

Darren Hughes
February 14, 2003
Dissertation Prospectus

Committee: Dr. Stanton Garner, Jr., Chair
Dr. Charles Maland
Dr. Amy Elias
Dr. G. Kurt Piehler

**True Praxis: The American Left and the Problems
of History in Cold War Literature**

In the opening scene of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America: Perestroika* (1992), Aleksii Antedilluvianovich Prelapsarianov, "the World's Oldest Living Bolshevik," stands alone at a podium, his delicate frame dwarfed by a great red flag hanging to the rear of the stage. Described by Kushner as "unimaginably old and totally blind," Prelapsarianov addresses an unidentified audience at the Kremlin at a critical moment in history. It is 1986, Mikhael Gorbachev is General Secretary, and change is in the air. Alternately impassioned and disillusioned, the old Bolshevik's speech is a nostalgic but strangely inspiring and poetic remembrance of Marxist idealism. Referring to the legions of reformers who surround him, he asks: "Do they have, as we did, a beautiful Theory, as bold, as Grand, as comprehensive a construct . . . ?" In the age of late capitalism—of "Market Incentives," "American Cheeseburgers," and "NEPmen"—Prelapsarianov greets the inevitable coming of Perestroika by mourning the impossibility of "True Praxis": "True Theory married to Actual Life. . . . You who live in this Sour Little Age cannot imagine the grandeur of the prospect we gazed upon: like standing atop the highest peak in the mighty Caucasus, and viewing in one all-knowing glance the mountainous, granite order of creation. You cannot imagine it. I weep for you" (14).

In the revolutionary's speech, Kushner captures the central dilemma that has come to characterize the political left during the postwar era. Having begun the century

with an Enlightenment faith in the Marxist narrative of historical progress, a faith that appeared to have become fully realized in global revolution, the left has been forced repeatedly to rewrite that narrative throughout the Cold War and beyond. My primary goal in this dissertation is to map a trajectory of social, political, and aesthetic change as evidenced in the literature of eight American authors whose work interrogates left-leaning political thought particular to their era. I view each of their projects as representations of the American left's attempts to discover "true praxis," the symbiotic mating of sound, intellectual theory with effective action. Because my primary concerns are with grand, overarching developments, I have decided to survey a relatively large field of texts, pairing authors so as to compare and contrast varying approaches to similar conditions: Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953) and *After the Fall* (1964) and Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* (1968), E. L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel* (1971) and Robert Coover's *The Public Burning* (1977), Ishmael Reed's *The Terrible Twos* (1982) and *The Terrible Threes* (1989) and Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* (1993), Don DeLillo's *Underworld* (1997) and Philip Roth's "American Trilogy" (1997, 1998, 2000).

As these texts illustrate, any artistic representation of the American Cold War left must inevitably come to terms with the left's waning energies, its contradictions, and, ultimately, its failures. My project will situate this condition within the context of what I am for now loosely calling "the problems of history." On the most literal level, of course, the left's greatest problem is history's failure to unravel as Marx had predicted it would. The Great Depression did *not* incite proletarian revolution; the Soviet experiment did *not* result in a model of Socialist Utopia; America's social, political, and economic

structures did *not* collapse under the weight of late capitalism. With its most essential theoretical foundations undermined, the left has been unmoored, floating through various and often competing incarnations, all of which have been frustrated in their attempts to establish significant and lasting efficacy. In *The Rise and Fall of the American Left* (1992), John Patrick Diggins argues that the many voices of the left are united only by their admittedly naïve and stubborn faith in the radical perfectibility of society, or, even more succinctly, by the gap that exists between these two questions: “What is real? What is possible?” (42). Diggins’s observation points to another problem of history, one that will be a centerpiece of my discussion: How does one—either individually or as a participant in collective action—become an influencing agent in history? Or, borrowing from the Pragmatists, how does one “will” oneself into a force capable of affecting change. These questions are, of course, further problematized by the radically shifting theoretical conceptions of history itself, which will play a significant role in my project.

I will build my discussion of the American left’s shifting Cold War narrative around a framework proposed by social theorist Jeffrey Alexander in *Fin de Siecle Social Theory: Relativism, Reduction, and the Problem of Reason* (1995). There, Alexander offers a useful vocabulary, positing four distinct periods in postwar intellectual thought: modernization, antimodernization, postmodernization, and neo-modernization. His own rationale for doing so—“for only in this way can we understand social theory not only as science but also as an ideology in the sense made famous by Geertz” (10)—falls neatly in line with my own, for my primary goals might all be described as ideological criticism. Alexander’s model is particularly well-suited to this project both for its helpful distinction between anti- and postmodernization (which is elided too casually, I think, by

many postmodern literary critics) and for its discussion of neo-modernization, the period that has posed the greatest and, perhaps, ultimate threat to the left's "grand narratives." Finally, because Alexander's book will be nearly a decade old by the time I complete my project, I hope in my conclusion to move toward the description of a fifth post-war period in which America has come to redefine itself in opposition to an Other that has been constructed rhetorically as "nationalism," "terrorism" and the "Axis of Evil," thus deliberately appropriating the heroic tropes of Cold War modernization.

Modernization and Romantic Liberalism

In the years immediately following World War II, a confluence of significant geopolitical events polarized the Western world in a potentially apocalyptic standoff between democracy and communism, a standoff whose echoes continue to ring loudly through America's contemporary socio-political life. Winston Churchill's 1946 "Iron Curtain" speech, delivered from America's heartland, Fulton, Missouri; the detonation of atomic bombs in both the Soviet Union and China, followed soon after by the arrest of "atom spies," Klaus Fuchs and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg; growing tensions and strategic interests in the Korean peninsula and Indochina; the implementation of state-mandated loyalty oath programs and the subsequent rise to power of both Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee; all contributed to the formation of what Godfrey Hodgson, in *America in Our Time* (1976), has usefully described as the "ideology of the liberal consensus" (67). This consensus represents the strangely universal acceptance of a system of beliefs that took root during the war and dominated popular ideology well into the 1960s. Hodgson's consensus is perhaps best

exemplified by the 1956 Presidential election, in which Eisenhower and Nixon, the revered war hero and the McCarthy ally, collected votes from such disparate, traditionally left-leaning figures as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Jack Kerouac en route to a second landslide victory over Adlai Stevenson. Hodgson writes:

Confident to the verge of complacency about the perfectibility of American society, anxious to the point of paranoia about the threat of communism—those were the two faces of the consensus mood. Each grew from one aspect of the experience of the 1940s: confidence from economic success, anxiety from the fear of Stalin and the frustrations of power. (75)

In Hodgson's discussion we witness the formation of what Alexander calls modernization or romantic liberalism. For Alexander, modernization theory made postwar society "historical" by allowing American intellectuals to conceptualize their present condition as one marked by radical change in relation to that which preceded it. "This was the social basis for constructing the traditional:modern binary code," he writes, "an experience of bifurcation that demanded an interpretation of present anxieties, and future possibilities, in relation to the imagined past" (15). That imagined past included the old left and its heroic narrative of collective emancipation, which, particularly after the revelations of Stalinist atrocities, no longer seemed compelling. Instead, American ideology turned on the "romantic" belief that the nation had, in effect, already discovered an ideal social order, "that progress would be more or less continuously achieved, that improvement was likely" (16). This confidence was manifest in the universalizing of liberal values, which, as Lynn Boyd Hinds and Theodore Otto Windt, Jr. argue in *The Cold War as Rhetoric: The Beginnings, 1945-1950* (1991), was a natural product of

America's self-constructed binary opposition to the Soviet Union, whose Godless totalitarianism was the only remaining threat to America's core values of freedom, tolerance, and diversity.¹ Campaigning in 1952, Adlai Stevenson appealed to voters from just this tack: "What is the nature of the threat which communism brings to the world? It is the threat of an all-powerful state, dedicated to the extinction of individual dignity, and individual freedom—individualism, in short" (qtd. in Arblaster, 7). The end result was a near complete silencing of progressive voices in America's political discourse.

