CHAPTER - IV

A LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT:
A SPIRITUAL QUEST

The first American production of Eugene O'Neill's *A Long Day's Journey into Night* at the Helen Hays Theatre on November 7, 1956, drew immediate accolades from a preponderance of this country's most distinguished dramatic critics. The new York production following the play's debut in Stockholm earlier that same year, was directed by José Quintero and featured Fredric Marcy, Florence Eldridge, Jason Robards, Jr., Bradford Dillman, and Katherine Ross. Three years after his death the play earned O'Neill a covey of literary awards including the Pulitzer Prize, the Circle Award, and the Tony Award. John Chapman was effusive in his praise of the play, stating:

> Let us now forget something that everybody knows by now, that Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* is about himself, his parents, and his brother. This is a mere detail... The news this morning, is that *Long Day's Journey into Night* is a magnificent work, and last evening it was given a magnificent performance by Florence Eldridge, Fredric March, Jason Robards, Jr., and Bradford Dillman.¹

Richard Watts, Jr., of the *New York Post* hailed the play as "magnificent and shattering."² In *Herald Tribune* Walter Kerr called the play "a stunning experience."³ Although Robert Coleman of *The Mirror* and Tom Donnelley of *The World Telegram* and *The Sun* offered favorable reviews, they criticized the play's length feeling that this factor diminished its dramatic effect. Brooks Atkinson offered his review of the play in *The New York Times* saying, "*Long Day's Journey into Night* has been worth waiting for. It restores the drama to literature, and the theatre to art."⁴ Atkinson's assessment of the play provides not only a perception of O'Neill's unique manipulation of dramatic constituents and his creation of a distinctive dramatic form:

> Twelve years before he died in 1953, O'Neill epitomized the life of his family in a drama that records the events of one day at their summer home in New
London, Conn., in 1912. Factually, it is a sordid story about a pathologically parsimonious father, a mother addicted to tope, a dissipated brother and a younger brother (representing Eugene O'Neill) who has T.B. and is about to be shipped off to a sanitarium.

Roughly, those are the facts. But the author has told them on the plane of an O'Neill tragedy in which the point of view transcends the material. The scenes are big. The dialogue is blunt. Scene by scene the tragedy moves along with a remorseless beat that becomes hypnotic, as though this were life lived on the brink of oblivion.

John Chapman, Richard Watts jr., Walter Kerr, and Brooks Atkinson have established the critical reputation of O'Neill's *A Long Day's Journey into Night*. Atkinson has provided additional observations of the work which address not only its merits, he has offered perceptions of the play's "point of view", as well as addressing its use of dialogue, and the pace of the action. In so doing, Atkinson initiates an assessment of O'Neill's manipulation of dramatic form. Atkinson's observations are significant not only in establishing the play's reputation in the modern American theatre; he identifies specific components of the dramatic work which distinguish it. Certainly his emphasis upon "point of view," establishing a visual, oral, tactile environment projecting each family member's private torments, his or her needs and aspirations, each individual's way of thinking, is paramount in the play. This emphasis upon "point of view" lends the play its tremendous power on the stage.

But it is Atkinson's identification of the threat of nonbeing, "life lived on the brink of oblivion," that characterizes the impetus of the play's dramatic action. The family's haranguing and bickering belie a profound discontent connected with the family's waning consciousness. The pace of the action is catapulted by this threat and by a spiritual longing. The sense of personal loss each member of the family experiences and the often lengthy soul-baring discussions used to present this spiritual loss move the play beyond the familiar landmarks of selective realism. This type of overt emphasis upon the psyche pushes the play toward the establishment of a dramaturgy rooted in this spiritual necessity.
Several theorists allude to O'Neill's experimentation with dramatic form. A brief examination of the critical literature addressing his unique orchestration of the dramatic constituents in his Long Day's Journey into Night provides an excellent starting point for a study of the play's employment of an existential-familial dramatic form.

Oscar Brockett and Robert Findlay comment on O'Neill's concentration upon spiritual themes in their Century of Innovation. Both refer to the playwright's development of material consumed by a spiritually deprived modern man set adrift in a material world. The sense of personal loss both Brockett and Findlay identify in O'Neill's work and his continuing refinement of a discourse criticizing inauthentic values, constitute a major component in his development of a psychological drama embracing consciousness. For as both Findlay and Brockett note, O'Neill is not concerned primarily with the establishment of objective detail and daily routine. His work reflects a more subjective quest, a reunion with the God-head: O'Neill once declared that in all his plays he had been concerned with man's relations to God-by which he meant man's search for some set of values to which he might commit himself. O'Neill was almost obsessed by the conviction that man has lost faith in his old gods but has been unable to find a new set of values on which to build a meaningful life. Consequently, he saw man as adrift without faith in a materialistic world, a lost creature searching for some way to escape despair.

In quoting O'Neill's own statement of intent, Joseph Wood Krutch's article "Eugene O'Neill," seeks to provide an explanation of O'Neill's work which addresses the author's employment of this spiritual theme. Krutch states that O'Neill also develops a complimentary scheme of dramatic action and organizes these devices into a cohesive dramatic design:

"The playwright today (writes O'Neill) must dig at the roots of the sickness of today as he feels it--the death of the old God and the failure of science and materialism to give any satisfying new one for the surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life in, and to comfort its fears of death with".

He needs to feel that loving and lusting, singing and weeping, mean something beyond themselves, that there is some justification in the nature of
things for that importance which they have for him. And if Religion--the belief in a supernatural power capable of investing them with meaning--has decayed, then man must discover some attitude toward himself capable of investing him once more with the dignity he has lost.7

Krutch's observations identify O'Neill's habitual employment of a spiritual theme reflecting states of being, authentic values, consciousness, and a quest for fulfillment. Robert Burstein recognized this same intent in his book, The Theatre of Revolt. He traces O'Neill's translation of this recurrent theme into concrete dramatic form. Burstein relates these influences to O'Neill's reliance on Fredrick Nietzsche and Nietzsche's philosophical ideologies:

O'Neill's messianic revolt centers on the dilemma of modern man in a world without God; and it is informed by the spirit of a philosopher who was also important in Strindberg's life--Fredrick Nietzsche. O'Neill’s concept of tragedy is obviously influenced by the Birth of Tragedy, and his religious ideas are almost all culled from Thus Spake Zarathustra.8

O'Neill's thematic preference characterizing modern man as a spiritual being pitted against an encroaching materialism echoes William Spanos' observation of existential man's predicament in a technological society. Spanos describes modern man as a spiritual being who has been subordinated to the tool in a machine society. This impersonal and superficial contact has robbed him of his humanity. It has also placed him at odds with a perception of reality in conflict with his spirituality:

According to the existentialists, scientific rationalism and its counterpart in practical life; the technological society, locate reality in the objective realm of measurable matter, and value in the production or utilization of objects. In so doing, they subordinate man to the tool, consciousness to efficiency, and the individual to the social and productive organizations (including educational institutions). By the inescapable logic of this system of valuation, the individual becomes dehumanized.9

It is this thematic thrust which is utilized by O'Neill in his Long Day's Journey into Night. Voiced by James Tyrone as he laments the loss of his acting talent, his identity, his very soul, this focus is instrumental in shaping each dramatic constituent of the drama:
Robert Burstein was fundamental in identifying O'Neill's employment of an existential perspective. He recognized the existence and the interaction of several components common to O'Neill's development of a specific type of messianic drama. This drama echoed the same plea of the lost self that James Tyrone describes in *Long Day's Journey into Night*. Burstein pointed to O'Neill's translation of these philosophical abstractions into a concrete dramatic form, tracing such an influence to August Strindberg. For it was Strindberg whom O'Neill credited as being "the greatest of all modern dramatists." As Burstein explains:

"Strindberg, for example, turns to existential revolt after the horrors of the Inferno crisis convince him of the vanity of trying to be God; O'Neill, in his last plays, converts his messianic demands into existential appeals; and existential revolt can even be detected under the fixed smile of Shaw."

