7 THE TEXTUAL AND DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITY I

EXTRALITERARY GENRES

…the whole of the enunciation is an empty process, functioning perfectly without there being any need for it to be filled with the person of the interlocutors. Linguistically, the author is never more than the instance of writing, just as I *is nothing other than the instance saying* I: *language knows a 'subject', not a 'person', and this subject, empty outside of the very enunciation which defines it, suffices to make language 'hold together', suffices, that is to say, to exhaust it.*

Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author"

This chapter and Chapter 8 both focus on the textual construction of subjectivity in novels which use extraliterary genres and discourses to represent heteroglossia and polyphony. The incorporation of extraliterary genres is the fourth of the four forms for representing heteroglossia outlined in Chapter 2, and the one I have so far not directly addressed. For Bakhtin, the representation of extraliterary discursive genres within the novel is one of the most basic and fundamental forms for incorporating and organising heteroglossia (1981, p. 320). Extraliterary genres, such as the diary, personal letter, confession, travel notes and biography, have played an especially significant role in structuring novels and in the historical development of the novel. This chapter examines the use of extraliterary genres and discourses and the implications that these textual strategies have for the ideological construction and representation of subjectivity in narrative. Chapter 8 will go on to deal at greater length with modes of extraliterary discourse representation in historiographic genres, with special reference to historiographic metafiction.

As I explained in Chapter 4, the term "heteroglottic" is used by Bakhtin to refer to the structuring of language out of diverse socially typifying discourses and idiolects representative of different socio-ideological groups and interests. There are two main implications of Bakhtin's position that

concern me in this chapter and in Chapter 8. First, the novel, for Bakhtin, is an inherently heteroglottic genre in that it appropriates, represents and is structured by these diverse discourses. Second, Bakhtin's ideas entail that the formation of subjectivity is contingent upon the construction of a subject position from which to speak and the appropriation of social and ideological discourses from within a heteroglossia with which to speak. Many of the novels discussed in these two chapters self-reflexively foreground the texts and discourses through which they are constructed, and thus draw attention to the textual and discursive construction of the subject and of the socio-ideological contexts in which subjects are positioned. Subjectivity is represented as an intersection of a range of appropriated cultural discourses, genres and intertexts.

This chapter will examine two main narrative forms: (1) narratives which mix literary discourse and extraliterary discourses derived from the mass media, popular culture and other nonliterary forms of writing; and (2) diary and epistolary genres of the novel. In novels such as *I am the Cheese* (Cormier, 1977/1991), *Backtrack* (Hunt, 1986), *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989), *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991) and *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991), overt mixing of diverse nonliterary genres functions as a way of representing and examining the sociocultural influences on the formation of subjectivity and the function of language in the construction and textual representation of subjectivity. Diary and epistolary narratives foreground the construction of subjectivity within language by problematizing the voice and subject position of the diary/letter writer. In these novels, the diary and epistolary form is used to express a concern with the formation of subjectivity within time and in relation to represented social and cultural contexts. The next section will examine Bakhtin's discussion of extraliterary genres, modes of representation and implications of strategies for the construction of narrative point of view and textual subject positions.

INCORPORATED EXTRALITERARY GENRES

Bakhtin outlines two ways in which extraliterary genres are incorporated in novels. First, they can be incorporated as structural components within a text (1981, p. 323). The following are some examples of adolescent novels which use extraliterary genres as structural components:

Newspaper items: *The House that was Eureka* (Wheatley, 1985); *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989)

Letters: *Dear Nobody* (Doherty, 1991), *Dodger* (Gleeson, 1990), *The Toll Bridge* (Chambers, 1992), *Came Back to Show You I could Fly* (Klein, 1989)

Diary entries: *Mandragora* (McRobbie, 1991), *Eleanor, Elizabeth* (Gleeson, 1984)

Interview: *I am the Cheese* (Cormier, 1977/1991)

Mixed genres—newspaper items, letters, diary entries, historical or legal documents and other extraliterary discourses: *Backtrack* (Hunt, 1986), *Breaktime* (Chambers, 1978), *Dance on my Grave* (Chambers, 1982), *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991)

In these novels, extraliterary genres are incorporated as discrete embedded textual elements. The last group is indicative of what has become a trend in recent adolescent fiction, where a range of nonliterary genres and discourses are combined—for example, the use of reports, documents, "nonfiction" informational texts, newspaper items and editorials, as well as paratextual strategies, such as footnotes, epigraphs, editorial comments, citations and so on, and typographical experimentation. This mixing of discursive genres functions primarily as a way of incorporating polyphony in novels.

Second, extraliterary genres can be incorporated as organizing principles which directly determine and organize the structure of a novel (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 323). The following are some examples of adolescent novels which use these extraliterary genres as an organizing principle:

Diary: *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991), *So Much to Tell You* (Marsden, 1987), *Breaking Up* (Wilmot, 1983), *Z for Zachariah* (O'Brien, 1975), *Emma Tupper's Diary* (Dickinson, 1971)

Letter, diary, confession: *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989), *Dance on my Grave* (Chambers, 1982)

Personal letters: *Letters from the Inside* (Marsden, 1991)

In these novels, extraliterary genres determine the form of a novel as a whole and, as will be clear from repeated texts in these two lists, both strategies for incorporating discourse can be combined in one novel.

All forms for appropriating and representing heteroglossia in the novel permit language to be used in ways that are indirect, conditional and distanced (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 323); that is, they can enable appropriated discursive genres to be the object as well as the mode of representation. For example, in *I am the Cheese* (1977/1991), a multistranded novel, one narrative strand is represented entirely as an interview conducted within an institution of the central protagonist Adam by Brint (a mysterious character whose role and purpose in interviewing Adam is not clear). The interview is being used in part to communicate events concerning Adam's

family leading up to his institutionalization, but it is not simply a way of framing retrospective narration. Instead, the interview mode itself is also the object of representation, in the sense that it becomes metonymic of Adam's disempowered subject position. The purpose of the interviews remains ambiguous, partly because the interviewer's role is never made clear—is Brint a psychiatrist trying to help Adam, or is he an interrogator trying to ascertain how much Adam knows, and if the latter, then whose side is he on? Thus, the interviewer-interviewee relationship is a power relation which reflects (or is a microcosm for) relations between institutionalized systems and political processes, and individuals enmeshed within these processes. As the interviewee, Adam is subjected by the interview process in the same way that he and his family have been subjected by political processes.

Incorporated discourses are usually linguistically marked by stylistic conventions discernible in aspects of register, lexis and syntax associated with specific generic discourses. The textual conventions for incorporating extraliterary genres in many contemporary adolescent novels can heighten these stylistic conventions. Hence, incorporated discourse becomes the object of representation. For example, the variation of print and layout conventions, and the use of marginalia, footnotes, epigraphs and other textual conventions associated with specific genres are strategies which draw attention to the physicality of texts.