Throughout my dissertation, I will refer to the McCarthy era, in general, and to the trial and execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, specifically, as one of the two "crisis points" in the American left's Cold War narrative, for this period signaled the resounding defeat of the old left, leaving little room for public dissent.

Antimodernization and Heroic Radicalism

As Alexander so glibly puts it, at various moments between President Kennedy's assassination and the summer of love (1967), "serious 'reality problems' began to intrude on modernization theory in a major way" (19). The first rifts in Hodgson's consensus became apparent as early as the late-1950s, when, as Mary L. Dudziak has documented, the burgeoning Civil Rights movement began to question publicly the hypocrisy of America's liberal ideology, pressuring Washington to address racial inequality or risk sacrificing its self-appointed "moral authority" on the global stage. Likewise, the voices

¹ In *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism* (1984), Anthony Arblaster draws interesting connections between World War II, Cold War liberalism, and the term "totalitarianism," writing, "in the perspective of history, the term will be seen as belonging more to political propaganda than to political analysis. It is, though, impossible to deny its centrality to the revived liberalism of the Cold War period. . . . The concept itself did much to ease the transition from the actual war against fascism to the Cold War against communism. Were not the two enemies essentially one and the same? Such an indifference to the manifest differences between fascism and communism is possible only from a liberal point of view" (319).

of popular culture—rock and roll and television, but also movies like Robert Aldrich’s *Attack* (1957) and, later, Stanley Kubrick’s *Dr. Strangelove* (1963)—openly resisted such tenets as mass consumerism, the exponential growing of a “military industrial complex,” and the absurd Cold War logic of George Kennan’s containment policies (Maland). The end result, according to Alexander, is that:

In terms of code, ‘modernity’ and ‘modernization’ moved from the sacred to the profane side of historical time, with modernity assuming many of the crucial characteristics that had earlier been associated with traditionalism and backwardness. Rather than democracy and individualization, the contemporary modern period was represented as bureaucratic and repressive. Rather than a free market or contractual society, modern America became ‘capitalist,’ no longer rational, interdependent, modern, and liberating, but backward, greedy, anarchic, and impoverishing. (21)

Although anti-modernization theory was never represented within the American public on the same scale as had modernization, its surprisingly wide appeal might be exemplified by the popular influence of David Riesman’s best-seller *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), which warned of the dangers of blind consumerism and conformity and inspired two decades of cocktail party and water cooler debates between “inner-directed” and “outer-directed” personalities.

In reaction against romantic liberalism, antimodernization theory offered a renewed enthusiasm for the potential of heroic radicalism. “The present was reconceived, not as the denouement of a long struggle but as a pathway to a different, much better world,” writes Alexander. “In this heroic myth, actors and groups in present

society were conceived as being ‘in struggle’ to build the future” (22). That struggle was manifest in various modes of political response: revolution and counterrevolution, class history and consciousness, opposition to exploitation and inequality, and state-centered policies such as welfare (20). All of these struggles united and were put on public display in the movements formed to protest the Vietnam War. In *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism* (1984), Anthony Arblaster argues that Vietnam was, in fact, the *inevitable* result of America’s global liberalism, the natural by-product of President Truman’s announcement in 1947 that “The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms.” “In practice,” Arblaster writes, this “had meant the propping up of each and every anti-communist regime, however unfree it might be” (312). In my dissertation, the rise and fall of the New Left, particularly as demonstrated by the anti-war movement, will serve as my second “crisis point,” for it remains the American left’s last grand gesture toward a radical politics founded on its historical heroic narrative, though one ultimately lacking the theory necessary for true praxis.

Postmodernization and Comic Detachment

With the energies of the radical social movements waning by the end of the 1970s, so went the optimism and enthusiasm of many American intellectuals. “Parallels with the 1950s were evident,” Alexander argues. “The collective and heroic narrative of socialism once again had died, and the end of ideology seemed once again to be at hand” (23). Instead of engaging in struggle toward a better world, social theorists were forced to confront the possibility of historical retrogression, which would, of course, signal the final defeat of the Enlightenment project and undermine the very foundations of

contemporary intellectual life. Postmodern theorists responded by welcoming this defeat as “an immanent one, a necessity of historical development itself. The heroic ‘grand narratives’ of the left had been made irrelevant by history; they were not actually defeated. Myth could still function. Meaning was preserved” (24). This problematic relationship between history, meaning, and power has dominated much of postmodern discourse, particularly since Jean Lyotard’s proclamation of the “end of meta-narratives” in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984). History, then, like all grand makers of meaning (Christianity, Marxism, and empiricism, to name but a few) is reduced by postmodernization to a multiplicity of texts, each equally incapable of documenting truth.

Like antimodernization theory, postmodernism takes as its binary opposition “the modern,” though in slightly different terms. Instead of emphasizing the moral and political consequences of modern capitalism, as had the radical social movements before it, postmodernization offers “privacy, diminished expectations, subjectivism, individuality, particularity, and localism” as alternatives to the modern’s stability and universalism. Alexander writes: “While postmodernism, then, is indeed a deflationary narrative vis-à-vis heroic radicalism, the specificity of its historical position means that it must place both heroic (radical) and romantic (liberal) versions of the modern onto the same negative side” (26). The end result is a near debilitating fatalism regarding the impossibility of totalizing change. Alexander characterizes the condition as “comically agnostic,” an apt description, I think, of much politically-minded postmodern art, including the Doctorow and Coover novels that I will be discussing (27). With all of history suddenly exposed as fictional constructs, artists were freed to interrogate it with

impunity, making it the stuff of parodic play. In their freedom, however, they also sacrificed recourse to effective political means, making parody easy (and fun), but *change* difficult.

Neo-Modernization or Reconvergence Theory

In a 1984 paid political advertisement—over images of white, middle-class workers raising American flags—a voice asks, “It’s morning again in America, and under the leadership of President Reagan, our country is prouder and stronger and better. Why would we ever want to return to where we were less than four short years ago?” The implied message—that the preceding decades of social turmoil were unfortunate but *avoidable* hiccups in America’s unassailable narrative of perfection—resonated most strongly with those seeking refuge from the dystopic contemporary world left in the wake of anti- and postmodernization. Alexander refers to the actors in this final stage as the “neo-liberal right,” for their position was founded once again on the tropes of liberalism and its ideological war with communism. Those tropes, in fact, had become so thoroughly universalized within neo-modernization theory that liberalism was reduced to what John Stuart Mill called a “dead dogma.” “The vague unspoken consensus in the West as to the virtues of liberalism has induced complacency,” writes Arblaster. “Liberal principles, apparently, do not have to be fought for” (10). This second liberal consensus was manifest most clearly in the popular support of President Reagan’s and Margaret Thatcher’s determined efforts to overthrow communism, largely through market forces. The radical historical changes that occurred in the late-1980s and early-1990s, from Moscow to Johannesburg, are ample evidence of their influence.

