

and authorial judgment: "Carefully crafted in original patterns, language [as Joyce uses it] enacts a meaning and presents what it means in a visual form. With the rules and order of syntax used and misused as its structure, language is an expressive as well as appropriate form" (p. 23). In the final chapter, he insists that "The vision and the form of Joyce's art are one: his artistic choices suggest moral ones [earlier, p. 31, Gottfried insists that they also suggest a political stance], and his moral perspective . . . informs his aesthetic view" (p. 169). This important point, however, is argued in the context of a defense of Joyce against D. H. Lawrence and F. R. Leavis, and these dunderheaded objections are not worthy of Gottfried's intelligence and discrimination. If Gottfried is right, and I believe he is, then the "moral perspective" which "informs" Joyce's aesthetic ought to be demonstrable and explicable in terms of the plot and themes of *Ulysses*, and thus the serious objections to Joyce raised by, among others, Wayne C. Booth, could be answered with conviction and authority. To say that I eagerly await what Gottfried has to say to such as Professor Booth is to underscore my admiration for this study, despite the reservations expressed.

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DABNEY STUART

Nabokov: The Dimensions of Parody
Baton Rouge: Louisiana State
University Press, 1978. Pp. 191.

Vladimir Nabokov engages the reader in a game in which the rules he has created are so compelling that, when the reader comes to write his or her own responses to the work, the player wants to continue in the spirit of the game. As Joyce observed, an original artist creates his own readers. Dabney Stuart, in his *Nabokov: The Dimensions of Parody*, proves himself a fitting opponent because he understands Nabokov's moral concerns, that the game incorporates ideas about perception and value. Play is delightful in itself and a rehearsal as well.

Stuart takes on some Nabokov works which are less frequently addressed: *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Laughter in the Dark*, *Despair*, *Pnin*, and *Speak Memory*. By using the conventions of genre—the novel as film, as biography, as play, as quest, as joke, as game—Stuart comes to recognize Nabokov's epistemological concerns: ". . . what is parodied turns out to be not so much a literary form used by other writers as more basic assumptions about perception and its relationship to so-called factual reality, that term which Nabokov has frequently said should be surrounded by quotation marks" (p. 133).

To what ends does Nabokov parody our expectations of what is "out there" in the novel and the world? I think Stuart is primarily concerned with diagramming process by means of description, close reading, analysis of detail, rather than attacking this question, but it is clear that he respects more than Nabokov's skill, that he admires his seriousness. Parody is a distancing device. When a political writer such as Brecht deploys it, the reasoning is obvious: he wants his audience not purged, but resolved to action. Nabokov's use of a tactic of disruption may be, despite different goals, more similar than he would have admitted. He seeks through his fiction to thwart received opinion and assert the liberty of individual expression.

Stuart's book stays, unlike the speculation above, within the confines of Nabokov's field, sensibly and sensitively. Speaking of his chapter on *Pnin* in the Preface, he writes: "I intend in the rest of that chapter to mimic more than comment, and certain devices (the address to the reader, and its counterpoint, for example) in the final chapter [on *Speak Memory*] signal a conscious veering toward parody itself, seen as subject matter earlier, but used, or almost used, as a mode of composition in the end. My aim, inadequately adumbrated here, is to have the book assumed by its subject, and the reader, a companion in these divagations, returned there, too." This homage to the Master, in which criticism emulates the strategies of the work under review, is advantageous to the reader in putting him or her on more familiar terms with the novels than their slippery, erudite author would sometimes allow—unless, of course, "Dabney Stuart" is an anagram I haven't succeeded in decoding.

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