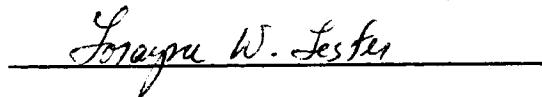
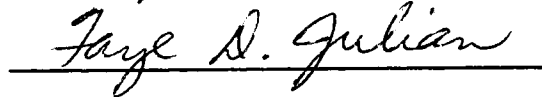


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DRAMA AND COMMUNICATION: A PENTADIC

ANALYSIS OF A TEXAS TRILOGY

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

David J. Mazzoli

August 1985

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the link between human communication and drama. The methodology chosen for the study was Kenneth Burke's Pentad format. This paper examines Preston Jones' A Texas Trilogy in order to demonstrate the relationship between communication concepts and drama. The focus of this analysis is limited to the Pentadic strain, scene, and the effects Bradleyville has upon the interaction within the plays. Throughout the study Bradleyville is examined with regard to three major communication concepts: group communication in The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia, intrapersonal communication in Lu Ann Hampton Laverdy Oberlander, and interpersonal communication in The Oldest Living Graduate.

The first chapter introduces Kenneth Burke and explains the Pentad's value for exploring the relationship between drama and communication. The second chapter discusses Preston Jones and includes a brief history of A Texas Trilogy. The third chapter analyzes Bradleyville and its relationship to communication concepts in the plays. The last chapter summarizes the paper and reiterates its implications.

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CHAPTER I

METHODOLOGY AND RATIONALE

1. Introduction

Since the 1970s a new interest has begun to emerge concerning the relationship between human communication and the drama. Scholars are beginning to realize that there is indeed a need for further research into this area, especially regarding the common link between the two disciplines. If "theatre has as its subject the actions of people" as Gillespie states, and communication is concerned "with the promotion of meaningful interactions among people," there is a definite relationship between the two.¹ In her article, "Theatre As Communication," Gillespie states:

From my survey of relevant scholarly literature, two conclusions are inescapable. First, little research has been published in our scholarly journals that explores relationships between theatre and the other aspects of communication; second, the small amount of research that has been published does not seem to reflect the current perception of either field. . . .

¹Patti Gillespie, "Theatre As Communication," The Southern Speech Communication Journal, 44 (Winter, 1979), 175.

Contemporary interests center on theatre and communication.²

Although scholars in both speech communication and theatre confirm the need for further research into their common ground, very little work has been done. Kathleen Koug1 questions a split between these two disciplines in her article, "A Selected Review of Speech Communication Studies in the Arts: A Retrospective and Prospective Look." She states that the problem:

is one of interface between the American Theatre Association and the Speech Communication Association. . . . What is the nature of the split in scholarly interests between the two disciplines. . . . It is important to clarify the nature of the division of interests because it indicates the direction for further research.³

This writer's interest in this area developed when he wanted to explore further the relationship between theatre and interpersonal communication. The connecting link chosen for this study is Kenneth Burke's Pentad format. The Pentad is a method for studying human interaction. This is accomplished through analyzing the relationships between the five elements of the Pentad. These elements

²Gillespie, pp. 168-169.

³Kathleen M. Koug1, "A Selected Review of Speech Communication Studies in the Arts: A Retrospective and Prospective Look," Communication Quarterly, 32, No. 4 (1984), 306-307.

include the act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. This format is used to facilitate the examination of the literature as expressed in its linguistic value. The Pentad method also provides a means to study human motivation. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the potential of the Pentad to analyze literature; and, in turn, this procedure may clarify communication concepts that appear in the trilogy.

For the purpose of this study, the focus is limited to Bradleyville, in Preston Jones' A Texas Trilogy. Bradleyville shapes its residents' values, it shapes their lives, it shapes their dreams. Bradleyville is small town America gone awry--the American Dream turned inside out. The Genet farm is not the end of an American rainbow, but a pot of ashes represented by a decaying town which affirms little hope and no escape.

In their deepest being the residents want what other Americans want: happiness, peace, pageantry, and symbols of that good life. The Bradleyville residents are surrounded by symbols of decay and death. They are the products of Burke's scientific determinism which propels them on a capitalistic treadway toward a gradual slip into oblivion. In The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia the symbols are everywhere: a club with no new members holding archaic bigoted values, an antiquated hotel filled with broken relics. In Lu Ann Hampton

Laverty Oberlander twenty years pass before Lu Ann accepts Bradleyville for what it is. By this time Lu Ann has dedicated her life to caring for her invalid mother and alcoholic brother. A fight for the possession of a tract of land ensues between a father and son in The Oldest Living Graduate because of the land's development potential.

A Texas Trilogy is particularly suited to this study because of the overwhelming influence Bradleyville has upon its residents. A Pentadic analysis of the trilogy should provide information regarding the relationship between communication and drama, as well as an understanding of the communication concepts within the plays themselves. This information in turn may expand one's understanding of human motivation in general.

A Texas Trilogy consists of three individual full-length plays: The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia (hereafter cited as Knights), Lu Ann Hampton Laverty Oberlander (hereafter cited as Lu Ann), and The Oldest Living Graduate (hereafter cited as Graduate). The trilogy has certainly received commercial success and literary merit. It had a successful two-month run at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and in September 1976, it premiered on Broadway at the Broadhurst Theatre. In the article, "Preston Jones, Regional Hero," in the Washington Post, Don Shirley states that "Had all the judges

seen Knights, it would have won the Pulitzer Prize."⁴
 One judge definitely favored Knights over that year's
 winner, Edward Albee's Seascape. The trilogy will be
 analyzed using a methodology developed by Kenneth Burke.

2. Kenneth Burke

Since his writing career began in the early 1920s, Kenneth Burke has produced works in numerous forms and on a countless variety of subjects. He has written eight books, a novel, a novella, poetry, short stories, reviews, essays, and articles concerning numerous subjects. He has addressed audiences in a wide range of disciplines varying from academicians, sociologists, psychologists, theologians, critics, and even the radicals of the Communist-inspired American Writers Congress.⁵ During the twenties he was associated with The Dial, a monthly magazine devoted to the best writings in new philosophy and criticism. His varied responsibilities included writing and editing literary and music criticism, reviews and translations. In January 1929, Burke received the last Dial award for his outstanding work in criticism. Marianne Moore, editor of The Dial from 1926-1929, felt that:

⁴Don Shirley, "Preston Jones, Regional Hero," Washington Post, 25 April 1976, Sec. G, p. 1, col. 5.

⁵Merle E. Brown, Kenneth Burke (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), p. 5.

He was the one American critic who possessed technique and sensibility enough to reconcile art and culture, science and imagination, in a single theory of literary value which is simultaneously a theory of human virtue.⁶

Neither Burke's writings, nor his lectures, can be classified to a single discipline. Nevertheless, his vision has always been focused on language in its poetic, rhetorical, and symbolic manifestations. Burke has analyzed the works of such diverse writers as Marx, Freud, Machiavelli, Coleridge, Jung, Pavlov, O'Neill, Aristotle, and Shakespeare. Even with the variety of his writings, Burke's reputation is largely confined to the academic community.⁷

Greater than the amount of material that Burke has written is the response generated by his writings. Reviews of Burke's writings have been numerous, and he is often the topic of heated literary discussions. From 1940 to the present anyone concerned with literary criticism has commented upon Burke in one form or another. He is offensive to many scholars, and because of this, he has been the subject of many reviews. Stanley Hyman, in his book, The Armed Vision, stated that Burke's criticism

⁶William Wasserstrom, The Time of the Dial (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1963), p. 129.

⁷Ben Yagoda, "Kenneth Burke," Horizon, June 1980, p. 66.

is "almost unequalled for power, lucidity, depth, and brilliance of perception."⁸ Yet in his review of A Grammar of Motives in The Philosophical Review, Max Black states that after he had finished reading the book, he was tempted to throw up his arms and shout "I surrender."⁹

Whether Burke is considered as "brilliant" or "misinformed," the central question asked concerning Burke remains "What exactly is he trying to say?" It is safe to assert that "Kenneth Burke is probably the most controversial literary figure of the past fifth years."¹⁰ In his book, Kenneth Burke, Merle Brown describes Kenneth Burke's writing:

There is little point to a sentence by sentence or association by association criticism of Burke's thought. He is rarely right or wrong; most of his statements are conspicuously too general to be called in question.¹¹

Critics of Burke cite many valid objections to his writing style. His style is difficult to read,

⁸Stanley Hyman, The Armed Vision (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 394.

⁹Max Black, "A Review of 'A Grammar of Motives,'" The Philosophical Review, 55 (July 1946), 487.

¹⁰Brown, p. 5.

¹¹Brown, p. 15.

and his writings are very diverse. Their manner inhibits the reader's picturing a general view of the whole. He creates his own terms and then changes their meaning so that the reader is unable to establish any guidelines for Burkeian semantics. Burke's vocabulary is so diverse that the reader often loses full comprehension of a whole sentence. His style is characterized by elaborate afterthoughts, footnotes, and appendices. In addition, he usually illustrates his writings with numerous metaphors and analogies. His writing is so eclectic that he digresses from one thought to an endless variety of other subjects. Yet from those willing to battle Burke's style, there is an equivalent amount of Burkeian praise to match the negative criticism.

George Knox maintains that Burke is "always in progress," and that he "transcendentally includes all roles and moves in and out and from one to another."¹² Hugh Duncan states that Burke is "one of the most panoramic writers of our time," and that following Burke's diverse writing style is "an exciting, if arduous task."¹³ William Rueckert sums up Burke's critics by declaring that they:

¹²George Knox, Critical Moments: Kenneth Burke's Categories and Critiques (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1957), p. xvii.

¹³Hugh Duncan, Intro., Permanance and Change, 3rd

suffer in varying degrees of intensity, from Burke sickness--a disease which produces hysterical enthusiasm and loss of perspective. And many of Burke's adversaries suffer from Burke nausea, a state which produces hysterical anger and a corresponding loss of perspective.¹⁴

Regardless of Burkeian criticism, scholars continue to discuss Burke as a literary critic with a rhetorical perspective. Thus Burke's roles as a rhetorician and critic create a definite overlap between these two areas. Burke believes that society consists of symbol-using animals communicating primarily through language. This language expresses a choice, or a preference for a certain objective; thus, as Burke states, "the basic unit of action in the human body is purposive motion."¹⁵ Society is moving toward symbolic action, and it is here that Burke as a rhetorician and critic merge.

Burke defines rhetoric as "the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents."¹⁶ If language can be used in

ed. by Kenneth Burke (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. xiv.

¹⁴William H. Rueckert, Kenneth Burke and the Drama of Human Relations (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), p. 4.

¹⁵Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1945), p. 61.

¹⁶Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950), p. 41.

its rhetorical dimension, the concern should be in becoming aware of how one utilizes language for the act of persuasion. According to Burke, this is also the goal of the critic. The critic should be able to educate society to locate elements of bias and prejudice in views that have been assumed valid and never questioned. If a critic chooses a literary medium to accomplish the goal of educating society, it is here that the social critic, literary critic, and rhetorician overlap.¹⁷

Burke believes that the ideal critic, speaker, or writer is one who can persuade others to reform society. Yet it is only after this writer or speaker has achieved proficiency as a linguistic critic that he/she can attempt to reform society through persuasion. Proficiency at language analysis will allow one to reveal insights which are both persuasive and realistic.¹⁸

Burke believes that a sociology of knowledge will develop the relationships existing among all ideologies, and he advocates the use of these relationships for any analysis or system of placement.¹⁹ Burke states, "the main idea of criticism, as I conceive it, is to

¹⁷L. Virginia Holland, Counterpoint: Kenneth Burke and Aristotle's Theories of Rhetoric (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), p. x.

¹⁸Holland, p. 13.

¹⁹Holland, p. 12.

use all that there is to use."²⁰ Stanley Hyman states that the goal behind Burke's criticism is "a synthesis, a unification of every discipline into one consistent critical frame."²¹ Burke is encouraging the reader to expand, to learn all of the available perspectives for criticism. In this process one will develop the ability of understand more fully the original perspective. In the conclusion to Permanence and Change, Burke states that his goal in criticism is "to show an integral relationship existing among a great variety of cultural manifestations which are often considered in isolation."²²

This concern of Burke's to learn all of the possible perspectives is carried over to his interest with language. Since the publication of A Grammar of Motives in 1945, Burke's main concern has been language. Language is the means humans have for being human. Humans' use of symbols allows them to progress beyond the lower drives of the animal kingdom. From Burke's point of view, people are organisms that communicate symbolically with one another through language. Burke also feels that the most threatening force in society is one that

²⁰Burke, Grammar, p. 12.

²¹Stanley Edgar Hyman, The Armed Vision (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1948), p. 375.

²²Kenneth Burke, Permanence and Change, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 262.

would take away the gift of language, for society has to be built and maintained through the ability to communicate through and interpret symbols.²³

In Burke's view, since all symbols need to be interpreted, it is this symbolic act of interpretation that leads to the understanding of human motivation. Motives are common elements shared by everyone. Any explanation of an act is an attempt to explain socialization. This philosophy translates to the idea that the assigning of motives is actually a strategy or a matter of appeal. A Grammar of Motives was the first of a proposed trilogy that concerns itself with language and motivation. A Grammar of Motives is interested with the logical dimension of language, or the way in which language can be analyzed. Burke writes an in-depth study of dialectical relations from which one may pursue an analytical understanding of language, and one may develop insight into the appreciation of human motivation. As a means to accomplish a study of dialectical relations, Burke developed the Pentad.²⁴

²³Burke, Permanence and Change, p. 272.

²⁴Burke, Grammar, p. xv.

3. The Methodology: The Pentad

The methodological tool to be employed in this investigation is Kenneth Burke's Pentad format. Burke developed the Pentad out of his concern for understanding bases of human conduct and motivation. Simply, the Pentad is a method for studying human interaction. Since human beings are "bodies that learn language,"²⁵ as Burke terms us, the symbolic act becomes his focal point for human motivation. Burke developed the Pentad as a vehicle to observe symbolic action as it occurs in both the dramatic and dramatistic setting.

Burke introduces the Pentad to reveal the motivation extant in symbolic acts. This may be accomplished through analyzing the relationships between the five elements of the Pentad. The elements include the act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. The act describes what took place, the scene is the background of the act or the situation in which it occurred, the agent is the person, or type of person, the agency is the instrument the person uses to accomplish the act, and the purpose.²⁶ Quite simply, the Pentad is a means of asking what,

²⁵Bernard L. Brock, Kenneth Burke, Parke G. Burgess, and Herbert W. Simons, "Dramatism as Ontology or Epistemology: A Symposium," Communication Quarterly, 33 No. 1 (1985), 31.

²⁶Burke, Grammar, p. xv.

when, where, who, how, and why. Burke states:

Men²⁷ may disagree about the purpose, act, the character of the person, or the situation. Be that as it may--any complete statement about motives will offer some kind of answer to these questions.²⁸

Burke believes that throughout history people have shown great concern in their attempts to understand human motivation. The understanding of motives is present in metaphysical structures, legal judgements, political and scientific works, and poetry and fiction. The Pentad is Burke's means for exacting human motivation. Burke believes that all statements concerning motivation arise out of the elements of the Pentad. Francis Fergusson adds that it is the flexibility of the Pentad that "illuminates many kinds of attempts (sociological, philosophic, psychological) to talk about human motivation."²⁹

The Pentad may reveal the motivation behind the event by providing a vehicle for analyzing the relationships, or ratios, between its elements. People will place the five Pentadic elements in order of importance

²⁷It is not the intention of this writer to limit the written material to the masculine gender. Since this research is dated, everything is written in the male gender, and for the sake of clarity to the reader "sic" will not be used in every quotation.

²⁸Burke, Grammar, p. xv.

²⁹Francis Fergusson, The Human Image in Dramatic Literature (New York: Doubleday, 1957), p. 193.

to reflect their own view of a situation. To illustrate how the placement of the Pentadic elements can reflect different views of a situation, Burke gives the example of a hero outwitting a villain. From his room of confinement (scene), the hero (agent) and his friend (co-agent) outwit the villain (counter-agent) by breaking his handcuffs (act) with a file (agency) in order to escape (purpose). Reflecting on various views of motivation in this example, one may state the primary motive is the agent's escape for personal freedom (purpose). Likewise, the scene may operate as the primary motive because of the agent's imprisonment. Another viewpoint could arise from the assistance the co-agent gives the hero in escaping (act). This placement of the Pentadic terms allows for different viewpoints of motivation.

