioners. I stress again that the contexts in which Stein and Thomson's opera does and does not appear are critical. As an experiment in media combination, *Four Saints* continues to attract interest, especially from artists working in theatre, music, and multimedia; as a breakthrough for the inclusion of racialized performers in lead roles in major operas and Broadway productions, *Four Saints* has had limited frequency.

For Stein and Thomson to claim in 1934 that the opera created something new, while at the same time ignoring the contemporaneous social movements impacting their own lives and those of the cast and crew, reveals an odd disjuncture in Stein's "careful listening" (*HWW* 158). Considering how *Four Saints* became an artistic event accounts for the production's broader contexts. More specifically, characterizing the opera as stereophonic recognizes the technological and political landscape it was made in, a landscape that featured the advent of surround sound production and the proliferation of radios for home use. As J. Stan Barrett argues, home radios made distancing oneself from the news and the public difficult in the 1930s.

Stein, however, enjoyed how the radio's simultaneous transmission and reception of sound allowed for public engagement. This feature is further reflected in Stein's statements on masterpieces and timing: only some people are capable of "at the same time listening and telling" (N 34), of recognizing paradigm shifts as they occur.

Finally, tracing the eventalization of *Four Saints* also includes how Stein gets to maintain her own political detachment, expressed as the desire to have the opera be simply enjoyed rather than analyzed ("RI" 89). Stein's alleged disinterest in Hitler and Mussolini—already suspect when considering the writer's expressions of support for Pétain—will become more questionable in the context of the following chapters, which take up more directly the interacting nodes of fascism, racism, and authoritarianism with intermedial modernism. Chapter 2 uncovers the impossibility of separating artistic practice from social context, examining how Virginia Woolf and Picasso used their reputations to support the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War. The war was officially declared in 1936, but its antecedents were already well underway by the time Stein and Thomson's dislocated Spanish saints took the stage in 1934.<sup>102</sup> Like Stein, Woolf and Picasso reference multiple media as part of their artistic practices. Unlike Stein, however, their work explicitly confronts "art under dictatorships."



## Chapter 2

### The Collage-like Remediations of *Guernica* and *Three Guineas*

“For men must work, and women must weep.”

—Charles Kingsley

“Traditionally, in order to deny the political quality of a category—workers, women and so on—all that was required was to assert that they belonged to a ‘domestic’ space that was separated from public life.”

—Jacques Rancière

“There are no small fascisms.”

—Daša Drndić

More than twenty years before Adolf Hitler agreed, in 1936, to aid the exiled Spanish General Francisco Franco in his country’s civil war—initiating Operation *Feuerzauber*, the first operation of the *Luftwasse*’s Condor Legion, which, in this instance, enabled the transport of Franco’s troops from Morocco to mainland Spain—Gertrude Stein took Vanessa Bell, painter and Virginia Woolf’s sister, to Pablo Picasso’s studio in Paris.<sup>103</sup> At the studio, Bell saw Picasso’s *La bouteille de Suze* (1912) and praised Picasso’s integration of different materials into his collage. Bell returned to England and started incorporating collage elements into her own work shortly thereafter, even extending the practice in her Omega Workshop projects.<sup>104</sup> Although Bell met Picasso multiple times, and saw *Guernica* (1937) as a work-in-process, Woolf was never acquainted with the Spanish painter nor did she visit the Spanish Pavilion, where *Guernica* was first publicly shown, on a trip to Paris in 1937. The connections between Picasso’s and Woolf’s responses to the Spanish Civil War (1936–39), however, invite sustained comparison.

During the war—two decades after Bell and Picasso’s first collages—Woolf and Picasso were certainly affected by Spain’s internecine war. In this chapter I will demonstrate that

*Guernica* and *Three Guineas* (1938) are collage-like texts that respond to the bombing of Spanish civilians. Indeed, multiple aerial bombardments during the war in Spain were shocking to Picasso and Woolf. John Richardson maintains that the poet Juan Larrea relayed the news of the bombing to Picasso (who was living in France) once he “realized that the obliteration of Guernica would provide” Picasso with a subject for his mural, which had already been commissioned (“Different”). Yet, as Herschel Chipp suggests, Picasso also would have heard the news over the radio and read it in newspapers. The effects of mediation—how news of the war was spread—are also tangible in Woolf and Picasso’s responses. *Guernica*, as Anne Baldassari argues, “deserves to be understood as propagating in pictorial terms the media shockwave created by the event, relayed through the *grisaille* of print, headlines, and photographs” (169). During the process of creating *Guernica*, Picasso added wallpaper to his mural. Ultimately, he removed these papers and used paint only, but the completed painting retains the effects of other media.

Woolf’s *Three Guineas* distributes various media as structural and rhetorical elements in her response to the visually provocative photographs coming out of Spain, like those that appeared in the *Daily Worker* and in pro-Republican propaganda campaigns. Emily Dalgarno suggests that “the Spanish Civil War seems to have been the catalyst that transformed Woolf’s essay on women into the anti-war argument of *Three Guineas*” (154). *Three Guineas*, an “Anti fascist Pamphlet” (Woolf, *D* 4: 282), takes the form of public letters that reference money, newspapers, legal documents, and letters. She includes in the book actual photographs of British men—authorities from government, the judiciary, the military, education—in regalia. In doing so, Woolf radically “subverts” the way photography was (and is) used in reportage (Henry 146; Berman 63–4). Rather than provide readers with photographs from Spain, Woolf “presents

unnamed images of British patriarchal power. . . . which juxtaposes British domestic life with the state of total war in Spain without conflating their different material conditions or rhetorical situations” (Berman 63).<sup>105</sup> The combination of materials allows Woolf to demonstrate how fascism is both an international and a local, everyday problem, while also attending to significant distinctions between Spain and Great Britain. I depart from other critics of *Three Guineas* by focusing on intermediality rather than a single medium (like photography). This method importantly places guineas as a medium in relation to the many others that Woolf effectively uses to bolster her argument about the subjugation of women in England. The use of guineas, along with photographs of men only, is a key point of divergence for Woolf in comparison to Picasso.

This chapter begins by discussing collage to situate Picasso’s *Guernica* and Woolf’s *Three Guineas* historically and formally. I argue that both artists “collage” with the products of photojournalism, a significant medium that became much more prominent during the Spanish Civil War.<sup>106</sup> This war affected the lives, careers, and activism of Picasso, Woolf, and many other modernists. Picasso’s mural responds to the war that divided the country of his birth and endangered many of his family and friends who lived in Spain. My analysis of *Guernica* focuses on its immediacy, an effect achieved because its references to newspaper, wallpaper, and photography are entirely covert.<sup>107</sup> Drawing on two recent exhibitions that pair Picasso’s work with that of photographer Dora Maar (Henriette Theodora Markovitch), I examine how her photographs contributed to *Guernica*’s intermediality and its circulation.<sup>108</sup> This pairing is significant because it highlights how gendered labour is visible in the mural. *Guernica*’s British tour, from September 1938 to March 1939, as part of an Artists’ International Association (AIA) effort, provides a salient link between Picasso and Woolf’s anti-war efforts. The AIA’s

involvement also exemplifies the civil war's multinational participants. After detailing the confluence of Picasso and Woolf's participation with the AIA, I conclude the chapter by focusing on Woolf's hypermediated *Three Guineas*. In contrast to Picasso's covert collage, Woolf's text overtly displays the mixing of materials. As a result, *Three Guineas* creates a radically different affective response than the representations of women in Picasso's mural.

The Spanish Civil War and the concurrent technologies of weaponry, communication, and reproduction will continue to reverberate throughout the dissertation. Aerial bombardments in Guernica (Basque: Gernika), Madrid, and elsewhere in Spain, constituted an event: "It is clear from all the news reports," Chipp observes, "that the destruction of Guernica shook the entire world" (38). As evidenced by the influence of Louis Delaprée's journalism (which was distributed in pamphlets in 1937) and other news sources, Picasso and Woolf responded both to that event and to the words and images that captured it. Although Picasso and Woolf each believed their own earlier work provided critiques of war and other violence, the Spanish Civil War pushed both artists into two kinds of responses: explicitly public, political works (direct statements condemning the rise of fascism) and creative experiments using different media combinations.

Collage, "a way of thinking about looking and knowing" (O'Reilly 19), enables Picasso and Woolf to re-visualize the Spanish Civil War. In 1931, Kurt Schwitters argued that collage was a timely response to the historical moment: "what we express in our work is neither idiocy nor subjective play, but *the expression of our age*, dictated by the age itself" (qtd. in Heesen 178 n37). Referring to the abundance of materials used by numerous artists employing collage in the early twentieth century, Heesen asserts that "the point of departure uniting the diverse artists and

the media they use is the conviction that art should be *a response to immediate events*” (157; my emphasis).<sup>109</sup> The intermedial choices common to both *Guernica* and *Three Guineas* are suggestive of their media environments: in 1937 and 1938, Picasso and Woolf not only contended with the newspapers’ increasingly photographic content, but also with newer mass media that were used to document and discuss the Spanish Civil War. *Guernica* and *Three Guineas* are more appropriately collage-like rather than properly collage; as I discuss, the rendering of other media *as if* writing or *as if* painting is a significant aspect of their responses to the conflict in Spain.<sup>110</sup>

Picasso and Woolf’s choices of collage materials in *Guernica* and *Three Guineas* instantiate the politics of intermediality, particularly as each text mixes private and public elements. “Collage is often perceived as an inclusive art form” because the materials can be anything, even inexpensive, unofficial, household objects, items meant to be thrown away (O’Reilly 19). What such cut-and-paste techniques do, for Picasso and Woolf, is make the daily materials they use much more permanent. By either incorporating or alluding to newspapers, pamphlets, and the photographs included therein, Picasso and Woolf’s texts allow audiences to consider their sources at length. *Guernica*, a main attraction for the museum that houses it, and *Three Guineas*, which continues to be republished and discussed in the twenty-first century (and often in response to issues of social justice), incorporate daily media into texts that are not meant to be thrown out.<sup>111</sup> “Criticality is embedded in collage’s methodology as well as its content,” explains Sally O’Reilly, because “its mode of construction is perpetually on show” (19). The combination and redistribution of materials in these collaged remediations, I argue, revalues radically the diverse source materials.

In addition to elevating and archiving otherwise unremarkable objects, collage can also undermine the authority of the cut-and-pasted elements and of the original medium itself. Both Picasso and Woolf subvert the perspectives of their source material, albeit differently. In *Guernica*, the massive size of the canvas (3.49 m x 7.77 m) and the conflation of foreground and background mediate the event of terror bombing. To see the mural in full requires some physical distance (whether in the museum or by looking at a reproduction); seeing it at close range, the viewer is engulfed by the painting's large-scale representations of bodies experiencing violence. Woolf, too, plays with proximity. *Three Guineas* challenges any singular point of view, layering multiple speakers, quotes, and "drafts" of letters in which the narrator presents and then negates a succession of ideas—but leaves the process in the text. Jessica Berman argues that Woolf's form emphasizes the importance of presenting various positions: "the demand for uniformity of perspective participates in the same violent erasure of differences among lived experiences as the equation of soldier and civilian under circumstances of total war" (72). Through collage, Picasso and Woolf both reject a singular or master narrative.

*Guernica* and *Three Guineas* employ collage to remediate events. Remediation, according to Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, features the "double logic" of immediacy and hypermediacy (5). The former "dictates that the medium itself should disappear and leave us in the presence of the thing represented" (Bolter and Grusin 6). Immediacy implies a direct or truthful representation of an event with little interference—images and reports from the frontlines of the Spanish Civil War purported to do exactly this. Because its intertexts are muted, I suggest that Picasso's *Guernica* is also an example of immediacy; his choice of materials, imagery, perspective, and title reflect a proximity to the event. Various media are all rendered as painting in *Guernica*, with attention drawn first to the subject matter and its emotional effect

rather than to the mural's composition. Hypermediacy, in contrast, "multiplies the signs of mediation," resulting in "a multiplicity of viewing positions and a multiplicity of relationships to the object in view" (Bolter and Grusin 34, 84). Woolf's *Three Guineas*, with its numerous sources and voices, exemplifies hypermediacy. Moreover, although both Picasso and Woolf respond to and remediate news of the Spanish Civil War, Woolf's elision of images of women suffering contrasts her response most saliently with Picasso's.

The differences in their remediations are significant because Picasso and Woolf encountered similar mass media representations of the Spanish Civil War. Further, the relocation of materials and texts—a method central in collage—reflects the circulating news and propaganda coming out of Spain. "The Spanish Civil War," Dalgarno suggests, "was the first war to become known to the general public primarily by means of the photographs published in newspapers" (149). Picasso and Woolf, both of whom kept newspaper clippings in the 1930s, would have been made aware of events in Spain through the daily press and other sources, including pamphlets.<sup>112</sup> Following the heavy aerial bombardment of Madrid in late 1936, one journalist's work—that of Delaprée—reached Picasso, who was living in France, and Woolf, who was living in England. Delaprée, who went to Spain as a war correspondent for *Paris-Soir*, grew increasingly frustrated at the newspaper for censoring his work. After his death in Spain in December 1936, Delaprée's articles were collected and published in the Communist paper *L'Humanité*. His work was then published as a pamphlet on 8 January 1937, complete with the passages that *Paris-Soir* had censored.<sup>113</sup> The pamphlet circulated globally and was translated into Spanish, English, German, and Russian.

Martin Minchom argues that Delaprée's "cinematographic" journalism visually influenced both Picasso's *Guernica* and *Songes et Mensonges de Franco* [*The Dream and Lie of*

Franco] (1937), his propagandist *auca*.<sup>114</sup> *The Martyrdom of Madrid*, Minchom further remarks, is also “the lengthiest single document that Virginia Woolf included in her *Reading Notes* of press cuttings” (186). In *Three Guineas*, Woolf directly cites Delaprée’s pamphlet in the endnotes. Berman productively compares *Three Guineas* with Delaprée’s journalism, suggesting that the latter “bears strong affinities to propaganda” that the former elides (70). Dalgarno argues that, even without using photographs, Delaprée’s “language represents the ideology of the unmediated photographic image,” an idea that Woolf “satirizes” (162, 151). Indeed, Delaprée professes immediacy: “All the images of Madrid suffering martyrdom, which I shall try to put under your eyes—and which most of the time challenge description—I have seen them. I can be believed. I demand to be believed” (*Martyrdom* 21). Woolf’s intermedial strategies in *Three Guineas* create a drastically different relationship to truth and fact—to immediacy—than Delaprée’s. As Alice Wood details, Woolf’s “scrapbooks” from 1937 contain a “newspaper report on the bombardment of Almeria,” “*The Martyrdom of Madrid*,” and “a number of lines from *Antigone*” (*Virginia* 81–2). Collecting Delaprée’s pamphlet alongside these other texts exemplifies Woolf’s method of placing seemingly unconnected objects in relation—as if collaging—in order to build her intertextual and complex argument. Picasso and Woolf’s common ground is in responding to the purported immediacy of sources like Delaprée’s pamphlet and other media that attempted to capture the Spanish Civil War. Picasso and Woolf provide alternate imagery to contend with the graphic, realist media conveying death and destruction.

Collage, I maintain, aptly represents the effects of the indiscriminate brutality deployed during the Spanish Civil War, particular that of terror bombing, a tactic of total war that targets civilians in order to weaken morale and create confusion. The mixed media in *Three Guineas*



and *Guernica* reflect this type of conflict, specifically the violence permeating the division of private and public space. In *Guernica*, the horror of aerial bombardments is represented through the bodies of subjugated beings—women, children, and animals. The most remarkable aspect of violence, in this painting, is the intrusion of war into private spaces, formally manifested as the collapse of interior and exterior space on a single plane. “Death is not localized in *Guernica*,” suggests T. J. Clark, “it is everywhere and nowhere: that is the picture’s main point” (*Picasso and Truth* 250). Violence is similarly diffuse in *Three Guineas*. The text shifts the nexus of tyranny from public to private spaces—from abroad (Spain, Germany, and Italy) to Great Britain.

Both Picasso and Woolf represent women experiencing violence in private spaces within the nation. The images of anguished women and destroyed houses on Picasso’s canvas match the descriptions of Spanish Civil War photographs that Woolf references (but never reprints) in *Three Guineas*:

They are photographs of dead bodies for the most part. This morning’s collection contains the photograph of what might be a man’s body, or a woman’s; it is so mutilated that it might, on the other hand be the body of a pig. But those are certainly dead children, and that undoubtedly is a section of a house. A bomb has torn open the side.

(*TG* 14)

Woolf’s narrator describes the “mutilated” body as unreadable—not clearly gendered or even decipherable from an animal’s. Although the figures of animal and human bodies in Picasso’s *Guernica* are also contorted and intermingled, the mural also clearly features representations of women, including one woman holding a dead child. Further, even though women’s labour is

made palpable in both works, Woolf renders economic inequality visible. Both works, however, materially and thematically illustrate the consequences of a nation at war on specific bodies.

In addition to providing materials for their collaging methods, different modes of communication allowed Picasso and Woolf to reach their audiences in the 1930s. The use of mass media such as newspaper clippings in *Guernica* and *Three Guineas* invokes the public. “It was the newspaper itself that called the large mass public into being, and that public, while fluctuating in size, has persisted to keep the newspaper alive and influence it in turn” (Heesen 50). Given that both artists had significant reputations by the time they produced these anti-war works, their public engagements had substantial effects. *Guernica* was always meant for the public: it was commissioned for the Spanish Pavilion in the *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne* [International Exposition of Art and Technology in Modern Life], held in Paris from 25 May to 25 November 1937. The Republican government oversaw the Spanish Pavilion, and its architect, Josep Lluís Sert, along with Max Aub, José Bergamín, and Juan Larrea, asked Picasso to contribute. Picasso had also invited people and the press to view *Guernica*’s creation in his studio. “Although Picasso had always discouraged strangers from watching him at work,” Richardson states, “he felt that the painting needed to be publicized for the sake of the antifascist cause. He was ready to welcome into his studio fellow artists and influential politicians, as well as other members of the European avant-garde” (“Different”). *Three Guineas* engaged with the public throughout its genesis (as lectures and articles) and in its mock-epistolary form. Wood argues that this text “represents Woolf’s most significant attempt to speak directly and pertinently to contemporary politics, yet many first readers found it unsuccessful in precisely this endeavor” (*Virginia* 65). These intermedial works, therefore,

represent how Picasso and Woolf used their cultural capital judiciously and publicly to oppose fascism.

Moreover, I am making an argument for Picasso's *Guernica* and Woolf's *Three Guineas* to be considered important instantiations of each artist's continual experiments with different media. In the 1930s, Picasso produced poetry, *auca*, *Weeping Women* (a series of paintings and sketches), and sculptural paintings. These were all important—thematically and materially—to the conception and creation of *Guernica*. Woolf developed *Three Guineas* along with her novel *The Years* (1937), both originating in an attempt to mix fiction and nonfiction in *The Pargiters* (which she later abandoned). In the same period, she also delivered lectures and radio broadcasts, wrote essays, and contributed articles to popular magazines. Thus, Picasso and Woolf employed mass media both as materials *in* their own creative work and *as* venues for distributing such work. Collage, too, recalling Schwitters and Heesen, effectively expresses and responds to its media and political environment, enabling Picasso and Woolf to consider publicly, and at the same time, aesthetics and war.

### **The Spanish Civil War**

In her account of the ethics of war photography, Susan Sontag suggests that “for a war to break out of its immediate constituency and become a subject of international attention, it must be regarded as something of an exception” (*Regarding* 35). The Spanish Civil War was “exceptional” in a number of ways: “it was a stand against the fascist menace, and (in retrospect) a dress rehearsal for the coming European, or ‘world’ war” (Sontag 36). The technologies of destruction—particularly aerial bombing—and the communications used to relay that destruction were tested and developed through this war. The war also drew international participants,

including many modernists. Although primarily noncombatants, women's participation as artists and as correspondents in Spain was significant. Images of women were also crucial in propaganda campaigns. The dissemination of photographs from the war front, for Sontag, also make this war exceptional. It was, as she explains, "the first war to be witnessed ('covered') in the modern sense: by a corps of professional photographers at the lines of military engagement, whose work was immediately seen in newspapers and magazines in Spain and abroad" (*Regarding* 21). New documentary media conveyed reports from areas of active conflict to the public with an increased sense of immediacy.

The 1930s in Spain were marked by radical changes in governance and concomitant periods of violent resistance and enforcement. As Stein observes in her extended portrait of Picasso, "Finally war broken out in Spain. First the revolution and then war" (*P* 84).<sup>115</sup> The revolution to which Stein refers was likely the transition, in 1931, from a monarchy to a republic. "The Republican government," Richard Rhodes summarizes, aimed to improve the daily life of Spanish citizens through the promise of regional autonomy and a new constitution that "endowed universal suffrage, public education, land redistribution, and church disestablishment" (xvi).<sup>116</sup> To garner foreign support for the new government, Louis Fischer, an American journalist, presented Spain's move away from monarchical rule as progressive: "The bloodless overthrow of the monarchy in 1931 was an effort to expel the Middle Ages and to introduce the twentieth century into Spain. The enlightened bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, the workingmen, and the peasants banded together to rid the country of the incubus of medievalism" (3). This revolution was short-lived, however, and a series of resistive acts by both right- and left-wing groups took place throughout the decade.<sup>117</sup> The Popular Front, a coalition of left-wing parties, was narrowly elected in January 1936. This minority government was soon challenged by a largely

unsuccessful coup in July 1936, followed by civil war. Spanish generals who had been exiled or reassigned by the Republican government were aided by German and Italian military forces during and after this coup, which, combined with the non-intervention policies of Britain and France, resulted in a “military insurrection against the legitimate Spanish government” (Fischer 1). In September 1936, and partly because of Hitler’s continued support, Franco became the leader of the rebellion as both commander-in-chief of the National army and head of state (*El Caudillo*). By the end of the decade, Franco had replaced the Spanish Second Republic with a military dictatorship.<sup>118</sup>

At the outset of the civil war—during which time France and Britain declined to supply the Republican government with air support—aerial warfare heavily advantaged the Nationalists, especially in the mountainous Basque region where Guernica is located. From October 1936 onward, and only with the aid of the *Luftwasse*’s Condor Legion and the Italian *Aviazione Legionaria*, Franco’s Nationalists dominated the air. In one month alone—November 1936—the Condor Legion attacked Madrid twenty-three times, focusing bombardments on working-class neighbourhoods. “Deliberately designed to terrorize and kill civilians,” these air raids in the country’s capital were, as Rhodes suggests, “concentrated in the city’s working-class districts where military targets were few” (30). It was in Madrid that the Condor Legion “started experimenting” with incendiary bombs to set off fires (Rhodes 31). These bombardment tactics, coupled with rapidly advancing air power, would result in far more destruction than the other types of aerial bombing that had been used up to that point.

The 26 April 1937 bombing of Guernica, the Basque region’s cultural centre, was particularly destructive. Even after numerous bombardments in Madrid and elsewhere in Spain, the devastation in Guernica was shocking because it was an unlikely target of such a

comprehensive attack. In a report published on 28 April 1937, *Times* correspondent George Steer explained:

In the form of its execution and the scale of the destruction it wrought, no less than in the selection of its objective, the raid on Guernica is unparalleled in military history. . . . The object of the bombardment was seemingly the demoralization of the civil population and the destruction of the cradle of the Basque race. (17)<sup>119</sup>

Guernica was approximately 30 kilometers from the front and the town's only military targets—a small-arms factory, two barracks, and a canal bridge—were left intact, a conspicuous detail given that more than 70 per cent of buildings were destroyed. The bombing, determines Chipp, “marked the most sensational case to date of unrestricted attacks by modern bombing and fighter planes for the purpose of terrorizing the populace. Modern total war and *blitzkrieg* both received their baptism on 26 April 1937” (43). The town's population, “normally about seven thousand,” explains Ian Patterson, “had been swollen by some three thousand refugees, fleeing from the bombing of Durango and other towns and villages” (24). Even more, the attack was scheduled for market day, when farmers and labourers from the surrounding areas congregated in Guernica, ensuring that the largest number of people would be affected. The scale of the city's destruction has since been compared to that of Berlin, Hamburg, and Dresden during World War II, and to Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the American military's use of atomic bombs.

In Spain, as in the colonies of Spain, Italy, France, and Britain, the victims of aerial attacks were often people with limited economic or political influence.<sup>120</sup> The bombing of Spain was described as being “unparalleled” in Steer's account. Sontag maintains, however, that it was the location of the attacks rather than the attacks themselves that was so notable:

Nothing in Franco's barbarous conduct of war is as well remembered as these raids, mostly executed by the unit of the German air force sent by Hitler to aid Franco, the Condor Legion, and memorialized in Picasso's *Guernica*. But they were not without precedent. . . . Far more lethally—starting with the attack by Italian fighter planes near Tripoli in October 1911—European nations had been bombing their colonies. So-called “air control operations” were favored as an economical alternative to the costly practice of maintaining large garrisons to police Britain's more restive possessions. . . . What horrified public opinion in the 1930s was that the slaughter of civilians from the air was happening in Spain; these sorts of things were not supposed to happen *here*. (*Regarding* 30–1 n)

The bombing in Spain demonstrates how the tactics and weaponry of imperial policing were now being used against the country's own population during a civil war (rather than against its colonies, as had been the practice). With the help of German and Italian militaries, Franco authorized terror bombing throughout Spain, revealing the inability of the Republican government to keep its citizens safe from brutality. In hindsight, “Guernica was inaugural. It ushered in the last century's, and our century's, War of Terror—terror largely administered by the state” (T. Clark, *Picasso* 240).

Within Britain, there had been generalized criticism about the use of aerial attacks prior to Guernica. Beginning in 1924, when the Labour Party came into power, there was increasing scrutiny from the public over the widespread use of aerial bombardments in the colonies. Surprisingly, public censure had come about not because of the large number of attacks or even because they were less effective than the military had claimed, but because of “critical press stories” (Corum 66). James Corum suggests that the Royal Air Force attended to this criticism by

purporting to limit noncombatant casualties, yet such tactics continued. Consider Churchill's response in the early 1920s to classified reports of the aerial bombardments: "Reports of Iraqi women and children dying at the hand of British aircrews, now dropping high-explosive bombs around the clock in the middle of villages, disturbed even Air and Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill, a bombing enthusiast. He finally asked to be spared the details of British air raids against civilians" (Grosscup 55). Given that such atrocities could be ignored by those responsible, press access to conflict zones was the primary way the public was made aware of its government's international military tactics. Without this access, or "out of the reach of noisy correspondents," Corum reveals, "humanitarian sentiments gave way to the practical mission of running an empire" (66). Therefore, it was not only that bombardments were more tolerated when the victims were non-European, racialized, and colonized peoples, as Sontag and other critics argue, but also that the press's representation of attacks were crucial to fomenting public outcry. I would argue that who is represented in the press—whose voices are heard, whose images are seen—is significant when looking at how journalists and artists respond to state-administered violence.

During the Spanish Civil War, front-line reporting conveyed a greater sense of immediacy than before. Although the American Civil War, the Boer War, and World War I were photographed, it was not until this war that "modern photojournalism was born" (Balsells 63). The expedient transmission of photographs—by plane or over telephone lines—resulted in the wide distribution of war photography. Photojournalists supplied images that were used in newspapers, photo-magazines, and official propaganda campaigns. Due to newer, lightweight cameras, embedded photographers could move much more easily with the action. As a result of these changes, "picture-taking acquired an immediacy and authority greater than any verbal



account in conveying the horror of mass-produced death” (Sontag, *Regarding* 24). Robert Capa (André Friedmann) and Gerda Taro (Gerda Phorylle), for example, became well-known photojournalists during this war “principally because of the *startling immediacy* of their work” (Preston, “Censorship” 21; emphasis added). Both favoured proximity, which would come to typify war photography: “they rejected the safe and distant stance of the typical reporter and sought new angles and forms to enable actual participation through solidarity” (Schaber 23).

The immediacy of the published photographs, however, is suspect. As Paul Preston (and other contributors to *The Mexican Suitcase*) explain, the press’s selection of war images indicates numerous mediators: photographers first faced restricted access to conflict zones, followed by censorship from national propaganda ministries, and then their images were culled by newspaper editors. Newspapers and press agencies also encouraged photographers to provide generic pictures from the Spanish Civil War that could be used to fit multiple narratives from both sides of the conflict. Indeed, Capa and Taro’s photographs were used in publications with contrasting ideological positions; their work was published in periodicals such as *Vu*, *Regards*, *Ce Soir*, the *Illustrated London News*, *Picture Post*, and *Life*. In and beyond what was published at the time, their photographs are strikingly diverse, exploring the mundane or everyday alongside disturbing close-up images of the dead and wounded. Their depiction of women’s lives in Spain is similarly broad: images of women with raised fists, families displaced by bombardment, and militia women. Although Capa and Taro did take photographs of dead women and children, their catalogues are much more varied and partisan than what was published in newspapers and photojournals during the war.

The use of photographs coming out of Spain exemplifies how the war was a specific event about which multiple media were used to make anti-fascist and pacifist arguments. Mass

media coverage and creative representations of the Spanish Civil War were greatly influenced by both Republican and Nationalist multimedia propaganda campaigns and by the involvement of modernist artists. Picasso and Woolf were among the many artists who responded to the war. International modernists participated in varying ways; several went to Spain as journalists, such



Fig. 4. Gerda Taro, “Republican militia woman training on the beach outside  
Barcelona, August 1936.”

as Martha Gellhorn, Lillian Hellman, Ernest Hemingway, Langston Hughes, and Stephen Spender. Several texts were generated in response to the war *and* from the immediacy of being in Spain during the war.<sup>121</sup> Of *Three Guineas*, Jane Marcus suggests: “Politically, this is very much a thirties text, part of the discourse of a powerful debate among the European Left inspired by the dilemma of how to respond to the Spanish Civil War” (xliv). Woolf characterized the period as such:

in 1930 it was impossible—if you were young, sensitive, imaginative—not to be interested in politics; not to find public causes of much more pressing interest than philosophy. In 1930 young men at college were forced to be aware of what was

happening in Russia; in Germany; in Italy; in Spain. They could not go on discussing aesthetic emotions and personal relations. They could not confine their reading to the poets; they had to read the politicians. They read Marx. They become communists; they became anti-fascists. (*E* 6: 268–9)

This statement indicates some modernists became more invested in “public causes,” or more politically engaged. Yet, the specificity seems pointed; Woolf suggests international political instability causes anti-fascism in the “young men at college.” In *Three Guineas*, she provides ample evidence of the domestic roots of fascism.

Woolf, too, found it difficult “not to be interested in politics” (*E* 6: 268). Tracing the evolution of Woolf’s politics in the 1930s, Wood argues that *Three Guineas* “reflects a shift in [Woolf’s] modernist aesthetics in response to the extreme political instability of the era” (Wood, *Virginia* 88–9). Woolf and Picasso each embed the political within their aesthetics. Furthermore, that numerous modernist responses included experiments in multiple media suggests *how* to respond to the war was both a formal and ethical question. J. Ashley Foster cites *Three Guineas* and the Spanish Pavilion as examples of “the trend of mixed-media projects that document the Spanish Civil War” (20). The latter, Marcus explains, “produced an avalanche of artistic response, in painting and propaganda, powerful posters never surpassed in artistic power since the Russian Revolution, poetry, fiction, journalism, and even music” (1–11). Indeed, *not* commenting on the Spanish Civil War was also significant: Stein’s silence on the conflict maybe have been one reason for her and Picasso’s cooling friendship (Madeline 358).

“Propaganda in its many guises,” Berman asserts, “is one of the most widely circulating cultural products to emerge from the Spanish Civil War” (191). For photojournalists like Taro and Capa, who had both become ardent supporters of the Republican cause as a result of working

in Spain, “the Spanish Civil War was primarily a political cause and they embraced the propagandistic uses of their photographs in support of the Republican cause” (Wallis 16). As Hugo García maintains, the deployment of propagandist works during this war was made possible through technological developments and the formation of official propaganda offices by federal governments during World War I, notably in Great Britain, France, and the United States.<sup>122</sup> Further, the Spanish Civil War “served as a laboratory for the development of new techniques, specifically in the use of radio, film and photography for propaganda purposes” (García 1). The communications technologies available during this period distinguishes Spanish Civil War propaganda.

The supposed veracity of the photography capturing this war created an effect of immediacy, also a feature of propaganda. Berman suggests that Woolf’s text interrupts the immediacy typical of propaganda: “On both sides of the struggle, the hallmark of the propaganda image or pamphlet is the manipulation of perspective in a manner that encourages an emotional, unmodified response to the subject matter—precisely what Woolf resists in her play with the photographs in *Three Guineas*” (191). Picasso, too, uses remediative techniques, but his sources are less explicit; his mural creates the effect of immediacy, but it does so without the use of photography or photorealism. Both artists interrupt what Sontag calls the “immediacy and authority” of the photographic image (*Regarding* 24).

Further, as Berman argues, official propaganda used by both left- and right-wing groups during the Spanish Civil War often visually reinscribed gender roles, featuring images that placed men in the battlefields and women at home. “Many Republican propaganda posters,” Berman asserts, “mobilize dramatic images of women and children in danger, women weeping, or dead children” (218).<sup>123</sup> Representing women and children as being victims, as requiring

protection, is only marginally different from the propagandist images that the Falange used, who were more likely to portray Franco as a masculine hero (Berman 223). These campaigns would have reflected the gendered discourses found in England, seen in the various examples that Woolf's *Three Guineas* provides, including Charles Kingsley's contention that "men must work, and women must weep" (252). Picasso and Woolf's intermedial responses, therefore, are not just contending with propaganda, but also with the notions of gender and nation that are reproduced in it.

The truthfulness of such representations of gender are suspect—but not surprising—considering women's participation in the Spanish Civil War. Taro was "one of the foremost photojournalists of her time," so dedicated to documenting war atrocities that she became "the first woman photojournalist to be killed on the field of battle" (Rogoyska 7). There were also significant feminist movements in Spain during the 1930s, including *Mujeres Libres*, an anarchist-feminist and anti-fascist group.<sup>124</sup> Many of this group's members were artists and writers, and yet the absence of their work from the Spanish Pavilion and from a canonized understanding of modernist responses to the war is still significant.<sup>125</sup> Hemingway and George Orwell's well-known accounts of the war, for example, make no reference to female Spanish artists and only briefly mention Spanish women's involvement in combat. Hughes, in contrast, compared the performance of flamenco singer La Niña de los Peines to an act of resistance, much like the blues (CW 14: 323). Woolf cites the example of Amalia, a Spanish militia woman from Delaprée's pamphlet (TG 210). Further, the number of women who were international medical volunteers on the side of the Republicans suggests that they were critical in the fight. For example, "18% of IB [International Brigade] doctors were female, a figure disproportionately high" (Coni 134). Representations of women only ever at home or weeping

dismisses and denies the various ways they were involved, including the intentional and brutal ways Spanish women were subject to violence during and after the war.<sup>126</sup>

The press frequently reproduced images and reports of women and children's casualties, portrayed as passive victims who should have been safely ensconced at home, in private spaces. Patricia Failing argues that "visceral empathy for the Spanish cause was not, for the most part, generated by actual events in Spain, but by newspaper images" (qtd. in Chipp, 42). The abundant images of weeping women used in newspaper reports and official propaganda suggests that these were valuable. The war would not have had the same impact outside of Spain were it not for the visual media that captured it most vividly. How Picasso and Woolf contend with these representations of women is significant.

I argue that the gendering of war in these mass-media representations was maintained through references to public and private spheres. In *Guernica*, Picasso illustrates how the destruction of private homes is a terrifying consequence of the aerial bombardments of Spain under the command of a Spaniard, Franco; Woolf shows how the equation of women with the private sphere has resulted in their subordination on both small and large scales. Phrased differently, the Spanish Civil War represents, for Picasso, a horrifying example of the state's sweeping destruction of private and public spaces. In contrast, for Woolf, the war's photographs are shocking, but the violence results in part from an insistence on domination not unique to Spain, Franco, or the 1930s.



Fig. 5. Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*.

### **Immediacy: *Guernica***

While living in France, Picasso would have learned of the aerial attacks on personally and politically significant places from newspapers, the radio, and friends. There were aerial bombardments of Málaga, his birthplace; of the country's capital, Madrid; and, later, the city where his family lived, Barcelona. Yet, the bombardment of a small agrarian town, Guernica, modified Picasso's work considerably: months before, he had been asked to create a mural for the Spanish Pavilion of the International Exhibition, but after the bombing he radically changed his project's theme and medium. That *Guernica* bears the marks of mass media was clear to observers from the outset. Spender, writing about the mural when it came to Britain in 1938, observed: "The flickering black, white, and grey lights of Picasso's picture suggest a moving picture stretched across an elongated screen; the flatness of the shapes again suggests the photographic image, even the reported paper words. The centre of this picture is like a painting of a collage in which strips of newspaper have been pasted across the canvas" (568). Spender's characterization of Picasso's work as filmic, photographic, "like a painting of a collage," reveals how multiple media are tangible in the painting. That all these materials are rendered *as if*

painted, I argue, demonstrates how Picasso's mural transposes various references. In recirculating mass media into his design, Picasso was not only responding to the attack on Guernica, but to the framing of the bombing in print, photography, and film.

Earlier in his career, Picasso had used mass-produced materials in his collages. *Guitare, partition et verre* (1912) and *La bouteille de Suze* are likely the first collages by a modern artist containing pasted-in newspapers. His first *papiers collés* had rarely been shown after they were produced. An exhibition, however, from 20 February to 20 March 1935 in Paris, *Picasso, papiers collés, 1912–1914*, was one example of renewed interest in Picasso's collaged works. Interestingly, this exhibition was accompanied by “a text by [Dadaist] Tristan Tzara who contrasts Picasso's approach with the shortcomings of purely propagandist art” (Baldassari 308). These initial collages incorporated newspaper segments that refer to the first Balkan war used as backdrops to still life images. The collages depict rooms, or interior space (Heesen 152). While the political content of the newspaper articles is suggestive, especially in relation to *Guernica*, multiple critics argue that Picasso's first uses of the newspaper may have been informed by its formal properties—the columns of type and styles of typography—as much as by its content. Indeed, many early viewers did not make note of the newspaper's content at all.<sup>127</sup> Picasso's collage-like *Guernica* is a distinctly different response to war. Materially, the boundaries between the newspaper and his paint are distinct in his earlier collages; he actually used cut-and-paste techniques in these. *Guernica*, in contrast, distills all media into oil paint in its critique of violence, resulting in immediacy rather than the hypermediacy of Picasso's earlier collages.

The Spanish Pavilion was an intermedial, propagandistic collection meant to garner allies and funds from international communities; organizers hoped that including Picasso, whose reputation was significant in 1937, would generate substantial publicity. “That the painting was



to serve as an astute propaganda coup was clear even before it had been completed” (Viejo-Rose 141). In addition to *Guernica*, Picasso contributed other works of art, and postcards of his anti-Franco series, *Songes et Mensonges de Franco*, were sold in the Spanish Pavilion (Borja-Villel et al. 169). Before Picasso had come to a final decision about his mural’s design, he would have known that “much of the pavilion would be devoted to agitprop” (T. Clark, *Picasso* 251). He also knew his contribution would need to be massive. The mural’s commission and scale are also reasons why *Guernica* differs from Picasso’s previous work. At 3.49 metres tall and 7.77 metres wide, *Guernica* is significantly larger than most of Picasso’s other paintings and many of the other pieces in the Pavilion.<sup>128</sup> Looking at *Guernica* in its original context, one can see how it was and continues to be historically and intermedially contextualized due to its inclusion in the International Exposition.

Such contextualization is also apparent in the mural’s international circulation, from 1937, when it was first shown, to 1939, when its inclusion in a Picasso retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City “finally established *Guernica* as an antifascist and anti-war propaganda painting and a masterpiece” (Borja-Villel et al. 163). These international shows often included other Picasso works, notably *Weeping Women* (the designation of multiple paintings, etchings, and drawings, all titled *Weeping Woman* or some variation thereof), and *Guernica* was mediated variously by these works as well as by the different international contexts. The rising threat of what would come to be known as total war also shaped *Guernica*’s international reception. As Dacia Viejo-Rose suggests, “the painting’s journey through a Europe on the brink of war—through Scandinavia (January–April 1938) and the UK (September 1938–March 1939)” meant it came to stand in for conflicts in those other locations (140). In this chapter, I am focusing primarily on the AIA’s role in bringing the

painting to Britain, and on *Weeping Woman* (1937). *Guernica*'s arrival in London the day before the Munich Pact, in hindsight, presaged the devastation that would be come from aerial bombs dropped by Germany during World War II on Coventry and London, including the destruction of Woolf's home in Mecklenburgh Square.

*Guernica* is one of Picasso's most public pieces. Indeed, T. Clark suggests that this composition was a departure from Picasso's methods up to that point: "in taking on the commission he was straying into territory—the public, the political, the large-scale, the heroic and compassionate—that very little in his previous work seemed to have prepared him for" ("Tragedy" 20; my emphasis). In *Guernica*, Picasso conflates interior and exterior spaces—in both form and content, the outside and inside exist on a single plane. Before *Guernica*, in contrast, his sketches and paintings often represented interior spaces. Even though there are a few pre-*Guernica* examples that suggest Picasso was responsive to events in Spain—notably *Songes et Mensonges de Franco* and *Figure (de femme inspire par la guerre d'Espagne)* (1937)—nothing in his oeuvre gained the publicity *Guernica* did. Formally, Picasso's collage-like techniques render the conflict through a redistribution of materials. As I will demonstrate in analysing the use of wallpaper, Picasso's choices of medium emblemize the conflation—or the *passage*—between public and private media, art and mass media.<sup>129</sup> In short, his composition renders visible the gendered divide between public and private spaces.

Terror bombing is remediated through women specifically in Picasso's *Guernica* and *Weeping Women*. "Of all the motifs developed in *Guernica*," Gijs van Hensbergen asserts, "it was the *Weeping Woman* that Picasso returned to again and again" (145). While many critics have discussed *Guernica* in relation to other media, and others still have discussed the gendered implications of its representations of women, I argue that the mural's remediations reveal

particularly gendered effects. In this way, Picasso's *Guernica* reflects other propaganda from the Spanish Civil War—which again, as Berman argues, often portrayed women as needing protection, as helpless victims. Picasso was candid about the role of women in his art: ““Like any artist, I am primarily the painter of woman, and, for me, woman is essentially a machine for suffering”” (qtd. in T. Clark, *Picasso* 225). Specifically, *Guernica*'s images of women emphasize their reproductive labour; it is the child's death that makes the mother monstrous with grief in the mural. This representation depicts gendered violence as the loss of the division of private and public space. Picasso's foregrounding of the mother's grief insists that war is terrible because women and children are no longer safe at home—a reinforcement of women's inextricable link to the home and to motherhood, to apolitical ““domestic' space” (Rancière, *Dissensus* 38).

Yet Picasso was close to women whose primary labour was art, not motherhood, and *Guernica* was heavily shaped by and circulated with the support of these women. Maar, the “Surrealist photomontage-poet” (Baldassari 23), was also vocally politically engaged (T. Clark, *Picasso* 243). She played a central role as collaborator, documentarian, and muse in Picasso's work in the 1930s, including *Guernica*: her photographs of *Guernica* as a work in progress were published in *Cahiers d'art* as promotion for the mural, and she “physically participated in the painting's creation . . . by painting the pattern of cross-hatching on the horse's flank” (van Hensbergen 53). In Picasso's renderings, however, he illustrated Maar's suffering rather than her active work in anti-fascist groups or as an artist; she is likely the model for the woman holding the lamp in *Guernica* and for some *Weeping Women* images.

Whereas Picasso's *Guernica* used newspapers and wallpapers in remediation, Maar remediated *Guernica* in her photographic documentation of its creation.<sup>130</sup> Maar's photography particularly influenced *Guernica*'s form, and her photographic process is tangible in the mural.

Emilie Bouvard, organizer of the 2018 exhibit, *Guernica*, at the Musée Picasso-Paris, suggests the dislocated feel of Picasso's mural was an effect of Maar's Surrealist photographs (Pes). Richardson maintains that the act of photographing the mural guided its palette: "[Maar] was able to make the first photographic record of the creation of a modern artwork from start to finish. It also helped Picasso to eschew color and give the work the black-and-white immediacy of a photograph" ("Different"). Baldassari emphasizes how Picasso painted using Maar's lighting equipment, leaving behind tangible effects of photography: "the bright orb of the photographic light haunts the painting" (172). Finally, T. Clark notes the impact of Maar's photography on women in particular as "shreds of the painting's light-dark architecture (its blast effect) slash across women's bodies" (*Picasso* 270). The mass media reference—in this case, photography—is gendered, suggesting that women's labour is both governed by actions of war and determined by representations of gender in wartime media.

Foregrounding intermediality in my analysis of *Guernica* necessarily highlights Maar's work in relationship to Picasso's. Indeed, Baldassari attributes much of Picasso's intermedial experimentation to his involvement with Maar, whom he met in 1935. The later 1930s were marked for Picasso by this relationship and by substantial changes in both his family life and in Spain. According to T. Clark, 1932–6 was "a complex, and in many ways unhappy, time" for Picasso, which "end[s], for much of 1936, in as much of a crisis of confidence as Picasso was ever capable of. He paints almost nothing for months on end, engraves spasmodically, pours his energies into a weird (and to my mind, bad) poetry. *Guernica*, among other things, is a convulsive awakening from this previous trance" (*Picasso* 252). It took the outbreak of war in Spain, a location immediate to Picasso even if he did not live there, for him to start painting again. "It was not the events themselves that were happening in Spain which awoke Picasso,"

claimed Stein, “but the fact that they were happening in Spain” (*P* 84). Stein dismissed the poems and failed to mention Picasso’s intermedial experiments in the two years leading up to painting *Guernica*. I suggest, however, that intermedial works—collage-like poems, writerly painting, and sculptural painting—are all modes Picasso used to respond privately and publicly to the Spanish Civil War.<sup>131</sup>

That Picasso continued to write verse until 1959 suggests that his poems were not the product of an uncreative or unconscious period. Susan Greenberg Fisher interprets Picasso’s writing as an upsurge in poetic work rather than a decline in productivity: “In Picasso’s career 1935–36 was a highly charged moment—one, understandably, long overshadowed by *Guernica*—when he experienced profoundly the allure of language” (133).<sup>132</sup> Further, several critics draw attention to the collage-like quality of Picasso’s poems. Mary Ann Caws remarks, “Picasso’s own writings, in particular his poems, in continual gestation like his paintings, have the structure of a collage” (18). His writing and painting are thus different methods of examining medium-specificity. In 1936, Clive Bell (Vanessa Bell’s husband) praised Picasso’s poems for the way it illuminated his other work: “Often in the poems, which are essentially visual, the connection of ideas, or, better, of ideas and images, is more easily apprehended than in the paintings and drawings. Picasso one realises, whether one likes it or not, Picasso, the most visual of poets, is a literary painter” (857). The important shift in Picasso’s work in the 1930s, I suggest, is not necessarily a move toward poetry or any one medium, but rather toward the representation of one medium in another, toward remediation.

Even more, intermedial experimentation helped Picasso shift from using collage to represent interiors—as he did in his earlier collages—to *Guernica*’s combination of interior and exterior space. As T. Clark suggests, for Picasso to conceptualize representations of public space

in his mural, he would need to consider the medium in relation to bodies and their environments. This process began by remediating sculpture in painting and sketches: “thinking a body in the outside world, for Picasso, involved imagining that body becoming a sculpture; and sculpture, as Picasso dreamed of that other medium in his painting, stood for a possible wholesale revision of scale in art (T. Clark, *Picasso* 195).<sup>133</sup> While I agree that the sculptural paintings are important, I focus on mass-reproduced media in *Guernica*. The sculptural paintings—which depict vast scenes on physically small canvases—may have enabled Picasso to place human figures in spaces of enormity, but an analysis of mass media allows one to understand how Picasso does or does not challenge popular representations of gendered and nationalist discourses.

In materials and origin, *Guernica* is a public piece. As T. Clark provocatively asks, “is not the point about *Guernica* that its space, and its whole conception, is public?” (*Picasso* 193). The development of Picasso’s Pavilion submission demonstrates a gradual shift away from his earlier work. Prior to this painting, T. Clark argues, Picasso’s preferred sphere was the private—“room-space” (274). Picasso’s initial concept for the Pavilion was, indeed, a depiction of a room’s interior. Anne Wagner describes this earlier idea as “an enormous depiction of an artist’s studio,” with a platform upon which two “rapt and pensive female busts” would be placed (110). The platform “would also have served as a barrier of sorts between Picasso’s exhibit and its public” (A. Wagner 111 n7). Picasso abandoned this idea after the bombing of Guernica; literally and figuratively, he removed the barriers between the work of art and its viewers. The evolution of Picasso’s contribution shows how *Guernica* involved a different conception of both space and audience interaction.

Certainly the mural’s colossal size is one of its most striking features, particularly as the representations of women and animals in distress tower over viewers. To contemporary

audiences especially, the physical and emotional effect of seeing the mural is also mediated by its innumerable reproductions. Although “*Guernica* suffers hugely,” suggests T. Clark, “from being continually miniaturized and disembodied in the world of mechanical reproduction” (*Picasso* 240), this reproducibility is central to both *Guernica*’s intermediality and the painting’s circulation. From the outset, Baldassari demonstrates,

the painting was to be reproduced and published as postcards to be sold at the Exhibition for the benefit of “Governmental Spain”. Thus Picasso would have thought of his composition right from the time of its conception from a media point of view, and considered its scale as connecting the logic of the monumental with that of the very small. In order to do this, he would have placed *the photographic imaging of the painting* at the very centre of the work process. (171)

By focusing on the imprints of photography in *Guernica*, Baldassari reveals Picasso’s awareness of the ways his mural might reach the broader public. Not only do the reproductions of *Guernica* continue to ensure a wide audience for the work, but they also recall how Picasso was responding to the reproducibility of images throughout the production of his mural.

The painting’s evolution from room-space to *Guernica*—from private to public—resulted in the incorporation of multiple mass media. Formally, in the combination of black, white, and gray tones and in the hatching, references to newspapers mediate how the bombing dominated daily media. Unlike his 1912 collages, *Guernica* does not include actual newspapers. Nevertheless, a few elements in the mural are newspaper-like. “The newspapers being used as palettes,” Baldassari observes from Maar’s photographs, “seem to have taken the composition by siege, infiltrating it”; “the joined together surfaces in black allow in the light tones, through which an intermittent typographic vibration passes, like a large folded sheet of newspaper”

(171). The newspaper—a medium, according to Heesen, very much bound up with the public—is notably present in Picasso’s workspace during the creation of *Guernica*. More specifically, Sara J. Angel asserts that Picasso was influenced by newsweeklies, suggesting that his mural resembles a double-page spread: “the dramatically oversized dimensions of *Guernica* link the painting to poster journalism, a new mode of graphic expression that emerged after the First World War in politically driven picture magazines” (376).

There are competing claims, however, as to which news account affected Picasso’s *Guernica* most significantly. Chipp suggests the mural was a reaction to “listening to the shocking news on the radio, reading the emotionalized words of the highly partisan newspapers” (38). In contrast, Minchom argues that *Guernica* was shaped by Delaprée’s pamphlet and by another pamphlet that depicted aerial bombardment, *Durango, ville martyre*, which was distributed on 1 May 1937.<sup>134</sup> Although the radio first broadcast news of the bombing, Picasso also would have been affected by the increased availability and immediacy of the visual documentation of the Spanish Civil War. The impact of newspaper photographs, the rapid increase of photojournals, and newsreels with footage of the warfront is visible in *Guernica*: “Picasso’s decision to opt for a *grisaille* palette was not motivated only by aesthetic and expressive considerations, but by the fact that he experienced the bombing in black and white through photographs, film and newsprint” (Cowling 579). Picasso regularly read the newspapers *Le Figaro* and *Ce Soir*, both of which first published photographs of the bombing on 30 April and 1 May 1937. “[T]he most horrific pictures in the newspapers,” insists Patterson, “had been pictures of women trying to escape the bombing at Guernica—something which struck Picasso very forcibly as he worked on his painting” (32). A. Wagner also suggests that a specifically gendered newspaper photo influenced Picasso thematically, arguing he read about the bombing



in *L'Humanité*, the first French paper to print a photograph of Guernica. The article was “accompanied by a photograph of the corpses of two female victims lying in the street,” and captioned with the phrase, “undoubtedly mothers” (A. Wagner 109). In depicting ruins and the victims of aerial bombing (and women in particular), Picasso does not only adopt the tonal imprint of the newspaper photograph but its content as well.



Fig. 6. *Ce Soir*, 29 Apr. 1937.

Even before photographs from the bombing of Guernica were published in *Ce Soir*, the newspaper elicited the presence of women and children on 29 April 1937, using the byline “*De nombreuses femmes et d’innombrables enfants ont péri sous les décombres enflammés de leurs demeures*” [“many women and countless children have perished under the burning rubble of their homes”] (Corman 1; fig. 6). The accompanying photograph, by Taro, is of soldiers, alive

and ready to fight.<sup>135</sup> The juxtaposition of the newspaper's textual description of women and the image of men reinforces—without photographic evidence—gender roles during wartime. In reality, these roles were much more mixed; the victims in Guernica ranged across gender and age, and the people resisting the insurgents included women. Compare the image selected by *Ce Soir*'s editors for the 29 April 1937 issue (see fig. 6) with Taro's varying images of women during the war (see fig. 4). This type of coverage indicates how the newspaper premediated the relationship between gender and war. Regardless of his specific news source, Picasso adopted the mass media representations of women as suffering and as mothers.

Rather than incorporating actual newspapers, Picasso experimented with adding wallpaper—a domestic material—to his mural. Before *Guernica* was finished, “Picasso seems to have pinned or stuck pieces of patterned, presumably colored, paper onto his painting’s blacks, whites, and grays” (T. Clark, *Picasso* 274). In addition to representing the private sphere—“the pieces are a last effort at preserving room-space”—these collage elements were associated with women’s figures in the painting; Picasso applied wallpaper strips to “the grieving mother’s dress” and “the falling woman’s frock” (274). Their temporary incorporation suggests a relationship between the domestic medium and women specifically. The wallpaper pieces were removed from the final mural, but they are still legible in the patterns on the women’s clothing, just as suggestions of newsprint are visible on the hatching that refines the horse’s body.

