Introduction

The Transfiguring Self of the Adolescent World

The novel of adolescence is a modern social construct; it is characterized by conflict, whether it is antagonism between the youth and society, or inner ambivalence about values of the adults. There is a new emphasis on inwardness, or the adolescent consciousness. Adolescence has long been characterized as a time when individuals begin to explore and examine psychological characteristics of the self in order to discover who they really are, and how they fit in the social world in which they live. The problematic aspect of this particular period of human life is the ideal ground for the dynamics of a conflict, which is fought both on a psychological, and on a social level. Edgar Friedenberg remarks: “Adolescent conflict is the instrument by which an individual learns the complex, subtle, and precious difference between himself and his environment.”¹ The image of man which recurs most frequently today is man in his isolation and loneliness, and Melville echoes this when he describes the Islanders in the Pequod as: “Isolates I call such, not acknowledging the common continent of man, but each Isolato living in a separate continent of his own.”² In this century we are all, in our loneliness, “displaced persons.”³ It is an apt description of the alienated man in the fractured world of today. Life becomes more complicated and
less easily formulated, and adolescents are the first victims and representatives of this change as they experience it for the first time, after leaving a sheltered childhood, and embarking on the difficult task of becoming adults. In a society, which makes little sense to the sensitive adults, the problem is even more confounded for the growing adolescent, the so-called maladjusted, the misfits in society. In this regard, one may accept the following statement by Franco Moretti on the relationship between social unrest, and its literary expression through the Bildungsroman genre:

The more a society is and perceives itself as a system still unstable and precariously legitimized, the fuller and stronger the image of youth. Youth acts as a sort of symbolic concentrate of the uncertainties and tensions of an entire cultural system, and the hero's growth becomes the narrative convention, or Fictio that permits the exploration of conflicting values. 4

The thematic center of the proposed thesis will focus on the adolescents' cynicism and rebellion against the dubious values of the adult world followed by their intensified search for and exploration of inner life. This study proposes to examine the different images of adolescents given by writers in different times and situations: in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953) Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* (1984) and Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding* (1946). By
analyzing these American texts we see a pattern emerge that is partially explained in the Joseph Campbell excerpt: "The whole sense ... of the hero's passage is that it shall serve as a general pattern for men and women...." The paths the adolescents follow on their personal journeys are indeed "the symptoms of [their] grasp of life." The determining factor in the journey of the young misfits into adulthood is the personal language of the adolescents' through which the authors' create a relationship between a confiding narrator and a listening reader. This bond becomes a tool for inviting the reader to identify with the narrators' position in the world. The narrators' perceptions of the outside world and how these are transformed into their own self-awareness form the core in each novel. What follows is based on the general proposition that the novels' uniqueness resides not only in the rich complexity of its themes, but also in the poetic intensity by which these themes are realized. The study analyzes the coherence of the writers' particular vision of the world, which is essentially the vision of their s/heroes — of Holden Caulfield, Augie March, Esperanza Cordero, and Frances Addams.

Keats who knew, more than anyone else, the agonies of adolescence has an interesting passage, in his Preface to Endymion, which is of great relevance here:

The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy; but there is a space of life
between, in which the soul is in ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick­sighted; thence proceed to mawkishness, and all the thousand bitters. 

In this study the focus will be on these sensitive adolescents who talk of their agonizing "moral toothaches," and try to come to terms with the bewildering culture that surrounds them. The quality of sensitive innocence, which they retain beneath their defiant mannerisms, seems to develop into a note of spiritual mysticism. It is the courage of adolescents, manifested in different ways, which these writers celebrate in their fiction.

The purpose of the chapter is to examine those themes and fictional devices that have been used to survey this sense of inner growth, and also to examine in the subsequent chapters their particular use by the different writers. The chapters will give examples of different views on the concept of identity and how they might be applied to individual cases. In order to discover the adolescents' position in the world, the study will be divided into three main categories: the adolescent, the outsider and the confessor/martyr/pilgrim. The attempt of the thesis is to analyze these categories separately in each text, and also to see how they link to each other, since they all have one thing in common: the loss of self, efforts to gain control over their own minds, to win their freedom without hindrance, and to further their self-development. Thematically speaking,
the writers' intent is to present "the plight of the idealist in the modern world. The idealist sees a difference between what is and what ought to be, and is bothered by that vision into some sort of action." He has a number of alternatives facing him. If he is to remain an idealist, he must either strive to find his ideal world, or attempt to reform what is into what ought to be. That is, his idealism can be either personal and escapist, or impersonal and social. He can, of course, become disillusioned about the possibilities of attaining his end, and as a result, abandon, modify, or change his ideal.

Adolescence has historically been applied predominantly to conceptions of developing manhood. Novels of (male) adolescence have been popular with American literary critics, because they fit so well with the "archetypal patterns" critics have perceived in American Literature. As Lillian Schlissel puts it in her essay, "Contemplating the American Eve:"

The patterns of American fiction, which we have so far constructed — and considered universal — patterns dealing with the nature of innocence and with the nature of adolescence and experience — apply in reality to the male in America.9

Women writers have struggled for centuries to gain the right to explore, and assert the validity of woman-space and experience. Novels of female adolescence have been considered limited and dismissed as too
feminine conveying only "a narrow corner of human existence."  

By including both male and female authors, this study aims to show: "how radically similar their literary origins were how they work with closely related assumptions, materials, and sentiments." The study makes us question hard-and-fast definitions of literary genres and traditions by emphasizing the way in which "a society that rigidly differentiates between male and female gender roles limits the full development of women and men alike." The "pattern of experience" that holds true for women in the fiction of adolescence will re-establish a balance and help understand coming of age in contemporary America.