As illustrated with the hero's escape, the Pentad does not limit itself. It may be varied according to the occasion and interest. Consequently, variation will occur in the internal relationships among the five elements. Burke uses the term "ratios" to define these internal relationships, and it is through the ratios that the Pentadic terms create statements about human motivation. Burke gives an example of voting to illustrate

³⁰Burke, Grammar. p. xx.

how Pentadic ratios create statements concerning motives:

we may think of voting as an act, and of the voter as an agent; yet votes and voters both are hardly other than a politician's medium or agency; or from another point of view, they are part of his scene.³¹

This example illustrates the range of combinations which the terms have, or how "their participation in a common ground makes for transformability."³²

Burke emphasizes that the relationships among the elements render them interdependent. The relationships among the Pentadic terms foster understanding of human motivation as Burke points out:

At every point where the field covered by any one of these terms overlaps upon the field covered by any other, there is an alchemic opportunity, whereby we can put one philosophy, or doctrine of motivation into the alembic, make the appropriate passes, and take out another.³³

This margin of overlap provides opportunity to move from one term to another. Burke compares the five Pentadic elements to the five fingers of the hand. Even though the fingers are separate from one another, they merge in the hand. One is able to trace any tendon to the palm of the hand, and then plot a new course of action along

³¹Burke, Grammar, p. xx.

³²Burke, Grammar, p. xix.

³³Burke, Grammar, p. ixx.

another tendon. Whereas the hand may be simplified to a single finger, it needs all five fingers to form the whole. Similarly, one may reduce the Pentad to a single element, yet the other terms are implicit in that element. With this comparison, Burke illustrates the simplicity of the Pentad and the relationship among the Pentadic elements.³⁴

Burke believes that the Pentad "should provide us with a kind of simplicity that can be developed into considerable complexity."³⁵ To clarify this paradox, Burke creates an analogy between the Pentad and a photographic mural (Road to Victory at the Museum of Modern Art).³⁶ In this photograph, lines cross and recross to create the impression of an infinite amount of lines. Yet even with such detail, the picture gives the impression of great simplicity. That is also the goal of the Pentad.

The Pentad possesses an ambitious nature in the understanding of motives with its variations in ratios. Burke addresses this ambiguity by stating that it must be taken "for granted that, insofar as men cannot themselves create the universe, there must remain something

³⁴Burke, Grammar, p. xxii.

³⁵Burke, Grammar, p. xvi..

³⁶Burke, Grammar, p. xvi.

essentially enigmatic about the problem of motives."³⁷

With this premise, Burke believes that this basic obscurity will "manifest itself in inevitable ambiguities and inconsistencies among the terms for motives."³⁸ Burke considers this ambiguous nature to be of assistance in the understanding of motives. "What we want is not terms that avoid ambiguity, but terms that clearly reveal the strategic spots at which ambiguities arise."³⁹

Through the use of the Pentad, one should be able to view history through a "system of placement," and in turn, the Pentad "should enable us, by the systematic manipulation of the terms to 'generate' or 'anticipate' the various classes of motivational theory."⁴⁰

Burke claims that the term for this process is Dramatism. Using the Pentad as a vehicle to study literature allows:

one to consider the matter of motives in a perspective that, being developed from the analysis of drama, treats language and thought primarily as modes of action.⁴¹

³⁷Burke, Grammar, p. xviii.

³⁸Burke, Grammar. p. xviii.

³⁹Burke, Grammar, p. xviii.

⁴⁰Burke, Grammar, p. xxii.

⁴¹Burke, Grammar, p. xxii.

This process is representative of a play of the human drama. In a very broad sense, Burke believes that "history can be viewed as a play."⁴² Just as there are a limited number of situations in which people may be involved, there are also a limited number of plot lines available to the playwright. As people see these similar situations or dramas recurring, they develop strategies to rationalize the experience.⁴³

David Ling, in his article, "A Pentadic Analysis of Senator Edward Kennedy's Address to the People of Massachusetts, July 25, 1969," observes that the Pentad suggests two conclusions in any analysis. First, the Pentad "functions as a tool for content analysis," and the five elements "provide a method of determining how a speaker views the world;" secondly, the results from a Pentadic analysis disclose a person's description of a particular situation, and this will reveal what they "regard as the appropriate response to various human situations."⁴⁴

⁴²David Ling, "A Pentadic Analysis of Senator Edward Kennedy's Address to the People of Massachusetts, July 25, 1969," Central States Speech Journal, 21 No. 2 (Summer, 1970), 81.

⁴³Ling, p. 81.

⁴⁴Ling, p. 81.

Ling illustrates these conclusions with an example concerning slums. First, if the Pentad provides a "method of determining how a speaker views the world," an individual who views the problem of slums as a matter of society's unwillingness to change the environment particularly afflicted, will suggest self-help as the answer to the problem. Secondly, Ling concludes that a Pentadic analysis will reveal what a person perceives as the appropriate response. In this instance a person who believes that people are victims of their environment will suggest that the slums be razed and the inhabitants located into a more suitable environment. In the first instance, the individual is not willing to initiate an act to solve the problem; in the second, the individual views society as victims of the environment. Ling concludes that in a Pentadic analysis, one's description of the situation and placement of the elements are most important.⁴⁵

Burke clarifies the use of the Pentad as a means of establishing how a speaker views the world, and how the Pentad may reveal the individual's appropriate response to various situations. He states:

This is the method . . . which brings its doctrines to a head in some overall title, a word for being

⁴⁵Ling, p. 82.

in general, or action in general, or motion in general, or development in general, or experience in general, etc. with all its other terms distributed about this titular term in positions leading up to it and away from it.⁴⁶

Any analysis with the Pentadic terms will allow for a complete understanding of human motivation. The Pentad does not limit itself to a scientific analysis, nor does it become lost in a complete historical survey. The ratios among the terms will guide the understanding of human action concerning a specific act, scene, agent, agency, or purpose. Like a mural that is both simple and complex, the Pentadic terms, and the various ratios, should help answer the question of "What is involved, when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it."⁴⁷

4. The Rationale

The Pentad and Communication

Hugh Duncan in his introduction to the third edition of Burke's Permanence and Change states that as one begins to examine human motives it:

becomes increasingly obvious that they depend on the forms of communication available to us as much

⁴⁶Burke, Grammar, p. xxii.

⁴⁷Burke, Grammar, p. xv.

as they depend on economic, political, social sexual, or religious interests.⁴⁸

He continues with the idea that "motives arise and continue to exist in communication," and unless one assumes "that communication is some kind of random affair" one must definitely acknowledge the "relationship between motives and the forms in which they are expressed."⁴⁹

Hence a study concentrating on communication form becomes a study of human motives.⁵⁰ Furthermore, a study that builds a model that clarifies interaction patterns is a study that Burke would call Dramatism.⁵¹ Burke feels that a scientific attitude is too confining for problems of human conduct, and that human conduct cannot be reduced to strictly physical, chemical, biological, or environmental causes. Rather, Dramatism develops the criticism and all the flexibility to examine several angles of communication within literature. By utilizing Burke's method, one will gain insight into the effects of communication on the relationship. Burke believes the communicative aspect fully explains the motives behind the act. Burke writes:

⁴⁸Duncan in Permanence and Change, p. xvii.

⁴⁹Duncan in Permanence and Change, p. xviii.

⁵⁰Duncan in Permanence and Change, p. xxii.

⁵¹Duncan in Permanence and Change, p. xxx.

when confronting naturalistic attempts to arrive at intrinsic motivations by reduction to "instincts" or "drives" or "urges" within the organism as a species, upon close analysis you will invariably find that all sorts of "complicating factors" (including external, environmentalist motivations) are referred to.⁵²

The significance of Kenneth Burke's theory lies in its simplicity. He does not discuss the demographic background of the communication (age, race, sex) but rather shows how communication affects social relationships. Burke believes that if an act is dramatic it should be proven as such through an analysis of its form and content as a social act. The acts are not contained in our subjective self, or hidden in the unconscious, but rather these acts are public because they are expressed in symbols. Such symbols are created in the most complex process one may experience--the communication of daily existence. In this process of existence one is influenced, and one's actions determined, by the motives of the communicative act. Simply, it is the understanding of why, where, what, and how the statement was made and, most importantly, what can be observed from this process.⁵³

⁵²Burke, Grammar, p. 104.

⁵³Hugh Duncan, "Communication in Society," Arts in Society, 3 (1964-1966), p. 94.

From Kenneth Burke's belief that communication affects the social relationship, Hugh Duncan creates a model that concentrates on people and their communication. If people are "communicants" and communication operates under a social sphere, communication is a search for order within a given relationship. Duncan believes the importance of any experience lies in "how it is expressed to become an experience."⁵⁴ Thus a model of the communicative act is created, and a social order arises, and continues to exist in communication. What is important in this structure of a communicative model is understanding how one's motives will influence the communication, and it is Burke's Pentad that addresses this area.

The Pentad and Literature

Burke realizes that using literature strictly as a paradigm of linguistic action and as a model for the study of human relations is both unfair to the literature and to the study. One must first approach literature for what it is. For example, Burke begins his analysis of Keat's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" by observing that "Our primary concern is to follow the transformation of the

⁵⁴Duncan in Permanence and Change, p. xxix.

poem itself.⁵⁵ But Burke believes that Dramatism requires the study of literature since:

the real world of action is so confused and complicated as to seem almost formless, and too extended and unstable for orderly observation, we need a more limited material that might be representative of the human way while yet having fixity enough to allow for systematic examination.⁵⁶

Literature provides a more orderly observation point for the study of human motivation. Yet Burke states that literature must be studied for its own merit before any information from that study may be used in other means. Burke states that a literary analysis:

" . . . concerns its linguistic nature in general; and then, beyond that, the insight it may afford into man's ways as symbol-use."⁵⁷ Thus the goal of a Pentadic literary analysis is to preserve literature for itself, and still be able to use it as a means to illustrate the complexities of human relations.

Explicating Burke on the viability of the Pentad as a means of providing insight into the study of motivation, Duncan states:

⁵⁵Burke, Grammar, p. 451.

⁵⁶Kenneth Burke, "Linguistic Approach to Problems of Education," Modern Philosophies and Education, ed. Nelson B. Henry (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 264.

⁵⁷Burke, Modern Philosophies and Education, p. 274.

For some, Burke's use of the classics in the construction of theory and methodology is blasphemous, but a great step forward for those who are trying to understand why we behave like human and inhuman beings, and who are not convinced that the study of caged rats is a helpful approach to studying the behavior of men in society.⁵⁸

Burke's theory attempts to link literature to life, and it seems appropriate to employ the Pentad to gain new insights into both the written text of A Texas Trilogy and interpersonal communication.

5. A Texas Trilogy

A method can be developed to analyze the trilogy through the use of the Pentad. This method will help to illustrate events and their causes throughout the plays and will provide a fuller appreciation for the trilogy as a whole.

Jones was criticized for depending upon regionalism, in effect depending upon the state of Texas for his success as a playwright. But the trilogy does not rely upon Texas as a major theme. Rather, it can stand on its own merit, and Jones happened to set it in Texas by personal choice. Jack Kroll in his Newsweek review of the trilogy states:

⁵⁸Duncan, Permanence and Change, p. xv.

a region becomes more than a physical locale--it becomes a psychic and spiritual locale. Jones' trilogy deals with the boondocks of West Texas, focused in his fictional town of Bradleyville. But Jones is also dealing with the boondocks of the soul.⁵⁹

Kroll was not the only critic who realized the trilogy concerned itself with more than just the state of Texas. Gerrit Henry titled his review of the trilogy in the New York Times, "A Trilogy that Probes Society's Soul."⁶⁰

Regardless of a Texas setting, the plays are American, and the characters are certainly realistic. Throughout the plays Jones has touched upon both tragic and comic elements that will affect the residents of Bradleyville. The characters must learn to accept such events as life, death, marriage, divorce, illness, and attitudes such as racism, and alcoholism, to name just a few. Psychologically, the characters must examine their thoughts concerning the passage of time and the memories that accompany it. The characters must confront painful experiences in relation to the lives they are presently leading. Regardless of the outcome of any of these situations, life in Bradleyville continues.

⁵⁹Jack Kroll, "Texas Marksmanship," Newsweek, May 17, 1976, pp. 95-96.

⁶⁰Gerrit Henry, "A Trilogy that Probes Society's Soul," New York Times, 19 September, 1976, Sec. II, p. 1, col. 1.

It is because of the validity of these occurrences, the stability of a single setting--Bradleyville, and the reappearance of characters throughout the plays that A Texas Trilogy was chosen. By analyzing the Pentadic element, scene, this writer hopes to explain motivation in terms of scenic influence. This will be accomplished by examining scene in interaction with the other Pentadic elements in an attempt to gain insights into the relationship between Bradleyville and subsequent motivational acts. Insights from such an analysis should clarify both the play itself and aspects of interpersonal communication.

6. Organization of the Study

This chapter has focused on an inherent link between the two disciplines of human communication and drama. In an effort to clarify methodology, the Pentad was explicated. The rationale of the study centers on the efficacy of the Pentad as a vehicle for analysis. As pointed out, the Pentad will provide the reader with new opportunities for exploring the relationship between drama and communication and will also provide the investigator with an opportunity to gain new insights into specific pieces of literature. Chapter II will introduce Preston Jones and A Texas Trilogy. Chapter III will analyze the effect Bradleyville has upon group communication

in Knights, intrapersonal communication in Lu Ann, and interpersonal communication in Graduate. Chapter IV will demonstrate what insights have emerged through the Pentadic analysis, the value of the Pentad as a vehicle for providing new insights into the study of plays, and will discuss the communication concepts which may be highlighted through the study of A Texas Trilogy. Finally, a short summation and the author's recommendations will conclude the thesis.

CHAPTER II

PRESTON JONES AND A TEXAS TRILOGY

1. Preston Jones

In the course of three years, Preston Jones wrote A Texas Trilogy, won a Rockefeller Scholarship, was compared to Eugene O'Neill and Tennessee Williams, and watched his plays move from a 56-seat experimental theatre in the basement of the Dallas Theatre Center (DTC) to Broadway.

While finishing his graduate degree in playwrighting at Trinity University in 1966, Jones worked at the DTC as director, actor, technician, and eventually playwright. In 1972, when Jones became the managing director of the Down Center Stage, a 56-seat workshop theatre at the DTC, he was charged with programming for the theatre. He wanted to present regional American plays by new playwrights, but being so disappointed with the selections that were being submitted, he decided to write his own. He stated "that almost every play written reflected a few neurotic characters living in New York, Los Angeles, or London. It made me think, by God, I'll try writing a play about Texas."¹

¹Mark Busby, Preston Jones (Boise: Boise State

Jones began writing Lu Ann in the spring of 1973, and upon completion he immediately wrote Knights. Knights premiered at the Down Center Stage on December 4, 1973, and ran for a scheduled thirteen performances. Lu Ann opened on February 5, 1974, and also ran for the scheduled thirteen performances. The local reviews in the Dallas Morning News were very complimentary:

In "Lu Ann Hampton Laverly Oberlander," Playwright Preston Jones has written yet another sad-funny chronicle of life in a small West-Texas town. This is Jones' second world premiere at Dallas Theatre Center's intimate Down Center Stage. His earlier offering "The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia," proved a winner. "Lu Ann" seems destined for the same fate.²

In the spring of 1974, the DTC management decided to move eight of the new American plays from the Down Center workshop theatre to the larger Kalita Humphreys Theatre in the Center. These plays were to be a festival that was retrospective of the 1973-74 season, and was called Playmarket '74. Among the plays chosen were Lu Ann and Knights. Two of the audience members who attended the Playmarket Festival were literary agent Audrey Wood, and noted director Alan Schneider. Wood was best known for "discovering" Tennessee Williams,

University Western Writer Series, 1983), p. 12.

