2005

The foundation of an apparel factory: culture's place becomes a practiced space

Kim T. Chavis
Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, kchavis@lsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations/2645

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized graduate school editor of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
THE FOUNDATION OF AN APPAREL FACTORY:
CULTURE'S PLACE BECOMES A PRACTICED SPACE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of English

by

Kim T. Chavis
B.A., North Carolina A&T State University, 1993
M.A., North Carolina A&T State University, 1995
May, 2005
Table Of Contents

ABSTRACT..............................................................................................................iv

CHAPTER
1 THE FOUNDATION OF AN APPAREL FACTORY: CULTURAL THEORIES CREATING SPACE..............................................1

2 THE RENAISSANCE WEAVERS OF SPACE..................28
   The Weaver Jonson.................................................................28
      Jonson's Cultural Creation: Influences on
      Jonson's New Form......................................................31
      The Weaving of Satiric Purpose to
      Obtain Morality.........................................................35
      The Weaving of Dramatic Irony to Obtain
      Humor...........................................................................56
   The Weaver Shakespeare.............................................63
      The Threads of Historicity and the
      Ancestor..........................................................................69
      Threads of Myth.........................................................77
      Threads of Humor......................................................84

3 THE AFRICAN AMERICAN WEAVERS OF SPACE.............91
   The Weaver Chesnutt.......................................................91
      The Basis of Weaver Chesnutt's Space...........94
      The Criticism of Conjurin' Space.........................98
      The Conjure Tales and Definitions Of
      Space............................................................................104
   The Weaver Hurston.....................................................117
      The Basis of Weaver Hurston's Space..........117
      Hurston's Unique Space...........................................122
      Hurston's Restricted Space.................................128

4 THE RAW MATERIALS FOR PRODUCTION: THREADS OF CULTURE IDENTIFIED AND EXERCISED.....................141
   The Spools of Spiritual History, Ancestor, and
   Rememory.......................................................................141
   The Spools of Myth, Carnival Comedy, and the
   Trickster..........................................................155
   The Spools of Humor, Comedy, and Satire......174

5 DENOUEMENT..................................................185
WORKS CITED.......................................................................................190
Abstract

The study provides a reformulation of culture as space. Building on Michel Certeau's theory of space and place, this study incorporates Karla Holloway's theory of historicity, memory, and metaphor – specifically, how these elements are formed and behave – W.E.B. Dubois's theory of double consciousness, Homi Bhabha's theory of the beyond and interstices, John Fiske's culture of everyday life, Bourdieu's idea of the habitus, Brett Williams's theory of texturing, and Edward Said's travel theory. These critical ideas are woven together to construct an operating construct of space, which allows for that culture to be a dynamic, fluid construction, represented in two genres of literature: English Renaissance Drama and Post Civil War African American fiction. Specifically, Ben Jonson's Volpone, William Shakespeare's The Tempest, Charles Chesnutt's The Conjure Woman, and Zora Neale Hurston's The Complete Stories are analyzed to show how the study's construct of culture as space is a powerful lens for reading the effects of literature on shaping social conscience, regardless of social and historical time. Additionally, the study demonstrates the universality of its critical frame by reading these African diasporic texts: Christine Craig's Mint Tea, Toni Morrison's Beloved,
Ntozake Shange's *Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo*, and Ama Ato Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost* and *Anowa*. Finally, analysis of Chester Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him Go* gives insight into the dialogue between Bakhtin's carnival with the study's construct of space.

These readings reveal the necessity in literary studies for new ways of engaging in cross-cultural literary analysis and illustrates through these authors' use of ancestry, myth, humor, and folklore, that human conditions and themes manifest themselves in all cultures.
Chapter 1: The Foundation of an Apparel Factory: Cultural Theories Creating Space

Just as love is a many-splendored thing so is culture a many-textured thing. Growing up in rural North Carolina, I was familiar with numerous spinning and apparel mills/factories that provided a good deal of the employment and economic, industrial stability to a mostly rural friends' parents and relatives were employed by these industries, which subsidized many of the little league teams on which my friends and I played; they provided economic support to many other charitable community activities, and they were widely known throughout the county for these reasons. Southern Apparel, Beau nit, Jefferson Mills, and June Day, to name a few, were as familiar to the residents of our county as the mayors, police chiefs, principals, teachers, and preachers. I draw attention to these factories because the work that took and takes place in them everyday, indeed their entire existence, depends upon the creation of fabric or clothing from its fundamental element, thread. Whether their mission was the production of fabric or the production of articles of clothing, each factory relied on a process which dealt with manipulating thread or cloth, texturing it if you will.
When I grew older, I had the occasion to visit one of these “sewing factories” once every two weeks. On these occasions, I observed the mostly female employees spinning, weaving, sewing, and creating numerous fabrics. While their work was repetitive the work of each employee, when layered, joined, and fitted with the work of others, created various patterns, textures, sizes, and colors of fabric that represented a profitable final product. For this study, the factory serves as a metaphor for how culture is produced and progressed.

In the sewing factory, each person has an assignment, a contribution to the whole. Particular employees function both individually and as part of the collective. A space has been provided that will enhance and be enhanced by other employees and their functions. Space only exists through practice. The infrastructure of the sewing factory itself, and with the result of the finished product, we have an outcome of space or a new complex, textured product. Nonetheless, it all begins with the identity or function of the individual employees and a space where those functions can coexist.

I utilize the concept of space in two parallel ways. First, I ground my use of space in the notion that individual threads come together to make a whole. Just
like the weaving of thread in the apparel factory produces cloth; so does, the weaving of cultural threads produces culture. The cultural threads for this project are textured: ancestry, myth, humor, folklore, interwoven in ways determined by social, political, economic factors.

Secondly, examining the employees presents another parallel to space. Note, however, that I am only concerned with their specific function and not the hierarchal structure of the factory. Once the employees have carried out their function then cloth or an item of clothing is produced. Everyone has to participate in her respective form or function. Culture behaves in the same way. Irrespective of a political, social, or economic hierarchy, all who are confined within the culture have a role to play in the creation and dynamism of that culture, whether it is deemed negative or positive.

Building on the factory model, the cultural threads for my study, the ancestor, myth, humor and folklore, inform the notion of space and act as mediators between the cultural and the textual. The ancestor's "restructuring of the community" sustains culture and myth acts in the culture of everyday life; it is a practical concept. Humor offers a way to analyze how subversion enters cultural processes while protecting the subversive, as humor
releases, cloaks, and manipulates. Finally, through folklore, we access the ancestor, myth and humor. Folklore is the normative space which gathers these other threads and encourages their collective work. In this factory, cultural identity is the product, and its form is literary. Identity is born of culture, and much as this is so, this line of logic leads us to deduce that identities constitute culture. This study examines how culture as identities are created, propagated, and continually changed through the use of myth, the ancestor, and its spiritual history, humor, and folklore. While these threads are universal, the manner that these threads are manipulated - woven - in each culture reveals its unique identity.

The theorists woven into this project define culture's space. In turn the chapter progresses through discussion of Certeau, Holloway, DuBois, Bhabha, Fiske, and Said and creates the space wherein I analyze culture's production. Certeau lays the foundation to which everything else is connected; Holloway provides the construction to illustrate how mythologies create cultural space; DuBois illustrates what must happen when one possesses a spatial construction; Bhabha constructs the method by which to gain perspective and space; Fiske gives us the practical application and manifestation of space, and Said offers the manner in which
foreign ideas influence a culture. My weaving of these critical ideas illustrates that the threads of culture are universal, and offers my construction of space as a critical lens that can be applied to any culture's literature as a way to understand its fluidity and dynamism.

Although there is no universal definition of culture, the concept, itself, is a universal construct. Hence unifying and identifying threads can be located in all specific cultures, even though they may manifest themselves differently. To clarify, I rely on Michel de Certeau's “Spaces and Places” from his *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Certeau's idea of space provides the means by which role and function are equated. He suggests that all who are in a space have a role that is not minimized or marginalized. In his essay “Spatial Stories,” Certeau discusses the construction of “spaces” and “places.” He defines space and place as such:

A place is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (place). The law of the “proper” rules in the place: the elements taken into consideration are beside one another, each situated in its own “proper” and distinct location, a location it defines. (117)
What is critical to note here is that place summons inequality. It is the “law of the ‘proper’ that rules,” begging the question, what is proper and who is not? In a sense it does not matter because the “proper will inherently be at the top of the hierarchy that place summons. This situation is parallel to the one being opposed by feminist and womanist thought.\(^2\) The task, to break down those patriarchal hierarchies and replace them with systems of equality, is not realized in place, for there is only a reversal of roles: the servant becomes the master but has not learned the detrimental lessons of lording over another.

In contrast, Certeau's space "is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities" (117). It accepts all on equal terms because there is no competition for place. With no hierarchy, particular voices are not privileged, and all can join the conversation if they choose. Space allows for choice. Most importantly, space is the location where theory and practice meet.
When one refers to place, there is an immediate, instantaneous configuration of positions. Consider the concept “the campus library.” Immediately images of a specific place – a building complete with not only books but kiosks for Internet and database research. However, Certeau expresses that space is similar to the spoken word. “It is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformation caused successive contexts” (117).

Viewed as a space, the physical location, place, and boundaries of "the campus library," have not changed, but the physical place, for its officially recognized form and function, becomes a practiced place, in effect, a space.

Certeau supplements his analysis using the street: “The street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers” (117). Once again the physical boundaries and location have not changed, but by the presence of the walkers walking, interacting, observing, hurrying, pushing or pulling, and going in different vectors and directions, the street has become a spatial entity. (117) The street itself, the physical structure that was built by man, represents place; however,
when the street begins to be utilized by the walkers, it is transformed into space. Indeed, our adherence to this principle manifests a personification of the street, assigning it street various roles in our literature, speech, and media. We recognize individuals for their street-savvy or being street-smart; we refer to the streets as being cold, hard, tough, and unforgiving; we refer to the street’s ability to cause undesirable behavior within good people, whether that is exhibited through drug use, hustling, or other moral deprivation. In these two instances, space has been created through practice.

More specific to my focus on English Renaissance drama and Post Civil War African American fiction is the idea that narrative structures have the status of spatial syntaxes. As Certeau writes, every story is a travel story - a spatial practice. Looking at this same line of thought from a different angle, Certeau asserts the "primary role of the story is to open a legitimate theater for practical actions" (125). In this, we are to understand that the story’s purpose is to create a space from the practice of a place, the text. The text allows us through its various ordered arrangements, to exercise, or in some cases exorcise, our thoughts, feelings, ponderings, etc. However, the story being told assumes life and begins to
move depending upon its context in time, environment, and situation. The story plays a decisive role. It “describes” to be sure, but “every description is more than a fixation,” it is “a culturally creative act” (Certeau 123).

Karla Holloway provides a means by which we locate a beginning, if you will, to the process of culture development and dynamism. Holloway empowers myth and oral histories as legitimate voices within literature. Holloway neither marginalizes these threads nor does she assign them second-class status. By analyzing black women writers use of myth, oral histories, and the spiritual in literature, she reveals the power of these cultural threads in more fully conceptualized cultural development and dynamism. As readers, we see how folk tales, oral history, ancestry, and spiritual elements impact culture and come to understand these are a driving force behind how and why culture develops and changes. It becomes more apparent how these constructions directly impact the fluid, changing nature of culture. If these components are marginalized then readers are left with a void. This situation goes back to my initial metaphor. If all are not able to complete their assigned role then an incomplete image of culture is produced.
Because culture is a very complex, multilayered, and diverse thing, it can be textured in an infinite number of ways, depending upon the dominance, frequency, and consistency of its threads. Without pinpointing a definite origin of culture, constructions embedded in myth, specifically the ancestor and spiritual history, offer the best means to identify a foundation for culture. Karla Holloway in her *Moorings and Metaphors*, offers the most substantial and formulaic structure for isolating these threads. She writes that

the elements of myth-metaphor, spirituality, and memory—as they appear in systems of literature—cultural presence acknowledges spoken language as its source. The potential to reformulate story, not into constituent patterns but into frames that reconstruct more ancient patterns of memory and telling-mythologies—is of interpretive significance. Texts by black women writers privilege an older understanding of literature. (89)

While Holloway uses "privilege" here, her notion is not hierarchal. Her analysis reveals that black women return to these forms, thereby affording them the privilege of voice in literary narrative. This access makes their literature a spatial rite rather than a place as traditional concept of "privilege" suggests. Black women's writing, Holloway argues, disperses the specificity that usually attends privilege, and "as a result, we find
sequences specifically written to supersede the expected and traditional narrative use of the agencies of time and space/place"(88). Black women writers’ works recapture the mythic and spiritual, making these critical to their text (15). The myths or oral histories are the culmination of many practiced places and act as an equal voice in the culture black women writers' text create. Black women's literature recognizes that displacement has happened, so they create balance by incorporating an immense energy into constructions of orature.

Black women writers seek to recapture the ancestor as a bridge between the past and the present. In Western literary practice, once the ancestor is dead, they are remembered, but not in the sense that black women writers seek to keep alive the ancestor. Holloway asserts that the ancestor establishes a spiritual presence after death. Although they are not present to human eyes, they have an interest in the lives of their families (90).

In fact, "their constantly meditative presence between the spiritual and physical worlds maintains a relationship between subjectivity and objectivity so critical and so intense that it demands a vocabulary distinct from that of the Western world"(90).

Using Holloway, I offer the physical world as one of ancestry and historicity and the spiritual world as one of
memory and metaphor, and together, they create culture, texts, and they define mythologies. (102) It is here, within the sphere of these mythologies, that we find evidence as to how culture is generated. It is my sense that the ancestor and spiritual history must be explored, examined, and understood through the critical lens of space. They must be given equal voice and responsibility in the production of culture and literature. Thus, how the ancestor impacts the physical world and contributes to narratives of culture is a significant aspect of my examination of culture as space.

Dubois's idea of double consciousness relates very well with my construct of space as the definition of double consciousness assumes a move from the American Negro having a place toward the American Negro existing in a space. Dubois argues that double consciousness affords an individual to see the shortcomings of America as place, yet the person can still strive to transform that place into a more informed space. In this way, double consciousness reflects the egalitarian potential of space. Specifically, DuBois explains that the Negro, endowed with double consciousness is characterized by "twoness, - an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body" (3). As
well, Dubois makes it clear that the Negro desires reconciliation, but only on equal terms for the Negro desires to be both. Both ideals must be equally at liberty to participate as "a co-worker in the kingdom of culture" (3). Thus, double consciousness and DuBois, through it, call for space not place.

A culture based on space is an obvious critical objective in black women's literary practices, and W.E.B. DuBois's double consciousness both illustrate what happens when one's range of illustration or ways of knowing, envisioning, or interpreting the world relies on a single cultural thread.

While giving the speech “Criteria of Negro Art,” Dubois discusses Scott’s “Lady of the Lake,” a poem he had studied in high school. Upon actually visiting the lake, he recounts a narrative of the wonder and beauty of this place on a peaceful Sunday. He was thoroughly enchanted with the closeness to nature and the physical beauty of the area. The next day there was a rush of American excursionists whose behavior was caustic, arrogant, and annoying. As a result, "the quiet home folk and the visitors from other lands silently and half-wonderingly gave way before them. They struck a note not of evil but wrong". Dubois acknowledges that in some respects they
were accomplished people, "but their hearts had no conception of the beauty which pervaded this holy place" (289). This narrative exposes the degree to which double consciousness allowed him to see and understand the Americans as well as the "home folks."

Dubois’s experience reveals that double consciousness provides a kind of clairvoyance, some clear idea, of what America really is. We who are dark can see America in a way that white Americans can not. And seeing our country thus, are we satisfied with its present goals and ideals? (Crisis, 290)

Dubois argues that Blacks endowed with double consciousness should temper what it means to be American by being able to be recognized as an American and transcend the shortcomings of America, creating from place a new space to accommodate a more dynamic, fluid identity that would challenge the old and disrupt its homogeneity. Double Consciousness would thus not only more fully represent place but also start the transition to space by creating a space of coalition between the "warring ideals." In that space a body once bordering on destruction is tempered with a hint of possible reconciliation.

Specific to literature, Dubois argues that art is propagandistic, so there must exist an avenue of free
expression for all art, not just art that illustrates white America as being perfect, righteous, and holy.\textsuperscript{4}

While recounting numerous examples, Dubois calls for art as a means of free, truthful (the arts truth) expression that is not limited by the derogatory depiction of one group or the constant positive depiction of one group. Dubois’s double consciousness is necessary for space, and its positive aspects can only avail themselves by all voices having equal access. Extending DuBois, I contend that the issue of access and value involves ethnic groups, genders, and religions. Each tradition has a story to tell, and that story, in all probability, will be impacted by one voice’s interaction with another or others.

Just as double consciousness opens cultural debate and demonstrates the significance of cultural openness to literature, Homi Bhabha writes about two correlated concepts, interstitial places and the "beyond". Interstitial places are the overlap and displacing of domains of difference. These domains of difference equate to place, and the overlap and displacement of these domains move toward space. Bhabha's "beyond" proposes that one must go outside of oneself in order to return to oneself with a new level of understanding. No individual can be representative of a culture, a gender, or an ethnicity.
What is most important is that one must experience something outside of a homogenous place in order to better understand oneself. The idea calls for an experience of space to better know oneself. Bhabha's idea complements Certeau's space in that it provides a way to create space, as well as a way to practice space. The idea that narrative structures are spatial syntaxes is exercised by incorporating the beyond. These spatial syntaxes, as Certeau tells us, come to life and take the reader on a journey through context in time, environment, and situation. As well, beyond is also reflected in Holloway's mythologies, which take one beyond one's immediate place to create some influence. Realizing double consciousness is another way to experience the beyond, for as Dubois suggests the possessor of double consciousness is able to go outside of himself to understand not only his situation but the situation of others as well.

Discussing political empowerment, Bhabha relatedly suggests that solidarity and community come from approaching culture from an interstitial perspective. He argues that social differences are the signs of the emergence of community envisaged as a project - at once a vision and a construction - that takes you “beyond” yourself in order to return, in a spirit of revision and
reconstruction" (3). Here, Bhabha makes clear that "beyond" denotes spatial distance, measures progress, and promises the future, but he also reminds us that "our intimations of exceeding the barrier or boundary - the very act of going beyond - are unknowable, unrepresentable, without a return to the present which, in the process of repetition becomes disjunct and displaced" (4).

Hence, the emergence of interstices is produced by a move away from singularity. They are produced in space and focus on those moments when the claim for being the originator of ethnic behaviors, ideas, language, and/or cultural identity, is overpowered by the articulation of cultural differences. This connects Bhabha to Certeau in that interstitial passages allow and even encourage a cultural hybridity that indulges differences without assuming or establishing hierarchical values. It is my contention that interstitial passages work well in identifying the threads of culture from a spatial perspective.

For Bhabha, such interstitial passages and the "beyond," evidence that "the present can no longer be simply envisaged as a break or a bonding with the past and the future, no longer a synchronic presence" (3). Here, Bhabha corroborates Holloway's claim about the ancestor's
persistence in the presence, a disruption of the Western tradition's strict delineation of past, present, and future. Cultures identify, and narratives are diachronic rather than synchronic, opening a space for myth and folklore. This recalls Toni Morrison's "rememory," in which the past is a part of the present and future.

Conceptualizing interstitial passages, imagine for example New York City with its boroughs and outlying areas - Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx, Mt. Vernon, and Long Island as a metaphor for cultural satiety. Each of the boroughs signifies a different culture with Manhattan being culture A and Long Island being culture F. Add a subway train that runs constantly connecting the six cultures. The subway becomes a "liminal space." It becomes the connective thread that links cultures A, B, C, D, E, and F. In this example, Bhabha would argue, "this interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (4).

The subway, in effect, transports people beyond their everyday selves in order to return them to themselves with a new level or measure of understanding. In essence, this makes a clear case for space. Akin to Certeau's space this return is essential because it provides the hybridity, the
fluidness, and the spark for dynamics necessary for cultural progression and change.

Acknowledging the beyond's invocation of distance from a return to everyday life renewed, John Fiske argues that materials, art, and items of everyday use are not separate from a culture, but they actually inform and contribute to its makeup and progression. In his "Cultural Studies and the Culture of Everyday Life," he concerns himself with separation of culture from the social and economic condition of the everyday. For Fiske, the degree of separation is correlative to economic status. For example, more affluent people can disconnect cultural materials, art, and items from their immediate historical and social reality. However, the poor and working class incorporate these things into their everyday lives. Thus, Fiske offers an explanation of how material elements of culture contribute to that culture. It offers a way of understanding their potential to define or give historical reference to a culture.

Specifically, Fiske argues that critical and aesthetic difference is a marker of distinction between those who are able to separate their culture from the social and economic conditions of the everyday and those who cannot. For example, in Alice Walker's short story “Everyday Use,” one
daughter returns to her very meager beginnings. During her visit, Dee, now known as Wangero, wants many items that are located in the home place, which is still inhabited by her mother and sister, especially two old hand-sown quilts. While Wangero initially wanted nothing associated with home, she now has a measure of distance and views the desired items as pieces of art to be displayed, hung, and admired. Instead of being used for warmth and comfort, Wangero acclaims when Mama asks her, "What would you do with them?" that she would, "Hang them."

Using Fiske, I argue that Wangero, produces an ahistorical meaning of the quilt, and she allies herself with a set of humane values that remove the functional qualities for the quilt and make it purely aesthetic. This alliance is what makes Wangero incapable of understanding how and why Maggie would consider it normal to just use the quilt everyday.

Similarly Mikhail Bakhtin and Pierre Bourdieu show how the culture of the people denies categorical boundaries between art and life: popular art is part of the everyday, not distanced from it. The culture of everyday life works only to the extent that it is woven into its immediate historical and social setting. Culture is inescapably material: distantiation is an unattainable luxury. The
culture of everyday is concrete, contextualized, and lived, just as deprivation is concrete, contextualized, and lived (Fiske 155).

Thus, Fiske works well with Certeau’s space, Holloway’s mythologies, DuBois’s double consciousness, and Bhabha’s beyond. The culture of everyday life is intricate to the world/environment of its participants. Materials, art, and everyday items are not separate from culture, but they actually inform and contribute to its makeup and dynamism. The culture of everyday invites ancestors into the present to participate in the creation of folk life and narratives (folklore). These cultural materials mold the space Certeau speaks of and the textured culture I seek to outline.

Brett Williams coined the term "texture," one of the key components of a “habitus” whose culture is of the material density of embodied practices (102). The habitus, as defined by Bourdieu, is located within a social space that has both temporal and spatial dimensions (155). While the temporal dimensions allow us to trace the historical movement whereby social formations or individuals within them change geographical positions, the spatial dimensions underscore the dynamic relationship between the major determining forces within our social order, such as
economics, class, education, and their manifestation in behavior. Hence, when Williams speaks of texture, she is referring to “dense, vivid, detailed interwoven narratives, relationships, and experiences” (103). Williams uses instances from everyday life experience to illustrate density and texture. For example, she employs an apartment complex known as The Manor, characterized by the small space afforded its residents and the poverty with which its families suffer. Williams profiles how Lucy and Robert, as typical inhabitants, cope with the material surroundings of The Manor by “texturing domestic density” (102). Lucy and Robert accomplish this by "weaving through their space varied sights, sounds, and rhythms" (102). Significant for my analysis here is Robert and Lucy's texturing of domestic density, and Williams's explication of The Manor and its mostly Black inhabitants, who have emigrated from North Carolina. For these immigrants even foods such as collard greens, ribs, and herrings take on an aspect of texturing. She notes that the residents of the Manor take these foods, which are basically bland in their raw state, and finish them with “rich, complex blends of decision making” that tempt all in their final preparation (48). This texturing of Washington, D. C. life, specifically Elm Valley and The Manor, is a direct product of culture exported from North
Carolina. Through the infusion of this texturing illustrated at Elm Valley and the Manor, we are privy to the production and progression of culture through migration.

The texturing and its maintenance through migration, invokes Edward Said's traveling theory; it impacts wholly on the matter of culture being fluid, influenced, and progressed. Said argues that the circulation and exposure of people, ideas, and behaviors through various cultures influences the mingling cultures. Ideas are shared, borrowed, and incorporated, and new thread is introduced which has the potential to be incorporated into existing cultures, which in turn influences the cultures. In its most powerful effect, such mingling could be the impetus for an entirely new culture. It voices the concerns that present themselves when cultures interact as well as the potential that these interactions have to influence cultures.

Many people travel on a daily basis, and with today’s technology, the world has indeed become very small in comparison to any other time in human history. Travel has the potential to enlighten and provide an avenue for personal development through direct exposure to other cultures. This is important in the process of creating
Said’s Traveling Theory makes this same argument by noting that "cultural and intellectual life are usually nourished and often sustained" by the traversing of ideas from one place to another; this circulation is equally "a fact of life and a usefully enabling condition of intellectual activity" (226). Said not only discusses the importance of travel for culture, but he also outlines the pattern in which theories can move.