Ihab Hassan's *Radical Innocence* is a full study of American adolescents in which Hassan claims that their innocence has not given way to experience, but rather has become more radical, going to the roots, becoming increasingly anarchic and visionary. He speaks of the adolescent self that refuses to accept, "the immitigable rule of reality — that is, the human condition." Hassan continues, "The hero in our time has become both victim and rebel, the lonely adolescent or youth, exposing the corrupt adult world where the dramatic emphasis is on the loss, the pain and bitterness of growth, the fall from uneasy grace." The protagonists of this study are those "strange children" who play such an important role in contemporary American fiction. Although one assumes
that Hassan is talking about male adolescents’, his comments can be applied to female adolescent protagonists’ as well because the young heroines seen here can also be characterized as ‘rebel-victim’; they too make gestures of protests. Hassan’s modern hero makes “an existential choice to be a victim by taking the stance of a victim.” The young heroine, on the contrary, is “a real victim” because her female body, “by immitigable rule of society dooms her to subservience.”\(^{15}\) The loss of innocence inevitable in growing up has a different implication for girls than for boys’ existentialists. For the girl, “existential anguish is a luxury: she has no time for protesting the unchangeable. But that does not mean that her outstanding quality is not radical innocence” (White, 1985, p.192). Moreover, “not all novels of adolescence include initiation; in fact, the protagonists may actively avoid or refuse it” (Hassan, 1961, p. 274). If the s/hero is initiated at all, the initiation often occurs suddenly at the end of the novel, and is ambiguous in nature.

One of Walt Whitman’s famous poems — *Song of the Open Road* — provides the subtitle of this thesis, analyzing the novels as a journey or quest. Throughout the pages of literature journey is a repeatedly, recurring archetypal phenomenon. A considerable part of the subject matter of literary rebels, in American literature, past and present is linked to the road. The road appears in American literature as a rebelliously
identifying image of yearnings. The act of wandering itself seems to provide a degree of exile from, and violation of established society, and therefore symbolizes an implicit defiance of established order. Their awareness derives from the movement away from repressive structures. Their "journey involves literal and emotional wandering." The journey is not so much in geography but in time and in spirit, from a physical displacement and a temporal movement, transcending into the realm of the spiritual. Further, these novelists have discovered on the road, above everything else, an "archetypal paradigm," of the sense of experience in the postwar period: "of experiences as life on the road, life as a sometimes haphazard journey out and along a treacherous, and promising open road whose end is beyond any man's sight, a journey possible only for those who retain a vulnerable openness to experience." 

The title of the thesis, with its reference to both journey and imagination, sets up a tension: the movement inward versus breaking out. The adolescents' are caught in a conflict between "that outward existence which conforms, and the inward life which questions." The two forces, inner and outer, come into conflict in the course of the quest in the form of societal and ideological influences. Carol Christ has depicted a similar characteristic in women's spiritual quest, as "a movement toward overcoming the dualisms of self and the world." Only the inner
directedness will guide to overcome the dualism of self and the experience of an awakening from "nothingness" to accomplish the "sacred task" of Bildung. Here space is defined as both a quiet place, in the teeming contemporary life, and as a lack of limits or boundaries, a borderless vastness to be explored at will. There are two essential movements — one outward and one inward. The outward movement describes the effort of youth for release, and freedom. To fulfill this part of the plan, authors involve protagonists in experiences played out in a "series of widening concentric circles." In the lived reality of daily existence, space has to be negotiated in several areas: the familial context, gender roles and realities within the family and the community, identity in the schools, and linguistic identity, and to understand how that ambience influences them in public. The central characters seek to break his/her bondage to these spaces, yearning to find a cure for loneliness, and achieving the freedom to face and deal with the world on his/her own terms. On the other hand, the inward movement explores the inner life of protagonists. The adolescents move outward into the broader world, but have to retreat within, polarities that impinge on the imagination and launch them on an inward journey. This imaginative search for an existence that goes beyond what is given constitutes the true Bildung of
the protagonist, and possibly also the education of the reader, and reflects again the particular artistic sensitivities of the individual authors.

These novels of adolescence are grounded in the disjunction within the protagonist’s experience of the “prose of concrete circumstances on the one hand, and of the poetry of the heart’s potential on the other.” The narratives are made up not simply of beneficent experiences, but also welcome the “poetry” of the individual’s inwardness; hence the tension which is sustained and enacted through the narratives — is not resolved. The recollecting voice of these adolescents are able to document precisely the disjunction referred to above — and to suggest the alternative (but unrealized) possibility that there need be no such absolute gulf between poetry and prose, between the complex inwardness of the inner man and of his actual life in society. The vision, the complete perception of human totality, exists outside ordinary time; it can be glimpsed as in a dream; it can be formulated discursively, but it cannot be possessed as an abiding and effective recipe for everyday living.

If the child symbolizes the invincible spirit, the adolescent is often presented as an archetypal image of growth in literature. The word adolescence comes from the Latin *adolescere* meaning “to grow up,” and this study will focus on adolescence as a developmental process of spiritual growth, and examine those stylistic and technical means that
have been used to convey this sense of inner growth. In these novels, there is therefore a modified form of the Grail Legend and Resurrection myth. The argument in this study will focus on how the life of the spirit, can assume centrality. These writers try to construct a spiritual myth relevant to contemporary man, as it is through "myth that the imaginative substance of religious belief is expressed, communicated and enhanced." All the four novels convey one coherent view of growing up, and this is developed in three stages: first, primary, ignorant perceptions of the adolescent, a gradual sophistication of these perceptions as they mature, and an evaluation of these, leading them to the final expression of an awakened self. Each text begins with the obsessed vision of folly of the egoist, and proceeds by correcting that faulty vision, refracting it through the physical world. So, the action of the texts is to bring home to the protagonist, how blind they have been to physical reality, to people, and to relationship. The fictional technique derived from this connection with the spiritual realm is what can be termed, "the awakening scene," (to borrow the title of Kate Chopin's novella The Awakening) and consists of brief "flashes of recognition." In the "awakening scene" the protagonist is forced through some ambiguous purgation — often in darkness, closed room, a kitchen, psychiatric couch — to encounter his own central organizing principle or
Being — “original spirit, the Scintillans Dei” (Tiger, p.19) — of the unique character. The reflections of the adolescents’ give to these places a special quality: it is an archetypal place of renewal in their mind. In his study of the Bildungsroman, Buckley considers a "gradual imaginative enlightenment"\textsuperscript{24} essential to the hero’s initiation. Throughout the entire narratives there is a gradual unfolding of the “illuminating incident, to reveal and emphasize the inner meaning of each situation,”\textsuperscript{25} and by implication the meaning of the entire story. The adolescents undergo a radical revision of thought moving to a “restructured vision”\textsuperscript{26} where it becomes impossible to deny with certainty the existence of a spiritual dimension crossing the material dimension. The suggestion, and this is at the thematic level only is that there may be a space where the two worlds — the spiritual and the materialist — intersect, a space closed to the “eye of logic” (Tiger, p.145). The riddle posed in the awakening or the coda of the text is intended to resurrect this “dead eye of logic” in order to make the protagonists’ and the reader cast “the new eye of the spirit,”(Tiger, p. 145) over all that has occurred and emerge momentarily into transfigured totality or a beatific vision. The convergence of these two perceptions in the protagonists’ “new eye of the spirit” becomes a representation of their restructured vision. The journey is largely an internal experience of such moments of passionate conviction, moments of privileged spiritual
insight. It constitutes a healthy action, a gathering up of powers to enable the adolescents' to leap forward more effectively, a process like that which Daly defines as the "qualitative leap" empowered by "the light of those flames of spiritual imagination and cerebral fantasy [that] can be a new dawn." Appropriately enough, such scenes end with an inner vision rather than a superficial view or a facile conclusion. The novels' total structure brings about a similar fusion in the reader's focusing of events. To this end, the novels employ the 'awakening scene' and the 'ideographic structure' where ego encounters its inner being.

