

## TEXTUAL VARIANTS, PERFORMANCE VARIANTS, AND THE CONCEPT OF WORK

IN THE EARLY 1980s when I was first developing my ideas about works, versions and texts, I sent Fredson Bowers the second part of a long, two-part article for consideration in *Studies in Bibliography*. In rejecting it he asked why I had not sent him the whole study, the full expression of my ideas on the subject. I replied that I was a little apprehensive about sending him the expression of ideas that took issue with his published positions. He seemed just a bit impatient with me for thinking him so petty and rigid.

Disagreement and the process of learning and changing one's mind is inseparable from scholarship, he said. In 1987 I asked Professor Bowers to give a paper at the 1988 convention of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association in a session with Jerome McGann, T.H. Howard-Hill and Simon Gatrell. The subject was to be: How does your theory of copy-text and your theory of emendation affect the way you deal with works that were significantly affected by non-authorial influences? During the months preceding the convention, Professor Bowers wrote asking for clarifications of the topic and pumping me for information and opinions of my own on the subject. In the end he prompted me and coached me into writing 'An Inquiry into the Social Status of Texts and Modes of Textual Criticism,' (*Studies in Bibliography*, 42(1989): 55-79). The point of this story is to say that Professor Bowers encouraged scholarly inquiry and study regardless of whether it conflicted with or confirmed his beliefs. The following essay takes issue with the essay resulting from my invitation to Professor Bowers in 1987,<sup>1</sup> but I am aware that my work in this area is made possible to a large extent by the broad shoulders on which I stand.

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An old question that reveals much about popular concepts of the nature of works of literary art is 'When is a revised text a new work?' I believe the question suggests an identity between a stable physical object and the work. Such a view is consistent with other art forms such as paintings, sculpture, and pottery where the popular conception finds nothing strange about asking 'Where is the Mona Lisa?' or 'Where is Picasso's Guernica?' because there is only one of each, and its uniqueness can be authenticated. The distinction between the real painting or sculpture and copies of it can be demonstrated in many ways. And if the copy is a very good one and is passed off as the real thing, there is a scandal about forgery. In short, the distinction between the authentic and the imitation has nothing to do with an aesthetic response to the physical object but has everything to do with a pre-conception about the nature or essence of works of art.

The laymen do, however, find it peculiar to ask 'Where is *Moby-Dick*?' They are not bothered by the existence of multiple copies of *Moby-Dick*, or even multiple editions of the work, but there is also in the popular mind a naive faith in the identity of the words of these copies and in the reliability of the physical objects. When one points out to the popular consciousness that some copies vary textually from others, the immediate desire is to know which copies represent the real thing

and which are corrupt or inferior reproductions. This desire for authenticity is consistent with the attitude towards real and forged paintings.

When it is further pointed out that there may be a revised version of the work, the popular consciousness equates this phenomenon with the existence in the art world of multiple versions of some paintings or sculptures which the artist executed on more than one occasion — notorious cases include Edward Hicks's 'A Peaceable Kingdom' and B.R. Haydon's 'Napoleon Musing at St. Helena.' Each 'original copy' is authentic and interesting, though it is perhaps lamentable that the artist didn't 'get it right the first time.'

The idea of the artist's 'getting it right' suggests two concepts about works of art that inform many persons' ideas of art. First, the idea suggests that art aims at some point of perfection that is 'right' — making all variants from it in some way 'not right.' And secondly, the idea suggests that art is a frozen moment, a tableau, contained in and represented by the physical object which itself freezes and stabilizes the moment of perfection — or attempts to.

Thus the question 'When is a revised text a new work?' reveals a concept of 'work of art' that involves stability and perfection, allowing for the possibility of a second revised perfection that is different — a new work. But this question is not merely a notion in the popular mind. It has an impressive history of commentary in scholarly journals. Among the most influential discussions of it are G. Thomas Tanselle's, Hans Zeller's, D.F. McKenzie's and Jerome McGann's. Scholars, it appears, also need a correct and, preferably, an overwhelming answer. I think, however, that every answer is unsatisfactory, not just because each textual situation is so particular that no answer by rule will do, but because the concept of a stable work and a stable text is fundamentally flawed.