Said identifies four stages of movement. First is a representative point of origin. This may not be conclusively identified, but Said argues, “there is a point of origin, or what seems like one, a set of initial circumstances” (226-7). It is from here that we must start. Second, we have the route of the idea as it moves from its origin to a new time and place where it comes into “a new prominence” (227) Third, “a set of conditions - call them conditions of acceptance or, as an inevitable part of acceptance, resistances” act upon the newly transplanted idea and allows its incursion. The fourth stage finds the newly transplanted idea being accommodated or incorporated into the new place, where it undergoes change by its new users, giving it a “new position in a new time and place” (227). With slight amendment, I offer that the traveling theory has a new position in a new time and
space. The transformation and metamorphosis of this idea has successfully negotiated its way to new areas and has allowed it to proliferate and enhance. Coalition takes place and changes to the idea and its new areas are reciprocal; they impact and change one another. There is the action of integration as opposed to assimilation. Thus, we have the creation of a space and a sharing of ideas caused by the theory's travels.

By showing – as Brett Williams did – the texturing of culture through the travel theory, Said illustrates how the threads of culture, when interwoven form a new idea in a new time and space.

As with creating fabric, I've woven critical threads to make a new piece of cultural material. Surely, the critics individually could be used to read cultural narratives, but the intersection produces a larger theoretical framework that is more inclusive than their individual theories alone can accomplish. Building upon the foundation of Certeau's space, Holloway's analysis of myth and the ancestor provides an avenue for Dubois's double consciousness to be clarified as a cultural thread. The ancestor, myths, and spiritual histories informed double consciousness becomes a way to examine everyday behaviors. Likewise, it accentuates Fiske's ideas of the practice of
everyday life by emphasizing the importance of merging cultural perspective to determine the value of art, the material products of culture, for everyday life. Maggie's understanding of the quilts, for example, illustrates the impact that material art has on the practice of everyday life. Bhabha and Said illustrate how Holloway's theory is internalized within a new cultural setting. Bhabha and Said demonstrate the importance of a theory of everyday life that incorporates the ancestor, double consciousness, and a vision of culture as space. Bhabha's beyond complements double consciousness and provides the means by which the theory of double consciousness is no longer restricted to a specific ethnic subject, but it is allowed to manifest in other forms cross-culturally. Once double consciousness travels, its necessity in everyday life becomes more clear, for to live the practice of everyday calls for some degree of double consciousness. At once, one is aware of the practical application of a thing, and that application is called upon to serve a dual function, practicality and aesthetics.

Collectively, these theorists provide the means to analyze specific threads in the fabric of culture. This new fabric, culture as space promotes a greater understanding of how much a thriving culture is dependent
upon progressive interaction and coalition from within as well as without. Using the threads of myth, the ancestor and spiritual history, folklore, and humor to create a practical space, I argue this exercise provides the best insight into culture creation and change as well as exposing how cultures differ and how they are similar. Renaissance drama and post Civil War African American fiction provide evidence that cultural differences, like their similarities, rely not on what the cultural threads are so much as on how various threads are woven together.
Chapter 2: The Renaissance Weavers of Space

The culture of the English Renaissance provides a fertile ground for the analysis of cultural threads incorporated in this project. The writers I would like to employ in this weaving of threads are Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare. Through their literature, the threads of historicity and ancestor, myth and trickster, and humor will be explored. The drama written by these two timeless authors weaves space within their own era as well as gives insight into the significance that such threads have for influencing and progressing culture.

The Weaver Jonson

Established theatre was a relatively new phenomenon in sixteenth century England. The first permanent, legal theatre was established in London in 1552. Before that, performances were carried out on temporary platforms set up in taverns and inns. Entertainment at the new venues ranged from bear baiting to performances for the royal court. The first mention of Ben Jonson in the theatre comes in 1597 in a note for a four-pound loan given to him for his work as an actor by the entrepreneur William Henslowe. Jonson was younger than the major Elizabethan writers Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare, who heralded the
theatrical exploration of universal facets of the human experience. However, this in no way implies that Jonson was not a contemporary as well as being familiar with their work. In fact, Jonson's appreciation of Shakespeare is noted in a most impressive tribute in The First Folio, 1623 where he writes of Shakespeare, "he was not of an age, but for all time!"

That same year Jonson was imprisoned for his part in writing and performing a play entitled The Isle of Dogs, a satirical work mocking the Scots. After his release, Jonson quickly became known for his writing rather than his acting, producing works for the leading theatres of the day. Every Man in His Humor, completed in 1598, established him as a major writer of comedy and satire. Its first performance was at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

Jonson was again imprisoned in 1598, this time for killing an associate actor in a duel. He was acquitted only after successfully pleading "benefit of clergy" — a law allowing for the pardoning of defendants due to their literacy. Jonson had a profound knowledge of Latin and Greek theatre as well as poetry. He was one of the most educated writers of the day, and the audience that he addresses in his writings is reflected accordingly. Brian Tyson acknowledges this when he notes that Jonson's plays
were not directed to the groundlings but to "scholars that can judge" (65-6). Jonson also dedicated *Volpone* to Cambridge and Oxford\(^1\) to whom Jonson feels obliged to explicate the "reason for his play"; a reason that Jonson affirms is correlated to his subject (Tyson 66). Like many artists of the period, Jonson developed his work within the framework established by the Greek and Roman classics. The English Renaissance writers reworked classical, traditional and contemporary stories.\(^2\) The art was in the telling, not in the creation, of the stories. This brief biography implies the kind of man Jonson was, his sensibility and personality. It begins to delve into Jonson's theory of art as well as how he approached that art. This is important in understanding how Jonson conceived of a new cultural space. Perhaps the greatest thread that Jonson lends to this project is his comedy. It is my argument that Jonson impacts space in two ways. The first is the creation of a new type of comedy woven from traditional and contemporary forms. He weaves the types together to create a new form that, secondly, is used to create a cultural space in attempts to affect cultural change.
Jonson's writing is often charged with being constrained by classical references; however, he was in no way overawed by the classics. In fact, part of his creative genius was his ability to rework themes and ideas to fit a contemporary setting. Many of Jonson's sources were so seamlessly woven into his stories that only after centuries of scholarship were the connections established between his work and that of earlier writers. He incorporated the ancestor in his spatial creation.

Jonson was informed by varied ancestral sources. He drew directly on ancient mythology in his masques for the royal court. Jonson and his sometime collaborator, architect Inigo Jones, developed the masque from a relatively simplistic entertainment into an elaborate art form. The playwright was also influenced by European theatre, particularly the Italian Commedia dell’Arte. Commedia dell’Arte troupes toured London in the late 1590s, and a number of the characters in Volpone have their direct counterparts in this Italian theatrical form. Jonson’s Volpone, for example, fits within the persona of the Commedia’s Pantalone, whose character went from a parsimonious and ineffectual old man to an energetic
cuckolder with almost animal ferocity and agility. In *Volpone*, Jonson integrates this influence with classical references, as well as English and European folk mythology and theatrical styles.

Another ancestral source for Jonson was the English tradition of medieval morality plays, where human characteristics such as virtue, vice, lechery, or curiosity were personified to illustrate moral lessons. Jonson weaved all these influences into a theatre that was purposeful and designed to play a critical role in society. His comedies created space and generated a new realism as well as a new method for representing human character types. Indeed, Jonson would write in *Discoveries* that "Language is the instrument of society" (Discoveries II. 1881).

Humor in the drama of the English Renaissance was usually written into a play as a commentary on social issues of the day. Some critics distinguished between the main story line of the play, or the serious story line, as opposed to what was commonly called the comic relief, or the simplistic, slapstick story line; however, in the Renaissance, a new and vital drama emerged. In England in the 16th century, the tradition of the Interlude, a style developed in the late 15th century of the English Medieval morality play which played between the acts of a long play.
treat ing intellectual rather than moral topics and containing elements of satire or farce, was developed by John Heywood. The Interlude blended with that of Latin classic comedy, eventually producing the great Elizabethan comedy, which reached its highest expression in the plays of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

Bakhtin's arguments support this notion. Bakhtin writes in "Folk Humor and Carnival Laughter" that "the present...analysis of laughter explains it either as purely negative satire or else as gay, fanciful, recreational drollery deprived of philosophic content" (Reader 201). The notion that there are two story lines or plots fits this kind of analysis; however, I argue that the two are much more intricate. Bakhtin contends "the important point [is] that folk humor is ambivalent:(Reader 201). It pervades all aspects of the drama, recalling Fiske's practice of everyday life. Jonson's comedies were strongly influenced by classical tenets and the realism of his time, which he wove into caustic, rich satire. Shakespeare's comedies, on the other hand, ranged from the farcical to the tragicomic, and he was the master of the romantic comedy. In either case, the parody, satire, dramatic irony, or humor were not an offshoot of the main action, but they were a direct reflection on the main plot of the
plays as well. Toni Morrison would argue that they made the plays practical to their community (Rootedness 343). These devices were used to reflect the author's view of society and culture, and they bolstered the plays underlying message.

Renaissance humor was comprised of three distinct forms. Each of these addressed some aspect of folk humor and was drawn upon in the creation of Renaissance drama. "Ritual Spectacles" consisted of carnival pageants and comic shows of the marketplace. Then there were the "Comic Verbal Compositions" which were made up of parodies, both oral and written. Finally, there were the "Various Genres of Billingsgate" that were identified by curses, oaths, and popular blazons (Bakhtin 197). Many critics of Jonson's Volpone have argued that it is not a true comedy but rather a mix of tragedy, comedy, and satire. Many have also claimed that it follows the traditional beast-fable that can be found in the tales of Aesop. Although Volpone takes on some characteristics of tragedy, it seems to follow closer to the conventions of comedy. But it is not the traditional form of comedy. It is a play that takes on the form of a comical satire as well as a morality play. It also adapts the features of a fable in that it strives to teach a moral. Yet this play, even though it adopts these
traditions, puts a different twist on what people would expect from a comedy or morality play. Jonson presents his audience with an unconventional way of approaching the subjects he is satirizing by creating a new form of comedy that embodies aspects of all three genres. I believe this play to be more like a satirical comedy because Jonson is satirizing his age and social atmosphere to bring about a new space in which the ancestor can arrest the tide of degradation Jonson felt was overtaking his England.

The Weaving of Satiric Purpose to Obtain Morality

Like Juvenal, the Roman satirist, Jonson is satirizing the whole of his country. Whether it is the corruption of the court that we find in Voltore or the immorality of the legacy hunters, Jonson is satirizing the importance of money during his time. Peggy Knapp writes that "Ben Jonson saw his world quite clearly, but he liked almost nothing in what he saw" (577). Jonson's goal as a poet was to portray the world with a measure of realism without "idealizing or sentimentalizing it." He argued that poetry is not simply a version of history, but it is fable (Knapp 577). Jonson's argument in Discoveries is that the true poet's fable embodies both nature as local reality (such language as men use) and as natural law (enduring patterns of causality) so
that the second may expose the defects of the first and reform the age.

There is a striking difference between Volpone and the traditional idea of comical satire. Gone are the static spokesman, the conveniently formulated ideal, and the easy dispensation of comic justice from a lofty vantage point (Dessen 75). Instead in Volpone we see an author who is concerned with "conveying an anatomy of the time's deformity through comedy" (Dessen 75). The deformity that Jonson is trying to comment on is the overemphasis on the importance of money. This deformity is seen in the first two lines of the play where Volpone wakes up and says "Good morning to the day; and next, my gold! / open the shrine, that I may see my saint / Hail the world's soul, and mine!" (I.i.1-2). In this opening scene the audience can see that the world of Volpone is not in order. Robert Adams supports this argument by interpreting Volpone's line, "the world's soul and mine," as the soul of the universe and his own immortal essence, both identified with gold (5). Where God is supposed to be the object of worship, it is clear that Volpone's greed envelops him as well as most of the characters of the play. This idea is the subject of Jonson's comedy. Knapp argues that Jonson constructed his massive fables to expose and attempt to arrest social
deterioration. In writing *Volpone*, *Epicoene*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair*, Jonson assigns an earlier idea and culture as his guide for morality. Jonson's present society is debased nature synonymous with the local reality of Jonson's time. This play is a satire on the morals of the time, and in this first scene Jonson is texturing the play as a satire as well as a morality play.

To clarify this idea further, it is helpful to define what Jonson would have viewed as the old way or the chain of being and the new way or "Publicke Riot" (Discoveries 1.956). Renaissance England was experiencing an economic upheaval. Between the years of 1500 and 1650, prices tripled, but wages and rent did not keep pace. During the same period, gold and other precious metals from newly acquired lands stimulated capital investments, producing a formula for out of control inflation. Under the frugal rule of Elizabeth, the economic problems did not reach a disastrous state; however, during James' reign bad decision-making led to what F. H. Durham called "the period of perhaps the greatest economic confusion in our history" (Knights 5). Traditional forms of wealth transference, and subsequently status, were disrupted by the sale of vast amounts of land. Governmental attempts to alleviate the deterioration of the countries system of wealth were
hindered by ineptness or dishonesty by the ministers. Overall, they had no concept of economics. The bottom line is that the country was going through a revolution of sorts—a revolution that redefined wealth, how one obtained wealth, and the status that accompanied wealth (Knapp 578-9).

This upheaval defined the publicke riot. It, to Jonson, was the new order of things. There was this constant pursuit of money that consumed every other facet of life. Edward Partridge echoes this when he contends that the central image in Volpone is feeding—man feeding on man, symbolizing greed (107). Peggy Knapp follows along the same lines by identifying the dominant theme of Volpone, from the publicke riot perspective, as "gold begetting gold" as opposed to the chain of being theme of "people begetting children" (580). There has been a shift from the pursuit of human legacy to the acquisition of gold signifying greed.

The satire consists of the deformity that exists in Jonson's London. It is a satire on the "very fabric of justice" in London as well as the worth people put on wealth over "such basic concerns as the ties between husband and wife, (and) the ties between father and son" (Dessen 80-81). For example, the main thrust of this
satire on social values is addressed in the situation of Corvino and his wife. In the Mountebank scene, we see the traditional values take hold of Corvino. During the scene Corvino's wife, Celia, acts out the part of a flirt with Volpone. Corvino witnesses this and thinks it is the "death of mine honor" (II.i. 1). At this point in the play, he is the jealous husband, but once Mosca presents him with an opportunity to prostitute his wife for the gain of money, he is quick to lose his honor in exchange for the inheritance.

Corvino. Slight! if this doctor, who is engaged, Unless 't be for his counsel, which is nothing, Offer his daughter, what should I, that am So deeply in? I will prevent him: Wretch! Covetous wretch!-Mosca, I have determined. Mosca. How, sir? Corvino. We'll make all sure. The party you wot of Shall be mine own wife, Mosca" (II.iii. 148-52).

Jonson wants to take his audience beyond so that they might see the effect greed has on traditional values. He shows the audience how disgusting Corvino is in betraying his values in order to gain money. He is criticizing the "materialism of the age" for "elevating gold 'above God" (Dessen 78). His comedy "makes avarice the prevailing theme" (Baum 85). The characters of Jonson's comedy are so wrapped up in becoming Volpone's heir they completely
forget any sense of honor. They marginalize their ancestral myth.

Ben Jonson's *Volpone* and *The Alchemist* offer two different outcomes for those who seek to take advantage of other people's greed. *Volpone's*, satiric comedy stems from the juggling of various inheritance suitors for Volpone's fortune. The play turns on the ability of Volpone and Mosca to dupe the greedy suitors into giving up their own fortunes and treasured things in hope of receiving much bigger returns on their investment at Volpone's seemingly close death. They are all shown in an ill light, and none but Bonario, Celia, Peregrine, and some of the Avocatori seem to have any morals whatsoever. Severe punishments are given for the degree of immorality in the conclusion of the play.

*The Alchemist* turns on greed as well. Subtle, Face, and Dol Common are able to carry out their fleecing of the gullible citizenry because of the false offers of gold, wit, and power that are promised by the trickster trio. The play has the same satiric, comic, juggling nature that worked so well in *Volpone*. *The Alchemist*, however, was written in 1610, four years after *Volpone* with its date of 1606. Another difference in the two plays is that the greedy suitors in *The Alchemist* do not fuel their immoral depiction by disinheriting their next of kin, committing
adultery, or "pimping" their wife. Rather, the characters of The Alchemist are just greedy and think they can get something that is too good to be true.

What is interesting however is that in The Alchemist, the final judgments for greed and other immoral acts are quite lenient in comparison to the judgments at the end of Volpone. I contend that Ben Jonson's purpose for incorporating satire into his plays changed by levels of degree in direct comparison to the moral issue that the play examined as well as the ancestral laws governing moral issues. In other words, the punishments changed from very harsh at the end of Volpone to lenient at the end of The Alchemist because the matters of morality that were being satirized in the plays were not on the same level of importance as defined by the ancestor. Thus, this gave Jonson the freedom to downgrade the scale of punishment in The Alchemist because their crimes, on the scale of things, were not as great as those committed in Volpone. I argue that this bolsters the idea of Jonson writing to influence his culture from the standpoint of creating a space textured with the old and the new.

It is my contention that Jonson, in a sense, was an optimist. He believed that societal reform would come, and he also believed that it was the poet's duty to make people
aware of the things that needed to be reformed. He understood his task to be as a beacon, showing those that strayed too far from morality the way back home; in a word, Jonson was political. He accomplished this task by focusing his plays on those he considered were in need of reform. Mostly dealing with a middle class treatment of society, Jonson developed the characters in his plays by observing the same in the society that he was trying to reform. He dealt with everyday situations, so his comedy would have the appeal that it needed to be successful as well as making it of the community. Dealing with everyday situations also gave Jonson the opportunity to reveal those morality flaws and to criticize them in the drama, thus affecting change in society. AnneMarie Faber argues that Jonson is primarily regarded as a poet who is concerned with ethics; however, his preoccupation with "ethical issues" is very much connected with society, especially the society of his age. Jonson's occupation with morals should serve to improve a society that was represented in his plays with a high degree of verisimilitude. Jonson was not certain that the audiences and readers of his drama accepted and understood his drama's intentions, but he was certain that his message was essential for those of his time and the welfare of the state (98-9). With Jonson's
poetic intentions clear, it becomes apparent that he
definitely had ideas of how society should be and of what
morality consisted. George Parfitt writes of Jonson that
his "view of what society should be was conservative, in
the sense that he wanted to maintain or restore values
which he believed had operated in the past and should
operate in the present, and so his consideration of society
centers upon the figure of the ruler" (98). Harold Bloom
seconds this conservative, traditional image of Jonson when
he writes "Bacon presumably preferred Jonson, The Ancient,
over Shakespeare, the Modern" (1).

It is highly unlikely that Jonson was basing his
ethics for moral change on Christian faith. His satire does
not generally conform to a religious ideology. Faber argues
that "if Jonson had criticized according to a Christian
ideal, this criticism of evil conditions would have had to
show that a character who did not reform was punished; such
a life would have had as a consequence punishment in the
after life, if not in this" (107). Instead, an argument
could be made that Jonson's reforms stemmed from his desire
for a cooperative community. He criticized and satirized
those faults in society that dealt with individuals
mistreating or interacting badly with their fellow man.
Jonson believed that by eliminating these faults and by
teaching the community to get along, everyone would lead a happier life. Hugh MacLean seconds this theory when he writes, "we find...not an explicit and detailed outline of the social order Jonson admired, but rather 'notes' on particular elements that ought to mark a society properly ordered, as well as suggestions for conduct in the midst of a disordered one" (179). The negative structures in Jonson's comedies are complemented and fulfilled by positive structures in his poetry and Discoveries. The three main themes that dominate these positive structures reflect theoretical elements of this study. The virtue of friendship between good men reflects collaboration; the receptiveness by nature to the free exchange of opinion and counsel results in space, and the strong resource such friendships establish for the ordered society and the secure state signify cultural dynamism (179).

Another way that we might view the varying degrees of punishment is the effect on the audience. Bloom posits an interesting theory that includes Jonson reading the audience. In Volpone we, the audience (and the physical audience that viewed the play), are privy to the deceptions of Volpone and Mosca. However, the play is written in a manner that draws us to these two con artists, and by Jonson's depiction of their victims, we tend to want to see
their deceitful endeavors succeed. However, this may just be the reason why the punishments are so harsh at the end of the play. Jonson's sublime vehemence conveys him to Volpone's side, despite his own Jonsonian moral theory. Not that Volpone – and the ignoble Mosca as well – is not hideously punished. The two are shockingly over punished, which may be Jonson's self-punishment for the imaginative introjection of his finest fiction. Bloom frames this idea in the following manner:

Perhaps Jonson is chastising us also, knowing that we too would delight in Volpone. The representation of gusto, when worked with Jonson's power, becomes a gusto that captivates us, so that it scarcely matters if we remember how wicked Volpone is supposed to be. Massively aware of this paradox, distrusting the theatrical while creating Volpone as a genius of theatricality, Jonson takes moral revenge upon Volpone, the audience, and himself. (8)

So here we have the possible basis as to why the punishment is so stiff in Volpone. We are chastised for siding with Volpone, no matter how much charisma he seems to have. We are shocked back into realizing that he is still a deceitful being. Seeing that immoral strain running through character, audience, and poet demands that we all are punished, and so we are punished through the severity with which Mosca and Volpone are handled.
Donald Gertmenian's theory advocates that the interaction between moral and immoral issues is accomplished in the two plays. While Gertmenian affirms the position that Bloom takes concerning the favorability of Volpone and Mosca as opposed to their dupes, he also posits that the main conflict in Volpone is that of the individual versus moral, social order. The main conflict of The Alchemist on the other hand revolves around man versus man. He argues that this is the main difference for the way that the punishments are exacted in the two plays. The greater fault was in the individual against moral order; therefore, the punishments were greater. This argument parallels George Parfitt's view of Jonson that I called attention to earlier. Jonson is seen as an ancient, traditionalist, and conservative. (Gertmenian 251)

I argue that the synthesis of these three arguments creates the best argument for the seeming shift in attitudes or rather the difference in the punishment of immoral characters. To understand Jonson's purpose and to apply that purpose to the role of the characters' morality illustrates a difference that Jonson held. What your immoral faults were directed towards (moral order or man) decided the severity of the immorality and thus provided
the basis for the punishment. In this argument, the punishment does fit the crime.

Returning to the scene following the speech Corvino gives about his honor being lost because of Celia's flirtation with Volpone (disguised as the Mountebank) and after being presented with the opportunity to profit from sharing his wife, Celia's remark, "What spirit is this that hath entered him?" (III.vii. 47-48) is Jonson's way of showing the crueness and ugliness of Corvino's actions. Jonson uses Celia as a counter example of what people should and would have traditionally done in such a circumstance. Her speech, when confronted with Volpone's proposition, is the way that people would be expected to respond.

Celia. Oh God, and his angels! whither, whither, Is shame fled human breasts? That with such ease, Men dare put off your honors, and their own? Is that, which ever was cause of life, Now placed beneath the basest circumstance, And modesty an exile made, for money?" (III.vii. 132-138)

She cannot believe that people would sell their honor. Jonson uses Celia as his voice to comment on the upside down morality that is in the play.

Jonson further satirizes his society by showing how "Corvino and Corbaccio are willing to sacrifice their dearest possession in hope of gain" (Baum 85). The
relationship between father and son is something that is traditionally sacred. Jonson's ancestor would certainly support the natural order, but once Corbaccio finds out that the only way he can become Volpone's heir is to disinherit his son, Bonario, and name Volpone his heir, he is quick to do so. Through Corbaccio's action Jonson is giving the audience a humorous, albeit sobering, glimpse at how greed affects ancestral social values. Critical satire is also directed towards the publicke riot. The corruption of the court is seen when Voltore utters his selfish lies. In the first trial scene, the court’s inability to see that Celia and Bonario are innocent while their accusers are the ones that are guilty is quite clear. In this scene "Jonson is showing us how the disease, which until now had been largely confined to Volpone's chambers, is literally "being carried in to . . . infect the halls of justice" (Dessen 93).

Jonson, in Volpone, is critiquing the state that he knows exists around him. Through the relationships between Corvino and Celia and Corbaccio and Bonario, he is showing his audience the ugly effect money has on ancestral values. These people are willing to give up their most sacred values in exchange for money. By making the characters of Corvino and Corbaccio so virulent, the audience understands
Jonson's satire of the social values that were beginning to infect London.

But Volpone is not a true satiric comedy in its strictest form. In this play there are the remnants of the Christian morality play. Like the morality plays of the 1400's and 1500's, we see in Volpone "a similarity between Volpone – Mosca and the morality vice" (Dessen 75). But it "is not a morality play" in that there is no main character that gives a speech "on the major premise of the play" (Dessen 79). Jonson has used the morality play as a partial source for his comedy. By doing so Volpone becomes somewhat of a moral comedy. It weaves the characteristics of satirical comedy with the moralizing of the morality play. It is like a morality play because of its "immoral and moralizing vice" (Dessen 76). It uses the characters of Volpone and Mosca to present the vice of greed. But unlike morality plays, there is no distinct voice to represent greed. Almost all of the characters are infected with this vice instead of there being one well-defined character of vice; although, Volpone and Mosca are clear examples of what the vice is.

In his characterization of gold as an object that is worshipped, Jonson has presented the audience with a situation where moral virtue takes a back seat to monetary
gain. It is also like a morality play in that it has character types. Where Corvino, Corbaccio, and Voltore are clearly characters of vice, the characters of Celia and Bonario are even more distinct as virtuous characters. These characters represent virtue in a world full of vice.

In the rape scene we see the virtuous character of Celia crying out to God to be saved. But unlike the morality play, it is not God who saves Celia but rather the luck that has placed Bonario in a position to rescue her. But even in the speech of Bonario when he interrupts Volpone, Jonson is satirizing as well as moralizing.