²John Neville, "Down Center Debut for Jones' 'Lu Ann,'" Dallas Morning News, 7 February 1974, Sec. A, p. 43, col. 1.

William Inge, and Arthur Kopit. Schneider had replaced John Houseman as Director of the Drama Division at Juilliard. The two were so impressed with Jones and his plays that Wood became his literary agent, and Schneider arranged a Washington production at the Kennedy Center.³

With the success of Knights and Lu Ann, Jones wrote Graduate which premiered at the Down Center Stage in November of 1974. In the spring of 1975, the DTC presented all three plays in a marathon performance that lasted nearly seven hours. The three plays were titled The Bradleyville Trilogy for this performance. Jones jokingly dubbed the trilogy "a long day's journey into West Texas."⁴

Jones and the trilogy had a very successful year in 1975. Knights was chosen as the offering of the American Playwrights Theatre and was booked for over 40 productions in regional theatres across the country. Jones won a Rockefeller Scholarship to write further plays, and arrangements were finalized for the trilogy to be performed at the Eisenhower Theatre at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. before moving to New York for a Broadway premiere.

³Tom Prideaux, "The Classic Family Drama is Revived in 'A Texas Trilogy,'" Smithsonian, October, 1976, p. 52.

⁴Bruce Cook, "Preston Jones: Playwright on the Range," Saturday Review, 15 May 1976, p. 41.

In April of 1976 the trilogy opened to rave reviews in Washington. The plays were well received, and eventually a second five-week extended run was booked for August before the trilogy's New York opening. Richard Coe states in his Washington Post review:

"A Texas Trilogy" is far and away the most creative theatre yet offered by the Kennedy Center . . . not since the late 40's when Miller and Williams were breaking in on us, has one heard so assured, so American a dramatic voice. Whatever else the future holds for Preston Jones, he has written three gorgeous, actable plays.⁵

On September 21, 1976, the trilogy opened on Broadway at the Broadhurst Theatre. At the last moment the producers rearranged the schedule from the original order, and Lu Ann opened the trilogy instead of Knights. The trilogy received mixed reviews from the New York critics. Clive Barnes, the leading theatre critic for The New York Times, wrote three very disinterested reviews. The lukewarm reviews from a majority of the critics guaranteed an early closing for the trilogy after sixty-three performances.

All three of the plays are set in Bradleyville, Texas, which is patterned after Colorado City where

⁵Richard L. Coe, "'A Texas Trilogy,' in Affirmation of Wonder," Washington Post, 9 May 1976, sec. K, p. 1, col. 1.

Jones lived at the end of the fifties.⁶ Throughout the original productions at the Down Center Stage, Jones and the designers discussed the importance of the Bradleyville environment to the plays. In Dallas the designer emphasized the theatre's total environment, so that the scene occurred from the moment one entered the lobby and continued to the seats in the auditorium.⁷ The DTC's lobby was decorated with paintings, photographs, and a mural of West Texas scenes. At times a live band performed country and western music before the plays began. In Washington this Bradleyville environment tradition continued. Although the Kennedy Center lobby was not decorated, music was performed and audience members were given a booklet containing informative articles and descriptions about Bradleyville, the townspeople, and even a map of the city. Its purpose was to encourage the audience to become more involved with the environment of the plays.⁸

For the publication of the trilogy, the Hill and Wang edition also includes lengthy descriptions of the people of Bradleyville, and an introduction to the town:

Bradleyville, Texas--population 6,000, a small dead West Texas town in the middle of a big, dead West Texas prairie between Abilene and San Angelo. The

⁶Busby, p. 16

⁷Busby, p. 32.

⁸Busby, p. 33.

new highway has bypassed it and now the world is trying to.⁹

The plays span 20 years, 1953-1973, and involve the inhabitants of Bradleyville.

2. A Texas Trilogy

The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia

The first play, Knights, tells the story of a group of Bradleyville men who are trying to preserve their past, and build their future with membership in a club based upon White Supremacy. This play was chosen as a study in group communication for the obvious reasons. In his article, "Reflections on a 'Trilogy,'" Jones states that, when he was registering for the draft while at college during the McCarthy era, he had to sign a form that stated he was not affiliated with certain groups or organizations. Looking over the list, he noticed an organization called The Knights of the White Cameliars, and the name remained with him. Later when he was writing his mater's thesis he saw the name again, but research revealed that they no longer existed. He asked himself:

⁹Preston Jones, A Texas Trilogy (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), p. 2.

¹⁰Preston Jones, "Reflections on a 'Trilogy,'" New York Times, 17 October 1976, Sec. 2, p. 3, col. 3.

How do you fold up an organization like that? What happens to all the funny hats, the banners, the incense burners and swords, to all the accoutrements and paraphernalia? That I guess was the genesis for "The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia."¹⁰

Lu Ann Hampton Lavery Oberlander

Lu Ann depicts three stages of Lu Ann Hampton's life in Bradleyville. Although the selection of this play as a study in intrapersonal communication may be less obvious than the selection of Knights as a vehicle for group communication, Lu Ann is an excellent model of intrapersonal communication since she must adopt strategies to accept Bradleyville's effects upon her future interactions. The play opens with Lu Ann's negative feelings toward her hometown, and as the play progresses Lu Ann realizes the affect that Bradleyville has upon her life.

Jones states that the inspiration for Lu Ann developed when he was working for the Highway Department in West Texas, and the crews would stop for their meals at the local Dixie Dinette restaurants. As he ate he would notice the waitresses and wonder:

What is the girl's background? Has she been married before? . . . I'd watch the waitresses we'd come across there, and there were Lu Anns all around.¹¹

¹¹Jones, "Reflections on A 'Trilogy,'" p. 3.

Jones incorporated these thoughts into Lu Ann, and even included the Dixie Dinette in the play.

The Oldest Living Graduate

Because the audiences had been so responsive to Colonel Kinkaid in Knights, Jones decided that the Colonel would be the subject of the third play in the trilogy. Graduate offers the opportunity to study interpersonal communication due to the interaction between the Colonel and his son Floyd throughout the play. These two men have developed a series of strategies for their interactions which promote significant conflict.

The idea for Graduate was developed as Jones watched the local television newscast one evening. After ninety years a Catholic Girls School in Dallas was moving away from its original campus. In this particular news feature the oldest living graduate of the school was being interviewed. Jones commented to his wife:

My gosh, that's kind of sad--the oldest living graduate. I mean there was nobody else around--you know.¹²

Jones developed this idea of being the only surviving member of one's high school class into Graduate.

¹²Jones, "Reflections on A 'Trilogy,'" p. 3.

CHAPTER III

THE ANALYSIS

1. The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia

Introduction

Knights is a sad, yet comic attempt of a group of men to reclaim their position as a leading fraternal order. They plan to accomplish this feat through the initiation of a single recruit with the hope that others will also join. Their dream collapses, and the organization seems to become nothing but a faded memory.

Knights is the first play of the trilogy, and although possessing autonomy, it introduces the setting of the trilogy, and introduces characters that may reappear in the other plays. Of the three plays Knights is the only one with a continuous line of action. Knights has a single setting, and at one point in the play each character has his chance at center stage. In Knights, Jones is making a subtle statement concerning racism, yet the emphasis is on the characters and the relationships, on the past, present, and future interactions of the men, and how those relationships affect the men.

The Setting

The action of Knights takes place on the third floor of the Cattleman's Hotel in 1962, Bradleyville, Texas. A single glance of the hotel room assures the spectator that the hotel is waiting either to be torn down or for nature to take the final step toward the hotel's deterioration. The room is very old and worn and shows its neglect. The plastered walls are stained and faded, the wooden floor is warped, and its holes are patched with flattened tin cans. The furniture consists of old chairs with no two alike, one old wheelchair, a small podium with a painted emblem of a white magnolia now faded with age, a coatrack, and an old truck. The room is decorated, if one can be so bold to call the room's interior decorated, with Texas flags now faded and dirty with age, a cross made of light bulbs covered in many years of dust, and banners representing the sun, the moon, and the west wind. The banners like everything else in the room, show age and neglect and add to the general feeling that everything in this room is nearly forgotten. Because a new Holiday Inn opened on the bypass, the old Cattleman's Hotel remains empty.

In Knights there is a double scene, or a setting within a setting. Within the larger circumference, Bradleyville, is the Cattleman's Hotel, the meeting place of the organization. As the town deteriorates, this

process affects the actions of the members in Bradleyville, and this in turn alters their interaction while at the lodge meetings.

Plot Summary

The play opens as Ramsey Eyes, an old black man who is the hotel's caretaker, is sweeping the floor. Rufe Phelps, a 55 year old refinery worker, and Olin Potts, a 56 year old cotton farmer, enter. As usual, they are arguing over nothing. During their on-going argument Red Grover enters. Red is 48, a bartender and owner of the local bar in Bradleyville, Red's. He supplies the liquor for the weekly meetings from his bar. While Olin and Rufe's argument continues, Ramsey Eyes leaves. L. D. Alexander and Skip Hampton arrive for the meeting. L. D. is a manager of ABC's market and is 40; Skip is 31, and works as a Texaco gas station attendant. As the members try to play a joke on Skip concerning forgotten liquor, it becomes obvious that Skip likes his liquor. Colonel Kinkaid, the oldest member of the group, requires the aid of Olin and Rufe to be carried up the stairs since he is confined to a wheelchair. L. D. describes the Colonel:

 somethin' else, ain't he. Here he is all
 crippled up and almost blind, but wild horses
 wouldn't keep him from a lodge meeting, no, sir.¹

¹Preston Jones, A Texas Trilogy (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), p. 25. All quotes cited in the text are from

Before the Colonel arrives it is disclosed that he still suffers from "shell shocks" that he received during WWI, and Red declares "All you gotta do is belch too loud and he starts yellin' about the Germans coming after him."

(26) Red believes that as soon as the Colonel dies his son Floyd will close the hotel. Red jokingly states that Floyd may not close the hotel, rather turn "it into a hotel for Coloreds only." (28) As the others look at him in disbelief over such an idea, the Colonel arrives. It is soon apparent that the Colonel's thoughts tend to wander and he lives in a world of memories. Since all the members are present except Milo Crawford, who had to take his mother to Big Spring, the Knights' oath is recited, and the members prepare to "commence with the domino games." (32) L. D. announces that the club is going to have an initiation rather than the domino games, since Lonnie Roy McNeill from Silver City wishes to join the lodge. The Colonel immediately rejects such a notion, because during a battle in 1918 Staff Sergeant George Plummer from Silver City refused to fight. The others finally resolve this minor objection by convincing the Colonel that Lonnie is from outside of Silver City. Lonnie joins the meeting while the Colonel reminisces

this edition. Numerous quotes in a single paragraph from the same page will only be cited once after the last quote.

about old war memories, Olin and Rufe continue to argue, and L. D. explains the history of the organization. The Knights were formed in 1902 when a Klan member, Maynard C. Stempco, decided to form his own group. The Knights grew relatively fast, and by 1939 there was a national convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma attended by 2,000 members. When Lonnie questions why the organization is presently so small, L. D. replies that people:

turned around and stabbed the granddaddies square in the back. Turned up their noses on their race, started kow towin' to all them there minorities, and little by little the lodges jest sorta dried up. (48)

The members begin to visualize gaining new members, and the Knights fraternity returning to its old glory. Skip accuses them all of dreaming, and the members continue to once again argue, and Lonnie offers to leave. The members decide that they must vote upon Lonnie's initiation when Milo Crawford finally arrives. Lonnie is invited to join the Knights, yet the initiation is delayed due to a misplaced initiation book. Ironically, the Colonel gave Ramsey Eyes the book to keep for safekeeping. The others are shocked that a black man had the sacred initiation book, but Red laughs it off accusing Ramsey Eyes of being "too dumb even to write his own name. Much less read anything." (83) The initiation begins, the conversation wanders, old arguments flare up, and as the

old lightbulbs in the cross begin to flash on and off the Colonel becomes lost in one of his war memories.

In an attempt to snap the Colonel back into reality, Red opens a bottle of liquor causing an argument between him and Skip. In one last spasm the Colonel grabs Lonnie asking for protection from the enemy. Terrified, Lonnie runs out of the room, and the Colonel slumps over in his wheelchair. More arguments arise between the members until Olin notices the Colonel's condition. Floyd is called, and everyone ponders the future of the lodge. With the future of the Knights organization questionable, Red comments upon the validity of the lodge:

Let me tell you something', Brother White Knight, Imperial Wizard, you don't put down the sons of bitchin' freedom riders and minority bastards with all this crap any more. You got to look for the loopholes, pal. (109)

L. D. becomes frustrated and bitter at the dissolution and apathy of the Knights. He states:

Damn, damn, things is changin'. Damn, Oh, to hell with it. This-here lodge, this-here society, this-here brotherhood, this-here ever'thin' is now adjourned. (112)

Olin and Rufe leave arguing, Skip leaves in the hope that Red will offer him a drink at his bar, and the play closes with Ramsey Eyes reading the Knights' oath, and laughing to himself in the process.

Scenic Control in The Last Meeting of the Knights of
the White Magnolia

As stated earlier this study will focus upon the scenic element of Bradleyville. In Knights a circumferential arrangement exists as a single setting, the third floor hotel meeting room, within a larger scene, Bradleyville. These two scenic perspectives complement each other since the goal of the Knights analysis is to determine the effect of Bradleyville upon group communication, and this specific group which meets in the hotel room.

A study concerned with group communication will revolve around the group's interaction, and that is the basic action in Knights. The lodge members are interacting for the purpose of initiating Lonnie while attending their regular weekly meeting. Throughout the play, the characters disclose their individual motivation in attending the meetings, and it is during these revelations that Bradleyville emerges as the controlling ratio. Yet before a detailed discussion of the scenic control of the play, a brief discussion of the agents is necessary.

Olin and Rufe appear to be Knights' brothers simply for social recreation. Throughout the play these two characters never actually refer to White Supremacy, or the brotherhood. After the obligatory reciting of the fraternal oath, Olin is concerned with setting up the tables, "so's we can commence with the domino games." (32)

Even when the fraternity is folding, Olin sums up the main advantage in attending the Knights' meetings, the domino games. Bradleyville does not offer a variety of entertainment for Rufe and Olin; thus their prime motivation in attending the meetings is based upon a social activity. The relationship Olin and Rufe share is that of a continual argument. The meetings serve as a setting for their ongoing conflict.

Bradleyville is the direct controlling agent in Skip's membership. He too is more interested in the fraternity for its recreational value than its racial policy. Skip's primary interest in the Knights' meetings is the free liquor that Red supplies. As a joke on Skip, Olin and Rufe hide Red's liquor. Skip becomes distraught and pleads to Red "Ah'll just run over to your place and pick some up." (23) If Skip were concerned with any official fraternal business he would not want to have to miss any valuable meeting time to retrieve forgotten liquor. Bradleyville offers Skip two choices in pursuing his taste for liquor: either purchasing a drink at Red's bar, or consuming free liquor at the weekly meetings.

Milo Crawford's need for the fraternity centers around his personal identity. Throughout the play Milo is referred to as a "mama's boy," and it is revealed that the fraternal meetings offer him the opportunity to assert his own identity in Bradleyville without his mother's

presence. Yet, when a decision must be made between the Knights or following in his mother's shadow in Bradleyville, Milo opts to forego his fraternal membership. L. D. indirectly insults Milo's mother, and Milo demands an apology. Milo's concern about L. D.'s statement should not deter a lodge meeting. Milo states that if he does not receive an apology "ah'm walkin' out that-there door an' never comin' back." (106) When Milo is not offered an apology he leaves the meeting in a fury. Obviously Milo is allowing his personal feelings to interfere with his fraternal loyalty. Even though the meetings allowed Milo his only opportunity to state his individualism in Bradleyville, when forced to make a decision, Milo opts to become trapped within the confines of Bradleyville and his mother.

