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Penetrating or Being Penetrated: The Use of Temple Drake and Drusilla Hawk as Phallic
Symbols

I. Introduction

Gender in William Faulkner's work has always and continues to inspire debate regarding his position on the topic. Many critics are increasingly aware of the mistreatment women suffer in Faulkner's novels. The opinions that lean toward the idea that Faulkner is a misogynist writer are prevalent in a lot of critical feminist circles. And, in a world in which Joanna Burden can be decapitated, Temple Drake can be raped with a corncob, Dewey Dell can be sold a scam abortion in exchange for sex, Caddy Compson can be tricked into giving up her child for her own good, and so on and so on, why shouldn't they? In one critical article, "Victims Unvanquished: Temple Drake and Women Characters in William Faulkner's Novels," Abby H.P. Werlock points out that

Male hostility towards women is disturbingly persistent throughout William Faulkner's novels. That Faulkner consciously presented women as victims is demonstrated again and again [...] A chronological view of Faulkner's novels reveals a male hostility toward women which is at first passive and verbal, then increasingly violent and physical (Werlock 3).

Although Werlock does point out that "one should not make the mistake of confusing Faulkner with his narrators or the ruthless males who people his fiction" (Werlock 4), she nonetheless

presents a troubling timeline of all the abuses women suffer at the hands of men in Faulkner's fiction, all of which seem to be taken out of context in terms of the entire gender spectrum in Faulkner's works; that is to say, bad things happen to the men in Faulkner's novels, as well. This is a fact that often gets ignored in these types of critical arguments. But it just seems silly to ignore that Lee Goodwin gets raped and burned alive, Homer Barron gets murdered by Emily *the female protagonist* of "A Rose for Emily" and rots in her house for years, Cash's broken leg gets set in cement and later boils from the heat, Sutpen gets his throat sliced as a result of his actions, and etc. These instances being ignored nullify any argument based off the chronology of mistreatment of women, regardless of excellent analysis. It is not sufficient to go that route to explain Faulkner's stance on gender roles.

When taking a new conceptual look at two different female characters in two different Faulkner novels, a new possibility arises to explain his position. Faulkner's use of the phallic symbol to describe both Temple Drake in *Sanctuary* and Drusilla Hawk in *The Unvanquished* indicates complicated tensions in gender roles and gender reversals that challenge the idea that he is a misogynist writer.

II. Temple Drake

William Faulkner's *Sanctuary* portrays Temple as an object of most of the men's desires, especially when considering the scene in which the boys from her school intend to punish Gowan Stevens with the glass on the road after seeing them together. In addition, though Temple is a virgin, her flirtations with the town boys and her reputation of going out on weeknights challenge the idea of purity in the context of the time period. Though Faulkner is definitely using this to stress that virginity does not correlate with purity, Temple's reliance on the

patriarchy makes her far more conventional than her progressive sexuality first indicates.

Unfortunately, this dependency causes her ineptitude in being able to fend for herself. In his article, Scott Yarbrough points out all the failings of the patriarchy in *Sanctuary*.

The forces of protection desert Temple [...] She has placed faith in the patriarchy, looking for protection, alternately, from Gowan, Horace, Red, and certainly from her father when she proclaims over and over, “My father is a judge.” Horace and her father, lawyer, and judge are twin representatives, embodying both the patriarchy and the abstraction of “justice.” Each fails her. Gowan is particularly worthless as her protector. (Yarbrough 54)

As noted in the article, the patriarchy not only failed Temple, but it failed her on multiple levels with several different men. Gowan is not only worthless as a protector, but deliberately went out of his way to think only of himself. He put Temple in that situation while he was drunk, unable to do anything about their surroundings. After telling Ruby that he would drive Temple home, he reconsiders after thinking that “the prospect of facing Temple again was more than he could bear” (*Sanctuary* 85). Instead of rectifying the problem that he had created, he ran away from it—risking Temple’s well-being—instead because he was a coward. The next man Temple put her faith in, Red, could not protect her after his death, and—although that’s hardly his fault—in doing so, he was not able to save Temple from Popeye. Because Horace equates what happened to Temple with what he would fear about Little Belle’s sexuality, he is trapped in the naïve delusion that virginity correlates with purity. Sally Page addresses this in her article by saying that

Horace’s failure to secure justice for his client, Lee Goodwin, is the result of his childish naïveté about reality. His “innocence” is indicated by his inability to comprehend the true nature of woman [...] he fails to anticipate the evil actions of Temple [...] because he does not admit the reality and the extent of evil in human nature. (Page 84).

