

Tickled to Death:
The Consistency of Tones in the Arts of Eudora Welty and Flannery O'Connor

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To Mark, my benefactor. Thank you for providing for our family in more ways than one while my attention was focused elsewhere. Although at times you have had to lovingly make me aware of my family's needs, you have not begrudged me. I knew "way back when" that having you around would come in handy! Thanks for holding me, guiding me, and checking me through it all.

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As Flannery O'Connor said, "[T]o the hard of hearing you shout, and for the almost-blind you draw large and startling figures" (*Mystery and Manners* 34). I would not have been able to complete this arduous task without your unending graciousness as I "checked out" of family life over the past few months. Thank you all for shouting your love to me and for drawing large figures to remind me where I belong.

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Chapter 1

Tickled to Death: Two Southern Authors, their Arts, and their Tones

As women who grew up in the Deep South of Mississippi and Georgia respectively during the Southern Renaissance, Eudora Welty (1909 – 2001) and Mary Flannery O'Connor (1925 – 1964) had more than a few things in common. Leaving their homes to pursue further education in Wisconsin and Iowa respectively after attending their corresponding states' women's colleges, both Welty and O'Connor found themselves returning home after a few years away, living with their mothers¹ and devoting the rest of their lives to the art of writing. Hailing from two Dixie states, both authors were decidedly southern writers who made an impact in the literary world during their lifetimes. Although sixteen years apart in age, these women had mutual friends and acquaintances like Katherine Anne Porter and Walker Percy, both wrote novels in addition to their successful short stories, and after graduation they both spent time at a community for budding artists of any sort in New York called Yaddo where Welty visited Katherine Anne Porter in 1940 and where eight years later O'Connor was able to work uninterrupted alongside future artists like Robert Lowell, Truman Capote, and Alfred Kazin. Their numerous speaking engagements and interviews allowed fans and critics alike to ask questions about their fiction and gave opportunities for the authors to talk about their works. Although their overall tones and styles are not often very similar, they definitely had similar expectations of and explanations for how they wrote. Not only did Welty and O'Connor impart to the literary world a variety of fictional works, but they also wrote essays, letters, and introductions which provide background information about their own framework of time and place, the relational conflicts within their fiction, and the importance of figurative language in literary art.

While critics have compared Welty's and O'Connor's fiction in the areas of women's studies² and fiction that utilizes the grotesque,³ one similarity which is rarely addressed concerning these two authors is their early background in the visual arts. As a pre-teen and teenager in the 1920s, Eudora Welty enjoyed the photographs that her father took of their family. She admits during an interview in 1989 that her father's interest in the camera "indirectly" pushed her toward photography (Welty, *Eudora Welty: Photographs* xiii). During the Depression, she landed a job with the Works Progress Administration, writing about and taking pictures of the people of Mississippi during the 1930s. Like Lewis Carroll, she thought she would earn her living through photography, attempting numerous times to publish⁴ her photographs (Marrs 42, 43) before finding success as a fiction author beginning with the publication of two of her short stories in a magazine called *Manuscript*. That same year, 1936, her third photography exhibit, called "Black Saturday," this time of forty-five of her photographs, was displayed in New York's Photographic Galleries (Welty, *Eudora Welty as Photographer* 85). Although she refers to her photographs as "crudities" (Welty, *One Time, One Place* 4), she continued taking pictures more than a decade after her first short story was published, stopping only after she left her camera on a bench in Paris in the 1950s, choosing not to replace it (Welty, *Eudora Welty: Photographs* xviii). Even a cursory glance through just one of the books containing her photographs discloses a gifted eye behind the lens of the camera. Welty even alludes to her own ability: "Frame, proportion, perspective, the values of light and shade, all are determined by the distance of the observing eye" (*One Writer's Beginnings* 21). Both in her photography and in her fictional writing, Welty exhibited her lifelong gift of translating to her audience just what her "observing eye" had noticed.

Flannery O'Connor also experimented with the visual arts before becoming successful as

a writer. During her high school and college years, O'Connor drew cartoons and wrote stories for her school newspapers and yearbooks. She submitted many cartoons to *The New Yorker* hoping to make a career in cartooning, but they were all rejected (Gooch 110). She also dabbled in painting,⁵ leaving behind a widely-circulated photograph of herself next to her own self-portrait. As a young girl, she wrote and illustrated stories for her family's amusement (Yaeger, "(Mary) Flannery O'Connor" 382), finding this to be a good foundation for concepts she would build upon when she attended graduate school. While in a writer's workshop under the teaching of Andrew Lytle, she was encouraged to focus on "the visual aspects of fiction" (Cash 86). Often throughout her collected essays in *Mystery and Manners* she speaks about the importance of the artist's eye or the artist's vision. She asserts, "For the writer of fiction, everything has its testing point in the eye" (91). Just like Welty, O'Connor relied on what she witnessed all around her to create a visual reality and a believable atmosphere within her stories. Relying on the senses (related to the "concrete" by O'Connor), especially the sense of sight, to create authenticity within their fiction, Welty and O'Connor draw from their experiences as visual artists to engage the reader in their works.

Their manners of engaging their readers are starkly different, though. Welty's books of published photographs, as well as her fiction, reveal a lighthearted and positive tone, reflecting not only *her* "simple high spirits and the joy of being alive" but the same joy within her subjects, as she explains in her first book of photography called *One Time, One Place* (6). Other terms which may describe Welty's tone throughout her photographs and fiction are *carefree*, *cheerful*, *happy*, *optimistic*, and *merry*. Glancing through the first section of the book labeled "Workday," the viewer will notice that many people are simply standing around or sitting instead of working and children are playing, which some may argue is the "work" of children. Evidence of previous

or intended “work” is included, but the photographs rarely show that work in action. Welty’s positive, almost humorous, tone as revealed through these photographs mirrors the tone she most often reveals within her fiction. The same connections can be made in O’Connor’s works, except that her tone is not the lighthearted, positive tone used by Welty. While often having a humorous effect, O’Connor’s most consistent tone is satire, which utilizes irony just like sarcasm but for a different purpose. Whereas sarcasm uses irony to merely attack people, satire uses irony to imply more of a commentary about the vices or ills of society for the purpose of correction. Analyzing the cartoons and early fiction of O’Connor before she went to graduate school, Virginia Wray notices the initial satirical tone of the budding author (140). Although O’Connor’s early fiction can only be found in the special collections at her alma mater in Milledgeville, the cartoons she created for the yearbook, student newspaper, and literary magazine in college were collected and republished in one book, allowing the viewer to quickly identify the reappearing tone of satire. The students of “Jessieville” – so named because of the school’s initials GSC (Gooch 88) – are often displayed making ironic remarks to each other in O’Connor’s cartoons or revealing the resentment they felt at having to share their campus with the four hundred female WAVES of the Navy (Gooch 97). The satirical tone of these cartoons builds a foundation for the satire reflected later throughout her fiction, which Gooch describes as “acidly comic” (9). Regardless of the specific artistic media these two women utilized, their tones remain consistent: Welty’s optimistic and positive tone is shown through both her photography and her fiction, and O’Connor’s ironic and satirical tone is illustrated through her cartoons and her writing.

The action of capturing a snapshot or creating a cartoon involves relaying meaning within the boundaries of a lens or the border of the cartoon frame, restricting the perspective of the audience. This visual restriction occurs in fiction as well. As visual artists, these authors

understand the importance of framing their art so that it includes only the information that is pertinent. Much like the narrator in Welty's story "A Memory" (1941), these authors realize that the short story, given its condensed nature, has to impart setting, mood, action, and emotion through a limited number of characters, events, and descriptions very much like photographs, cartoons, and paintings which are created to capture a specific sensation. A short-story writer has to make decisions of what to include and what to omit, not only as a means of conveying information, but also as a means of involving the reader. Welty's young narrator explains in a tangible way how the artist effectively limits the world around her: "Ever since I had begun taking painting lessons, I had made small frames with my fingers . . . [having] my hands squared over my eyes, finger tips touching, looking out by this device to see everything: which appeared as a kind of projection " (75). Welty herself admits to learning this framing technique when she was younger: "Well, when I took art from Mrs. Hull [Marie Hull, a Jackson painter and teacher], she taught us that device: framing with your fingers. Studying drawing and painting made me aware in writing a story of framing your vision, as a way toward capturing it" (Introduction, *Eudora Welty: Photographs* xvi). Because of their early experimenting with visual arts, Welty and O'Connor each understand this need to frame what they see, both in reality and in their imaginations, in order to pass it along to the reader through their fiction. While their framing abilities are evident in both their visual arts and their fiction, only five short stories⁶ from each author will be compared to their visual arts to illustrate the similar tones between their different media.

While this concept of seeing is important to both authors, O'Connor speaks most often about the responsibility of using her eyes in representing the world through her fiction. In her essay titled "The Catholic Novelist," she claims, "The novelist is required to open his eyes on the

world around him and look. If what he sees is not highly edifying, he is still required to look.

Then he is required to reproduce, with words, what he sees” (*Mystery and Manners* 177).

Revealing her consistently defiant tone, her comments here are in response to the critics who say that a Catholic writer should not portray the sinfulness of man to the degree that O’Connor does, but she believes that “the Catholic fiction writer is entirely free to observe. He feels no call to take on the duties of God or to create a new universe. He feels perfectly free to look at the one we already have and to show exactly what he sees” (178). This is not to say that she refrains from using her imagination in her fiction. On the contrary, she gives much credit to her own creative abilities: “The imagination works on what the eye sees, but it molds and directs this to the end of whatever it is making” (qtd. in Turner 42). O’Connor’s framing ability is enhanced by her ability to portray fallen man in his fallen state through her imagination. Beginning with the familiar and adding as they go, these authors succeed in creating artfully-framed word pictures.

The concept of squaring their fingers to see a reality which they then add to their own imagination corresponds to the concepts addressed by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren in their well-known textbook *Understanding Fiction*. They discuss the three worlds every reader needs to keep in mind as he begins to read fiction:

When we read a piece of fiction, we move from our actual world, the world where we, as people, live, into a world of imagination. But that world of imagination has been created by the writer out of the actual world in which he, as a person, lives. So there are three worlds involved here, our actual world, the writer’s actual world, and the world which he has created for us. The world that the writer has created is what we want to savor and enjoy, but we cannot deeply appreciate it unless we comprehend its relevance to the other two worlds, the

writer's world and our world.

A story, if it is a good story, is more than a little mechanical contrivance of words and events, more than a clever trick the writer has learned to do to amuse others or make an honest penny. It is an attempt, however modest and limited, to make sense of experience, to understand how things hang meaningfully together. (526)

Since Welty and O'Connor are creating imagined worlds based on their own realities, many of the manners and tones evident in their real worlds will be revealed within their imagined worlds. As they work to produce meaning in their works, their tones will be displayed.

The first focus where Welty's and O'Connor's tones span both their visual arts and their fiction involves the framework of time and place. Although the imagination is at work in fiction, something has to be used to create the framework within which fiction can operate for the reader. For Welty, that most important anchor is "[p]lace [which], to the writer at work, is seen in a frame. Not an empty frame, a brimming one . . . a product of personal experience and time" (*On Writing* 49). This frame must be brimming with imagination even as it draws from memory and experience. Mirroring Brooks and Warren's idea about the different worlds involved in understanding fiction, Welty continues her thought and claims "that the writer must accurately choose, combine, superimpose upon, blot out, shake up, alter the outside world for one absolute purpose, the good of his story. To do this, he is always seeing double, two pictures at once in his frame, his and the world's" (49). Like any good author, Welty understands the quandary of juxtaposing her imagination with just enough reality to make it believable. O'Connor also understands the importance of uniting reality and imagination as she reminds critics to "remember that the eye sees what it has been given to see by concrete circumstances, and the

imagination reproduces what, by some related gift, it is able to make live” (*Mystery and Manners* 195). The one depends on the other. Using a word picture to explain this interdependence, Welty says, “[I]magination is the tool with which any fiction writer does his work, and he’s got to have something solid at which to dig. That can be place” (*Conversations* 8). As women raised below the Mason Dixon line, their trowels dig down into the soil of the Deep South, pulling up material that can only come from authors well-versed concerning their regions as they are defined by time and place.

Both authors mention repeatedly the frame of time and place when referencing their writing. Welty’s first book of photographs even uses the title: *One Time, One Place*. She defends the subtitle *A Snapshot Album* in a later interview. When asked, “Why do you consider them snapshots and not photographs?” she replies with a reference to both time and place: “Well, they were snapshots. It refers to the way they were taken, which gave meaning to the book. They were taken spontaneously – to catch something as I came upon it, something that spoke of the life going on around me. A snapshot’s now or never” (Introduction, *Eudora Welty: Photographs* xiii). She, like O’Connor, realizes that once a moment is gone, it is gone forever, so she works tirelessly at creating “the life going on around” her within the frame of her fiction. O’Connor, who calls herself a southern writer before admitting that her “own sense of place is quite unadjustable” (*Conversations* 63), addresses a similar concept of merging time and place in her essay “The Regional Writer.” She says, “The writer operates at a peculiar crossroads where time and place and eternity somehow meet. His problem is to find that location” (*Mystery and Manners* 59). Both Welty and O’Connor manage to bring time and place into their stories in such a way that the narrative seems to be both dependent on them and at the same time ignorant of them. Although time and place are essential to understanding these stories, neither time nor place

is made a focal point. Earlier in this same essay, O'Connor complains about southern college student writers who lack a sense of place in their writing: "[T]hey might all have originated in some synthetic place that could have been anywhere or nowhere. These stories hadn't been influenced by the outside world at all, only by the television. It was a grim view of the future" (*Mystery and Manners* 56). Without the framework of an appropriate time and place, these student writers have no way of connecting their readers with the imagined worlds where their stories take place. Aware of the importance of time and place, Welty and O'Connor, on the other hand, write their fiction in such a way that it reveals their differing tones about life as they imagine it in the Deep South.

While time and place are the first aspect to reveal the tones of the authors, the second aspect is intricately linked to the community within that time and place; this aspect involves the relationships of the characters. Welty effectively explains the importance of both of these concepts: "[P]ersonal relationships matter more than any kind of generalizations about the world at large. . . . But since it is all an ordered world, any work of fiction, everything, including time and place, has to be directly applicable to the needs of the story" (*Conversations* 52-53). If time and place stay the same but the people are different, the story loses its effect; the relationships would change. The same is true if the community stays the same but the time and place change. These aspects all work together to produce one effect and one tone, supporting the story as interrelated elements that rely on each other.

The different relationships within a certain time and place have an effect on the way the authors themselves view life. That view of life is reflected through their tones. Welty stresses the importance of time and place on the creation of characters within a certain community when she says, "Besides furnishing a plausible abode for the novel's world of feeling, place has a good

deal to do with making the characters real, that is, themselves, and keeping them so” (*On Writing* 45). In order to keep those characters real, they have to be placed within a community which utilizes relationships to add support to the time and place framework. Without this web of relational connections, stories would fall apart. Welty connects her characters to their environments this way: “A character is a taproot that goes clear down” (*Conversations* 104), indicating the need for the character to draw his life from the nutrients of the society around him, including the history of that society and that community.

O’Connor also stresses the importance of relationships within time and place when she uses the word *community* in her essay titled “The Regional Writer.” She says, “Unless the novelist has gone utterly out of his mind, his aim is still communication, and communication suggests talking inside a community” (*Mystery and Manners* 53). This is not to be confused with her earlier statement during a panel discussion at Wesleyan College in 1960 in which she claims that she is not “writing *about* the community at all [emphasis added]. I feel that I am taking things in the community that I can show the whole western world, the whole edition of the present generation of people, of what I can use of the Southern situation” (qtd. in “Recent Southern Fiction: A Panel Discussion” 70). In this statement and in other essays⁷, she emphasizes that the relationships she creates within the community of her fiction must coincide with the story’s time and place because they cannot be separated.

Welty also underscores how relationships within a community affect time and place, especially “The Place” of the South. Because southerners grow up listening to stories about the past, they feel like they experienced the history of generations gone by. She says of southerners, “We’ve known a community of life, as I say, through the years. If we weren’t around when something happened, way back, at least we think we know what it was like, simply because

we've heard it so long" (*Conversations* 143). During a later interview, she elaborates on this concept, recognizing that the southerner is "shaped" by his environment, including his "economic background" and "the folkways and the stories that come down to him in his family" (159). In this same conversation, she also concedes that people should be able to learn more than just what their own communities teach them, but they need that "base" in order to "test further knowledge" and make it applicable (159). The community creates relationships, and according to Welty and O'Connor, because southerners are entrenched within their communities, they are better able to write within such a framework.

Growing up in societies where relationships are developed by and often depend on oral communication, Welty and O'Connor are able to create atmospheres that relay southern undertones in addition to their own personal tones. Both of these authors believe that the southern writer is good at his craft because his ear is accustomed to listening to the stories that define his environment. Not only does O'Connor believe "[t]he Southern writer's greatest tie with the South is through his ear" (*Mystery and Manners* 199), she also discusses the importance of taking advantage of the "social fabric" (104) of regional idioms to help define both place and character. She says, "A great deal of the Southern writer's work is done for him before he begins, because our history lives in our talk" (105). One author, who published a book of photographs trying to recreate visual images of Georgia as O'Connor would have seen them, notices that O'Connor's own mother was "herself a superb storyteller" (McKenzie, Introduction xii) which would easily explain the author's innate ability to tell a story. The southerner's habit of storytelling is a learned skill that O'Connor claims belongs to most southerners; when her cousins visit her from Boston, she notices that "they discuss problems, they don't tell stories. We tell stories" (*Conversations* 71). Her concept of being a southerner equates to being a story-teller.