Colonel Kinkaid has been the longest active member of the Knights. The Colonel attended the famed national convention at Tulsa in 1939, and because of this he is highly respected by L. D. L. D. is praising the Colonel, and Red questions the validity of this praise since the Colonel suffers from the "shell shocks." L. D. supports his faith in the Colonel, "Hell, Red, there were lots of fellers come back from that World's War I with shell shocks." (26) Somewhere in the Colonel's past he may have been a firm supporter of White Supremacy, yet presently he attends the meetings for their social activities--in particular the domino games. When the

domino game has to be postponed for the initiation ceremony, the Colonel responds "Dammit, ah wanna shuffle dominoes." (32) To the Colonel the domino games are of great importance to the weekly meetings. Since the Colonel is confined to a wheelchair, and lives with his son and daughter-in-law, Bradleyville does not offer him many opportunities to socialize. Floyd humors the Colonel's interest in the fraternity, and drops him off at the hotel every week. The meetings are one place in Bradleyville where the Colonel is only dependent upon his family for transportation.

Observing the scenic control that Bradleyville exercises, it appears that five out of seven members use the fraternity as a social refuge since Bradleyville offers a limited amount of social activities. Because these men view Knights as a social fraternity, their interaction is structured informally on their interests which vary between dominoes and liquor.

Contrasted to the others are the remaining two members, Red and L. D. Red is a firm supporter of a White Supremacy policy, and the fraternity serves as a place in Bradleyville where Red may express his racial beliefs. Red moved to Bradleyville from Meridian, Mississippi, and brought his biased views with him to Bradleyville. Red owns his own business where he simply reserves the right "to refuse service to anybody." (110) Yet the fraternity

is an outlet for Red's vocalized racism. There are numerous examples throughout the play establishing Red's biased perspective, thus a majority of his interaction with the others revolves around his racism. Red believes one has "to look for the loopholes," to be successful with discriminatory practices, and he has accomplished this through his refusal to serve only those he chooses. (109) This analysis shows Red's biased nature, and signifies that Bradleyville's anti-discriminatory policies affect Red's perception of Bradleyville, which, in turn, influences his interaction with the others.

L. D., like Red, supports a White Supremacy policy, yet he is the only fraternal brother concerned with the organization itself. He is the only member who refers to the others as "brothers," and he is the formal leader of the group. He guides the brothers through the formal rules and regulations of the initiation ceremony, and begins the reciting of the fraternal oath. This is the only organization in Bradleyville supporting White Supremacy that L. D. may hold membership in, and function in an administrator's role. Because of his administrative duties his communication with the others is formally structured. He has been the support for the organization attempting to manage the different views held by the other members.

The new initiate, Lonnie, seems motivated to attend the Knights meeting because of Bradleyville's effect upon his social existence, and he evidences only slight interest in White Supremacy. Lonnie is interested in the domino games and the liquor. L. D. assures Lonnie that Ramsey Eyes is not a lodge member, and Lonnie wants additional assurance "you sure now he ain't . . . " (40) Lonnie is lonely in Bradleyville since his high school friends have moved away from the town, and this in turn influences him to join the Knights. He tells the members "Well, ah don't know many fellers my age over to home. Most of 'em are either gone off somewhere or are in the army." (51)

It has been established that the agents are motivated to attend the fraternal meeting because of social interests or a belief in White Supremacy. Following is a discussion explaining Bradleyville's influence over the agents' specific acts.

Within the play itself, the controlling act is Lonnie's initiation. Yet to explain the degree of influence of Bradleyville on the agents, individual acts need to be analyzed. This analysis will state that Bradleyville is the guiding Pentadic element that bonds Knights together both before and after the actual meeting. Bradleyville is a small town, and in this sense its social functions are extremely limited. To a group of men as diverse as the Knights' brothers, the fraternity offers a refuge from the restraints of Bradleyville's size. Within

the confines of Bradleyville, there are few places for its citizens to convene, and the Knights' meetings allow Olin and Rufe a place to continue their endless arguments. In an attempt to settle an argument between Olin and Rufe concerning a horseshoe game, Red advises Rufe to find another partner. Olin's response represents one of the many ways Bradleyville affects him, he replies "Ain't nobody else to play with." (19) In this sense Bradleyville affects the agents' basic social acts. Even though Olin and Rufe are temporarily upset with each other, living in Bradleyville influences any social activities with specific partners because of the limited number of residents, thus forcing Olin and Rufe to socialize together regardless of their personal viewpoints. Consequently, the scene has a direct impact upon Rufe and Olin's interaction; instead of ending the argument and proceeding elsewhere, they will continue their argument at the Knights meeting.

At the play's ending with the folding of Knights, Rufe sums up the effect of the organization on his social activities, "Now there won't be nothing to do." Olin replies in return, "Ah hell, Rufe, there's always something to do." (113) Yet the only example Olin cites is visiting the new bowling alley, so obviously Bradleyville does not offer numerous forms of entertainment to Olin and Rufe.

Red does not consider any of the other brothers close friends, yet he tolerates their participation in the fraternity. Red is also influenced by Bradleyville's impact upon his selection of friends. The scene has forced Red to search for interaction with a group supposedly based upon a policy he supports. In reality a majority of the brothers do not share Red's vigor for discrimination, they hold membership in a fraternal order based upon White Supremacy for other reasons. Regardless of the members' personal convictions, Red justifies their membership since supposedly the members should believe in White Supremacy. In this guise, Red is comfortable interacting with the other brothers, yet outside of the lodge Red may not opt to socialize with these men. Since Knights allows Red to voice his convictions he is willing to socialize in general with the brothers throughout the meeting, and even supplies the liquor.

At the play's ending, Red's racial perspective reaches its height of revelation when he instructs L. D. not to tolerate "the sons of bitchin' freedom riders and minority bastards with all this crap any more." (109) Because Bradleyville attempts to prohibit discrimination, Red is forced to justify his position by publicly stating that he reserves the right to refuse service to anyone. Obviously the city does not support racism, and the Knights' meetings

serve the function of allowing Red to express his belief in White Supremacy.

As compared to Olin and Rufe, Skip's membership in the fraternity reflects his need for a social activity. The meetings offer Skip a place to satisfy his taste for liquor, and a locale where he can retell old war tales. The lodge is Skip's only option for entertainment while living in Bradleyville. Skip begins to discuss his involvement at the Chosan reservoir incident with Lonnie, and Red explodes "For Christ's sake, shut up! We heard that damn story a hundred times." (49) Apparently Skip has recited that particular experience so often Red cannot tolerate hearing it again. Bradleyville is an extremely small town, and after a short period of time any reminiscing of old war adventures becomes repetitious to Bradleyville residents. Since Lonnie is relatively unknown to the fraternity, he represents a new person for Skip to share his old worn out adventures with. Living in Bradleyville does not often offer the chance for one to interact with new people, and Skip is relatively excited by this opportunity.

In another manner the lodge meetings represent free liquor to Skip, and his interaction with the others is often based upon obtaining this liquor. Skip's drinking is also the subject of many sarcastic comments from the others, both in his presence and absence. Discussing

Skip's taste for liquor, Red observes "Hell Skip wouldn't pass up a drink if he had to squeeze it out of an armadillo's ass." (21) At the end of the play L. D. acknowledges "shore, shore, we all know why Skip comes up here." (112)

Playing a joke on Skip, the others are attempting to fool Skip into believing that he was to deliver the liquor for Red. Skip openly admits "Ah would of remembered. Hell's fire, Ah'd never forget somethin' as important as that." (23) To Skip's dismay, L. D. suggests the meeting proceed without the liquor and Skip offers to retrieve the liquor from Red's. Red immediately opposes such an act, and Skip proceeds to volunteer L. D.'s services. Obviously Skip is more concerned with the liquor than the meeting, or he would not suggest leaving the meeting. Skip desperately wants the liquor, thus he is not bothered that he is volunteering the time of others to reclaim the forgotten liquor. Skip's primary motivation throughout the meeting, and subsequently in his interaction with others, revolves around liquor.

Upon the appearance of the "forgotten" liquor, Skip immediately reaches for it. Red stops Skip and reaffirms "All us gentlemen wait on refreshments till after the meetin', don't we Skip?" Skip does not favor this policy, but replies "Sure, sure, oh, hell, yes." (25) Skip's constant efforts to begin drinking cause the others to

be cautious of Skip's partiality to liquor, since this influences his actions.

Skip does not have any interest in the lodge other than as a social activity, and when announced that someone wants to join the club, Skip is astonished. Upon this announcement Skip responds in disbelief "You mean to tell us that somebody wants to join the lodge." (33) The only fraternal loyalty Skip has is that once a week the Knights offer a source of entertainment in Bradleyville where he may obtain free liquor.

Since the lodge policy is that the group can only drink after the meeting, Skip is extremely interested in speeding up the meeting's pace. Rather than contribute to the conversation with the others, Skip urges them "now come on, lets git on with the meeting." The others recognize Skip's intention, and Rufe replies to Skip "You don't want to get on with the meetin' you jest want to get on with the refreshments." Of course Skip denies this accusation, and Red sarcastically responds "Your tongue's hangin' out so far now it looks like a neck tie." (38) Skip's interest in the refreshments have disrupted the meeting, and the Colonel must finally restore order. The lodge members are continually having to appease Skip as well as perform the other fraternal duties. At one point L. D. is explaining the official ceremony to Lonnie, and Skip repeatedly interrupts the conversation to state his

desire for a drink. L. D. proceeds to inform Lonnie that after the meeting they will have a drink, and Skip replies "Sounds damn good to me." Finally L. D. must resort to telling Skip to "Shut-up" or L. D. will never finish his conversation. (43)

As the initiation ceremony is delayed Skip believes he will never get a drink. He encourages the others to start the ceremony "Hell, yes, lets git started." (56) Throughout the ceremony Skip is constantly urging the others to speed up the process, "Let's git on with the votin'." (66) Since Skip's goal at the meetings is to drink, and that can only be done at the meeting's end, his acts during the lodge meeting are designed to promote meeting termination.

At the beginning of Act II, Lonnie has temporarily disappeared, and the others have interpreted this to mean that he decided not to join the lodge. With this discovery they decide to finally open the liquor, and without hesitation Skip is the first to reach for it. When the liquor is finally within reach for Skip, Lonnie returns. Skip resorts to pleading "Ah come on, Red, jest one shot, jest one." (74) While the others are upset that their dreams of the fraternity's growth have vanished, Skip is still concerned over his own interests.

Before the members can begin the initiation ceremony, the misplaced initiation book must be located. That is

the central concern for everyone except Skip, who replies "Hell, let's all have us a little drink, maybe it'll help us to remember." (80) As the brothers begin to question each other in an attempt to remember who last had the book, Skip is asked if he borrowed the book to study. Astonished, Skip replies "Are you kidding!" (75)

During the initiation ceremony Skip tires of standing and decides to sit and rest. L. D. and Milo both have to order Skip to remain standing since that is the official policy. Unmistakably, the formality of the initiation ceremony holds no value to Skip. When Lonnie is officially initiated and given a shot of liquor, instead of an congratulatory words to Lonnie, Skip's reaction is to the shot of liquor: "How about a shot for his faithful companion." (92)

At the play's ending, Skip has lost his patience, and cannot tolerate waiting for a drink any longer. He finally grabs the liquor and drinks from the bottle. When ordered to stop, Skip threatens physical harm to anyone who comes near him. Skip acts as if his tire gauge is a knife, yet the mere act of Skip's proposed violence signifies, beyond any doubt, that Skip's loyalty is not to his brothers, or the lodge.

Bradleyville's impact on Skip influences his interaction with the other brothers throughout the play. Skip is an alcoholic and his participation within the group

reflects this. Skip's social interests are severely limited, and Bradleyville offers him few entertainments where he may obtain a drink and exchange old war tales. Consequently his primary motivation in attending the meetings is the fulfillment of his goals, and this in turn affects his interaction with the brothers. Once at the meeting Skip encourages the idea that the liquor should highlight any official fraternal act, regardless of the others' objectives. In this manner he may satisfy his own interests.

L. D. supports White Supremacy, and since Knights is the only organization in Bradleyville based upon this policy, L. D. is a member of this fraternity. Throughout the play, L. D.'s role is the formal leader, and he attempts to keep the meeting organized and functioning under its proper rules and regulations. He attends the meeting wearing a suit, and his communication with the brothers is based upon his administrative position. L. D. starts the meeting, leads the members through the oath, and formally introduces Lonnie to the brothers. The Colonel is quite upset that Lonnie's home is Silver City and refuses to allow Lonnie into the brotherhood. L. D. acts as negotiator and tries to appease the Colonel. As L. D. is administering the oath of membership to Lonnie he explains the fraternity's history and its present condition. When the others begin to digress and interrupt

the structure of L. D.'s conversation he orders "Dammit to hell, now you all shut up and let me finish." (44)

Lonnie is quite surprised at the fraternity's decline, and questions the reasons for its present condition. L. D. emphasizes "Stupidity, Lonnie Roy. Pure by-God dumb stupidity." (48) Clearly L. D.'s statement reaffirms his belief in the brotherhood. L. D.'s enthusiasm for the club often influences his responses to the other lodge members. L. D. is a loyal follower of the Knights, and Bradleyville's only opportunity for L. D. is the Knights. For this reason he dedicates his time and interest to work toward the organization's success.

L. D. is noticeably enthusiastic over the prospect of a new brother, and informs Lonnie that the initiation ceremony will be the "high by-God point of your life." (56) L. D. believes the initiation ceremony requires absolute formality, and he posts Olin as a door sentry during the voting procedure. Realistically the idea of anyone storming into their third floor meeting room in Bradleyville is as remote as Bradleyville's regeneration. Nevertheless L. D. deems the initiation's secrecy of such gravity that it demands a door sentry. L. D. continues a formal procedure throughout the ceremony, and Lonnie is sent outside during the voting process. When L. D. calls for Lonnie to re-enter the room he addresses Lonnie as "Brother Elect Knight of the White Magnolia Lonnie Roy

McNeil." (70) In Knights, L. D. has his only opportunity to participate in a leadership position in a dead organization that he believes can benefit a deceased society. L. D. is the guardian of a crypt, albeit a humorously lively crypt.

The stage directions state the L. D. is to be "In a mild state of panic" over the misplaced initiation book. L. D. questions "How we gonna hold a ceremony without a book." (76) It is suggested that a ceremony be created, and L. D. immediately rejects such an informal idea, "We gotta find that book." (77) When the official initiation book is located, L. D. discovers his own ironic demise. His attempts to preserve the tenets of White Supremacy are ultimately thwarted by a sardonic twist--the "sacred" book is kept by the black janitor.

This revelation combined with his realization that his brothers do not share his convictions leads to a confrontation with Olin "What the hell do you come to the meetings for anyway?" (111) Finally L. D. is exasperated "Ah'm tired of tryin' to keep ever'thin' goin' any more." (112) Disenchanted, L. D. will leave the fraternity, ponder over his "lost" brothers and brotherhood, and return to life in Bradleyville.

Bradleyville is the motivating factor for L. D.'s membership in the lodge since it represents his belief in White Supremacy, and fulfills his leadership

characteristics. His interaction with the other brothers reflects his belief in the Knights, its future, and his capacity to function as a leader. Eventually it was the confrontation between values and valuelessness that initiated L. D.'s loss of faith in the fraternity, and he too would resign from the Knights.