For the left, the impact of neo-modernization was dramatic. Alexander reminds us, “It is important not to underestimate the ideological effects of this world-historical fact: high-level, sustainable transformations of backward economies were achieved not by socialist command economies but by zealously capitalist states” (30-31). Left-leaning intellectuals took notice, evidencing a renewed interest in and enthusiasm for market processes, and seeking rational, liberating brands of “market socialism.” In figures such as Lech Walesa, Mikhail Gorbachev, Nelson Mandela, and Vaclav Havel, the left also found suitable (if often problematic) figures to place at the center of new heroic narratives, thus countering postmodern deflation. The process is made more difficult, though, by the dramatic differences between our contemporary, post-communist era and the modernization period. While universalism, human rights, and individualism are once again symbols of “the good,” we are no longer able to stand them in opposition to a ready-made “profane” side such as totalitarianism or socialism. Alexander finally settles on the concept, “nationalism,” a term that has become firmly established in our public lexicon since his book was published. (America’s response to the genocidal conflict in Bosnia is a prime example.) He writes, “The categories of ‘irrational,’ ‘conspiratorial,’ and ‘repressive’ are taken to be synonymous with forceful expressions of nationality, and equated with primordiality and uncivilized social forms” (30). These ideas, so closely bound to those that shaped America’s Cold War narrative, continue to hold currency, dominating the current administration’s domestic and foreign agenda.

Chapter 1: Arthur Miller and Norman Mailer

Because the remainder of my dissertation concerns contemporary American literature that rewrites our recent past, I have decided to devote the first chapter to a careful examination of those two historical periods that most preoccupy the authors I have selected, the McCarthy era and the rise of the New Left. In Alexander's model, these moments exemplify modernization and antimodernization, the former an ideology of consensus and romantic liberalism, the latter an attempt to recapture the potential of heroic radicalism. By focusing this chapter on Arthur Miller—*The Crucible* (1953) and *After the Fall* (1964), in particular—and Norman Mailer—*Armies of the Night* (1968), in particular, but also *Why Are We in Vietnam?* (1967) and *Miami and the Siege of Chicago* (1968)—I hope to make clear the connections that bind inextricably these crisis points in the left's Cold War narrative, thus laying the foundation for subsequent chapters.

The temptation when writing about Arthur Miller's early career is to paint him as a heroic and unproblematic champion of liberal values amid a tide of oppressive, post-war conformity. That image, of course, was constructed in both his very public private life—most notably his refusal to name names when called before H.U.A.C. and the severing of his relationship with Elia Kazan, who did not—and in the liberal humanism that informs his most famous tragedies, *Death of a Salesman* and *The Crucible*. I will argue, though, that Miller's work, in fact, exemplifies a paradox that is central to modernization, a paradox that effectively silenced any voice of resistance that might have been offered by the left. When, in 1953, audiences sat down to a performance of *The Crucible*, they did so knowing that the plight of John Proctor was being staged simultaneously “for real” in the lives of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, among others. But,

while the play certainly exposes the dangers of oppressive conformity, it does so by touting the very liberal ideals that combined to shape that consensus. In other words, audiences left the theater once again reciting the romantic Puritan narrative that defined America as the home of individual freedom, responsibility, and opportunity—the exact same narrative that was adopted during the Cold War in order to define America in opposition to communist totalitarianism. Viewers were allowed an opportunity to feel suitably outraged by injustice without actually confronting either the root causes of the problem or alternative solutions. As David Savran writes in *Communists, Cowboys and Queers* (1992), “Rather than consider collective agency or the opening up of a possibility beyond the (liberal) fixation with individual versus society, he appears to see ‘Marxism’ only as the destroyer of personal freedom and the symptom of a ‘despairing passivity before History’” (26). Miller, then, despite his best efforts to resist the contemporary social climate, actually reinforces many of its chief axioms while contributing to the suppression of the old left progressive thought typical of his parents’ generation. I plan to pair *The Crucible* with *After the Fall* from a decade later, both of which interrogate history, personal responsibility, and the American memory. The latter, though, seems a more complicated and (given the context of my project) *interesting* treatment of those problems, for it returns once again to the McCarthy era, but it does so without *The Crucible*’s veil of allegory or its largely black-and-white moralities.

The shift from modernization to antimodernization can be attributed to a confluence of varied social forces (Kennedy’s assassination, the Civil Rights movement, the rise of feminism, anti-war protests, rock and roll, etc.), all of which combined to expose the contradictions and paradoxes of romantic liberalism. In *American Fiction in*

the Cold War (1981), Thomas Hill Schaub argues that the pervasive threat of nuclear annihilation, for instance, “made even more implausible the role of writer-as-liberal. For liberal thought requires a future in which the amelioration of the human condition may occur, and the specter of atomic devastation made even the idea of a future doubtful” (65). For Schaub, Norman Mailer’s works of the 1960s are representative of a general aesthetic and political response to the disintegration of existing ideologies. Whereas his first novel, *The Naked and the Dead* (1948), represents war through a coherent third person narrative, by 1968 and *The Armies of the Night*, Mailer has lost faith in objectivity and is left with little recourse but creative reportage, or New Journalism. Mailer’s first-hand accounts of the New Left are of interest to me for two main reasons. First, they document the blossoming of a radical political movement formed in explicit opposition to modernization, a movement with a progressive pedigree and radical potential. Mailer’s measured optimism, for instance, can be felt in the following image:

The thousand days of John Kennedy had done much to change the style of America; nowhere perhaps more than to the sartorial sense of the liberals and the Left Wing intellectuals now gathering for breakfast—some drabness had quit them since the fifties, some sense of power had touched them with subtle concomitants of power—a hint of elegance. (81)

Mailer’s accounts are also interesting, though, because even in their narrative form they predict the inevitable failure of heroic radicalism and the onset of postmodernism. I will rely heavily here on Linda Hutcheon’s treatment of *The Armies of the Night* as historiographic metafiction, which will also serve as a transition to the following chapter.

Chapter 2: E. L. Doctorow and Robert Coover

The pairing of E. L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel* (1971) and Robert Coover's *The Public Burning* (1977) has long been a touchstone in the debates over the efficacy of postmodernism to address the problems of history. In *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), Frederic Jameson cites Doctorow's fiction as exemplary of the political impotence of "pastiche," a brand of parody "devoid of laughter and of any conviction that alongside the abnormal tongue you have momentarily borrowed, some healthy linguistic normality still exists. Pastiche is thus blank parody, a statue with blind eyeballs" (17). Jameson's argument builds from Georg Lukacs's of nearly fifty years earlier, when in *The Historical Novel* (1937) he denounced those who would flatten the contours of history, equating the ideological and economic concerns of the past with those of the present. "As a result," he writes, "history is dissolved into a collection of curiosities and oddities" (176). Linda Hutcheon counters in *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988) by describing both Doctorow's and Coover's novels as postmodern "parody." "Like Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*," she writes, "parody works to distance and, at the same time, to involve both artist and audience in participatory hermeneutic activity" (35). This activity, she argues, repeatedly questions the power relations between language and history that have been traditionally accepted as unproblematic. "Postmodernism attempts to change that," she concludes (187). In this chapter I hope to enter into this conversation, arguing that Hutcheon has perhaps overestimated the practical political impact of parody. Both *The Book of Daniel* and *The Public Burning* make apparent the failure of the left to establish praxis, finding the tragic and absurd in its many faults. But,

trapped as they are in the morass of postmodern discourse, both novels are incapable of offering workable alternatives.

