NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. I am here using the translation and paraphrasing of Patrick O’Neill (76). See his very different critique of treating the narrator in anthropomorphic terms (76–82).

2. See William Nelles’ article, “Beyond the Bird’s Eye: Animal Focalization,” for a perceptive overview of some of these techniques.

3. This thesis on the gendering of narrators in turn is further corroborated from a different angle by Daniel Punday’s canny work on the implicitly embodied form of even the most austere narrators (2003: 149–84). For a stimulating account of the ideological maneuverings of female authors who employ male narrators, see Scott Simpkins’ 1992 article on “narrative cross dressing” in Sand and Shelley.

4. I discuss these and similar cases in a forthcoming article on postmodern authors as fictional characters.

5. And as we will see in Chapter Five, even this relation can be skewed in unexpected ways.

6. Even those contemporary biographers or historians who “record” the thoughts of their protagonists are making educated guesses; unlike the novelist, they do not know what went on in their subject’s mind.

7. For an earlier discussion of the “contamination” of the narrator’s language by that of a character, see Stanzel 192–93.

8. For a different reading of the play of voice and narration in this work, see Margolin (1990), who affirms that “the voice tries to give life to a ‘you’ lying on his back in the dark by telling him his whole life story from beginning to end” (431).
9. For a theoretically informed account of Powell’s practice, see Felber (1995, 156–61); Drabble’s novel will be discussed below.
10. For a discussion of the narrative ethics of such a practice, see Phelan (2005).
11. The only work I am aware of that moves in the opposite direction is Gertrude Stein’s *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933), which concludes with the following admission: “About six weeks ago Gertrude Stein said, it does not look to me as if you were ever going to write that autobiography. You know what I am going to do. I am going to write it for you. . . . And she has and this is it” (252). Since this is a nonfictional work, issues of omniscience do not arise. In the end its effect is rather like that of Norman Mailer describing himself in the third person in *The Armies of the Night* (1968).
12. This passage is translated by and cited in Ann Jefferson (1980: 100); she provides a good introduction to many of the more famous and extreme forms of narration in the *nouveau roman*.
14. On the differences between French, German, and English usages and implications of this pronoun, see Fludernik (1996, 232–35). It might be noted that the English translation does not employ the pronoun “one” to translate “man.”

**NOTES TO CHAPTER 2**

1. For several other titles, see Fludernik’s bibliography (1994); for additional items, see Schofield (1999).
2. See, however, Irene Kacandes, who considers many second person texts as works in “the apostrophic mode” (2001, 141–96).
3. For additional discussion of the shifting of pronouns in Butor, see Morrissette (“You” 13–18), Passias, van Rossum-Guyon (114–74), and Kacandes (157–62).
4. DelConte makes a comparable point, observing that this novel suggests “that in the eighties, free choice was illusory. Second-person narration exemplifies this cultural climate, for it manifests in narrative technique the notion that someone or something outside of yourself dictates your thoughts and actions” (205).
5. Carlos Fuentes’ *La Muerta de Artemio Cruz* is the only text I know of to use the future tense for standard second person narration.
6. For a thorough discussion of gender and the reader(s) of this novel, see Teresa de Lauretis’s excellent article, “Reading the (Post) Modern Text.” In it she notes, for example, that the narrative’s “you” does address a female reader for six pages, after which Calvino seems to need to reassure the male reader that the book is not losing sight of him (139–40).
7. Jonathan Holden similarly observes that “most poems that deploy the blurred-you are far more effective when delivered by the poet in person to a live audience” (54).

**NOTES TO CHAPTER 3**

1. In rare cases, such as Donald Barthelme’s short text, “We dropped in at the Stanhope . . . ,” the “we” speaker remains unidentified throughout, creating an
irreversible estrangement effect.

2. For an exhaustive account of these possibilities from the perspective of linguistics, see Margolin (“Telling” 116–19).

3. Even during this scene, however, there is a significant return to a collective consciousness that is signaled by the reversion to “we” form: the solidarity of the men reappears while they selflessly work to free Wait from his berth below deck (66–73).

4. There may even be an allegorical image of this preternatural narrator in the figure of the captain, who is said to be “one of those commanders who speak little, seem to hear nothing, look at no one—and know everything, hear every whisper, see every fleeting shadow of their ship’s life” (125); his inexplicable omniscience is an apt analogue for the oscillating perspectives of the uncanny voice of the text.

