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MOBILIZING MODERNIST MAGAZINES: PETER SLOTERDIJK AND THE
TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW

by

Daniel Lee Conrad

B.A., University of Louisville, 2012

A Thesis

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Thesis Approved on

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by the following Thesis Committee:

Dr. Aaron Jaffe

Dr. Alan Golding

Dr. John Gibson

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ABSTRACT

MOBILIZING MODERNIST MAGAZINES: PETER SLOTERDIJK AND THE *TRANSATLANTLIC REVIEW*

Daniel L. Conrad

April 24, 2014

Many early examinations of “little magazines,” or avant-garde modernist publications, tend to focus on the biographical narratives of their editors or center their discussion on early versions of canonical works in order to develop a greater understanding of the body of work itself. Works like Bernard Poli’s *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review* follow this biographical model, and while well researched and informative, Poli’s study strictly focuses on the role Ford played in the publication; in doing so, it limits what can be said about the *review*’s project to the local editorial level.

This thesis, by contrast, seeks to extend modernist studies and the examination of modernist magazines into the field of post-human studies. By looking at magazines like the *review* as tools of bio-power and examining them in relation to massive communicative systems, this thesis develops a foundation to explore this moment of radical technological, informational, and cultural expansion using language developed by New German Media theorists such as Peter Sloterdijk and Vilém Flusser.

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INTRODUCTION

Any discussion of modernism must necessarily place itself in the context of modernist studies, their history, and in the case of this thesis, the directions in which the conversation might evolve. In his preface to *Little Magazines & Modernism*, Mark Morrison gives a brief overview of the history of modernist studies. Early research centered on mining reviews and little magazines for versions of uncollected work by titanic authors and the negotiation of lineages of influence and affiliations within various avant-garde scenes.¹ This project expanded the portfolios of well-known authors and added to the understanding of the network of communication that led to such prolific aesthetic variation across modernist art. The biographical nature of this work has in the past produced studies such as Poli's *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review* (1967) or Nicholas Joost's *Years of Transition: The Dial, 1912-1920* (1967); however, while interesting and divergent from previous archival endeavors, these works still offered an account focused on the local involvement of the editor. In the case of Poli's work on *the transatlantic review*, this focus on the role of the editor generated an often biographical narrative for the publication. Though well organized and illuminating, these types of investigations lack the awareness of mass-culture and the expansive project of modernism demonstrated in more inclusive modernist research such as Jennifer Wicke's.

¹ Mark Morrison, "Preface" In *Little Magazines & Modernism: New Approaches*. ed. Suzanne W. Churchill, and Adam McKible (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), xv-xvii.

By expanding modernist studies outward rather than further into the archive, scholarship is able to comment more accurately on the systemic implications of these magazines and their projects. While the archival impulse certainly adds nuance to understanding complex works and their development and close examination of archives will often reveal early drafts of works which would later become monuments, there is often a lack of context or wider awareness involved in the process. For example, this type of research in the case of Ford's *transatlantic review* reveals early versions of chapters in Pound's *Cantos*, Stein's *Making of Americans* and early iterations of *Finnegan's Wake*, all of which receive mention in Poli's text – a text which nonetheless does not consider the networked significance of the magazine itself. Though this sort of intensification of the archive can further articulate the canons of established names and add complexity, it doesn't add much to the breadth of understanding surrounding the large-scale meta-cultural project of modernism.

However, there are avenues to do that sort of larger work. In his Preface, Morrisson also quotes from an issue of *PMLA* where Robert Scholes and Sean Latham explain that “a new area for scholarship is emerging in the humanities and the more humanistic social sciences.”² In this same vein, this thesis develops the position that the field of modernist studies can also benefit from a more ‘post-humanistic’ consideration, expanding the investigation of these publications to include the mass-cultural implications of the texts and the technology being used to produce and disseminate them. Christine Stansell offers a split definition of modernism when she notes that “one story of modernism often told begins with the exiled solitary artist gazing out from his rented

² *Ibid.* xvii.

room onto the streets of the strange and unknowable city below. But another starts off with an eclectic assortment of people in a downtown café – women and men, patrician-born and barely educated, Yankees and Russian Jews – absorbedly talking, feeling their odd concourse to be in league with something new on the streets outside.”³ This thesis, though, proposes a third story of modernism: a story that is defined not only by the networks comprised of young visionaries and artists, but also by the technologies and cultural currents that made up the social *umwelt* of the time.

Jakob von Uexküll’s explanation of *umwelt*, from the German “environment” or “surroundings” describes the “biological foundations that lie at the very epicenter of the study of both communication and signification in the human animal.”⁴ This post-humanist look at the constitution of *zeitgeist* considers not only the social elements of production, but also the physical limitations and extensions of natural ability which come out of the apparatus available to von Uexküll’s subject. Agamben’s explanation of *umwelt* as being “constituted by a more or less broad series of [...] ‘carries of significance’ or ‘marks’ which are the only things that interest the animal,” and are presented to the subject as a function of the material limitations of the subject’s apparatus.⁵

In this sense, this thesis adopts a post-humanistic approach, analyzing small magazines with focus on the factors that constituted their *umwelt*, or their understanding of culture, the world, and their participation in the development of modernism as a

³ Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (New York: Henry Holt and company, 2000), 8.

⁴ Thomas A. Sebeok, “Forward,” *Contributions to the Doctrine of Signs*, (Lisse, Netherlands: Peter de Ridder press 1976). x.

⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *The Open Man and Animal*. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004), 40.

cultural moment through the apparatus of how and in what manner they exist. Rooted in post-humanist exploration, this thesis extends the field of modernist studies to include an approach that considers not only the humanist, biographically-driven story of modernism, but also the technological apparatuses that defined and regulated the development and spread of modernism. It seeks to develop an understanding of modernism as a global project of mass-culture and mass-communication; as a form of bio-power, administered over previously unreachable and potentially expansive audiences.

Because of *the transatlantic review's* nature as an international publication, it serves as especially fertile soil for considering the global-aesthetic implications of modernist publication. The *transatlantic* nature of Ford's project opens the *review* to a global perspective and affords an arena to examine modernism in a global sense (taking into consideration the obvious Anglophone-centric tendencies of modernist publishing). Peter Sloterdijk's biopolitical theories on thymotic rage, centauric thought, and mobilization-toward-mobility help to illuminate the cultural, social, and technological nuances of this particular revolutionary moment in communication. His thoughts on the nomotopic – or essentially *known* – space and the tensegral structuring of human islands also help to develop a language for discussing the cultural and social exchanges on the global scale.

Historically, academic discussions of modernist bodies have been centered around the coterie – authors living harmoniously within stable aesthetic and philosophical structures and producing art happily together. Modernist studies reveal that this is most often not the case; that authors and editors often disagreed, struggled against one another socially and aesthetically and resisted assimilation into other groups where it was called

for. Peter Sloterdijk's supposition is that this misconception of the 'house' of modernism as it were, harmonious and stable, is rooted in the mistake of erotodynamic understandings of psychopolitical bodies. In considering ecology, economy and other issues of affect which are only calculated on a mass-collective level, psychopolitical investigations seeks "not to depoliticize individuals, but to deneuroticize politics."⁶

Sloterdijk's position is that overemphasis of eros in human activity has led to a skewed understanding of social interactions – that most interactions are driven by *thymos*, or pride-like rage. Sloterdijk's thymotic political investigation offers a language to examine the complicated bodies of modernist magazines, taking into consideration the often radically violent and aggressive interactions between the titanic egos participating in the production of the work.

The first chapter offers a comprehensive review of Poli's development of the narrative of *the transatlantic review* as it centers on Ford Madox Ford's editorial role. Using letters and various biographical sources, the chapter develops a sense of the magazine's formation and attempts to approximate the aesthetic project set forth by its founders. The chapter examines both primary and secondary texts in an attempt to make sense of the nebulous history of the *review*. Chapter two then introduces the biopolitical structures proposed by Sloterdijk's model, explaining the framework of Sloterdijk's philosophy regarding "nomotopic space" and placing the *review* in the context of Sloterdijk's apparatus. The chapter further explores the intricacies of international communications and offers an explanation of Sloterdijk's non-linear system of interactions, which helps to contextualize the superstructural elements of modernist

⁶ Peter Sloterdijk, *Rage and Time*. (Columbia UP, 2010), 90.

publishing and situates the magazine within the context of international communication, aesthetics, and cultural attunement.

Chapter three returns to the role of Hemingway as an assistant editor. Though understated in Poli's account, Hemingway's role in the aesthetic development of the magazine as an international point of interest was indispensable. Again, using Sloterdijk's language, the third chapter examines Hemingway's actions relative to radical thought, or what Sloterdijk refers to as "centauric thought." The chapter then expands Sloterdijk's consideration of centauric thought to see the *transatlantic review* as a hero of the form and mobility-toward motion. Seeing the *review's* project through the lens of Sloterdijk's philosophy also grants the reader a better sense of how interactions and relationships function within Sloterdijk's "tensegral" model.