Bakhtin distinguishes between two modes of representation whereby extraliterary genres are incorporated in the novel. They may be represented as directly intentional, that is, they "refract authorial intentions"; or they may be treated objectively, "not as a word that has been spoken, but as a word to be displayed, like a thing," and, thereby, deprived of authorial intentions (1981, p. 321). Bakhtin's essay on novelistic discourse was written in the 1930s and, in the context of more recent critical discussions of authorial intentionality, terms like "intentional" and "objective" are misleading. Some commentators have substituted other more critically "neutral" terms: Todorov (1984), for example, uses the terms "passive" and "active" (p. 70). The distinction Bakhtin is making is not so much about authorial intentionality as the diegetic level at which incorporated discourses are represented and the degree to which the discursive otherness of these discourses is foregrounded. The incorporation of extraliterary discursive genres can thus be understood as a form of discourse representation, and for this reason I use the terms "indirect" (intentional) and "direct" (objective).[1] In the case of "intentional" discourse, incorporated genres are represented as indirect discourse which is diegetically subordinate to a narratorial voice or authorial position, and their discursive otherness is thereby

often masked or repressed. In the case of "objective" discourse, incorporated genres are represented as the quoted or direct discourse of another which has other contexts and meanings, and their linguistic or stylistic peculiarities are thereby generally foregrounded.

Both modes of representation can potentially effect a doubleness. That is, both modes can be used to represent incorporated discourse as another text situated in a dialogic relation to the focused text in which it is incorporated, and which refers to other texts and contexts outside of the focused text. However, direct modes of representation are potentially more overtly dialogic, while the dialogicality of indirect modes tends to be more covert. Indirect modes incorporate extraliterary discourses within the discourse of characters or narrators as direct or indirect quotation, paraphrase or appropriated discourse. In *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991), for example, although the diaries of the two brothers are represented directly, media discourses are represented indirectly as either quoted or appropriated discourse within the writing of the two diarists. Direct modes foreground the distinctive textual and discursive features of extraliterary discourses by physically representing these discourses as diegetically and textually distinct from the narrative discourse. This is indicated usually by typographical, linguistic and paratextual features specific to the discursive modes being imitated. For example, newspaper pages in *The House that was Eureka* (Wheatley, 1985, pp. 77–78 and pp. 113–115) are physically represented using the typography associated with the newspaper genre—headlines, subheadings and double columns—as well as linguistic features peculiar to that genre. Paratextual strategies include footnotes, epigraphs, prefaces, illustrations, editorial comments, documents, reports and so on; that is, textual conventions associated with discursive genres such as historical, legal or other nonfiction texts (*see* Hutcheon, 1989, pp. 82–92).

Direct representation of extraliterary genres can enable the incorporation of a range of social and ideological viewpoints in texts. Readers will potentially be situated in positions not directly aligned with character or narratorial point of view. In *Backtrack* (Hunt, 1986), *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989) and *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991), incorporated texts, such as newspaper items or documents, represent aspects of a story in ways which distance readers and involve them in active processes of inferring and constructing both story and meanings. For example, in *The Blooding,* paratexts in the form of endnotes to newspaper items refer to other articles, and thereby construct another level of story (for example, 1989, pp. 30, 34, 75 and 149). This format thus stresses the complexity of events, the multiplicity of causes and implications that events can have, and thereby implies that the fictive world comprises

multiple layers and interconnections. The function of extraliterary discourses in incorporating a range of political and social viewpoints is particularly important in *The Blooding,* the discourse of which is otherwise virtually straight first person narration. In contrast, *I am the Cheese* (Cormier, 1977/1991) mixes literary and extraliterary genres in combination with multistranded narration. There are three narrative strands: a first person account Adam's bike ride from Monument to Rutterburg narrated in the present tense; an interview by Brint (a psychiatrist, perhaps?); and an account of Adam's childhood and events leading up to the death of his parents narrated in the third person in the past tense. Up until almost the close of the novel the temporal relations between these three strands are unclear, and readers cannot be sure whether the bike ride takes place before or after the interviews. It is finally revealed, however, that Adam is in fact riding his bike within the confines of the institution where he is being held, and that this narrative strand thus occurs on a different diegetic level, rather than at a different point in time. The meaning of this narrative strand remains ambiguous: does it represent Adam's imaginings or desires, his plans for the future, or is it symbolic of Adam's life insofar as he, like his bike-riding counterpart, is left utterly alone, alienated and unable to trust anyone by the end of the novel. The novel ends "I keep pedalling, I keep pedalling…" (1991, p. 191), but the fact that the journey from Monument to Rutterburg to see his father has merely taken him around the grounds of the institution suggests that his "pedalling" will get him nowhere; he will eventually be "obliterated" or "terminated" (p. 190). This narrative structure combined with the interview genre positions readers in active subject positions which, once the "story" has been disclosed, are oriented toward making thematic and metaphoric links between the three narratives and making interpretative decisions about the interviews themselves—postulating answers to questions such as—What is the purpose of the interviews and who is Brint working for?

Incorporated extraliterary discourses can be used to articulate concerns with the interrelations between the self, the world and others. These discourses often refer not so much to any specific text as such, as to a particular set of textual conventions and cultural and ideological assumptions associated with specific discursive genres. The generic codes and discourses associated with the mass media, in particular newspaper and television, constitute a special group of extraliterary cultural discourses through which the public, political and social spheres are mediated, represented and disseminated. These kinds of discourses are usually quite overtly inscribed with socially constructed cultural assumptions and values. Their incorporation within novelistic discourse performs an important function in the representation of social

and cultural influences on the formation of subjectivity and of cultural values and ideologies in relation to which characters and narrators position themselves and are positioned as subjects. For example, news items in *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989) and *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991) construct a recognizable social and cultural context for represented events in relation to which characters are positioned. Characters in both novels are in the process of becoming more aware of social roles and codes of behaviour, and extraliterary material in these novels is crucial for the representation of subjectivity as being formed within a social context. Whereas extraliterary texts in *The Hillingdon Fox* and *The Blooding* gesture outside of the text so as to imply analogies with extratextual social and historical contexts, extraliterary material in *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/ 1991) and *Backtrack* (Hunt, 1986) is, by comparison, more intratextual and, in the case of *Backtrack,* radically self-reflexive.

Extraliterary genres also have an important function in the ideological construction of subjectivity in language and the representation of intersubjectivity in novelistic discourse. Discursive genres are "specific points of view on the world" and each possesses its own verbal and semantic forms for assimilating various aspects of reality (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 290). In other words, they are ideologically inscribed. Represented in the novel, these genres usually preserve their own structural integrity and independence, and their own linguistic and stylistic peculiarities (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 321). The effects of incorporating extraliterary genres can potentially be similar to those of using multiple focalizers or narrators. They can enable the representation of a variety of linguistic styles and registers and ideological viewpoints, and the construction of characters and narrators as "ideologues," that is, as "subjects of their own directly signifying discourses" (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 7) who occupy subject positions not dominated by a narratorial voice or authorial position. However, as I argued in Chapter 2 about the use of multiple narrators, focalizers and narrative strands, the presence of extraliterary genres in a novel does not automatically ensure its dialogicality. This resides not merely in the presence of different styles and dialects, but also the "dialogic angle at which these styles are juxtaposed and counterposed in the work" (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 184).