Colonel Kinkaid is the oldest member of the organization, and his age is often reflected in his communication. His thoughts wander to past memories, and these incidents often interfere with his daily interaction with others. In this sense he is often living in the past, and is continually sharing those memories with the brothers. The Colonel's career was in the Armed Services. Other than his active duty, he has spent his life in Bradleyville, only to return, finding himself forced to remain in the city because of his handicap. Presently the brotherhood represents familiarity to the Colonel. He is comfortable attending the weekly meetings even though he must be physically carried up three flights of stairs. The Colonel's physical condition strictly limits the social activities in which he may engage in Bradleyville. The Colonel's fraternal interests also highlight his social appetite--playing dominoes. When L. D. announces that this particular meeting is dedicated to an initiation ceremony, the Colonel blurts "Damn it, ah wanna shuffle dominoes." (32)

The Colonel's communicative acts are characterized by pseudo-formal military statements--perhaps symbolic of his attempt to maintain identification with a sense of transcendence of Bradleyville. He addresses the other brothers as "men," and when he is finished talking to Ramsey Eyes the Colonel dismisses him. Throughout the play the Colonel refers to past military experiences in any conversation. Red refers to the Colonel as "Just an old war horse." (43) Any of the Colonel's interaction relates to the military in some manner. The first question that the Colonel asks Lonnie centers on Lonnie's military experience. Another instance has the Colonel informing Olin on the correct procedure for a sentry: "Sentries don't sit, they stand and they stand tall." (62)

Yet the Colonel exhibits his own encapsulation in Bradleyville. L. D. announces that Lonnie's hometown is Silver City, and the Colonel opposes Lonnie's future membership because:

in nineteen hundred and eighteen Staff
Sergeant George Plummer from right over yonder
in Silver City refused to fight, . . . Whey-
faced little coward jest stood there in the
trench with his puttees floppin' around . . .
Kept mumblin' over and over, "Who am ah? Who
am ah?" Well, ah knew damn well who he was,
he was Staff Sergeant George Plummer from
over there to Silver City. (35)

The Colonel's memory of a soldier from Silver City who refused to fight has created a negative image which

distorts any decision the Colonel makes concerning Silver City. Because of this tarnished view of reality the brothers often have to arrange their interaction around subjects that will not upset the Colonel.

The Colonel does not attend the Knights meetings to further White Supremacy. The Colonel attends the meetings out of habit, and to find a place to socialize, play dominoes, and escape to a more exciting scene--his military career. If racism were the foremost motivating factor in the Colonel's mind he would not refer to Ramsey Eyes as a "Faithful Employee," and that "Ah would trust that man with anythin' I owned." (72) That is exactly what the Colonel does, and asks Ramsey Eyes to care for the initiation book.

The flashing lights during the initiation ceremony triggers the Colonel's memory to a terrifying experience he once had in a trench with bombs exploding around him. The Colonel has a stroke and passes out in his wheelchair. Ironically it was the Colonel's interaction with the Knight's brothers that in turn causes his stroke. The contrast between transcendental memories and Bradleyville reality was more than the Colonel could accept. After the Colonel returned, he was controlled by an environment where his participation in events was extremely limited because of his handicap. There was a void that life in Bradleyville could not fill, and the Colonel lived in

the memories which represented his past actions and excitement.

In the stage directions Jones states that Lonnie had originally planned a military career for himself, yet asthma and flat feet altered his career choice. Thus he had been forced to remain in Bradleyville against his preference. Presently all of Lonnie's high school friends have moved away from the area for various reasons, and he is now extremely lonely. Obviously Bradleyville has a direct impact upon Lonnie's life. Since Lonnie does not have any close friends, and he desires more social interaction, he joins the Knights. Lonnie also enjoys playing dominoes, and Rufe encourages his interest. Responding to Rufe's statement of his interest in dominoes, Lonnie enthusiastically responds "You bet! Moon, Forty-two, ah like to play em all." (44)

To continue establishing his interest in the lodge, Lonnie clarifies when he heard "that this here lodge was for white men only, well sir, ah was sold. Sold right there on the spot." (44) Obviously Lonnie is searching for an activity to occupy some of his leisure time, and if that activity is based upon racism Lonnie will act bigoted as a means to be accepted. Throughout the meeting the brothers are drawn into various arguments until finally Lonnie asks "My gosh. Do you fellers fight like this all the time?" Lonnie proceeds to state "maybe ah'd

better go home and come back next time." (55) Lonnie may want to belong to the organization since he is eternally trapped in a void in Bradleyville, yet he does not want to be associated with these men who continually argue.

In addition to the dominoes, Lonnie enjoys having a drink. The stage directions state that as the initiation ceremony ends Lonnie is to take a long drink from the liquor bottle. Lonnie appears to be drinking to such an extent that Red grabs the bottle and tells him "not too damn deeply." (92) Bradleyville is the driving force in Lonnie's loneliness and boredom. Because of his lack of social activities and companionship Lonnie joins the brotherhood to fulfill the needs that Bradleyville is unable to provide. The Knights fraternity is based upon racism, yet it offers Lonnie friendship and activity that Bradleyville cannot. Hence, he is discouraged and disillusioned with the climate of conflict.

Milo arrives at the fraternity meeting late because of his mother's errands. The others jokingly tease Milo about his relationship with his mother. Milo did not join the lodge for either the dominoes, liquor, or its racial beliefs. The Knights offer Milo the one opportunity in Bradleyville to accomplish a goal on his own without his mother. Jones states in the stage directions that Milo joined the Knights and started smoking as forms of rebellion against his mother. Being a member of a secret,

all-male organization is one act Milo's mother had no control over, although she attempt to distract him from attending the weekly meetings.

When Milo states that he had a drink during his initiation, Red teases him and asks if his mother knew that he drank liquor. Milo's reply is "Ah do lots of things my mama don't know about." (91) Bradleyville does not offer Milo many opportunities to reaffirm his identity away from his mother's influence; thus attending the fraternity meetings satisfies those needs. Compared to the Colonel's physical entrapment to the wheelchair, Milo is emotionally trapped within his mother's image in Bradleyville. Milo, like the Colonel, escapes from Bradleyville's overwhelming control of his life into the organization.

At the play's ending Milo is not concerned over the Colonel's illness, the brothers' arguments, or even the fact that the lodge's future in Lonnie just ran out of the meeting. Rather Milo is distressed at the length of the meeting since his mother will begin to worry. L. D. indirectly insults Milo's mother since L. D. is quite exasperated from the night's events. Milo demands an apology, and when ignored he storms out of the meeting. Milo's actions reveal the little value he places in the fraternity. Eventually Milo will discover another organization that will enable him to assert his identity in

Bradleyville. Until then he will allow Bradleyville, and his mother, to control his future actions.

The preceding discussion maintains that the scenic theme is the controlling element throughout Knights. It answers Burke's question of "What is involved, when we say what people are doing and why?"² Through a Pentadic analysis it was discovered that the scene had a direct influence upon the agents and their acts in Knights. Bradleyville is a small town with limited opportunities for social and civic activities. The brothers look forward to their meetings to pursue interests as varied as drinking, dominoes, and reminiscing. Outside of this hotel room Bradleyville denies the members this luxury.

Whereas Bradleyville affects the agents' actions, it also controls the group communication. The agents' motivation varies between social and racial policies, and the interaction between the agents must represent both viewpoints. Ironically, it is within these two factions of group communication that conflicts arise that eventually progress until the fraternity disbands. Bradleyville is the controlling element that influences the agents to attend the weekly meetings out of variety of reasons that include loneliness, self-assertiveness, and freedom. Yet once at this particular meeting, the variations in

²Burke, Grammar, p. xv.

motivation resulted in the inevitable failure of the lodge to survive. The agents were no longer "fused into one togetherness,"³ thus it was inevitable that the fraternity would fold, and the agents return to Bradleyville, the significant controlling element in Knights.

2. Lu Ann Hampton Lavery Oberlander

Introduction

Clive Barnes describes Lu Ann as a study "of a woman cheerfully surviving all manner of loss."⁴ The play covers three stages of Lu Ann's life, beginning when she is a high school cheerleader, and proceeding through the next twenty years. During this time span she marries twice, has a daughter, and eventually cares for her invalid mother and alcoholic brother. In his Newsweek review, Jack Kroll states that Lu Ann becomes "wiser and harder," and she "is both a survivor and a waste, a waste of the precious promise of the ordinary."⁵ Lu Ann survives the problems that life in Bradleyville has imposed upon her, yet she never has the opportunity to experience the world

³Burke, Grammar, p. xix.

⁴Clive Barnes, "Preston Jones's 'Tex Trilogy' Opens with Portrait of a Loser," New York Times, 22 Sept. 1976, p. 30, col. 1

⁵Jack Kroll, "Texas Marksmanship," Newsweek, May 19, 1976, p. 95.

of her dreams while in high school. In his Smithsonian article Tom Prideaux sums up Lu Ann's life:

The play is an account book of distinguishing returns, which by rights should be depressing. But it isn't . . . as Lu Ann grows salty and hard, she also grows noble, but without a trace of self pity.⁶

Setting

Lu Ann occurs over a period of 20 years and in two settings. Act I opens in the year 1953, and the action occurs in the Hampton livingroom. Jones describes the setting as a small house furnished with "Sears catalogue type furniture." (119) The livingroom contains a door leading to a small front porch where numerous entrances and exits are made throughout the play.

Act II takes place at Red's bar in 1963. Jones describes Red's as "A small, dim, beer-smelling West Texas dive." (158) There is a small wooden bar with a few scattered tabels and chairs throughout. Over the bar is a large sign that states: WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE SERVICE TO ANYONE.

Act III occurs in the Hampton livingroom in 1973. Jones suggets a few changes in the furnishings such as new drapes and slipcovers to represent the passage of time.

⁶Tom Prideaux, "The Classic Family Drama is Revived in 'A Texas Trilogy,'" Smithsonian, Oct. 1976, p. 53.

Plot Summary

Act I opens as Lu Ann and her boyfriend, Billy Bob Wortman, are discussing taking Billy Bob's father's new Hudson Hornet to the Senior Picnic. Lu Ann is insistent that they attend the picnic in that car, and after a lengthy manipulative process she manages to have Billy Bob promise he will be able to borrow his father's car.

Billy Bob leaves to discuss the car with his father, and Lu Ann begins to tell her mother, Claudine, about the day's events at school. After Lu Ann tells her mother about the basketball assembly, classes, and the cheerleader's pranks on the basketball players, Claudine advises her to "enjoy yourself while you can, honey, remember that your schoolin' days are the happiest days of your life. (130) Lu Ann rejects such an idea; "if this is the happiest time of mah life, ah'm jest not too all fired shore ah want to go on livin'." (131) Lu Ann explains her dream of visiting European castles:

I was sittin' there in study hall the other day
and I got to lookin' at a picture there on the
wall of one of them castles they got over there
to Europe, . . . what I wouldn't give to git
outta here for a spell and go over yonder to
where that castle is. (131)

Lu Ann's mother is appalled that Lu Ann is daydreaming her life away, and advises Lu Ann to begin planning her future now that she is almost finished with high school.

Lu Ann rejects all of Claudine's suggestions, justifying "Ah don't want to think about it jest yet." Lu Ann's mother recommends to her that she should start seriously considering her future, yet the only thoughts Lu Ann has given to the future center around leaving "this house, outta this town, outta the state somewhere." (134)

Claudine leaves for work, and Lu Ann's older brother, Skip, enters with Dale Laverty, a friend from the Korean war. After introductions, Dale explains to Lu Ann that with his military experience he found a job as a truck driver quite easily. During his conversation with Lu Ann, Dale admits to having disliked high school. Lu Ann tells Dale, "my mama says its the happiest time of your life. Ever hear anythin' so silly?" (149) The conversation changes from high school to the advantages of house trailers, and Dale tells Lu Ann that the best advantage of living in a trailer is "that if you git tired of bein' in one town you can jest hook 'er up and take off." (150) Lu Ann agrees that "it sounds like heaven." (151)

Skip advises Lu Ann to be thinking about a "man" (153) instead of her high school dates. Skip begins to discuss his involvement with the Knights of the White Magnolia, and Lu Ann replies that the truth is "nobody does nuthin' but drink whiskey, play dominoes, and git into big fights." (154) Exasperated, Skip leaves for Red's, and Dale asks Lu Ann if he may call her sometime. The act

ends as Lu Ann turns on the radio and soliloquizes "Dale Laverty--Dale Laverty, gee, that's a pretty name." (157)

The time is 1963, and the scene is Red's bar as Act II opens. Red is explaining Skip's attempted suicide to Rufe and Olin when Lu Ann arrives to have a beer. Skip had tried slitting his throat the night before at Red's, but Lu Ann informs everyone that Skip is doing fine at the hospital. As Rufe and Olin leave Corky Oberlander, a Highway Department inspector, enters. He flirts with Lu Ann, asks her to join him at a table, and the rest of the act consists of their conversation at Red's. Lu Ann explains her degree from the Sanford School of Beauty Culture in San Angelo, her job as a beauty technician, and as she warms to the occasion she elaborates on her divorce from Dale Laverty. Life in a trailer was not as idealistic as Lu Ann once thought. In her words, "Hell's fire, that was no way to live." (175) Dale was constantly away delivering cattle leaving her alone to raise Charmaine, their daughter, and chase rattlesnakes out of the trailer.

At this point Lu Ann realized that escaping from Bradleyville to a trailer park in Snyder was not equivalent to her dreams of visiting European castles. She confronted Dale on their present state, and he stormed out of the trailer, ran over the mailbox and the dog, and Lu Ann has never seen him since. Lu Ann sold the trailer, buried

the dog, and returned to Bradleyville. Corky explains his career as a highway inspector, and Lu Ann finds it quite comical that there is a career in inspecting dirt.

"What's so damned important about lookin' at dirt?", she quizzes. This sarcastic inquiry eventually escalates into an argument which in turn leads Corky to ask Lu Ann for a dinner date.

Act III occurs at the Hampton home in 1973. Lu Ann is presently caring for Skip, Charmaine, and her mother who is the victim of a stroke. Skip's dependence on alcohol has changed his behavior to that of a child always begging for money from Lu Ann. While Skip is complaining of his treatment, and Charmaine is upset at both Skip and her mother, Billy Bob is in town and visits Lu Ann. The remainder of Act III centers on Lu Ann and Billy Bob's reflections on Bradleyville, past and present. Lu Ann explains Corky's death after they had only been married a couple of years, her mother's stroke, and her new job as a Howdy Wagon Hostess. They continue to discuss the changes in Bradleyville over the past 20 years. Other than a new parking lot and two new screens at the drive-in theatre, Bradleyville is mostly unchanged. Billy Bob questions Lu Ann about the fact that she has remained in Bradleyville after all of these years, and Lu Ann explains that her life "kindly found its little hollow to stay in."

Billy Bob is a minister, and contemplates Claudine's future because of her stroke. He suggests a church home for Claudine, and Lu Ann immediately counters that Claudine is her responsibility. She asserts "my mama ain't no vegetable, she's a flower, a great old big pretty flower."

(224) After Billy Bob leaves, the play ends with Lu Ann reminiscing that she could have married Billy Bob, but: "Ah just never could cotton to that boy's name, Billy Bob Wortman. Why, it's jest plain silly-soundin." (225)

Scenic Control in Lu Ann Hampton Lavery Oberlander

As stated earlier this study will focus upon the scenic element of Bradleyville as a controlling force in Lu Ann's intrapersonal communication. In this manner the study will illustrate Lu Ann's reflections on Bradleyville throughout her life. Lu Ann is not a play with continuous action, or a single setting; rather, the play explores twenty years in Lu Ann's life. During this period Bradleyville's impact often influences Lu Ann's major acts. Obviously in a study centered on intrapersonal communication the analysis will be limited to a single agent, and a scene-act ratio will be reflected in the agent's interpretation of the act.

During the play's first act Claudine asks Lu Ann about the day's assembly at school, and Lu Ann replies, "the same old stuff, dull, dull, dull." (128) Even though Lu Ann is

a cheerleader, the pep rallies no longer hold any excitement for her. Lu Ann proceeds to explain the day's activities to her mother, and Claudine advises:

Mah, mah, well, you best enjoy yourself while you can, honey, remember that your schoolin' days are the happiest days of your life. (130)

Lu Ann simply replies, "Oh, pooh." (130) This idea seems too ridiculous for Lu Ann to accept, and she responds:

Well, if this is the happiest time of may life, ah'm jest not too all fired shore ah want to go on livin'! Gee whiz. (131)

Obviously Lu Ann's attitude is affecting her outlook on life in general. Lu Ann is bored at school, and questions its value. She explains to her mother that while in study hall she began to concentrate on a photograph of a castle somewhere in Europe, and she began to think "What I wouldn't give to get outta here for a spell and go over yonder to where that castle is." (131) Once there Lu Ann has even planned her exact actions. She would walk on the outside deck and yell:

Hey, ever'body, look here, look at me. I've just opened the little door that's at the top of the whole wide world. (131)

Lu Ann is bored with school, being a cheerleader, and she is especially upset that she must participate in those activities in Bradleyville. Instead of using and

benefiting from study hall, Lu Ann would rather spend her time dreaming of escaping Bradleyville. Lu Ann's encapsulation in Bradleyville is symbolized in her daydreams of transcendence. The accomplishment of this goal is of such importance that Lu Ann has already planned her actions and written her dialogue. Rather than occupying herself with any present objectives, Lu Ann is participating in an indepth intrapersonal dialogue with herself regarding her dreams, and her future outside of Bradleyville.