Burstein has provided a pivotal link in the critical literature addressing O'Neill's development of an existential dramatic form. Unfortunately, Burstein has not provided a definition of the ontology. His personal disaffecting for what he considered to be an existential philosophy resulted in his description of a form bearing little resemblance to the tenets expressed by Martin Heidegger, Martin Buber, William Spanos, Soren Kierkegaard, and Jean-Paul Sartre, the founding fathers of the perspective. Burstein's assessment of the philosophical perspective is so negative in its orientation that his observation has not promoted any investigation of O'Neill's development of an existential dramatic form. In his *Theatre of Revolt* Burstein states:

"In the last stage of the modern drama, existential revolt, the dramatist examines the metaphysical life of man and protests against it; existence itself becomes the source of his rebellion."
This type of broad generalization, supplying more a critique of some still undiagnosed malady than a precise correlation to existential tenets must be reevaluated in terms of its capacity to shed any light upon the emergence of such a dramatic form in American dramaturgy. For without providing a thorough explanation of the composite and complex philosophical perspective, critics like Burstein will continue to dismiss it as a type of bastardized nihilism with no place in the drama. Burstein also states:

*Existential revolt represents Romanticism turned in on it and beginning to rot. Extremely contemptuous of messianic ideals, disbelieving totally in messianic individualism, the existential rebel, nevertheless, shows vestiges of the old radical demands. He is a Neo-Romantic, raging against existence, ashamed of being human, revolted by the body itself. One of the strongest identifying marks of the existential drama is its attitude towards the flesh, which is usually described in images of muck, mud, ashes, and fecal matter, in a state of decomposition and decay.*

Burstein similarly describes the existential protagonist as "disadvantaged, humiliated, perverse, and thoroughly incapable of significant action." It seems odd then, that Burstein should recognize O'Neill's *A Long Day's Journey into Night* as an example of this emerging dramatic form and still characterize the play as a modern masterpiece. *The Iceman Cometh* and *A Long Day's Journey into Night* are, in my opinion great works of art.

Burstein sheds little light on O'Neill's incorporation of specific traceable existential ideologies into dramatic constituents. Any investigation of the playwright's development of an existential dramaturgy must be prefaced by the establishment of a definition of existentialism. For without establishing what the phenomenon entails, it is impossible to discern whether O'Neill has employed it and translated it into dramatic form in any one play. Existential philosopher William Barrett provides the most succinct definition of the perspective in his *What is Existentialism?* Barrett states:

*These themes--the incurable isolation of the individual, the absurd mechanisms of society that destroy him, and the courage to face death while*
affirming life—have been persistent ones in existentialism, or at least one side of existentialism. 17

However, such a complex and multifaceted phenomenon defies any one simplistic description. Any definition of the term must take into account the related observations of major existential philosophers. These observations provide a composite definition of the perspective, a definition which demonstrates the symbiotic nature of ten basic tenets. These tenets are interrelated, one giving rise to another. This type of approach avoids the ambiguous or biased references which are so prevalent in the critical literature. It also offers specificity, a designation of ten elements that can be used in a comparison study of dramatic constituents. This composite delineation of existentialism abstracted from the critical perceptions of major existential philosophers, offers the most comprehensive, the most accurate definition of the ontology. The following tenets are synonymous with an existential perspective: consciousness, alienation, the affirmation of life, freedom and choice in relation to man's capacity to create his own being, Angst, dasein, the call of care and the capacity of human relationships to encourage spiritual growth, authentic values, and a presentation of the concrete in contrast to an analysis of the abstract.

Given this comprehensive definition of this complex philosophical perspective, it is possible to proceed with a point by point comparison of these ten existential tenets and O'Neil's manipulation of the dramatic constituents in his Long Day's Journey into Night. A close study of the text of O'Neil's Long Day's Journey in which each production constituent (subject, theme vision of reality, dramatic action dialogue, characterization, symbol, set design, lighting and sound) is examined and compared to existential ideologies, provides the most adequate means of determining if the play gravitated beyond the bounds of messianic drama which Burstein described, to the formation of an American existential dramaturgy. Such an investigation should also shed some light on O'Neil's capacity to satisfy his stated intent of presenting "man's relation to God." This spiritual quest for enlightenment and
purification provides a focus for such a study in which each dramatic constituent is examined in terms of its capability to satisfy this intent.

Several dramatic theorists have addressed O'Neill's employment of individual existential ideologies. However, a systematic study of his translation of this composite phenomenon into dramatic form in any one play has not been undertaken. The many isolated references in the critical literature which connect O'Neill's plays to an emerging existential dramaturgy support a comparison study of existential tenets and dramatic constituents. Indeed, if these scattered fragments in the critical literature which compose a uniform perception of the existential foundation of the play had been previously collated, the existential form O'Neill uses would now comprise a well documented segment of American theatre history. Since a systematic ordering of these separate perceptions augments the credibility of a comparison of existential philosophy and dramatic form, inclusion from a number of these articles will appear in conjunction with a comparison of each dramatic constituent to an existential equivalent.

To begin, the entire action of O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey* takes place in the living room of the Tyrone's summer home, a dark and shabbily furnished room sporting little more than the essentials necessary to maintain a modest sense of comfort. "A dark windowless back parlor, never used except as a passage from living room to dining room,"18 is included, as is a doorway leading out to the front porch and the harbor. Several windows likewise overlooking the foggy harbor, allude to the world beyond. This claustrophobic environment encapsulating the four Tyrones, simultaneously separates the family from the larger community outside while forcing them in toward one another. The singularity of the room and the utter darkness surrounding it at the play's end evokes an immediate comparison between the physical cell the Tyrones inhabit and the frustrated psyche of the family members. The presence of the fog which increase as the day wears on, the play of light and
the increasing shadow within as the onslaught of familial accusations reach a climax, signal a type of metaphysical kinship. It is almost animated, a silent, brooding, darkening chamber of the family's joint consciousness. It is virtually the fifth member of the family Tyrone. On a symbolic level, the house serves as a repository harboring both the tangible and intangible items lost over the years which the Tyrones now strive desperately to regain. Somewhere within, James Tyrone has misplaced the newspaper clipping given to him by the famous actor Edwin Booth. Mary has lost the bridal gown she connects with her lost idealism and the happy days of her young married life:

**TYRONE**  
*The praise Edwin Booth gave my Othello. I made the manager put down his exact words in writing. I kept it in my wallet for years. I used to read it every once in a while until finally it made me feel so bad I didn't want to face it any more. Where is it now, I wonder? Somewhere in this house. I remember I put it away carefully--*

**EDMOND**  
*It might be in an old trunk in the attic, along with Mama's wedding dress.*

Mary Beth Dakoske, whose dissertation addresses the archetypal images in the play, comments on the symbolic nature of the physical environment O'Neill presents on stage. Although she connects this orchestration of the stage environment to a perception of consciousness, a spiritual quest, she does not pursue a comprehensive study of the existential foundation of the play:

*Through symbols that once told them who they were, they try to recover the fragments of their identity. James Tyrone is certain that the newspaper clipping is "somewhere in this house." Mary Tyrone knows that her wedding gown is also in the house; it never occurs to her to look outside the house for it. Sure enough, the fragments of identity are there.*

The drab Tyrone living room, with its bookshelves and its wicker chairs, its "windowless back parlor," assumes an added dimension in the play. Each family member's constant references to "home," and the lost self that each member is searching for coincides
with the physical setting O'Neill has presented. This setting presents the spiritual vacuum the
Tyrone's lament in concrete form on the stage:

MARRY
I've never felt it was my home. It was done in the cheapest way. Your father
would never spend the money to make it right. It's just as well we haven't any
friends here. I'd be ashamed to have them step in the door. But he's never
wanted family friends. He hates calling on people, or receiving them. All he
likes is to hobnob with men at the Club or in a barroom. Jamie and you are
the same way, but you're not to blame. You've never had a chance to meet
decent people ...21

O'Neill combines the cloistered environment he creates on stage with the family
member's individual perceptions of consciousness and self identity. James Tyrone describes
his wife's temporary abstinence from drugs as a return home, as a return to her old self. The
Tyrone home is equated with the self:

TYRONE
It's damnable luck Edmund should be sick right now. It couldn't come at a
worse time for him.

He adds, unable to conceal an almost furtive uneasiness.

Or for your mother. It's damnable she should have this to upset her, just when
she needs peace and freedom from worry. She's been so well in the two months
since she came home.

His voice grows husky and trembles a little.

It's been heaven to me. This home has been a home again. But I needn't
tell you, Jamie.22

Ultimately, the realistic facade of the Tyrone living room is overpowered by the
darkness creeping over it, the family's inability to face one another honestly and to come to
terms with their own fears, failures, and guilts. There is little room for self exploration, just as
there is little light to guide the weary and confused. And, when Jamie returns home drunk,
broke, and emotionally bankrupt, he sees the Tyrone home both as an extension of himself,
and as an extension of the family. Both are capable of inflicting pain:

JAMIE
He bends and slaps at the knees of his trousers.
Had a serious accident. The front steps tried to trample on me. Took advantage of the fog to waylay me. Ought to be a lighthouse out there. Dark in here too.

Scowling.