Growing up in one of these story-telling environments which not only describes relationships but also enhances them, Welty claims that the southerner has no choice but to write: “It is nothing new or startling that Southerners do write—probably they *must* write. It is the way they are: born readers and reciters, great document holders, diary keepers, letter exchangers and savers, history tracers—and, outshining the rest, great talkers. Emphasis in talk is on the narrative form and the verbatim conversation, for which time is needed” (“Place and Time” 546). The prominence of oral storytelling as a means of passing along a rich heritage in the southern culture provides the impetus for these naturally gifted authors who succeed at merging their own imaginations with the social implications of the communities around them. They are able to portray through words the actual environment necessary for an accurate context of their stories; their sense of community is always present and always presented to the reader.

This sense of community, while relying on time and place, still has its focus on the same things all humans deal with: relationships. Welty admits that after publishing her first short story “Death of a Traveling Salesman” (1936), she realized that her “real subject [was] human relationships” (*One Writer’s Beginnings* 87). In one essay that addresses the tension of society in the 1940s, she says that southern writers “do not need reminding of what our subject is. It is humankind, and we are all part of it” (*On Writing* 85). No matter how her fictional stories evolved, her subject remained the same.

Relationships are equally as important in O’Connor’s fiction. Her friend and biographer Sally Fitzgerald claims during an interview that O’Connor’s characters reveal how much humans need each other in order to break free from their isolation because being “separated from other people” means they are separated “from their own best interest” (qtd. in Magee and Wright 29). O’Connor’s interest in relationships is echoed by Helen I. Greene, one of O’Connor’s former

college teachers, as she discusses the ease with which O'Connor was able to converse "with the highly educated, as well as the semi-educated and the uneducated. The human being was her chosen study" (48). This interest in people could have stemmed from O'Connor's original plan to earn a degree in social science before switching her major to English. O'Connor herself admits that she sees reality manifested in fiction through "things and human relationships" (*Mystery and Manners* 172). Ms. Greene also claims that "Mary Flannery . . . could see in the individual . . . some of what was universal in our species" (46). This innate ability of the authors to understand people and relationships allows them to utilize those relationships to reveal their specific tones.

While Welty's and O'Connor's tones are displayed through their use of time and place as well as through the conflicts which exist within relationships, the final discussion of their tones will be through their use of figurative language. In what at first glance appears to be an oxymoron, authors use figurative language to help create concrete details within their fiction while at the same time using the concrete in a figurative way. O'Connor claims that the short story writer must "reveal as much of the mystery of existence as possible . . . by showing, not by saying, and by showing the concrete—so that his problem is really how to make the concrete work double time for him" (*Mystery and Manners* 98). Welty also places emphasis on the idea of showing instead of telling when she discusses how she wrote one of her other works: "I wanted it all to be shown forth, brought forth, the way things are in a play, have it become a novel in the mind of the reader" (*Conversations* 46). In order to show the reader these things, Welty and O'Connor apply their visual framing techniques to their works to impart meaning to the reader through figurative language. Their tones are most clearly and most often displayed through their use of symbolism, simile and metaphor, and the comparing technique of the "as if" construction.

In order for the concrete to "work double time" (*Mystery and Manners* 98), O'Connor

uses the term both as a reference to “sense experience” (125) and as a reference to tangible items that can be used as symbols (72). In using their eyes to create the frames which limit their short stories, the authors understand the role of the senses in helping to create a believable work of fiction. Setting the stage for the importance of this connection, Welty claims, “Children, like animals, use all their senses to discover the world. Then artists come along and discover it the same way, all over again” (*One Writer’s Beginnings* 10). Sensory perception is no less important to O’Connor who says that “[f]iction begins where human knowledge begins—with the senses—and every fiction writer is bound by this fundamental aspect of his medium” (*Mystery and Manners* 42). Based on her speeches reprinted in *Mystery and Manners*, she speaks about how writing must connect with and utilize the senses, which she equates with the concrete (125), on no less than seven occasions⁸. As the authors reveal to the reader not only what they see, but also what they hear, smell, taste, and feel, they create a connection of believability between the work and the reader, allowing the reader to share experiences with the authors in their imagined worlds of fiction.

O’Connor’s ambiguous use of the term *concrete* to explain both the use of the senses as well as the use of symbols is arguably intentional. Because she is a Catholic author who understands the incarnation of Jesus Christ in human flesh, symbols are very important to O’Connor, and she uses them with the skill of a master artist. Where O’Connor’s symbols often focus on religious interpretations, Welty’s symbols range from the religious to the mythological to the general. In her autobiographical book *One Writer’s Beginnings*, Welty admits that her family was not a religious family, although she and her brothers were christened as babies and they occasionally attended the Methodist Episcopal Church. Growing up in the Bible belt of the Deep South, however, she knew her Bible stories and recognized that she “grew up in a

religious-minded society” (30-31). While admitting that symbols have always been used in every art form (*On Writing* 66), Welty claims that “[a]nything can be a symbol if the way it’s used refers us to the imagination” (*Conversations* 52). She cautions, however, that symbols must “occur to [the writer] organically” and support the story (188), lest they seem forced and cause the story to suffer because of it. She also feels that symbols can be overused and encourages writers to “ignite” the imagination of the reader through “explicit observation that springs firsthand from deep and present feeling in one [sic] breast” (*On Writing* 66). Welty and O’Connor both are able to ignite the reader’s imagination through their effective use of symbols.

Besides using symbols, Welty and O’Connor appeal to the reader’s senses through their use of simile and metaphor. Such associative images allow the reader to use his own imagination in experiencing the work produced. Because of their southern upbringing, these two authors often use elements of figurative language; it is not limited to their fiction. For example, when describing the principal of her elementary school, Welty uses a simile to cause the reader to question whether Miss Duling is a saint or a demon: “That bell belonged to the figure of Miss Duling as though it grew directly out of her right arm, as wings grew out of an angel or a tail out of the devil” (*One Writer’s Beginning* 23). In this example, Welty effectively creates two possible visual images for the reader while also involving the reader in the experience of having to figure out just which one of those images actually applies to Miss Duling. In similar fashion, O’Connor uses a metaphor to describe the tail of a peacock in her essay, “King of the Birds”: “Meanwhile the hen goes about her business, diligently searching the ground as if any bug in the grass were of more importance than the unfurled map of the universe which floats nearby” (*Mystery and Manners* 14). Anyone who has seen a peacock knows how brilliant the tail looks when it is open, but by comparing it to a map of the universe, O’Connor not only draws the

mind's eye toward the circular patterns resembling celestial spheres but also toward the attitude of superiority that a peacock has when he struts by. Following O'Connor's advice, both authors get the images to work double-time for them.

The two examples of figurative language given above showcase the differing tones consistently exhibited by these authors. Welty's example of Miss Duling's arm being either an angel's wing or a devil's tail produces contradictory images for the reader and creates a playful curiosity which entices the reader to keep reading so he can figure out just which image is the proper one to attribute to this character. Contrasted with Welty's usually lighthearted tone of playfulness is O'Connor's use of satire. With words like "meanwhile" and "diligently," O'Connor illustrates distractedness on the part of the hen; the phrase "her business" shows the hen's focus; by describing the cock's tail as something that "floats nearby," she causes the reader to picture him as regal, almost angelic. This contrast of images and tones demonstrates O'Connor's ability to use irony in depicting a satirical tone; no one, not even a bird, wants to be ignored when he is acting like royalty, yet that is what happens. O'Connor's description conveys just the right touch of irony that lets the reader know this cock is not going to get what he wants.

Because Welty and O'Connor express themselves through both visual arts and fiction, the tones found in the one medium can also be found in the other. Like any human expressing emotion, the same tone will not be portrayed at all times, but a consistent pattern does emerge in both forms of artistic expression by these two authors. Welty admits that her "natural temperament is one of positive feelings," and she claims to solve problems through her art (*Conversations* 86). Both of these assertions can be confirmed through her playful and sometimes whimsical tones. O'Connor, on the other hand, once described herself as "a pigeon-toed, only-child with a receding chin and a you-leave-me-alone-or-I'll-bite-you complex" (qtd.

in Gooch 30), and that same biting manner reveals itself in the satire of both her cartoons and her fiction.

In a book analyzing the feminist effects on the writing of Eudora Welty, Carson, McCullers, and Flannery O'Connor, Louise Westling also notes the difference in voice between Welty and O'Connor. She describes Welty's fiction as exhibiting "a positive, celebratory vision" while O'Connor's works take "closer, more problematic looks at the next generation" reflecting some inner "resentment" within the characters (38). Later, as Westling looks at the backgrounds of the authors themselves, she notes that "Welty has an unusual confidence and an acceptance of her individual self which . . . O'Connor never found." She declares Welty "positive" before labeling O'Connor "pessimistic" (55). Such descriptive words consistently point toward the more upbeat tones of Welty's works and the more satirical tone of O'Connor's.

One example of Welty's positive, upbeat, and sometimes playful tone comes from her story "Livvie":

It was a nice house, inside and outside both. In the first place, it had three rooms. The front room was papered in holly paper, with green palmettos from the swamp spaced at careful intervals over the walls. There was fresh newspaper cut with fancy borders on the mantel-shelf, on which were proper photographs of old or very young men printed in faint yellow—Solomon's people. (155-56)

Based on language like "nice," "careful," "fresh," "fancy," and "proper," a positive tone is displayed. The owners of this room are not wealthy, evidenced by the decorations of palmettos and newspapers, but neither are these owners trashy people; they cherish family members based on the pictures on the mantel, and they must have some money because they purchased photographs and newspapers. In addition, a hopeful atmosphere is created through the use of

green natural items brought into the house to decorate the walls and the neat use of newspaper to act as a lace runner. Had the palmetto leaves been brown and dying or the newspapers strewn across the room, a completely different tone would have been given. Instead, the reader determines something about this room that is happy and hopeful. The tones from this scene are often repeated in Welty's fiction and photography.

The underlying tones from O'Connor's works contrast deeply with the tones found in Welty's works. This example from "Everything That Rises Must Converge" shows a small glimmer of hopefulness overwhelmed by despair and dejected reality:

The sky was a dying violet and the houses stood out darkly against it, bulbous liver-colored monstrosities of a uniform ugliness though no two were alike. Since this had been a fashionable neighborhood forty years ago, his mother persisted in thinking they did well to have an apartment in it. Each house had a narrow collar of dirt around it in which sat, usually, a grubby child. (4)

Giving this passage a somber feeling are words like "dying violet," darkly," "bulbous liver-colored monstrosities," "uniform ugliness," "collar of dirt," and "grubby." Even though the middle sentence referring to the mother's opinion of this environment shows a small shoot of appreciation popping up, that little bud is surrounded by the depressing tones of darkness from the sentences before and after it, giving the entire passage a negative and hopeless tone. Often in O'Connor's works, the words are either sarcastic or despairing, consistently presenting a satirical tone by the author but contrasting with Welty's more positive and upbeat examples.

Thus, by analyzing Welty's and O'Connor's use of tone both in their visual arts as well as in their fiction, connections to Welty's light-hearted tone and O'Connor's satirical tone will be illustrated through their use of time and place, their creation of relationships among their

characters, and their use of figurative language. Such an analysis will allow the reader to draw conclusions beginning with the authors' worlds, continuing on to their imaginative worlds, and ending in his own world so that he will be able to gain the deeper appreciation of their fiction which Brooks and Warren promised.

¹ O'Connor's father died when she was fifteen years old of a hereditary form of lupus. This same disease affected the author, causing her to return to her mother at the age of twenty-five. Welty's father died in 1931, the same year the Depression hit. Not finding work or anyone to publish her photographs in New York, Welty returned to Jackson where she found a job.

² See, for example, Louise Westling's *Ravaged Groves and Sacred Gardens*.

³ See, for example, Jeanne Campbell Reesman's "Women, Language, and the Grotesque in Flannery O'Connor and Eudora Welty," from *Flannery O'Connor: New Perspectives*.

⁴ Welty attempted to sell her photographs directly to publishers in late 1934 (Marrs 43); She received a rejection letter from Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, Inc., Publishers April 2, 1935; Her proposed book *Black Saturday* was rejected by Harold Strauss of Covici-Friede, Inc., Publishers in 1937; and Whit Burnet from Story Press rejected a collection of photographs in 1938 (*Eudora Welty as Photographer* 85-86). After becoming a successful author, her first book of photographs, *One Time, One Place*, was published in 1971.

⁵ She painted murals on the walls at GSCW and had one of her paintings called *Winter* included in an exhibition through Georgia (Gooch 111).

⁶ The chronological publication dates of the ten stories are as follows (the first five are from Welty; the last five belong to O'Connor):

1937 "Lily Daw and the Three Ladies" – *Prairie Schooner*, Winter

1937 "A Memory" – *Southern Review*, Autumn

1941 "Why I Live at the P.O." – *Atlantic Monthly*, April

1942 "The Wide Net" – *Harper's Magazine*, May

1942 "Livvie" (originally "Livvie is Back") – *Atlantic Monthly*, November

1953 "A Good Man is Hard to Find" – *The Avon Book of Modern Writing*

1955 "Good Country People" – *Harper's Bazaar*, June

1956 "Greenleaf" – *The Kenyon Review*, Summer

1958 "The Enduring Chill" – *Harper's Bazaar*, July

1961 "Everything that Rises Must Converge" – *New World Writing* 19

⁷ One example occurs in "The Fiction Writer & His Country," where O'Connor claims that "[t]o know oneself is to know one's region" (*Mystery and Manners* 35). She defines *region* as the area "that most immediately surrounds him [the writer], or simply the country, with its body of manners, that he knows well enough to employ" (28).

⁸ See the following essays and page numbers in *Mystery and Manners*: "The Grotesque in Southern Fiction" (42); "The Nature and Aim of Fiction" (67-68); "Writing Short Stories" (91, 101); "The Teaching of Literature" (125); "Novelist and Believer" (155); "Catholic Novelists" (175-76); and "The Catholic Novelist in the Protestant South" (197).

Chapter 2

Down Yonder in the Hollow: Tone in Time and Place

The consistent revelation of lighthearted and positive tones found in Eudora Welty's published photographs and the ironic and satirical tones found in Flannery O'Connor's college cartoons mirror the tones repeatedly revealed through their fiction. Although the reader is cautioned by Reynolds Price in his foreword to *Eudora Welty: Photographs* not to "suggest connections between a given picture of Welty's and one of her stories" (x), the reader is not discouraged from looking at the overall tones illustrated through her photographs and making connections to the tones described in her fiction. The same process of finding similar tones can also be applied to Flannery O'Connor's cartoons and her fiction. Within their various media of photography, cartoons, and short stories, the first area their distinct tones are revealed is through time and place.

In their various essays and articles, both Welty and O'Connor discuss the roles that time and place play in their fiction. During one interview after her first book of photographs was published, Welty sums up her idea of how to create an effective atmosphere: "Everything does have to be compressed ... it has to have bounds. You can't begin without staking something off in time and place" (*Conversations with Eudora Welty* 46). She even goes so far as to claim that place does more than just inspire her. When asked during another interview, "Is place your source of inspiration?" Welty answers, "Not only that, it's my source of knowledge. It tells me the important things. It steers me and keeps me going straight, because place is a definer and a confiner of what I'm doing. It helps me to identify, to recognize and explain" (87). The implication is not just about the physical place of her created fiction, but also about the time period in which the stories take place; her works are dependent on the South, as are O'Connor's.

In one essay dealing with the southern Catholic writer, O'Connor alludes to the need for the important structural framework of place when writing fiction: "The Catholic novel that fails is a novel in which there is no sense of place . . . Its action occurs in an abstracted setting that could be anywhere or nowhere. This reduces its dimensions drastically and cuts down on those tensions that keep fiction from being facile and slick" (*Mystery and Manners* 199). For O'Connor, the tensions of southern life help create her fiction; they are necessary to make her stories come alive. The tensions that these authors understand the most are those created within the framework of the Deep South during the middle of the twentieth century.

The most obvious element of fiction which deals with time and place is that of setting, which adds details to fiction and provides a necessary framework for putting the storyline in context. But the setting of a story can take the reader only so far in truly understanding the atmosphere of a story. While specific details should not be overlooked as they play a role in depicting local color, the use of time and place includes more than just setting; it encompasses social mores and general philosophies of life. For the southerner during this time and in this place of the Deep South, the expectations of behavior involve a laid-back atmosphere, an understanding of racial and class distinctions, and by extension, an assumption of what clothing reveals about people. Welty and O'Connor utilize these details as they illustrate their tones through their different media.