For these reasons, the effort here has been to locate clues about the measure of a work in its relatively impersonal structure — to discover the spiritual dimension towards which the technical devices of the structure, as well as other fictional features, are directed. Structure here is not regarded as a framework upon which the author hangs his plot, characters, themes, style, etc. It is rather seen as an organizing principle, an organic attribute that is internal and articulated by the text. The reader encounters this structure as he reads, and internally journeys to become aware of performing a "re-creative activity of restructuring the text" (Redpath, p.14). This the writers accomplish through the use of what Virginia Tiger calls the "ideographic structure":

The ideographic structure seems, at first reading, to create two contradictory perspectives on the same circumstances
since the coda reverses the expectations which the first movement has built up... the two perspectives can be linked together by the reader ... In forcing the reader to build the bridge between contradictory perspectives, the ideographic structure forces the reader to ... encounter, by the imaginative impact of words, those experiences, which conventionally words do not reach ... the primacy of spiritual experience itself. (Tiger, p.17)

The *ideographic structure* used in these novels suggests the following features: first, it consists of two parallel interconnected and simultaneous narrative movements' — one positive and one negative. One movement leads towards *communion* (positive movement — realizing true self\ identity\ freedom\ art), and one towards *alienation* (negative movement — breaking with all bonds\ loneliness\ exile). The principal theme in these novels can be stated as: Adventure of the mind: communion or alienation. This is set off by other counter themes, which develop and elaborate on the principal one. The focus is on the adventure of these protagonists, which leads them to discover the mode of spiritual life. Whereas the first part of the movement portrays a linear external/social formation of the protagonists, a formation that results in an increasing sense of alienation, the second part of the movement involves vertical internal/psychic *Bildung* process. This second part of the movement takes them beyond social boundaries, beyond patriarchal space, and centers upon the personal psychic sphere: the quest into their own unconscious for psychic wholeness. This turn toward the interior
spaces of the mind, a fluid, permeable ego boundary entails risks and psychological danger and as Annis Pratt observes, is as likely "to lead to madness as to renewal." They undergo experiences that may ground the adolescents in a new understanding of themselves and their position in the world, yet the authors do not reveal how these experiences may change their life or their concept of self. Therefore, this “ego flexibility and relational thinking” suggests only a potential path toward an authentic self, and helps create a new space of psychological, spiritual, and social relationships. Following the plots’ major movement, there is a coda ending in each of these novels, which reverses, and often contradicts the implications of the first movement. Secondly, the structure involves two different perspectives on the same situation: that emerging from the first movement and that emerging from the coda. Thus the coda’s surprise is integral to the final theme of each novel. In the first narrative movement events are seen from the adolescents’ faulty point of view, while in the coda, events are seen from the enlightened consciousness—“restructured vision”—of the novel’s protagonist, or another character’s point of view. Though superficially contradictory, the two perspectives can be linked together by the reader from hints collected and assembled imaginatively. By making the reader forge the link between the main body and the coda of the text, and between what Tiger calls “the physical
world which contemporary man accepts and the spiritual world, which he ignores but which does not ignore him,” (p.16) these writers force an awareness of a spiritual dimension on the readers, since this is the explanation that will provide the link between the two parts. One sees in this world, what in his essay William Golding calls, “the thumbprint of mystery,” where reality “freed from learnt meanings and rigid system occurs as a spiritual event — close, incommunicable” (Tiger, p.18). In this study, the term spiritual refers to that ambiguous area of belief: “the magical, mysterious, powerful, terrible, dangerous, and awesome” (Tiger, p.20). Thus, although the novels do not openly explain events in spiritual terms, the paradoxical structure of each novel, somehow lead the reader to accept — at least in the imaginative realm — “paradoxes of existence, which are symptoms of the spiritual world” (Tiger, p.209) and which the protagonists are shown as being unable to perceive or accept. However, this empty space filled by the readers’ new perspective is only another ‘picture’ or ‘ways of looking’ (Redpath, p.212) at the novel. The “pictures” say Gregor and KinKead-Weekes “are visualizations not conceptualizations... [It] renders... the life of the senses and instinct since the impression the reader receives of the outside world is of a series of still images.” To read is to read at several different levels simultaneously, to perform the activity of identifying these levels,
interpreting them in conjunction with the other codes of the texts, and then to fuse them into the structure of the novel. The process of reading makes the reader aware of himself, and of his existence extending beyond the covers of the books: “a consciousness in a world in which, [the novels] are merely artifacts created by another consciousness” (Redpath, p.138).