5. Ian Watt identifies a single narrator, specifically, “a special kind of privileged narrator who functions as a collective voice” (101). Others postulate two (or even more) narrators. Jakob Lothe identifies two main kinds of narrator, one homodiegetic, the “narrator as character’ (I as personal pronoun); the other heterodiegetic “they as personal pronoun” (97), and goes on to claim that these two basic narrating perspectives are repeatedly modified and fused; ultimately he identifies six types of narrating positions. Still others find the text’s narration to be a mistake: Jeremy Hawthorn refers to the work’s “technical confusions in the manipulations of narrative perspective and distance” (101) and Marvin Mudrick condemns Conrad’s “gross violation of point of view” (72).

6. More helpful perspectives on Conrad’s play with voice are offered by John Lester, who argues that Conrad’s narrative technique is “more controlled and more inventive than he has generally been given credit for” (170) and Bruce Hendricksen, who states that the text “deconstructs the subject who narrates by juxtaposing a third-person narrative voice that refers to the crew as ‘they’ with a first person voice that says ‘we’” (27).

7. She does, however, occasionally possess surprisingly detailed knowledge of situations she is unlikely to have encountered, as Paul Brians points out (39).

8. As Brians notes, she states that “there are only twenty-four houses in the village. This seems tiny indeed, until we realize she is counting the houses of Brahmins” (34).

9. For an analysis of Glissant’s three “we” novels, see Celia Britton; on the relation between Glissant and Chamoiseau, see Dawn Fulton.

10. Thus, one Yukon Native begins the story of her life with a history of her nation, the histories of her mother and other close relatives, and the origin myth of her people. “She does not even get to her own birth until page 52 (and then it is buried in a long list of her brother and sisters arranged in birth order)” (174).

11. The fusion of recently deceased tribesmen in the collective living subject, as “they” merges with “we,” deserves quotation: “They would sit in the snow outside the door, waiting until from longing we joined them. We would all be together on the journey then, our destination the village at the end of the road” (5).

12. “We” narratives continue to proliferate and gain recognition: two of the stories in Yiyun Li’s prize-winning collection, A Thousand Years of Good Prayers (2005), are written in the first person plural.

13. Monika Fludernik has identified a number of other texts that alternate “we” and “I” narration; these include Mauro Senesi’s “The Giraffe” (1963),
Gabriele Wohman’s “Fahrplan” (1968), John Barth’s Sabbatical (1982), and Jean Echenois’ Nous trois (1992). Fludernik notes that in these cases the *we* text usually represents an extended first person narrative, for example, in rendering the experience of childhood or of rural life, “and it therefore includes the first-person narrator in a larger community of playmates or village folk” (“Natural” 224). See the appendix to this volume for still more titles of other recent “we” narratives.

14. Indeed, the most recent criticism and theory of “we” narrations often explicitly rejects the parameters of realism: Britton (136), Woller (346–48), Fulton (1113n3).

15. Genette simply asserts that “the collective witness as narrator” is an unremarkable variant of homodiegetic narration (1980, 245n).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Two important partial exceptions to this practice are Franz K. Stanzel’s *A Theory of Narrative*, which includes a fine discussion of alternating first and third person pronominal reference in, for example, novels written by a protagonist that at times refers to himself in the third person, such as Henry Esmond (99–110); and Hazard Adams, who points toward a more fluid model of the narrative transaction in “Critical Constitution of the Literary Text: The Example of Ulysses.” Genette also describes several interesting examples of alternating persons in *Narrative Discourse* (243–47), only to deny the importance of person as a category of narrative analysis.

2. Thus, the rational self speaks in the first person, and always depicts the id in the third person. Interestingly, the id keeps attempting to use the first person plural, a practice which the disgusted I strenuously resists.

3. The specific novels referred to here are Atwood’s *The Edible Woman*, Drabble’s *The Waterfall*, Laurence’s *The Fire Dwellers*.

4. For a compelling overview of the book’s narrative stances, see Suleiman, 44–49.

5. For a perspicacious account of the complexities of Barthes’s position, some of which are necessarily slighted in my summary remarks, see Andrew Brown (123–25). In *Writing Degree Zero*, Barthes had affirmed that “‘he’ is a typical novelistic convention,” while the “I” can take “its place beyond convention” (35).