Claudine attempts to encourage Lu Ann to become more concerned about her future, and begin developing plans for a career after her graduation. Claudine suggests Business School, or training in a pre-nursing program at the local hospital over the summer. Lu Ann rejects both suggestions, and replies "Ah don't want to think about it jest yet."

(134) A future in Bradleyville is the last objective for which Lu Ann wants to prepare. Lu Ann feels trapped in Bradleyville, and her only motivating force is to escape this small West-Texas town. Lu Ann's motivation is inhibiting her from organizing any specific arrangements that would require her to remain in the one place she is desperately hoping to leave.

Lu Ann is willing to share her one specific post graduation objective with her mother, "Ah just wanna go, go anywhere. Outta this house, outta this town, plumb outta this state somewhere." (134) Lu Ann has not made

any specific plans for her future, yet she knows what she wishes to avoid:

Ah know ah don't want to be stuck all may
life in a little old dried up West-Texas town,
emptyin' bed pans at the god damned hospital,
like someone ah know. (135)

Lu Ann regrets saying something this insulting to her mother, and apologizes. Yet her statement verifies that Lu Ann is cautious of becoming trapped in a never-ending cycle in Bradleyville that is impossible to stop. Obviously Lu Ann has given certain aspects of her future great consideration, and leaving Bradleyville is one definite decision she has made.

Later Skip offers to tell Lu Ann how Dale saved his life at the Chosan reservoir while they were in Korea. Lu Ann becomes interested in hearing about the incident, but first she must turn off the stove. When Lu Ann re-enters the livingroom, Skip has forgotten about the story and Lu Ann must remind him. It's doubtful that Lu Ann is really interested in another of Skip's exaggerated war tales. Yet, since the action of the incident occurs outside of Bradleyville, the story appeals to Lu Ann.

To change the topic from Skip's exaggerations, Dale asks Lu Ann about her feelings toward high school. Dale admits that he too hated school, and Lu Ann tells him "My mama says its the happiest time of your life. Ever hear

anythin' so silly?" Lu Ann has already decided there is nothing of value that high school can possibly offer her any longer. Dale asks Lu Ann about her post graduate plans, and Lu Ann admits "Gee, ah don't know." (149) Not only does Lu Ann want to avoid planning her future, when she is directly confronted about it she admits to having nothing definite planned.

Dale begins to explain that his sister is a dental assistant, and lives in a house trailer. Thus begins a discussion of a house trailer's advantages. Living in a trailer appeals to Dale because one can simply "Jest hook up and take off." (150) Dale proclaims "Now that is the way to live." (151) Here is an opportunity for Lu Ann to begin to develop some ideas for her future. Lu Ann is not concerned with a career, rather she is interested in any method that will allow her to escape from Bradleyville. A house trailer's mobility appeals to Dale, and in the process Lu Ann shares his enthusiasm.

Dale asks Lu Ann if she and Billy Bob are engaged, and Lu Ann immediately emphasizes "Oh, shoot, no, we jest kinda go with each other, you know." Dale asks if he may call her, and Lu Ann answers "Oh, sure, Dale that would be real neat." After Dale has left and Lu Ann is alone, she begins to plan her future "Dale Laverty--Dale Laverty, gee that's a pretty name." (157) Lu Ann has discovered her means of leaving Bradleyville, and thus she begins to play

with the sound of Dale's name. Lu Ann realizes that Dale represents the answer to her future. If she marries Dale she can continue to postpone any career objectives, and she will be accomplishing all of her individual goals--leaving Bradleyville and anything associated with the city.

Throughout Act I Lu Ann's intrapersonal dialogue has been a discussion centered around leaving Bradleyville. In the meantime she meets Dale Laverty who provides the agency that Lu Ann needs to accomplish that goal. In Lu Ann's mind, life in a house trailer with Dale can satisfy the void she feels by living in Bradleyville.

During the ten year interval between Acts I and II, Lu Ann has left and returned to Bradleyville. Lu Ann confesses to Corky that living in a trailer was not as idealistic as it once sounded, and advises "Stay out at them damned trailer parks, might as well live on a tumbleweed farm." (174) What Lu Ann once thought would be "heaven" in reality was a constant battle against the weather and rattlesnakes. Lu Ann envisioned Dale's enthusiasm over a house trailer's mobility to represent frequent moves, travel, and excitement. Instead they moved to "Shady Grove Mobile Home Park until the tires rotted off." (175) Dale was constantly away for two to three week periods, leaving Lu Ann alone to raise Charmaine. When Dale was at home, he preferred to remain at the trailer and brag about his travels to Lu Ann.

During this time when she was alone, Lu Ann began to realize "Hell's fire, that was no way to live." (175) Dale had once represented Lu Ann's method to escape from the "nothingness" of Bradleyville to a more exciting lifestyle. Lu Ann realized that her progress was static, and instead of moving from Bradleyville to somewhere exciting, she proceeded to a similar situation of boredom at Shady Grove Mobile Home Park. Upon this actualization Lu Ann confronted Dale:

So one boozy evenin' when he was home lappin' up the Jim Beam and talkin' about the new shower baths at the Top of the World truck stop in Moriarty, New Mexico, ah went right through the roof. "Listen, you flap-mouthed son-of-a-bitch," ah said, "if that cattleshit-smellin' semi you got out in the yard there means more to you than me and li'l Charmaine, why don't you jest haul your butt into the cab and boom on outta here for good." (176)

For Lu Ann to resort to such drastic statements she has obviously dwelled on the subject at length. Because Lu Ann spent a majority of her time alone with Charmaine, she had the opportunity to consider the situation, and rehearse her exact ultimatums. When given the option to choose between his semi and Lu Ann, Dale opted for the semi. He "slammed out of the trailer . . . Knocked over the mailbox, ran over our mangy dog, and took off down the road." (176)

After Dale's reaction, Lu Ann had to decide upon her future, so she "buried the dog, sold the trailer, picked up Charmaine," and returned to Bradleyville. Corky sympathizes "that's a damn shame," (176) and Lu Ann responds "Ah think it was probably for the best." (177)

While Lu Ann was in high school her dreams revolved around leaving Bradleyville. Subsequently, Bradleyville has a controlling force in Lu Ann's decision to marry Dale, since Dale offered a life outside of her hometown. Yet once Lu Ann had accomplished leaving Bradleyville, her lifestyle was no different than before. Lu Ann realized that even outside of Bradleyville she was still bored with her life. Thus Lu Ann returned to the one place she had always wanted to leave. Even though Lu Ann lived in Snyder, Bradleyville still controlled her actions. After ten years Lu Ann has had the opportunity to examine the situation, and has decided:

Ah'm doin' okay. Got a good job over the beauty shop, drink a few beers now and then, watch the television, you know. (177)

Whereas working in a beauty parlor, having a few beers and watching television would not have appealed to Lu Ann ten years earlier, presently she justifies her life in Bradleyville through these events. Certainly this lifestyle is not as glamorous as Lu Ann's dreams of European castles, yet presently she is accepting reality.

Lu Ann asks Corky if he remembers the fairytale of the king who turns everything he touches into gold, and then proceeds to compare this fable to Skip. The difference with Skip is that everything he touches "goes bad." Corky asks if Skip is crazy, and Lu Ann is very objective in her analysis of Skip, "he jest cain't seem to catch hold of anything, that's all--never seemed to get started." If Skip had attempted suicide ten years earlier, Lu Ann's first reaction would have been to question Skip's sanity. Yet Lu Ann has realized that Skip has problems very similar to her own. Whereas at one time Lu Ann tried to avoid planning her future in Bradleyville, it required a series of events for Lu Ann to accept the town's relation to her life. She now realizes this policy is valid for Skip also. Bradleyville never helped Skip to grasp reality; rather, he "jest sorter hung around year after year boozin it up and dreamin' up big plans." (181)

The decade since Lu Ann's high school years has given her time to explore her own thoughts and judgments, and through this process she has learned to become more accepting of others. Lu Ann realizes that she was not the only person Bradleyville influenced. Bradleyville was a major factor in Lu Ann's marriage to Dale, and when the marriage failed, Bradleyville was a controlling force for Lu Ann to return to the only city she know. Since Lu Ann had to accept the responsibilities of rearing a child, she

returned home, worked toward a career and developed an acceptance for Bradleyville. Bradleyville was the only reality Lu Ann knew, and in this sense the scene helped Lu Ann to grow as an individual, to explore her own feelings and responsibilities. Eventually Bradleyville helped in Lu Ann's acceptance of others that have not yet experienced a scenic acceptance.

Lu Ann and Corky have a misunderstanding of the importance of each other's careers which eventually leads into an intense argument. Corky mistakenly calls Lu Ann a "God-damn beauty operator," (191) and she is quick to clarify that her official title is a beauty technician. At this point in her life, Lu Ann has an actual career, and she is no longer dreaming of castles in Europe. Lu Ann is quite proud of her degree from the Sanford School of Beauty Culture, even though that may have never been in her original plans. Corky and Lu Ann's argument eventually develops into a dinner date. Once again the act ends with Lu Ann reciting a man's name, this time it just happens to be Corky's.

Act II portrays a much calmer, more self assured woman in the character of Lu Ann. This self growth represents Lu Ann's acceptance of Bradleyville and its effect on her life. When Lu Ann marries Corky her motivation is not to leave Bradleyville as it was in her previous marriage.

In Act III there is yet another ten year interval in Lu Ann's life. Presently she is caring for her invalid mother, alcoholic brother, and Charmaine. Skip informs Lu Ann that Charmaine went to San Angelo to see Dale, but she was not impressed with his physical appearance. Lu Ann agrees "what'd she expect me to find here in Bradleyville in 1953, the by-God King of England." (209) Physical characteristics were not a consideration in Lu Ann's decision to marry Dale, even though Lu Ann comments upon them now. Ironically Lu Ann comments that she did not have a large selection of possible dates in Bradleyville, yet she stood Billy Bob up for the Senior picnic to be with Dale. Realistically Billy Bob was the one person who might have eventually offered Lu Ann a lifestyle out of Bradleyville that was more than a trailer park and rattlesnakes.

Billy Bob asks Lu Ann about Corky's death, and if she has considered remarrying, and Lu Ann replies, "Oh, Lordy, no. Right after Corky was killed Mama had her stroke and ah jest sorter settled in to look after her." (216) Whereas at one time Lu Ann would have seriously considered marriage if she had been single, presently she has accepted the demands that her family has placed upon her, and she remains in Bradleyville.

In Act II Lu Ann was very vocal about her dislike for her boss, Maude, at the Beauty Shop, yet presently Lu Ann is very calm concerning her job. She tells Billy Bob that

she enjoys this job, and even justifies commuting to Big Spring every day. At one time Lu Ann's greatest desire was to leave Bradleyville, and presently she lives in the city and commutes elsewhere for her job. Even more ironic is that Lu Ann's career is to welcome people to the Bradleyville-Big Spring area.

Billy Bob observes that Bradleyville rarely changes, and Lu Ann defends the city and proceeds to list its major changes over the past twenty years. They agree that the changes do constitute progress, although twenty years earlier Lu Ann would never have justified a new parking lot as progress. Bradleyville has literally overcome Lu Ann in the sense that it now represents reality to her. Lu Ann is now defending this small West-Texas town to one of its former residents.

Billy Bob comments that "it's funny, Lu Ann, but I never figured you would stay here in Bradleyville." (219) Dwelling upon the events in her life, Lu Ann states:

Ah did leave once, got as far as Snyder. Ah, I don't know, Billy Bob, ah spoze ah never did think much further than this-here town-- never hankered to. (220)

Even though Lu Ann's primary motivation through high school was to leave Bradleyville, she never developed any specific plans. Bradleyville may have influenced her actions, yet Lu Ann never benefited from her actions. Twenty years

later Lu Ann has accepted this, and she tells Billy Bob that a future outside of Bradleyville actually ended when she left him at the Senior picnic:

Well, ah think maybe it was then that mah life jest sorta dug itself in. Kindly found its little hollow to stay in. . . . I just started a standin still. (220)

Through twenty years of self growth and actualization Lu Ann realizes that she allowed Bradleyville to influence her actions. The opportunity to leave the town appealed to Lu Ann while in high school, and she left with a man whose aspirations were not equivalent to her own. Yet once away she had no where else to call "home." Thus she returned to Bradleyville to remain, and now reminisces to Billy Bob that high school was the best time of her life. Presently Lu Ann has a specific goal, and that is the caring of her invalid mother. Billy Bob suggests a church home, and Lu Ann immediately rejects his idea and states "This is her home." (223)

After Billy Bob leaves, the play ends with Lu Ann once again discussing a man. Yet this time it is not to consider a marriage; rather, Lu Ann tells her mother:

You know, Mama, if ah'd have played mah cards right ah probably could have been Mrs. Billy Bob Wortman today. . . . But, you know, Mama, ah jest never could cotton to that boy's name. Billy Bob Wortman. Why it's jest plain silly-soundin'. (225)

It has been established that Bradleyville has been a controlling element within Lu Ann's intrapersonal communication. Throughout the play Lu Ann has had to progress from a hatred of the town to an eventual acceptance of its role upon her life. During her senior picnic Lu Ann left her boyfriend to be with Dale, whom she used as a method to escape from Bradleyville. Yet when forced to make a decision concerning her life, Lu Ann returns to her familiar surroundings. Lu Ann begins to realize that she must solve her own confusion concerning her life. As the years pass she begins to understand and accept how Bradleyville can affect actions, yet it is up to the individual to interpret those actions into something meaningful.

As Lu Ann nears 40 during Act III, she has almost become sentimental and philosophical over Bradleyville. Through a twenty year intrapersonal dialogue with herself, Lu Ann has learned to accept Bradleyville to a point that she even defends its image. Jack Kroll was very accurate in his description of Lu Ann; she is a "survivor and a waste."⁷ She has definitely survived her experiences, yet it is a waste that it required 20 years, two marriages, an alcoholic brother, and her invalid mother for Lu Ann to realize that she is indeed a survivor.

⁷Kroll, p. 95.

3. The Oldest Living Graduate

Introduction

The Oldest Living Graduate is the third play of the trilogy, and revolves around Colonel Kinkaid, the oldest living graduate of an old Southern Military Academy. In the other two plays, characters from low or middle class have been portrayed, but Graduate concerns itself with Bradleyville's upper class, the socially elite of small town America. Yet the upper class, members of the private country club, belong in the same category as everyone else; they too are afflicted by Bradleyville. Maureen Kinkaid, a member of Bradleyville's upper class, desperately wants to escape from the "windmills, mesquite, tumbleweeds, and the beautiful skyline of Bradleyville," (252) to Europe, the Caribbean, or Acapulco. Martha Ann Sickenger, married to one of the wealthiest men in Bradleyville, keeps herself occupied by attending the country club for her study club meetings to gossip over such items as "Mavis Purnell's sinful full-length mink coat from Meiman and Marcus." (235)

The Colonel's absentmindedness often provides the play's humor, yet he is also the most sympathetic character in the play. He has survived the terror, insanity, and filth of war only to return to Bradleyville, where he will eventually die. In his last hour the Colonel

realizes his upcoming death which is symbolic of the entire Bradleyville society--upper or working class.⁸ Regardless of individual goals, profession, or wealth, Bradleyville has afflicted its entire population; everyone is actively standing still, waiting for death.

Setting

The action of Graduate takes place in Floyd Kinkaid's den over a period of four days in the summer of 1962. Jones describes the ranch style home as having "a rich masculine decor." (232) The furnishings include leather chairs, footstools, a small desk, and Indian rugs. Numerous photographs, a gun rack, and a stuffed deer head hang on the walls. These photographs include the Colonel in his World War I uniform, Franklin in his World War II flying suit, and a picture taken at the national convention of the Knights of the White Magnolia in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Doors in the den lead to the living room, the patio, and the Colonel's bedroom.