Much critical attention has been dedicated to the split between the male focused, and the female-centered Bildungsroman. When Margaret Fuller prophesied in *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* a “ravishing harmony of the spheres,” her vision was based on the shifting gender roles within her own milieu. In the contemporary period, writers challenge conventional borders in an effort to express evolving notions of selfhood, and the difficulty of encapsulating a life through writing. There has been a move away from separatism to reconciliation, or a blurring of the spheres. In fact, Linda Kerber rightly shows how the boundaries are becoming “fuzzer.” As such, all these novels are a story of borders both demarcated and permeable, borders outside the self and others created within. The thesis will analyze the intersecting, or overlapping sections of the gender spheres between the male/public realm and the female/private realm, especially in terms of the blurred, or shifting boundaries between the spheres. As most border theorists agree, the idea of the border
becomes even more fertile when we “liberate it from the notion of space, [or from a specific locale] to encompass [among others] notions of sex, class, gender, ethnicity, identity, and community.” The texts therefore illuminate the many borders that appear such as, physical boundaries, economical disparities, and gender based demarcations — and the protagonists' attempts to not only cross, but also erase these borders. There is an attempt to re-evaluate perceived differences by including these novels that emphasize the connectedness rather than to create an artificial either-or situation. Novels of female consciousness tend to present increased possibilities for adolescents' integration in society, and more flexible gender roles. Therefore rather than limiting these texts to one category or another, these novels raise consciousness about the importance and unique nature of adolescents in literature by analyzing the ways in which texts probe and challenge oppressive gender-bias, and socio-cultural ideologies. The belief in the permeability of boundaries embodied in the works examined here seems to also be an attempt to extend the sphere of the women without overriding the integrity of others. “The female envisioned (or hoped-for) is one with vastly increased responsibility.” Thus these coming-of-age novels cut both a wider and a longer path through the bewildering experiences of childhood and adolescence, and their journey “moves from darkness toward light,
toward hoped-for illuminations in the future." The writers do not recover one-dimensional and stereotyped protagonists. Rather, they carefully penetrate the interior worlds of the adolescents, to trace how they move and cope with obstacles in their world. The self and its creation lead the readers through the inner and outer directedness of each protagonist. By the novel's end, the road has brought a resourceful adolescent to the threshold of effective manhood or girlhood — in his/her own terms. These novels must then be read as an effort, not so much to render the protagonists' life as lived, but as a quest, and a labor of self-creation that complements and extends their writing, and at the same time as a discursive re-invention of their identity. So the boundaries of the books are mutable.

Consciously or unconsciously, the four writers independently structure their novels on the pattern established by the Bildungsroman genre, a German term meaning novel of transformation, the growth of a character from childhood to maturity. This human striving for integrity or wholeness, (whether achieved or not) fits into the context of the Bildungsroman tradition. This German term, however, comes with "a historical baggage of association of positivism, white male superiority and a sense of the self as a unified entity ... It proposes the growth of a subject from one fixed state of mind to another: immaturity and maturity.
It also implies a sense of progression." This clearly clashes with the American experience and ideology, and so these American narratives of Bildung must be separated from the classical ones. The term Bildung "embodies a double process of inner developing and outer enveloping, what the German call Anbildung and Ausbildung" (Theander, 1955, p.8). The term ‘Anbildung’ signifies “knowledge brought from without”, what belongs “to the public sphere of knowledge”: a social enveloping of the individual. ‘Ausbildung’ on the other hand, “belongs to the private sphere,” (Kertzer, p.97) what comes from within the individual: it describes how the strengths and talents of the individual emerge. The maturation processes discussed in the following pages, especially in female narratives of Bildung, clearly depict societies, which ignore their responsibilities of “enveloping,” and the subjects’ desperate attempt to “develop” in spite of racial and gendered oppression. These writers turn away from patterning the adolescent quest story on the traditional male-defined generic paradigm of individual accommodation to socio-cultural values and gender role expectations to portray the Bildung of an adolescent as a process of self-discovery that is a conscious quest for authentic selfhood. Four different Bildung experiences are outlined that present a movement “from the recognition of restrictive social roles through a rejection of arbitrary standards, to the generation of a counter-
figure who creates a new role and a new, positive lifestyle into which she [he] becomes integrated. These novels illustrate the process of transcending borders and boundaries by devising a method of illustrating both the new opportunities for independence and paradoxically the modern-day prejudices still stifling growth. The adolescents live for what they believe in, and they do this by looking within themselves to discover who they are. They reject the expectation of others, and through self-discovery attempt to claim their real selves. Their stories focus on the intricacies, the paradoxes, and the difficulties of maturity. Finally, of course, the characters in novels live and move and have their being in the readers mind, exploiting memories, which supply the evidence of common experience, common humanity. Departures from the traditional structure will be discussed more fully as the female Bildungsroman of self-discovery and self-definition is defined. By appropriating the genre for the female version of the Bildung process, the women writers challenge and expand this genre. The problem of ‘creating oneself’ amid the pressures and restrictions of society are as great for women as for men. That the pattern of maturation for women has been different from that for men in our society is important to note. Women’s fiction reflects an experience radically different from men’s because their drive towards growth as persons is thwarted by society’s prescriptions concerning
gender and their own inward confusions. The tools they acquire in their Bildung, or formation, is necessarily different. Linda Huf argues:

The artist heroine who fights for the rights of woman against the wrongs of man invariably ...learns that she has inner foes as formidable as outer ones. Because she has internalized society's devaluation of herself and her abilities, she must slay enemies within her own ranks: fear, self-doubt, and guilt. 39

Gender limitations often confine female protagonists to the home, interpersonal relationships, and their influence in the domestic sphere to domesticity and passivity, to socio-cultural entrapment, and then later to an awakening to a self-effacing existence illustrating "the heroine's inward, vertical movement toward self-knowledge." 40 This awakening leads the female protagonists to seek authenticity and selfhood beyond the social confines of patriarchal structures. "If women say again and again that society denies them clear paths to fulfillment," writes Patricia Meyer Spacks, "... they also affirm in far reaching ways the significance of their inner freedom...." 41 The final effects of the suppression of growth in women emerge in reality as the suppression of half of the self for every individual, male or female. The novels discussed here propose a different solution — devotion to the life of spirit, and artistic growth. Adrienne Rich speaks to this need for affirmative visions of the future: "if the imagination is to transcend and transform experience it has to question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives." 42 (Emphasis added)
For an autonomous self-definition resisting old roles while imagining new ones is essential. Evoked mainly by sociological and psychological factors of contemporary reality, the theme of alienation has developed to such a degree that the possibility or idea of any true Bildung is questioned or parodied. If the word Bildungsroman ultimately escapes precise definition, or neat translation, its meaning should nonetheless emerge clearly from an account of the novels themselves, and the steady recurrence of certain common motifs in them.