Bonario. Forbear, foul ravisher! Libidinous swine!
Free the forced lady, or thou diest, impostor!
But that I am loth to snatch thy punishment
Out of the hand of justice, thou shouldst yet
Be made the timely sacrifice of vengeance
Before this altar, and this dross, thy idol.
Lady lets quit this place, it is the den
Of villany; fear naught, you have a guard:
And he, ere long shall meet his just reward.

(III.iii. 270-78)

In this brief speech of Bonario's, we see both the satire of conventional traditions and the vice that infects Volpone. "His speech is meant to be taken as a straight forward assertion of the play’s values" (Watson 93). It is a satire of conventional values in that the speech makes Bonario seem rather naive when he is confronted with such a character as Volpone. Calling him a "foul ravisher" and
"libidinous swine" shows how strong and sometimes farcical the language of the virtuous can be. Even though it is a satire on the traditional virtues, Jonson is clear to point out that Bonario is a character to be exemplified more so then Volpone.

More than a satire on the ancestral morality, it is a satire on the type of drama that was prevalent. In his dedication Jonson makes it clear that he will deal justice out in its' proper manner rather than what was conventional for the theater at the time. He is trying to "disarm the moral critics of the theater" (Watson 82). Rather than have the rogue trickster Volpone escape through the use of his wit, Jonson brings him down by the use of wit. In the speech by Bonario "Jonson is again exploiting the clash of generic expectation, both to generate a new sort of comedy and to force the audience to recognize that innovation" (Watson 83). It is in this speech that we see a foreshadowing of the downfall of Volpone. Even though he escapes in act four, he will "meet his just reward" (III.vii. 274) by the end of act five. This is not what the Renaissance audience would expect.

By adopting some of the characteristics of the morality play, Jonson hoped to "imitate justice" and to "instruct to life" through the combination of a satiric
comedy and morality play. The harshness of the punishments at the end of the play falls more in line with the morality play than with the comical satire. "The surprisingly blunt exposure and punishment in Volpone pits the indulgent conventions of satiric comedy, in which wit is the sole criterion for success, against the forces of conventional moralism" (Watson 83). In the conventional play, Volpone would have escaped just as he did at the end of Act four, but instead of following the expectations of a comical satire, Jonson is determined to create a new form by balancing the comical satire with morals. Throughout the comedy he has satirized both the conventions of his times and the lack of morals that was beginning to infect London at the time. His new form of comedy was more like the ancient fables of Aesop than a comedy of Elizabethan standards.

Some scholars, such as T. H. White in his work The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts have defined Volpone, at least in part, as a beast fable. David Radcliffe in Sylvan States: Social and Literary Formations in Sylvae by Jonson and Cowley also acknowledges a comparison to the beast fable mainly because it incorporates animal names for its characters as well as its use of a moral ending, yet it is not exactly the traditional fable. In the traditional
fable, we have a character that is similar to the witty character in a comic satire. But in Volpone this character is not as successful as the fable prototype. By referring to Volpone as a fable, we can see that Jonson was certainly influenced by the fable form. In trying to develop a play that would be both satirical and moral, Jonson adapts the fable. This genre enables him to combine a satire of man with the moral he is trying to convey to his audience. As stated in his dedication, Jonson is trying to give his audience a play that will show them how to live. With the use of the fable, he is able to do this.

It is common in many fables to have the wit victorious. In a popular beast fable, there is a fox that outwits a vulture. He claims to love the singing of the vulture and is able to get the vulture to sing. By doing this, the vulture drops the food that was in his mouth. Then the fox runs away with the food. Volpone is like this in that the fox is able to outwit "the birds of prey and finally entraps them by feigning death" (Watson 85). The fable that Jonson creates in Volpone has two plots. In the main plot we have the fox and the fly that are the wits of the fable; then, there are the birds of prey: the vulture (Voltore), the raven (Corbaccio), and the old crow (Corvino). These creatures are known for their predatory
status. It is the fox (Volpone) that sets the trap for the birds, and Mosca is the parasitic, trickstering fly that lives off the fox. Volpone's trap is very successful in getting the birds to give him money. This is the satirical element of the fable. By choosing the raven as the person who rejects his son in favor of becoming the fox's heir, Jonson is showing how Corbaccio is failing as a father just as a raven, which does not provide for its children, is not fulfilling the role of nature (White 141-142). The old crow, Corvino, is also betraying his nature by using his wife as a means to monetary gain. Jonson uses the beast fable in the main plot to satirize the upside down nature of society. Watson argues that because Volpone's schemes fall through that Jonson is breaking the rules of the fable; however, I contend that Jonson believes in realism over set constructions of literature because "the real world does not work that way, and Jonson will not yield his realism to any pleasant literary formula" (Watson 96-97). Since Jonson advocates the practice of everyday life, this is intentional, and I argue even necessary because Jonson is concerned with weaving a new sort of comedy. He is creating a comedic space that is at the same time satirical and moral, and its focus is to bring about cultural change.
This is also why Jonson's trickster does not succeed. Volpone is Jonson's trickster. I would also argue that even though White contends that Mosca is "a fly that lives off Volpone," he is also a trickster figure. Mosca illustrates a high degree of manipulation through wit. In actuality, he is conducting most of the duping while Volpone just plays the role of an invalid close to death, so I would consider them both to embody the characteristics of a trickster. A trickster sometimes is duped, especially when they take their trickery too far. Lowe writes of High John, Zora Neale Hurston's trickster character, "John, however, frequently gets tricked himself, as were his predecessors the Signifying Monkey, Anancy, and Brer Rabbit" (Lowe 9).

This new sort of comedy can best be seen in the sub-plot, which is connected with the moral aspect of the fable. It is in the subplot that we see Jonson attempting to show his audience the dangers of living like the characters of the main plot. "It is on the thematic level that the presence of the Would-be's can be justified and their antics related to the major motifs of the play" (Barish 93). The Would-be's are seen as parrots of the vices seen in the main characters. They are used by Jonson to show the folly that is involved in the English frame of
mind in trying to imitate the Venetian court. Jonson uses the sub-plot to show what could happen to England if the country does not watch what it is doing.

Sir Would-be is "a comic distortion of Volpone" (Barish 94) while Lady Would-be is a rather paltry copy of a Venetian lady. But Jonson is clear that this couple is not involved in the vice of the main plot but rather involved in the folly of imitating that vice. Jonson used the Would-be's to show the danger of parroting the decadence of the main characters. In the subplot he shows how it is still possible for England to escape the terrible outcome that befalls the other creatures of the fable. The play is structured so that the creatures involved in folly may escape while those involved in true vice are punished. Jonson is telling his audience that there is only one possible outcome for society if it succumbs to vice. But he makes it clear that he does not think England has become like the corrupt world of Volpone. His hopes are that the audience will learn from this play and escape public punishment just like the Would-be's have been able to.

The Weaving of Dramatic Irony to Obtain Humor

The use of dramatic irony in Ben Jonson's Volpone is essential to the main plot of the play as well as to the comic aspect. Jonson uses dramatic irony, not only in the
task of cultural change by illuminating the idiosyncrasies of the characters, but also to employ humor to effect cultural change by creating hilarious situations and showing the illogical and ridiculous way that the characters react all in the pursuit of greed and material wealth.

The most apparent use of dramatic irony is the farce by Volpone of being a sickly near-death man of great wealth who has no heir to bestow his fortune on at his demise. As well as being a main part of the plot of the play, this fact also sets up a large amount of the comedy of the play. We find out from the outset that the fortune that Volpone has amassed has come from the cunning play on other people's greed.

Vol. What should I do,
But cocker up my genius, and live free
To all delights my fortune calls me to?
I have no wife, parent, child, ally,
To give my substance to: but whom I make
Must be my heir; and this makes men observe me:
This draws new clients daily to my house,
Women and men of every sex and age,
That bring me presents, send me plate, coin,
Jewels
With hope that when I die (which they expect
Each greedy minute) it shall then return
Tenfold upon them; (I.i. 70-81)

We also find out that this only makes the fortune, as far as Volpone is concerned, all the greater because of the way it was obtained. "Yet I glory / More in the cunning
purchase of my wealth / Than in the glad possession, since
I gain / No common way" (I.i. 30).

The very way that Volpone gains his fortune is of
great comic value to the play. This is evidenced by
the initial visit of Voltore or "the Vulture."
Voltore's visit shows the excellent execution and
teamwork of the two tricksters Volpone and Mosca. They play their parts to perfection and make the
promise of a great inheritance to Voltore seem in the
grasp and near at hand as evidenced from Act one,
scenes three through five (1.3-5. 11-22).

Another glimpse of the duo of Volpone and Mosca at
work using their trickery is witnessed in Act two, scene
one. This scene involves Scoto, Corvino, and Celia. Dramatic irony is present here also. Disguised as a
mountebank doctor, Volpone has come to a place right
outside Corvino's house to view his lovely wife Celia. The
action that follows in this scene helps to further our
understanding of the extreme greediness and lack of any
moral fiber that the characters in hope of inheritance will
go through to be named as Volpone's heir. This scene sets
the background of all that later follows in the play, to
include the downfall of everyone except Bonario and Celia.
The use of dramatic irony in this situation is based primarily on Corvino and secondly on his wife Celia. Mosca manipulates Corvino into commissioning his wife to sleep with Volpone. Scoto's oil has supposedly worked some good on the ailing Volpone, which is the first point of the dramatic irony because there was nothing wrong with Volpone to begin with and also the fact that Volpone was Scoto. Secondly, Corvino is maneuvered into offering his wife to sleep with Volpone so that he will remain in the best favor with the ailing heirless Volpone, who we know is as healthy or healthier than those who seek to get his fortune. With the dramatic irony in effect upon Corvino, Celia is doubly in the dark. She is led to believe that Corvino is no longer angry with her for dropping her handkerchief to the mountebank. However, the audience knows better, and it is also known that the promise of material wealth has caused this change in Corvino.

Mos. Sir, I warrant you, I'll so possess him with it, that the rest Of his starved clients shall be banished all, And only you received. Corv. Where are you, wife? My Celia! wife! [Re-enter Celia] -What, blubbering?
Come, dry those tears. I think thou thought'st me in earnest.
Ha! By this light I talked so but to try thee.
Methinks, the lightness of the occasion
Should ha' confirmed thee. Come, I am not jealous. (II.iii. 169-78)

The use of dramatic irony also drives a wedge between Corbaccio and his son Bonario. Corbaccio is convinced to disinhere Bonario and to write out a new will with Volpone as his heir. Corbaccio is led to believe that surely Volpone will die before him and then he will have both fortunes, as Volpone would surely name him heir in response to his naming Volpone as his heir. The audience knows this is just more manipulation by Mosca.

Mos. Now would I counsel you, make home with speed.
There, frame a will, whereto you shall Inscribe My master your sole heir.
Corb. And disinhere My son!
Mos. Oh, sir, the better: for that color Shall make it much more taking.
Corb. Oh, but color? (I.i. 395-398)

Corbaccio is again the victim of dramatic irony after Bonario has rescued Celia from Volpone. Mosca tells him

Mos. Oh, undone, amazed, sir. Your son, I know not by what accident,
Acquainted with your purpose to my patron,  
Touching your will, and making him your heir  
Entered our house with violence, his sword drawn,  

Sought for you, called you wretch,  
unnatural,  
Vowed he would kill you." (III.iii. 305-9)  

To which Corbaccio replied, "This act shall disinherit him indeed" (III.iii. 311). The audience knows that Bonario did no such thing and in fact was only defending Celia's honor.

Lady Politic Would-Be, another heir apparent to Volpone, is easily led to believe that her husband is seeing another woman. She first believes that Peregrine is a woman that her husband is seeing and then she testifies in the trial that it was Celia, after some coaching from Mosca. The audience knows that neither account is correct. We know that this is just the work of Mosca. Sir Would-Be is portrayed as a fool and instances of dramatic irony go a long way in helping to enhance this perception.

One such incident would be when Peregrine disguised tells Sir Politic Would-Be that he, Sir Politic, has consulted with a spy who has told the Senate of plans by Sir Politic "to sell the state of Venice to the Turk"(V.ii. 35-37). This later leads to
Sir Politic's hiding under a tortoise shell with his limbs protruding and actually believing that no one would know that it was he.

Finally, dramatic irony has an effect upon Volpone. Volpone, not being willing to calm things down for a while after escaping the mess of the first trial, plans to proclaim his death and to make Mosca his heir in jest. However, we have slowly ascertained since Mosca's soliloquy in Act three, scene one, that he plans more for himself than just being a servant. He feels that he is worthy of the whole fortune. This secret is shared only between Mosca and the audience, so once again dramatic irony is present.

The device of dramatic irony is effective in advancing Jonson's purpose of cultural change through humor. It is a catalyst to the plot throughout the play, and it is used to humorously illustrate character flaws and affect a change in the publicke riot.

In Volpone the audience is presented with a new comedic space. It is like no other play before it. It is the weaving together of the different forms by Jonson to present a space that is both satirical and moral. It deals with social issues, such as the potential danger of putting
gold above God, as well as the moral issues that are brought up in the treatment of Celia by Corvino. Jonson's comic space is one that challenges the audience to look at their actions critically as well as laugh at the fate of others. It is this combination of the moral and satirical that makes this play so unique for its time. The use of the fable lets the reader treat the subject of moral action in a detached way while the comical action entertains the audience, but more importantly, it sends a clear Jonsonian message of what the appropriate response should be. In Volpone Jonson was successful in combining three genres in order to create a new space that had the potential for cultural change.

The Weaver Shakespeare

Shakespeare's The Tempest is generally regarded as his last comedy. The Tempest was written in 1611, and its first recorded performance was by the King's Players in Whitehall before King James on Hallowmas Night.¹ No definite source for The Tempest has ever been identified, but a German play entitled Comedy of the Beautiful Sidea, penned by Jacob Ayrer before 1605 is thought to be one likely source. In the Comedy of the Beautiful Sidea, a magician Prince with a spirit attendant has an only daughter who falls in love
with the son of her father's enemy. However, The Tempest is rich in possible sources and influences, and much of the criticism concerns itself with advancing some source material as the catalyst for Shakespeare's work. Another source that has commanded a lot of attention is the shipwreck of the Sea-Adventure that occurred off the coast of Bermuda. In 1609 the Adventurers and Company of Virginia sent from London a fleet of eight ships. During a calamitous storm, The Sea-Adventure, which carried the leaders of the expedition, was separated and damaged so that it began to take on water and was in danger of sinking. They were able to make landfall in Bermuda, and everyone onboard was safe. Bermuda was thought to be inhabited by devils, witches, and other unworldly beasts; however, the shipwrecked crew found a virtual paradise with everything they needed to survive for their ten-month stay.

Another highly likely source for Shakespeare was John Florio's translation of Montaigne's Essays, which were published in 1603. Montaigne's stance was a desire to model primitive man for his innocence and goodness, as opposed to the evil that permeated civilized society. Dean Ebner writes concerning Montaigne's essay that it "is a part of an extensive body of utopian literature which sprang up in the Renaissance with the hopes that the reason
of man could find the conditions necessary for the establishment of a new social order" (165). It is clear, if one accepts these as being sources for Shakespeare - as most critics concede - how the New World theories cropped up in *Tempest* criticism.²

Kenneth Semon advocates, "any good work of poetry creates a world within itself, and in the sense that it is not the world of everyday experience, it is a "secondary world" (25). He further explains that such a world - secondary - has three possibilities. The first possibility is one of being realistic or centered in the practice of everyday, using a very high degree of verisimilitude. The other option is that of the fantastic or the realm of the spiritual, and the third is a combination of the realistic and the fantastic (25). The rules of the secondary world however, contend that if realistic or fantastic, the secondary world must "be consistent within itself," and "in order to create a credible secondary world which is consistent within itself, the artist must also base his creation on a series of inter-related propositions" (25). Semon acknowledges that the propositions don't have to mirror the primary world, but they should observe "the logical form of the primary world" (25). I contend, then, that Prospero's island is a space that Shakespeare has
woven to exact cultural change for his purpose of reconciliation.

Throughout The Tempest Prospero takes great delight in the practice of his "Art." As the audience sees him, Prospero has become a practiced mage\(^3\) and has the power to order and control his environment. Unlike regular, mortal man, Prospero has the fantastic ability to control his world, the secondary world Shakespeare has woven, and to texture everything within it. In this unique space, Prospero does not have to make a distinction between the secondary world and the primary as his ancestor, Shakespeare, does. For Prospero there is no difference between his art – the magic – and the primary world of experience. The audience of The Tempest must recognize this, if Shakespeare's space is to affect cultural change and reconciliation.

As stated, England, during the time of The Tempest, was in a state of flux. The population was booming, the definition of wealth was being rewritten around a capitalist perspective, and this affected the people's morals, values, and sensibilities. Shakespeare was acutely aware of the shift in the culture, and he infused his drama with reflections of the degradation in his world to bring about cultural change.
The criticism of *The Tempest* is multi-layered and very diverse with numerous schemes for the interpretation of the play. Virgil Whitaker argues that Shakespeare is revealing his increased interest in philosophic ideas, especially in the political arena. Whitaker also argues that Shakespeare is concerned with a theological interpretation of life embedded within the Christian heritage. James Phillips highlights five concepts that critics often seek to argue. One of these is the significance of Christian concepts of ethical and political morality" (147). Phillips makes us aware of *The Tempest* as autobiography in nature, communicating Shakespeare's view of his own art. Still, other critics view the play as a thesis on colonialism in the New World. Renaissance ideas about white and black magic as well as neoplatonic doctrine also characterize a great deal of *Tempest* criticism. Frank Kermode warns in his introduction to the Arden text of the play that the seduction to allegorize Shakespeare is strong but should be resisted (301). Theodore Spencer acknowledges that *The Tempest* is "a play with so many layers of meaning that no single interpretation can do it justice" (148). I further the view of Spencer by acknowledging the multilayered work of Shakespeare, and I accept the various reasoned criticisms on the basis of space. I contend that it is
precisely this polyvalent nature of the play that creates its value as a cultural tool of change. Shakespeare's texturing of the real world with the fantastic world births a powerful cultural space.

Shakespeare's manipulations are a series of exalted gestures, part of a symbolic package that points toward a grand, coherent, or transcendent completion of Shakespeare's highest art. It is not possible to read the play as just a play without meanings of various symbolic kinds. I contend, then, to look at the play as if it is experimental, just as the secondary world Shakespeare has created in the play is experimental. Shakespeare is experimenting with the very premises that lead audiences to expect poetic justice, symbolic neatness, and resolved endings for Renaissance plays. Indeed, he is evincing the limits of the three expectations.

Probably more than any of Shakespeare's other plays, The Tempest has been read as a kind of cipher to contemporary biographical, political, or religious events, quite beside the theories of more general symbolic construction identified already. It is not my intent to sort these theories out or to argue a new theory; however, my objective is to note that this diversity of criticism must mean something. I do not subscribe to the argument that
there are some ideas to which the variety can be subordinated — that would be settling for place; moreover, the spatial reading reflects and depends upon themes connected with the multiplicity and possibly the deliberate inconclusiveness of the plays various interpretations. By incorporating space to evaluate these many interpretations, it can be consistently inferred that the play, which occasions such riches, must itself be rich and strange. Both the richness and strangeness are functions of Shakespeare's experiment and creation of space.

**The Threads of Historicity and the Ancestor**

The threads of historicity and the ancestor are present and functioning in *The Tempest*. James Phillips identifies the Renaissance idea of man. The three parts of the soul delineate this concept: rational, sensitive, vegetative. The vegetative soul is the base, in a sense comparable to Freud's id. The vegetative soul is about keeping the physical body alive and functioning. Tasks such as securing food, shelter, and survival needs belong to this soul. Phillips writes that "the vegetative soul keeps the organism running" (149). The sensitive soul is the home of data collection or stimuli response. This soul accumulates information from the outside world and, by using common sense, judges whether the data is painful or
pleasurable, good or bad. Phillips supports this when he writes "the imagination...forms the data into images or transforms them by its creative ability, then evaluates them...and with the memory it retains the data for future use" (149). Finally, the rational soul takes over and evaluates the data using reason as opposed to common sense. Its job is to judge what is true and what is false, and make decisions based on logic and reason, "above all distinguishing between good and bad" (149). As long as the three souls work in concert with one another, man should attain his highest level of being. Phillips writes, "when these three sub-souls or powers operate together in the way God originally designed them to operate, man lives virtuously and knows true happiness in this world" (149). However, as in concepts dealing with an idea of man, there is a yin and yang effect. Phillips elucidates this when he writes, "unfortunately, however, man's tripartite soul does not always function in the way that God intended. As a result of the Fall, man's life and happiness are constantly threatened by a persistent tendency in the soul to short-circuit itself" (149). When one soul does not carry out its function or a soul is positioned in a place, not allowed to complete its function, the breakdown of the virtuous and happy man is lost.
By applying the concept of the Renaissance idea of man to *The Tempest*, specifically examining Caliban, Ariel, and Prospero, a direct correlation becomes apparent. Donald Stauffer contends that Caliban is "instinct and passion", Ariel reflects "imagination," and Prospero presents "noble reason" (304-5).

Caliban is consistently a favorite among *Tempest* readers and critics. As with the diverse renderings of the play, so too does Caliban have numerous critical interpretations. He has been described as the impetus for the colonial interpretations, "a creature all earth," and eighteenth century critics greatly admired him - calling him a marvelous effort of the imagination. (Harrison 1473) John E. Hankins argues that he is Aristotle's "bestial man", since he embodies the characteristics of the sensible soul but not those of the intellectual. However, Phillips counters, "If we regard only the history, the appearance, and the drunken, conspiratorial character of Caliban, each of [the bestial man] interpretations appears plausible. But when one regards the function of Caliban on the island and his relationship to Prospero, his activities are remarkably like those attributed "to the vegetative" (150).

Caliban tells the audience of his many chores that define him as the vegetative soul of the tripartite. He
was king of the island until Prospero's arrival, so he is quite familiar and more knowledgeable about what is there than anyone. This falls in line with his housekeeping chores. The first evidence of Caliban's role on the island comes from Prospero.

Pro. But, as 'tis
We cannot miss him. He does make our fire,
Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices
That profit us. (I.ii. 310-13)

In this passage, the audience ascertains Caliban's role to Prospero and Miranda. Once Caliban is presented, however, the audience learns more background information that supports Caliban's definition as the vegetative soul.

Cal. I must eat my dinner
This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother
Which thou takest from me. When thou comest first
Thou strokedst me, and madest much of me, wouldst give me
Water with berries in't. And teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night. And then I loved thee,
And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle,
The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and Fertile.
Cursèd be that I did so! All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have,
(I.ii. 330-41)

One could argue that Caliban was duped into this arrangement, and because of Prospero's magic, he must sustain his servitude; however, Caliban's subservient role is one that is ingrained in him. This is proven once the
shipwreck has occurred, and all the crew has been
separated. Upon the meeting of Caliban, Stephano, and
Trinculo, we understand the vegetative soul in Caliban.
Caliban believes the two drunken fools to be great men.
Trying to enlist the two idiots in deposing of Prospero, he
entreats them,

Cal. I'll show thee the best springs, I'll pluck
Thee berries,
I'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough.
A plague upon the tyrant that I serve!
I'll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee,
Thou wondrous man.
Trin. A most ridiculous monster, to make a wonder
of a poor drunkard!
Cal. I prithee let me bring thee where crabs
grow.
And I with my long nails will dig thee pignuts,
Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how
To snare the nimble marmoset. I'll bring thee
To clustering filberts, and sometimes I'll get
Thee
Young scamels from the rock. (II.ii. 162-76)

Caliban catalogs the care taking duties that he has in the
past performed for Prospero and is willing to, in the
future, provide for Stephano. One last characteristic of
the vegetative soul is that of reproduction. Phillips
draws attention to the failed rape of Miranda to show
Caliban's culpability. This is a logical view since we
have the intent professed by Caliban when he says.

Cal. Oh ho, oh ho! Would't had been done!
Thou didst prevent me. I had peopled else
This isle with Calibans. (I.ii.349-50)
The vegetative soul is alive and well in Caliban. Yet, he is only the first soul needed to complete the historicity of Shakespeare's space or Renaissance idea of man.

Ariel is a character of high interest. Ariel, the sensitive soul, possesses the powers of knowing or apprehending and moving or feeling. Ariel is Prospero's instrument of magic. Ariel carries out the magic of the play, albeit at Prospero's will. Indeed, Prospero neither sees nor hears much of the action that he is given credit for in the play. Ariel is the entity who instigates the meeting between Ferdinand and Miranda, keeps both sets of conspirators under watchful eye, foils their plots at the proper time, and produces and plays a part in the marriage masque. Ariel's successful completion of these duties illustrates the sensitive soul.

Ariel knows what is going on at all times. He is the one who reports the development of the plot and conjurings to Prospero, the mage. Probably the biggest task for Ariel was to carry out the tempest that caused the shipwreck and all subsequent action.

Pro. Hast thou, spirit, Performed to point the tempest that I bade thee? Ari. To every article. I boarded the King's ship. Now on the beak, Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin, I flamed amazement. Sometime I'd divide, And burn in many places; on the topmast,
The yards and the bowsprit, would I flame
Distinctly,
Then meet and join. Jove's lightnings, the
Precursors
O' the dreadful thunderclaps, more momentary
And sight-outrunning were not. The fire and
Cracks
Of sulphurous roaring the most mighty Neptune
Seem to besiege, and make his hold waves tremble-
Yea, his dread trident shake. (I.ii. 194-205)

Ariel's carrying out of the tempest sets a pattern for most of the magic undertaken in the play. Once Ariel has performed Prospero's wishes, then it is time for the spirit to report the results. When the three conspirators, Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo resolve to murder Prospero in his sleep, it is Ariel who confounds their plans. He reports back to Prospero; "This I will tell my master" (III.ii 124).