Time and place play an important role for Welty and O'Connor because of their own southern upbringing. The South, especially the Deep South, is not just the location of their homes; the South is inside of them and part of their heritage. Like the Snowball Bush (also known as the Mophead Hydrangea) which soaks up the nutrients of the soil around it, producing pink flowers when the soil has a higher pH and blue flowers in more acidic soil, these two

authors soak up – embody – the atmospheres of life around them. They, in turn, translate the surrounding life into their fiction. In her essay called “Notes on Time in Fiction” (490), Welty quotes William Faulkner’s description of how the environment, like the nutrients in the soil of the Snowball Bush, gets inside the author. The quote Welty uses comes from a question and answer session at the University of Virginia in 1957 when Faulkner was Writer-in-Residence. He claims the past is really present tense: “Also, to me, no man is himself, he is the sum of his past. There is no such thing really as was because the past is. It is a part of every man, every woman, and every moment. All of his and her ancestry, background, is all a part of himself and herself at any moment” (qtd. in Gwynn and Blotner 84). The southern way of life in which they grew up is not only an accumulation of their lives and the lives of their ancestors, it is an accumulation of the behaviors of everyone within their communities. In the South, things are not just done; things are done the southern way.

One aspect of the time and place of the South during the mid-1900s is the acceptance of – even expectation of – a relaxed atmosphere which is expressed regardless of whether people are playing, working, or just sitting. Both authors use such an atmosphere as a means of displaying their tones. Two of Welty’s stories that appear to showcase initially stressful environments for the characters are “The Wide Net” and “Lily Daw and the Three Ladies” because there is a sense of urgency as groups of people search for someone. Yet, as each story progresses, the relaxed atmosphere begins to emerge. As William Wallace begins looking for his wife who left a note claiming that she was going to drown herself in the Pearl River, the procession of men and boys who head to Doc’s house to get the net are in no hurry. In fact, many of them want to play. As they then proceed to drag the river with the net, they occasionally banter back and forth among themselves. Rarely does a solemn moment emerge throughout the entire adventure. In fact, at the

end of the journey, Doc admits that he knew Hazel had not jumped into the river (186), which indicates that he just went along for the adventure and because he had time on his hands. This same refusal to engage in someone else's emergency appears within "Lily Daw." When the three ladies first begin looking for Lily Daw, the townsfolk they speak with are not affected by the women's anxiousness; they continue going about their business, or in the case of Estelle Mabers, lack of business (101). The quest of these women even has a whimsical tone to it because they start searching for Lily at the water tower before walking down the street and asking Ed Newton at the general store if he has seen her. When he reports that he saw her recently, and she told him she "was fixin' to git married" (101), the ladies are flabbergasted. When they walk past "the Mabers girl," she is "slowly drinking an orange Ne-Hi" (101), illustrating the slower pace of the South and providing a nice contrast to these frantic women. When they finally find Lily Daw, their anxiety continues, but their southern sense of needing to slow down takes over. They step inside her house and sit with her a while as they discover why she is packing and as they work to convince her to move willingly to the "Ellisville Institute for the Feeble-Minded" (102-106). They are even reluctant to hurry later in the story when Aimee Slocum convinces them to get off the train so that Lily can meet her fiancé on the platform (109). These examples show characters who enjoy life and stretch out every minute for the enjoyment of the experience, as expressed through Welty's choice of creating a positive tone for the stories.

Many of Welty's photographs also depict this relaxed atmosphere among the people of the South in the 1930s and 1940s. In her book *Eudora Welty: Photographs*, no less than 30 of the 140 pictures taken around Mississippi depict people sitting in a variety of locations: on front porches or within churches or on parade floats. These pictures reveal people squatting next to watermelon on the ground (#36), a man resting on the fender of a car in town as he talks to

others standing nearby (#75), and groups of people sitting either on top a boxcar to see some spectacle (#129) or piled on crates within a warehouse while taking a break from picking tomatoes (#31). Even those pictures which reveal people working do not display much action. A woman hoeing with the caption of “Chopping cotton in the field” (#20) is standing upright even though her hoe is moving. The picture does not show enough of the field to determine how productive this worker has been, but if she were busily hoeing, she would not be upright; she would be bent over. Another picture titled “Making cane syrup” (#33) shows five men standing around an outdoor furnace as smoke billows around it. One man has a pipe sticking out of his mouth; one man seems to have his hands in his pockets. They are all looking at the furnace, but none of them appears to be doing anything other than standing and staring. Such a relaxed environment, shown in Welty’s photographs as well as her fiction, is prevalent within southern culture. Welty seems to embrace this ideology, presenting it in such a manner that her lighthearted tone shows through.

The southern roots reach deep into the soil of O’Connor’s heritage as well. She confirms this assertion by linking the environment to the art inside the author: “When we talk about the writer’s country we are liable to forget that no matter what particular country it is, it is inside as well as outside him. Art requires a delicate adjustment of the outer and inner worlds in such a way that, without changing their nature, they can be seen through each other” (*Mystery and Manners* 34-35). Evidence of the South living inside O’Connor is found through a memory of the journalism instructor who asked O’Connor to contribute some cartoons to the *Alumnae Journal* her senior year. Watching the cartoonist walking down the sidewalk with sample illustrations in her arms, Margaret Meaders remembers that “she ‘moseyed.’ I never remember seeing her hurry” (qtd. in Gooch 110). For these artists, time and place are not just the things that

happen around them or the superficial elements they choose to employ when writing their fiction; time and place are essential to the authors' lives and to the stories which they produce.

While the relaxed atmosphere of the South provides Welty with ample opportunities to show her positive tone, that same relaxed atmosphere often produces ill-will within O'Connor's characters who are annoyed at the slow pace of their environments. Through these characters' reactions to the idea of sitting around, O'Connor is able to display her satire concerning someone's dissatisfaction with his time and place. Two of her more educated characters, Asbury from "The Enduring Chill" and Hulga from "Good Country People," despise having to be with their families out in the Georgia countryside where things are slower-paced. Asbury abhors his southern hometown and the dairy farm on which he lives, preferring to live in New York City, but not having the money nor the physical strength to stay there. He really hates having to sit out on the porch during the day to "enjoy the view," as his mother insists (95). Similarly, Hulga often makes it clear to her mother that she disdains living in the hills of the South and wishes to be at a university where she can teach and talk to people who understand her level of intelligence (276). She does not enjoy the conversations that the women have around the kitchen table, except when she can use those conversations to distract her mother. For these two educated characters, the southern mentality of "just sitting a spell" creates more conflict within them than they can contain, illustrating O'Connor's satirical view of the southern mentality of time and place through society's expectation that people simply take the time to enjoy themselves.

Although O'Connor's cartoons mostly depict the active or frustrating lives of college students, some of them illustrate this concept of the laid-back mentality of the South. One satirical cartoon involves a pack of dogs lounging on the grounds of Georgia State College for Women. Four dogs are lying in various positions, stretched out on the ground and in some cases

partially on top of each other. Two other dogs are sitting up having a conversation. One says to the other, obviously a new-comer, “The whole family’s been wintering here at GSCW – you have to take what you can get these days” (*Cartoons* 70). The fact that the dogs are doing nothing but lying comes as no surprise to a southern viewer who is accustomed to seeing animals and humans “taking it easy” in the sometimes oppressive heat of the South. While the college had a problem with stray dogs during the war years to the point of their wandering into classrooms, this cartoon could be a pun referencing the many male soldiers with weekend passes who would converge on Milledgeville to see the female WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service for the NAVY). Finding the hotels full and not enough families to house them, often these soldiers would sleep in various places around the campus of GSCW (Gooch 98). Regardless of its intent, the concept of lounging around was not inconsistent with the mindset of the day.

Another cartoon showing O’Connor’s satire toward southern ease appears with the Clubs section in O’Connor’s 1944 yearbook. In this cartoon, seven students sit in a living room environment doing little but frowning. One girl sits on a wooden chair with her arms hanging limply by her sides, looking like she may be sick. On a nearby couch, one student is reading a book while three other girls next to her sit with arms crossed or with dejected looks on their faces. In another wooden chair, one girl reads a newspaper while her nearest neighbor, looking the most content of all seven students, relaxes in a more comfortable wing chair (*Cartoons* 15). This cartoon’s irony involves the concept that clubs are supposed to provide opportunities for students of like mind to share their passions, yet these seven girls find their only passion is that of sitting. Again the viewer sees O’Connor’s satire as revealed through her droll depiction of characters who find themselves trapped in the slow pace of the South.

The concept of leisurely living only extends to certain aspects of the southern life during the time which these two authors were writing, for very little could be called *leisurely* concerning the racial and class-based tensions of the time. For centuries, the conflict of race distinctions was a major issue in the South, reaching the boiling point round the middle of the twentieth-century. Although World War II had ended, wars of a different nature were raging within the contiguous United States. In 1947 Jackie Robinson broke through the color barrier as the first black player on a major league baseball team, and in 1948 the armed forces were ordered to begin desegregation. But these positive actions came with a price: rioting and race-motivated murders escalated, mostly in the South. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Brown v. Board of Education* to eliminate segregation in public schools; in 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a segregated bus in Alabama. Days later, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. joined the bus boycott which began his connection with the civil rights movement. O'Connor disclosed her dislike of the racial tension through a sarcastic comment in a 1957 letter. After describing to a friend the separate but equal accommodations made for some black teachers at a conference hosted by a local college, she mentions a cross burning that occurred in the side yard of the college president that night. Her viewpoint is shown through the ironic comment which followed: "The people who burned the cross couldn't have gone past the fourth grade but, for the time, they were mighty interested in education" (*Habit of Being* 195). Because all this conflict based on race relations is happening at the time these stories were written, Welty and O'Connor address the tensions in various ways within their literature.

This particular conflict of race relations shows up most clearly in O'Connor's "Everything that Rises Must Converge." The white women on the bus, including Julian's mother,

feel uncomfortable with the new laws that end segregation. During the bus ride, Julian's mother and the white stranger she converses with reveal their attitude about black people:

She [Julian's mother] sat forward and looked up and down the bus. It was half filled. Everybody was white. "I see we have the bus to ourselves," she said. Julian cringed.

"For a change," said the woman across the aisle . . . "I come on one the other day and they were thick as fleas—up front and all through."

"The world is in a mess everywhere," his mother said. "I don't know how we've let it get in this fix." (10)

Using specific pronouns like *we*, *ourselves*, and *they*, the women's conversation shows a distinct separation of the races. Other words like *fleas*, *mess*, and *fix* also show contempt toward the black race and the laws that require integration. The attitudes displayed, however, mirror the attitude found in the South at the time. O'Connor's satire is revealed later as Julian's mother is hit with a pocket book because of her condescending actions toward a black boy and his mother. Slapped so hard that she appears to have had a stroke, Julian's mother, who initially speaks disparagingly against black people as a group, calls out for the black nanny she had as a child (22). By displaying the white woman's desire of a black woman to take care of her in her most childish state, O'Connor shows a dependency of the one on the other and an overall satirical tone toward racism.

Although this is the only story of the ten to focus specifically on racial tension, distinctions of race do show up in the others. Asbury in O'Connor's "The Enduring Chill" tries to befriend the black men who work in his mother's dairy farm in order to find out "how they really felt about their condition" so he could apply that to a play he is writing. He tries to get

them to smoke and to drink the fresh milk, but they will not participate, so he finally leaves them alone (96-98). Even though Asbury is willing to spend time with these people of a different race, he still has the mentality of separation which is consistent with his upbringing. Although he is not as sardonic toward the black men as his mother is – she cannot understand why anyone would want to write a play about the Negroes who try to get away with doing as little work as possible (88) – his reaction to race distinction causes him to use unhealthy behaviors trying to befriend the black men, ultimately causing his illness and bringing upon him O'Connor's punishment through his enduring chill of “undulant fever.”

Although Welty's fiction displays more tolerance toward race relations overall, two of her stories allude to this tension. Mirroring O'Connor's portrayal of black people as unreliable, Welty's narrator Sister in “Why I Live at the P.O.” makes a reference to the black help that her mother hires: “Of course Mama had turned both the [black helpers] loose; she always said no earthly power could hold one anyway on the Fourth of July, so she wouldn't even try” (146). Sister's tone shows not only exasperation with her mother for letting the helpers have a day off when Sister could have used their help making the pickles but also indignation at the helpers when she mentions that one of them almost drowned himself that day. Welty again briefly reveals white supremacist sentiment concerning black people in “The Wide Net.” When two black brothers are seen walking nearby, William Wallace, in typical white fashion of the day, says to them, “Come here, boys. . . . Come along with us, we're going to drag the river” (173). The expectation is that the boys have nothing better to do than give their free time to helping some white men do manual labor. As it turns out, these two boys seem to be delighted to help, alleviating any stress that could have occurred; they sound excited and smile in reply. Welty does not create any racial tension here and keeps the mood lighthearted, but the attitude of the white

characters still reveals the prevailing mentality of the day.

In addition to the problem of racial disparity in the South during this time, the differences of social class also provide context for the authors' backgrounds and fiction. Because of the South's long dependence on an agrarian structure, the bourgeois ideology continued to separate land owners – those with money, education, culture, and by extension political power – from those who worked the land and had a different view of acceptable behavior. After World War II, the idea of a middle class emerged as a prominent demographic, further separating the poor rural community from their suburban middle-class counterparts. The southern pride that pits “us against them” in O'Connor's stories on race relations reveals a similar desire for separation between classes regardless of race. For example, in Welty's story “A Memory,” the narrator at one point mentions that she does not know anything about the parents of the boy she loves. She is bothered by the fact that they could be “shabby—dishonest—crippled—dead” (76), proving that she is worried about the family's distinctions of class or about the boy's position in society if his parents are dead. She also wonders what their house looks like, afraid that it may belong to people of a lower class: “It was unbearable to think that his house might be slovenly and unpainted, hidden by tall trees . . . I speculated endlessly on the dangers of his home” (76). But instead of taking this class distinction and using it to make herself appear better than they, she portrays a more positive concern about the well-being of the boy she loves. This narrator is faced with another class distinction when the noisy “common” family plops down near her, their obnoxious bantering “astonish[ing her] heart” (77). Although she uses many negative words to describe their actions, she is more perturbed by their intrusion into her dream-world than by the fact that they are common people in faded bathing suits sharing the beach with her. She intentionally chooses to focus on her memory of the boy at school, as the “sweetness of [her]

love . . . swing[s her] gently in its suspended wind” (79). After the common family leaves, she is able to return to the game of framing her fingers, no longer dreaming of a past encounter with the boy but a future possibility of getting to see him when school begins again.

Welty’s positive view on life as reflected through the racial and class tensions of her time shows up within her photographs as well. Of the eighty-one photographs within *One Time, One Place* which clearly illustrate the race of the people represented, sixty of them are taken of black subjects, many of them smiling at Welty the photographer. Even the photograph of the black bootlegger displaying an ice pick to drive away customers (65) shows playful personalities both in front of and behind the camera. As Welty reflects on the photograph, she notes that the lady was joking (5), a claim which is easily confirmed by one glance at the woman’s lively grin. Only an artist with a lighthearted persona could capture such a playful atmosphere from a person on the other side of the color line.

The fact that Welty refers to this collection of photographs, including black and white people, “as a family album” (4) also speaks to her position on the racial issue. In the introduction to this book, she does address the oddity of a white person taking pictures of black people, but she gives credit of her success to “an angel—a presence of trust” (6). For whatever reason, the subjects in these pictures had no reason to think Welty wished them ill; such a mentality would not be true just a few decades later as racial conflicts intensified. Welty admits, “It is trust that dates the pictures now, more than the vanished years” (6). By focusing on the lives revealed through the faces of her photographs (7), Welty was able to capture life as it was lived in Mississippi during the 1930s, showing reality but capturing it in a positive way.

Welty is also able to show her acceptance of class distinctions through her photography of the more common white folks. In her book *Eudora Welty: Photographs*, Welty shows the

general contentment of people regardless of their circumstances during the depression. Picture number 44 shows a barefoot girl in a simple cotton dress sitting on the railing of a porch, looking wistfully off to her left. Although no specific context is provided other than the caption “Child on porch / Hinds County / 1939,” this white child appears to be satisfied with her life at this moment. Another picture of tenement housing in New Orleans shows children playing in a dirt lot among some two-story buildings with fresh laundry hanging across the courtyard (#95). Although these children have no play ground on which to play and only one tricycle for the seven of them, they do not demonstrate any anxiety over their circumstances just as Welty does not seem to pass any judgment on them. Another spread which shows a white family feeling the effects of the Depression shows a young daughter looking at the photographer with a sense of curiosity mixed with trust while her dad lovingly looks down at her. They are both standing on the porch of their houseboat tied up on the Pearl River (#109, #110). Had Welty shown an elitist personality, she would not have succeeded in getting her subjects to trust her behind the lens of the camera; however, her positive and respectful approach shows up in the photographs she captures and in the fiction she writes.

An example of class distinction from O'Connor's work occurs in “A Good Man is Hard to Find,” but her satirical tone is much different than Welty's lighthearted one. The grandmother sees herself as a lady and dresses to make sure that others see her the same way. She views the Misfit as beneath her socially until she begins to understand that her family members are in danger; then she tries to bring the Misfit up to her perceived social status by calling him “a good man” (127,128). Mrs. Hopewell in “Good Country People” makes sure not to hire white “trash” (272) to help her with the fields, and she repeatedly judges people's worth by determining if they are “good country people” (272, 273, 279, 282). Asbury's mother in “The Enduring Chill” sees

difference of class between northerners and southerners, as evidenced by her insistence that only the local family doctor would be able to attend properly to her ailing son, even though Asbury keeps reminding her that the doctors in New York are better trained than the country doctor his mother likes (94). She also sees a clear distinction between Protestants and Catholics, not trying to hide her disgust at having a Catholic priest in her home (105). Finally, Mrs. May in “Greenleaf” consistently shows contempt toward the entire Greenleaf family, whether through her characterization of Mrs. Greenleaf as a crazy woman lying on the ground, Mr. Greenleaf as a lazy man who finds excuses not to do as she asks, or the boys and their families as dirty people. The characters’ awareness of class distinctions and their antagonistic approaches toward members of inferior classes shows a negative attitude of resentment and refusal to change.

