

Henry Miller's Economical Need to Bullshit

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Henry Miller has long been an outlying twentieth-century American author, and has often been criticised for the alterations of his personal history in his semi-autobiographical novels. Biographers of Miller have attempted to unravel the intentional misrepresentation in Miller's novels without fully explaining why the author would choose to dissemble and yet simultaneously state that his works were truthful accounts of his life. This article explores the significance that author identity held for Miller by re-examining the economic difficulties he faced in attempting to publish. I contend that Miller's real world ability to bullshit enabled him to enliven his texts with an enhanced image of himself in order to successfully market his literary output; in doing so, the narrative form constructed out of Miller-the-author's monetary struggles is shown to directly play out in Miller-the-narrator's identity. To support this argument, I examine Miller's perspective on lying and its function in art and conclude that Miller's habit of biographical distortion proved an economically viable method for reaching his readers.

“I lived out so many roles portrayed by [Dostoevsky’s] characters (good and bad) that I almost lost my own identity,”¹ observed Henry Miller in his 1963 introduction to his play, *Just Wild About Harry*. Encompassing a significant element in his philosophy, literary critics have probed the depths of Miller’s literature to disentangle his perspectives on individuality and identity that gradually emerged into a doctrine of self-reliance and self-discovery. But as Miller’s introduction intimates, identity does not always represent a single presentation of the self. As he developed into a writer, Miller learned the hard way that man cannot live by words alone. In order for a man to live by words, the words must sell—and to sell is exactly what Miller desired for his works. Within much of his literature is the reality of maintaining economic stability in order to continue writing. To achieve this end, Miller occasionally bent the truth: to portray himself as slightly superhuman or, in some cases, more demihuman. Miller was not above the art of dissembling, nor did he avoid pandering to individuals who could provide him with monetary sustainment. The question that stands, however, is how do Miller’s everyday financial difficulties define some portion of his identity? In other words, how does this struggle influence the message(s) we receive from Miller-the-narrator? Identity is multifaceted, Miller portends in *Just Wild About Harry*; nonetheless, it would be

preposterous—perhaps even blasphemous to some—to suggest that Miller’s narrative identity is a complete hoax. Instead, I contend that Miller’s real world ability to bullshit enabled him to enliven his texts with an enhanced image of himself in order to successfully market his literary output; the narrative form constructed out of Miller-the-author’s monetary struggles is shown to directly play out in Miller-the-narrator’s identity.

Henry Miller was rather crafty in the manipulation of his author-image. Despite this, it is not the intention of this article to disavow or discredit his life-long efforts to awaken in his readers their own personal independence; Miller’s allure for readers will remain dominated by his ability to be perceived as a “trustworthy and trusting friend.”² What I will examine, though, is Miller’s conscious awareness of his need to reach an audience and win some favour, and some money. In order to address this topic, I partition this article into three sections. The first discusses a few broad, theoretical Western perceptions concerning economical causation for misrepresentation. In particular, I narrow the focus to establish how economic disparity serves as a driving factor behind a willingness to pander to another’s expectations, or to intentionally mislead. To demonstrate that Miller-the-narrator is an artful manipulator of reality, the second section examines selections of Miller’s early-published texts, looking at rather colourful examples of his bullshitting techniques, providing a veneer of deceptive bravado, resulting in the sometimes successful hoodwinking of the unknowing recipient. These scenes will lead into the third section, where I explore to what extent Miller-the-author knowingly employed these forms of misrepresentation. Unsuccessful for several years in his attempts to publish, Miller was keenly aware that an author’s true identity could serve as a barrier between the acceptance and refusal of a manuscript. As a result, identity becomes tied to financial success and provides motivation to present his literary personae as something other than its reality.

Before looking at examples from Miller’s texts, it is important to draw a distinction between Miller’s narratives and his more philosophical essays. The narrative form allows Miller to present his autobiography as he desires; not surprisingly then, the narratives in *Tropic of Cancer* (1934), *Black Spring* (1936), *Tropic of Capricorn* (1939), and *The Rosy Crucifixion* trilogy (1949-59) often receive the most critiques for their inaccurate details. Within the narrative of each of these novels, however, Miller expounds his philosophical views of the world; thus far, there has been no scholarly basis to assume Miller intentionally misrepresents his philosophical outlook (see Indrek Männiste’s recent work on Miller’s philosophy). As Miller developed his writing across the decades, he continued to express and clarify his world perspective. The narratives, then, are at the centre of my exploration. “Does Miller’s ‘I’ change across his oeuvre?” ponders James Decker, “in other words, is there a dialogic process wherein versions of the ‘I’ speak to and contradict one another? The narrator of *Cancer* seems very different from the

narrator of *Plexus*—to me any way.”³ While I perceive Decker’s emphasis to be placed more on the philosophical dialogue emanating from Miller-the-narrator, his question is valid in that we as readers must consider the possibility of narrative contradictions in Miller’s literary identity. From a historic perspective, an answer to Decker’s question may come from Lawrence Durrell. One morning, Durrell entered Miller’s apartment in Paris to find the author scribbling away; Miller looked up and said to Durrell, “I have got so little of the truth on paper as yet. It makes me wild with impatience.....And do you know what? [...] Here and there I’m deliberately putting down a lie—just to throw the bastards off the track.”⁴ Clearly acknowledging misrepresentation, Miller’s narratives are intentionally misleading in places while also providing instances where Miller-the-narrator displays for readers his ability to bullshit characters with whom he interacts.

DISSEMBLING AND BULLSHITTING: A TALENT OR MORAL FAILURE?

The social consequences of lying fluctuate throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. As such, scholars across a variety of fields have concentrated their efforts to understand the varying levels of acceptance surrounding this social reality. Narrowing the spectrum of analysis has proven beneficial, as exhibited in the scholarly articles in *Incredible Modernism: Literature, Trust and Deception* (2013), edited by John Attridge and Rod Rosenquest. The work analyses the modernist mindset of the first part of the twentieth century in order to expose—and here I selectively emphasize this point—the intricate relationship between readership and authorship. Additionally, *Incredible Modernism* attempts to link social expectations with the ensuing literary dialogue between the modernist writers. Noting Lionel Trilling’s challenge for authenticity in contemporary literature, the editors emphasize “just how often the norm of sincerity was invoked during the modernist period.”⁵ For Henry Miller, however, sincerity is relative. Setting Miller’s writings within the moral atmosphere of the 1930s, Guy Stevenson posits that Miller, “while attempting to denigrate the very principal of fixed systems of moral order, he himself imposes his own particular moral authority on his text.”⁶ It is true that Miller enacts his own moral standard—one that served his purpose—but not without consequence; as the argument in *Incredible Modernism* demonstrates, the act of dissembling and bullshitting within literature of the period was strongly frowned upon by many prominent writers—and their vast readership.