What the hell is this, the morgue? Let us have some light on subject.²³

Philosopher William Barrett's description of the existential perspective, "the incurable isolation of the individual, the absurd mechanisms of society that destroy him, and the courage to face death while affirming life,"²⁴ provides a stunning comparison between the physical environment O'Neill creates, the options for action open to his family Tyrone. The Tyrone living room, little more than a comfortable cell, isolates each of the Tyrones from society on the outside. It directs the members inward toward each other for answers. And the darkness so closely associated with it, virtually enveloping it, signals both the waning consciousness of the family and the void beyond. The tattered, darkened interior signals the diminished capacity of the family to reconcile themselves "to what life has done to them,"²⁵ and what they have done to each other.

The Tyrone living room is the last bastion of consciousness, the last glimmer of light. Its dimly lit chandelier dangles from the ceiling as the fog covered windows appear pressed flat against the darkness beyond. This inoffensive room crowded with its chairs and bookshelves, dictates the nature, the pace of the action of the play as well as establishing the vision of reality the play projects. It both restricts and inhibits physical action while encouraging the mental interplay between family members. As the darkness increases and the realistic detail of the room fades in the background, only what is significant remains in view, the psychological interplay between the family members.

O'Neill has translated Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of consciousness to the stage, presenting it in the form of a real room, but a particular room, made more particular by the four members of the Tyrone family who inhabit it. It is at once, home, self, and consciousness. It is the only environment capable of housing the family's symbolic journey
from light into darkness, unconsciousness. As Sartre states, "What is meant here by saying that existence precedes essence? It means that, first of all man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and only afterwards defines himself." Sartre continues his explanation of this idea by stating that man's awareness of self and his capacity for spiritual growth is based upon an interplay with other people. This captive and restricted environment in *Long Day's Journey*, this home of the family of the soul, demands that such an interplay take place. Sartre explains:

> Thus, the man who becomes aware of himself through the cognition also perceives all others, and he perceives them as the condition of his own existence. He realizes that he cannot be anything (in the same sense that we say that someone is witty or nasty, or jealous) unless others recognize it as such. In order to get any truth about myself, I must have contact with another person.

The physical environment of the play, isolated, closed, singular, with all light sources fading, reflects the psychological and spiritual decay of the family. O'Neill's orchestration of the physical setting coincides with the Tyrone's steady progression toward non-being. O'Neill has transposed the primary tenet of existentialism, consciousness, into dramatic form in his presentation of a specific set and lighting design. This design is symbolic of the family's waning consciousness and shapes the focus and pace of the ensuing dramatic action.

In a similar vein, the accumulated actions of the family signal this same sense of isolation, what constitutes an almost total regression from consciousness by each member of the family. This symbolic journey begins in the morning hours of a sunlit day in August, 1912, and ends at midnight that same day. In Act I, the family gathers in the Tyrone living room after breakfast. James, Jamie, and Edmund watch Mary closely to ascertain if she is remaining drug free. Her reliance upon narcotics is viewed by her family as a retreat from consciousness, a loss of her "old self:"

> MARY
You really must not watch me all the time, James. I mean, it makes me self-conscious.

TYRONE

Putting a hand over one of her nervously playing ones.

Now, now, Mary. That's your imagination. If I've watched you it was to admire how fat and beautiful you looked.

His voice is suddenly moved by deep feeling.

I can't tell you the deep happiness it gives me, darling, to see you as you've been since you came back to us, your dear old self again.

He leans over and kisses her cheek impulsively--then turning back

adds with a constrained air

So keep up the good work, Mary.

MARY

Has turned her head away.

I will dear.

She gets up restlessly and goes to the windows at right. Thank heavens, the fog is gone.

Later in this same act, Mary notices James constant stare. His concern for her well-being unnerves her and both James and Mary are struck by this mutual lack of trust. It is as though an unspoken accusation had been made. A pattern of distrust, accusation, and pretense begins to undermine the Tyrone's ability to truly see and understand each other and themselves:

MARY

Why are you staring, Jamie"

Her hands flutter up to her hair.

Is my hair coming down? It's hard for me to do it up properly now. My eyes are getting so bad and I never can find my glasses.

JAMIE

Looks away guiltily.

Your hair's all right, Mama. I was only thinking how well you look.

This continuing vigil, making Mary "Self-conscious," is used as a means to make her responsible for her actions in hopes she can avoid the horrors of drug addiction in the figure. Once again, O'Neill has drawn upon the primary tenet of existentialism, consciousness, in his development of a specific dramatic form. He utilizes this concept to develop a scheme of
dramatic action emphasizing a symbolic journey from self-knowledge toward nonbeing. He has combined it with the fourth tenet of existentialism, namely, the concept of freedom and choice in relation to man's responsibility to create his or her own being in the world. Mary's admonition to Edmund as she tries to avoid this responsibility provides a concrete example of O'Neill's manipulation of these two existential tenets and their translation into dramatic form:

MARY

Wincing--her lips quivering pitifully.
Don't. I can't bear having you remind me.

EDMUND

Don't take it that way! Please, Mama! I'm trying to help. Because it's bad for you to forget. The right way is to remember. So you'll always be on your guard. You know what's happened before.\textsuperscript{30}

O'Neill pursues this same approach with a vehemence and with an smashing consistency in his development of the play's dramatic action. Each member of the family engages in a round robbing series of tempestuous accusations and denials. Each of the four Tyrones continues to move further away from the truth about themselves, further away from consciousness with each embittered charge and counter charge. Mary continues to deny the past. She denies her addiction and in refusing to face the truth, places the blame for her condition on the family. For in Mary's troubled mind, it is the family whose suspicion has placed a burden on her. In this same act, James Tyrone criticizes his eldest son, Jamie, for not making something of himself. The charge serves to alleviate the elder Tyrone's own sense of guilt for not pursuing a serious acting career as a Shakespearean actor. It moves him away from a true picture of himself:

MARY

Now Don't start in on poor Jamie, dear.
Without conviction.
He'll turn out all right in the end, you wait and see.

TYRONE

He'd better start soon, then, He's nearly thirty-four.\textsuperscript{31}
Tyrone continues to press this same issue when the boys start to tease him, as they do later in this same act concerning the elder Tyrone's reputed snoring. Again, James rushes to exonerate himself:

   JAMIE  
   Boredly  
   What's all the fuss about? Let's forget it.  
   TYRONE  
   Contemptuously  
   Yes, forget! Forget everything and face nothing: It's a convenient philosophy if you've no ambition in life except to --- .

Once again, Tyrone hammers upon this same attack when he lashes out at Jamie for not carrying on the family tradition. He berates Jamie for not making his existence felt in the world. But the accusation serves two purposes. It vents Jamie's frustration and his anger with his sons and it acts as a diversionary tactic, a type of moral camouflage to divert blame from himself:

   JAMIE  
   My salary! Christ!  
   TYRONE  
   It's more than you're worth, and you couldn't get that if it wasn't for me. If you weren't my son, there isn't a manager in the business who would give you a part, your reputation stinks so. As it is, I have to humble my pride and beg for you, saying you've turned over a new leaf, although I know it's a lie!  
   JAMIE  
   I never wanted to be an actor. You forced me on the stage.  

Tyrone seizes the opportunity to turn his son's criticism of his own penury in regard to Edmund's medical care to a diversionary attack on his accuser. Attention is being constantly focused and refocused on the frailty of one member of the family. The conversation draws on, with more talk, more accusations are leveled, denied, and more faults uncovered. Blame is placed on the other family members to blot out each member's own culpability. The family is sick, suffering from a number of maladies. O'Neill's manipulation of the related actions point to his consistent translation of three existential tenets into concrete dramatic form. He
has employed the concept of consciousness and the idea of freedom and responsibility in regard to each individual's capacity to create his or her own being in the world. He has complimented this joint thrust with yet another emphasis by detailing the family's capacity to encourage or inhibit the spiritual quest of each member. For it is the family members with their perpetual accusations, the soul-mocking blame, guilt, and denial which prevent each of the Tyrones from establishing contact with another human being, or with themselves. O'Neill has so meticulously orchestrated this scheme of dramatic action; each of the Tyrone's quest to recover a lost self is dependent upon the actions and the perceptions of the other family members.

The family's psychological and spiritual deterioration is reinforced by the introduction of Edmund's consumption. This is another indication that the family is being consumed from within. As with each crisis facing the family Edmund's illness is denied, then blamed for securing a quack instead of a qualified doctor. Then Jamie is accused of leading Edmund into physical and moral ruin:

MARY
You mustn't mind Edmund, James. Remember he isn't well.

Edmund can be heard coughing upstairs. She adds nervously A summer cold makes anyone irritable.

