

Method and Judgment in the Theodore Dreiser Edition

From *Sister Carrie* to *The Titan*

Jude Davies

The history of editing has moved according to its own logic, marked, on the positive side, both with methodological advances and with compelling demonstrations of the importance of informed judgment. The two elements, method and judgment, tend to appear on the intellectual stage as opponents, and are sometimes identified, respectively, with the ideas that the past is best recovered by either objective or subjective means. The tension in this opposition has generated its share of pointless negativity, but like all dynamic relationships the struggle has its creative potential.

—Richard Bucci¹

The Theodore Dreiser Edition is a project to publish the work of Theodore Dreiser (1871–1945), a leading and controversial literary figure of the early twentieth century.² Since its inception in 1981 it has produced editions of novels, travel writing, and autobiography, of private letters and diaries, and volumes of political writings and interviews. Over that time the Dreiser Edition's policies have evolved in ways that overtly reflect how textual editing has engaged with notions of the social text. Its first publication, an edition of Dreiser's first novel, *Sister Carrie*, that explicitly affiliated itself with the Greg-Bowers-Tanselle tradition, became a focal point of resistance to eclectic editing, while its most recent editions downplay eclecticism and announce themselves as presenting versions of texts in a continuum of composition. Instructive as this may be as an example of the unfolding of a logic in the history of editing, this essay takes the Dreiser Edition as exemplifying that in author editions, other dynamics are also at work. The editorial context is never independent from the fluctuating status and significance attributed to authors, while different editorial practices may be required by changes in authors' practices of composition and revision as their relationships with publishers and publics

develop over their career, and by differing archival resources. Modal differences between outputs also require different editorial approaches. Editorial aims may be conditioned by contextual changes in literary theory, criticism, and pedagogy. The trajectory of the Dreiser Edition may indicate general trends in scholarly editing, then, but this essay aims to complicate such linear narratives by reference to these other dynamics and contexts. The main focus is on reviewing the practices and rationale of the 1981 edition of *Sister Carrie*, its highly polarized critical reception, the notions of authorship that it promoted, and the kinds of reading that it fostered or made possible. The essay then moves on to consider the subsequent development of the Edition, focusing especially on its latest volume, Dreiser's fourth novel, *The Titan*, which is forthcoming in 2016.

The 1981 *Sister Carrie* (known as the "Pennsylvania" text largely to reflect the major archival repository of Dreiser's papers at the University of Pennsylvania Library, which has provided the basis of most subsequent Dreiser Edition volumes) elicited much praise and much criticism upon publication. A central but not sole cause of this controversy, as will be seen, was the decision by textual editor James L. W. West III to use as copy-text the holograph manuscript of the novel completed by Dreiser in March 1900, before it entered the processes of being typed, revised, and further edited. Various people, notably Dreiser's wife, Sarah White Dreiser, and his friend, the minor writer Arthur Henry, contributed to these revisions. As well as "correcting" Dreiser's distinctive writing style and removing alleged profanities, this involved cutting 36,000 words from the manuscript, changing and reordering the ending, fictionalizing some proper names, and adding chapter titles. All of this, at the time, Dreiser sought or approved in order to get his first novel published, and he reversed none of the revisions when opportunities to republish the novel arose later in his career. In his statement of editorial principles, West cited W. W. Greg, Fredson Bowers, and G. Thomas Tanselle as authorities, before using value-laden rhetoric to validate Dreiser's holograph as a "serious work of art" and to state that it was the editor's task to rescue it from attempts to produce a "saleable fiction." What antagonists with different perspectives would view as authorial revision, or the social and historical processes of publication, were described by West as "damaging," "weakening," "censor[ing]," and "emasculating" Dreiser's original vision.³ West justified his choice of Dreiser's holograph—effectively a first draft—as his copy-text, and his editorial treatment of it, on the grounds of

not only expunging the contributions of anyone other than Dreiser, but also of purifying Dreiser's own authorship from revisions he made or accepted as an editor of his own work. Radically revising the notion of the "author's final intentions" as developed in the copy-text tradition, West argued that "[i]n the strictest sense," Dreiser's "authorial function ceased after he inscribed the holograph draft of *Sister Carrie*."⁴

This argument was ratcheted up in the edition's preface by general editor Neda M. Westlake, which strongly evoked New Critical discourses of the verbal icon. The editors of the Pennsylvania Edition of *Sister Carrie*, Westlake stated, "with recourse to the manuscript and typescript, restore the novel as closely as possible to the author's original version, a more somber and unresolved work of art. The frame of the novel remains; within the picture, like a cleansed portrait, the characters assume the original clarity of the artist's design."⁵

This was, of course, not all that the editors provided. West supplied a copious apparatus, including a table of "Block Cuts Marked by Arthur Henry and Accepted by Dreiser" as well as passages such as Dreiser's revised ending of the novel, which enabled interested readers to consider the process of revision. However, at the time few reviewers registered this interrogative and enabling aspect of the edition. One such was Hershel Parker, who implied that West's project was "bringing biographical, historical, and textual evidence to bear on the study of real authors creating real works of art."⁶ Most responses, though, accepted the self-presentation of the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie* as aspiring to release the individual act of authorship from its social context, and were polarized between validating and contesting such a project.