Ultimately, the project hopes to develop a foundation for a biopolitical examination of modernist magazines and small press publications. The application of New German Media theory and biopolitics allows the subject of small magazine studies to expand outward, considering in more depth the complex issues of cultural influence and social development. Because of the explosive and violent nature of avant-garde publication, it is finally the language of Sloterdijk's rage-based philosophy that serves as an excellent medium for exploring the global implications of local publishing endeavors like these small reviews.

FLUCTUATE

Ford stood beside Pound, watching a young Hemingway shadow boxing in front of a Chinese portrait in Pound's studio. "He's an experienced journalist. He writes very good verse and he's the finest prose stylist in the world," Pound explained to Ford. When Ford objected, saying that Pound had recently referred to *him* as the best prose writer in the world, Pound's reply was to simply denounce Ford as being "like all the other English swine."⁷ This was the first physical encounter between Ford and Hemingway, a meeting facilitated by Pound with the intent to arrange their partnership at the *transatlantic review*.

Both men had established themselves as competent writers and had cultivated some editorial abilities in their time as writers. Ford was older and more distinguished; a celebrated editor at the *English Review*, he had been the first to publish authors like Wyndham Lewis and D.H. Lawrence during his tenure.⁸ Ford's own writing had also been well received and he had published *The Good Soldier* in 1915. His style laid the aesthetic foundations for authors like James Joyce and Ezra Pound, who said of Ford's influence as being "the limpidity of natural speech, driven toward the just word," explaining that he had "learned more from Ford than from anyone else."⁹ Hemingway,

⁷ Jeffery Meyers, *Hemingway, a Biography*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 127.

⁸ *Ibid.* 126

⁹ Ezra Pound, "Appendix I" in *Confucius to Cummings*, ed. Ezra Pound and Marcella Spann, (New York: New Directions, 1964), 327.

who reminded Ford of an “Eton-Oxford, husky-ish young captain of a midland regiment of His Britannic Majesty,” would receive perennial praise from Ford.¹⁰ Hemingway had won the favor of other young artists in the expatriate scene, and had developed a skill set that would serve useful on the *transatlantic review* – Ford was glad to have the help.

Despite Ford’s celebrated military history – volunteering to go into service during the First World War and being gassed for his efforts in the summer of 1916 – and a reputation as a ladies’ man, he was unable to win the personal favor of Hemingway. Hemingway referred to Ford as “the golden walrus,” and found him to be unhygienic, obese, and generally unkempt. He felt that Ford was too “goddam involved in being in the dregs of an English country gentleman.”¹¹ Furthermore, despite consistently publishing glowing reviews on Hemingway’s work, Ford was never quite able to solidify a fully amicable working relationship with his assistant editor, either. Even after publishing Hemingway’s early stories – “Indian Camp,” “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife,” and “Cross Country Snow”— in the *review*, and publishing warm reviews of *In Our Time* heralding Hemingway as “the best writer in America [...] the most conscientious, the most master of his craft, the most consummate,” Ford was unable to create or maintain a functional balance between their two strong personalities in public or private.¹²

Ford certainly had positive feelings towards his assistant editor and colleague; in his introduction to *A Farewell to Arms*, Ford reflects fondly on his time in Paris and places Hemingway among “the three impeccable writers of English prose that I have

¹⁰ Jeffery Meyers, *Hemingway: Critical Heritage*. (London: Routledge, 2009), 154.

¹¹ Quoted in live B. Toklas, *What is Remembered* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), 113.

¹² Meyers, *Hemingway: Critical Heritage*. 151

come across in fifty years or so of reading,” citing also Conrad and W.H. Hudson.¹³

Ford’s further kind words, saying that Hemingway had the ability to write such that “one of his pages has the effect of a brook-bottom into which you look down through flowing water. The words form a tessellation, each in order beside the other,” were ultimately not enough to undo the ill will harbored by the other man, spurred by years of observing what Hemingway perceived to be unforgivable character flaws in Ford.

Others also noted the contentious nature of their interactions. Stein’s rendition of Ford’s and Hemingway’s imbalanced dynamic further articulates the synergistic issues that the two men experienced during their professional relationships. Stein writes, “It was Ford who once said of Hemingway, he comes and sits at my feet and praises me. It makes me nervous.”¹⁴ Apocryphal though this particular quote may have been, as part of the pool of misinformation and inflammatory writing which Stein regularly directed toward Hemingway’s constantly swelling ego, the statement by Stein would do enough to articulate something substantial about Ford’s relationships with his peers. Stephen Crane had previously attempted to defend Ford from the attacks of his peers. Of Ford, Crane had explained, “You are wrong about [Ford]. I admit he is patronizing. He patronized his family. He patronizes Conrad. He will end up by patronizing God who will have to get used to it and they will be friends.”¹⁵ Ultimately, Hemingway “felt that Ford spent all his time kissing the asses of wealthy people and then insulting those with less money to show he never kissed anyone’s ass.”¹⁶

¹³ Ford Madox Ford, “Some American Expatriates,” *Vanity Fair*, 28 (April, 1927), 64.

¹⁴ Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 220

¹⁵ Stephen Crane in John Berryman’s *Stephen Crane: A Critical Biography*, revised ed., (New York: Cooper Square press, 2001), 251.

¹⁶ Meyers, *Hemingway: a Biography*, 130.

The tension between Ford and Hemingway throughout their career, specifically during their shared time as editor and assistant editor, serves as an interesting focus for the application of Sloterdijk's social theories regarding centauric thought, thymos-driven interactions, and the ethos of mobilization-toward-mobility. These frameworks serve to explain how the project of the *review* in particular operates as an instance of biopolitical administration in various ways, as well as how this project should be considered in relation to others at the time, all of which were engaging in cultural production and education for the sake of modernist art on a scale which had previously been largely unseen. This study will return to the dynamic between the two editors of the review and its significance to the project of the publication; however, first, it is worthwhile to consider the explicit project with which Ford initiated the review on his own: a project of global communication and artistic convergence.

On the formation of the *transatlantic review*, Pound wrote, "As I see it, 'we' in 1910 wanted to set up civilization in America. By 1920 one wanted to preserve the vestiges or start a new one anywhere that one could. Against the non-experimental caution of *Dial* and *Criterion*, the *transatlantic review* was founded in Paris."¹⁷ In Ford's account, the formation of the *review* was serendipitous to say the least. In *It Was the Nightingale*, Ford reflects on the advent of the *transatlantic review*, saying that it

arose almost accidentally, though I had said that when I had been passing through Paris on my way to the Riviera an idea had passed through my mind. It was a vague sense rather than an idea... it seemed to me that it would be a good thing if someone would start a centre for the more modern and youthful of the art movements with which in 1923 the city, like an immense seething cauldron, bubbled and overflowed. I hadn't thought that the task was meant for me. But a

¹⁷ Ezra Pound, "Small Magazines," *The English Journal*, vol. xix, no. 9. (November, 1930) 698-699.

dozen times I was stopped on the Boulevards and told that what was needed was another *English Review*.¹⁸

Ford's happening across the editorial position of the *review* was indeed almost an accident. When traveling through Paris, Ford met his brother Oliver, who sought to deposit Ford at the head of a review to be funded primarily by an initial backing by John Quinn, who had made a considerable name for himself during the Joyce censorship case in New York.¹⁹

Also significant to the formation of the review was Ford's admiration for the growing assemblage of young artists and authors in the expatriate community in Paris. He saw the Parisian art scene as comparable to those of New York and London and he sought to unite them in a sort of editorial correspondence through the *transatlantic review*. Ford saw in the expatriate scene, as well as in the Parisian avant-garde scene, a spirit of literature leading him to "rejoice to think that at last in the post-war period would there exist a noisy and ferocious movement."²⁰ Ford felt that the revolutionary energy he saw collecting in the cafés of Paris could only be articulated by artists. He hoped to ignite in his readership what he generically referred to as "a critical attitude," or what Poli interprets as "a more reflective and intellectual turn of mind than the English were usually credited with."²¹²² In his pursuits during the editorship of the *English Review* as well as in the later *transatlantic review*, Ford operated

in the hope of discovering whether there exists in these islands any trace of a sober, sincere, conscientious and scientific body of artists, crystallizing, as it were, modern life in its several aspects, that these pages have been written. And for the

¹⁸ Ford Madox Ford, *It Was the Nightingale* (New York: Octagon Books, 1975), 284-85.

¹⁹ Bernard Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*. (NY: Syracuse UP, 1967), 20-21.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 181.

²¹ Ford Madox Hueffer, *The Critical Attitude* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1911), 4.

²² Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*, 5.

matter of that, it is for the definite and unashamed purpose of promoting such a school [...]²³

Ford, in both of his editorial endeavors, sought to produce what he felt to be “good” and “new” literature, but as is often the case with the avant-garde, what was largely considered both ‘good’ or ‘new’ was largely classifiable as “non-commercial.”²⁴ This would eventually be the downfall of not only the *English Review* due to a lack of readership to provide revenue, but would later lead to the early demise of the *transatlantic review* as well.²⁵

Additionally, the name of the magazine – the *transatlantic review* – offers some insight into its project or guiding intent. Originally slated to be called the *Paris Review*, the magazine was changed to *The Transatlantic Review* (later transitioned to entirely lower-case letters in order to fit on the bound cover) in order to better reflect the “‘transatlantic’ connotations [of the] special relationship young Americans had with Paris and the ‘French Line.’”²⁶ The hope was to unite through avant-garde publishing the three cultural epicenters of Paris, New York, and London. Unfortunately, Ford’s early solicitations for work to publish seemed to work against his project. In an early attempt to find material, Ford contacted Coppard about possible submissions. In his letter, Ford solicits work from Coppard, very openly states that the forthcoming *review* would “prefer not to have sexually esoteric, psychoanalytic, mystic, or officially ethical matter but won’t bar any of them obstinately,” and later offers Coppard the venue to publish any essays.²⁷ Ford later sought submissions from Eliot and Thomas Hardy as well, but was

²³ Hueffer, *The Critical Attitude*. 24.

²⁴ Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*. 6.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 6.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 25

²⁷ Richard M. Ludwig, *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*. (New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1965), 152-153.

offered little more than moral support and the suggestion that Ford make efforts to “invite young men more particularly, and keep out old men.”²⁸²⁹

Somewhat discouraged by his inability to accumulate contributions from his idols, Ford turned his focus to more American elements, and released a newly-focused prospectus for the production of the *transatlantic review*. Ford’s manifesto lays the groundwork for an intensely global project. In his “*purposes*” section, Ford expresses two main purposes of the magazine; “the first is that of widening the field in which the younger writers of the day can find publication, the second that of introducing into international politics a note more genial than that which almost universally prevails.”³⁰ Ford explains early in his declaration that “there is no British Literature, there is no American Literature: there is English Literature which embraces alike Mark Twain and Thomas Hardy with the figure of Mr. Henry James to bracket them.”³¹ Though this seems innocuous in many ways, Ford’s project takes an emphatic turn toward the global as he explains that

[t]he aim of the *Review* is to help in bringing about a state of things in which it will be considered that there are no English, no French – for the matter of that, no Russian, Italian, Asiatic or Teutonic – Literatures: there will be only Literature, as today there are Music and the Plastic Arts each having Schools Russian, Persian, 16th Century German, as the case may be. When that day arrives we shall have a league of nations no diplomatists shall destroy, for into its comity no representatives break. Not even Armageddon could destroy the spell of Grimm for Anglo-Saxondom or of Flaubert and Shakespear for the Central Empires. And probably the widest propaganda of the English as a nation is still provided by Mr. Pickwick.³²

²⁸ Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*. 31-32.

²⁹ Thomas Hardy to Ford Madox Ford, October 18, 1935, Cornell University Library.

³⁰ Ford Madox Ford, Document, courtesy Mrs. Louis H. Cohen, from her collection of the work of Ernest Hemingway, reproduced in Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*. p 37-41

³¹ *Ibid.* 37.

³² *Ibid.* 37-38.

Ford's denunciation of Dickens and his collapse of literary national identity here are steeped in tones of globalism and mass-communicative intent. His prospectus drips of the electric energy of the modernist revolutionary moment, where avant-gardes regularly exhibited symptoms of fascist thinking. Indeed, the stated mission, whether sincere in scope or appropriately exaggerated in the tradition of modernist bombast, is one erasure of other identities. Here, Ford heralds not only the diffusion of the distinction between French, English, and American Literature, but the dissolution of all nationalistic alignments of art, literary and plastic; occidental and oriental.

In his prospectus, Ford also explains the necessity of Paris for the transnational character of his project. In a section subtitled "*Why then Paris,*" Ford explains the flight of the American and Briton alike to the scene of Parisian cafés, and cites the ease with which he expects to receive international submissions with a Parisian headquarters: "You don't from here have to write to Oklahoma for contributions: from all the other proud cities you must."³³ Ford perceived an appreciation for the arts in Parisian culture, more so than he felt other countries were able to offer:

For other countries have their Tamerlanes transcendent in their halls of fame; it is only in France that you will find an equal glory accorded to all writers from Racine back to Billon; it is only in France that you will find the Arts of Peace esteemed above the science of warfare; not Napoleon or eagles on the postage stamps!³⁴

He championed artistry in his prospectus, and assured his readers that

no writer or artist will in the *Transatlantic Review* find flouting merely because he is of a former Enemy or Neutral nation – nor will any other being. *The*

³³ *Ibid.* 39.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 40.

Transatlantic Review will devote a quarterly supplement to reproductions of paintings, drawings and sculpture; and a quarterly section to the Art of Music.³⁵

Ford therefore saw the review as a venue to develop better international relations through the spread of fine arts. His desire to develop “an international ‘republic of letters’” was largely built around his position that “French influences were predominantly important in intellectual and artistic matters.”³⁶ He felt that the importance of Paris in the triangle needed to be impressed on the readership such that he ended his prospectus with the assurance that the review would “be published in Paris, London and New York.”³⁷

Because of Ford’s desire to create a global arena for art and literature, and the transatlantic focus of his prospectus, it is important to consider the implications of his *transatlantic* project on the global scale. During the run of the magazine, only twelve issues, Hemingway’s contributions to the editorial project, and to a lesser extent the involvement of Pound, would cause the magazine to have a rather volatile editorial sense. Hemingway’s perception of Ford’s success in developing an international approximation of modernism was often that Ford was not rising to the occasion. Because of the complicated editorial relationship between Ford and Hemingway, and the original intent Ford had to make the *review* a project of international scale, the following chapter introduces Sloterdijk’s discussion of global theories and human islands, wherein Sloterdijk outlines how radically different agendas may intersect in order to stabilize and mobilize populations. In this way, the chapter moves to show how the unstable editorial relationship between Ford and Hemingway can be seen as an integral factor the magazine’s social, cultural, and aesthetic importance.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 40-41.

³⁶ Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*. 41.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 41.

THE *TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW* AND NOMOTOPIC SPACE

One of the common projects among nearly all of the modernist publications and “little magazines” of the early twentieth century was the dissemination and propagation of modernist aesthetics and the ideologies of the avant-garde art scene. While it was certainly not the intent of each of these magazines to participate in the act of canon-making and contributing to the institutionalization of modernist aesthetics, magazines such as *the transatlantic review* and *The Dial* – whose success the *review* hoped to emulate in scale and kind – certainly were seeking to develop the cultural landscape through the selection and promotion of select avant-garde authors in concert with more popularly received literature of the time. Whether or not these individual publications sought to actively shape the plane of modernism, their proliferation during the early twentieth century dramatically increased the visibility of young modernist authors and their work.

In the September issue of *The Dial*, James Watson explains the distinction between two clearly identifiable categories of little magazine as seen in the period. Watson first describes magazines similar to the *The Little Review*, which sought to offer new writers a venue to publish works that would be considered too ‘avant-garde’ or experimental for more mainstream venues. As Watson explains, “magazines of this type

are often more immediately encouraging to interesting new writers, not to mention movements.”³⁸

Alternatively, magazines like *The Dial* adopted a more commercially palatable approach, attempting to strike a balance between the occasionally comical and often lofty projects of high modernism and the more approachable and economically viable products of popular culture, “mediat[ing] between the avant-garde and the general reader.”³⁹ In the March 1920 issue of *The Dial*, in a “Comment” section, the publication claims that “a magazine ought to print, with some regularity, either such work as would otherwise have to wait years for publication, or such as would not be acceptable elsewhere,” with the reservation that those difficult or else-wise unmarketable works be dispersed throughout issues filled primarily with less “impossible” readings, such that the publication could ‘soften’ the hard edge of avant-garde poetics at the time.

Ultimately, these two disparate projects would complement one another, both in their efforts -- either active or unintentional -- to shape both the aesthetic and cultural topography through publishing. *The transatlantic review*, as Ford originally envisioned it, would also try to embody the mission statement put forth by *The Dial*; Ford openly hoped to replicate the success and fashion of *The Dial* at the inception of *the review*.⁴⁰ In the latter half of the *review*'s life, under the brief leadership and occasional acts of journalistic and administrative terrorism at the hands of Hemingway (more on this to follow in chapter 3), *the review* would work to publish material which was less likely to find itself in print under the leadership of Ford (also to be expanded later).

³⁸ [James Sibley Watson], “Comment” *The Dial* 83, no. 3 (September 1927), 270.

³⁹ William Wasserstrom, *The Time of the Dial* (NY: Syracuse UP, 1963) 134.

⁴⁰ Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*, 9-17.

The significance of the role little magazines played in the developing of a national aesthetic and a sense of taste cannot be understated. Alan Golding's explanation of the meteoric rise of T.S. Eliot by way of support from *The Little Review* and *The Dial* is perhaps the best example of the symbiotic relationship between these two types of publication. As Golding explains, *The Little Review's* willingness to publish the early works of Eliot, works that would later fill the collection *Prufrock and Other Observations*, led to his perseverance as a writer and his development as a publicly known author. The role *The Little Review* played in Eliot's early career placed him in a position such that, at the time of his release of *The Waste Land*, *The Dial* and *Vanity Fair* would be in tense competition for rights to publish and distribute his work.⁴¹ Golding goes on to explain that it was the publication of *The Waste Land*, as well as an explanation of the form, which helped to saturate the poetic landscape with Eliot's work and in doing so cement him as a "cornerstone of high modernism," ultimately allowing a convergence of the avant-garde and the mainstream mass media while simultaneously allowing for a break between the institutions of high modernism and avant-gardism.⁴²

The system that emerged between these types of magazines – those interested in publishing the avant-garde artists of the aesthetic future and those more concerned with blending the boundaries between commercially viable art and high modernism – worked to smooth the edges of this often abrasive new form of aesthetic experience. According to Joost, in part due to this new balance of distribution and illumination through the networks of little magazine publication, modernist works of art were becoming not only

⁴¹ Alan Golding, "The Dial, The Little Review, and the Dialogics of Modernism," in *Little Magazines & Modernism: New Approaches*, ed. Suzanne W. Churchill and Adam McKible (Ashgate Publishing, Burlington, VT., 2007) 73-74.