But not only was Horace failing Lee Goodwin in this respect, he was also failing Temple herself.

Although it was her choice to falsely accuse Goodwin, she simply lashed out against an all-male

courtroom against Goodwin, who had been another male who failed to keep her safe earlier in the novel. The layers upon layers of masculine failure seem to be Faulkner's way of criticizing the patriarchal system of the time period in which Temple lives. Horace's driver was spot on in the purpose of the patriarchy when he points out later in the novel, "We got to protect our girls. Might need them ourselves" (*Sanctuary* 298). This patriarchal system stresses the idea of sexual power, as demonstrated by the driver's comment. Not only do the men have power over women, but they consider them objects to be possessed.

Temple is not only utterly dependent on this patriarchy, but it is also an established way of life that fails her in every respect; none of the males truly protect her, but all of them think of her as an object, whether it be one of sex, purity, or something to be possessed. Her reliance on this flawed system not only gives Temple an overarching psychology explaining her utter helplessness as a female, but it challenges by its nature the idea that *Sanctuary* is a misogynist work. Temple's dependence on men rendered her unable to rely on herself for protection from the violence Popeye inflicted upon her, yet, it isn't a stretch to assert that Faulkner is using this to criticize the traditional view of the patriarchal system of the time period.

Although she has sex appeal and is a desirable and conventional female, Temple gets repeatedly described in phallic terms both slightly before and long after the rape scene with blood playing a prominent role both figuratively and literally in many of the images. To add to the plethora of instances in which she is sitting or standing 'erect,' the phallic descriptions include how "She could hear the blood in her veins..." (*Sanctuary* 218), "She moved stiffly..." (237), and a description of how "the stiffened blood trickles and tingled through her cramped muscles" (86). Later on in the novel, Popeye "freed himself and thrust her into the passage" (240), which can also sound phallic. Nonetheless, the descriptions can be

argued as trivial or proving nothing without metaphorical help, as—despite their abundance in the text—they work only on the surface. Surprisingly, however, the most astounding support for Temple as a phallus appears in the rape scene. On a literal level, her attempt to grow a penis out of sheer willpower functions as a defense mechanism to help her cope with the inevitability of her rape. She transforms this idea further in her mind, according to how she recounts the rape, wishing she wore a chastity belt.

I was just thinking maybe it would have long sharp spikes on it and he wouldn't know it until too late and I'd jab it into him. I'd jab it all the way through him and I'd think about the blood running on me and how I'd say I guess that'll teach you! (*Sanctuary* 218)

After the rape, blood literally runs down Temple's legs due to the damage her body sustained:

“Temple gazed dully forward [...] feeling her blood seeping slowly inside her loins” (*Sanctuary* 137). This relates to that later recollection that she desired a chastity belt—she was, as a phallus, penetrated in much the same way that she desired the spike to penetrate the rapist. The flowing menstrual blood relates to this imagined wound that she would have felt on her, functioning as another image that calls forth Faulkner's use of phallic imagery.

The rape scene, especially considering that it was perpetrated by an impotent man, inspires many critical assertions that Faulkner writes from a misogynistic point of view. For example, one critic argued in favor of a misogynist reading of *Sanctuary* by taking the Hemingway route and asserting that the impotent Popeye's rape of Temple was Faulkner's way of establishing his own masculinity which was damaged by being rejected from the war and having a feminine career of writing. “The persistence of this structure, highlighted by the persistence of an intergender model of desire, prompts the male author writing as a woman to write simultaneously against women, in order to distance himself from the devalued position in which he finds himself” (Michel 150).

However, the idea of Temple Drake—a sexually-desirable and virginal young woman—being represented as a phallus challenges the straight-forward but not quite thorough misogynist readings of Faulkner. Though Popeye’s impotence makes it more difficult to argue against the misogynist readings, Florence W. Dore does it the most creatively in the article “Obscenity, the Phallus, and Faulkner’s *Sanctuary*” by pointing out the cob paradox.