I would like to review briefly some of the commentary on this question, then ask some similar questions that might indicate what kind of question this really is. Then I hope to demonstrate, with specific examples, how a work without written textual change can be different from itself. From these grounds I want to search for the basic assumptions about works of art that make the question seem worth asking. And, finally, I'll provide a guide for use in practical situations. That, of course, should be the last word on the subject, and we shall all live happily ever after.

First, however, we might ask, who wants to know when a work changes and why they want to know? Ever since Gordon Ray took F.R. Leavis to task for claiming that Henry James in his first work, *Roderick Hudson*, sounded like the mature Henry James — without realizing he was reading the heavily revised New York edition — critics have known they should be careful about which *Roderick Hudson* they read. Which *White Jacket*, which *Red Badge of Courage*, which *Sister Carrie*, which *Prelude*, which *King Lear* — all these have become household questions for scholars and their students.

If it matters to them, it probably should matter to editors. Which version of the work shall be the reading text? This is a practical problem with serious consequences in the business of literary interpretation. Of course, there is no merit in deciding that the 1805 and 1850 *Prelude* are different works requiring separate

treatment — or that Tennyson's 'Oh that t'were possible' (1834) is different from *Maud* (1854) or that Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of his National Life* is different in its Australian serial and English book versions. An editor with pudding for brains can see that the alternate versions of these works are radically different. The question becomes difficult and perhaps interesting in borderline cases.

All papers on editorial questions should refer to W.W. Greg. Let me fulfil that obligation. In 'The Rationale of Copy-Text' he says, the 'reliance on one particular authority results from the desire for an objective theory of text-construction and a distrust, often no doubt justified, of the operation of individual judgment'.<sup>2</sup> I think these tendencies (to want objectivity in text-construction and to distrust individual judgment) are alive and well and have a bearing on the discussion at hand. But more to the point, in discussing the rationale for emendation (once a copy-text is chosen) Greg distinguished between corrections and revisions, saying all corrections from other sources should be incorporated. Revisions he divides into two rough categories, saying the editor should incorporate all 'revisions, so long as this falls short of complete rewriting' (p.53). He does not discuss the borderline between 'revision' and 'complete rewriting'; I assume he left that to individual judgment. He does not clarify the issue in the brief example he raises to illustrate the problem. He notes only that in the folio version of Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* 'revision and reproduction are so blended that it would be impossible to disentangle intentional from what may be fortuitous variation, and injudicious to make the attempt' (p.57). These new distinctions between 'revision' and 'reproduction' and between 'intentional' and 'fortuitous variation' seem to focus on the difficulty of distinguishing authorial from non-authorial alterations, rather than the difficulty of melding eclectically two authorial forms where revision amounts to 'complete rewriting.' Ultimately, for Greg, it appears the decision to treat variant texts separately or eclectically is a practical one. If you can conflate the revisions into one version, then do it; if you can't, don't. I don't think that helps us much — perhaps because Greg was not faced with many instances of recognized revision in the texts he worked on.

James Thorpe is more specific. Discussing the question 'when does a work become a work?', he remarks in 'The Aesthetics of Textual Criticism':

the problem of identifying the 'real' *Great Expectations* . . . was simplified when we insisted on respecting the public version to which Dickens gave authorial integrity. The application of this basic test will not select one or the other of Auden's 'In Time of War,' however, since each is a fulfilment of his intentions, and each was communicated to his usual public. From our review of what takes place in revision for private and public versions, I hope it is clear that the two versions of the Auden collection are equally 'real.' They stand, side by side, as two separate works, and each has every bit of the dignity and integrity with which an author can endow any work of art.<sup>3</sup>

This is both a romantic and a mechanical answer — whenever an author publishes a new revision, we get a new work; but as long as the revisions remain unpublished by the author, we have only a private document, which is not yet a work. Authority is something metaphysical that authors endow upon works (at publication?).

G. Thomas Tanselle finds Thorpe's formulation inadequate. He develops the idea that revisions designed to enhance an intention that remains basically unchanged can be called 'horizontal' revisions and do not create a new work. Revisions that change the concept or purpose or intention, on the other hand, are called 'vertical' revisions and create new works.<sup>4</sup> He intends these categories of revision to help editors formulate general principles or guidelines subject to the exercise of individual judgment. Horizontal revisions, he implies, should be incorporated in the standard edition, vertical changes call for separate editions. One practical reason for these guidelines is that sometimes changes are so extensive as to make collation impossible; hence separate editions, as Greg said, are the only practical or judicious way to deal with the problem.