Controversy was fueled by the marketing of the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie* as likely to become the "accepted standard"⁷ and the simultaneous publication of a paperback edition of the "unexpurgated" text *sans* editorial matter in the Penguin American Library. In the furor, the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie* became a focal point of the resistance to eclectic editing that was building in the American academy during the 1970s and 1980s, as Paul Eggert and Peter Shillingsburg have noted.⁸ On the one side was a particularly extreme idealization of the author function, defended in reviews by Richard Lingeman, who likened the editors to "art historians cleaning a da Vinci fresco." On the other side was an insistence on the "historical" text, as in Donald Pizer's review in *American Literature*, and later

by Jack Stillinger, as part of his critique of "the myth of solitary genius." Pizer had laid out his own view on how Dreiser's novels should *not* be edited as early as 1972, arguing that the circumstances of modern American authorship were materially different from the conditions pertaining to the Renaissance printed texts for which the Greg-Bowers methods were initially formulated. "Dreiser's novels," he stated, "offer an excellent example of the futility of applying copy-text principles to the editing of much twentieth-century fiction."¹⁰

Pizer had anticipated, from a perspective embedded in literary history, many of the criticisms of the Greg-Bowers tradition that would follow in the 1980s and 1990s, especially those made by Jerome J. McGann from the point of view of the "social text."¹¹ However, as Parker recognized, the 1981 *Sister Carrie* also demonstrates a sensitivity to the text at hand and its various contexts, that goes beyond any straightforward application of editorial principles. West's consideration of authorship and textual production was itself embedded in conflicts over the status of Dreiser and the significance of his first novel. The gestures toward idealist notions of authorship made by the *Sister Carrie* editors and supportive reviewers can be fully understood only when considered in the context of Dreiser's critical reputation and the trajectory of literary studies. Because of his style, his subject matter, and his politics, Dreiser was marginalized by New Criticism, and his reputation as a central literary figure was not assured in 1981. The affiliations with Greg-Bowers methodology and New Critical discourse were in part, it could be argued, a means of engaging the historical, literary, and covertly political debates over Dreiser's reputation as an American author and the status of *Sister Carrie* within the canon of American literature.

At one level, the projects of "cleans[ing]" and "cleaning" were directed against biographical "dust." Before the publication of the Pennsylvania Edition, Dreiser's literary reputation was still strongly influenced by his later biography, especially the left-wing political activism to which he had devoted most of his time in the 1930s and 1940s, culminating with his support for the foreign policy of the USSR in 1939–42, and his joining of the Communist Party shortly before he died in December 1945. To devote the resources required to describe the composition, publication, and text of *Sister Carrie* was not to dehistoricize but to rehistoricize it, allowing it to be assessed independently of Dreiser's later political affiliations.

At another level, the editors, and reviewers such as Lingeman, were addressing issues of Dreiser's style, which, while they were the focus of New Critical attention, have a much longer history, extending to the present. Critical views of Dreiser as a naïve or simply a bad writer go back to some of the first reviews of *Sister Carrie*, and he was the main literary target of Lionel Trilling's critique of realism in the 1946 essay "Reality in America," reprinted in *The Liberal Imagination* (1952), one of the most influential works of the New Criticism. According to Trilling, Dreiser's works were overvalued (by critics such as Vernon Parrington, the primary object of Trilling's critique), because they "have the awkwardness, the chaos, the heaviness which we associate with 'reality.'"¹² More recently, even critics seeking to validate Dreiser's work have sometimes done so by negating his sophistication, as when Joseph Epstein praises Dreiser as "a good boiled potato" compared to the caviar that is Henry James, or when Fredric Jameson frames Dreiser's style as an artifact of American materialism and consumerism, in a reading first made the same year that the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie* appeared, and renewed in 2015.¹³ In this context, West's emphasis on Dreiser's text, on the lone author and his aesthetic judgments, makes sense as part of the claim that Dreiser's aesthetics were worthy of the same kind of attention as, say, those of Mark Twain or Shakespeare. As West would put it later, "I meant to present him as a disciplined professional and a serious young artist, not as a poorly educated rube from Indiana who needed chastisement with the blue pencil."¹⁴ West's insistence on the forensic attention required to isolate and define Dreiser's authorship aligned him with earlier critics who had striven to validate Dreiser as an artist and a thinker, such as Robert H. Elias, Robert Penn Warren, and Ellen Moers, and with Donald Pizer's own *The Novels of Theodore Dreiser* (1976), which drew upon a deep familiarity with Dreiser's processes of composition and revision. In this sense Dreiser is a good example of how the negotiations between the disciplinary development of critical and documentary editing, and the changing influence on literary and historical studies of New Criticism, "Theory," deconstruction, and multiculturalism, are central to any understanding of their trajectories.¹⁵ What could be read as a tendency to idealize the author function in West's "Editorial Principles" could equally well be understood as a strategic use of Greg-Bowers concepts to stake out a critical assessment of Dreiser's work that avoided the polarizing debate between New