Typographical experimentation and overt genre mixing have become increasingly common in adolescent fictions but, as Stephens (1992b) has suggested, these strategies "seem to be settling into [their] own formulaic conventions: two or three clearly delineated genres or modes…are juxtaposed in order to suggest restricted perspective and to complicate otherwise flat, everyday surfaces" (p. 53). The narrative context in which

extraliterary discourses are incorporated is a major determining factor in the dialogic function of incorporated discourse. The heteroglottic potential of incorporated extraliterary genres can be contained and repressed through the presence of a dominant authorial or narratorial point of view. This can also occur through a lack of register differentiation, whereby the stylistic and linguistic peculiarities that characterize particular forms of social and professional discourse are either disguised or ignored, and through the treatment of narrative discourses in general as transparent media which simply conveys information rather than as specific linguistic codes which construct and inscribe this information with meanings. For example, in novels such as *Came Back to Show You I Could Fly* (Klein, 1989), *Dodger* (Gleeson, 1990), *Letters from the Inside* (Marsden, 1991) and *The Toll Bridge* (Chambers, 1992), the dialogic potential of extraliterary discourses and double-stranded narration is repressed by the presence of dominant authorial viewpoints, naive realist assumptions about the representational function of language, and a common failure to represent register variation in represented character discourse. These three characteristics combine to deny characters and implied readers subject positions independent of the dominant authorial position. In comparison, novels such as Chambers's *Breaktime* (1978), Hunt's *Backtrack* (1986), Crew's *Strange Objects* (1990/ 1991), and Mark's *The Hillingdon Fox* (1990) consistently foreground their own textuality and discursivity and use extraliterary genres to construct characters and readers as active subjects.

HETEROGLOSSIA AND POLYFOCALIZATION IN BACKTRACK

Peter Hunt's use of extraliterary discourses in *Backtrack* (1986) is particularly complex and self-reflexive. He combines a range of extraliterary discourses, narratorial modes and focalization strategies so as to explore and play with notions of historical accuracy and authenticity. The plot centres on a "mysterious" train crash. This event is narrated at least five times from different characters' points of view and using different narrative and discursive modes, as the following passages show. Passages (2) and (4) are third person narration focalized by characters present; the other three are all represented as retrospective accounts using extraliterary discourses, namely, newspaper, report and letter. Passages (1) and (5) are represented directly using typographical features peculiar to newspaper and letter genres and (3) is represented indirectly. In all of these five passages, narrative point of view and discursive mode are used to construct subject positions for speakers and focalizers in relation to the represented events—subject positions are determined by time and place, social position and occupation, attitude and emotional viewpoint and, in the case of the

textual accounts, implied audience and the context of writing. The different meanings attributed to the event are indicative of the varying contexts, viewpoints and discourses used to describe it.

1. Newspaper report (direct representation) Our correspondent in Hereford last night informed us of another shocking railway catastrophe. A train which was carrying the Rt-Hon Sir Edward Marks, His Majesty's Minister for Military Supply, was derailed near the village of Elmcote with terrible results. Eight persons are reported to have perished in the holocaust occasioned by fire. Sir Edward, who was fortunately uninjured, gave such assistance as he could together with other rescuers. Further details will be given in later editions, but it is already conjectured that the accident may represent an attempt on the life of the Minister by agents of a hostile nation. *The Times Friday, 3rd September, 1915* (p. 3)
2. Third person narration focalized by Harry, George and Will And through the trees down to the footpath just as the light changes and the gush of heat sears up the eyes and up the carriages; one hanging half off the viaduct, another on its end, resting on the tender of the engine, and leaning against the pillar of the second arch. The engine still shuddering and the upper cranks turning in the plough of trees and path, the black nose among burning bushes. Lit faces over the parapet, (p. 11)
3. Inquest Report: third person retrospective narration, quoted by Jack (indirect representation) "The engine crossed the up line, broke through the parapet of the viaduct, and fell directly into the lane below, dragging the first coach with it. The couplings between the second and third coaches fractured, and the second coach remained suspended on the parapet at an angle of about 40 degrees from the vertical. The third coach was slewed across the running lines, and the fourth had over-ridden it and was at a steep angle; the front half of the first-class set had over-ridden this, and was at a similarly steep angle; the second half was on its side. Due to the superior construction of these vehicles, there was comparatively little structural damage to them. The remainder of the train remained upright on the rails." (p. 61)
4. Third person narration, focalized by Edward The door that was on the right seems to be underwater: dark green light: no, just bushes and unmistakably a rail down in the ground. The carriage creaking and smelling worse, momently. But at least there's an open window, or a hole, and Edward leans across and up, elbowing his body out of the open space to

air and trees; the carriage almost on end, and on its side. Climbing out and looking down the streaked roof, and an horrific sight: splintered and shattered wood, and crushed shapes, and the coach hanging off over the parapet of a bridge. People running to the broken brickwork and looking down, where there is smoke and fire and noise. The sides of the carriage pitted and seared with gravel, like a heavy bombardment of shells, (p. 62)

5. Letter: first person retrospective narration by Ashley Cartwright (direct representation)

   When I came to myself, the air was filled with smoke and steam, and I found that the carriage had reared upwards. Getting to the window, I perceived that I was nearly 20 feet from the ground, and as I looked out (risking injury from the shards of shattered glass) I felt the carriage lurch violently, and the carriage that was caught aslant the turn on the parapet of the viaduct fell away in a terrible gush and inferno of flame. At the very last second, I saw a man leap from it to the parapet, where he was barely held from plunging to his death by two other men. The scene was lighted by an unearthly glow, as of stygian fires, (p. 68)

There is a lot of repetition of descriptive and nominal terms in the five passages, and the physical positioning of the carriages and engine is roughly the same in each account. However, speakers and focalizers are constructed in subject positions which vary according to their physical, emotional and attitudinal relation to the event, their occupation and social position, and hence their access to technical, social and cultural discursive codes. Passage (1) is represented as reported indirect discourse of an unspecified other—as in "Our correspondent in Hereford informed us of…"—and is the most physically distanced from the event. Passage (3) is narrated by an unspecified person from an unspecified position, but the detail of the account suggests a position of physical and temporal proximity. Passages (2), (4) and (5) are all narrated from the viewpoints of characters present, though their physical positions are different—Harry, George and Will (2) were all outside the train, while Edward (4) and Cartwright (5) were inside it. The time of narration also varies. Cartwright's account is retrospective and the repetition of the first person pronoun—as in "I came," "I found," "I perceived"—draws attention to the status of his account as narrated text, and hence mediated and re-presented. In contrast, the use of present tense indirect narration and the omission of pronouns denoting the perceiving subject in passage (4) implies an illusion of unmediated narration of events. By describing the same event from a

number of different viewpoints using different kinds of discourse at different points in the novel, the text raises questions about the status and significance of the event(s) described and their ontological dependence on the position, voice and discourse of the narrating/focalizing subject. Insofar as each passage represents a different version of events, the meanings ascribed to these events vary according to point of view, context and, in the case of passages (1), (3) and (5), the purpose for writing. Does each passage represent the same event, and can it mean in the same way each time it is described?