Near the end of *The Book of Daniel*, the novel's hero participates in the protest march on the Pentagon as chronicled in *The Armies of the Night*, even sighting Mailer at one point. This intertextuality is but one of the many formal devices employed by Doctorow to represent the dramatic shifts both in the contemporary socio-political landscape (from antimodernization to postmodernization) and in the aesthetic responses to it. In *Framing History: The Rosenberg Story and the Cold War* (1993), Virginia Carmichael describes *The Book of Daniel* as "an early juxtaposition of two literary modes—realism and postmodernism—as a method for bridging the two historical periods in which those modes prevailed: the pre-Rosenberg period of the old left, and the post-Rosenberg period of the 1960s and the New Left" (155). Throughout the novel, Doctorow treats both eras with equal measures of skepticism and outrage. The old left is naïve and hypocritical—"Rochelle [Daniel's mother] had a profound distaste for the common man" (95); the New Left is ineffective and ridiculous—"Peace marches are for the middle class to get its rocks off. The peace movement is part of the war. Heads or tails it's the same coin" (134). As Stephen Spender has written, "Nothing is clearer to a later generation than the naivety of an earlier one, just as nothing is clearer to the earlier one than the naivety of the later" (qtd. in Diggins, 218). The novel, then, documents the American left's impotence and contradictions, but in his "problematizing" of history (to borrow Hutcheon's turn of phrase), Doctorow is unable to offer an alternative narrative for the left. *The Book of Daniel*, like the New Left itself, is a powerful and passionate cry of rage and frustration, but its voice lacks an effective message.

Robert Coover's *The Public Burning* also appropriates the Rosenberg story in its treatment of the New Left, but, whereas Doctorow's historiographic metafiction laments that failure as a disheartening tragedy, Coover's takes parodic delight in its inevitability. For Coover, history is not only problematic, it has completely disintegrated, collapsing into a rubble of American myths and ideologies, each exposed as oppressive fiction. *The New York Times*, Betty Crocker, Walt Disney, *Time* magazine, and Uncle Sam stand side by side in a ridiculous carnival, all products and shapers of Cold War ideology and American history. In *Dissident Postmodernists* (1991), Paul Maltby argues that, ultimately, Coover's novel depicts the impossibility of effective communication in America's political discourse. "There is simply no public sphere in Coover's cold war America," he writes, "no forum for debating political issues. There are only vertical, one-way flows of information controlled by a virulently anti-communist press and the propaganda departments of the FBI and other state apparatuses" (121). Coover's approach evidences many of the political problems of postmodernization, though, most notably its almost nihilistic surrender to the impossibility of effective change. *The Public Burning* ultimately fails to reveal avenues toward praxis because, like so much of the academic left spawned by 1960s radicalism, the novel is muddled in "theory" that alienates those ideas from action.

Chapter 3: Ishmael Reed and Tony Kushner

The triumph of neo-modernization in the early-1980s again redefined the left, contributing to its retreat to academia and making it once more a hushed voice of opposition in the face of popular ideology. As personified by President Reagan, neo-

modern America vigorously renewed its heroic, “God appointed” role in a moral, rhetorically constructed Cold War struggle against communist totalitarianism, a conflict in which America would *inevitably* rise victorious (or so its ideology demanded). With its narratives of romantic liberalism and heroic radicalism erased by the market-driven influences of late capitalism and globalization, the neutered left mobilized behind specific issues in hopes of exposing the contradictions of the era. In this chapter I will argue that Ishmael Reed—in *The Terrible Twos* (1982) and *The Terrible Threes* (1989)—and Tony Kushner—in *Angels in America* (1993)—deliberately frustrate neo-modernization’s “vision of absolute social harmony, of an entire reconciliation of all oppositions of class, race, and gender, the repair of all families, the achievement of utopia” (Berger, 154). In *After the End: Representations of the Post-Apocalypse* (1999), James Berger argues that Reagan’s vision, as disseminated through public policy, advertisements, and stump speeches, demanded the erasure of dissonant history from our collective memory. He writes: “The problem Reaganism faced was how to confront—indeed, how to account for—social and historical trauma when according to its post-apocalyptic definition of America, none should exist” (143). I will argue here that both Reed and Kushner delight in unearthing that trauma, focusing their gaze on race, religion, and sexuality.

In several of his earlier novels, most notably *Mumbo Jumbo* (1972) and *Flight to Canada* (1976), Ishmael Reed adopts a postmodern approach to America’s history and defining mythologies not unlike Coover’s, revealing them as fictional constructs and problematizing their relation to power. However, his approach also offers explicit narrative resistance, as he proposes alternative, Afro-centric, and otherwise non-Western modes of myth- and meaning-making. That approach continues in *The Terrible Twos* and

The Terrible Threes, Reed's hilarious diatribes against Ronald Reagan, Santa Claus, and the Religious Right. The metaphor that dominates these novels—"Two-year-olds are what the id would look like if the id could ride a tricycle" (*Twos*, 28)—is an ironic representation of Reagan America's vision of the two decades of social turmoil that preceded it. By caricaturing the racism, greed, and hypocrisy of neo-modernization, Reed confronts his readers with the Cold War narratives that helped to form it. (In one memorable scene, the new President, a former male model, descends into hell where he is told those stories directly by Truman and Eisenhower.) Also of interest to me is that, although Reed continues to employ many of the standard postmodern narrative devices here, he does so while reflecting self-consciously on their inefficacy, writing, "There were still galleries in which art hung that was less interesting than the jargon that was peddled in its behalf" (*Threes*, 152). I plan to pursue this thread, tying it together with what I see as Reed's critique of the abstruse, theoretical left that came to dominate academic thought during the 1980s. Mocking the supposedly civilizing influence of high Western culture, he writes: "Taking an African and putting him in one of those places is like trying to domesticate a white shark. Something dies within the African soul, or he gets a Ph.D., which is the intellectual equivalent of a lobotomy" (*Threes*, 40).

In the opening act of *Millennium Approaches*, the first part of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, Joe Pitt gushes to his wife, "This is a great thing. The truth restored. Law restored. That's what President Reagan's done, Harper. He says 'Truth exists and can be spoken proudly'" (26). More than four hours later, during the first act of *Perestroika*, the mostly-closeted Mormon Republican lawyer now sits across from Louis Ironson, his lover, and begs him to forget his "victimology. Forget that I am what I am

and simply hear what I'm saying, free from politics and history" (38). Both are telling moments for Kushner, who, throughout the plays, lashes out against Reagan America's "forgetfulness" by juxtaposing racial, ethnic, and sexual politics against a popular ideology that would deny their existence. Like Doctorow and Coover before him, Kushner returns to the McCarthy era, quite literally resurrecting the ghost of Ethel Rosenberg as a personification of the old left, now largely forgotten. She returns to witness the final defeat and death of Roy Cohn, the former McCarthy ally, who, like Joe, espouses conservative values while denying publicly his own homosexuality. But, while Kushner certainly denounces neo-conservatism, he also shows little regard for its organized opposition. For Kushner, the failings of the left can be attributed, at least in part, to its "homelessness," to its inability to substitute "a new theory" for the atrophied dreams of a Socialist promised land. That struggle is waged on stage in the person of Louis, who seems to have inherited from his Jewish and political ancestors only an impotent brand of liberalism. Here, I will argue that Louis's unresolved quest for (something like) an objective morality and a practical personal politics mirrors that made by much of the intellectual left during the Cold War, and that Kushner deliberately sounds that quest with echoes from the Jewish Diaspora. Wandering through the desert of Reagan America, Louis is forced, along with the rest of the left, to redirect his course toward a theory that acknowledges the victory of Capitalism in a post-Communist world, while finding potential in communal action.