⁴² *Ibid.* 74-76.

increasingly commercially viable, but increasingly valuable as well.⁴³ The establishment of Eliot's poem *The Waste Land* as a modernist classic and the gravity with which it was then and continues to be treated is simultaneously emblematic of not only the collapse of "avant-garde, high, and mass culture"⁴⁴ but of the cultural power of such publications and the scope of their networks. This moment, in many ways, is also emblematic of the larger project of these small magazines, such as *the transatlantic review* – that is, the development of a semi-standard cultural perception of modernism and the avant-garde.

The Nomotopic Space of Publishing

In his essay "The Nomotop: On the Emergence of Law in the Island of Humanity," Peter Sloterdijk develops a social theory of human nature, seeking to establish a discourse surrounding what he refers to as *nomotopic space* or "a state of affairs for which there exists no simple and convincing general term, but on which differently tinged customs, cultures, rights, laws, rules, relations of production, language games, forms of life, institutions, and habituses rely."⁴⁵ Sloterdijk's term by definition refers to a place of normalcy, or 'the usual,' but in the context he develops it refers instead to the general constellation of culture and its elements which contribute to the nature of general human consciousness. Sloterdijk's notion of the nomotopic space draws heavily on a Heideggerian sense of *Eigenzeit*, which is a hermeneutic explanation of the interaction between "insulated human groups" and culture. Essentially, generations exert themselves upon the cultural landscape, reshaping it and being reshaped and informed in the process,

⁴³ Nicholas Joost, *Years of Transition: The Dial 1912-1920* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishers, 1976), 261.

⁴⁴ Golding, paraphrasing Rainey's *Institutions of Modernism*, "The Dial, The Little Review, and The Dialogics of Modernism." 76

⁴⁵ Peter Sloterdijk, "The Nomotop: On the Emergence of Law in the Island of Humanity," *Law & Literature*, Vol, 18, issue 1, 1.

and through this dialectic reshaping of self and environment are more able to ensure their spatio-temporal relationship to “their proper time.”⁴⁶

In the case of modernist publication and little magazines, Sloterdijk’s essay offers a system of thought which serves as helpful when considering the implications of magazines such as *The Dial*, and to a greater degree magazines such as *the transatlantic review*, which sought to contribute to a sense of aesthetic unity between international communities of modernism. While Sloterdijk’s discussion deals primarily with the emergence of legal systems and the inherent systematization of life and humanity which emerges in the nomotopic space that is the network of human islands, his terminology is also useful when considering the scale and implications of these small magazines and modernist publications. Sloterdijk’s supposition is that nomotopic space is governed by *Eigenzeit* through the process of generational law. The cultural and ethical desires of each generation move to reshape and reconfigure the existing constellations, and with each generation the permutations of culture, morality, and ideology become resituated among aesthetically, ideologically, or politically affiliated islands of humanity.⁴⁷ Sloterdijk conceptualizes the network of nomotopic space as a rhizomatic structure, drawing heavily from the model supposed by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. The rhizomatic model of culture resists a systematic organization which leads chronologically from a ‘source’ to a series of cause-driven effects toward a conclusion of events. The rhizome, in contrast, is open, continuously expanding in scale and influence by way of network-based interaction. In Deleuze and Guattari’s model, endless semiotic chains are

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 2-3.

formed between agents, organizations, and other networks; any point of a rhizome can and must be connected to all relevant rhizomes within the network being considered.⁴⁸

When explaining his own variation of the systematic interaction between the various human islands, Sloterdijk relies on the visual aid of the tension integrity structure as developed Buckminster Fuller. Rather than the linear root-system of causal relationships or the infinitely increasing cloud of rhizomatic non-linear associations, Sloterdijk relies on the semi-structured nature of these “tensegrities,” which he describes as “floating spatial inventions integrated by means of internal half-timbering tensions that dissolve the principle of the supporting wall and rely instead on the stability of the tension created by the pull of bars and ropes.”⁴⁹ Sloterdijk uses this structure as a symbolic representation for the process through which independent bodies of human agents administer law. His discussion is largely concerned with the international application of law – the administration of legal action over supposedly sovereign bodies – but due to the versatility of the tensegral model, its implications are much more far reaching. In the case of little magazines, Sloterdijk’s model helps to explain the cultural tension created by the process of publishing and disseminating the work of certain authors over others with the intention of cultivating a mass culture able to adopt the worldview of high modernism or internalize an ethos propagated by the avant-garde.

Sloterdijk’s interest in the tensegral structure, as well as the model’s worth, lies in its physical description and structural function. Sloterdijk explains that

⁴⁸ Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (U Minn. Press, 1987).

⁴⁹ Peter Sloterdijk, “The Nomotop,” 4.

For a systems theory that uses the concept of system not just contemplatively but is interested in its actual operation in the construction of machines, buildings, and institutions, these innovations matter because they make explicit -- in a way that is unprecedented in the history of ideas and technology -- the meaning of systematic structures, *the securing of stability combined with adaptation to movement*.⁵⁰

Sloterdijk, visualizing the various communities and discourses of the world as floating islands of culture, aesthetic sensibilities, socio-political allegiances, each networked by way of a tether of interest or association, continues to explain the value of the tensegral model:

Wherever the human island takes shape, there arises a *normative tension* within it that testifies to the fact that there exist certain house rules -- rather imperceptible to participants (leaving aside exceptional situations); conspicuous and perplexing to strangers; and for philosophers, an occasion for thinking both about the spirit of the (positive) laws (*Geist der Gesetze*) and about the positedness (*Gesetztheit*) of institutional spirit (*von institutionellem Geist*).⁵¹

For Sloterdijk, the tensegral model demonstrates most importantly that society is governed and maintained by a network of various *tensions* rather than pressures, and that the oppositional force of these tensions allows for the stabilization of rhizomatic networks of human islands. This “normative tension” becomes, in Sloterdijk’s model, law. Applying the tensegral model to the study of early twentieth century modernist magazines and publishing, this normative tension can be seen in the individual wills of editors and committees, distributing the work of those such as Eliot in hopes of mobilizing mass culture in a particular philosophical or aesthetic direction. It is Sloterdijk’s assertion that “culture is a building,” which is a model that he suggests can be applied even to the earliest forms of human collectives. Sloterdijk’s position suggests that this model is applicable to human collectives because of its applications in

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 5.

explaining the delicate interactions between individuals. He feels that, based on the structurally and physically flexible nature of the tensegral model, a description “of stabilization through the mutual carrying of weight, or through atmospheric tension,” can be used to better understand the interactions between human islands.⁵²

Sloterdijk explains that the tensegrity as a model can vary in scale and scope when applied to various communities. Because of the focus on the tensions created in the interactions of independent agents and communities, the tensegral model resists the notion of “pressure.” Sloterdijk remarks on the inaccuracy of the common expression “pressure of expectation,” saying that cultural attunement and law-making occur as a process of *pull*. This *pull* becomes manifest through “appeals to ambition and self-respect, as well as mimetic seduction, as forms of this mode of transmission of force.”⁵³ Again, Golding’s example of Eliot’s integration to the modernist canon and the arena of mass culture serves as an excellent example for this process, wherein a readership was consistently *pulled* toward Eliot – first by way of his early publication in *The Little Review* and then later by a serialized explanation of the form of his more complicated and inaccessible work, *The Waste Land*, in what seems like an obvious attempt to further acculturate a readership towards accepting the new iteration of mass culture. Similarly, *The Little Review*’s persistence in delivering Eliot to an established readership compelled Eliot to aspire to the expectations of a supportive community and persist in his efforts, eventually developing a catalog that would reach an increasingly large audience.

⁵² *Ibid.* 5.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 6.

The appeal of the tensegral model, in both the case of Sloterdijk's consideration of law and our own consideration of the network of modernist journalism, rests in its structural and systematic stability. Sloterdijk uses the model to explain how, in a world where ethical *truth* seems unlikely, a normative system of law and social conduct can be maintained and enforced by a reluctant but highly mobile population (largely, earth) and can be systematically updated and repurposed over periods of time. For Sloterdijk, social structures are no longer buttressed by ethical weight-bearing pillars. Where Nietzsche saw morality predominantly as a 'hang over' from the pre-historic human herd mentality, Sloterdijk seems to see this hang-over as the source of all modern and social law in this this "ethicality of custom."⁵⁴ This "ethicality of custom" of course refers to a morality (or more generally a climate of particular ethos) as determined by societal norms and cultural currents. This system ostracizes those who fail to adhere to norms and participate in the zeitgeist, and by way of social currents, eventually pulls subjects into the tow of normative custom.