Although Picasso’s reputation was significant when he made the mural, *Guernica*’s early publicity came primarily from remediations and relocations. Maar’s photographic process contributed to its iconicity: “To generate interest, Dora Maar’s photographs of the artist working on *Guernica* were published in the international journal *Cahiers d’Art*” (Davies), in an issue that featured one of the only early reviews to praise Picasso’s mural.<sup>136</sup> The painting’s tour was also

important in generating attention; the circulation of *Guernica* and surrounding texts elevated Picasso's mural to its iconographic status. In part, the painting's travels were synchronous with the coming international war; "Gernika's symbolic nature and its significance were augmented by events of the world war" (Viejo-Rose 142). That these events happen around the same time strengthens the connection between the mural and total war.

*Guernica*'s tour of Europe, Britain, and the United States resulted partly from the negative reactions to the work from artists and politicians in Spain. After the Exposition, Picasso initially offered the painting to the people of Guernica, which "their president [José Antonio Aguirre] disdainfully refused" (Richardson, "Different"). Basque artist Ucelay described it as "one of the poorest things ever produced in the world. It has no sense of composition, or for that matter anything . . . It's just seven by three meters of pornography, shitting on Gernika, on Euskadi [Basque Country], on everything" (qtd. in Richardson, "Different"). Such strong rejections from Spain meant the painting was sent to be displayed in Scandinavia in early 1938, after the Exposition closed, and then to Britain. At the end of the Spanish Civil War, in 1939, Picasso declared that he and the painting would not return to Spain until Franco was no longer in power.<sup>137</sup>

*Guernica* was neither immediately successful nor unreservedly valued within or outside of Spain. Early criticisms of *Guernica* usually followed one of two arguments: that it was not effective as propaganda, or that it was too much like propaganda and thus not good art. Indeed, a wide range of public figures criticized the mural along these lines. Picasso's friends and other artists like Tzara and André Breton reacted negatively. Even Picasso's compatriot, filmmaker Luis Buñuel, admitted, "I can't stand *Guernica*, which I nevertheless helped to hang. Everything about it makes me uncomfortable—the grandiloquent technique as well as the way it politicizes

art” (qtd. in Richardson, “Different”). For Buñuel and other artists, it was too political. In Britain, it was rather the opposite: “art critic Anthony Blunt published a scathing review of the painting, dismissing Picasso’s inaccessible, elitist symbolism” (Davies).<sup>138</sup> The tour of 1937–39 helped to shift public perception of the painting from “elitist” to a masterpiece, an impression shaped further after the end of World War II, when a fuller understanding of the military atrocities from 1935–45 became known to the public. During this post-war period, there was also a wider appreciation of anti-war art.

### **Artists’ International Association (AIA)**

Woolf encountered similar charges of both elitism and disengagement after publishing *Three Guineas*. Taken together, criticisms of Picasso and Woolf suggest that the parameters for creating politically engaged art in the 1930s were rigid. Various charges were levied against Picasso and Woolf’s anti-war texts, with reviewers claiming that their work did not engage directly with specific events—the Spanish Civil War, the bombing of civilians, the rise of fascism in Europe—and for being pretentious or illegible. *Guernica* and *Three Guineas*, however, do foreground mass media representations of war. Popular media, in *Guernica* and *Three Guineas*, are strategically employed, repurposed to criticize both violence and reportage. Further, as media, *Guernica* and *Three Guineas* were used to raise funds for Spain. In sum, both artists worked to make their anti-war works accessible to a broad public using mass media.

Although both Picasso and Woolf were criticized for the ways *Guernica* and *Three Guineas* intervened as anti-war texts, both artists contributed their own reputations and money to direct action. Consider, specifically, Picasso and Woolf’s relation to the AIA, a group that “supported the left-wing Republican side in the Spanish Civil War through exhibitions and other

fund-raising activities” (Clarke, in Woolf, *E* 6: 79 n2). In 1936, Woolf wrote an article for the *Daily Worker* “on the occasion of the AIA’s *Artists Help Spain* exhibition” (Wood, “‘Chaos’” 19). In June 1937, Woolf was an invited guest at a London event put on by the AIA where Picasso’s *Weeping Woman* (1937) was auctioned for funds to aid Basque refugees coming to Britain. Additionally, Woolf “donated some manuscript pages of *Three Guineas* . . . to be sold for the aid of refugees from the Spanish Civil War” (Marcus li).<sup>139</sup> The AIA also helped bring *Guernica* to Britain, where it toured from September 1938 to March 1939 “to raise funds for Republic Spain, with the assistance of the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief and the Artists’ International Association” (Viejo-Rose 141). Although I suggest the intermedial application of collage to be their most vital meeting point, Picasso and Woolf’s work also overlaps in both artists’ involvement with the AIA.

During *Guernica*’s British tour, Helen Little suggests, “the majority of people who saw it and wrote about it talked about it first and foremost as a piece of political propaganda, not as an artwork. Many found it deeply confusing; they questioned whether art can or should be politically engaged in this way” (qtd. in Davies). Woolf had also addressed the question of art and engagement in her 14 December 1936 essay, “Why Art To-day Follows Politics,” written for the *Daily Worker* at the request of AIA secretary Elizabeth Watson. The *Daily Worker* often featured work by members of the AIA (Wood, “‘Chaos’” 18). A month before Woolf’s article appeared in the paper, “the *Daily Worker* published photographs of a large group of children killed when a school in Getafe was bombed during the Nationalists’ first air raid on Madrid” (Schurr 8). These images were contextualized by the newspaper as a rallying call to arms. Two days later, on 14 November 1936, Woolf wrote to Julian Bell (her nephew and Vanessa’s son) discussing both “Spain, which is now the most flaming of all problems” and her *Daily Worker*

article (*L* 6: 83). It is therefore likely that Woolf would have seen the images of Spain published by the *Daily Worker*.<sup>140</sup> Moreover, she had been engaged in the Spanish question even before seeing these images; along with other British intellectuals, Woolf had signed her name to an open letter supporting the Spanish Republican government that was published in the *Times* on 19 August 1936 (García 170).

“Why Art To-day Follows Politics” begins with the rhetorical strategy of asking and answering questions (a device Woolf also employed in *A Room of One’s Own*, *Three Guineas*, “Why,” and elsewhere): “I have been asked by the Artists’ International Association to explain as shortly as I can why it is that the artist at present is interested, actively and genuinely, in politics” (*E* 6: 75). Woolf describes the competing voices that the artist hears “when society is in chaos” (77), observing that war affects the artist’s production because the public, upon whom the artist depends for financial support and intellectual stimulation, is preoccupied. Artists are also called on to join the war cause by turning their creative skills into weapons, to make art only as “the servant of the politician” (77). Yet, Woolf’s form in this essay seems to propose another option for artists: to engage in discourse.

In June 1937, Woolf and her husband Leonard—a recognized Labour party intellectual—“were among the notable writers, artists and performers invited to sit on the platform behind the speakers” at a meeting to raise funds for Basque refugee children (Olivier Bell 98 n19). Other attendees included Vanessa and Clive Bell, Spender, and W. H. Auden. Woolf described the event in the following diary entry: “Then speeches. Then semi jocular money collecting; then an auction of pictures. One by Picasso: one by Kapp. All very stagey empty & unreal” (*D* 5: 99). Ruth Schurr adds that Picasso’s *Weeping Woman* (1937) was the auctioned picture (8). A year later, during the mural’s tour, Woolf was a listed patron for the *Guernica* exhibition at the New

Burlington Galleries in London (Mephram 168). The proceeds from this 1938 show also went to “Spanish refugee relief” (T. Clark, “Picasso in London” 145). Despite these overlaps in Picasso and Woolf’s fundraising activities, Woolf rarely mentions Picasso or his work in her diaries and letters. Of the 1937 fundraising occasion, for example, she complained about the loudspeakers and praised Paul Robeson, who had performed, but she writes little of Picasso.<sup>141</sup>



Fig. 7. Pablo Picasso, *Weeping Woman* (1937).

Because Picasso’s multiple works of women weeping surround *Guernica*, *Weeping Woman* (1937) accompanied and affected perceptions of *Guernica* in London in 1937. “Well before the completion of his mural, Picasso produced the drawings that would initiate the long series of compositions—paintings and prints as well as drawings—now known collectively as *Weeping Women*” (A. Wagner 121). Even still, as is evidenced by the Reina Sofía’s collection and curation, multiple images of women suffering frame Picasso’s work. Only more recently has Maar’s work and influence been productively paired with *Guernica* to provide counterexamples of women’s responses to war.

Woolf's work provocatively summoned images of weeping women when she revised *Three Guineas* for publication in the *Atlantic Monthly* as a two-part series, "Women Must Weep—or *Unite against War*" (May–June 1938), in order to build a readership for *Three Guineas*'s publication in the United States. In changing the title, Marcus determines, "Woolf avoided having to explain to the American reading public the history and political relevance of 'guineas' by instead enlisting her readers in the cause of seeing the oppression of women in 1938 as an obsolete Victorian sentimentalism" (225–6).<sup>142</sup> The title of the differently mediated article also shifts attention to the ways in which images of women were deployed in the *Daily Worker*, in Republican propaganda campaigns, and in Picasso's works. Although the article is photographic (it conjures images), the *Atlantic* publications were not accompanied by the five photographs included in *Three Guineas*. Naomi Black argues that "Women Must Weep" is "most distinctive because it lacks the photographs and the scholarly apparatus that make *Three Guineas*, the book, so very feminist" (145). The photographs, along with the guineas, were context-specific; the references would have been familiar to British audiences, not American. The title "Women Must Weep," I suggest, takes the place of Woolf's ironic use of photography in *Three Guineas* for her American audience. In this article and in *Three Guineas*, Woolf critiques the notion that "men must work, and women must weep"—only weep—in the face of fascism.

Because the international circulation of propaganda in the Spanish Civil War was crucial for garnering support, the convergence of Woolf's *Three Guineas* with Picasso's *Guernica* and *Weeping Woman* (1937) in London is significant. Outside of Spain, as García suggests, "Great Britain was, with France, the country most affected by" the war (3). Further, London "was the location of the Non-Intervention Committee. . . . Hence both sides concentrated their diplomatic



and propaganda efforts on London” (García 3). *Three Guineas* was published in June 1938; it circulated at roughly the same time as Picasso’s mural was on display (from September 1938–March 1939), in a location that numerous players in the war were targeting from Spain. *Guernica*’s British sojourn, I suggest, contextualizes and is contextualized by *Three Guineas*, and both texts circulated in tandem with Spanish Civil War propaganda.

### **Hypermediacy: *Three Guineas***

Although Picasso and Woolf highlight different effects of state violence, their works re-visualize images of war by relocating the action of war to the home front. Picasso’s *Guernica* and *Weeping Women* show the effects of aerial bombing in ways that elicit sympathy for mothers. The single plane upon which interior and exterior are levelled makes private grief visible. Woolf, however, is careful to point out how the reduction of women to their status as mothers—to performing labour in the private sphere only—is one effect of tyranny, of domination that is imposed over a population through multiple methods, including both economic disparity and aerial bombardments. In contrast, Woolf insists that women must engage in public discourse. In “Why,” an essay first published in May 1934 (in *Lysistrata*, a magazine for women’s colleges), she determines:

Churches, public houses, parliaments, shops, loud-speakers, motor cars, the drone of an aeroplane in the clouds, and men and women, all inspire questions. Yet what is the point of asking questions of oneself? They should be asked openly in public. But the great obstacle to asking questions openly in public is, of course, wealth. (*E* 6: 30)

Technology, government, and gender are all topics that elicit the questions to which Woolf refers. Her concluding point, that public participation entails having access to money, is made

again in *Three Guineas*, and it comes after several works by Woolf that critique women's limited participation in the public and media.

During Woolf's first radio broadcast, in 1927, she advocated for broader access to the means of literary production. "Above all things," Woolf expressed, "the reader wants variety; he wants books written by all sorts of people; by tramps and du[ch]esses; by plumbers and Prime Ministers. The reader's appetite is insatiable" (*E* 6: 613). Mass reproduction can be democratic in Woolf's view; diversity may be generated if writers with differing lived experiences of class and gender have access to the means of production.<sup>143</sup> Writing, Woolf explains in multiple texts, is more available to people with limited financial resources than other media. To illustrate this point, Woolf provided an introduction for a 1930 exhibition of Vanessa Bell's work wherein she discusses the historical exclusion of women from professional painting: "for a woman to look upon nakedness with the eye of an artist, and not simply with the eye of mother, wife, or mistress was corruptive of her innocency and destructive of domesticity" ("Foreword"). This foreword, suggests Diane Gillespie, "now seems as important to the genesis of *Three Guineas* as is 'Professions for Women,' written in the same year" (11). In all three texts, Woolf demonstrates how women's intellectual and creative labour is limited by gendered expectations and norms.

That the financial, social, or institutional constraints of some media practices exclude women more than others is symptomatic of wider disparities. Woolf compares private and public forms of domination, reiterating how tyranny at home mimics tyranny abroad. Examples can be found throughout her work. In essays such as "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid" (1940), she comments, "Let us try to drag up into consciousness the subconscious Hitlerism that holds us down. It is the desire for aggression; the desire to dominate and enslave" (*E* 6: 243); in her private diaries, "And more and more I come to loathe any dominion of one over another; any

leadership, any imposition of the will” (*D* 1: 256); in her fiction, “Once, long ago, she had caught salmon freely; now quick to minister to the craving which lit her husband’s eye so oilily for dominion, for power, she cramped, squeezed, pared, pruned, drew back, peeped through” (*Mrs. Dalloway* 85); and, of course, throughout *Three Guineas*. In this hypermediated, anti-fascist text, Woolf critiques tyranny by putting scraps of different media beside each other, allowing for multiple voices to converse. Importantly, Woolf’s combination of “official” and household materials suggests that civic engagement should not come at the cost of dismissing the domestic altogether. Domination, as Woolf argues, has entailed the division of private and public spaces and consequently limits women’s participation. *Three Guineas*, in content and in medium, seeks to traverse this divide.

Like many other critics, notably Berman, but also Wood, Black, David Bradshaw, Sarah Cole, and Anna Snaith, I argue that the form of *Three Guineas* is inseparable from its feminist, anti-fascist content. By focusing on intermediality, my argument is attentive to Woolf’s specific media practices in *Three Guineas*. Through distribution—by which I mean both the text’s publication history and the distribution of guineas as a narrative framework—Woolf’s deployment of intermediality exposes the gendered impacts of war *and* the gendered effects of media. Indeed, while *Three Guineas* has been analyzed for its feminism, its pacifism, and its rhetorical strategies (especially the use of photographs and letters), this text is also a sustained argument *about* media. *Three Guineas*’s hypermediacy and Woolf’s public engagement make unseen forms of domination visible, unmasking evidence found in the different materials she combines.

Woolf’s engagement with mass media in the 1930s was different than earlier in her career, owing to the commercial successes of her own texts, revenues from the Hogarth Press,

and developments in media technologies. “At the end of the 1920s,” Wood claims, “Woolf’s literary reputation was at its peak” (*Virginia* 9). According to Leonard Woolf, *The Years* was “the most successful of all Virginia’s books. It was the only one which was a best-seller in America” (144). As a result of their increasing financial security, Leonard and Virginia Woolf did “less in the occupations which we did not want to do, for instance journalism” (L. Woolf 145). Although she wrote fewer essays in the 1930s than earlier in her career, these latter texts are “more overtly political and socio-political” in content (Clarke xvi).<sup>144</sup> While Woolf had less financial imperative to produce mass media, this did not result in disengagement from the public sphere. Rather, it was the opposite: in terms of reputation, Woolf had more to risk in the 1930s *and* was the most outspoken in this decade. She continued to write, publish, and circulate her own work and that of others, including unmistakably partisan texts. As neither journalism nor fiction, *Three Guineas* responds to the political climate of the 1930s (which Woolf characterizes in “The Leaning Tower”). Further, because it is one of her most clearly political and feminist texts, it is significant that Woolf’s readership was substantial at the time of *Three Guineas*’s publication.

Early in her career, “Woolf had learned her trade as a journalist working within the framework of the *Times Literary Supplement*” (Sandbach-Dahlström 293 n12), but her work appeared in multiple, diverse publications in the 1930s, expanding her audience. Wood asserts that Woolf moved into “new political and aesthetic territory” with her contributions to popular periodicals in the 1930s (*Virginia* 140); Woolf’s three BBC radio appearances between 1927 and 1937 mark, as Ian Whittington suggests, “a willingness to intervene in the public sphere via the wireless” (641).<sup>145</sup> In addition to lecturing and publishing her own fiction and nonfiction texts, Woolf contributed to popular magazines, such as *Good Housekeeping* and the *Atlantic Monthly*,

and a photograph of her appeared on the cover of *Time* on 12 April 1937. She wrote articles for various smaller magazines and journals that focused explicitly on labour or gender, such as the *Woman's Leader*, *Lysistrata*, the *New Statesmen*, and the *Daily Worker*. She was also influential in the artistic marketplace as Hogarth Press's "primary literary manuscript editor" (McTaggart 74). Woolf's participation in various venues indicates she was regarded as being a public intellectual, and her mass media contributions reiterate the more sustained arguments of gender, medium, and language found in *Three Guineas*, *The Years*, and *Between the Acts* (1941).

Of *Three Guineas* in particular, its collage-like form uses daily media to expose how war seeps into the everyday. Found and imagined materials are repurposed in satirical, anti-authoritarian ways, repudiating the notion that documentary media contains only objective facts: "Woolf's narrative involutions, gaps, and detours challenge the efficacy of a complete and coherent accounting for oneself, contest the documentary claims of war reporting, and interrupt the kind of teleological, unitary perspective that characterizes propaganda" (Berman 41). These interruptions include found photographs of men in "the fashion of fascism" (Truett 26), notional photographs of "dead children, ruined houses," as well as endnotes, monetary figures, newspaper clippings, letters, autobiographies, legal documents, and references to propaganda pamphlets and radio broadcasts. Further, "official" media are mixed within an interior space: Woolf's narrator refers periodically to a table upon which the paper and pictures are placed, which stages the narrative as a private conversation.

*Three Guineas* emerges from Woolf's varying methods of framing her arguments in the 1930s. Black asserts that *Three Guineas* and *The Years* both "started as a lecture given by Virginia Woolf for the Junior Council of the London and National Society for Women's Service on 21 January 1931" (51).<sup>146</sup> This lecture was then likely revised and published as "Professions

for Women.” The themes of this lecture and subsequent essay are like Woolf’s earlier foreword for Bell: she stresses gender and paid work. Woolf “also drastically cut and revised the text for serialization in the *Atlantic Monthly* [May, June 1938] before the appearance of the first American edition” of *Three Guineas* on 25 August 1938 (Black 69). The magazine’s readership “was huge and quite different from the literary audience for her novels” (Marcus xxxv). Thus, Americans encountered the work as a serial at roughly the same time that *Three Guineas* was first published in England, on 2 June 1938. As evinced from its transition from a public speech to its serial publication, *Three Guineas* influenced audiences beyond those who had access to the full text.

The development of *Three Guineas* shows Woolf practicing what her narrator proposes in the text: “Find out new ways of approaching ‘the public’; single it into people instead of massing it into one monster, gross in body, feeble in mind” (*TG* 117). I emphasize Woolf’s attempts to reach multiple publics because, as she makes explicit, the division between private and public spheres is a way of delegitimizing those who are not gendered men and those who are not wealthy. Jacques Rancière, who uses and extends many of Woolf’s arguments in his criticism, also explicitly links public exclusion and subjugation:

If there is someone you do not wish to recognize as a political being, you begin by not seeing him as the bearer of signs of politicity, by not understanding what he says, by not hearing what issues from his mouth as discourse. And the same goes for the easily invoked opposition between, on the one hand, the obscurity of domestic and private life and, on the other, the radiant luminosity of the public life of equals. Traditionally, in order to deny the political quality of a category—workers, women and so on—all that

was required was to assert that they belonged to a ‘domestic’ space that was separated from public life. (*Dissensus* 38)

*Three Guineas* does the exact opposite of rendering a subject mute by moving her/him/them into the private sphere. Instead, she makes domestic spaces a public concern. For Rancière, the process of politicizing groups, which echoes Foucault’s concept of eventalization, “consists in making what was unseen visible” (*Dissensus* 38). I argue that the collage-like combination of materials in *Three Guineas* renders disparities both visible and political.

In *Three Guineas*, Woolf challenges the separation of space according to gender by productively comparing passages found in local newspapers. In one example, a series of quotations on the importance of providing waged labour to men over women are put alongside statements made by Hitler. Woolf’s narrator claims:

There we have in embryo the creature, Dictator as we call him when he is Italian or German, who believes that he has the right whether given by God, Nature, sex or race is immaterial, to dictate to other human beings how they shall live; what they shall do. Let us quote again: “Homes are the real places of women”. . . Place it beside another quotation: “There are two worlds in the life of the nation, the world of men and the world of women.” (*TG* 65)

Woolf illuminates how such a gendered division of daily life must be a crucial aspect of domination. In the endnotes, there are yet more examples connecting patriarchy to fascism.<sup>147</sup>

Two clippings from the *Daily Herald* are juxtaposed: “Evidence of the complex nature of satisfaction of dominance is provided by the following quotation: ‘My husband insists that I call him “Sir”,’ said a woman at the Bristol Police Court yesterday. . . . In the same issue of the same paper Sir E. F. Fletcher is reported to have ‘urged the House of Commons to stand up to

dictators” (TG 214). The newspaper is used against itself throughout Woolf’s text, compellingly illustrating the roots of fascism in private spaces, in British homes.

Writing publicly about the “embryo” of fascism in British patriarchy resulted in a mixed and even hostile reception of *Three Guineas* from the press and from members of Woolf’s circle. “Woolf’s usually voluble male friends,” as Gillespie asserts, “silently ignore[d] the book as a public embarrassment” (20). E. M. Forster declared it “cantankerous” and among “the worst of her books” (262). In hindsight, comparing the devastatingly cruel, long-lasting, and widespread effects of Nazism to the radically different effects of economic subjugation reveals, as Marina Mackay asserts, “the limitations, at this stage, of Woolf’s understanding of the Nazi within and without” (29).<sup>148</sup> It seems, however, that Woolf’s critics reacted to these two forms of domination being placed on the same plane at all. Jennifer Barker maintains that criticism of *Three Guineas* is the result of Woolf’s implication of Britain in the text’s exposure of tyranny, which was atypical of other anti-fascist art:

Her peers’ desire to maintain clear and definitive boundaries in relation to fascism reflects a common stance in antifascist writing and ideology of the 1930s and 1940s, which often identified fascism as completely “other” or “perverse,” and therefore her suggestion that “fascist” thinking was not only possible but also pervasive in Britain’s traditional institutions and private homes caused many to react indignantly. (73–4)

Woolf anticipated some of these reactions, writing in her journal: “I must not let myself believe that I’m simply a ladylike prattler: for one thing it’s not true” (D 4: 181). Woolf was prepared to take the financial risk of publishing the text, including its costlier (but necessary) photographs. It is impossible to determine if a different publishing house would have made the same choice. Based on the response of *Three Guineas*’s critics, who labelled the book’s message as being



insignificant, Woolf's proprietary role at the Hogarth Press was essential for the intermedial text to reach the public.

Although "*Three Guineas* sold reasonably well" (Black 69), the ways in which Woolf's book was dismissed as being politically irrelevant suggests that women's options for contributing as professional artists were limited. Considering the critical and financial success of *The Years* in 1937, Woolf's oblique criticisms of tyranny were seemingly more amenable as fiction than as *Three Guineas*—a satirical, collaged rendering of documentary evidence. The difference in reception between the two texts is tangible in reactions like those from Woolf's friends, including the economist John Maynard Keynes, who "had loved *The Years*" but was "'very critical' of *Three Guineas*" (Briggs 332). And yet, celebrating Woolf's fiction while disparaging *Three Guineas* undermines her explicitly feminist critique of war.

Even more, Woolf provides a compelling argument for the necessity of nonfiction within *Three Guineas*. In the text's notes, it is suggested that fiction can be an imprecise tool for persuasive writing; *Antigone*, she maintains, wielded as propaganda could elicit sympathy for both Antigone and Creon (*TG* 201 n39). *Three Guineas* makes Woolf's criticism of domestic and international tyrannies much more explicit than *The Years* does. Although both texts are intermedial critiques of class, gender, and war, they differ in their treatment of gender and medium: in *The Years*, Colonel Pargiter keeps newspaper clippings in a scrapbook; in *Three Guineas*, newspaper clippings are kept as evidence of domineering British men who resemble Colonel Pargiter. *Three Guineas* reveals the unseen traits of these decorated, upper-class men in military dress; war, fascism, and domination are the effects of those captured in the five photographs, whose ideas are echoed in the newspaper clippings that argue women's space be kept separate from men's. Dismissing Woolf's *Three Guineas* as a "public embarrassment," as

an unimportant contribution to anti-fascist literature because it critiques fascism through feminism, is yet another example of how women's public work—in this instance, Woolf's—is restricted.

*Three Guineas*'s implication of British fascism, however, makes it distinct from propaganda. According to Berman, “By insisting on the variety of faces, experiences, perspectives, and narrative responses to war, Woolf's essay . . . not only brings intimate ethics to bear on the public politics of antiwar activism but also acts as a political refusal of the very categories of identity created by and perpetuated in war and patriarchy” (76). Here, Berman addresses specifically the way Woolf refuses to conflate soldier and civilian, maintaining, in the face of total warfare, that there remain distinctions between soldier and civilian and that the position of “Outsider” is possible. I would extend Berman's argument; Woolf's text refuses distinct, stable, and singular categories, both in refusing the shared subjectivity between her narrator and the letter writers, her narrator and the Spanish victims, but also of media. Specifically, Woolf's intermedial practice critiques war without reinscribing clear divisions between inside and outside, one medium and another, while also distinguishing among Spanish and British reportage. That Woolf renders other media primarily as writing is partly due to the narrator's position as a woman and as a writer within *Three Guineas*. “The speaker,” Marie-Luise Gätgens suggests, “locates her own position as on ‘the threshold of the private house,’ as on ‘the bridge which connects the private house with the world of the public life.’ She is thus neither enclosed by the private house, nor has she joined the profession” (32). Continuing this observation, I would suggest that the choice of media is a significant factor in the narrator's role as an Outsider—that this position allows her to understand the letter writers while also distributing photographs and other evidence to point to their differences.

The narrator's profession, in addition to obfuscating the division between Woolf and her narrator, is economically informed; she is a writer because "the extreme cheapness of its professional requirements" means that "the profession of literature is still that which stands widest open to them [the daughters of educated men]—to prevent war" (Woolf, *TG* 107, 116). The narrator is not only a writer, however, but a collector of evidence from multiple media made into writing, into a text that can be mass-produced. The speaker begins her argument about the vast "gulf" between men and women of the same class by "lay[ing] before you a photograph—a crudely coloured photograph—of your world as it appears to us who see it from the threshold of the private house" (Woolf, *TG* 22). The first photograph in the text, of Lord Robert Baden-Powell, appears shortly after this statement (25).<sup>149</sup> Although the narrator is likely referring to the war photographs—"The Spanish Government sends them with patient pertinacity about twice a week" (14)—the proximity of verbal reference and the text's first actual photograph results in associating the notional photograph with the image of a smiling man in military uniform.



Fig. 8. "A General." Photograph from *Three Guineas*.

*Three Guineas* remains outside a single medium. Indeed, critics have used a variety of epithets to categorize *Three Guineas*, confirming only that it is a rampantly hybrid text. In *Three*

*Guineas*, “Woolf creates a radically experimental new essay genre” (Berman 62). Merry Pawlowski calls it “the elaborate tapestry” (744). *Three Guineas* has also been compared to a scrapbook: in the process of compiling clippings in the planning, Marcus argues that Woolf “took that domestic staple of family life, the scrapbook, and used it for recording public events” (xxxvii–i). These numerous classifications of *Three Guineas* suggest its hybridity and polyvocality. When writing *The Pargiters*, Woolf considered its form: “It should include satire, comedy, poetry, narrative; and what form is to hold them all together? Should I bring in a play, letters, poems? I think I begin to grasp the whole” (*D* 4: 152). A 1935 diary entry by Woolf also suggests *Three Guineas*’s genre: “And here I am plagued by the sudden wish to write an Anti fascist Pamphlet” (*D* 4: 282). Later, Woolf recorded that she was experimenting: “I am trying to cut the characters deep in a phrase: to pare off and compare scenes: to envelop the whole in a medium” (*D* 5: 25). *Three Guineas*, which came out of this formal experiment, is a well-constructed “whole,” a collaged textual collection of other materials, without being singular or totalizing.

Woolf stages the argument as a series of letters, thus valuing dialogue and debate in the prevention of war. In the essay “Why,” Woolf asserts that “I am pestered with questions” that “should be asked . . . in public” (*E* 6: 30); *Three Guineas* was named “Answers to Correspondents” at one point.<sup>150</sup> The letters, with their multiple imagined writers, create multiple points of view—Teresa Winterhalter suggests this method “reveals an intricate layering of voices” (236). The epistolary mode also contextualizes *Three Guineas* as a publicly engaged text of its era. “The public letter was a common trope in 1930s pamphlet literature,” argues Wood, and Woolf “indicates an attempt to engage with literary forms popular and suitable to the climate of public political debate that raged through the 1930s. Woolf’s use of the epistolary mode in

*Three Guineas* determinedly shifts her feminist-pacifist cultural analysis into the public realm” (*Virginia* 80, 81). Thus the letter-writing mode itself, even without considering its content, demonstrates Woolf’s public engagement.

The letters in *Three Guineas* are a private exchange rendered public. According to Ria Banerjee, Woolf had previously used letters in her writing: “In both early fiction and later non-fiction, the feminized space of the personal letter counters the public, masculine sphere of the modern machine age” (11). Woolf’s “ardently feminist” intertextual references, Anne Fernald suggests, create a reading list of other women’s work (62). It is women who are credentialed through citation, and often it is actual letters and biographies that are used.<sup>151</sup> As remediated letters that use excerpts from the daily lives of historical women, *Three Guineas* makes the source texts more permanent. Deliberately, effectively, Woolf creates spaces for women’s lives in her mass-produced text.

Conversely, reproduced photographs of men—and of men only—redirect the gaze critically. “Up to a point,” Sontag explains, “the weight and seriousness of . . . photographs survive better in a book, where one can look privately, linger over the pictures, without talking” (*Regarding* 121). Although the letters frequently reference pictures of destruction in Spain, they are interrupted by the five reproduced photographs of British men in public, images that were originally printed in newspapers. Near the end of *Three Guineas*, the narrator clarifies that photographs are also a point of connection:

For as this letter has gone on, adding fact to fact, another picture has imposed itself upon the foreground. It is the figure of a man; . . . He is called in German and Italian Fuhrer or Duce; in our own language Tyrant or Dictator. And behind him lie ruined houses and dead bodies—men, women and children. But we have not laid out that picture before you

in order to excite once more the sterile emotion of hate. On the contrary it is in order to release other emotions such as the human figure, even thus crudely in a coloured photograph, arouses in us who are human beings. For it suggests a connection and for us a very important connection. It suggests that the public and private worlds are inseparably connected; that the tyrannies and servilities of one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other. But the human figure even in a photograph suggests other and more complex emotions. It suggests that we cannot dissociate ourselves from that figure but are ourselves that figure. It suggests that we are not passive spectators doomed to unresisting obedience but by our thoughts and actions can ourselves change that figure. (*TG* 168–9)

Although “that picture before you” directly refers to the intermedially referenced images of destruction in Spain, the interspersed images, imagined and actual, connect the smiling general to that destruction. Woolf, however, provocatively suggests that we are both complicit in destruction and capable of change. *Three Guineas* is not simply a stacking up of evidence and arguments; it offers solutions. More importantly, the text also critiques other anti-war efforts, such as fundraising, without dismissing them altogether.



Fig. 9. “Heralds.” Photograph from *Three Guineas*.



Fig. 10. “A University Procession.” Photograph from *Three Guineas*.



Fig. 11. “A Judge.” Photograph from *Three Guineas*.

The actual photographs are one rhetorical method among many in *Three Guineas*. The beginning of this passage—“as this letter has gone on, adding fact to fact, another picture has imposed itself”—reveals the work of Woolf’s intermedial practice: it is not any one medium but rather media in combination that enable Woolf’s anti-fascist argument to cohere. Remediated, the photographs and newspapers destabilize the authority of those captured. “Photographs objectify,” Sontag asserts, “they turn an event or a person into something that can be possessed” (*Regarding* 81). Only men are pictured in the book, signalling that British men in power can be ridiculed, possessed, and repurposed. The five photographs are striking not only because they provide a different visual record of the faces of destruction than what was printed in newspapers,

sent by the Republican government, and described in Delaprée’s pamphlet, but also because they mimic the images used in pro-Franco, pro-Hitler propaganda campaigns—those that venerate men with economic, educational, military, and religious authority.<sup>152</sup>



Fig. 12. “An Archbishop.” Photograph from *Three Guineas*.

Although Sontag calls *Three Guineas* Woolf’s “brave, unwelcomed reflections on the roots of war” (*Regarding 3*) and returns to Woolf’s feminist argument at the end of her own essay, she is critical of Woolf’s treatment of war images: “To read in the [notional] pictures, as Woolf does, only what confirms a general abhorrence of war is to stand back from an engagement with Spain as a country with a history. It is to dismiss politics” (9). Yet, the five reproduced photographs—in contrast to the verbalized war images—stop British men and women from directing their gaze outward to other nations without also discerning similar patterns of domination at home. When Woolf “interrupts her narration, begins again, or switches to another generic mode,” as Berman argues, “she mitigates the power of the image to determine her response and to act like propaganda on her or on us” (72). It is unclear whether Sontag had read an edition of *Three Guineas* with the five photographs included, and, if she had, whether this would have altered her criticism of Woolf’s use of war images.<sup>153</sup> When Woolf suggests that the photograph is a “fact” (*TG* 169), however, the actual photographs should be considered. That



Woolf substitutes photographs of the Spanish Civil War for those of British men is perhaps evidence of not engaging with “Spain as a country with a history,” of over-identifying with another group. In exchange, however, the five photographs are factual evidence of British patriarchal imperialism.

Woolf’s diaries and letters indicate that she was aware of and affected by both local and global conflicts, suggesting that she does not “dismiss politics” but instead engages with the politics of Britain rather than Spain. “A specimen day, yesterday: a specimen of the year 1935,” Woolf noted, “when we are on the eve of the Duke of Gloucester’s wedding: of a general election: of the Fascist revolution in France: & in the thick of the Abyssinian war” (*D* 4: 351). This combination of major and minor events is typical in her private and public writings; continually, Woolf makes connections between domestic and global issues. *Three Guineas* captures people in power as the primary photographic subject. In doing so, Woolf creates proximity between those directly responsible for bombing women, children, and houses in Spain and those living in England. As Corum has determined, the more press coverage that the aerial bombardments received, the more public criticism against such bombardments was made in Britain in the 1920s and 30s. Typically in war reportage, Sontag suggests, distance plays a role in the images used: “The more remote or exotic the place, the more likely we are to have full frontal views of the dead and dying” (*Regarding* 70). In the press clippings included in *Three Guineas*, however, Woolf’s readers were given full views of upper-class, British domination.

Finally, Woolf also makes the “unseen visible” (Rancière, *Dissensus* 38) through waged labour in *Three Guineas*. The guineas—or rather, the cheques which promise guineas—are an instrumental medium of feminist critique. Remediated money in *Three Guineas* creates a different sort of exchange value for guineas: the cheques she offers are useless in any actual

marketplace, and instead become much more valuable as part of a resistance to war through collage-like art. Throughout the text, Woolf's support is valued at much more than a guinea: "The majority of Woolf's letters ask for endorsement not money, and none of them request a guinea" (Wood, *Virginia* 80). Indeed, her participation in the AIA refugee event, as a "notable writer" (*D* 5: 98 n19), suggests her reputation was sought more frequently than her funds as contributions to propaganda campaigns. The value is in Woolf's labour—what Pierre Bourdieu would term her "charisma"—not in capital.

The combination of different kinds of labour in *Three Guineas* demonstrates how Woolf's creative, archival work has monetary, and thus public and communal, value. Labour, in *Three Guineas*, is exemplified in its intermedial, referential framework: the epistolary mode figures the text as an exchange of money for letters. "Like words and language," Marshall McLuhan maintains, "money is a storehouse of communally achieved work, skill, and experience" (*Understanding* 186).<sup>154</sup> In *Three Guineas*, the artifice of subscription uncovers deficits within the distribution of wealth. There are more letters than guineas (twelve letters, according to Black, and only three guineas), which stresses communication over the accumulation of capital in the prevention of war. Further, because both Woolf and the narrator are women, the text and its labour are women's work. The evidence of Woolf's own extensive research is in the hypermediated inclusion of references, endnotes, and drafts of letters, suggesting that the text is also indeed a "storehouse of communally achieved work."

There are costs and numbers throughout the text: figures reinforce nearly every argument and uncover gendered, economic disparity. This use of statistics, as Elena Gualtieri explains, mimics early twentieth-century feminist rhetoric: from the Cooperative Women's Guild Congress, "Woolf learned that facts could be wielded as weapons, as explosive charges against

the sclerotic fabric of British society” (188). Repurposed and relocated, economic evidence drawn from newspapers and other official sources betray the social conditions behind wealth. But again, the narrator provides more letters, more drafts, and certainly more arguments than guineas. Readers are reminded, in more ways than one, that money alone will not prevent war. As the narrator of *Three Guineas* provocatively asks: “How much peace will £42,000 a year buy at the present moment when we are spending £300,000,000 annually upon arms?” (43). The more labour-intensive letters and the imagined dialogue within *Three Guineas* are presented as being important contributions to the prevention of war.

Woolf does not use just any currency, but guineas specifically.<sup>155</sup> In *Three Guineas*, therefore, violence is not only the highly visible effects of war, but also the economic domination that excludes certain bodies from making significant money, from making guineas. “Through money,” Bruce Carruthers suggests, “political authority is insinuated into every market exchange, even ostensibly ‘private’ exchanges” (58–9). Guineas imply a legacy of wealth gained through imperial authority: the name refers to the area of West Africa most implicated in the Atlantic slave trade, which also included mining the region for gold and other natural resources. It was the currency of subjugation and exploitation of both people and the environment. “The ring of those golden guineas ritually invoked by the title reminds us,” asserts Marcus, “that this civilization is based on slavery, that the English empire and its present democracy derived much of its capital power from the buying and selling of slaves and the use of their labor. We are meant to connect this fact to the patriarchal use of the unpaid labor of women” (lix). The guineas, however, also reflect the social class of *Three Guinea*’s narrator, a status made possible through centuries of exploitation. Although women’s labour is compared to slavery throughout *Three Guineas*, I suggest that this currency complicates the division between perpetrator and

victim. Because she is affiliated with wealth, the narrator (and the other daughters of educated men) is not blameless.

In *Three Guineas*, the distribution of guineas demonstrates how wealth dictates power relations. The narrator plays a complicated role as a woman being asked for money because she has the authority to give, refuse, withhold or earmark funds. The narrator claims, “if she [the solicitor] is poor, as poor as she pretends to be, then we can bargain with her” (Woolf, *TG* 51), an acknowledgement that economic dependence results in the domination of one group over another. At multiple points in the text the narrator considers attaching conditions to the guineas only to decide against it. In one example, the narrator drafts a letter, stating, “the guinea should be earmarked ‘Rags. Petrol. Matches.’ And this note should be attached to it. ‘Take this guinea and with it burn the college to the ground’” (*TG* 45). This condition, however, stays in the text but as a draft; the collage-like form of *Three Guineas* allows such playful, discarded material not to be wasted. The guinea ultimately goes to fund a women’s college “without any condition attached” (*TG* 49). Further, the distribution of this guinea keeps the first letter writer, an educated male pacifist, waiting. The narrator exercises power by funding not the pacifist group but rather a women’s college. “In *Three Guineas*, a woman’s right to earn a living is given ‘paramount importance’ because at last a woman is able to assert the right of the giver, rather than the obligation of the receiver” (Im 578). Amid more explicit suggestions as to how we are to prevent war, the text also provides the narrator’s distribution as an example—address income inequality, she suggests, rather than continue to reinforce power relations through money.

Woolf stresses the importance for women “to earn their own livings” (*TG* 130), not only to earn wages from professions open to women, but from those with marked gender disparity—such as painting, as she describes in the foreword to Bell’s exhibit. The narrator in *Three*

*Guineas* also proposes compensating reproductive labour: “if any condition were to be attached to the guineas it would be this: that you should provide a wage to be paid by the State to those whose profession is marriage and motherhood” (*TG* 131).<sup>156</sup> In Picasso’s *Guernica* and *Weeping Women*, images of women’s reproductive labour are used, unremunerated, in service of the nation. The paintings’ grieving mothers provide labour both as imagery for the Spanish Pavilion (a state-solicited art exhibition) and as producers of soldiers and children who are then killed in war. Pictures of weeping women—appallingly punctuated by their dead children—were valuable tools to solicit sympathy and funds.

Woolf’s narrator, however, interrupts this employment of grieving mothers by denying the immediacy of such propaganda. Berman argues that Woolf’s juxtaposition of real and verbally rendered images makes *Three Guineas* distinct from propaganda; Woolf redirects the outrage that the war images were meant to elicit. In addition to the play between verbal and visual images, I argue, the guineas disrupt an emotionally affective reaction to war, suggesting that images of women as war’s victims obscures the abundant financial evidence of gender disparity. Indeed, with every medium she uses, Woolf further complicates the relationship between images of war and affect. Near the end of her own anti-war meditation, Sontag rephrases *Three Guineas*’s (and her own) opening question: “Is there an antidote to the perennial seductiveness of war? And is this a question a woman is more likely to pose than a man? (Probably yes.) Could one be mobilized actively to oppose war by an image. . . . *A narrative seems likely to be more effective than an image.* Partly it is a question of the length of time one is obliged to look, to feel” (*Regarding* 122; my emphasis). The combination of narrative, images, drafts of letters, and guineas in *Three Guineas*—its mixture of materials—demands time from its readers, an effect that amplifies the intrinsic differences in spatiotemporal modality between

words and photographs. Hypermediacy, that self-aware display of media, creates the disruptions and deferrals in *Three Guineas* that complicate any facile consumption of the text.

Overall, the narrator of *Three Guineas*, a woman who holds economic and authorial power, provides an important counter-narrative to the depiction of women's labour in Picasso's *Guernica*. If Picasso suggests that ultimate sadness is in a mother's grief made monstrous, in women who weep, Woolf provides the eventalization of those weeping women, of how their roles came to be limited to grieving. Using the distribution of guineas, *Three Guineas* shows how the division of space according to gender results in women's limited economic and political participation, leaving them little recourse to prevent war. She also, however, identifies the ways women support patriarchy, indirectly or directly, by condoning their husbands' wealth and prestige. *Three Guineas* asks everyone to divest themselves of the institutions that support war. The costs of restricting women's participation in the public sphere, for Woolf, are not merely financial. She wants to end the glorification of war, put an end to the "embryo" of fascism. Part of this work, she suggests, entails the representation of and participation by women in media as more than merely machines of suffering, reinforcing the need for readers to take up the means of production themselves. Remediation allows other media to be rendered as writing, that profession most available to women "to prevent war" (Woolf, *TG* 116). In this way, the authority of the source medium can be challenged.

Woolf's *Three Guineas* relocates the Spanish Civil War by showing how war is an extension of everyday tyranny. In contrast, Picasso's *Guernica* dislocates the war as it stands in for conflicts across the globe. Taken together, both texts demonstrate how the everyday and the event flow into each other. In both, gender, nations at war, and threats of public and private

violence are central concerns that Woolf and Picasso respond to through intermedial experiments. Picasso's collage-like mural alludes to the infiltration of newspapers, wallpaper, and photography, suggesting that war and war reportage affects women in particular. Maar's photographs of the process contributed to its iconicity, which was further enhanced as it toured different countries at the beginning of World War II. Woolf layers multiple media in *Three Guineas*, stripping bare the relationships between capitalism and patriarchy, and demonstrating the cost of this system to gendered bodies. In both, war and the reporting of war is a central concern.

Although Picasso and Woolf had no direct relationship, the relationship created through their personal and political networks (including the AIA) and through seeing the same types of reporting and photographic images in the press forges a connection between their controversial responses to the Spanish Civil War. Both *Guernica* and *Three Guineas* have been compared to weapons: Picasso's participation in the Spanish Pavilion was likened to a victory on the battlefield (Viejo-Rose 140–1), and *Three Guineas* represents "Woolf's ironic deployment of mass-produced works as weapons" (Sarker 50). Remediation, however, results in a different strategy of contending not only with war but also with propaganda. Picasso and Woolf's uses of remediation are contrastive; whereas Picasso obscures the perpetrators of suffering and focuses on the victims, Woolf puts *only* men under the glare of the camera. For both artists, however, the goal was to oppose war.

That Sontag returns to the Spanish Civil War in multiple texts indicates the event's continuing influence on contemporary war imagery; this war resulted in the targeting of noncombatants, evidence of which was captured and circulated by the press and other documentary media. The use of aerial bombardments in Spain, then reported as shocking,

continues across the globe. “*Guernica* had been horribly prescient,” maintains Gijs van Hensbergen, “Every community in the world that has suffered an appalling atrocity has become synonymous with *Guernica* the painting and Gernika the town” (5). Images of destruction, it seems, are not enough to inspire disarmament. During World War II, and living through the German military’s bombardment of Great Britain, Woolf promoted imaginative, radical preventatives for war: “Unless we can think peace into existence we—not this one body in this one bed but millions of bodies yet to be born—will lie in the same darkness and hear the same death rattle overhead” (*E* 6: 242).

The media and the weaponry developed in the Spanish Civil War will resurface in Chapters 3 and 4. State-sanctioned violence against its own citizens—and a soldier, specifically—in the United States is the subject of Chapter 3, which also takes up the economic and racial injustices leading up to the Harlem riot of 1943. In Chapter 4, I consider again the aerial bombardment of noncombatants and the technologies used to capture and disseminate globally that destruction. Witnessing the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Muriel Rukeyser described in poetry the “*bombs whose insanity craves size, / the lethal breath, the iron prize*” (20). Aerial attacks during World War II certainly caused more and more devastation, but the optics of nuclear weapons—their invisible effects—will result in different depictions than those that I have analyzed in this chapter. Throughout these events, intermedial practices are used to challenge who is represented in the images from conflict zones and to what purposes the images are employed.



### Chapter 3

#### Transmitting the Detained Voices of the 1943 Harlem Riot

*“As the rioting and looting continued, government officials labeled the violent outbreak ‘opportunism’ and ‘sheer criminality,’ and the media picked up this language. Whatever the reason for the riots, images of the looters’ continued rampage eventually displaced the fact that an unarmed man was shot to death. . . . How difficult is it for one body to feel the injustice wheeled at another? Are the tensions, the recognitions, the disappointments, and the failures that exploded in the riots too foreign?”*

—Claudia Rankine

*“African Americans seeking to find better housing attempted to move into new areas. This resulted in the bombing of their new homes”*

—Jacob Lawrence<sup>157</sup>

The threat of widespread violence—from the air or otherwise—during the 1930s and 40s was not contained to Spain during its civil war, or to Europe during World War II, nor to the African and Middle Eastern colonies of England, Italy, and France. Homegrown American violence features in the depictions of race riots by Langston Hughes, Jacob Lawrence, and Ann Petry. Whereas the Spanish Civil War made the country’s citizens disposable, in the United States, thousands of miles from any warfront, Black Americans “ain’t even safe where [they] live” (Petry, *MM* 280). This statement occurs after characters in Petry’s fictional remediation of the 1943 Harlem riot witness a White police officer shoot a Black soldier in Harlem. During World War II, African American soldiers represented the promise of equal citizenship. Fighting for freedoms abroad, it was hoped, would necessarily ameliorate the racism within the nation, which—especially tangible in military training camps in the South—made the home front seem less safe than the battlefield. According to James Baldwin: “the people I knew felt, mainly, a peculiar kind of relief when they knew that their boys were being shipped out of the south, to do battle overseas. It was, perhaps, like feeling like the most dangerous part of a dangerous journey

had been passed” (74–5). In the works of Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry, however, America’s other regions provide only marginally safer homes for soldiers and civilians alike. Untenable conditions were either compounded or illuminated by race riots that occurred across the nation in 1943.

As Baldwin summarizes, the Harlem riot of August 1943 began after “a Negro soldier, in the lobby of the Hotel Braddock, got into a fight with a white policeman over a Negro girl,” and the resulting rumour—that a Black soldier had been killed by the police in front of his mother—ignited the crowd (81). “The facts were somewhat different,” adds Baldwin: “the soldier had not been shot in the back, and was not dead, and the girl seems to have been as dubious a symbol of womanhood as her white counterpart in Georgia usually is, but no one was interested in the facts” (81). Putting aside momentarily Baldwin’s description of “the girl” (Margie Polite), what contributed to the rumour’s potency was the already acrimonious relationship between Black Americans and the police. In her April 1949 photo-essay “Harlem,” Petry describes the hostility between Harlemites and the police: “New York’s ‘Finest’ has, on occasion, been so hated, so distrusted here, that if a man was found lying in the street, stabbed, and a policeman leaned over him, a crowd would gather, instantly; and this angry crowd would believe that the *cop* knifed the man” (770). Given this backdrop, the crowd’s reaction to an act of police brutality against an African American soldier is unsurprising. Indeed, this instance of violence merely reinforced the multiple legal, economic, and social inequities permeating daily life.

This chapter examines how various texts transpose and transmit the 1943 Harlem riot, an event that fundamentally shifted the meaning of “race riots.” I begin with *PM*, a daily newspaper that ran the earliest large-scale photographic depiction of the Harlem riot on 3 August 1943.

Jason Hill describes the publication:

*PM*—a newspaper launched in 1940 as an explicit argument against the reactionary (visual) politics dominating the New York media landscape—was anything but an ordinary New York tabloid. Published without advertising, *PM* championed the New Deal and the CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations], and promoted such untimely causes as the integration of the U.S. military and the improvement of mental health facilities and public schools in New York, its crusading activist journalism taking advantage of sophisticated visual argumentation in the vein of such Popular Front illustrated periodicals in interwar Europe as *Arbeiten Illustrierte Zeitung*, *Vu*, or *Ce soir*. (“Police Wagon” 4)

Although *PM*’s staff was more diverse than other New York newspapers (in terms of both race and gender), it consisted predominantly of White and Jewish men. Similarly, its readership was mostly White and leftist. *PM*’s coverage, as I will demonstrate, visually and verbally “contains” the riot: the reports maintain the rioters consisted mainly of “hooligans” (“Whole Story” 7), while the images show police in control, detained and injured rioters, and interracial camaraderie. Only a few of the people depicted in *PM* were women. I will compare *PM*’s reports and images with Hughes’s poem, “The Ballad of Margie Polite,” (1943, 1949), the accompanying illustration by Lawrence, *The Ballad of Margie Polite* (1948), and Petry’s short story, “In Darkness and Confusion” (1947), all of which figure the riot as being uncontainable. Looking specifically at representations of police and women, I suggest that these intermedial texts call attention to the “policing” of Black Americans within the nation. Lawrence’s remediation of Hughes’s poem eschews the ironic distance of its source, stressing the violence during the riot and the police’s complicity in it. The drawing, however, marginalizes women’s participation. Referencing sonic and visual media, Hughes and Petry highlight the radical

involvement of Black women in resistance movements, spontaneous or otherwise, reframing female rioters both as being motivated by personal and communal injustice and publicly responsive—not simply caught up in the crowd, but actively expressing disaffection with the state’s treatment of its citizens.

Throughout the chapter, I employ “riot” and “race riot” to indicate the political nature of the Harlem riot of 1943, aligning my own understanding to that of Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, Melissa Esmacher, Lindsay Lupo, and David Sears and John McConahay.<sup>158</sup> Broadly, Sears and McConahay understand rioting “as a political instrument” (16), refuting other theories that mute any political significance, such as “contagion” theories, which suggest rioters were either influenced by “outside agitators” or “simply caught up in the action because of proximity,” and the “riffraff theory,” which categorizes rioters as being underclass or criminal, representative of only a small portion of the population (18, 20).

Such an analysis of the politics of rioting is also informed by international efforts to combat fascism, such as the Popular Front.<sup>159</sup> *PM*, a Popular Front publication, typifies Harlem’s leftist scene; its coverage indicates how Popular Front strategies in the United States attended to issues of race but maintained a primary focus on opposing fascism. In the 1930s and 1940s, Harlem was a center of Popular Front activity, with organizations like the National Negro Congress, the People’s Committee, the American Negro Theatre, and Negro Women, Inc. all founded or located there (Rubin and Smethurst 23). The careers of Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry bear imprints of their various affiliations with leftist groups. Michael Denning suggests that Hughes’s *Simple* character is representative of “the African American Popular Front” (219); Farah Jasmine Griffin asserts that Petry’s literary “success” is due in part to “publications such as *PM*, a leftist newspaper” (8). *PM* also had close ties—and even overlapping contributors and

audiences—with the *People's Voice*, the weekly Harlem newspaper that Petry worked for from 1941 to 1944. Petry's column, argue Rachel Rubin and James Smethurst, "is a fascinating example of the engagement of Popular Front politics with mass culture" (25–6). Some of Hughes's poems were first published in the *People's Voice* in the 1940s. Hughes's most significant contribution to journalism, however, was his regular column in the *Chicago Defender*, which ran from 1942 to 1962.

Several scholars have analyzed the ways in which various media outlets covered the 1943 Harlem riot. More specifically, Esmacher draws notable distinctions between White and Black publications, a divide Laurie Leach also tracks in her excellent study of Polite's treatment in mass media. *PM*'s riot reportage, however, has not been adequately studied. The differences between *PM* and the newspapers Petry and Hughes were columnists for during the 1940s are telling. Both the *Chicago Defender* and the *People's Voice* foreground racial justice and Black American resistance, explicitly and repeatedly linking Hitler's brutal policies with Jim Crow America.<sup>160</sup> Hughes sums up the distinction between *PM* and the *People's Voice* by depicting an exchange between a newspaper vendor and a customer who wished to buy *PM*: "'I want to read about the coal strike,' said the young man, 'not Jim Crow'" ("Saturday Night"). *PM*'s riot edition was a shift from the paper's typical focus on images from the warfront and stories of labour movements.