Of the five passages, the language used to describe the accident in (1) is the most sensationalized—as in "shocking," "terrible," "perished," "catastrophe" and "holocaust." However, terms like "catastrophe" and "holocaust" actually generalize the event and subordinate it to the war at large. The semantic impact of terms such as "shocking," "terrible" and "perished" is diminished, and the discourse thus conveys the speaker's physical and emotional distance from both the accident and the war. As "another shocking railway accident," it is a plot element in the metanarrative of war. This contrasts with the reference to war in passage (4)—as in "like a heavy bombardment of shells"—the specificity of which implies the immediacy of the perceiving subject (Edward) to both the train accident and to war itself. Ashley Cartwright's letter also features a mixture of sensationalist and generalizing discourse similar to that of the first passage, though the register is elevated and overtly literary. Cartwright's vocabulary—particularly the lexical set "inferno," "unearthly" and "stygian"—makes an intertextual link with mythic and religious metanarratives. The effect, however, of Cartwright's over-the-top language and literary allusions, combined with the long preamble which precedes his account, is parodic.

The five passages each reflect how register is used to invest the scene with significances which are largely determined by the attitudinal position of the focalizing or narrating subject and that subject's access to specific social and cultural codes and conventions. The generalizing discourse used in (1) and (5) is contrasted by the specificity of terms used in passages (2), (3) and (4). The semantic range of descriptive and referential terms in these three passages corresponds to the emotional stance and social and cultural knowledge of perceiving subjects. The emotive register of terms in (2) and (4) is roughly similar—as in "sears," "shuddering" and "burning" in (2), and "splintered," "shattered," "crushed," "pitted" and "seared" in (4)—and this contrasts with the more neutral and objective technical register of terms in (3). However, passages (2) and (3) both use a technical register—as in "viaduct," "tender," "upper cranks" and "couplings," which contrasts with

the vague descriptive terms used in (4), such as "the parapet of a bridge." These contrasts in register are indicative of characters' physical and attitudinal points of view as well as their access to technical codes and knowledge. Will, George and Harry, who focalize passage (2), and the unspecified writer of passage (3) are familiar with the technical language used to talk about trains and viaducts, whereas Edward (4) is not. The textualized subject positions of speakers and focalizers also constructs different significances. The three textual accounts [(1), (3) and (5)] are overtly oriented toward an addressee, the construction of a narrating voice and the production of significances within a larger social and cultural context. The newspaper is primarily concerned with representing an accident of war and the audience constructed by the discourse is characterised by an interest in sensation, disaster and narrative complication and resolution—hence the postulation of causes and the subordination of events to the metanarrative of war. The account in the inquest report is an implicit attempt to affirm that liability for the accident did not lie with either the train or the railway. And Cartwright's letter is an overt attempt by Cartwright to construct and present himself as a writer, within a literary tradition of (Dickensian) writers about train crashes and of grand mythical narratives.

Extraliterary discourses and genres which are incorporated in texts as textual components have an important function in the dialogizing of the narrative discourse. They incorporate a range of social and ideological viewpoints within texts and foreground the role of language in the construction of meanings for represented events, and thereby construct more active implied reader subject positions. The remainder of this chapter will examine the use of diary and epistolary genres as organizing principles which determine the structure of the novel as a whole and the implications these narrative strategies have for the representation of subjectivity.

DIARY AND EPISTOLARY NOVELS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITY

Diaries, journals and letters are extraliterary discursive genres which have had a significant role in the historical development of the novel (Porter, 1984; Martens, 1985). For Bakhtin, they also have an important function for the incorporation and representation of heteroglossia in the novel (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 323). The remainder of this chapter examines the use of diary and epistolary genres in *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989), *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991) and *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991), where they function mainly as organizing principles to structure the novels. Diary forms in each of these novels represent characters as occupying narrative

subject positions not dominated by an authorial or narratorial position or voice. A common concern is with the textual construction of the writing or narrating subject: the act of writing a diary entails the simultaneous construction of a narrated or represented self and a narrating voice. The latter involves the construction of a subject position from which to write or narrate and the appropriation of socio-ideological discourses and narrative forms with which to write or narrate.

Diary genres are used in these three novels to construct double narrative structures. *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991) and *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991) both comprise two parallel journals which frame and contextualize each other. *The Hillingdon Fox* is a double-stranded diary novel which consists of the two diaries of two brothers written eight years apart, Hugh (age seventeen in 1990) and Gerald (age eighteen in 1982). The diaries are represented in the novel as alternating daily extracts. Both diarists are involved in documenting a war: Gerald records the Falklands War; and Hugh records the opening of the Gulf conflict. Both also record events concerning their family and friends. The viewpoints of both narrators are limited and this, combined with the time gap between their narratives, produces narrative gaps and discrepancies. Implied readers are thereby positioned in active reading roles and are required to infer both story details and significances. *Strange Objects* is a double-stranded multitemporal novel in which diary genres are represented at two diegetic levels of narration. The primary narrative is set in 1986 and concerns a young man, Stephen Messenger, who finds a series of "strange objects," among them the (fictive) diary of Wouter Loos (a Dutch murderer who was cast away on the coast of Western Australia in 1623 with another murderer Jan Pelgrom). The primary narrative is represented as a project book, entitled "The Messenger Documents," which Messenger has apparently compiled and assembled before disappearing, and this manuscript is presented as evidence in an inquiry into his disappearance. The project book functions as a structuring principle which organizes the novel as whole, and it includes within it a newspaper copy of a translation of Loos's journal.

The Blooding (Wheatley, 1987/1989) centers on a conflict in a small Australian logging town between the local timber cutters and a group of conservationists. It is narrated by Colum, who in lives in the town, and who has an affinity with the forest and spends much of his time in a secret place in the forest that his grandfather showed him as a child. His father is a logger, however, and when the conservationists arrive in town Col comes into conflict with his father through his involvement with them. The novel opens with Col in the hospital with two broken legs,

having fallen from a tree which was in the path of a bulldozer driven by his father, and his lawyer asks him to write a statement, giving an account of events leading up to this. Thus, the narrative takes the form of a retrospective account written by Col. However, the status of the document that he writes is ambiguous. It is a letter, a diary and a confession, and thus combines the narrative strategies of the epistolary novel, the diary novel and a legal statement or confession. Throughout the narrative Col remains unsure about whom the document is addressed to—the lawyer, himself or an unknown future reader—and why he is writing it. This ambiguity destabilizes Col's subject position (as diarist, letter writer, confessor) and his own notions of story and significance, thus generating multiple story/discourse times and textualized subject positions both for addressees and for Col himself.