Ariel's movement is a staple of the action of the play as well. Ariel is spirit, invisible at will, and can assume any shape. His movement is instantaneous, and it further recalls the imaginative faculty in the sensitive soul. Phillips reminds one that "this is the faculty which enables man's soul to achieve the remarkable feat of traveling outside the body to any point in time or space" (154).

Ari. All hail, great master! Grave sir, hail! I come
To answer thy best pleasure, be't to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
On the curled clouds, to thy strong bidding task
Ariel and all his quality. (I.ii. 189-93)

Ariel performs the task of knowing and movement, and he
insures that the information is passed on to Prospero for
rational analysis.

Prospero represents the third soul of the historicity
of Shakespeare's space. The third soul, or the rational
soul, is characterized by reason or wit and the will. This
soul is sustained by the vegetative and served by the
sensitive, which are the roles fulfilled by Caliban and
Ariel, respectively. It is Prospero's challenge to live up
to the Renaissance idea of man and be a virtuous and happy
man. It is not such a simple task, since the premise from
the outset of the play was revenge by Prospero for those
who usurped his dukedom. However, revenge cannot be
realized if Prospero is to be happy and virtuous in the
final outcome, so Prospero never realizes his revenge
because he is catapulted to a level of awareness where he
was able to forgive and display his true humanity.

At the climax of act five, Prospero is faced with the
decision to not realize his true humanity and take revenge
on all who have wronged him or to realize his true humanity
and release notions of revenge. Since the three souls have
combined and they have worked according to God's plan,

Prospero chooses forgiveness.

Pro.       And mine shall. 
Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling 
Of their afflictions, and shall not myself, 
One of their kind, that relish all as sharply, 
Passion as they, be kindlier moved than thou art? 
Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the 
quick, 
Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury 
Do I take part. The rarer action is 
In virtue than in vengeance. They being penitent, 
The sole drift of my purpose doth extend 
Not a frown further. Go release them, Ariel. 
My charms I'll break, their senses I'll restore, 
And they shall be themselves. (V.i. 20-31)

He has reached his zenith of humanity; the ancestor has 
informed well. By allowing all souls to function and carry 
out their purpose, Prospero goes beyond and returns with a 
high level of understanding. His allowance for coalition 
has rewarded him. In Act five Miranda proclaims, upon 
seeing the entire crew of the shipwreck, "Oh, wonder! / How 
many goodly creatures are there here! / How beauteous 
mankind is! / Oh brave new world, That has such people 
in't!" (V.i. 181-3) Little does she realize that the most 
beauteous has been with her all the time.

**Threads of Myth**

Turning to the threads of myth in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, once again the task is to determine how these 
threads impact Shakespeare's cultural space. There is a
definite overlap in the Renaissance idea of man as far as historicity and ancestry, memory and metaphor, and text and culture with the ideas flowing through Shakespeare's fantastic space. I argue that Shakespeare's space exercises myth, particularly the idea of transcending man's baseness and achieving a higher quality of humanity. I further argue that his creation of space, both fantastic and real, allows this process to have a voice.

As was called attention to earlier, Montaigne's concept of primitivism permeates an overwhelming amount of Tempest criticism. His ideas and comparable ones were referred to as Utopian literature. The desire by Europeans was to ascend to an ideal society, a utopia. I contend that Shakespeare did not subscribe to the idea of a utopian society, but he did allow that the individual could effect great change by bettering self. Herein lies the great debate. How was this, from Shakespeare's perspective, to be accomplished? Dean Ebner contends "utopian literature...sprang up in the Renaissance with the hope that the reason of man could find the conditions necessary for the establishment of a new social order" (165). The Renaissance myths for accomplishing these goals sprang from texts such as the Biblical Eden, The Golden Age as penned by Ovid, Hesiod's Age of Heroes, and Plato's Republic.
From these, Ebner explains that the Renaissance writers forged their own renderings of utopia such as Francesco Patrizi's *The Happy City*, a recasting of Plato's ideas and *Utopia* by Sir Thomas Moore. Ebner furthers this argument by penning, "the byword for a simple existence apart from the corruption of civilization, could be found everywhere in the drama, poetry, and prose romances of the period" (165).

When Shakespeare undertook to create his fantastic space, the secondary world in *The Tempest*, the result becomes the entire island as myth incarnate. Shakespeare weaved a set of myths that went into the development of Prospero's island. Many critics have sought to center these myths with New World references. What I deem most important is that Shakespeare wove all these myths together to realize a new and better individual self. In effect, he has created what Said would term "a travel story." Ebner catalogs the tradition of idealizing the New World. "[It began] with Vespucci, who was certain that the Terrestrial Paradise of medieval theology was to be found in [New Worlds]," and "Peter Martyr gave a picture of the primitive innocence of the West Indian natives." Further "John Davies reported the natives discovered toward the North Pole as a people who 'have wonderful excellency and an exceeding
prerogative above all nations of the earth.'" And finally from Richard Hakluyt, "we found the people most gentle, loving, and faithful, voide of all guile and treason, and such as live after the manner of the Golden Age" (165-6). These and others like them would have been the impetus for the virtuous primitive, and the wondrous intrigue with the New World. However, Shakespeare was just as likely to have read or been familiar with the contradicting reports and views of primitive man.

Explorers such as Captain John Smith described at length the "'most craftie contrived and bloody treasons' of the American Indians" (167). Ebner makes us aware of primitive accounts that were "diametrically opposed to that advanced by Montaigne and the entire 'noble savage' school. The argument is now directed to how Shakespeare reconciled these conflicting accounts. Ebner argues that the later accounts "tended to confirm what Shakespeare already knew about the nature of man" (167). This is what Shakespeare depicts in The Tempest. The best illustration of this is seen in Caliban. Once loved and cherished by Prospero, he now is nothing more than a slave to Prospero's needs because of his attempted rape of Miranda.

Pro. Thou most lying slave, Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have used thee,
Filth as thou art, with human care, and lodged
Thee
In mine own cell till thou didst seek to violate
The honor of my child. (I.ii. 344-46)

He plagues Caliban with tortures – bee stings, pinches, hallucinations, etc. – Caliban's rebellion does not recall Montaigne's "noble savage" imagery. Quite the opposite, Caliban seems to be so "depraved that he is immune to any type of moral education" (Ebner 163).

Pro. Abhorrèd slave,
Which any print of goodness will not take,
Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each Hour
One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes With words that made them known. But thy vile race,
Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good Natures Could not abide to be with. Therefore wast thou Deservedly confined into this rock,
Who hadst deserved more than a prison.
(I.ii. 351-62)

Ebner further contends "there could be noble and evil men in both primitive and civilized societies; therefore, a return to primitive surroundings or an association with primitive men was not the answer to the evil within the race" (167). With this view, Shakespeare was left with no recourse but to look elsewhere, other than primitivism, for a remedy for cultural degradation. I contend that the search landed him with the individual self. Evil men
effectively prevent the establishment of an ideal political state. Ebner argues that Christian virtues were the appropriate path for Shakespeare to choose. I argue that Christian virtues were a part of the solution, but other mythologies were also important in Shakespeare's space. Once again, I cite the multilayered nature of *The Tempest*, its vast collection of meanings and interpretations to support this stance.

Shakespeare uses the play to refute Montaigne's thesis on the primitive man. As argued earlier, Caliban does not embody what one would consider the characteristics of the noble savage. However, Shakespeare does not stop here. We are given Antonio and Sebastian, supposedly civilized men, plotting the murder of Alonzo, the king, and Gonzalo. Gonzalo is interesting himself for the mere fact that he, of all the shipwrecked, exhibits Montaigne's primitive man characteristics. The primitive environment, from the view of utopian literature, is supposed to purge the evil from corrupt civilized individuals. However, the primitive environment only offers opportunity for Antonio and Sebastian to heighten their evil.

Ant. A space whose every cubit
Seems to cry out, "How shall that Claribel
Measure us back to Naples? Keep in Tunis,
And let Sebastian wake." Say this were death
That now hath seized them - why, they were no

82
Worse
Than now they are. There be that can rule Naples
As well as he that sleeps, lords that can prate
As amply and unnecessarily
As this Gonzalo. I myself could make
A chough of as deep chat. Oh, that you bore
The mind that I do! What a sleep were this
For your advancement! Do you understand me?
Seb. Methinks I do.
Ant. And how does your content
Tender your good fortune?
Seb. I remember
You did supplant your brother Prospero.
Ant. True.
And look how well my garments sit upon me,
Much feater than before. My brother's servants
Were then my fellows, now they are my men.
Seb. But – for your conscience.
Ant. Aye, sir, where lies that? If twere a kibe,
'Twould put me to my slipper. But I feel not
This deity in my bosom. Twenty consciences,
That stand 'twixt me and Milan, candied be they,
And melt ere they molest!...
Seb. Thy case, dear friend,
Shall be my precedent. As thou got'st Milan,
I'll come by Naples. Draw thy sword. One stroke
Shall free thee from the tribute which thou
Payest,
And I the King shall love thee. (II.ii. 257-93)

This type of corruption is seen in all the scenes of
rebellion that occur in the play. What is important to
note is that they come from the civilized as well as the
primitive.

Utopia is not possible, but the individual's rise to
the idea of the Renaissance idea of man and Shakespeare's
space allow a constant striving toward utopia. By infusing
myths in a secondary, spatial world, Shakespeare detects
the fallacies and strengths of all the myths that are
voiced. Ebner writes, "there is more hope for man and his ideals than the series of rebellions would indicate" in *The Tempest*. He follows this with "if utopian perfection is not possible, even in primitive surroundings, at least some improvements in man's nature and the social order can be made" (171).

**Threads of Humor**

*Poetic comedy realizes and presents to us by means of fantasy. Fantasy is the natural instrument of comedy.*

Helen Gardner

"Since Aristotle we have been accustomed to think of comedy as drama concerned with the ridiculousness in human nature and ending happily; of tragedy as drama of man's nobility, ending unhappily" The psychological effects of comedy and tragedy are in opposition as well. "Human folly in comedy appeals primarily to the intellect, and human misfortune in tragedy to the emotions" (Sider 1). John Sider argues a traditional definition of comedy. However, he contends that to read Shakespeare's plays in this way does a disservice to the play. Sider contends that Shakespeare is able to skillfully weave both into his comedy, so he is able to handle serious material from a comic aspect. Indeed, Shakespeare is employing an aspect of the comic division identified by Levine, "the economy of laughter" (320).
The humor of The Tempest is derived from high and low comedy; although, the same subject matter is treated in the high comedy and the low comedy. Shakespeare's play, in effect, makes the term "comic relief" a misnomer. Much of the humor is derived through the fantastic that Shakespeare creates in his secondary world. Kenneth Semon argues this when he writes that "wonder, in The Tempest, usually means 'amazement'; the characters are amazed at the fantastic events caused by Prospero's magic" (27).

Shakespeare has given control of the fantastic world to Prospero who controls everyone's sense of reality. The first issue of the play and the one, which determines all else, is the storm. Miranda shows amazement at the severity of the storm until her fears are calmed by Prospero's assurance that no one is injured. Once the shipwreck has occurred, then there are constant scenes of amazement throughout the play. Prospero's magic amazes all. Ferdinand is the first of the shipwrecked to be brought to Prospero. Semon argues, "the success of Prospero's art is manifest in Ferdinand's disorientation" (34).

Pro. Come on, obey.
Thy nerves are in their infancy again,
And have no rigor in them.
Fer. So they are.
My spirits, as in a dream, are all bound up.
My father's loss, the weakness which I feel,  
The wreck of all my friends, nor this man's threats,  
To whom I am subdued, are but light to me  
Might I but through my prison once a day  
Behold this maid. All corners else o' th' earth  
Let liberty make use of, space enough  
Have I in such a prison. (II.i. 482-91)

Ferdinand's wonder at what he has just been subjected causes an amazement in him that makes him unsure of anything but being able to see Miranda.

Amazement and wonder also work with the low comedy. Caliban's meeting of Trinculo and Stephano illustrates the fool's amazement.

Trin. What Have we here? A man or a fish? Dead or alive? A fish – he smells like a fish, a very ancient And fish-like smell, a kind of not of the newest Poor John. A Strange fish!

The hatching of the plot to usurp Prospero provides a great deal of comedy, wonder, and amazement. If this were one of Shakespeare's tragedies, the audience might shiver to think of the bumbling trio's fate. However, in the comic mode of The Tempest they are handled lightly and forgiven.

Cal. Why, as I told thee, 'tis a custom with him I' th' afternoon to sleep. There thou mayst brain him, Having fist seized his books, or with a log Batter his skull, or paunch him with a stake, Or cut his weasand with thy knife. Remember First to possess his books, (III.ii. 96-100)
Only in a comedy would such rebellion be met with no punishment. Instead, the plot is foiled, and the three are undeniably revealed as the idiots of the play.

Semon also calls attention to the issue of freedom, as it is manifest throughout the play. He also illustrates how freedom leads to very amusing scenes from the play. He highlights the roles that freedom plays. Ferdinand is not free to marry Miranda until he has proven himself by "remove some thousands of these logs, and pile them up" (III.i. 10). The shipwrecked noblemen are not allowed to leave the island until they have been subjected to Prospero's magic and returned his dukedom. Caliban views Stephano and Trinculo as saviors that will support his desire to be free from Prospero. Ariel is intent on completing Prospero's wishes so that he might be free. When Ariel reminds Prospero of the promise to free him once his tasks were completed, Prospero chastises Ariel. Semon notes that "the scene is rather amusing and suggests that a playful relationship exists between Prospero and his 'brave spirit'" (36-7).

Pro. Dost thou forget
From what a torment I did free thee?
Ari. No.
Pro. Thou dost, and think'st it much to tread the Ooze
Of the salt deep,
To run upon the sharp wind of the North,
To do me business in the veins o' the earth
When it is baked with frost.
Ari. I do not, sir.
Pro. Thou liest, malignant thing! Hast thou forgot
The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy
Was grown into a hoop? Hast thou forgot her?
Ari. No, sir
Pro. Thou hast. Where was she born?
Speak, tell me.
Ari. Sir, in Argier.
Pro. Oh, was she so? I must
Once in a month recount what thou hast been,
Which thou forget'st. (I.ii. 250-63)

Prospero continues on, relating the story of his rescuing
Ariel from Sycorax. Ariel eventually provides the desired answers to Prospero's question, probably in attempt to end the lecture. In this scene we have the comic construction of the control or straight man with his comic, laugh-a-minute sidekick.

By creating a fantasy world in The Tempest, Shakespeare provides us with a unique perspective from which to view the central unsolvable problems that exist outside of the controlled world of imitation. The fantasy world of the play is carefully woven so that the amazing and wondrous events that occur in that secondary world are verisimilar within their own context; the possibilities for action are increased because verisimilitude is not limited by what is real in the primary world. The worldly space of the play functions as it should. Ultimately, however,
fantasy, like the way in which we perceive the primary world, depends on a series of logical propositions and thus describes metaphorically the way things are. In an unparallel way, Shakespeare's fantasy provides a very diverse commentary on the primary world; through Shakespeare's characters, we are invited to review what we know. Shakespeare takes us outside of ourselves, by traveling from the real to the fantastic, so that we may return with a better understanding of what we know, once we perceive the secondary world. Like Prospero, who seemed to know all, we are left with a strong impression that the ability to perceive the limits of our own world only exposes us to the mystery that lies outside of that world, and this exercise expands us as individuals.

The Tempest renders still another variant on the form of good and evil fortune that personifies serious comedy. The singular tranquility of the play ensues from Prospero's escalation to a high ideal of man. Sider argues, "we observe a man righting old injuries, in complete control not only of the situation but of himself. For his benign firmness makes the subduing of his enemies a pleasant thing" (10). Shakespeare's serious comedies are exceptional because they weave together so well the roles of tragedy and light comedy. The audience is not taken
beyond tragedy, but *The Tempest* depicts mankind in a fashion that justifies a more meaningful optimism than is implied in either light comedy or in tragedy. The idea of the individual attaining true happiness in spite of adversity exemplifies the greatest hope that the audience can desire.

Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare both create a new space from which they call attention to their perceived wrongs in English society such as the importance placed on material possession, greed, and the corrupting of the individual. Using his ancestral sources, ancient mythology, the Commedia dell'Arte, classical traditions, medieval morality plays, the Interlude, and the beast fable, Ben Jonson developed a drama that challenged avarice and immorality and catalyzed a move toward a collaboration of the publicke riot and new society. Shakespeare's space relied upon the fantastic. Weaving spiritual history, the ancestor, myth, and humor, he attempts to arrest the moral degradation and corruption of the individual that stemmed from excessive materialism, which he too understood was becoming commonplace in England.
Chapter 3: The African American Weavers of Space

Post civil war African American literature reflects a disposition similar to that I examined in Shakespeare and Jonson’s drama. Where Jonson and Shakespeare relied on spiritual history, the ancestor, myth, and humor, Charles Chestnutt and Zora Neal Hurston incorporate the ancestor, spiritual history, myth, and humor to create an egalitarian space suited for America. Through Chestnutt, the reasoning for an egalitarian post Civil war culture is explored. First, the development of Chesnutt’s space is explored. Secondly, critics’s arguments are analyzed to explicate Chesnutt’s Conjurin’ Space, and finally, the conjure tales are analyzed using the previously mentioned threads of culture. Zora Neale Hurston’s space is marked by its universal quality. Initially, the basis and development of her space is explored. Next, critics are analyzed to define Hurston’s unique space, and finally, the restrictions that seemed to follow Hurston from childhood to adulthood are viewed as a means to understand how they impacted her life and literature.

The Weaver Chesnutt

Charles Waddell Chesnutt was born in Ohio, on 20 June 1858, the son of free blacks who descended from a group
called old order free Negroes. His parents had emigrated from Fayetteville, N.C. to Cleveland, Ohio in the late 1850s to escape the Civil War. When Charles was eight years old, his parents returned to Fayetteville, where Charles worked part-time in the struggling family grocery store and attended the Howard school founded by the Freedmen's Bureau and named after General O.O. Howard, leader of the freedmen's bureau, who later was a founder and head of Howard University.

The Howard school was very progressive and well-run. It exemplified excellence in education, and it was well funded by the Peabody foundation. Richard Brodhead illustrates why this union was so beneficial for the Howard school. "Rather than dribbling its funds away in small gifts to many schools of marginal strength, The Peabody Fund proposed to support a few schools that were 'well-regulated' on the idea that they could set an example for others in the state" (7). And set an example, they did. The Howard school fit the bill for excellence, so they were awarded one third of all monies awarded to black schools by the Peabody Fund statewide. The Howard school plays a prominent role in the makeup of Charles Chesnutt as intimated in his journals. Brodhead contends, "The Howard School was the most decisive fact of Charles Chesnutt's
early life. It would scarcely be possible to overstate the extent to which the character recorded in [Chesnutt's] journal is a creature of his school" (8).

In 1872, by the time Chesnutt's journal begins, his academic achievements and financial necessity led him to begin a teaching career in Charlotte, N.C. at the other heavily funded Peabody school. Chesnutt teaches in South Carolina where he records that he was confronted with distrust and quibbling over his monthly salary. He returned to Fayetteville in 1877, married a year later, and by 1880 had become principal of the Fayetteville State Normal School for Negroes (one of only two state Normal schools, the other being University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill). Despite his successes, he longed for broader opportunities and a chance to develop the literary skills that by 1880 led him toward an author's life. In 1883 he moved his family to Cleveland. There he passed the state bar examination and established his own court reporting firm. Financially prosperous and prominent in civic affairs, he resided in Cleveland for the remainder of his life; however, it was those years spent in North Carolina that spurred the literature for which he is celebrated.
The Basis of Weaver Chesnutt's Space

My grandmother, Hattie Clark, lived from 1896 to 1998 in basically the same rural area of North Carolina all her life. I remember as a child the stories my grandmother would tell about ghosts, magic, spirits, and witches. The same tales had been told to my mother and her sisters as well. My grandmother was a virtual reference of what I now know as conjuration or conjures tales. Being a child, the value of these stories escaped me, as they were just a form of oral entertainment to me at that time. It wasn't until I enrolled in a folklore course during my Master's study that I started to realize and connect a deeper meaning to the tales that my grandmother had related to me during my childhood. The fantastic nature of the tale's events, the magic or conjure qualities, kept my cousins and I in deep suspense, and they also created cultural myths. The stories took place in our home place, in and around the north and west areas of Martin County, so there was a familiar quality related to the tales. Many of the places that were incorporated into the tales were still there or were easily located.

One story in particular dealt with a man who had married a witch, unbeknownst to him. Well, as was the custom of a witch, she would leave her skin at night and
scour the area for horses, mules, and individuals to ride. Throughout the course of time, the man became suspicious of certain things that just did not seem normal. He noticed a distinct difference in his sleeping patterns, and some mornings, he would vaguely remember the strangest dreams of his wife leaving the house in the middle of the night. So, the husband consulted a root doctor to see if someone was working roots on him. The root doctor commenced to working her roots and informed him that his wife was a witch and that she was drugging him and getting out of her skin. The husband was in shock, and he couldn't live with a witch, so he asked the root doctor what he should do. She gave him an oil to spread on his eyes which would keep his wife from putting him to sleep for the night, and she told him the next time his wife got out of her skin to pretend he was still asleep, and once she left, he should sprinkle salt into her skin. The husband abided by the root doctor's advice. The next night the wife checked her husband to make sure he was asleep and got out of her skin to go out riding. Once she left, the husband sprinkled salt in her skin. Upon returning from her night's "haunting," the witch tried to get back in her skin, but it would burn her to no end, and she would hope back out exclaiming "skinny, skinny don't you know me, skinny, skinny don't you know me, skinny don't you know me, skinny don't you know me, skin..."
skinny, skinny don't you know me?" Well, after her
repeated attempts at getting in her skin and having to jump
back out, she was burned so bad that she knew she was in
serious trouble. The problem was the sun was about to come
up, and she could not survive if she were not in her skin.
In the end she was no more.

When I came across Charles Chesnutt's *The Conjure
Woman*, I experienced my grandmother's oral tradition all
over again. In his writings were the exact same elements
of humor, myth, and spiritual history; however, now I was
better equipped to handle the deeper meaning associated
with the entertaining conjure tale. The tales were not a
part of the culture simply for entertainment, but they were
to serve a dual purpose. They presented rules, morals, and
ways of knowing for the culture in which they were
perpetuated. These tales and their tellers recall the
construction of the griot. Houston Baker posits upon
writing about Zora Neale Hurston that "rather than an
engaging lay narrator, she is a spiritual griot seeking her
authority in doctrines and practices that have ancient
spiritual roots" (94). I contend that by incorporating
spiritual history in the progression of culture, such
storytellers as my grandmother assume the role, in part, of
a griot. Further, Chesnutt's purpose in this role was not
only to inform but also to change cultural mores that he viewed as restrictive and placed Blacks in a marginalized position, a place.

Charles W. Chesnutt’s *The Conjure Woman* begins with the interaction between a Northern white male, John, and Julius McAdoo, the ex-plantation slave. In the collection, Julius recounts stories that he says he heard or experienced during the antebellum era. The audience for Julius's stories is John, who is also the narrator of the story, and his wife, Annie. The stories have commanded many interpretations from critics; however, the most surface interpretation, that I liken to the entertainment quality that I attributed to my grandmother's stories as a child, is the telling of the tales as an attempt by Julius, and in most cases his achievement, to acquire material possessions by spinning his trickster tales. In a sense this interpretation of the tales does illustrate Julius's trickster characteristics which I acknowledge, but on another level, they disallow the trickster qualities that I argue exist in Chesnutt as author of the text, for I contend that Chesnutt develops a dual nature with just about every aspect of this work from the narrators to the function of the work. Julius is not the only trickster at
work in the *Conjure Woman*; Chesnutt fulfills this role in his attempt to affect cultural change.