6. See Cohn (Distinction 163–80) for a sound refutation of this farfetched notion.

7. The few times we encounter the woman expressing herself in the first person occur primarily when her nemesis discovers and reads her old journals and letters the better to manipulate her. That is, we read her first person accounts through his eyes.

8. For a more extended discussion of this pronominal strategy, see Ostrovsky, 76–78.

9. For additional discussion of how women and gays have used the second person and other uncommon pronominal forms to combat stereotyping and enhance potential reader identification, see Fludernik, “Persons.”

10. Much subjunctive second person narration could be rewritten using “one” instead of “you” with little change in meaning, as the following sentence suggests, “To get there you follow/one follows Highway 58. . . .” This similarity may have led Wittig’s translator to use the English word “you” to render the ubiquitous
“on” of *L’Opoponax*. Wittig’s subsequent annoyance over this choice suggests an important difference between the two, a difference I suspect is rooted in divergent narrative persons.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. This is equally true of a third superficially similar type: in *La Chute*, the narrator Clamence appears to be telling a story to an offstage audient, partially repeating that person’s replies and responding to his questions as they occur or are imagined (“You are in business, no doubt? In a way? Excellent response!” [8]).

2. For an excellent recent discussion of the catechistic form of “Ithaca,” see Thwaites.

3. Senn, it should be noted, has no use for Hayman’s arranger: “If you want to label this entity—it or him or why not her or them?—Narrator or arranger you are in good critical company, but you won’t find these personifications here [in Senn’s work]” (45).

4. As Monika Fludernik observes, one encounters narratological “difficulties at the end of the episode, which resists transformation [into conventional categories of narration] because the questions ‘Womb? Weary?, ’ ‘Whirh,’ ‘When,’ and ‘Where’ cannot be interpreted realistically or made to tally with the preceding description of Bloom’s posture in his bed” (“Ithaca,” 94–95).

5. The earliest example of this “interpretive” kind of denarration that I am familiar with occurs in the ninth canto of Camões’ *The Lusiads*, in which the riotous adventures of Vasco da Gama’s crew on the Island of the Blessed, after being described with brio, are then stated to be merely allegorical depictions of the men being ravished by honor.

6. In addition to compelling examples from Pynchon, Brooke-Rose, Sukenik, and others, McHale cites the actual erasing of events in Clarence Major’s *Reflex and Bone Structure*: “It’s Dale who stands there, mouth open, watching us. I erase him” (20, in McHale, 99).

7. It will be helpful to quote Robbe-Grillet’s description of Beckett’s use of this practice: “in Beckett, there is no lack of events, but these are constantly in the process of contesting themselves, jeopardizing themselves, destroying themselves, so that the same sentence may contain an observation and its immediate negation” (*New Novel*, 33; cited in Begam, 217).

8. The most thorough treatment of this general phenomenon can be found in Carla Locatelli’s *Unwording the World*, which concentrates on Beckett’s fiction after 1972. For useful discussions of textual negations in *Molloy*, see Dearlove (64–67), Hill (72–78), and Connor (56–63), who observes that “Time, and the present moments or states of which it is made up, is endlessly reimagined, so that the present moment not only repeats another moment belonging to the past, but reconstitutes that moment” (62).

9. Here I must disagree with Brian McHale, who asserts that “the ‘erased’ state of affairs still persists, if only as a kind of optical afterimage” (1987: 99). I believe the examples adduced here show instead that denarration effectively undoes the earlier assertions, rendering them as if they had not occurred, as is the case with other statements (false statements, typographical errors, lies) once we learn the actual state of affairs.
10. Cohn’s paper (“Discordant”) identifies other theorists, such as Susan S. Lanser, who earlier had identified comparable distinctions; for the most capacious model of unreliability (which includes six types), see Phelan (2005, 49–53).

11. I am here both drawing on and straying from Emma Kafalenos’ ingenious narratological account of indeterminacy in postmodern fiction (1992).

12. H. Porter Abbott discusses this kind of narratological slippage from a different perspective in his chapter on Beckett in *Diary Fiction* (201–2).