Several thematic motifs will therefore be discussed. One such motif is the transfiguring self, the belief that it is possible for human beings to transform themselves. It is a belief rooted in the triune mythic drama of birth, death, and rebirth. Stories, particularly, what can be termed “transforming stories,” play an important role in provoking, and providing insight into the turn around of the soul from unreflective to reflective living. In these novels adolescents are trapped in a moral dilemma, often of their own making, and become “prisoners of consciousness” when they attempt to resolve it. The journey through the “chambers of consciousness” reflects the crisis of the self or the conscience. We are not so much informed as lead to infer the crisis of consciousness in these novels. Adolescents do not totally identify with their social or cultural position, and this in turn makes them, on one hand,
suffer from frustration, and on the other hand, deprive them of the capability of transforming themselves on the basis of an inner motivation for change. The personality crisis is the result of the fact that attempts to connect to others always seems to fail: they find nothing that relates to them. Thus they become outsiders in society. If life as it is offers cause for despair, and if the individual is both product and producer of this life, then the individual must be redeemed. Through his redemption society will be redeemed. The emphasis is on the creation of a self in each novel, and the structures of these texts demonstrate the necessity of breaking down the “vertical wall of the self, and selflessly extending oneself to others” (Redpath, p. 124). Each protagonist in the end experiences an awakening; far more profound in scope than the egocentric vision they begin with. Characters achieve a heightened and spiritualized view of reality, and in the process abandon their old attitudes and assumptions. The self seeks not for extinction, but for transmutation. The transmuting or the transfiguring self (change to something nobler) is more capable of, and conducive to the needed adaptability, and ultimately leading to redemption. So the novels affirm not the present individual and the present society, but their “possibilities.” Completing the journey of transformation, what the adolescents manage to do is “to come in touch with the inner workings of their beings, to achieve non-intellectual
enlightenment — what Zen Buddhists call satori — that blessed state of illumination.\textsuperscript{45} According to Allan Watts, “Zen Buddhism is not a religion, not a philosophy but a way, an attitude with intuitive spiritual enlightenment as its goal.”\textsuperscript{46} To transform themselves ethically, and achieve well-being, these protagonists seek both inward, analytic means, as well as, external, communal care through reconnection with others, especially with the family. To exist is to change; to change is to mature; to mature is to go on ‘creating oneself’ endlessly. The central concern of these protagonists is their continuing quest for certitude, for a point of rest, which reflects an order and harmony of mind. The entire effort is described by one critic as "a quest for personal identity and inner peace" (Swales, 1978, p.14).

Another familiar motif, somewhat akin to the transfiguring, is that of the quest for authentic self-development. This process is both environmental and psychological, and it entails coming to terms with multiple social and cultural forces, external as well as internal, that infringe upon the path toward an understanding of the individual self. Two independent quests operate throughout the narrative. The major quest involves the protagonists’ search for spiritual freedom in contemporary social chaos. Rites of passage are depicted either as the adolescent protagonist's coming of age, striving to gain maturity, and a
vision of their own future, or as the awakening to the reality of the social and cultural role, and the subsequent attempts to re-examine life and shape it in accordance with a new found consciousness. Generally the young protagonist is at first shaped by his environment, but becomes conscious of its pressure, and tries to find his own identity, meaning and value, freedom and truth that provide spiritual nourishment to the estranged self in a seemingly chaotic world. These novels finally espouse an existential authenticity of the self.

The other motif is the emphasis on the unity and interconnectedness of all life — what can be identified as the holistic (as opposed to the mechanistic) view of life. There is always an abiding faith, in fact — a yearning for such a view. These include, but are not limited to the quest for what can be called “the human touch,” a kind of sympathetic human community. These novels are ultimately a study in the spiritual picaresque, a quest for a new faith — “the faith of modern adolescents in their power to shape their own destiny” (Spiller, 1962, p.1).

Careful analysis of the structures of these novels demonstrates how all elements of the novel — character, plot, style, setting, and symbol — are integrated in the larger purpose of presenting the failure of communication, the isolation, and the violence prevalent in modern
society. The novels' characters demonstrate the roots of these general conditions in the nature of the individual personality. Human beings can be selfish, uncommunicative, immature, sexually frustrated, and essentially alienated from their society. No communication can exist when each person creates only a self-centered and self-deluded view of the world around him. A society composed of such individuals' drives man further into himself. Locked in the prison of his isolation, and tortured by the pains and shocks of life, man attempts to escape from this condition into an imagined world of perfect fulfillment. This search for personal realization must necessarily be social because he must communicate with, and love other human beings. Man's social world is imperfect because of personal failings, and his personal existence is painful because of the tension between self, and an imperfect society. There are, of course, extreme variations among these writers. They are, after all, novelists haunted by the elusive nature of human truth and the underlying themes in their novels gives coherence to the variety and surprises they have found in the world around. This world is often beset by terrifying moments of self-doubt in the fierce shadows inside oneself or other people. We are then ultimately taken on shattering voyages of terror into the depths of the spiritual isolation that underlies the human condition.
It is the journey motif in the novels that accounts in great part, for the episodic nature of what are frequently unconnected human encounters. In a broad meaning of the old word, these are picaresque novels. The American style of the Bildungsroman is a combination of the German Bildungsroman, and the Spanish picaresque. The American Bildungsroman follows the pattern of moral growth for the protagonist as he discovers his identity in conflict with social norms. They focus on the adventures of persons who are ‘picaros.’ However, Critic David H. Miles sees the transformation of the Bildungsheld from "picaro: that is, rogues, outlaws misfits — persons whose defining quality is an inability or unwillingness to behave according to the strict moral and social codes of the day into — the confessor."48 Blended into the story is also the picaresque element of the hero being a traveler who has an outsider’s perspective on what he encounters. The picaro does not treat his fantasies as if they were realities, but regards each new role as one possibility out of the many available to him, useful for solving a particular problem, and perhaps interesting for the new insight it may offer, but in no way a limitation to be accepted. Picaresque life is not lived in search of the one true way, but is rather an endless series of roles to be played in response to ever-changing circumstances. The adolescents discover that they are not “a single, consistent entity, but a ‘mosaic’ whose picture is constantly
"reforming" (Kertzer, p. 35). The metaphysics of the picaresque world is relativistic and fluid. Picaresque behavior is governed by an internalized acceptance of universal flux as the basic nature of the world. Indeed the focus on process, rather than programme is itself a prime characteristic of the post-modern style, reflecting a world where flux is more obvious than fixed purposes. Post-modern youth, at least in America, is very much in process, unfinished in its development, psychologically open to a historically unpredictable future. The term identity suggests fixity, stability, and closure that many of the youth are not willing to accept. This fluidity and openness mark all aspects of their lives. They are non-ideological, hostile to doctrine, and formula. Their vision of the personal and collective future is blurred and vague: later adulthood is left deliberately open. In essence, youths no longer live life as a journey toward the future, but as a condition. Following the picaresque tradition, the survival that they seek is moral, and spiritual. A positive energy can be felt in the rhythms of their lives even when they explore frustration and indirectness. The human spirit is dauntless, which ultimately succeeds in working its way out of even the grimmest human circumstances. These adolescents’ are “martyrs in the eternal search for idealism. They try at least, painful as it may be, to find their own realistic place in society.” 49
They emerge, finally as pilgrims, too: "journeying through a mysterious and hostile world, a world both chaotic and conformist, on their various eccentric pilgrimages — towards some shrine of honor and value and belief" (Spiller, 1962, p.149). The shrine, in these novels usually remains out of sight, but it does give a sense of purpose to their encounters, and a sense of form to the novels. It takes the form of a celebration of the self, and of a spiritual belief in social, political, and personal change. Most of all, it is achieved in the creative act itself: in the writing of the texts.