**The Criticism of Conjurin' Space**

Henry B. Wonham in his article, "Plenty Of Room For us All? Participation And Prejudice In Charles Chesnutt's Dialect Tales" argues that we should read *The Conjure Woman* as a question posed by Chesnutt. With the arrival of John and Annie from the North, we are to, through Julius's tales, ponder the question of a new form of Black disenfranchisement. Wonham asks, "does John's arrival from the North after Reconstruction signify a return to white domination and black disfranchisement, a new form of slavery for the post-war era, or will blacks retain some participatory authority on John's new Southern plantation?"(131). On the other hand, Jeffrey Meyers promotes an ecological reading of *The Conjure Woman*. Meyers calls for us to look not only at a type of exploitation of the native people (from the perspective of North and South and from the perspective of those inhabitants who experienced antebellum life in Cumberland and Robeson Counties) but an exploitation of land that has experienced war and subsequent neglect as a result of war. Meyers writes, "Charles W. Chesnutt's *The Conjure Woman* (1899) illustrates how the construction of the 'Other' in
the dominant American culture is as injurious to landscape
as it is to groups of people." (Myers 3)  Meyer's
interpretation deals not only with economics as in
reference to individuals but also in connection with the
land.  Meyers supports this point further:

The Conjure Woman is not only a work that
deconstructs the nostalgic myths of the
antebellum South and attacks the turn-of-the-
century racial caste system. The work is also a
call for the conservation of undeveloped land and
wildlife in the South, at a time when the region
was beginning an acute phase of natural resource
exploitation, despite the fact that such calls
were preserving wild lands elsewhere in the
United States.  (Myers 3-4)

Still others battle over interpretations based on
Chesnutt's views of African Americans and their place in
American culture.  Chesnutt's admirers and detractors have
traditionally disagreed over whether to regard the Uncle
Julius stories as an expression of politically contemptible
acquiescence or of creative subversion. The more derogatory
conviction of Chesnutt as a black parrot for white racist
ideologies prevailed among some radically minded critics of
the 1960s, such as Amiri Baraka, who identified Chesnutt
with an assimilationist black middle-class that "wanted no
subculture, nothing that could connect them with the poor
black man or the slave"(2).  More recently, critics like
Houston Baker and Craig Werner have effectively revised
this image by noting Chesnutt's role as a subversive voice working quietly to dismantle the plantation tradition from within (3). Of course, this study's perspective is one of cultural space creation; therefore, the oppositional nature of these arguments, although I think defended nicely, settle for place. Joseph Church in his argument "In Black and White: The Reader's Part in Chesnutt's "Gray Wolf's Ha'nt" elicits an idea conducive with space. Church compares Uncle Julius to Uncle Remus of the Joel Chandler Harris fables. Church contends that Chesnutt took note of the popularity with which Harris's tales were received. The idea of the former slave imparting life experience, wisdom, to a little Caucasian boy became very popular. Chesnutt duplicates this form with some important changes. Instead of a third narrator, Chesnutt makes the listeners of the tales the narrators. By doing this, an account and explication of the two narrators is given, so the audience learns about John and Annie as much as they are exposed to the tales' message. Church posits that this is important because John and Annie reflect The Conjure Woman's intended audience. Another change that Chesnutt incorporated was changing the grandfatherly Uncle Remus into the shrewd Uncle Julius and changing the stories from beast fables to conjure tales. Church contends that this
allows Julius to challenge the views of his listeners rather than to validate them. Church writes, "Uncle Remus addresses but does not question his audience's character: Remus sees the boy's need for maturational wisdom, and responds with appropriate tales, just as Harris sees and satisfies, but does not question, his readers' desire for romantic escape." (121) On the other hand, Chesnutt desires to subvert that end. Julius addresses his listeners' need to know the unromantic truth about slavery and their own part in racial caste. Unlike Uncle Remus, "with his tractable boy," Julius must contend with John, "an amicable but nonetheless patronizing, at times, imperious man who, because of his legal and social power, threatens always, however unconsciously, to subject everyone and everything to his own ends." (121). Church allows then that Chesnutt's Julius uses his conjure tales in part to protect his and his people's interests by challenging the auditor and, it is hoped, to bring him to self-knowledge and the possibility of self-transformation. To do so, Julius must interpret John's (as well as Annie's) character, both its conscious and unconscious elements, and devise stories that disclose and counteract the man's many assumptions. (121)

By employing the conjure tales to critic the intended audience's views and assumptions, "Julius and, by extension, Chesnutt seek to obtain an 'elevation of the
whites' by bringing them to an awareness of not only antebellum racial oppression and its postbellum legacy but also their own perhaps unconscious part in perpetuating caste" (Church 121). Ideally, Chesnutt's interpretive conjure tales impose upon John, and the dominant culture that he represents, the hope that the tales will work to expose and undo the dominant culture's underlying prejudices (121).

This argument frames a spatial attempt at cultural change woven heavily with the ancestor, myth, and double consciousness, and the creation of culture is achieved through the weavings of a trickster. I earlier alluded to the dual nature of Chesnutt's work. I identified Uncle Julius as a trickster as well as Chesnutt. It is my contention that this is how Chesnutt should be interpreted, as a trickster. He incorporates a nostalgic, romantic nature of slavery to subvert the very idea. Chesnutt turns the idea back on itself. Paul Petrie supports this argument when he writes, "The tales collected in The Conjure Woman seek to win a white audience to a comprehensive transfiguration of its relationship to African American people and culture, redeploying the generic conventions of white racist plantation-dialect fiction for racially progressive purposes" (183).
Therefore, we have two constructions of the trickster – one working within the tale while the other oversees the tale.

Paul Petrie argues in his article "Charles W. Chesnutt, The Conjure Woman, and The Racial Limits of Literary Mediation" that "as thoroughly as that of any other figure in American literature, Charles W. Chesnutt's writing career proceeded from a prior commitment to a particular set of social and political goals" (183). Chesnutt's body of fiction from his first conjure tale in 1887 to the final novel of his most successful writing era in 1905 – *The Colonel's Dream*, consistently aspired to change the prevailing white cultural myths of race. His method to accomplish this task consisted of employing his fiction "as a tool against the intensifying post-Reconstruction trend toward civil re-enslavement of black freedmen and women" (183). Chesnutt's career in its numerous and various forms, from teacher to lawyer, illustrates the lengths of his dedication to progressive racial reform and thus cultural reform. Chesnutt writes of his philosophy:

The object of my writings would be not so much the elevation of the colored people as the elevation of the whites,--for I consider the unjust spirit of caste which is so insidious as to pervade a whole nation, and so powerful as to subject a whole race and all connected with it to scorn and social ostracism--I consider this a
barrier to the moral progress of the American people: and I would be one of the first to head a determined, organized crusade against it. (139-40)

**The Conjure Tales and Definitions of Space**

"The Goophered Grapevine" is perhaps the most anthologized of *The Conjure Woman* tales. In the beginning of the tale occurs the initial meeting of the book's main characters. We hear from John, the narrator, at the outset explaining the reason he and Anne, his wife, are relocating to the South. Due to Ann's health issues as well as John's desire to try his hand at grape farming, they settle on the sand hills of North Carolina, Patesville - the place of the head, mind, or brain.

In "The Goophered Grapevine" John is synonymous with place. His place is that of a petty capitalist. In "The Goophered Grapevine" as in all the tales, John is only able to understand Julius's stories from an economic perspective, the place in which John is centered. He misses totally the aspect of Henry's exploitation as well as the exploitation of the vineyards too. The only thing that makes the story of any consequence to John is his belief that Julius's motives stemmed from a possible loss of entrepreneurial revenue. John tells the reader "I found, when I bought the vineyard, that Uncle Julius had occupied a cabin on the place for many years, and derived a
respectable income from the product of the neglected grapes. This, doubtless, accounted for his advice to me not to buy the vineyard" (34-5). Annie, on the other hand, senses a deeper meaning of what Julius is conjuring in his tale. She poses the question to Julius, "Is that story true?" (33) She is not asking whether the fantastic has occurred (Henry's becoming one with the grape vine and the two interlinked fates ending in death) as John thinks, but she, from a perspective of sympathy in reaction to man's inhumanity to man acted upon Henry, realizes the horror of Henry's plight and subsequently, a romantic notion of slavery has been destroyed. Petrie bolsters this when he writes

Her culture and education preclude the sort of magical thinking that would lend credence to a literal belief in "conjure." Rather, Annie understands figuratively; the truth about which she inquires pertains to the deeper facts of human relationship under the slavery system. Annie's apprehension of that truth is achieved only via her sympathetic, emotional participation in the lives of the tales' characters—a set of readerly capacities totally lacking in John. (183)

On another level, Annie does not get the full import of Julius story either. Wonham argues,

Having suffered through successive periods of 'shiftless cultivation' and 'utter neglect' since the war, the vines twine 'themselves among the slender branches of the saplings which had sprung up among them,' presenting a vivid image of
horticultural--not to say cultural--blending and hybridization (32-33).

To further this argument "Grape culture is a trope for culture itself" in "The Goophered Grapevine," according to Eric Sundquist, who points out that Julius possesses a vested interest in this image of the New South as a luxuriant, uncultivated, racially and culturally diverse world of hybrid possibilities (6).

Our characters, then, hear Julius's tale on various levels. John, because he is centered in an economic place, determines only a rudimentary message, while Annie, being based in a more progressive space, ascertains the exploding of the nostalgic myths of slavery. However, neither one realizes the full import of Julius's message pertaining to a fluid, spatial, future culture.

Ponder the differing reactions of John and Annie to Julius's tale of "Po' Sandy." In this story Sandy is such a good slave that all the master's family wants him. This keeps him moving and working at the various plantations at the expense of his own personal happiness with Tenie; however, Tenie is a conjure woman, and after some discussion and thought, Sandy and Tenie decide that Tenie will turn Sandy into a tree so that he will not be subject to the master's will and can stay in one place. This works
fairly well until Mars Marrabo decides to build a new kitchen. As fate would have it, the tree that he chooses for this new construction is the conjured Sandy. The job proves surprisingly difficult for the two slaves assigned the task of cutting the tree down. It is as if the tree were resisting the process with magical powers; however, they eventually get the tree felled. The resistance is not over. It takes the pair more than half a day to transport the tree to the sawmill where it will be processed into the lumber for Mars Marrabo's new kitchen. Tenie, up until this day, had watched over Sandy by conjuring nature to protect Sandy from being hurt by nature and man; however, Tenie was also at the beck and call of the master, and she was sent to another plantation to nurse Mars Marrabo's daughter in law. This took her away from the security of helpless Sandy. When she returns and learns of Sandy's fate, Tenie rushes to the sawmill. As she tries to tell Sandy of her innocence, that it wasn't her fault, the men treat her as if she were out of her mind, and she is restrained, and the job is finished. Thus, the inconsiderate and cruel power of the master over the slave brings about the end of Tenie's and Sandy's love. At the conclusion of Julius's story, "Annie had listened to this gruesome narrative with strained attention."
'What a system it was,' she exclaimed... 'under which such things were possible.'

'What things?' I asked, in amazement. 'Are you seriously considering the possibility of a man's being turned into a tree?'

'Oh no,' she replied quickly, "not that"; and then she murmured absently, and with a dim look in her fine eyes, "Poor Tenie!" (60-1)

John's preoccupation with the practical is a limitation. It causes him to grasp only the fantastic, amusing story told as a rather shrewd contrivance to protect some economic or material interest of Julius and his family and friends. Annie's sympathies travel beyond the difficulties of believing in the conjuring aspects of the tales and point to the response Chesnutt hoped his larger reading audience would share — "What a system it was" (60).

"Mars Jeems's Nightmare" turns on an inversion of roles, which is a major tenet of comedy. The humorous nature of the story lies in Mars Jeems's construction of a system steeped in human degradation and denial of human social and psychological functions being turned back on him. He denies his slaves basic elements of human existence in favor of a totally utilitarian life. Julius recounts that

His niggers wuz bleedzd ter slabe fum daylight ter da'k, w'iles yuther folks's did n' hafter wuk 'cep'n' fum sun ter sun; en dey did n' git no mo' ter eat dan dey oughter, en dat de coa'ses kin'. Dey wa'n't 'lowed ter sing, ner dance, ner play de banjo w'en Mars Jeems wuz roun' de place; fer
Mars Jeems say he would n' hab no sech gwines-on, --said he bought his han's ter wouk, en not ter play, en w'en night come dey mus' sleep en res', so dey'd be ready ter git up soon in de mawnin' en go ter dey wuk fresh en strong. (71)

The story is prompted by the cruelty that seems to be a genetic trait in the McLean family. Mars Jeems McLean's grandson passes Annie, John, and Julius while they are waiting for the spring to be cleaned out. He is whipping his horse relentlessly, which prompts the trio to take note of the severe treatment he inflicts on his horse. This gives way to a story of the grandfather, Mars Jeems. The trouble starts when Mars Jeems is jilted by his love interest, Miss Libbie. She notes his cruelty to his slaves as the main reason for breaking off their courtship.

"But it pears dat Miss Libbie heared 'bout de gwines-on on Mars Jeems's plantation, en she des 'lowed she could n' trus' herse'f wid no sech a man; dat he mought git so useter 'busin' his niggers dat he'd mence ter 'buse his wife atter he got useter habbin' her roun' de house" (73).

This breakup only leads to more severe treatment of Mars Jeems's slaves, since he has more time to devote to them.

While Mars Jeems was "co'tin'" Miss Libbie, a romance sprang up on the plantation between Solomon and an unnamed female. Mars Jeems breakup with Miss Libbie signals the end of this romance, and Solomon is given fo'ty, and his "junesey" is shipped off to Robeson County. Solomon
approaches Aunt Peggy to see if her conjurin' can help his situation. Aunt Peggy conjures a potion that turns Mars Jeems into a black man, so now he is on the receiving end of his system of terror. Mars Jeems, the Noo Nigger, can't complete any task that he is given and has to be restrained from attacking Nick Johnson, the overseer Mars Jeems left in charge. He is beaten, starved, and punished in all manners, but he just doesn't complete the work. Finally, rather than destroying property, Nick Johnson hands the Noo Nigger back over to Mars Duncan McSwayne. Once the goopher is reversed, Mars Jeems fires his cruel overseer and affords his slaves more liberties than any other master. This prompts his reward of higher efficiency, yields, and money.

The interpretations of "Mars Jeems's Nightmare" can be problematic, as Wonham warns us. "On one hand, the story seems to provide a virulently racist apology for the enslavement of African Americans, in that Jeems—the white man in black skin—proves to be inherently masterful in defiance of tyranny, unlike his meek fellow slaves, who cower under Mr. Johnson's whip" (131). This reading assumes that Mars Jeems is in some way impervious to the severe treatment to which slaves are subjected. The second issue of "the story would seem to endorse widely accepted
assumptions about African-American docility and fitness for service, in contrast to the aggressive tendencies of the "Angry-Saxon race" (131). However, neither reading parallels Chesnutt's purpose in *The Conjure Woman*. Since John began the setup for this tale by prefacing the hiring and firing of Tom, Julius's nephew, because he was lazy and shiftless, it is evident, as has been the pattern in the conjure tales, that this incident figures into Chesnutt's message. Once again John only understands Julius's "trickstering" to get his inept nephew employment, but John does not comprehend Chesnutt's "trickstering," Tom presented in the same situation as Mars Jeems.

But Jeems, like Tom, is less obstinate than simply ignorant about how to inhabit a stereotype he has known heretofore only from the outside. His "laziness en impudence"--which explicitly recall Tom's "laziness," "carelessness," and "lack of responsibility" are the products of his unfitness for the servile role in which he has been cast, an unfitness based not on racial characteristics fixed in nature but on inadequate training in the Sambo act. (Wonham 131)

This illustrates the place that John is centered as opposed to the space where Julius wants to take him and subsequently, for Chesnutt, the book's audience. Mars Jeems had to travel in the beyond (due to Aunt Peggy's conjure) to progress to his next level of space within the text. Level is important here, as space comes in degrees.
John, however, still opts for his practical place while there is the implication that Annie continues to move toward space.

Turning to the tale of "Sis' Becky's Pickaninny" the audience is told that Annie's health has improved significantly since the move to North Carolina from Ohio, but as of late, Annie has suffered regresses and has become severely depressed. "Toward the end of our second year, however, her ailment took an unexpected turn for the worse. She became the victim of a settled melancholy, attended with vague forebodings of impending misfortune" (132).

John is at a loss to break his wife out of this state. He has tried several avenues to stimulate his wife back to good health. "I tried various expedients to cheer her up. I read novels to her. I had the hands on the place come up in the evening and serenade her with plantation songs. Friends came in sometimes and talked, and frequent letters from the North kept her in touch with her former home" (133). John has been warned by the doctor that, left in her current emotional state, Annie may have a serious relapse. "'You must keep up her spirits,' said our physician,.... 'This melancholy lowers her tone too much, tends to lessen her strength, and, if it continue too long may be fraught with grave consequences'" (133).
Julius appears and, after a brief exchange about the merits of carrying a lucky rabbit's foot, tells the story of Becky, a young slave woman traded for a racehorse by an enterprising master, who is an obsessive gambler. Becky is then forced to separate permanently from her infant son. Julius explains that when Becky and the boy fall into a severe depression as a result of their separation, Aunt Peggy, the conjure woman, uses her magic to induce the master to change his mind, enabling Becky to regain the boy and her health. John and Annie listen intently to the story, and by way of Julius's tale, Annie realizes the depth of suffering in the time of slavery, and she evidently recognizes something of herself in Becky and responds favorably to Julius's conjuring.

My wife had listened to this story with greater interest than she had manifested in any subject for several days. I had watched her furtively from time to time during the recital, and had observed the play of her countenance. It had expressed in turn sympathy, indignation, pity, and at the end lively satisfaction...My wife's condition took a turn for the better from this very day, and she was soon on the way to ultimate recovery. (158,160)

Unlike Annie, John fails to see how the tale relates to current circumstances, indeed, how it reflects him. Annie takes the story of Becky more seriously than John; she grasps the historical pathos and to some extent relates
past events to present circumstances. The ancestor begins to inform her, and Annie embodies the ancestry of Julius's cultural tale to her benefit. John, who simply views the tale as entertainment, is left without the psychological benefit manifested in the tale as well as the symbol of luck, the rabbit's foot.

"That is a very ingenious fairy tale, Julius," I said, "and we are much obliged to you." "Why, John!" said my wife severely, "the story bears the stamp of truth, if ever a story did." "Yes," I replied, "especially the humming-bird episode, and the mocking-bird digression, to say nothing of the doings of the hornet or sparrow." (159)

In "Sis' Becky," Chesnutt desired to illustrate the master-slave relationship, as Farnsworth argues, "in implicit rebuttal of the sentimental picture that had become current in the magazine fiction of the time" (xiii). It is through the illustration of the disregard for any familial ties between man and woman, mother and child that the idea of humans as chattel property conjures up repugnance on behalf of Annie. Through Annie's reaction, it is clear that Julius has accomplished this task. Not only does she realize the horrible precariousness of family during slavery, but she also accepts a piece of that culture in order to reinvent herself (acknowledging and accepting Julius's rabbit's foot). Annie has allowed travel stories from a different culture to enhance her cultural space.
Cynthia Lehman argues, "Chesnutt's purpose for writing was a means to lead a determined effort against the barriers of prejudice and to promote a human understanding for his characters in the hope that it would be a vehicle for better relations between black and white Americans" (275). According to the argument of Molefi Asante, In an Afrocentric conception of literature and orature, the critical method would be employed to determine to what degree the writer or speaker contributed to the unity of the symbols, the elimination of chaos, the making of peace among disparate views, and the creation of an opportunity for harmony and hence balance. (177-8)

Charles Chesnutt works support the argument of Lehman and Asante. The tales contained in The Conjure Woman exhibit Asante's idea of the critical method. The tales eliminate chaos by addressing a potentially hostile audience with romantic type entities that are not overtly aggressive but still are determined to send a message. Chesnutt has also sought to create a space for opportunity, harmony, and balance. Lehman determines Chesnutt's purpose as bringing together Blacks and Whites in an atmosphere of good relations. I argue that the idea should be taken a step further. Chesnutt wanted to create a new and dynamic culture. I don't think he saw either the Black or White culture as being sufficient. I contend that his ultimate
goal was to create an entirely new dynamic, fluid, culture that accepted all on equal terms. Chesnutt wrote as much in a letter to Walter Hines:

Race troubles would never cease until the Constitutional amendments were strictly observed, in the spirit in which they were meant, the color line entirely wiped out before the law, and equal justice and equal opportunity extended to every man in every relation of life. (114)

In *The Conjure Woman*, the illustrations of Chesnutt's philosophies are exercised. He has played the role of the trickster from within the text (Julius) as well as from without (author). He has constantly portrayed space on a textual level as well as a societal level. He has allowed the text and subsequently the audience to be informed by the ancestor, myths from black and white culture, and tropes of humor. Recalling the stories of my grandmother produces and informative view of a Southern, black, rural cultural life or way of knowing. Basically, it is one that is a progenitor to the one I exist in now; however, Chesnutt's purpose goes beyond just informing. Analyzing Chesnutt's stories produces the potential to form a new culture, or new way of knowing.
The Weaver Hurston

The Basis of Weaver Hurston's Space

In the small town of Notasulga, Alabama, Zora Neale Hurston was born on January 7, 1891. She was the fifth of eight children and one of the only two girls. After her birth, Hurston's family moved to the town of Eatonville, Florida. Eatonville was a newly established town founded in 1887, just a few years prior to the Hurston family's arrival. Upon hearing that the town consisted solely of African-Americans, Hurston's father, John Hurston, felt it provided the best opportunities to enable him to care for his large family. He soon acculturated himself to the place and took on several roles in the community. He became the local minister and was elected mayor for three consecutive terms, beginning in 1899. A very serious man, he was often at odds with his strong-willed daughter, Zora. John was a complete opposite to Hurston's mother, Lucy Ann Potts, in disposition, and it was from Lucy that Hurston seemed to acquire her adventurous nature and questioning spirit. While John was demanding meekness from his family, Lucy was always encouraging her children to "jump at de sun" (Boyd 27). Lucy philosophized that "we might not land on the sun, but at least we would get off the ground" (Boyd 27).
Hurston's mother, Lucy, died in 1904 when Hurston was reaching a critical stage of her adult development. During these years, Hurston's only real trouble came from relations with her father. Since the inspiration and support of her mother was removed and only the parent of seriousness and restrictions was left, tensions flared between the daughter and father. A foreshadowing of this stormy, restrictive relationship took place during Lucy's death. At Lucy's deathbed, Hurston tries to enact her mother's last wishes. Ironically, it is her father who physically restrains her.

Somebody reached for the clock, while Mrs. Mattie Clarke put her hand to the pillow to take it away. 'Don't!' I cried out. 'Don't take the pillow from under Mama's head! She said she didn't want it removed!' I made to stop Mrs. Mattie, but Papa pulled me away...Papa held me tight and the others frowned me down" (Dust 65-6).

The idea of being limited, restricted, and voiceless would play an important role in a significant amount of Hurston's literature.

No longer getting along with her father and because of the tension between Hurston and her stepmother and an argument that culminated in a violent confrontation, Hurston took to the road and began the journey that would eventually lead her to Harlem. However, Howard University
became the catalyst for her introduction to New York. Hurston became a member of The Stylus, the journal published by Howard's literary club. Her first short story publication in May of 1921, "John Redding Goes to Sea," caught the attention of writer and scholar Alain Locke, who would assist her in getting her short story published in Opportunity. Charles Johnson, then editor of Opportunity, admired "John Redding Goes to Sea," and wrote to Hurston, inviting her to submit more material to Opportunity" (Boyd 91). Hurston sent, "Drenched in Light," and it was published in the December 1924 issue of Opportunity. With Johnson's encouragement, Hurston packed and headed to New York. She reached the "Big Apple" with only $1.50 in cash and "no job, no friends and a lot of hope" (Marks 53). Hurston's arrival in Harlem marked the inception of her writing career. She came in contact with other writers such as Langston Hughes and Fannie Hurst. While in New York, Hurston became well known not only for her writing, but also for her outspokenness, her distinct way of dress, and her refusal to be ashamed of her culture. With her outgoing personality, Hurston became entrenched into the Harlem Renaissance landscape. Socializing with other celebrated personalities such as Carl Van Vechten, Countee Cullen, and Claude McKay, Hurston was described by them as
clever, witty and out-going. People gravitated to her. Fannie Hurst said Hurston had the gift of "walking into our hearts" (Boyd 100).

During the Harlem Renaissance Hurston published short stories and essays that made very little money, so she had to rely on a patron of the arts for financial support. Charlotte Osgood Mason, an elderly white benefactor who took an interest in preserving Native and African American cultures, employed Hurston to gather folk-tales and history of African Americans in the south. This hunt for folklore led Hurston throughout the south during the latter part of the twenties. Hurston's financial arrangement finally came to an end in September of 1932, giving Hurston the freedom to publish the material from her travels. The Realist, such as Richard Wright, often criticized the stories that Hurston created during this time period for not taking a more powerful stance on race relations. As sometime friend and fellow writer Langston Hughes stated, "[she] did not write fiction in the protest tradition" (Marks 59). Instead, Hurston focused on what she knew of the southern Black culture and created characters and storylines that truly reflected black life.

"It's thrilling to think - to know that for any act of mine, I shall get twice as much praise or twice as much
blame" (Myself 153). Hurston was caught between the emphasis on the exotic aspects of the Harlem Renaissance and the angry voices of black literature. Hurston did not think along the lines of the race writers of the day. She saw universal themes in all races and cultures. She saw the negative characteristics of a culture manifested universally as well as the positive ones. Hurston argues "But I am not tragically colored. There is no great sorrow dammed up in my soul, nor lurking behind my eyes" (Myself 153). Hurston, in terms of this study, was forcing space into her world. She did not opt for the oppositional place as those who would persecute her art did; however, she was able to trace threads of culture within black America and white America and pull out those constant threads that made both human and American. "I have no separate feeling about being an American citizen and colored. I am merely a fragment of the Great Soul that surges within the boundaries. My country, right or wrong" (Myself 155).

Hurston’s works acknowledge universal themes, view individuals at all levels of society, and they represent diversity. Hurston reveals themes in literature that are universal despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of her portrayals center on black southern culture. She has stirred the emotions of critics and devotees in a
variety of ways. As an African American female from the rural south, she challenged racial, class, and sexual assumptions in her writing. Her writings were woven from the practice of everyday life; her humor was woven from the practice of everyday life, and her message was to weave the morality of everyday life.

**Hurston's Unique Space**

The events I have included in this brief biography of Hurston are important to reading her as a weaver of space. Of the four authors that have been given attention in some detail, as was her motif in other worlds, Hurston is unique. Dunkley credits Chesnutt with having "a theory of one race," which in some respects may be akin to Hurston's philosophy, but Chesnutt's novel views were tempered by assimilation; however, this is not Hurston's stance. (Dunkley 5) For Hurston, in general, race or ethnicity was not an issue of her existence, except in certain scenarios.