Epistolary and diary novel genres have received critical attention from narrative and genre theorists who have focused primarily upon the temporal disparities between the narrative discourse and the story and relations between narrators and narratees (Prince, 1975; Porter, 1984; Martens, 1985; Genette, 1986). Diary and epistolary novels are an example of what Genette terms "interpolated narration": narration which occurs "between the moments of the action" and in several narrative instances (1986, p. 217). The journal or letter are to some extent both "a medium of the narrative and an element in the plot" (p. 217); in other words, the acts of writing and narration are both the object of the story and elements of the discourse. A crucial aspect of narrative which diary and epistolary genres foreground is the construction within language of a speaking subject (the narrator or diarist), a narrated subject, and an addressee or narratee. However, a peculiarity of diary fiction is the apparent absence of a narratee: the diary is most frequently seen as a private mode of writing in which the diarist writes "essentially for himself" (Martens, 1985, p. 4). If, as Bakhtin argues, all utterances are oriented toward an other, toward a speaker's idea of that other, then to whom is the diary addressed, and what is the relation between the narrator, the narratee (or apparently absent narratee) and implied readers? A tacit assumption in conventional diary and autobiographical fiction is that the narrating subject denotes a centered and unified self which coincides with the narrated subject. However, Barthes's (1977b) parody of autobiographical genres has foregrounded the implicit doubleness of the subject in the act of self-narration, generated by disparities between the narrating and the narrated subjects (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 40). The convention that the diarist writes for her/himself creates a further split between the subject as narrator,

narrated and narratee. These fragmentations and doublings are comparable to the use of the *doppelgänger* that I discussed in Chapter 3, and can also be understood in Bakhtinian and Lacanian terms as configurations of the relations between self and other and of the fragmented subject. The idea that the diarist writes for, about and in the voice of different selves represents a variation on the idea of the subject as being constructed via the appropriation of the position and viewpoint of the other. The narrated subject and the narratee are both aspects of the subject's internalization of the other. The disparity between the subject as narrator, narrated and narratee is analogous to that disparity described by Lacan and Bakhtin between the subject as perceiver and perceived in relation to the mirror. The text of a letter or diary, like the mirror, constitutes the field of the other in which the subject is constructed or narrated.

TIME AND ORDER IN DIARY FICTION

Interpolated narration in novels such as *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/ 1989), *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991) and *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1990) problematizes narrative order, beginnings and endings, and it foregrounds disparities between the story and its representation in the narrative discourse. Characteristically, the diary is a fragmented, discontinuous and incomplete form. Its apparently random and contingent narrative structure implies the illusion of an unstructured spontaneous "artless," and therefore "natural" account, lacking a beginning and an ending, but potentially focused on significant events or incidents. However, any fictional account always begins and ends somewhere, thereby implying a narrative structure "that imparts meaning as well as order" (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 62). The problem of beginnings is flaunted in *The Hillingdon Fox,* for example, in Hugh's comments about starting a diary:

> I'm already beginning to wish I'd started to write all this when I first thought of it, last month. Then I'd have had a complete record of the conflict… It's *annoying,* that's all, starting in the middle of something. Still, that's life isn't it? You always come in in the middle. I was born in 1973. I must find out what I arrived in the middle of. (my ellipsis, Mark, 1991, p. 9)

The narrative structure of the diary apparently reflects the structure of a human life; it opens and closes *in medias res*. Hugh's comment contrasts ironically with the first entry of Gerald's diary in which he overtly attempts to construct a subject position from which to begin:

> Greetings to the Twenty-First Century! Let me introduce myself. My name is Gerald Marshall and I am eighteen years old, having been born on January 17th 1964. I live at 8, Grosvenor Avenue, Calderley, Oxon, with my parents Anthony and Elizabeth Marshall, and my brothers, Geoffrey and Hugh. (p. 10)

Gerald's listing of his name, age, address, family members, their names, ages and so on is an overt attempt to situate himself and to construct an illusion of a narrative beginning, as opposed to an opening. Implicit here is also an attempt by Gerald to construct an image of himself as an objective reporter of events. The novel ends abruptly when the two brothers cease writing, at the point at which Gerald decides to put the diary in the time capsule (and is about to find out the truth about whether or not his father is having an affair) and Hugh is about to open the time capsule where Gerald's diary is hidden (along with other unknown items). Thus the point at which the novel closes is also the point at which it opened; it begins and ends in the middle of things.

The temporal situatedness of the act of narration is also foregrounded in *The Hillingdon Fox* by disparities between the story and the narrative discourse. This relation is treated playfully in Gerald's unintentional and indirect reporting of a relationship between two of Gerald's friends, Jo Ann Rugg and Mark Lovell, through which the disparity between discourse order (Gerald's narration) and story order (as it is reconstructed retrospectively by Gerald and by readers) is ironically foregrounded. The main events of the story are narrated inadvertently by Gerald—for example, his note of Jo Ann and Mark's absence from the meeting (p. 24) and account of Jo Ann crying in the library (pp. 59–60). The story is also recorded, again inadvertently, on a video which contains footage of Jo Ann visiting an ante-natal clinic, Mark and Mr. Rugg having a fight outside a Laura Ashley store, and Mark and Jo Ann meeting outside the town hall. These story components, which take place on the third and fifth of April, are only gradually revealed in Gerald's narrative over the period from the fourth to the eighteenth of April as he inadvertently narrates them and, especially, as he describes the video film (pp. 76–77, 89–91 and 94–95). It is only after he sees the video for the second and third times (pp. 89–91 and 94–95) that he begins to notice the relationship between what had appeared to be unrelated contingent occurrences and to construct these story elements as a connected narrative sequence, which is that Jo Ann, thinking she was pregnant, had told Mark (the father to be) and her parents, and after a fight with Jo Ann's father, Mark had run away (pp. 111 and 116–117).

In *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991), Crew incorporates the conventions of interpolated narration in a way which opposes story and discourse aspects of the narrative. The documentary material comprising Stephen Messenger's scrapbook is in chronological order, a fact that ostensibly implies that it has been compiled over the four-month period which it covers. In this way, it constructs an implied reader position which would assume a reading of the text as a diary narrative. However, the only entry narrated by Messenger which is dated is the final letter to Hope Michaels (p. 175). It would seem, then, that "The Messenger Documents" (as Messenger's scrapbook is referred to in the novel) have been selectively collected and arranged by Messenger from a retrospective point of view, as if this viewpoint were situated in the present of the story. This retrospective structuring of the discourse, by a clearly unreliable narrator, has the effect of undermining and subverting the story represented in the narrative discourse. "The Messenger Documents" are framed and structured by an introduction and afterword by. Dr Hope Michaels, to whom the manuscript has been addressed and sent, and who occupies a diegetically higher editorial position. Michaels also disrupts the apparent chronology of the story when she withholds crucial "story" information until the final pages of the novel, namely, that Stephen Messenger's father had died three months prior to the point at which the novel begins—a detail which possibly explains Messenger's dreams of blood and clearly unhinged state of mind. Thus, Michaels replicates the strategies of deception deployed by Messenger, and ultimately by Crew. Whereas disparities between story and discourse components in *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991) place characters and readers in similar interpretative positions (that is readers infer the "story" along with Gerald and Hugh) the treatment of story/discourse relations in *Strange Objects* isolates, and ultimately disempowers, its readers who are deceived not just by the "author," but also by characters and narrators at all levels of narration.