A modernist emphasis on trust may play a crucial part in Miller’s exclusion from the selectively defined canon of the period.⁷ One of the first well-known authors to give any lengthy attention to Miller’s work was George Orwell, in his now famous essay “Inside the Whale.” Orwell’s essay received backlash from one notable modernist critic who considered it to be misdirected. Rebecca West, who

never esteemed Miller, disagreed with Orwell for his opinion on Miller. In 1946, West wrote to Orwell: “The commonplaceness of [Miller’s] opinions and the emptiness of his language, of which you so rightly complain are, I think, due to the fact that he is, beyond all possible doubt, a humbug. But I do not find him personally an unpleasant humbug.” West establishes her position based on her interactions with Miller, brought about through their shared friendship with Anaïs Nin. Continuing in a more positive yet self-righteous tone, West suggests that if Miller could reform his counterfeiting methods, and “that if he stopped being a humbug he might, with the aid of the fluency he has acquired while writing as a humbug, become quite a valuable writer.”⁸ I will address the issue of humbuggery shortly, but here West is emphasizing that sincerity is a necessary trait for a praiseworthy author, and failure to steadfastly esteem truth is nigh on worthy of banishment from shelves of the canonical library. Similarly, some readers of Miller’s early work detested the mixing of reality and literature, and “remained unwilling to make the distinction between telling lies and writing the kind of fiction that Miller wrote.”⁹ Yet, as we will see, a fundamental reasoning that underscores Miller’s world perception is based on the multifaceted workings of humankind. As he would write in 1939, “The world is perpetually divided on the question of truth versus illusion. The two co-exist in man, creating a perpetual duality, a seemingly unhealable schism.”¹⁰ For Miller-the-author, a personal duality surfaces through the act of insisting that his biographical writing is a truthful testimony, while knowingly distorting historical elements.

West’s accusation that Miller was a humbug deserves some consideration. The *OED* defines humbug as “deceptive or false talk or behaviour.” Additionally, in the essay, “The Prevalence of Humbug,” Max Black notes that while the present day meaning of humbug seems to have shifted away from its dictionary definition, humbug does indeed differ from outright lying. Humbug is, as Black defines it, “deceptive misrepresentation, short of lying, especially by pretentious word or deed, of somebody’s own thoughts, feelings, or attitudes.”¹¹ Black’s emphasis on a person’s “own” feelings suggests that, in the case of an author, if humbug is present in the work, there is intentional self-misrepresentation that thereby misleads the reader. Orwell praises Miller’s *Tropic of Cancer* and *Black Spring*, claiming, “It is as though you could hear a voice speaking to you, a friendly American voice, with no humbug in it [...]. For the moment you have got away from the lies and simplifications, [...] and are dealing with the recognizable experiences of human beings.”¹² Orwell goes too far, I believe, in idealizing the reader’s reaction to the text by ignoring Miller’s humbuggery—precisely what brought on the complaint of Rebecca West—for if Miller presents and represents everyday life, certainly there will be both humbuggery and lying. As Harry Frankfurt humorously begins in his short treatise, *On Bullshit*, “One of the most salient features of our culture is that there is so much bullshit. Everyone knows this. Each of us contributes his share.”¹³

West's divergence from Orwell emphasizes how intentional misrepresentation was viewed as a hindrance between the writer and audience, reiterating Lionel Trilling's standpoint that an author's intended message should be shrouded in sincerity.

In the context of lying, two related terms that may be applied to Miller's writing are dissembling and bullshitting, but these terms do not equate to outright lies. While both may appear as such on the surface, a closer examination of the definitions and circumstances in which deception occurs reveals the difficulty of distinctly labelling them as unethical behaviour. Similar to lying, which also "involves taking intention into account,"¹⁴ the speaker's objective is crucial for specific categorization. Bullshit in particular carries certain connotations in its essence, as seen in George Reisch's definition: "Bullshit [...] engages us differently. Instead of responding to our own needs and concerns, it seeks to *create* needs or perceptions with which it can manipulate us. The difference is important, for it explains why we can ignore bullshit safely but lies only at our peril."¹⁵ The implementer of bullshit, Reisch suggests, "cloaks" his speech; he is not lying, but rather turning his narrative into that which emphasizes a need, and thereby invokes the perception of conveying a legitimate message. Thomas Carson, in *Lying and Deception* (2010), further categorizes this form of manipulation as "evasive bullshit." With this function, we tend to assume that the speaker "often want[s] to deceive others and make them think [the speaker is] answering or trying to answer their questions"; however, Carson clarifies, "not all cases of evasion by means of bullshit involve the intent to deceive [...]. There are cases in which one is rewarded for making a performance in response to a question."¹⁶ Without knowing the author's intentions it is difficult to aptly and differentially label dissembling discourse; therefore, it is up to the recipient (or the reader) to discern how the message should be processed and categorized.

Looking further into the categorization of lying, we find that ethical ideologies vary greatly from individual to individual and have a basis in idealism and relativism. In his reputed article, "A Taxonomy of Ethical Ideologies," Donelson Forsyth outlines broad delimiters for ethical behaviour. Categorizing these behaviours, Forsyth argues that a person holding a high level of idealism will fall into a situationist or an absolutist grouping based on their level (low or high) of relativism. On the other hand, a person with low idealism will make decisions from either a subjectivist or an exceptionist standpoint, according to their level of relativism. These two groupings are also considered relativistic and utilitarian, respectively. In particular, the subjectivist (or relativist) establishes their judgment on "personal values and perspective rather than universal moral principle,"¹⁷ or what occasionally falls into the category of an ethical egoist. In doing so, the low-level idealism of the subjectivist differs from a Hegelian interpretation of subjectivism in that freedom to lie is not linked to "the human as an individual and as a member of a community,"¹⁸ but is given over to a more isolationist

determination of right and wrong. Miller, ever the anti-idealist, vehemently opposes such ideology. In a 1935 letter to Herbert Read, Miller plainly states, “Not a drop of idealism in me,”¹⁹ elsewhere associating it with “the cheap idealism of Americans.”²⁰ Miller is most closely aligned with “subjectivist notions of the artist role,”²¹ as he “systematically refuses the moral logic of social consciousness and day-to-day compassion,”²² signifying by doing so, that he places himself—not above—but outside social constructs, thereby providing himself an egocentric sense of freedom in personal conduct.