The antagonistic reactions to the community leaders (which included people affiliated with *PM* and the *People's Voice*) in Hughes's poem and Petry's story emphasize the limitations and failures of leftist organizations in combating racism.<sup>161</sup> Such shortcomings were made evident by riots in the summer of 1943 in Los Angeles, Detroit, and Harlem. These actions, suggests Alan Wald, "were disconcerting jolts to the Popular Front strategy during World War

II,” revealing how “Blacks and Chicanos involved in them did not share the view that the only road to liberation was through the subordination of all other struggles to achieving victory over the Axis” (128–9). Although Hughes and Petry supported the war effort in journalism and other nonfiction texts, their creative remediations of the Harlem riot highlight racism within the nation.

Comparing *PM* with creative works that capture the riot offers a productive means for analyzing the political effects of using media in combination. The images in *PM* offer compelling examples of containment, illustrating how “the image,” according to Sara Blair, “emphasizes the power of modern social agencies—not least the documentary camera—to *manage* social disorder” (2; my emphasis). *PM*’s representations of the police and of women differ distinctly from Hughes’s poem, Lawrence’s drawing, and Petry’s short story. Like other papers, *PM* commended the police, reproduced the police report of the riot (including the claim that Polite was a sex worker), and suggested that Black youths were mostly responsible for the violence. *PM*, however, also printed Bandy’s account of the riot, which contradicted the police report, and encouraged its readership—which was, again, predominantly White and leftist—to stop “turning our back on Harlem as something unpleasant and difficult and distasteful,” and to take the work of anti-racism more seriously (“Whole Story” 2). Overall, although its coverage was far less sensational than that of other mainstream New York newspapers, *PM* demonstrates the ways class-centered publications can subordinate racial justice movements, notably using images to “manage” the riot.

In “The Ballad of Margie Polite,” the unnamed soldier plays a less significant role than Polite, who is made into a folk hero. Multiple, competing voices within Hughes’s poem emphasize the tension between the crowd and the authority figures attempting to control it. Simultaneously, the community celebrates Polite and dismisses Mayor Fiorello La Guardia and

NAACP leader Walter White. The depiction of La Guardia is glaringly different from the mayor's depiction in *PM*. Hughes gives Polite vocal dominance, muting the way the images and voices of people like La Guardia and White were transmitted in the press and over the radio. Moreover, the riot poem is contextualized by its place in the collection, *One-Way Ticket* (1949), throughout which Black women's lives are foregrounded but also punctuated by poor working conditions, violence, and limited political or social avenues to redress inequities.

Lawrence's drawing adds further complexity to interpreting Hughes's poem of the same name. Of the six drawings reproduced in *One-Way Ticket*, *The Ballad of Margie Polite* is the only one that breaks up the body of a poem, an intrusion made even more abrupt due to its sharp tonal contrast to Hughes's text. Lawrence's chaotic drawing depicts police caught up in the mayhem of the unmistakably brutal riot. The drawing does not concentrate on Polite—or indeed, on any one, identifiable person. Rather, the figures of women and children operate in distinction to the men and police. Whereas the photographs in *PM* show police in control, protecting property, even facing the camera and smiling, *The Ballad* captures the aggression used to maintain such authority, thereby contesting the way images of looting and property damage “displace” police brutality (an effect of mediation that Rankine criticizes). As a result, Lawrence presents a much more complicated depiction of those whom the riot involves. The combination of Lawrence's drawing and Hughes's poem calls attention to the superseded or uncaptured images of state violence against Black people in America.

In Petry's text, the police are also unequivocally violent, but they represent merely one of many discriminatory institutions in her short story “In Darkness and Confusion” (which was written shortly after the riot but Petry could not find a publisher for it until 1947). Multiple injustices are focalized through a single character, William Jones, whose son, Sam, was drafted

into the military but who, William learns the night before the riot, had been shot by military police and then imprisoned in the South for refusing to move to the back of a bus. That William is the only internal focalizer (to employ Mieke Bal's term) reinforces his position on the margins. According to Hillary Holladay, William fails to communicate throughout most of the story, finding no outlet to express his grief and no community outside of the riot. At the same time, Pink and Annie May, William's wife and niece, are active, loud, social, and powerful throughout the text. As such, Petry's story "is the first sustained literary account of" the riot, suggests Robin Lucy, "and the only one to represent black women as active participants in it" (3–4). This portrayal contrasts with press and radio coverage of the riot, which virtually erased women's participation, including the various ways women were policed. Most saliently, the short story is a critique of the way William surveils Annie May's behaviour.

Overall, the medial transpositions of riot reportage in Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry's works refigure how the event is broadcast. The poem, the drawing, and the short story provide alternative forms of transmission, a term that evokes "the centrality and indeed inescapability of radio as a feature of the Modernist landscape" (Cohen et al. 6). Radio communications can be compared productively with what individual bodies relay in Hughes's poem and Petry's story.<sup>162</sup> During and after the 1943 Harlem riot, Mayor La Guardia and Black community members attempted to pacify rioters and other New Yorkers by speaking over the radio and from radio cars. Newspapers such as *PM* echoed their messages, combining words and images to reassert a sense of safety and to effect containment of the riot. Images, too, were disseminated internationally using radio technology. Hughes and Petry focus on women who riot, contrasting individual, non-mechanically amplified voices to the people speaking through loudspeakers and to the reproduced images in the press.



The amplified voices and images of the Harlem riot, however, have overwhelmingly belonged to men. The legal and press treatment of Polite forms part of a larger discourse that both ignored the root causes of 1943 race riots and silenced women's grievances. Despite the participation of many women in the riot itself and in its wake, examples of African American women responding to the event are often absent from written accounts of the riot, whether these are official documents or creative texts.<sup>163</sup> Petry's short story takes up Black women's oppression and resistance that is marginalized elsewhere, even in celebrated modernist texts such as Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (which also remediates the 1943 riot). In response, I employ critics who consider the intersection of race and gender, including Andrea J. Ritchie and Jacquelyn Dowd Hall. Further, Lindsay Lupo's compelling study of the way commission reports "manage" riot outcomes is an example of how official records can silence civil resistance movements. Considering Lupo's analysis alongside Ritchie's work is useful in determining how women's roles in the riot are particularly managed. Comparing Polite and the actual riot to the fictional, intermedial accounts, resists such containment.

My argument is twofold: that media capturing the Harlem riot of 1943 reveal a relationship between medium and policing (considering, too, how intermediality might work against such constraints); and that Hughes and Petry's representations recognize rioters as publicly engaged citizens. As a term, "representation," according to W. J. T. Mitchell's Foucauldian analysis, "has the virtue of simultaneously linking the visual and the verbal disciplines within the field of their differences and connecting them with issues of knowledge (true representations), ethics (responsible representations), and power (effective representations)" (*Picture Theory* 6). In their depictions of the riot, Petry and Hughes reframe women as being politically motivated rioters—not simply consumers taking goods or mothers expressing

personal, individual grief. The women in these works express public dissatisfaction—that is, dissatisfaction with public institutions, and in public, in the streets.<sup>164</sup> More specifically, I am not suggesting that the representations of women—as both subject to various forms of violence and as resisters to such treatment—are in themselves what makes “The Ballad of Margie Polite” and “In Darkness and Confusion” radical. Rather, it is Hughes and Petry’s depictions of the community *recognizing* women as such that makes these texts necessary interventions in historical and literary accounts of the riot.

### **The 1943 Harlem Riot**

On Sunday evening, 1 August 1943, police officer James Collins was attempting to arrest Margie Polite, a guest at the Braddock Hotel, for disorderly conduct when Robert Bandy, a soldier on leave, intervened. In the ensuing action, Collins shot Bandy in the shoulder. The shooting was reported around 8 p.m. that night, and crowds started gathering within the hour. The crowd later moved through the streets, from the hotel to the hospital where Bandy had been taken, and then to the police station. Bandy and Polite were both under police supervision that night—Bandy was arrested and taken to the hospital; Polite was arrested and taken to the police station—and this likely happened before 10:30 p.m., which is when the crowd started to become destructive. Over the course of the night, Harlem shop windows were broken and stores were looted. Petry remembered the broken windows from the riot, even forty years later: “I can remember walking through 125<sup>th</sup> Street when the street was filled with shattered glass from store windows. It made a scrunching sound. I can still hear it” (“Ann Petry” 264). The riot was short-lived; the situation was mostly calm by Monday morning. Yet in the end, six people were dead, all of whom were Black, including five who were shot by police (and three by the same officer).

Furthermore, as many as 700 people were injured and nearly 600 people were arrested, including approximately 100 women. Property damage was estimated at five million dollars, with 1,485 stores damaged and 4,495 broken windows (Brandt 207).<sup>165</sup>

Three different versions of the Braddock Hotel shooting circulated during and after the riot: (1) the rumour that a cop had shot and killed an army officer in front of his mother (the substance of the rumour was reported by the press); (2) the police report, which claimed that Bandy and others physically assaulted Collins before Collins shot Bandy, published in *PM*, 2 August 1943; and (3) Bandy's account, which was published in *PM* on 3 August 1943:

Bandy noticed the officer pushing Miss Polite out and became involved. He remarked to the policeman: "You wouldn't do that to one of your group."

The two became involved in a fight. Collins threw his nightstick at Bandy and missed, according to Bandy's mother and sweetheart. Bandy's mother entered into the brawl. Bandy picked the nightstick up. Collins ordered him to put it down and then fired a shot. It struck Bandy in the upper part of his shoulder. It was not a serious wound.

("Whole Story" 4)

Bandy's version explicitly refers to an insider/outsider configuration that Hughes and Petry also employ. Despite containing multiple differences, every version of the altercation includes the fact that a police officer shot an African American soldier, and this, more than anything else, seems to have spurred the riot.

World War II—and soldiers by extension—had represented optimism for many Black Americans. "Much of the black community's enthusiastic support for the war," suggests Vincent Intondi, "came from a hope that African Americans' loyalty, ability, and overall contribution to the war effort would be recognized and rewarded with progress toward gaining full equality" (5).

Such optimism, however, was countered by *de jure* and *de facto* segregation, even in the war effort. “Everyone except black people benefitted from the immediate prosperity the war brought,” suggests Dominic Capeci (59), noting race-based exclusions in defense employment. Even in military service, Black soldiers were targets of violence, particularly in Southern training camps, and served in segregated units. Furthermore, on the morning of the riot, Harlemites would have read “a story in the *Amsterdam News* about a black sergeant in Georgia who was executed because he’d gotten into an altercation with a state police officer” (Griffin 118). This shooting, combined with Bandy’s, likely reinforced the injustice felt by African Americans during the war.

The 1943 riot signaled how, as C. L. Greenberg finds, “inequality more than poverty provoked Harlemites” (*Explode* 213). The riot was preceded by notable cases of disparity specific to Harlem. First, “the [Harlem] community was particularly resentful of Mayor La Guardia’s support for Stuyvesant Town” (Abu-Lughod 147), a segregated housing project. Second, in May 1943, the closing of the Savoy Ballroom—“the largest interracial site for jazz”—was considered to be “an economic attack on Harlem” and “a racist attack on the democratic principle of interracial social relations” (Lowney 94–5).<sup>166</sup> Moreover, many of the same conditions that had led to the 1935 Harlem riot were still unresolved. Even journalists at the time linked the 1943 riot to inaction by La Guardia on issues identified in the 1935 commissioned riot report, such as overcrowded or inadequate housing for Black citizens, discrimination in education, health services, and employment practices, and disproportionate levels of police surveillance and violence.<sup>167</sup>

Race riots occurred throughout America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially during times of war. Disturbances in Los Angeles, Detroit, and Harlem in the summer

of 1943, however, marked distinct changes in terms of who participated and to what effect. As Esmacher details,

the 1943 riots reflected a transitional period in rioting, when the definition of “race riot” underwent a change. The term, previously defined by scholars and observers as white vigilante violence against minorities, was increasingly being applied to the relatively new phenomenon of rioting minorities attacking white-owned property in minority neighborhoods as a form of social protest. (11)

Riots in St. Louis (1917), Chicago (1919), and Tulsa (1921)—one of the most destructive, lethal, and costly cases of anti-Black violence in American history—exemplify the earlier type.<sup>168</sup> The term’s transition, marked by events in Harlem, highlights the politics of rioting. Drawing attention to the role of Black community groups both before and after the riots of 1935 and 1943, C. L. Greenberg argues that “the riots represented, not a rejection of political activity, but rather extensions of it” (*Explode* 214).

At the time of the 1943 Harlem action, however, many public leaders and mainstream newspapers refused to call it a race riot, opting instead to employ contagion and riffraff explanations.<sup>169</sup> These classifications reflect the changing discourse around race riots, but such explanations obscure who actually rioted. “Almost from the moment it began,” argues Beverly Smith, “La Guardia blamed the riot on outside agitators and juvenile delinquents” (16). Similarly, in the pages of *PM*, Albert Deutsch, the eminent journalist and mental health care advocate, claimed: “There can be little doubt that the rioting was almost entirely confined to the hooligan element of Harlem,” and further commended “[t]he restraint of the overwhelming majority of Harlem citizenry. Most Harlemites went peaceably about their own business” (“Whole Story” 7). These examples demonstrate how officials and journalists disassociated

notions of “respectability” from rioting. That is, Deutsch and La Guardia argue that most Harlem residents are well-behaved citizens and that, as such, they must not have participated in rioting.<sup>170</sup> Editorials such as Deutsch’s absolve the broader community of participating in the riot while also assuring readers that any rage was contained to a small subset of the population. Somewhat differently, the Communist party contended that outside agitators were responsible (Wald 128).

In the case of the 1943 Harlem riot, attributing the riot to outsiders and delinquents is an especially false claim. C. L. Greenberg argues that “riffraff” explanations have been employed to explicate almost every race riot during the past century, suggesting further that the riot participants were representative of Harlem more broadly—that is, diverse in age, class, gender, employment, and family status. This diversity signals widespread dissatisfaction with living conditions and a distrust of the police; it indicates a group protesting communally-felt grievances rather than hooliganism. According to Lupo, “the race riots of the twentieth century were political in nature and spawned by a sense of injustice felt by those who rioted”; and that attributing riots to “riffraff” is a “depoliticization of the riot violence” (25). Articles and images like those found in *PM*, I contend, also contribute to such depoliticization strategies by ignoring the community’s widespread participation and suggesting that there are “proper” channels through which to redress grievances.

In the 1940s, “New York’s black community was more organized politically than that in almost any other city” (Abu-Lughod 140). Indeed, in his column discussing the 1943 riot, Hughes recalled how White store owners had responded to legal, organized protests by calling the police; as a result, the rioters “feel that neither you nor the police care much whether colored people live or die” (Hughes, “Suggestions”). Although planned anti-discrimination actions—like

the one described by Hughes in this column—had spurred improvements to social and economic conditions in Harlem, the country's entrance into war had shifted attention away from domestic issues, and by 1943, there were still significant disparities between White and Black Americans: "The war preoccupied government officials, and black Harlemites saw no clear and promising method to redress grievances peacefully. If organized groups could not channel that protest energy, a riot is hardly a surprising result" (C. L. Greenberg, *Explode* 214). Overall, rioters in Harlem were responding not only to racial discrimination, disproportionate levels of poverty, and racialized policing, but also to the increasingly limited avenues through which to enact change.

La Guardia's false attribution of the Harlem riot's cause reflects his broader efforts to prevent the levels of destruction seen during the Detroit riot only two months earlier.<sup>171</sup> Leading up to August 1943, La Guardia actively (and unsuccessfully) tried to prevent a similar riot from breaking out in New York City by promoting interracial harmony and making behind-the-scenes tactical changes to how police would respond to a potential riot (Capeci 78). Yet, La Guardia only made significant changes to policies and practices that would positively affect Harlem residents *after* the 1943 riot. Ironically, and despite Baldwin's assertion that rioting was not "doing anybody any good" (82), it did bring about improvements to living and working conditions in Harlem.<sup>172</sup>

Harlem's history of community organizing also shapes the abundant and diverse artistic responses to the riot. As part of New Deal programming, the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) established the Harlem Community Art Center (Griffin 104). The Center exemplifies how community, political, and artistic practices frequently overlapped: both Petry and Lawrence took classes at the Center, and Hughes's International Workers Order [IWO] theatre project, the Suitcase Theatre, was based there. The WPA also further established

Lawrence's professional career (Wheat 122). Beyond the Center, Harlem was also a critical space for documentary photography: "In the wake of the 1935 riot, at the moment of photography's ascendancy as a cultural agency and form of art, Harlem became a photographic proving ground" (Blair 7, 8). By 1943, Blair further suggests, "Harlem became the occasion for what we might call a riot of images, conspicuously new in tone and affect. They premised a newly iconic Harlem, at once metonymic of America's modernity and revelatory of its social failings" (5). Representations of the 1943 riot reflect Harlem's particular history of political and artistic engagement, reinforced in the diverse ways Harlem was documented.

As Janet Abu-Lughod explains, the riot should be understood "as the paradigmatic event presaging the series of racial uprisings that would wrack American cities in the second half of the 1960s" (149–50). Because of its effects on artistic practices, social policies, and patterns of civil disorder, however, it is productive to consider the 1943 Harlem riot an event and a part of what J. Hall terms "the long civil rights movement," broadly referring to organized and spontaneous actions beginning in the 1930s and continuing into and beyond the 1970s.<sup>173</sup> The long civil rights movement captures the work—historically and contextually—of Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry, each of whom depict racisms beyond the South and attend to the interrelated problems of race and class. Petry's short stories, for example, "form a crucial bridge between the so-called Old Left radicalisms of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s and the new black radicalism of the 1960s and 1970s" (Rubin and Smethurst 34). The depictions of the Harlem riot in "The Ballad of Margie Polite," *The Ballad of Margie Polite*, and "In Darkness and Confusion" constitute political acts (amid others) calling for systemic change, as part of the long civil rights movement. The riot coverage in *PM* operates somewhat differently, treating the riot as an errant and containable action. Although I do not wish to criticize categorically *PM*'s representation of the riot, the



newspaper's coverage caters to notions of respectability that Hughes and Petry dismiss. This contrast highlights how respectability is a way of policing Black women's participation in the public sphere.

***PM*: “The Whole Story of the Harlem Riot”**

*PM* emerged amid the growing popularity of newspapers and magazines that featured multiple images, made possible by inexpensive, portable photographic equipment and lower-cost printing technology, and the advent of technology that could send photographs across large geographical distances (factors addressed in Chapter 2). The photographs in *PM* were printed “through a state-of-the-art process that preserved the tonal quality of the source image to a degree unprecedented in daily news publishing” (Hill, *Artist* 7). *PM*'s founder, Ralph Ingersoll, was a major figure in the rise of American photo-magazines during the 1930s and after. Ingersoll had left *Life* after the magazine named Hitler the 1938 Man of the Year (Hill 14n17). According to Hill, Ingersoll ran *PM* with an awareness of the power of photography as both discourse and art, giving *PM* staff photographers unprecedented authority over their images. Furthermore, *PM* accepted no money from advertisers (4). Because *PM* was established in opposition to “sensationalist” or lesser-quality newspapers, it operated with a heightened sense of journalistic integrity. The paper's “responsible representation,” however, looks different from Hughes's, Lawrence's, and Petry's.

*PM*'s coverage combines text and image to depict the riot as a contained event, even including a clip-out pledge that readers could sign and send to La Guardia agreeing not to participate in any future race riot. Such a containment strategy relies on depicting both police and women as non-threatening. A comparison of the 3 August 1943 issue of *PM*, which includes a

ten-page picture layout (the first large-scale photographic coverage of the riot) with the works of Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry is very revealing. My focus on police and women comes from the subject matter of all three artists, but also because Black women's roles in civil rights movements have too often been overlooked: "Even more invisible than police violence and [the] criminalization of women of color has been the resistance to these phenomena throughout history" by women of colour (Ritchie 210).<sup>174</sup> The images in *PM* do not make rioters' motivations clear. Instead, the photographs focus mainly on the effects of violence: destroyed buildings, stolen goods, and injuries (to Black people only). The images also show police dominance and, remarkably, scenes of interracial harmony. "Representative of public reaction to the riot," argues Capeci, "was the sentimental report in *PM* that throughout the evening on August 1, 'two little boys,' one black, the other white, 'slept peacefully side by side' in the 28<sup>th</sup> police precinct headquarters'" (115). The effect of such images in *PM* would have been to help quell the rioting, to treat the riot as an aberration or a tragedy rather than as politics by other means. Capeci suggests *PM*'s initial report reiterates how most New Yorkers minimized the riot's race politics: "by ignoring its racial nature and by blaming it on hoodlums, blacks and whites eased their consciences and temporarily re-established harmony" (115). Such contextualizing, I would argue, overlooks police brutality, endemic anti-Black racism, and women's participation in a public demonstration.

There are significantly fewer images of Black women than of men in *PM*'s 3 August 1943 issue, even in photographs suggesting interracial cooperation. The few images of women are de-politicized by accompanying text. In one telling example (fig. 13), women's roles were re-framed by the newspaper between editions: initially, the headline read, "Demonstrators Loot 133d St. Dress Shop" ("Whole Story" 14 [a]), but a later edition replaced "Demonstrators" with

“Women” (“Whole Story” 14 [b]).<sup>175</sup> The substitution of “Women” for “Demonstrators” stands in for broader patterns of dismissing women as politically motivated riot participants, reinforcing—at the same time—both that the riot was not a political act and that women were not involved in any intelligent, demonstrative way. The amended phrase suggests women were



Fig. 13. *PM*, “Whole Story” 14–5.<sup>176</sup>

merely misguided consumers, “help[ing] themselves to dresses and other articles of clothing from a bashed-in shop,” according to the caption (“Whole Story” 14). This description separates women from the act of destroying the shop window and emphasizes a certain kind of femininity in naming dresses specifically. Yet, this image of women is surrounded by police: the two smaller images below and one on the opposite page (with the completed phrase, “Cops Dominate Scene at Harlem Station House”) retain the earlier edition’s more active contextualization (“Whole Story” 15). That is, “Demonstrators” were originally juxtaposed with images of police in control. The composition of images and captions suggests the ways in which female rioters specifically were also policed by the newspaper’s mediation of their actions.

Police handling of women and other rioters is reinforced by the following two-page spread. Police are notably absent from the bottom-left image (“With bandaged heads, two women walk away after being treated”) (“Whole Story” 16); indeed, there are no images of police in the same frame as injured women, including no images of women or girls being arrested. Although this is likely a larger pattern, to separate images of injury from those of the police (upper left, 16; bottom left, 17), there are multiple images of police arresting Black men, even ones who are injured (top and bottom right, 16), and Black men in custody. Further, consider the police officers whose bodies physically frame the woman in the upper right image; they each grasp her arms—tightly, it appears—and the image is captioned: “A woman sympathizer . . . is hustled out by police” (“Whole Story” 16). Such captioning calls to mind Ritchie’s assessment of the way that racialized women are often “typecast in the role of supporting actors and sorrowing family members” within larger movements against police brutality (210). The woman’s unreadable facial expression challenges the caption. This image highlights the mock-chivalry of protecting women by removing them from public institutions (like the courtroom) and as leaders of resistance movements. This image also represents how police treated other women during the riot, which is to say dismissively and even roughly.

Such framing of women’s roles in the riot is echoed in the coverage of Polite. As Leach details, “Polite is given scant attention in the newspaper and is treated ambivalently when mentioned” (“Polite” 30). In newspapers across the country and the globe, Polite is often unnamed but almost always racialized and gendered—reduced to that “negro woman.” Reports of Polite’s actions are inconsistent in various police and news reports, and few papers attend to Collins’s treatment of Polite. Yet, *PM*’s coverage of Polite is more generous than that of other mainstream newspapers. In no other paper that I have examined except *PM* does Polite being



Fig. 14. *PM*, “Whole Story” 16–7.<sup>177</sup>

pushed by Collins register. (As Leach finds, however, the judge who sentenced Polite also blamed her for starting the riot [“Polite” 25], suggesting legal hyper-vigilance in assigning fault to Polite.) Simultaneously, she is both ignored and incriminated. Leach suggests one should understand Polite as a representative of African American female rioters more broadly, that her acts of resistance counter the erasure of Black women from public discourse.

In many of the early newspaper articles, Polite is also characterized as being a sex worker, a result of the initial police report of the incident and an example of how the police crafted Petry’s role. Polite is first mentioned in *PM* (though not by name) as a sex worker: “The police gave this version of the start of the trouble: At 7:55 p.m., Harry Wagner, night manager of the Braddock Hotel, 272 W. 126<sup>th</sup> St. called Patrolman James Collins, who had been stationed at the hotel to prevent its use as a house of prostitution, who asked him to arrest a girl who, Wagner said, was a prostitute” (“One Killed”). It should be noted that the “Wagner said” in the quote is reported speech from the police. In the next day’s issue, *PM* reprinted the account, followed by

Wagner's rebuttal: "But . . . Wagner told *PM* yesterday: 'I didn't call the police and I had no knowledge that the woman arrested was a prostitute'" ("Whole Story" 4; ellipsis in original). The editors of *PM* do not offer any further explanation as to who Polite is or what she was doing at the hotel. In Bandy's version of the story, and in others, Polite is simply a hotel patron. In contrast, the police positioned Polite as being a criminal, a description repeated in the press and one that stayed.

Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry resist figuring female rioters as either non-participants or criminals. Neither Hughes nor Petry reproduce the police's characterization of Polite's pre-riot activities. Importantly, neither account attempts to make Polite respectable by offering details about Polite's personal or professional life that might justify her actions. In Hughes's poem she "cussed / Out the cop" (*OWT* 75), and she calls the cop a "white son of a bitch" in Petry's story (*MM* 279). Hughes and Petry not only differ from *PM* in giving Polite a voice, but they also depict the riot as the outcome of her refusal to cede to police authority. As a result, Hughes's poem and Petry's story demonstrate how Black communities are over-policed, often using such pretenses as prostitution.

Although Hughes and Petry both created photo-documentary texts about Harlem, I focus on "The Ballad of Margie Polite" and "In Darkness and Confusion," in which there are no actual photographs. These texts are extra-photogenic.<sup>178</sup> That is, they supply different sorts of captions than those found in newspapers. Petry's story, I will argue, references newspaper images of girls and women and explicates the actions captured in them. Hughes supplies the voices of the rioters, operating in loud opposition to La Guardia and other leaders whom *PM* features.

## **The Ballad of Margie Polite**

### *Hughes*

In the final pages of *PM*'s 3 August 1943 edition, there are two images of people in Rome "celebrat[ing] the end of Fascism" ("Whole Story" 21, 28). These photographs (relayed from London to New York City by radio), housed within an issue devoted primarily to the Harlem riot, allude to the connection between fascism and segregation, an association Hughes repeatedly made. On route to Spain in 1937, for example, Hughes gave a speech in Paris in which he states, "American Negroes understood and opposed fascism since they lived with it every day," a point he reiterates in his poems "White Man" and "Air Raid over Harlem" (Leach, *Hughes* 99). During his 1939 lecture tour, and following Franco's victory in Spain, "Hughes spoke passionately about fascism abroad and racism at home" (104). After the Americans entered World War II, in December 1941, Hughes "emphasized that the war provided an opportunity to fight both fascism and segregation" (112). In his column on 21 August 1943, and in direct response to the riot, Hughes argued that Black Americans "have long know the evils of local fascist practices—although in the past we have not called Jim Crow by a fascist name" ("Suggestions"). That on the same day anti-fascists celebrated in Italy while the people of Harlem rioted stresses the gap between Allied victories abroad and the persistence of racism within America.

Hughes also adapted his creative work as part of multimedia events intended to combat fascism and segregation. In 1938, Hughes sought help "to set up a theater of his own to produce plays for the cause of antifascism and socialism. Within weeks, the Harlem Suitcase Theater was established as [a] cultural activity of the IWO" (a group that combined pro-labour and anti-fascist activism) (Leach, *Hughes* 101; Denning 76). The Harlem Suitcase Theatre's first shows

were also, at Hughes's insistence, intermedial—theatre that combined poetry, music, and dance. The same year as the riot, 1943, there were multiple examples of the ways Hughes combined media in events that spoke to social issues: in March, Hughes's poem "Freedom's Plow" was "commissioned by the National Urban League to be recited to orchestral accompaniment by the Broadway star Paul Muni" and was broadcast on the radio (Leach, *Hughes* 113). In June, for the First Negro Freedom Rally in Madison Square Garden, "Hughes wrote the lyrics for a song titled 'For This We Fight,' with music by Herbert Haufrecht," which was performed during an event that also featured Pearl Primus, Duke Ellington, and Paul Robeson (Schwartz and Schwartz 40). Later that same year, Primus performed another protest dance, "Jim Crow Train," again adapted from a poem by Hughes (255).

Ever attentive to the cultural infrastructures necessary to reach audiences, Hughes argued that part of the difficulty in fighting fascism abroad and racism at home was the lack of available outlets through which to show Black lives and Black art. In his 1939 speech at the Third American Writers' Congress—"a comparison of the situation of the Jews in Germany with that of blacks in America"—he stressed this limitation: "important avenues for disseminating speech, such as magazines, newspapers, and filmmaking were often inaccessible to blacks" (Leach, *Hughes* 104). Indeed, Hughes experienced significant difficulties publishing and being remunerated for his creative work, even when he was contributing to the war effort. Scripts Hughes wrote for film and radio were either never produced or he was not compensated, and his songwriting attempts were unsuccessful. Although Hughes was more in demand as a writer and commentator by 1943, his work was censored in mainstream productions. A few weeks before the riot, in July 1943, Mayor La Guardia asked Hughes "to contribute to a series of radio programs entitled 'Unity at Home—Victory Abroad'" (Leach, *Hughes* 115). These radio



programs were one of multiple (ultimately ineffectual) efforts by the mayor to prevent a race riot from erupting in Harlem that year. Hughes responded to the request by writing two radio plays, *In the Service of My Country* and *Private Jim Crow*. The first focused on “blacks and whites working together on the Alaska-Canada Highway,” and “was highly praised and broadcast right away”; the latter, “which revealed the daily indignities faced by blacks in the armed forces, was perceived as too controversial” and was not broadcast (Leach, *Hughes* 115).<sup>179</sup> This example demonstrates the limits imposed on contributions by Black artists to national discourses—narratives of racial disharmony were muted as part of efforts to disregard domestic conflicts during wartime. Indeed, even the riot itself was censored from some international news coverage (“Harlem Riot Censored”). That same year, however, Hughes broadcast the riot and criticisms of nation-wide racism in poetry: “The Ballad of Margie Polite” was first published on 2 October 1943 in the *New York Amsterdam News*, a Black weekly newspaper, and later included in *One-Way Ticket*. It is significant that this poem, other selections in *One-Way Ticket*, and those in *Jim Crow’s Last Stand* (1943), pointedly address racial discrimination and segregation in the US, giving voice to the local racisms that were being silenced elsewhere.

Hughes was out of town on 1 August 1943, when the riot occurred, but was not unaffected by it. In a letter to Arna Bontemps, Hughes wryly expressed amusement at the riot’s effect on Harlem’s elite (those who live in the affluent neighbourhood of Sugar Hill):

You know I am sorry I missed the riots. It has always been my fate never to be in one. I think I will go down to New York this weekend maybe though and survey the damage. The better class Negroes are all mad at the low class ones for disturbing their peace. . . . I expect that is one of the reasons Sugar Hill is so mad. Laundries and pawn shops looted,

they suffered as much as the white folks. I do not know why that tickles me, and I am sorry in my soul. (*SL*, 5 Aug. 1943)

Hughes's public reaction in the *Chicago Defender*, however, focused much more on the owners of the stores rather than on Harlem's residents. Addressing "White Shopkeepers" on 14 August 1943, Hughes rationalizes the rioters' actions and, at the same time, apologizes for the destruction:

The damage to your stores is primarily a protest against the whole rotten system of Jim Crow ghettos, Jim Crow cars, and Jim Crow treatment of Negro soldiers. But, you say, you are not responsible for those Jim Crow conditions. Why should your windows be broken? They shouldn't. I am sorry they are. . . . I do not condone it. I do not believe mob violence is a solution for social problems. ("Letter to White Shopkeepers")

In the following week's column, Hughes offers specific ways shop owners could prevent future destruction, primarily suggesting that property owners ought to become more socially and financially committed to the communities and neighborhoods in which their businesses are located. In response to such commitment, Hughes suggests, "even the hoodlums would know about your reputation and help protect your property against mobs. Certainly those of us who are not hoodlums would like for you to be a little more friendly in a community way. Why not? If our world explodes, your does, too" ("Suggestions"). This final, compelling line is a warning: what happens in Harlem does not stay contained there.<sup>180</sup>

Although Hughes uses the term "hoodlums" in his column, he imagines the voices of rioters expressing a much more complex understanding of the event, demonstrating how Hughes addressed his various audiences differently. In his column on 28 August 1943, Hughes sets up a debate between himself and Simple, wherein the fictional Simple expresses why he rioted—"I

didn't want no ham. I wanted justice"—and repudiates the notion that rioters were driven by opportunistic looting or that their acts of destruction were without underlying political meaning (“Simple Looks for Justice”). Simple, a “fictional Harlem everyman” (Harper 2), makes his own and other rioters’ motivations clear by tying the destruction of property in Harlem to a legacy of economic injustices against Blacks in America. Baldwin suggests that the crowd could easily have moved into proximal White areas of New York City but did not: “The mob seems to have been mainly interested in something more potent and real than the white face, that is, white power, and the principal damage done during the riot of the summer of 1943 was to white business establishments in Harlem” (81–2). Simple further elucidates: it is not only economic disparity that motivates him to throw bricks at shop windows, but that White business owners make their financial gains off Harlemites. Although the property damage does not solve any larger issues, Simple “felt better” knowing that the store owners would have to pay for the repairs (“Simple Looks for Justice”).

In the same column, Hughes also shows mass media’s effect on people like Simple, who suggests that his sense of injustice was driven by nationalist discourses broadcast over the radio: “I am tired . . . of hearing the radio talk about the Four Freedoms [of speech, of worship, from fear, from want] all day long and me living here in Harlem where nary one of them Freedoms works” (“Simple Looks for Justice”). In a later story, Simple declares: “The only time colored folks is front-page news is when there’s been a race riot or a lynching or a boycott and a whole bunch of us have been butchered up or arrested” (*CW* 8: 107). In contrast to radio programming that devotes no airtime to the complexities of race and citizenship, and the mainstream press, which offers limited depictions of Black life, Hughes represents the voices of rioters in his column and in his poetry.<sup>181</sup>

Hughes unequivocally casts Polite as a poetic hero in his ballad while simultaneously reframing the role of all the rioters. As Leach suggests, “Hughes felt that ‘race leaders’ were too willing to blame the riot on hoodlums and to feel ashamed of Harlem's behavior instead of seeing the riot as a symptom of the urgent need for change. In his poem he gives voice to disgruntled Harlemites and sees Margie Polite as their symbol” (“Polite” 26–7). Critically, Polite is neither explicitly a hoodlum nor respectable. In the ballad, Polite is *only* figured as a resistor. As such, “the poem reverses conventional expectations about which members of a community are worth honoring” (Nadell 150). Rather than focus on the soldier, Hughes opts to champion Polite in his remediation of the riot: she is named in both the first and final lines of the poem as well as multiple times throughout. Hughes’s choice is radical because he provides no buttressing characteristics; Polite is not made sympathetic. Instead, Hughes’s poem makes Polite a respected community member precisely and only because she stands up to the cop, thus starting the riot.

Hughes could have turned the soldier’s mother, Florine Roberts, into the subject of his poem. Roberts was also at the Braddock Hotel and, like Polite, was also charged with disorderly conduct. Like Bandy, Roberts would have been a sympathetic figure; her grief or parental protectiveness might excuse her behaviour. Polite, however, is distinctly not a mother in Hughes’s poem. Indeed, a fictional (or ironic) holiday dedicated to her is celebrated in contrast to Mother’s and Father’s Day:

When the PD car  
 Taken Margie away—  
 It wasn’t Mother’s  
 Nor Father’s—  
 It were

MARGIE'S DAY! (Hughes, *OWT* 78)

Given the use of a grieving mothers in Spanish Civil War propaganda—notably in Picasso's *Guernica*—Polite stands out distinctly because she is celebrated for inciting a mass demonstration. Recall, too, Baldwin's characterization: "the girl seems to have been as dubious a symbol of womanhood as her white counterpart in Georgia usually is" (81). Hughes, it seems, turns Polite into a different representation of the types of women who participate in the public sphere (into someone other than either the grieving mother or the morally suspect).<sup>182</sup>

The poem plays with Polite's detainment. Structurally, Hughes's text is almost regularized: it consists of thirteen stanzas, most of which are rhymed quatrains ("abcb"). That Hughes uses a ballad—traditionally, an oral (and often musical) form of communicating folk or popular narratives—eludes expectations: formal deviations, as well as punctuation choices, result in a ballad that seemingly struggles to contain its content.<sup>183</sup> Fittingly, the poem contrasts Polite's actual arrest with her action's uncontrollable reverberations. Perhaps because Hughes's text gives the poetic Polite a prominent role in starting the riot, several Hughes's critics incorrectly credit the false rumour to the historical Polite. Leach, however, observes that Polite was likely in police custody soon after the shooting: "neither contemporaneous journalistic accounts in the *New York Times* or the *Amsterdam News* nor Capeci's analysis of the police reports support the claim that Polite was the source of the rumor" ("Polite" 28). In contrast to the judge, who blamed Polite for starting the riot and who sentenced her harshly, Hughes's poem "seems to honor rather than censure Polite for her role as a catalyst" (Leach, "Polite" 26). Indeed, the poem celebrates her role:

She started the riots!

Harlemites say

August 1<sup>st</sup> is

MARGIE'S DAY. (Hughes, *OWT* 76)

Although it is unclear if “Harlemites say” refers to the line preceding it, the lines following it, or both, Polite’s place as community hero is assured. In the poem, Polite, even after the police detain her, is uncontainable because the community identifies with and perpetuates her defiance.

Further, in a poem full of competing voices, Polite’s stands out. The way the community champions Polite reinforces her dominance, especially in comparison to way they respond to people trying to stop the riot. Polite, Martha Nadell argues, “becomes an alternative political leader capable of speaking the language of the black masses better than the inadequate race leader (explicitly named), and who has greater political effect” (150). Throughout the poem, the speaker is interrupted by multiple other voices, often represented by italics; for example, “*They killed a colored soldier!*,” answers a plea for Harlemites to return to their homes (*OWT* 75).

Although Polite’s reported speech—“cussed / Out the cop”—are the only words clearly attributed to her in the poem, the community renders her powerful and loud, someone who can keep the “Mayor,” “Walter White,” and “everybody / Up all night!” (*OWT* 75, 78). Mayor La Guardia, in contrast, has no vocal presence in the poem and is criticized by the crowd for his role in Harlem’s housing crisis.

Hughes’s depiction of La Guardia contrasts sharply with the mayor’s portrayal in *PM*: his is the only image to accompany the paper’s story on the riot on 2 August 1943 (“One Killed, Scores Injured”), and his image appears again early in the following day’s edition, which is devoted almost entirely to the riot (see figs. 15 and 16). The images and captions depict La Guardia working and communicating—he “went on air in attempt to stop riot,” and “he conferred” with police and military. Even more, the inclusion of La Guardia at the outset of riot

coverage uses the mayor's authority to frame the event. In contrast, Hughes's Polite and the rioters dismiss succinctly authoritative figures like "the Mayor" and "Colored leaders / In sound trucks": "Somebody yelled, / *Go home, you hucks!*" (OWT 78). During the riot, Leach suggests, these authoritative figures become mere "hucks" whereas "Harlem residents as a whole assert themselves" ("Polite" 29). That Hughes condemns both La Guardia and the "leaders" as hucksters—pushy or even fraudulent figures—is a fascinating reversal of whose actions ought to be labelled negatively. Even more, despite having access to amplification and broadcast technologies, La Guardia and the "Colored leaders" have no effect on quieting the community.



Mayor La Guardia, who went on air in attempt to stop riot.



Mayor La Guardia is shown as he conferred yesterday on the Harlem situation with Maj. Gen. Thomas Terry, left, of the Eastern Defense Command, and Police Capt. Walter Harding.

Figs. 15 and 16. (left) *PM*, 2 Aug. 1943, p. 10; "Whole Story" 4.<sup>184</sup>

Polite's amplified voice contrasts with her legal detainment. "The Ballad" highlights the mistreatment endured by racialized groups within the legal system. "If Margie Polite / Had of been white," the speaker clarifies in the poem's opening lines, "She might not've cussed / Out the cop that night." This point is reiterated in the third stanza: "[Bandy] got shot in the back / By a white cop— / The soldier were black" (OWT 75). The poetic Polite's interactions with the police, which mirror the historical Polite's, resurface throughout the poem:

They taken Margie to jail

And kept her there.

## DISORDERLY CONDUCT

The charges swear. (*OWT 76*)

“The charges swear,” matches the way Polite “cussed,” a personification implying that the legal ramifications might equal Polite’s powerful voice. The phrasing also suggests the law’s “conduct” is suspect; because “charges swear” rather than police, the legal system is ultimately the problem. The capitalization of the poem’s final line—“MARGIE’S DAY!” (*OWT 78*)—matches the volume of the charges against Polite. However triumphant this ending seems, the irony cannot be dismissed: the actual Polite was likely not celebrating as she was being taken into custody, nor after. Given the way Collins dealt with Polite in public, and given the police report’s framing of Polite as a sex worker, it seems unlikely that she was treated kindly once in custody. Indeed, the legal consequences were severe: following her arrest, Polite’s bail was set at \$10,000, much higher than other for rioters (and currently equivalent to approximately \$180,000), and she spent six weeks in jail—significantly longer than other rioters—despite having no criminal record and only one charge of disorderly conduct against her (Leach, “Polite” 25). Although the poem alludes to the historical Polite’s police mistreatment, its ending rewrites news accounts that only focus on her criminality, suggesting instead that she ought to be honoured.

“The Ballad”—and the historical Polite by extension—is contextualized by its place within *One-Way Ticket*. The riot ballad depicts one of multiple interactions between threatening police and Black Americans. Three poems in the collection explicitly reference police violence: “Roland Hayes Beaten,” “Third Degree,” and “Who but the Lord?” Further, the final lines of “Who but the Lord?” explicitly link race and police brutality, and immediately precede “The Ballad”:



Now I don't understand  
 Why God don't protect a man  
 From police brutality.  
 Being poor and black,  
 I've no weapon to strike back  
 So who but the Lord  
 Can protect me? (*TP* 194)

In response, Hughes's poetic *Polite* enables the unprotected and weaponless Harlemites to "strike back" verbally. The specific ordering of poems within *One-Way Ticket* highlights how systemic racism in America's legal institutions contributed to the Harlem riot. Further, "The Ballad" is the final poem in a series beginning with "One-Way Ticket," in which the speaker leaves the South for "Any place that is / North" (188), but still encounters discriminatory housing policies in Chicago (189). In "Negro Servant," Hughes characterizes Harlem as offering "sweet relief from faces that are white," at the end of the workday (192). Yet, in the text immediately following, Hughes complicates this portrayal: "Here on the edge of hell / Stands Harlem" (192–3). The sequence of poems "Negro Servant," "Puzzled," "Who but the Lord?," and "The Ballad" provides ample evidence for why the riot is treated as a radical, even inevitable action.<sup>185</sup>

*One-Way Ticket* also offers other explanations for women's participation in the riot. The collection is divided into ten sections beginning with a series of "Madam" poems that focus on African American women's experiences. This first section of poems (all of which employ the ballad form) references segregation, poor living and working conditions, Black women's domestic labour, the nation, and the treatment of Black youth in the legal system. Contextualized this way, *Polite*, like Madam Alberta K., is not simply reacting to being thrown out of the hotel

lobby, but to persistent, widespread injustices. Given the ways in which *One-Way Ticket* depicts women's lives in Harlem, that Polite resists at all is impressive.

Finally, *One-Way Ticket*'s multiple intermedial elements illuminate the ways various media transmit American lives. Even without Lawrence's drawings, Hughes combines filmic and sonic elements throughout, including references to blues songs and singers. The poem following "The Ballad," "Note on Commercial Theatre," critiques the ways Black art and artists appear in mainstream productions:

You've taken my blues and gone—  
 You sing 'em on Broadway  
 And you sing 'em in Hollywood Bowl,  
 And you mixed 'em up with symphonies  
 And you fixed 'em  
 So they don't sound like me. (CW 2: 197)

The poem's second stanza suggests a dissatisfaction with how theatre producers employed Black actors without including anything of their lives: "You put me in *Macbeth* and *Carmen Jones* / . . . / And in everything but what's about me" (CW 2: 197).<sup>186</sup> *One-Way Ticket*, in its combination of multiple media, reasserts diverse ways of transmitting the state of being Black *and* American *and* an artist. The inclusion of Lawrence's work amplifies how visual media can enhance rather than co-opt or obfuscate representations of Black lives.

### ***Lawrence***

Among Lawrence critics, analyses of his *One-Way Ticket* drawings are rare. Nadell, however, offers an extended comparison of Lawrence's illustrations and Hughes's poem.

Overall, she suggests, “*One-Way Ticket* tends to employ indirection and inference as its governing aesthetic principle. . . . Lawrence’s drawings, in contrast, make the subject matter explicit” (159). Although I agree generally with Nadell’s excellent interart discussion, *The Ballad of Margie Polite*—its placement in the text, its dissimilarities to the poem—invites further explication. Lawrence’s own intermedial methods are significant: Hughes and Petry produce, among other things, jazz literature; Lawrence, in contrast, has been called a literary painter.



Fig. 17. Jacob Lawrence, *The Ballad of Margie Polite*, 1948. Brush and ink on paper, 62.9 x 41.9 cm.

Indeed, Patricia Hills draws on literature and writers throughout her study of Lawrence, and compares Lawrence and Hughes at length. “It was Simple’s Harlem,” Hills suggests, “that Lawrence painted in the 1940s—the Harlem of expectations, distortions, contradictions” (*Painting* 189). Although Hills’s analysis of the riot is limited, her examination of Lawrence’s black-and-white drawings made in the late 1940s is useful in comparing mass media

representations. Further, Hills situates Lawrence in Harlem and provides rich comparisons with Hughes's and, albeit briefly, Petry's depictions of Harlem in the 1940s.<sup>187</sup>

Lawrence was already a well-known painter by the time he was asked to contribute illustrations for *One-Way Ticket* in 1947. Six years earlier, in November 1941, *Fortune* magazine had reproduced twenty-six panels from Lawrence's *Migration Series* in full colour. The inclusion, Leah Dickerman suggests, was "extraordinary, unheard of for a young black artist," particularly because the cost of colour printing was significant (28). *Fortune* presented Lawrence's work to his widest audience to date, which was augmented by a "fifteen-stop tour, organized by the MoMA, that concluded with a New York presentation at the Museum in 1944" (Dickerman 12). Thematically, *One-Way Ticket* parallels *The Migration Series*: both collections show how racial discrimination and violence in the South led to mass migration, and both depict the continued inequities upon arriving in the North. Both series also represent the unfulfilled promises of progress that spurred the Harlem riot of 1943. Two other notable exhibitions by Lawrence indicate analogous subject matter in his paintings and Hughes's poems: in 1943, Lawrence's *This Is Harlem* series was shown at the Downtown Gallery (five panels from the series were reproduced in *Vogue*'s September 1943 issue), and in 1947—around the same time Hughes suggested to his publishers that Lawrence should supply art for his poetry collection—Lawrence's war series, *Victory*, was on display (Hughes attended the exhibit in December).

Despite Lawrence's impressive reputation, especially for a relatively young artist, Hughes had difficulty convincing his publisher that Lawrence's work was a worthwhile inclusion. In the end, Hughes was so insistent that he paid Lawrence \$600 himself for the rights to the work (Nadell 141).<sup>188</sup> Although they did not know each other well, Hughes wrote to Lawrence in January 1948 proposing that they collaborate: "I have chosen as a title for the book,

ONE-WAY TICKET, from the poem of that name. Perhaps that poem, or that particularly [*sic*] sequence of poems might suggest an idea for one of your drawings, but do not feel bound by this. I want you to feel free to interpret the book as you feel it emotionally” (qtd. in Hills, *Painting* 169). Hughes, it appears, was persistent about including Lawrence’s drawings in his collection of poems, but, as part of this insistence, he wanted Lawrence to decide which poems to illustrate and how.<sup>189</sup> Lawrence, too, was eager to work with Hughes.

The editorial note on the book jacket of *One-Way Ticket* invites readers to discern the similarities between the poems and the drawings: “Mr. Lawrence has caught with aptness and insight the very spirit of Langston Hughes’s work. The result is *a remarkable unity of text and design*” (my emphasis). Although most of Lawrence’s illustrations reflect or enhance the content of Hughes’s poems, the relationship between *The Ballad* and “The Ballad” is one of contrast and difference.<sup>190</sup> Hills’s scant analysis suggests only that Lawrence’s drawing “presents a parallel comment on the riot” to Hughes’s poem (*Painting* 185). Nadell, however, identifies key distinctions between the two. “The poem,” she asserts, “assumes a post-riot place, establishing a temporal distance” (150). “Lawrence’s drawing presents a very different version of the riot,” Nadell argues, “calling attention to the violence and confusion of the event” (150). Indeed, in terms of identifiable people, things, or actions, Lawrence illustrates nothing of Hughes’s poem or its specifics, adopting only its title and the event to create any sense of cohesion between the two works. No other example in *One-Way Ticket* presents such divergence between poem and drawing.

Lawrence’s depiction of the people involved in the riot creates a notable distinction between his work and Hughes’s. Hughes names specific individuals, both to criticize “leaders” like La Guardia and to single out Polite for praise. Generally, the rioters are loud and defiant.

Lawrence, in comparison, illustrates the “anguish in the unindividuated faces” (Nadell 152). *The Ballad* depicts people running away from the action, bloodied-faced men opposite police, shocked onlookers, and someone pushing through the crowd with arms full food (presumably stolen). Eyes and hands feature abundantly, expressing distress, pain, or anger. In the foreground, a fist wraps around a nightstick. The police are both enactors of violence and caught up in it. There are few women in the drawing, and they are all along the margins, nearly out of frame. The most sympathetic figure is a child, drawn small and shaded black. Overall, Nadell suggests, “Lawrence’s graphic representation acts as a kind of shorthand for representing members of the black community in conflict with white figures of authority” (152). The drawing counters the poem’s celebratory tone, depicting instead the people and the event as indistinguishable from any other violent altercation.

Although the tones of the poem and drawing clash—Hughes’s dark irony up against Lawrence’s unmistakable violence—this is not to suggest that they do not also complement each other. The boldness of the image matches the “loudness” of the poem’s capitalization and exclamatory punctuation. Even formally, Hughes’s and Lawrence’s techniques generally correspond throughout *One-Way Ticket*. Nadell suggests that multiplicity is characteristic of both poet and painter: “Lawrence’s collage aesthetic and his layering of forms serve as visual parallels to the multiple voices [of Hughes’s poems],” but Lawrence’s drawing creates “a dialogue predicated on violence” (159, 152). Further, it is difficult to distinguish the poem’s multiple speakers, with the italicized font representing both the speech of a radio-transmitted voice and the voices of the crowd. Lawrence’s layering of multiple body parts on top of others works similarly; distinguishing distinct, singular bodies is nearly impossible, especially at the drawing’s centre. When individuals are somewhat identifiable—as in the case of the woman in a floral-

print dress, the child, and the two police officers—the visual elements warrant closer examination.

Although there are notable exceptions, “Lawrence often depicts women at home; when outside they are often onlookers or passersby in scenes where men and boys initiate action” (Hills, *Painting* 195). This generalization is also true of *Ballad*. Of fourteen bodies drawn, only two are distinctly women, both on the margins and diagonally opposite from each other: one woman in a floral dress—weeping, perhaps—in the lower left corner, and one with a stunned expression in the upper right corner, possibly clothed in a nun’s habit. The assemblage of body parts makes gender, race, even clothing difficult to distinguish. Thus, in the lower right corner, a trailing foot with shoes could indicate a woman or a child. The figure in the middle right might also be that of a woman.<sup>191</sup> Yet even these putative women are at the edges. Along the centre of the drawing, in contrast, there is (from top to bottom): a man’s shoe, a police officer either punching at or holding a bloody head under his arm; a second police officer; a large black hand with curling fingers; the “looter” in a striped shirt; and at the very bottom, a hand clutching an object (Hills suggests this is a brick [*Painting* 185]).

Women are rendered sympathetically in *Ballad* through formal details; they are small in size and on the margins. They are not depicted as being destructive to anyone or anything, nor are they looting. None is imposing, physically, or in the foreground. The woman in the floral dress is looking in the direction of the police officer who is holding the baton. In front of the woman there is a stick. Although it appears less menacing than the police baton, the stick indicates an attempt to fight back. Alternately, its size—much smaller than the baton—suggests how limited or ineffectual resistance is. Without the poem, such an interpretation is a stretch, but if one extends Hughes’s insistence on Polite’s resistance, then such a reading is warranted.

Further, Lawrence's drawing retains the poem's title, which ostensibly makes it about Polite. Remediated in Lawrence's drawing, Polite's ballad is unending, violent, and devastating.

The policemen's actions in the poem are markedly different than in the drawing. In the ballad, the police are central to the riot contextually, but their actions and violence are featured mostly at the beginning and end, and almost entirely relating to Polite. The officer and Polite have an encounter (stanza 1), the White cop shoots an African American soldier (stanza 3), and the police take her to jail and charge her (stanzas 5 and 13, the final stanza). In contrast, the two police officers are along the centre line of Lawrence's drawing, very much in the middle of the blood, violence, and confusion of bodies. Absent, too, is any sort of between barrier between the rioters and those trying to control the riot: the drawing contains no police vans, no radio cars—indeed, no identifiable community leaders. Further, unlike in Petry's story, wherein the police mount horses to control the crowd, the police in Lawrence's drawing are much more physically vulnerable.



Fig. 18. *PM*, "Whole Story" 10.<sup>192</sup>



Because it features men predominantly as being central to the riot's action, Lawrence's drawing aligns with the images in *PM*. In *PM*, however, the police are always pictured in control, protecting property rather than people. Indeed, they physically frame the rioters in multiple examples, reasserting visually a sense of dominance and authority. Although the images of injured Black people that appear alongside images of police arresting rioters could be read alternatively—as a way of implicating the police in those injuries—the image's captions and articles throughout *PM* praise the police, who “bore themselves with extraordinary restraint during a long and difficult night, using every artifice to avoid violence” (“Whole Story” 2). In contrast, Lawrence's drawing depicts neither that the “police have restored order” (“Whole Story” 10, see fig. 18), nor officers smiling uninjured for the camera (see fig. 19). Although



Cops and prisoners alike show no trace of animosity as another load of prisoners leaves the W. 123d St. Station for detention at the 94th St. Armory. The big fellow in background has a big smile for his captors, while the prisoner at right feels camera-shy. Patrol wagons were busy through the night and the early daylight hours.