This same negative attitude shows up in O’Connor’s cartoons. Since the cartoons focus on campus life, the class distinctions are limited to students, faculty, and WAVES, but the cartoons clearly show an “us versus them” attitude. Although only two of the cartoons from the newspaper feature faculty members, many of the captions reference student disdain for their professors or for the students’ work load. One of the cartoons pictures a student with an armload of books, a suitcase, and an umbrella. The caption reads, “Term papers add quite a lot to these Thanksgiving holidays” (*Cartoons* 35), demonstrating an ironic tone implying satire because the viewer can tell that the student would rather forget about school for a weekend. Another cartoon with a similar theme shows a student jumping up and down on her books with her fist in the air as she shouts to another student nearby, “. . . and I ask you—how many Pilgrim Fathers had to write term-papers during Thanksgiving” (77). The attitude portrayed in these cartoons and others like them is one showcasing the disparity between students and faculty and the students’ desire to change the rules.

For these students, the real emphasis of a class distinction based on the cartoons involves the WAVES. Of O'Connor's fifty-seven published cartoons from her college newspaper from fall 1942 until graduation in 1945, thirteen of them relate directly to these NAVY women who appeared on campus in January of 1943. The initial cartoons dealing with the newcomers show natural curiosity. The first cartoon involving WAVES shows two students standing behind a pillar along a school sidewalk watching two WAVES approach. One student says to another, "Officer or no officer, I'm going to ask her to let me try on that hat" (41). The students like the uniform and in some ways want to imitate the professional character of these NAVY officers. The cartoon published just two weeks later depicts two students telling another student to stop exercising because she will "never look like a WAVE anyhow" (43). But the initial curiosity soon wears off when the next cartoon, printed in the newspaper just one week later, shows a student with a scowl on her face clinging about seven feet off the ground to a tree trunk like a cat while rows and rows of WAVES march along the sidewalk below her. The caption for this cartoon reads simply, "Traffic" (44). From this point on, the cartoons concerning WAVES become more satirical, illustrating students wishing to play practical jokes on the officers (53) and a student trying to decide whether or not to use the marching women as target practice for the bow and arrow she holds in her hands (49). By April of the following year, the newspaper published a cartoon with the tables turned: a student has forced at least seven WAVES up a tree by using her bow and arrow against them (69). This desire to maintain control of their campus can be compared to the conflict broiling outside the college community as black and lower-class Americans try to gain the rights they deserve.

Drawing from centuries of southern tradition, one distinguishing element of a person's class during the middle of the twentieth-century involved her clothing, which often revealed not

only her beliefs but also her perceived income. Two specific examples from Welty focusing on clothing involve people of the common or simple class in “A Memory” and “Lily Daw and the Three Ladies,” yet in these stories the more affluent people simply try to ignore or to fix the offending garb. Affected by the social constraints concerning dress, other characters – and by extension the readers – realize that these improperly-dressed characters do not submit to proper forms of modesty for their time periods. In the former, the narrator describes with some agitation the oversized sunbathers at the lake, noting how one of the young boys as well as the two ladies are about to “burst” out of their bathing suits (78). Even though the narrator finds these people and their outfits disgusting, the tone is not so much derisive as it is annoyed and slightly amused as the older woman turn her suit inside out so that the sand can fall out of it (79). The second example involves the simple Lily Daw who is wearing her petticoat when the three ladies come to visit her (102). Although Lily has been instructed not to continue to wear this undergarment as a dress, she does not take the warning seriously, not understanding the social implications of her attire. In typical humorous fashion, Welty later confronts the attitude of the time when Mrs. Watts remarks speculatively, “What would they think if she ran all over Ellisville in a petticoat looking like a Fiji?” (105). Popular pictures of Fiji women at the time depict topless women. By addressing the social attitudes and expectations concerning dress, Welty displays not only the setting of time in these stories, but also her proud yet lighthearted tone.

While various photographs Welty took could illustrate this playful tone involving impropriety, one spread within her first book of photographs *One Time, One Place* stands out as an appropriate example. Each page has one full-sized picture. The left-hand picture is titled “Storekeeper – Rankin County” and shows a slim, serious-looking white-haired gentleman sitting down on a large display shelf in a storefront window, right leg crossed over the left leg,

right arm resting casually on his right leg, and left arm stretched out and resting on a large watermelon also sitting on the shelf. His hands look relaxed. The store keeper is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved dress shirt with buttoned-down collar, a dark tie with a tie clasp bar, and light-colored dress pants held up with suspenders (104). His light-colored clothes and serious expression contrast with the dusty-looking shelf on which he sits, creating an impression of proper decorum and refinement. The image could easily represent the narrator at the beach in “A Memory” as well as the three ladies in the other story.

The picture on the right-hand page reflects the attitude toward dress which the bathing family and Lily Daw portray, creating a visual contrast to the properly-dressed store keeper in the opposing photograph. This picture is titled “Delegate, Governor’s Mansion – Jackson.” It is taken in front of the mansion and has men and a boy standing in the background underneath the shade of a large southern tree. The focus, however, is on the delegate – an elderly woman standing on the sidewalk looking directly at the camera. Everything about her body and wardrobe is gaudy and saggy. The loose skin on her face and neck reflect her loose bosom which is highlighted by her dress; instead of wearing a loose-fitting dress to try to mask her droopy figure, she is wearing a dress that distinguishes the demarcation between upper torso and lower torso. The problem is that her bosom is resting on her oversized middle, drawing attention to both. Two rows of buttons running from the collar down the chest and a long strand of pearls hanging around her neck draw the eye downward, accentuating the flaccid effect. Adding to the gaudiness is the lop-sided placement of ribbons and pins on her left side. The uppermost pin has a fist-sized bulls-eye decoration from which extends an ankle-length white ribbon reading “Matron of Honor.” Just below this ribbon is affixed a rectangular pin. Although the pin is hard to distinguish, it is made of two parts with at least two dark-colored ribbons extending toward the

delegate's hip. The third pin looks more like an actual delegate ribbon with a bar atop a three-inch piece of material that is dark on one side and light on the other (105). All three of these continue to draw the eye down the delegate's body, adding to the droopy effect. Although she is applying for the serious position of an elected official, this delegate gives the impression that she does not understand the earnestness required for the job. While there is no indication that Welty took this photograph with the intent of mocking the delegate, its whimsical arrangement cannot be denied, especially as the delegate's choice of dress contrasts with the well-dressed men standing behind her and with the serious-looking store keeper in the photograph on the opposite page. Through these photographs as well as through her fiction, Welty is able to lightheartedly portray her humor through the expectations concerning proper clothing in Mississippi during the middle of the twentieth-century.

O'Connor uses clothing as a means of conveying tone within time and place as well, although she consistently portrays a feeling of satire when a character puts too much emphasis on dress. Using two specific characters, she displays her satirical tone through their mistaken association of class as it pertains to the expected wardrobe of a lady in the South in the 1950s. Both the grandmother in "A Good Man is Hard to Find" and Julian's mother in "Everything that Rises Must Converge" believe that wearing certain clothes sets them apart from the rest of the world, including their own family members. Although Bailey's wife is still wearing slacks and has her hair pulled back under a bandana as the family members begin their vacation, the grandmother is wearing a fancy hat and a dress so that "anyone seeing her dead on the highway would know at once that she was a lady" ("Good Man" 118). In similar fashion, Julian's mother not only can rest assured that she will not "meet [her]self coming and going" because of her gaudy hat, but she is also "one of the few members of the Y reducing class who arrived in hat

and gloves” (“Everything” 5). Holding onto the old traditions keeps these two ladies in touch with their heritage and gives them a sense of identity. But the information concerning their dress is presented to the reader in a scornful way, especially as Julian’s mother finds that one of the articles of dress which is supposed to set her apart from any inferior classes actually links her to that class when a large black woman enters the bus wearing the same gaudy hat. The same scornful tone is directed toward the grandmother as she finds that the manner of dress which sets her apart as a lady does nothing to protect her from the bullet of the Misfit. Through subtle details, O’Connor reveals her satirical tone aimed against the socially accepted expectations of dress to which her characters fall prey.

Also displaying this patronizing tone is one of O’Connor’s cartoons from her college newspaper which shows someone wearing improper attire at the wrong time and in the wrong place. In this cartoon, two students are standing in the hallway, one with her hands on her hips and a frown on her face. They are watching another student walking from a classroom with her eyes closed and her head held high, carrying her textbooks under one arm and a fur coat under the other arm. She is dressed in an evening gown, wearing pumps and long gloves with her hair fixed nicely and a boa around her neck. As the other two girls, dressed in drab school clothes, observe this prima donna, the taller girl whispers into the ear of the shorter student, “I understand she says it’s the happy way of doing things” (*Cartoons* 79). These girls know that the behavior of the well-dressed student does not match her environment, and it creates a sense of animosity within them because such dress creates tension by setting them apart. According to Gooch, this cartoon appeared after a new professor used a quote from Emerson during a speech to the student body: “Manners are the happy way of doing things” (113). O’Connor’s response to “the happy way” is to show her satire toward the conventions of dress as a means of proving their status in

life.

The influences of southern life in the mid-1900s affect Welty and O'Connor in such a way that they display evidence of the South being inside of them. Both their visual arts and their fiction reveal their attitudes toward the South's relaxed atmosphere, racial and class tensions, and the ideals associated with clothing as a determiner of class. While both women reflect southern mentalities, their individual attitudes as reflected through their tones are starkly different. Welty's more upbeat, lighthearted tone appears in both her photography as well as her fiction. In similar fashion, O'Connor's satirical tone can easily be found within her cartoons and her short stories. Although the media change, their tones are consistently expressed through the cultural expectations that accompany the Deep South of the mid-1900s.

Critics have noted the depth of this southern influence on Welty's and O'Connor's fiction. Westling provides further insight into the effect of their southern environments, noting that even though the authors were raised in two different states, because they were both in the Deep South, their "social and cultural world[s were] . . . essentially the same"; this deep-seated connection to place intertwines itself with all the elements they use in fiction, not just the setting, creating a "richness and power which is far less apparent or affecting when they [the elements of fiction] are taken separately" (2). Beginning with the social mores created by the time and place of their lives and their arts, Welty and O'Connor also show their southern roots through two other aspects: character relationships and figurative language. Just as their tones permeate time and place, they also will be clearly seen within these other two elements. Time and place infuse local color into their arts, strengthening their fiction and providing a proper framework for their visual arts. Because their southern heritage so indelibly defines them as individuals, their tones can be seen in the same elements that provide this local color: time and place.

Chapter 3

Strange Fellows, Raisin' Cain, and Young 'uns: Tone through Relationships

While a proper framework for their stories may begin in time and place, Welty and O'Connor both understand the importance of relationships in helping their readers have a meaningful experience through their fiction. Not only do the tones of Welty's and O'Connor's fiction mirror the tones within their visual arts in the area of time and place, the tones revealed within their differing media are also connected through their use of relationships.

Similar situations involving relationships appear within these ten stories, yet the authors handle each of those situations in manners which reveal their different tones. Just as one uses the lens of a camera to initially frame a subject before zooming in to capture a closer look, so too can one initially frame the relationships within these stories from a distance and then zoom in closer to gain a more exclusive view. In addressing the southern expectation of how to react to strangers, each author creates a salesperson in one of her stories. Moving from strangers toward relationships that occur mostly because of the proximity of the characters, each author also displays her tone through family relationships and close friendships. Moving into more intimate relationships, both authors reveal their tones through the creation of maternal relationships.

An example of a relationship of distance used by both Welty and O'Connor in their fiction involves a visit by a door-to-door salesperson. Although these characters are strangers to the inhabitants of the houses they visit, southern hospitality mandates that a relationship be established, even though it will be shallow and very short-lived. Through these salespeople within Welty's "Livvie" and O'Connor's "Good Country People," the authors' different tones are revealed.

Although Livvie has lived secluded and sheltered for nine years out along the Natchez

Trace nowhere near a road, Miss Baby Marie manages to drive her car to Livvie's house in an attempt to sell cosmetics to the young girl. Livvie does not forget her manners when this stranger knocks on the door, even though her husband has banned contact with other people for fear that his young wife would want to leave him. Timidly allowing the saleslady to force her way through the barely-opened door, Livvie experiments with some lipstick which brings back happy memories of her childhood home. The two women share a moment of conversation while looking in a cheap mirror out on the front porch before Miss Baby Marie packs up her cosmetics. Although the saleslady tries to convince Livvie to purchase the lipstick, she is neither rude nor unduly sweet with comments like "Try this!" (162) and "Use it freely. Rub it on" (163) followed by "The lipstick I can let you have for only two dollars" and "Oh, but you don't pay the first time. I make another trip, that's the way I do" (163). Not having any money, Livvie is forced to be firm in refusing to purchase anything, yet she is also nice in her reception of and interaction with Miss Baby Marie. Her complete submission to her husband is visible, and she uses it to turn away the saleslady: "Yes'm. My husband, he keep the *money*. . . .He is as strict as he can be. He don't know *you* walk in here—Miss Baby Marie" (163-164). By making her visitor feel like she is an accomplice in a secret (i.e., hiding information from Solomon), Livvie shows her ability to walk the fine line of welcoming a stranger while honoring her husband's strict preferences. Through this brief scene, Welty keeps the mood light and reveals a positive tone from both characters with words like *respectfully*, *proper*, *light*, *triumph*, *freely*, and *danced*. Even though Miss Baby Marie drives "far away from anywhere" (163) to get to Livvie's house and still does not make a sale, she does not display an attitude of contempt as she packs up her cosmetics and leaves.

While not specifically depicting door-to-door salespeople, some of the photographs from

Eudora Welty: Photographs do show people trying to sell one item or another. Initially establishing relationships with Miss Welty behind the camera, these characters are also connecting on some level with the viewers because they are making eye contact with those who see them. One such picture is of a boy of about twelve standing barefoot on a sidewalk (#48), wearing a large straw hat, a light-colored cotton shirt with the sleeves rolled up, and cotton britches. He has a tambourine in his right hand, which appears to be hitting his knee, and his left hand also seems to be in motion. These facts, combined with the huge grin on his face and the caption reading, "Dancing for pennies," give the impression that he indeed is in the middle of a dance and enjoying every second of it. The caption could have read "Smiles for sale," for one cannot help but return the smile offered by the boy while longing to toss him some coins, evidence of the effectiveness of developing relationships in the sales world as well as evidence of Welty's positive tone as depicted among relationships of distance.

Another picture which displays Welty's lighthearted and positive tone concerning a salesperson involves a tomato wholesaler in Crystal Springs, Mississippi (#73). A lady wearing a skirt, long-sleeved shirt, and a cardigan with her hair tied up in a scarf is standing next to a shed showing off an oversized tomato at least as large as the shed on which it has been constructed. The woman has a come-see-what-I-found grin on her face, inviting the viewer to share in her joke, and the name painted on the shed in large letters defines the perceived magnitude of the entire operation: "Tomatropolis." Providing additional positive imagery, signs of progress are in the background as a new, larger building is being erected. Again, understanding relationships, even cursory relationships between salesperson and customer, Welty is able to reveal her positive tone by connecting the subjects within her photographs with the audience viewing her photographs. The relationships created among complete strangers affirm her consistency of tone.

A door-to-door salesperson also presents himself in one of Flannery O'Connor's stories, but his presence reveals relationships of a more satirical nature, reflecting the tone of O'Connor's cartoons. Even his name, Manley Pointer, has an ironic undertone, especially when the reader realizes that this Bible salesman is neither a believer in his product nor an innocent and naïve "Chrastian" (278) in the area of sexuality. O'Connor herself thought highly of this work, calling "Good County People" "a very hot story [which she wrote] at the last minute" (*Habit of Being* 76). In this tale, the salesman comes knocking at the door of the Hopewell household. Like most southerners who react suspiciously toward people who are not from their own communities, Mrs. Hopewell originally reacts defensively toward the salesman as he stumbles into her house with his huge case of Bibles (278). She soon invites him to stay to dinner, however, after he gives her the impression that he is a good country person. Mrs. Hopewell's hospitable reaction towards the salesman creates a foil for her daughter's refusal to be polite. Christened as Joy but legally changing her name to Hulga to shown disdain for her given name (274), this daughter's reaction to the salesman is to "[g]et rid of the salt of the earth" (279); however, after he convinces both women of his innocence over dinner, Hulga wants to seduce him (284), seeing herself as philosophically superior to this naïve Bible salesman. She treats the relationship with this stranger as a game, tolerating his innocence until she can effectively seduce him.

Hulga continues her offensive conversations as she and Manley Pointer walk out to the barn in the back pasture. Trying to shock him with her philosophical understanding of life, she tells him, "In my economy, . . . I'm saved and you are damned but I told you I didn't believe in God" (286). Soon, however, she finds herself beginning to trust him, imagining them running away together. Just when Hulga's character begins to shed its sarcasm with more innocent

questions like, “[A]ren’t you just good country people?” (290) the author picks up that sarcastic tone and turns it into satire for the reader by revealing Manley Pointer’s true colors. Shedding his own innocent façade, Manley opens his suitcase to reveal a hollow Bible with a “flask of whiskey, a pack of cards, and a small blue box” containing condoms (289). O’Connor shows her satirical tone when she turns the tables completely on Hulga:

Her face was almost purple. “You’re a Christian!” she hissed. “You’re a fine Christian! You’re just like them all—say one thing and do another. You’re a perfect Christian, you’re . . .”