This explanation of internal normative tensions seems to reflect as well the process by which small magazines and journals managed to develop a mass culture that successfully integrated aspects of high modernism and accepted the presence of radical aesthetics and ideologies as put forth by the avant-gardes of the early 1920s. As Sloterdijk states directly, "Whenever the human island takes shape, there arise a normative tension within it that testifies to the fact that there exist certain house rules."⁵⁵ In the case of modernist publications, few participants managed to capitalize on the limited pools of influence offered by financial backing and stable readerships due to an

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 5.

adherence to said ‘rules.’ Through their influence and persistent focus on specific artists, authors, circles and geographical regions, individual magazines were able to create the appearance of a demand, thus supporting the expectation that readers and consumers be prepared to digest the new content being provided.

For Sloterdijk, all societies – and by logical extension, all microcosms of societal function – regardless of how rudimentary, operate as “expectation-tensegrities.” This is to say, the true moment of “pressure” only exists in the form of an imminent threat to a subject, generally in the form of either physical or bare institutional violence. Where these moments of institutional violence (in whatever scale appropriate for the “human island” in question) are able to be avoided, participants are compelled to participate by way of slight structural and social augmentations, slowly restructuring the system of tensegrities supporting the social sphere. For Sloterdijk, the process of social life seems to be full of navigating a system of “stress creating themes,” or social obligations and compulsions designed to keep participants “‘worked up’ or agitated about something or other- be it catastrophes, enemy states, or scandals”⁵⁶ or, for the purposes of analyzing the discourse generated by the practices of small magazines, the aesthetic recognition of the advent of modern technology, the issue of proper citation and proper creation, or the question of simple taste.

Indeed, the apparatus of social structure and the system of mass media and culture seem to operate by way of engineering social currents designed to guide participants peaceably rather than engaging in what Sloterdijk refers to as “rage acts.” These “rage acts” develop from the ideological position that suffering and pain can be

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 6.

deserved and even accumulated in relation to an individual's acts, and that there exists in the world an imbalance of this suffering, which requires redistribution.⁵⁷ But it seems that the majority of participants in society are capable of functioning without ever being in need of reproach in the form of institutional violence; the pull of social currents is sufficient for generating results in all but extreme cases of resistance.

Sloterdijk's discussion of all of this social attunement through the process of rage transgression and social current is in part concerned with mapping the processes of systematic life on many scales. It is perhaps more concerned with the ways in which the system is restructured and the ways in which "progress" can be defined. Sloterdijk himself believes that the general goal of modernity is the acceleration of the advent of "progress," which he defines as "the expression of movement in which the ethical-kinetic self-awareness of modern times expresses itself most powerfully... If we mention progress we mean the kinetic and kinetic-aesthetic fundamental motive of modernity, which has as its only goal the elimination of the limits of human self-movement."⁵⁸ For Sloterdijk, the mode of human existence after the industrial revolution is a state of "being-toward-movement," a process of navigating social apparatuses which compound in tensegral models to create the nomotopic space such that the potential for mobility is constantly increasing. This "being-toward-movement" is constantly seeking to extend the tensegral network; to create new connections to new rhizomes; to promote the "human movement to free oneself."⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Sloterdijk. *Rage and Time*, 56.

⁵⁸ Sloterdijk, "Mobilization of the Planet." 37.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Ultimately, the tensegral model works to support the kind of radical destabilizing actions that occasionally erupt within the nomotopic spaces of human existence. Sloterdijk's appeal to the resilience of the internally regulated and anchored systems of pressure helps explain the system's resilience and, for our purposes, its applicability to the often-destructive forces of modernism and the avant-garde. Sloterdijk's model remains resilient against the "uncanny, even devastating connotations" of mobilization as a modern ethos because of its attention to the constantly reconfiguring representation of human interactions. The model itself, like mobilization toward mobility as an ethos and the body of small modernist magazines and publications, "resists a complete positivization, it is more apt than any other to describe a 'civilizational' mechanism that uses all the modern advances in ability and knowledge, mobility, precision, and effectiveness for the strengthening and destructive process, for armament, expansion, self-empowerment, and mutilation of cohesion."⁶⁰

In order to see the value of the terminology offered by Sloterdijk when considering the space of modernist publication circa 1920, it is necessary to recognize the process of disseminating media across populations as an obvious demonstration of biopower. Sloterdijk bases all of his biopolitical assertions around the notion of the *sphere*, which Timothy Campbell defines as "the realm wherein dimensions are disclosed, one that he will increasingly link to the notion of environment and climate as essential for life (in contrast to what he will describe as natural spaces)."⁶¹ Sloterdijk begins his model with the advent of humanity exploring the cosmos, citing the first humans viewing the

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 37-42.

⁶¹ Timothy Campbell, "Chapter 3: Barely Breathing: Sloterdijk's Immunitary Biopolitics" in *Improper Life: Technology and Biopolitics from Heidegger to Agamben* (U Minn press, MN. 2011) 85.

Earth from a distance as the first to experience external space as an extension of a “uterine-social, domestic fantasy established regionally.”⁶² For Sloterdijk, “globalization is the making of the earth as man’s home inhabited by the *homo habitans*.”⁶³ This is, at its core, the process of stabilizing the nomotopic space in such a way that is insulating to human kind from the desolate exterior of our own spherule existences. In so far as Sloterdijk sees modernity as a process of motion-toward-mobility, he also sees it as a process of insulating the human from the world outside of the comfort of the human island; as a

struggle to create [...] metaphoric space suits, immunitary regimes, he will call them, that will protect Europeans from dangerous and life-threatening contact with the outside (outside understood in the nineteen and twentieth centuries as the imperial heart of darkness and as the ruinous effects of too close a proximity to one’s neighbor in twentieth century totalitarianism).⁶⁴

This sort of “immunitary regime” inarguably includes the type of systematic and clandestine acculturation of an audience to a particular readership. In Sloterdijk’s understanding, of course, ‘immunity’ and ‘immunization’ are tied to his desire for increased mobility and as such are centered on reinforcement and protection of increasing individualism. Sloterdijk rejects more global, Habermasian ideas which favor postnational constellations over modern political structures, arguing that

In this context the epochal tendency towards forms of individualistic life discloses its immunological meaning: in today’s advanced “societies” it is individuals, perhaps for the first time in the history of the convergence among hominids, who, inasmuch as they are bearers of immunitarian competencies, break away from collective bodies (which they had until that time protected) and en masse now want to separate their own happiness and unhappiness from the preservation of the form of common politics. Today we are probably living the irreversible

⁶² Peter Sloterdijk, *Bubbles: Spheres Volume I: Macrospherology (Semiotext(e), 2011)* 182.

⁶³ Campbell, “Barely Breathing.” 87

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 88.

transformation of a collective politics addressed to the security of groups with an individualist immunitarian design.”⁶⁵

As demonstrated here, Sloterdijk’s notion of immunization looks very similar to the increasing degree of factionalism which ran through the early modernist avant-garde scenes in both the United States and Europe. Further, Sloterdijk’s notion of immunitary progress considers any motion away from the dependence on community or group-based thought to be positive, and seeks to engage in “the telescoping of ecological technologies onto the body of the individual itself.”⁶⁶ This means that individuals must be constantly ‘upgraded’ to constantly interact with the nomotopic space as it changes or varies from valence to valence with regard to the spherule structures of human islands.

Sloterdijk’s view of the avant-garde and modernist move specifically is one that centers on destabilization. His perception of those artists who specifically sought to “Make It New!” was such that these artists contributed to a process of dismantling forms of community and ultimately opened up a space for populations to be corralled en masse to a particular aesthetic conclusion, thus being more easily frightened and controlled. As Campbell summarizes, “The result is a turning away from community toward something else that is based principally on the fear of not having a community or being a community – an early version of identity politics that appears as the emergency, created and intensified as innovation.”⁶⁷ With this description, it becomes easy to see how the persistence in presentation of authors, the illumination of texts and forms, and the eternal return of the text itself become instruments of redistribution of power. By examining the life and process of these publications through the lens of Sloterdijk’s biopolitical

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Campbell, “Barely Breathing” 91.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*102.

discussions of nomotopic space, tensegral structures, and the political implications of immuno-political programming, it becomes evident how these magazines were able to so dramatically shape the landscape of early twentieth-century poetics and artistic progress.

HEMINGWAY AND CENTAURIC THOUGHT

Whether it was part of an effort to live up to the mythologies surrounding him, or merely his participation in the rage-based economy of modernist art and literature of the early twentieth century, Hemingway's participation in the production of *the transatlantic review* was routinely problematic for Ford and his relationships with artists in the community. In his time editing the magazine while Ford was away acquiring funding in America, Hemingway managed to publish several issues of the *review* which would complicate interactions between the already tenuously related groups of authors and artists Ford hoped to solidify with his 'transatlantic' project. However, this complication in scope also created a unique and productive space for the project of the magazine to develop in strange, provocative directions.