*I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background. For instance at Barnard, 'Beside the waters of the Hudson' I feel my race. Among the thousand white persons, I am a dark rock surged upon, and overswept, but through it all, I remain myself"* (Myself 154).

It could be argued that feeling her race in this scenario has just as much to do with isolation as well as ethnicity. For instance, suppose she were the only obese person out of
thousands of anorexic people? Clearly, her ethnic background and appearance impact the situation, but wouldn't any difference that was as extreme? Hurston also relates the scenario in reverse. "Sometimes it is the other way around. A white person is set down in our midst, but the contrast is just as sharp for me" (154). Hurston, then, only thinks about blackness or whiteness when in situations where the physical or cultural construction of ethnicity is inescapable. She bolsters this when she writes, "at certain times I have no race, I am me. When I set my hat at a certain angle and saunter down Seventh Avenue, Harlem City, feeling as snooty as the lions in front of the Forty-Second Street Library, for instance" (Myself 154). These ideas of ethnicity require reading a new cultural space in Hurston's work to affect cultural change.

Since Hurston centers the majority of her literature in the environment of rural, southern black culture, it is imperative to understand her philosophy of ethnicity and culture. Hurston attempted to identify what I would term as threads of culture through her deep examination of folklore. She believed that these universal threads, the ones she incorporated in her literature, were present in all cultures, whether they manifested themselves negatively
or positively. Since she was at one with rural, black southern culture, it only made sense to use this familiar culture to weave and texture those universal threads of culture. Therefore, when reading for space in Hurston, one can approach space from a, basically, homogeneous culture because the themes that run through and provide the basis of the work exude spatial qualities and relationships.

"John Redding Goes to Sea" begins with a curious line, but a line that forewarns of the main characters kindred spirit to space. "The villagers said that John Redding was a queer child. His mother thought he was too. She would shake her head sadly, and observe to John's father: 'Alf, it's too bad our boy's got a spell on 'im" (1). John wants to travel. He wants to explore unknown regions of the world and to expand himself; he desires space. To all the "simple folk in the Florida woods," except his father, this is not a reasonable desire.(1)

From childhood John's favorite entertainment is "to wander down to the water's edge, and, casting in dry twigs, watch them sail away down stream to Jacksonville, the sea, and the wide world" (1). John's mother believes he has been goophered to travel, but the reader learns from Alf, John's father, that there is nothing wrong with John, and Alf doesn't want these crazy notions imposed upon his boy.
Even as a child, John gets upset when restrictions and limitations confront his imaginary constructions of travel. "But these twigs, which John called his ships, did not always sail away. Sometimes they would be swept in among the weeds growing in the shallow water, and be held there...'Let go mah ships! You ole mean weeds you!' John screamed and stamped impotently. 'They wants tuh go 'way. You let 'em go on!'" (2)

Time passes and John grows up to be an honorable and respectable son. He still retains his queer nature, complete with the desire to travel. With his father's blessings and support, departure dates are set and missed because his mother forbids his attempts to travel the world. She uses hysterics, basically a guilt trip imposed upon John, to make John conform to what she believes is best for him and, selfishly, her. "John, John, mah baby! You wouldn't kill yo' po' ole mamma, would you?" (5) Through such devices, Matty is able to retain John, and he succumbs to nature and gets married to Stella. Stella shares the sentiments of the town and Matty. She does not understand the desire to travel that is so strong in John and Alf. John and Stella reside in the Redding household, and John's attempts to travel present constant tension and division in the household, Matty and Stella as opposed to Alf and John. After one heated confrontation, a storm approaches and threatens the new bridge that is being
constructed. Men are required to work throughout the night to save the unfinished bridge from total destruction. John goes but bars Alf's involvement in the rescue attempt.

"'I'll go, Mister Hill,' said John with a great deal of energy. 'I don't want papa out on that bridge — too dangerous" (11). During the night, sleep was not an option with the tempest brewing outside. "A screech-owl alighted on the roof and shivered forth his doleful cry...’dat's a sho' sign uh death" (13). John is killed, and ironically, he is set adrift down the St. John river where Alf stops any rescue attempt to retrieve his son's body. "You all stop! Leave my boy go on. Doan stop 'im. Doan' bring 'im back for dat ole tree to grin at. Leave him g'wan. He wants tuh go. Ah'm happy 'cause dis mawnin' mah boy is goin' tuh sea, he's goin' tuh sea" (16).

The story of John Redding involves the quest for space. John has an inherent desire to travel the world, to see new places, and to experience the beyond. Matty, Stella, and the village people are centered in place. They live in a barred room that is comfortable, a known quantity, and relatively safe. Alfred is the only person presented who shares his son's quest for space, something more than the small village in the Florida woods.
Hurston's restrictions as a child are, I contend, relative to John Redding. Hurston knows that for one to truly be free is to be oneself and not what others would have you to be. John can never realize this because of the restrictions imposed upon him by his mother to keep him centered in a place. Sting published a song entitled "If you love someone, set them free" on his 1985 album The Dream of the Blue Turtles. Hurston, in her younger years, and, subsequently, John were not set free. This opting for place caused familial strife, heartache, and unfulfilled dreams for John Redding. Hurston was eventually able to take charge of her need to explore the world. But for John, only through death is he able to realize his dream of the St. John River spiriting him to parts unknown.

Finally, it must be realized that John is a dreamer. Understandably, he doesn't want to hurt his mother and later his wife, but he never asserts his position to bring his dream to reality. He lets his dream be deferred over and over again. Space is neither easy to achieve nor comfortable to accept. Its very nature makes it a move from the familiar, the safe, and the known. It is a leaving of what Bernice Reagon termed as the "barred room." (358) However, it is one that must be ventured upon to attain space, to go beyond in an attempt to return, in
John's case, home a better human being. "John Redding submits to defeat, admitting to being beaten by both mother and wife. John remains a passive dreamer" (Samuels 242).

In a sense, the ancestor and spiritual history of African Americans are invoked. The image of the slaves returning home to Africa in the folktale "All God's Chillen Had Wings" is reflected in John's final journey. As was the case with many slaves, death became that final chariot that was "Coming for to carry [me] home" (Norton 14). As illustrated by "John Redding Goes to Sea," Hurston's formula for writing towards space is not oppositional as other authors of this era were. She depicted a theme, albeit in a rural, black southern setting, that could be placed in any culture. Wilfred Samuels points out that "it is the medium through which Hurston not only visualizes and provides insights into the African-American experience but also a valid vehicle for understanding the larger human condition" (240). Fear of the unknown, fear of change, and selfishness are universals that all cultures face.

**Hurston's Restricted Space**

The issue of Hurston's being blackballed and ridiculed is perhaps an issue detailed in every piece of criticism of Hurston and her literature. Indeed, to tell her story without addressing this issue would leave a gaping hole of
unanswered questions. Of the factors and events that led up to this situation, humor is a major issue, and it is also a major characteristic of Hurston's personality, and therein lies the problem. Hurston's humor was an extension of her personality. You could not have one without the other; however, the same things that can cause love and adoration have the potential to cause strife and disdain.

Lawrence W. Levine describes a division of laughter entitled "The Economy of Laughter" (320). In the economy of laughter, there is a section devoted to laughter aimed at the rural Black who has migrated to the urban North. Levine posits that the reasons this type of humor derived was

It was a way of denying the immediate southern rural past and of encouraging acculturation to northern and urban life styles. It was also a way of laughing at oneself and one's peers...Humor allowed laughter at the idiosyncrasies of behavior often produced by mobility and the transitions between South and North. (322-3)

John Lowe in his seminal work *Jump at the Sun: Zora Neale Hurston's Cosmic Comedy*, quotes a passage from Alain Locke that related "Rudolph Fisher, Zora Hurston...take their material objectively with detached artistic vision; they have not thought of their racy folk types as typical of anything but themselves or of their being taken or mistaken
as racially representative (50)" (51). This perception, taken in regard to what is known of Hurston's personality from the many accounts of her attendance at events such as Harlem rent parties, offers an idea of the precarious image and personality that the period's judges of proper black cultural etiquette would be at odds with. Hurston writes in "How It Feels to Be Colored Me" that "I am colored but I offer nothing in the way of extenuating circumstances except for the fact that I am the only Negro in the United States whose grandfather on the mother's side was not and Indian chief" (152). Hurston makes no apologies for who she is, nor does she try to change what she is. Lowe writes, "she also was silenced for her outrageous sense of humor, something blacks and women were permitted only when it took the most passive forms. Her brand of ethnic humor became associated with the negative sense of the word 'primitive'" (51).

To define Hurston, I argue then, is to have a fun loving, rural black female who was magnetic and extroverted enough to be the life of the social scene. The economy of laughter would not work on her, to acculturate her to urban sensibilities, but she would have the ability to turn the jokes back on themselves or engage in a type of ritual of insult to combat them; however, this would provide another
means by which she would be alienated for assuming a posture not that of a woman. In essence, she broke all the rules. Then the issue becomes one of sincerity. Lowe tells us that Alain Locke did not view rural blacks as being representative of the race. "Gradually, this stance began to affect the literati's view of Hurston herself: at first charmed by her wit and appearance, they began to have reservations about her 'seriousness'" (52). This change in the way Hurston was perceived led eventually to her literature and the later well documented attacks by such people as Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison. However, I argue that not only was she sincere, but she was a precursor of the "not black enough" sentiment today.

The short story "The Conscience of the Court" published in 1950, well after Hurston's more successful years, illustrates Hurston's comic wit and puts to rest any question of seriousness. Laura Lee Kimble has been locked up for three weeks for assaulting and seriously injuring Clement Beasley. Supposedly Beasley has tried to collect on an outstanding loan given to Mrs. Claiborne, Laura Lee's boss. Mrs. Claiborne is vacationing in Miami and has left Laura Lee to look after things. Beasley, not waiting until Mrs. Claiborne returns tries to confiscate furniture and silver from the residence. This precipitates Laura Lee
forcefully denying access to Beasley and forcefully
removing him from the property.

Laura Lee is an oddity to the proceedings of the
court. Stories of her ferociousness have reached the bench
in the past three weeks, and the judge is faced with what
he terms as a riddle.

This was the man-killing bear cat of a woman that
he had heard so much about. Though spare of fat,
she was built strongly enough, all right. An odd
Negro type. Gray-green eyes, large and striking,
looking out of a chestnut-brown face. A great
abundance of almost straight hair only partially
hidden by the high-knotted colored kerchief about
her head. Somehow this woman did not look fierce
to him at all. Yet she had beaten a man within
an inch of his life. (163)

Laura Lee is completely ignorant of court proceedings and
legal terminology. When asked how she pleads to the
charges, Laura Lee replies, "Plead? Don't reckon I make out
just what you all mean by that" (163). When asked if she
would like to have a court appointed attorney, she declines
stating, "Naw sir, I thank you, Mister Judge. Not to turn
you no short answer, but I don't reckon it will do me a bit
of good" (164). The prosecution puts on a prima facie
case, and emotional sentiment runs against Laura Lee during
Beasley's testimony. "Clement Beasley was borne from his
cot to the witness stand, and he made things look a hundred
times blacker. His very appearance aroused a bumble of
pity, and anger against the defendant" (164-5). Laurie Lee's ignorance, naïveté, and most importantly, human value is exhibited when she takes the stand. Laura Lee tells her story with the voice of believability. She relates the events that led up to the confrontation, but she also relates events from years past that illustrate her love and devotion for Celestine Claiborne. The prosecutor objects, but he is overruled by the judge. The court hears Laurie Lee's life story. Once Laura Lee finishes, court sentiment has shifted to her. The judge also finds that Beasley's note was not to come due for three more weeks, prompting him to proclaim, "this is the most insulting instance in the memory of the court of an attempt to prostitute the very machinery of justice for an individual's nefarious ends" (175). Case dismissed.

Some critics have viewed this story as another text of Hurston's affirming a white position or "cuttin' the monkey for the white folks" (Lowe 53). Judith Musser alluded to this fact when she wrote they viewed it as "Hurston, catering to the predominantly white, middle-class readers of The Saturday Evening Post, is reassuring them that they can feel at ease with their white middle-class values--an African-American woman prevails over a white man and therefore there is no racism in the white courts of
America" (79). However, Musser offers an alternative argument.

I believe, however, that subtleties in the text as well as the circumstances under which the story was written suggest that Hurston's last piece of fiction was not a sell-out to the formula demands of a white readership. The most significant reading of this story stems from the fact that it is remarkably autobiographical. This is not an unusual characteristic in Hurston's writings. (79)

Musser's argument is a valid one, and it illustrates the spatial characteristics that Hurston embodied for at least twenty five years - if we are to believe her portrayal of Isis in "Drenched In Light" as being biographical, then she has been this way since her early childhood. What Musser is referring to is the very traumatic trial that Hurston experienced in real life. The accusation of pedophilia, even though it was clear she was not even in the country, turned her world upside down. However, where Laura Lee was the naive, simple, ignorant, loyal servant, her story was believed, and "she was rubbed and polished to a high glow" (176). Hurston's trial experience did not go as well. Because she did not fit the stereotype of a Laura Lee, she was persecuted even though innocent, so it was not her guilt or innocence that prompted these actions, it was her persona. Even her friends, such as Fannie Hurst, thought this was a staged event. Holloway tells us that her
friends had been so deceived by her persona that they could not and maybe were not willing to see the agony Hurston was going through. Later in a letter to Van Vechten during a deep depression, she stated that she wanted to kill herself. (Character 28-9). It was a result of refusing to be defined by one location (place) but choosing to center herself as a person. In this respect, Hurston was close to fifty years ahead of her time. This event offers too much evidence to entertain the idea that Zora Neale Hurston was ever not serious about her art or who she was. Granted, she was spirited, dramatic, and lively, but I contend that she was true to her art and to her spatial self.

Contained in The Complete Stories is "Hurricane," an excerpt from Their Eyes Were Watching God. Their Eyes is Hurston's most celebrated text, and because of the richness of this novel, themes abound. Space is illustrated in the work as well. When the story opens, the audience is presented with the potential creation of space. "Since Tea Cake and Janie had friended with the Bahaman workers in the 'Glades, they, the 'Saws,' had been gradually drawn into the American crowd" (149). An infusion of culture takes place. It is a relationship of give and take, as both cultures are expanded by the interaction.
The major event of this chapter/short story is the hurricane that hits the 'Glades and signals the end of Janie's storybook love affair. However, even though the story opens with the hope of space, its disallowance precipitates the tragedy to follow.

Tea Cake gives Janie the day off because the fire dances carried on too late. Home by herself, Janie sees bands of Seminoles passing. Three bands passed during the course of the day. With the last group to pass, Janie asked where they were going. "Going to high ground. Sawgrass bloom. Hurricane coming" (149). The people on the muck, especially Tea Cake, ignore the daily processionals of Seminoles, claiming, "Indians are dumb anyhow, always were" (150). The disallowance of a native culture that is indigenous to the area wrecks of opting for a tragic place. The Seminole culture is infused into the area. Their legends, myths, ancestors, and history are tied to the land, but because they are just dumb Indians to the Johnny come latelys on the muck, their wisdom, their voice is marginalized.

The next day, there is a mass migration of the animals on the muck. "Some rabbits scurried through the quarters...Some possums slunk by...Snakes, rattlesnakes began to cross the quarters...Janie heard the snort of big
animals like deer...Once the muted voice of a panther. Going east and east" (150). At this stage the Bahamians seek to leave and offer Tea Cake and Janie a ride.

"Hello 'Lias. You leavin', Ah see."
"Yeah man. You and Janie wanta go? Ah wouldn't give nobody else uh chawnce at uh seat till Ah found out if you all had any way tuh go."
"Thank yuh ever so much, 'Lias. But we 'bout decided tuh stay."
"De crow gahn up, man."
"Dat ain't nothin'. You ain't seen de bossman go up, is yuh? (150)

What is most interesting about this exchange is the justification given at the end. Tea Cake poses the question, "you ain't seen de bossman go up, is yuh? In other words the white people have not left, so what are you worrying for? In one sense Tea Cake reaffirms his opting for place. Two cultures and nature have tried to voice the threat of danger, but it is clear there is only one voice that matters to Tea Cake, the one of the boss. In another sense, Tea Cake reflects on Chesnutt's John from The Conjure Woman. Tea Cake is centered in an exploitive economic situation that he does not want to give up. "Man, de money's too good on de muck. It's liable tuh fair off by tuhmorrer" (150-1).

As the next evening comes into existence, the people who did not heed the warnings gather at Tea Cake and Janie's house and "stuff courage in each other's ears"
The evening winds down as the storm starts to unleash its fury. The winds create a tempest that is said to have "woke up ole Okechobee and the monster began to roll in his bed" (153). Hurston writes, "the folks let the people do the thinking" (153). The folks, the people in the shacks on the muck, are deferring to the people, the white folks in "the castles" (153). On the surface this deference is akin to the deference that Uncle Julius portrays in *The Conjure Woman*; however, the intent defines the huge disparity in the two. Julius is cerebral, a trickster if you will. His deference is a tool to manipulate and change. The deference shown by the individuals left on the muck is one of naiveté, bordering on stupidity, encased in place.

The story progresses from here illustrating the trials that Janie and Tea Cake have trying to out run the lake once it is loosed from its bed. Tea Cake is bitten by a rabid dog trying to save Janie, who in the midst of the storm only wanted to cover Tea Cake so he could rest more comfortably. However, their fate is sealed because Tea Cake will indeed contract rabies, and Janie will have to kill him. The pursuit of space often means sacrifice but always good sense. Dynamism is ideal over stagnation, just as caution is better than death.
Hurston's work opportunes a unique read of space. She weaves unlike my three other authors. In Hurston's case, it is not a matter of promoting space, but seeking space. Wilfred Samuels bolsters this point when he writes of Hurston's Eatonville setting. "But Eatonville does much more, for it is the medium through which Hurston not only visualizes and provides insights into the African-American experience but also a valid vehicle for understanding the larger human condition" (240). Hurston uses the backdrop of Eatonville not to write to a black audience or to a white audience, but to a human audience. Her desire was to glorify her culture, while acknowledging the worth and value of other cultures and reveal her culture's many universal threads. At once she could promote rural black southern culture and give insight to those universal threads cross-culturally. Her wish was to be herself and not what the reigning socio-political climate was dictating at the time. Because, only by being herself could "she pull in the horizon like a fishnet and drape it on her shoulders. "So much of life in its meshes! She called in her soul to come and see" (Eyes 215).

Charles Chestnutt and Zora Neale Hurston create a cultural space that is informed by spiritual historicity and the ancestor to create cultural ways of knowing, relies
on double consciousness to relate the plight of those who are disenfranchised, seeks to take their respective audiences beyond so that they might understand egalitarian and humane space, and finally, reside in the practice of the everyday, creating a sense of community. Charles Chesnutt enacts the role of a trickster and uses Uncle Julius to explode nostalgic myths of slavery and to argue for a more egalitarian America that recognizes the rights, voices, and perspectives of all. With double consciousness as his loom, Chestnutt weaves a beyond for his audience, as his narratives take them outside of their privileged position so that they may better understand the plight of the disenfranchised African American.

Where Chestnutt aims to write “a theory of one race,” Zora Neale Hurston's space is written, not to one culture or two cultures, but she speaks to matters of humanity, not specifically directed towards any particular culture (Dunkley 5). Writing to the most expanded audience of the four weavers employed in the study, Hurston’s work argues that cultural threads are indeed universal, and it is through a spatial creation that culture can accommodate such and expanded world view.
Chapter 4: The Raw Materials for Production: 
Threads of Culture Identified and Exercised

The previous chapters have demonstrated how the cultural threads of myth, the ancestor and spiritual history, and humor open Renaissance drama and post Civil War African American fiction to readings which reveal the cultures which produced those literatures. Specifically, these particular cultural threads work similarly in other literary traditions. Proving my theory’s usefulness as a lens for reading universal practices of cultural propogation, this chapter examines African diaspora narratives and reveals how threads of culture’s space work to "restructure the community" (Holloway 96). Christine Craig’s Mint Tea, Toni Morrison's Beloved, Bessie Head's Serowe, Ntozake Shange's Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo, and Ama Ato Aidoo's The Dilemma of a Ghost and Anowa illustrate the fluid and dynamic African diasporic culture.

The Spools of Spiritual History, Ancestor, and Rememory

Weaving the threads of spiritual history and the ancestor, "Burnt Hill," from Christine Craig’s Mint Tea, is a story which has a migration away from the country in search of what the character Miriam Davis called a chance for “higher education and something more out of life for
her children” (58). However later in the narrative, one of those children migrates back to the home, finding that higher education and “something more” was not enough. Leonard returns to his grandfather's home plot in search of something that he cannot yet identify. He just knows that it is not possible to find it in the city from which he migrated. The narrative, at this point, exposes the significance of the ancestor in Leonard's careful attention to the detail of his grandfather’s old cottage, such as the original lattice work. As well, Leonard values the carpentry as art, a manifestation of the cultural significance and value of the everyday so important to John Fiske. It is my contention that Leonard's ancestor and its spiritual history affect his cultural space. Indeed Leonard has gone beyond "in order to return in a spirit of revision and reconstruction to his past, making it his present” (Bhabha 3).

There are other instances in the collection where people come to (re)identify with the Jamaican home. For example in the story “Cousins,” the visiting professor finds his identity in a past he had been denying. Both of Craig's stories contain elements of ancestry, historicity, memory, and metaphor to create text and culture. The migrations of the characters in “Burnt Hill” and “Cousins”
stem from the elements that produce mythologies or "the diffusive agencies of language by black women writers that substantiate a metaphorical presence in the language of the text" (Holloway 89).

Leonard's searching results from the circle of ancestry and historicity, evidenced by his return to a life that would seemingly be unsuitable for him, especially given his grandmother Miriam's perspective. However, she is not the entire of his ancestral line, and his grandfather, Sam's, legacy manifests more strongly in Leonard's make-up. The preservation of old craft and Leonard's persistence in creating furniture from raw products call upon ancestry and historicity found in the physical world.

Nevertheless, memory provides Leonard contact with the spirit of his ancestors - and this memory compels his return to the old home location. Although the place exists as a physical entity, the call or desire to return is spiritual. Similarly, the visiting British professor in "Cousin" is influenced by his understanding historicity and ancestry. Immersed in that physical locale that represents historicity and ancestry, he assumes some nuances of both that locale and its affiliate ancestry. The place contains the spiritual presence of the ancestor and becomes
transformed into a space. The memory of his own spiritual world (such as the memory of Aunt Lena in connection with Mama C) facilitates Leonard's double-consciousness, allowing him to manifest a hybrid Jamaican and English cultural identity. This revised identity, likewise, situates the visiting professor at a location of home. Leonard and the Professor's migrations and then creation of a space called home mirror Carole Boyce Davies' argument that migration is a vehicle for identity location and transformation. While Davies focuses exclusively on women subjects, her articulation that "home becomes a critical link in the articulation of identity" is borne out in these two short stories (115). Leonard's double consciousness relies upon rememory, a reconstruction of something that has been remembered and a restoration of the ability to remember. It is at once to forget, put back into memory storage and to reconstruct knowledge or restore memory of an event. Karla Holloway further asserts that (re)memory "elevates that event and its surrounding structures, whether syntactic or semantic, to mythic proportions" (92). Just as Leonard's rememory of his grandfather in the past is not identical to the reality within which his grandfather existed, Toni Morrison's Beloved rememories
slavery's impact on the psyche and spirit of its survivors and their descendants.

Rememories function in Beloved to add spiritual dimension to the novel. A rememory relies upon the spiritual, and the construction of Beloved as a living being substantiates this claim. I contend that Beloved is a construction of rememory. She is the something that has been remembered. In this case, however, the something that is remembered becomes a living being who restores Sethe's ability to remember in order to reconstruct knowledge in a culture that seems to have lost its memory. Once again, this conjures up Bhabha's beyond. There is no break with the past. Rather, Beloved is an ancestor manifesting herself to "illuminate and transform the present" (hooks 147). By doing so, Beloved demands that the cultural space of the present allow her voice and influence. Toni Morrison defines this in her essay "Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation." Morrison argues that the "blend[ing]...of the supernatural and a profound rootedness in the real world at the same time with neither taking precedence over the other" argues for the necessary role of the ancestor in literature (Rootedness 342). This idea supports the creation of a space where what Morrison terms as "discredited knowledge" is not marginalized but given
equal voice (Rootedness 342). Therefore, Beloved becomes that ancestor who is "instructive" and "provides a certain kind of wisdom" (Rootedness 343). She retrieves the exacting pain of slavery, a lost event and feeling, and it is through her physical form, the memory assumes for all who have the ability to recall it.

Demonstrating the power of ancestral spirit history, Beloved resists being rememoried, situated in a past time that has been forgotten or repressed. She instead reconstructs Sethe's memory recalling the infanticide, Beloved's own death. While not everyone bumps into this rememory, all are affected by its incarnation. Looking at this in conjunction with Holloway's thesis, rememory acts as a force of culture narration in that it informs and keeps alive ancestry and historicity. Here, Beloved parallels the visiting British professor in Craig's "Cousins." Through his life in two cultures that he is able to internalize and accept, he has created a new cultural space for himself.