JAMIE
Genuinely concerned
It's not a cold he's got. The kid is damned sick.

In rushing to deny Edmund's illness, Mary blames the medical community for misdiagnosing her son's malady. In so doing, she also blames this same entity with supplying her with the drugs which she became addicted to. The reality of the situation has been obliterated by this pattern of accusation and denial, just as Mary's sense of her own identity has been clouded:

MARY
A look of contemptuous hostility flashes across her face Doctor Hardy!
I wouldn't believe a thing the said, if he swore on a stake Bibles! I know what
doctors are. They're all alike. Anything, they don't care what, to keep you coming to them.

She stops short, overcome by a fit of acute self-consciousness as she catches their eyes fixed on her. Her hands jerk nervously to her hair. She forces a smile

What is it? What are you looking at? Is it my hair--?35

Once again, the reality of the situation and individual responsibility is denied. Mary places the blame for her addiction on James and refuses to face her responsibility for her own actions. She continues to live in a make-believe world of blame and denial. James' penny-pinching practices have made the Tyrone house less than a home, not her reliance upon drugs.

Once this round robin of accusation, denial, and blame commences, it runs rampant. Each member of the Tyrone family denies his or her own personal failures. These actions negate any member's knowledge of the true self. This turbulent pattern tears at the fabric of the family. The refusal to accept individual responsibility for the sad state of their lives, keeps each member isolated, separate from one another. It prevents each one from recovering that lost self each of the Tyrones is striving so desperately to regain. The perpetuation of delusions aimed to stall the truth diminishes the capacity of any member of the family to really know each other or himself:

JAMIE

Shrugging his shoulders
All right. Have it your way. I think it's the wrong idea to let Mama go on kidding herself. It will only make the shock worse when she has to face it. Anyway, you can see she's deliberately fooling herself with that summer cold talk. She knows better.

TYRONE

Know's Nobody knows yet.

JAMIE

Well, I do. I was with Edmund when he went to Doc Hardy on Monday. I heard him pull that touch of malaria stuff. He was stalling. That isn't what he thinks any more. You know it as well as I does. You talked to him when you went uptown yesterday, didn't you?36
It Tyrone must admit that Edmund is gravely ill, he feels compelled to blame Jamie. In so doing, he turns the guilty finger away from himself. Tyrone's actions belie a confusion about his son and himself, both are strangers:

TYRONE
The less you say about Edmund's sickness, the better for your conscience!
You're more responsible than anyone!

JAMIE
That's a lie! I won't stand for that, Papa!

The truth and self knowledge in particular is a commodity in short supply. The design of denial and pretense, once established, wears on. Near the end of Act I, James states his preference for a relatively painless lie in lieu of the consequences that the truth might bring:

TYRONE
Yes, this time you can see how strong and sure of herself she is. She's different woman entirely from the other times. She has control of her nerves--or she had until Edmund got sick. Now you can feel her growing tense and frightened underneath. It wishes to God we could keep the truth from her, but we can't if he has to be sent to a sanatorium. What makes it worse is her father died of consumption...38

Acts II and III signal an escalation in the family hostilities, with more charges and counter charges being made. Jamie and Edmund fool the old man by stealing whisky from his liquor bottle and replacing the amount they have taken with water. Jamie warns Edmund to be prepared for bad news from Doc Hardy, and Mary chastises Jamie for criticizing his father:

EDMUND
Uneasily
Oh, dry up, Jamie! And for Pete's sake, Mama, why jump on Jamie all of a sudden?

MARY
Bitterly
Because he's always sneering at someone else, always looking for the worst weakness in everyone.
Then with a strange, abrupt change to a detached, impersonal tone.
But I suppose life has made him like that, and he can't help it. None of us can help the things life has done to us.
They're done before you realize it, and once they're done they make you do other things until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self forever.  

Mary's speech provides the rational and the common threat for the dramatic action in the play. For each member of the family has suffered through what life has done so them, and this ordeal has robbed them of their faith. It has caused them to doubt those closest to them. It has also pressed them to harsh words and thoughtless actions, "until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self forever."  

In Act I, Mary cannot break with the past. She begins to take narcotics again. She becomes more "detached". James realizes his wife has lost her battle with drugs and forfeits any hope for the future. O'Neill has drawn upon another tenet of existentialism in presenting Mary's "detachment", her alienation, in concrete form on the stage. Her actions constitute a symbolic withdrawal from the family. This "detachment" symbolizes both a physical and a spiritual alienation. O'Neill has augmented the existential foundation of the play by translating this existential concept of alienation into dramatic action.

In Act II, James avoids any contact with Mary because of her return to drug addiction. Consequently, Mary blames James for her loneliness. The accumulation of accusations and denials forces the members of the family into a type of psychological and spiritual isolation in which they are incapable of making contact with each other, or in relocating the lost self each has forfeited:

MARY
It's no use finding fault with Bridget. She doesn't listen. I can't threaten her, or she'd leave ... Never mind. The summer will soon be over, thank goodness. Your season will open again and we can go back to second-rate hotels and trains. I hate them, too, but at least I don't expect them to be like a home, and there's no housekeeping to worry about. It's unreasonable to expect Bridget or Cathleen to act as if this was a home. They know it isn't as well as we know it. It never has been and it never will be.
TYRONE

Bitterly without turning around
No, it never can be now. But it was once, before you--

MARY

Her face instantly set in blank denial.
Before I what?

There is a dead silence. She goes on with a return of her detached air.
No, no. Whatever you mean, it isn't true, dear. It was never a home. You've always preferred the Club or a barroom. And for me it's always been as lonely as a dirty room in a one-night stand hotel. In a real home one is never lonely. You forget I know from experience what a home is like. I gave up one to marry you--my father's home.  

Each member of the family has built an emotional fortress around a crumbling identity. The emotional gulf separating one member of the family from another is compounded by a lack of physical contact. They turn from one another, look in opposite directions and refuse to touch one another as the tirade of blame and accusation continues. Mary symbolically leaves the family, retreating further into a drug stupor. She relives significant moments from her past.

MARY

I was so healthy before Edmund was born. You remember, James. There wasn't a nerve in my body. Even traveling with you season after season, with week after week of one-night stands, in trains without Pullmans, in dirty rooms of filthy hotels, eating bad food, bearing children in hotel rooms, I still kept healthy. But bearing Edmund was the last straw. I was so sick afterwards, and that ignorant quack of a cheap hotel doctor--all he knew was I was in pain. It was easy for him to stop the pain.

TYRONE

Mary! For God's sake, forget the past!

MARY

With strange objective calm
Why? How can I ? The past is the present, isn't it? It's the future, too. We all try to lie out of that but life won't let us.

It is impossible to ignore the explicit connection between O'Neill's schemes of dramatic action--the denials--the lies--the stagnation of the family--their self-imposed
isolation from the outside world, each other and themselves--with O'Neill's reliance upon existential tenets of consciousness, freedom and responsibility for the self, the capacity of relationships to encourage or inhibit spiritual growth, and alienation. He has translated these tenets into the dramatic constituents of set and lighting design, dramatic action and the vision of reality the play develops. O'Neill has carefully manipulated these perspectives into a uniform whole and reinforced this design by emphasizing the subjective nature of the family's journey. This progression, this "Long Day's Journey" from light into darkness, "Into Night," is not a spatial venture. It is not a movement from one place to another. The locale is perpetual and does not change appreciably. The family's journey consists of their collective perceptions of life experience through time. The journey is in essence, the collective state of the Tyrones' beings in the world. Several articles in the critical literature support this view of O'Neill's translation of existential tenets into concrete dramatic form. Dramatic theorist, Reinhold Grim, comments upon the existential nature of O'Neill's treatment of time in Long Day's Journey. Grim asserts that the time structure used in the play is synonymous with the family's shared experience. Grim states:

... and it is a typical "analytical" drama, i.e., a play where everything has already happened and is now either evoked and repeated, indeed, reenacted, or gradually yet inescapably, brought to the fore.43

Robert Burstein comments on the development of dramatic action in the play and the significance of this design. Burstein perceived the scope of dramatic action in the play as a type of reliving of past experience. "All four seek solace from the shocks of life in nostalgic memories, which they reach through different paths. For Mary, the key that turns the lock of the past is morphine."44 Burstein relates this design to a psychological drama concerned with the family's collective consciousness. He stated:

Here, combining the retrospective techniques of Ibsen with the aoristic attack of Strindberg, O'Neill compresses the psychological history of his family into the events of a single day, and the economy of the work for all its length, is magnificent.45
This simultaneous existence of the self in the past and in the present, "The past is the present, isn't it? It's the future too," provides an individual focus offering each of the Tyrones a sense of identity. This perception of the self which each one derives from the individual actions of the family members is balanced against the perceptions of those same members. This facet of O'Neill's design signals the translation of a specific existential tenet into concrete dramatic form. In his Introduction to The Early Plays of Eugene O'Neill, Travis Bogard explains this dual concept of existence and time. He relates the temporal or subjective nature of time and its connection to a sense of existence in the world, to man's collective actions. As Bogart states, "O'Neill was less concerned with narrating events in time, and more with projecting states of being, set to some extent, out of time."47

In this regard, O'Neill has created a design employing the subjective nature of I-time. He has presented significant moments in the lives of each family member to provide in insight into these character's motivations. He aligns these moments with a range of conduct to draw attention to and to emphasize what lies beneath the surface of seemingly mundane events. Jean-Paul Sartre explains this approach to time and action in his Being and Nothingness:

Temporality is evidently an organized structure. The three so-called "elements of time, past, present, and future," should not be considered as a collection of "givens", for us to sum up—for example, as an infinite series of "nows" in which some are not yet and others are no longer—but rather as the structured moments of an original synthesis... This ontological presupposition has engendered the famous theory of cerebral impressions. Since the past is no more, since it has melted away into nothingness, if the memory continues to exist, it must be by virtue of a present imprint as present stamped on a group of cerebral cells. Thus everything is a present impression in the body—all is actuality: for the impression does not have a virtual existence qua memory, it is altogether an actual impression.48

The scope of dramatic action as O'Neill develops it is not primarily a matter of what happens. He has not presented a strictly linear series of events to be taken at face value. He has
presented a series of related external events called from the family's collective consciousness, "where a twitch in one creates a spasm in another." The playwright has evoked a panorama of familial accusations and confessions that serve as psychological buffers separating family members. He has externalized the mental and spiritual turmoil undermining each of the Tyrone's lives. His concentration upon the spirited conversations between family members reveals the inner lives of the characters. These discussions act as a conduct, connecting the failures of each member of the family with the sense of spiritual loss felt by another member of the Tyrones.

In presenting the psychological drama described by Brustein, Atkinson, and Dakoske, O'Neill has drawn upon primary tenets of existentialism. He has translated these ideologies into the dramatic constituents of set and lighting design, dramatic action, and a specific vision of reality reflecting the subjective nature of consciousness. These components of dramatic form are virtually inseparable, one feeding and being fed by another. The scheme of dramatic action O'Neill develops with its self-perpetuating pattern of accusation, denial, and pretense evolves into a consistent and symbiotic treatment of characterization.

Dramatic theorist Francis Hodge defines characterization in the following manner in his book *Play Directing*:

> In the Poetics, Aristotle places dramatic action first and character second, with the second flowing out of the first. Although playwrights may not actually write plays in that order since plays can be conceived and evolve from many stimulations, they must achieve this ordered association in the final draft or the character will not have a life of his own. A character does not exist, except in a superficial, external way, through what he says he is or through what others say about him, although these clues help us to see him more clearly. Instead, he exists in what his actions, particularly those under pressing circumstances, tell us he is. Consequently, character is wrapped up in action, and it is for this reason that we can say a character, when we analyze his connection to a play is a statement.
Hodge also states, "A character takes shape and is revealed in the course of the action. Thus, characters do not change, they unfold." Hodge's views summarize this element of dramatic form as the character's thoughts, values, and motivations put into action. In so doing, he advances this facet of dramatic form from a strictly literary standpoint to an active ingredient of the dramatic production on stage.

The traditional "flaw" associated with tragedy, if that term must be utilized in the absence of any better means to describe the character's actions, revealing their frailties or limitations in O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey*, is one of negation and reduction. It is a symbolic journey from consciousness into the hollow night of oblivion. O'Neill compounds the consequences of the family's actions in Act II, as Edmund and Jamie leave the house for a doctor's appointment in town. In this same act James leaves to drown his dashed hopes at a neighborhood bar. These sojourns out of the home signify another overt step away from the self, a psychic separation or alienation. It is this sense of alienation which propels each member's quest for a lost self and which conversely inhibits any self-discovery.

In Act II, the servant girl Cathleen keeps Mary company. They both drink, while Mary, lost in a drug induced haze: relives the past. Likewise, both James and Edmund return home drunk, more removed from the lost self each is seeking. O'Neill has pressed this negative progression even further as each of the Tyrones moves away from self-knowledge and from any sense of contact with one another.

Act IV provides a significant change in the direction and the pace of the character's actions, for it is in this final act that James, Edmund, and Jamie make confessions of their innermost longings. These self-disclosures allow a member of the family to temporarily close the gap separating him from the family. The emotional chasm keeping the Tyrone men in solitary confinement is momentarily abolished and a new found understanding takes its place:

_TYRONE_
Yes, may be life overdid the lesson for me, and made a dollar worth too much, and the time came when that mistake ruined my career as a fine actor.

Sadly

I've never admitted this to anyone before, lad, but tonight I'm so heartsick I feel at the end of everything, and what's the use of fake pride and pretense. That God-damned play I bought for a song and made such a great success in--a great money success--it ruined me with its promise of an easy fortune. I didn't want to do anything else, and by the time I woke up to the fact I'd become a slave to the damned thing and did try other plays, it was too late. They had identified me with that one part, and didn't want me in anything else. They were right too. I'd lost the great talent I once had through years of easy repetition, never learning a new part, never really working hard. Thirty-five to forty thousand dollars net profit a season like snapping your fingers! It was too great a temptation ... What the hell was it I wanted to buy, I wonder, that was worth-Well, no matter. It's a late day for regrets.

He glances vaguely at his cards

My play, isn't it?

EDMUND

Moved, stares at his

Father with understanding--

I am glad you've told me this, Papa. I know you a lot better now. 52

Human contact has been made and with it a glimmer of consciousness is sparked. Edmund now understands his father, he knows him better. Because of this, he begins to understand his own feelings. This act of confession and the spiritual communion that follows is short-lived however. James withdraws again turning out the light, an act synonymous with the family's actions as a whole, for they have all turned out the light of awareness and consciousness.

Jamie's return home and his own confessions emphasize O'Neill's continuing concern with existential ideals of consciousness and spiritual growth based on fellowship. It is what existential philosophers like Buber and Heidegger have described as the call of care which propels Jamie toward self-disclosure. Jamie's back-handed reference to this concern for others is revealed in a exchange with his brother. Unable to fully embrace another human
being, he musters the depleted receive of his spiritual bastion to declare his affection for Edmund and to announce an emotional involvement in the life of another family member:

JAMIE

Why shouldn't I be proud? Hell, it's purely selfish. You reflect credit on me. I've had more to do with bringing you up than anyone. I wished you up about women, so you'd never be a fall guy, or make any mistakes you didn't want to make! And who steered you on to reading poetry first? Swinburne, for example? I did! And because I once wanted to write, I planted it in your mind that someday you'd write! Hell, you're more than my brother. I made you! You're my Frankenstein.53

Each separate action, each verbal exchange in the play reflects an identical design. O'Neill has meticulously interwoven the actions of each character, multiplied them tenfold. All of these emotionally charged conversations seek to absolve each individual family member of responsibility for his own failures. The persistent denial of personal responsibility, the lies, the attempts to blame another; signal a mounting retreat from psychic suffering. But forgiveness and absolution are meted out in small quantities. The weight of the family's collective denials has diminished their capacity to see and understand themselves or each other. The gambit of these domestic travails, the dissonant orchestration of characterization in Long Day's Journey is conducted in a graphic reduce. They move from light into the fog, then toward utter darkness.