There is, however, a more tangible and monetary motivation behind lying. In some cases, a financial disadvantage may justify the misrepresentation in order for the speaker to appear to be on equal ground. In their scientific analysis, “Lying to Level the Playing Field,” Gino and Peirce find that “inequity or equity concerns may simultaneously or alternatively motivate dishonesty through two mechanisms: emotional distress [...] and altered moral judgments about the dishonest behaviour.”²³ When applied to economic terms, the latter motivator suggests that the more financial disparity exists between the two parties, the more potential there is by one party to disregard the negative social valuation of dishonest behaviour. Indeed, dishonesty becomes a tool through which levelling of a person’s presumed financial position may be achieved. In other studies on lying in relation to incentives, researchers have established that within certain contexts, “when the gains are high, the frequency of lying increases with experience.”²⁴ Additionally, another study has found that “the introduction of a market context increases the weight people place on self-interest.”²⁵ I cite such scholarship not to imply that Miller increases his lying the more financially distraught he becomes; instead, these studies reveal the propensity of an economic situation to impact a willingness to disregard potential negative consequences of dissembling choices. The introduction of a “market” is valuable for approaching Miller’s writing, as external motivators driving the composition of his early work and the contextual settings represented within the narratives, reveal how various markets—specifically, publishing and consumer—influence Miller’s intentions. Miller biographer Arthur Hoyle has rightfully noted that Miller was not writing to the market,²⁶ but Miller was very much aware of the need *for* a market.

AN IDENTITY OF ECONOMICS

Securing money is perhaps the most recurring and defining preoccupation for the identity of Miller-the-narrator. One of the particular traits that Miller employs in relating his New York adventures is how gracefully he escapes the potential embarrassment of being found without sufficient funds. It is a ploy repeated over and over throughout Miller’s New York-based narratives. An

exemplary scene occurs in *Aller Retour New York*, Miller's 1935 lengthy letter intended for his friend, Alfred Perlès. The "letter" to Perlès was never sent.²⁷ Instead, with the help of Anaïs Nin, Miller polished the prose and published the letter as a 150-page pamphlet. By directly publishing the letter, Miller removes the intimacy as well as the possible validity of the intended message to his friend, and thereby misrepresents the familiarity of a private letter, leading us to believe it was actually published after being read by Perlès. This point aside, a particular event retold in the letter reveals that Miller's tactics involve not only verbal misrepresentation but also demonstrates that he understands the importance in bluffing a successful appearance when engaging in a money finagling scheme. In other words, Miller is fully aware of his dissembling and even more aware of the stakes involved. The scene begins with an initial ruse of seeking out an old friend who works in a shady New York bar; Miller enters the bar, hoping for drinks or an expensive sixty-five cent dance with a hostess. "I knew when I entered the joint that I didn't have enough money to sit down and hire a dance partner," he explains; yet, this only challenges him to "[walk] in brisk and dapper, looking my alertest(!)." Enquiring after his friend, Miller is directed to approach a rough looking bouncer and being conscious that he has the appearance of money only encourages his façade. While chatting with the man, Miller commences his eloquent bullshitting: "I asked again about my old friend Jack Kweiler. Said I had been away for about ten years, been up to Alaska and all that shit."²⁸ He continues by convincing the bouncer of his close relation with the bar's employee, and receives a drink on the house. In this setting, Miller assumes the position of the "information control[er]," as he is able to manipulate the situation, which in turn "enhances negotiatory power,"²⁹ allowing him to gain the trust of the bouncer and thereby acquire what he is financially incapable of otherwise procuring. Intent on playing the part to the fullest, Miller claims to have "fished around for my wallet as though I couldn't stand for a thing like that, but he wouldn't listen to me." Successfully acquiring his goal, Miller boasts, "a little front and mustachio comes in handy." He authoritatively dishes out advice to Perlès, stating, "Always look the part! Look 'em straight in the eye and be innocent! Always say you've been to Alaska, or Tahiti. I said Alaska because I wasn't sunburned enough to have been in Tahiti ten years. That was quick thinking for me."³⁰ And with these words, Miller moves to the next topic and the exhibition has passed without any apparent consequences. Yet, this scene epitomizes the methods by which Miller markets himself in that "what Miller fears is a literature that has forgotten to speak to the average man, the man on the street."³¹ In successfully marketing oneself to an audience there is clear agreement in the words of Miller-the-author and Miller-the-narrator: the dialogue of the street demands the ability to bullshit.

In this typical Milleresque scene, Miller-the-narrator emulates a modern Melvillian confidence-man. His interaction with the bouncer recalls Melville's man

in grey, who approaches a charitable lady, asking her if she has confidence in mankind. When the woman balks at replying, the man in grey feeds her with a tall tale of his trustworthy nature and charitable cause. Returning to his question, he demands the woman demonstrate her confidence in him, declaring, “Prove it. Let me have twenty dollars.”³² When the lady offers her money, the man notes her donation to his fictitious charity in his little booklet. The act of recording the donation in the booklet and Miller’s feigned search for the wallet to pay for his drink finalize the misrepresentations of the two men by establishing an association between dialogue and action, a proverbial demonstration of actions speaking louder than words. While the tactics of extracting the desired object may differ—and there are numerous accounts by both Miller-the-author and Miller-the-narrator of bold-faced requests for money—the outcomes are similar. Both Miller and the confidence man’s charade result in some tangible form of economic gain through the proffering of a made-up narrative.

Aside from stories of barroom successes, *Tropic of Capricorn* provides a more purposeful moment of bluffing with intent: the need to find employment and earn an income. During a period after the First World War when he was incapable of landing a job, Miller-the-narrator happens upon a man who takes sympathy on his dejected position. Entering a large mail-order house, he gives a long-winded speech to the editor. By the end, Miller lands himself a job as assistant editor, to aid in compiling “an enormous compendium of horseshit which was put out once a year and which took the whole year to make ready. I hadn’t the slightest idea what it was all about.”³³ Putting on a front of a responsible employee, motivated to assist his employer, he secures himself a steady job. By this point in the narrative, however, the reader has been exposed to the emerging identity of Miller-the-narrator and it is to no surprise that shortly afterwards he is fired when discovered writing an essay on Nietzsche during work hours. Afterwards, a bit of regret emerges for having failed the editor: “I wished it had been possible to prove to him [...] that his faith was justified. I wished I could have justified myself before the whole world at that moment: I would have jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge if it would have convinced people that I wasn’t a heartless son of a bitch.”³⁴ Many of his stories begin and end in this fashion: hungry, maybe looking for a nip of alcohol, in need of money for food and rent, or just plain down on his luck. Miller-the-narrator’s verbal suavity provides a means to an end, as his want of finances encourages the risks he takes and thereby drives the narrative for his readers.

Other outside factors were pressing on Miller during the early 1920s, and his need to provide for his wife and child brings him to stoop to what he considers the lowest form of occupation: a telegraph messenger. These moments of financial desperation provide Miller-the-narrator opportunity for his most adroit examples of masking the truth. In *Tropic of Capricorn*, Miller retells his experience with the Western Union Telegraph Company, renamed the Cosmodemonic Telegraph

Company. Miller's success in becoming a manager for the company is precipitated by an outright rejection of his employment application. After being denied work, Miller wonders if the person had misconstrued him for a college student, but that, he concludes, could not be possible because "I had [...] honored myself on the application with a Ph.D. degree from Columbia University." His pride wounded, the next day he storms into the main office demanding to speak to the president, but it is the general manager who eventually hears the story that Miller selectively relates. Miller discerns that a bit of dissembling was required, since, "after years of job hunting I had naturally become quite adept, I knew not only what *not* to say, but I knew also what to imply, what to insinuate."³⁵ Thomas Carson distinguishes withholding information from deception by arguing that withholding information "is to fail to offer information that would help someone acquire true beliefs and/or correct false beliefs."³⁶ Miller is aware that his retelling of the events is intentionally misleading, as he explains, "I let him wheedle it out of me to suit his fancy, observing all the time which way the wind was blowing."³⁷ So productive is his performance that Miller is awarded the position of hiring manager when the day before he was unable to acquire even a simple messenger position.