Plot Summary

The play opens with the Colonel waiting for his son, Floyd, to return home from the bank, and Martha Ann Sickenger is visiting Maureen, Floyd's wife. Maureen tells

⁸Harold Clurman, "Theatre," Nation, October 9, 1976, p. 349.

Martha Ann that the Colonel and his "shell shock" bother her, yet that it does "break up the monotony of this damned little town." (235) After the Colonel complains on a variety of subjects, Maureen eventually asks their hired hand, Mike Tremaine, to take the Colonel for a drive. The Colonel wants to go to the lake to "look at mah town." (243)

The Colonel's town happens to be a tract of lake property that he owns that was once the Genet farm. Martha Ann explains to Maureen that Clarence, her husband, and Floyd are going to develop the lake front property into a resort area and call it "Mumford County Estates." Maureen responds:

My God! House and boat docks on the Colonel's Genet farm. I can't believe it. That old man treats that property like it was sacred. Goes out there all the time. (245)

Floyd and Clarence enter, and after a brief discussion of the Founder's Day Barbecue, the Sickengers leave. Maureen confronts Floyd about the Colonel's Genet farm, and he admits that he has not asked the Colonel for the land yet.

Maureen desperately wants to escape from Bradleyville during the summer and she suggests a vacation. Floyd resists and diverts attention by showing Maureen a letter he received from the Mirabeau B. Lamar Military Academy in

Galveston. The school is moving from its original campus to a new location. Colonel Kinkaid is the oldest living graduate of the academy, and the school wants the Colonel to be the guest of honor in a ceremony celebrating their new campus. The academy has agreed to have the ceremony in Bradleyville due to the Colonel's difficulty in traveling.

Graduates of the academy include numerous politicians, military officials, and affluent business executives. The Colonel also happens to be "the only living member of the school's first graduating class." (254) Most of his classmates were killed during the First World War. Floyd has already planned a banquet, cocktail parties and is considering booking the country club for the actual ceremony. When Maureen asks whether the Colonel will disagree with the entire idea, Floyd responds "He's not goin' to say no." (256) Floyd admits that this celebration coincides with his plans to develop the lake front property, and that he may be able to gain some favorable publicity with the dignitaries during the ceremony.

Scene two occurs an hour later as the Colonel returns with Mike Tremaine. The Colonel is reminiscing about the loss of his son, Franklin, who was killed while flying his B-17 during a training flight for World War II. Mike asks the Colonel about the lake property, and the Colonel explains that a religious association once formed a

farming community on the land. One of the families in this group was named Genet. There were two daughters, and the Colonel and his friend, Charlie Parsons, started dating the sisters. The Colonel tells Mike "Jesus, ah was crazy about that girl." (264) Yet the land was not suitable for farming, so eventually everyone moved away from the area. The Colonel's father bought the land and the creek was damned to create Lake Bradleyville. The Colonel states:

So where the farms was is all under water now. But them foundations up there on that little rise, that's where ah was a young feller in love once. That's why ah don't let anybody fool with that property. Ah like to keep it for rememberin'. That's important to an old feller like me, having places that stay the same for rememberin' on. (265)

Floyd eventually explains to the Colonel about his interest in the lake property, and asks the Colonel for the Genet farm. The Colonel absolutely refuses, and finally Maureen has to offer to assist him into his bedroom.

In Act II Major Ketchum from the academy visits the Kinkaid's to discuss the plans for the celebration. As the Major attempts to discuss the schedule, the Colonel interrupts and embarrasses the Major with comments and songs from his military years. The Colonel asks who he has outlived, and a list is read of his former classmates.

As this reading progresses the Colonel realizes all of his classmates were killed in action, or died from results of the war. This information upsets the Colonel, and he refuses to be involved in the ceremony. The Major will not allow the ceremony to be in Bradleyville, but reschedules it back to Galveston. Floyd then accuses the Colonel "Well, you did it, didn't you? You messed up the whole damn thing for me." (299) This leads into an argument, until Floyd loses his patience, repeating a phrase used by his father:

From now on ah'm tellin' you what's by God what. That, Colonel, that is an order and that is a fact! (300)

Having lost his patience, Floyd leaves, and Maureen comes in and offers the Colonel a drink. Maureen justifies the Colonel's attitude about the ceremony, but she asks him to give the land to Floyd. Maureen attempts to explain to the Colonel that Floyd needs the land to begin planning the development project just to keep himself busy:

My God, Colonel, look at him look at us rattlin' around in this big old house with no purpose in life at all. The Kinkaid interests run themselves. . . . He needs the deals he's gonna make to keep from goin' nuts . . . and it's up to you to give it to him. (304)

While Floyd is bringing the Colonel to his lodge meeting, the Sickengers are waiting with Maureen for Floyd to return. Clarence is meeting with the bank officials the next day and wants a definite commitment from Floyd concerning the Genet farm property. Floyd stalls:

Now, Clarence, like ah was tellin' you I'm pretty sure that Dad's gonna come across, but I can't exactly say when now, that the best ah can do. (316)

Clarence disagrees, and asks Floyd why he's not telling everyone the truth. Clarence tells Maureen that Floyd does not need the Colonel to give him the land; all that is necessary is for Floyd to obtain legal control of the land due to the Colonel's instability. Floyd knows of this policy, and when Clarence asks Floyd when he did that, Floyd responds "Last week." (317)

Maureen cannot understand Floyd's actions and he tries to justify himself: "I wanted Dad to give me something, just give me something." (319) The scene ends when Ramsey Eyes calls to tell Floyd that the Colonel has had a stroke at the lodge meeting.

The last scene occurs later that evening, and Claudine Hampton, a nurse, is with the Colonel at the Kinkaid home. Mike Tremaine comes to visit the Colonel, and Claudine tells him "It ain't good, Mike. It ain't

good at all. Poor old feller." (325) The Colonel awakens and is quite scared:

Ah cain't help it Mike, ah'm afraid the death wagon comin', Mike. It's comin' for me. The bells of hell, the bells of hell, ah kin hear 'em ringin'. (328)

Floyd and Maureen come in to check on the Colonel, and the Colonel is reminiscing over his life, and tells Floyd "You can have that land out there." (329). Floyd refuses, and the Colonel insists, stating that the memories he associated with the land have faded. The play ends with the Colonel telling Mike:

I'm the oldest livin' graduate of the Mirabeau B. Lamar Military Academy. Ain't that a helluva note. Oldest livin' graduate. Betcha didn't know that . . . did ya? (330)

Scenic Control in The Oldest Living Graduate

This study will focus upon the scenic element of Bradleyville as a controlling force in the interpersonal communication between Colonel Kinkaid and his son, Floyd. In this play Bradleyville represents a tangible item, a tract of land that has been in the Kinkaid family, controlled by the Colonel. The play explores the relationship between the Colonel and Floyd, and how the Bradleyville property, the Genet farm, influences their relationship.

During the first act Floyd was supposed to take the Colonel for a drive, but when Maureen cannot tolerate the Colonel's complaints any longer she asks Mike Tremaine to take the Colonel to visit "his land." Maureen describes to Martha Ann how the Colonel "won't even let Floyd run any cattle" (244) on his land. To the Colonel, this specific tract of land symbolizes his past dreams--his youth, and falling in love with a special girl. The Genet farm represents a sign of the "good times." To Floyd, the land represents the future, progress, and an extreme profit. Once Floyd can obtain the Genet farm, the development project will establish his success and ability as an entrepreneur to the community and his father. The land's value is extremely different between Floyd and the Colonel. This difference of opinion over the value of the Genet farm will affect the relationship between these two men.

When Maureen confronts Floyd over the lake development project, Floyd admits he has not asked the Colonel for the property. Maureen advises him not to inform the Colonel that the Sickengers are involved with the project since the Colonel "rates them somewhere below Herbert Hoover and the Kaiser." Floyd answers "Ah thought that spot was reserved for me." (250) Floyd realizes that his actions do not always please his father, and that the Colonel does not have much respect for Floyd. The relationship between the two men has been tense in the

past, yet the Genet farm issue will instigate a direct confrontation between the two.

Maureen wants a vacation outside Bradleyville during the summer, and tells Floyd "I wish I could get out of this town for a while." (251) Floyd refuses since they will be busy planning the celebration honoring the Colonel as the oldest living graduate of the Mirabeau B. Lamar Military Academy. Maureen comments it is rather sad that the Colonel is the only surviving graduate of his 1905 class. Floyd responds "What's sad about it? This is goin' to mean a helluva lot of publicity for Bradleyville." (254) Floyd is not concerned that this celebration may be upsetting to the Colonel; rather, his only interest in this event is for himself. Floyd is already plotting the advantages of the ceremony for his lake development project, and he is not concerned with the ceremony's significance to his father.

Floyd elaborates on his tentative plans for the ceremony to Maureen, and she asks if the Colonel disagrees with this celebration. "He's not going to say no," (256) Floyd asserts. The Colonel's emotions are an obstacle that can be overcome. When Maureen comments what a pleasant coincidence that this celebration is scheduled to coincide with the lake development project, Floyd raises his glass and states "Damn right. . . . Ah do the best ah can." (257)

When the Colonel returns from his drive, he orders Mike Tremaine to postpone working on the fence and to remain in the house with him. The Colonel reminisces about fishing with Mike's father, Carter, and states:

Damn death, damn it straight to hell.
Takin' things away from a feller, don't
give a god-damned thing, jest takes away.
Took away Carter, took away Franklin. (261)

Franklin was the Colonel's other son who was killed during a training flight for World War II, and the Colonel states "Jesus, what a waste." (261) The Colonel has not yet accepted Franklin's death.

Mike asks the Colonel why the Genet farm is so important to him. The Colonel explains that the land possesses many memories for him. Since the Colonel often escapes reality into a world of his past memories, the land is a tangible reminder of his past. There is very little in Bradleyville that the Colonel values more than this land. The Colonel has seen many of his close friends, his wife, and a son die. Thus there is very little of his past life that he can actually interact with. He tells Mike:

Ah like to keep it for rememberin'. That's
important to an old feller like me, havin'
places that stay the same for rememberin' on.
(265)

Even though Bradleyville is a small town with limited progress, life is not static. The land represents the

Colonel's method of postponing change in his life. The Colonel states that Floyd's drilling of oil wells, and raising stock on his other land was acceptable, "but, by God, ah made 'em let the Genet farm alone." (266)

Floyd returns and is quite upset to see Mike Tremaine relaxing with the Colonel instead of working on the fence. Even though his father is lonely and does not have the opportunity for much interaction, Floyd is upset that the Colonel is reminiscing with Mike. The Colonel defends Mike's actions, and Floyd refutes "Now, Dad, ah don't want you keepin' Mike from his chores." (267)

The Colonel begins to reminisce over a fishing incident from many years past when he was slightly injured. The Colonel begins to remember Franklin's concern:

Colonel:

Franklin cared, he cried and cried 'cause his daddy was hurt.

Floyd:

Jesus, that was years ago. . . . Carter and Franklin are dead now, so forgit about it.

Colonel:

My boy's gone, my good boy. (269)

Floyd cannot tolerate the Colonel's favoritism, and his jealousy emerges "Let's just forget about Franklin." (270)

In an attempt to snap the Colonel back into reality Floyd yells "Dammit, Dad, listen to me!" The Colonel immediately becomes defensive "Where do you get off yellin' at your father! That ain't no way for a boy to

do." (270) The relationship of these two men is very tense, and their interaction is a constant conflict. The Colonel believes that Floyd does not treat him respectfully, and Floyd is very jealous of the Colonel's fondness for Franklin.

After the Colonel digresses on a variety of subjects, he tells Floyd to finish his question:

Well, go ahead. Ah damn sure ain't goin' no place. Bumble-dickin' wheelchair. Cain't even go fishin. (271)

The Colonel may be able to escape into the world of his past and revive memories over deceased friends and family members, yet he realizes that he is trapped in Bradleyville confined to a wheelchair. Thus he resolves to listen to Floyd's questions.

Floyd does not attempt to lead into the conversation, but directly tells the Colonel "I'm gonna lay it right on the line, Dad. We wanna do somethin' with the Genet farm property." (272) This is one point where both men are discussing a matter very realistic to each of them. Floyd's obtaining the land represents the present. The Colonel cannot escape into his past memories, and Floyd cannot dream of his future success. The Genet farm is their present contact and conflict. The Colonel immediately rejects such an idea:

Colonel:

The hell you say! You cain't touch that land. It's mine.

Floyd:

Now don't get all excited, Dad. Just hear me out.

Colonel:

Don't wanna hear you out. Ah told you when you took over my half of the Kinkaid properties that you could do anythin' you damned well wanted to with 'em, but you was to keep your hands off the Genet farm ain't that right? (272-273)

The mere mention of the Genet farm and the Colonel becomes defensive, and this leads the men into a direct confrontation. Floyd asks the Colonel to listen to the entire plan, yet the Colonel refuses. Floyd then admits that the Colonel is correct in his understanding of the original agreement, and upon that admission the matter is settled for the Colonel. Floyd explains that the land is very valuable, yet the Colonel states that the only value to the land is his. Floyd asks the Colonel how the land is valuable to him, and the Colonel argues:

Colonel:

Ah got may reasons for wantin' that property and that by God is enough.

Floyd:

Well, it ain't enough for me.

Colonel:

It damned well better be. (273)

Neither of these men is willing to listen to the other. Instead of discussing a possible compromise they would rather argue. Floyd finally explains the land's

monetary value, and states "We could make a fortune." Yet that justification is unsatisfactory to the Colonel: "You got enough money now." (274) The Colonel finally rejects all of Floyd's justifications "You cain't have the Genet farm." (275) This tract of Bradleyville land has instigated an argument between the Colonel and Floyd which inexorably escalates the preexisting conflict.

To the Colonel the matter is settled "You cain't have the land, that is an order and that is a fact." Floyd, too, is tiring of the argument, and refers to the Colonel "Like tryin' to talk to a damned brick wall." (277) What could have been a simple discussion of property between the two men developed into a tense interaction where the Colonel wheels himself to his room refusing Maureen's assistance "Damnit, leave me alone!" (278)

Act II occurs four days after the Genet farm confrontation between Floyd and the Colonel. Major Ketchum and Cadet Whopper Turnbull arrive in Bradleyville to discuss the ceremony, and the Colonel asks who the other honored graduates are. Upon the discovery that all of his classmates were killed as a result of the war, the Colonel refuses to be involved with the ceremony. This leads to another confrontation between Floyd and the Colonel:

Floyd:
Now listen, Dad, you're not backin' outta this. We're having' this ceremony and you're going to be there or I'll by God know the

reason why.

Colonel:

The reason why? The reason why is 'cause
ah flat-assed don't want to and what's more
ah ain't goin' to.

Floyd:

You damn sure are. (298)

Observing this turn of events, Major Ketchum is no longer interested in scheduling the ceremony in Bradleyville and announces that the celebration will be held in Galveston as originally planned. In a final attempt to keep the ceremony in Bradleyville, Floyd promises "He's going to be with us, Major, ah guarantee it." Once again Floyd's motivation is to benefit himself, and any objection from the Colonel can be overcome. Rather than being concerned for his father's best interests, Floyd orders his father to attend this ceremony. When the Colonel states he is not going to attend, Floyd asserts "You damn sure are!" (298)

This is yet another incident concerning Bradleyville that develops into a direct confrontation between the Colonel and Floyd. First Floyd wants the Colonel's land, then he demands the Colonel's participation in a ceremony that Floyd's sole interest in is publicity for his development project:

Floyd:

Well, you did it, didn't you? You messed up
the whole damn thing for me.

Colonel:

What the hell did it have to do with you? It's none of your damned business if ah don't want to go to that ceremony.

Floyd:

Oh yes, it is, that's exactly what it is-- business. (299)

Once again the interaction between the two men develops into an argument that cannot be solved; instead it only continues.