The boy’s mouth was set angrily. “I hope you don’t think,” he said in a lofty indignant tone, “that I believe in that crap! I may sell Bibles but I know which end is up and I wasn’t born yesterday and I know where I’m going!” (290)

Hulga finds herself stranded in the loft of the barn after Manley Pointer admits that he “got a woman’s glass eye this way” and runs off with her wooden leg (291). Demonstrating his intellectual supremacy over her, he leaves after saying, “[Y]ou ain’t so smart. I been believing in nothing ever since I was born!” (291). This satire against intellectualism’s replacement of religious faith, initially revealed as sarcasm within Hulga before it is used against her, distances the characters from each other.

Much criticism has been written about O’Connor’s use of these distant relationships as a means of illustrating the need for grace. In his seminal book on O’Connor, Frederick Asals – claiming that O’Connor uses a “wry tone” (25) – notes the diversity of these intruders within her work, claiming “they become the galvanic centers of the works they inhabit . . . for they seem to embody a kind of knowledge the protagonists have lost touch with” (116-117). Not only are these characters – both household inhabitants and the strangers – distant from each other, in

many ways they also exhibit distant understandings of normal society and relationships. Using satire, O'Connor illustrates just how far off base these characters are. Furthering this concept by alluding to Hulga in addition to many of O'Connor's other characters, Westling mentions that the author wishes to break "through the pride of . . . her sour intellectuals, her grasping widows, and her self-congratulatory Pharisees to reveal their helplessness and their need for faith" (136). This situation that Hulga finds herself in does just that. Where Welty uses the interaction of strangers to draw them to a temporary relationship of common ground and a feeling of delight, O'Connor uses the interaction of similar strangers to drive them further apart and toward isolation. One of her longtime friends and biographers, Sally Fitzgerald not only mentions that O'Connor's characters reveal how much people really need each other, but also that isolationism brings harm (qtd. in Magee and Wright 29). It is through her satirical tone and the troubles that follow humans because of their own prideful tendencies that O'Connor is able to portray the follies of such selfish thinking.

O'Connor conveys the same satirical tone through one of her cartoons depicting a shoe saleslady trying to force her own opinion onto a male sailor. The sailor, sitting in the shoe store with one hand open and turned upward in a gesture of invitation, has a look of saddened confrontation as he speaks. With a scowl on her face and her lips tersely closed, the saleslady is sitting rigidly next to the sailor's foot which is planted on the sloped side of a bench. On his foot is a black and white wing-tip shoe. While leaning forward in a more inviting position than the saleslady, he says, "Yeah, I know it's a nice shoe, lady, but it's not exactly what I'm looking for" (*Cartoons* 86). This sarcastic tone, while humorous, shows the way that distances between strangers can be stretched to feel even greater than they are; the refusal of one of the strangers to meet the other stranger on similar terms keeps their relationship far apart. This feeling is opposite

the one expressed by Welty's more positive photographs which invite the viewer into a relationship with those strangers depicted inside the frames.

The author's tones are not only revealed through relationships of distance; they are also revealed through relationships of proximity. These relationships involve people who know each other but not always in intimate ways, even though sometimes those relationships involve family members. Although Welty's "The Wide Net" and "Why I Live at the P.O." showcase conflict among proximal relationships, the stories are still portrayed in a lighthearted tone that contrasts completely with the satirical tone of similar relationships in O'Connor's "Good Country People" and "Greenleaf."

In "The Wide Net," Welty uses friendships and acquaintances that appear close but not intimate to portray her positive tone. The friends on whom William Wallace calls when he thinks his wife has gone to the river to drown herself are understanding and patient people, giving up their time – which may or may not be a sacrifice – to spend an entire day dragging the river. When the distraught husband runs to Virgil's house to get help, Virgil initially dismisses him until William Wallace insists that something must be done:

William Wallace reached out and shook him. "You heard me. Don't you know we have to drag the river?"

"Right this minute?"

"You ain't got nothing to do till spring."

"Let me go set foot inside the house and speak to my mother and tell her a story, and I'll come back." (170)

The lighthearted humor in this short passage informs the reader early in the story that no one really believes Hazel has committed suicide, as is evidenced by Virgil's delay in starting for

the river. The relationship between these two characters is one of tolerated bantering: Virgil allows himself to be inconvenienced and William Wallace allows himself to be detained. Throughout their journey, their conversations and actions depict a positive tone in spite of the serious quest they are on.

The relationships of other men within this story are just as lighthearted and humorous as the one between William Wallace and Virgil. Instead of being overly worried about Hazel, the Malones are excited when they catch a small alligator in the net, so they tie it up and throw it in the boat (178). During a thunder storm, the two black boys are scared and have to be reminded by Virgil of their purpose for the day:

“Now us got scales,” wailed Sam. “Us is the fishes.”

“Hush up, little-old colored children,” said Virgil. “This isn’t the way to act when somebody takes you out to drag a river.”

“Poor lady’s ghost, I bet it is scarer than us,” said Sam.

“All I hoping is, us don’t find her!” screamed Robbie Bell. (183-184)

This humorous and lighthearted conversation defuses the tension that escalates with the thunder storm, even though one of the comments is disrespectful of the supposedly dead woman. All the men tolerate each other, even in the midst of their ignorance or fear or folly. During what should be a solemn event, dragging a river looking for the recently deceased wife of one of the men, everyone is jovial and playful, acting as giddy as boys at a carnival. For example, they cook and eat some of the fish caught in their net, William Wallace performs a crazy dance which results in their “holler[ing]” and crying with laughter, and they act as if seeing a snake sliding through the water is akin to watching the Loch Ness Monster or paying a nickel to see a two-headed pig behind a tent (181-182). Through such representations of proximal relationships, Welty displays

her lighthearted and positive tone.

Another story which depicts Welty's tone through close but not intimate relationships involves family conflict at a dinner table. In "Why I Live at the P.O.," the atmosphere around the dinner table produces friction much like a board room in a corporate environment where opposing factions each demand their way. Two different meals are served throughout the course of this story; each time, Stella-Rondo manages to turn the conversation against Sister by pitting first Papa-Daddy and then Uncle Rondo against her (142-43, 149). What makes these two meals memorable is the fact that instead of bringing people together, which is the expectation of a southern dinner, these gatherings actually serve to split the family further apart. Welty uses a combination of past-tense and present-tense verbs to draw the reader into her characters' emotion, creating a lighthearted and rather humorous effect in spite of the bickering. For example, after Sister refuses to believe that Shirley-T. is adopted, the family sits down to eat dinner, but the way the story is told encourages the reader to think that Sister is the victim:

So the first thing Stella-Rondo did at the table was turn Papa-Daddy against me.

"Papa-Daddy," she says. He was trying to cut up his meat. "Papa-Daddy!" I was taken completely by surprise. Papa-Daddy is about a million years old and's got this long-long beard. "Papa-Daddy, Sister says she fails to understand why you don't cut off your beard."

So Papa-Daddy l-a-y-s down his knife and fork! . . . "Have I heard correctly? You don't understand why I don't cut off my beard?"

"Why," I says, "Papa-Daddy, of course I understand, I did not say any such of a thing, the idea!" (142)

The initial verbs describing action are all past tense (*did, was, was trying, was taken*), distancing the reader from the action, and the verbs describing dialogue are present tense (*says*), drawing the reader closer to feeling the sting of the words spoken as Sister would feel them; however, Papa-Daddy's reaction to Stella-Rondo's comments occur not in the past, but in the present tense and with drawn out letters (*l-a-y-s*), giving the impression that a drama queen is narrating this story, blatantly trying to draw the reader into her view of the offending world. This simple format change helps the reader see Welty's droll tone through Sister's eyes, all set within the normal environment of the family dinner. Although these two sisters are arguing, with comments like "I was taken completely by surprise. . . .Stella-Rondo sat there and made that up while she was eating breast of chicken" (143) and "Not that it isn't the next to smallest P.O. in the entire state of Mississippi" (143), a tone is revealed that is both humorous and lighthearted, especially as Sister continues to react like a pouty, childish girl and runs all over the house packing her belongings so she can move into the post office.

Evidence of Welty's tone as revealed through proximal relationships is also visible in her photography which reminds one of aspects of these stories. While pictures themselves do not often reveal how close people are to each other relationally, the compositions of those photographs can convey tone about people and their perceived relationships. With photographs like "Sandbar" (*Eudora Welty as Photographer* 65) and "Fisherman and his boys throwing knives at a target" (*One Time, One Place* 40), one cannot help but imagine the men of "The Wide Net" walking along the river and the sandbars in much the same way. The people in the former picture are so far away that drawing conclusions based upon their expressions is impossible; however, their body placement can be used to draw conclusions. The six people are walking toward the river, three of them bunched together in some sort of conversation and the

other three in various positions nearby. They are all on a sandbar of the Pearl River that resembles a beach, looking like they are trying to decide exactly what they should do. The entire scene is peaceful with a hint of anticipation, framed by water and trees with a lone dinghy tied up on the near shore. The latter picture shows a young shirtless father laughing as his two boys around the ages of ten and six practice throwing knives in the direction of some fishing nets and poles resting on barrels. The ground underneath their feet and all around the foreground is sandy indicating that water is nearby, and the trees in the distance are lanky and weather-beaten as if storms are often experienced in this area. The older boy has been caught in the motion of throwing his knife while father and younger brother look on in admiration. Although both boys' faces are in shadow, the father is smiling. His facial expression coupled with the body language of the boys reveals a happy-go-lucky kind of day. Just like the men in the wide net, these boys and their father appear to be enjoying their time together. Through such positive images of life along Mississippi waterways, Welty has captured yet another image of life that displays a positive tone similar to the positive tones of her fiction.

Another photograph which illustrates proximal relationships similar to Sister's family is one of people eating together on the lawn of the courthouse grounds (68). Although the people are not smiling and their relationships are unknown, they are all content to squat next to or bend over some half-eaten watermelons lying on the ground. Men and women alike seem to be discussing some serious topic because two people are looking directly up into the face of someone bending over them while a third person is looking down at something he is holding in his hands. Showing respect and not contempt for one another, their faces reflect a seriousness that is different than the joking or laughing nature of the boys on the beach, yet still positive in its familiarity.

The dinner table also provides an environment for proximal relationships to depict tone in O'Connor's stories. In "Good Country People," Mrs. Freeman comes to Mrs. Hopewell's back door every morning and several times throughout the day. These two women have an open relationship that involves listening to each other and sharing their lives through the exploits of their daughters. At times they try to compete against each other with their maxims which they readily share but rarely illustrate through their own actions. For example the women banter back and forth with "Nothing is perfect," "that is life!" "It takes all kinds to make the world," and "I always said so myself" (272-273). The two mothers are described as "carr[ying] on their most important business in the kitchen at breakfast" (271), which usually involves discussing the habits and behaviors of their daughters. Like most southerners, Mrs. Freeman was "[a]t no time . . . in any hurry to leave" (273). Such descriptions appear trite at first, until the narrator mentions that "[a]ll this was very trying on Mrs. Hopewell but she was a woman of great patience" (273) who later speaks "absently" (281) to Mrs. Freeman while hoping instead to be able to find out information from her daughter about her conversation with the Bible salesman (281). Still, the upbeat Mrs. Hopewell, who believes that "a smile never hurt anyone" (276), tolerates Mrs. Freeman's presence. The reader also knows that Mrs. Hopewell insists on having these conversations with the hired man's wife because Mrs. Freeman is known for "be[ing] into everything," and these daily meetings allow Mrs. Hopewell "to use other people's [bad qualities] in such a constructive way that she never felt the lack" of her own (272). Although their relationship is portrayed as a friendship through all the gossiping that these women do, it is actually a ruse for Mrs. Hopewell to maintain the upper hand of control over Mrs. Freeman, based on her explanation that "she had made up her mind beforehand exactly how she would handle the woman[:] . . . she would *see to it* that she was into everything" by "put[ting] her in

charge” (272). Through the dramatic irony of a friendship that really is not a friendship, O’Connor demonstrates her sarcastic tone.

Another example of a proximal relationship which presents a satirical tone is that between Mrs. May and her hired hand Mr. Greenleaf in the story “Greenleaf.” Her perception of him illustrates her faithlessness in his abilities:

Just the way he approached an object was enough to tell anybody with eyes what kind of a worker he was. He walked with a high-shouldered creep and he never appeared to come directly forward. He walked on the perimeter of some invisible circle and if you wanted to look him in the face, you had to move and get in front of him. She had not fired him because she had always doubted she could do better. He was too shiftless to go out and look for another job; he didn’t have the initiative to steal, and after she had told him three or four times to do a thing, he did it; but he never told her about a sick cow until it was too late to call the veterinarian and if her barn had caught on fire, he would have called his wife to see the flames before he began to put them out. (26-27)

Using words like *creep* and *shiftless*, O’Connor introduces a tone of mistrust into the relationship between Mrs. May and Mr. Greenleaf, and the examples of his actions demonstrate their differences of priorities. She feels that he intentionally does the opposite of anything which she tells him to do. This is especially true concerning the scrub bull which continually comes onto her property and eats her bushes. Afraid that it will ruin her cows by breeding with them, she wants the bull returned to its owner. A later conversation continues to build the conflict between them:

“I told you to get up that bull. Now he’s in with the milk herd.”

“You can’t do two thangs at oncet,” Mr. Greenleaf remarked.

“I told you to do that first.” (38)

Then as the bull continues finding its way onto her land, she wants it shot. Her relationship with this slow-moving man continues to be one of complete contempt; according to her, he can never do anything right. He, on the other hand, merely tolerates her, which makes her even angrier.

While Mrs. May’s disdain is revealed through such comments as her prideful statements comparing her own sons – whom the reader understands to be immature and lazy – to Mr. Greenleaf’s sons, O’Connor’s greatest sarcasm is revealed through the satiric ending to the story. Because of Mrs. May’s pride of putting herself and her family above Mr. Greenleaf and his family, she receives unexpected attention from the source of her displeasure:

In a few minutes something emerged from the tree line, a black heavy shadow that tossed its head several times and then bounded forward. After a second she saw it was the bull. He was crossing the pasture toward her at a slow gallop, a gay almost rocking gait as if he were overjoyed to find her again. She looked beyond him to see if Mr. Greenleaf was coming out of the woods too but he was not. . . . She looked back and saw that the bull, his head lowered, was racing toward her. She remained perfectly still, not in fright, but in a freezing unbelief. She stared at the violent black streak bounding toward her as if she had no sense of distance, as if she could not decide at once what his intention was, and the bull had buried his head in her lap, like a wild tormented lover, before her expression changed. (52)

The ironic ending does release Mrs. May of her troubles, but not in the way she imagined. Instead of illustrating proximal relationships as something fun and enjoyable, O’Connor uses these relationships as pictures of satire against the character with the “better-than-thou” attitude.

While there is no published cartoon of two mothers talking in the kitchen of a farmhouse or of a bull goring a neighbor, O'Connor's cartoons do reveal proximal relationships in a satirical way. Two specific cartoons focusing on seemingly close but not intimate relationships have an ironic and humorous tone. One involves a dentist and his patient. While the patient is lying back in the dentist's chair with his mouth wide open, the dentist perches on top of the patient. Facing the man, he places his feet on either side of the patient's chest, all the while holding a dental tool in one hand. He asks with a smile, "You don't mind if I get comfortable, do you?" (*Cartoons* 85). The absurdity of this cartoon makes it humorous, for surely this posture is not any more comfortable for the dentist to begin working on his patient. It is also humorous in the fact that the dentist behaves in a manner which is much more intimate than any doctor would be with a client or patient, and as such mocks the professionalism of the dentist. Another cartoon showing satire within proximal relationships involves a student pointing a long, bony finger at a dean sitting behind his desk. She must feel comfortable enough with this professor to approach him so that she can voice her concern, but she tries to elicit change in a disrespectful way. Tapping the desk with her other hand, she says with a stern look on her face, "I demand an honorary organization for the C-Group!" (*Cartoons* 76). Ridiculing the dean and minimizing the achievements of those students who qualify for the Dean's list, this student's comment is satirical because few people would speak to someone in authority in such a manner and even fewer would want to reward her mediocrity. The tone of these cartoons matches the tones found in O'Connor's proximal relationships within her fiction.

Thus far, the consistency of Welty's and O'Connor's tones has been illustrated through the wide-angle focus of relationships between strangers in addition to the more narrow focus of relationships of proximity. Taking that same lens and narrowing the focus even more, the

authors' tones can be found when looking at relationships of intimacy. Although fraught with conflict like all other relationships, the relationship of mother and child is one of the most intimate relationships humans know, and in the absence of a mother, a surrogate often steps in to fulfill the role, creating an intimacy just as potent. Through this motherly role, the authors' differing tones are displayed.