These varied examples from *Aller Retour New York* and *Tropic of Capricorn*, exemplify part of Miller's philosophy in his first-person semi-autobiography. His peers in the Villa Seurat circle in Paris considered his style an extension of his identity. In the drive to interpret his life, Miller's "philosophical insights," infused within his narrative, were considered crucial by his circle of writers "precisely because they believed that he was always writing about himself [...], recording that which was 'true' rather than 'logical,' plotting the parameters of his own personal experience in order to get to the truth and demonstrate it to his readers."³⁸ Performance is also characteristic of Miller's literary personae, both on and off the page, and it is important to consider that "Miller privileges language play and de-emphasizes facts," as described by James Decker in his work on Miller's narrative style.³⁹ Miller-the-author's personal identity is partly born out of his refusal to participate in an American capitalist system, initiating him into a subterranean environment of economic instability, thereby requiring him to resourcefully provide himself with everyday monetary necessities. Such capacity is then transposed into a literary portrayal of himself and finally on to his readers, factual or not. Writing in *Black Spring*, Miller's first-person identity becomes tied with the distinctive style of his writing, "My book is the man that I am, the confused man, the negligent man, the reckless man; the lusty, obscene, boisterous, thoughtful, scrupulous, lying, diabolically truthful man that I am."⁴⁰ The tricky element for the reader is to decipher where Miller-the-author and Miller-the-narrator diverge. For Miller's biographers this task has proven difficult; as a result, certain critics, such as Rebecca West, have rested disparaging critiques against Miller's true identity.

An examination of Miller's creative misrepresentation would be impartial

without briefly looking at the effect of Dostoevsky on Miller-the-author and in Miller-the-narrator. The extent of Dostoevsky's impact on Miller has warranted an in-depth analysis in Maria Bloshteyn's *The Making of a Counter-Culture Icon: Henry Miller's Dostoevsky* (2007). Bloshteyn highlights Miller's reference to General Ivolgin, a character in Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, who has a propensity for tall tales; in *Tropic of Capricorn*, Miller draws a comparison between the dissembling Ivolgin and a Russian named Kronski with whom the narrator converses. Kronski, Miller-the-narrator and Miller-the-author have identities that mirror—to some degree—General Ivolgin, and Bloshteyn emphasizes that this overlay “carries even deeper metatextual implications concerning the similarity of the need to invent and relate stories about oneself that never happened (‘inspired’ lying) and the need to invent and write stories as a part of a literary text (inspired ‘lying’).”⁴¹ From Dostoevsky to Miller, the presence of a lying character may seem inconsequential, but it becomes more significant when we consider the extent of the influence the Russian author had on Miller's life. In another significant work on Miller, *Henry Miller and How He Got That Way* (2011), Katy Masuga examines the manipulating mind games transpiring between Miller, his wife Mona and her lover, Stasia, in 1928, as played out in Miller's narrative *Nexus* (1960). As Masuga argues, Dostoevsky's novels and the philosophies therein serve as stimuli for the group's unhealthy relationship: “the three continually engage in reciprocally degrading behaviour, constantly upping the ante of lie-telling and insults. Miller explains that Stasia lies in order to please Mona, whereas Mona lies in the attempt to reinvent herself. Miller himself lies to partake in the perversity of the game.”⁴² Miller-the-author would recall the Dostoevskian inferences in a letter to his friend Emil Schnellock, envisioning that after receiving a copy of *Tropic of Cancer*, June would be “grinning” and “telling the next-comer what a funny dud I was, that now and then I had a Dostoevsky touch.”⁴³ Alfred Perlès, in his memoir of the period, insisted that Miller needed June's lying: “He needed the lying machine, the bag of lies, for his own personal well-being.”⁴⁴ This need plays out in Miller-the-narrator's undeniable lying and misrepresentation. But in order to understand the meaning, we must turn to a closer examination of Miller-the-author.

FROM PAMPHLETEER TO NOVELIST

As noted above, Miller's semi-autobiographical novels have often been exposed for their historical inaccuracies, and so, I will avoid rehashing these in this final section. I will instead begin this part of the analysis with Miller's methodology in his early efforts to publish, while living with his second wife, June Mansfield (Mona of *Nexus*). Miller's consciousness concerning an author's identity is apparent as he readily applied June's name to a number of his early writings. Doing so enabled June to pass them off as her own writing to her dancehall admirers.⁴⁵

Miller's *Mezzotints* are a particularly useful example of such writing. Privately published in 1925 with \$100 funding from a friend,⁴⁶ the *Mezzotints* were small, coloured cardboard broadsides that Miller printed and, on all but one, signed with "June E. Mansfield." A previous business venture of selling candies door to door had revealed June's adeptness with selling, and this proved even truer when presenting herself as the author of the broadsides. "With the Mezzotint racket," notes Mary Dearborn, "Miller foresaw the merchandizing of art, and of the written word, which would color his entire career."⁴⁷ His first real "market" was certainly small-scale; yet, writing June's name in place of his own represented a conflicted sense of identity.⁴⁸ The clash between finances and identity occurs with these early writings since "Miller became a mere literature factory, producing 'works of art' which were packaged, marketed and sold by his wife under her own brand label,"⁴⁹ thereby benefitting financially while robbing Miller of his own artistic sense of worth.