The visiting professor was able to view his situation from an interstitial perspective and he was able to go beyond himself in order to return with newfound recognition of himself, thus carving out a new cultural location for himself. Beloved, likewise, crosses the boundary between
the past and present in everyday life so as to bridge the pain of Sethe's rememberings and forgettings, crafting a new space for Sethe to progress. Building on Beloved's reliance of ancestor and memory, Craig's framing of double-consciousness is constructed through an awareness, spiritual and physical, of ancestral history.

Shange's *Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo* depicts three, strong sisters that choose different paths of life while holding on to their ancestral, spiritual foundation. Sassafras has a slightly independent personality; Cypress is an experimenter and contemporary artist, and Indigo manifests a spiritual mooring. Their lifestyles differ as the location of home serves to give each a perspective from which to resolve their problems. For Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo home is a cultural space, providing an interstitial perspective.

Sassafras suffers primarily from psychological dislocation, stemming from a mentally and physically abusive relationship. She is trapped by her feelings for Mitch as well as an inability to feel secure and complete without his presence. Once the relationship turns abusive, she does leave him for a short time only to return after he calls and demands her return. However narration of this relationship reveals Sassafras's cultural grounding. When
in doubt or troubled, she turns to those crafts that were taught and intertwined with her identity as a child, particularly, her weaving and crafting of various home objects. This not only connects her with her immediate foundation (i.e. mother, sisters, and home), but it also connects her with a much larger family or social group, because when women make cloth, they have time to think, and Theban women stopped thinking, and the town fell. So Sassafras was certain of the necessity of her skill for the well-being of women everywhere, as well as for her own” (Shange 92).

As well, the girls' mother, Hilda Effania, is a weaver, and she names her daughters after the tree used in the process of dying cloth. Thus, Sassafras' return to weaving is a return to her ancestral roots, her mother but also the culture of Charleston, South Carolina – home. While the craft supplies psychological ease, it also budes Sassafras' physical separation from her mother and home. Living in Los Angeles, Sassafras deals with psychological dislocation through weaving and calling upon her ancestors.

Cypress is also physically separated from home, a dancer in San Francisco and New York. She has restricted her residence to the city, disregarding any chance to move back to a small place such as her family home. Yet she
draws upon her memories of home as she attempts to "dance as good as white folks and find out the truth about colored people's movements" (135). Movements here are obviously rhythmic and related to the art of dance, but and anyalysis of the novel's creation of cultural space revelas the movements to be invgratory as well. Cypress is the perfect picture of the struggling artist and tends to partake of the stereotypes that are commonly associated with that lifestyle (e.g., drugs, wild parties). However, her self-identification is born of an acknowledgment of her cultural roots and an acknowledgment that history, without censure, tends to replay itself as memory in the dream of the "bearers." For Cypress, dance is "how we remember what cannot be said" (Shange 168). Art, for Cypress, is spiritual and endows her with cultural presence.

Paralleling Alice Walker's "Everyday Use," Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo presents Cypress as one who incorporates art and folklore into everyday life. Her San Francisco home is replete with statues of African goddesses, again honoring her women ancestors and channeling spiritual energy. Here we have the ancestor keeping watch and interest in the progeny. "Cypress laid waste to the tunnels, caverns, and shadows of the other world. She drew upon memories of her own blood: her
presence would be a mortal threat to those who wounded, maimed, her ancestors, her lovers, Leroy” (Shange 208). Cypress links cultural ideologues and artistic traditions achieving cultural rebirth and renewal.

Like Cypress, Indigo is connected to the spiritual and in touch with ancestors in part constructed by the elders of her hometown. As a child, Indigo spent time with the older people of the community and her dolls. She receives a gift of a "talking fiddle, which allows her to talk "in the unreal" (28). Through the fiddle, Indigo calls upon the ancestors and embraces their healing power. Although she is a child, she has the rare ability to project wisdom not of a child but of a person of experience and years. (Le Suer 170). Indigo never leaves far from home. She ends up becoming a midwife, a profession that would seem to suit her innate abilities very well. Her grounding is most closely associated with the spiritual threads of ancestry.

In the end, home provides the location for the resolution of the sisters’ conflicts. I argue that home - mother, music, dance, wearing and healing - provides their grounding for their movement toward an interstitial perspective and knowledge of their cultural space. This serves to steady the women on life’s course and gives them a foundation with which they have the ability to solve
life’s issues. Their identity and culture is progressive, and each becomes aware of that progression over the course of the novel. Ancestry is the guiding force in their discovery of themselves.

The ancestors is immediately located in the mother, who acts as a loom, a prominent tool in the novel, and weaves the threads of the fabric of her daughters. The idea of the ancestral spirit as an informative spirit that in this case is not destructive plays a prominent role in the novel as well. I think all of these issues further the case of home as foundation for self and cultural awareness.

Struggling to build solidarity across gender, historical, and geographical boundaries, Ama Ata Aidoo in her two plays weaves the spiritual and ancestral into narrative which unites people of African descent to view diaspora culture as progressive and collaborative. For example, The Dilemma of a Ghost analyzes the tension between Ghanaian traditions and black American expectations. The play revolves around the marriage of Ato Yawson, a Ghanain man, and Eulalie Rush, a African American woman. The dilemma of the title results from Ato's inability to meld the worlds of “his people” to that of his American wife. His unwillingness to communicate truth (no matter how tough or radical it may appear to either side)
is what causes the major tension of the play. The truth, here, connotes the unique cultural mores of Ghanain and American life that creates the play's tension. Ato does not afford either his wife or his people the opportunity to collaborate across their cultural difference, to forge a familial bond. Instead, breakdowns in communication lead to the reinforcement of cultural, superstitious fears. Ato's double consciousness, the result of his being part of both cultures, could have mediated the tension, but due to Ato's reluctance to allow it, his voice in the conflict is silent. Ato instead opts to maintain a cultural place rather than create a new cultural space where the two cultures involved in tension could partake on a journey of coalition.

However, the play's ending - with the two women embracing - suggested coalition between Esi Kom (representing Ghanian culture) and Eulalie (representing black American culture) is possible. For, even if Ato’s role has been unfulfilled, the ancestor and history can influence a developing cultural space. As ancestors Esi Kom and the spirit of Eulalie's deceased mother work to end the cultural tension; Esi Kom castigates Ato for not handling Eulalie with more care, given that she has no mother. She embraces Eulalie erasing her motherless but
also writing her into the family and its cultural space. Just as the memory of the ancestor served to move the visiting professor to a new cultural space, so can the ancestor act in moving the characters in the *Dilemma of a Ghost* to begin the development of a new coalescent culture.

The play *Anowa* complicates the tension of culture clashing by challenging myths of history. Anowa, throughout her life, has strived to be a free thinking individual. She is recognized as clairvoyant and her grandmother labels her a witch, a "wisechild" (47). In a traditionally patriarchal sociocultural system, Anowa’s abilities cause problems. This is illustrated by the conflict that serves to separate her from her husband Kofi, slaves. Anowa has reasoned that slavery is wrong by benefit of the memory and metaphor of a dream. Kofi’s answer is “everyone is doing it.” Kofi’s only recourse is retreat into the traditional patriarchal stance of his culture that says a wife should not question her husband. He retreats to place, a safe haven or barred room.

The breakdown in *Anowa* is not necessarily a lack of interstitial perspective or melding of cultures. Kofi seems to situate himself fairly well between the traditional African culture and the new "pale" culture. However, each of these cultures are highly patriarchal,
Bhabha warns against cultural formations that disenfranchise the minority voice. Anowa, on the other hand, creates a new cultural space that has an interstitial perspective as well. However, Anowa’s interstices are informed by ancestry and historicity and memory and metaphor as most powerfully illustrated by her metaphorical slavery dream. Anowa's dream connects her with the horrors of slavery and causes a reawakening of an event that everyone has tried to forget. She dreams that she is a "big, big woman" from "which poured men, women, and children" (106). Subsequently, these people were attacked and destroyed by "many giant lobsters, boiled lobsters," who became men and women, but retained their "lobster head and claws" (106).

Aidoo’s plays illustrate the ills that are produced when ancestry and historicity are ignored or intentionally forgotten. One must progress, but not at the expense of or the denial of one’s cultural foundation. Space dictates that it cannot be marginalized either.

Beloved illustrates the role of rememory in culture creation, and exemplifies memory and metaphor acting on and influencing post reconstruction culture. Mint Tea also has elements of rememory, but its cultural space is created from preexisting cultures. The stories suggest that
culture, like identity, is fluid. The visiting professor finding himself by stepping out of himself and returning (as Bhabha instructs) illustrates the flexibility of culture. Leonard, harkening back to an ancestral voice illustrates the ancestral historicity of his grandfather Sam. Shange’s novel illustrates how acknowledging cultural moorings grounds and supports individual identity formation, and the three sisters' experiences reveal how self understanding, when assisted by ancestral history and an interstitial perspective, can make culture a progressive, moving construction. All of this narrative evidence culture as constructed by ancestry, historicity in the physical world and memory and metaphor in the spiritual world. It is the weaving of these elements that forms an interstitial perspective that moves culture from a static place to a fluid space.

**The Spools of Myth, Carnival Comedy, and The Trickster**

Where the previous narratives engaged the ancestor, historicity and spiritual presence, threads of myth and humor also mark cultural space. An example of this can be seen with an examination of Chester Himes' novel *If He Hollers, Let Him Go*. By applying Bakhtin's concept of the grotesque Carnivalesque and acknowledging Bob Jones's being informed by the myth of black inferiority, it can be seen
that the move from place to space becomes a valid option and one that causes cultural change.

Anthony Evans argues in his book, *Are Blacks Spiritually Inferior to Whites?: The Dispelling of an American Myth*, that myths are "traditions passed down over time in story form as means of explaining or justifying events that are either lacking scientific evidence or historical basis." He asserts that when a culture or society accepts a myth, it influences every facet of that culture or society's existence such as: education, politics, religion and economics. The myth begins to authenticate and validate itself (Evans). John Lowe in his article "From Flags in the Dust to Banners of Defiance" echoes this sentiment when he writes concerning an aspect of his own cultural space development that "a myth is a story that people believe is true. It's also usually a story that people want to believe is true" (121).

The entire pro-slavery movement hinged on the premise of Negro inferiority. Thomas Jefferson wrote, "I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstance, are inferior to the whites in the endowments of body and mind." Jefferson further stated on another occasion that he thought the Negro "lacked native ability
for the larger pursuits of civilization" (Jefferson, 1801; Jenkins, 1960). This represents the foundation of the inferiority myth that restricts and oppresses Hime's Bob Jones.

The myth of inherent black inferiority was strengthened largely through education. Scientists, politicians, and theologians of the day all conspired to build an apologetic for the inferiority myth. Natural scientists such as Samuel George Norton studied physiological fields like craniology postulating the Negro was inferior based on their brain being "smaller and lighter" than a Caucasians' (Jenkins 22). Luis Agassiz suggested a peculiar conformation characterizes the brain of an adult Negro. Its development never gets beyond that observable in the Caucasian in boyhood (Jenkins 23). Dr. S.S. Cartwright of Mississippi helped to establish the connection between the curse of Ham and the Negro race by studying the Biblical names, contending that Ham meant "the progenitor of hot and black" and that Canaan meant "the self-submissive knee bender" (Jenkins 35). Dr. Adam Clark, the learned commentator of the Bible, from deep reading in the Hebrew, Arabic, and Coptic languages, came to the conclusion that the entity that deceived Eve was "an animal formed like man, walked erect, and had the gift of speech.
and reason." He further concluded that the Hebrew word "serpent" translated as "Nachesh" should have been translated as "Negro" (Barndt 90). As these credible scholars of the past rendered their findings, they were incorporated into professional journals of science and philosophy. History, as it was taught in mainstream white society, had to be reinterpreted reinforcing the natural superiority of Caucasians and of Western European culture. In this sense education bolstered the purpose of the Western European institution. What was taught in the academies was also taught at home, and it became woven into the fabric of our society and prejudices today (Evans, 1992; Knowles & Prewitt, 1969).

From the anti-bellum slave narratives and freedmen writing to the highly politically charged writing of the sixties, African Americans have sought to challenge such myths. Similarly, Mikhail Bakhtin's works on the carnivalesque sought to change and to "present the victory of [the] future over the past" (Rabelais xxii-xxiii). Bakhtin's carnival is "about freedom, the courage needed to establish it, the cunning to maintain it, and-above all-the horrific ease with which it can be lost" (Rabelais xxi).

In developing his theory of the Carnivalesque, Bakhtin identified several major divisions of the carnivalesque
that included laughter, popular-festive forms, banquet imagery, grotesque images of the body, and images of the material body's lower stratum. This examination deals with the grotesque images of the body, and it illustrates how Bob Jones and Himes's novel published in 1945 aid in propelling culture from a place to a more fluid space.

The grotesque takes different forms, but it's primarily the anatomical that is important for my analysis here. The upper body is generally positive, but the abdomen, genitals, bowels, and legs are seen as the worst of the grotesque while the mouth, nose, eyes, ears are seen as positive manifestations of the grotesque. However, there are times when the mouth is viewed as negative such as when a person spits, vomits, or emits any bodily fluid or substance from their mouths. At times, the nose is also indicative of a phallic symbol at which point it becomes a negative manifestation of the grotesque as well (Rabelais 304-17).

If He Hollers, addresses the issues of racial oppression in the United States during World War II. It deals with the psychological ramifications for a black male who is constantly aware of his second-class citizenship, who despises his manipulation by the dominant society, and who is afraid and powerless to combat such manipulations.
Bob Jones gropes and reacts his way through a society that does not allow him to be a man in his personal life and a leaderman in his professional life. His personal life is mandated by unofficial societal rules that govern his behavior, sustain a fear of the dominant, and confine him to his proper public place. His professional life is one that is defined by political monopoly. As a leaderman, he is a figurehead only, unless he is supervising other Blacks. He has no real power and is slighted, ignored, and verbally harassed by his immediate supervisors. This is the world of Bob Jones that we are invited to view. Bob was, as was the case with Black culture as a whole, in a place. The culture of everyday life operates only to the degree that it is allowed to traverse into its immediate historical and social setting. To a large degree, Bob Jones was denied this avenue to the workings of everyday life.

Instances of grotesque realism are abundant and serve to further Bob's personal revolution. One instance noted in the beginning of the novel serves to illustrate the overcoming of fear and subsequent revolution of Bob Jones. Upon coming to the Atlas Shipyard and receiving their assignments for the day, Bob Jones and his crew notice that once again, they have the worst assignment. They are stuck
in the bottom of the ship where it is very hot, stuffy, and void of ventilation. After signifying on the condition and the man who is responsible for their predicament—Kelly, Bob's boss—they relate the following, "He mine. I've been saving that red-faced peckerwood too long to give 'im up now. I'm gonna whip him till he puke; then I'm gonna let 'im get through puking; then I'm gonna light in on him and whip 'im till he poot... (Himes 12). In this quotation we have two references that signify the carnivalesque. Puke is a negative reference using the rules of the grotesque body. The stomach is in the negative part of the body, and puke comes up from the stomach and out the mouth. Poot is totally negative because it is wholly situated in the lower half of the body. Both puke and poot tend to subvert the dominant through grotesque realism and grotesque laughter. The very nature of the lines and the fact that they are a critique of the dominant qualifies them as carnivalesque constructs.

In Bakhtin's critique of Rabelais, the dominant and lower classes made up a binary opposition. However, in Hime's novel the binary relationship is not based on class, but it is based on race. Since the novel is written from the perspective of Bob Jones, the reader is privy to the insights of the black protagonist. Therefore, when
grotesque realism is presented, the reader is able to identify with the signification of the grotesque and laughter as it is applied to the dominant or white world. This is important to realize, especially if the purpose is to examine the potential that this novel had to influence an oppressive culture, a place.

In the chapter on grotesque realism, Bakhtin writes that "[in] the grotesque body, . . . death brings nothing to an end, for it does not concern ancestral, which is renewed in the next generation" (Rabelais 322). This body is not of an individual nature but one that embodies many. In this case the body would make up the black or white divisions. It is this idea of the grotesque ancestral body that Bob Jones refers to when he says that the "white folks sure brought their white to work with them that morning" (Himes 15). In this statement we clearly have the dominant division of white people, but we also have a new being that has been created from the white people. White has been passed down through the generations and has been renewed and bestowed upon the white people who further its existence and in turn pass it along to the next generation. White has taken on a body and a life of its own. It controls Bob Jones and the other Blacks just as much as the individual white people control the Blacks.
There are three relationships that give insight into Bob Jones's struggle to free himself from his oppressed state while exemplifying the workings of carnival and how it manifests itself in the novel. These relationships demonstrate the control, fear, and powerlessness that whiteness has imposed upon Bob—bolstering the myth of black inferiority. They are with Alice, his girlfriend; Madge, a white female co-worker; and Johnny Stoddart, a white male co-worker.

Jones's relationship with Alice tends to remove him from a carnivalesque mode of operation. Alice, who comes from a wealthy family, poses a view of assimilation. The end result of revolution, as reached through carnival, does not have any bearing on what Alice hopes to accomplish through her philosophies concerning discrimination and prejudice, to assimilate rather than create a new situation, to opt for an exchange of place rather than create a new space. She, as Dubois would posit, does not strive for a better situation through the use of double consciousness; rather, she just wants to belong to the status quo.

Bob and Alice are opposite in every respect except race, and even that is a source of conflict because Alice can pass for white thus taking on, to a small degree,
whiteness. So at those times when Bob waivers from his carnivalesque, revolutionary behavior, it is because of his interaction with Alice. This notion may seem contradictory, but in essence, it is not. Bob has a consented right to Alice, even if she can pass for white, because she is still black; therefore, the fear of whiteness that makes Bob impotent and powerless is not mandated by the dominant society in this relationship. However, once he returns to the black streets or the shipyard, whiteness again descends upon him stifling his manhood and pride.

Alice serves in an indirect fashion to bring about the subversion of the carnivalesque. Bob has a dream that culminates with Alice's death. "[Alice's] head and shoulders were the same but her body had shrunk until it was no more than a foot long and she was dead. I looked up for the woman who was standing at the fence but instead of one woman there were millions of white women leaning there. . .[with] the most sympathetic smiles. I woke up overcome with a feeling of absolute impotence"(Himes 101). Alice's grotesque disfiguration and death leads to the "sympathetic" smiles of whiteness and Bob's impotence. Bob's attention next shifts to one individual who
represents the fear and powerlessness that he feels toward whiteness.

"I saw Madge's kidney shaped mouth, brutal at the edges, spitting out the word 'nigger'; and something took a heavy hammer and nailed me to the bed" (Himes 101). Madge on many occasions is described using the grotesque. The two share a violent and cruel physical attraction. To fully understand Madge's significance, I offer the following. Madge has gotten Bob demoted for calling her a "cracker bitch" when she refuses to work for him, which she is supposed to do. (Himes 27) This incident confirms the hatred that the two have for one another. However, the relationship is much more complicated than that, and the theory of carnival recognizes the full complexities of this relationship. "Lust shook me like an electric shock; it came up in my mouth; filling it with tongue, and drained my whole stomach down to my groin. And it poured out of my eyes in a sticky rush and spurted over her from head to foot" (Himes 19). This passage seems to suggest the wantonness that Bob has for Madge. By carnivalesque standards it reeks of negative, grotesque body images. Lust is the metaphorical equivalent of vomit or puke, and it reaches down into the most grotesque region of the body, the groin. This is not any ordinary sexual attraction. It
is one that is desired, not for sexual gratification, but to overcome the fear that Madge and one million other white women perpetuate.

This attraction is a subversive one that stems from Bob conquering whiteness. His sexual conquering by emitting the semen of his groin upon the most sacred symbol of whiteness will lead to a release from fear. This act parallels Gargantua when he pisses over the land and makes a deluge that creates the Rhone river and seven hundred ships (Rabelais 150). No matter how derogatory this may seem, it was the ambition of carnival through grotesque realism to bring about such action so that a regeneration or rebirth could take place. In Bob Jones's case, whiteness and its controlling fear would be destroyed, and the foundation or revolution for a new space oriented society would follow.

"I began thinking of how I ought to cut him. . . . Bile rolled up in my stomach and spread out in my mouth. I started retching and caught myself" (Himes 35). This begins another way that Bob Jones deals with his oppression brought on by whiteness. Jimmy Stoddart, the blond boy, is the object of this unrealized promise of violence. Bob stalks Stoddart every time whiteness bore down too heavy upon him. Once again, the grotesque realism in relation to
the bodily lower stratum is present. Bile is brought up to the mouth and is about to be released. It is important to note that Bob Jones is not able to go through with his violent notion, and once this is realized, Bob says, "the sick feeling left my stomach" (Himes 36). With the subsiding of the bile, there is also a subsiding in the will to overcome the whiteness that Stoddart represents and, in part, creates. However, we see a revisiting, on several occasions, of the desire to kill, and this desire sustains Bob for a short time, almost like a drug high. When things were going bad, Bob would hunt down his white boy just to see the fear in his face or, in some cases, just think about killing him, and everything would be better for a while. He would win a hollow victory over whiteness for a short time.

Finally, we must understand that Bob Jones never achieves his revolution over whiteness. He never triumphs over the fear and powerlessness he is subjected to in the scope of the novel; however, the value of Bob Jones lies firstly in the fact that he has the ability to threaten and challenge the myth of black inferiority, and he survives to threaten the environment of whiteness that oppresses him with the myth. Secondly, by succeeding at threatening the makeup of his oppressive state, he forces a recognition of
himself and consequently a change in the cultural mores that oppress and stifle him; he begins the act of refuting the myth. So the theory of carnival, although yet unrealized, is still very much a part of Bob Jones's makeup. The lust must not only rise from his groin, but it must flow out to the huge amalgamated body of whiteness. The bile must not only rise from his stomach to his mouth, but it must spill over for the full potential of carnival revolution to influence a new more egalitarian cultural space.

Reading *If He Hollers* as carnivalesque reveals a platform for a change that will lift the oppressive nature that society has proscribed for Bob Jones and offer the move from an oppressive place to a more egalitarian space.

A literary figure that promotes space is the trickster. An inordinate amount of trickster criticism illustrates the nebulous nature of the trickster. Examples of tricksters are numerous. African tricksters include Esu-Elegba, Signifying Monkey, and Anancy the spider, and High John, Brer Rabbit, and Coyote serve as examples of North American tricksters. The trickster can be young or old, male or female, good or evil, moral or amoral, or any other set of dichotomous qualities. Critics agree that the trickster possesses no well-defined or fixed form. Paul
Radin argues the "trickster is at one and the same time creator and destroyer, giver and negator, he who dupes others and who is always duped himself. He wills nothing consciously. At all times he is constrained to behave as he does from impulses over which he has no control. He knows neither good nor evil yet he is responsible for both" (ix). William Hynes adds that the trickster has a "fundamentally ambiguous and anomalous personality" (34). Donald Cosentino asserts that the trickster is "both first and last born, old man and child, cunning and capricious" (262). Jay D. Edwards suggests that ambiguity is another key to the trickster, which allows him to be first stupid then clever and then friendly yet treacherous (58). Other critics such as Miles J. and Frances S. Herskovits bolster the image of the trickster's nebulous qualities, but they also allude to the trickster's awareness of social norms, which the trickster may or may not follow.

They write in their description of Legba that the figure is neither creator nor destroyer; that what he gives and takes away is far more often individual than cosmogonic; that while he dupes others, he is rarely duped himself. His activity, again, is calculated, highly conscious. His acts are rarely impulsive, but for the most part are directed toward the achievement of a well-defined end. He knows socially accepted values even when he behaves contrary to them" (100-1).
Although, Bill Hampton argues that, "there is enough difference to preclude lumping all trickster figures together for interpretation," (56) and I agree to some extent, I also believe that if the trickster is analyzed in conjunction with other threads of culture, such as humor, credible commonalities present themselves. John Lowe in his work *Jump at the Sun: Zora Neale Hurston's Cosmic Comedy* writes that "Africans themselves assume humor exists everywhere, even in the highest levels of existence . . . Esu-Elegba, in many ways the most important deity, operates as agent between God and humans, thereby playing the same role as the trickster does around the world" (4). I further contend that an adaptation of space makes the trickster capable of being compared across cultures. In fact, the very nature of the trickster elicits space. The nebulous qualities of the trickster assume a space where an almost limitless number of characteristics reside and are allowed to prelect.

Various critics support the spatial characterizing of the trickster. Carl Jung views the trickster as "a faithful copy of an absolutely undifferentiated human consciousness," once again supporting a spatial quality to the tricksters makeup. (200) Jung further notes that the trickster is equivalent to a "shadow" because it can adjust
its form to any dimension yet remain insubstantial (202). Since the trickster "lives beyond all bounded communities and is not confined to any designated space," it is able to choose any form according to Barbara Babcock-Abrahams (155). This is how the trickster may be a "deceiver, thief, parricide, cannibal, inventor, creator, benefactor, magician, and perpetrator of obscene acts" as Robert D. Pelton believes (3). Yet, the trickster may be viewed as "a clown, fool, jokester, initiate, cultural hero, even ogre...he is the central character for what we usually consider many different types of folk narrative," as Roger D. Abrahams points out (170-1). Clearly, the form of the trickster is constantly shifting. Thus, critics accept the trickster's ambiguity. All recognize that the trickster has a near limitless existence in western society permitting him to do almost anything. Each attempt to understand the trickster's ambiguity reinforces the protective layers already surrounding his personality and introduces new layers for interpretation, a true feature of space.