13. The reading I will be offering tends to corroborate the critical position set forth by Andrew Kennedy; it is opposed to scholars like J. E. Dearlove who asserts, “Beneath the apparent and artificial diversity of traditional associations is the universal figure of a self coming into being via its self-perceptions, of a narrator creating himself through his own narration” (61). Such a stance ultimately begs the question “a self” and “his own” narration, positions Beckett resolutely undermines. For a more nuanced and compelling framing of this issue that suggests Beckett “expresses an openness to the possibility of an extralinguistic personal force” that is “quite compatible with The Unnamable’s suspicion of the knowing voice” (54–55), see Porter Abbott (1996: 52–62 and passim). For a catalogue of statements in the trilogy relevant to this debate, see Rabinovitz (95–101).


15. There are of course still more possibilities, several of which have been set forth by Gary Adelman (2004), 67–75, esp. 73.

16. Eyal Amiran also agues for an ultimately unified position (116–22).

17. I do not, however, entirely agree with Begam’s conclusion, that the space of the in-between “not only refuses to resolve itself into either of these two terms but renders impossible their very articulation” (156). This unresolved opposition of both terms remains; Beckett does not allow us to move beyond it via a Derridean notion of *écriture*.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. For an overview and bibliography of narration in drama, see my articles on the subject (the later of which is partially reproduced in this chapter).

2. It can also function as a generative narrator, as it does in cases of Cocteau and Benmussa described below.

3. For a deft analysis of the interplay of voice and text in this play, see Kristin Morrison’s book on narration in the drama of Beckett and Pinter (214–18).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1. For an excellent, nuanced critical summary of this debate, see Phelan (2005, 38–49).

2. This is the only one of several definitions still circulating that I will defend, or believe to be defensible. See Nünning for a thorough refutation of many of these conceptions.

3. It is also the case that Eliot’s narrators present themselves as male; at one point, one refers to the act of stroking his moustache.
4. For a magisterial account of the multiple yet unknowable identity of the actual authors and redactors of Beowulf, see Nelles, who concludes that its historical author “is composed of at least seven flesh-and blood people, among whom the initial creator is by far the least concrete” (“Implied” 23).

5. Genette makes this statement after adducing the admittedly monovocal work of collaborators like the brothers Goncourt; he does not consider any of the more challenging cases I mention below.

6. As David Hawkes notes in his introduction, the final chapters seem to be written by “someone who was very familiar with [Tsao’s] drafts and wanted a different ending” (18).

7. The reviewer for The Nation wrote, “One fancies Mr. James hypnotically persuaded to take his place in the circle between facetious Mr. [John Kendrick] Bangs and soulful Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and caused to produce an excellent parody of himself, as if in spite of himself” (Bendixen, xxxvi).

8. Naturally, some individual voices do emerge; they do not perfectly blend together into a single implied author (for example, there is a pronounced shift in tone between the farcical first chapter and the much more serious, feminist-inflected second chapter).

9. I pursue this analysis further in my article, “Bad Joyce.”

10. Or perhaps it is that all authors of Harlequin romances aspire to reproduce the tone and sensibility of same implied author.

11. This does not imply that there is any easy way to determine such a correspondence, only that one may bring external evidence (essays, journal entries, conversations with friends) to bear on this question in a way that is pointless concerning, say, geographical correspondences.

12. For a recent discussion of this issue, see Lanser, “(Im)plying” 156–59.

13. For an elaborate schema employing eleven different levels including the actual author, our notion of the historical author, the arranger, the narrator, etc., see Hazard Adams, “The Critical Constitution of the Literary Text” (90–110).

14. For another example of a clear distinction of a discontinuous historical author, implied author, and narratee, see Nelles’ discussion of Gulliver’s Travels (43–45).

15. See also pp. 25–44 and 192–206.

16. I develop this position at length in my article, “The Other Reader’s Response.”

17. The best account of the gender of reading remains Patrocinio Schweickart’s foundational essay, “Reading Ourselves,” in which she states: “Reader response cannot take refuge in the objectivity of the text, or even in the idea that a gender-neutral criticism is possible” (38–39).


NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1. For a discussion of the postmodernism of Ulysses, see my article, “The Genealogies of Ulysses.”

2. See Ferrer (1990, 65–96) for an extended discussion of the oddities of this kind of narration, which he tentatively calls prosopopoea.