Critical dismissals of his novels, and the framing of Dreiser's work as directly realist portrayals of modern American urban society.

Reconsidered in these contexts, West's initially surprising description of his editorial work on *Sister Carrie* as "conservative" comes into focus. Having insisted so strongly on the literary and artistic quality of Dreiser's manuscript, West severely limited his emendations, essentially to those necessary to correct grammatical errors, and the very few instances where he could be certain that Dreiser revised alone and on purely artistic grounds. He rejected "nearly all" of the block cuts marked by Arthur Henry and approved by Dreiser.¹⁶ It would be reasonable to consider that some of the 36,000 words cut from the first-draft manuscript were cut for good "artistic" reasons—Donald Pizer's review would suggest several instances—but West's policies made it very difficult to obtain sufficient evidence to make such qualitative judgments. In short, the edition embraced eclecticism more in theory than in practice.¹⁷ Whether this was due to method or to judgment, there was an irony that so much criticism was directed toward the Edition's presumed ahistoricism and idealism, given that its treatment of the holograph manuscript bore some resemblance to the nascent practice of versioning. West himself would go on to suggest in 1994 that "versioning would probably work for novels such as *Sister Carrie*."¹⁸

The Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie* invited an engagement with the novel's historical textualization precisely through its transparency in detailing editorial choices according to Greg-Bowers methods. In his "Editorial Principles" West explicitly ruled out the possibility of any edition of *Sister Carrie* being definitive and envisaged a range of possible "future editions," including the use of parallel texts, facsimiles, and a variorum.¹⁹ The combination of this sense of textual possibility, West's own "conservatism" in choosing not to selectively adopt the cuts proposed by Henry and agreed to by Dreiser, and his provision of tables identifying those cuts effectively invited readers into the editing process. As Paul Eggert appreciatively notes, "Because of its point of comparison" West's "textual apparatus allows a more readily comprehensible study of the changes made to the manuscript draft by Dreiser and by his collaborators than if his edition had merely accepted the results of the collaboration as unchangeable." As a result, it can be added, for students of literature at any level, the volume offered a practical introduction to questions of composition, authorship, and editing.²⁰

By the mid-1990s, the controversy over *Sister Carrie* had died down, as it became apparent that the “restored” text provided a highly useful resource for critics and readers alongside the text published by Doubleday, Page and Company in 1900, and that paperbacks based on the 1900 text continued to sell alongside the Penguin Books edition that advertised its use of West’s text.²¹ Far from supplanting the 1900 text, as some critics had feared,²² the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie* had effected what might be called a kind of “versioning” by the back door, helping to create a situation whereby even the most casual of readers cannot help but engage with the novel’s textual instability, at the most basic level of having to choose between what are now called the “complete and unexpurgated text” (Penguin) and the “author’s final version” (Oxford University Press). The Norton Critical Edition, edited by Donald Pizer, became even more textually aware than either after its second edition in 1991 added a comparison of the Doubleday, Page and Pennsylvania texts, and a “Textual Appendix” described as providing “a generous sampling of the cuts Dreiser and his friend Arthur Henry made in the typescript version[.]”²³

Anent the serendipity of this “versioning by the backdoor” narrative, some interesting questions remain. If the availability of two textual versions of *Sister Carrie* undoubtedly conveys welcome senses of the fluidity of textualization and the historical contingencies behind publication, it perhaps also tends to prematurely resolve those questions into a binary opposition, such that readers are confronted with a simple choice between (only) two texts, Dreiser’s original manuscript and that published in 1900. Both the Penguin and Oxford University Press marketing tags quoted above lay claim to a definitiveness which is highly questionable, hinging as they do on somewhat contingent interpretations of “complete,” “author’s,” and “final.” For readers without a background in textual editing, the immediate effect of this polarization is to cement an absolute distinction between a privatized conception of authorial creation, and the public and social process of publication. In the process, the questions of authorial intention and revision that give rise to eclectic editing in the first place are foreclosed before they have properly been registered. In this case, the process of revision by which Dreiser’s manuscript became the text published in 1900 is simplified, and any textual changes after 1900 are marginalized. The latter are potentially considerable, given the publication of a shortened version in