Dearborn relates that out of the *Mezzotint* racket a potentially worthwhile connection ensued when June met Howell French, who worked for the powerful newspaper magnate, Randolph Hearst.⁵⁰ French proposed that June compose articles for a monthly column in one of the Hearst newspapers; even before receiving the first article, French began paying June—and therefore Miller—a weekly stipend of \$100.⁵¹ Dearborn wrongfully states that there is no written record of these articles (in Dearborn's defence, she may be referring to a published record of the articles); fortunately, however, the Miller archives at UCLA and the Smithsonian Archives of American Art hold a total of seven typed manuscripts from 1925, signed in June's name. In a handwritten note within the UCLA folder, Miller jotted down the following: "These are original carbons of texts by me and signed under June Mansfield's name. Probably written for prospective column in the Hearst papers, as related in *Sexus* or *Plexus*. Very important!"⁵² One 5-page essay entitled "Haridas the Pamphleteer," dated June 7, 1925, is particularly interesting as it makes fun of the intellectual efforts of Haridas, a graduate of a Bombay university who has decided to come to America to profess his worldly wisdom through the distribution of broadsides, pamphlets and public lectures. After an initial success, his efforts to reach his audience dwindle due to the obtuse nature and irrelevancy of his words. In his "truthful" efforts Haridas fails to garner an audience and Miller mocks the irony of the pamphleteer with a bit of intertextuality by including Oscar Wilde's 1889 short dialogue play, "The Decay of Lying." Miller, I believe, intentionally misquotes Wilde's character as saying: "Fact is a dead man's corpse. It is Fiction that gives Fact a quickening, vivifying touch of Life..."⁵³ This sentence does not appear in Wilde's work, but the following sentence in Miller's quote is verbatim: "As one knows the poet by his fine music, so one can recognise the liar by his rich rhythmic utterance."⁵⁴ That the second half of the quoted section is correct leads me to believe that Miller was humorously inserting his own "rich

rhythmic utterance” in lieu of Wilde’s words. The quote appears at the beginning of Haridas’s demise as a pamphleteer, when he realizes that the American audiences to which he is professing his wisdoms are more likely “subnormals” than “normals.” Similar to Haridas, Miller’s *Mezzotint* broadsides were ignored by the masses, finding sales mostly among the men who sought attention from the pseudo author, June.

Miller’s parody within “The Decay of Lying” serves as an example par excellence of Wilde’s aesthetics. The rhythm Miller utilizes signifies that he is the willing liar that Wilde lampoons. By inserting his own phrase into the quotation, Miller knowingly rejuvenates the art of lying and thus saves it from “decay”. This supplementation, ironically, exemplifies Wilde’s dialogue: lying has become too commonplace, having lost its poetic status. As Wilde’s character claims, “Lying and poetry are arts [...]. Indeed, they have their technique.”⁵⁵ To artfully dissemble with crafted, rhythmic utterances is worthy of praise. Perhaps Miller had such aesthetics in mind when he penned his farcical *Money and How it Gets that Way* (1938). In this text, Miller explores the process by which physical objects gain monetary value—be it that of seashells or gold. Miller authoritatively claims that these values are derived from a variety of cultural aspects:

We know from the rope-and-quoit system of notation used by the Incas that number and tale amounted to the same thing. By the same token we also know that they must have been a very old race, since the etymology of the word “tale” always includes the notion of number, which the Chinese, who are again a very old people, have preserved in their word “tael”. It goes to show, if we pursue the question far enough, that in the long run men will always prefer payment in kind, which is tale.⁵⁶

Miller is running around in nonsensical circles here, linking tale (a total), tael (unit of weight) and then again tale (a narrative) together with the seemingly congruous notion that since both the Incas and Chinese are “very old people”, there must be some logical connection between these methods of payment based solely on the words. Wilde’s definition of a poetic liar surfaces through what I consider to be Miller’s employment of the three variants of “tale”. Where the circular reasoning stops is through a final payment with a tale, or narrative. My reasoning is supported by Miller’s further musing that the “red Indians not only used money (their wampum) as a medium of exchange but also as an alphabet. [...]. In any event it was always money, and, whether it was the account of a famous battle or just a mythological tale, it could always be exchanged for food or weapons—or, as happened later on, for rum.”⁵⁷ In Miller’s reasoning, the narrative becomes the financial reward for the narrator; the more artfully elaborate, the more handsomely rewarded.

Returning to Miller’s own historical narrative, upon arriving in Paris, Miller

transformed his writing style, beginning to forge his own literary singularity in Miller-the-narrator. Yet, as with the ghost-writing under June's name, Miller knew the importance of presenting an alluring identity. In letters to his New York friend, Emil Schnellock, Miller reveals his philosophical explanation behind altering facts. As with all writers, Miller understands that writing is imbued with personality; when writing autobiographically, his self-presentation can be manipulated, as the author chooses. Discussing *Tropic of Cancer* with Schnellock in 1932, Miller asserts that the transgressions of the truth are intentional and crucial:

And when you detect discrepancies in the narrative, lies, distortions, etc., don't think it is bad memory—no, it is quite deliberate, for where I go on to falsify I am in reality only extending the sphere of the real, carrying out the implicit truth in situations that life sometimes, and art most of the time, conceals. Do you follow me? And if I succeed with my aim and intention you will have a fine presentation of contrasting lies—June the pathological liar and myself the creative liar—points where we meet, explosions where we disagree, tangential approaches, logarithmic tabulations, parabolas, etc. I am the most sincere liar that ever lived. You will see that. But to myself I lie almost negligibly. I am writing it out of my system, wiping it out, as it were, all that kind of lying. That is the real purpose of art—among all its real purposes, which nobody understands anyway.⁵⁸

Miller's alterations, he claims, lead to genuine revelations of life experience. Artistic manipulation enhances "the sphere of the real"; and for Miller, this allows him to delve below the depths of perceived reality. An emphasis to reveal the "implicit truth" through lying resonates with the implications of Nietzsche's pensée: "In speaking about 'truthfulness', perhaps no one yet has been sufficiently truthful."⁵⁹ Proudly labelling himself a creative liar, Miller is emphasizing a transformative power in misrepresentation, by turning it into an instrument useful for uncovering what lays concealed within the quotidian. He does not consider these alterations as devious lies, as he demonstrates an awareness of a broader implication to his "discrepancies." Later, Miller would recall the impact of cleansing through writing, when discussing with Alfred Perlès in *Art and Outrage* (1961): "the more I wrote the more I became a human being.—I was getting the poison out of my system, no doubt. Curiously enough this poison had a tonic affect for others."⁶⁰ Even though Miller's work is entwined with willing deceptions, he is aware that his writing has served a purpose, regardless the accuracy.

Very early, Miller appears to have justified his dissembling with the argument that through lying, a cleansing occurs. He uses writing to regenerate himself, enacting his belief that in order to live, one must first die. In his letter to Schnellock, we see the workings of what would soon become Miller's philosophical conception of "China," or "the ultimate goal of the *inhuman artist*" and the eventual

destination of the artist's "philosophical voyage."⁶¹ "China is a projection into the spiritual domain of [the artist's] biologic condition of non-being," Miller argues in "Creative Death"; he continues, "It is the expression of a man's wish to triumph over the reality, over becoming. The artist's dream of the impossible, the miraculous, is simply the resultant of his inability to adapt himself to reality. He creates, therefore a reality of his own."⁶² Indeed, this created "reality" has played out in Miller's works, resulting in his narratives indisputably being labelled as "semi-autobiographical." Miller is not condoning the act of intentional misrepresentation; instead, he clarifies in his letter that in order to overcome the limitations of reality, he must purge himself of lying. It may be that to move closer to his perception of the artist, initially, he must lie. And at this early stage, the Miller-Schnellock letter reveals an awareness of the need to expunge from himself—perhaps not completely—this particular form of factual lying.