Hans Zeller, pursuing theory where practical men fear to tread, notes quite logically that a work of art is a web of relationships among the signs which constitute it. The web becomes disturbed and realigned with every change. Thus, unrevised parts change their meaning or effect because their relationship to the revised passages is changed.<sup>5</sup> In editorial practice, strict adherence to this theory would require parallel texts for every authoritative variant text. The idea is perhaps more palpable in poems than in prose and more feasible as an editorial principle in editing short poems than longer works.

So far we have concentrated on linguistically variant texts, texts in which the words are different. But recently there has been an emphasis in both textual and literary theory on the iconic character of literary art, the way in which the literary work means what it means bibliographically as well as linguistically. For example, D.F. McKenzie and Jerome McGann have, in a sense, tied the work to the document that is its medium. In theory, at least, their arguments tend to make a new work out of every new physical manifestation of it, its physicality and historical context being inextricable parts of its literary existence. McKenzie says, 'Each version has some claim to be edited in its own right, with a proper respect for its historicity as an artifact . . .'<sup>6</sup> Randall McLeod has demonstrated forcefully the way in which the Oxford editor of John Harington's English translation of *Orlando Furioso* ignored and violated the meanings of the physical text chosen as copy-text and created nonsense by his ignorance.<sup>7</sup>

These iconic evaluations or interpretations of text are elaborated by Jerome McGann, who develops the additional idea that the circumstances of distribution determine the meaning of a work even when it is linguistically invariant. The physical book in its bibliographical integrity becomes the representative of the historical moment of distribution and of the production intentions that created that edition. He suggests that textually cognate editions of Matthew Arnold's 'Empedocles on Etna' before and after Arnold's 1853 repudiation of it, have different significances, and that three textually invariant versions of Byron's 'Fare Thee Well' have different significances deriving from the private and public nature of distribution and from the authorizing issuer of each edition. The logical extension of this idea is that new scholarly editions are also new iconic representations of works representing the modern moment of republication in so-called 'corrected' forms. The corrections, McGann points out, are only 'corrections

as they have been imagined and generated through a particular theory of the text.<sup>8</sup> The new scholarly edition means, then, what its producers intended it to mean, and it is therefore not 'the work itself' but just another edition of the work.

It may be worth noting how radically different from one another are the bases for these theories. Tanselle's (and perhaps Greg's) test is intentional; Zeller's is semantic; McKenzie's is physical; McGann's is socio-historical. Moreover, Thorpe's Zeller's and McKenzie's tests are mechanical: individual judgment is not needed to determine that the work is now a different work; judgment is employed only in determining what significance a semantic change has made or how a shift of physical perspective has altered the work. Editing, for them, becomes essentially a matter of tracing the history of change. Tanselle's test, however, requires judgment in determining if the alteration has really changed the work or just enhanced the old work. Editing, for him, is a matter of determining the best form the text should take to best represent the work as it should be (or should have been) according to some determination of authorial intention.

One might note that the range of editorial implications here can be seen as stretching between two poles: the one, usually associated with classical editing, of recovering a lost archetype that presumably did exist and the other, usually associated with eclectic or critical editing, of recovering authorial or best intentions for a work when no existing text has yet achieved it.

Though it is sometimes clouded by other factors, the underlying assumption of some of these theories seems to be that a single text is more desirable than multiple texts since it would be tidier (more convenient or less confusing) to have an edited standard text, which all readers and scholars could have in common, even though to do so would require that we trust the individual judgment of the critical editor. The equally clouded underlying assumption of the other theories is that multiple texts may be unavoidable, but if we have multiple texts, let us not have the exercise of individual judgment in editing them.<sup>9</sup>

Jack Stillinger, opposing the first of these tendencies but falling into, I think, the latter, has coined the name 'textual primitivism' for the tendency among editors to identify an author's early versions as the best representative texts of works. He advocates a multiplication of editions of Wordsworth's revised works on the grounds that:

Wordsworth did, after all, write the 1805 version [of *The Prelude*] and the 1850; and the 1798 *Peter Bell* and the rest of the versions including those of the printed texts of 1819, 1820, 1827, 1832, 1836, and 1845 . . . each of these versions embodies some degree of the poet's intention and authority . . . it is not, I think, possible to argue that authority resides in a single version, and that the rest of the texts in a series, whether early or late, should be banished to some limbo of poor relationship.<sup>10</sup>

Whereas McGann seems to find a discrete work in each new edition because each represents a different production intention, Stillinger finds each revised edition interesting because it represents a different authorial intention. Neither man is

impressed by the idea of a single eclectic text or by identifying a single edition as the best text, the one that *is* the work.

The tendency of Stillinger's and McGann's very different arguments is to promote multiple editions, each well labelled for its authorial or historical position of origination. These positions may at first appear to reflect the correlative idea in literary theory that literary works of art are primarily processes rather than objects — that writing and reading are action verbs describing processes that do not close. In fact, however, none of the textual critics surveyed have gone so far; Stillinger, McGann, McKenzie, and Zeller at most advocate a series of discrete historically extant objects that might have resulted from the fact that writing is a process. But they all stop short of saying that the work remains essentially a process rather than a stable object or series of stable objects.

One of the great strengths of Fredson Bowers's work on textual principles was that he focused on concrete examples rather than on abstract theories. In one of his last essays, 'Authorial Intention and Editorial Problems,' he lays out four instances in which the ideals of editing for authorial intention were challenged by textual revision by agents other than an author. As Bowers puts it, the editorial question concerns 'whether in such circumstances an editor should observe the author's latest documentary intention, no matter how arrived at, or else restore what had originally been intended but altered for other than strictly personal literary considerations.'<sup>11</sup> This is a specialized form of the question 'When is a revised work a new work?', for in these cases the changes resulted from non-authorial interventions. Nevertheless, the question hinges on the concept of versions of a work and leaves one, broadly speaking, with the choice of a work as intended by the author in some autonomous condition or as intended in a collaborative production process. The choice suggests either that the work in one version is THE work and the other is a falsification or that the work exists in more than one form, each representing different (though obviously very similar) works.

In the fourth of his examples Bowers describes the conditions of composition, revision and publication of William James's account of Thomas Davidson. Bowers indicates that the work was originally intended in 1903 for publication in a memorial volume. Such volumes have relatively homogeneous audiences, and James was occasionally technical in reference to philosophical positions and frank in reference to the subject's medical history. That intended volume was postponed for so long that, when the opportunity arose, James revised and published the piece in *McClure's Magazine* for a broader audience. Several years later James's original version was printed in the memorial volume, apparently from a copy of the manuscript James originally had submitted and then had retrieved to revise for *McClure's*. Thus, the last printed version is the author's original text; the first printed version, his last revised intentions. The different mediums of production imposed different influences on authorial intention.

From the way Bowers formulated this editorial problem we can deduce the underlying concept of works and the 'proper goal of editing' that informed his decisions. First, he notes that 'whenever it is possible to substitute apparatus for parallel texts,' one seeks the manuscript for authority in accidentals (p.58). That is,

a single text is to be desired over parallel texts whenever it is practical to use an apparatus. This preference for a single text overrides any desire to see the work as two different works to be considered 'separately in their own right.' Second, Bowers formulated the question as one of determining James's 'true intentions for the reminiscence' (p.59). It seems to go without saying that if James had a *true* intention for the reminiscence, he couldn't very well wish posterity to read the essay in some untrue form. But Bowers raises as a complication the contradictory propositions that James's proofing and approving the memorial volume 'last' might indicate that it represented his 'final' intentions, on one hand, and, contrarily, that James's true and final intentions are represented by the 'revised' *McClure's Magazine* version, prepared at a time when he believed the memorial volume version had been aborted. Bowers's struggle over which was *final* and which was *true* demonstrates his resistance to the idea of two separate texts or two separate works. His solution indicated how thoroughly he was committed to the idea of a true version of the work, for he chose the *McClure's* as copy-text and restored from the memorial volume (later in publication but earlier in composition) those forms of the work that Bowers believed to underlie or precede 'the special self-censorship that James imposed on himself in view of his new audience' (p.60). This he chose to do because 'a reading text had to be prepared that to the best of my judgment represented what James finally wanted, free from a certain form of arbitrary restraint' (p.60). The idea that there might be two separate texts representing what James 'finally wanted' on two separate occasions, in two separate mediums, for two separate target audiences did not outweigh the desire for one text whenever apparatus could substitute for parallel texts. The result is a third version of the work, which may very well approximate the text James would have wanted for Bowers's scholarly edition but which *in its reading text* fails to represent what James wanted on either of the two occasions when he designed a text for a particular form of publication. The ideal editorial goal for Bowers was, it seems clear to me, a single best text of the work. This should not be confused with earlier mentioned editorial attempts to simplify the work, however, for Bowers did not withhold any textual information. At worst, he privileged one version over other by foregrounding it; the others remain in the background, indicated by the pointing hand of the editor in the introduction.