Fig. 19. *PM*, “Whole Story” 6.<sup>193</sup>

Lawrence depicts police on the receiving end of violence, contextualization provided by *One-Way Ticket* and even *PM* limits one's sympathetic response to the police. Lawrence's drawing contrasts the large police with a small, black child running out of frame, dropping a loaf of bread. Such a distinction in physical size characterizes the police as being brutish. That the police are framed this way is a critical distinction between Lawrence's illustration and the photographs of police in *PM*; their presence disrupts any sense of safety. At best, they are ineffective at maintaining order; at worst, they are the cause of violent, unnecessary disorder.

Further, that the police are enmeshed in the action of *Ballad* distinguishes the drawing from Lawrence's other depictions of the justice system. Lawrence portrayed riots in *The Migration Series*, Nadell asserts, but "none of the panels had depicted the sort of out-of-control violence evident in [*Ballad*]" (150). Indeed, police are either not pictured or not explicitly violent in his other riot depictions. Throughout the series, however, representatives of the legal system are threatening, violent, and clearly racially demarcated between the state (White cops, judges, and police) and those criminalized by it (Black people). In Panel 22, for example, an image of three Black men handcuffed together is captioned: "Migrants left. They did not feel safe. It was not wise to be found on the streets late at night. They were arrested on the slightest provocation" (*JL: MS 90–1*). Panel 59—near the end of the series—shows a single voting booth guarded by a White officer. The caption states: "In the North they had the freedom to vote." Of this painting, Jodi Roberts notes: "The only white figure, a nightstick-wielding guard stationed at the entrance to the voting booth, is an intimidating presence, but he does not interfere" (*JL: MS 164*). Panel 22 demonstrates both why Black Americans left the South and the barriers that prevented them from doing so; Panel 59 contrasts "freedom" with the guarded, orderly image. Together, these two paintings suggest different ways Black Americans were policed, reiterating how the legal system might operate differently in the North than in the South, but that it offers no real freedom or security.

*The Migration Series* also depicts the conditions undergirding the eruptions of race riots across the U.S. in 1943, including poor employment and housing options for Black Americans (Panels 46, 47, and 48) and acts of extralegal, racialized violence—even the bombing of homes (Panels 50 and 51).<sup>194</sup> Such precariousness is also formally reinforced by the placement of Lawrence's drawing within *One-Way Ticket. Ballad* comes after "Who but the Lord?" (a lament

on the lack of protection from police violence), and it marks the only instance in *One-Way Ticket* where Lawrence's work divides the body of a poem. This placement—an intrusion into poetic space—performs the drawing's uncontainable violence, affecting infringement into personal or private space. In the book, *Ballad* is reproduced on a full page and divides stanzas 9 and 10 (thus occurring between the lines, “*What about / Stuyvesant Town?*” and “*Colored leaders / In sound trucks*”). Because the drawing interrupts two stanzas that depict competing voices, it, too, acts as a competing “voice.” And because *Ballad* disrupts the text so abruptly—the unprecedented switch from the structured, verbal ballad to the chaos of the visual drawing—the placement and the immediacy of the drawing undermines any sense of order or safety or even revelry. There is no safe space within the poem because the drawing brings in the presence of police, of violence, in stark black-and-white imagery.

Lawrence frequently described the impact of his Harlem community on both his subject matter and technique; his intermedial methods come from his life and education. When asked, Lawrence described his work as “a form of expressionism in its style and in its form it's cubist. I would say that in the very broad sense of terms. And, in its content, it's social” (Lawrence, “Expressionist” 18). But he also suggested that he was not politically motivated in his choice of subject matter: “I didn't select what I was going to do so much as doing what was around me. If that turned out to be political or cultural it wasn't because I thought of it in those terms. Street corner orators. The riots. Things like that. This is all taking place around me” (qtd. in Hills, *Painting* 184). His depiction of race riots is due to their frequency in American history; the Harlem riot of 1943 was not a singular event for Lawrence.

In terms of technique, however, *Ballad* and the other drawings in *One-Way Ticket* are aesthetically distinctive within Lawrence's catalogue of boldly coloured, serial paintings.

Although the drawings fit within the broader categorization of Lawrence's "expressive cubist collage aesthetic" (Hills, "Cultural" 227), the choice of black-and-white is distinctive. This decision may have been due to the availability and cost of colour reproduction. The drawings, however, are also representative of a short period of Lawrence's career—roughly 1947 to 1949—during which he produced drawings to be published in journals, magazines, and books. Hills suggests that Lawrence's choice to work in black-and-white resulted from his travels through the South in the summer of 1947 on a commissioned assignment by the editors of *Fortune* magazine. Hills argues that the "more symbolic black-and-white illustrations done within two years of his 1947 trip to the South give evidence of Lawrence's 'inward emotions' in the face of the suffocating racism he read about and may have experienced in the South. They were not images that would appeal to *Fortune*" (*Painting* 166).<sup>195</sup> Lawrence's black-and-white drawings were published in leftist magazines such as *Masses and Mainstream* and the *New Republic*. Referring to a specific drawing, *Untitled [Lynching]* (1947), Hills claims, "Lawrence's emphasis on pattern in his compositions accentuates the horror at the treatment of people as anonymous objects" (*Painting* 166). The subject matter of the texts that his drawings accompanied—including *One-Way Ticket*—was that of racism, lynching, and also resistance.

Similarly, Lawrence's "stylization" in *Ballad*, according to Nadell, "creates the impression that the flailing bodies are an infinitely reproducible pattern" (152).<sup>196</sup> Even more, the illustrations in *One-Way Ticket* allude to the history of printed reproduction; it is easy to mistake them for prints. Nadell proposes that *Silhouettes* is "reminiscent of a woodcut" (146), and I would suggest that all six of Lawrence's brush-and-ink drawings are rendered in the same style. *Ballad*, thus, doubly remediates Hughes's poem (which is itself a retelling of the riot). It is fitting, then, that Lawrence's drawing employs what Irina Rajewsky terms intermedial reference.

Within his specific aesthetic choice, Lawrence recalls not only the earliest forms of printmaking but also other examples of woodcuts and etchings, such as Francisco Goya's print series, *The Disasters of War* [*Los desastres de la guerra*] (1810–20) and German Expressionist Käthe Kollwitz's series of woodcuts, etchings, and lithographs, *A Weavers Revolt* [*Ein Weberaufstand*] (1893–7), *Peasant War* [*Bauernkrieg*] (1903–7), and *War* [*Krieg*] (1921–3). Indeed, Lawrence would have seen prints by both artists in the mid-1930s (Wheat 121), and he cites their influence in multiple interviews.<sup>197</sup>

Overall, Lawrence's remediations seem to serve the purpose of immediacy.<sup>198</sup> As he said, “[I] want to communicate. I want the idea to strike right away” (McCausland 251). Lawrence's woodcut-like drawings, however, depart compellingly from the intermedial methods he typically used in his paintings. Whereas Dickerman suggests that photo-magazines—like *Fortune*, *Look*, and *Life*—were a “model” for the way Lawrence's paintings combine image and text (20–1), *Ballad* does not reference, in any formal way, these contemporaneous uses of images. Instead, *Ballad* keeps the suggestion of mass reproduction but makes the event non-specific; in this way, rioting is always an immediate possibility. This omission of specifics contrasts both with Hughes's poem, which details people, places, and dates (Polite, La Guardia, Stuyvesant Town, August 1<sup>st</sup>), and with Petry's short story, which evokes then-contemporary photography. Formally, the woodcut style of *Ballad* is historically evocative, making the riot of 1943 seem unabated rather than temporally or spatially contained.

### **“In Darkness and Confusion”**

Hills suggests that Petry, like Lawrence and Hughes, was also invested in representing daily life in Harlem. After moving to Harlem from Connecticut in 1938, Petry immersed herself in “a community of activist-oriented artists” (Griffin 101). Petry's activism included organizing

and participating in pickets with Negro Women Inc. and coordinating after-school programs. At the same time, she joined the American Negro Theater group, took piano lessons and was friends with jazz musician Frances Kraft Reckling, and, like Lawrence before her, “took painting and drawing classes at the Harlem Community Art Center” (Griffin 101–4).<sup>199</sup> Petry worked for two Harlem newspapers: after leaving the *New York Amsterdam News* in 1941, she joined the *People’s Voice* in three capacities: as an editor of the women’s pages, a regular columnist, and a general news reporter. As Alex Lubin summarizes, “Petry was a perceptive journalist, offering readers an account of day-to-day life in Harlem, as well as a critical view of the plight of African American female workers. She focused her attention on the lives of domestics and children” (7). Harlem also enabled Petry’s most productive period of creative writing, and her intermedial, intersectionally astute fiction bears the imprints of her journalism, her civic activism, and her sustained interest in other arts.

The *People’s Voice* was the centre of much of Petry’s work and life in Harlem. Rubin and Smethurst describe the *People’s Voice* as “the newspaper of record for activities of the black Left in New York” (24). Powell positioned the *People’s Voice* as “the Lenox Ave. edition of the *Daily Worker*” (qtd. in Griffin 91), underscoring the paper’s attention to issues of class. Although Petry was never a member of the Communist Party, she worked with Doxey Wilkerson, Marvel Cooke, Max Yergen and other communists while employed at the *People’s Voice*.<sup>200</sup> Further, Petry’s short stories and essays appeared alongside that of communists’ in Popular Front publications such as *Common Ground*, *PM*, and *Cross Section*. Yet, despite this association, and as a safeguard against charges of communism, Petry argued that her writing was not any more or less Marxist than that of other politically or socially conscious novelists. In a 1950 essay, “The Novel as Social Criticism,” Petry suggested that “the perfidious influence of

Karl Marx” was attributed to a number of writers in the 1930s. Regardless of classification, however, Petry’s fiction—like her journalism—often highlights Black women’s labour. “In *Darkness and Confusion*” is no exception; learning to see women’s labour as being restricted by race and racism is a key moment in the narrative, a moment made possible through intermedial reference.

Petry captures the 1943 riot and its causes in her sonic, photographic short story, “In *Darkness and Confusion*.” She re-presents the event primarily through one family, the Joneses, which consists of William and Pink, their son Sam (who was drafted into military service), and their 18-year-old niece Annie May, who lives with them. In framing the riot through one working-class family, “Petry makes the ordinary, anonymous participants of the Harlem riots the central figures of literary fiction. This is her major contribution as an artist: to give voice and complexity to those people who remain nameless in official accounts” (Griffin 125). In addition to including an unnamed character who represents the historical Polite within the story, Petry’s fictional Annie May stands in for Polite and other “nameless” girls and women who participated in the riot. The narrative traces the personal and historical events leading up to the riot and treats William’s involvement sympathetically: the day before the riot William learns that Sam had been shot by an MP for refusing to adhere to Jim Crow laws and was now serving twenty years’ hard labour in the South; the night of the riot, William witnesses a White police officer shoot an African American soldier, which for him was “like having Sam killed before his eyes” (*MM* 281). Narrative flashbacks before and during the riot illustrate multiple instances in which William is silent in the face of racial discrimination, unable to advocate for himself or his family members.

Even though the narrative stays primarily with William, women are the main agents of riotous behaviour in the short story. A woman in the hotel lobby tells the cop she has “a right” to be there, and calls him a “white son of a bitch” after he pushes her (*MM* 279). After William finally tells Pink about Sam’s imprisonment, she breaks the first store window, then starts the looting, and is depicted “leading the crowd” (289). Annie May destroys a mannequin; and an older woman sets a record store on fire. The targets are telling: women destroy symbols of White legal, economic, and cultural authority. William witnesses each of these women’s actions, and his focalization suggests that readers interpret Annie May and Pink’s efforts as being powerful. Petry’s story, therefore, not only “inscribes the revolutionary energy of black women,” as Lucy suggests (16), but demands that these women be recognized as such, even—or especially—within their own families and communities.

The destruction of the mannequin and the record store are public demonstrations against mass culture, housed within a depiction of the riot that begins with one woman’s refusal to leave a public space. Beginning with the unnamed woman in the bar, I want to highlight how Petry’s depiction of women and police differ from the account of the riot published in *PM*. I will also focus on the mannequin scene as one example of Petry’s use of mass culture in “In Darkness” to criticize the way African American women are figured, using images in *PM* as a comparison. As Rubin and Smethurst suggest, “Petry particularly investigates the special impact of the intersection of visions of race, class, and nation, often structured or framed by mass culture (and, in turn, often a structuring element of mass culture), on black women” (33–4). In Petry’s text, the mannequin scene is profoundly rebellious. I am not suggesting that Petry disavows the newspaper images—as Sara Blair argues, the 1943 riot images featuring women and girls reveal a subversive understanding of being captured on film—but rather provides alternative ways of



seeing the lives behind such images. Petry also references mass media in the record store scene, offering a critique of jazz, of the way Black women's voices have been co-opted while Black women's sexuality is simultaneously fetishized and criminalized. Importantly, William's moments of race and gender consciousness are accomplished using intermedial references to popular culture in tandem with depictions of police violence (a reiteration that policing occurs on multiple fronts).

The shooting is an overt act of state violence that punctuates Petry's more general depiction of an unsafe Harlem. The way sounds distress William further establishes the story's foreboding environment. One could say William is policed by various sonic elements—multiple sounds and voices affect him throughout the narrative. Primarily, he is a receptor for sound, saying almost nothing. Further, the narration, which is filtered through his consciousness, places the reader alongside him in the role of auditor. Many of the “ominous,” “loud,” and “violent” noises reinforce White hegemonic authority: the police officer's gunshot “stayed in [William's] ears. He couldn't get it out” (*MM* 280); during his meeting with the high school principal, William “was buried under a flow of words, a mountain of words, that went on and on. Her voice was high-pitched and loud” (265). But the sonic reverberations William encounters in his neighbourhood, and within his own home, are also equally distressing to him: Pink's voice is “sharp, like the crack of a whip” (262). Just before the shooting, William overhears domestic abuse, which drives him out of his home and to a bar where even the music playing on the jukebox “beat about his ears in a queer mixture of violence and love and hate and terror” (278). The threatening aural atmosphere suggests home (and the home front) is neither safe nor separate from outside influence.

As Keith Clark points out, the Jones' home offers no safety or separation from the outside. Indeed, William finds almost no comfort in public or private spaces throughout the story. The only exception is during the riot, which is figured as not only as a site of violence but also of catharsis, even if such relief is temporary. William finds his voice, or, rather, *a* voice, both as part of the crowd during the riot and at the end of the story, after Pink has died in the middle of the street:

All his life, moments of despair and frustration had left him speechless—strangled by the words that rose in his throat. This time the words poured out. He sent his voice raging into the darkness and the awful confusion of noises. “The sons of bitches,” he shouted. “The sons of bitches.” (*MM* 295)

William's shouts repeat, almost exactly, what the Polite-like character said to the officer after he pushed her, just before the outbreak of the riot: ““You white son of a bitch”” (*MM* 279).

Although this phrasing may seem minor, the editor of the *Crisis* cited “profanity” as the reason for rejecting “In Darkness” for publication.<sup>201</sup> Between the first and last utterances of this phrase, the atemporal narrative provides multiple examples of racist mistreatment. William's return to this particular verbal expression reinforces who is at fault for Pink's death: not simply the police, but rather the state's racial inequities that make certain citizens unsafe.

William's repetition of the unnamed character's words also draws attention to the ways women like Polite are treated by the police. Petry figures this character differently than mass media representations of Polite—she is not a sex worker—but the woman is not entirely sympathetic:

A white cop was arguing with a frowzy-looking girl who had obviously had too much to drink.

“I got a right in here. I’m mindin’ my own business,” she said with one eye on the bar.

“Aw, go chase yourself.” The cop gave her a push toward the door. She stumbled against a chair.

William watched her in amusement. “Better than a movie,” he told himself.

She straightened up and tugged at her girdle. “You white son of a bitch,” she said.

The cop’s face turned a furious red. He walked toward the woman, waving his nightstick. It was then that William saw the soldier. (*MM* 279)

In William’s interpretation of the scene (or perhaps it is the narrator’s), the woman is “frowzy” and drunk. Yet, the soldier’s intervention condemns the police officer’s use of force against her—both the push and the potential of further violence from the baton. Furthermore, in Petry’s short story, the woman is not the source of the rumour that starts the riot. The rumour seems to emerge from the crowd without a single source, and William is partly responsible for spreading it. The woman disappears from the narrative such that she is not part of the riot crowd, and no other information is provided about her, but her words—or a version of her words—conclude “In Darkness.”

The baton, a distinct symbol of police brutality that Petry employs in the short story and in her photo-essay, “Harlem,” reinforces how untenable a home Harlem is for working-class people like the Joneses.<sup>202</sup> In the essay, Petry figures the police as adversaries: “Parts of the Hollow, and parts of the Hill, too, for that matter, reveal something else about Harlem. In some of the side streets the law is an enemy, visible, hateful—a fat cat in a blue uniform, twirling a nightstick” (“Harlem” 769–70). By evoking Sugar Hill, a wealthier neighbourhood within Harlem, Petry suggests that a distrust of the police cuts across class lines. Indeed, in the short

story, race marks the primary distinction between the police and Harlemites. In contrast to William H. Johnson's depiction of the police in *Moon over Harlem* (his remediation of the 1943 riot), the police officers in Petry's story are White: "The mounted cops rode their horses into the crowd. . . . There were more and more cops. All of them white. They had moved the colored cops out" (*MM* 283).<sup>203</sup> The riot police are even dressed in white (284), symbolizing the inextricable links between race and the legal system.

Annie May offers a compelling depiction of a rioter compared with either Pink or William. She never learns about Sam, nor does she witness the shooting in the hotel lobby. Before the riot, William unfavourably compares Annie May with Sam, who was exceptional, so good at basketball that "his picture had been in one of the white papers" (*MM* 269). In contrast, William is upset with Annie May for staying out late and not maintaining a regular job. William refers to Annie May as a "Jezebel," and thinks young women like her "talked too loud and laughed too loud" (264, 259). She does not behave the way William thinks she should, and the insinuation of sex work aligns Annie May with Polite, who was also framed this way by the police. During the riot, however, William's perception of Annie May radically changes after he sees her throw a white mannequin into the street. In this scene, William "felt that now for the first time he understood her. She had never had anything but badly paying jobs—working for young white women who probably despised her. She was like Sam on that bus in Georgia" (290). This is a significant moment of comprehending racism across gender, of realizing how Harlem offers Annie May no more than the Jim Crow South. John Charles argues that, as a result of this scene, William "recognizes that her [Annie May's] refusal to go to work *on time* and to keep a 'steady' or 'regular' job, is not laziness, but her means of resisting the deadening regulation of her life, her humiliating incorporation into routines of labor that sustain the domestic sphere and

private life of the white family she works for at the expense of her own” (104). Indeed, William learns from Annie May the futility of working hard, of behaving respectably. Because the narration stays compellingly with William rather than with either Annie May or Pink, it suggests William’s revised perception of Annie May, specifically in relation to race, resistance, and labor, is a crucial and necessary act.

In the short story, as in the actual riot, storefronts rather than police are attacked. As the windows were being smashed, William observes, “White folks owned these stores” (*MM* 288). The source of violence and the target of retaliation are clear: White economic power. As C. L. Greenberg suggests:

The object of attack that night was whites; perhaps not white people, but certainly white power. The riot began with the shooting of a black man by a white policeman. Would a black policeman in the same situation have sparked a riot? Thousands of blacks joined the riot, from all classes. (*Explode* 212)

The crowd in the story is also diverse, repudiating the claim that the rioters were “hoodlums” or criminal. Nor does Petry suggest that the rioters were thoughtless in their targets: “In this story,” as Charles argues, “Petry imagines violent protest in the streets not as lawlessness and immorality, but rather as a momentarily galvanizing, therapeutic, and public act of resistance to the immorality of state violence and its role in protecting white supremacy, specifically in the form of ‘white’ property” (100). Annie May’s choice of object—one that sells White merchandise to Black consumers—and subsequent arrest is a layered critique of White economic, cultural, and judicial power.

Petry draws on the heavily-circulated images of broken mannequins in mass media depictions of the riot. As Blair details, photographs of mannequins had become ubiquitous in the

1940s, citing images by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Lisette Model, and others. By the time of the 1943 riot, mannequin photographs were already freighted with meaning, functioning as a “prop for burgeoning consumer culture; a cause and effect of the cultivation of personal image; a figure for the radical alienation of human labor and consciousness under advanced capitalism” (Blair 142). Petry’s invocation of the mannequin underscores the latter, suggesting that there are no uncomplicated venues for Black labour—an idea that undermines the politics of respectability. Blair further compares the mannequin images featured in newspaper coverage of the riot. Photographs used in mainstream newspapers like the *New York Times* “suggest outrage about the destruction of white-owned property and loss of revenues, even as they stoke white readers’ anxiety about the implied (or real) threats to (real) white bodies downtown” (Blair 147). In contrast, the mannequin photograph in the *New York Amsterdam News* operates “as both a watchful survivor and a haunting testament to the logic that produced this landscape: economic opportunism, unacknowledged labor, a consumer logic predicated on white-owned institutions and Anglocentric artifacts” (Blair 147–8).

The mannequin images in *PM* operate somewhat differently from either grouping Blair describes. In *PM*, the mannequins are made comedic by the accompanying headline, “Even Tragedy Has Its Lighter Side” (“Whole Story” 18). The caption for the larger image (by Morris Gordon) also generates humour: “A Sanitation Dept. worker and a dummy burlesque queen survey wreckage at Klark’s Kredit store on W. 125<sup>th</sup> St.” (“Whole Story” 18). Although the caption equates the subjects caught in the image, their positions are certainly different: the worker (who appears to be a Black man) has his gaze fixed downward, eyes blocked from the camera by his hat. He is captured mid-labour, producing sympathy by reminding readers that Harlemites are the ones cleaning up after the riot. The image, however, also does not “stoke

white readers' anxiety" (Blair 147) because of the positioning of the largely intact and starkly white mannequins to the worker. The fully dressed "dummy burlesque queen" stands above the worker, gazing out. The Black worker is not pictured handling or even looking at the mannequins. In Weegee's photo (bottom right), a worker (perhaps White) carries a headless, armless mannequin while other men are also visible in the background. Again, the emphasis is on the labour necessitated by the riot's destruction. Further, there are no images of what or who specifically damaged the mannequins, a choice that alleviates anxieties about harm to White bodies in current or future acts of resistance.

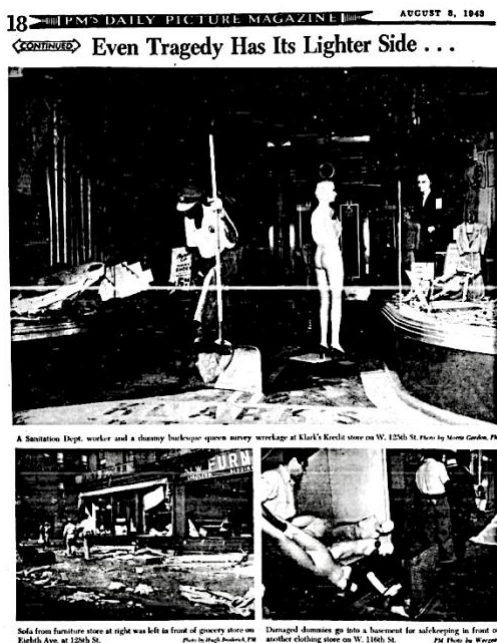


Fig. 20. *PM*, "Whole Story" 18.<sup>204</sup>

The mannequin images printed in *PM* displace Black women's bodies, both as participants and as labourers. Petry, alternately, makes these women the crux. Annie May stands in for the unnamed women photographed looting and for the absented women who may have destroyed symbols of White power during the riot. "Annie Mae is a fictional representative," Griffin suggests, "of the women described by a *New York Times* article that appeared on August

3, 1943, entitled ‘500 Are Arraigned in Harlem Looting: 100 Women Among Prisoners Crowding Courts After Night Disorders’” (125). The 1943 riot was unique, argues Griffin, because of the large number of women who participated, some of whom were, like Annie May, arrested: “more young women, like Hughes’s Polite, were arrested for ‘disorderly conduct’ on the night of the riot than on any other night preceding or following it” (126). Robin Lucy, however, compellingly links Annie May with an image of a mannequin published in the *People’s Voice*: “the week after the riot . . . the editors printed a photograph which Petry made a central image in *In Darkness and Confusion*: stripped, female mannequins are strewn across a dress shop floor, the store windows shattered” (5–6). The newspaper mannequin images detailed by Blair, Griffin, and Lucy are all of the aftermath of the riot. Petry overwrites these images with a fictionalized scene of how the mannequins came to be targeted riot objects.

In contrast to *PM*, Petry’s description of Annie May holding and throwing the mannequin would likely amplify rather than alleviate any anxieties about bodily violence:

there was something so ferocious about the way her dark hands gripped the naked model that he [William] resisted the onward movement of the crowd to stare in fascination. . . .

Her hands crept around the throat of the model and she sent it hurtling through the air about the heads of the crowd. It landed short of a window across the street. The legs shattered. The head rolled toward the curb. The waist snapped neatly in two. Only the torso remained whole and in one piece.

Annie May stood in the empty window and laughed with the crowd when someone kicked the torso into the street. (*MM* 289)

Qualifiers such as “ferocious,” “gripped,” and “crept around the throat” operate in stark contrast not only to the images in *PM* but also to the accompanying headline and captions. In Petry’s



cinematic description of the scene, William's contextualizes Annie May's action immediately after seeing it, interpreting it as evidence that Annie May was "like Sam on that bus in Georgia" refusing to make way for White rider (290). William's "caption" realigns Annie May with other acts of protest against segregation, a reminder that not only is Annie May "ferocious" but that such outrage is a justified response to legal and social inequities. Through Annie May, Petry rewrites the images of women as spectators or consumers only, suggesting that the 100 women arrested were politically aware.

The story's most compelling assertion, I would argue, is not only that radical women like Annie May exist undocumented by the press, but that men like William need to recognize the interconnected vectors of class, race, and gender. "As Annie May breaks a plate glass window and dismembers a white dummy," observes Page Dougherty Delano, "her fiery stance reveals that she is not what either Black men or white nation has supposed. . . . Annie May emerges as a disorderly woman whose disturbing appearance must now be read as disturbing the pillars of racism and the sex/gender system" (59). I would add that Petry's decision to narrate this scene through William's perspective is key to such a reading. The scene would be radically different if William had been the one to throw the mannequin or if Annie May's consciousness were relayed through the narrator. As it is, this radical revision of mannequin images disrupts Black women's depictions in the mainstream press and how Black men like William "read" them.<sup>205</sup>

Petry's story also disrupts the management of Black women's voices in popular culture. William's only targeted attack on any commodity during the riot involves blues records: "He didn't like those records, so they had to be destroyed" (*MM* 292). The record store scene—which is the longest duration the narration spends in any one place during the riot—figures the recording industry as marketing Black women's sexuality for a White audience. At least, this is

how William understands it:

All the records sounded the same—a terribly magnified woman’s voice bleating out a blues song in a voice that sounded to him like that of an animal in heat—an old animal, tired and beaten, but with an insinuating know-how left in her. The white men who went past the store smiled as their eyes lingered on the young girls swaying to the music. (*MM* 292)

Rather than repudiate the sexualization of women like Polite, Petry’s story draws attention to the way the White-dominated recording industry encourages or exploits such racialized, sexualized interpretations. Like the mannequin scene, Petry uses a mass-reproduced object to demonstrate how Black women both shape and are shaped by popular culture. Throughout the story, however, William demonstrates a conservative view of women’s sexuality, making his interpretation of the blues suspect.<sup>206</sup> Given that Petry considered herself “a jazz buff” (qtd. in Clark 6), and that she critiqued the way mass media portrayed Black women’s sexuality in her column, “The Lighter Side,” this scene offers multiple, complex arguments about race, gender, and the blues.<sup>207</sup> For example, does William dislike blues records because of his own sexual anxieties? Is he expressing disapproval of women’s sexuality, or of the way White men look at the “young girls”? Nevertheless, for my argument the record store scene reinforces how people like the Joneses had no creative, social, or political outlet for expressing grievances *except* for rioting.

At the story’s conclusion, the narrative returns to the Polite-like character whose insistence on her “right” to be in a public space led to the start of the riot. Critically, in this scene of anger and grief, William does not mimic the voices of the men in the barbershop, but instead takes on the voice of the Black woman who opposed the White officer’s authority. Of course, William’s repetition of the woman’s phrase also suggests unending, unresolved interracial

conflict. Holladay contends: “The rioters’ seemingly powerful actions, are, more precisely, pathetic reactions to an institutionalized racism beyond their control” (120). William, too, comes to think that the riot is futile: “Burn the whole place down. It was wonderful. Then he frowned. ‘Twenty years at hard labor.’ The words came back to him. He was a fool. Fire wouldn’t wipe that out. There wasn’t anything that would wipe it out” (*MM* 293). Despite William’s belief that nothing will ever change, he is certainly different after the riot. Before the riot, he saw a woman getting pushed by the police as entertainment, “‘Better than a movie’” (280). At the end, his repetition reveals that he now understands their shared circumstances. Consider again Rankine’s questions: “How difficult is it for one body to feel the injustice wheeled at another? Are the tensions, the recognitions, the disappointments, and the failures that exploded in the riots too foreign?” (116). The riot, I would suggest, enables both William and the short story’s readers “to feel the injustice wheeled at another” and to reinterpret the rioters’ actions as resistance.

Despite her short story’s seemingly hopeless ending, Petry believed that fiction could inaugurate change: “Social reforms have often received their original impetus from novels which aroused the emotions of a large number of readers” (“The Novel” 38).<sup>208</sup> Indeed, Petry also asserted that “In Darkness” was intended to be “like an explosion inside the head of the reader” (“Ann” 265), a signal that what happens within the story and then within the reading of it are both important dimensions in which to incite reactions. This incendiary style contrasts with *PM* magazine, which sought to assuage readers’ anxieties. “In Darkness” details how the conditions of daily life in Harlem contributed to the riot. “Petry’s view of the crisis of the Harlem Riot is unambiguous,” Wald asserts: “The riot in Harlem grew out of homegrown racism, as expressed in the terrible social and economic circumstances that were exacerbated by wartime conditions” (134). As Wald further argues, such an emphasis on the need to address domestic racism in

tandem with class and gender oppression puts Petry's account of the riot at odds with other leftist groups, including people she worked with at the *People's Voice* (128). Thus, even though these organizations were incredibly influential in Petry's career, the politics of her intermedial fiction create a sprawling indictment of multiple institutions, even ones of which she was a member.

In conclusion, Petry, like Lawrence and Hughes, depicts the police as embodying the brutal reinforcement of a legal system built to protect property and (White) property owners. Unlike Lawrence's drawing, however, Petry's short story gives women active roles in the riot; her "inclusion of women as key participants in the event," Lucy suggests, "restores these women to a revolutionary role otherwise lost in the accounts of black male writers of the period" (5–6). I would add that Petry not only "restores" them but challenges her reader's perception of them. Seeing women as politically motivated rioters, not merely consumers, is the effect of both Petry's story and Hughes's poem. The latter transforms the riot into a communal action against injustice, using Polite as icon. Lawrence brings out the disorder and violence of the occasion in his illustration, directly showing how racialized policing is at the centre of Harlem's riot. As a collection of poems and drawings, *One-Way Ticket's* intermediality encompasses both the everyday and the historical event to demonstrate the persistence of anti-Black racism in America.

By comparing "The Ballad of Margie Polite," *The Ballad of Margie Polite*, and "In Darkness and Confusion" with *PM's* coverage of the riot, I have highlighted the ways Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry break through the containment strategy indicated by headlines like "Disorders Confined to Young Hooligan Element" ("Whole Story" 7). Attributing rioting to "hoodlums" or "riffraff" overwrites the diversity of participants across Harlem and diminishes the policing that set off the riot. In contrast, Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry resist figuring Harlem

as a battleground between criminality and respectability. Instead, it is a cogent example of America's unresolved racisms. Further, each of these riot texts enables a consideration of the ways intermediality acts either to constrain or amplify an event and its effects. Whereas many newspapers, including *PM*, echoed the same voices (or the same kinds of voices) that were sounded from radios and loudspeaker cars and selected images that obscured the political targets of riot participants, Hughes and Polite drown out such voices. Lawrence's drawing, alternately, captures a radically different image of the police and the riot than what was found in *PM*. As a result, Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry suggest that sentiments underscoring the Harlem riot continue. Indeed, similar riots broke out throughout the U.S. in the 1960s. In 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr. claimed that "a riot is the language of the unheard," and suggested that such demonstrations will continue to occur unless radical changes are made ("The Other America").<sup>209</sup> More recently, Rankine has demonstrated how images used by the press too often mask the state violence that incites rioting, an effect one can trace back to the Harlem riot of 1943, even in leftist publications such as *PM*. It is fitting, then, that Hughes, Lawrence, and Petry give voice to the unheard and counter-images to the misrepresented.

Within my dissertation more broadly, the Black Popular Front of the 1930s and 1940s productively links the art and artists I discuss in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Geographically, too, it connects social and political actions in the United States to those in Spain (specifically in relation to the civil war) and in Eastern Asia (especially against the Imperial Japanese Army's actions). As a direct result of participating in Popular Front activities, many notable Black artists were scrutinized or limited by state oversight. Such artists included: Hughes, Lawrence, Petry, Primus, Gwendolyn Bennett, and Paul and Eslanda Robeson. Instead of rooting out any traces of fascism within their homes and the nation (as Woolf cogently suggested everyone do), the House Un-

American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated anyone suspected of Communist sympathies. The HUAC's purview was broad: in addition to criticizing individual artists, it scrutinized the WPA and anyone associated with it, and pushed for stricter Japanese internment (which included conducting public hearings in 1943). Yet, the HUAC did not investigate the Ku Klux Klan, a detail that exposes the tenuous, even oppositional relationship between race and nation. This strained relationship is also evident when William, in Petry's short story, uses the derogatory term "Japs," an example that I return to in the following chapter to discuss the contentious uses of American patriotism amid global racisms.

## Chapter 4

### Populating the Atomic Void

*“There is only the question: When will I be blown up?”*  
—William Faulkner

*“Visibility is a trap.”*  
—Michel Foucault

On 27 October 1945, two months after President Truman first announced the existence and use of the atomic bomb, more than 100,000 people gathered at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum to view a multimedia, spectacular recreation of the bombing of Hiroshima, complete with blinding lights and a simulated explosion followed by the rise of a mushroom cloud.<sup>210</sup> The “Tribute to Victory” was a display of technological and military power that both reassured and terrified its audience in an attempt to reveal the enormity of the atomic bomb, which had been constructed and tested in near complete secrecy. The mock explosion and re-enactment of Japan’s surrender—one of many explicit links between the bombings and American military victory—culminated a full day’s worth of programming that constituted a final drive for war bonds. In the ensuing decades, however, it has become, in contained, controlled miniature, a damning display of the atomic age. Among the broader, typifying factors that can be extracted from the extravaganza: how the bombs are represented publicly, including the aestheticization of the nuclear mushroom cloud; the excessiveness of testing and filming atomic detonations; and how hypothetical, relocated bomb detonations absent the people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki by “fictionalizing” the threat of nuclear weapons. Above all else, the “Tribute” reveals the marked difference between representations of the bomb in America and Japan. The latter’s residents were already under an American-led occupation by October 1945, meaning that any public or

private mention of the bomb in Japan—and especially its effects on humans—was subject to censorship by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP).<sup>211</sup>

In photographs documenting the “Tribute to Victory,” multiple motion-picture cameras are visible, underscoring the relationship between film, visibility, and public memory in the atomic age. Although filmic documentation of atomic explosions had been abundant from the outset, the distribution of nuclear information was strictly controlled, suggesting that the atomic age is synonymous with two contrasting concepts: that of secrecy, or invisibility, and of film, or visibility.<sup>212</sup> Stated differently, the object over which military and government officials are the most secretive is also captured on film to an unprecedented degree. Documentation of the July 1946 Bikini Atoll tests, for example, “used up half the world’s supply of motion picture film” (O’Brian 91).<sup>213</sup> As Douglas Kahn argues, “the Bikini tests were reenactments that would upstage the *Tribute to Victory* at the Los Angeles coliseum. The whole world was invited to the spectacle and for those who could not attend it was the most photographically and cinematically recorded event in history” (144). Peter Kuran details the numerous methods used to capture the bombs, including several new film technologies invented specifically for that purpose. Further, with the notable exception of the Trinity test (the first atmospheric atomic bomb detonation in New Mexico, on 16 July 1945), “the atomic tests performed in the 1940s and 1950s in the United States were for the most part public, performed in plain view of tourists and others eager to witness the spectacle” (Bryan-Wilson 117). John Hersey’s “Hiroshima” was published on 31 August 1946, less than two months after the Bikini tests.

The preponderance of atomic bomb images overrides how visibility *and* invisibility are always at play in these images. Responses to the atomic age contend with the ways in which nuclear technologies produce both hypervisibility and “[t]he absolute invisibility of radiation”



(Van Wyck, *Highway 40*). Radioactivity, the antecedent to nuclear fission, results in colossal mushroom-cloud-shaped explosions alongside seepages of radiation, imperceptible to humans (unassisted by media technologies) but affecting our bodies on a cellular level, altering some much more than others. Employing the intense visibility of the bomb's explosion—which is described as a camera flash by multiple survivors and scientists in “Hiroshima”—much atomic documentation is filmic (still camera or movie reel), reinforcing the inextricable link between technologies of war and technologies that capture war. As Susan Sontag has suggested, comparing point-and-shoot cameras to the shooting of guns: “War-making and picture-taking are congruent activities” (*Regarding* 44). Julia Bryan-Wilson further explicates: “The flash of the bomb often acts in place of the flash of the camera in these images, and this substitution demonstrates how, in fact, there is a peculiar affinity between photography and atomic weapons, as the technology of sight and the technology of death are conjoined” (118). Most compellingly, however, is Akira Mizuta Lippit's assertion: “the atomic explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki turned these cities, in the instant of a flash, into massive *cameras*; the victims grafted onto the geography by the radiation, *radiographed*” (50). Lippit equates the function of exposure in both cameras and atomic bombs, making the two technologies homologous in this respect. Taken together, these similarities between camera and bomb make one question what of warfare is shown and how.

Such an affinity, however, also obfuscates the ways in which the effects of the bombs cannot be fully represented or understood through visual media. Even with access to documentary evidence, the filmed materials in themselves hide critical details. In terms of technical limitations, the explosion of an atomic bomb creates “a brightness so blinding it can barely be registered by the photographic film” (Bryan-Wilson 109). More specifically, Bryan-

Wilson chronicles the excessive means of capturing atomic tests and the inability to depict accurately the effects of radiation, suggesting: “while there might be an affinity between the camera and the blast, at the same time, the photograph, with its immediacy, its grasp of the instant, the way it captures *this thing here now*, is also totally unsuited to record the unique kinds of destruction wrought by radiation” (119). This inherent limitation of film also echoes verbal accounts of the bombs: “In the earliest, officially approved accounts, radiation was scarcely mentioned” (Boyer 187). To encounter the atomic bomb solely through visual media, particularly the filmic media produced in the United States, is to obscure the lived experience of the bombings and their aftermaths endured by people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki beginning on 6 and 9 August 1945.

Although the atomic bomb tests would be recorded excessively, the limited availability of information relating to the effects of the nuclear weapons on people and the environment shapes much of the public and artistic responses to the use of atomic weapons. This chapter deals with the period during which the full devastation of atomic bombs is restricted knowledge, unknown to the people living in the countries that first manufactured and tested the bombs, the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, and in the country where the bombs were first used in combat, Japan. To trace how producers of literary media portray the atomic age, I focus primarily on responses from writers living in the United States from 1945–1952, during the development and early uses of the bombs and the occupation of the main islands of Japan. The relationship between visibility and information, I suggest, plays out in a paradox central to the atomic age: it is synonymous with both hypervisibility and invisibility, abundance and emptiness.<sup>214</sup>

These paradoxes are tangible in President Truman’s first public announcement of the bomb, which shaped profoundly the American public’s response to the bombing. As I will

demonstrate, Truman's initial description of the atomic age is reaffirmed, verbally and visually, in newspapers, magazines, and film. "From the beginning," argues Paul Boyer, "the entire Hiroshima/Nagasaki story was carefully stage-managed by the American military. The first accounts, written by William L. Laurence, who was in effect functioning as the Manhattan Project's public-relations man, simply recorded the visual observations of the bomb crews" (*Bomb's* 187). Laurence drafted Truman's announcement shortly after witnessing the Trinity test; his words and imagery echo throughout subsequent depictions of the atomic age.

After briefly summarizing mass media portrayals of the Pacific War and of Japanese people leading up to the bombing (revisiting, briefly, Ann Petry's "In Darkness and Confusion"), I consider articles and photographs from *The New York Times*, *Life*, and *PM* to illustrate the typical ways in which the bombing, as event, is mediated. These publications cover atomic issues exhaustively but barely mention and almost never show images of Japanese civilians. The first images of people in press representations of the bombings are portraits of celebrated American military and government figures and scientists (see fig. 21). The earliest images of the bombs' effects are primarily of mushroom-shaped clouds erupting from blasts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, such as those found in *The New York Times Magazine*, 12 August 1945. These distant, aestheticized photographs capture succinctly both the excesses and voids of the atomic age; the abundantly reproduced and widely circulated mushroom cloud images absent the ground-level devastation of human and plant life.

Alongside Truman's announcement and mass media representations of the atomic age, I consider Mina Loy's poem, "Time-Bomb" (1945; 1961) and manuscript, "Tuning in on the Atom Bomb" (written c. August 1945). Loy's texts represent the rupturing impact of the atomic age on writers living in North America. The way in which Loy populates her atomic age texts

bears unsettling similarities to other depictions of the atomic age immediately after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: when newspaper and magazine articles consider the effects of the nuclear technology on people, they often re-locate and fictionalize its impact.<sup>215</sup> Articles in American and Canadian newspapers and magazines mediate responses to the atomic bomb, conveying its *potential* devastation by mapping hypothetical explosions onto North American cities using charts, graphs, and illustrations. “Tuning” similarly relocates the event, internalizing its effects within a single person’s experience. “Time-Bomb” is completely absent of people, reflecting the frequent use of unpopulated images, such as those of mushroom clouds or ruins, in mass media representations of the event. “The politicization of terror,” Boyer argues, “was a decisive factor in shaping the post-Hiroshima cultural climate” (66). Combined, Loy’s texts, Truman’s announcement, and popular press representations of the bomb demonstrate (and even amplify) the anxiety of the atomic age. Mediations such as these, however, omit the people whom the bombs were actually terrorizing.

In contrast to texts that fictionalize the threat of atomic bombs, John Hersey’s “Hiroshima” supplies the narratives missing from most early representations of the bomb, those of the survivors themselves.<sup>216</sup> As this chapter will suggest, Hersey’s “Hiroshima” populates the void left by filmed representations of the atomic bombs during the occupation period, employing a single medium to narrate the experiences of the atomic bomb’s first intentional civilian victims.<sup>217</sup> In particular, Hersey’s attention to the effects of radiation—that invisible substance—and to the experience of censorship distinguishes his depiction from others circulating during the same period.<sup>218</sup> Hersey’s sympathetic account of six people who lived through the attack, the *hibakusha*,<sup>219</sup> stands in contrast to depictions that immediately preceded and followed the bombings, exemplified by the “Tribute to Victory,” as well as *First Yank into Tokyo* (1945), the

first feature film to remediate footage of the bombing, and numerous articles and images published in the popular press. Michael Yavenditti suggests that Hersey's article prompted a moral reconsideration of the bomb's uses. I would add that in not using any reproduced images (of either mushroom clouds or survivors), Hersey conveys the event's immediacy through verbal accounts of individuals who had experienced the nuclear holocaust. Hersey's narrative of local people before, during, and after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima was instantly successful: the article was re-printed in more than eighty periodicals (Treglown 13), and readings of "Hiroshima" over the radio were conducted in the United States, Canada, England, Australia (the countries occupying Japan at this time), and in other countries. With a terrible irony, however, *Hiroshima* was massively successful in many parts of the world except for Japan, where the book was not published until 1949.

To consider how "Hiroshima" populates the void, I examine which representations of atomic bombs circulated in Japan around the same time *Hiroshima* was published. Media, as Michel Foucault suggests, "produce effects of power," and Japan's literary marketplace reveals how *hibakusha* are doubly subjected: first, as victims of war, and second, to the SCAP's "power processes" (*Power* 338–9). The SCAP operated both by imposing strict limitations on atomic bomb representations in Japanese media—censoring the impact on civilians—and by importing an abundance of American media into Japan, especially films.<sup>220</sup> Such censorship, which applied to both the public and private expressions of people living in Japan, meant that survivor-produced literature (*hibakusha bungaku*) and atomic bomb literature more generally (*gembaku bungaku*) were largely prohibited. As John Dower makes clear, such restrictions were "certainly disdainful of the needs of the survivors themselves," because they "could not grieve publicly, could not share their experiences through the written word, could not be offered public counsel"

(“Bombed” 118, 127). Further, limiting the distribution of scientific and medical knowledge impeded the treatment of those afflicted by radiation poisoning. Hersey’s “Hiroshima” highlights the disparate circulations of atomic media within and outside of Japan and the consequences of this disparity.

The question of how media shape individual and collective responses to nuclear technology remains relevant. Of the Art Gallery of Ontario’s 2014–2016 exhibit of nuclear media, *Camera Atomica*, John O’Brian argues that it addresses “the role of nuclear photography in shaping public memory” (15).<sup>221</sup> In this chapter, I ask what the effects of *eschewing* nuclear photography are in shaping public memory. How do intermedia (including mixed media and “single” media) shape public reaction and produce knowledge during the occupation period? More specifically, I examine how American and Canadian citizens learn of the devastation wrought upon Japanese civilians. During the occupation, those responsible for producing the bomb (American, Canadian, and British militaries and workers, unbeknownst to themselves until Truman’s announcement) understood the bomb differently than the residents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki did. Even in the United States, however, the cost of atomic weapons to individual lives is not known fully by the public. Indeed, any understanding of the event is limited by American state control over nuclear knowledge.<sup>222</sup> This chapter considers the juxtapositions inherent in the first act of global terrorism—that destruction beyond national, temporal, and geographic borders occurs simultaneously with strictly censored access to information about that action; that its hypervisibility obscures the suppression of atomic knowledge. In reaction, Hersey’s and Loy’s literary atomic texts individuate the effects by populating what I am calling the filmic void—the absences formed by so much excess—and provide powerful examples of the unaccounted casualties of the atomic age.

## The Atomic Age

The deployment of a bomb made from highly enriched uranium on Hiroshima, 6 August 1945, of a plutonium-core bomb on Nagasaki three days later, and the announcement that the military had developed and used nuclear weapons ushered in the atomic age. Truman's opening lines are at once triumphant and threatening:

Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of TNT. It had more than two thousand times the blast power of the British "Grand Slam" which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid manyfold. And the end is not yet. With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. In their present form these bombs are now in production and even more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its powers has been loosed upon those who brought war to the Far East. ("Text of Statements")

The descriptions and justifications from Truman (and followed up by US Secretary of War, Henry Stimson) conceptualize nuclear power as cosmic, as unprecedented, as necessarily secret, and, over and over, as an American victory. Truman's announcement is thus both illuminating and obscuring; it reveals the enormity of nuclear weapons development and of its secrecy.

The impact of Truman's announcement that "atomic energy ushers in a new era" was shocking ("Text" 4). As Boyer details, "the atomic-bomb announcement was, indeed, a psychic

event of almost unprecedented proportions” (22). Citing a *New York Times* article from 8 August 1945, Boyer is struck by “how quickly contemporary observers understood that a profoundly unsettling new cultural factor had been introduced—that the bomb had transformed not only military strategy and international relations, but the fundamental ground of culture and consciousness” (*Bomb*’s xxi). This effect seems to have been the intention; the public’s surprise is partly due to the suppression of atomic power news in the years leading up to 1945. “A flurry of journalistic stories in 1939 had publicized breakthroughs in the esoteric field of nuclear fission,” Boyer details, “but then a blanket of secrecy had descended and the atom largely disappeared from the public consciousness” (12). Jerome Shapiro further suggests that “during World War II the U.S. government tried to censor any popular discussion of nuclear energy, particularly in films” (6). Before the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, therefore, visual and textual descriptions of nuclear power experiments were purposefully obscured.

Further, Truman’s use of extravagant phrasing (supplied by Laurence and edited by military officials before Hiroshima was bombed) encouraged such a response.<sup>223</sup> Most Americans first heard about the atomic bomb’s development and use on radio broadcasts that aired on the day of Hiroshima’s bombing, or they read about it in the newspapers that evening and the next morning. Photographers could not initially capture the destruction from planes because the city was covered in dust, clouds, and smoke from burning fires. When photographs were made available, the images published were of mushroom clouds. Without film or photographs of the bomb’s on-the-ground effects, nor any eyewitnesses from the city, the American public imagined the bomb using primarily Truman’s verbal description.<sup>224</sup> Linda Kinnahan suggests that the medium of the announcement matters: “Preceding any visual image of the event,” she summarizes, “Truman’s speech pronounced the atomic bomb both ‘the greatest



achievement of organized science in history’ and ‘the greatest destructive force in history’” (208). Although Truman concluded his announcement with the suggestion that “atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence toward the maintenance of world peace” (“Text” 4), the grandiose language used throughout emphasized the bomb’s destructive power. Indeed, Truman repeated the words “power” and “force” multiple times. Despite any excitement about this new potential alternative energy source, the development of nuclear fission was almost immediately interpreted as dangerous. Truman’s announcement seemed to offer a vision of the future, yet the overall effect was of “a radical sense of futurelessness” (Lifton, “Beyond Nuclear Numbing” 15).

Even those who were proximal either to the development of nuclear fission or to battlefields experienced the atomic age as a significant shift. As Philip Morrison explained, “never before had a single plane destroyed a city,” and that the impact could not adequately be captured except for in-person (m 14–5). Morrison, “one of a handful of physicists sent to the island of Tinian to assemble the bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima,” expressed how visiting Hiroshima post-bombing convinced him that the atomic bomb marked a distinct change in warfare (Overbye).<sup>225</sup> Seasoned war journalists, like Martha Gellhorn, for example, also single out the atomic bomb. Gellhorn, who covered during her storied career the Great Depression, the Spanish Civil War, World War II, the Vietnam war, the Arab-Israel conflicts, and conflicts in Central America, stated, “we can expect wars; we have never been free of them. I hate this fact and accept it. But nuclear war is unlike any other kind of war that has threatened mankind, and cannot be thought of in the old known terms. Nuclear war reaches a dimension unseen before in history” (3). News of the atomic bombings even overwhelmed what they allegedly brought: the end of the Pacific War. On 18 August 1945, essayist, novelist, and long-time *New Yorker*

contributor E. B. White declared: “For the first time in our lives we can feel the disturbing vibrations of complete human readjustment. . . . Today it is not so much the fact of the end of a war which engages us. It is the limitless power of the victor” (108). Regardless of Truman’s reference to peace in the final line of his announcement, the effect on the public—including scientific experts and journalists who had been covering wars for decades—is that the bomb seemed to produce the potential for human extinction, created and controlled by humans.

Throughout the announcement, Truman dismisses civilian casualties, almost completely ignoring the people on whom the bomb was deployed while simultaneously emphasizing the role of American workers, scientists, and military. Although Truman’s sidestepping of Japanese civilian casualties is an unsurprising tactic from a president who was continuing the mass internment of Japanese Americans implemented by his predecessor, he also dismisses the risks from radiation to the people living near or working in the production plants located in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Richland, Washington, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Thousands of workers were employed to refine the government’s aggressive uranium accumulation. “Employment during peak construction numbered 125,000,” Truman claims, adding that, “Few know what they have been producing.” Truman reassures the public that workers “have not themselves been in danger beyond that of many other occupations” (“Text” 4), but this was not entirely accurate. As Peter C. Van Wyck argues, pointing to several articles from the 1930s that illustrate the health risks to various workers who had handled radium, “the dangers of mining and handling radioactive materials were well known to both the American and Canadian governments” (*Highway* 39). In the announcement, however, neither Truman nor Stimson mention the workers in and around the uranium mines, nor the communities near the mines or the testing locations of the first atomic bombs. As Gabrielle Hecht has illustrated, most of the uranium used in “Little

Boy” was mined from Shinkolobwe, in the Belgian Congo (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), and it was supplemented by the Eldorado mine located on the land of the Sautú Dene of Great Bear Lake, in the Northwest Territories, Canada. Soon after, uranium mining expanded within the United States, most notably on the lands of the Navajo, the Spokane, and the Laguna Pueblo.<sup>226</sup> The way Truman mentions certain workers and locations is telling; he evades the ways in which colonial and settler power relations are embedded in nuclear development.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 1945.

### FIRST ATOMIC BOMB ALREADY OBSOLETE

Nagasaki Missile Found More Potent Than One That Tore Up Hiroshima 3 Days Earlier

A B-29 BARRACUDA in the Missouri, which flew 200 miles from Nagasaki, made the first atomic attack on Hiroshima, Aug. 6. It was the first of a series of atomic attacks on Japanese cities, which are now being planned by the United States.

The first atomic attack on Hiroshima was made by the B-29 Superfortress, which flew 200 miles from Nagasaki, Japan, to Hiroshima, Aug. 6. The atomic bomb was dropped from the plane at 8:15 a.m. The explosion killed about 80,000 people and destroyed most of the city.

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### Smoke and Fire Reach Toward the Sky as Atomic Bombs Are Dropped on Japanese Cities



At Hiroshima: A tall column of smoke 20,000 feet over the city after the first bomb fell on Aug. 6. A cloud of smoke 30,000 feet in diameter covers the base of the column. This picture was made after the missile was launched from an altitude of between 20,000 and 30,000 feet.

### POPE WARNED IN 1943 ON ATOMIC BOMB USE

ROME, Aug. 11 (AP)—Pope Pius XII said today that he had foreseen the development of atomic energy and broadcast in 1943 a warning against its use.