The authors' own writings about their novels and material from interviews have been used in exploring their approach to fiction, reality, and to some rather more philosophical issues dealt with in the various novels. This is done through an analysis of the prose style in order to explore how, "the verbal resonance of language itself contributes to a novel's imagined world" (Tiger, p.35). This however presents a paradox which David Lodge identifies in Language of Fiction: "It is the irony of our position as critics that we are obliged, whatever kind of imaginative work we examine, to paraphrase the unparaphrasable."50

These working definitions and introductory remarks indicate the parameters of this thesis, and shape its structure as a "fugue"51 (a musical composition featuring several repeating themes). Like a voice in a fugue,
each one of the main characters is an entirety in himself, but his personality takes on a new richness when contrasted and woven in with the other characters in the book. In several of the chapters, reference is made to the other works of these writers, which allows similarities to be highlighted, and perhaps, more importantly, emphasize apparent contradictions that can be resolved when viewed in terms of each other. Though each of the chapters discusses only one of the writers, the chapters together establish a comparative strategy: it can be seen that the tensions in each of these very schematic books, as well as the repetitive structures are remarkably similar, and yet the resolution of the tension and the purposes of the repetition are quite different. Each, in fact, is sophisticated and complex, with deep roots in contemporary American literary tradition. The thesis is divided into the following chapters.

Chapter 1: Dreams of Manhood: A Study of J.D. Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye (1951)

In this chapter based on The Catcher in the Rye (1951) Salinger captured the voice of adolescent anxiety, and the disorientation of a generation searching for authenticity in a culture deemed by the novels protagonist Holden's dismissive reckoning as phony. He stands as a critic of society, taking a stance against phoniness: hypocrisy, obscenity, and passivity. The actual setting of the book is Holden’s mind, and the connection between his writing and the structure he brings into existence
through the writing has therefore been emphasized. The novel is built on
two movements: the nervous breakdown of Holden is followed by an
examination of the reason. We learn that about a year before the narration
takes place something has happened that caused him to end up at the
California sanatorium, and this "something" is what he wants to share
with the reader. Within this part of the story, Holden frequently flashes
back to experiences and people from earlier in his life. The first-person
narration invites a reader to share his feeling that he's an outsider
observing a world he cannot accept — or completely reject. In this
position, he demonstrates the need for maturity as well as the need for
honesty. A very important aspect of Holden's personality is his adherence
to his own personal integrity. It is no coincidence that Holden's journey
takes him through a cross-section of American society: the school, bars,
city streets, family, etc; Salinger aims to show how widespread this
phoniness has become. Holden is also in a movement: at the same time
both leaving the innocent childhood and entering the world of grown-ups.
To him, innocence means freedom, since he feels unable to function in
the affectation that he believes permeates, and even poisons the adult
world. Not only does he seem to position himself as an outsider, but he
also goes as far as to create an image of himself as a 'savior.' There is
actually an element of romanticism in his identity crisis. Holden's
fantasy — the metaphor of the fall — standing in front of a cliff and protecting playing children from falling over into adulthood is based on a misunderstanding of Robert Burn's lyrical poem “Comin through the Rye” (“If a body meet a body comin' through the rye” not, “If a body catch a body” (CR, p.115 emphasis added). As the catcher in the rye, risking his life at the edge of the cliff in order to protect the children is a metaphor for saving the innocence at the cost of his own safety. Holden’s whole perspective is centered on this basic misapprehension of his own role in society. With this wish, and search for idealism Holden assumes, although not in a biblical sense, but rather in a more symbolical form, the position of a martyr. Holden attempts to escape into a series of ideal worlds, fails, and is finally brought to the realization of a more impersonal ideal, that only through selflessness, the extension of forgiveness, and the appeal to others outside the self can people, as Holden realizes — “miss everybody” (CR, p.214). He finally identifies in some way with the people he has spent so much time criticizing and realizes that man and the world, in spite of all their imperfections, are to be loved. This is a truth gained from his experiences “a restructured vision,” and the most important kind of freedom — an internal one. In the end, Holden has not accepted the falseness of society, instead, we find him still in that original position against it, except that he consciously
accepts it. Its direction, in other words, is toward family and community, reconstructed and redefined. “Holden's quest takes him outside society; yet the grail he seeks is the world, and the grail is full of love.” It is not through mysticism, but through love that the Salinger hero at last re-enters the world.

Chapter II: The New American Adam: A Study of Saul Bellow’s The Adventures of Augie March (1953)

In the epilogue of The American Adam, R.W.B. Lewis contends that Saul Bellow’s The Adventures of Augie March, which won the National Book Award in 1954, is written in the tradition of the earlier American Adamic myth because Augie is “as youthful, innocent, optimistic and adventurous as are the earlier Adams.” This chapter will show that Bellow deviates from Lewis’s traditional concept of the American Adam applicable to the nineteenth century writers’, and creates a distinctly new and different character: a modern Adam with a new attitude towards experience. In as far as Augie seeks paradise; he may be compared to the traditional Adam. But rather than imagining paradise as the fulfilment of the American dream, Augie envisions paradise as an escape from modern American dilemmas, and does not discount the possibility of a new Eden. However, Bellow asserts that it is impossible to escape reality by imagining paradise, and that one must adapt to the world rather than attempt to flee it. Augie is situated in a context in which
hopefulness and belief in the endless availability of new beginnings — so characteristic of the American Adam — are no longer credible. When Huck Finn as the prototypical adolescent Adam "lights out for the territories," he is not only moving forward in time and space but in the hopeful pursuit of ideals that have been strengthened from being tested by the challenge of experience. In marked contrast, when Augie confronts his own morality, any perception of hope for individual distinctiveness is dashed by his recognition of contemporary chaos and anonymity. Bellow's heroes, then, find the complexities of their dilemma not only in an alienation from society; they are also confronted by a kind of conflict within themselves, which creates an even more insoluble problem. In any case the nature of man is finally defined by no one but himself, and that definition includes the power of the imagination.