Beginnings, narrative order and the very act of narration are all also problematized in the opening of *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989), where the narrator, Colum, is instructed to write an account of the events leading up to his confinement in hospital:

> The Lawyer said to write down what happened.
> *'Everything?'* I said.
> *'Everything,'* he said, 'The whole sequence of events.' (1989, p. 1)

> 'Just begin at the beginning,' he said very patiently, 'and work through to the middle, and end at the end. Pretend you're just telling a story.' (1989, p. 2).

Colum's attempts to follow the lawyer's instructions are frustrated from the outset, as the point at which the sequence of events could be said to have "begun" becomes more difficult to situate. The temporal disparity between the story and the discourse is foregrounded by the combination of interpolated and retrospective narrational modes and a range of addressees. Colum writes a journal (wherein he records daily events in the hospital), a letter (which is addressed to a fictive reader and is personal in tone) and a (retrospective) legal statement or confession (which is addressed to a lawyer and which strives for objectivity and linearity). The temporal relation between story and discourse is further complicated through the construction of four kinds of time: story, discourse, historical and mythic. The interrelations between these concepts of time can be seen in the following passage.

> The story I'm simply trying to tell about what happened in Cornwall in that little bit of time from Thursday afternoon when I met Jade when I was hunting, till Monday morning when the old man ran me down with the bulldozer, all seems to get gobbled up by talking about the hospital or how I got into the gang with Scott or how I used to get on best with Mum till I won the old man to me with fighting and sport or how the happiest times of my life have been in my land. Plus there's the stuff about Grandad too. (p. 37)

Story time corresponds to "that little bit of time from Thursday afternoon…till Monday morning." However, the present moment of narration in the hospital (discourse time), events which happened in Colum's past and in the past of his forebears (historical time) and the stories told to Colum by his grandfather (mythic time) constantly impinge upon his attempts to "just tell the story." These strategies draw attention not only to the effects of retrospective narration and appropriated discourses upon the perception and representation of past events, but also to the need to historically situate these events within the confines of a metanarrative through which events are inscribed with cultural meanings. Each of these notions of time presupposes a beginning and a narrative structure, and thematically the novel centers on the (deferred) desire for an originary moment and a stable subject position from which to narrate.

The secret "palace" that Col's grandfather had shown him as a child, and which is Col's own secret or private place, is in fact the site of an earlier settlement. The fairy tales which his grandfather tells represent this historical settlement as myth or folklore, thereby obscuring its historical significance, as the "first settlement" of the town of Cornwall, in Australia[2]. The representation

of the settlement as a "palace," that is, as a mythic place, constructs the past and the original moment of settlement as mysterious and other (it is unfamiliar for Colum and for readers). The moment of (white) settlement is located in mythic or fairy tale time rather than in historical time and is thus represented as immanent, that is, outside of conventional linear concepts of time. In this way, the "palace"—that is the archaeological remains of the earlier settlement—is represented within the generic conventions of the pastoral, that is as a part of the forest and its metaphoric "greenness"; it is a "natural" place outside the closedness of Cornwall society. However, growing at the center of this "palace," this archetypal "wilderness," are magnolias and herbs—plants which are not native to Australia. These exotic plants disclose the pastoral myth underlying Grandad's (and the text's) construction of history; a myth which is not only homocentric, but also anglocentric (*see* Scutter, 1991). Finally, the forest is "saved," not because of any intrinsic value it might have in itself as wilderness, as conservationist discourse might imply, but because it is centered around, enclosing and preserving, a remnant of the colonial past, that is, a remnant of (white) human society. The pastoral myth merely legitimates the colonialization of the wilderness and postulates an originary moment which is coterminous with (white) human civilization. While the ending of the novel demystifies Col's reading and thus reveals the cultural constructedness of place and the past, the ideological apparatus through which the moment of colonization is constructed as originary is neither interrogated nor dismantled.

AUTHORITY AND AUTHENTICITY IN DIARY FICTION

Historically, epistolary and diary genres have been associated with the conventions of literary realism (Porter, 1984, p. 18). Typically, these genres have been used as a means of authenticating the fictive text and the world it depicts, though in self-reflexive modes of fiction they are often also a means of interrogating that world. The diary novel has a double status as fiction and as written document, which depends upon the implicit agreement that the fictive act of writing coincides with that of narration. For example, in *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991) Hugh declares that his diary will record his "innermost thoughts" and that he will not "cross anything out" because "you can't cross out what you think" (p. 7). The assertion implies that writing, narrating and thought are all coincident, that is, they occur simultaneously. Thus, two dominant thematic concerns in diary fiction are with the physical processes of writing and the materiality of the written document, and with the relations between representation, authenticity and authority (Prince, 1975, p. 479). The use of the diary form is associated with a desire to confer authority through a pretence of authenticity. The

documentary status of the diary enables it to function as a literary found object, as the diaries of Wouter Loos in *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991) and Gerald in *The Hillingdon Fox* are represented, though its fictive status potentially undermines and subverts this authority, particularly in metafictive novels. This ambiguity as to the status of the fictive document also underlies Gerald's journal and the time capsule itself in which it is to be placed. A "time capsule" is a sealed container in which objects and documents are placed in the hope that they will display the current state of a civilization to whomever might eventually find it at a later time. In other words, a time capsule is an attempt in the present to construct the present as a historical (pretextualized) artifact, and to dictate future representations of that present as past. The stated purpose of the contributors to the time capsule in *The Hillingdon Fox* is to put together "as true a picture as we can contrive of the state of the nation" (p. 10). However, the term "contrive," with its connotations of stratagem, plot and trickery, draws attention to the extent to which this picture is one which is inscribed with cultural (and possibly fictive) assumptions about the present and future and about history.