The Pope's address on Feb. 21, 1943, at the opening session of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences emphasized the danger of the atomic energy principle. The speech indicated the Pope was aware of atomic knowledge long ago.

"While hundreds of allied scientists and technicians were working in utmost secrecy in the United States, and the world situation was unchangeable, the Pope broadcast to the world his warning."

The Pope also said that he had foreseen the development of atomic energy and broadcast in 1943 a warning against its use. He said that he had foreseen the development of atomic energy and broadcast in 1943 a warning against its use.

### ATOMS BURST IN AIR TO CUT LOSS OF LIFE

At Nagasaki: Three minutes after the atomic bomb was dropped on this city on Aug. 9, smoke column rose more than 30,000 feet above the metropolis.



At Nagasaki: Three minutes after the atomic bomb was dropped on this city on Aug. 9, smoke column rose more than 30,000 feet above the metropolis.

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EXTRA SELECTIONS of Gems in NEW YORK  
GENTLEMAN  
Naturally the unique policy of merchandising in reflected in THE PRICE  
WILLIAM ELDER MARCUS  
NO 5427 57th STREET  
Phone Plaza 1-6100  
Since 1942 as my city contact  
with my other store

Fig. 21. New York Times, 12 August 1945, p. 28.

That the atomic bomb’s development and detonation constitute an event is reinforced by its sustained presence in mass media. Boyer suggests that “the news spread with amazing rapidity,” with pollsters finding unprecedented “‘continuous public interest in [this] one particular subject’” (*Bomb’s 22*).<sup>227</sup> The public was not only interested in the bomb, but also supportive of its use. In August 1945, 85 percent of Americans approved of using the atomic bombs on Japanese cities.<sup>228</sup> Indeed, in a poll taken the following month, only 4 percent of

respondents said they would refuse to drop a bomb on Japan if they were able to decide. In the years following the bombings, the overwhelming majority of Americans viewed them much like how Truman first contextualized the atomic bomb: as a victory, as necessary to end the war in the Pacific, and a justifiable response to Pearl Harbor.<sup>229</sup> Even those who objected to the bombing of civilians—which was, despite Truman’s public declarations otherwise, a major factor in site selection—felt that the bombs ultimately saved more lives than were lost.<sup>230</sup>

Truman only needed to mention Pearl Harbor briefly as justification in his announcement because of the way the Japanese and the Pacific War had been portrayed in North America. As Boyer suggests, “Pearl Harbor, Bataan, and the brutal island campaigns of the Pacific were fresh in memory. For years, news reports and propaganda (much of it involving racist stereotypes of striking crudity) had stressed Japanese savagery, barbarity, and fanaticism” (*Bomb’s* 184). Popular American discourse about the Japanese is evident in Petry’s “In Darkness and Confusion,” which was written two years before the bombs were dropped (but not published until 1947). In the short story, William, in a display of masculine bravado, uses the term “Japs,” parroting both the view and the language of the White Americans for whom Pink, his wife, works.<sup>231</sup> William uses this language before a riot, during which he begins to understand how intersectional and insurmountable America’s racial inequities are. It is therefore possible to read the pejorative as a sign of William’s insufficient awareness, especially pre-riot, of how race and nationality operate. That he uses the term at all, however, shows how far-reaching anti-Japanese propaganda was leading up to August 1945. Further, as Emmanouil Aretouklakis suggests, the “Tribute to Victory” reveals how, “as far as the American public was concerned, the nuclear detonation over Japanese territory was fully justified and morally legitimate” because it had been convinced the Japanese “had no subjectivity” (64, 65). Media before and after the bombings

illuminate how and why it was the Japanese who were targeted for the bomb's first use in combat.

One notable and particularly gruesome portrayal of Japanese people in American mass media is found in the 13 August 1945 issue of *Life*. The issue contains a six-photo series that shows close-up, in graphic detail, how an "Australian soldier uses [a] flamethrower on Jap hiding place" ("A Jap Burns" 34).<sup>232</sup> The third photograph in the series is captioned: "With liquid fire eating at his skin Jap skitters through underbrush" (34). The language characterizes the Japanese soldier tellingly: he is a "Jap" (unlike the "Australian soldier"), and his movements "through the underbrush" are skitterish. This phrasing carries connotations of vermin hiding, a further denial of the subject's humanity. Although the 13 August 1945 issue of *Life* was compiled and edited before Truman's announcement, its publication after the bombings of both Hiroshima and Nagasaki amplifies the callousness of *Life*'s depictions.

The bulk of early atomic age representations suggest that the public's sustained attention to the atomic bomb was directed toward areas Truman had initially discussed: American scientific and military achievement. As an example, *The New York Times*' coverage of the atomic bomb in the first few months after the bombings focuses predominantly on: (1) how powerful the bombs are; (2) the bombs as scientific achievement; (3) the changing nature of warfare because of atomic weapons; and (4) localized coverage, of either contributions to the bomb or its potential destruction to a local setting. There is almost nothing of the people killed by the bombs. In his opening sentence, Truman claims Hiroshima is an important army base. Beyond that, however, Truman barely refers to the city or its residents, only mentioning Japanese civilians once: "It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. If they do not

now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth” (“Text” 4). This assertion not only threatens further violence (such that any sympathy Truman extends to Japanese civilians is immediately undercut), but it also implies that the Japanese were amply warned before the bombings.<sup>233</sup> Similarly, in the majority of popular press articles in the months following the bombings, little or no mention is made of the people killed or injured in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nor to the lingering effects of radiation on either the environment or the people living and working near sites of nuclear bomb development and use, including those in the United States and Canada.<sup>234</sup>

The viewpoint William repeats in Petry’s short story had been entrenched by photographs like those found in *Life*, as well as in posters and films.<sup>235</sup> As Dower argues, multiple cartoons equate Japanese soldiers with simians. Animated cartoons such as *Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips* (1944) use derogatory terms and stereotypes to portray members of the Japanese Imperial Army as being simultaneously animalistic, childlike, violent, and easily outsmarted. The popular press, post-bombing, continued to feature images of Emperor Hirohito and the military more than any other Japanese representatives, showing limited variation between pre- and post-bombing treatment of the Japanese people.<sup>236</sup> Further, feature films produced immediately following the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continued to valorize the American military at the expense of the Japanese. *First Yank into Tokyo*, for example, immediately remediated the footage of the atomic bombing into mass entertainment; the film was released in September 1945. *The Beginning or the End* (1947), an MGM film, “exploited melodrama and distorted history to justify the bomb’s use” (Yavenditti 45). Specifically, Yavenditti criticizes a fabricated scene in which Truman states that the people of Japan will be given considerable warning of the upcoming attack and that “the bomb will shorten the war by at least a year,” saving the lives of

“maybe a half-million of America’s finest youth” (*Beginning*). Later in the film, just before deploying the bomb, an Enola Gay crew member repeats Truman’s claim: “We’ve been dropping warning leaflets on them for ten days,” adding, “that’s ten days more warning than they gave us at Pearl Harbor” (*Beginning*). Greg Mitchell traces how the film became “pro-bomb propaganda” once script oversight was given to General Leslie Groves, director of the Manhattan Project, and President Truman (Interview).

In *The Beginning or the End* and in many major North American newspapers and magazines, damages from the atomic bombs were often depicted from long-distance, in aerial shots voiding any individual casualties. The first images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki post-bombing in *The New York Times* appear on 12 August 1945 (see fig. 21). On this page, three photographs represent the event. The first is of a mushroom cloud over Hiroshima; the second, a mushroom cloud over Nagasaki; and the third, a portrait of Colonel Paul W. Tibbets Jr., in the act of receiving the Distinguished Service Cross for dropping the bomb on Hiroshima. These images represent typical coverage: Japan is shown from a distance and unpopulated, there is a close-up portrait of American military officials, and, further, this image is directly beside a secondary headline assertion that “Atoms Burst in Air to Cut Loss of Life.”<sup>237</sup> *Life* also published large-scale images of the mushroom clouds, both drawn and photographed, shortly after the bombings. The magazine, details Boyer, “devoted much of its August 20, 1945 issue to the bomb; here in full-page photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many Americans encountered for the first time the towering mushroom-shaped cloud that would become the quintessential visual symbol of the new era” (*Bomb’s* 8).<sup>238</sup> Close-up images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not published in the *Times* or *Life* until September, leaving nearly a month for Americans to imagine the destruction based on Truman’s words and these early depictions.<sup>239</sup>

Photographs of atomic mushroom clouds represent a filmic excess emptied of the people affected directly by the detonation. These images are inescapable: pictures of the smoke columns above Hiroshima, Nagasaki, the Marshall Islands, and elsewhere continue to proliferate. “The dominant visual impression of nuclear war in American culture,” argues Don Carleton, “is the mushroom cloud—that is, the view from a distance, from above” (qtd. in “Briscoe”). Peggy Rosenthal argues that the mushroom cloud is “unchallenged around the world in its status as the symbol of the nuclear age” (63).<sup>240</sup> That the mushroom cloud is *the* image of the atomic age is troubling because of what it fails to show. As Lille Chouliaraki suggests, “the pictures of the mushroom-shaped cloud rising above Hiroshima are some of the most iconic yet ambivalent 20<sup>th</sup>-century representations of technology,” noting how “technology and its horrific effects on civilian populations were marginalized in favour of a phantasmagoric spectacle of destruction,” one which “leaves out the moral dimension of human death” (141–2). The image’s aesthetic reflects what Truman and others wanted the public to think about the bomb, as a spectacular, clean, and abrupt end to the war: “the dropping of the bomb and its aftermath,” suggests Aretouklakis, “were repressed in public memory and replaced by the fully aesthetic image of the mushroom cloud: a flawless image signifying a flawless attack, the ‘perfect ending’ of a world conflict” (65).<sup>241</sup>

In stark contrast to the abundant images of mushroom clouds immediately following the bombings, there were few available images of the atomic bomb’s victims. Such limited availability is suspect. Consider the mass distribution of frontline photos from the Spanish Civil War in relation to the incredibly limited availability of ground-level photographs from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.<sup>242</sup> Consider, too, the importance Sontag assigns to photographs of the atomic bombings:



If there was one year when the power of photographs to define, not merely record, the most abominable realities trumped all the complex narratives, surely it was 1945, with the pictures taken in April and early May in Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, and Dachau, in the first days after the camps were liberated, and those taken by Japanese witnesses such as Yōsuke Yamahata in the days following the incineration of the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in early August. (Sontag, *Regarding* 20)<sup>243</sup>

Photographs, however, can only “define” horrors of war and overpower “the complex narratives” if they are seen. Yamahata, a military photographer, arrived in Nagasaki on assignment the day after the bombing. Although a few of Yamahata’s photographs were published in Japanese newspapers in late-August 1945, they were quickly out of circulation the following month, when the American military took control of Japanese mass media.<sup>244</sup> Further, photographs by Matsushige Yoshito demonstrate the difficulty—physical and emotional—in capturing the effects of the atomic bombs in the immediate. Matsushige, a photojournalist and military photographer who was at home in Hiroshima when the bomb exploded, grabbed his camera out of professional habit. “It was such a cruel sight,” he recalled, “that I couldn’t bring myself to press the shutter.” In the end, Matsushige took only five photographs, and none from “the section of town which had been hit hardest. . . . I couldn’t take even one picture of that central area” (“Yoshito Matsushige”; see fig. 22).<sup>245</sup>

Most people did not see the photographs by Yamahata and Matsushige until 1952, when the restrictions on “photographs that showed the civilian impact” (Ives) were eased in both the United States and Japan. As Barbara Marcoñ notes, “representations of atomic destruction in Japan barely existed in public discourse for the seven years of the American Occupation” (788). In Japan, images depicting the aftermath of the bombings were first published on 6 August 1952,

the seventh anniversary of the bombings, in a special issue of *Asahi Graph* (Lifton, *Death in Life* 454). In the United States, Yamahata and Matsushige's photographs were published a month later in *Life*, on 29 September, and marked a vital moment in support for the bombings: "America's 'moral imagination' of the bomb began to change most decisively with the first published pictures of the carnage, released in 1952" (Kinnahan 213). This issue of *Life* was exceptional, however; much of the early filmic documentation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was not widely available until decades later. Indeed, "in the United States," many of the photographs taken soon after the bombings "are still virtually unknown," Ives argued in 2020.<sup>246</sup>



Fig. 22. Matsushige Yoshito, West end of Miyuki Bridge, 6 Aug. 1945.

Even when images of the aftermath do appear during the occupation period, they are often contextualized in ways that diminish the impact on civilians. As Scott Zeman argues, "*Life* overwhelmingly focused on military and peaceful aspects of the atomic age: the twin poles of atomic culture. These two general areas . . . accounted for 90 percent of the coverage of the atomic age in the pages of *Life* from 1945 to 1965" (54–5). Photographs in *Life* variously capture Americans celebrating in cities across the United States following the bombings, injured

American soldiers, and Hirohito and other Japanese military long before any ground-level photographs of the atomic bomb's civilian victims were published.<sup>247</sup> The first photographs showing injured survivors in Hiroshima, published 8 October 1945, are two, ¼-page images within a series of photographs (“Tokyo Express”). The limited number and size of these photographs are notable compared to the numerous and full-page images of mushroom clouds and of ruins the magazine had run. Combined, these images indicate how coverage of the atomic bomb showcased wholesale destructiveness while also minimizing the impact of the atomic bomb on civilians.

The text accompanying one of the two photographs of Hiroshima survivors in *Life*'s 8 October issue recalls Truman's description of the atomic bomb as retaliation for the attack on Pearl Harbor. The photograph is captioned: “Mother and child, burned by the blast, rest on bank's floor. Photographer Eyerman reported their injuries looked like those he had seen when he photographed men burned at Pearl Harbor” (“Tokyo Express” 34). Although this caption could seem to be sympathetic—as if to say the mother and child, who could certainly not be on active military duty, were experiencing a similar fate to servicemen—I would argue that the comparison to Pearl Harbor immediately truncates sympathy for the people captured in the picture. The reference also negates the disparity between the attacks. At Pearl Harbor, a naval base, sixty-eight civilians were killed; in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, more than 200,000 people were killed, the overwhelming majority of whom were civilians. This caption, especially without abundant images reflecting just how many people were affected, reduces the magnitude of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the level of the much less lethal attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>248</sup> Images are further contextualized in the same issue, particularly by a reproduced drawing entitled “Dead Jap” (the dismissive caption speaks volumes). The full-page, close-up image was “sketched by

[Army Captain] Frede Vidar shortly after the Jap was killed” (70), and it is the issue’s most intimate depiction of a Japanese person. The subject of the drawing is a soldier, reiterating the association of the nation and war. This illustration (especially considered alongside “A Jap Burns”) reiterates how editors at *Life* were not opposed to showing graphic violence inflicted on the Japanese. Rather, it is the graphic depiction of the atomic bombs’ effects on individual bodies that the magazine’s editors elided and diminished.

Not only were the photographs of dead and wounded Hiroshima and Nagasaki residents absent from public record, but the photographs also document profound absence. When images are closer range than the mushroom clouds, they are often pictures of ruins. For example, on 15 October 1945, *Life* published Bernard Hoffman’s photograph of destroyed architecture, not of people (“Picture of the Week” 36–7).<sup>249</sup> Even more, many of the early examples of people documenting the damage to Hiroshima and Nagasaki comment on the void left in the wake of the bombs.<sup>250</sup> Hoffman, a war correspondent commissioned by *Life* to travel to Hiroshima and Nagasaki weeks after the bombings, described Nagasaki’s destruction to the magazine’s picture editor in September 1945 as such: “There is no way of comparing Atom Bomb damage with anything we’ve ever seen before. Whereas bombs leave gutted buildings and framework standing, the Atom Bomb leaves nothing. Where a Factory stood in Nagasaki is now nothing. There were some hotels in the area we photographed, but we couldn’t find even a trace of one” (“Hiroshima and Nagasaki”). On 28 August 1945, Joe O’Donnell’s Marine unit was “among the first to enter Japan,” and he noted Nagasaki’s emptiness: “no bird, no wind blowing, nothing to make you think there had once been a real city here” (qtd. in Martin).<sup>251</sup> Phillip Morrison, too, described Hiroshima as “[a] great scar” (m 14). Morrison and O’Donnell both became anti-nuclear advocates as result of seeing the devastation in person.

Given this media backdrop, Hersey's article stands out because of "his considerable achievement in transforming the subhuman 'Japs' of wartime propaganda back into Japanese: human beings" (Boyer, *Bomb's* 208). Indeed, Hersey's was one of the earliest publications that focused on the experiences of the survivors. Before I discuss Hersey's article, however, I want to elucidate further the context in which it appeared by analyzing Mina Loy's atomic age writing. Because they lack a celebratory spirit, Loy's 1945 compositions represent different responses to the bombings than those dominating press coverage. These texts, however, also exemplify that coverage, particularly in the ways Loy mediates the effect of atomic bomb information.

### **Mina Loy's Unpopulated Texts**

Much like the descriptions of the photographers who entered Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the bombings, Loy's poem "Time-Bomb" depicts the atomic age as something that is empty. The poem, I suggest, is entirely unpopulated: there are no people, only "ruins" taking the place of "sentinels / in an unknown dawn / strewn with prophecy" (Loy, *LLB* 123). Loy's text reflects what Robert J. Lifton describes: "In 1945, a new image came into the world . . . the imagery of extinction" ("Beyond" 14). Kinnahan suggests the emptiness in Loy's poem reflects mass media depictions of the bombings, such as James Farrell describes:

Images of the mushroom cloud and aerial views of the destruction of Hiroshima dominated pictures in the papers and newsmagazines. These images were made by American aircrews, both to record the historical events and to offer an interpretation of them. Although they were photographs, they presented a selective view of the events. They excluded, for example, any reference to human agency; taken from the air, they also excluded any reference to human consequences. (33)

In addition to the ruins, Loy's use of "dawn" and "prophecy" (*LLB* 123) recalls Laurence's use of sun and apocalyptic imagery, both in his own book, *Dawn Over Zero* (1946), and in Truman's announcement. Cristanne Miller also suggests that Loy's diction "echo[es] reportage of the times," and that the poem "registers a shock like that felt by many when the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan in August" (194).<sup>252</sup> Critically, as Kinnahan observes, the poem demonstrates "Loy's own discomfort with the prevailing 'jubilant' tone 'about destruction'" in American mass media (210). Thus, although mass media language and imagery seep into the poem, it provides a significantly different response to the bombings than those Loy would have been surrounded by.<sup>253</sup> "Time-Bomb" was not published until 1961, but a pencil mark on the manuscript dates its composition to 31 August 1945, making "Time-Bomb" likely one of the earliest poems about the atomic bombs written by a notable author.<sup>254</sup> It is significant that Loy's immediate reaction to the atomic age emphasizes "death" and "ruins" rather than Truman's insistence on "victory" and "peace."

Loy's draft essay, "Tuning in on the Atom Bomb," in its title and use of certain words and phrases, also alludes to Truman's radio address and to the bomb's media saturation more generally.<sup>255</sup> Whereas "Time-Bomb" reflects the absence of photographs of atom bomb victims and the concurrent presence of photographs featuring atom bomb ruins, "Tuning" exemplifies another aspect of early atomic bomb representations, that of relocating the bomb. There were numerous magazine and newspaper articles and radio programs that, as in the Los Angeles Coliseum tribute, presented Americans as victims of a *hypothetical* nuclear war. Through representations such as these, Boyer suggests, "the nation's atomic fears were manipulated and exacerbated by the media and by political activists," citing specifically "The 36-Hour War," published in *Life* on 19 November 1945 (*Bomb's* 65, 67). In *PM* the day after the bombing of

Hiroshima, the newspaper emphasized local fears concerning global actualities by including a graphic, “Here’s What Could Happen to New York in an Atomic Bombing.” On 24 March 1946, *PM* reprinted the first chapter of Morrison’s *One World or None* (1946), supplying the Sunday issue of the newspaper with its sensational cover page headline, “If an Atom Bomb Hit N.Y.!” Although the piece begins with on-the-ground descriptions of Hiroshima from Morrison and a few of the city’s residents, Morrison shifts his focus to a speculative attack on New York City to convey a “clearer and truer understanding” of the devastation nuclear weapons can bring (m 14). Morrison’s verbal description of a notional New York City under siege concludes with a call to action: “if we do not learn to live together so that science will be our help and not our hurt,” he asserts, “The cities of men on earth will perish” (m 15). I am not suggesting that Loy “manipulated and exacerbated” terror in “Tuning,” but rather that her piece reflects how American-centric responses amplified local, imaginary fears.

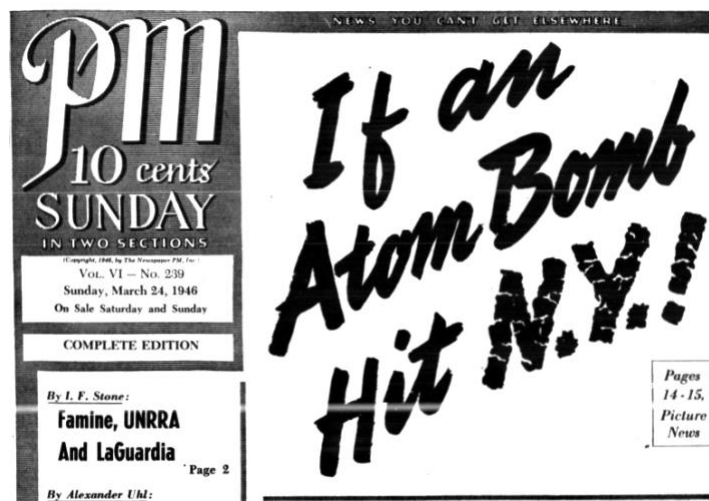


Fig. 23. *PM*, 24 Mar. 1946, front page.

“Tuning” is also useful in elucidating the relationship between fiction and the atomic age. Although the association between film and atomic weaponry has been suggested by Julia Bryan-Wilson, Jean Baudrillard, Paul Virilio, and others, I want to demonstrate how verbal media also

void civilian casualties.<sup>256</sup> Jacques Derrida explicates the link between atomic bombs and verbal media when he suggests that nuclear war

[is] a phenomenon whose essential feature is that of being *fabulously textual*, through and through. Nuclear weaponry depends, more than any weaponry in the past, it seems, upon structures of information and communication, structures of language, including non-vocalizable language, structures of codes and graphic decoding. But the phenomenon is fabulously textual also to the extent that, for the moment, a nuclear war has not taken place: one can only talk and write about it. (“No Apocalypse” 23)<sup>257</sup>

To Derrida, the threat of nuclear annihilation remains a fable; it never culminates in the complete destruction it threatens. As a fable, as story, nuclear war relies on the power of rhetoric specific to imaginative media. When Morrison suggests that, “Even from pictures of the damage realization is abstract and remote” (m 14), he, too, relies on fable over documentary film as a persuasive technique.

In many of the responses to the atomic age, there are numerous allusions to much older stories, particularly to Armageddon texts, and to those featuring “extinction by technology” (Lifton, “Psychic Toll”). Watching the Trinity test, J. Robert Oppenheimer, head of the Los Alamos laboratory that constructed that bomb, quoted the *Bhagavad Gita*: “‘Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds’” (“Now”).<sup>258</sup> Similarly, Winston Churchill, after learning of the Trinity test, stated: “‘This is the Second Coming, in wrath’” (qtd. in Mollins). In his announcement to the public, Truman claimed that the atomic bomb “is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe” (“Texts”). This language immediately lends itself to various allusions. “The development is of Promethean significance,” Harry M. Davis suggested less than a week after Hiroshima had been bombed (m 5). Laurence’s description of watching the bomb descend



on Nagasaki on 9 August (he was in an accompanying B-29), is full of metaphor, making it seem like the bomb cloud is alive and both monstrous and beautiful (“Nagasaki”). Laurence further describes the crew members’ accounts of the bombing “like something out of the pages of Dante” (*Dawn Over Zero* 187).

There is danger, however, in emphasizing this relationship between fiction and nuclearity. John Whittier Treat criticizes Derrida’s Western-centric critique of atomic bomb culture that both fails to name Hiroshima and Nagasaki and forecloses Japanese nuclear criticism (353–7). As Kyoko Matsunaga further explicates: “‘Fictionalizing’ nuclear war undermines the connection between nuclear/atomic issues and human agents” (9). I would extend this argument to say that although “Tuning” operates differently than Morrison’s text, Loy still fails to represent any human—perpetrator or victim—other than herself. Loy does, however, attempt to explain the event using other texts, ultimately disregarding each one. Even the Bible fails to provide sufficient context for this new era: “There was nothing to seek in this shattered scripture – – – nothing to write with thought defeated” (*SE* 289). Unlike Davis, Laurence, and others, Loy finds nothing in older texts to which she can equate or understand the present catastrophe.

“Tuning” ostensibly concerns Loy’s unsuccessful attempt to write about the atomic bomb while sitting in a private garden: “My usual warm appreciation of the concrete world disintegrated in a global disappointment – – continued in endless chain-reaction of terror transpiercing me” (*SE* 287). The phrasing reveals Loy’s experience of diffuse, intangible nuclear anxiety, of “the terror that appeared to invade me from something endlessly surrounding me” (289). Dread envelops Loy, a localized atomic terror, but what scares her is also something which cannot be fixed or located. The essay traces the difficulty of naming what *it* is, exactly, that invades her consciousness, calling it “the mysterious onslaught” and “my unfounded

distraction” (*SE* 287, 288). More than once, the terror is nothingness: “I faced a glaucous continuity of evacuated space, a universe constructed of intangibles crushed one upon another like endless proportionless strata of inexistent glass, reflecting nothing (*néant*)” (287).<sup>259</sup> And yet, these attempts at classification are excessive: there are numerous examples of Loy’s dense articulations making voluble descriptions out of “evacuated space,” out of “nothing.” She attempts multiple routes of comprehension and returns to ancient history and texts for explication, but ultimately fails to alleviate or even articulate the atom bomb’s effect.

Into this anxious void—produced by news of the atomic bomb—Loy places herself (or perhaps the implied author), populating it minimally and locally. Loy’s piece dislocates the effect of the atomic bombs away from Hiroshima and Nagasaki; “Tuning” makes no reference to the bomb’s terror as it might have been experienced by *hibakusha*. In this way, the essay reflects how, as a *New York Herald Tribune* journalist expressed on 7 August 1945, ““one forgets the effects on Japan or on the course of the war as one senses the foundations of one’s own universe trembling”” (qtd. in Lifton, “Psychic Toll”). “Tuning” certainly expresses the psychological effects of atomic bomb news, as Loy describes “struggling through a sort of double life” after “the unaccountable transformation” (*SE* 288). Loy’s speaker finds no comfort in the garden, seeing instead only tree limbs “bronzed by some unnatural blast” (286), nor in scripture, in which she finds “a ruthless tornado of castigation” (288). In its intensity, the essay can be said to amplify the experiences of the *hibakusha*: if Loy, at such a physical distance from the bomb’s use, describes the event as being “an inexhaustible fount of terror” (*SE* 287), what does this mean for the experiences of survivors near the hypocentres in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and their ability to make sense of the unprecedented bombing’s trauma? In comparison to the survivors’ lives explicated in Hersey’s “Hiroshima,” it is difficult to muster empathy for Loy, who not only has

access to more informative news coverage of nuclear weapons, but also a private garden in which to write.

The opening lines of “Tuning,” however, depict Loy not only struggling with the event but also with complicity:

Serene, amid scintillas of sunlight gilding our narrow garden, writing of the danger induced by extracting force from Power, suddenly, seismically was *I overcome by an eccentric sense of guilt*; as though speared by an echo of some forgotten wisdom sunken in ancient time, forbidding all revelation of some perilous secret. (*SE* 286; my emphasis)

As Rachel Eames suggests, Loy’s reaction to this new development in physics makes “Tuning” a departure from Loy’s earlier work: “For much of Loy’s career,” she argues, “the concept of atomic dissolution held largely positive connotations . . . [but that] the much-anticipated revelation of the atom’s ‘secret’—its potential for untold and inhuman destruction—drastically challenged Loy’s earlier perspective” (47). This “sense of guilt” (*SE* 286) was not echoed widely, making “Tuning” distinctive from other notional relocations of the nuclear destruction. In the year following the atomic bombings of Japan, most Americans approved of their use, and about 20 percent of those polled expressed the desire to use even more nuclear weapons against the Japanese.<sup>260</sup> “Tuning,” however, never celebrates the weapons. Although Loy focuses on a single experience of the atomic age outside of Japan, at least part of that experience is a feeling of culpability.

The tone of Loy’s “Tuning” also makes it distinctive from Truman’s announcement, which is alluded to throughout. Specifically, Loy’s opening paragraph describes the topic as being “the danger induced by extracting force from Power” (286). Such phrasing recalls Truman’s assertion that atomic power “is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The

force from which the sun draws its powers” (“Text” 4). Similar to Truman’s announcement, in “Tuning” there is ample evocative imagery, but nothing is visible. Further, instances of “secrecy” occur in tandem with the multiple references to lights and other visual stimuli, suggesting a central contradiction of the atomic age, that it is marked by both exposition and obfuscation. Such formation also recalls the way Truman’s announcement reveals an enormous secret while also maintaining almost the entirety of that undisclosed information.

Whereas Truman asserts control and authority throughout his announcement, Loy compellingly shows just how uncontained the effects of nuclear weapons are. Populating the atomic void minimally, Loy presents terror through an individual experiencing physical and mental unboundedness. As such, the atomic age’s effect in “Tuning” is articulated with a combination of scientific language (“scintillas of sunlight” [SE 286), violent descriptions of perceptual sensations (“speared by an echo” [286]), and expressions of ineffability, of illusions (“the prestidigitation of an unreasonable universe,” “apparitional” [287], “phantasmagoria” [288]). The resulting text features a tension between what a body feels and what can be explained: “I could feel the former ulcer in my body revert to its origin, a sensate sore in cerebration—nauseous nucleus of fear” (287). Feeling, to Loy, is indescribably beyond perception. In evoking the “nauseous nucleus of fear” and an “endless chain reaction,” however, “Tuning” can be read as a reaction to the atomic age. Overall, “Tuning” describes the failure of perception, or rather the failure of perception to be confirmed by anything tangible, touchable. Nuclear anxiety is expressed in reaction to how we know something as much as it is about what we know: “Excentric guilt! I did not *know* the secret” (286).<sup>261</sup> However unknown the specifics of the bombs are, they still have massive effect in “Tuning.”

In terms of generating atomic age fiction, Boyer suggests “serious” writers were stunned immediately post-bombing and that finding an appropriate mode to use took time (244).<sup>262</sup> Although Boyer does not mention Loy, “Time-Bomb” and “Tuning” suggest that she was responding to the event immediately. Further, “Tuning” represents the struggle of how to express its subject matter, revealing the pervasive anxiety of the atomic age that was heightened by newspapers, books, films, and photo-magazines that relocate and imagine atomic warfare. The people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are mostly absent in North American responses to the bombings, including Loy’s. Within early representations, Boyer argues, one can see “the larger cultural process by which Hiroshima and Nagasaki gradually sank, unfronted and unresolved, into the deeper recesses of American awareness” (195). “Tuning” suggest that this “sinking” was the effect of the news of the atomic bomb: it felt immediate *everywhere*. The *hibakusha* were forgotten amid what Loy describes as the “very Eternity deteriorated to an ultimate dimension of hopelessness from which there is no escape” (*SE* 289). Her texts exemplify how the pre- and post-bombing treatment of the Japanese in media shifts from being vilified to being supplanted.

Given the media available in 1945, Loy can be excused perhaps for absencing *hibakusha*. After the publication of Hersey’s “Hiroshima,” however, assertions of the fictional fabulousness of nuclear technology should be suspect. Hersey reasserts that something real and present has occurred, that the bombings have already affected and will likely continue to affect the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. To get a sense of what the victims of the atomic bomb in Japan were experiencing—what Aretouklakis calls “one of the very first instances of massive, globalized, terrorism” (65)—North Americans would have to wade through the excesses and voids of the atomic age, the ways in which the people subjected to the bombs were obfuscated by mushroom cloud images and by re-located sites of hypothetical detonations. Whereas Loy employs the

verbal and visual qualities of figurative language in “Tuning” to describe the invisible effects of the atomic bomb, Hersey populates the atomic void with *hibakusha*, making them visible, paradoxically, without using visual media. Although some of Hersey’s contemporaries criticized the way he employs elements of fiction in his narrative of Hiroshima, I argue that Hersey’s creative nonfiction has decidedly different effects than the simulated and speculative nuclear explosions so rampant in North America.

### **Individuating “Hiroshima”**

Considering the range of North American responses to the atomic age, from Loy’s texts to spectacles like the Los Angeles Coliseum’s “Tribute to Victory,” Hersey’s “Hiroshima” is exceptional in individualizing the experience of the bomb without dislocating it. Hersey focuses on the verbal accounts of six civilians who were living in Hiroshima during the bombing, each of whom is presented sympathetically. Reliving the detonation six times, giving details of each person’s morning before the bomb and their accounts of the days and months following it, Hersey radically refocuses the impact of the bomb on the people living in Hiroshima. Up until “Hiroshima,” descriptions of the atomic bombs’ effects had come primarily from or were vetted by Truman, Stimson, and the scientists and journalists who had been approved by the United States Armed Forces. Overall, these sources document the damage done to the physical areas rather than to the people. Unlike most mainstream North American press accounts of the bombing, “Hiroshima” uses no charts, graphs, or photographs. There are no comparisons to familiar American cities, no celebrations of scientific progress, nor of the war’s end. Hersey delays providing the bulk of scientific, factual details until the end of “Hiroshima,” and even then, he privileges the Japanese scientists’ findings over Americans’. There is only brief coverage of major Japanese and American public figures. Instead, “Hiroshima” re-introduced the

atomic bomb by emphasizing its civilian targets rather than give more space to those responsible for making and deploying the bomb.

Further, Hersey does not revel in newer media technologies; he certainly references other media, but the source materials are presented through the survivors, always keeping information in relation to people. More specifically, Hersey's detailed accounts of radiation sickness—the most censored and contentious topic during the occupation—highlights disparate access to knowledge inside and outside of Japan. Using an individual medium, I suggest, exemplifies the written text's potential for "long exposure," and at the same time highlights what Bryan-Wilson calls the insufficiency of film to reveal the long-term effects of radiation exposure. As a result, "Hiroshima" contributes to non-filmed testimony of the bombing. In opting for words over photographs, one could argue that Hersey exemplifies Nicole Shukin's assertion: "The artist who seeks to illuminate catastrophe must be careful not to perpetuate it inadvertently by replicating the physicist's, photographer's, or even bomb's pursuit of irradiated matter" ("Biocapital"). Although Shukin refers specifically to Fukushima, her analysis of the relationship between nuclear energy and filmed media aptly contextualizes the importance of not memorializing Hiroshima and Nagasaki through film alone. Consciously or not, by repudiating photography for text, Hersey speaks to the materiality of atomic media. Rather than provide evidence of bodies terminally affected by radiation using photography (a medium that relies on animal tissue for visibility, Shukin reminds us elsewhere), Hersey's article suggests that there are other ways of understanding.<sup>263</sup>

In part, Hersey's background contributed to his ability to bridge disparate cultures: born in China (to American parents), Hersey lived there for the first ten years of his life. Throughout World War II, Hersey was a foreign correspondent in various conflicts, and had become a well-

regarded writer by the time he left *Time-Life* for the *New Yorker* in early 1946.<sup>264</sup> Hersey arrived in Tokyo at the end of May 1946, where he was granted permission by SCAP General Headquarters to spend only two weeks in Hiroshima (Blume 69). By late June, he had returned to New York City to write the article. It was not until Hersey went to Hiroshima that his own perspective on the bomb radically changed (Yavenditti 35).<sup>265</sup> As Hersey explained, he was careful to present the devastation to his audience in a similar way: “A high literary manner, or a show of passion, would have brought *me* into the story as a mediator; I wanted to avoid such mediation, so the reader’s experience would be as direct as possible” (qtd. in Boyer, *Bomb’s* 208).

Hersey’s American audience, in 1946, had seen copious amounts of atomic bomb news but had limited knowledge about the effects of the bombing on people and the environment. As Yavenditti suggests, “one year after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Americans had learned too little about the bomb to become aroused over its use against Japan” (30).<sup>266</sup> This suppression of information operated in tandem with abundant other media. By the time “Hiroshima” was published, Yavenditti argues, “American sensibilities had been dulled not only by the reports of Groves, De Seversky, and the Bikini tests but also by the way the mass media had portrayed the static remains of the atomic-bombed cities. The numerous post-bombing photographs and newsreels of Hiroshima and Nagasaki made them look like any other war devastated city” (46–7).<sup>267</sup> The scope of Hiroshima and Nagasaki’s destruction was difficult to grasp, particularly through film and photographs.<sup>268</sup> For those living in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain—the nations that cooperatively produced the bombs—Hersey’s article reignited a debate over their use.



The publication of “Hiroshima” on 31 August 1946 surprised its readers and even other employees of the *New Yorker*.<sup>269</sup> The impact of “Hiroshima” was amplified by managing editor William Shawn’s insistence that the magazine publish the entire piece in one issue rather than over four issues as originally planned. Yavenditti argues that this decision was made to maintain reader interest, while Yuko Shibata further suggests that the magazine’s editors “must also have feared the reaction of American authorities after the publication of the first installment if the work were serialized” (84). The unprecedented decision to run only Hersey’s article—no other articles, nor poems or cartoons—was made too late to change the magazine’s cover, an illustration of a park filled with people enjoying summertime leisure (Rothman). In addition to the cover’s misleading cheeriness, that the *New Yorker* was the source of such a conscience-shifting article was also surprising to audiences both because the magazine “was generally associated with light entertainment,” and because Hersey’s sensitive depiction of Japanese people was unexpected (Treglown 14).

Although Hersey’s narrative had its critics, “the [general] reception of *Hiroshima* was overwhelmingly approving” (Boyer, *Bomb’s* 205). It quickly reached wider audiences: “The entire text of the article was read in four special half-hour broadcasts, with all commercials cancelled, over the American Broadcasting Company and many of its affiliates from September 9 through September 12 [1946],” and the radio program subsequently won a Peabody Award (Yavenditti 32). Readings of “Hiroshima” were also broadcast by national networks in England, Canada, and Australia (Rothman). *Hiroshima* was published as a book later that year (1946), and, as a Book-of-the-Month Club pick, “free copies [were distributed] to many of its 848,000 members” (Boyer, *Bomb’s* 204). *Hiroshima* has never gone out of print, and its circulation

increases whenever arguments about nuclear power arise.<sup>270</sup> Except, notably, in Japan and the Soviet Union, Hersey's text had a broad audience almost immediately after it was first published.

Not only did Hersey's published and adapted account reach audiences in multiple countries, but it also "'laid the groundwork' for a fundamental moral reassessment of the bomb" (Boyer, *Bomb's* 209). Such an effect is partly due to Hersey's method. "By raising certain moral questions, rather than resolving them," Yavenditti suggests, "Hersey heightened American sensitivities and contributed to a continuing dialogue over the justification for atomic warfare" (49). Retrospectively, Hersey felt this style of reporting was effective:

A quarter of a century has gone by since "Hiroshima" was published, and generations of school children have read it, and the letters I still get in considerable numbers suggest that the book has had a moral impact. . . . I believed, and I still believe, that the tension that came from the deliberate suppression of horror . . . gave an effect far more morally disturbing [than] would have been achieved had I shouted or screamed my outrage. (qtd. in Yavenditti 48n86).

Despite Hersey's "deliberate suppression" of editorial comment in his manner of relaying information, his article nevertheless provides details that contradict the reasoning that caused most Americans to support the use of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Yavenditti suggests that in 1946 and 1947—both before and after "Hiroshima" was published—articles in newspapers and magazines by military personnel, and one film in particular, *The Beginning or the End* (March 1947), shaped public support of the bomb's use against the Japanese. In these popular media, several key points were implied: that the Japanese were warned of the attack, that the order to drop the bomb involved thoughtful deliberation and that, ultimately, Truman "could make no other decision" (*Beginning*), that the effects of radiation exposure were not serious, and

that atomic bombs were not significantly different from other weapons of war. Hersey's "Hiroshima" challenges deliberate misinformation about the atomic bomb, including its destructiveness (Japanese buildings were actually built better than American ones, he argues, because of earthquake precautions) and the continuing impact of radioactive fallout.

More specifically, the article's appeal to ethics results from Hersey's attention to the bomb's human casualties. During his 9 August 1945 radio broadcast, Truman alleged that civilians were not targeted: "The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a military base. That was because we wished in this first attack to avoid, insofar as possible, the killing of civilians" ("Radio report").<sup>271</sup> In subsequent press coverage, there were only obscure references to the people who had been bombed:

For a year, the obliteration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been the subject of enormous public attention. What one might call the panoramic background of an atomic attack—the sheets of flame, the mushroom cloud, the mass destruction, the instantaneous death of thousands—was already vividly present in the consciousness of Hersey's readers. But that unearthly panorama had been largely devoid of human content. (Boyer, *Bomb's* 207)

In sharp relief, Hersey explained, "I felt I would like to write about what happened not to buildings but to human beings" (qtd. in Lifton and Mitchell, *Hiroshima* 87). In fact, before arriving in Hiroshima, Hersey had already chosen his narrative method—to focus on a few people's experiences of the same event—by drawing on Thornton Wilder's novel, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (1927), which he read on his way to East Asia (Sanders 15; Lemann).<sup>272</sup>

Hersey not only details the physical and emotional toll on the people of Hiroshima, but also makes this group's suffering matter to his audience. This was not an easy task; as I have shown, other popular media depictions of the Japanese had been dehumanizing. "United States

media, including Hersey's previous employers, *Time-Life*, had needed little encouragement from Washington to portray the Japanese as a race of cartoon monsters, bug-eyed, big-toothed, rapacious" (Treglown 13). Hersey himself had described the Japanese as animals in his earlier dispatches (Blume 53). In "Hiroshima," however, the audience could "find that among these ogres were doctors, scientists, clergy—people not unlike readers of the *New Yorker*, or for that matter of *Time* and *Life*" (Treglown 13). Rather than emphasize sameness, however, Hersey enables readers to see the six survivors as Japanese (or German) *and* sympathetic. I would add that Hersey's translations—literal and figurative—of the bombing, its victims, and its aftermath re-introduces Americans to the Japanese people without completely collapsing differences. Throughout the article, Hersey incorporates Japanese words or phrases and includes examples and explications of Japanese customs. In the first pages, for example, a few Japanese words are easily translated, implying that cross-cultural understanding is possible and that the disconnect between the American readership and Hiroshima victims can be bridged.

The bridging relies on the critical use of the prose medium to translate, rather than reproduce, the lived experiences of the six survivors. Hersey's use and, more critically, his non-use of other media within "Hiroshima," highlights the politics of monomedia. Among the various sources found in Hersey's archives are "Photographs of disfigured survivors" (Treglown 13). That he opted not to include them must have been a conscious choice. As Sontag argues, "the other, even when not an enemy, is regarded as someone to be seen, not someone (like us) who also sees" (*Regarding* 48). In contrast to an external point of view, such as that of a camera, "Hiroshima" conveys the event through verbal descriptions of what the survivors—the enemy during the Pacific War—see, hear, and feel. Hersey supplies the specific impact of the bombs on bodies using multiple sensory details: "charnel-house smell" (*H* 47); the smell of the dead infant

(*H* 57); tactility (“slimy” describes irradiated skin [*H* 45, 51]); and sound. People closest to the bomb’s centre heard nothing (*H* 6), but people miles away heard the explosion. All senses are activated in Hersey’s text, but descriptions of the bomb’s effects are often visual. There is a “permanent shadow” thrown by buildings from the blast’s light against objects and bodies, “a kind of bas-relief on the stone façade of a bank building on which he [a victim] was at work” (*H* 73). Further, several survivors of the atomic bomb compare its blast to photography, including Dr. Sasaki, who describes the “light of the bomb . . . like a gigantic photographic flash” (*H* 14). Consequently, damage to vision was extensive among the victims: “Third-degree retinal burns prevented many of those who saw the light from seeing again, and, toward the upper range of the electromagnetic spectrum, gamma radiation was neither seen nor heard but nevertheless manifested in *atomic bomb illness*, *atomic cancer*, and the *atomic plague*” (Kahn 142). That such bright light was followed by the invisibility of radiation is a compelling paradox Hersey reveals. In privileging the survivors’ sight and other senses, the embodied, multisensory form of “Hiroshima” works in opposition to photographic depictions that absent the survivors’ individuality, agency, and existence.

Hersey certainly shows how the bombing affects people in devastating, long-lasting ways, but he also demonstrates how access to information impacts people. Although I suggest “Hiroshima” presents itself as one medium, it does reference other media, a choice that enables Hersey to contrast ways of knowing with ways of perceiving. The survivors engage with various media throughout Hersey’s article, reflecting what information was circulated or suppressed among the *hibakusha*. Radios and newspapers are deemed unreliable and insufficient throughout “Hiroshima.” At the beginning of the essay, Hersey’s short preamble mentions multiple magazines and newspapers, suggesting the six survivors are well-informed. And yet, Hersey

emphasizes from the outset the lack of information available to survivors in Hiroshima: “At the time, none of them knew anything” (*H* 2). The Reverend Mr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto, who describes the moment of impact “like a sheet of sun,” sees soldiers, covered in blood, coming out of caves in the hills, “where they should have been safe” (*H* 6). This early example shows the disconnect between vision and information, indicating how the unprecedented nature of the atomic bomb impeded the ability of witnesses to understand what they were seeing. Fr. Kleinsorge “could not yet comprehend what he had been through” and found that walking through the city offered no clarity (*H* 57).<sup>273</sup> Newspapers were of no help either: “It was several days before the survivors knew they had company [in Nagasaki], because the Japanese newspapers were being extremely cautious on the subject of the strange weapons” (*H* 57). References to photography, the radio, newspapers, literature, and scientific reports show the limited resources survivors had to understand what they had endured. Further, none of these sources explained that they would continue to endure lifelong, and even intergenerational, physical and psychological after-effects. As a result, “Hiroshima” highlights how media construct knowledge.

Even though Japanese radio had broadcast, on 7 August 1945, Truman’s announcement (“that very few, if any, of the people most concerned with its content, the survivors in Hiroshima, happened to hear” [*H* 49]), and, on 15 August 1945, Emperor Hirohito’s concession speech, Hersey suggests the survivors did not know what type of weapon had been used until well after most of world had already learned.<sup>274</sup> During Hirohito’s concession—which was significant because he was “speaking for the first time over the radio” (*H* 65) and thus many survivors gathered around “a loudspeaker in the ruins of the [Hiroshima railway] station” to hear the program (*H* 64)—the type of bomb was not specified. Instead, Hirohito described how “the enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is,

indeed, incalculable, taking the toll of many innocent lives. . . . [and which could] lead to the total extinction of human civilization” (“Text of Hirohito’s”). Despite the way Hirohito’s national broadcast is considered to be monumental by Tanimoto and others, Hersey includes only one sentence from that address before cutting away to Mrs. Nakamura’s understated response to the news that the bomb was atomic and that the war was over (*H* 64). In this way, Hersey focuses more on the people’s reaction to the broadcast than to the Emperor or his words.

As they are contextualized in “Hiroshima,” the announcements made by Hirohito and Truman demonstrate the disconnect between those physically impacted by the weapons and those responsible for their use. After including only two sentences from Truman’s announcement, Hersey suggests of survivors that,

even if they had known the truth, most of them were too busy or too weary or too badly hurt to care that they were the first objects of the first great experiment in the use of atomic power, which (as the voices on the shortwave shouted) no country except the United States, with its industrial know-how, its willingness to throw two billion gold dollars into an important wartime gamble, could possibly have developed. (*H* 49–50)

The boastful, “shouted” radio program contrasts distinctly with the wounded survivors, most of whom had not received medical attention at the time of Truman’s announcement. The complexity of Hersey’s sentence in describing Truman’s speech allows for multiple interpretations, but the parenthetical comment is particularly telling. Hersey’s characterization of Truman’s tone—“(as the voices on the shortwave shouted)” —codifies the bombing and distinguishes Hersey’s view from the radio’s declaration of American exceptionalism. As sources of information, Hersey suggests that official descriptions are neither useful nor sufficient and have little relevance to the survivors. Hersey undermines the importance of Truman and

Hirohito in narratives of Hiroshima, focusing on the effect of the bombs rather than on the pronouncements and contextualizations of military officers and national leaders.

As mentioned, Hersey depicts the six survivors as readers of various print media—indeed, three of them are reading a newspaper just before the bomb strikes. Following the bomb’s detonation, another survivor, Miss Sasaki, is buried under bookshelves: “There, in the tin factory, in the first moment of the atomic age, a human being was crushed by books” (*H* 16). This passage, which closes the first section of “Hiroshima,” announces the event as the crushing weight of useless information, an irony that highlights the contrast between traditional ways of knowing and this new, unknowable nuclear technology. Miss Sasaki is—sympathetically—uninformed: not one of the books piled on top of her can tell her what has happened, nor can they explain that she will continue to suffer from radiation exposure throughout her life. Boyer contends that this scene remarks on the insufficiency of written words to account for Hiroshima: “Whenever *books* are mentioned, it is as an absurd irrelevancy” (*Bomb’s* 208). I would argue, however, that this scene is one of multiple references to literature in “Hiroshima,” revealing how, “in the first moment of the atomic age,” written texts remain relevant in making sense of the event. Indeed, as I have shown, many scientists, writers, and other people reference ancient literary texts to try to understand the atomic age. Further, in a 1950 essay, Hersey extolled the value of literature over newer media: “among all the means of communication now available, imaginative literature comes closer than any to being able to give an impression of the truth” (“Novel” 25). “Hiroshima” is not fiction, but it does employ narrative elements (Shibata 85–6).<sup>275</sup> Amid the booming and evolving technologies of the mid-twentieth century, “Hiroshima” is an argument for the power of storytelling to explicate the atomic bomb.



In part, Hersey makes his non-fiction literary by covertly integrating numerous sources with the survivors' testimonies, creating focal characters out of the six survivors. In one example, one of many moments in which Hersey deftly transmits research to the audience, he cites a report from four botanists in an exceptionally literary passage describing Miss Sasaki's experience of being transported, from one hospital to another, through a plant-filled Hiroshima, one month post-bombing. The scene contains evocative juxtapositions: "there was something about it that particularly gave her the creeps. Over everything—up through the wreckage of the city, . . . was a blanket of fresh, vivid, lush, optimistic green; the verdancy rose even from the foundations of ruined houses. Weeds already hid the ashes, and wild flowers were in bloom among the city's bones" (*H* 69). This personification effectively contrasts with Miss Sasaki's broken and infected leg. Moreover, the vegetation has harsh and even weaponized names: "Spanish bayonet," "clotbur," and, "panic grass and feverfew" (*H* 69). Treglown demonstrates how Hersey drew on the botanists' report substantially for observations and even figurative language. I would add that the report shows how the botanists, much like Hersey, combined metaphorical and technical language to explain the effects of the bomb.<sup>276</sup>

Because Hersey provides information in a way that privileges immediacy, it both obscures where the information comes from and equalizes all sources. This conflation makes it difficult to distinguish among Miss Sasaki's impressions, the botanists' report, and Hersey's own figurations. Does Miss Sasaki know, for example, the names of the numerous plants? Did she, in an interview with Hersey, articulate how the lush city scene "gave her the creeps" (*H* 69)? Or does the scene instead show Hersey's narratological traces, how he amplifies an irony elucidated in the botanists' report by presenting it through Miss Sasaki's perspective? Treglown finds that considerable language comes from the botanists' observations of the ruins. At the same time,

there is no direct speech from Miss Sasaki in this scene. Because it is from Miss Sasaki's perspective, however, Hersey makes her the source of specialized knowledge. Using focalization, Hersey keeps a single survivor's experience—in this case Miss Sasaki's—at the forefront; all other source materials are conveyed through her in this scene.

I would further argue that "Hiroshima" insists on the relevancy of books, particularly in relation to occupation censorship. The Japanese subvert American authority through books, which are difficult to track down and eradicate. First, Hersey draws attention to SCAP practices, which attempted to control print media:

General MacArthur's headquarters systematically censored all mention of the bomb in Japanese scientific publications, but soon the fruit of the scientists' calculations became common knowledge. . . . *Long before the American public had been told*, most of the scientists and lots of non-scientists in Japan knew—from the calculations of Japanese physicists—that a uranium bomb had exploded at Hiroshima and a more powerful one, of plutonium, at Nagasaki. (*H* 82; my emphasis)

This passage demonstrates American military control over knowledge and offers a single, significant example of resistance: "The scientists had these and other details which remained subject to security in the United States printed and mimeographed and bound into little books" (*H* 82). Further, by pointing out the limits of what "the American public had been told," Hersey suggests Americans should also be suspicious of the nuclear information they receive, including the medium through which it is conveyed. All of the images of mushroom clouds, of depopulated ruins, provide none of the details contained in the illegal books. There are other notable examples of Japanese literary media evading censorship, which I address later. More frequently, however, Hersey shows how the atomic bomb's first intentional victims had incredibly limited

ways of making sense of their experiences, and how their doctors struggled to treat the after-effects of the bombing with circumscribed information.

One of the most telling ways Hersey's populates the void is in his treatment of radiation. The article works differently than other mass media circulating in the year following the bombings. In the final section, Hersey employs irony to highlight how the *hibakusha* "begin to falter . . . while the vegetable world takes on an eerie exuberance" (Treglown 15). Juxtaposing Miss Sasaki's recovery with the plants is effective; her injuries were the most immediately severe and her arduous wait to have her compound fracture set is the reason why she, of all six survivors, does not see the city again until a month after the bombing. In contrast, *The New York Times* report of the bomb's effect on vegetation obscures the experiences of people. On 4 September 1945, the newspaper reprinted a United Press article, using the subheading "Nagasaki Plant Life Revives." After briefly stating that, "Tokyo radio said today that plants had begun growing again in Nagasaki," the following is relayed: "The broadcast said that the bomb had three types of effects on the human body: (1) Instant death, (2) symptoms similar to dysentery and eventual death, and (3) bleeding gums, falling hair and throat ulcers resulting in death" ("Nagasaki Plant"). Putting this information under a subheading about plants overlooks the humans who are acutely impacted by toxicity. Hersey, in contrast, highlights the cruelty of the weapon, of the contradiction intrinsic to nuclear technology—that it can regenerate some cellular life while also absolutely destroying others.