London in 1901, whose commercial and critical success was crucial in encouraging and enabling Dreiser to relaunch his literary career after the commercial failure of the first edition, and a significant revision made for the second American edition (B. W. Dodge, 1907) in the first chapter of the novel to remove material appropriated from the humorist writer George Ade.²⁴ In sum, there is still critical and pedagogical work to do even now, as West anticipated there would be in the speculations about future editions contained in his account of textual principles.

This last point brings us back to the unresolved duality of the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie*, and its implications for definitions and methodologies of editing more widely. On the one hand, as has just been argued, it invited readers into the archive to consider the processes of revision and publication. On the other hand, this invitation was often obscured by the strong claims made on behalf of its restored text, and the use of New Critical concepts to frame the edition. (With hindsight West explicitly distanced himself from the moralizing rhetoric employed in 1981, stating two decades later that if editing *Sister Carrie* again, "I would not be as insistent about the virtue of what I was doing."²⁵) As it was, the volume could be considered to exemplify what Peter Shillingsburg has described in a recent essay in *Ecdotica* as the blurring of distinctions between archival editions and scholarly editions that took place in the 1980s. Shillingsburg regards this blurring as responsible for a great deal of confusion, misdirected criticism aimed between archival editors and scholarly editors, and more recently, for allowing a narrowly archival approach to develop in the field of digital editing.²⁶ Developing terms broached by Paul Eggert, he therefore sets about clarifying and separating the projects engendered by the "archival impulse," which he summarizes as being to "reiterate texts," and the "editing impulse," to "fix texts." This agenda draws upon a foundational opposition that parallels Richard Bucci's distinction between method and judgment quoted in the epigraph to this essay, albeit that Bucci emphasizes the "creative potential" of this dynamic, while for Shillingsburg the "pointless negativity" looms larger. Notwithstanding this contrasting orientation, when taken together, both sets of distinctions usefully open up a conceptual distance around the familiar categories of documentary editing and critical editing. While the editing traditions differ as to aim and approach, which therefore must be made clear at all times, the relationship between them is dynamic; they are not necessarily bound to mutually negating ontologies. Rather, they can be seen as

different methodologies for arbitrating between opposed modes of historicization. Reiterating and fixing, method and judgment, are all at work, in varying degrees, in different models of editing. Critical editing has its dualism of text and apparatus, while, for example, in the German Historical-Critical tradition the text is present alongside the primary aim to present an encoded archive. The relationship between archival and editing impulses can be and is reconceptualized according to the specific archival base and requirements of each project. What gives editions their character, then, is not their adherence to one of these impulses above the other, but the ways in which they arbitrate the negotiation between them, which is itself often manifested in the kinds of claims they make about the texts presented, and in turn the ways of reading that they invite or allow.

In the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie*, it could be said, archival and editing impulses coexisted without a unifying structure. This is not to identify a flaw or failing so much as to indicate that it confronted head-on the conflicted nature of Dreiser's reputation, notions of authorship, and editorial practice. Though James West does not put the matter in these terms, his reflections on the experience of editing novels by F. Scott Fitzgerald and William Styron as well as Dreiser are compatible with this sense of methodology as a product of reflection on the text at hand. In *Making the Archives Talk* (2011) West argues strongly for the embedding of the editorial project in the editor's open-minded immersion in the archival and biographical record from which a text is produced. "Narratives" justifying the text and its editorial procedures are constructed retrospectively.²⁷

For the second novel published by the Edition, *Jennie Gerhardt* (1992; original publication 1911), West, as he had with *Sister Carrie*, adopted a holograph manuscript as his copy-text on the basis of its embodying Dreiser's "fair copy" text at the moment of submission, in this case in spring 1911, to the publisher Harper and Brothers. However, drawing upon the distinction between "active" and "final" authorial intention elaborated by Tanselle, West produced a much more eclectic text than that presented in the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie*. He emended the copy-text to adopt the Harpers editors' revisions where they were judged commensurate with Dreiser's active intentions.²⁸ The apparatus indicated the complex web of revisions and illustrated specific cruxes, giving readers detailed access to the process of revision within the limitations of the printed volume. As with *Sister Carrie* the tension between editorial and archiving impulses was more difficult to harmonize

at the level of the explicit claims about the “new” text. In the introduction, the “restored” text was presented as a “complement” to the first edition of 1911, while the statement of editorial principles began by emphasizing the impossibility of producing a “definitive” text given the complexity of the archival record, and closed by asserting that this text was so different from the 1911 published version that it amounted to “an edition of a new work of literature, heretofore unknown.”²⁹ While this latter was undoubtedly an extravagant claim, it immediately sidelined the reductive debates over primacy that had dogged *Sister Carrie*. It also had the critically useful effect of highlighting to readers the range of literary discourses (such as those of the “sentimental” novel and of realism) at play in Dreiser’s work.