There exists in Miller-the-author, and witnessed through Miller-the-narrator, an economic necessity, or financial driving force behind what would eventually become an inextricable part of Miller's identity. Hoyle's recent biography, *The Unknown Henry Miller* (2014), provides detailed explanation of Miller's assorted avenues of publication, especially while his "notorious" novels were still banned in America.⁶³ When considering Miller's financial struggle as a thematic topic in his work, the following analogy posited by Alec Marsh may prove useful: "money is to the economy as words are to language: money is the signifier of value and the bearer of desire. Money, in short, is like a language: it is the script we use to spell out our American identities."⁶⁴ Marsh highlights that value is attributed through money proportionate to the level of desire, as money facilitates a particular identity. For Miller, this translates to the unavoidable need to sell his words (and watercolours) in order to continue his writing. In "An Open Letter to All and Sundry" (1943), Miller states his necessity for funding in clear terms: "The primary thing is this, that whatever money is given me constitutes a mortgage on the future, *my future as a writer*."⁶⁵ Miller's determination to situate himself outside the American system of what he considered enslavement to work and consumerism brought him to the forefront of the struggle of the American artist. In the same letter, Miller vents, "[a]n artist who is non-commercial has about as much chance for survival as a sewer rat. If he remains faithful to his art he compromises in life, by begging and borrowing."⁶⁶ Such a plight so greatly impacted Miller that he became very critical with America's apparent disregard of the financial condition of the artist.

LOOKING BACK

I want to conclude by looking at the aged Miller, the Miller-the-author looking back on his years of writing and, in some sense, amazed at his own

achievement. But he is also a cautious Miller striving to preserve the integrity of his own biographical identity. In Miller's early effort to find his authorial voice, he was intentionally dependant on the great writers who, in many ways, had brought him to the point of embarking on his writing journey. This indebtedness to other authors reveals itself in a scene from Robert Snyder's *The Henry Miller Odyssey* (1968), filmed in Los Angeles and Europe. On a visit to the UCLA archive library, Miller sits with Lawrence Clark Powell as he unfolds a large handwritten "planning" chart created by Miller during his preparations for *Tropic of Capricorn*; easily detectable in the dialogue is the amusement the two older men find in Miller's section on styles:

HM: Styles, let's see that one...

LCP: Dostoevsky for Xerxes Society...

HM: See, see; you get me what a cunning bastard I am—and what shall I say, a cheat? Still I'm thinking what style I can use, not my own, do y'understand.

LCP: (continues reading): Dreiser for desertion theme; Sherwood Anderson for yearnings and introspection.

HM: How do you like that! That hits me, I don't remember all this.

LCP: Henry Miller, for what? What was left?

HM: Yeah, where do I come in?

LCP: You're the coda; the index!⁶⁷

In referring to his younger self as a "cheat", Miller sees a flaw in this form of appropriation, as doing so hinders him from finding his own identity. It is worth considering that through the younger Miller's efforts to successfully publish, he chose to borrow from the styles of successful (and published) writers. Miller had laid out the plans for *Capricorn* before *Cancer* was published, so he was not yet stylistically confident to represent himself, nor had he established the authorial identity he knew was necessary to reach and expand his audience.

The transposition between the world of reality and that which the artist creates was most challenged during Miller's lifetime by the work of Jay Martin, perhaps the best known of the author's biographers. Martin pressed Miller for the truth behind many of the scenes in the autobiographical narratives, and met with multiple rebuffs from the author. In his preface to *Always Merry and Bright: The Life of Henry Miller*,⁶⁸ Martin addresses the issue head on: "Miller's account of his life is self-evidently misleading on innumerable points."⁶⁹ In an interview between the two men, Miller would explain that he considered himself to have "written my own biography [...]. Whatever isn't said in my books isn't really important. [...]. No, anyone who tried to write about me would only get one slant. I've written my own truest biography."⁷⁰ Such a stance did not dissuade or fool Martin. On the contrary, a reply letter to Miller in September, 1971, demonstrates how Martin intentionally sought to pry into Miller's deceptions. The letter further elaborates on the quote from Martin's introduction: "You next stated that there didn't have to be a

biography written about you since you had written your own biography; but you then went on to add that, of course, you hadn't told all the truth, and that an independent biography would illuminate the process of artistic creation."⁷¹ Miller paid specific attention to these sentences and underlined "told all the truth" while placing one of many question marks in the margins. An underlying facet of Miller's well-known dislike for biographers surfaces in Martin's letter, as any biographer attempting to uncover Miller's identity must contrast the facts with what Miller perceived as the embodied truth⁷² of his work. Ultimately, then, the identity Miller had strived to create, and the market for his material, might be reconstructed through the biographer's reinterpretation—or, as Miller believed, a mis-reinterpretation.

I turn finally to perhaps Miller's most open and forthright statements on the significant value that lying has for art. A meeting with Barbara Kraft in 1979 would be Miller's last lengthy interview. Perhaps the most important question that Kraft asks of Miller concerns his perception of truth in art, to which he immediately flips the question around and answers in terms of the role of lying in art. Kraft asks, "what about truth in writing, truth in art?" and Miller replies at length:

About truth? Well let me put it in a humorous way to begin with. There's no harm in lying a bit. In a sense art is a great lie. It's the one great lie. It isn't a replica of life. It's what life ought to be in the mind of the artist or what it could be. [Other writers,] they're writing about life as it is, but I don't think that's what we want in art—life as it is. We want life as it might be or could be. Not even as it ought to be, that's for the religionist. I think that all exaggeration in art is very justifiable. Without it, art is flat, stale and unprofitable. There has to be this exaggeration. Life is too bleak.⁷³

Unequivocally, Miller is insisting on the presence of lying in art in order to enhance art to a higher level, in order for art to meet the need of its recipients; yet, Miller believes in the purposeful aggrandizement of art in order to benefit, rather than demoralize, the participant. We can infer, then, that by adding colouring to his texts, Miller empowers his readers. As Caroline Blinder has observed, "within Miller's particular framework, the artist is both powerful [...] and yet curiously indifferent to the collective good, which is why he laments the fact that the mob is governed by religious restrictions."⁷⁴ The power that the artist wields through their work need not follow the Biblical commandment of "Thou shall not lie," for that merely directs the "flat, stale, and unprofitable." For Miller, misrepresentation gives us a valuable form of marketable art. That Miller inverts Kraft's question by answering not on truth but on the necessity of aggrandizement illustrates Miller's lifelong belief of indeed being the "lying, diabolically truthful man that I am."