Brooks Atkinson identified the nature of the play's unique combination of dramatic action and characterization. He stressed the increasing tempo of the character's actions, how these seemingly mundane domestic events of family strife point to a reduction of consciousness:

Faculty, it is a sordid story about a pathologically parsimonious father, a mother addicted to dope... Scene by scene the tragedy move along with a remorseless beat that becomes hypnotic as though this were life lived on the brink of oblivion.54
O'Neill's characters tread a path of negation, reduction which leads them unmistakingly toward "oblivion." These accumulated acts, this one day in the life of the Tyrones represents the entire history of the family and the state of their being. Jay Halio's "Eugene O'Neill: The Long Quest," identifies a similar treatment in many of O'Neill's plays. The personal sense of loss felt by each character, each individual search for fulfillment is thwarted by his or her inability to recognize and admit what is true or what is false. This inability to accept responsibility for their actions and to forgive those closest to them distinguishes the characterizations O'Neill develops. As Halio states:

> Concerned with members of a single family it explores within the compass of a single, critical day, the pressures--and the causes of those pressures--which despite the love each one feels for the others, compel them to drive one another to despair.55

In her article "Long Day's Journey into Night: Form Early Notes to Finished Play," Judith Barlow describes the dramatic necessity that this chain of action sets in motion. Barlow describes the actions of the family, O'Neill's sense of characterization as a collective groping about in the darkness for a glimpse of the love and understanding each member of the family seeks. The actions of the family in her opinion impose an overwhelming sense of isolation upon each member. The barrages of accusations belie a "self-delusion" manifesting itself in a chain of mutual attacks. Barlow points to O'Neill's modification of the first draft of the play to balance his pattern of denial, accusation and blame with the redeeming qualities of confessions and forgiveness which offer the possibility of some degree of self-understanding:

> In the published Journey, the Tyrones are often selfish, bitter and even vicious as they take out their misery on their deep concern for one another are clear. In early versions, by contrast, the Tyrones' cruelty and anger are so predominant that it is difficult for an audience to sympathize with the characters.56

Barlow's article, abstracted from the literature addressing O'Neill's manipulation of dramatic form in Long Day's Journey Into Night bears a striking resemblance to existential
philosopher Jean Paul Sartre's observations are particularly damning given the Tyrones verbal assaults on one another. He stated, "In order to get any truth about myself, I must have contact with another person." Sartre's definition of consciousness, man's self-awareness, demands an introspection based on the care and nurturing of those primary relationships involved in daily life. "What is meant here by saying that existence precedes essence? It means that, first all man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and only afterward defines himself." Sartre's additional comments in his Existentialism and Human Emotions, point to the individual choice of action or the accumulated acts of a lifetime as a barometer of man's being. As Sartre states, "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself." All the blame, denial, and pretense have moved the Tyrones away from their "home."

It is ironic that this sense of self-consciousness is inextricably connected with the aware individual's perception of and his relationship to other beings. The lost faith, the lost self which the Tyrones lament is part and parcel of their inability to contact one another as human beings. As O'Neill has dictated, all that has been lost resides within the home. This constant repetition emphasizing consciousness and spirituality is elucidated through symbol, dramatic action, characterization, set and lighting design, and dialogue. Mary searches for her lost wedding gown. James searches for a lost news clipping and Edmund recounts a sense of oneness he once felt at sea. Each character is involved in a quest for some lost quality. This search is synonymous with an internal quest for the self:

MARY

What is it I'm looking for? I know it's something I lost. Something I miss terribly. It can't be altogether lost something I need terribly. I remember when I had it I was never lonely nor afraid. I can't have lost it forever; I would die if I thought that. Because then there would be no hope.

O'Neill has combined a unique manipulation of dramatic constituents and existential ideologies with his treatment of the family subject to present his theme of consciousness and spirituality. His employment of the family far exceeds the type of "domestic drama" detailed
by dramatic theorists like Tom Scanlan whose Family, Drama, and American Dreams supports a view of Long Day's Journey into Night as a traditional example of selective realism. His overt emphasis upon a psychological interplay between the characters, his concentration upon conversation rather than external action, and his reliance upon symbol to present the waning consciousness of the Tyrone family expands the perimeters of a realistic form.

Sociologist Ruth Nansa Anshen offers an explanation of the modern American family's connection with an existential perspective. She describes a primary function of the family as its capacity to generate consciousness in the individual. It is this specific function of the family that attracted O'Neill, making it the optimum vehicle for his thematic concern with "man's relation to God." As Anshen states:

The concept of family pervades all civilization--nay, all human life--and the human family itself becomes manifest as the immediate substantiality of the mind, receiving its specific and definitive characterization through love. And it is through such love that the mind becomes conscious of its own intrinsic unity and power. The possession of the self awareness-consciousness of one's individuality within this unity as the essence of oneself results in the recognition that one exists in the family not as an isolated, independent person, but rather as a member of the microcosmic pattern of the dynamic world community.61

O'Neill's concept of characterization as Judith Barlow and other critics describe it, is more than the schematic plot of individual actions or even the interwoven fabric of cross-purposes. O'Neill has developed in interplay of motivations, a vivid subtextual externalization of the individual psyche termination in objective action. What the characters do (deny, blame, and accuse) and what they say culminates in a presentation of an existential philosophical perspective in concrete form. They say: (I've never felt it was my home,62 "If I could find the faith I lost, so I could pray,"63 "Why don't you light the light, James? It's getting dark."64 "Who wants to see life as it is if they can help it?"65 "How thick the fog is. I can't see the road."66)
O'Neill has taken great care to avoid the unaltered abstractions of existentialism. He has translated these connected ideologies into dramatic form, presenting the concrete, the observable. He has dramatically evoked this retreat from consciousness in such an explicit manner that its essence is immediately realized, as T.S. Eliot has states in describing his concept of the "objective correlative." As Mary appears in the darkened living room of the Tyrone home near midnight, her physical appearance and her actions convey a sense of isolation and a retreat from consciousness. Her befuddled appearance on stage exemplifies the loss of the self:

The playing stops as abruptly as it began, and Mary appears in the doorway. She wears a sky-blue dressing gown over her nightdress, dainty slippers with pompons on her bare feet. Her face is paler than ever. Her eyes look enormous. They glisten like polished black jewels. The uncanny thing is that her face now appears so youthful. Experience seems ironed out of it. It is a marble mask of girlish innocence, the mouth caught in a shy smile... She hesitates in the doorway, glancing around the room, her forehead puckered puzzled, like someone who has come to a room to get something but has become absent-minded on the way and forgotten what it was...67

O'Neill's development of the dialogue augments his emphasis on the Tyrones; waning consciousness. The dialogue is aggressive, penetrating, designed to peel the masks from the family Tyrone and to uncover the truth and the embattled self within. On occasion it lapses into extended colloquies designed for self-disclosure. O'Neill described this concept in his "Memoranda On Masks." O'Neill stated, "For what, at bottom, is the new psychological insight into human cause and effect, but a study in masks, an exercise in unmasking."68 O'Neill also explains, "One's outer life passes in a solitude haunted by the masks of others; one's inner life passes in a solitude haunted by the masks of others; one's inner life passes in a solitude hounded by the masks of oneself."69 Certain words and phrases, repeated so often as to become variations upon the same resounding theme, converge becoming just that, a recapitulation of the same opus of spiritual longing. The following phrases are repeated
throughout the play indicating this emphasis: "self-conscious, "old self," "home", "soul", "fog", "dark", "death", and "forgive". Mary's words echo O'Neill's theme with a simple eloquence:

MARY
But I suppose life has made him like that, and he can't help it. None of us can help the things life has done to us. They're done before you realize it, and once they're done they make you do other things until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self forever.70

Mary Beth Dakoske refers to O'Neill's development of theme and the archetypal images in his Long Day's Journey. She points to the playwright's refinement of this recurrent theme of spiritual loss and consciousness. Dakoske connects O'Neill's development of this theme with his selection of the family is the subject for the dramatization of these concerns. She states:

Loss, then, is the central theme and the consequent feeling that pervades this play. There is that personal 'loss of faith' for each of the characters and there is also a familial loss in the frustrated way they look to each other for recovery of their losses...71

Dakoske also characterizes O'Neill's development of language in the play, his finite translation of theme into dialogue, as she correlates this repetition of key phrases to the characters' quest for enlightenment and spiritual fulfillment. Once again O'Neill has integrated his manipulation of dramatic constituents and his reliance on existential tenets to present a uniform design reflecting consciousness and a spiritual quest. As Dakoske states:

While there is a strong desire for homecoming among the Tyrones, loss of a home is, instead, the dominant thematic statement. For each of the Tyrones, the homecoming quest is characterized by loss.72

This integration of an existential philosophical construction into dramatic form, its translation into theme, subject, set design, characterization, and dialogue; is represented objectively in the character's lives on stage. O'Neill continues this externalization of the psyche with an emphasis evoked through symbol. In so doing, he dictates a distinctive vision
of reality operative on stage. It is this vision, this establishment of the play's migration from actuality, which points to the emergence of an existential American genre expanding the implications of surface reality or realistic detail. Such a form presents a psychological reality determined by an individual perception of being in the world, a subjective view determined by the individual's state of consciousness.