Further, the placement of this *New York Times* article, next to a brief item, "Japan Still Censors Bomb News," implies that Japan is the only nation censoring its news. Such a headline belies the significant role American occupation press officials played in prohibiting journalists from entering Hiroshima and Nagasaki and in preventing radiation news from leaving Japan. As

Boyer suggests, “the long history of official lying and misrepresentation on the issue of radiation—a history that includes the notorious advice of President Eisenhower to AEC officials in 1953 to keep the public ‘confused’ about different types of radiation hazards—dates from the very beginning of the atomic era” (*Bomb’s* 188). Hersey’s article, however, alerts its American readers to both the existence of censorship and how it operates. “The public face of the Allied Occupation brought the ideal of freedom of the press to Japan even as secret offices of censorship and propaganda supporting the new regime and suppressing vestiges of the old one were established. Censorship under the newly imposed free press system stipulated that its existence be kept secret” (Abel 2).<sup>277</sup> Critically, “Hiroshima” reveals the censorship as well as the kinds of information that censorship might be blocking.

Further, Hersey not only showed how the SCAP operated, but he illustrated the dissemination of information through individuals. Specifically, Hersey provided “new findings that estimated Japanese fatalities from radiation at twenty percent of the total; and, perhaps more importantly, he graphically depicted death and suffering from radiation poisoning” (Yavenditti 38). Hersey’s coverage is a compelling counter-example to an article from 25 August 1945 that typifies how mainstream American newspapers presented radiation:

The death toll at Hiroshima and at Nagasaki, the other Japanese city blasted by our atomic bombs, was still rising, said the enemy broadcasts. . . . Now Hiroshima is peopled by a “ghost parade,” the living doomed to die of radioactivity burns, Tokyo asserted. . . .

American experts on Japanese propaganda suggested that the Japanese may be attempting to capitalize on the horror of atomic bombing in an effort to win sympathy from their conquerors and to play on possibly divided opinion among the Allies.  
 (“Japanese Stress”)

During the following weeks, *The New York Times* reiterated that Japanese reports of radiation sickness were misleading and false.<sup>278</sup> Editors omitted crucial passages and further amended a first-person account from Leslie Nakashima, a United Press reporter who had gone to Hiroshima to find his mother. “The death toll is expected to reach 100,000, and people continue to die daily from burns suffered from the bom’s [*sic*] ultra-violet rays,” observes Nakashima, whose report is interrupted by an editorial insertion, “[United States scientists say the atomic bomb will not have lingering after-effects in a devastated area.]” (“Hiroshima Gone”). The intrusion of the authoritative voice drastically undermines Nakashima, who concludes his article with the assertion that many more people and plants will die from the bomb’s continuing effects. Nakashima’s piece—the most intimate, ground-level report of Hiroshima at that point in the *Times*’s coverage—demonstrates how American media nullified details about the bomb that contradicted official accounts.<sup>279</sup>

Hersey, on the other hand, “gave careful attention to the lingering effect of radiation exposure—still in 1946 a little-understood phenomenon and one that most early accounts barely touched upon” (Boyer, *Bomb’s* 207). Radiation toxicity is elucidated in the fourth and final section of “Hiroshima,” saving the most damning and most long-lasting effect of the atomic bomb for last. Tracing early symptoms, such as the Nakamura children’s vomiting in the second section of the article, through to the reports that confirm radiation poisoning in the fourth section, Hersey reveals the cause of the survivors’ symptoms slowly. In this way, Hersey keeps the reader somewhat in the dark, mirroring the way survivors experienced the symptoms well before they could name it: “These four did not realize it, but they were coming down with the strange, capricious disease which came later to be known as radiation sickness” (*H* 68). Symptoms include visible manifestations, such as hair loss and hypodermal bleeding, and invisible ones: “as

if nature were protecting man against his own ingenuity,” Hersey explains, “the reproductive processes were affected for a time” (*H* 78). As Lifton suggests, “ordinary people called it invisible poison. Eventually, intellectuals came to call it radiation” (“Beyond” 12). Because Hersey’s narrative covers an extended period (almost a full year), his article tracks the progression of short- and long-term effects. Unlike photographs of the bombings—which capture a moment—more time can pass in literature, enabling explication of both the visible and invisible consequences of radiation exposure.

In the article’s final section, Hersey also provides facts, such as, “It killed ninety-five percent of the people within a half mile of the center, and many thousands who were farther away” (*H* 76), but he then details those deaths, drawing on credible Japanese sources to explain how radiation impacts the body: “The doctors realized in retrospect that . . . [those killed] had absorbed enough radiation to kill them” (*H* 76). Far from the bravado and omissions of Truman’s announcement, Hersey uses these numbers in a section that highlights the continuing impact of the bomb on survivors. The “queer,” “curious,” and “baffling” symptoms of radiation exposure throughout “Hiroshima” reveal how nuclear weapons are substantially different than previous types of bombs (*H* 71, 78). Yavenditti suggests that Hersey’s descriptions of radiation poisoning, coupled with the bomb’s unparalleled destructiveness, “seemingly persuaded many readers that atomic bombing was qualitatively different from other kinds of bombing” (47). I would add that the conclusion specifically contributes to this assessment: explicit references to morality and ethics in relation to the atomic bombs’ use, and of total war, come only in the final section of Hersey’s 1946 article, which is also where the effects of radiation are detailed and named.

The ending of “Hiroshima” summarizes the six survivor’s feelings about the bomb, drawing heavily on the direct speech of the *hibakusha*. Thus, not only does Hersey withhold discussing the bomb’s use until the end of his article, but he also presents it through the various subject positions of survivors themselves. Some, like Mrs. Nakamura and Dr. Fujii, were resigned and “remained more or less indifferent about the ethics of using the bomb,” while others, like Dr. Sasaki, asserted that “the men who decided to use the bomb” ought to be punished for committing a war crime (*H* 89).<sup>280</sup> Among these various points of view, Hersey includes a report by Fr. Johannes Siemes, S.J., a German Jesuit priest who was in the outskirts of Hiroshima at the time of the bombing, calling for religious leaders to take a clear stance on the atomic bomb: “The crux of the matter is whether total war in its present form is justifiable, even when it serves a just purpose. Does it not have material and spiritual evil as its consequences which far exceed whatever good might result? When will our moralists give us a clear answer to this question?” (*H* 89, 90).<sup>281</sup> By including Siemes’s provocative, unanswered questions, Hersey invites readers to dwell on the priest’s suggestion that the repercussions of using nuclear weapons “far exceed” any gains.

Culminating with substantial passages from survivors, Hersey highlights the people living amid the atomic aftermath, reminding his audience of the bomb’s human targets and of children specifically. “Hiroshima” concludes with a school essay from Toshio Nakamura, one of “the children who lived through the day of the bombing in Hiroshima” (*H* 90). Written shortly before the first anniversary of the bombing, Toshio’s essay ends with young children searching for their mothers: “I went to Taiko Bridge and met my girl friends Kikuki and Murakami. They were looking for their mothers. But Kikuki’s mother was wounded and Murakumi’s mother, alas was dead” (*H* 90). Closing the article with the words of a child—an undeniably harrowing

recollection—reminds the audience that the aftermath of the bomb was and is felt acutely by noncombatants. Thus, in this series of final reflections from the *hibakusha* themselves, Hersey both introduces “the ethics of using the bomb” (*H* 89) and leaves it to Toshio’s essay to provide the report’s final statement.

This ending clearly employs pathos; Hersey’s audience is meant to feel for the children and other *hibakusha*, and to then question the use of such destructive and unprecedented weapons. Although “Hiroshima” attracted a large readership, audience reactions were varied. Dower argues that Hersey’s account “stunned American readers” (*Ways* 154), yet it is not clear if the article is the call to nuclear disarmament that Hersey believed it to be. As Yavenditti argues, “Hersey’s work aroused many readers but incited few of them,” and further concludes that “in retrospect one of the most striking features of the American reception of ‘Hiroshima’ is how little, rather than how much, protest it inspired against the atomic bombings” (48, 42). There are certainly examples of callous responses: “‘I read Hersey’s report,’ a subscriber wrote the *New Yorker* in 1946. ‘It was marvelous. Now let us drop a handful on Moscow’” (qtd. in Boyer, *Bomb’s* 334). More often, however, readers did react compassionately to the narrative, but not in a way that compelled action. Indeed, Boyer suggests that Hersey’s text might have hindered further engagement: “for many, the very act of reading seems to have provided release from stressful and complex emotions. . . . *Hiroshima* may have enabled Americans of 1946 both to confront emotionally what had happened to the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and, in a psychological as well as literal sense, to close the book on that episode” (*Bomb’s* 209).

Hersey’s affective narrative method accounts partly for such varied and politically inactive responses. According to Sontag, images that collapse the distance between people experiencing war and the people viewing images of that war safely from home create “yet one



more mystification of our real relations to power” (*Regarding* 66). Hersey’s article might work similarly. As much as I have argued that “Hiroshima” bridges the distance between Japan and America (without completely collapsing differences), Hersey’s narrative, which humanizes the civilian victims of the atomic bombings, might also elicit sympathy more than culpability. “So far as we feel sympathy,” Sontag asserts, “we feel we are not accomplices to what caused the suffering. Our sympathy proclaims our innocence as well as our impotence” (66). It is better, Sontag continues, to find the connections between one’s privilege to another’s suffering, and then to take action. To encounter testimonies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki victims and feel passive sympathy is to believe that nuclear war happens elsewhere and that resistance is not possible. Viewing *hibakusha* in this way produces a critical blockage; it makes their existence a foregone conclusion rather than an instance to consider how power relations are rationalized to the extent that certain bodies continue to be more at risk than others.<sup>282</sup>

Although Hersey does not use reproduced images—and its single mediality effectively populates the void created by the abundance of nuclear film and photography—perhaps his article provides, at best, “only an initial spark” (Sontag, *Regarding* 66) rather than a direct call to action. And yet, if “Hiroshima” were truly so innocuous, it likely would not have encountered resistance from high-ranking military officers in the late 1940s. Indeed, there are indications that authorities worried about the effect that Hersey’s narrative would have on public opinion. *Hiroshima*’s Japanese publication history evidences this apprehension over the flow of information into and out of Japan. Such concern over discourse that is not officially vetted alerts one to the text’s potential: to steer the public’s attention, to make subjugated knowledges legible, or to illustrate how the relations of nuclear knowledge and nuclear power operate at home and abroad.

### “Hiroshima” in Japan

The American occupation of Japan following the atomic bombings entailed the widespread censorship of representations of the United States and of the atomic bomb in particular.<sup>283</sup> According to Dower, “secrecy concerning nuclear matters” was meant to fend off possible “public unrest” and also foreclose a Japanese “countercampaign that called attention to the Allies own atrocious policies, most graphically exemplified by the nuclear destruction of the two essentially civilian targets [of Hiroshima and Nagasaki]” (*Ways* 139). Had “Hiroshima” been written by someone living and publishing in Japan in 1946, the explicit descriptions of radiation’s effects on civilians—especially when coupled with reminders that children were victims of American military violence—most likely would have been censored. As Chad Diehl maintains, the SCAP “suppressed materials related to the bombings that *described or portrayed the human destruction in detail* because it might ‘invite resentment’ against the United States, as one censor put it, or if they outright criticized the United States for dropping the bombs” (100; my italics). Hersey did not “outright criticize” the decision to deploy the bombs in “Hiroshima,” but the article certainly details disfigured bodies and other physical effects of radiation, and, at the same time, it suggests the anger and hatred felt by some of the survivors is warranted.<sup>284</sup> Following its release in the United States, Hersey’s article faced some criticism, but its publication in Japan encountered much more resistance.

Even though the censors were limited in their power over books produced outside of Japan, they did exert enough influence to stop “Hiroshima” from appearing in print in Japan until 1949. Monica Braw details how, as early as November 1946, “the English-language *Nippon Times* in Tokyo” first expressed interest in publishing Hersey’s article (105). Representatives

from the newspaper requested approval to print the text from the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD). The CCD believed “that Hersey’s reportage contained many passages that might create the impression that the use of the atomic bomb was ‘unduly cruel,’” but, because “Hiroshima” was an American publication, the CCD could not censor the article’s content (105). Knowing this, the CCD consulted with another department, the Civil Information and Education Section, which argued that the *Nippon Times* could not consort with the *New Yorker*. The Japanese newspaper did not pursue it further (Braw 105). *Hiroshima*’s absence in Japan was notable to readers in America; items about the book’s status appeared in *The New York Times*, prompting General Douglas MacArthur to refute the suggestion that publication had been banned. Yet, even though MacArthur denied interfering, *Hiroshima* was not published until April 1949 (Braw 106).

Immediately before and after *Hiroshima*’s Japanese publication, and despite the occupation, there were substantial contributions to what would later be classified *hibakusha bungaku* and *gembaku bungaku*.<sup>285</sup> Karen Thornber argues that “Japanese creative writers began publishing on the atomic bomb almost immediately, and they continue to do so well into the twenty-first century,” referring specifically to the poetry of Tōge Sankichi (“Introduction”). The circumscribed circulations and limited translations of texts by Tōge, Shōda Shinōe, and Nagai Takashi, however, illustrate the way the genre has been policed. For example, Shōda’s covertly printed and dispersed collections of poems, *Repentance (Sange)* (written in 1947, distributed in 1948) demonstrates how the materiality of literature—its less expensive reproduction—make such subversive distribution possible. Ōe Kenzaburo considers Shōda’s collection of poems to be “among the first efforts to depict the misery caused by the atomic bomb,” during “the period when [*hibakusha*] were forced to keep silent by restrictions imposed by the occupation GHQ” (165). Not only did Shōda’s resistance entail assuming the financial cost of printing the poems,

but she also risked arrest. Indeed, the collection's cover lists the incorrect publication date; "December" was substituted because the text would have been illegal at the time of its actual printing, in October 1948. "Dates were falsified," Treat asserts, "in order to deceive Occupation officials who might have decided to arrest Shōda—and according to the rumors of the day, put her to death—for violating Press Code provisions" (192). In "Hiroshima," Hersey, too, provides examples of illegally circulating books, drawing attention to the disparate dissemination of nuclear information. Combined, Shōda's collection and Hersey's examples demonstrate lapses in the SCAP's effectiveness in containing literary texts. Shōda's poetry, however, reveals how significant the threats of repercussions were, and how these must have inhibited Japanese atomic bomb literature in a way that Hersey never experienced.

The publication history of *Hiroshima* in Japan also highlights how the Japanese literary marketplace was a crucial node in shaping public response to the atomic bombings. The tactics and specific targets of occupation censorship changed multiple times in the years following 1945, but the atomic bomb was always its central concern (Diehl 100). The eventual publication of *Hiroshima* reflects how, as the occupation continued, the goal shifted from banning outright every depiction of the atomic bombs to controlling the message. As Diehl argues, "top SCAP leaders knew that discussion of the atomic bombings would eventually be out of their hands, and so they selectively approved books in an attempt to cultivate a narrative of Nagasaki and Hiroshima that did not explicitly indict the Americans" (101). Whereas American authorities within Japan downplayed the severity of the bombings, the Japanese, following the end of the occupation in 1952, encouraged atomic-bomb literature that enabled the nation to gloss over its own military's war crimes.<sup>286</sup> "In the post-occupation period," Diehl explains, "the national

government and peace movements evoked the experience of the atomic bombings to portray Japan as a nation of victims of the war rather than its aggressors” (102).

When *Hiroshima* was finally published in Japan, it circulated amid authorized literature by survivors. “In the print media,” Dower argues, “the easing of censorship in late 1948 finally paved the way for publication of reminiscences, poems, essays, and fictional recreations by *hibakusha*” (“The Bombed” 129). The publishing industry, however, was still under American direction:

In Japan, the American occupiers controlled all aspects of publishing, from intellectual content to materials including glue, ink, and paper, creating a bureaucracy of control that spanned numerous departments and incorporated various methods not limited to conventional censorship. Occupation officials viewed censorship as a way to nurture the “seeds of democracy planted by SCAP,” as they put it. During the first five years, SCAP had a hand in the publication of 77,019 books, including 49,268 first editions. (Diehl 98)

Indeed, alongside importing numerous American films into Japan during the occupation, the SCAP promoted an incredible number of literary publications, particularly those that justified the bombing and portrayed the United States favourably. What was published reveals relations of power, exemplifying how survivors are subjected—subjugated by and made into subjects—to the occupying forces and their control over mass media.

Although *Hiroshima* was a bestseller in Japan, it was less popular than atomic bomb literature written by Japanese writers. For example, the best-selling and fourth-best-selling books of 1949 were both written by Nagai, a survivor of the Nagasaki bombing.<sup>287</sup> Whether sales of *Hiroshima* were impacted by SCAP interference is not clear, but the occupying forces did promote Nagai’s Nagasaki narrative—one that is anti-Communist and absolves Americans of

blame—over others. Nagai had multiple bestsellers in Japan, yet only one of his texts was translated into English and published in the United States during his lifetime. Hardly any Japanese atomic bomb literature reached American audiences; writers in the United States and Japan were producing texts, but there was almost no shared readership. Although Hersey's book was read alongside (heavily censored) *hibakusha* writings in Japan, almost none of these bestselling Japanese atomic bomb texts were available to American readers.<sup>288</sup>

In Japan, audiences were reading *Hiroshima* and other atomic bomb literature not as counter-examples to filmic atomic media but rather in place of it. For seven years, verbal descriptions were the primary public representations of the bombs, in part because censorship restrictions eased on written textuality before visual media. Dower suggests that “the Japanese as a whole did not begin to really *visualize* the human consequences of the bombs in concrete, vivid ways until three or four years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been destroyed” (*Ways* 148). “The first graphic depictions of victims seen in Japan,” he further argues, “were not photographs but drawings and paintings by the wife-and-husband artists Maruki Toshi and Maruki Iri. . . . In 1950 and 1951, they were permitted to exhibit five large murals of *hibakusha*” (*Ways* 148). It was not until 1952 that atomic films and photographs started to be widely distributed in Japan. Thus, atomic bomb literature in Japan was not only providing alternatives to other media that omit individual people (such as photographs of ruins or mushroom clouds), but also that it was the *primary* representation of atomic bombs in mass media. In contrast, Hersey's American audience read “Hiroshima” amid an absence of Japanese atomic bomb literature and within an abundance of filmic media that sensationalized the bomb “while avoiding the spectacle of human suffering” (*Lente* 249).

## Hiroshima's Oclusions

Both within and outside of Japan and the United States, *Hiroshima* and other atomic bomb media continue to circulate. Whereas nuclear tests, treaties, disarmament campaigns, and anti-nuclear protests have continued throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the 1970s and 1980s mark the earliest period when *Hiroshima* circulates in the United States among literature produced by writers directly impacted by the physical effects of building, testing, and deploying the atomic bombs. Examples include Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977), Ōe, *Hiroshima Notes* (English translation published in 1981), and a collection of short stories edited and introduced by Ōe, alternately titled *Atomic Aftermath* (1984, Japanese publisher, English language) and *The Crazy Iris* (1985, American publisher). The two editions are nearly identical, but with one notable difference: the Japanese publication includes ten photographs whereas the American version includes none.<sup>289</sup> In 1983, Jacob Lawrence chose to provide eight illustrations for a special edition of *Hiroshima*. Finally, Hersey's 1985 follow-up article, "The Aftermath," also published in the *New Yorker*, intersperses updates on the six survivors with succinct passages on the continued uses of nuclear bombs. "The Aftermath," included in all publications of *Hiroshima* after 1985, does not repeat the emotional appeals that conclude "Hiroshima." Rather than invoke dead children or their mothers, "The Aftermath" calls for everyone to remember the lasting effects of Hiroshima's bombing—not the purported ending of war, but rather the dangers of an increasingly irradiated world.

If remembering Hiroshima beyond the filmed images remains a difficult task, remembering beyond Hiroshima presents a greater challenge still. Positing the first nuclear detonation in combat as *the* event of the atomic age generates notable absences. Hiroshima—as both an actual location and as a term that stands-in for everything and nothing, what Boyer calls

“a kind of empty vessel that replicated the literal void created in August 1945” (“Exotic” 165)—dominates much atomic bomb discourse inside and outside of Japan, a trend that began soon after the bombs were dropped.<sup>290</sup> Hiroshima overshadows the other victims of the August 1945 atomic bombings, such as those in Nagasaki and the Korean *hibakusha*.<sup>291</sup> Further, the critical vacuum of Hiroshima too often absents the unintentional *hibakusha*, those people affected both during and after the bomb’s production, in the United States, Canada, the Congo, and elsewhere, and from the rampant testing of atomic bombs after 1945. A full account of the bombings’ victims would consider what Rob Nixon calls “the relative invisibility of slow violence” (2). Compellingly, Nixon suggests that writers find ways to account for the uninhabitable toxicity produced by testing in the Marshall Islands, for example, without replicating “the privileging of the visible” (15). After all, the invisible effects of nuclear weapons not only impact human life, but the lingering contaminants at work on the cellular level of plant and animal life are also unseen in spectacles such as mushroom cloud photographs and tributes to “victory.”<sup>292</sup>

Further, as I have argued, the filmic excesses of the atomic age smother the unequal distribution of nuclear information. In part, the technology to capture the explosive images on film comes much earlier than our ability to understand the bomb’s accretive toxic effects. But even more, the hyper-visible, excessive documentation of nuclear weapons tests obscures the ways in which atomic knowledge has been and continues to be, to borrow Stimson’s 1945 description, “completely compartmentalized” (“Texts” 4).<sup>293</sup> For Lifton and G. Mitchell, the atomic age is synonymous with the state’s suppression of intelligence from the public: “Surely Hiroshima was the mother of all cover-ups, creating distortions, manipulative procedures and patterns of concealment that have affected all of American life. Secrecy has been linked with national security—and vice versa—ever since” (“The Atomic Curtain”). At the same time that



the news of Hiroshima inaugurated the public revelation of nuclear weaponry, it also revealed how the public would be kept in the dark. One legacy of Hiroshima is that the containment strategies established during the atomic bomb's initial development continue to impede public discourse on the uses of nuclear technologies.<sup>294</sup> In sum, even though the victims of nuclear weapons are widespread and increasing, any ability to prevent further exposure remains incredibly limited.

In drawing attention to the juxtaposition of hypervisibility and invisibility, of secrecy and visibility, of containment and borderless violence, both Loy and Hersey elucidate the atomic age. Critically, I suggest, both authors employ individual media, that of written textuality, drawing on different perceptual registers to account for the unseen, individualized damages of nuclear weaponry. Loy's two atomic bomb texts reveal the effects of the politicization of terror, a tactic evident in Truman's initial announcement of the bombing. Subsequent hypothetical atomic bombings imagined in American mass media suggest why and how the diffuse threat of nuclear war was felt by Loy and others. Yet, even though Loy centers her own experience, "Tuning" fictionalizes the bombing differently than does mass media. If anything, Loy's single medium suggests a rupture of visualization and verbalization, a failure in her ability to mediate or contain the bomb's effect within language. Whereas Loy re-locates the bomb's effect in "Tuning" and depopulates the atomic age in "Time-Bomb," Hersey provides the moment of actual impact using the translated, multisensory experiences of six *hibakusha*. With its narrative focused on the people in Hiroshima, Hersey's 1946 extended essay radically privileges the survivors, translating their somatic and psychological experiences of the bombing and subsequent radiation sickness. Unlike photographs of the nuclear mushroom cloud, Hersey concentrates on the *hibakusha*'s ground-level observations.

In the first three chapters of this dissertation, intermediality enables different modes of exposure, subjecting various individuals and groups to the entrapments of representation. In this concluding chapter, individual media attempt to remove mediating layers, particularly those of visual media. Hersey's text holds the audience at an imaginative distance, bridging without collapsing the disparities between his subject and his audience. The effect of such work is a narrative that shows accretive violence much more effectively than the other atomic media circulating around 1946. "Hiroshima" does not contribute to the political uses of terror by imagining nuclear apocalypse. Instead, it enables the audience to confront the people living during and after the bombing, to be neither awed nor terrorized by the spectacle of nuclear weapons but to experience the daily life of *hibakusha* as significant.

## Conclusion

In 1934, the *New Yorker* magazine published a cartoon about the opera *Four Saints in Three Acts*, captioned, “This picture ought to give you a pretty foggy idea of what Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson have been up to. The dark lady on the cellophane throne is St. Theresa I, who isn’t interested in the idea of electrocuting fifty thousand Chinamen by pushing a button” (reproduced in Barg, “Black Voices” 145). The publication of John Hersey’s “Hiroshima” in the same magazine twelve years later underscores just how surprising his account of the atomic bombing must have been to an audience not only amused by St. Theresa’s disinterest in mass weapons, but also condoning—consciously or not—both the punchline and the description of the character as a “dark lady.” The cartoon, or, rather, the opera which it cites, also highlights rapid technological changes: what was merely hypothetical weaponry in 1934 had become, in the following decade, a spectacularly devastating possibility.

From the outset of this project, I have sought to illuminate the politics of intermediality through the eventalization of specific sites—publicly- and privately-waged conflicts, works of art, and the emergence or newfound dominance of certain media. For such a study, the nebulous categorization of late modernism has been useful in two key ways. First, it is a way of re-examining modernism, specifically contesting the insistence that aesthetics and politics have ever been or could ever be wholly separate. The texts in this late modernist, intermedial project have shown the material, practical, and ethical impossibilities (and even undesirability) of such demarcation. Second, employing late modernism to distinguish chronological and aesthetic parameters places on the same plane works and artists from 1927 to 1949. This chronological specificity traces the nascence of contemporary media studies as it encompasses the first media age (Trotter) and the atomic age, and contends with the following: the collapse of time and

distance made possible by global communications technologies; the increasing omnipresence of telephones, loudspeakers, and radios (the golden age of radio); and the widespread circulations of photojournalism and documentary films. This expanding media landscape illuminates—as Walter Benjamin expressed and critics like Jonathan Sterne have reiterated—how sonic and visual cultures radically shaped and were shaped by the reorientation of class relations and changing technological reproducibility around the turn of the twentieth century.

Studying the fluctuating interactions among sonic, verbal, and visual representations of events from the 1920s through the 1940s means approaching media when they are still in flux; the plasticity of newer media from this period makes for a compelling intermedial analysis. When medial borders become more definitive, regardless of the conventionality or essentialism involved in such a process, at the same time other conventions are re-asserted, re-evaluated, and/or broadened.<sup>295</sup> Thus, as “broadcasting,” “stereophony,” and “surround sound” become associated with specific technological, cultural, and social processes, they also affect the borders of written textuality. Said differently, once broadcasting implies radio, then broadcasting no longer implies literature (directly, anyway). Such specificity, articulated by Clement Greenberg shortly after Stein claimed that her writing was broadcasting, necessarily affects how contemporary critics interpret *Four Saints*, as the libretto’s intermedial references to surround sound are transposed onto the stage and over the radio. Sonic mediations reverberate in each chapter as the artists within my project negotiate, employ, and reference various sound technologies. Ultimately, however, broadcasting is merely one kind of intermedial circulation that my project has considered.

Framing the dissertation with *Four Saints* and *Hiroshima* enhances my argument about the opera’s politics, specifically the ways intermediality reveals intersectionality differently. Too,

the cross-media comparison also illuminates the intense media-permeability of written textuality, of literature. In more expansive media constellations like *Four Saints*, and in “stripped down” written texts like *Hiroshima*, the impossibility of understanding literary works as single media is made clear. Although I have discussed Loy and Hersey’s texts as monomedia (each writer uses words alone), I do not wish to reify the borders of a single, distinguishable medium.<sup>296</sup> As Irina Rajewsky maintains, the idea of “individual media” is only ever theoretical (“Border Talks” 54). Similarly, W. J. T. Mitchell’s analyses of the inseparability of various media, particularly that of verbal and visual media, as he clarifies in *Picture Theory* and elsewhere. The texts in Chapter 4, particularly juxtaposed with the opera, trouble the concept of monomedia and its suggestion of immediacy. As I have demonstrated, Loy and Hersey’s medium specificity reveals paradoxically how literary media are not impenetrable, “pure,” or separate from the media landscapes in which they were produced. Throughout the dissertation, I have attempted to demonstrate how literature is always already mixed, drawing on Lisa Gitelman, Mitchell, and Rajewsky to do so.

Whether hypermediate or immediate, separating one medium from another is not easily done—despite Greenberg’s assertions that modernism can be defined as a preoccupation with “pure” media (“Towards a Newer Laocoon” 41), a notion that Mitchell and others have argued against (“No Visual Media” 258).<sup>297</sup> These late modernist texts demonstrate how mass media, too, push against the boundaries of medium specificity. For my project, however, being able to trace certain medial borders has illustrated (concisely, effectively) the politics of intermediality. In order to attend to the “semiotic, aesthetic, epistemological, and political relationships embedded” within representations (Mitchell, *Picture Theory* 423), I have specifically emphasized how media might attend to public and private modes. That is, not only does my dissertation advance an understanding of literary media as being permeable, but it does so by

drawing attention to the border of public and private (a border literature is particularly capable of representing). Indeed, throughout this analysis, there are many depictions of the interpenetration of the public and private spheres, of public and private media, and numerous sonic and visual irruptions. As Benjamin articulated, “the radio listener, unlike every other kind of audience, welcomes the human voice into his house like a visitor” (*SWB* 2: 544). Virginia Woolf and Pablo Picasso both combine public and private materials in their responses to the Spanish Civil War. Loy shows terror in a single, private, ostensibly “safe” life (far away from ground zero); Hersey reminds readers that the private lives of *hibakusha* are worth consideration. It is this feature—the inseparability from daily life, daily media—that qualifies the texts covered in this project as being late modernist.

My project, which examines art *as* the event and art *and* the event, has illuminated a number of intersections and border crossings. I would like to reiterate some connections among these various events and artists. Given the widespread adoption of distancing technology, these connections are not surprising. But they are illuminating all the same. Within each chapter and among the chapters, various media constellations place certain events and actors at the forefront. Critiquing how the event was shaped by sundry channels of transmission draws attention both to the sonic, verbal, and visual media and to the producers of such media.

Returning to the *New Yorker* cartoon, it has been possible from 1945 onward to kill, at a distance, 5,000 people (as *Four Saints* references), 50,000 people (as the *New Yorker* caption exaggerates), and indeed in even greater numbers.<sup>298</sup> As Muriel Rukeyser expressed while being evacuated from Spain just after the war broke out in 1936, “peace” is “a time used to perfect weapons” (19). The number of civilians killed as a result of the aerial strikes over Guernica in April 1937, itself devastating, is a fraction of those who were killed in Hiroshima in August

1945—not to mention Nagasaki, or indeed the many other sites of nuclear devastation. Distance is key in both instances of bombardment: on the one hand, the proximity of Spain makes *Guernica* difficult for Picasso and Woolf (and Rukeyser) to ignore. On the other hand, the distance between North America and Japan (cognitive, physical, and cultural) circumscribes movements of people and media differently.

There are also compelling, less “spectacular” points of comparison among events occurring between 1937 and 1945. Compare, for example, Picasso’s depiction of a mother holding her dead child in *Guernica* and the unnamed dead children in the photographs to which Woolf alludes in *Three Guineas* with the representations of the Harlem riot of 1943. The intense reactions desired in the propagandistic uses of these specific depictions of violence contrast starkly with the reaction that Petry’s characters receive following the death of their infant: The nurse in “In Darkness and Confusion” tells William and Pink, ““You people have too many children anyway”” (*MM* 284). Although Petry’s short story is fiction, the White nurse’s remark makes it clear why evoking images of dead children is ultimately an ineffective strategy for preventing war. Some lives, we are reminded, matter more than others. In the immediate aftermath of the atomic bombings, the absence from North American press of the kinds of photographs that Picasso and Woolf were inundated with (those of dead babies and grieving mothers) provides a glaring and highly visible disparity in evidence. The remedy, however, for such disparity is not necessarily more visual proof. Indeed, such mediation is impossible given the invisibility of radiation and its intergenerational effects.

The past century—during which there has certainly been no absence of conflict—has also been a time to refine intermedial practices and analyses. The artists in this project responded to events and to their mediation by experimenting—for artistic, commercial, and political reasons—

with different genres, and combining and/or referencing multiple media. Hersey, for example, found that journalism came up short compared to fiction, which he wrote almost exclusively after *Hiroshima*: “Journalism allows its readers to witness history; fiction gives its readers an opportunity to live it” (“Novel” 27). Although Sontag suggests that, “Pathos, in the form of a narrative, does not wear out,” she argues further that sympathy is not necessarily a productive or ethical response to images of atrocity (*Regarding* 60). Words or images alone, and especially when used in reportage, are seemingly insufficient representations of conflict. In contrast, Benjamin (a critic with whom Sontag engages explicitly) suggested the radical potential of combining word and image: “What we require of the photographer is the ability to give his picture a caption that wrenches it from modish commerce and gives it a revolutionary use value” (*SWB* 2: 775). In the preceding chapters, one can trace the various ways these artists were trying to figure out how they could contribute the sort of valuable work that Benjamin discussed.

Furthermore, I have argued that intermedial reference is an especially vital intervention within these experiments. Mitchell’s description of a specific type of poetics summarizes what intermedial reference, at its most innovative, can do:

The crucial rule of ekphrasis, however, is that the “other” medium, the visual, graphic or plastic object, is never made visible or tangible *except* by way of the medium of language. One might call ekphrasis a form of nesting without touching or suturing, a kind of action-at-distance between two rigorously separated sensory and semiotic tracks, one which requires completion in the mind of the reader. This is why poetry remains the most subtle, agile master-medium of the *sensus communis*, no matter how many spectacular multimedia inventions are devised to assault our collective sensibilities. (“No Visual Media” 263)



I would advance that intermedial reference operates similarly, and that literary intermediality has political potential still yet to be mined. Loy's "Tuning," for example, might effectively be analyzed given Mitchell's description; the anxiety of the atomic age, expressed only in "the medium of language" speaks to the many deliberately propagated gaps in public atomic knowledge. Quite differently, the references in "In Darkness" also function like ekphrasis; Petry's narrative leads the reader to certain observations about the rioters' actions, utilizing internal focalization in place of the camera's point-of-view. Although ekphrasis is different from what Petry does—she alludes verbally to press photographs rather than to a specific sculpture or painting—the story articulates the community's experiences and requires that readers "complete" the remediation. This kind of interactive, co-productive reading practice was one that many of the artists in this study seem to have wanted. Furthermore, many of the artists in this project made commercial, documentary, and/or archival media into intermedial references, giving their practice a similar impetus to what Hersey, Sontag, Benjamin, and Mitchell each variously proposed mixing genres and media can do. Quite simply, references to other media can result in texts that generate dissensus rather than consensus (Rancière).

The multiple reactions, remediations, and references to the events studied in this dissertation indicate that these events, media, technologies, and producers (authors, writers, musicians, multi-art artists) do not stay contained within their specific geographic and temporal locations. Indeed, the events (and the debates about and reactions to them) discussed in each chapter are still palpable in the twenty-first century. Digital culture certainly affects the specific media that are employed and how quickly and widely information can be circulated, but there are similarities between contemporary conflicts and those happening at the mid-twentieth century:

audiences still expect artists and writers to respond to events; nations and groups continue to wage war intra- and internationally and, in both cases, this involves restricting the political participation of those at home; in the past decade, conservative, neo-fascist movements have gained significant traction in Spain and elsewhere; police officers still disproportionately harm racialized and colonized communities—and there are mass demonstrations in response;<sup>299</sup> aerial bombardments targeting civilians remain a feature of state violence, and these continue to operate along geographical, racial, and colonial dimensions;<sup>300</sup> and finally, real and perceived nuclear threats proliferate alongside strategically limited public information.<sup>301</sup>

In terms of representation, we continue to see, as Sontag has suggested, horrifying photographs, videos, and other visual media showing the effects of such conflicts. In this way, inscriptive, reproductive, and connective media still contribute to distanciation, dispersing images globally and showing more grotesquely the “foreign” victims of global power relations. At the same time, these representations often (and deliberately) make it difficult to discern who is directly responsible for these various acts of violence, for the spectacularization of certain bodies. Too, throughout the past century artists have continued to mine media to make sense of events, to make an event, or to make the everyday as visible as an event. This project, which focuses on an emergent period of media studies, suggests that there is much to be learned from analysing broadcasts, photo-texts, and multimedia performances in relation to written textuality. Such enquiries could also illuminate other moments when media borders have been more intensely contested, and certainly when considering the ways new media practices reconfigure or specify media anew.

Finally, I have demonstrated that some artists, works of art, and events continue to circulate more than others, and that these disparate movements result from an array of social,

political, and material factors, sometimes intentional, sometimes unconscious. I have studied how intermediality, defined broadly as one medium's relationship to another medium, reveals certain subjects differently. These numerous mediations have also shown the way artists employ various media to reach their audiences, to render public lives that are otherwise private. Yet, within this project—which began with an expressed desire to examine intersecting operations of power—there are many texts, producers, moments and movements that warrant a more robust investigation. That such gaps have appeared is inevitable; because no one medium can take the place of or transpose fully another, some nuance will always be revealed. Ultimately, intermedial practice—as being generative, operating within and against containment—reveals the politics of mediation.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> From *Simulacra and Simulation* (55).

<sup>2</sup> Stein seems to reflect how, for modernist writers, “what looks very much like a preoccupation with energy did give way, at some point during the 1920s, to what looks very much like a preoccupation with something else altogether: call it information, or connectivity” (Trotter 22–3). Somewhat similarly, Benjamin contrasted the type of knowledge possible within storytelling with that of news accounts: “Every morning brings us the news of the globe, and yet we are poor in noteworthy stories. This is because no event any longer comes to us without already being shot through with explanation. In other words, by now almost nothing that happens benefits storytelling; almost everything benefits information” (“The Storyteller” 4). Stein concludes her short reflection by stating, “This is a nice story” (“Reflection” 161). Teo emphasizes Stein’s disinterest—productively comparing it with Saint Therese’s in *Four Saints in Three Acts*, and Stein’s conservative economic views expressed in “Let us Save China” (undated)—observing that “Reflection” was likely written after the August 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and certainly after the fire-bombing of multiple cities in Japan (6). Alternately, Wineapple suggests that “Reflection” shows “the occlusion of Gertrude Stein and other women—men too, primarily modernists—as political beings” (“The Politics of Politics” 37–8). The most generous reading of Stein’s essay, I advance, would be to say that she was not “enamored of [nuclear] power” (borrowing from Foucault, *Power* 109).

<sup>3</sup> For a survey of current approaches, see Mao, ed., *The New Modernist Studies*.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to incarcerating anyone of Japanese descent, the internment camps in the United States and Canada incarcerated German and Italian Americans and Canadians. The brutal policing of race and nation is also evident in other World War II conflicts, notably the Holocaust.

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<sup>5</sup> Benjamin worked on this essay from 1935 until 1939 (it was still unfinished when he died). A shorter version of the essay was first published in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* in May 1936. I am working from the third version. Benjamin critiques fascism's mode of mobilizing the masses without abolishing private property, Futurism, "illustrated magazines and newsreels," and "l'art pour l'art" ("The Work of Art" 255, 269–70). Film is a unique medium for several reasons, as Benjamin details. As mediation, film "*provides the equipment-free aspect of reality . . . and does so precisely on the basis of the most intensive interpenetration of reality with equipment*" (Benjamin, "The Work of Art" 264).

<sup>6</sup> Speech given at Paris Meeting of the International Writers Association for the Defense of Culture, 25 July 1938.

<sup>7</sup> Petry's essay first appeared in *The Writer's Book* (1950), which also included Hersey's "The Novel of Contemporary History." Petry explicates her position: "the novel of social criticism . . . is art of the highest order, but it could not possibly be called an example of art for art's sake. It tells the reader in no uncertain terms that society is responsible for the tragedy of the native African" ("Novel" 37). This classification of Petry's literary work is telling. Brown suggests that "Petry's hybrid modernism underscores the intersections of mid-century social realism and modernism, which, rather than simply distinctive movements, are often messy yet vital complements," further noting how Petry's musical and filmic writing reveals "the imbrication of gender and race within her novel" (23).

<sup>8</sup> In 2003, a replica of *Guernica* that had been hanging outside the United Nations Security Council chamber since 1985 was covered up, suggesting that the painting's anti-war sentiment might conflict with several nations' campaigns for war in Iraq and Afghanistan. A UN delegate claimed: "We may live in the age of the so-called 'smart bomb', but the horror on the ground [in

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Iraq] will be just the same as that visited upon the villagers of Gernika. . . . And it won't be possible to pull a curtain over that" (qtd. in van Hensbergen 3). In February 2021, the replica was removed after its owner requested it back (without providing a reason) (Gladstone). Woolf described experiencing the Blitz (during the Battle of Britain) in a 1940 essay, "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid" (*E* 6: 242–7).

<sup>9</sup> During the Spanish Civil War, Hughes worked for the *Baltimore Afro-American* as a news correspondent and made radio broadcasts from Spain. Hughes addresses his time in Spain in *I Wonder as I Wander* (a text that Redding describes "as a textual performance through which Hughes stages a public persona" ["Turning" 307]); see also, in the same volume, his observations on the treatment of Koreans by the Japanese (262–7). Soto discusses how Hughes's work demonstrates "the centrality of race to Spain's civil conflict" (133), noting the participation of "international volunteers of color supporting the republican government, on the one hand, and the fascist rebels, spearheaded by Spain's colonial Morocco-based *Ejército de África*, or Army of Africa, on the other" (131).

<sup>10</sup> I draw on Berman's excellent transnational study of modernism here and throughout the dissertation. Although transnational movements demonstrate networks of broad political engagement, there are also notable limitations. Stein, for example, seemingly could not imagine Asian people even though she and Toklas employed Vietnamese servants while living in France during the nation's colonial rule over Vietnam and other Southeast Asian territories. Further, Stein's disinterest in the atomic bomb is markedly different from that of many other public intellectuals, offering a distinction in my project's analysis of writers' and artists' multiple political and cultural investments.

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<sup>11</sup>Late modernism has been defined and implemented variously by Jencks, Blanton, T. Davis, Genter, Jordan, MacKay, T. Miller, Whittier-Ferguson, and others. Chronological differences are often based on region of study. MacKay, for example, examines British texts between 1939 and 1945; Genter studies American texts from 1945 through the 1960s. Further, Blanton argues that “late modernism provides not a chronological but a conceptual marker, . . . the systematic negation of a certain high-modernist aspiration to aesthetic self-sufficiency, the accession to a certain historical determinacy” (20–1).

<sup>12</sup> These divisions—between high, late, modern, and postmodern—are not unique to literary studies, of course. Take, for instance, Berger’s assertion that the “moment of Cubism” lasted from 1907 to 1914, with the exception of a few later works by Juan Gris: “Braque and Picasso never surpassed the works of their Cubist period: and a great deal of their later work was inferior” (3–4).

<sup>13</sup> As I discuss in Chapter 4, the use of the bombs was purported to have ended the Pacific war, but this is disputed. World War II in Europe officially ended 7 May 1945 (V-E Day). The war in the Pacific ended with the armistice, 14 August 1945 (V-J Day; Japan’s formal surrender was signed 2 September 1945).

<sup>14</sup> Derrida, too, expresses this concern, suggesting that designating an event makes it “already performative in a way” (“Certain Impossible” 447). He also argues, “as the ability to immediately say and show the event grows, so does the capacity of the technology of saying and showing to intervene, interpret, select, filter, and, consequently, to make the event happen [*faire l’événement*]. . . . what is shown to us live is already, not a saying or showing of the event, but its production.” (447).

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<sup>15</sup> Elleström differentiates between mediation and representation: “The issue of representation thus belongs to the semiotic modality, which is only one of the many aspects of media and mediation” (32). I rely more on Grusin’s understanding of mediation.

<sup>16</sup> For example, Rilke, “Primal Sound” (1919) and Adorno, “The Curves of the Needle” (1928), each discuss sound production and reproduction. Rilke is notably more enthusiastic about the technology than Adorno. Horkheimer and Adorno developed ideas on technologies of reproduction and distribution in their seminal text, “Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception” (1944).

<sup>17</sup> Hersey further suggests the following “valid motivations” for writing a novel of contemporary history: “A search for understanding”; “A desire for communication”; “Anger”; and “A will for world citizenship” (“Novel” 29). This desire for a more global community was one shared by many writers and artists in my project, notably Hughes.

<sup>18</sup> Gitelman defines media as follows: “socially realized structures of communication, where structures include both technological forms and their associated protocols, and where communication is a cultural practice, a ritualized collocation of different people of the same mental map, sharing or engaged with popular ontologies of representation. As such, media are unique and complicated historical subjects” (7). Uricchio (who acknowledges his indebtedness to Raymond Williams) has stated: “I understand media to be more than mere technologies, institutions, and texts. . . . I see media as cultural practices which envelop these and other elements within a broader fabric offered by particular social orders, mentalities, and the lived experiences of their producers and users” (“Historicizing Media in Transition” 24). Gitelman uses the phrase “inscriptional media” to encompass a variety of practices; Trotter distinguishes



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between representational media (such as photography) and connective media (such as the telegraph).

<sup>19</sup> Elleström seeks to find a common terminology between intermediality and multimodality, specifically suggesting that the arts are “aesthetically developed forms of media” (11) and that “intermediality is a result of constructed media borders being trespassed” (27).

<sup>20</sup> McLuhan, W. Mitchell, Schröter, and other critics similarly suggest that all media are mixed to some degree. Mitchell particularly argues that images and texts are always mixed (see *Iconology*), but he does qualify this claim: “If all media are mixed media, they are not all mixed in the same way, with the same proportions of elements. . . . The notion of ‘medium specificity’, then, is never derived from a singular, elemental essence. It is more like the specificity associated with recipes in cooking” (“No Visual Media” 260).

<sup>21</sup> The 1934 opera provides a pronounced example of various specific materials and media. It is comprised of (minimally): Stein’s libretto, Thomson’s musical scores (sheet music for both the piano-vocal score and the full score), the performers, sound production (reading the libretto either aloud or internally, singing, speaking, choral direction, and instrumentation), dance, tableaux, cellophane, lighting, and even the programs (which included photographs and other paratexts). The performance sites and audiences are also crucial aspects the opera’s transmission; thus, one must account for the four separate theatres where audiences watched the opera in 1934 (the Wadsworth Atheneum, two Broadway theatres, and one Chicago theatre); the radio studio, its technologies, and the radio program’s host; and the radios within the homes and businesses that transmitted the opera to the program’s audiences. This list is extensive and yet still incomplete.

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<sup>22</sup> Woolf originally conceived *Three Guineas* as *The Pargiters*, a half-novel, half-essay literary innovation. *Three Guineas* and *The Years* both come out of Woolf's attempted generic experiment. These texts, therefore, were always invested in working through different types of writing, different representations of the same events.

<sup>23</sup> Derrida explains: "A predicted event is not an event. The event falls on me because I don't see it coming" ("Certain Impossible" 452). According to Derrida, confessions, giving gifts, inventions, hospitality, and forgiveness can all be events if certain conditions (such as improbability and unexpectedness) are met. Derrida's suggestions of those who have been able to articulate events include Rainer Maria Rilke (writer; 1875–1926), Paul Celan (writer; 1920–1970), Gilles Deleuze (philosopher; 1925–1995), Sarah Kofman (philosopher; 1934–1994), and Maurice Blanchot (writer, philosopher; 1907–2003) (445).

<sup>24</sup> Badiou elaborates: "the creative capacity in all the domains seemed limitless, so to speak. Painting and music weren't the only ones concerned. It was the period of Einsteinian relativity, the creation of modern algebra, psychoanalysis, the rise of the cinema" (*Philosophy* 75).

<sup>25</sup> Foucault appears to use both "eventalization" and "eventualization" to refer to the same process. Following Tamboukou's oft-cited "Writing Genealogies," I also use eventalization. Foucault notably uses this methodology in *Discipline and Punish* (1975), his seminal work on the history of the penal system.

<sup>26</sup> Berger, who notes many of the same scientific and medial changes, details how Cubism was revolutionary: "The proposition that a work of art is a new object and not simply the expression of its subject, the structuring of a picture to admit the coexistence of different modes of space and time, the inclusion in a work of art of extraneous objects, the dislocation of forms to reveal

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movement or change, the combining of hitherto separate and distinct media, the diagrammatic use of appearances—these were the revolutionary innovations of Cubism” (30).

<sup>27</sup> For an excellent handling of ethics, politics, and aesthetics, see Berman. In Badiou’s terms, an ethical response entails recognizing and following through with that which the event has made possible. More often throughout my dissertation discussions of ethics will be drawn from Foucault, Sontag, and Chouliaraki.

<sup>28</sup> Gaudreault and Marion describe film’s emergence like a birth (12). Their use of birth as metaphor, however, is much more careful than how those associated with the atomic bomb’s development described its invention.

<sup>29</sup> In her compelling transnational and transmedial study—which extends Benjamin’s “The Work of Art”—Rey Chow suggests that montage “be rethought not simply as an event in the history of cinema but also as a key operation in twentieth-century theoretical thinking. . . . We perform montage whenever we move things around from one context into another in the realm of thought, producing unanticipated, unsuspected relations” (3).

<sup>30</sup> As Virilio summarizes, “the history of battle is primarily the history of radically changing fields of perception” (*War and Cinema* 7). Further, Virilio details how Joseph Goebbels, a former journalist, “help[ed] Hitler to power” using records, radio, and film: “he had sent fifty thousand fascist propaganda records to gramophone-owning households and had forced cinema managers, often under threat of violence, to screen ideologically loaded shorts. Once he became a minister, he ensured that radio sets were within reach of everyone’s pocket” (24). In terms of sound technologies, “Hitler decided to introduce sound effects into his control room” (Virilio, *War and Cinema* 51). Virilio also elaborates on the relationship between medium and war in “Vitesse et Politique” (1977) and *A Landscape of Events* (2000).

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<sup>31</sup> Woolf seemingly links the emergence of modern fiction with a shift in the fine arts: the Post-Impressionist Exhibition organized by Roger Fry opened in London in November 1910. The date may also be significant as a reference to British political instability: King Edward VII died in May 1910. In the 1930s, Woolf commented on various world events, including the invasion of Manchuria by Japan in 1931, the significant shifts in governance in Spain, the rise of the Nazi party in Germany, and the abdication of King Edward VIII in December 1936. Woolf's essay on modernist form has an interesting, multimodal publication history: "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" was first published in the *Nation & Atheneum* (Dec. 1923). The essay was then revised and given in response to an invitation to speak about modern fiction "to the Heretics Society of Cambridge in May 1924" (Sorum 142). The lecture was renamed and published as "Character in Fiction" in *The Criterion* (July 1924). It was subsequently edited and published under its original title as a pamphlet from the Hogarth Press (Bowlby 69), with Woolf's sister, Vanessa Bell, providing the cover illustration. The essay also appeared in the *New York Herald Tribune* in August 1925 (Briggs 127).

<sup>32</sup> A fictional character, Hersey suggests, "is far more moving, more persuasive, and more memorable than the most raucous headlines and the most horrible statistics and the most authoritative editorials that could possibly be published in a newspaper" ("The Novel" 27).

<sup>33</sup> To elaborate further, Foucault proposes an alternative historical practice that he terms "genealogy," a process Tamboukou summarizes adeptly: "Genealogy introduces the problem of how by becoming constituted as subjects we come to be subjected within particular configurations. Therefore, what one should study in history are the anonymous deep configurations that determine the ways we are classified and grouped, the genealogy of the constitution of our 'politics'" (208).

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<sup>34</sup> Illustrative of radio's ubiquity in the 1930s, Douglas suggests that "40 million people might have listened simultaneously to the same show on a given night," and, further, World War II "was, first and foremost, a radio war that millions listened to and imagined" (10). S. Wilson characterizes 1934—the year of *Four Saints*'s premiere—as "a year of fierce debate over the Federal Communications Act and the regulation of radio" (261). The formation of nation-wide broadcasting organizations in the 1920s—the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) in 1922; the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in 1926, and the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) in 1927—made possible the mass distribution of simultaneous radio programming. Trotter suggests that the BBC was instrumental not only in nation-building but also in maintaining the British empire. Radio, however, was also a resistive channel against colonial or homogenizing forces (see Giles, 40, and Douglas for elaboration).

<sup>35</sup> Loudspeakers, Douglas suggests, were an integral part of radio's increased capacity to address and configure the public. Consider, too, the use of loudspeakers at Nazi rallies in the 1930s. Woolf criticizes "the loudspeakers and the politicians" in "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid" (*E* 6: 243). Sewald discusses the role of "mobile public address systems" for political and commercial purposes in American soundscapes in the 1930s and 1940s.

<sup>36</sup> It seems that, for Foucault, eventalization informed or was formed out of his own critical praxis of advocating for prison reform. Intersectionality further refines what I mean by "politics" in this project. According to Collins and Bilge, "identity gets either associated with bad politics or dissociated from politics" (131). In response, they suggest that "the politics of identity can constitute *a starting point for intersectional inquiry and praxis and not an end in itself*" (132).

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<sup>37</sup> MacKay's analysis is a critical reminder of Woolf's intersectional shortcomings; Woolf's anti-Semitic short story, "The Duchess and the Jeweller," was published in *Harper's Bazaar* magazine in April and May 1938, shortly before the publication of *Three Guineas* (29).

<sup>38</sup> Briefly, such unrealized avenues of critical attention include the following: the careers of the Black women involved in the 1934 productions of *Four Saints*; *Mujeres Libres* (1936–39); Petry, particularly how her work is taken up (or not) within modernist studies; the literary work of Japanese writers from around the Pacific war that has yet to be translated into English (particularly Japanese women's writing), and the enslavement of Asian women (called *ianfu* [comfort women]; predominantly working class Korean women) by the Japanese Imperial Army during the Pacific war. This latter group's continued legal battles shape international relations between Japan and South Korea (see Sang-Hun's report on the April 2021 court ruling).

<sup>39</sup> A brief distinction between spectacle and event is useful: "Making an event a spectacle arguably naturalizes it, depriving the event of its otherness and strangeness (since the event presents itself, at least initially, as an object of wonder, something that exceeds the observer's horizon of expectations or intelligibility). . . . spectacularizing the event reduces it to an economy of sameness: devouring its content, and tacitly exhausting its relevance, before moving on to the next "new" event-to-be-spectacle" (Magnusson and Zalloua 5).