Since Augie does not wish to assume a structure of personality designed by someone else, he seeks the freedom to develop his own lifestyle, and to understand life without being imposed upon by his "Reality Instructors," who try to convince him that power is the ultimate and only response to the human condition. The story becomes in part a parable about a capitalistic American culture, in which masculine striving for dominance and power, has all but excluded love, the soul, beauty, and poetic visionary state. Augie acknowledges the presence of
disappointment, pain, and absurdity in human life, but refuses to accept the clichés of alienation, anxiety, doom, and despair as inevitable to the human condition. He offers a mystical vision of human possibility. Man has to base his existence on “the axial lines of truth, love, peace, bounty, usefulness, and harmony” (AM, p.454). Search for an affirmative attitude does not necessarily end in finding — the axial line of life. The goal is not then, some idealized mode of life, but an anchor of assurance amidst all the buffeting inevitables in real life. Our last view of Augie is traveling along the very edge of Europe, laughing at the idea of himself as “a sort of Columbus,” (AM, p.536) discoverer of a new-found land, laughing above all at the enigma and the paradox that is man. This sense of humor is a gift that enables him to see things clearly, and protects him from falling into complete depression over what he finds is a corrupt world. Augie’s final discovery seems closer to the mixed experience of the novel when he realizes that life of the human soul is a movement between idealism, and the daily facts. Striving for completion, therefore, is a lifelong process that is never accomplished. To be involved with life, and people means to hold on to such principles as freedom, fairness, and personal integrity, but it also means that one must constantly adjust the application of these principles to daily circumstances that challenge and change a person.

B) Dreams of Girlhood: Breaking Boundaries — A Study of Carson McCullers': *The Member of the Wedding* (1946)

*The House on Mango Street* and *The Member of the Wedding* offer new alternatives and interpretations of women's destinies, and specific insights into the complexities of women's growth and independence. Unlike their male counterparts, Cisneros and McCullers observe the space of the home to understand how that ambience influences young girls in public. The chapter will concentrate on particular pivotal moments in the lives of Esperanza Cordero and Frances Addams connected to maturation and self-discovery. By depicting their journey out of the "cramped confines of patriarchal space" a notion that applies to the social as well as the literary sphere, female writers are transforming the very concept of Bildung and creating a discourse based on distinctive paradigms of self-development.

*The House on Mango Street* is dedicated *a las Mujeres,* "to the women"— all the female characters whose lives have enriched that of the protagonist, and who represent a diversity of challenges and perspectives. The structural unity of the forty-four vignettes of the novel is achieved by the first-person narration of the female "I", and central consciousness of the novel Esperanza Cordero, who resists entrapment within socio-
cultural norms and expectations. It is through the very act of constructing, and telling her own story, like Holden Caulfield, that Esperanza resolves the contradictions that inform her life. The young girl's memoirs are, however, not the day-to-day record of a pre-adolescent girl, but rather a loose-knit series of lyrical reflections, her struggle with self-identity and the search for self-respect amidst an alienating and often hostile world. As an aesthetic process, the apprehension of the world of Mango Street becomes a metaphor for identity. The consequence of this aesthetic process is that the reader is directed less toward the singularity of the places, events and persons of Mango Street than toward the "I" that writes them. Esperanza, probes into her world, discovers herself and comes to embody the primal needs of all human beings: freedom and belonging. The tapestry that is woven by the constant imagistic movement of the narrator's perceptions and thoughts is a narrative of self-invention by the writer-speaker. The structure of this text, therefore, begins as a frame for self-invention and as the writing progresses so does the subject. She is, in the most direct sense of the word, 'making herself' and in 'a space of her own.' By writing, this young woman has created herself as a total subject and not merely playing out a gender role or signifying a disembodied voice.
Two narrative threads connect the stories: the personal and private story of her own search for identity, about creativity and becoming an artist, and the public and collective story of the individuals in the Latino neighborhood on Mango Street. Esperanza actively researches, questions, and negotiates her own meaning in community. She reads the neighborhood and other women who have some insight and self-determined lives, despite some difficulties with men and with illness and lets their examples, encouragement, and prophecies enhance her original readings. She rejects the role models which her society offers her and consciously chooses to forge her own identity through writing; and in so doing, she symbolically chooses the American translation of her name (hope) over the Spanish (waiting). Esperanza’s initial wish for an illusive real house, one she can point to, is thus in the course of her narrative transformed into a more defined desire for a place that transcends the mere physical living quarters. At the end of her narrative — her story — she has created for herself the "home in the heart" (HMS, p.64) predicted by the local fortuneteller. Shifting from a literal to a metaphoric register, her “house” becomes not a structure but a spiritual sanctuary she carries within — a home for herself through her inner life, and her writing. Esperanza recognizes, and Cisneros validates, the empowerment that comes through writing and remembering. The House on Mango Street
was at first taken as an exclusively Chicano literature, but now has
become a part of the American literary canon transcending cultural, and
gender-based boundaries through the sheer power of its astute
observations and implicit lessons.