CODA

I want to end by reiterating that I do not perceive Miller ever to have had malicious intent behind his dissembling. Authorial identity and the marketplace are entwined, Miller learned early on, and this fact influenced his self-presentation in his art. In the construction of his narratives, Miller paints an image of himself that, without much convincing, readers could construe as a direct and lifelike characterization of Miller-the-author. Nevertheless, duplicity is very similar to a two-edged sword, Frankfurt suggests in *On Bullshit*, in that “[h]owever studiously and conscientiously the bullshitter proceeds, it remains true that he is also trying to get away with something.”⁷⁵ Just as the marketer, intent on selling a product, creatively elaborates on the product’s best qualities by avoiding a rigid and exact depiction, so does Miller manipulate his own image, at times concealing and camouflaging his true self, wearing perhaps a Dostoevskian identity. I would again postulate that Miller’s deceptions—or his humbuggery, to recall West—had a direct impact on his association with the canonical authors of his period. For West, and others in her guild, Henry Miller-the-narrator is rebuked in his freedom to lie like a Leopold Bloom precisely because Henry Miller-the-author insisted in calling his works biographical, as he never considered *Tropic of Cancer* a novel.⁷⁶ As the decades passed, however, Miller’s own prediction concerning his prosaic lying appeared to come true: he had substantially cleansed himself of the poison in his system. Like the two *Tropic* books, *The Rosy Crucifixion* required Miller to don the personae of the much younger, diabolical Miller. Yet, after the 1959 publication of the final volume in the trilogy, Miller would never complete another publication with the young Miller-the-narrator on centre stage. Failing to finish *Nexus II* and incapable or unwilling to begin *Draco and the Ecliptic*, Miller’s purported pure and simplistic biography concerning his original intentions for his biographical writings,⁷⁷ it appears that Miller had finally gained command of his humbuggery. Originating from an economic instability, the bullshitting nature of Henry Miller the narrator, as constructed by Henry Miller, remains one of the most controversial—yet profitable—American depictions of an author in the twentieth century.

NOTES

¹ Henry Miller, *Just Wild About Harry: A Melo-Melo in Seven Scenes* (New York: New Directions, 1963), 11.

² Guillermo O’Joyce, *Miller, Bukowski and Their Enemies: Essays on Contemporary Culture* (London: Pinter & Martin, 2011), 8.

³ Quoted in Frank Marra, “The Dostoevsky/Miller Project: Investigations in Human Consciousness and Doubt,” *Nexus: The International Henry Miller Journal* 4 (2007): 147.

⁴ Quoted in Jay Martin, *Always Merry and Bright: The Life of Henry Miller: An Authorized Biography* (Santa Barbara: Capra, 1978), viii. Later, in *Art and Outrage*, Durrell would recount, “It was time to catch my train, but I lingered reluctantly under the church at Alesia, reflecting on the nature of Henry’s particular struggle with ink and paper. Its very violence contains a lesson which the wise reader will be able to interpret to himself. ‘Truth’ I want to get to, the Truth about myself! How much or how little truth did he find on the way—on this long journey from the position of an American Villon to that of Chuang Tzu?” Alfred Perlès, *Art and Outrage: A Correspondence about Henry Miller between Alfred Perlès and Lawrence Durrell/with an Intermission by Henry Miller*. (London: Village Press, 1973), 9–10.

⁵ *Incredible Modernism: Literature, Trust and Deception*, eds. John Attridge and Rod Rosenquist (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 11.

⁶ Guy Stevenson, “Henry Miller and Morality,” in *Henry Miller: New Perspectives* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), 69.

⁷ Clearly, the propensity for labelling Miller as too sexually explicit to be indoctrinated into the modernist canon is a long-held (and overwrought) opinion for his exclusion. For an interesting, informal survey on Miller in the academic classroom, see Arthur Hoyle’s findings in *The Unknown Henry Miller: A Seeker in Big Sur* (New York: Arcade, 2014), 323.

⁸ *Selected Letters of Rebecca West*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 208–09.

⁹ Robert Ferguson, *Henry Miller: A Life* (New York: Norton, 1991), 245.

¹⁰ Henry Miller, *The Wisdom of the Heart* (New York: New Directions, 1941), 84.

¹¹ Max Black, *The Prevalence of Humbug and Other Essays* (London: Cornell University Press, 1983), 143.

¹² George Orwell, *A Collection of Essays* (Orlando: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1981), 213. One of Miller’s letter-writing friends, Michel Fraenkel chided Miller concerning the benefits of allowing oneself to worry, telling Miller that “You’ll be poisoned by your own dishonesty. Henry Valentine Miller, the man who don’t care, who goes to the toilet with Lao-Tse once every thousand years, is a humbug.” Henry Miller and Michel Fraenkel, *Hamlet, Volume II* (Paris: Carrefour, 1939), 227.

¹³ Harry Frankfurt, *On Bullshit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 1.

¹⁴ Hans van Ditmarsch, “Dynamics of Lying,” *Synthese* 191, no. 5 (2014): 773.

¹⁵ George Reisch, “The Pragmatics of Bullshit, Intelligently Designed,” in *Bullshit and Philosophy: Guaranteed to Get Perfect Results Every Time*, eds. Gary Hardcastle and George Reisch (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 2011), 43.

- ¹⁶ Thomas Carson, *Lying and Deception: Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 60.
- ¹⁷ Donelson R. Forsyth, "A Taxonomy of Ethical Ideologies," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 39, no. 1 (1980): 176.
- ¹⁸ Dimitris Vardoulakis, "The Freedom to Lie," *Philosophy Today* 58, no. 2 (2014): 142.
- ¹⁹ Henry Miller, "Henry Miller's Letters to Herbert Read: 1935-1958," *Nexus: The International Henry Miller Journal* 5 (2008): 5.
- ²⁰ Henry Miller, *Tropic of Cancer* (New York: Grove/Atlantic, 2007), 93.
- ²¹ Kingsley Widmer, *Henry Miller*, Revised Edition (New York: Twayne, 1990), 100.
- ²² Stevenson, "Henry Miller and Morality," 64.
- ²³ Francesca Gino and Lamar Pierce, "Lying to Level the Playing Field: Why People May Dishonestly Help or Hurt Others to Create Equity," *Journal of Business Ethics* 95, supplement 1 (2010): 100.
- ²⁴ Uri Gneezy, Bettina Rockenbach, and Marta Serra-Garcia, "Measuring Lying Aversion," *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 93 (2013): 299.
- ²⁵ Alexander W. Cappelen, Erik Ø Sørensen, and Bertil Tungodden, "When Do We Lie?," *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 93 (2013): 259.
- ²⁶ Hoyle, *The Unknown Henry Miller*, 31.
- ²⁷ Ferguson, *Henry Miller*, 246.
- ²⁸ Henry Miller, *Aller Retour New York* (New York: New Directions, 1991), 29–30.
- ²⁹ Roy J. Lewicki and Robert J. Robinson, "Ethical and Unethical Bargaining Tactics: An Empirical Study," *Journal of Business Ethics* 17, no. 6 (1998): 666.
- ³⁰ Miller, *Aller Retour New York*, 29–30.
- ³¹ Caroline Blinder, *A Self-Made Surrealist: Ideology and Aesthetics in the Work of Henry Miller*, (Rochester: Camden, 2000), 39.
- ³² Herman Melville, *The Confidence-Man* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 57.
- ³³ Henry Miller, *Tropic of Capricorn* (New York: Grove, 1994), 316.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 317–18.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.
- ³⁶ Carson, *Lying and Deception*, 56.
- ³⁷ Miller, *Tropic of Capricorn*, 18.
- ³⁸ Maria R. Bloshteyn, *The Making of a Counter-Culture Icon: Henry Miller's Dostoevsky* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 121.
- ³⁹ James Decker, *Henry Miller and Narrative Form: Constructing the Self, Rejecting Modernity* (New York: Taylor, 2005), 53.
- ⁴⁰ Henry Miller, *Black Spring* (New York: Grove, 1994), 23.
- ⁴¹ Bloshteyn, *The Making of a Counter-Culture Icon*, 84.
- ⁴² Katy Masuga, *Henry Miller and How He Got That Way* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 48.
- ⁴³ Henry Miller to Emil Schnellock, 7 September 1933, (Emil Schnellock Collection, O3.CR.TW.2), TS, The Henry Miller Memorial Library.
- ⁴⁴ Alfred Perlès, *My Friend, Henry Miller* (New York: Belmont, 1962), 59.
- ⁴⁵ Martin, *Always Merry and Bright*, 104.
- ⁴⁶ Kenneth C. Dick, *Henry Miller: Colossus of One* (Sittard: Alberts, 1967), 174.