In the early stages of the publication's development, Hemingway's attempts to publish Stein's largely unpublishable work, *The Making of Americans* – using the only bound manuscript version to do so – nearly bankrupted the review.⁶⁸ Hemingway's promise to serialize the six volume monolith was in every way ambitious. In a letter,

⁶⁸ Meyers, Jeffrey. *Hemingway a Biography*. (Harper and Row: New York, 1985) First ed. 76.

Hemingway explained to Stein his presentation of *Americans* to Ford, “mak[ing] it clear it was a remarkable scoop for his magazine.”⁶⁹ He promised Stein an exorbitant price for her work, assuring her that it was worth all of investor John Quinn’s 35,000 francs. Hemingway then encouraged Stein to pressure Ford in their letters to offer her more than the already lavish rate of 30 francs per formatted page in the *review*, and admitted they would never be able to foot the bill for the whole of the 9,000 page manuscript.⁷⁰ Though Ford had written Stein personally, explaining to her that he and Joyce had been serialized in the *review* without pay, Hemingway would continue to encourage Stein to pressure Ford and later Krebs for checks, despite Krebs’s protests and explanations that the magazine was (as usual) under financial duress and was only paying out “contributors ‘that needed it’.”⁷¹⁷² Hemingway further undermined the apparent legitimacy of the magazine and Ford’s administration in his correspondence with Stein, explaining that “the only reason the magazine was saved was to publish [Stein’s] stuff,” and that, should Ford and Krebs discontinue the publication of *the review* and *Americans*, he would “make such a row and blackmail that it will blow up the show.”⁷³ He accused Krebs and Ford of hedging an “old American game of letting a debt mount until you can regard any attempt to collect it with righteous indignation” and insisted that Ford’s correspondence with Stein regarding Hemingway’s original misrepresentation of *Americans* as being a short story was base deception on Ford’s part.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Ernest Hemingway, “Letter to Gertrude Stein, Paris, 17, February 1924” in *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-1961* ed. Carlos Baker (Hemingway Foundation, 1981) 111.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Ernest Hemingway, “Letter to Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, Paris, 14, September 1924” 125.

⁷² Ford Madox Ford, “Letter to Gertrude Stein, 1 September, 1924” in *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Richard Ludwig (Princeton UP, Princeton NJ, 1965) 125.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Hemingway, “Letter to Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, Paris, 10 October 1924” 126.

Though other authors and artists felt that Ford's management of the *review* played a smart line between the avant-garde and an appeal to more traditional and main-stream tastes, Hemingway saw this as being to the publication's detriment. He felt that the compromise that the *transatlantic review* struck between the traditional and more experimental work was a mistake, claiming that it oscillated between bland works which could see publication in magazines such as *Harpers* and "surrealist 'shit in French.'"75 Hemingway eventually received the opportunity to publish two issues of the magazine without the supervision of Ford, which in turn allowed him to publish the sorts of American authors he admired, as well as the opportunity to publicly attack those he felt were representative of the conservative and decidedly European elements of the publication. In October of 1924, Hemingway publicly attacked T.S. Eliot, a large source of inspiration during Ford's early efforts in establishing the *review*. Using an obituary for Joseph Conrad as his arena, Hemingway denounced Eliot and his conservative style, saying that he "would gladly grind Eliot into a fine powder if that would bring Conrad back to life."76 In the December issue of the *review*, Ford would publish a public apology for Hemingway's "bloodthirsty" statements against Eliot.77 And though Hemingway would initially resent Ford for his redaction of the attack on Eliot, he would later apologize to Eliot for his aggressions.

Ultimately, this sort of violent swing was not uncommon in Hemingway's character or his involvement with the *review*. Despite his constant protests against Ford and his practices, Hemingway's participation in the magazine was indeed a labor of love,

⁷⁵ Meyers, *Hemingway: A Biography*, 129.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 131.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

which he saw as a chance to offer under-employed writers a chance at exposure just as Pound had helped him in the past. During his tenure at the *transatlantic review*, Hemingway dedicated tireless efforts to acquiring what he saw to be quality submissions, often to the detriment of his own publications. He would complain that Ford's excursion to America was an inconvenience to his own publishing, but was ultimately grateful for the opportunity to try his hand at developing his editorial touch. Despite landing publications in Anderson's *Little Review*, Flechteim's *Querschnitt*, Walsh's *This Quarter*, and Ford's early iterations of the *transatlantic review*, he was only able to earn a net fifty dollars in 1924 from his publishing due to his time investments with *the review* and debts accumulated from failed publications in the Three Mountains Press series which he had released earlier.⁷⁸

When examining Hemingway's actions during his participation at *the review*, it is easy to read many of his interactions with others as terroristic. His steady streams of misinformation, fed both to contributors as well as investors and editors, his manipulation of the emotions of his peers, and his blatant disregard for the projects of his investors and administrators in many ways indict Hemingway as a saboteur to Ford's ambition. Still, keeping in mind the tensegral model offered by Sloterdijk, and considering the shape of the nomotopic space of publishing and international culture, Hemingway can be seen more clearly as an agent rallying for a continued mobilization-toward-mobility, as a champion of *centauric thought*.

Developed in his 1989 work, *The Thinker ON Stage: Nietzsche's Materialism*, Sloterdijk's concept of centauric thought emerges from his reading of Nietzsche's

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 140-141.

influential *The Birth of Tragedy*, resting primarily on Nietzsche's fundamental idea of the Apollonian/Dionysian dialectic. Upon this foundation, Sloterdijk makes two claims: firstly, that the nature of modernity has altered the landscape of art in such a way that we can no longer consider the Apollonian/Dionysian discourse to be a purely mimetic one, and secondly, that this theoretical apparatus is representative of a type of thought – *centauric thought* – which allows the humanities and philosophies to continuously achieve new and soaring discourses. Sloterdijk's Nietzsche is a multimodal Nietzsche; a Nietzsche of remediation; a thinker who nests disciplines, "allowing him to be a philosopher *as* an artist, or a poet *as* a theorist."⁷⁹ Because Sloterdijk's Nietzsche is one who engages in one discipline *through* another, he finds a way to subvert the rules of an otherwise standard structure of discourse. Sloterdijk believes that this process of subverting the rules by way of participating in a discipline through the actual practice of another develops a sort of "somnambulistic self-assuredness," and forges forward without regard for the standards of genre, discourse, or audience.⁸⁰ In shedding the burdens of audience and standard procedures of a discourse, this type of philosopher-artist-theorizing, or what can be simply referred to as "centauric thinking," is constantly able to rise to new and greater heights of philosophizing.

Centauric thought, which Sloterdijk ascribes to figures such as Freud, Kierkegaard, Adorno, and Foucault, can be, somewhat reductively, seen as a disregard for boundaries, either within the context of the discourse itself or in the context of a larger social scale. In Sloterdijk's interpretation, these *centaurs* have the tendency to produce violent, thrashing philosophies – thought that resists a simple interaction with the

⁷⁹ Peter Sloterdijk, *Thinker on Stage: Nietzsche's Materialism* (MN: Minnesota UP, 1986) 8.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 10.

reader, and in doing this also resists the positivistic tendency to self-criticize and qualify its claims. Sloterdijk believes that these atypical, less systematic structures of thought are ultimately more powerful than their more structurally evident counterparts; that rather than collapsing in on themselves due to inconsistency, “Nietzsche’s centaurs consistently take the wrong step – and thereby proceed upward.”⁸¹ The philosophical and artistic product of this interpretation of *centauric thought* emerges from the manifold manifestation of the philosopher/philologist/artist/aesthete which Nietzsche and his centaurs embody. That is, this sort of violent, thrashing thought which resists tethers to the audience and dismisses initial criticisms is a by-product of transgressing the boundaries of disciplines, of ignoring the demand to align with the standards of a *single* mode or process of exploration.

Hemingway’s participation in the *review* in many ways embodies the radicalism demonstrated by Sloterdijk’s interpretation of Nietzsche’s centauric figures. The obvious interdisciplinary nature of his editorial and artistic position at the *review*, as well as his work to further philosophize and create through the very performance of the persona that is *Hemingway* – the mythology that during and after his life surrounded him – are both examples of this tendency. His involvement with the magazine, though at times seemingly destructive, can be seen as a centauric progression that resisted the more rigid and well-defined systems that Ford had tried to impose on the publication by attempting to emulate earlier successful models. Hemingway’s resistance to Ford’s process and his alienation no doubt destabilized the structure of the *review* as Ford had platonically

⁸¹ *Ibid.* 12.

envisioned it, but in doing so, allowed the *review* to restabilize as something different within the tensegral structure of modernist relational aesthetics.

transatlantic centaurism

In his prospectus, Ford lays out an agenda for the *review* which seems somewhat contradictory. He outlines two main purposes – to better international relations via the proliferation of the arts, and to widen the arena for younger writers to find publication.⁸² He goes on to list significant persons expected to submit to the forthcoming review, including such names as Joyce, Cummings, Coppard, Pound, Eliot, Loy and McAlmon as upcoming contributors.⁸³ Though he presents these names as being part of his leap toward avant-garde internationalism, attempting to cultivate a discourse which welcomed the French intellectualism that had settled in the Parisian expat café communities, Ford is in reality playing very closely to his roots with the *English Review*.