Within the three stories "Why I Live at the P.O.," "Livvie," and "Lily Daw and the Three Ladies," three specific maternal roles all reveal Welty's positive tone, even through conflict. The only biological connection appears within "Why I Live at the P.O." where Sister and her mother are often found arguing, mostly because Sister feels jealous of Mama's choice to believe Stella-Rondo's tall tales. Every time that Sister succeeds in getting Mama to doubt Stella-Rondo, that doubt is short-lived, resulting in Sister's feeling even more unloved and unappreciated. One humorous example of this occurs when Sister wonders if the young child can even talk. After Shirley T. screams, "OE'm Pop-OE the Sailor-r-r-r Ma-a-an!" Mama replies with "Why, the little precious darling thing! . . . Just as smart as she can be!" before she begins "talking baby talk" with the young child and then demanding that Sister apologize to Stella-Rondo (148). Mama's split-personality responses of originally wondering if Sister is correct in saying the child cannot talk and then resorting to speaking baby-talk to the child before declaring her to be "as smart as she can be" shows her conflicted role as peace-maker between these two warring siblings. Although the reader empathizes with Sister's emotions and understands that singing a song from an animated tale does not necessarily illustrate one's intelligence, the humorous mood and actions described within this scene reveal Welty's positive tone.

While specific mother-child relationships are not displayed within the other two stories, the presence of a motherly figure conveys the same effect concerning Welty's tone. Livvie takes

care of her husband Solomon just as a mother would her sick child, fixing him nice meals even though he no longer has the energy to eat them (158, 159, 161). Livvie even walks quietly through the house pretending sometimes that she has a sleeping baby, and she does not wish to awaken it (159). She proudly shows off her husband to the cosmetics saleslady just as a new mother would open the door to the room of her sleeping baby so that a visitor would be able to see just how precious the baby is (164). Having an instinct like a mother who knows when something is wrong, Livvie rushes back to Solomon's side with the premonition that he is about to die (166). Such devotion on the part of this young wife illustrates a willingness to serve someone who cannot take care of himself much like the three ladies who take care of Lily Daw after her mother's death. While these women have helped raise Lily Daw by getting her away from her abusive father, feeding and clothing her, and making sure she attends Sunday school regularly (102), they realize they have one more motherly act to perform now that she is almost a woman, and that is to ensure that Lily Daw is in an environment where she can be protected from men who may want to take advantage of her simple-mindedness. They get the notion stuck in their heads that the best place for Lily Daw is at the Ellisville Institute for the Feeble-Minded of Mississippi, and they bribe her to move there immediately upon finding out that some stranger from the circus may have taken physical liberties with her the night before (104-105). If a pregnancy occurs, they do not want it to happen on their watch, which creates some humorous scenes between them all. Then, when they realize that the xylophone player is serious about his intentions to marry Lily Daw, they rush to make it happen, calling up the Baptist preacher from the train station to perform the wedding immediately (108-110). While their devotion to Lily Daw is not as profound as Livvie's devotion to Solomon, Welty does use their intimate relationships in such humorous ways that her positive tone cannot be denied.

Positive tones from intimate relationships also appear within Welty's photography. Two specific pictures from *Eudora Welty: Photographs* depict positive mother and child relationships regardless of circumstances. One of them shows a smiling lady holding a child about two years old on her right hip while a bucket hangs from her left arm. The little girl also holds a bucket though hers is child-sized. Both females are wearing dresses and hats. Although their clothing seems nice, it is obviously worn; the woman's dress has a hole in the sleeve. Both mother and child are looking at something outside the frame of the photograph. While the child looks amused, the mother looks pleased. The caption for this delightful picture is "Plum pickers" (#42). Turning back one page, another picture of a mother holding her child appears (#37). This woman is sitting on a cane chair outside, although the background does not reveal any information concerning proximity to any buildings or a specific location. The mother appears to be speaking to her child who has her hand on her mother's chest. The woman's dress is fraying at the ends and her coat appears to be well-worn. Unlike the photographs of people on the opposite page, this mother and child are both wearing shoes. The effects of poverty are apparent in the lives of this family, yet their portrait still portrays a positive tone.

The maternal figures in Flannery O'Connor's fiction have varying degrees of devotion as Welty's characters do, yet the tones used to describe those figures are usually satirical. Alsas notes that O'Connor's "family relationships always involve a struggle for power, a power the parent may assert simply by [her] continuing presence and which the child, bent on his [or her] own autonomy, is determined to wrest to himself [or herself]" (124). Such conflict produces contempt because these family members are unable to see past their own selfishness. In "A Good Man is Hard to Find," the relationship the grandmother has with her family proves to be lacking in the normal intimacy one would expect. The reader can tell that she regularly nags her family

because “she was seizing at every chance to change Bailey’s mind” about where they should go for vacation, and when she speaks to her son Bailey and his wife, they both ignore her (117). The grandchildren apparently take their own cues about their grandmother from their parents; John Wesley shows his displeasure more vocally by trying to convince her to remain at home while the rest of the family goes on vacation without her (117). The granddaughter June Star then reveals her own sarcasm by replying, “She wouldn’t stay at home for a million bucks. . . . Afraid she’d miss something” (118), more than likely mirroring her own mother’s comments. Not only can the reader hear the young girl’s contempt for her grandmother, the reader also learns that the grandmother is a busy-body, feeling like she must be in the middle of whatever is going on around her. She is also used to having her own way even if she must resort to trickery, as is evidenced by the fact that she hides the cat in the car knowing her son will disapprove of its traveling with them (118). Because of her disregard for what the rest of her family desires, the grandmother’s selfishness is easily discovered. She incites the children by making up a story about a house with silver hidden behind the walls (123) until they badger their father so much he agrees to turn down a dirt road toward the house (123-124). Her selfish desire to prove herself right also costs the family their lives as she identifies the Misfit aloud (127). When her family members are taken into the woods to be executed, again the grandmother’s selfishness appears as she pleads for her own life with little regard for theirs (131). The troubled relationships that the grandmother fosters within her family only serve to isolate them from each other, causing each of them to become easy targets for the Misfit and his thugs.

Although the grandmother clearly lacks the ability to form positive relationships within her family, she tries to connect with the Misfit in various ways in an attempt to save her own life. She first attempts to play the “damsel in distress” by appealing to the Misfit’s sense of chivalry.

She calls herself “a lady” and turns on the tears so she can wipe her eyes with her handkerchief (127). When that tactic fails, she tries to categorize him as “a good man” without any “common blood,” coming “from nice people” (127). After Bailey and John Wesley are ordered to march into the woods with the two henchmen, the grandmother tries the tactic of respected older lady, straightening up “as if she were going to the woods with him” and then commanding her son to return to her (128). She gets the same reaction she had received the morning prior: everyone ignores her and her comments. In addition to continuing to categorize the Misfit as “a good man,” the grandmother finally tries the motherly relationship tactic, offering Bailey’s shirts to him, followed by the honest tactic, reminding him that if he would just be honest, people would stop chasing him and he would not have to spend his life running from the law (129). She attempts to develop a spiritual relationship with the Misfit, first asking him if he prays (129), then begging him to pray (130) before returning one more time to the motherly relationship by exclaiming, “Why you’re one of my babies. You’re one of my own children!” before she touches him (132). This final attempt at forming a motherly relationship pushes the Misfit over the edge, causing him to react by shooting her and concluding, “She would of been a good woman . . . if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life” (133). Trying to create intimacy with a stranger after she fails to develop it with her own family members backfires on her, producing a satirical tone of grave implication for the reader.

Some of the motherly figures in O’Connor’s fiction try to demonstrate their intimacy toward their children, but for various reasons, the adult children reject those attempts. Possible explanations are discussed in an article by Lisa S. Babinec. Although her article focuses mainly on female relationships, her ideas pertain to many of O’Connor’s maternal characters. Babinec claims that much of the mother/child struggle comes from the mother’s attempt to raise her

children in such a way that they fit into society's mold; she does not consider their individuality. When the children fail to meet these societal standards, the mother feels like a failure (13). These emotions of not measuring up lead to conflict within the children as they work out their resentment toward their mothers by trying to manipulate not only their mothers but other people around them as well. Three specific examples are Hulga from "Good Country People," Julian from "Everything that Rises Must Converge," and Asbury from "The Enduring Chill." Babinec claims that the mother-daughter tensions between Hulga and her mother lead to the daughter's desire to dominate (9). Constance Pierce notes that Mrs. Hopewell's insistence on treating Hulga as a child not only complicates matters, but it also threatens the already precarious relationship the two women have (par. in Babinec 9) leading to, as Babinec puts it, "a sullen, withdrawn, immature, lazy daughter who is unwilling and unable to exist in the social world" (9). Julian from "Everything that Rises Must Converge" is similar to Hulga in his sullenness. Although his mother appears innocent and unassuming in some ways, Julian witnesses her condescension toward black people, feeding his own feelings of self-righteousness and strengthening his desire to see her put in her place (12, 17, 20). He tries to manipulate his environment to make himself appear more accepting than his mother by intentionally sitting next to a black man on the bus and trying to start a conversation, but its forced nature causes the attempt to fall flat (13). Julian's own bigotry towards his mother has the same implications as his mother's racism but with even greater punishment. O'Connor creates another petulant character in Asbury who wants to "assist [his mother] in the process of growing up" ("The Enduring Chill" 83) by shocking her with news of his impending death and the knowledge that she contributed to his demise because she stifled his creativity. He felt that "[h]er way had simply been the air he breathed and when at last he had found other air, he couldn't survive in it" (92). This sense of constriction affects Hulga's,

Julian's, and Asbury's views of the world as they grow older, forcing them to never really mature and keeping them confined in a childlike mentality even though they are well into adulthood. Attempting to break free from the domination they feel from their mothers, Hulga, Julian, and Asbury hide their emotions behind either an academic degree or the academic pursuit of writing. In the end, however, their educations cannot free them, for two of them find themselves even more dependent on their mothers than they were when the story begins – Hulga because the salesman has left her in a hay loft after taking her wooden leg and Asbury because the undulant fever will continue to return throughout his lifetime, causing him to remain an invalid – and Julian finds himself freed of his mother through her death or debilitating stroke. Through their failure to understand their own shortcomings initially, the children have to live with the result of their own actions. Creating situations that resemble the “I told you so” attitude, O'Connor represents a satirical tone within their relationships with their mothers.

Another maternal figure who fails to create the normal intimacy with her children because of her own prideful attitude is Mrs. May in “Greenleaf.” Like the grandmother in “A Good Man is Hard to Find,” her condescending manner separates her from everyone around her. After years of fixing breakfast for her two sons and making sure “that they had what they wanted” (28) while also finding positive things to say of her own two loafers when comparing them to the sons of her hired helper, her sons have grown up with a false sense of pride and entitlement. Even as adults aged thirty-six and a little younger, they laugh openly at her, insult her, and imply that they cannot wait until she dies (36-37). Scofield even says, “I declare . . . with the Mamma I got it's a wonder I turned out to be such a nice boy! . . . All I know is . . . I done mighty well to be as nice as I am seeing what I come from” (44). This attitude – the result of Mrs. May's coddling of her boys – has come back to haunt her, making her a victim of her

own devices. Through this learning the lesson the hard way, O'Connor's satirical tone is revealed.

Using more humor and less attitude in her cartoons to depict her satire through maternal relationships, O'Connor has a drawing in the GSCW yearbook of 1945 of two female chaperones at a school dance. They sit with scowls on their faces watching a young couple on the dance floor. Each woman wears a monocle with a chain dangling down her face, adding to the perception that these two women with simple dresses covering their ankles are two old-fashioned spinsters. The students themselves have different impressions of their dance. The sailor has a goofy grin on his face while the girl appears to be tripping over his oversized feet with an expression of simple tolerance. The caption reads, "Having a wonderful time" (*Cartoons* 26). The fact that only the sailor is obviously enjoying himself makes the caption ironic, showing O'Connor's knack for satire which is similar to her stories in which usually only one person thinks he is enjoying life as it is until he finds out that his view of life is sadly skewed.

By looking at the relationships that occur within Welty's and O'Connor's fiction and then by thumbing through any of Welty's books of photography and O'Connor's cartoons, one can see the way both authors use those relationships to depict their positive and satirical tones, respectively. Comparing the different tones of these two authors, Westling mentions that Welty "sees the world through [her female characters'] eyes, lovingly, reaffirming the old female powers of the land as she reaffirms the fruitful alliance of male and female humans and celebrates their domestic arrangements" while "O'Connor, on the other hand, only grudgingly accept[s] a female status that [her] fiction pictures as a trap, a paralysis, a diminishment" (183). With these perceptions playing a role in how Welty and O'Connor view life, their tones logically follow through the creation of their characters and their relationships.

Chapter 4

Mad as a Hornet and Fit to be Tied:

Tone Displayed through the Concrete and Figurative Language

One of the published snapshots from Eudora Welty's camera captures a nicely dressed young black girl smiling down at a pair of guinea pigs she is holding in her arms. Although her hands are full, she is trying to feed something leafy to one of these pets (*Photographs* #18). A pleasant sense of playfulness surrounds this picture as the girl juggles her charges and their treat. Shadows blur the bottom third of the frame, forcing the viewer to focus on the top two-thirds of the photo where the girl's face looks relaxed and pleased and where her pets are being pampered. Almost anybody studying this photograph will be tempted to smile as associations of his own childhood pets come to mind. A different reaction is elicited from this same viewer when he shifts his attention from this photograph to an artistic rendering of a college-aged student and her pet created by Flannery O'Connor. This cartoon depicts a female with books in hand walking an oversized turkey on a leash while two other students nearby complain, "Just the thought of getting away from here for a few days unhinges some people, you know" (*Cartoons* 60). This cartoon, published in O'Connor's college newspaper just before Thanksgiving break, shows both absurdity through someone having a turkey as a pet and derision through the satirical comments made by the neighboring students. These images created by two great American authors illustrate the different approaches each author takes toward her visual arts. While both images may evoke a smile from the viewer, the tones revealed through these images are very diverse.

These authors also approach the imagery of their fiction with these different tones. In Welty's "The Wide Net," she describes the scenery as peaceful and serene, even though William Wallace and Virgil are on their way to get a net so they can drag the river for Hazel's body after

she left William Wallace a note indicating she was going to drown herself. As they walk and William Wallace wonders how his wife, who is afraid of the water, could drown herself, Virgil replies, “Jumped backwards . . . Didn’t look.” The story continues:

When they turned off, it was still early in the pink and green fields. The fumes of morning, sweet and bitter, sprang up where they walked. The insects ticked softly, their strength in reserve; butterflies chopped the air, going to the east, and the birds flew carelessly and sang by fits and starts, not the way they did in the evening in sustained and drowsy songs. (171-172)

Virgil’s comment illustrates the playfulness found throughout this story while the description of the morning resonates a calm peacefulness consistent with Welty’s usually positive tone.

Flannery O’Connor, on the other hand, when describing a scene that is supposed to provide comfort to a character, still manages to add disturbing details which add to the satire she is illustrating. Mrs. May, after an emotional encounter in which her sons insult her, wipes her eyes and looks out the window:

The cows were grazing on two pale green pastures across the road[,] and behind them, fencing them in, was a black wall of trees with a sharp sawtooth edge that held off the indifferent sky. The pastures were enough to calm her. When she looked out any window in her house, she saw the reflection of her own character. . . . “Everything is against, you,” she would say, “the weather is against you and the dirt is against you and the help is against you. They’re all in league against you. There’s nothing for it but an iron hand!” (“Greenleaf” 37)

Although Mrs. May seems to think that looking out her window and seeing this scene helps to calm her, the reader notices that the scenery reflects her jagged and biting personality with terms

like *sawtooth*, *indifferent*, and *iron hand* along with the idea that Mrs. May must stand against the world. While Welty's and O'Connor's differing tones can be found through analysis of their descriptions of time and place as well as through their depictions of character relationships, the best connection between the tones of their visual arts and the tones of their fiction can be found through their use of imagery.

In the visual arts, imagery usually manifests itself through what can be seen. However, in fiction, imagery is not limited to the visual; imagery involves any sensory encounter which allows the reader to experience the action of the literature. One literature textbook defines *imagery* as "[t]he representation of any sense experience" (Brooks and Warren 685). The first connection readers have with any story occurs through the imagery received on a literal level: in order for the reader to accept a work of fiction, the writing must be believable. In *Understanding Fiction*, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren claim that the reader wants to enjoy fiction not necessarily as an escape from the real world, but in order to see "a new vision of [actuality]" (526-7). Fiction's believability relies on connections through the senses. Brooks and Warren continue to solidify fiction's dependence on reality as they look at how stories written by Welty and some other authors "suggest . . . how the individual story grew out of the personal world of the writer" (526). Looking at their writing processes shows "how the created world of fiction relates to the world of actuality, including [the reader's] particular personal one, whatever that may be. For in the end what [the reader's] imagination craves is not a flight from actuality, but an illumination of it, a new vision of it" (526-27), stressing the idea that the reader wants to see familiar things in a new way. Since all humans experience life through their senses, and since fiction is an art form which encourages the free associations of life to the events on the page, authors must rely on the senses to effectively create imagery.