At this pivotal point, the trajectories of West and the Dreiser Edition diverged somewhat.³⁰ While West went on to produce, for example, an edition of the F. Scott Fitzgerald text he published as *Trimalchio: An Early Version of The Great Gatsby* (2000), the Edition began to frame its output explicitly through an emphasis on “versioning.” In a 1998 second edition of *Sister Carrie*, general editor Thomas P. Riggio described the West text as “a version in a continuum of composition.” Given that, as Riggio also noted, “even the harshest of critics of the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie* today recognize its importance[,]” the claims for definitiveness which had attended the same text in 1981 were perhaps now unnecessary, though one may wonder whether the 1981 text would have had the same impact on readers if those claims had never been made. In any case, Riggio now emphasized that “[v]iewed together, all versions—Doubleday (1900), Dodge (1907), and Pennsylvania (1981)—give us a good idea of the complex process of writing and editing that went into making the novel.”³¹ Here Riggio began to make explicit the interest in “versioning,” derived in part from Donald H. Reiman,³² that has informed the ways in which the Dreiser Edition has presented subsequent work. Editions of *The Genius* (edited by Clare Virginia Eby in 2008) and *The Financier* (edited by Roark Mulligan, 2010) print substantial material that had been cut or revised for the initial publication, and present themselves as versions to be read alongside the published versions.

It needs to be made clear that this embrace of versioning as a framework for understanding the function and status of Dreiser Edition volumes does not involve a commitment to the practices and protocols of documentary editing. A copy-text is identified. Emendations are made, recorded, and explained. Just as

they always have, editors take into account the author's intentions for the work, insofar as they are knowable, and examine and consider all relevant texts both pre- and post-publication. Volumes are often dependent on unpublished manuscripts and typescripts. A general statement of editorial principles, prepared by Thomas P. Riggio for the 2016 Dreiser Edition of *The Titan*, summarizes current policy: The named authorities might be read as each signaling a register of difference. Gaskell, from within the copy-text tradition, suggests an initial focus on the last version of the work to leave the author's hands, to be selectively emended, as distinct from the original tendency in the Greg-Bowers tradition to prefer the authorial manuscript before the technological and social elements of print culture intervene. McGann's name of course betokens an acknowledgment of the social text, while the citation of Reiman signals the interest in "versioning." These citations function less programmatically than the appeal to Greg, Bowers, and Tanselle in the *Sister Carrie* edition, which they implicitly reflect. Rather, as the "Editorial Procedures" also declares, though there are certain general principles, "Dreiser Edition volumes are not based on any fixed theory or school of thought, and editors assume that every text presents unique issues that shape editorial practice."

Those issues are evident in the two latest novels to appear in the Dreiser Edition, *The Financier*, as mentioned above, and *The Titan* (forthcoming in 2016), both edited by Roark Mulligan and both of which use page proofs for copy-text. As Mulligan states, in the case of *The Financier*, "[t]his choice is based on critical and historical considerations" which include the sense that the 1912 published version had been displaced by a revised and cut version that Dreiser oversaw in 1927. Mulligan's archival research revealed that some material which was cut in proof was reinstated by Dreiser in the later, shorter edition. For this and other reasons, he regarded the page proofs as "a significant stage in the novel's production" and presented it accordingly.³⁴

The 2016 Dreiser Edition volume of *The Titan* is in many ways a collaborative enterprise, in which volume editor Mulligan worked closely with Riggio as textual editor, and with me. Here again the page proofs were chosen as copy-text, but this was a more difficult decision, without the specific critical and historical considerations that applied to *The Financier*. Nevertheless, the historical specifics of the biographical and archival record strongly influenced editorial policy. For a number of reasons, the ways that Dreiser composed and revised changed