Chapter 4: Don DeLillo and Philip Roth

In the final chapter, I plan to address the following question: Why, as the twentieth century drew to a close, did two of America's premiere novelists attempt to write epic and cohesive narrative accounts of the postwar era? Don DeLillo's *Underworld* (1997) and what has already become known as Philip Roth's "American Trilogy"—*American Pastoral* (1997), *I Married a Communist* (1998), and *The Human Stain* (2000)—have garnered considerable accolades, collecting the William Dean Howells Award, a National Book Award, a PEN/Faulkner Award, and the Pulitzer Prize. Little has yet been written, though, concerning their status as accounts of the contemporary political condition and its continuing problems with history. For now, this chapter most excites me because I have not yet drawn any firm conclusions. While I greatly admire DeLillo's and Roth's formal skills, I am not sure if their impressively rendered aestheticizations of America's Cold War history even attempt an explicit political critique. And that problem, in and of itself, is interesting to me. Has the universalizing of liberal values, as personified by President Clinton's two terms of conservative-lite centrism, contributed to the much-ballyhooed "end of ideology"? What options (if any) remain viable for the American left in this age of capitalist neo-modernization?

Don DeLillo claims that *Underworld* was inspired by two front page headlines in the October 4, 1951 edition of the *New York Times*: "Giants Capture Pennant" and "Soviets Explode Atomic Bomb." What he found in that juxtaposition was:

Two kinds of conflict, certainly, but something else, maybe many things—I could not have said at the time. Mostly, though, the power of history. This is what kept

me fixed to the swivel chair, eyes on the screen but not really looking anymore, staring past the page or into it. . . . The home run that won the game—soon to be known, vaingloriously, as "The Shot Heard 'Round the World"—had found its vast and awful counterpoint. A Russian mushroom cloud. ("Power")

In the same piece, he later adds, "Fiction is all about reliving things. It is our second chance." *Underworld* begins on that day in 1951, reliving a significant moment from America's collective memory, before jumping suddenly to the early-1990s. In the nearly 800 pages that follow, DeLillo works backward through the Cold War years, unearthing the hidden history implied in the novel's title. As has been the case throughout his career, DeLillo's history is marked by apocalyptic paranoia carefully concealed by false consensus, mass consumerism, repressed emotion, and faked innocence, all of which are captured in the critical Cold War term, "containment." Images of containment populate *Underworld's* pages with striking frequency: Nick Shay's career as a waste management specialist, Sister Edgar's latex gloves, lead-lined coffins, and the many discussions of condoms, for example. "I just realized," Lenny Bruce says, licking and fondling a prophylactic. "This is what the twentieth century feels like" (584). And yet, by the end of *Underworld*, despite the constant presence of impending violence and its realization in George's murder, DeLillo suggests the possibility of "Peace," the final word of the novel. I hope to unpack the political implications of that conclusion.

Unlike DeLillo, who has interrogated history frequently during his career, Philip Roth's turn to the past in *American Pastoral* marks a dramatic shift in the author's perspective. When asked what led him to write its follow-up, *I Married a Communist*, he pointed out how freeing the experiment had been: "I found that dealing with a very

important, powerful decade in American life in the Vietnam War era enabled me to write in ways I hadn't written before" ("Interview"). I have chosen to conclude the main chapters of my dissertation with Roth for several reasons. First, although a contemporary of Doctorow and Coover, Roth has been a self-promoted champion of Henry James-like realism and craft, forgoing the more experimental tangents of postmodernism. Because he has consistently limited his scope to veiled pseudo-biography (some might call it self-indulgent navel-gazing), very few critics have seriously considered his politics. His turn in the "American Trilogy" seems to beg a reconsideration. Also, I am intrigued by the fact that, once again, an American author has chosen to explore our Cold War history by returning to its crisis points, the McCarthy Era and the rise and fall of the New Left. Near the beginning of *American Pastoral*, Roth's alter-ego, Nathan Zuckerman, returns to Weequahic High for a class reunion. Awash in memories, Zuckerman remembers being a "Jewish kid aspiring to be an all-American kid during the patriotic war years" (19). His reverie is dashed, though, by an encounter with an old friend who reminds him, "It's nostalgia. It's bullshit" (61). Roth's awareness of our strangely millenarian nostalgia for what Tom Brokaw has loudly proclaimed as the "greatest generation" and for the era of modernization that they helped to secure, reflects the author's desire to challenge those collective memories.

Conclusion

Having mapped a course of social, political, and aesthetic change through the Cold War years, I hope to conclude my dissertation by again addressing a question raised in the final chapter: what options, if any, remain available to the American left given

contemporary conditions? I will suggest that the new millennium has witnessed another shift in social theory, one in which the tropes and rhetoric that formed the Cold War and modernization are reapplied with varying degrees of success and stability to the new “War on Terror.” After decades of defining itself in opposition to communist totalitarianism, America now finds itself at odds with “fundamentalism,” “radicalism,” and “terrorist evil-doers.” Defense budgets, public policy, and general attitudes have changed accordingly. I plan to use Tony Kushner’s play, *Homebody/Kabul* (2002), as an entry point into this conversation. The play, which entered rehearsals at the New York Theater Workshop in October, 2001, begins with a 21-page, hour long monologue that sifts through the 5000 year history of Afghanistan, drawing out the beauty and the barbarity of a nation whose troubles have so recently become enmeshed with our own. I would also like to use this conclusion as an opportunity to survey other contemporary literature (2002-2004) that might offer a left-leaning response to George W. Bush’s America.

Primary Sources

- Coover, Robert. *The Public Burning*. New York: Viking, 1977.
- DeLillo, Don. *Libra*. New York: Viking, 1988.
- . *Underworld*. New York: Scribner, 1997.
- . *White Noise*. New York: Viking, 1985.
- Didion, Joan. *Democracy: A Novel*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984.
- Dillon, Millicent. *Harry Gold*. New York: Overlook, 2000.
- Doctorow, E. L. *The Book of Daniel*. 1971. New York: Plume, 1996.
- Kushner, Tony. *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1993.
- . *Homebody / Kabul*. Theatre Communications Group, 2002.
- Mailer, Norman. *The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel, the Novel as History*. 1968. New York: Plume, 1994.
- . *Miami and the Siege of Chicago: An Informal History of the Republican and Democratic Conventions of 1968*. New York: New American Library, 1968.
- . *Why Are We in Vietnam?: A Novel*. 1967. New York: Picador, 2000.
- Miller, Arthur. *After the Fall*. 1964. New York: Viking, 1980.
- . *All My Sons*. 1947. New York: Penguin, 2000.
- . *The Crucible*. 1953. New York: Penguin, 1995.
- . *Death of a Salesman*. 1949. New York: Penguin, 1998.
- . *A View from the Bridge*. 1955. New York: Viking, 1987.
- Oates, Joyce Carol. *Black Water*. New York: Plume, 1993.

Reed, Ishmael. *Flight to Canada: A Novel*. New York: Atheneum, 1976.