We see then that the question 'When is a revised work a new work?' has a variety of possible answers depending on one's theoretical position concerning the existence of literary works, and that all the theories I have thus far examined share a basic focus on the work of art as a physical artifact. I think this is so even of Tanselle, who distinguishes between the text of the work and the text of the document, but who sensibly finds both represented only in documents. The notion is that the text of the document, the physical copy, sometimes distorts the text of the work, which is the ideal text that might not be embodied perfectly in any document.

When these physical copies vary, we think we have a problem. We resolve the variant texts by calling some of the variants errors and some revisions, and we worry with the significance and importance of these variants — as well we should. But I don't think we quite understand the issue at hand if we think we have settled it all

by correcting errors, conflating variant texts into a single standard text, or editing separate versions separately.

Let us ask one or two less frequently asked questions — asked less often probably because as editors we can do nothing about them and as bibliographers there may be nothing to record. Yet I believe these questions are important and central to our concerns as editors and critics because we edit for the sake of the experience of reading. We want well edited texts *to read* not just *to have*.

McGann has already asked if a work which is textually unchanged can be two or more different works. His answer is that they can be and often are. He reasons from the 'intentions of production' rather than from authorial intention and points to bibliographical differences as indexes (in C.S. Peirce's sense of the word) to the significance of the edition. T.H. Howard-Hill, misconstruing, I think, McGann's point, insists that the bibliographical elements of a work are not part of the meaning of the work because the author did not, in most instances, mean anything by them and because a bibliographical description of the book does not convey, as a text, the meanings about the text to which McGann alludes.<sup>12</sup> These two positions are different but not, I think, mutually exclusive. McGann is raising our consciousness about aspects of the work that 'go without saying' and for which normally our reaction also 'goes without saying.' McGann would have us examine the ways in which the bibliographical elements index social conditions and limitations and determinations. He attaches to the physical product the significance of the social conditions under which it was produced. Though he does not put it this way, I think when he refers to the bibliographical meaning of the work he is referring to the intention of the producers of the edition. Authorial intention, he says, is one among several forces constituting social contract adding significance to the production. If normally these things go without saying, McGann wants us to be aware of them in the same way that post-structural critics wish us to be aware of the consequences of similar conditions in discourses. Howard-Hill's insistence that they go without saying because they are without significance to the work itself is, in McGann's terms, simply a declining to examine the significance of that which goes without saying.

It might, however, be worth pushing a bit further this question about what makes a work a work and when does revision or republication (or whatever) make it a different work. Focusing for a moment on the work as a reception performance, let us shift our view from the context of origination — the author and the social complex of production — to the context of reception. It now becomes possible to ask, in a different sense, whether a single edition or even a single copy of a work can ever be a different work from the one it was at another time. This is difficult to say because we do not often think in this way. I mean, can a single text of a document be the vehicle of performances such that a single invariant text can be said to represent two works. (I hasten to say the point of this argument is not going to be the obvious one, that different people read differently. Rather, I want us to observe the similarities between this form of the question and the ones we have previously considered in order better to see what concepts of a work of literary art underlie editorial concerns.) The text in a closed book can be corrupt or pure, singular or



multiple, for all the difference it can possibly make. As long as the book is closed the work is unknown. But a text read off the page becomes reality for readers in a variety of performances influenced by the text-on-the-page but not entirely determined by it.