dramatically after the publication of *Jennie Gerhardt*. After 1911 Dreiser, more than familiar with the active roles of publishers and editors, submitted his novels in forms that were clearly unfinished, expecting to bring them to completion in dialogue with publishers' editors and other readers. (As James West has pointed out, this is a fairly common shift among novelists.³⁵) It therefore becomes much more difficult to identify a "fair copy" manuscript or typescript that could be chosen as copy-text on the grounds that it represents a completed stage in the development of the novel. Another set of issues derives from Dreiser's subject matter. Early novels such as *Sister Carrie* and *Jennie Gerhardt* were suggested by Dreiser's own experiences and those of his close family. With the trilogy begun with *The Financier* and continued with *The Titan*, Dreiser changed his way of working. He carried out lengthy and intensive historical research on the financier Charles Tyson Yerkes (1837–1905), consulting newspaper archives and traveling extensively in the United States and Europe to interview people who knew Yerkes. As part of his research for the Dreiser Edition volumes, Roark Mulligan examined the materials Dreiser had assembled for the trilogy, preserved among the Dreiser Papers at the University of Pennsylvania Library, including over 1,000 pages of notes and clippings. Having drafted his fictionalization of these materials, Dreiser spent months in early 1914 revising, selecting, and cutting. In his "Textual Commentary," Mulligan elaborates on a range of factors that affected these revisions. Principal motivations were Dreiser's aesthetic and commercial concerns to make the novel more concise and focused. Such cutting and revising of an initially lengthy draft were by now typical, integral phases in Dreiser's habitual way of writing fiction. Here they were given particular impetus by his dissatisfaction with *The Financier*, which he already viewed as overlong. In addition, Dreiser's thematic interests shifted as he moved from the first volume, which contextualized his protagonist Frank Cowperwood's narrative largely with respect to the world of banking, to the second, which is more engaged with the city politics of Chicago and the Illinois legislature.

Given these and additional aesthetic, literary, commercial, and legal details uncovered by Mulligan, even had we wanted to, it would have been very difficult to restore a text of *The Titan* to a moment before significant revision took place, as was done with the *Sister Carrie* and *Jennie Gerhardt* editions. To try to arbitrate between revisions would have been highly speculative. Hence it made practical as

well as critical sense to choose the proofs as the copy text and to make minimal emendations.

Dreiser's use of historical research in composing *The Titan* also influenced our conception of the apparatus. Fairly straightforwardly, since Dreiser's fictionalization of specific historical material is a key element of the novel, Mulligan provided brief accounts of the historical personages and events in a series of historical notes. More difficult questions arose from the need to arbitrate between archival and editing impulses. Mulligan's research at the University of Pennsylvania Library revealed that Dreiser had written, and subsequently cut, material that would be of interest to cultural historians, if not students of Dreiser's work. Naturally, we wanted to make available from the documentary record Dreiser's depiction of important events such as the 1893 Chicago World's Fair or Great Columbian Exposition, a much-studied topic, even though the chapter was cut before the page-proof stage. We also wanted to indicate how decisions over the inclusion or exclusion of specific historical events and contexts were part of the process of composition. While this is true of any novel that draws upon historical research, the issue is sharpened here because a central theme of Dreiser's trilogy is the dynamic between its protagonist's exceptional ability to influence events, and wider historical forces. In *The Financier*, for example, Dreiser depicts Cowperwood being puzzled by the outbreak of "war-spirit" during the Civil War, since he views the conflict between Northern and Southern states almost exclusively in terms of its financial implications for him personally. The climax of the novel narrates Cowperwood's financial ruin due to the financial panic following the Great Fire of Chicago, followed by the restitution of his fortunes during the stock market crash of 1873. Much of *The Titan* deals with Cowperwood's attempts to manipulate the development of streetcar lines in Chicago for his own enrichment. A particularly pointed example occurs in chapter 23 of the proofs, where Dreiser's narrator goes out of his way to mention the 1886 Haymarket affair, explaining that it "changed, quite as an eruption might, the whole face of the commercial landscape." After a lengthy paragraph describing this historic importance, Dreiser adds simply that "In the face of this, however, Cowperwood was not disturbed." Such episodes provide the grounds for interpretive debate over issues such as the novel's depiction of agency, and its orientation toward Cowperwood's status as an exceptionally powerful individual. At the same time,

they exemplify the importance of preserving and explaining Dreiser's strategic depiction, or withholding, of historical narrative. We have sought to present and explain Dreiser's decisions in the printed volume, while planning to put online selected archival material that was cut before proof stage.

Like all authors and all works, Dreiser and *Sister Carrie* and *The Titan* are special cases. Each volume in the Dreiser Edition is a product of the application of editorial practice to the archival record, and over the last thirty-five years editors have taken the social nature of textual production increasingly seriously. However, as this brief survey has illustrated, volumes have been shaped just as decisively by a range of other considerations: differing processes of composition and revision, issues of canonicity and reputation, the demands of readers as anticipated in the production of the edition and the uses to which readers put it once published, and wider tendencies in literary and cultural study. Bearing this in mind, the shift from an avowedly "eclectic" practice to one that explicitly embraces "versioning" seems to be directed more at influencing *how* Dreiser is read than *what* Dreiser is read.