⁴⁷ Mary Dearborn, *The Happiest Man Alive: A Biography of Henry Miller* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 95.

⁴⁸ Oddly, Miller never mentions that one of the broadsides found publication in 1925 in *Pearson's Magazine*, in his name, even though it was originally printed for sale in broadside form under June's name. Roger Jackson, "Newly Discovered Miller Texts Not Appearing in Henry Miller: A Bibliography of Primary Sources, Vol. I or II," *Nexus: The International Henry Miller Journal* 1, (2003): 180.

⁴⁹ Rod Rosenquist, *Modernism, the Market and the Institution of the New* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 119.

⁵⁰ In an ironic twist, Miller would spend nearly 20 years in Big Sur, California, living a mere 60 miles north of the Hearst Castle, visited by such famed writers as George Bernard Shaw.

⁵¹ Dearborn, *The Happiest Man Alive*, 95.

⁵² Henry Miller, "Handwritten Note by Henry Miller," n.d., Box 93, Folder 3, Henry Miller Papers (Collection 110). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

⁵³ Henry Miller, "Haridas the Pamphleteer," 7 May 1925, Box 93, Folder 3, Henry Miller Papers (Collection 110). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

⁵⁴ Oscar Wilde, *The Decay of Lying: And Other Essays* (London: Penguin UK, 2010), 7.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁶ Henry Miller, *Money and How it Gets that Way* (Metuchen NJ: Van Vechten Press, 1946), 38.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

⁵⁸ Henry Miller, *Letters to Emil*, ed. George Wickes (New York: New Directions, 1991), 106.

⁵⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, trans. Marion Faber *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 177.

⁶⁰ Perlès, *Art and Outrage*, 39.

⁶¹ Indrek Männiste, *Henry Miller: The Inhuman Artist: A Philosophical Inquiry* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), xv.

⁶² Miller, *The Wisdom of the Heart*, 4.

⁶³ Hoyle's biography contains one of the more detailed accounts of Miller's yearly financial situation. Throughout Miller's life, he was constantly aware of how much money he was earning and he was not embarrassed to share this information. In 1942, Miller informed Durrell that he was working on a new project that he entitled *The Rosy Crucifixion*; to Durrell, Miller relates that he had few concerns, but that "I earn no money. \$450.00 last year, for royalties and magazine articles and everything" (Henry Miller and Lawrence Durrell, *Lawrence Durrell, Henry Miller: A Private Correspondence*, ed. George Wickes, New York: Dutton, 1963, 175.) Only after the end of the Second War, would Miller suddenly find himself a best-selling author in France when the G.I.'s began buying up his works. Aware of his success in France, Miller was encouraged to write *Sexus*, book one of *The Rosy Crucifixion* with similar bravado as the *Tropics*, suggesting that he was attempting to capitalize on the identity he had created for himself.

⁶⁴ Alec Marsh, *Money and Modernity: Pound, Williams, and the Spirit of Jefferson* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 18.

⁶⁵ Henry Miller, *The Plight of The Creative Artist in The United States of America* (Berkeley: B. Porter, 1944), 6.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶⁷ Robert Snyder, *This Is Henry, Henry Miller from Brooklyn: Conversations with the Author from The Henry Miller Odyssey*. (Los Angeles: Nash, 1974), 102.

⁶⁸ There is a tendency to overlook or discount Martin's subtitle for the book, *An Unauthorized Biography*, but the reality is that Miller was not keen on what he presumed would be Jay Martin's style of factual writing.

⁶⁹ Martin, *Always Merry and Bright*, vii.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 491. Miller's words are strikingly similar to B. Traven's well known quote, "The creative person should have no other biography than his works." It is not clear if Miller was well acquainted with Traven's work, but when Miller learned of Traven's death in 1969 he mentioned it in a letter to Bob MacGregor of New Directions, to which MacGregor replied that he had heard of the author's passing in Mexico. New Directions to Miller, 18 April, 1969, Box 68, Folder 12, Henry Miller Papers (Collection 110). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

⁷¹ Jay Martin to Miller, 20 September 1971, Box 73, Folder 13, Henry Miller Papers (Collection 110). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

⁷² Lakoff and Johnson have explained that embodied truth should be a "humanly conceptualized and understandable form if it is to be a truth for us." Embodied truth then must encapsulate the following characteristics: "A person takes a sentence as 'true' of a situation if what he or she understands the sentence as expressing accords with what he or she understands the situation to be." George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*. (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 106.

⁷³ Barbara Kraft, "A Conversation with Henry Miller," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 20, no. 2 (1981): 51.

⁷⁴ Blinder, *A Self-Made Surrealist*, 129.

⁷⁵ Frankfurt, *On Bullshit*, 23.

⁷⁶ Miller was adamant until the day he died that he had not written a novel with *Tropic of Cancer*, that the work was indeed biographical and something beyond the novel format. In a 1974 review of Erica Jong's novel, *Fear of Flying*, Miller again harped on the issue: "critics and readers were inclined to think I had invented Henry Miller. To this day many people refer to it as a novel, despite the fact that I have said again and again that it is not" (Henry Miller, "Two Writers in Praise of Rabelais and Each Other," *The New York Times*, 7 September 1974, 27).

⁷⁷ See Yasunori Honda, *In Quest of Draco and the Ecliptic: Henry Miller's Interspatial Literature* (Dallas: Stroker Press, 2003).