[The cob is] recognizable at once as the horrible instrument of violation, the phallus. But as the phallus, it is also a sign; it stands in for Popeye’s penis [...] the phallus in *Sanctuary* is a *sign*, as much of signification itself as of Popeye’s impotent penis, this very fact—its ambiguity—makes it immediately obvious: it is the cob, in all its conspicuous plainness, that Popeye uses to rape Temple because he is impotent. The cob is thus paradoxical. (Dore 83-84)

Not only is the cob itself somewhat of a paradox, but a closer look at Popeye’s masculinity further tangles the gender spectrum in the novel. Just as Temple embodies a masculine role by representing a phallic symbol and a feminine role by adhering to patriarchal norms, Popeye actually takes on feminine characteristics despite feeling the need to assert his power over Temple by raping her. “Physically, Popeye is small and fragile, nearly feminine: his hands are ‘doll-like.’ Indeed the description of Popeye suggests two conflicting codes at work, the masculine and the feminine” (Petty 74).

The critic goes on in his article, “Reading and Raping in *Sanctuary*,” to point out another scene in which Popeye gets compared not only to a female, but one of the archetypal females in all of literature: “He smells black, Benbow thought; he smells like that black stuff that ran out of Bovary’s mouth and down upon her bridal veil when they raised her head” (*Sanctuary* 7). Even the fact that Popeye is impotent helps the idea of thinking him as feminine. For all the time that he spends at the whorehouse, he never has the copious amounts of sex that a normal man would if he hung around one as often as Popeye does. Granted, this is because Popeye can’t, but this

juxtaposition seems deliberate on Faulkner's part. To add to the paradox of Popeye's femininity, Temple did not escape rape by attempting to grow a penis. According to Dore, "Either she has the phallus, or she is susceptible to it" (Dore 87). That logic in conjunction with the idea that she conceptually represents a phallus implies that Temple is just as impotent as Popeye. If Popeye and Temple were clearly defined as male and female, the misogynist argument might work, but it's far more difficult to sort out Faulkner's opinion on gender amidst all the reversals that characters undergo.

Temple, particularly, changes rapidly through the course of the novel, and this change stems from her rape. Jeffrey J. Folks, the author of the critical article "Women at the 'Crossing of the Ways': Faulkner's Portrayal of Temple Drake," notes that "Temple's violation evidences that all growth requires change, and change implies an unsettling violence, a violation of private security" (Folks 64). Her rape is thus essential for her to break free from the helplessness caused by her ties to the patriarchy. As horrible as it sounds, the violence spurred on a necessary change.

At this point in the novel, a shift occurs from the helpless Temple as a phallic symbol to her actual displays of power over Red and Popeye. She teases Popeye about his impotence when she says "Give it to me, daddy" (*Sanctuary* 236) even though he obviously can't. Overall, this scene simply functions as a way to indicate that Temple's overt sexuality is a change in her, and a cruel one at that, adopted from the world that Popeye exposed her to. As she is

[f]ully aware of Popeye's impotence, she verbally and physically demonstrates her sexual power over him. She rapes him. Her tormenting of Popeye produces a showdown between the two men now in her life—Red and Popeye. She writhes her loins against Red imploring him to leave, but also admitting to her murderous scheme (Petty 82).

So, the phrase that she says to Popeye could be a way of emulating him, but in doing so it serves more metaphorically as an indication of another gender reversal in which Temple is raping Popeye. Red's importance to Temple is, though not exclusively, as a weapon as evidenced by her

need to turn against Popeye; her power over Red is her sexuality, so she can thus be viewed as a femme fatale (Yarborough 60).

Yarborough asserts, however, that the one thing that does not constitute as an act of femme fatale behavior is Temple's perjury leading to Goodwin's death (Yarborough 53), but her motives are unclear and thus complicated enough to assert that that statement is not necessarily true. Her perjury was not an omission relating to the rest of the displays of her lack of power or voice, but a deliberate altering of the truth. It can be argued that she did it to take the deal the Memphis lawyer offered her (Yarborough 61), but the other alternative Yarborough offers makes far more sense:

Horace is aware of Temple's conformity to the paradigm when she is to appear in the courtroom; as he enters, he says to himself, "She will have on a black hat," and when he sees her, the narrative reads, "Temple had on a black hat." Even by 1929, the black hat had become the symbol of villainy in cinema; although the hat may also convey a funereal tone, Horace's focus on the hat and his prediction of Temple wearing it shows that she is again enacting the masquerade of herself as a villain. As a femme fatale, she can and will exact revenge against that which has harmed her—the [systemized] patriarchy (Yarborough 62).

As a changed female, Temple would rebel against what made her powerless in the first place: the patriarchy. In this case, the patriarchy she is rebelling against includes not only Goodwin "whose own apathy toward lending Temple aid has landed him in this predicament" (Yarborough 62), but also against Horace and the male courtroom that would fail to bring Popeye to justice. As a phallic symbol, Temple is diminished in the courtroom:

She began to cringe back, her body arching slowly, her arm tautening in the old man's grasp. He bent toward her, speaking; she moved again, in that shrinking and rapt abasement. Four younger men were standing stiffly erect near the exit [...] the girl could be seen shrunk against the wall just inside the door, her body arched again (*Sanctuary* 289).