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Notes

1. Richard Bucci, "Tanselle's 'Editing without a Copy-Text': Genesis, Issues, Prospects," *Studies in Bibliography* 56 (2003/2004): 1–44; 7.
2. The first general editor of the Dreiser Edition was Neda M. Westlake, with James L. W. West III as textual editor. Thomas P. Riggio became general editor in 1986

and has been its guiding presence since, remaining as textual editor after 2012, when the current author became general editor. Initially at the University of Pennsylvania Press, the Edition was published by Illinois University Press between 2004 and 2012, and subsequently moved to University of Winchester Press, which is scheduled to publish critical editions of Dreiser's fourth novel, *The Titan*, in 2016, followed by his *Critical Writings* and further volumes.

3. West, "Editorial Principles," in *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser, Pennsylvania Edition, John C. Berkey and Alice M. Winters, historical editors; James L. W. West III, textual editor; Neda M. Westlake, general editor (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 580, 581, 582.
4. West, "Editorial Principles," in Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, 580. Though an extreme definition of authorial intention, West's distinction would be elaborated in Hershel Parker, "The Determinacy of the Creative Process and the 'Authority' of the Author's Textual Decisions," *College Literature* 10 (Spring 1983): 99–125; 102–3.
5. Westlake, "Preface and Acknowledgements," in Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, ix.
6. Hershel Parker, "[Review of] The Pennsylvania Edition of Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*," *Resources for American Literary Study* 11 (1981): 332–36; 336. Paul Eggert quotes and amplifies this argument in *Securing the Past*, 195.
7. See, for example, Herbert Mitgang, "After 80 Years, Publisher Plans Uncut 'Sister Carrie,'" *New York Times: Books*, April 17, 1981, at <http://www.nytimes.com/1981/04/17/books/after-80-years-publisher-plans-uncut-sister-carrie.html?pagewanted=all>. Accessed January 10, 2016.
8. Paul Eggert, *Securing the Past: Conservation in Art, Architecture and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 192–98; Peter L. Shillingsburg, *From Gutenberg to Google: Electronic Representations of Literary Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 83–84; and Shillingsburg, "Literary Documents, Texts, and Works Represented Digitally," *Ecdotica* 10 (2013): 76–93; 77. Eggert's and Shillingsburg's complementary historical contextualizations of the 1981 *Sister Carrie*, and their evident convictions that West's project instantiates questions still vital after the development of digital editing, are insights on which this essay seeks to elaborate.
9. For key arguments, in addition to the Eggert, Shillingsburg, and Parker cited above, see Richard Lingeman, "Sister Carrie's Chaperones," *Nation*, July 11–18, 1981, 53–57; Donald Pizer, "Sister Carrie," *American Literature* 53 (January 1982): 731–37; and Jack Stillinger, *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 157–62. The debates are evenhandedly summarized by Riggio in the introduction to the 1998 reissue of the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie*. He also notes their exhaustion, a conclusion echoed shortly afterward by both West and Pizer. See Thomas P. Riggio, "Introduction," in *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), vi–xvi; James L. W. West III, "The *Sister Carrie* We've Come to Know," *Dreiser Studies* 32, no. 2 (Fall 2001):

- 39–41; and Donald Pizer, "The Text of *Sister Carrie*: Where We Are Now," *Dreiser Studies* 32, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 42–48.
10. Donald Pizer, "Dreiser's Novels: The Editorial Problem," in *The Editing of American Literature, 1890–1930: Essays and Reviews* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2012), 37.
 11. For their conjunction, see Donald Pizer, "Self-Censorship and Textual Editing," in *Textual Criticism and Literary Interpretation*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 144–61.
 12. Lionel Trilling, "Reality in America," in *The Liberal Imagination* (New York: Viking, 1950), 13.
 13. See Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1981), 160, and his contribution to "Roundtable," *Journal of American Studies* 48, no. 4 (2014): 1088–89; and Joseph Epstein, *Partial Payments: Essays on Writers and Their Lives* ([1989]; New York: Norton, 1991), 260.
 14. West, "The *Sister Carrie* We've Come to Know," 41.
 15. Eggert outlines these dynamics in detail in the closing three chapters of *Securing the Past*, 154–240.
 16. West, "Textual Principles," 581.
 17. Describing the typical practices of copy-text editing, West states that "The edition is therefore eclectic" ("Textual Principles," 577), but this statement of principle is balanced by his own avowedly "conservative" practice as just discussed.
 18. James L. W. West III, "Fair Copy, Authorial Intention, and Versioning" [1994], in *Making the Archives Talk* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 29–38; 37.
 19. West, "Textual Principles," 588–89.
 20. Eggert, *Securing the Past*, 195. My own experience as an undergraduate in 1980s London, UK, substantiates this claim. While I would never have dreamed of consulting the manuscript of *Sister Carrie* in the New York Public Library, or the Dreiser Papers in the University of Pennsylvania Library, it seemed obvious to mark up my own paperback edition with Dreiser's cuts, using the university library's copy of the Pennsylvania *Sister Carrie*.
 21. The 1998 Pennsylvania version is now available as an e-book on the JSTOR and Kindle platforms, regrettably without West's textual apparatus. West's text also remains in print in the 1994 reissue of the Penguin Books edition. Several editions are currently available based on the 1900 Doubleday, Page text with the 1907 revision for the Dodge Edition, including significant introductory and editorial