When Ulysses in Tennyson's poem says in the fourth paragraph (line 33): 'This is my son, mine own Telemachus', does he say it with pride swelling his voice? ('*This is my son, mine own Telemachus*'). Or does he say it with simpering disdain? ('*This is my son, [long pause while the sad fact and disappointed implications of this admission sink in] mine own Telemachus*'). Does he say 'Well-loved of me' (line 35) with a heart full of pride and sorrow? Or does he say 'Well-loved of me' in ironic recognition of his neglected duties and hoped-for escape? When he says 'He works his work, I mine' (line 43), are we being told that each has a natural place or pre-ordained goal in life, or is there a tone of disdain for the stay-at-home boy in his voice? I would say that the written text of the document does not give you sufficient clues to the 'correct' variant reading in these cases. Having a single standard text will simply not indicate which is the *real* 'Ulysses' in a reading performance of the work.

So let us go back briefly to Thorpe's distinction between private and public works in which we are asked to respect the integrity of a work only when the author has endowed it with such by publishing a text? Thorpe seems to say readers are better off with a principle for dismissing a variety of versions of the work because they are private, not public. And let us look at Hershel Parker's preference for the text reflecting the peak of creativity over the mutilated revisions that cannot be read. He seems to say readers are better off for having the revisions stricken from the work. Or look at McKenzie's or McGann's view that each edition represents its social existence as a work in ways the manuscript or other private or provisional versions cannot. They seem to say readers are better off for having a principle for excluding textual information in the same way Thorpe suggests.<sup>13</sup> Are we better off with any other standard text, well-edited and published on acid-free paper in library binding attesting the stability of the text within? We have in these cases a simplified text (rationalized from the extant variant forms), but do we have a *better* text? Is our reading and analysis of the text going to be better for being uncluttered by the facts?

One might object that scholarly editions are not uncluttered by facts. That is right. Scholarly editions are repositories of information concerning the multiple forms and developing forms in the past. They are also, in themselves, new 'material texts'. A scholarly edition is temporally and iconically different from the texts it purports to represent, but it also provides a great deal of information about authorial intentions, production interventions, bibliographical significance, revisions, corrections, and other important textual and meta-textual events and circumstances. Why is it then, that scholarly editions are generally referred to as standard texts? Why do our references to them emphasize the edited text — the clear reading text? And why do critics and students who use scholarly editions focus on the edited text? Why do publishers of classroom editions reissue the edited texts without apparatus? Isn't it because we still generally think of a work of literary art

in the way the popular mind conceives of it — as a single physical text that gets it right? Or in a succession of single texts that each gets something right?

The question of when a revised work becomes a new work is both interesting and stupid. If the question emanates from a fussy concern over which variants are the correct ones and which can be ignored when reading a work, it is silly and schoolmarmish. If it emanates from a desire to know as much as possible about each text of the work, it is an interesting question. However, it is one that can be answered only by the exercise of individual judgment. Critics worth their salt will want to know all texts and will be careful about which documentary text, out of the various available ones, their critical remarks are in reference to. Nor will they necessarily agree about which one should be the 'standard' text.

It does not go without saying, however, that it is good to desire to know as much as is possible about all the variant texts and the contexts of their originations. It requires explanation to know why a text with an array of historical variants identified by originators is better than a single, correct, standard text of the work itself. Jo Ann Boydston has recently pointed out that many editors and critics still believe that a clean text with perhaps a few selected pieces of information about textual variants would be far more useful than an edition for which the editors forgot to take down the scaffolding when the editing was done.<sup>14</sup>