The most known characteristic of the trickster lies with the ability to deceive through its cleverness. It is commonly assumed that all tricksters have an innate genius to confuse and mislead others. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
contends that the trickster figure is a mediator of tricks; consequently, it brings about general discord by serving as an intermediary force of deception (6). Lawrence W. Levine contends, "at its most elemental, then, the trickster tale consists of a confrontation in which the weak use their wits to evade the strong" (106). Levine also observes that "throughout the century of freedom, guile and wit remained necessary and ubiquitous tools with which to confront the dominant culture' (380).

In The Book of Negro Folklore, Arna Bontemps and Langston Hughes agree with Levine in that the trickster's essential characteristic is his ability to fool bigger and stronger creatures. Bontemps writes, when applying the concept to practical applications, "to the slave in his condition the theme of weakness overcoming strength through cunning proved endlessly fascinating" (ix). The trickster subsumes the dichotomy of residing and existing in connecting, reciprocal worlds. In fact, the trickster's survival depends on its ability to deceive those more powerful. The trickster's wit and genius for speech heightens its ability to trick others and ensures that it remains the figure behind the scenes yet close enough to the action to effect an outcome.
Finally, the last attribute of the trickster reflecting cultural threads is humor. Hampton, referring to the humor of the trickster, writes that laughter "describes the inevitable reaction of any audience when hearing about the feats of the trickster" (60). Further, Levine contends that "for the most part [trickster] tales were the vehicle through which slaves...laughed at their masters" (125). Arna Bontemps adds "in the course of the [trickster] tales the story tellers poked as much fun at themselves as they did at their masters" (x). Indeed, "trickster tales provide a fertile source of cultural reflection and critical reflexivity that leaves one thoughtful and laughing" according to Doty and Hynes (4). For Mac L. Ricketts, "the trickster is the embodiment of humor - all kinds of humor" (347). The reflection of these arguments supports the idea that humor establishes a restorative effect because the trickster has a tension-releasing role in African American culture. Although trickster literature is perceived as humorous, I contend that it can be a cross-cultural phenomenon, especially when one has the wherewithal to recognize a trickster busy at his craft in diverse cultural roles.

The tricksters identified in this project provide an analysis of this point. Volpone and Mosca fulfill the role
of tricksters. Through their cunning and wit, they subvert the power of high-class citizenship. They cause an upheaval in the ancestral value systems of their dupes. For Volpone and Mosca, the space created is one designed to swindle the inheritance suitors. On the authorial level, Jonson creates a space to castigate the degradation of his England. On a textual level, the tricksters' created space functions subversively and degradingly. Chestnutt's dual trickstering provides another example of how the trickster can affect cultural change through fiction. By Chestnutt fulfilling the role of authorial trickster and Uncle Julius as textual trickster, there is a multilayered texturing and culture creation taking place. Chesnutt's space is being created to allow for his "theory of one race" while Uncle Julius's space lays the foundation for Chesnutt by exploding the nostalgia of slavery and questioning the restrictive, marginalizing treatment of black culture. (Dunkley 5) In both examples, the goal is to create a new cultural space.

**The Spools of Humor, Comedy, and Satire**

Lawrence W. Levine in his seminal text *Black Culture and Black Consciousness* divides the laughter of African American culture into three separate divisions. These divisions consist of "laughing at the man, the economy of
laughter, and the ritual of insult." I contend that two of
the three divisions, "laughing at the man, the economy of
laughter," define and explain the various uses that
laughter and humor fulfill in cultural creation. The
divisions are deeply embedded in a culture and act as tools
of psychological survival and power subversion. (299-358)
The divisions of humor also behave as a conduit for the
transfer of place into space. They recall Bhabha's beyond
and Said's traveling theory. They dwell in the practice of
everyday life, acting as stress reliever, survival tool,
and social worker.

In an analysis of laughter conducted by Henry Bergson,
the following view of laughter is given:

Inversion [is] one of the prime comic methods:
picture to yourself certain characteristics in
certain situations: if you reverse the situation
and invert roles, you obtain a comic scene . . .
Thus, we laugh at the prisoner at the bar
lecturing the magistrate; at a child presuming to
teach its parents; in a word everything that
comes under the heading of topsyturvydom.
(Levine 300)

The division of "laughing at the man," defined by Levine is
important in realizing that humor is a way to subvert the
oppressive nature of a culture's existence. The joke and
laughter serves more than a purpose of entertainment, but
it also presents a way to lash out through a covert
theoretical way at the idiosyncrasies of a society that
seeks to restrict and marginalize. This idea of trivializing or degrading ideas that are held to be lofty or noble by the dominant is a universal situation that can be found in many cultures when dealing with differences in caste and class (Levine 301).

For example, the butt of many of these jokes in turn of the century African American culture centered on the Irish community. Irish immigrants immigrated around the mid-nineteenth century and came in a great influx into the United States. At the time many of these immigrants were in economic competition with African Americans, and due to their foreign ways, Americans ostracized the Irish, and African Americans could identify with mainstream America to a point. The Jewish were often a target of black cultural jokes as well. The Jewish stereotype was one of money-grubbing materialist. This is seen not only in African American culture but is exhibited and referenced many times in English Renaissance culture as well. Who can forget the likes of Shylock? In both situations, the African American was able to identify with mainstream America against a peripheral group, and they also got to satirize Whites without fear of punishment.² The Jewish and Irish did not have a monopoly in the African American joke community. Other ethnic groups such as Mexicans, Native Americans,
Chinese, and Italians also shared in this type of satire by African Americans. However, the Irish and Jewish were most prominent (Levine 306).

The division of laughing at the man would also include mock laughter used to manipulate. This kind of humor is often identified as a weapon in the arsenal of slaves to control and manipulate Whites by showing deference to Whites by grinning and laughing in the white folks' face. This type of humor tends to demean all who are involved in it, and it illustrates the contempt for and ridicule of the dominant; however, it also performs a function of survival for those who have no other real form of protection. In African American culture, this survival technique was needed during slavery as well as after slavery. An example of this technique employed in the practice of everyday life is evidenced when the writer J. Saunders Redding was driving through Tennessee and Kentucky during the depression. Stopping to pick up Bill Perry, a black singer and guitarist, they are subsequently stopped by armed guards who are patrolling mining towns.

He wanted to know where we "boys" were going. Before I could answer, Bill Perry broke in: "Cap'n, we'se goin' to Kintucky. See all dat stuff back dere, Cap'n? Well dat stuff 'longs ter Mista Rob French, an' he sho' will raise hell ef we don' git it to him," Bill lied convincingly. "That gittar too?" the guard
questioned. Bill grinned. "No suh, Cap'n. Dis yere box is mine." "G'on. But don' stop nowheres. Don' even breathe hard," the guard said grinning. "No suh, Cap'n. I ain't much of a breever noway. Jus' 'nough ter live on. No, suh. I don' want no mo' o' white folks' air den I jus' got ter have." We drove on. Bill P'erry doubled with laughter. "I kin lie when I has ter." "Man dat gun was 'bout de mos' uglies' thing I ever seen." "What do you suppose the trouble is, Bill?" "'Deed, I ain't got no notion. But hits white folks' truble, an' dat's 'nough fer me," Bill said. (Levine 309)

This type of laughter is also used to satirize the ideas of discrimination and inequality. The joke served to take oppressive customs, laws, and traditions literally.³

Under the guise of humor, American society allows infinite aggressions by almost everyone against almost everyone. The telling of jokes in the economy of laughter served a two-fold purpose. The first one acted as a facilitator for the expression of hostility. The second, although similar, was a bit different. It produced a venue where disguised aggression could be uttered and where these utterances would be able to get past internal and external censors, thus releasing pent up aggression and relieving the joke teller and his audience of the need to expend this built up inhibiting energy. Derived on the foundation of double consciousness, this type of humor is a definite catalyst for cultural expression and change; since, in many cases it is the economy of laughter that allows
marginalized people to tell about themselves in a way they determine – recalling the concept of travel stories. It is well conceived with wit, evoking the entity of the trickster.

David Krasner argues in his article "Resistance, Parody, and Double Consciousness in African American Theatre, 1895-1910" that "the early decades of the twentieth century were, in many respects, the beginning of the period of black aesthetic and intellectual reconstruction. He, in part, based this on Alain Locke's idea. Locke wrote that "a sudden flood-tide of new life and vitality" in African American music, dance, and musical comedy defined the era. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., wrote that during this time there emerged "the era of the myth of a New Negro, a New Negro in search of a Renaissance suitable to contain this culturally willed myth" (Signifying 151). Krasner acknowledges the importance of "notions of new life, vitality, and the "New Negro" in African American culture because they highlight efforts by African Americans during the first decades of this century to deconstruct the minstrel caricature and to reconstruct a new positive image of cultural representation (317); however, this argument can easily be taken a step further to illustrate that what the "New Negro" had undertaken was a function of cultural
creation and change. The "New Negro" sought to forge a new identity and create a new space from an old, restrictive place for his cultural well-being. To reverse the nineteenth century's negative representation of African Americans, the idea of a New Negro in art, literature, and theatre began to evolve, implying "a bold and audacious act of language, signifying the will to power, to dare to recreate a race by renaming it, despite the dubiousness of the venture" (Gates Trope 132). The idea argues for the role of space in culture building, redefining by asserting a voice that has been marginalized.

Krasner relies heavily on the writings of W.E.B. Dubois to support his theory. Krasner notes that according to August Meier, it was Dubois who was most aware "of the complexity and sophistication of African culture" (317), and he also noted that drama critic Lester Walton recognized the significance of The Souls of Black Folk in his weekly column "Music and the Stage." "DuBois makes the powerful plea, Walton wrote in 1908, "that the history of art in this nation will not be written until the Negro has made his contribution" (Krasner 317). Space is not realized until all voices are heard. The arguments of Dubois only seek to have the African American voice heard through the avenues that are open to African Americans.
during this time. Krasner then notes Paul Gilroy's point that *The Souls of Black Folk* was illustrated as being especially important because it "sensitized blacks to the significance of the vernacular cultures that arose to mediate the enduring effects of terror" (Gilroy 119-20).

Using Krasner's specific example, it is noted that "the black artist had to create a public self through what DuBois called a "tertium quid," often performing or creating a "clownish, simple creature, at times even lovable within its limitations, but straightforwardly foreordained to walk within the Veil" (318). In this state, the black artist and subsequently black culture existed in a finite, restrictive place defined by mainstream American culture. What these turn of the century artists sought was a move from that restrictive place to a more egalitarian space, one which they would have voice in creating. Krasner also acknowledges the construction of the veil when he argues that "the strength of the Veil as a distorting mask is illustrated by the fact that many African American artists, notably Bert Williams, had to wear blackface make-up because their real faces did not conform to the caricature popularized by nineteenth-century white minstrel stereotypes" (318). Paul Laurence Dunbar captured this spirit in his often-anthologized poem "We Wear The Mask."
What was taking place for the African American artist at the turn of the century was not the identification and settling for a place. Dunbar's poem defines the situation but does not imply any action to subvert the wearing of the mask, the taking off of the veil. One has to use the quality of "twoness" that Dubois identifies to overcome the restrictions and limitations of a restrictive place. What is called for are the actions of a trickster, one who would use the qualities of Dubois's "twoness" to overcome or subvert the restrictions of place. It was imperative for Africa American artists at the turn of the century to work within the avenue that they were allowed to subvert the practice of marginalization, so in effect, they became tricksters, were able to begin voicing views about themselves to mainstream America, and started the move from place to space. This signifies the culture that post Civil War African American artists wove.

Krasner argues that the success of African American performers during the turn of the century not only accelerated Blacks to the legitimate stage, but it also extended what Eric Sundquist termed a "tradition of performative subversion of white authority that reached back into slave culture" (Sundquist 20). I contend that through this phenomenon, the move from place to space by
the use of subversion is illustrated. Slowly but methodically, the trickster's desires start to be fulfilled. James Scott echoes this notion when he writes that "black [culture] emerged in a state of opposition, creating a form of 'hidden transcripts' characterized by a discourse that moved beyond direct observation of the powerholders" (Scott, 4).

The outcome of the turn of the century performers enacting double consciousness was parody. The Longman Dictionary of Poetic Terms defines parody as "an ancient device of comic imitation or sustained allusion meant to satirize previous works or ideas for the sake of humor or serious criticism by using the original form and/or content as a model" (Myers 225). Under the guise of parody and humor, a subversion of dominance takes place. The exploding of the place of cultural stagnation is accomplished subversively.

Humor, then, can be used to subvert oppressive power structures, to manipulate and control, to turn individual expression into collective expression, to call attention to and satirize various foibles of culture, and to survive in various cultures. Like the humor of "Moms" Mabley, this reading presents a universal way of approaching humor. As Mabley did so well, culture creating humor speaks to the
human condition. Mabley's success in entertainment supports this argument. For Mabley, as Toni Morrison advocates in "Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation" "dealt with her audience not as an entertainer but as a member of their community...and her audience responded as participants..." (Levine 366).

The diaspora narratives in this chapter demonstrate that the concept of space defined in chapter one and used to read Jonson, Shakespeare, Chesnutt, and Hurston is a critical framework that reformulates culture as space. Culture as space is a powerful tool for reading the effects of literature on shaping social conscience, regardless of social and historical time. It allows a way to analyze cultural threads on an individual basis, illustrating how they collaborate to create, influence, and change culture. The cultural threads of spiritual historicity and ancestor, when woven together, advance culture from a static place to a dynamic space. The threads of myth, carnival comedy, and the trickster illustrate the potential to transcend a place of segregation, discrimination, and marginalization by those subjected to these restrictions, and finally, the threads of humor, comedy, and satire illustrate how place can be subverted through laughter, moving culture to a more expanded level of space.
Chapter 5: Denouement

I once heard a professor tell a class that if you leave graduate school the same way that you came, you have missed something in the process. The theory of space and place that is developed in this project is the culmination of my courses and writing since beginning graduate school. Looking back to my Master's program and the subsequent pursuit of the doctoral degree, everything that I have studied and or written can be explained using this spatial perspective. Space for me is not just a theory I incorporated to write the final requirement of my degree, the dissertation, but it is a way to define my teaching philosophy and view of life; therefore, I can attest that the pursuit of space is not an easy thing because it constantly challenges you to leave the barred room in search of new expanding ideas, beliefs, and ways of knowing. It constantly dictates that you go beyond to better understand your social, your professional, and most importantly, your personal life. The practice of space hinges on the individual's objectivity, adaptability, and courage.

Objectivity is a major requirement of space. Objectivity allows the explosion of the periphery and marginalization since it demands that one look for
universal threads in all societies, cultures, and subcultures, as I argue Zora Neale Hurston accomplished. There are negatives and positives in any social fabric, so the task becomes one of not delineating one culture negatively or positively because of the way that some thread is manifested in that culture, but the task is to understand why it is manifested in that manner. In other words, stereotypes are exploded and the cause or root of their existence is explored. I contend that this brings about a more meaningful dialogue in terms of coalition, acceptance, and egalitarianism.

Another key characteristic of space is adaptability. Adaptability assumes that some form of coalition and acceptance has occurred. Indeed, without it there can be no coalition, acceptance, and egalitarianism. Individuals must adapt to an ever-changing cultural space. They must be open to change as well as to explore change. *Who Moved My Cheese?* by Spencer Johnson illustrates this point very effectively. The book has become, arguably, the business world's most popular management method. It is a simple parable that reveals profound truths about change through the depiction of rats in a maze searching for cheese. The "Cheese" represents what you want in life and the "Maze" represents where you look for what you want. How the
characters deal with the unexpected changes illustrate to the reader how to adapt to an ever-changing society and cultural space. This is accomplished through a teaching based on adaptability. Shakespeare argued that as the individual goes so does society, so adaptability is an important cog in the process.

Finally, there is the element of courage in space. Fear is probably the biggest hindrance to space: fear of the unknown, fear of rejection, fear of marginalization, ridicule, and insult, fear of success, fear of failure, and the list goes on and on. Granted, it is hard to leave the safe haven of known quantities for the unknown, and generally, human beings resist this urge unless they deem the act of remaining in whatever capacity they are in as being worse than anything in the unknown. Diogenes once stated, "Nothing can be produced out of nothing," and this is quite true of space creation. Individuals must defer fear to exploration. Unlike Hurston's John Redding, they must be able to take that journey, to go beyond in a spirit of conquering the unknown. Another aspect of courage lies in individuals being themselves. Ben Jonson and Zora Neale Hurston both had powerful personas, to their detriment at times and to their advantage at other times; however, they were true to who they were in any event. Jonson's courage
can be seen in his conviction to evince issues that were counter to government sentiment even at the expense of imprisonment. His loyal following from the Sons of Ben is another aspect of this strong will and character. Zora Neale Hurston never waivered on who she was to the detriment of her career, as I argue in Chapter Three. To any environment that the individual comes in contact, identity must be maintained. It is not a matter of giving up one place for another, but the goal is to be oneself in a spirit of give and take. Not only does the new environment impact the individual, but the individual impacts that environment as well. Therefore, the courage to be oneself is a key component to an individual's realization of space.

Objectivity, adaptability, and courage are the key elements needed for a practical implementation of space. So many times in academia, people are faced with theories applied to one genre of literature or another. The theory is suitable to the literature, and there ends its application. The theory is not conducive to the practice of everyday life or the culture of everyday life. This is problematic for me. Coming from a background where I attended HBCUs and instructed at HBCUs and community colleges, I view theory in a different manner. If it
cannot be incorporated at a practical level in the classroom, in assignments, indeed, in the student's everyday life, then it doesn't contribute wholly to the student's way of thinking. Exposure is great, but that exposure must be tempered with instructing in ways of knowing and being; that is the goal. This is what space offers and promotes, an exchange of ideas, positive and negative, that expand the horizons of individuals, subcultures, cultures, and societies.
Works Cited


**Appendix: Chapter Notes**

**Chapter 1 Notes**

1. Many scholars have written about space, but most, such as Gaston Bachelard, would equate space to what Certeau would define as place. I also find that this is true in other disciplines, such as geography. The terms space and place are reversed, or at least the use of the word space, in relation to this study, would equate with place.

2. I refer to arguments suggested in hooks' *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* chapters two and three (2-43), and Shelia Radford-Hill's notion of "authentic feminism" in her *Further to Fly: Black Women and the Politics of Empowerment* (1-11).

3. This is also distinctive from the rules of Western literary practice, as posited by Levi-Strauss and his concept of myth, which illustrates that Western cultures view myth as a separate and distinct genre. The ancestor's role goes no further than progenitor in Western literary practice.

4. You know the current magazine story: A young white man goes down to Central America and the most beautiful colored woman there falls in love with him. She crawls
across the whole isthmus to get to him. The white man says nobly, “No”. He goes back to his white sweetheart in New York.

I have in my office a story with all the earmarks of truth. A young man says that he started out to write and had his stories accepted. Then he began to write about the things he knew best about, that is, about his own people. He submitted a story to a magazine which said, “We are sorry, but we cannot take it”. “I sat down and revised my story, changing the color of the characters and the locale and sent it under an assumed name with a change of address and it was accepted by the same magazine that had refused it, the editor promising to take anything else I might send in providing it was good enough.”

5 This idea recalls Toni Morrison’s notion of rememory, which is not a clear break with the past, but the past is a part of the present and future.

Chapter 2 Notes

Jonson

1 Dedication from Volpone reads "To the / most noble and most equal sisters / THE TWO FAMOUS UNIVERSITIES / for their / love and acceptance shown to his poem / in the presentation / Ben Jonson / The Grateful acknowledger / dedicates both it and himself."
Shakespeare, for example, reworked an already rephrased English translation of an Italian story for his Romeo and Juliet (1595), which the Spanish playwright Lope de Vega retold as a tragicomedy in 1608. Christopher Marlowe’s epic poem Hero and Leander, which is based on an ancient Greek myth, says more about the customs of contemporary England than of the ancient Greeks.

Corvino recalls this image after Celia drops her handkerchief to Scoto. "Hearst! Ere tomorrow I shall be new christened, / And called the Pantalone di Besogniosi" (II.i. 395-6).

Jonson uses "nature" to mean social reality.

Jonson's old way of life, or rather the ideals of it, is the force of natural law, what should by nature occur.

Peggy Knapp furthers this argument in "Ben Jonson and the Publicke Riot" by stating, "to use the stage to speak for the old and chastise the new way would be straightforward didacticism – the catch here is that the stage itself is gold, noise, influx, and marketing. To castigate the "publicke riot" caused by capitalism Jonson is forced to use the public theater, which is, like all economic entities, dependent on commercial enterprise and shares its chaos."
The intrusion of money into the realm of begetting distorted Volpone's relationships and the familial bonds of his marks. In Epicoene, however, money distorts affections by tempting Morose to conceive a child so as not to will his fortune to Dauphine. In effect Morose "spends semen in order to divert money" (Knapp 584).

1 November 1st.

A considerable amount of criticism dealing with The Tempest is centered around New World issues such as: Caliban's reflection of Native Americans, ideas of primitivism from Montaigne, colonialism, and myths concerning new, strange lands.

3 Carol Gesner conjures the Commedia dell 'arte. Several of the comedies of the Commedia dealt with men shipwrecked on an island controlled by a Mago.

4 Most critics point to Prospero as a representation of Shakespeare when incorporating this theory, so Prospero's speeches reflecting his art, magic, are to reflect Shakespeare and his art, poetry.

5 This overlap is intended in respect to Karla Holloway's diagram in Moorings and Metaphors. (P. 102)

The concept of a free public education system was still very new. Black schools had to be developed from nothing and often had to secure resources from the poorest demographic of the population. White schools were not in much better shape especially, as Brodhead highlights, after the state supreme court ruled the property tax mechanism used to raise funds for the schools was unconstitutional. However, with these disadvantages, the Howard school excelled causing the story that "the city fathers are reported to have asked [Alexander Graham, a white teacher from Fayetteville] to create white graded schools for Fayetteville after the embarrassment of a court trial at which five white boys had to make their marks while six black boys signed their names with ease" (Noble, 403).

Sometime it is the other way around. A white person is set down in our midst, but the contrast is just as sharp for me. For instance, when I sit in the drafty basement that is The New World Cabaret with a white person, my color comes. We enter chatting about any little nothing that we
have in common and are seated by the jazz waiters. In the abrupt way that jazz orchestras have, this one plunges into a number. It loses no time in circumlocutions, but gets right down to business. It constricts the thorax and splits the heart with its tempo and narcotic harmonies. This orchestra grows rambunctious, rears on its hind legs and attacks the tonal veil with primitive fury, rending it, clawing it until it breaks through to the jungle beyond. I follow those heathen-follow them exultingly. I dance wildly inside myself; I yell within, I whoop; I shake my assegai above my head, I hurl it true to the mark yeeeeeoooww! I am in the jungle and living in the jungle way. My face is painted red and yellow and my body is painted blue. Mr pulse is throbbing like a war drum. I want to slaughter something-give pain, give death to what, I do not know. But the piece ends. The men of the orchestra wipe their lips and rest their fingers. I creep back slowly to the veneer we call civilization with the last tone and find the white friend sitting motionless in his seat, smoking calmly.

"Good music they have here," he remarks, drumming the table with his fingertips.

Music. The great blobs of purple and red emotion have not touched him. He has only heard what I felt. He is far away and I see him but dimly across the ocean and the
continent that have fallen between us. He is so pale with his whiteness then and I am so colored. (From "How it feels to Be Colored Me reprinted in I Love Myself When I am Laughing...And Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive 154).

2 It is also important to remember that she did, on occasion, write outside of this culture - **Seraph of the Suwanee** - but those same universal threads were incorporated.

**Chapter 4 Notes**


2 Such Jewish jokes were "a colored man, a Jew, an Italian, and a white man agree to contribute five dollars each to the first one that dies so that he might carry some money with him across Jordan. A few months later the Italian dies, and his friends line up at his coffin to fulfill their promise. The white man drops a five-dollar bill in. The black man follows suit. Finally the Jew goes to the coffin, removes the cash and writes the departed Italian a check for fifteen dollars" (Levine 305).

2 During the influx of southern Negroes to the North during and after World War I, the story circulated through
the black communities that the Biblical prophet must have been referring to a black man moving into a white neighborhood in a northern city when he predicted that one 'shall chase a thousand' and that two shall 'put ten thousand to flight - and in dealing with the South - A Negro chauffeur driving a movie magnate through Alabama on their way to Florida develops a terrible toothache. They stop at the next town where the local dentist tells him it will cost $500 to have the tooth pulled. The employer asks how much it would cost to have his tooth pulled and is told $20. Incredulous at the disparity, he demands an explanation. 'Well, it's a major operation, for here in Alabama a Negro doesn't dare open his mouth to a white man, so we have to pull it out his anus' (Levine 312).

3

WE wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,--
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
    We wear the mask!
Vita

Kim T. Chavis is a native of North Carolina. He attended North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University where he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in English and the Master of Arts degree in English and Afro-American literature. Upon completion of the master's degree, Mr. Chavis taught at Elizabeth City State University as a Visiting Professor before he matriculated at Louisiana State University as a doctoral candidate in the English department. Upon completion of his course studies in English and a minor of history, Mr. Chavis accepted a position at the newly formed Baton Rouge Community College, where he was one of the first fulltime faculty members hired. After completing two years at Baton Rouge Community College, Mr. Chavis accepted a position at Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College as a full time faculty member in the English department, where he currently serves. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy will be conferred on Mr. Chavis at the May 2005 Commencement.