The reality of Ford's efforts to make good on his word to further French literature is actually quite underwhelming. According to Poli, there is very little in the way of evidence that suggests Ford went to great lengths to secure any submissions from French contributors, or to cater to the opinions or tastes of French readers.⁸⁴ The text of the prospectus Ford released outlining the mission of the *transatlantic review* treats the subject of Paris and its culture as an interesting proposition for the consideration of Post-

⁸² Ford, "Document," 37-41.

⁸³ *Ibid.* 40.

⁸⁴ Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review*, 41.

war Anglo-Saxon artists – rather than as a strong Francophone culture in its own right.⁸⁵ The portions of the *review* that did see publication in French very rarely did anything to reflect the contemporary state of French Parisian art, and of the four French names listed on the primer for the *transatlantic review* two of them never appeared in print. The other two French contributors whom Ford had ‘anticipated’ using in his publication, Jean Cassou and Philippe Soupault, would end up having only limited interactions with the publication as well.⁸⁶

In his prospectus, Ford would explain that his stance was somewhat conservative, which would be reinforced by his solicitations of work from Eliot and his attempts to gain Eliot’s praise and support in his endeavors with the review. Ford would write in that prospectus that “[t]he politics will be those of its editor who has no party leanings save toward those of a Tory kind so fantastically old fashioned as to see no salvation save in the feudal system as practiced in the fourteenth century -- or in such Communism as may prevail a thousand years hence.”⁸⁷

As this reluctance to fully include French artistic endeavors implies, from the beginning it seems that Ford is largely intent in recreating his success with the *English Review* in the *transatlantic review*’s moment, and in doing so binds himself to the conservative, and ultimately static tendencies of an editorial position outdated by nearly fifteen years at the time. However, with the advent of Hemingway’s participation in the publication, the nature of the magazine shifted radically. The mission of the magazine

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 41-42.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 40.

was no longer centered on the aesthetic and social agenda of a single editor as it had been in the beginning but now was tempered by the strong will and ego of Hemingway.⁸⁸

As previously noted, Hemingway resisted Ford's influence and overtures of admiration, finding him too conservative, too old, and too British. When Ford allowed Hemingway the opportunity to edit the magazine outright for issues unsupervised, Hemingway immediately began to undermine the networks that Ford had established. Further, the contributions of Ezra Pound, occasionally antagonistic with his submissions to the magazine, helped to shape the sometimes self-contradictory novelty of the publication. Pound, who was prolifically involved in the modernist art scene, had involved himself with the *transatlantic review* from the beginning, but his affiliation was intermittent and loose at best. In the sixth issue of the *review*, Hemingway published an editorial under the pseudonym of "Old Glory," a reference to a caricature of American authors Ford embodied in his prospectus outlining the review. Through Hemingway's publishing and Pound's penning of the letter, the authors offered their unsolicited feedback to Ford regarding his success. Six issues in, Pound provided Ford with a register on his success for what he had at least presented to be his editorial mission. The letter reads:

Cher F.

April Number good. Especially Hem. and Djuana.

Want more of them and of McAlmon and Mary Butts.

May number not so good.

So and So: Nix. (*British Contributor*. Ed.)

Blank. Not sufficient. (*British Contributor*).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 20-22.

Dash (1) Oh Gawd. This village Idyll stuff. (*British Contributor*).

The chap on Palestrina, Cingria, quite intelligent. H.Z.K.T.= *Times Lit. Sup* rubbish. He “enjoyed articles” = plus his personal biography, touching British delight in landscape -- failed to grasp point --- ghost of Clutterbrock. (*It adds to the enjoyment of this that H.Z.K.T. and Cingria are one and the same gentleman.* Ed.)

The So and So is regular ole magazine stuff. (*British Contributor*).

Pore old Bill Exe trundling erlong: quite good on Doubleyou but rot on Why.

Best action you have is McALmon, Hemingway, Mary B., Djuna, Cingria, K. Jewett.

Willcome back and (?) manage you at close range before you bring out any more numbers.

Yours

Old Glory⁸⁹

Characteristically cryptic, Pound’s meaning here is nonetheless fairly evident in the end.

He openly criticizes Ford’s choices to promote what Pound considers to be largely conservative writing over the younger authors promised in the prospectus. Pound does more here than just illustrate discontent among the ranks of those invested in the proliferation of modernist and avant-garde aesthetics. Rather, the publication in the magazine of Pound's critical feedback, like Hemingway’s editorial resistance to Ford’s project, contributes to a clear sense of the *transatlantic review* as an instantiation of Sloterdijk’s political and social theory.

This development of the *transatlantic review* as a publication with little internal cohesion ultimately produces a magazine that attempts to operate on new levels, levels that are not straightforward or predictable. Concerning itself initially with an immense project, the *review* sets out on a course to achieve what many little magazines had

⁸⁹ Pound, “Communications,” *transatlantic review*, vol. 1, no. 6. 480.

previously attempted to do – that is, to expand a readership, to promote an aesthetic, or to educate a population. However, after generating momentum, the publication’s conflicted editorial mission, inconsistent staff, and precarious financial backings resulted in the formation of a magazine that itself was a centauric being among mere traditionalists. Where other magazines held editorial processes that balanced, checked, and self-policed, the staff of the *review* aired on the side of self-sabotage, prone to radical changes in direction, message, ethos and tone between editorial shifts. The radical, unpredictable and ideologically ambitious nature of the *review* under the guidance of its three primary catalysts, massive modernist personalities they were, demonstrates a fervor for progress that rings not only throughout modernist aesthetics but also resonates with Sloterdijk’s desire for progress in favor of stasis.

This type of radical thought as embodied in Nietzsche’s centaurs also operates well within the structural framework of Sloterdijk’s political call to action, “Mobilization of the Planet from the Spirit of Self-Intensification,” wherein he discusses the process of “movement toward an increased mobility,” or what could be referred to in more Heideggerian language as *being toward movement*. He explicitly states that “[i]f we mention progress we mean the kinetic and kinetic-aesthetic fundamental motive of modernity, which has as its only goal the elimination of the limits of human-self movement.”⁹⁰ Sloterdijk’s understanding of “progress” is one that “tears apart the old limits of mobility, [...] broadens its work spectrum” and “asserts itself with a good conscience against inner inhibitions and outer resistance.”⁹¹ Simply stated, “the only ‘step’

⁹⁰Sloterdijk, “Mobilization,” 37.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

that is progressive is the one that leads to an increase in the ‘ability to step.’”⁹² Keeping in mind the tensegral structure of the nomotopic space of human life as a model for thinking about social and cultural interaction, Sloterdijk’s theory of mobilization ultimately becomes one dependent on the process of destabilizing structures. If the tensegral model becomes static, motion itself is restricted. New and exciting networks and juxtapositions no longer emerge from the interactions of those occupying the space. Mobilization, in Sloterdijk’s view, is a simultaneously destructive and generative force that allows the tensegrity to shift its weight and position itself to connect to a new anchor. Establishing new networks, opening up new avenues for expression, and disrupting the limiting factors of developed structures are all functions of Sloterdijk’s understanding of mobility.

The militaristic sense of the word Sloterdijk chooses -- *mobilization* -- is not to be overlooked either. Sloterdijk explains that:

Mobilization is a category of a world of wars. It includes the critical process by which combat potentials at rest reach the point of operation. It is not acceptable that the repugnance toward this idea, and even more the disgust for the actual deed, make us blind to the circumstance that the fundamental kinetic pattern of this process – as self-actualization through the mission – is not at all specifically military, but rather that it expresses the fundamental principle of all modern undertakings of self-movement.⁹³

Sloterdijk understands the process of cultural production and distribution as a violent one -- a process that belongs to “a category of a world of wars,” steeped in conflict. It is important to Sloterdijk that the terminology used here maintain an awareness of the “violent core of scientific, military, and industrial leading-edge processes” when

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*40.

considering the whole of mobilization as an ethos.⁹⁴ He feels that because of the connotations of the word itself, it resists “complete positivization” and “is more apt than any other to describe a ‘civilizational’ mechanism that uses all the modern advances in ability and knowledge, mobility, precision, and effectiveness for the strengthening and destructive processes, for armament, expansion, self-empowerment, and mutilation of cohesion.”⁹⁵

The militaristic language Sloterdijk uses to describe mobilization is also useful in considering Hemingway’s participation in the cultural production of early modern publishing. Hemingway’s time as assistant editor and most especially his time publishing independently in Ford’s absence could easily be described similarly: as a moment that hoped to utilize all of the most modern advances the avant-garde could offer, and certainly as a moment of armament and mutilation of cohesion. Sloterdijk’s words here should not be seen as derisive in describing Hemingway’s efforts at the *review*. Indeed, Sloterdijk sees the “mutilation of cohesion” as a necessary catalyst for progress. In Sloterdijk’s reading, Hemingway’s destabilization of the structures of the *review* and his inflammatory interactions with members of the community would merely have served to free the *review* from its tethers to previously established social or political obligations, freeing it to develop new relationships and mobilize in new directions in order to potentially advance. Sloterdijk states that

[o]ntologically, modernity is a pure ‘being-toward-movement.’ [...] If the fundamental process of modernity promotes itself as a ‘human movement to free oneself’ then it is a process that we absolutely do not want and a movement that is impossible for us not to make. It seems that there is a moral kinetic automatism

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 41.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 41.

working that ‘condemns us not only to freedom’ but also to a constant movement toward freedom.⁹⁶

The state of “being-toward-movement” which Sloterdijk describes is also evident in the spirit of modernism. The modernist movement too was one which was widely resisted in varying capacities, both by those who sought to appeal to tradition and those who would have preferred to accelerate through the space of the many concurrent waves of avant-gardisms, each claiming to be the new champion of culture, sent to save the masses from its outdated and ignorant predecessor. Much of Sloterdijk’s language discussing the world even mirrors that of the modernists. In his essay he discusses the miracle of modern mobilization, the automobile, with Marinetti-like language.