There is a very good reason, I believe, for wanting to know variant texts and for wanting to know who produced the changes and under what circumstances. A theory of meaning called Molecular Sememics suggests that meaning is determined in particular communication acts by the relevant context (molecule) operant for speaker and recipient.<sup>15</sup> Sememic molecules are conventionalized but not stable linguistic structuring elements shared by socialized speakers of a language. The specific molecule governing selection of language and determining its meaning is often indicated by the physical context as well as by syntax and by historical patterns of usage. For example, the phrase 'He's out' has specific determined meanings when spoken by an umpire in a baseball game, a receptionist in a doctor's office, an anesthesiologist at an operating table, or a radio sportscaster at a boxing match. The relevant aspect of this theory to the problem of revised texts is that, in a given molecular structure of selection, there are a limited number of possible words to use at a given point in a sentence, a limited number of possible phrases to use, even a limited number of sentences and paragraphs that can be chosen. An umpire, for example, must say 'Out' or 'Safe.' A receptionist must say 'Out' or 'In.' An anesthetist must say 'Out' or 'Still conscious.' An umpire cannot say 'In' or 'Still conscious' as an alternative to 'Out.' Further, and perhaps more important, the molecular structure of selection limits the number of meanings that can be conveyed by the chosen words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs in a particular utterance. That is, context (semantic, physical, temporal, etc) limits what can be appropriately said at any particular occasion, and it determines (in the sense of delimiting) what a particular locution means. A listener would understand, because of the physical context and identity of the speaker whether 'He is out' meant unconscious by reason of anesthesia or unconscious by reason of a violent blow to the head. Of course, nonsense can be produced (deliberately?) at any time and

place, but even nonsense is recognized as nonsense because of the functioning molecular structure of selection (which nonsense violates). Furthermore, any locution hived off from its molecular origin can be made to mean an almost unlimited number of things. But a critic seriously considering the meaning of a particular work by a particular author published (or not) in a particular way, has more to go on than the linguistic text as accurately reproduced in a scholarly edition. There are the bibliographical elements that McKenzie emphasizes, the production circumstances that McGann emphasizes, and the intentions (authorial and otherwise) that just about everyone refers to. Variant texts represent a number of possible kinds of activities. All of these aspects combine to form the context of origination for utterances. A knowledge of the context of origination is necessary in order to determine the structure of molecular selection that guided the generation of the utterance and determines its appropriate meanings.

Variants that result from an author's changing his or her mind about what is to be said and meant are different from variants that result from an editor's intervention about what should be said. Variant things to be said are different from variant ways to say the same thing, and these in turn are different from variants produced in the trial-and-error process of finding out what is to be said. If one assumes that an author is seriously contemplating variant texts, and if one can reconstruct the important parts of the molecular structure of selection, one might see more clearly from the variant texts what the author was trying to communicate. Hence, availability of variant texts is very helpful to analytical reading, but only if the context of origination of each variant is taken into account.<sup>16</sup>

For example, if in 'Ulysses' Tennyson had experimented with italics to indicate the old sailor's intonation, we would have some rough clues about what tone was being contemplated. An editor who eliminated such trivial doodling on the grounds that it was private documentation or that it was a pre-copy-text form would be eliminating data a good reader could use to generate a more author-determined reception performance of the work. Getting the text of the work right is not good enough. Identifying the best text of the work is not enough. Exercising editorial control over the individual judgment of readers is reprehensible. Just because some readers are asses does not mean we should treat all readers as if they were.

So, I think, when asking, 'When is a revised work a new work,' it is good to remember that this potentially interesting question is to be answered by each person individually. Each edition will reflect its editor's opinion in this matter, so editors should beware of foisting that essentially personal opinion onto readers by denying them the chance of judging the evidence for themselves (which happens every time variants or emendations are reported selectively). And when reading other editions, I would be careful not to accept without examination the choices made for the reader by the editor. I would also be careful not to ignore the data relevant to the reading of any text provided by the variants and their contexts of origination.

Editors who wish to enhance the work of good readers will forsake Thorpe's arbitrary distinction between private and public texts because it is a principle of exclusion; they will forsake Tanselle's distinction between horizontal and vertical revisions because it is a principle of separation; and they will be suspicious every

revisions because it is a principle of separation; and they will be suspicious every 'standard' or 'established' text in exactly the same way they are wary of a drugstore paperback. But these suspicions are not to be allayed by finally finding the correct or best text; they are to be satisfied by finding the record of revision laid out in the specific contexts that gave them being and determined their significance. For practical purposes, of course, editors cannot be all things to all readers. Nor can they fail to make decisions simply because there is more than one feasible alternative. Scholarly editors who realize their new editions are simply new editions may feel less pressure to insist on the correctness and universal acceptance of their editorial decisions. Furthermore, editors are not in charge of the text's meanings, nor is it their responsibility to make its meanings clear. But by being clear about what they have done and being inclusive about information about variant texts, variant iconic formats, and variant contexts for authoritative source texts, editors seek to fulfil a responsibility for making sure that all the possible meaning indicators are represented, preserved, or transmitted. Editors are not asked by good readers to oversimplify the textual problems or to eliminate the anxiety of texts by pretending to have resolved for everyone what readers should resolve for themselves.