---. *The Terrible Threes*. New York: Atheneum, 1989.

---. *The Terrible Twos*. New York: St. Martin's, 1982.

Roth, Philip. *American Pastoral*. Boston: Houghton, 1997.

---. *The Human Stain*. Boston: Houghton, 2000.

---. *I Married a Communist*. Boston: Houghton, 1998.

Secondary Sources

I. Critical Context

Adorno, Theodor. *Negative Dialectics*. New York: Seabury, 1973.

---. *The Problems of Moral Philosophy*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000.

Alexander, Jeffrey. *Fin de Siecle Social Theory: Relativism, Reduction, and the Problem of Reason*. London: Verso, 1995.

Arblaster, Anthony. *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1984.

Bacon, John Lance. *Flannery O'Connor and Cold War Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993.

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation (The Body, in Theory: Histories of Cultural Materialism)*. Trans. Sheila Faria Glaser. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1994.

Berger, James. *After the End: Representations of Post-Apocalypse*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1999.

Booker, M. Keith. *Monsters, Mushroom Clouds, and the Cold War: American Science Fiction and the Roots of Postmodernism, 1946-1964*. Westport: Greenwood, 2001.

- Carmichael, Virginia. *Framing History: The Rosenberg Story and the Cold War*.
Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1993.
- Carnes, Mark C., ed. *Novel History: Historians and Novelists Confront America's Past
(and Each Other)*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001.
- Diggins, John Patrick. *The Rise and Fall of the American Left*. New York: Norton, 1992.
- Dudziak, Mary L. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*.
Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000.
- Foertsch, Jacqueline. *Enemies Within: The Cold War and the AIDS Crisis in Literature,
Film, and Culture*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2001.
- Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- Giddens, Anthony. *Beyond Left and Right*. Cambridge: Polity, 1994.
- Habermas, Jurgen. *Theory and Practice*. Boston: Beacon, 1973.
- Hinds, Lynn Boyd, and Theodore Otto Windt, Jr. *The Cold War as Rhetoric: The
Beginnings, 1945-1950*. New York: Praeger, 1991.
- Hodgson, Godfrey. *America in Our Time*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1976.
- Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor Adorno. *Dialectics of Enlightenment*. New York: Herder,
1972.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*. New York:
Routledge, 1988.
- Jacobs, Naomi. *The Character of Truth: Historical Figures in Contemporary Fiction*.
Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1990.
- Jameson, Frederic. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham:
Duke UP, 1992.

- Jamison, Andrew, and Ron Eyerman. *Seeds of the Sixties*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1994.
- Jay, Martin. *The Dialectical Imagination*. Boston: Beacon, 1973.
- Kinney, Katherine. *Friendly Fire: American Images of the Vietnam War*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000.
- Kraus, Elisabeth, and Caroline Auer, eds. *Simulacrum America: The USA and the Popular Media*. Rochester: Camden, 2000.
- Kumar, Krishnan. *1989: Revolutionary Ideas and Ideals*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2001.
- Lasch, Christopher. *The Agony of the American Left*. New York, Knopf, 1969.
- Lenz, Gunter H., et al, eds. *Reconstructing American Literary and Historical Studies*. Frankfurt: Campus, 1990.
- Lukács, György. *The Historical Novel*. Trans. Hannah Mitchell and Stanley Mitchell. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1990.
- Lyotard, Jean Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984.
- Maland, Charles. "Dr. Strangelove (1964): Nightmare Comedy and the Ideology of Liberal Consensus." *Hollywood as Historian: American Film in a Cultural Context*. Ed. Peter C. Rollins and Ray B. Browne. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1983. 190-210.
- Marcuse, Herbert. *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*. Boston: Beacon P, 1964.

- - -. *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*. New York: Humanities P, 1954.
- Mills, C. Wright. *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford UP, 1956.
- - -. *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford UP, 1959.
- Murphey, Brenda K. *Congressional Theatre: Dramatizing McCarthyism on Stage, Film, and Television*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.
- Nadel, Alan. *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age*. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.
- Olster, Stacey Michelle. *Reminiscence and Re-Creation in Contemporary American Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.
- Radosh, Ronald, and Joyce Milton. *The Rosenberg File*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1997.
- Riesman, David, Nathan Glazer, and Reuel Denney. *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*. 1950. New Haven: Yale UP, 1976.
- Robertson, Roland. *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: Sage, 1992.
- Rorty, Richard. *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1998.
- - -. *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1989.
- - -. *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979.
- - -. "Postmodern Bourgeois Liberalism." *Hermeneutics and Praxis*. Ed. Robert Hollinger. Notre Dame: Notre Dame UP, 1985.
- Schaub, Thomas Hill. *American Fiction in the Cold War*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1991.

- Simmons, Philip E. *Deep Surfaces: Mass Culture and History in Postmodern American Fiction*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1997.
- Sollors, Werner, and Maria Diedrich, eds. *The Black Columbiad: Defining Moments in African American Literature and Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1994.
- Weber, Max. *The Sociology of Religion*. 1922. Trans. Ephraim Fischhoff. Boston: Beacon, 1993.
- White, Hayden. *The Content of Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987.
- Whitfield, Stephen J. *The Culture of the Cold War*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996.
- Wittner, Lawrence S. *Cold War America: from Hiroshima to Watergate*. New York: Praeger, 1974.

II. Specific Author Studies

A. Miller and Mailer

- Bigsby, Christopher, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- Brucher, Richard T. "Willy Loman and The Soul of a New Machine: Technology and the Common Man." *Journal of American Studies* 17.3 (1983): 325-36.
- Buddick, E. Miller. "History and Other Spectres in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*." *Modern Drama* 28.4 (1985): 535-52.
- Davidson, Richard Allan. "Arthur Miller and Other Critics of The Fifth Column." *North Dakota Quarterly* 65.3 (1998): 26-34.
- Ferres, John H., ed. *Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Crucible*. Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1972.

- Hassan, Iha. Focus on Norman Mailer's *Why Are We in Vietnam?*” *American Dreams, American Nightmares*. Ed. David T. Madden and Harry T. Moore. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1970. 197-203.
- Klein, Jeffrey. “Armies of the Planet: A Comparative Analysis of Norman Mailer's and Saul Bellow's Political Visions.” *Soundings* 58 (1975): 69-83.
- Lennon, Michael J., ed. *Critical Essays on Norman Mailer*. Boston: Hall, 1986.
- Lennon, Michael. “Mailer’s Radical Bridge.” *Journal of Narrative Technique* 7 (1977): 170-88.
- Lowe, Valerie. “‘Unsafe Convictions’: ‘Unhappy’ Confessions in *The Crucible*.” *Language and Literature* 3.3 (1994): 175-95.
- Marino, Stephen, ed. *The Salesman Has a Birthday: Essays Celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman*. Lanham: UP of America, 2000.
- Marino, Stephen. “Arthur Miller’s ‘Weight of Truth.’” *Modern Drama* 38.4 (1995): 488-95.
- Marks, Barry A. “Civil Disobedience in Retrospect: Henry Thoreau and Norman Mailer.” *Soundings* 62 (1979): 144-65.
- McCann, Sean. “The Imperiled Republic: Norman Mailer and the Poetics of Anti-Liberalism.” *ELH* 67.1 (2000): 293-336.
- McGill, William J. “The Crucible of History: Arthur Miller's John Proctor.” *New England Quarterly* 54.2 (1981): 258-64.
- Mierau, Maurice A. “Carnival and Jeremiad: Mailer's *The Armies of the Night*.” *Canadian Review of American Studies* 17.3 (1986): 317-26.