This passage brings the image of Temple Drake as a phallic symbol full circle. Compared with the stiffly erect men, Temple is “shrunkened” and small. This reflects her impotence as a phallic symbol and is meant to reflect back to Popeye.

In essence, for all the phallic imagery that Temple is associated with, she is just as impotent symbolically as Popeye is literally, rendering their power struggle meaningless in terms of gender roles. Although Popeye and Temple are male and female, their characterizations are far too complicated to assert a clear dominant gender. In this way, it is impossible to call *Sanctuary* a misogynist work.

III. Drusilla Hawk

Drusilla Hawk in *The Unvanquished* tangles the conceptual gender spectrum similarly to Temple Drake in *Sanctuary*, and both of their stories line up structurally as well. In terms of the phallic symbol, some of the more obvious ones include “Drusilla leaning forward a little and taut as a pistol holding Bobolink” (*The Unvanquished* 104), “thrust back in Granny’s chair [...] in her black dress” (203), and “She stood erect” (238). Other references to Drusilla being phallic exist in the text, but the wordplay is not as overt as it is with Temple in *Sanctuary*. Instead, the heavy-handed way in which she is characterized as a man following the death of her fiancé functions in much the same way.

The gender transitioning that Drusilla undergoes begins with the Civil War and its claim on her would-be husband’s life. Since war is generally an all-male activity, the casualty of Gavin Breckbridge and the absence of men overall can be seen as an abandonment of the patriarchy especially since Drusilla’s father is also deceased. Because of this abandonment of the patriarchy, she must transform herself as a reaction to no longer having that male protection.

Unlike Temple, however, Drusilla bounces back by changing into a far more masculine figure. She's initially described as both male and female in a single paragraph: "She had on pants, like a man. She was the best woman rider in the country..." (*The Unvanquished* 89). This is one way in which Drusilla is far more unconventional than Temple Drake, which explains why Drusilla's characterization and change is far more dramatic than Temple's. Because she lacks any male in her life, she must transform herself into a man. The first indication of this is when she attacks female domesticity in her speech to Bayard:

Living used to be dull, you see. Stupid. [...] you fell in love with your acceptable young man and in time you would marry him and then you settled down forever more while your husband got children on your body for you to feed and bathe and dress until they grew up too; and then you and your husband died quietly and were buried together [...] Stupid, you see. (*The Unvanquished* 100-101)

Although her speech counts as her first condemnation of traditional feminine values, the longing can almost be felt in the way she repeats the word 'stupid' as if trying to reassure herself that renouncing it is the correct course of action. Nonetheless, this hesitation doesn't last long; she solidifies her transformation into a man by joining Colonel Sartoris in his quest to fight the Yankees. One critic in her article declares that this is effective because "[w]omen may be ostensibly silenced by the rhetoric of war which, like combat, is generally controlled by men, but male absence from the home-front can transform defenseless creatures into active speaking subjects" (Clarke 229). Drusilla was, as a woman in the context of the time period, without the protection of the patriarchy; she responded by jumping the gender fence as a defense mechanism, since gender is what seems to "divide the combatants from the noncombatants" (Clarke 230). In this sense, she not only solidifies her identity as a man, but also achieves a type of gender mobility that parallels what Faulkner was unable to do in his own life (Clarke 230). In her article, Clarke uses this concept to show both that Faulkner yearns for freedom from women and that he

is concerned with how “war both genders and ungendered human beings” (Clarke 231). While the latter seems to be true, the former seems to be reaching. Instead, the possibility exists that Faulkner gives Drusilla the chance to do what he could not (join the war) and succeed in doing so despite her chances being steeper as a woman, not because he is trying to distance himself from women but trying to live vicariously through one of them.

The women of the community disapprove of Drusilla’s deliberate actions to essentially become a man, considering her a fallen woman. Aunt Louisa goes so far to assert that she not only shirked the “highest destiny of a Southern woman,” being “the bride-widow of a lost cause,” but she had also brought shame to her father’s memory by doing so (*The Unvanquished* 191). This kind of attitude supports the conventional idea of Southern womanhood, supports the traditional patriarchal system, and spurs on the women’s action against Drusilla. We can certainly apply what Folks pointed out in his critical article on *Sanctuary*, that change requires a violence or violation, to Drusilla Hawk in *The Unvanquished*. Though she was never physically raped as Temple was, a violation nonetheless occurs when she is forced to wear a dress.