This concern with authenticity and authority extends to the positions and functions of represented diary writers. The idea of the "time capsule" as an attempt to inscribe and circumscribe narrated events in the present with meaning underlies the motivation of journal writers such as Gerald in *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991), and Wouter Loos in *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991), both of whom are overtly motivated by a concern to produce and project a specific image of themselves. The activity of writing a diary or letter entails the representation of a narrated subjectivity and the construction of a narrating subject. Both are contingent upon the writer's adoption of a subject position in relation to the represented world and to an actual, imagined or absent narratee. These relations hinge on the diarist's conception of the context of her/his writing and of whom s/he is writing for. In *The Hillingdon Fox* and *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989), the context of journal writing is inherently double: it is both a public and a private activity. As a transcription of daily events, a diary can be an impersonal daily record of public social and historical events, as terms like "journal" or "chronicle" would imply. This is suggested in Hugh's description of the practice of "Mass Observation" in *The Hillingdon Fox*—this is "a kind of national diary of what it was like to be alive at the time" (Mark, 1991, p. 7). A diary is also a private, secret and personal record of one's "innermost thoughts," and Hugh's description of himself as "sitting alone in an empty room…writing down innermost thoughts" (Mark, 1991, p. 7) is a conventionalized image of the fictive diary

writer (Porter, 1984, pp. 15–16). However, even where it is essentially a private activity, it is one situated within a specific time and place.

The complexity (and inseparability) of this double context is a central thematic concern in *The Hillingdon Fox,* where Gerald and Hugh write for quite different reasons and with different addressees in mind. Both have a sense that they are living in politically significant times and thus see themselves as involved in the activity of recording political and social "history" as it occurs. For Gerald, this means constructing an accurate and objective social history (p. 10). Although he writes with a hypothetical reader in mind, he finds himself writing increasingly for himself in his obsession to understand and ascribe meanings to the events and incidents he records. Hugh is more conscious than Gerald of his own personal reasons for writing: he writes about the political events around him in an attempt to make sense of his own position in relation to them. Both brothers attempt to exclude themselves, their families and relationships from their accounts in order to focus on larger social and political issues. However, both find that their own positions and viewpoints impinge upon the objectivity of such a document in ways which foreground the relations between representation, the context of writing and the socio-ideological position of the writer.

Gerald and Hugh each record a war: Hugh records the start of the Gulf conflict in 1990; and Gerald records the Falklands War in 1982. These external events imply a cultural context within and against which they are writing and, to some extent, structure their writing. Their diary entries either begin or end with references to the current state of the "international situation," and they both appropriate media terminology to describe public and political events. These appropriated media discourses mediate historical and social contexts and ideologically situate the two narratives. A dominant concern for both diarists is the relation between the self and the world, and Gerald and Hugh appropriate media discourses as a means of constructing for themselves subject positions in relation to the public political worlds they describe, and in relation to their imagined addressees. Gerald's use of appropriated discourse tends to be unreflective. He simply reiterates the discourses of economic rationalism, Thatcherism, late capitalism, war and patriotism—as in "Perhaps all this will revive the sense of what it means to be British, slow to anger but terrible when roused!", for example (p. 23).

One effect of the double narrative structure is that Hugh's narrative constructs a position from which to interrogate the ideological assumptions inscribed in the discourses which comprise Gerald's narrative, and hence draws attention to the semantic instability of these discourses. Hugh's writing

about war and the public world is more introspective than that of Gerald. His incorporation of the discourse of war tends toward the parodic, such as "'A search for a way back from the brink'—is what they said on the News last night after dinner. It *was* calamaris, by the way…" (p. 13), where the serious and the mundane are ironically juxtaposed. His appropriations of literary and popular humanist discourses—as in references to *1984* (p. 118), Donne (p. 123) and Bob Geldof (p. 125)—further undermine Gerald's position. The double narrative structure and the temporality of the diary mode also draw attention to the restrictions placed on interpretation by interpolated narration, and by the already textualized form of the history which Gerald and Hugh record. The time of narration is transient and momentary, and both diarists lack the necessary distance from events from which to interpret retrospectively their historical and political significances. Their access to events occurring in the Falklands and Gulf wars is only via the television and newspapers, that is, already textualized accounts of events. The instability of knowledge about the present, or the past, for that matter, is highlighted in the last entry in Gerald's diary, which refers to the sinking of the *General Belgrano* (apparently) inside the exclusion zone (p. 159). Hugh has already described the process whereby this event was selectively recorded, and how the account was changed as the war progressed (p. 119). Although the actual circumstances of the sinking of the Belgrano did eventually emerge—that it was sunk outside the exclusion zone, though the reasons for this are still open to question—Hugh's narrative draws attention to the processes through which events are constructed and obsfucated within language. This destabilizing of the capacity of language to represent and ascribe meaning to events is replicated within the text, particularly in Gerald's narrative. In early diary entries, he attempts to list events which occur and so represent the world objectively. However, as his diary progresses, he becomes increasingly obsessed with the relations between different events and people and the meanings of events.

NARRATORS, NARRATEES AND IMPLIED READERS IN DIARY FICTION

The construction of a subjectivity and representations of the relations between the self and the world are tied up with the diary or letter writer's conception of the other for whom they perceive themselves as writing. Prince and Porter have both argued that while a fictive diarist typically claims that s/he is writing for him/herself, they often have an addressee or reader in mind (Prince, 1975, p. 479), and that even the commonplace notion that a diarist "writes for him/herself" implicitly assumes the trace of an "addressee in that self sufficiently

objectified to be written for" (Porter, 1984, p. 10). In other words, the text of the diary writer who writes for him/herself functions like a Lacanian or Bakhtinian mirror as the field of the other within and through which the subject is constructed.

The main difference between a diary novel and an epistolary novel is that the latter constructs a more active textual role for its narratee (Porter, 1984, p. 10). The narratee of epistolic narration can take a number of forms: a possible future reader (who may be the diarist's future self), an addressee who is implicitly constructed within the discourse, or a narrated self as distinct from the self who narrates. The writings of Colum in *The Blooding* (Wheatley, 1987/1989), of Wouter Loos and Messenger in *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991) and Gerald in *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991) all constitute examples of epistolic-diary narration. Each of these diary writers is to some extent aware of an addressee, either implicit or explicit. Hugh is the only diary writer in these novels who writes essentially for himself, but he is always self-consciously aware that someone might read what he writes, even if that someone is only his future self. A significant portion of Colum's narrative in *The Blooding* is taken up with his attempts to work out who he is writing for and why. He attempts to write a legal statement or confession, but his narrative style and register constantly shift between public and private modes of address to both an other and to himself. Gerald, Stephen Messenger and Wouter Loos attempt to construct their narratees more overtly than either Hugh or Colum. This is contingent with their attempts to "narrate" themselves, that is, to use their narration to construct and inscribe themselves as unified subjects. Ambiguities in Colum's and Hugh's narration (and which also develop in Gerald's narration) articulate a view of a subjectivity which is provisional and subject to change.