<sup>40</sup> Due to increasingly portable and easy-to-use camera equipment, coupled with established communications systems that allowed faster photographic transmission, modern photojournalism emerged during the coverage of Spain (Balsells 63). Although it contains no photographs, Delaprée's "cinematographic" journalism affected Woolf and Picasso's responses to the war (Minchom 186; Dalgarno 162). According to Virilio, total war is about perception—that is, innovative uses of film and other media—as much as it is about weapons. See *War and Cinema*,

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53–66, for further elaboration. As Caroline Brothers demonstrates (and Dalgarno explicates), the *Times* (and most British newspapers except for the *Daily Worker*) devoted more pictorial coverage to George VI's coronation in 1937 than to Spanish children.

<sup>41</sup> Rubin and Smethurst suggest that “both in the way [Petry] utilized the venues of the African American and ‘mainstream’ press for her work and in the ways she drew on the formal resources and generic conventions of popular culture in her work, she attempted, as did many Popular Front writers, to use these venues, resources, and conventions to make her radical fiction accessible to a mass audience” (33).

<sup>42</sup> Hughes's poem and Lawrence's drawing were included in Kaba's 2012 pamphlet, “An (Abridged) History of Resisting Police Violence in Harlem,” a PDF of which is available at: <http://mariamekaba.com/publications/>.

<sup>43</sup> Lifton and Mitchell argue that the uneven dispersal of atomic knowledge continues: “For years American officials suppressed information about the bomb's effects (particularly its radiation effects), censored or manipulated newspaper reports, seized all photographs and film footage of Japanese A-bomb victims and declared top secret most documents relating to the decision to use the weapon. The American cover-up has been apocalyptic in at least two ways: in the grotesque human dimension of what has been suppressed, and in the relationship of that cover-up to our continuous embrace of still more destructive nuclear devices” (“The Atomic Curtain”).

<sup>44</sup> Genter argues that “the inadequacy of language to describe both the seemingly limitless force of the atomic blast and the feeling of insignificance in the face of such destruction” (164) is a significant factor of American late modernist writing. Loy's “Tuning” reflects this. Yet, as much as Loy demonstrates the struggle to find the accurate words, she also uses only words to describe the event.

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<sup>45</sup> Certainly the text employs what Elleström calls “sensorial modality” in that it is sensorially evocative. In its circulations and remediations, *Hiroshima* operates in multiple material, spatiotemporal, and semiotic modalities.

<sup>46</sup> The role of spectators-survivors is also evident in the “Tribute to Victory,” which took place on 27 October 1945 at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum (discussed in Chapter 4).

<sup>47</sup> Although the term “Black” is anachronistic to the 1930s, I follow a number of critics, such as Crenshaw and Barg, and guidelines drawn from the National Association of Black Journalists and the APA. I use “Black” and “African American” throughout the chapter, primarily using “Black” as an adjective and “African American” as a noun. My intention in using both terms is to highlight the complex relationship between race, nation, and gender; a person who identifies as “Black” might not identify as “African American.” I capitalize “Black” and “White” to acknowledge that I am referring to constructed and complex categories of race and, partly, for clarity because I discuss colour as a feature of visual art in subsequent chapters. While everybody is racialized, I use “racialized” throughout to refer to groups who have faced historical exclusions based on race.

<sup>48</sup> Stein’s increasing cultural capital—resulting partly from the opera—is also evident in the 1934 reissue of an abridged version of *The Making of Americans* by Harcourt Brace, a mainstream publisher. The text had first been published by Contact Publishing in 1925.

<sup>49</sup> Focusing on Great Britain, Trotter details the following: “The advent of synchronous sound in cinema, the marketing of a television or ‘televisor’ set, the crescendo of the campaign to define telephony as a social medium, the Imperial Wireless and Cable Conference that recommended the merger of all British communication interests, the invention of a further range of semisynthetic plastics such as cellophane and cellulose acetate: all these developments took



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place in or around 1927. If there was a year in which the world ‘changed,’ for literature at least, it may have been 1927, rather than 1910, as Virginia Woolf thought” (36–7). There were also significant developments in American mass media: NBC was founded in 1926 and CBS the following year, which meant that “broadcasting came under oligopoly control as the two networks dominated the airwaves”; in 1927, the Federal Radio Commission assigned fixed frequencies to stations, user-friendly radios became more affordable and widely available, and the Radio Act banned profane language on the radio primarily as a response to jazz music (Douglas 63–92).

<sup>50</sup> I use Wolf’s conception of “transmedia” to mean a phenomenon or technique that can exist among multiple media without being specific to any single medium. Stein, I would suggest, uses sound and “broadcasting” transmedially, or not as being media-specific. Somewhat differently, H. Jenkins defines transmedia storytelling as “a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed across multiple delivery channels . . . Ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution” (“Transmedia Storytelling 101”).

<sup>51</sup> Uricchio suggests that “radio’s shift from an individuated two-way communication system to a broadcast system” is an important shift in media history (“Historicizing” 30–1). “Radio,” Douglas suggests, “is arguably the most important electronic invention of the century. Cognitively, it revolutionized the perceptual habits of the nation. Technically, culturally, and economically, it set the stage for television. It forever blurred the boundaries between the private domestic sphere and public, commercial, and political life” (9). Further, Stein suggested that she imagined broadcasting before hearing a radio broadcast, reflecting how, “insofar as sound technologies are *ever* organized into sound media, the medium—or, at least, an imagined medium—precedes even the technology itself” (Sterne 214).

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<sup>52</sup> The Paris Théâtrophone “operated from 1890–1925” and “broadcasted performances of the Parisian Opéra, the Opéra Comique, and the Théâtre Française” (Sterne 192–3). Similar telephone broadcast systems existed in a few other cities: in Budapest, the Telephon Hirmondó (Telephone Herald) operated from 1892 to at least 1930; beginning in 1911, the New Jersey Telephone Herald Company, operated a popular but short-lived service (Sterne 193).

<sup>53</sup> Although not considered to be commercially viable in the Depression-era 1930s, stereophonic radio broadcasting and recording was popular from the 1950s to the 1990s (stereophonic films, for example, were first produced in 1953). There are, however, early innovations of note: during 1932–33, the earliest stereophonic sound recordings were made by Blumlein and Leopold Stokowski. The latter recorded the avant-garde music of Alexander Scriabin and Schoenberg. At the 1932 World’s Fair in Chicago, a stereophonic demonstration involving a mannequin conveyed the movement of sound. This led to further developments: on 27 April 1933, stereoscopic sound was transmitted from the Philadelphia orchestra to audiences in Washington. In sum, experiments in stereophony were very much contemporary with the opera’s premiere.

<sup>54</sup> Although I do not explicitly cite Marianne DeKoven, Johanna Frank, Cyndria N. Pondrom, and Angela Steidele, their work is foundational to understanding Stein’s musicality and orality.

<sup>55</sup> Frank’s *Radio Free Stein* is a contemporary, online project that produces sound performances of Stein’s plays. Recently, Philip Miletic and Stephen Trothen turned Stein’s *Everybody’s Autobiography* into an interactive “radio text.” Further, Stein’s experience of the radio seems to have been less fraught than other modernists’. Wallace Stevens’ poetry, for example, expresses “his desire to be socially engaged” while also having “a much stronger desire to distance his own thinking from the public’s thoughts, which Stevens strongly associated with radio” (Barrett 259).

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<sup>56</sup> I recognize that aligning Badiou, whose writings express anti-Semitism, with Stein is troubling. Further, Stein's use of the term "events" is different from Badiou's. As Stein explained in a lecture, "sometimes a personality breaks through an event, it takes a tremendously strong personality to break through the events in a newspaper and when they do well it is soon over it is soon smoothed over and even history wishes to change it into something that any one could recover from" (*N* 39). I understand the event to be nearly the opposite—something that cannot be "smoothed over" because it has introduced a fundamental rupture or change. I understand Stein's use of "genius" to describe a similar irruptive effect. Because I analyze *Four Saints* and *Autobiography* as events, these texts are useful in determining which artistic practices have been labelled "genius," "masterpieces," and "artistic events." As I demonstrate, Stein's work involves Black art and artists only marginally. Badiou's understanding of "the Event" is similarly exclusive.

<sup>57</sup> I am drawing on Magi's insightful reconsideration of Stein's racialization and racism: "Stein has the potential to teach us that it may be a feature of whiteness, class privilege, and the Eurocentric modernist 'make it new' maneuvers that enable an artist to work with 'words only' (a kind of intellectual segregation), separating words (and self) from social realities and separating even from the physical body. I want to argue that Stein shouldn't be disliked for this possible approach—rather, she is an example of *how this approach to literature is possible*." (Magi para. 24). Eventalization, I would suggest, yields a similar analysis.

<sup>58</sup> In a letter to the editor printed in *The New York Times*, a reader rejected Stein's ridiculous statement: "I am a Negro, and can certainly see . . . the meaningless twaddle of Miss Stein" (Kirnon).

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<sup>59</sup> During the Great Depression, Black Americans experienced continued disenfranchisement, a 50% unemployment rate, and the threat of lynching. As I will discuss in Chapter 3, New Deal programs initially perpetuated these racial inequities and, in response, “a mass-based, political culture emerged in Harlem in the 1930s” (C. L. Greenberg 400). White Americans’ violence against Black Americans resurged in the 1930s, leading to a number of artistic and political interventions, such as the formation of the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching in 1930 (“Jessie Daniel Ames”). There were two 1935 art exhibitions in New York City to raise support for a federal anti-lynching bill that had been introduced in 1934 (“An Art Exhibit”).

<sup>60</sup> The organizers of this exhibition faced substantial criticism for overlooking how Stein’s “pro-Fascist ideology” was instrumental in the preservation of her art collection (Greenhouse).

<sup>61</sup> Stein’s *Portraits and Prayers* (1934) contains “Picasso” (1909) and “If I Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso” (1923). I discuss Stein’s *Picasso* (1938) in Chapter 2. Although I do not take it up in this chapter, Thomson’s work is also intermedial; he composed musical “portraits” of Stein, Picasso, and others (Tommasini).

<sup>62</sup> See Goldman and Curnutt for extended discussions of modernism, celebrity, and Stein. To some, such popularity indicates that the more radical stage of high modernism had passed by 1934. Huyssen eschews such a division between high art and mass culture. T. Miller, MacKay, T. Davis, and others suggest that “late modernism” begins in the 1930s. See also E. Wilson, *Axel’s Castle* (1931).

<sup>63</sup> Posman argues that Stein and Henri Bergson both use the concept of melody to express duration, or the felt experience of time: “Stein’s 1920s landscape plays,” she suggests, “mirror the philosopher’s concern in *Duration and Simultaneity*” (107).

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<sup>64</sup> Thomson “introduced himself by leaving a piano-vocal setting of ‘Susie Asado’ on her doorstep,” and “Thomson also set Stein’s ‘Preciosilla’ and ‘Capital Capitals’ in 1927” (Clements, “How to Remediate” 49). Thomson and Stein later collaborated on another opera, *The Mother of Us All* (1946–7), which premiered after Stein’s death.

<sup>65</sup> Wolf defines opera as an “intermedial genre” (40); Rajwesky classifies it a “media combination” (51–2).

<sup>66</sup> Saint Ignatius of Loyola (Spanish; 1491–1556) composed the *Spiritual Exercises* (1548). Saint Teresa of Ávila (Spanish; 1515–1582) authored *The Interior Castle* (1588) and other texts. Stein remarked that she had read the confessions of St. Ignatius and “the meditations of St. Therese” (“Miss Stein Uses Saints as Scenery”).

<sup>67</sup> Compellingly, Barg suggests that the saints provide Stein and Thomson with an “allegory of their lives as (queer) artists,” further stating that “Thomson’s fascination with the racial ‘otherness’ of black voices served as an outlet for the projection of a more evanescent dialect: that of the closet” (“Modernism” 67, 73). Malcolm also suggests, along with other critics, that Stein substituted the queer and Jewish characters in her novella, *Q.E.D.* (1903), with Black characters when she wrote “Melanctha.”

<sup>68</sup> Stein’s understanding of Italians may have been as both a racial and national category. Near the turn of the twentieth century, “it was the Italian immigrants—and to some extent the Jews—who found themselves in an indeterminate position in the racial order between white and black” (Rattansi 42). Rattansi further discusses racial categorization, its connection to nation-building in the nineteenth century, and how the history of racial distinctions in the United States is particularly complicated. Coates cites the example of Italian immigrants to demonstrate how racial categories shift over time.

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<sup>69</sup> In its use of appellations, *Four Saints* appears on the page somewhat differently from her earlier work. In her theatrical works written before and after the libretto for *Four Saints*, many of the individual pieces are labelled according to genre by Stein and denote intermediality. Texts in *Geography and Plays* (1922) and *Operas and Plays* (1932), for example, include the following labels: “A Play,” “Portrait,” “Scenes,” and “A Lyrical Opera Made by Two.” Notwithstanding these generic designations, there are no distinct formal similarities that can be used to group her plays wholly separately from her portraits or her operas.

<sup>70</sup> In the libretto, the line reads, “Surround them with the thirds and that” (*LOP* 449). Thomson changed “surround” to “sound” (*FS* [1934] 26).

<sup>71</sup> The literary loop “wards off closure and problematizes affective appropriation and ‘remembering’” (Delville 78). Delville further suggests that Stein’s libretto is a precursor for minimalist music (like John Cage’s) and tape loops (like Steve Reich’s) (81).

<sup>72</sup> The adverse responses to the publication of Van Vechten’s *Nigger Heaven* in 1926 demonstrates how the use of the derogatory term was controversial and offensive even then. See Sanneh’s detailed discussion of various responses, including those from Stein and Hughes. Given the reaction to Van Vechten’s book, Stein and Thomson’s use of the slur should not be dismissed.

<sup>73</sup> Including “just” makes explicit how, in 1934, Black artists were not seen by Stein, Thomson (and others) as creating avant-garde theatre. Magi suggests that Thomson’s letter exemplifies how the implicit link between “experimental” and “white” also “occludes the fact that the first North American literary experiments were a result of colonialism, slavery, genocide, and the Middle Passage” (para. 52–3).

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<sup>74</sup> In an early preview of the opera, the casting is thus described: Thomson scored the opera “with white singers in mind. In fact, it was not till after he had arrived in America,” after living in Paris for 12 years, “that he changed his mind.” Thomson asserted that the casting was due to “their diction” and “their superior choral works and *above all their ability to objectify themselves. According to Thomson, they live more on the threshold of consciousness, hence have no intellectual objections to batter down. . . .* Mr. Thomson concludes, ‘If we find that the religious devotion of the public is offended by Negroes playing the roles of saints, we will have them play in white-face’” (“Four Saints in Three Acts Collaborate”; my emphasis). Van Vechten further suggested that “there is nothing Negro in the gestures or singing speech of this remarkable company” (“Words and Music”).

<sup>75</sup> Downes’s attention to race and racism, however, is minimal; he does not name Matthews, Wayne, or any other individual performer in his 1934 review. Even more, when Downes reviewed the 1952 Paris production—which featured Matthews reprising his role as St. Ignatius—he repeated the very stereotyping that he had criticized Thomson for: “There is little need to praise the performances of the singers, who have almost to a man and woman excellent voices and who interpret them with a felicity that seems native to them rather than acquired” (“Thomson’s Opera in Paris Premiere”).

<sup>76</sup> According to Thomson, the inclusion of a ballet was Stein’s suggestion. In terms of makeup, the cast members’ faces were painted a uniform brown shade (Harris 110), which implies that a homogenous conception of race was being applied to the performers.

<sup>77</sup> In contrast, “Saint Therese could be very much interested” in Saint Settlement, but the line was not included in the score (Stein, *LOP* 447).

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<sup>78</sup> Throughout, I use “Saint Therese” and “Saint Ignatius” to refer to Stein’s libretto; “St. Teresa” refers to the composite character of the opera whereas “St. Teresa I,” “St. Teresa II,” and “St. Ignatius” refer to the individual roles; and “Saint Teresa of Ávila” and “Saint Ignatius of Loyola” denote the historical saints.

<sup>79</sup> Barg suggests that “virtually all of the principal white collaborators—Stein, Thomson, Grosser, Stettheimer, Ashton—as well as their prestigious art-world supporters and salonniers—Van Vechten, A.E. ‘Chick’ Austin, Kirk and Constance Askew—were part of an extensive transatlantic network of queer artists, musicians, and writers” (“Modernism” 67). See also Barg’s discussion of George Platt Lynes’s photograph showing three teenage Black dancers and a clothed, 30-year-old Ashton (77–8).

<sup>80</sup> “Stein’s text is, of course, in a vein that is fading rapidly from importance . . . and the method is dated” (Downes, “Stein-Thomson Concoction”).

<sup>81</sup> I am drawing on an RCA recording of a 1947 radio oratorio for this performance analysis, which can be found here: [https://www.kpfahistory.info/music/4\\_saints.html](https://www.kpfahistory.info/music/4_saints.html). The phrase “surrounded not surrounded” starts at 17:34 (in Act I). “Around is a sound” begins at 17:35 (in Act III). Matthews, Wayne, and Holland reprised their roles for this recording.

<sup>82</sup> Thomson singled out Wayne’s performance, stating that the opera’s long run on Broadway was possible “because of Freddy & Florine & Mrs. Wayne” (“Letters” 70). Following *Four Saints*, Wayne’s career was certainly less notable than Matthews’s, who also starred in *Porgy and Bess* in 1934 (Jessye was the choral director for both shows) (see Allmer and Sears 11–15). Of Howard, “little is known” (Allmer and Sears 20).

<sup>83</sup> In the 1982 *Orchestra of Our Time* performance, this line marked the end of Tableau 1, indicating more finality.



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<sup>84</sup> Nock-Hee Park discusses this passage more substantially and in relation to Stein’s complicated relationship to her own Jewish identity.

<sup>85</sup> In a December 1933 *New York Times* preview of the opera, the following example is included as “Somewhat clearer” text: “‘If it were possible to kill 5,000 Chinamen by pressing a button would it be done?’ To this question Saint Therese replies, ‘Saint Therese not interested’ (‘Four Saints in Three Acts Collaborate’). Audiences, therefore, may have been aware of the line before it was ever performed on stage.

<sup>86</sup> Blumlein was an active part of radar’s development until his death in 1942 (Shankleman). See also Uricchio, “Storage,” on television missile systems during World War II, and Virilio, *War and Cinema*.

<sup>87</sup> St. Teresa II speaks earlier in Act I—in conversation with Teresa I (mm. 85–8), and later individually (Act One, mm. 170–3)—but her singing voice is not independently heard until this duet.

<sup>88</sup> In the score, this note is written as F3, but with 8va *ad lib*. As such, the score leaves room for the performer to play with tempo. No *ad lib* is indicated in the piano and vocal score.

<sup>89</sup> My analysis draws on the tableaux directions from the full score, archival photographs from 1934 production, and Harris’s descriptions. Photographs of the tableaux are reproduced in Allmer and Sears, Harris, and the piano-vocal score.

<sup>90</sup> Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s sculpture, *L’Estasi di Santa Teresa* (1647–52), is another example of how the historical visionary has been represented in various media.

<sup>91</sup> Using the police to increase the spectacle of the opera, especially when considering the numerous conflicts between Black Americans and the police in the 1930s, makes the Whiteness of *Four Saints* conspicuous. For example, Van Vechten’s “inflamed crowd” would have been

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radically different than that of the Harlem riot of 1935, which occurred on 19 March (and thus before Stein left the United States). The gulf between these two events illustrates the lack of Thomson and Stein's understandings of race, violence, and spectacle.

<sup>92</sup> *The New York Times* announced the Hartford broadcast: "The world premiere of Gertrude Stein's new opera, 'Four Saints in Three Acts,' will be broadcast direct from the Wadsworth Atheneum at Hartford, Conn., by WABC on Feb. 8. Alexander Smallens will conduct. Edward Matthews, former director of the Fiske Jubilee Singers, heads the all-Negro cast" ("Behind Studio Scenes"). The *March of Time* broadcast was announced in the paper a few weeks later: "the company of 'Four Saints in Three Acts' to appear for three minutes on the air in the 'March of Time' broadcast" ("Four Saints' to Go on Air"). It is not clear who chose which section to perform on the radio, but Harry Moses, the opera's producer, "accepted the invitation" ("Four Saints' to Go on Air"). The *March of Time* was a national radio news documentary and drama series that ran from 1931 to 1945. It was sponsored by *Time* magazine (Schneider).

<sup>93</sup> Douglas suggests that in the 1930s, "40 million people might have listened simultaneously to the same show on a given night" (10). In terms of radio ownership, in 1930 "43% of Chicago's black families owned radios" (Douglas 93). Radio also presented less of a financial barrier than live opera: tickets to see *Four Saints* in 1934 cost between \$5–7.50 each (adjusted for 2021: \$100–140).

<sup>94</sup> As Allmer and Sears explain, some of the opera's cast members had radio careers: Wayne had been a "radio performer" before *Four Saints*; Matthews became, in 1936, "a regular feature of WABC's Capitol Radio family"; and, in 1941, Altonell Hines (Commère) was featured on the radio (16).

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<sup>95</sup> As Douglas summarizes it, “jazz, as performed by African Americans musicians, got on the air in certain places like Chicago and New York,” reflecting how “the 1920s radio (along with phonograph records) opened a small crack between white and black culture, and Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Duke Ellington, and a few others slipped through. By the end of the decade, most would agree that the newly founded radio networks and the white bands they rewarded had co-opted, domesticated, and often bastardized black jazz” (84–5).

<sup>96</sup> I have been using “surround sound” rather figuratively throughout, but the in the 1940s (and aided by FM radio) radio studios broadcast (and home radio audiences heard) stereo transmissions.

<sup>97</sup> Kalup Linzy has posted two short clips from the video installation here:

<https://youtu.be/qi5tGRaZXFI> and <https://youtu.be/MoYc-5bZMPA>.

<sup>98</sup> Bay-Cheng and Cermatori also provide extensive lists of artists who were influenced by *Four Saints*.

<sup>99</sup> Stein included photographs of Wayne and Matthews in *Everybody’s Autobiography*, indicating that she was impressed by their performances. Weiss argues that “the portrait of Gertrude Stein’s America—that is, *Everybody’s Autobiography*—would be incomplete without the presence of black folk” (120).

<sup>100</sup> Stein’s account of Cubism generated outcries from some of the artists she described. A booklet-length supplement to *transition* entitled *Testimony against Gertrude Stein* (February 1935) was devoted to statements from Georges Braque, Henri Matisse, and others criticizing Stein’s understanding and depiction of the movement.

<sup>101</sup> Examples include films such as *Gertrude Stein: When You See This, Remember Me* (1970), *Waiting for the Moon* (1987), *Paris Was a Woman* (1996), *Midnight in Paris* (2011), and

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“Gertrude Stein’s *Brewsie and Willie*” (2012); and Truong’s novel, *The Book of Salt* (2001). In the theatre, *The World Is Round* (a dance-theatre remediation of Stein’s 1938 children’s book) was performed in 2014; *In Circles*, Al Carmine’s 1967 musical adaptation of Stein’s “A Circular Play” (1920), was produced again in 2019. A 2012 publication of *Ada* features chromolithographic illustrations by the artist ATAK. 27, an opera about Stein’s life, was performed in 2014 and again in 2016.

<sup>102</sup> In a letter to Stein, Thomson discussed how a plan to revive the opera in 1938—as part of the Federal Theater Project with an all-Black cast and “making it all modern and about the Spanish war”—could not go ahead because the director, Thomas Anderson (who had played St. Giuseppe in *Four Saints*), had left for radio work (“Letters” 70).

<sup>103</sup> On 25 July 1936, Hitler met with delegates representing Franco in Bayreuth, Bavaria. The meeting took place immediately after Hitler heard Richard Wagner’s opera, *Die Walküre*, at the annual Wagner festival. Hitler agreed to aid Franco and offered significantly more than the general had asked for; he named the operation, *Feuerzauber* (Magic Fire), after the opera. Wagner’s own intermedial practices (his concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* as unification, even subordination) operate quite differently from the combination of media in *Four Saints*.

<sup>104</sup> Tickner suggests that “neither Picasso nor Braque made the same move to abstraction in their collages nor adopted the vivid colouring of Omega’s decorative aesthetic” (193). Vanessa Bell’s inclusion of a signed cheque in her collage *Still Life (Triple Alliance)* (1914) is an early example of money as a collage-able medium.

<sup>105</sup> I use “total war” in this chapter to highlight the targeting of civilians. Patterson suggests the bombing of Guernica exemplifies this type of combat: “One of the most fearsome ideas to emerge in the course of the twentieth century was the idea of total war—the belief that the most

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effective way of winning wars was by the obliteration, or the threat of obliteration, of the civilian population of the enemy's towns and cities by means of an annihilating attack from the air. The first, and still in some ways the most striking, demonstration that this could be done came in April 1937, when the ancient Basque town of Guernica was almost completely destroyed by the blast and incendiary bombs of the German Condor Legion" (2).

<sup>106</sup> "Photojournalism," which, explains Balsells, "was born at the beginning of the twentieth century in the liberal Germany of the Weimar Republic, found its true dimensions in the coincidence of advances in print media with the appearance of the rotary press and, above all, the manageability of the cameras" (61). Owing to the historical proximity of the Spanish Civil War with the technological developments in camera equipment and photographic transmission, modern photojournalism emerged during the coverage of Spain (Balsells 63).

<sup>107</sup> In using "covert" (or direct) and "overt" (or indirect), I am drawing on Wolf's terms to distinguish between types of intermediality. For example, the actual photographs included in *Three Guineas* are examples of overt intermediality; the notional photographs are covert intermediality.

<sup>108</sup> *Picasso: Love and War, 1935–1945* at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (30 June–8 Oct. 2006); *Guernica*, Musée Picasso-Paris (27 Mar. 27–July 29, 2018). The latter exhibit focused on the painting's tour and gave Maar a central role in its creation.

<sup>109</sup> Collage, as Heesen defines it, "refers to something cemented, welded, or pasted together . . . a collage is the result of a process in which bits of paper and other found materials are combined" (151). Other early practitioners included Georges Braque, Hannah Höch, Schwitters, and Tzara. Woolf would have seen the collage techniques of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant.

<sup>110</sup> "As if" is Rajewsky's phrasing to indicate intermedial reference.

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<sup>111</sup> Sontag discusses *Three Guineas* in multiple texts, relating Woolf's work to contemporary conflicts. More recently, the 2019 Woolf Studies Annual conference theme, "Woolf and Social Justice," suggests that *Three Guineas* remains pertinent due to the rising popularity of far-right political parties.

<sup>112</sup> According to Heesen, the practice of keeping newspaper clippings was a "cut-and-paste technique [that] became common practice around 1900," which is approximately the same time collage "first blossomed into a genuinely artistic medium" (xi, 151). Baldassari notes that "Picasso kept a sort of 'war diary', systematically using pages taken from the daily press as a support for painting studies for his canvases [between 1939 and 1943]. . . . He had already worked this way on editorials from 1936 and 1937, which commented on the position of the Popular Front or on international politics" (243). His paintings from this period also include portraits on newspaper sheets. The endnotes for *Three Guineas* are evidence of Woolf's own practice of keeping newspaper clippings.

<sup>113</sup> Marcus contends that Delaprée's pamphlet was published with photographs, but this is likely incorrect. In Minchom's reconstruction of Delaprée's dispatches, there are no photographs included or mentioned, nor are there photographs in the facsimiles of the pamphlet. P. Laurence suggests that "Delaprée's war front reports and the articles and pictures in the London *Times* on the bombardment and massacre in Madrid, particularly during November and December 1936, profoundly affect Woolf's view of the Spanish civil war and her later involvement in the insurgents' and refugees' cause" (234).

<sup>114</sup> *Auca* (Catalan: *auque*; Castilian: *aleluya*) is a Spanish form that combines image and text, similar to comics or illustrated verse. Picasso's series was intended to be anti-Franco propaganda (Borja-Villel et al. 169).

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<sup>115</sup> Stein's phrasing reverses a slogan from the Spanish Communist Party (PCE), "First the war, then the revolution," which was a response to in-fighting among "different factions on the Republican side" (Vergara).

<sup>116</sup> The aims of this constitution are similar to what Woolf's narrator/focalizer espouses in *Three Guineas*: broader access to education, limiting the role of the church, and rights to participate directly in government. Spanish women could vote starting in 1933. See note 125.

<sup>117</sup> In 1933, following the election of the Radical Party (led by Alejandro Lerroux), and especially following the appointment of ministers representing Catholic right-wing groups (CEDA), there was an insurrection. In Asturias, "the revolutionaries murdered around 40 people, most of them clergy" (García 24). Franco led an attempt to suppress the insurrection, during which "around a thousand revolutionaries died in the fighting, and many of those arrested were tortured in the prisons" (24). Franco's attempt, however, seemed to galvanize the left rather than quiet it.

<sup>118</sup> The Spanish Civil War is much more complex than this short summary. For further explication see Patterson, *Guernica and Total War* (2007), and Preston, *Franco: A Biography* (1995). For further discussion of post-civil-war Spain, see Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust* (2011).

<sup>119</sup> The bombing of Guernica was subject to misinformation. In the London *Times*, a short article published on 29 April 1937 recounts how the German press characterized the bombing: "if Guernica was destroyed by incendiary bombs it could have been done only by the 'Bolshevists,' who must be held responsible. This, at least, is the view of the *Nachtausgabe*" ("Germany" 15). In the same issue, "It is emphatically denied by the Franco government, however, that the fires [in Guernica] were the result of bombing by Nationalist aircraft. . . . In Nationalist circles it is

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asserted that the enemy fired Guernica” (“Bilbao” 16). The same issue also contains a report on the official Basque statement, which blames German aircraft for the bombing of Guernica, Durango, and Eibar, noting that “the streets are filled with charred bodies, and that the women and children found dead among the ruins are numbered by the thousands” (“Bilbao” 16).

<sup>120</sup> Lindqvist suggests that the first aerial bombing occurred 1 November 1911, when an officer dropped a grenade from a biplane over the Turkish line in Libya during the Italian-Turkish War (1910–11). Between 1919 and 1932, British RAF bombs were dropped on various countries and their civilians, including: Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Burma, India, and the Hottentots of Southwest Africa (Grosscup 54–5). Beginning in 1924, Spain’s military bombed its colony Morocco “with explosives and poison gas”: “To the Spanish, and Franco in particular, the terror bombing of Morocco was perfectly appropriate since the Moors were ‘like children who needed a father’s firm hand’” (Grosscup 55, 57). Sontag asserts, “Franco was using the same tactics of bombardment, massacre, torture, and the killing and mutilation of prisoners that he had perfected as a commanding officer in Morocco in the 1920s. Then, more acceptably to ruling powers, his victims had been Spain’s colonial subjects, darker-hued and infidels to boot; now his victims were compatriots” (*Regarding* 9). The American military began aerial operations in 1916 in Mexico and continued to expand its use of bombardment over the “rebellious citizens” of the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua (Grosscup 60). The use of aircraft (allegedly private) as part of the destruction of Greenwood (Tulsa, OK) in 1921 is a possible model for Franco/Hitler. The Japanese imperial army bombed Chinese civilians throughout the 1930s. It should also be noted that materials for the atomic bombs that devastated Japan were mined from Indigenous lands in the United States, Canada, and the Congo. The American military tested those bombs on or near Native American land, causing significant damage to the people and the



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environment (Kuletz). In many cases of aerial bombardment, the targets included civilians living under the rule of colonial or neocolonial power, and the targets of these bombardments were often racialized groups.

<sup>121</sup> Rukeyser's "Mediterranean" (drafted while she was on a ship from Spain to France in 1936), Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), and Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), are three such examples. Rukeyser's poem contains intermedial references and its publication in the *New Masses* (14 Sept. 1937) included artwork by Sylvia Wald and others. Shortly after the publication of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, "*Life* printed a photo-essay using images personally selected by Hemingway. The majority were by Capa, but two were Taro's, including the photo of the soldier with a field telephone" (Schaber 23; "The Hemingways in Sun Valley," *Life*, 6 January 1941, 49–57).

<sup>122</sup> "The origin of modern forms of persuasion," García explains, "can be dated back to 1896, the year of the foundation of the *Daily Mail* in Britain—considered to be the first mass newspaper in history—of the projection of the first cinema film by the Lumière brothers, and of the first demonstration of the principles of wireless telegraphy by Marconi" (7). Further, World War I "represented a turning point in the history of public opinion. As a result of the 'Great War,' propaganda ceased to be an activity carried on fundamentally by private interests—the press, political groups, social organizations—to become one more instrument of policy for governments, within and beyond state frontiers" (García 10).

<sup>123</sup> Propaganda campaigns that played on the perceived vulnerability of women and children were effective, however. Britain had agreed initially to accept only young children from thousands of Basque refugees; it was then persuaded to take in adolescent girls when doctors suggested that they needed to be protected from militarized sexual violence.

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<sup>124</sup> Members of *Mujeres Libres* promoted women’s participation in the public sphere, advocated for literacy programs, and drew attention to gendered economic disparities—similar goals to what the Spanish Republic’s constitution outlined. This attention to reproductive labour, education, and the economic disparity between women and men within a nation is also demonstrated in *Three Guineas*. Take, for example, this passage from poet Lucía Sanchez Saornil, one of the founding members of *Mujeres Libres*: “The vast majority of male comrades—with the exception of a half dozen right-thinking types—have minds infected by the most typical bourgeois prejudices. Even as they rail against property, they are rabidly proprietorial. Even as they rant against slavery, they are the cruelest of ‘masters.’ Even as they vent their fury on monopoly, they are the most dyed-in-the-wool monopolists. And all of this derives from the phoniest notion that humanity has ever managed to devise. The supposed ‘inferiority of women.’ A mistaken notion that may well have set civilization back by centuries” (“The Woman Question”).

<sup>125</sup> In the pavilion, *Guernica* was opposite “a blown-up photo of [Federico] García Lorca, ‘poète fusillé à Grenade.’ In between the two stood a fountain by [American artist and mobilist] Alexander Calder, with runnels of mercury falling into a pool,” and films, curated by Luis Buñuel, were shown just outside (T. Clark, *Picasso* 240). Joan Miró’s explicitly working-class imagery and Picasso’s use of a working-class locale, *Guernica*, indicate that the curators and artists were attentive to class. Like much propaganda coming out of Spain in the 1930s, however, representations of gender were normative. Further, only two women had their work shown in the Pavilion: Juana Francisca’s realist drawing, *Mujer abrazando a un soldado muerto* [Woman Hugging a Dead Soldier], and a series of six Surrealist engravings by Pitti Bartolozzi, *Pesadillas infantiles* [Children’s Nightmares]. See also Acklesberg, *Free Women of Spain* (1991).

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<sup>126</sup> In addition to being injured and killed by bombardments and other military operations during the war, Spanish women were imprisoned and sometimes forced to ingest castor oil (for purposes of humiliation). The extent of this violence is still being uncovered: in October 2018, it was announced that, “A judge in Argentina will examine cases of sexual assault, murder, forced abortion and the theft of children in Franco’s Spain after widening her inquiry into the atrocities committed during the civil war and dictatorship to include crimes committed specifically against women” (S. Jones).

<sup>127</sup> See Heesen (152).

<sup>128</sup> Miró’s contribution, *The Reaper* (1937), was roughly the same size as *Guernica* but was vertical rather than horizontal. Miró’s piece was lost after it was displayed at the Pavilion, probably in transit from France to Spain. An image of the mural can be viewed here:

<https://www.tate.org.uk/tate-etc/issue-22-summer-2011/hymn-freedom>.

<sup>129</sup> “[P]assage, a word that referred to the visual slippage between continuous, juxtaposed elements, conceived as an alternative to traditional renderings of spatial depth. *Passage* is a characteristic formula of Cubist painting” (Borja-Villel et al. 48–9).

<sup>130</sup> Baldassari demonstrates that Maar not only captured Picasso’s mural, but that she also manipulated her photographs of *Guernica* using collage techniques (174).

<sup>131</sup> T. Clark suggests Picasso’s Christmas 1939 poem with an “image of an eagle-bomber” as an example (“Tragedy” 47).

<sup>132</sup> Picasso composed “more than 340 poetic works, and he also penned two full-length plays” (Greenberg Fisher 129). The poems include intermedial elements and were published in *Cahiers d’Art*, alongside a preface by Breton. Picasso’s *auca* also contain poetry.

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<sup>133</sup> T. Clark refers to Picasso's sculpture paintings, such as: *Standing Nude* (1928); *Nude Standing by the Sea* (1929); *Head: Study for a Monument* (1929); *Female Bather with Raised Arms* (1929); and *Abstraction: Background with Blue Cloudy Sky* (1930).

<sup>134</sup> According to Minchom, *Le martyre de Madrid* was published on 8 January 1937 and *Durango, ville martyre* was distributed 1 May 1937, the same day "Picasso began his masterpiece, the *Guernica*," and "a day on which the French national daily press did not appear" (197). The confluence of dates leads Minchom to assert that, "when Picasso was hearing about Gernika, he was actually *seeing* Durango": "While the impact of Delaprée's *Le martyre de Madrid* lay in its powerful writing, the illustrated pamphlet *Durango, ville martyre* was full of terrible, disturbing imagery. Several of the photos are of prone mortuary victims" (202–3).

<sup>135</sup> The image used in this issue of *Ce Soir* is likely not of soldiers in Guernica, despite the article's title, "Dans les ruines de Guernica." Taro was near Madrid in April 1937.

<sup>136</sup> "Only the art publisher Christian Zervos celebrated the painting in an impeccably illustrated double issue of his avant-garde magazine *Cahiers d'Art*" (Richardson, "Different").

<sup>137</sup> Picasso died in April 1973; Franco, in November 1975. The MoMA reluctantly returned *Guernica* to Spain in 1981 (it was housed initially in the Prado, Madrid; in 1992, it was moved to its permanent site, Madrid's Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía).

<sup>138</sup> Art critic Anthony Blunt rose to prominence in the 1940s and 1950s; he was appointed Surveyor of the King's Pictures in 1945. Blunt, a distant cousin of Queen Elizabeth II's mother, also served in the British military during WWII and worked for MI5. Beginning in the 1930s, he also worked as a spy for the Soviet Union. Blunt wrote of *Guernica*: "It is not an act of public mourning, but the expression of a private brain-storm which gives no evidence that Picasso has realized the political significance of Guernica" ("Art in Paris"). Further, Blunt attacked Picasso's

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*auca*, the mural, and modern art more broadly for being out of touch (“Picasso Unfrosted”). Herbert Read responded to Blunt in *The Spectator*’s subsequent issue: “Mr. Blunt comes from middle-class doctrinaires who wish to ‘use’ art for the propagation of their dull ideas,” and suggests that Picasso’s mural and postcards were examples of modern art reaching the public (636). The two critics went back and forth over the next month. Blunt reiterated his stance: “Picasso’s art,” he claimed, is “an essentially private art, which is therefore not easily applied to public problems” (687). Roland Penrose—who was instrumental in bringing *Guernica* and *Weeping Woman* (1937) to England—also rejected Blunt’s assessment in a published letter to the editor in *The Spectator*.

<sup>139</sup> There seems to be a dispute about this particular issue: Black briefly mentions “the myth that a *Three Guineas* manuscript was sold ‘for the refugees’ and then to the Berg Collection” (ix). Marcus uses Woolf’s letters as evidence that a manuscript was sold; see Woolf, *L* 6: 314, 319. The discrepancy may be whether the manuscript in the Berg is the one that was sold to raise funds.

<sup>140</sup> Brothers demonstrates that French publications were altogether more likely to feature photographs of Spanish children than the British press (124; 176). Dalgarno suggests that the *Daily Worker*, unlike the *London Times*, was much more likely to have photographs of Spain and of Spanish children during the war (164).

<sup>141</sup> Woolf was indeed full of praise after Robeson’s performance, but her description of the artist reflects racialist stereotypes of Black Americans: “Robeson sang: a sympathetic, malleable, nigger, expressive, uninhibited, all warmth & the hot vapours of African forests” (*D* 5: 99). Robeson, in addition to being a talented performer, was ardent anti-war activist. Ever since “the Fascist invasion of Ethiopia,” Robeson argued, “the parallel between [African Americans’] own

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interests and those of oppressed peoples abroad has been impressed upon him daily” (147).

Intondi suggests that “the most stinging condemnation [of the atomic bomb] came from Robeson” (23).

<sup>142</sup> The title of Woolf’s article, Marcus suggests, comes from the repeated phrase “women must weep,” found in “The Three Fishers” (1851), a poem by Charles Kingsley, the uncle of Mary Kingsley, whom Woolf quotes in *Three Guineas*. Charles Kingsley was a journalist, clergyman, and writer; his novel *Westward Ho!*, advances the idea of “muscular Christianity,” of which he was a vocal proponent. In addition to venerating Mary Kingsley, Woolf’s citations also mock Charles Kingsley’s misogynistic notions.

<sup>143</sup> Benjamin, too, expressed optimism about mass production and wider access to cultural production. Yet Sarker suggests Woolf and Benjamin differ in their approaches: “Whereas Benjamin envisions the simultaneous creation and reflection of the masses by means of mechanical reproduction as a democratic representation by and for a wide range of people, Woolf, as writer and publisher, is quick to point out in *Three Guineas* that mechanical reproduction (especially the Press) is controlled by men” (39). Benjamin was attentive to the different ways class affects control over the means of production. Banerjee, for example, indicates that “Benjamin is all too aware that the revolutionary potential of the newspaper has not been realized” (12). I would add that, taken together, Woolf and Benjamin suggest the possibility of wide participation in various media practices while also pointing to limitations. See Benjamin “The Newspaper” (in *SW 2*).

<sup>144</sup> Clarke lists “‘Why?’, ‘Royalty’, ‘Why Art To-day Follows Politics’, ‘Women Must Weep’, ‘Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid’, ‘The Leaning Tower’ and the version of ‘Royalty’ that was rejected by *Picture Post* in 1939” as being overtly political (xvi).

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<sup>145</sup> Like journalism, radio was a lucrative venue for modernist writers to supplement their income, but Woolf's letters and diaries suggest that the BBC's scripted programming was both too conservative and stressful for her to want to contribute more frequently. Before her first radio broadcast, she wrote to Vita Sackville-West: "Just off to broadcast; not a bit nervous; more likely to be deadly bored" and made a joke about sexuality, comparing the BBC's conservatism and the openness available in letter writing (*E* 6: 609). A partial recording of her final broadcast, "Craftsmanship," is the only extant sound recording of her voice. Max Richter remediated this recording on his album *Three Worlds: Music from Woolf Works* (2017), from the narrative dance piece.

<sup>146</sup> "The L&NSWS was a feminist lobbying association . . . its Junior Council drew in younger professional women (and some men) and seems to have served for networking and career advancement" (Black 54). Of the event, "feminist peace activist Vera Brittain reported in her column in the *Nation and Athenaeum* a 'hilariously serious' happening, 'a delicious entertainment' provided by Woolf and Ethel Smyth . . . Woolf had said that women succeeded in literature because paper was cheap and writing made no noise" (Black 55), perhaps in comparison to music, which is what Smyth was speaking about. Woolf joined the Junior Council 2 November 1932 (Black 62).

<sup>147</sup> These endnotes mock academic writing and, according to Im, create separations within the text: "The text itself marks its departure from the public space the gentleman's society occupies and resituates their conversation by splitting itself into two interrelated sites: the body of the text and its footnotes" (576).

<sup>148</sup> MacKay's analysis suggests other limitations to Woolf's argument: "praise for the radicalism of *Three Guineas* should probably be tempered by the recollection that, first, it conflates two

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surely incommensurable forms of violence, and that, second, Woolf was simultaneously engaged in publishing ‘The Duchess and the Jeweller’, her story about an arriviste Jew ruined by his lust and social-climbing, and so unselfconsciously anti-Semitic that its transatlantic publication in April and May of 1938 suggests the limitations, at this stage, of Woolf’s understanding of the Nazi within and without” (29). MacKay maintains that Woolf revises her pacifism, her commitment to a Society of Outsiders, during World War II, finding that the late modernist *Between the Acts* “does not convincingly support the equations of English masculinity and the European dictatorships that seem rhetorically so powerful in *Three Guineas*” (30).

<sup>149</sup> During his military career, Robert Baden-Powell served (among other places) on the Gold Coast during Fourth Anglo-Ashanti War (1895–6), and in South Africa during the Second Boer War (1899–1902). His brother, Baden Baden-Powell, who also served in the Second Boer War, gave a lecture in 1909 outlining the potential military uses of aircraft, suggesting, “In Savage Warfare much could be done. The moral effect on an ignorant enemy would be great, and a few bombs would cause serious panics” (565). This photograph thus elicits the British military’s violent attempts to maintain colonial rule, including the use of aerial bombardments to do so.

<sup>150</sup> See Wood, *Virginia Woolf’s Late Cultural Criticism*, for a thorough account of the development of *Three Guineas*’s title.

<sup>151</sup> Sources listed in *Three Guineas*’s endnotes include: *The Life of Mary Kingsley*, *Life of Anne J. Clough*, Josephine E. Butler’s *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade*, *The Life of Sophia Jex-Blake*, *Miss Wheeton, Journal of a Governess, 1807–1811*, *The Life of Octavia Hill*, *The Earlier Letters of Gertrude Bell*, and *The Autobiography and Letters of Mrs. M. O. W. Oliphant*.

<sup>152</sup> Stavely identifies the people photographed in the five pictures (in order): Lord Baden-Powell, Earl Baldwin, Lord Hewart, and William Cosmo Gordon Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury.



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Further, she states, “these men were not only very much alive in June 1938 [at the time of publication], they were also the reigning ‘chiefs’ of the patriarchal enterprise spanning Empire, Government, Justice, and Religion” (4–5). The propaganda photographs sent by the government sometimes included “unpublishable” images (Minchom 187).

<sup>153</sup> *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003) evolved from Sontag’s Amnesty Lecture at Oxford University, “War and Photography,” given in February 2001. Sontag did not mention Woolf’s *Three Guineas* in the lecture but includes it in “Looking at War,” her *New Yorker* article that expanded her ideas from the lecture. The article was published in 2002 with only one picture, Robert Capa’s *Falling Soldier*. *Regarding* was published in 2003. There are no images in the book, but the cover is a print from Goya’s *The Disasters of War* (a series that also influenced Picasso). It is possible, given the dates, that Sontag read an edition of *Three Guineas* that did not include the five photographs of men in uniform. Wisor explains that *Three Guineas* had been published in the United States without the photographs for decades, with the images restored to the text in 2006 (in the edition annotated by Marcus). The photographs were included in British editions in 1992 and 1993. Regardless of which edition Sontag may have read, she makes no reference the five actual photographs.

<sup>154</sup> McLuhan contends that Keynes “discovered the dynamics of money as a medium” (*Understanding* 193). See also Gualtieri’s discussion of Keynes vis-à-vis Woolf. Collaging with bank notes and cheques, however, was done earlier than the publication of Keynes’s *A Treatise on Money* (1930), notably in works by Schwitters and V. Bell. I suggest that Woolf’s *Three Guineas* should also be considered an example of money being used as a medium.

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<sup>155</sup> Guineas were no longer minted at this point—the gold coins were replaced by the pound and sovereign in 1816. Guineas were still used in specific exchanges: for example, in the purchase of luxury items such as fine art.

<sup>156</sup> Three guineas, Briggs explains, was the cost of “a standard medical consultation fee: in a long and largely abandoned scene in *The Years* manuscript between Rose, Maggie, and Elvira (later, the 1910 episode), Rose counters Elvira’s arguments for contraception by pointing out the women on the street below were too poor to be able to afford it” (317). Access to birth control was thus restricted by cost.

<sup>157</sup> From Rankine’s intermedial text *Citizen* (2014), in which she addresses the 2011 murder of Mark Duggan by London police and the subsequent riot in northern London, comparing it to the beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles, CA (and the 1992 riots). The second epigraph is Lawrence’s revised caption for Panel 51 of the *Migration Series*. The original caption stated: “In many cities in the North where the Negroes had been overcrowded in their own living quarters they attempted to spread out. This resulted in many of the race riots and the bombings of Negro homes” (*JL: MS* 148).

<sup>158</sup> Some critics opt for alternate terms to describe Harlem’s riot. Abu-Lughod, for example, refers it as “the ghetto uprising” (152).

<sup>159</sup> Denning recognizes 1934–48 as the Popular Front era, and further defines it as “the insurgent social movement forged from the labor militancy of the fledgling CIO, the anti-fascist solidarity with Spain, Ethiopia, China, and the refugees from Hitler, and the political struggles on the left wing of the New Deal. Born out of the social upheavals of 1934 and coinciding with the Communist Party’s period of greatest influence in US society, the Popular Front became a radical historical bloc uniting industrial unionists, Communists, independent socialists,

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community activists, and émigré anti-fascists around laborist social democracy, anti-fascism, and anti-lynching. Along with the Socialist, feminist, and syndicalist insurgencies of the early 1910s . . . and the New Left, black liberation, and feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the moment of the Popular Front stands as a central instance of radical insurgency in modern US history” (4). Further, L. Jackson associates the Popular Front with Black American art: “A wave of young black writers and activists broke into the modern present by way of the American Communist Party’s broadly inclusive ‘Popular Front,’ or ‘People’s Front,’ strategy of the mid-1930s” (42).

<sup>160</sup> Cartoons in the *Chicago Defender* and the *People’s Voice*, for example, depicted Hitler celebrating the riots in Harlem and Detroit (in 1943) (see Esmacher 233, 235; Capeci 75).

<sup>161</sup> The people speaking from radio cars included Max Yergen (then working at the *People’s Voice*), the Rev. John H. Johnson, Ferdinand Smith, Hope Stevens, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins (Brandt 194). As Wald suggests, Petry’s criticism of these voices in “In Darkness and Confusion” is an example of how her personal politics are distinct from the *People’s Voice*: “in crafting this plot Petry was fully aware that the leaders of the Communist Part in Harlem and others grouped around the *People’s Voice* (Adam Clayton Powell was out of town) had been central to the pacification efforts she depicts in the story” (134).

<sup>162</sup> On 7 Aug. 1943, the *Chicago Defender* ran an article, “800 Notables Urge FDR Fireside Chat on Riots,” documenting an open letter sent to Roosevelt asking him to reinforce his support “to prevent outbreaks of anti-racial violence,” and suggesting that a fireside chat would “sustain the morale” of Black Americans (6). This example articulates the perception that radio broadcasts were an effective means of public persuasion.

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<sup>163</sup> Outside of the riot, however, there are multiple examples of women who actively combined civil rights work and artistic expression in Harlem during the 1930s and 1940s, including: Odette Harper Hines, Eslanda Robeson, Pearl Primus, Gwendolyn Bennett, Ruth Page, and Augusta Savage.

<sup>164</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2, homes are disrupted by public and private violence. But the purported “safety” of home is exposed differently by Black women in Harlem in the 1940s. As critics Charles, K. Clark, and Lucy suggest, the boundary between public and private is complicated, especially considering Black women’s domestic labour in the homes of White people. According to Stoeber, even the way radio programming and other mass media reinscribe dominant narratives about race within seemingly private spaces challenges the notion of home as a safe or separate sphere.

<sup>165</sup> The exact numbers of people injured and property damage estimates vary among different sources. See Leach, “Polite,” for a summary of these differences. \$5 million in 1943 is equivalent to nearly \$80 million USD in 2021.

<sup>166</sup> After the closing of the Savoy Ballroom (authorities cited concerns about prostitution), Petry wrote a rebuttal, “An Open Letter to Mayor LaGuardia,” published in the *People’s Voice* on 22 May 1943; Adam Clayton Powell likened the closing of the Savoy Ballroom to a victory for Hitler (Lowney 95).

<sup>167</sup> The 1935 Harlem riot began on 19 March, resulting from the false rumor that an African American boy had been “brutally beaten” by a store owner after being caught stealing, and that a woman who witnessed the altercation was mistreated by police while being arrested for disorderly conduct. In scale, the damage from the 1935 riot was less than in 1943—seventy-five people were arrested, even fewer were injured (no deaths), and property damage was not as

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widespread (C. L. Greenberg, “Politics” 406–8). Following the riot, La Guardia commissioned a report to uncover the causes of the unrest, but never implemented the committee’s recommendations. “The only place where the report [on the 1935 riot] ever appeared publicly in its entirety, original concluding chapter included, was the black newspaper *Amsterdam News*” (Esmacher 194). See also Lupo (87).

<sup>168</sup> Investigations into the Tulsa race riot of 1921, since re-termed the Tulsa massacre, continue. The scope of the destruction from White mob violence against Black residents and property was substantial: the outbreak resulted in as many as three hundred deaths and the destruction of thirty-five city blocks (likely the result of plane attacks). Riots in Tulsa, St. Louis, and Chicago featured what Beverly Smith describes as the “overriding characteristic of nineteenth-century race riots—the invasion of black neighborhoods by white mobs intent on avenging a perceived racial incident.” The “Harlem and Detroit Riots of 1943,” Smith further suggests, “set a new pattern, continued on a larger scale in the 1960s and later, of blacks rioting, looting, and burning within the boundaries of their own communities” (2). See Leach’s discussion of riots in Los Angeles, CA and Beaumont, TX in 1943 (“Polite” 34). Characters in Petry’s *The Narrows* (1953) also discuss the Chicago race riots. Hughes spoke with dozens of people who remembered the Chicago riot of 1919 in preparation for his never-completed sequel to *Not Without Laughter* (1930) (SL 191).

<sup>169</sup> *PM*, for example, reported how “Mayor La Guardia, in a series of radio appeals for calm, and other officials, kept repeating: ‘This is not a race riot’” (“Whole Story” 3). In the same issue, Richard Wright is also quoted: “‘I don’t think it’s a race riot—though it has possibilities of turning into one. I had the feeling it was a spontaneous outburst of anger, stemming mainly from the economic pinch’” (“Whole Story” 8).

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<sup>170</sup> Respectability politics, or the politics of respectability, is more complex than “proper” or normative behaviour. See Cooper, *Beyond Respectability* (2017) for a thorough study of the term’s usage. Luttrell, *White People & Black Lives Matter* (2019), discusses the ways notions of respectability foreclose any kind of protest, peaceful or otherwise (66). See also Maynard, *Policing Black Lives* (2017), on race, class, and respectability within the Canadian context.

<sup>171</sup> The Detroit riot began on 20 June 1943 and lasted four days. More than 700 people were injured during the riot and there were thirty-four deaths. The riot’s coverage in the *New York Amsterdam News* “emphasized the role of police in encouraging or even perpetuating violence against blacks” (Leach, “Polite” 35).