In order to effectively use imagery, an author must appeal to the physical senses in a variety of ways. In various articles and essays, both Welty and O'Connor mention the importance of relaying information to their audience through sensory perception. Even St. Augustine in his treatise on teaching the Scriptures mentions the importance of the senses⁹ in the act of communicating (31). O'Connor takes this seriously: "As a novelist, the major part of my task is to make everything, even an ultimate concern, as solid, as concrete, as specific as possible. The novelist begins his work where human knowledge begins – with the senses; he works through the limitations of matter, and unless he is writing fantasy, he has to stay within the concrete possibilities of his culture" (*Mystery and Manners* 155). Readers of fantasy know that even within that genre, associations must be made between what already is and what could be in order for the reader to willingly submit to the story. In another essay, O'Connor spells out the sense association very clearly: "Fiction operates through the senses . . . The first and most obvious characteristic of fiction is that it deals with reality through what can be seen, heard, smelt, tasted, and touched" (91). Thus experiencing realistic fiction is the goal, and appealing to the senses is the means. But this reflection of reality is not an end to itself. In her short book *On Writing*, Welty clarifies that writing does not yield mere "imitation" (61); imagery provides another means of helping the reader experience the story. Using the literature of D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf, Welty describes how those two authors appeal to the senses in order to further the plots of their stories (17-19). The ultimate test, for her, involves questioning "is it [the writing] valid?" (61). In order to answer yes to that question, she notes that authors must be like "[c]hildren . . . [who] use all their senses to discover the world" (*One Writer's Beginnings* 10). Understanding the importance of the senses in helping their readers experience their fiction, Welty and O'Connor capture and relay the concrete; imagery through the senses is the

brushstroke these authors use to convince the reader of their imagined realities.

The term *concrete* emerges often in explaining how one translates reality into words on a page. The concrete is tangible and physical, unlike the metaphysical world of the abstract. For O'Connor, the word *concrete* often coincides with the senses and her explanation of the mystery that she tries to address in her fiction: "[T]he fiction writer is concerned with mystery that is lived. He's concerned with ultimate mystery as we find it embodied in the concrete world of sense experience" (*Mystery and Manners* 125). According to her letters in *Habit of Being*, this mystery can be the mystery of what one learns from suffering (543) or the mystery of redemption (102) or the mystery of existence (78), among other things. In one letter, O'Connor says that the reader must "go through the concrete situation to some experience of mystery" (520), leaving the door open for almost any sort of awakening. For Welty, the concrete is mostly connected with place (*On Writing* 46-47); mystery, to her, is "in the use of language to express human life" (*On Writing* 63). So, although fiction begins with the concrete, it must also connect those concrete experiences with something more meaningful. Janet Burroway, in her book about how to write fiction, succinctly pegs the idea of linking the concrete and the mysterious by distinguishing between concrete details that appeal to the senses and details that are "significant" because they also appeal to "an idea or a judgment or both" (24). O'Connor and Welty both write the concrete in such a way that it serves two purposes because "[f]iction is made to show forth human life, in some chosen part and aspect" (Welty, *On Writing* 64). As St. Augustine also concludes, the audience prefers to learn through imagery, not through exposition: "But no one disputes that it is much more pleasant to learn lessons presented through imagery, and much more rewarding to discover meanings that are won only with difficulty" (33). Not only does a mystery exist within good literature, but the reader also finds pleasure in solving that mystery. And that pleasure

comes from interpreting the imagery provided by the author. At first glance, imagery that utilizes the concrete and figurative language together seems oxymoronic, yet Welty and O'Connor blend the two seamlessly. In order to appeal to the senses in an effective manner so as to create a concrete reality within their fiction, these authors effectively use symbolism, simile and metaphor, and other comparisons using the phrase "as if."

One of the most discussed elements of figurative language these authors employ is that of symbolism. Good authors do not set out to create a symbol; instead, O'Connor claims that "certain of the details will tend to accumulate meaning from the action of the story itself, and when this happens they become symbolic in the way they work" (*Mystery and Manners* 98). Since symbols "work double time," O'Connor often uses them to display religious themes in addition to their literal uses. In "Greenleaf," the bull is seen as a Christ figure¹⁰ because it is initially wearing a crown of "hedge-wreath" (26) and it has been detained on Mrs. May's land for three days (27), just as Christ wore a crown of thorns and was in the tomb for three days. Welty has the same expectation of symbols: "[I]f a symbol occurs to you organically in writing the story, you can use it" (*Conversations* 188). She agrees with this same interviewer that her symbols often express mythological associations (189). Her most discussed symbolism occurs in her story "A Worn Path" in which she chooses the name Phoenix for the main character to describe the woman's ability to persevere in spite of obstacles placed in her path just as the bird of ancient mythology was able to return after being reduced to ashes. In "The Wide Net," William Wallace looks for his wife in a river which actually exists in Mississippi – fulfilling Welty's requirement that a symbol be used "organically" – yet its name is also symbolic in this story where a husband dives deep under the water, searching for his wife. This body of water is called the Pearl River. Other examples of symbolism from each author also show the different

tones inherent in the works of Welty and O'Connor.

An example of Welty's upbeat tone as displayed through symbolism exists in the hope chest owned by Lily Daw. This poor girl, coming of age and having spent a questionable evening with a traveling xylophone player, has very few material possessions. When the three ladies visit her, she is trying to arrange "two bars of soap and a green washcloth" ("Lily Daw and the Three Ladies" 103) inside her small hope chest. When asked what she is doing, she replies, "Packing, silly" (103). Such a deliberate action of arranging and rearranging too many items in a stuffed suitcase is expected; rearranging merely "two bars of soap and a green washcloth" in an empty hope chest, however, indicates Lily Daw's simplicity, and her choice of calling Aimee Slocum "silly" shows a playful tone whereas a more sarcastic person would say, "What does it look like I'm doing?" Lily Daw is not bothered by the fact that she has almost nothing to pack; after all, a simple mind rarely can see anything beyond the elementary in front of her. Once Lily realizes that the hope chest – an extension of who she is – can travel with her, she consents to going to Ellisville. As quickly as Lily Daw can arrange her soaps and washcloth in her chest, the three ladies prepare Lily Daw to travel and put her on the train. The prospects for Lily's future soon change again as the xylophone player shows up on the platform looking for Lily. Now that she is to be married to the xylophone player, she is no longer the responsibility of the three ladies. The storyline that depicts Lily's future going back and forth is mirrored by the rapid movements of the xylophone player's hands as Lily Daw describes them. When the ladies first speak to Lily, she is to move to Ellisville (103); Lily refuses and tells them that she wants to get married (104). The ladies convince her to go to Ellisville and actually get her on the train (106-107), but then the xylophone player shows up on the platform (108). In quick-tempo fashion, Lily's future shifts from the institute to marriage back to the institute and finally toward marriage. Such

playful “*ping-pong! ding-dong!*” (104) effects showcase Welty’s artful playfulness. As the train pulls away from the station taking Lily Daw’s hope chest with it, such symbolism shows the reader that Lily’s simple life is gone, and a new life as wife awaits her. Like this story, many of Welty’s snapshots also depict such hope, like the ones she captured of Katherine Anne Porter at Yaddo looking comfortable, poised, and happy (*Photographs* #203-#206). Although Porter was fifty years old at the time these photographs were taken, she is still portrayed as hopeful about her future, illustrating yet again Welty’s positive tone as depicted in both her fiction and her visual art.

One example of O’Connor’s humorous yet satirical tone as seen through symbolism is her use of a wooden leg in “Good Country People.” In *Mystery and Manners*, she is quick to defend her choice of giving a wooden leg to a Ph.D. graduate, claiming that the leg was not created to be a symbol, but as she wrote the story, “the wooden leg accumulate[d] meaning” (99). By the time that Hulga’s personality reveals that she is “spiritually as well as physically crippled,” the connection is made between the wooden leg and Hulga’s belief in nothing, so that when the leg is stolen, her independence and part of her personality have also been stolen (99). Hulga’s mind is described in the story as “clear and detached and ironic anyway” (“Good Country People” 285), creating just the support necessary for associating the removable wooden leg with her personality. Having a physical handicap exist as a symbol for Hulga’s mental handicap mocks the very foundation of belief for this character. That mocking tone mirrors O’Connor’s humorous attacks on the faculty within her cartoons from her college years. In one example, two students are walking with scowls on their faces. One of them, her arms loaded with books, laments to the other student, “Do you think teachers are necessary?” (*Cartoons* 57). While the comment mocks the teachers themselves, an astute viewer realizes it is the students who are

being mocked for believing that they do not need the instruction of their professors, much like the smug Hulga who disdains the guidance of those around her.

Another way Welty and O'Connor showcase their tone is through their use of simile and metaphor. Discussing the contrasting images of these elements, Burroway notes that the best art “comes precisely when the illusion rings true without destroying the knowledge that it is an illusion” (30). She continues to extol the usage of simile and metaphor because of their ability to make associations for the reader, connecting things which are unlike while working to bring further meaning to the story (30-31). Isolating such elements within a story does not illustrate the overall tone of the story, but looking at groups of comparisons helps to create a montage of images all with an overarching effect.

Within the five stories this thesis focuses on, Welty uses the simile more than the metaphor. Examples of simile occur at least seventeen times within “A Memory” and “Lily Daw and the Three Ladies,” and many of them are comparisons to things found in nature: The young narrator’s experiences in life are protected and “coaxed like a vine on our garden trellis” (“A Memory” 75); her imagination concerning the love she has for a boy at school is “like a rose forced into premature bloom” (76); the breasts of the fat woman on the beach hang “like pears” (78); the vulgarity of the rude family rises from them all “like a wreath of steam” (78); the narrator’s dreams shake “like leaves” (79); blinking her eyes is “like some alternate experiences of night and day” (79); Mrs. Carson’s voice is as “sad as the soft noises in the hen house at twilight” (“Lily Daw and the Three Ladies” 102); sucking on a flower sounds “like a jay bird” (102); the fact that Lily Daw could have a lover falls “like a summer hail” (104); and the rapidity with which the xylophone player pulls out his notebook is “like lightning” (108). Such associations – both of sight and sound – to natural things and phenomena draw the reader toward

the pleasurable even for those things which are unpleasant in themselves, for these comparisons to nature have positive connotations for most people. For example, the depiction of the rude family in itself could be seen as negative, but when comparing them to “a wreath of steam,” the positive connotation of steam rising from a mountain lake softens the intensity of their vulgarity.

The fact that Welty connects her fiction to nature comes as no surprise to the person who has flipped through her photographs and snapshots. While she often took pictures of people and events, Welty did not shy away from taking pictures of the natural world of Mississippi: rivers, pathways, trees, beaches, even landscapes where the hand of man was present like churchyards and dilapidated houses. In fact, within *Eudora Welty: Photographs*, ten pictures in a row illustrate Welty’s interest in nature as these photographs show no humans; the only hint of a current human presence is the one picture which shows Welty’s shadow as the sun sets behind her. Picture number 116 begins this run of photographs with clumps of Easter lilies in full bloom next to headstones at a grave yard. Four different buildings follow: an abandoned brick home on the Natchez Trace (#117), a quaint Catholic church built in a field (#118), the remnants of columns at the “Ruins of Windsor” (#119), and another country church set in a field with a line of trees behind it (#120). The next picture became part of Welty’s imagination in “Livvie”; it shows an old shack with at least five trees in the front of it. While one tree is tall and branched with buds appearing on all the limbs, the other four trees simply have one skinny, straight trunk and various short branches coming off that trunk. On those branches are bottles of various sizes (#121). Although the photograph is black and white, Welty describes the bright colors of those bottles in *One Writer’s Beginnings* (85). Completing this grouping of photographs based on nature are pictures of a suspension bridge over the Strong River (*Photographs* #122), another country church this time made of cinder blocks with grave stones visible on the grounds (#123),

a photograph of someone's farm as seen from the middle of a vine-covered patch of woods (#124), and the high bank with a large tree atop it next to a dirt road (125). These images all attest to Welty's interest in the natural world around her.

Where Welty focuses more on the simile, O'Connor utilizes both simile and metaphor more evenly. In her story "The Enduring Chill," she has roughly ten examples of each type of comparison. While some of these analogies may give a more positive tone when viewed alone, like the roofs of the town being viewed as "the mounting turrets of some exotic temple" (82) or the doctor being called an angel (93), the context of the story proves otherwise, especially when these two positive descriptions are quickly negated: Asbury chides himself for thinking about a beautiful temple when viewing "this collapsing country junction" (83), and he later disrespects the doctor who is further described as having "a face as senseless as a baby's" (94). Often the correlations are harsh in effect: Asbury always comes home with a "wooden resigned expression" because he has to "endure" each "two-week stay" (84), and he is later described as ignoring his mother with his "wooden face" (93); he tries to make his words warning his mother of his impending death feel "like a hammer blow on top of her head" (101); she replies with a comment of denial and with eyes "as hard as two old mountain ranges seen in the distance" (101); Asbury sees his bed as a "crater of death" (104); and after learning that he will not die, his mother's face has a "smile . . . as bright and intense as a lightbulb without a shade" (113). Who hasn't experienced the spotted visual effects of having erred by looking directly at a light bulb? Similar uncomfortable feelings are created often by O'Connor through her comparisons to illustrate her disgruntled and unsettled tone, much like the tone portrayed in her cartoons.

The harsh reality found in O'Connor's fiction is also visible through her artwork. In one amusing yet satirical cartoon, two students wearing rain coats and rubber boots are standing out

in the rain under an umbrella. One girl has her arms full of books, and she says to the other student, “Understand, I got nothing against getting educated, but it just looks like there ought to be an easier way to do it” (*Cartoons* 75). The dreary day matches her dreary face and her dreary outlook on life. Another example of the harsh reality for these college students includes a simile in the caption of a cartoon reminding the students that they have to share their campus with the WAVES. Two students, dressed in sandals and frocks covering their dresses are talking with two smartly-dressed WAVES. While one of the officers scratches her head, one student, with her hands on her hips, says, “I think it’s perfectly idiotic of the Navy not to let you WAVES dress sensibly like us college girls” (51). Having an assumption that their own school-girl clothing is sensible, these two students either do not understand the sense of pride felt by the WAVES as they wear their uniforms or the girls do understand, and they are trying to be devious in their comments. Either way, the conflict between the two groups is evident, providing an opportunity for satire to O’Connor.

An interesting link to simile and metaphor which both authors utilize is the analogy using the “as if” construction. This has the same effect that a simile has, yet the word picture is usually broader than just comparing one image to another; this construction usually compares one scene to another scene. In O’Connor’s “The Enduring Chill,” the “as if” construction is used at least eleven times. Many of the scenes of comparison sound sinister like “he felt the beginning of a new chill, as if death were already playfully rattling his bones” (102), and “Asbury moved his arms and legs helplessly as if he were pinned to the bed by the terrible eye” (107). Other negative images using the “as if” construction involve Asbury trying to develop a relationship with the two black farm helpers who talked to him “as if they were speaking to an invisible body located to the right or left of where he actually was” (96); the doctor “rais[ing] his hands over his

head in the gesture of a victorious prize fighter” before dropping his hands “as if the effort had exhausted him” (113); Asbury’s eyes “not appear[ing] to move on the surface but somewhere in their blurred depths there was an almost imperceptible motion as if something were struggling feebly” (113); outside Asbury’s window the black treeline “form[s] a brittle wall, standing as if it were the frail defense he had set up in his mind to protect him from what was coming” (114); and Asbury’s final understanding that he must live as an invalid when “the last film of illusion was torn as if by a whirlwind from his eyes” (114). Even the non-threatening allusions do little to exude a positive impression; for example “the Negro . . . took it [the glass of milk] and gazed down inside the glass as if it contained some great mystery” (98). The tone of foreboding – of something unpleasant waiting to occur – is clearly seen through O’Connor’s use of this type of comparison.

Within O’Connor’s cartoons, the phrase “as if” is not found, yet there is one drawing which stands out from the rest in its sense of dread as it depicts different scenes all in one context similar to the analogies created by the “as if” construction in O’Connor’s fiction. This drawing fills the entire spread of the inside cover of the GSCW 1945 yearbook. In these scenes, two different groups of WAVES march along the only sidewalk space available with a scrawny dog marching along between the groups. On either side of the sidewalk, students show various states of dismay. On the right-hand side, one student holding an umbrella stands knee-deep in a mud puddle while the feet of another student are shown sticking out of a hole in the ground which she has inadvertently fallen into. Nearby, a student has wrapped her arms and legs around the lowest limb of a tree having been forced to take refuge there by the WAVES marching by underneath her. On the left side of the sidewalk, one student peeks out of a pit dug into the ground while two other students in raincoats try to balance along wooden planks placed over the mud (*Cartoons*

17). These scenes illustrate the challenges of the students during the school year: having to deal with the rainy weather, stray dogs on campus, muddy construction, and marching WAVES taking up much of the sidewalk space on campus. Illustrating various scenes all of equal discomfort creates in effect a visual “as if” for the viewer.