The critical literature addressing the play's dramatic form suggests that O'Neill has incorporated such an emphasis upon a psychological reality in his development of the play's dramatic constitutions. Several dramatic theorists have suggested that Long Day's Journey migrates beyond the bounds of selective realism, although no comprehensive study to date documents the existence of such an influence in Long Day's Journey or any other O'Neill play. These observations remain little more than suggestions. The dramatic devices O'Neill manipulates in Long Day's Journey have not been previously examined to determine what forces associated with such a psychological drama are operative in O'Neill's design. In examining his manipulation of subject, theme, dramatic action, characterization, dialogue, set and lighting design, symbol, and the vision of reality the play presents; it becomes clear that O'Neill has combined these elements of the drama with specific existential tenets. This study, in presenting the correlations between O'Neill's employment of specific existential tenets and his manipulation of dramatic constituents in Long Day's Journey into Night, provides evidence that the playwright combined these two phenomenon, presenting a unique vision of reality synonymous with an existential perspective. Any investigation of O'Neill's development of an existential dramatic form would not be complete without providing a collation of the scattered references in the critical literature which point to O'Neill's development of a unique psychological drama. Such a collation brings these isolated critical observations together, presenting them in mass as an additional substantiation of O'Neill's
employment of an existential dramatic form. It also provides a summary study of the critical literature heretofore left ungathered.

Oscar Brockett and Robert Findlay allude to O'Neill's employment of an existential perspective in their *Century of Innovation*. Brockett and Findlay limit their discussion of O'Neill's use of this philosophical base to the playwright's development of the same theme used by existential authors. Both theatre historians also refer to O'Neill's use of a strikingly singular set to coincide with his concentration upon a psychological drama revealing a joint spiritual quest. As Brockett and Findlay explain:

> Many critics consider *Long Day's Journey into Night* O'Neill's finest achievement. Like *The Iceman Cometh*, it is realistic in method and much longer than the average play. Here the action is confined within a very restricted framework: it takes place in a single room on one day and focuses on four characters... All of the characters are caught in a hell created by their own psychological and spiritual failures. All seek to evade an unpleasant present--through drugs, alcohol, dreams, and memories--but there can only be a temporary escape backward to a time before faith and hope were shattered, for as in the earlier play, here O'Neill suggests that life without faith can only be a delayed journey into night. Thus, in his own distinctive way, O'Neill pursues the same theme that preoccupies the existentialists and Samuel Beckett.73

This constant attention to theme and plot, as well as an additional focus upon the autobiographical nature of the play often found in the critical literature has consumed the greater portion of the collective efforts of drama critics over the past three decades. Such efforts have diverted any investigation detailing the connection between existentialism and O'Neill's development and texts composing the critical literature establish the excellence of O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey*, but do not proceed with studies aimed at examining his development of a cohesive dramatic design. Like T.S. Eliot's "objective correlative," *Long Day's Journey* unites them and form in one inseparable presentation.
Tom Scanlan's *Family, Drama, and American Dreams,* concentrates on O'Neill's development of theme and his use of a spiritual quest in his *Long Day's Journey.* Scanlan points to O'Neill's unique reliance upon symbol and a manipulation of this convention in characterization, action, and set design. And yet Scanlan, like Brockett and Findlay, does not supply a rational for O'Neill's presentation of objective detail in his treatment of these constituents as they coexist with his manipulation of overt and repeated symbols. As Scanlan states:

O'Neill takes special pains to isolate the Tyrones, and their story is the most purely presented of any of his dramas. All the action takes place in one room on one day. The family is small, with two parents and two children. Contact with the outside world is space and the minimum that a play in the realistic mode wills allow.\(^74\)

Scanlan alludes to the dramatic implications inherent in O'Neill's design, but does not proceed with a comprehensive analysis of the various production constituents and how these elements might be shaped by O'Neill's development of theme. Scanlan recognizes a repetitive motif in the play which distinguishes it, but along this emphasis only with O'Neill's choice of family as the subject matter to convey his thematic thrust. "Finally, it should be said that the repetition in Long Day's Journey evokes a sense of endlessness to the actions of this family."\(^35\)

In "Eugene O'Neill: The Long Quest," Jay Halio comments not only upon O'Neill's continuing refinement of this spiritual theme with an emerging dramatic form. Halio recognized that O'Neill was subtly tampering with the facade of selective realism, expanding it to encompass his existential drama. Halio stated:

*But the quest remained central to O'Neill's work, and the earnestness of his seeking as much as his indefatigable experimentation with technique, greatly contributed to the revitalization of the American theater in the early decades of his century—even as one illusion of "home" after another was examined and found for what it was—an illusion.*\(^76\)
Although O'Neill presents a physical environment grounded in realistic detail, "As the curtain rises, the family has just finished breakfast. Mary Tyrone and her husband enter together from the back parlor, coming from the dining room," his commanding and repetitive use of symbol moves the play beyond the perimeters of realism. O'Neill's symbolic treatment of time, his commanding use of symbol in the dialogue and dramatic action overpowers objective detail to present states of being. Travis Bogard describes this quality of O'Neill's design in his introduction to The Early Plays of Eugene O'Neill. Bogard observes that O'Neill achieved this effect primarily through a manipulation of lighting. As he states, O'Neill was concerned less with narrating events in time, and more with projecting states of being, set to some extent, out of time." It is the graphic reduction in light that Bogard identifies that parallels the family's symbolic journey from consciousness to psychic, spiritual darkness. This emphasis projecting "states of being," raises the scheme of dramatic action to a level synonymous with the Tryones' consciousness. As Mary tells Jamie in Act I, "Well, if you're going to work on the hedge, why don't you go? I mean, take advantage of the sunshine before the fog comes back." As Bogard recognizes, Act III commences with yet a more severe reduction in light. Although the scant presence of light emanates from real sources, it's almost dictatorial control of the action begins to judge O'Neill's drama toward an existential format concerned with presenting states of consciousness in concrete form:

SCENE

The same. It is around half past six in the evening. Dusk is gathering in the living room, an early dusk due to the fog which has rolled in from the Sound and is like a white curtain drawn down outside the windows. From a lighthouse beyond the harbor's mouth, a foghorn is heard at regular intervals, moaning like a mournful whale in labor, and from the harbor itself, intermittently, comes the warning ringing of bells on yachts at anchor.

Carl G. Jung characterized such representations as O'Neill's manipulation of symbol in the play, as a descent into psychic darkness. "Day and light are synonymous for consciousness; night and dark for the unconscious." O'Neill presents the family's turn from
consciousness on several converging planes. His title indicates a descent into psychic darkness, the day's progression into night. The repeated reference to the fog and to darkness in the dialogue augments this influence. Add to this, Mary's growing detachment, and the drunken stupor of the Tyrone men and Jung's description becomes even more appropriate.

In his *A Dictionary of Symbols*, Juan Cirlot reveals the symbolic nature of O'Neill's title and the ensuing dramatic action as a quest for illumination:

*The form of symbolic journeys representing a quest that starts in darkness of the profane world... and gropes toward the light. Such ordeals or trials--like the stages of a journey--are rites of purification.*

By infusing each production constituent with the theme of a spiritually bankrupt modern man groping in the dark of unconsciousness for his lost self, O'Neill has subtly altered the realistic form to suit his own existential intent. The emphasis derived from the cumulative effect of this symbolic presentation creates a vision of reality rooted in individual consciousness. The "rites", which Cirlot refers to, must conform to prescribed patterns of movement, gesture, and focus in accordance with the restricted physical environment O'Neill has presented. As Act I begins, the family enters the living room. Their actions are stimulated by a robust quality which pales as each begins to lapse into unconsciousness. O'Neill's symbolic reduction, the family's journey into darkness, is manifested in a physical reduction of the characters' movements on stage:

*James Tyrone is sixty-five but looks ten years younger. About five feet eight, broad shouldered and deep-chased, he seems taller and slenderer because of his bearing, which has soldierly quality of head up, chest out, stomach in, shoulders squared.*

Mary is described in a similar robust state. She is characterized in the following manner:

*She is dressed simply but with a sure sense of what becomes her. Her hair is arranged with fastidious care. Her voice is soft and attractive. When she is merry, there is a touch of Irish lilt in it.*
Both descriptions suggest a physical demeanor characterized by crisp, energetic, broad movements indicative of their mental state. As the couples appear for the first time, "Tyrone's arm is around his wife's waist as they appear from the back parlor. Upon entering, he gives her a playful hug." In presenting the first picture of the family, O'Neill has created not only an image of vitality, but one of physical and emotional closeness. There is contact between the characters and an observable display of spiritual communion.