[T]he automobile is the sanctum of modernity, it is the cultural center of a kinetic world religion, it is the rolling sacrament that makes us participate in something faster than ourselves. Whoever is driving an automobile is approaching the divine; he feels how his diminutive I is expanding into a higher self that offers us the whole world of highways as a home and that makes us realize that we are predestined to a life beyond the animal-like life of pedestrians.⁹⁷

Sloterdijk’s words here on this marvel of mobilization mirror the fetisization of the automobile seen in Futurist literature. For Sloterdijk, the cultural and political moments of modernity and modernism are deeply connected. When he tells us that “[t]he low-emission Messiah ruled in his celestial empire; with electronic ignition and ABS, with a controlled catalytic converter and turbo charger he lifted up his people to a celestial ride [...] We will have to learn the postmodern stop-and-go by the sweat of our brow,” the violent romance associated with the mobilization through the automobile hopes to convey

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 38.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 39.

the aggressive rhetoric of Marinetti as clearly and eminently as the shades of Nietzsche's 'will to power' that ring throughout his philosophy.⁹⁸

Sloterdijk's reading of modernity and modernism is valuable in two senses: it explains an aesthetic model which accounts for both the individual and the cultural experience of art and the world, and it explains how both modernism and modernity become a project of displacement. This is to say that the aesthetic and cultural projects of modernism and the industrial and cultural revolutions that accompany the advent of modernity are developed in such a way that they demonstrate *lack* or *unbalance*, most often an imbalance of power, violence, or suffering which must be righted. Understanding this allows us to more easily map the constantly changing topology of the networks of nebulous groups by means of tracking interactions and quantifying to what degree these interactions were meant to develop or destabilize systems in place.

Sloterdijk's apparatus as a whole, the system of nomotopic space, tensegral structures, rage-based economies, and centauric destabilization of systematic thought, all emerge from his Nietzschean understanding of modernity. At his outset, Sloterdijk primes his readings by questioning the zeitgeist, wondering if the appeal of Nietzsche lies in our hunger for "harder truths and the enchanting removal of restraints," and indeed the climate of modernism/modernity and the mindset of those participant in the movements seem to indicate a desire for increased mobility; for a 'removal of restraints' and an opening of definition; for a transition into a space more aware of the plurality of modern and post-modern culture.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 39.

⁹⁹ Sloterdijk, *Thinker on Stage*, 5.

In Schulte-Sasse's opinion, the Nietzschean shades of Sloterdijk's argument – its roots in cynical philosophy and its relationship to the work done by Nietzsche's Apollonian/Dionysian dialectic – “introduces the possibility of transcending agnostic individualism; as such it is a precondition for the acceptance of otherness.”¹⁰⁰ The overcoming of ‘agnostic individualism’ is important for both the project of cultural and political stabilization and the continued development of an artistic community. The agnostic individualism which Schulte-Sasse observes as a threat refers to the continuous and insulating turn inward toward introspection, or the perpetual strengthening of social and political structures to establish a more permanent bond. The problem with maintaining and sustaining these sorts of connections within the society (using Sloterdijk's tensegral model) is that stasis prevents the agent from advancing and thus affords them no motion-toward-mobility. Rather than being-toward-movement, this sort of being only secures that the current structures remain stable, but in a world where all agents are constantly seeking to reestablish themselves in a more dynamic or potent position, those seeking to simply maintain are doomed to be exploited or left behind. The initial understanding of *otherness* which comes from this sort of oppositional structuring is important, but in Sloterdijk's model, the *other* has no evaluative weight – it is purely topological, designed to help understand the separation from one body from the next; to define the boundaries of one shorthand and its associated network from an entirely separate network.

¹⁰⁰ Schulte-Sasse, Jochen, “Forward” to *Thinker on Stage*, (MN: Minn UP, 1986). xvii.

CLOSING CHAPTER: DIGRESSIONS

This exploration of *the transatlantic review* is far from complete, and the application of Sloterdijk's theory in the previous chapters is only roughly sketched out, but the applicability of his philosophy is undeniable. The explosion of modernist magazine studies into the realm of biopower and mass-media studies illuminates the gravity of even these obscure artifacts of artistic production at the turn of the twentieth century. Considering the emergence of a global culture that occurred during that fractious period, and the prolific and often lofty goals perused by the authors and artists of the moment, a prolific and massive approach must be used to fully grasp the scale and significance of the subject.

In particular, Sloterdijk's model of rage-based economics applies directly to the violent nature of the modernist cultural moment. It seems that his supposition that "rage (together with its thymotic siblings, pride, the need for recognition, and resentment) is a basic [...] in the ecosystem of affects, whether interpersonal, political, or cultural" applies as much to discussions of avant-garde displacement of cultural or aesthetic opinion as it does to the violent rhetoric of the communist revolutions or his readings of systemic violence at the hands of industrialized culture.¹⁰¹ Indeed, the modernist environment seems to be one forged in the fires of Sloterdijk's thymotic politics, and

¹⁰¹ Sloterdijk, *Rage and Time*, 227.

reading its agents through his philosophical model produces dramatic and telling observations.

The potential application of biopolitical and digital media studies to the field of modernist studies is one that extends far beyond the initial forays of this project. The dynamic and aggressive rhetorics of the experimental modernist movements and the participants of those movements offer a rich subject to expound upon, particularly using the German New Media theorists in order to explicate the facets of the media explosion which occurred at the turn of the twentieth century. Friedrich Kittler's observations on the cultural and nomotopic implications of inventions of the period that augmented the way we produce, exchange, store and perceive information (the typewriter, the gramophone, or the advent of film) would contribute extensively to an understanding of the cultural and communicative contexts of the work produced at this time. Further articulated by Vilém Flusser's observations on mass media and communication, the international contexts of Modernist studies would offer insights to the way mass culture transitioned from Romantic and conservative values of the late 1800s to the increasingly progressive values of the early and mid-1900s.

A post-humanities-informed reading of modernist publications and magazines is ultimately facilitated by the network-theory approach of biopolitical modernist studies and extends the reading of modernist work in several directions. The work represented here is only a fraction of the potential explosion of modernist studies into the superstructural level. By transcending the local level of authorial involvement and biographical focus, we are able to extend our understanding of the modernist magazine on a larger cultural scale. We are able, more importantly, to see how the efforts of

relevant authors and artists shaped the rapidly extending spheres of influence that altered the state of aesthetic and sociocultural productions in the period. By examining this context, we can see to what extent these individuals were able to manipulate massive audiences, cultivate carefully tuned tastes, and prepare individuals for the massive shifts in media, culture, and any manner of identity that the constellation of industrial, cultural, technological, and aesthetic revolution that the turn of the century would bring.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Daniel Conrad
6104 Whispering Hills Blvd, Louisville, KY 40219
(502)418-5645 / dlconr02@louisville.edu

Degrees

B.A. English, Minor in Philosophy, University of Louisville, KY – Summer 2012

M.A. English, University of Louisville, KY – in progress

University Experience

Undergraduate Intern: Conference – Braaaains: Professors vs. Zombies, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, 13-14 April 2012

Graduate Intern: Ideas 2 Action discussion board, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, May 2012

Graduate Intern: Conference intern - Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, 20-22 February 2013

Graduate Intern: Digital Theory Lab – University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, August 2012- Present

Graduate Thesis: Completed defense of graduate thesis, titled “Mobilizing Modernist Magazines: Peter Sloterdijk and the *transatlantic review*,” Spring 2014, advisor Dr. Aaron Jaffe.

Scholarships & Awards

University of Louisville Trustees Award (2008-2012) – partial tuition for B.A.

Employment Experience

University of Louisville, Louisville KY – August 2012 through May 2013

Graduate Teaching Assistant; responsibilities included working with students at the Writing Center in one-on-one teaching.

University Of Louisville, Louisville KY – August 2013 through May 2014

Associate Instructor; taught two sections of English 101: Intro to college writing and two sections of English 102: Intermediate college writing.

Related Experience

Assistant Editor/Intern Coordinator: *Miracle Monocle Online Literary Magazine*,
University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, August 2011- 2012

First Year Graduate Student Mentor: Grad Student mentoring program, University of
Louisville, Louisville, KY, August 2013-Present