In *Strange Objects* (Crew, 1990/1991), there are overt (though clumsy) analogies between the narratorial positions of Loos and Messenger and the Barthesian notion of the split narratorial subject (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 40). These are represented in a disagreement between Professor Hans Freudenberg, the translator of Wouter Loos's journal (pp. 59–60), and the writer of a letter to the editor signed "sceptic" (p. 72) about Wouter Loos's journal. This disagreement concerns the relation between the intention and personality of Loos (the author) and the "voice" and subject position of the writer, as it is inscribed in and constructed by the discourse of the journal. Loos's journal is addressed to his peers and is clearly an attempt to clear his name (regarding the charges of murder for which he was cast away). Freudenberg's interpretation assumes a direct correspondence between the "voice" of the writer and the personality of the author—that is, between the narrated and narrating subject. The sceptic interprets this relation as disparate: the author has adopted a voice

which does not correspond with his personality in order to achieve certain intentions and to disempower his readers—the intended reader of Loos's journal, according to the "sceptic," is one who will be seduced by the "honeyed tones of its author" (p. 72). Presumably, the reader who can read between the lines of these "honeyed tones" and deconstruct the text can also gain access to the "real" (murderer/rapist) author. Both commentators are concerned with what of Loos's character, anterior to the journal, can be extracted from the text, and with how to reconcile what they know of Loos the person with Loos the writer. And while the sceptical letter writer distinguishes between implied readers and actual readers, both reading positions are, in Barthesian terms, "author-centered": "The explanation of a work is always sought in the man or woman who produced it" (Barthes, 1977a, p. 143). Both Freudenberg and the sceptic, in assuming that narrative discourse can simply reflect or disguise its author, rather than construct an image of that author as a narrated (and therefore represented) self, thereby confuse the personality of the author, anterior to writing (a construct of what is known of his past actions), with the subject of the enunciation, the speaker inscribed in the text of the journal. The notion of the essential subject underlies this confusion and the disagreement between Freudenberg and the sceptic hinges on how to define this essentiality. The sceptic sees Loos as inherently evil—essentiality is thus correlated with the idea of original sin. Freudenberg sees Loos's writing as an act of atonement whereby Loos redeems his inherent humanity—essentiality is thus correlated with the humanity of the subject. The biblical discourse of Loos's journal implies that the writing is a form of baptism or redemption—"I will not become new through blood but through words. I will use the words of this book to begin" (p. 173).

These ideas have implications for the representations of Stephen Messenger, constructed in "the Messenger Documents" by Messenger himself and by Hope Michaels, the "editor" of those documents. Messenger experiences subjectivity as fragmented and doubled through the presence of a *doppelgänger,* the "other Stephen Messenger." In a letter to Messenger, Hope Michaels compares him to James Dean and Messenger subsequently describes his *doppelgänger* as a James Dean figure. Crew thus represents the relation between self and other as locked in the narcissistic stage of the mirror phase wherein the narrating subject identifies with the image of the self which is constructed by the other. Underlying the novel, then, is a desire for an authentic and stable subjectivity which would transcend the alienation and fragmentation that Messenger and Loos experience and which would thus transcend the gap between the narrating and narrated subject(s) and the narratee.

The diary novel functions on two interrelated levels: the narrator's purposes for writing, which are informed by assumptions about whom s/he writes for; and the functions the diary form has within the fiction itself for the production of meanings and the construction of implied reader subject positions. The narratee of a diary novel is a function of the narrator's discourse and intentions—whether implicitly or explicitly stated by the narrator. The fictive act of writing a diary or letter is a framed communicative act outside of which implied readers are situated (Martens, 1985, p. 33). It thereby constitutes an element of the story as well as the discourse, and the position of an implied reader depends not on the actuality of a narratee, but on the relations between the narrator, the narrative discourse and story. In *The Hillingdon Fox* (Mark, 1991) the double narrative structure and Gerald's overt construction of a narratee foreground the distinction between narratees and implied readers and the status of the narratee as a function of the narrating subject. The narratee position is constructed overtly through direct address, and covertly in Gerald's implicit assumptions about his readers and as an adjunct of the subject position that he constructs for himself. Direct address and explanations are overt attempts to construct a narratee position and to predict, dictate and circumscribe expected attitudes and responses. His use of the discourse of patriotism, references to "feminist" friends (p. 29) and to "the liberal egalitarianism that has for decades undermined our schools" (p. 39) covertly situate the narratee in a position which is attitudinally and ideologically aligned with his own. The narratee position is thus a replication of the narrated subject position. It is an ideal other through and for whom Gerald constructs an image of himself, as narrated subject. The overt construction of the narratee in Gerald's narrative effectively denies implied readers a passive reading position. His use of pretentious registers—such as, "We stand on the threshold of maturity and prepare to disperse into adulthood" (p. 17)—and his narration of ironical exchanges between his parents (e.g., pp. 16–17), undercuts his viewpoint and makes his discourse the object of irony and parody. Hugh's construction of a narratee is much less overt than that of Gerald, but the double narrative structure constructs two narratee positions. This, combined with strategies which undercut Gerald's and Hugh's narratives, effects a clear distinction between narratee and implied reader positions.

CONCLUSION

Incorporated extraliterary genres and discourses shape the textual construction and representation of subjectivity by enabling the inclusion of a wide range of ideological and social discourses and viewpoints and the construction of active implied reader subject positions. The effects of using a range of discursive

genres in narrative can potentially be similar to those of the polyphonic strategies discussed in Chapter 2, in that characters and narrators can be represented as occupying discrete subject positions within a text and the role of language and subject position in the construction of meaning(s) can be foregrounded. As my discussion of *Backtrack* has shown, the combination of multiple extraliterary textual elements and multiple character focalizers com-plicates the representation and meaning(s) of events because of the range and number of social, ideological and discursive points of view that are represented.

Diary and epistolary genres have an important function in the textual and discursive construction of subjectivity. I have focused on some of the peculiar narrative features of these genres, such as interpolated narration, the ambiguous position of the narratee and the distinct positions that these genres imply for narratees and implied readers, and their function in foregrounding concerns with representation and authenticity in the novels discussed. A common concern is with the simultaneous construction of a writing or narrating subject and a written or narrated self via the act of writing. This interest can in turn effect a fragmentation and/or doubling of the narratorial subject. Diary and letter genres in *The Hillingdon Fox, The Blooding* and *Strange Objects* all represent subjectivity as provisional and as formed in relation to others and to the world, despite character narrators' more or less articulated desires to project a stable and centered subjectivity for themselves.

The novels discussed in this chapter self-reflexively foreground the texts and discourses through which they are constructed, and the textual and discursive construction of the subject. The discussion has thus touched on some issues which are taken up more fully in the next chapter, where the focus is on the representation of extraliterary discourses in historiographic genres, with special reference to historiographic metafiction.

ENDNOTES

1. On discourse representation *see,* for example, Leech and Short (1981), McHale (1978) or Pateman (1989).

2. For Wheatley's Australian readers, the allusion to the "first settlement" of Australia—that is the arrival in Sydney of the first white settlers in 1788—is obvious. The term, "first settlement" mythicises the colonizing process, implying that the land was "unsettled" and therefore unoccupied, and that this moment marks a beginning for a history of Australia. Grandad's fairy tales in *The Blooding* take this mythicising process a step further, locating this moment of settlement in a mythic and therefore immanent past.