- Miller, Gabriel. "A Small Trumpet of Defiance: Politics and the Buried Life in Norman Mailer's Early Fiction." *Politics and the Muse: Studies in the Politics of Recent American Literature*. Ed. Adam J. Sorkin. Bowling Green: Popular, 1989. 79-92.
- Miller, Jeanne Marie. "Odets, Miller, and Communism." *College Language Association Journal* 19 (1976): 484-93.
- Nilsen, Helge Normann. "From *Honors at Dawn* to *Death of a Salesman*: Marxism and the Early Plays of Arthur Miller." *English Studies* 75.2 (1994): 146-56.
- Otten, Terry. "Historical Drama and the Dimensions of Tragedy: A Man for All Seasons and *The Crucible*." *American Drama* 6.1 (1996): 42-60.
- Pearson, Michelle. "John Proctor and the Crucible of Individuation in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*." *Studies in American Drama* 6.1 (1991): 15-27.
- Poirier, Richard. "The Aesthetics of Radicalism." *Partisan Review* 41 (1974): 89-95.
- Raleigh, John H. "History and Its Burdens: The Example of Norman Mailer." *Uses of Literature*. Ed. Monro Engel. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1973. 163-86.
- Savran, David. *Communists, Cowboys, and Queers: The Politics of Masculinity in the Work of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1992.
- Smith, Kathy. "Norman Mailer and the Radical Text." *Cohension and Dissent in America*. Ed. Carol Colatrella and Joseph Alkana. Albany: State U of New York P, 1989. 174-89.
- Thornton, William H. "Stranded in the Sixties: The Politics of Mailer's *Armies of the Night*." *Popular Culture Review* 5.1 (1994): 97-105.

Weales, Gerald. "Arthur Miller and the 1950s." *Michigan Quarterly Review* 37.4 (1998): 635-51.

Widmer, Kingsley. "The Post-Modernist Art of Protest: Kesey and Mailer as American Expressions of Rebellion." *Centennial Review* 19.3 (1975): 121-35.

B. Doctorow and Coover

Ames, Christopher. "Coover's Comedy of Conflicting Fictional Codes." *Critique* 31.2 (1990): 85-99.

Cioffi, Frank L. "Coover's (Im)Possible Worlds in *The Public Burning*." 42.1 (2000): 26-39.

Claridge, Henry. "Writing in the Margin: E. L. Doctorow and American History." *The New American Writing: Essays on American Literature Since 1970*. Ed. Graham Clarke. New York: St. Martin's, 1990.

Coover, Robert. "*The Public Burning* Log 1966-77." *Critique* 42.1 (2000): 84-114.

Cottrell, Robert. "The Portrayal of American Communists in Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*." *McNeese Review* 31 (1984): 64-68.

Doctorow, E.L. "Cutting Both Ways: E. L. Doctorow's Critique of the Left." *South Atlantic Review* 58.2 (1993): 111-25.

Emblidge, Davi. "Marching Backward into the Future: Progress as Illusion in Doctorow's Novels." *Southwest Review* 62 (1977): 397-409.

Fogel, Stan. "Richard Nixon by Robert Coover, Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes." *English Studies in Canada* 8.2 (1982): 187-202.

Frick, Daniel E. "Coover's Secret Sharer? Richard Nixon in *The Public Burning*." *Critique* 37.2 (1996): 82-91.

- Gordon, Lois. *Robert Coover: The Universal Fictionmaking Process*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1983.
- Guzlowski, John Z. "Coover's *The Public Burning*: Richard Nixon and the Politics of Experience." *Critique* 29.1 (1987): 57-71.
- Harpham, Geoffrey. "E. L. Doctorow and the Technology of Narrative." *PMLA* 100.1 (1985): 81-95.
- Henry, Matthew A. "Problematic Narratives: History as Fiction in E. L. Doctorow's *Billy Bathgate*." *Critique* 39.1 (1997): 32-40.
- Humm, Peter. "Telling Tales on the Rosenbergs." *Literature and History* 12.1 (1986): 48-57.
- Hutcheon, Linda. "Historiographic Metafiction: Parody and the Intertextuality of History." *Intertextuality and Contemporary American Fiction*. Ed. Patrick O'Donnell and Robert Davis. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1989. 3-32.
- Iannone, Carol. "E. L. Doctorow's 'Jewish' Radicalism." *Commentary* 81.3 (1986): 53-6.
- LeClair, Thomas. "Robert Coover, *The Public Burning*, and the Art of Excess." *Critique* 23.3 (1982): 5-28.
- Maltby, Paul. *Dissident Postmodernists: Barthelme, Coover, Pynchon*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1991.
- Mazurek, Raymond. "Metafiction, the Historical Novel, and Coover's *The Public Burning*." *Critique* 23.3 (1982): 29-41.
- Morris, Christopher D., ed. *Conversations with E. L. Doctorow*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1999.

- Morris, Christopher. *Models of Misrepresentation: On the Fiction E. L. Doctorow*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1991.
- Olson, Lance. "Stand By to Crash! Avant-Pop, Hypertextuality, and Postmodern Comic Vision in Coover's *The Public Burning*." *Critique* 42.1 (2000): 51-68.
- Orlov, Paul A. "A Fiction of Politically Fantastic 'Facts': Robert Coover's *The Public Burning*." *Politics and the Muse: Studies in the Politics of Recent American Literature*. Ed. Adam Sorkin. Bowling Green: Popular, 1989.
- Parks, John G. "The Politics of Polyphony: The Fiction of E. L. Doctorow." *Twentieth-Century Literature* 37.4 (1991): 454-63.
- Pugh, Thomas. "Why Is Everybody Laughing? Roth, Coover, and Meta-Comic Narrative." *Critique* 35.2 (1994): 67-80.
- Reed, T. V. "Genealogy/Narrative/Power: Questions of Postmodernity in Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*." *American Literary History* 4.2 (1992): 288-304.
- Reitz, Bernhard. "The Reconstruction of the Fifties in E. L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel* and Robert Coover's *The Public Burning*." *Historiographic Metafiction in Modern American and Canadian Literature*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1994. 223-40.
- Solomon, Eric. "A Note on 1930s Nostalgia and *The Public Burning*." *Critique* 42.1 (2000): 18-25.
- Strecker, GERALYN. "Statecraft as Stagecraft: Disneyland and the Rosenberg Executions in *The Public Burning*." *Critique* 42.1 (2000): 70-80.
- Strout, Cushing. "Historicizing Fiction and Fictionalizing History: The Case of E. L. Doctorow." *Prospects* 5 (1980): 423-37.

Tokarczyk, Michelle M. *E. L. Doctorow's Skeptical Commitment*. New York: Lang, 2000.

- - -. "From the Lions' Den: Survivors in E. L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*." *Critique* 29.1 (1987): 3-15.

Trenner, Richard, ed. *E. L. Doctorow: Essays and Conversations*. Princeton: Ontario Review P, 1983.

Walsh, Richard. "Narrative Inscription, History and the Reader in Robert Coover's *The Public Burning*." *Studies in the Novel* 25.3 (1993): 332-46.

Williams, John. *Fiction as False Document: The Reception of E. L. Doctorow in the Postmodern Age*. Columbia: Camden House, 1996.