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## NOTES

1. Fredson Bowers, 'Authorial Intention and Editorial Problems,' *TEXT*, 5(1991): 49-61. The same issue of *TEXT* contains the essays developed by McGann and Howard-Hill for that session. They are cited below.
2. W.W. Greg, 'The Rationale of Copy-Text,' 1950; rpt. in *Bibliography and Textual Criticism*, ed. O.M. Brack Jr and Warner Barnes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p.50 [pp.41-58 inclusive].
3. James Thorpe, 'The Aesthetics of Textual Criticism,' 1965; rpt in *Bibliography and Textual Criticism*, p.135 [pp.102-138 inclusive].
4. G. Thomas Tanselle, 'The Editorial Problem of Final Authorial Intention,' 1976; rpt. in *Selected Studies in Bibliography* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1979), pp.334-35 [pp.309-353 inclusive].
5. Hans Zeller, 'A New Approach to the Critical Constitution of Literary Texts,' *Studies in Bibliography*, 28(1975): 241 [pp.231-64 inclusive]. Hershel Parker demonstrates the resulting 'adventitious meanings' in a variety of American works in *Flawed Texts and Verbal Icons* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1984).
6. D.F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, (London: British Library, 1986), p.x.
7. Randall McLeod (as Random Cloud), 'From Tranceformations in the text of *Orlando Fvrioso*,' *Library Chronicle of the University of Texas at Austin*, 20 (1990): 59-85.
8. Jerome McGann, 'What is Critical Editing?' *TEXT*, 5(1991): 27 [pp.15-29 inclusive].
9. See the forum discussion by R.H. Miller, Peter Shillingsburg, and Joseph McElrath in *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography*, 3(1989): 89-107, where Miller proposes the editor as archivist. He also proposes the editor as arbiter, but then denies him the exercise of any judgment except in cases where the editorial goal is to recover a lost archetype.
10. Jack Stillinger, 'Textual Primitivism and the Editing of Wordsworth,' *Studies in Romanticism*, 28(1989): 27 [pp.3-28 inclusive].
11. Fredson Bowers, 'Authorial Intentions and Editorial Problems,' p.50.

13. To do McKenzie and McGann justice here, they emphasize the integrity of each production performance. McGann's occasional denigration for manuscripts as copy-texts and for authorial intention as a guiding principle in editing probably results in part from the battle he is trying to wage on behalf of 'production intentions' against the idea of autonomous authors, which tends to glorify manuscript forms. There is nothing in principle in McKenzie's and McGann's views that would prevent manuscript forms of works from being treated as products of a comprehensive context of origination similar to a 'social contract.'
14. Jo Ann Boydston, 'In Praise of Apparatus,' *TEXT*, 5(1991): 8 [pp.1-13 inclusive]. The unacknowledged exercise of phallic power involved in *not* disclosing all the information is clearly presented by Clayton J. Delery in 'The Subject Presumed to Know: Implied Authority and Editorial Apparatus,' *TEXT*, 5(1991): 63-80. Randy McLeod refers to similar editorial interference with the facts as 'disambiguating' the text in 'Information on Information,' *TEXT*, 5(1991): 252 [pp.241-281 inclusive].
15. Price Caldwell, 'Molecular Sememics: A Progress Report,' *Meisei Review*, 4(1989): 65-86. A fuller exposition of this generative grammar and theory of meaning is in progress. I am grateful to Professor Caldwell for letting me see his manuscript in progress and for helping me use it in this paper.
16. I have developed the logic of this position in 'Textual Angst: The Benefits(?) of Literary Theory to Textual Criticism,' forthcoming in a book of essays on the importance of literary theory to practical criticism, edited by Philip Rollinson, University of South Carolina Press, 1992. Critics whose play with text is unimpeded by any knowledge of or concern for the contexts of origination are not explicating particular texts by particular authors. Like linguists contemplating the meaning of disembodied sentences or words, such critics are manipulating untethered utterances as 'examples of utterance' rather than as utterances per se.

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