Aunt Louisa made her put on a dress that night [...] she was beaten, like as soon as she let them put the dress on her she was whipped; like in the dress she could neither fight back nor run away (*The Unvanquished* 201).

This challenged her comfortable way of life and traumatized her in a detrimental and irreparable way. In one article which discusses the mistreatment and bondage of women at the hands of men, this very concept is discussed:

Another more obvious sort of bondage is the dresses women wear, as Faulkner clearly demonstrates with Drusilla Hawk in *The Unvanquished*: wearing men’s clothing and fighting Yankees, she is free of the strictures of society until her horrified mother sends for the trunk filled with dresses (Werlock 8).

It is worth it to mention, however, that though the focus is on the strength of men overpowering women, the critic fails to mention that—in this case—the other women are the ones who

perpetrate the dress-rape, stripping Drusilla of the male identity she more closely identifies with. John Sartoris was perfectly content in letting her wear trousers and fight with the men, even encouraging her to take everything in stride: “‘What’s a dress?’ he said. ‘It don’t matter. Come. Get up, soldier’” (*The Unvanquished* 201). However, though he seems to not be bothered by Drusilla’s newfound masculine identity, even to the point of encouraging it, he steps back and lets her fight her own fight by never once defending her against the women. Though she is defending both of their reputations, she is the only one on the chopping block. This can be seen as another abandonment of the patriarchy. She doesn’t get over the attacks about wearing a dress, and “could neither fight back nor run away” (*The Unvanquished* 201). Something that seems to undermine Drusilla’s willfulness as a strong female character and the idea of dresses as bondage is that one of her most masculine actions in the novel occurred while she was wearing a dress:

Dru stopped Bobolink and jumped down in her Sunday dress and put the pistol to Bobolink’s ear and said I cant shoot you all because I haven’t enough bullets and it wouldn’t do any good anyway but I wont need but one shot for the horse and which shall it be? (*The Unvanquished* 90)

Nonetheless, the dress-rape spurs a second change that parallels that of Temple Drake. She becomes submissive for much of this portion of the novel, seeming to be going around with the ladies that perpetrated the rape so much so that “you would have thought that Drusilla was Mrs Habersham’s daughter and not Aunt Louisa’s” (*The Unvanquished* 202). Also, as a result of this new submissive attitude, John Sartoris—once supportive of Drusilla’s choice to wear pants and be a soldier—does not let her go around dressed like a man now that she is his wife; Drusilla is described after his death as “in a dress now, who still would have worn pants all the time if father had let her” (*The Unvanquished* 221). However, her submissiveness does not last long. Drusilla is spurred on by the death of her husband and as a result of being

[d]enied the power of masculinity, she tries the influence of femininity, manipulating the attraction her stepson Bayard feels for her to get him to

act as surrogate killer for her, vicariously enjoying the agency in violence the constricting layers of corsets and petticoats deny her (Roberts 243). As her newfound identity is revoked, she uses her sexuality against Bayard to achieve her own vengeance in much the same way that Temple uses hers against Red to betray Popeye.

Drusilla establishes her sexual power over Bayard by getting him to kiss her despite his protests that she is married to his father, and tricks him into being the aggressor of the kiss, as well: “Now it was she who said, ‘No.’ So I put my arms around her” (*The Unvanquished* 228). This scene is meant to mirror the one in which she gives Bayard the pistols. Structurally, the flashback occurs in Bayard’s mind right in the middle of the pistol scene, creating a neat juxtaposition between the two. In both scenes, Drusilla is clothed in the yellow ball dress and described as a boy: “not slender as a woman is but as a youth, a boy, is” (*The Unvanquished* 219) and “the body not slender as women are but as boys are slender” (*The Unvanquished* 223). Since giving up her masculinity, she seems to straddle the line between man and woman, which results in the description of her as a boy. The kissing scene also reflects her intentionality for giving Bayard the pistols. She needs a male to carry out her wishes on her behalf, whether they morally oppose it or not; she has chosen Bayard to be that man for her because of his willingness to avenge Granny by killing Grumby. Before the kiss, Drusilla mentions that incident by asking if Bayard had forgotten him. When he answers in the negative, she says, “You never will. I wouldn’t let you” (*The Unvanquished* 227). This statement is not only a verbal demonstration of her power over Bayard (“I wouldn’t let you”), but also the first indication of her intentions. Drusilla wouldn’t let Bayard forget Grumby because she needs him to be that man again; later, she needs it in order to simultaneously avenge her husband’s death and re-experience the violence she misses by being a woman.