C. Reed and Kushner

Bechtel, Roger. "'A Kind of Painful Progress': The Benjaminian Dialectics of *Angels in America*." *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 16.1 (2001): 99-121.

Bottoms, Stephen J. "Re-Staging Roy: Citizen Cohn and the Search for Xanadu." *Theatre Journal* 48.2 (1996): 157-84.

Bryant, Jerry H. "Old Gods and New Demons: Ishmael Reed and His Fiction." *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 4.2 (1984): 195-202.

Davis, Robert Murray. "Scatting the Myths: Ishmael Reed." *Arizona Quarterly* 39.4 (1983): 406-20.

Dick, Bruce Allen, ed.. *The Critical Response to Ishmael Reed*. Westport: Greenwood, 1999.

Dick, Bruce Allen, and Amritjit Singh, eds. *Conversations with Ishmael Reed*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1995.

- Elias, Amy. "Oscar Hijuelos's *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*, Ishmael Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo*, and Robert Coover's *The Public Burning*." *Critique* 41.2 (2000): 115-28.
- Fisher, James. *The Theater of Tony Kushner: Living Past Hope*. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Fontenot, Chester J. "Ishmael Reed and the Politics of Aesthetics, or Shake Hands and Come Out Conjuring." *Black American Literature Forum* 12 (1978): 20-23.
- Freedman, Jonathan. "Angels, Monsters, and Jews: Intersections of Queer and Jewish Identity in Kushner's *Angels in America*." *PMLA* 113.1 (1998): 90-102.
- Geis, Deborah R., and Steven F. Kruger. *Approaching the Millennium: Essays on Angels in America*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1997.
- Harris, Norman. "The Gods Must Be Angry: Flight to Canada as Political History." *Modern Fiction Studies* 34.1 (1988): 111-23.
- Hume, Kathryn. "Ishmael Reed and the Problematics of Control." *PMLA* 108.3 (1993): 506-18.
- Keifer, Daniel. "*Angels in America* and the Failure of Revelation." *American Drama* 4.1 (1994): 21-38.
- Klein, Dennis A. "*Angels in America* as Jewish-American Drama." *Modern Jewish Studies* 12.4 (2001): 34-43.
- Kushner, Tony. "Notes about Political Theater." *Kenyon Review* 19.3 (1997): 19-34.
- Martin, Reginal. "The Freelance Pallbearer Confronts the Terrible Threes: Ishmael Reed and the New Black Aesthetic Critics." *MELUS* 14.2 (1987): 35-49.
- - -. *Ishmael Reed and the New Black Aesthetic Critics*. London: Macmillan, 1986.

- McGee, Patrick. *Ishmael Reed and the Ends of Race*. New York: St. Martin's, 1997.
- McNulty, Charles. "Angels in America: Tony Kushner's Theses on the Philosophy of History." *Modern Drama* 39.1 (1996): 84-96.
- Moraru, Christian. "Dancing to the Typewriter!: Rewriting and Cultural Appropriation in *Flight to Canada*." *Critique* 41.2 (2000): 99-113.
- Ogden, Daryl. "Cold War Science and the Body Politic: An Immuno/Virological Approach to *Angels in America*." *Literature and Medicine* 19.2 (2000): 241-61.
- Quinn, John R. "Corpus Juris Tertium: Redemptive Jurisprudence in *Angels in America*." *Theatre Journal* 48.1 (1996): 79-90.
- Savran, David. "Ambivalence, Utopia, and a Queer Sort of Materialism: How *Angels in America* Reconstructs the Nation." *Theater Journal* 47.2 (1995): 207-27.
- Smith, Matthew Wilson. "*Angels in America*: A Progressive Apocalypse." *Theater* 29.3 (1999): 153-65.
- Steyn, Mark. "Communism Is Dead: Long Live the King!" *The New Criterion* 13.6 (1995): 49-53.
- Vorlicky, Robert, ed. *Tony Kushner in Conversation*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1997.

D. DeLillo and Roth

- Bailey, Peter J. "Why Not Tell the Truth?: The Autobiographies of Three Fiction Writers." *Critique* 32.4 (1991): 211-23.
- Bizzini, Silvia Caporale. "Can the Intellectual Still Speak? The Example of Don DeLillo's *Mao II*." *Critical Quarterly* 37.2 (1995): 104-17.

- Bull, Jeffrey S. "What about a Problem That Doesn't Have a Solution?' Stone's A Flag for Sunrise, DeLillo's Mao II, and the Politics of Political Fiction." *Critique* 40.3 (1999): 215-29.
- DeLillo, Don. "The Power of History." *New York Times* 7 Sept. 1997. 18 Dec. 2002. <<http://www.nytimes.com/library/books/090797article3.html>>.
- Furman, Andrew. "A New 'Other' Emerges in American Jewish Literature: Philip Roth's Israel Fiction." *Contemporary Literature* 36.4 (1995): 633-53.
- Greenberg, Robert M. "Trangression in the Fiction of Philip Roth." *Twentieth Century Literature* 43.4 (1997): 487-506.
- Kauvar, Elaine M. "This Doubly Reflected Communication: Philip Roth's 'Autobiographies.'" *Contemporary Literature* 36.3 (1995): 412-46.
- Kavadlo, Jesse. "Recycling Authority: Don DeDillo's Waste Management." *Critique* 42.4 (2001): 384-401.
- Kremer, Lillian S. "Philip Roth's Self-Reflexive Fiction." *Modern Language Studies* 28.3 (1998): 56-72.
- McClure, John A. "Postmodern/Post-Secular: Contemporary Fiction and Spirituality." *Modern Fiction Studies* 41.1 (1995): 141-63.
- Michael, Magali Cornier. "The Political Paradox within Don DeLillo's *Libra*." *Critique* 35.3 (1994): 146-56.
- Mott, Christopher M. "*Libra* and the Subject of History." *Critique* 35.3 (1994): 131-45.
- Osteen, Mark. *American Magic and Dread: Don DeLillo's Dialogue with Culture*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2000.

- Parrish, Timothy L. "The End of Identity: Philip Roth's *American Pastoral*." *Shofar* 19.1 (2000): 84-99.
- - -. "From Hoover's FBI to Eisenstein's Unterwelt: DeLillo Directs the Postmodern Novel." *Modern Fiction Studies* 45.3 (1999): 696-723.
- Pinsker, Sanford. "Imagining American Reality." *The Southern Review* 29.4 (1993): 767-81.
- Roth, Philip. "Interview." *Houghton Mifflin*. 18 Dec. 2002.
<<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/authors/roth/conversation.shtml>>.
- Searles, George J., ed. *Conversations with Philip Roth*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1992.
- Shapiro, Michael J. "American Fictions and Political Culture." *Strategies* 6 (1991): 260-83.
- Spencer, Nicholas. "Beyond the Mutations of Media and Military Technologies in Don DeLillo's *Underworld*." *Arizona Quarterly* 58.2 (2002): 89-112.
- Wallace, Molly. "Venerated Emblems": DeLillo's *Underworld* and the History-Commodity." *Critique* 42.4 (2001): 367-83.
- Wilcox, Leonard. "Baudrillard, DeLillo's *White Noise*, and the End of Heroic Narrative." *Contemporary Literature* 32.3 (1991): 346-65.
- - -. "Don DeLillo's *Underworld* and the Return of the Real." *Contemporary Literature* 43.1 (2002): 120-37.
- Wolcott, James. "Blasts form the Past." *New Criterion* 16.4 (1997): 65-70.