*The Member of the Wedding* charts Frankie Addams’ difficult
passage from a childhood of innocence and freedom to an awareness of
the limitations and constraints of her position in her culture. Although this
story is told in a third-person narrative, it is filtered through Frankie’s
consciousness — her “inner psychic rhythms.” A concern for man's
“spiritual isolation,” (*The Mute*, p.124) his revolt against that isolation,
and his need to achieve a perfect communion with others was the basis of
almost everything Carson McCullers wrote. She has successfully
explored what she termed the “solitary region of simple stories and the
inward mind” (*The Mute*, p.251). She was particularly interested in the
“paradox of shared isolation,” a term that describes the relationships
among the three main characters — Frances Addams, Berenice Sadie
Brown, and John Henry West — and their community as well. The setting
itself serves as the metaphor for such spiritual isolation. She begins this
novella by establishing the dreariness, and sadness of a setting, which
seems estranged from all other places in the world: “The kitchen was
silent and crazy and sad” (*MW*, p.22). For life here is hopelessly inward,
separated, and estranged. Selfhood means only confinement in the solitude of one's own heart. The urgency which drives Frankie to become "a member of the wedding" is the conviction that "all other people had a we to claim, all other except her" (MW, p.42). She is seeking an ideal love, not a physical one, which joins all people — as Frankie puts it, "the we of me" (MW, p. 42). It is by thus identifying themselves with something larger than themselves that all of her characters' become conscious of their individual identities. Frankie’s longing at once for escape and belonging, makes her consider her role as a “member of the wedding” to mean that when her older brother marries, she will join the happy couple in their new life together. This fantasy transforms Frankie's twelve-year old perspective regarding herself, her relationships, and her small southern hometown. In her ideal world, “people could instantly change back and forth from boys to girls; whichever way they felt, like and wanted” (MW, p.97). What Frankie is dreaming of is possible only in her imagination. The author portrays Frankie’s illusory existence in order to dramatize all that threatens to destabilize her isolated view of herself, and her community. The events precipitated by the wedding destroy her illusions, forcing her to reconsider everything she holds to be true — about human nature, and about individual power. As Frankie attempts to grow up and seek membership into the adult world, she discovers that
certain life rules encumber her. The most important rule has to do with the fact that married couples only include two people, shutting Frankie out of her dream of becoming a threesome with Janice and Jarvis. Frankie’s primary identification with the masculine world of her brother and her father can be attributed in part to her mother’s death when she was born. According to Frankie, power and authority are masculine attributes and to be a girl is to be marginalized and excluded. But being fiercely independent, Frankie resists any kind of limitations placed upon her. An important part of her development is her growing comprehension that she will be forced to enter the world of women, a world that holds no attractions for her. It is not the responsibility of womanhood that she reluctantly must take up but the decision, which confronts her, the decision to be a woman at all, accounts in large part for Frankie’s fear and forms a major thematic concern of the novel. Frankie is, “then hovering between the two sexes and has the problem not only of sex awareness, but also of sex determination” (Eisinger, p. 250) in the sense that she is a girl who does not want to be done out of the privileges of boys. As a child, by adopting masculine attributes, Frankie is attempting to seize the social power that is denied to females. It is this masculine power that Frankie is not willing to give up, even when she reaches adulthood. Girls turning into women are taught to be feminine or passive,
thus losing their power, but a boy becoming a man is taught to be *masculine* or *assertive*, thus gaining power. Frankie thus vacillates between striving for adult status and resisting it. The end is a brief coda that reports the events after the wedding when Frankie painfully discovers the reality of the situation, and has replaced her old aspirations with new ones, and has even changed the very nature of her dreams. Frankie’s old dreams of flying planes, of being able to switch genders whenever she wished, of joining the wedding, are examples of her protests against the powerlessness of women. They are projections of her desire to be an autonomous adult. Frances, as she is finally called, wants to write poetry, and travel with a new friend Mary Littlejohn who introduces her to the privileges of white society, and she even comes to relish the superiority she feels it bestows upon her. Her new dreams are socially acceptable and easily within her reach. Finally, Frankie’s ideals are defeated by the demands of social norms, and her own inward confusions. Ambiguity rather than clear distinctions informs the divided world which Frankie inhabits. The world of the adolescent child is, after all, only a promise of life to come in adulthood. If McCullers implies any solution besides racial equality to the social injustice, and personal isolation, and despair she portrays in her novels, it is a move towards a more integrated view of conventional gender roles; towards the more androgynous world Frankie
envisions. We are asked to look inward to the heart, rather than outward to political, and economic structures in society for any final answers to human problems. The revelations contained in the novels of McCullers’ works are the variety and complexity of humanity, and how ultimately love and life are richer if differences of color and gender are accepted as inherent aspects of the species. After establishing a dichotomous relationship between male power and female powerlessness, this chapter suggests that by asserting female power women can create their own space/vision and language. The feminine space is opened up as a new structure for survival, a space of her own, of personal growth, and of creativity.

Conclusion - Traversing Boundaries: A Shared Experience

As a summary of the argument throughout, in all the novels discussed, there seems to be a marked evolution from externally imposed structures, to internally realized structures. The motif of the journey inward and the experiences it yields is the link that connects these texts, providing the impetus for this study. Each novel represents the individual vision of the artist, his direct impression of reality. The uniqueness of each story has provided moments of vision, leading to epiphany, transcending the gender and socio-cultural polarities destructive to self-realization. In doing so, these writers have made of the adolescent novel a
pathway to the authentic self, and to our innermost being. In addition, it is also noted that it is not solely a search for identity *per se* that engages these writers, but rather an exploration and articulation of the process leading to a purposeful *awakening* of these protagonists. It is precisely because the protagonists' journey is largely an internal experience, and the *awakening* is a result of changed consciousness, that the voyage is ultimately symbolic. Though all these adolescents to some extent fail in achieving wholeness, it does not in any way negate their internal journeys as worthwhile endeavors. These adolescents live for what they believe in, and they do this by looking within themselves to discover who they are. The adolescent spirit now seems able to wrest affirmation out of despair, and will continue to do so, as long as family, hope and love remains. In a very real sense the journeys have not ended. To complete them one has to continually break down the walls and discover doorways — new areas of life and experience, about which one has remained ignorant.
End Notes


4 Franco Moretti, op. cit., Ch.4, “The Conspiracy of the Innocents” p.185.


16 Mary G. Mason and Carol Hurd Green have also studied women's autobiography in the context of the "journey." Journeys: Autobiographical Writings by Women focuses on the Anglo-American tradition.


19 Carol Christ, op. cit., p. 13.


27 Mary Daly, "The Qualitative Leap beyond Patriarchal Religion." *Quest*, 1, No.4 (Spring 1975), p. 29.


38 Sandra Frieden, "Shadowing/Surfacing/Shedding: Contemporary German Writers in Search of a Female Bildungsroman" *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female*


54 Saul Bellow, *Herzog* (New York: Viking, 1967), p.125. In *Herzog*, Bellow has his protagonist, Moses Herzog, confronted by cynical characters that he calls "Reality instructors" because they seek "to teach" and "to punish" Moses with "lessons of the Real." Though the term "Reality instructors" primarily is related to *Herzog*, it also applies to the cynics in *The Adventures of Augie March*.