In this scene Drusilla is described as a snake, when Bayard thinks “of the woman of thirty, of the ancient and eternal Snake and of the men who have written of her” (*The Unvanquished* 228). His thought equates Drusilla to the image of the Snake in Eden. By uniting the Snake, commonly read as a phallic figure with that of the woman, Faulkner reminds us of one of the archetypal instances of temptress behavior that literature has: Eve’s tempting of Adam to eat the forbidden fruit. This is interesting in the sense that the Snake, Eve, and Drusilla are united in one central image: the phallic symbol and woman coming together as one; but also in the sense that Drusilla is exhibiting Eve-like behavior. She tempts Bayard with a seemingly forbidden kiss and then, later, with the two pistols she “took from Heaven” (*The Unvanquished* 237) to give to Bayard, just as Eve took knowledge from the forbidden fruit to give to Adam.

This femme fatale behavior is the final transformation Drusilla undergoes during the course of the novel: she stands in front of Bayard in a yellow dress, described as a boy, neither man nor woman, presenting him with her instruments of violence:

Take them. I have kept them for you. I give them to you. Oh you will thank me, you will remember me who put into your hand what they say is an attribute only of God’s, who took what belongs to heaven and gave it to you. Do you feel them? the long true barrels true as justice, the triggers (you have fired them) quick as retribution, the two of them slender and invincible and fatal as the physical shape of love? (*The Unvanquished* 237)

The pistols are described phallically, as they represent the final masculine desires of the androgynous, gender-empty woman standing before him, and also because Drusilla had seen the power she held over Bayard sexually have effective results before, with the kiss. In addition, this is supposed to go along with the Eden mythology, in which Eve presents Adam with the forbidden fruit. The pistols are meant to be equated as phallic symbols with that of the Snake in Eden.

With his father gone, Bayard is the new patriarch and—by refusing to heed her wishes—Bayard completes the final instance of patriarchal abandonment that Drusilla experiences. Although, it is worth it to note that just as with Temple and Popeye, there is no clear power struggle between male and female. Bayard's rejection of traditional Southern masculine chivalric values makes him seem feminine in contrast to the male gender role of the former time period. In conjunction with Drusilla's characterization as both male and female, or as neither, no clear male victory over the feminine exists in the text. Drusilla did fail as a female by the end of the text, but she also failed in her role as a man, just as Temple failed as a phallus to avoid being penetrated. In a sense, Drusilla is impotent in this way. Both Bayard and Drusilla are too complicated in terms of gender to label *The Unvanquished* as a misogynist work.

IV. Parting Thoughts

Certain parallels crop up when looking at Temple and Drusilla. Both were abandoned by the patriarchy, described phallically and in terms of masculine traits, both experienced a rape (one literal, one metaphorical), and both resort to manipulating men using their sexuality as a result of the abuse they sustained due to the constrictions of the patriarchy. Due to William Faulkner's portrayal of Temple Drake and Drusilla Hawk as phallic/masculine symbols, complicated tensions arise that challenge the idea that Faulkner writes from a misogynist point of view, especially considering that both women respond to an abandonment of the patriarchy by becoming femme fatales. The issue some critics have with the rape of Temple Drake can be argued against by looking at the cob paradox and how Temple and Popeye's gender roles become interchangeable, as well as the juxtaposition of Drusilla's rape by the women. In addition, Faulkner's criticism of the patriarchy in *Sanctuary*, his views on Southern womanhood

in *The Unvanquished*, Temple's impotence, Drusilla's ability to overcome gender roles in order to join the army when Faulkner could not, and the manipulation of men that both Temple and Drusilla exhibit all imply far more complicated views on gender than the misogynist critiques suggest.

Critics that look exclusively at the misfortune of *women* in William Faulkner's body of work largely miss the scope of the gender spectrum presented in his novels, and are thus unable to analyze with any form of accuracy what Faulkner may have been trying to do in terms of gender. Characters of both genders of the two works discussed in this paper are characterized as far more complicated than the binary of male versus female. The power struggles, in essence, become invalid in relation to that binary, since no male victor emerges. Faulkner uses that tangle of gender roles to prove the flaws in traditional patriarchal society and thus cannot be considered a misogynist writer.

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