<sup>172</sup> “The 1943 Harlem riot, like the one in 1935, did succeed in bringing changes impossible to attain in calmer times,” argues C. L. Greenberg. “After the riot, La Guardia promised to fight residential segregation,” “municipal funds went to juvenile delinquency prevention programs,” and “[t]he mayor convinced the commissioner of markets to crack down on price ceiling violations in Harlem.” Further, “La Guardia established a Mayor’s Committee on Unity . . . which helped establish a State Commission against Discrimination, and helped Governor Lehman pass a state Fair Employment Practices Act in 1945.” Culturally, “[t]he Savoy reopened” (C. L. Greenberg, “Politics” 430–1).

<sup>173</sup> I draw on the long civil rights movement because, as J. Hall asserts, it suggests “civil rights unionism [or what Biondi calls the Black Popular Front] was not just a precursor of the modern civil rights movement. It was its decisive first phase” (1245). Further, the long civil rights movement “undermines the trope of the South as the nation’s ‘opposite other’”; “emphasizes the gordian knot that ties race to class and civil rights to worker’s rights”; demonstrates that “women’s activism and gender dynamics were central both to the freedom movement and the

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backlash to it”; “makes visible modern civil rights struggles in the North, Midwest, and West”; “directs attention” to the 1970s; and “construes the Reagan/Bush ascendancy . . . as a development with deep historical roots” (J. Hall 1239).

<sup>174</sup> See McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, for a thorough study of the way sexual violence against Black women, especially when police and military officers were the perpetrators, brought about many civil rights demonstrations. For example, McGuire details how the Montgomery bus boycott was the eventual result of Rosa Parks’s investigation into Recy Taylor’s assault by a member of the U.S. Army and six other men in 1944.

<sup>175</sup> Two editions of *PM* exist for 3 Aug. 1943. When there are significant differences, I use [a] to denote what I presume to be the earlier edition, and [b] for the latter. A copy of the [a] edition is in the archives at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; the [b] edition is available online through [fultonhistory.com](http://fultonhistory.com).

<sup>176</sup> Headline: (left) “Women Loot 133<sup>rd</sup> St. Dress Shop.” Captions: (top) “Women help themselves to dresses and other articles of clothing from a bashed-in shop at 133<sup>rd</sup> St. and Eighth Ave”; (bottom left) “Policeman looks over recovered loot in the W. 123<sup>rd</sup> St. Station House. It includes a rack of lamb, liquor, typewriter, groceries”; and (bottom right) “Police reinforcements from downtown in commandeered truck from Second Ave. and W. Houston St.” (“Whole Story” 14). Headline: (right) “Cops Dominate Scene at Harlem Station House.” Caption: “Policemen, firemen and highly interested spectators jam the street in front of the W. 123<sup>rd</sup> St. Station House yesterday about noon. Prisoners were transferred from here to the 101<sup>st</sup> Regiment Armory at 94<sup>th</sup> St. and Park Ave.” (“Whole Story” 15).

<sup>177</sup> Headline: (left) “Hospitals and Police Stations Jammed.” Captions: (top left) “A Negro, bleeding from head wounds, walks away from the scene of the rioting in Harlem”; (top right) “A

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man caught by police is removed through the window of a looted tailor shop at 2044 Seventh Ave.”; (bottom left) “With bandaged heads, two women walk away after being treated for injuries received in the riot”; and (bottom right) “Policemen lead a Negro, who has suffered head injuries, to the 28<sup>th</sup> Precinct Station” (“Whole Story” 16). Headline: (right) “As Hundreds Are Rounded Up After the Riots.” Captions: (top left) “John Lewis, 15, was taken to the station house wearing a silk topper and a dress coat over his own coat”; (top right) “A woman sympathizer who refused to leave the corridor of Felony Court is hustled out by police”; (bottom left) “Station house scene . . . a Negro taken in the roundup sits on the floor awaiting developments”; and (bottom right) “An arrested man carries a case of wine—alleged to be his loot—into Felony Court” (“Whole Story 17).

<sup>178</sup> Hughes’s *The Sweet Flypaper of Life* (1955) and Petry’s photo-essay “Harlem” (1949) reinforce Blair’s assessment that “virtually every African American writer of national significance during the postwar period engaged directly with the archives, practices, and effects of documentary photography” (10). For Hughes’s photo-text, which tells the story of Harlem in 1940s and 50s through one grandmother, Sister Mary Bradley, Roy DeCarava photographed Harlem, and then Hughes selected 141 of the images and supplied the text. Petry mentions both the 1935 and 1943 Harlem riots in her photo-essay, “Harlem,” which included nineteen photographs by George Leavens, “accompanied by two poems by Langston Hughes” (Wald 121). Given the ways Hughes and Petry—and Woolf—included photographs in some texts makes the absent photographs in other texts even more compelling.

<sup>179</sup> Hughes was not compensated for his contributions to radio programs put on by Office of Civilian Defense, “even though,” as Leach details, “white writers who contributed to the program were paid.” Even more, “[o]ne of Hughes’s radio scripts was rejected as too



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controversial. Titled ‘Brothers,’ it concerned the racism faced by a black sailor returning home from duty. Hughes was discouraged by this further proof that radio, like the film industry, was not open to realistic depictions of black life and concerns” (Leach, *LH* 111).

<sup>180</sup> Hughes revisits the bomb motif in “Harlem,” one of the lyrics in *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (1951): “What happens to a dream deferred? // Does it dry up / like a raisin in the sun? / Or fester like a sore— / . . . / Or does it explode?” (CP 426).

<sup>181</sup> The Jesse B. Semple (“Simple”) character first appeared 13 Feb. 1943, in Hughes’s *Chicago Defender* column. (When Hughes’s column moved to the *New York Post* in 1962, Simple reached a radically different audience). For more than twenty years, Simple featured in multiple columns, short stories, and collections. Simple discusses rioting in “Name in Print,” lamenting, “I have never been nowhere near news except when I was in the Harlem Riots. Then the papers did not mention me by name. They just said ‘mob.’” (Hughes, *The Later Simple Stories* 107). In a later story, “Wigs for Freedom,” Simple’s Cousin Minnie participates in the 1964 Harlem riot in order “to be free in my own black neighborhood” (250).

<sup>182</sup> Hughes’s poem “Ruby Brown” (1926) provides another sympathetic and complicated representation of Black women’s labour and sexuality.

<sup>183</sup> Like other socially conscious poets in the 1930s and 1940s, Hughes uses the ballad form extensively and with wide variation. B. Edwards argues that Hughes’s “Letter from Spain” (1937) draws on his translations of the executed Spanish poet Federico García Lorca’s ballads. Smethurst suggests that the section of ballads in *Shakespeare in Harlem* (1942) “plays with ‘high’ literary, popular or folk literary (e.g., the Scots ballads of Robert Burns and the *Constab Ballads* of [Claude] McKay), and popular musical (specifically African American popular

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musical) versions of the ballad, a literary form favored by New Negro Renaissance poets” (*New* 151).

<sup>184</sup> Left: “Mayor La Guardia, who went on air in attempt to stop riot.” Right: “Mayor La Guardia is shown as he conferred yesterday on the Harlem situation with Maj. Gen. Thomas Terry, left, of the Eastern Defense Command and Police Capt. Walter Harding.”

<sup>185</sup> Police are the subject matter of multiple poems by Hughes, and speakers refer to police brutality specifically in “Air Raid Over Harlem,” “How About It, Dixie,” “Beaumont and Detroit: 1943,” and “Death in Yorkville.” The latter was composed sometime after 16 July 1964, when a White, off-duty police officer shot and killed a 15-year-old in Manhattan, sparking “the worst civil disturbance in Harlem since 1943” (*CP* 690 n554).

<sup>186</sup> *Four Saints in Three Acts* also represents this type of “race-neutral” casting (the decision of producer/composer Virgil Thomson).

<sup>187</sup> Hills makes no mention of Petry’s accounts of the 1943 riot. Rather, Hills briefly notes the “shared observations” of Lawrence’s paintings and Petry’s novel, *The Street*, and further details how a reproduction of Lawrence’s *Harlem* (1942) appeared alongside the 1946 *New York Times* review of *The Street* (Hills, *Painting* 190).

<sup>188</sup> Hughes may have been so insistent about Lawrence’s contribution because his publisher had chosen a White illustrator for *Shakespeare in Harlem*. Hughes “was horrified,” Leach suggests, “when he saw that the dust jacket of his book was illustrated with dice and wishbones, which Hughes saw as tacky, stereotypical symbols of black culture” (*LH* 109).

<sup>189</sup> Hughes and Lawrence exchanged letters about *One-Way Ticket*, but nothing in them suggests Hughes pushed back on any of Lawrence’s choices. Lawrence completed eight drawings; six

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were used. At Hughes's request, Lawrence also made some illustrations for *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (1951), but they were not included in the published text.

<sup>190</sup> The six drawings form a concise narrative of their own. The first drawing, *Silhouette* (OWT 57), depicts a Black man's lynching, which is followed by *One-Way Ticket*, showing families migrating out of the South and away from such violence (63). Harlem's riot in *The Ballad of Margie Polite* typifies the inability to escape violence completely (77). This crowded scene is followed by *Too Blue* (103), featuring a single person in a sparse room. Next is a funeral procession, *Home in a Box* (117)—there is no single poem with this title, rather the title is of a series of five poems. The final drawing, *Graduation*, features a graduation ceremony (129). None of the images except *Silhouettes* and *Ballad* is explicitly violent, but none is celebratory either.

<sup>191</sup> One figure in *Ballad* is especially difficult to read in terms of gender, race or ethnicity, and this figure deserves attention: the foot immediately below her/him/them wears a man's shoe; two arms crisscross the face and body such that the police baton covers the torso; the large black hand with torn shirt sleeve might also belong to him/her/them. The marks on the hat are likely blood, but they might also be flowers.

<sup>192</sup> Headline: "Police Chase Rioter from Harlem Store Window." Captions: (top) "Motorcycles snorting, police crash over the sidewalk at the corner of 137<sup>th</sup> St. and Lenox Ave., where a store was being looted. One man is still in the store window, while others dash madly for safety. The man in the white shirt and felt hat in front of the store scooted across the street, only to be felled by a passing car. The police drew their guns and fired a few shots into the air"; and (bottom) "Same scene five minutes later: Pistols still drawn, police have restored order and form a cordon to make sure rioters don't return" ("Whole Story" 10).

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<sup>193</sup> Caption: “Cops and prisoners alike show *no trace of animosity* as another load of prisoners leaves the W. 123<sup>rd</sup> St. Station for detention at the 94<sup>th</sup> St. Armory. The big fellow in the background has a big smile for his captors, while the prisoner at the right feels camera-shy. Patrol wagons were busy through the night and early daylight hours” (“Whole Story” 6; my emphasis).

<sup>194</sup> Panels 50–2 depict race riots; Panel 50 is especially illuminating: “Race riots were numerous. White workers were hostile toward the migrant who had been hired to break strikes” (*JL: MS* 146–7); and Panel 52: “One of the most violent race riots occurred in East St. Louis” in 1917 (*JL: MS* 150–1). Earlier paintings in the series illustrate how the police prevented migration: migrants “were arrested en masse. They often missed their trains” (*JL: MS* 130–1).

<sup>195</sup> Lawrence was accompanied by the photographer Walker Evans during this trip. Evans introduced the paintings reproduced in *Fortune*. Evans’s (underwhelmed) preface and the decision to reproduce only three out of the ten Lawrence paintings indicate that the editors were significantly less excited about these than they were about *The Migration Series* (Hills, *Painting* 166).

<sup>196</sup> In composition and theme, two black-and-white drawings are like Lawrence’s *One-Way Ticket* drawings: *Slave Rebellion* (1948) and *Dixie Café* (1948). *Slave Rebellion* was published in *Masses and Mainstream*, Feb. 1949; *Dixie Café* in the *New Republic*, 18 Oct. 1948.

<sup>197</sup> Given the discussion in my dissertation and the mutual influence of Goya on both artists, it is easy to discern similarities between Picasso’s *Guernica* and Lawrence’s *Ballad*. There are, however, other visual antecedents that may inform Lawrence’s black-and-white drawings, such as Aaron Douglas’s four woodcuts, made in 1926, based on Eugene O’Neill’s play, *The Emperor Jones*. The Phillips Collection curation draws connections between Lawrence’s *Migration Series*

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Panel 16 and Kollwitz's *The Widow* (from her woodcut series *War*): <https://bit.ly/3cHTN6D>.

Comparing Kollwitz's woodcuts to Lawrence's *One-Way Ticket* illustrations would also be productive.

<sup>198</sup> Lawrence's body of work is intensely intermedial, with references to and transpositions of textiles, photography, literature, archival material, and sculpture. Claude McKay (writer) and Augusta Savage (sculptor) were among his mentors. Critics frequently note the literary quality of Lawrence's work. A 1943 review of Lawrence's *Harlem* series described his captions as "a sort of free verse" (M.R.). "Lawrence's major works are narrative, historical series," argues Nadell, "they act almost as revisionary textbooks" (144). Lawrence, too, described himself and his work in narrative terms: "I was a storyteller. I was interested in telling a story" (qtd. in Nicholas 262).

<sup>199</sup> The Harlem Community Art Center was originally directed by Savage. Bennett was director when Petry took classes. William H. Johnson also taught there (Griffin 101–4).

<sup>200</sup> Griffin details how "the *People's Voice* was a special concern for Hoover," in part because "the paper's editorial leadership was largely Communist" (92–3). Cooke, "the de facto managing editor of the *People's Voice*," was "subpoenaed by Joseph McCarthy in 1953" (Wald 110–1).

<sup>201</sup> Although Petry wrote "In Darkness" shortly after the riot, it first appeared in *Cross Section* (1947), a short-lived Popular Front publication edited by Edwin Seaver (who was later investigated during the McCarthy hearings). Petry's story had been rejected by the *Crisis* in 1944. In his letter to Petry, James Ivy, the editor, explained that while he thought the story was excellent, it would not suit the audience: "We, naturally, have no objection to the appropriate use of profanity and verbal obscenity, but our readers do, and they object strenuously when they run across such words in the *Crisis* stories" (qtd. in Jackson 144–5). Ivy's letter suggests the

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NAACP publication catered to a readership that adhered to respectability, something that Petry criticizes in the short story.

<sup>202</sup> Whether Bandy did or did not hit Collins with the officer's nightstick is an inconsistent detail. In Petry's story, the soldier grabs the nightstick from the officer—presumably to stop him from using it on the woman—and throws it across the room. The soldier and cop fight, but the soldier does not make contact (*MM* 280). Despite their central, magnified presence in Lawrence's illustration, there are no police batons in Hughes's poem. In this example and in other ways, Lawrence's *Ballad* resembles the riot depicted in Petry's story.

<sup>203</sup> *Moon over Harlem* can be viewed here: <https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/moon-over-harlem-11874>. As Gill argues, the 1943 Harlem riot “inspired” Johnson's work, “which drew from notorious news photos of children in stolen tuxedos and top hats” (330). Notably, the police officers in Johnson's painting are Black, suggesting internalized violence (Smee, however, has more recently interpreted Johnson's police differently). Like Petry, Ellison also explored racial violence through a single, suppressed voice in *Invisible Man*. Ellison “witness[ed] some of the worst rioting” in Harlem 1943, “hoarding details for his fictional account of the riot” in his sprawling intermedial novel (Gill 330).

<sup>204</sup> Headline: “Even Tragedy Has Its Lighter Side.” Captions: (top) “A Sanitation Dept. worker and a dummy burlesque queen survey wreckage at Klark's Kredit store on W. 125<sup>th</sup> St.”; (bottom left) “Sofa from a furniture store at right was left in front of grocery store on Eighth Ave. at 128<sup>th</sup> St.”; and (bottom right) “Damaged dummies go into a basement for safekeeping in front of another clothing store on W. 116<sup>th</sup> St.” (“Whole Story” 18).

<sup>205</sup> Newspapers feature in “In Darkness” and impede communication more than once. William, for example, holds the comics section in front of his face to avoid talking to Pink the morning

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before the riot. Readership among Black Americans was high—indeed, Lawrence suggests this: “In many of the communities the Black press was read with great interest. It encouraged the movement” (*JL: MS* 86–87).

<sup>206</sup> Petry’s jazz fiction includes *The Street* and “Solo on the Drums” (1947). See Devlin for an excellent discussion of the latter—in part, he argues how Petry’s short story possibly influenced Ellison’s *Three Days Before the Shooting* and the prologue of *Invisible Man*. “In Darkness and Confusion,” I would add, is an understudied example of Petry’s jazz criticism. There are, of course, other ways to interpret the blues. Angela Y. Davis, for example, has studied the expressions of subversive womanhood in the music of Billie Holiday, Gertrude “Ma” Rainey, and Bessie Smith—these topics (and musicians) were exactly what the radio restrictions were targeting in the 1930s and 1940s.

<sup>207</sup> Peterson details how Petry pushed back against mainstream depictions of Black women: “When the *Daily News*, which frequently featured racist stories, condemned Harlem as a ‘vice area’ that white soldiers ought to avoid (reportedly in concert with U.S. military warnings) Petry recorded the outraged responses of Harlem residents [in her column]. Petry further expressed her own indignation by walking a picket line with other members of Negro Women, Inc. outside of the *Daily News*” (78).

<sup>208</sup> Petry distinguishes her works from those that provide clear solutions: “If he is more pamphleteer than novelist, and something of a romanticist in the bargain, he will offer a solution to the social problem he has posed. He may be in love with a new world order, and try to sell it to his readers; or, and this happens more frequently, he has a trade union, usually the CIO, come to the rescue in the final scene, horse-opera fashion, and the curtain rings down on a happy ending

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as rosy as that of a western movie done in technicolor” (“The Novel” 36). This statement is similar to Woolf’s discussion of propaganda in *Three Guineas*.

<sup>209</sup> King first made this remark in 1967. Gwendolyn Brooks uses King’s statement as the epigraph for her poem, “Riot,” from her chapbook of the same name, which was a commissioned response to the 1968 Chicago riot that King’s assassination precipitated.

<sup>210</sup> Kahn describes the pageant as “a spectacle reminiscent of Albert Speer’s Cathedral of Light at the Nuremberg rallies” (142). He includes the *Los Angeles Times* account: ““At a signal, a low-flying B-29 skimmed over the bowl, the multicolored searchlight beams tinting its gleaming silver with pastels. As the big bomber roared over the peristyle, a terrific detonation shook the ground, a burst of flame flashed on the field, and great billows of smoke mushroomed upward in an almost too-real depiction of devastation. As the smoke snaked skyward, red and blue lights played over the white column with magic effectiveness”” (qtd. in Kahn 142–3).

<sup>211</sup> The SCAP, Diehl explains, “was the American-led military government in charge of the occupation” (46–7). Censorship began in September 1945 and ended in 1952. Dower provides a succinct definition of the SCAP, calling it “a neocolonial military dictatorship” (*Embracing Defeat* 80). More specifically: “MacArthur’s command was especially sensitive to the issue of radioactivity and other aftereffects. . . . In February 1946, SCAP confiscated and sent to Washington chilling documentary footage of Hiroshima and Nagasaki shot by the Nippon Film Company (Nichiei) in the weeks immediately following the cities’ destruction. For four years, Colonel Putnam’s media custodians routinely struck down lay and scientific reports on the effects of the bomb. Although literary works dealing with the subject were not banned outright, the maze of pre-censorship requirements made publication difficult, and until 1949, only a handful of such works appeared in print” (Takemae 389).



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<sup>212</sup> This logic—that power is at the same time entirely covert and entirely spectacle—also plays out throughout the Cold War.

<sup>213</sup> The number of tests and their documentation are both excessive: “Between 1945, when the first bomb exploded in Alamogordo, New Mexico, and November 1962, more than 200 known above-ground or ‘atmospheric’ tests were conducted by the United States military,” Bryan-Wilson details. “These tests were diligently, meticulously, even obsessively chronicled both by still cameras and movie reels” (109).

<sup>214</sup> Gabrielle Hecht suggests another notable paradox: the nuclear is figured as both exceptional and banal.

<sup>215</sup> The re-locations are both foreboding and celebratory. Newspapers and magazines tended to celebrate local accomplishments. In *Maclean’s*, more attention is paid to explaining the science of the bomb and positing what it might mean for Canadians rather than showing its actual impact on Japanese (or Canadian or Indigenous) people.

<sup>216</sup> To distinguish between publications, I use “Hiroshima” throughout to refer to the 1946 extended essay and *Hiroshima* to refer to the book.

<sup>217</sup> Schröter employs the term “monomediality” to denote the opposite of “intermediality” (“Politics”). For Schröter and other intermedial theorists, monomedia is a constructed, impossible designation, and the term is used to critique the notion (most distinctly put forward by C. Greenberg) that definitive media borders are desirable or even possible. Rajewsky explicates: “in my own understanding, the term ‘individual medium’ (*Einzelmedium*) does not per se point to any kind of ‘monomediality’ or medial ‘purity.’ Instead, in my view, what is at issue here are media that are conventionally perceived as distinct from other media . . . individual media—and this is also true of media often termed ‘monomedial,’ such as (literary) texts—are always to be

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conceived of as multimodal” (“Media Borders” 65–6n7). Like Rajewsky, I use “monomedia” somewhat differently than “single” or “individual media,” which I use interchangeably.

<sup>218</sup> “For years American officials suppressed information about the bomb’s effects (particularly its radiation effects), censored or manipulated newspaper reports, seized all photographs and film footage of Japanese A-bomb victims and declared top secret most documents relating to the decision to use the weapon. The American cover-up has been apocalyptic in at least two ways: in the grotesque human dimension of what has been suppressed, and in the relationship of that cover-up to our continuous embrace of still more destructive nuclear devices” (Lifton and G. Mitchell, “The Atomic Curtain”).

<sup>219</sup> “The conventional term used to refer to an atomic-bombing survivor, *hibakusha*, became widely used only in the late 1950s, and it was used largely as a legal definition for the purposes of allocating national medical relief to sufferers” (Diehl 3). More recently, because fallout is world-wide, “the term *hibakusha* applies not only to people in the vicinity of nuclear test sites, but to the entire human race” (Toyosaki 158). Although Toyosaki’s point is valid, I use “*hibakusha*” in this chapter to refer to the people living in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the time of the atomic bombings.

<sup>220</sup> A 1951 report frames SCAP involvement as liberating and details the extensive American media imported into Japan during the occupation: “The meaning of responsible freedom of expression in the informational media has been taught since 1945, when by SCAP directives, the Japanese Government’s interference with and control of these media was ended. The present phase of the program is the more difficult and long-range task of *developing in the minds of the people a genuine understanding and respect for individual liberties and human rights*. This is being done . . . in the schools and society through the informational media of motion pictures,

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press, periodicals, books, fine arts and exhibits” (“Semi-Annual Report” 1–2). Film carried particular importance: “the motion picture has proved to be one of the most potent of the mass media in the reorientation program” (9).

<sup>221</sup> The exhibit ran from July 2014 to January 2016 and addressed Canada’s role in the nuclear age.

<sup>222</sup> Bryan-Wilson highlights how “the US nuclear test programme and its secret Lookout Mountain corps generated more than 6,500 films”; these films were declassified in 1997 by President Clinton only to be re-classified by President George W. Bush in 2001 (114).

<sup>223</sup> In a front-page article on 7 August 1945, Shalett interprets the announcement’s tone as “given to the world in utmost solemnity by President Truman,” and that, “Not the slightest spirit of braggadocio is discernable” (1, 2). Although H. Davis seems to laud the way Truman “taunted” the Japanese with his language choices (“the worshippers of the rising sun”), his description, too, recognizes the tone as provocative rather than sombre (m 42). Boyer interprets Truman’s tone as “gloating” (*Bomb’s* 14).

<sup>224</sup> At the same time Americans were hearing the news of the atomic bomb, Boyer suggests, “Hiroshima itself was enveloped in an eerie silence that the outside world only gradually penetrated” (*Bomb’s* 4).

<sup>225</sup> Morrison describes the city as being empty: “we circled Hiroshima, and there was just one enormous flat, rust-red scar” (qtd. in Overbye).

<sup>226</sup> Toyosaki asserts that, although everyone is now *hibakusha*, “those who have suffered most are indigenous peoples,” due to the history and locations of mining and test sites, and to Indigenous uses of the land (161). The Eldorado Mine (Port Radium, near Great Bear Lake) had been uncovering pitchblende, radium, and other ores and minerals decades before, starting in

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1942, focusing on uranium on the Dene peoples' land. Mines on the Navajo Nation reserve opened in 1944. On the Laguna Pueblo land, the Jackpile-Paguate Uranium Mine opened in 1953; on the Spokane reservation, mines opened in 1954. Hecht, too, connects nuclear weapons development with colonialism ("Interview" 281).

<sup>227</sup> While studying the atomic bomb's presence in American media from 1945–1950, Boyer "was overwhelmed by the wealth of evidence" (*Bomb's* xxi). Beyond numerous news articles, American and Canadian mass media capitalized on the commercial and entertainment potential of the bombs almost immediately after they were announced.

<sup>228</sup> Although support has been waning, the majority of Americans believe that the use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was justified ("Declining Support"). Full data can be found here: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/17677/majority-supports-use-atomic-bomb-japan-wwii.aspx>.

<sup>229</sup> "The moral symmetry of [Truman's equation of the atomic bomb as a response to Pearl Harbor] appealed to many commentators and editorial writers"; "for nearly four years Japan had been the hated, treacherous enemy" (Boyer, *Bomb's* 12). Truman's arguments still have more traction than they should.

<sup>230</sup> Consider this statement from the 1946 United States Strategic Bombing Survey: "Hiroshima and Nagasaki were chosen as targets because of their concentration of activities and population" ("The Effects"). As Boyer asserts: "The argument that the atomic bomb saved hundreds and thousands of American and Japanese lives is, of course, speculative. One should note, however, that it was decisively rejected in the [Survey]," which "concluded that Japan would have surrendered 'certainly prior to 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945'" (*Bomb's* 186). Of course, nuclear weapons did not bring about the end of war. There have

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been many wars since, and, as Virilio and Lotringer suggest, the persistent threat of nuclear war brought about the shift from “total war” to the endless preparation for war.

<sup>231</sup> For further discussion of William’s language in this scene, see K. Clark (194–5). Race was certainly a factor in media coverage and in the bomb’s usage. William Lyon Mackenzie King, Canadian Prime Minister at the time, wrote in his diary on 6 August 1945: “‘It is fortunate that the use of the bomb should have been upon the Japanese rather than upon the white races of Europe’” (qtd. in Mollins).

<sup>232</sup> There are, as Boyer shows, critiques of both the bomb and these types of media portrayals among articles published in the Black press and from those in the NAACP leadership. “Roy Wilkins, editor of the NAACP magazine *The Crisis*,” for example, “linked the atomic bomb to other wartime tactics such as roasting Japanese soldiers alive with flamethrowers and attributed such barbarities to racist attitudes that viewed the Japanese as subhuman” (Boyer, *Bomb’s* 199).

<sup>233</sup> Several critics, including Boyer, have asserted that the ultimatum issued at Potsdam was unclear (*Bomb’s* 13). Yavenditti explains: “Although there is some question as to whether warning leaflets of any kind were dropped on Hiroshima before August 6, 1945, certainly they did not warn of atomic attack” (46 n83).

<sup>234</sup> *The New York Times* repeatedly depicts Hiroshima and Nagasaki as military centres. A front-page article published on 9 August 1945 claims, “Nagasaki is vitally important as a port for transshipment of military supplies and the embarkation of troops in support of Japan’s operations” (W. H. Lawrence 1). In the same article, a Japanese radio broadcast is characterized as propaganda: “The Tokyo radio yesterday described Hiroshima as a city of ruins and dead ‘too numerous to be counted,’ and, ‘The Tokyo announcer used the French phrase ‘villes demilitarizes,’ or ‘open towns,’ although Hiroshima was known to be a quartermaster depot and

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a garrison town of considerable military importance” (6). The effects of radiation were also discounted in the same issue (“70-year Effect”). In *Life*, 17 September 1945, the headline “What Ended the War” appears beside an image of the Nagasaki atomic mushroom cloud, and below the text is an image of a destroyed factory that had been “producing torpedoes” (37). Similarly, of Hiroshima it is suggested: “The bomb exploded 150 feet above Military Park” (37). Captions and images like these suggest that the targets of the atomic bombs were military.

<sup>235</sup> Baldwin describes the effect of propaganda posters on Black Americans. Because everyone in Harlem knew someone serving in the military, he claims, “It would have demanded an unquestioning patriotism, happily as uncommon in this country as it is undesirable, for these people not to be disturbed by the bitter letters they received, by the newspaper stories they read, not to have been enraged by the posters, then to be found all over New York, which described the Japanese as ‘yellow-bellied Japs’” (74). Baldwin suggests people were “enraged” not by the posters themselves, but rather because their friends and families were fighting a people they had been encouraged to hate.

<sup>236</sup> As Dower suggests, the press presence of Hirohito was, in Japan, a crucial tactic to maintain middle- and upper-class support of the American occupation (*Embracing Defeat*).

<sup>237</sup> Similarly, on 7 August 1945, *The New York Times* included photographs of production plants in Tennessee and Washington, the colonels in charge of those plants and an aerial shot of Hiroshima pre-bombing (“Atomic Bomb Sites”); of William L. Laurence (“War Department”); and of ten scientists, including Oppenheimer (“Among Those”).

<sup>238</sup> Boyer reminds the reader of *Life* magazine’s “five million-plus circulation” (*Bomb’s* 8). The 6 August 1945 issue of the magazine contains no references to the atomic bombs (it would have

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gone to press before the announcement). It does contain, however, an article by Gertrude Stein, who recounts sitting on Hitler's balcony ("Off We All Went to See Germany").

<sup>239</sup> In *The New York Times*, the first image of Hiroshima post-bombing appears on 2 September 1945. It is an aerial shot ("Blast Center"). The first photographs of Nagasaki—distant images of ruins—were published on 9 September 1945 ("Aftermath").

<sup>240</sup> Photographs of atomic mushroom clouds were immediately adapted for different contexts and continue to operate along many registers. Amid other initial descriptions of the image, Rosenthal suggests "mushroom" stayed because of it alludes to various religious and folk traditions, and because it is an apt metaphor for the meeting of science and nature. Michael Stoff suggests that Japanese survivors prefer the term *pika-don* [flash-bang] (in Ives).

<sup>241</sup> This effect has also been called the nuclear or atomic sublime (Hales). Chouliaraki traces war photography leading up to Hiroshima, arguing that WWII photographs typically imply a moral dimension that is absent in images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "If the D-Day landing images used snapshot aesthetics to introduce moral insight into war photojournalism, the dropping of atomic bombs in Japan sustained an amoral aesthetic grounded on large-scale depictions of war" (141).

<sup>242</sup> See Ch. 2 for further discussion of the Spanish Civil War and photojournalism.

<sup>243</sup> Sontag suggests that photographs of survivors are exceptional: "there are pictures whose power does not abate," such as "the faces melted and thickened with scar tissue of survivors of the American atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki" (*Regarding* 54). That so few photographs featuring these people were published in the American press is an anomaly:

"Generally, the grievously injured bodies shown in published photographs are from Asia or

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Africa. This journalistic custom inherits the centuries-old practice of exhibiting exotic—that is, colonized—human beings” (Sontag, *Regarding* 48).

<sup>244</sup> For the most part, “photographs of the effects of the bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not published in Japan until after the occupation ended in the spring of 1952,” because, as Dower argues, “occupation policy forbade even possessing such negatives or prints” (“The Bombed” 129).

<sup>245</sup> Matsushige’s are the only surviving photographs from Hiroshima taken at ground level on 6 August 1945. When Matsushige described his movements through the city that day, he recounted how he and other professionals struggled to take photographs, particularly near ground zero: “There were other cameramen in the army shipping group and also at the newspaper as well. But the fact that not a single one of them was able to take pictures seems to indicate just how brutal the bombing actually was” (“Yoshito Matsushige”). Yamahata’s photographs, more composed than Matsushige’s, are of critical interest; Masafumi Suzuki calls them “the ‘ground zero’ of atomic photography” (37). Yet, the act of being photographed—methodically, professionally—further traumatized Yamahata’s subjects (R. Jenkins 17).

<sup>246</sup> Marcoñ suggests, “it was not until the late 1960s that the [photographic] material confiscated or collected by the Americans was gradually given back to Japan” (788). Yamahata’s photographs continued to be excluded from exhibits into the 1990s (S. Yamahata 27). More recently, in the announcement of a book, *Flash of Light, Wall of Fire* (2020), and a forthcoming digital archive featuring photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Briscoe Center’s executive director stated that “the majority of the images found in the ANPM collection have never been published in America” (“Briscoe”). See Ives for an explication of the director’s initial hesitancy to publish the photographs.



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<sup>247</sup> When the first images of atomic bomb victims were published in *Life* magazine, on 10 September 1945, they appeared in the issue only after photographs of American soldiers, Japanese military officials, and uninjured people in Yokohama (“U.S. Occupies Japan”). The first image of victims, an aerial shot, is captioned: “REFUGEE TRAIN of open freight cars winds through the waste that was Hiroshima. The subdued Japs ignore plane. Japan claims that Hiroshima area is still unsafe for human beings because of radioactivity caused by the atomic bomb” (“U.S. Occupies Japan” 38). This photograph and its caption are the first indications as to the impact on survivors, but the surrounding images diminish the bomb’s severity. The photograph is one of six centrefold images; its place on the page is below an “unscarred” baseball park in Tokyo, and beside a village that “entirely escaped bombing, since it contains no industry. . . . Such peaceful havens furnished Japan with many obediently sadistic soldiers” (38–9). The opposite page features an aerial shot of Japanese children playing at a school, which also appears undamaged (39).

<sup>248</sup> The justification for such a comparison, however, is that the United States was attacked without having first declared war.

<sup>249</sup> The caption for Hoffman’s photograph: “A stone head of Christ, dislodged by the atomic blast at Nagasaki, lies before the ruins of a Roman Catholic cathedral” (36–7). In *The Beginning or the End*, Hiroshima is annihilated. Col. Tibbets (the character) circles over the city immediately after the bombing and declares, “Let’s get out of here. I feel like we’re over a dead world.”

<sup>250</sup> More precisely, the filmic void which Hersey populates is an effect of American, Canadian, and, to a lesser extent, British photo-magazines, newspapers, and American films. I do not wish to imply Japanese film and photography cause a similar filmic void. Rather, censorship under the American-led occupation prevented wider audiences from seeing cinematic and photographic

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film from Japanese producers after the bombings. For example, American forces confiscated a documentary film, *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (*Hiroshima, Nagasaki niokeru genshi bakudan no kōka*) in 1946 and only returned the film in 1967 (Shibata 6; Takemae 389; see also Hirano).

<sup>251</sup> O'Donnell, a Marine sergeant who “spent seven months photographing devastation in Japan,” could not bear to look at his photographs of Nagasaki until the 1980s; when he did, “he was so repulsed he threw himself into protesting nuclear arms” (Martin). These images were published in Japan in 1995 and in the United States in 2005 (Martin).

<sup>252</sup> C. Miller reads the poem as populated: “People are mere ‘disreputables,’ ‘ruins’ that act as ‘sentinels’ without having anything to look out for” (194). Although C. Miller contends that the exact composition date of the poem is unknown, Kinnahan argues that “A pencil note on the draft of ‘Time-Bomb’ dates its composition to the end of August 1945” (206). More specifically, the note reads: “31 August finished up before 8 AM” (Loy, “Time Bomb MS”). In the manuscript, there are no extra-wide spaces between words or punctuation.

<sup>253</sup> “Tuning” and “Time-Bomb” are notable because they do not aestheticize the bombs. The deputy commander of the Manhattan Project described the Trinity test as being indescribably beautiful: “It was that beauty the great poets dream about but describe most poorly and inadequately” (qtd. in Wellerstein, “First”).

<sup>254</sup> Loy’s literary career is complicated by numerous factors—her forays into other arts is one example of the sundry ways Loy, as Conover describes, did not fit easily into any one category (xiii). Loy composed poems in the 1940s, but they went largely unpublished and only appeared in periodicals at the insistence of Gilbert Neiman, novelist and “longtime admirer” of Loy’s (Conover 210–1). Neiman requested poems from Loy in 1960 when he was starting a literary

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magazine, *Between Worlds*. Loy sent seven poems, including “Time-Bomb,” and they were all published over the following two years. It is unknown why or how Loy chose the poems she sent, but the timing of the publication of “Time-Bomb” aligns it with early 1960s. This period, as Redding has detailed, inaugurated a breakdown in the Cold War consensus, exemplified by Kubrick’s scathing satirical film *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) (*Turncoats* 134).

<sup>255</sup> As a phrase, “tuning in” refers to the radio beginning around 1900, with figurative uses of awareness beginning in the mid-1920s.

<sup>256</sup> Baudrillard suggests that “TV and the nuclear are of the same nature” (53).

<sup>257</sup> Fitzpatrick explains: “Because we lack the direct experience of nuclear war, and because the structures of atomic language, codes and terminology are abstract and technologically unprecedented, the terms through which we know atomic weapons are necessarily rhetorical, symbolic, and affecting” (170). Fiction and the atomic bomb have a long history. As Lifton points out, “it was through reading H. G. Wells in the mid-1930s that Leo Szilard became convinced that actual atomic bombs could indeed be built” (“Psychic Toll”).

<sup>258</sup> The video of Oppenheimer speaking these words can be seen here:

[www.atomicarchive.com/media/videos/oppenheimer.html](http://www.atomicarchive.com/media/videos/oppenheimer.html). Foucault names Oppenheimer when discussing the “specific” intellectual, noting how “the atomic expert brought into play his specific position in the order of knowledge,” and henceforth became “the strategist of life and death” (*Power* 128, 129).

<sup>259</sup> Loy’s use of “crush” warrants further attention: in a much earlier poem, Loy described admirably how Gertrude Stein “crushed / the tonnage / of consciousness . . . to extract / a radium of the word” (*LLB* 94). Yet, in “Tuning,” its connotations are negative. Similarly, in 1961, Loy figures technology adversely: “The Brutal pulse / of the potential man-crusher” (“Impossible

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Opus”). These two negative uses of “crush” exemplify Loy’s post-bombing understanding of nuclear fission’s capacity for absolute destruction (shown vividly as Hersey depicts Miss Sasaki “crushed” in the blast [*H* 16; see pp. 42–3 for my analysis]). Consider, too, Foucault’s description of the individual in relation to power: “The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals” (“Two Lectures” 98).

<sup>260</sup> Loy was living in New York in 1945. She published no poetry between 1931 and 1946. Loy’s nationality shifted throughout her life, and she became an American citizen in 1946. Whereas Boyer argues that anti-war writers responded with criticism of the bomb quickly, I would argue that writers whose race, gender, and/or sexuality made their nationality more tenuous are among the immediate vocal critics of the atom bomb—such as Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Irene Orgel.

<sup>261</sup> Excentric is defined: “not placed centrally or arranged symmetrically about a centre,” for example, “a distinct excentric nucleus” (“Excentric”).

<sup>262</sup> Boyer distinguishes between science fiction writers, who produced abundant texts post-bombing, and “serious” writers, whose “muted” responses were due to the event’s magnitude, its unprecedented nature, and their own distance from the event (*Bomb’s* 250). Although Boyer contends that Stein exemplifies this stunned reaction, I read her response differently in my Introduction.

<sup>263</sup> See Shukin, *Animal Capital* (2009), for further explication of photographic gelatin.

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<sup>264</sup> During World War II, Hersey reported from the Pacific, Europe, and Moscow. His journalism generated material for his fiction works, including his first novel, the Pulitzer Prize-winning *A Bell for Adano* (1944).

<sup>265</sup> After his visit, Hersey spent much of his career arguing against the use of nuclear weapons. Further, “Hersey gave the ‘residual’ income—profits from newspaper serialization and book-club sales—to the American Red Cross,” and “later distributed his considerable Japanese royalties among his main informants” (Treglown 14, 13).

<sup>266</sup> There were, however, a few critical atomic texts circulating. When Shawn urged Hersey to write about Hiroshima in March, he may have been motivated by two other works published that same month: *One World or None*, which “immediately became a national bestseller” (Boyer, *Bomb’s* 76), and E. B. White’s *New Yorker* piece on the Bikini tests.

<sup>267</sup> The effects of radiation were repudiated by Groves in 1945, who told reporters visiting New Mexico that there was virtually no “residual radioactivity” (Yavenditti 27n9). He also claimed that radiation poisoning “‘is a very pleasant way to die’” (qtd. in Yavenditti 27). Major Alexander P. de Seversky contended in *Reader’s Digest* (Feb. 1946) that inferior Japanese construction caused the mass destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki buildings (27); and the Bikini tests of July 1946 “disappointed reporters, foreign officials, and military observers” who were hoping for scenes of massive destruction (29). Further, after “Hiroshima” came out, notable articles published in *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1946) and *Harper’s* (February 1947) contradicted Hersey’s account.

<sup>268</sup> A number of people remarked on the vast difference between the effect of seeing Hiroshima and Nagasaki in person compared with the effect of seeing photographs, including “Guthrie Janssen, correspondent for the National Broadcasting Company . . . [who] spent a day in the

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ruins of Hiroshima, described it as ‘the most terrible scene of human destruction in the world,’ a hundred times [*sic*] worse than the rubble of Berlin” (“Russia Hints” 7).

<sup>269</sup> Editors “[Harold] Ross and [William] Shawn had decided that the Hersey project must be kept top secret—even from the in-house *New Yorker* team” (Blume 110).

<sup>270</sup> As Boyer details, “during the periods of intense engagement with the nuclear threat that have occurred at intervals since 1945, *Hiroshima* has always been rediscovered as a primary text” (*Bomb’s* 209).

<sup>271</sup> The recording of the radio address is available here: [www.trumanlibrary.gov/soundrecording-records/sr61-37-radio-report-american-people-potsdam-conference](http://www.trumanlibrary.gov/soundrecording-records/sr61-37-radio-report-american-people-potsdam-conference).

<sup>272</sup> From the “approximately forty people” Hersey interviewed, he chose six with whom “he could bridge the language barrier more easily” (Yavenditti 34, 35). Many of Hersey’s principal informants have some relationship to America or the English language.

<sup>273</sup> Throughout the text, survivors experience trauma beyond comprehension. In some cases, Hersey explains to readers what the survivors had no way of knowing at the time. For example, Kleinsorge sees twenty soldiers whose “faces were wholly burned, their eyesockets were hollow, the fluid from their eyes had run down their cheeks. (They must have had their faces upturned when the bomb went off; perhaps they were anti-aircraft personnel)” (*H* 51–2). The parenthetical explanation lessens the reader’s shock, providing context (even if it is speculative—“perhaps”), and a moment of reprieve, both of which Kleinsorge would not have had. More frequently, however, the inexplicable and gruesome scenes have no direct explanation—for example, the dead infant who might have died from asphyxiation (*H* 57–8); the Nakamura children’s vomiting; and skin coming off victims’ bodies.

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<sup>274</sup> “About a week after the bomb dropped, a vague, incomprehensible rumor reached Hiroshima—that the city had been destroyed by the energy released when atoms were somehow split in two” (*H* 62).

<sup>275</sup> Shibata is particularly critical of the ways Hersey’s “historical emplotment” and characterization shapes knowledge production of the event (85). Yet, Treglown argues that Hersey’s focus on a few people is typical of the journalist’s other work (13). Boyer finds that Hersey’s method “of individualized social realism” reflects his contemporaries’ practices: “Photographers like Dorothea Lange, novelists like John Steinbeck, and journalists like James Agee had explored the impact of the Great Depression by focusing on individuals” (*Bomb*’s 204). Internal focalization is a mode particularly relevant to modernist representations of consciousness (Jahn). As in Woolf’s *Three Guineas*, one sees how this literary technique is employed effectively in *Hiroshima*. Using Genette’s terminology, I would argue that Hersey uses two different types of internal focalization: variable focalization, where different episodes are presented through the different survivors (as in Miss Sasaki’s transit through Hiroshima), and, less frequently, multiple focalization, when the same episode is presented through each of the six survivors (the bomb detonation, for example).

<sup>276</sup> As Farrell notes, “journalists relied heavily on analogy and imagery to normalize the abnormal” (33) when discussing nuclear weapons. In their report, the botanists describe the rapid growth of plants, ““as if this plant had been dropped together with the bomb”” (qtd. in Treglown 15). Hersey borrows almost the exact phrasing: “It actually seemed as if a load of sickle-senna seed had been dropped along with the bomb” (*H* 69–70). Hersey added his own figurative language to the botanists’ report: “panic grass and feverfew,” Treglown maintains, are Hersey’s creative translations of their Latin designations.

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<sup>277</sup> Japanese imperial censorship (1923–1945) was succeeded by the SCAP (1945–1952): “Japan was preoccupied with censorship before the Occupation. Writers saw themselves as exiled even at home long before the start of the Asia-Pacific War, because they perceived that there was no escape from the censor” (Abel 3, 12).

<sup>278</sup> Despite early indications that the bombs would have lingering physiological effects, numerous items in the *New York Times* disputed the impact of radiation exposure. For example, “Japanese accounts last week of continued fatal ‘radioactivity’ from the atomic bombing might have been somewhat exaggerated” (“Dead Nagasaki” 3). Similarly, *Life* contradicted what was viewed as Japanese propaganda regarding radiation toxicity: “It seemed certain that Japanese in Hiroshima and Nagasaki had died within the grotesque legality of wartime killing” (“New Mexico’s”). Even outside of the American and Japanese media, the US Armed Forces retained substantial control over the representations of radiation sickness. Wilfred Burchett, an Australian journalist who arrived in Hiroshima on 3 September 1945, had his camera, film, and the original of his dispatch taken by American authorities (Boyer, *Bomb’s* 187). Burchett’s account, which stated that ““people are still dying, mysteriously and horribly—people who were uninjured in the cataclysm from an unknown something which I can only describe as the atomic plague,”” ran in the London *Daily Express*, 5 September 1945 (qtd. in Boyer 187). It was quickly repudiated by America officials, who suggested that Burchett had ““fallen victim to Japanese propaganda”” (qtd. in Boyer 187).

<sup>279</sup> See Uchino for a more detailed discussion of Nakashima.

<sup>280</sup> If it were to happen today, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima would be illegal (McKinney et al.).



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<sup>281</sup> Siemes's report was reprinted in *Time* (11 Feb. 1946). Treglown argues, "Hersey was helped by and quotes from Siemes's piece, which also crucially alerted him to the Jesuit mission as a useful source of contacts" (14).

<sup>282</sup> Combining Sontag and Foucault demonstrates that nuclear weapons emblemize not so much the dawn of a new age but rather a continuation of colonial forms of domination. It also follows that, borrowing from Foucault, "[nuclear] power is a war, a war continued by other means" ("Two Lectures" 90).

<sup>283</sup> American troops were supplemented by British, Indian (under British rule), and Australian troops and civilians on the four main islands of Japan. Soviet troops occupied the other islands, and Russia has controversially retained control of some islands. Takemae details the breadth of censorship: "One of the Occupation's key intelligence tasks was monitoring and censoring the mass media, the entertainment media and other expressions of public and private opinion, a duty the SCAP entrusted to the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD). . . . [who] routinely opened private mail and conducted pre-publication checks of books, journals, and the press. Such actions, undertaken on an emergency basis, may have been inevitable in the early stage of occupation, but their maintenance until 1949 violated the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and thought that GHQ was committed to uphold" (167–8). Reporting on sexual violence or any other crimes committed by occupation forces was also suppressed (Takemae 67).

<sup>284</sup> Part of Hersey's portrayal of the survivors strategically includes examples of anger and anti-American sentiment. Tanimoto's rage—the first example of anger in the article—follows a particularly gruesome section in which he sees soldiers "grotesquely burned," "Sick, burned horses," and when he tries to pull a woman out of the water, "her skin slipped off in huge, glovelike pieces" (*H* 43, 45). Given Tanimoto's experiences that day, such that, "He had to keep

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consciously repeating to himself, ‘These are human beings’” (45), his anger is warranted. The final section also includes survivors’ anger, now specifically directed at Americans (*H* 72).

<sup>285</sup> There are many distinguished *hibakusha* writers, including: Hayashi Kyōko, Hara Tamiki, Kurihara Sadako, Ōta Yōko, and Tōge Sankichi. Notable writers of *gembaku bungaku* include: Ōe Kenzaburō, Sata Ineko, and Ibuse Masuji. Yet, outside of Japan, Hersey’s text continues to be more widely read than any of these Japanese writers. Shibata compares the limited circulation of Ōta and Hara’s work with the “canonization of Hersey’s *Hiroshima*,” arguing that the latter contributes to the “compartmentalization of knowledge” (85).

<sup>286</sup> “Japanese officials were able to present their people as hapless victims of a war crime, to a degree that helped them shrug off condemnation of atrocities Japan itself committed in the ‘long’ Second World War, some long notorious in the West, such as those associated with the building of the Burma-Siam Railway, others less familiar to us but well remembered in China, where Japanese incursions from the early 1930s on had involved chemical weapons, the torture of captives and the widespread use of rape as a weapon against civilian populations” (Treglown 15). Furthermore, the emphasis on peace affected *hibakusha*: “With censorship, the only safe way to mourn was by connecting Hiroshima’s destruction to peace. Accordingly, the victims, almost immediately, were made victims for peace (rather than victims of war)” (Zwigenberg 30).

<sup>287</sup> In sales figures, “Nagai’s books placed far ahead of the Japanese translation of John Hersey’s *Hiroshima*, which was nineteenth, and that only in the votes of men” (Diehl 80).

<sup>288</sup> As Diehl details, Nagai’s texts are particularly illustrative of SCAP influence. Nagai finished writing *Nagasaki no kane* in August 1946, but it was not published until January 1949, “only after Nagai had agreed to include an American-prepared appendix” (Diehl 102). The appendix, which included photographs provided by the American military of Japan’s attack on Manila, was

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intended to reinforce atrocities committed by the Japanese military and to suggest that the bombing of Nagasaki was justified. It had the opposite effect (Diehl 110).

<sup>289</sup> Much more could be said about this notable difference. At a minimum, it suggests a continued restriction of certain kinds of photographs.

<sup>290</sup> In one sense, Hiroshima's dominance also alerts one to how, as a term, it operates too broadly. As Diehl shows, many formative critical texts on the atomic bombings ignore almost everyone except Hiroshima *hibakusha*. G. Mitchell also finds that any references to Nagasaki were removed from *The Beginning or the End* (Interview).

<sup>291</sup> Dower suggests that Koreans killed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki are "double victims—exploited by the Japanese and incinerated by the Americans" (*Ways* 140). Dower also calls attention to the "virtual enslavement of many tens and thousands of so-called comfort women (*ianfu*) . . . [the] majority of them young Korean women" (124). Van Wyck compares the Korean *hibakusha* to the Dene: "Much like the Dene experience in Canada, the story of the Korean labourers in Japan (some 40,000 died in the detonations or their aftermath) is absent from the official histories of the time" (*Highway* 42).

<sup>292</sup> A brief list of other places directly impacted by the development of nuclear weapons in the 1940s and 1950s includes: Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Washington in the United States; Great Bear Lake, Northwest Territories, Fort McMurray, Alberta, Chalk River, Ontario, and Port Hope, Ontario, in Canada. The Marshall Islands is especially radioactive, having been "subjected between 1948 and 1958 to sixty-seven American atmospheric nuclear 'tests,' the largest of them equal in force to 1,000 Hiroshima-sized bombs" (Nixon 7). As of this contemporary moment, Joseph Masco has suggested that, "Every person on the planet now receives a certain amount of radiation each day produced by the cumulative effects of above-

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ground nuclear weapons tests and radioactive releases” (26). Finally, contaminants from nuclear weapons have reached even the deepest ocean trenches (Levy).

<sup>293</sup> The bomb’s development, however, relied on international cooperation; Farrell astutely describes how it was an “Anglo-American collaboration” (26).

<sup>294</sup> Zwigenberg expands on the effect of containment on memory: “the entire edifice of remembrance in and around Hiroshima was, consciously or not, built around containment” (2). “Surrendering our right to know more about Hiroshima, and later nuclear policies,” Lifton and G. Mitchell argue, “contributed to our gradual alienation from the entire political process” (“Atomic Curtain”). Such alienation extends beyond American citizens. As Chow describes America: “it tends to set the terms and criteria for the way knowledge is produced, indeed negotiated, disseminated, and normativized around the contemporary world” (*Entanglements* 136).

<sup>295</sup> See Rajewsky, “Border Talks,” for a further elaboration on not seeking to reify media borders but needing distinctions in order to perform criticism productively.

<sup>296</sup> That *Hiroshima* is a single medium is only ever marginally true and becomes more questionable once *Hiroshima*’s remediations are considered. The article uses words alone, but these words were quickly medially transposed in the months following its publication. Hersey’s follow-up, “The Aftermath,” is more explicit in its intermedial references than his 1946 text, an observation that deserves further consideration.

<sup>297</sup> W. Mitchell calls C. Greenberg’s argument that modernism is synonymous with medium-specificity “one of the most familiar and threadbare myths of modernism” and claims that “it is time now to lay it to rest” (“No Visual Media” 258). C. Greenberg articulated what he saw as an avant-garde fascination with “self-sufficiency” and “radical de-limitation” in “Towards a Newer

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Laocoon” (1940), and he repeats this claim elsewhere, notably in “Modernist Painting” (1965).

See also T. J. Clark, “Clement Greenberg’s Theory of Art” for further discussion.

<sup>298</sup> Stein re-figured the number of those (hypothetically) killed in *Everybody’s Autobiography* at 3,000. See Teo’s excellent discussion for what these shifting figures suggest.

<sup>299</sup> Riots in the United States during 1943, including the Harlem riot, are foundational to contemporary theories of riots, suggesting that their representations likely also inform how similar acts of resistance are captured and contextualized.

<sup>300</sup> Ondaatje makes explicit the racial dimensions of the atomic bombing in his novel *The English Patient* (1992).

<sup>301</sup> In 2019, President Donald Trump boasted about alleged new and classified nuclear weapons: “I have built a nuclear—a weapons system that nobody’s ever had in this country before. We have stuff that you haven’t seen or heard about. We have stuff that [Russian President Vladimir] Putin and Xi [Jinping, President of China] have never heard about before. There’s nobody—what we have is incredible” (qtd. in Woodward 185). Trump’s ostentatious comments can be compared to Truman’s atomic bomb announcement from 1945.

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