Floyd tells the Colonel the ceremony was "important to me. Important to the lake project deal." (300) Floyd is only concerned for his own welfare, and not that of the Colonel. The Colonel is confused by Floyd's resistance to accept his decision:

Colonel:

But that land's mine, ah told you, you couldn't have it.

Floyd:

Quit tellin' me what ah can an can't have.

. . . Now, by God, from now on, what ah say goes. . . . From now on ah'm tellin' you what's by God what. That, Colonel, that is an order and that is a fact!

Colonel:

Mind your tongue, boy, you just mind your tongue. Franklin never talked that way to me. (300)

The mere mention of the land explodes into releasing many other frustrations between the two men, and it becomes clear how they actually regard one another. Floyd is no longer willing to accommodate his father, and clarifies his position. Shocked over Floyd's accusations, the

Colonel's only protection is to compare Floyd to Franklin. Yet this instigates Floyd's anger further, until he tells his father that he was relieved that Franklin's plane crashed. Floyd cannot tolerate the Colonel's "perfect" image of Franklin. Franklin mocked and humiliated Floyd when they were in high school, and Floyd has never forgiven Franklin:

To hell with Franklin. I'm sick of hearin' about him. You've stuck him down my throat since we were boys. . . . You know what Franklin was, . . . my first day in high school he sicked some of his buddies on me and they took my pants off in front of the whole school. I was laying' there in the dirt, too goddamned ashamed to move, and he was laffin', laffin' louder than all the rest. I hated his guts. (300)

Floyd has been carrying this hatred for Franklin as long as the Colonel has been remembering him as the "good" brother, the "perfect" son. It is not until the Genet farm conflict that Floyd's actual feelings concerning Franklin emerge. The Genet farm highlights two very different opinions of Franklin.

This statement shocks the Colonel, and he attempts to justify his actions "Ah always tried to be fair to you Floyd." (301) Floyd seizes upon this statement to manipulate his father to his advantage. In his defense, the Colonel explains that the ceremony relates to his life and not Floyd's. Floyd cannot understand the Colonel's refusal to be honored, and the Colonel asserts:

Honor? What honor? What the hell kind of honor is there in a world where a boy can dishonor his dead brother and try to shame his father. (301)

At this point the conflict between the Colonel and Floyd concerns the Genet farm and their entire relationship. Floyd is trying to tarnish Franklin's image to the Colonel which in turn disturbs the Colonel's memories of "a simpler past--the 'good times.'" The Genet farm symbolizes the pleasant memories of Bradleyville to the Colonel. Yet it is these memories (especially those of Franklin) that Floyd wishes to erase. By attempting to tarnish Franklin's image, Floyd is hoping to replace him as the "good brother" or the "perfect son."

In an attempt to justify Floyd's actions to the Colonel, Maureen explains that Floyd needs the land to keep himself occupied. Floyd is a wealthy man, yet his investments manage themselves, leaving Floyd without any responsibilities. Confused, the Colonel responds that he gave everything away, and yet everybody still wants more. Maureen replies "Not ever'body, Colonel." (301) Maureen realizes that the Genet farm is an issue that will affect the future relationship between the two men. This matter is no longer limited to a simple transaction of a legal deed. The Colonel avoids Maureen's explanation, and states that he wants to be taken to his lodge meeting "Ah wanna shuffle some dominoes." (305)

As Floyd is bringing the Colonel to his meeting, the Sickengers visit Maureen, and Clarence informs her that Floyd legally has the right to transfer the ownership of the property into his own name. Later, Floyd admits to having done that last week. Maureen accuses Floyd "this time you've pushed it too damn far." (318) Floyd attempts to justify his actions; he wanted his father to "just give me something." (319) Actually Floyd was trying to manipulate his father into giving him an item he already possessed. In this process Floyd instigated numerous arguments that upset the Colonel, and in turn the Colonel lost all respect for Floyd.

Floyd is interested in proving his worth to his father, he wants to see what he can accomplish with the property. Floyd views this project as a means to re-establish his credibility to his father. If the Mumford County Estates project is successful, there will be numerous benefits for the town. Because of new growth and higher incomes, Bradleyville will no longer be a place that the "highway has bypassed and now the world is trying to." (2) Since Floyd is one of the founders of the project, he views the development as a method to establish himself as the "good son" or the "successful son" to the Colonel. Yet, he then states "Ever'body in the whole damn state will be impressed, you'll see." Actually Floyd is

concerned with impressing others, his father is just one of the many.

Maureen asks why Floyd didn't simply just explain the entire situation to the Colonel, and Floyd answers that he tried "Then we got into a big fight as usual and the whole blasted thing went up in smoke." (320) Floyd has just explained the entire relationship between him and the Colonel, their interaction eventually develops into an argument.

In yet another attempt to justify his actions, Floyd clarifies that he's not literally taking the land away from the Colonel:

Just 'cause ah've taken it don't mean it's gone.
Ah mean, what the hell, ah'm not going' to put it
in my pocket and carry it off someplace. (320)

To Floyd the actual land will still be accountable, and that should be enough to satisfy the Colonel's tendency to reminisce over the land.

In the last scene of the play, the Colonel is resting at home after his stroke. The Colonel realizes that he is approaching death "Ah know ah am. Ah can feel it. Oh, Jesus, but it's scary." (328) Floyd attempts to get the Colonel to calm himself and rest. The Colonel decides to finally end the argument over the Genet farm:

Colonel:

You can have the land out there, Floyd.

Floyd:

No, Dad. Please, let's never talk about that anymore.
That land's yours. (329)

Unfortunately the one time that Floyd and the Colonel are not arguing is when they both realize there is not the time to argue any longer. Ironically their final interaction revolves around the land, each of them have just reversed their perspective. The Colonel explains to Floyd:

There ain't nuthin left out there for me nowadays.
The things ah seen and remember in this country is
all gone now. (329)

The Colonel finally realizes that he cannot exist in his memories any longer. He is willing to forego his land, and he even acknowledges his status as "the oldest livin' graduate of the Mirabeau B. Lamar Academy. Ain't that a helluva note." (330)

In this play the controlling element of Bradleyville was represented by the actual land itself. This in turn affected the decisions of both the Colonel and Floyd, and their interaction often revolved around these decisions. Floyd was going to develop the lake property regardless of the Colonel's feelings. In turn the Colonel felt that Floyd should respect his decisions regardless of whether he agreed or not. In this process they revived old antagonisms that time had not forgotten. The Genet farm

conflict eventually led to an inevitable climax, that unfortunately would be the last argument that Floyd and the Colonel would undertake.

CHAPTER IV

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

This thesis explores the relationship between drama and human communication. The methodology chosen for this study was Kenneth Burke's Pentad format. This method was chosen because the Pentad allows A Texas Trilogy to be examined for its own merit, and it provides a means to illumine communication concepts in the plays. In this manner the Pentad was the most satisfactory method suited to a study of theatre and communication. The focus of the analysis is limited to the Pentadic strain, scene, and the effects Bradleyville has on the interaction within the plays. This thesis illustrates the relationship between communication and a specific dramatic setting, and how this relationship may further the understanding of human motivation in general. Throughout the study, Bradleyville is examined with regard to three major communication concepts: group communication in The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia, intrapersonal communication in Lu Ann Hampton Laverdy Oberlander, and interpersonal communication in The Oldest Living Graduate.

The first chapter introduces Kenneth Burke and his writings. Burke's interest in understanding the bases of human conduct and motivation led him to the development of the Pentad. As pointed out the Pentad provides the reader with new opportunities for exploring the relationship between drama and communication, and also provides the investigator with an opportunity to gain new insights into specific pieces of literature. In addition to the methodology the rationale of the study centers on the efficacy of the Pentad as a vehicle for analysis. By applying the Pentad as a method for literary analysis, literature is preserved for its own value and yet still can be employed as a means to illustrate the complexities of human relations.

The first chapter continues with a discussion of the trilogy's value to this study. Although the setting of the plays is limited to Bradleyville, Texas, the plays explore many events which illustrate human relations that are not limited to a specific locale. The communication concepts illustrated in A Texas Trilogy highlight the relationship between drama and human communication, and establish the validity of such a study.

Preston Jones and a history of the trilogy are discussed in the following chapter. Jones needed new plays for a presentation of new regional American drama. His dissatisfaction with the plays he received inspired him

to write the trilogy. The chapter continues with an explanation of personal events which inspired Jones for each play, and outlines the trilogy's progress from Dallas Theatre Center's Down Center Stage to a Broadway debut at the Broadhurst Theatre.

The third chapter consists of the analysis of Bradleyville upon the communication concepts for the study. It begins with The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia, and suggests that Bradleyville has a direct controlling force in motivating the agents to attend the meetings, and then influences their acts once there. When the agents are at the weekly meetings, their interaction revolves around individual perspectives of the effects Bradleyville has upon their lives. Bradleyville is a small town with limited opportunities for social and civic activities. The brothers look forward to their weekly meetings to pursue interests as varied as drinking, dominoes, and reminiscing. This in turn influences the communication between the brothers.

Bradleyville affects the agents' actions, but also controls the group communication. The agents' communication varies between social and racial policies, and the interaction between the agents must represent both viewpoints. The play portrays what may happen when different factions within a group lead to conflict without a viable

solution, and the effect this has upon the group communication.

An analysis of group communication employing drama as its vehicle portrays the opportunities available in understanding the effects different viewpoints will have upon the group as a whole. A group meets for a distinct purpose, yet individual members have their own needs and desires. These predispositions are incorporated into the group. Thus, as the group grows, a greater variety of purposes are introduced into the group. Eventually these individual motivations will have an effect upon the group's organization and communication. Literature offers the opportunity for one to study group communication. By studying the literature one is seeing the communication act reflected through the words and perceptions of the author. Observing and learning about communication situations which may be familiar, or wholly new, provides a unique learning opportunity for the literature participant. When literature becomes drama and is heard, or when it is heard silently by reading from the page, it enables the participant to begin to develop an understanding that some group members may perceive their own experiences as more important than the general function of the organization. By recognizing the effect of the reflected motivation, desires, needs, and predispositions, of the individuals of the group in the literature, the reader or

listener can create perceptions of his/her own which are analogies to his/her own situations and time.

The particular case in point concerned the agents who allowed Bradleyville to control their actions for a variety of reasons ranging from alcohol to White Supremacy. The analysis proved that the agents were not bonded together under a single theme. Rather, their individual points of view would affect their interaction toward each other. It was inevitable that the fraternity would fold, and that the agents would return to their individual lives in Bradleyville, the significant controlling element in the analysis.

The chapter continues with an analysis of Bradleyville's effect upon Lu Ann's intrapersonal communication in Lu Ann Hampton Oberlander. Throughout the play Lu Ann progresses from a hatred of the town an eventual acceptance of its role upon her life. During the twenty year time span of the play, Bradleyville controls Lu Ann's actions. Involved in an intrapersonal dialogue with herself during high school, Lu Ann voices her desires to leave Bradleyville, and rehearses her actual lines for her escape. When the opportunity arises for Lu Ann to leave she begins to plot her escape. Yet once Lu Ann has succeeded in leaving the city, Bradleyville still controls her actions. As a single woman with the responsibility of a young daughter and no career, Lu Ann is forced to return to her hometown.

During the next twenty years Lu Ann continues her intrapersonal dialogue, and begins to develop an acceptance of Bradleyville in relation to her life. When she is directly confronted with the idea of leaving Bradleyville again by an old high school boyfriend Lu Ann defends the city, and discusses her plans to remain. Lu Ann has learned to accept Bradleyville to the point that she upholds its image to a prior Bradleyville resident. As the years have passed Lu Ann has realized that Bradleyville can affect her actions, yet it is her responsibility to interpret the actions into something meaningful.

In this instance studying Lu Ann's intrapersonal communication portrays her process of acceptance both for herself and her environment. This analysis highlights the validity of literature to explore intrapersonal communication. By studying the process of an intrapersonal dialogue in a literary figure the investigator may gain insights into a process everyone participates in. The process of intrapersonal communication is one that is studied and artistically reflected by the author. Time is taken so that the figure within the literature should reflect most accurately the details, motivations, and peculiarities inherent in the existing, concrete, world which involves and surround the literature's creator. The author's characters are drawn from what is observed in life. These reflections of the ways in which people

communicate with themselves, the solutions to problems, or to the conflicts produced between the physical realities of life and the spiritual ideals of the consciousness, can help the literature participant find patterns within his/her own psyche. The value of literature as a tool in the study of communication is, therefore, clearly reflected in the knowledge and perception gained by the listener or reader.

By recognizing Lu Ann's process of self growth and actualization in the different stages of her life, the reader may be able to relate this process to personal experience. Rather than remaining static Lu Ann is willing to adapt her life to her surroundings. All of human existence is a process of adaptation which uses tools, such as literature, to perceive new avenues of development and growth. By witnessing this self growth in Lu Ann the investigator may understand how intrapersonal communication may be illustrated through drama.

The third chapter concludes with the analysis of interpersonal communication in The Oldest Living Graduate. In this play Bradleyville represents a tangible item, the tract of land the Colonel refers to as the Genet farm. Floyd needs the land to begin the lake development project, yet the Colonel has personal control of the land. The Genet farm represents two opposing views between the Colonel and Floyd. The Colonel values the land for

its past memories, old customs and traditions. The farm allows the Colonel to escape reality into a world of his pleasant experiences. Floyd values the land for its future merit, its monetary worth. Underlying these concerns, Floyd is hoping that the successful completion of the project will establish his personal responsibility to his father and the community.

Because of these two opposing views to the Genet farm, Floyd's relationship with his father is often strained. The difference of opinion over the land often instigates past memories to emerge that add to the conflict. Throughout the play the men must come to terms with other issues including the Genet farm. Eventually the Colonel's failing health influences him to offer Floyd the land, yet Floyd refuses his offer. Unfortunately it requires the Colonel's illness before the two men can interact peacefully toward each other.

By employing The Oldest Living Graduate to recognize the interpersonal communication between Floyd and the Colonel, the analysis highlights how past events, past memories, and deceased relatives may influence people's interaction toward each other. Bradleyville affected the interaction between Floyd and the Colonel in numerous forms. Each man had his own opinion regarding the Genet farm, yet this land instigated harsh statements concerning their past and present relationship. Before an

agreement is established the Colonel becomes ill. The Oldest Living Graduate portrays a simple tract of land that revives numerous memories that affect the interpersonal communication between Floyd and the Colonel.

Through the study of this piece of literature one can discover some basic principles of human communication. The aesthetic quality of the literature as drama highlights the identification process. This enables the participant to more easily form analogies between the emotional clashes and calms in the piece, and his/her own interactions with those living in his/her own sphere of contact. Further, the interaction process is the most easily observed and most accurately reflected by the author. The accuracy of the author's reflection serves to increase its accessibility, thus rendering it more potent in its impact on the participant.

In conclusion, a Pentadic analysis allows the investigator a fuller appreciation of A Texas Trilogy, and shows the significance of Bradleyville upon the actions of its residents. Through a Pentadic analysis A Texas Trilogy may provide information into the relationship between communication and drama, and provide a better understanding of the communication concepts with the plays themselves. All of life is a process of communication and adaptation. All of literature, indeed, any aesthetic endeavor, strives to explain how humans interact with one another, with

themselves, with larger groups, and with the world itself. Any study of literature, particularly in its form as drama, will provide insights into one's own patterns of communication and perception. A formal method for structuring a study of literature, such as Burke's Pentad, is most helpful in analyzing a work, particularly one of such complexity as A Texas Trilogy. Literature is a living thing which reflects the living circumstances of its conception and as such, is vital to the study of the communication process inherent in all human life.

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VITA

David J. Mazzoli, the son of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Mazzoli, was born in Albany, New York, on August 2, 1959. He was graduated from Antioch High School in June 1977, and the following September entered Austin Peay State University. In September 1979 he transferred to The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Speech and Theatre in August 1981.

After working for Opryland, USA, Live Entertainment division, for two years, he entered the Graduate School of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in 1983. He accepted an assistantship in the scene shop of the Clarence Brown Theatre and worked there until May 1984. He was then awarded a graduate teaching assistantship for the 1984-85 year. He received the Master of Arts degree with a major in Speech and Theatre in August 1985.