Using this same “as if” construction less frequently but still just as effectively, Welty exhibits a more positive tone in her story “Livvie.” Even though the story involves a sheltered woman and the death of her husband, the satirical tone of O’Connor is missing from these analogies. When Livvie takes food to her dying husband, “he would only look at it, . . . as if he were past seeing how he could add anything more to himself” (158). While the tone displayed through this example may be sad, it is not without hope. The inevitable may be coming, but it is presented in a respectful manner. Other comparisons using this construction while Livvie tends to her husband Solomon are more cautious: “shouts came through the air and roused her as if she dozed neglectfully in the shade” (160), and while he lay dreaming “she saw him sigh gently as if not to disturb some whole thing he held round in his mind, like a fresh egg” (161). But after she leaves the house for a break and sees Cash walking along the Natchez Trace in his snazzy Easter outfit, these “as if” constructions take on a decidedly more powerful and playful tone. As he walks, Cash is “kicking the flowers as if he could break through everything in the way” (165) which shows his youthful vigor contrasting greatly to Solomon’s fading life. He also dances while “lift[ing] his spread hand high and [bringing] it down again and again in his laughter . . . as if Cash was bringing that strong hand down to beat a drum” (166), showing his mirthfulness. When they get back to Solomon’s house, Cash rushes into the front room ahead of Livvie where she finds him “turning slowly about” with “[t]he little guinea pig peep[ing] out. Around Cash, the pinned-up palmettos looked as if a lazy green monkey had walked up and down and around

the walls leaving green prints of his hands and feet” (167). It is not until Solomon awakes from his deep sleep for the last time and finds Cash in his house that the “as if” construction takes on a conflicted tone. As soon as Solomon awakens, “Cash raised his quick arm. . . . But he did not bring his arm down—it stayed in the air, as if something might have taken hold” (168). The scene that follows provides for Livvie an opportunity to separate herself from her dead husband and rejoin other people whom she has been restricted from seeing since she married Solomon. The hope of new beginnings matches the positive tones provided within these comparisons.

Many of Welty’s photographs show the promise of new life like the children frolicking in the “front yard” (*One Time, One Place* 32) or the girls waiting in line beside the front porch to have their hair done in “hairdressing queue” (31). One of her pictures, however, shows a specific illustration of the “as if” construction found in her fiction through the visibility of two scenes at the same time: a store window acts as a mirror, showing not only the items for sale in the window but also a reflection of the setting behind the photographer. The town has a row of at least six store fronts all connected together visible on the left side of the reflection. On the right side of this town are trees and some type of picket fence. Hidden within the shadows of these trees is the photographer’s silhouette. The items on display within the large picture window are images anyone in town could use: lanterns, clocks, a scale, canisters, a mailbox, an iron, and other items which are difficult to identify (52). This picture allows the viewer to see the town as if he were inside the store standing near a window, able to view items on the shelves while also being able to see the town outside the window without even having to move his head. These images create a juxtaposition of two pictures at once just like the analogies Welty creates using “as if.”

Just as the visual photographs and cartoons produced by Welty and O’Connor have

differing tones and feelings (i.e., Welty's positive imagery of pet guinea pigs eating lettuce within a girls' hands versus O'Connor's sarcastic imagery of an oversized turkey on a leash), so do the images created by these same authors illustrate their differing tones within their fiction. By blending concrete images and figurative language, Welty and O'Connor provide associations for the reader which help him connect images on a literal level while also leading toward deeper understandings. These associations also represent the two differing tones – Welty's more playful tone and O'Connor's more satirical one – generally exhibited by these authors in both their visual arts and in their fiction.

⁹ While St. Augustine focuses on the eyes and the ears, he also uses illustrations from the Bible of communication through smell, taste, and touch in this passage.

¹⁰ See for example Connie Ann Kirk's *Critical Companion to Flannery O'Connor*, page 80 and Jessica Winter's "A Doom of One's Own" from the theater section of the *Village Voice*, Nov. 13, 2001, page 61.

Conclusion

I Reckon. . .

During a 1978 interview, Eudora Welty was reminded about a program in November 1962 on which she and Flannery O'Connor were guests. Welty reminisces about O'Connor and the brief conversation they had:

I admired her work a lot. She “hated me” she told me, because I was supposed to have gone to University of Chicago once¹¹ and had illness at home and couldn't leave at the last minute. Flannery went in my place, and she said, “It was the most awful blizzard I landed in and I got pneumonia.” She had an awful time, and she said, “I ought to hate you, really.” But we turned out to like each other. We got to talk, but *never* did I get to talk to her just by herself, it was always in a crowd or a group. We wrote now and then. I always had it in my mind that we were going to get to talk again. I felt I knew her well and loved her work.

I always regret that I didn't have that next meeting. (*Conversations* 219-220)

This narrative as presented by Welty reveals the tones consistent within each author. O'Connor's satire extends from her artwork, through her fiction, and into her conversations with people, as is evidenced by her “I hate you” comment. Understanding its jocular context, Welty was able to have an amiable relationship with the Georgia native, a relationship that in retrospect she regrets not fostering. In addition to revealing O'Connor's satire, this quote represents Welty's own positive tone through her lighthearted description of their meeting as well as through her hopeful perspective that their conversation would be continued one day; even within a simple candid discussion, their different styles are easy to identify.

These two authors who appreciated each other's work¹² relied on their southern upbringing and their ability to see a myriad of things around them, from the complexity of relationships to the mundane of a picture on the wall, all of which they combined to produce their outstanding works of art. Describing southern authors, Thomas Daniel Young uses examples from Welty and O'Connor as writers who used "techniques that would make their world appear, as Lewis A Lawson has written, extra-real" (466). Such an ability to write about the "extra-real," coupled with their giftedness in other tangible arts, truly sets these two southern artists apart as women who desire to engage their audiences in experiencing the worlds of their imaginations.

Like many of their southern counterparts, Welty and O'Connor infused their fiction with the local color of their regions; they capitalized on the southern heritage into which they were born. Where their tones may be different, their reliance on their southern upbringing is similar. Much of this reliance is based on the cultural turbulence of the time. Louis D. Rubin, Jr. notes that the changes within the South, more so than just its location, most likely played a role in the fiction of all southern authors who wrote after the Second World War:

Applied as modifier to the noun *literature*, the adjective *Southern* continued to signify a distinction that was more than geographical.

Yet there were differences, not only in individual talent but in shared attitudes and concerns, differences that grew out of a changed and changing situation, a developing experience of community, society, and belief. For if it was the human transaction in change and resistance to change, in the pervasive workings of the historical imagination upon individual and community circumstance, that has provided so much of the distinctive quality of modern

Southern writing, then the effect of such change was bound to have an impact upon the successive generation of writers. (Introduction to Part IV 464)

The changes that these authors witnessed in their communities, and the conflicts produced when these changes rubbed against the southerner's long-standing sense of tradition, no doubt affected their writing, yet their dedication to depicting life through the eyes of a southerner remained constant. Southern practices and beliefs permeate their writing, giving their fiction texture and a sense of belonging. Such strong foundations connect Welty and O'Connor to the time and place of their fiction.

Critics have noticed the importance of time and place within the artwork of Welty and O'Connor. In the introduction to *Selected Stories of Eudora Welty*, Katherine Anne Porter claims that "[b]eing the child of her place and time . . . she [Welty] will never have to go away and live [elsewhere]. . . She gets her right nourishment from the source natural to her" (xiii). Having visited with Welty on numerous occasions, Porter is able to acknowledge Welty's sense of time and place from first-hand experience. Referencing Welty's book of photographs *One Time, One Place*, Barbara McKenzie points out Welty's intentional use of time by labeling three of the four sections as they relate to days of the week: "Workday, Saturday, and Sunday" ("Eye of Time" 398). For the Mississippians depicted within these photographs, time and place were constrictors of their lives. By taking their pictures, Welty was able to create "a record of fact, putting together some of the elements of one time and one place" (Welty, *One Time, One Place* 4). As a southerner herself, Welty felt as if she could capture the essence of their lives as no other photographer would have been able to do. Another critic, Barbara Harrell Carson, in the introduction to her book about the holistic writing of Welty, ties Welty's background of the South to the mindset she brought to her art: "Welty's own association of Southernness with the

ability to be at ease with the idiosyncratic suggests that the region of her birth contributed something to her holistic perspective” (xv). Carson continues to attribute some of Welty’s outlook to the fact that she was born during a time when people were questioning reality in a variety of academic fields, including the sciences and social sciences (xvi). The implication that Welty wrote in a holistic manner is in itself evidence of her positive outlook on life; it portrays Welty as a mediator who, according to Carson, “recognize[ed] that there is another way of seeing the world that is distinctly non-dualistic” (xvii). Perhaps the fact that her parents, from Ohio and West Virginia, moved to the South and raised three children as southerners creates within Welty a sense of seeing the world as a whole. Regardless, she is still successful at incorporating her own southern roots into her fiction but in such a way that it serves to connect instead of isolate.

O’Connor’s southern ties to time and place are also discussed by various critics. In her introduction to the book which reprints O’Connor’s cartoons from college, Sarah Gordon notes that the specific audience O’Connor was drawing for while in college was limited to her fellow students and the faculty of GSCW. Her understanding of time and place allowed her ironic tone to take full advantage of many situations, creating “inside jokes” for her audience. Gordon links the importance of time and place to O’Connor’s tone within her cartoons: “Even though her subjects rarely smile and their commentary is peevish, even sarcastic, O’Connor clearly demonstrates delight in her time and place” (5), a reference to the all-female college which she attended from 1942 through 1945. Understanding her own time and place allowed her to effectively create an environment within her visual artwork that worked not only for its intended audience, but for anyone who views these cartoons decades later. Having bridged the gap between her physical environment and the atmosphere which she created within her cartoons, O’Connor demonstrated an equal talent in understanding how those environments work for her

fiction. In one article originally published in the *Flannery O'Connor Bulletin*, Rubin claims that Flannery O'Connor "has given us a powerfully concrete and tangible gallery of men and women and children with Southern accents and whose life and thought are deeply grounded in the regional experience. . . .[T]he Southern milieu in which her art is set . . . is not only part and parcel of her fiction but significantly modifies and shapes the meaning, the theme, of her fiction" (181). Welty also confirms this idea of the connection between fiction and place: "[T]his connection between place and story *is* deep, *does* take time, and its claims on us are deep" ("How I Write" 243). Using their own time and place as a spring board for their fiction, Welty and O'Connor pull many aspects of "southernness" together, connecting their fiction to their own time and place.

Within the time and place of the Deep South during the middle of the twentieth-century, Welty and O'Connor were able to illustrate relationships that could only be found in such an environment. Welty claims that the importance of her photographs has nothing to do with her as a photographer; "their merit lies entirely in their subject matter" (*One Time, One Place* 4). Her decision to put people first not only allowed her access into the intimate lives of her subjects as she took their photographs, it also helped her create realistic relationships within her fiction. This in turn allowed her positive tone to be viewed through both her media. In case her audience wants to make her look like someone capitalizing on the plight of the black or poor person, Welty sets him straight: "Whatever you might think of those lives as symbols of a bad time, the human beings who were living them thought a good deal more of them than that. If I took picture after picture out of simple high spirits and the joy of being alive, the way I began, I can add that in my subjects I met often with the same high spirits, the same joy" (6). Theirs was a shared joy – maybe even a pride – of being alive during this time and being part of a state they could claim

as theirs. Elaborating on relationships in *One Writer's Beginnings*, Welty claims that “most intensely do we experience this [act of discovery through remembering] when our separate journeys converge. Our living experience at those meeting points is one of the charged dramatic fields of fiction” (102). Drawing from her own memories of shared moments with her subjects, Welty not only saw the relationships in front of her, she also created such relationships within her fiction. Through these relationships, Welty reveals her positive tone.

Although the relationships which each author depicts in her art of photography or cartooning are different, the fiction of both women effectively resonates the tones found within their respective visual arts. Welty's photographs display positive interaction among subjects. The relationships visible through her lens show subjects who are making the most of what they have. They are either working or playing or resting. They trust the photographer,¹³ allowing her to be a bystander of their lives without feeling like she is intruding or asking anything of them. Many times, the subjects in her photographs are merely gazing back at her or just going about their own business. In her book *One Time, One Place*, her images range from a woman hoeing in a field (11), to a father holding his toddler daughter on the porch of their house boat on the Pearl River (37), to a “[f]isherman and his boys throwing knives at a target...near Grand Gulf” (40). Whether showcasing work or leisure, Welty's subjects are generally at peace with themselves and with the world around them. These implications of relationships transcend from her snapshots to her fiction.

O'Connor's perception of relationships is captured through cartoon images drawn as early as her teen years and published in her high school and college newspapers. In these cartoons, she captures characters' facial expressions which depict sarcastic personalities. These characters are mostly females who show displeasure at one facet of life or another, from dress

code to required courses to faculty to assignments. Many of these cartoons focus on the students' displeasure at having to share their college campus with the WAVES.¹⁴ In one such cartoon, a college student hangs from a tree branch as if she were trying to get away from a predator while other students fall into holes dug into the yard, all the result of rows and rows of marching WAVES filling the sidewalks and leaving no room for the students (17). Many of the captions for these cartoons are satirical in tone while also containing a sense of humor, much like the fiction O'Connor creates. Just as she showcases conflict in relationships visibly through her cartoons, she also reveals such relational conflict within her fiction.

Just as these two authors reveal their tones through time, place, and relationships, so too do they reveal tones through their use of figurative language. Linking relationships with symbolism, Welty claims that the "confluence" of being at the same place as her subjects from her pictures "exists as a reality and a symbol in one. It [confluence] is the only kind of symbol that for me as a writer has any weight, testifying to the pattern, one of the chief patterns, of human experience" (*One Writer's Beginnings* 102). Such a belief, however, does not deter Welty from using various forms of symbolism and analogies within her fiction. Through these uses of figurative language, her positive tone is revealed.

O'Connor's symbolism has been associated with different aspects of her art. Asals links her use of setting to symbolism (69), claiming that in some of her stories "a setting that at first seems simply a literal backdrop takes on metaphorical implications" (70). He also explains the importance of her Catholic belief of symbolism, reminding the reader that "[t]he Catholic concept of sacramentalism insists on both the material and the spiritual, the specific and the universal, the outer and the inner" (72). Such an understanding of things which can appear as

contrasts yet work together as complements allows O'Connor to fully utilize figurative language within her artwork.

With the recent publication of O'Connor's cartoons in one volume, an interesting area of further study would be the comparison of those cartoons and her early fiction from high school and college. Wray's research focuses on the satire of those early stories, but it does little to compare her fiction to that satire. As the previous chapters have demonstrated, O'Connor's satire is evident throughout her cartoons and her published fiction; further linking her early attempts at fiction would further illustrate her brilliance as an artist who is able to reach her audience through multiple levels of media.

Another area of possible future study would involve delving into the authors' backgrounds in an attempt to determine why the blatantly Christian author has the more satirical tone while the less religious author has a more positive tone. O'Connor's belief that mankind is "incomplete in himself . . . [and] prone to evil, but . . . redeemable when his own efforts are assisted by grace" (*Mystery and Manners* 197) helps the researcher glimpse a small part of her world view which would cause her to use satire. Her desire to use satire is also explained through her realization that most of her readers do not see the mystery of life with a proper Christian perspective, so she does her best to help make her "vision apparent by shock—to the hard of hearing [she] shout[s], and for the almost-blind [she] draw[s] large and startling figures" (34). Thus her explanation of utilizing the grotesque as a mirror for her audience does address her religious world view. In contrast, Welty's world view could possibly be tied more to the financial security that she found in and because of her father. When she remembers his life, specifically his dedication to the insurance business, she notes he believed "that success in business was the solution to most of the problems of living—security of the family, their ongoing

comfort and welfare, and especially the certainty of education for the children” (*One Writer’s Beginnings* 91). Having lost his own mother at the tender age of seven, her father lived “with the energetic practice of optimism” while mindful of his own impending death (91). Delving into the world views of the authors and their families may provide even further understanding of how variations in perspective affect the tones these two authors utilize in their arts. Since this thesis has focused primarily on the works of the authors and less on specific aspects of their lives, little evidence has been presented which could lead someone to any direct conclusions as of yet. Researching their backgrounds and their expressed or implied motivations may prove to be an interesting study.

These two southern authors, while each having a tone of her own, display their tones consistently within their visual arts and their fiction. Supporting Welty’s positive tone, Katherine Anne Porter claims that “[t]here is nothing in the least vulgar or frustrated in Miss Welty’s mind. She has simply an eye and an ear sharp, shrewd, and true as a tuning fork” (xx). Even O’Connor alludes to Welty’s more positive style when she contrasts her own writing with that of Welty: “I am not one of the subtle sensitive writers like Eudora Welty” (*Habit of Being* 141). Instead, O’Connor’s “wry vantage point” and “outrageously irreverent sense of humor” (Gordon 5) are used to create a view of reality which contrasts with most nonreligious beliefs. “A novel [and by extension a short story], like a cartoon, arranges stylized versions of people within a certain space; the graphic artist learns to organize and emphasize, and this knowledge serves the writer” (Updike 430) in much the same way that the photographer learns to “know the moment when you see it” (Welty, *One Time, One Place* 8). In framing their art in this manner, these authors are able “to part a curtain, that invisible shadow that falls between people, the veil of indifference to each other’s presence, each other’s wonder, each other’s human plight” (Welty 8). The curtain

which often separates the various media has been parted, revealing a connective link through tone.

¹¹ O'Connor references being the replacement for Welty in her letter to Cecil Dawkins dated 14 January 1959 (*Habit of Being* 316). The Chicago conference lasted five days in February 1959 (318).

¹² Welty thanks an interviewer for putting her in the same humorous category with Flannery O'Connor and Muriel Spark (*Conversations* 25), and O'Connor puts Welty on her list of "the best Southern writers" (*Habit of Being* 98).

¹³ See, for example, the photo opposite the title page of *One Time, One Place*.

¹⁴ Notice specifically Volume 17, numbers 18 (13 Feb, 1943, p. 4), 21 (6 Mar, 1943, p. 4), 23 (27 Mar, 1943, p. 2), and 24 (24 Apr, 1943, p. 2) from the collection held in the Flannery O'Connor Collection at Georgia State College, Milledgeville.

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