In contrast, Act II begins in repose. The tempo of the character's actions has been radically slowed and the range of their motions has been restricted to depict the growing isolation of the characters and their diminished consciousness:

*Edmund sits in the armchair at left of table, reading a book. Or rather he is trying to concentrate on it, but cannot. He seems to be listening for some sound from upstairs. His manner is nervously apprehensive and he looks more sickly than in the previous act.*

The "rites" Cirlot identifies are inextricably combined with O'Neill's manipulation of symbol, what Jung defined as representations of the "unconscious." Act III presses this physical deterioration and the spiritual degeneration it involves, even further. A restriction of contact and a reduced energy level personifies the family's progression into spiritual darkness. Not only do the characters' movements signal a slower tempo, their interactions convey isolation and a reduction in physical space. O'Neill includes a graphic redirection in focus, as the characters begin to avoid not only any physical contact, but any eye contact as well:

*Mary is paler than before and her eyes shine with unnatural brilliance. The strange detachment in her manner has intensified. She has hidden deeper within herself and found refuge and release in a dream where present reality is but an appearance to be accepted and dismissed unfeelingly--even with a hard cynicism--or entirely ignored.*

O'Neill has minimized the contact between characters to signal their growing isolation. His redirection of focus emphasizes this aspect as a key ingredient establishing the
stage environment. Jamie speaks to his mother in Act II, "without looking at her," and "Jamie gets up and goes to the windows at right, glad of an excuse to turn his back." In Act II, Scene ii, we are told:

The family are returning from lunch as the curtain rises. Mary is the first to enter from the back parlor. Her husband follows. He is not with her as he was in the similar entrance after breakfast at the opening of Act One. He avoids touching her or looking at her. There is condemnation in his face, mingled now with the beginning of an old weary, helpless resignation... Edmund sits in a chair by the table, turned half away from his mother so he does not have to watch her. 

O'Neill has utilized the family as the optimum vehicle to present this spiritual abyss, believing as sociologist Ruth Nanda Anshen has stated that it is the family which encourages or inhibits the individual's self awareness, his consciousness. It is also the family, as O'Neill has employed it, which sponsors value systems used by the individual in welding an identity. In his Theatre of Revolt, Robert Brustein comments on the characters' constant bickering, their accusations, their collective illusions, and their dependence upon one another. As Brustein states, "No individual character trait is revealed which does not have a bearing on the lives of the entire family." Mary's dependence on drugs is somehow related to Tyrone's excessive thrift and to Edmund's birth, although she must bear a portion of the responsibility for her own life. It is rather, the shoddy, the inauthentic values promoted within the group which aid and abet the Tyrones in sustaining the illusions which ultimately keep them separate. Tyrone's penury is directly related to the drab, unhappy surroundings of the Tyrone home, Mary's and Edmund's shoddy medical care, and Jamie's festering resentment of his father. Tyrone's love of the dollar has also undermined his career as a serious actor, leaving him frustrated and bitter, wondering what life might have been if he had not sold out. Brustein comments upon the family's connection to this search for fulfillment, Edmund's James', and Jamie's sense of failure. "Although less shrouded in illusion than Mary, each nevertheless haunts the past like a ghost seeking consolation for a wasted life." As Jamie
confesses to Edmund near the end of the play, "Look in my face. My name is Might-Have-Been; I am also called No More, Too Late, Farewell."\textsuperscript{93}

Thomas F Van Laan comments upon O'Neill's treatment of the family and his joint concern with values in O'Neill's \textit{Ah Wilderness Long Day's Journey}. In his "Singing in the Wilderness: The Dark Vision of Eugene O'Neill's Only Mature Comedy," Van Laan addresses the capacity of the Tyrones to alternately praise and belittle one another. The onslaught of bitter recriminations stem from any one member's inability or refusal to adhere to the values fostered within the family group. The hypocrisy of these values is consistently brought to the fore as the root cause of the ambivalence and the bickering undermining the lives of the family members. Jamie is chastised for his philandering, his drinking and his lack of success as an actor. And yet Mary concedes that James has set the example and Jamie has never known "decent people", only barroom chorines and whores. When his father berates him for his lack of success as an actor Jamie reminds Tyrone, "You forced me on the stage."\textsuperscript{94}

James Salem addresses O'Neill's persistent obsession with values in his "Eugene O'Neill and the Sacrament of Marriage." Salem states, "Eugene O'Neill was amoral conservative--the only writer of serious plays in the twenties and thirties to insist upon the established conventions."\textsuperscript{95} Addressing O'Neill's development of theme and characterization in his early plays, Salem comments on the playwright's unique combination of the family and spiritual concerns. In Salem's view, this was readily apparent in O'Neill's \textit{Welded}, in which the playwright joined the institution of marriage with religious imagery to convey a spiritual communion. The same spiritual communion is what is lost and yearned for in O'Neill's \textit{Long Day's Journey}. It is a quest thwarted by the fears, the guilt and the inadequacy of the family members. But this spiritual longing is propelled by the same hypocrisy and inauthentic values' leaving the Tyrone's spiritually bankrupt. Edmund voices this life-long search for fulfillment in an exchange with his father:
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I lay on the bowsprit, facing astern, with the water foaming into spume under me, the masts with every sail white in the moonlight, towering high above me. I became drunk with the beauty and singing rhythm of it, and for a moment I lost myself--actually lost my life. I was set free! I dissolved in the sea, became white sails and flying spray, became beauty and rhythm, became moonlight and the ship and the high dimstarred sky! I belonged, without past or future, within peace and unity and a wild joy, within something greater than my own life, or the life of Man, to Life itself! To God, if you want to put it that way.96

In refining his career-long emphasis upon a spiritual quest and the family's involvement in that quest, O'Neill has incorporated the basic tenet of existentialism into his dramatic design in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. He has translated the concepts of consciousness, freedom and responsibility in relation to an individual being, the capacity of relationships to encourage spiritual growth, authentic values, and alienation into concrete dramatic form. He has manipulated the constituents of dramatic form in such a manner that these philosophical ideologies spill over into virtually every facet of the drama. But it is O'Neill's vision of reality, his overt and multifarious reliance upon symbol in Long Day's Journey which distinguishes it as a prime example of an emerging American existential-familial dramatic form. The gestalt of these converging ideologies presented in concrete form on the stage evokes an immediate sense of the void outside the Tyrones' door. The darkness creeping in over the family, the fog rolling in from the harbor, the warning bells clanging like a death knell outside; combine to flesh-out an omnipotent threat of non-being. The existential notion of Angst has been transposed from a philosophical or literary abstraction to a condition controlling the Tyrone's lives.

Each of the four "haunted" Tyrones thrashes about, searching for some sense of meaning in life, groping in the encroaching darkness for some spiritual epiphany to counterbalance the mean existence of their lives and the void which waits beyond. This undirected fear of non-being permeating the Tyrones' lives is as tangible as the bookshelves
crammed with volumes of Shakespeare and Nietzsche, or the wicker chairs set at center stage. It hangs over the household like a black chameleon taking many shapes. It is the simultaneous threat of Edmund's consumption, Tyrone's fear of dying destitute, Jamie's hatred of the bard of him that is already dead, and Mary's total withdrawal into a narcotic nightmare. In Lionel Trilling's words, "In short, O'Neill solves the problem of evil by making explicit what men have always found to be the essence of tragedy--the courageous affirmation of life in the face of individual defeat."^{97}

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NOTES

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
12. Ibid., p. 27.
14. Ibid., p. 27.
15. Ibid., p. 29.
16. Ibid., p. 324.
19. Ibid., Act 4, p. 152.
22. Ibid., p. 36.
23. Ibid., p. 155.
27. Ibid., pp. 37-38.
29. Ibid., p. 20.
30. Ibid., p. 45.
31. Ibid., p. 18.
32. Ibid., p. 21.
33. Ibid., pp. 31-32.
34. Ibid., p. 26.
35. Ibid., p. 27.
36. Ibid., pp. 29-30.
37. Ibid., p. 34.
38. Ibid., p. 37.
39. Ibid., p. 61.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., pp. 71-72.
42. Ibid., p. 87.
45. Ibid., pp. 348-349.
51. Ibid., p. 39.
53. Ibid., p. 164.
58. Ibid., p. 15.
59. Ibid.
63. Ibid., p. 107.
64. Ibid., p. 117.
65. Ibid., p. 131.
66. Ibid., p. 102.
67. Ibid.
69. Ibid., p. 504.
72. Ibid., p. 91.
75. Ibid., p. 117.
78. Bogard, Introduction to *The Early Plays of Eugene O'Neill*, p. xvii.
80. Ibid., Act 3, p. 97.
84. Ibid., pp. 12-13.
86. Ibid., p. 51.
87. Ibid., p. 97.
88. Ibid., p. 57.
89. Ibid., p. 60.
90. Ibid., p. 61
92. Ibid., p. 354.
94. Ibid., p. 32.