matter, all of which, like the Pennsylvania and Penguin Books volumes, call attention to the existence of two versions of the work. The most substantial is the Norton Critical Edition, edited by Donald Pizer, now in its third edition (2006). The Oxford University Press World's Classics edition, with an introduction by Lee Clark Mitchell, was reissued in 2009, and in the same year Signet, part of the Penguin Random House group, brought out a version with an introduction by Richard Lingeman and an afterword by Rachel Sarah. At time of writing (January 2016), the Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image at the University of Pennsylvania Library hosts online digital facsimiles of three versions of the novel: the 1900 typescript used as setting copy for the novel (rejected by West as copy-text in favor of Dreiser's holograph, but a document whose multiple and extensive revisions make it fascinating reading), the 1900 Doubleday, Page volume, and the Pennsylvania Edition. See <http://www.library.upenn.edu/collections/rbm/dreiser/sc.html>.

22. See, for example, Stiller, *Multiple Authorship*, 162.
23. These phrases come from, respectively, the back cover of the Penguin Books edition and the Oxford University Press catalog, both as of September 2015, and the back cover of the Norton Critical Edition of *Sister Carrie*, 2nd edition, 1991.
24. It is also worth noting that the phrase "The Unexpurgated Text," which had featured prominently on the front cover of the Penguin Books paperback edition, was relegated to the back cover when in 1994 the title migrated from the Penguin American Library to the same publisher's Classics series. Perhaps a sense of unstable textuality was felt to cause some cognitive dissonance with the notion of the classic.
25. West, "The *Sister Carrie* We've Come to Know," 41.
26. Shillingsburg, "Literary Documents, Texts, and Works Represented Digitally."
27. West, *Making the Archives Talk*, 1–2. Also, see especially the first three essays collected in that volume: "The Scholarly Editor as Biographer," 6–16; "Editorial Theory and the Act of Submission," 17–28; and "Fair Copy, Authorial Intention, and Versioning," 29–38.
28. This is a brief summary of the approach explained and justified by James L. W. West III, "Editorial Principles," in *Jennie Gerhardt* by Theodore Dreiser (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 485–96.
29. James L. W. West III, "Introduction," *Jennie Gerhardt*, x, and "Editorial Principles," *Jennie Gerhardt*, 485, 495.
30. For example, while conceding the possible validity of versioning as a critical approach to *Sister Carrie* and *Jennie Gerhardt*, West argues that later works such as *The Financier* and *The Titan* demand an eclectic approach ("Fair Copy, Authorial Intention, and Versioning," in *Making the Archives Talk*, 37). On the face of it, this seems in exact opposition to the Dreiser Edition's trajectory from eclecticism to versioning, but as is discussed below, the situation is more complex.

31. Riggio, "Introduction," in *Sister Carrie* (1998), xi.
32. See Donald H. Reiman, *Romantic Texts and Contexts* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 180.
33. Jude Davies and Thomas P. Riggio, "Editorial Procedures," in *The Titan* by Theodore Dreiser, edited by Roark Mulligan; Jude Davies, general editor; Thomas P. Riggio, textual editor (Winchester, UK: Winchester University Press, forthcoming, 2016).
34. Editorial Principles," in *The Financier* by Theodore Dreiser, edited by Roark Mulligan; Thomas P. Riggio, general editor (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 621–24; 621, 622.
35. Making this point in "Fair Copy, Authorial Intention, and Versioning," West draws the conclusion from the absence of an authorial "fair copy" for *The Financier* and *The Titan* that an eclectic approach is required. See *Making the Archives Talk*, 29–30, 36–37.)