THE AMERICAN NOVEL

剑桥美国小说新论·1

（英文影印版）

New Essays on

Sister Carrie

《嘉莉妹妹》新论

Donald Pizer 编

北京大学出版社
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著作权合同登记　图字：01-2006-7200号
图书在版编目(CIP)数据

《嘉莉妹妹》新论 = New Essays on *Sister Carrie* / 皮泽尔(Pizer, D.)编. —北京：北京大学出版社，2007.1
(剑桥美国小说新论·1)
ISBN 978-7-301-11430-8

Ⅰ.嘉… Ⅱ.皮… Ⅲ.长篇小说-文学研究-美国-现代-英文
Ⅳ.I712.074

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2006)第157020号

Originally published by Cambridge University Press in 1991

书　　名：New Essays on *Sister Carrie*
《嘉莉妹妹》新论
著作责任者：Donald Pizer 编
组稿编辑：张　冰
责任编辑：刘　爽
标准书号：ISBN 978-7-301-11430-8/I·0865
出版发行：北京大学出版社
地　　址：北京市海淀区成府路205号　100871
网　　址：http://www.pup.cn
电　　话：邮购部 62752015　发行部 62750672
编辑部 62767347　出版部 62754962
电子邮箱：zbing@pup.pku.edu.cn
印 刷 者：北京宏伟双华印刷有限公司
经 销 者：新华书店
650毫米×980毫米　16开本　8.75印张　145千字
2007年1月第1版　2007年1月第1次印刷
定　　价：20.00元

导　读

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近年来，美国文学在我国很受欢迎。大专院校英语系纷纷开设美国文学选读和专题课，学生从中学到的大部分内容是美国小说。不仅如此，在本科毕业论文、硕士论文或博士论文方面，学生所选题材也大多为关于某部美国小说或某个美国小说家。然而，我们的学生往往热衷理论而对作品或作家缺乏深入细致的了解和分析。他们往往先大谈理论规则，然后罗列一些例证，不能很好地把理论和文本融会贯通，恰如其分地结合在一起。在这种情况下，我们需要一些好的参考资料来帮助学生更好地认识和理解他们在阅读或研究的作品和作家。《剑桥美国小说新论》正是这样一套优秀的参考书。

这套丛书的负责人是曾经主编过《哥伦比亚美国文学史》的艾默里·埃利奥特教授，并且由英国剑桥大学出版社在上世纪80年代中期开始陆续出书，至今仍在发行并出版新书，目前已有五十多种，不仅出平装本还有精装本。一套书发行二十多年还有生命力，估计还会继续发行，主要因为它确实从学生的需要出发，深受他们和教师的喜爱。

《剑桥美国小说新论》的编排方式比较统一。根据主编制定的原则，每本书针对一部美国文学历史上有名望的大作家的一本经典小说，论述者都是研究这位作家的知名学者。开篇是一位权威专家的论述，主要论及作品的创作过程、出版历史、当年的评价以及小说发表以来不同时期的主要评论和阅读倾向。随后是四到五篇论述，从不同角度用不同的批评方法对作品进行分析和阐

释。这些文章并非信手拈来，而是专门为这套丛书撰写的，运用的理论都比较新，其中不乏颇有新意的真知灼见。书的最后是为学生进一步学习和研究而提供的参考书目。由此可见，编书的学者们为了帮助学生确实煞费苦心，努力做到尽善尽美。

这五十多种书有早期美国文学家库珀的《最后的莫希干人》，也有当代试验小说大师品钦的《拍卖第49号》和厄普代克那曾被《时代》杂志评为1923年以来100部最佳小说之一的《兔子，跑吧！》；有我们比较熟悉的麦尔维尔的《白鲸》，也有我们还不太了解的他的《漂亮水手》；有中国学生很喜欢的海明威的长篇小说《永别了，武器》，令人想不到的是还有一本论述他所有的短篇小说的集子。有些大作家如亨利·詹姆斯、威廉·福克纳等都有两三本作品入选，但它们都分别有专门的集子。丛书当然涉及已有定论的大作家，包括黑人和白人作家（可惜还没有华裔作家的作品），但也包括20世纪70年代妇女运动中发掘出来的如凯特·肖邦的《觉醒》和佐拉·尼尔·赫斯顿的《他们眼望上苍》，甚至还有我国读者很熟悉的斯托夫人的《汤姆叔叔的小屋》。当年这部小说曾经风靡美国，在全世界都有一定的影响，后来被贬为“政治宣传”作品，从此在美国文学史上销声匿迹。70年代后随着要求扩大文学经典中女性和少数族裔作家的呼声日益高涨，人们才开始重新评价这部作品，分析它对日后妇女作家的影响、对黑人形象的塑造，甚至它在美国文学的哥特式传统中的地位等等。

这样的例子还有很多，例如威廉·迪恩·豪威尔斯和他的《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹》。以前人们只肯定他在发展现实主义文学和理论方面的贡献，对他的作品除了《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹》评价都不太高。但在这本新论文集子里编者对已有定论进行挑战，强调豪威尔斯的小说、他的现实主义跟当时的社会经济文化现状有很大的关系。他的小说既有其文学形式，又是一种社会力量。另外一位19世纪新英格兰作家萨拉·奥尼·裘威特过去一向被看成是乡土作家，现在学者们用女性主义观点强调她的《尖枞树之乡》对美国文学的贡献，分析当年的种族、民族主义和文学市场

对她写作的影响。用封底宣传语言来说，这本集子对美国文学研究、女性主义批评理论和美国研究等方面都会引起很大的兴趣。

还有一本书似乎在我们国家很少有人提起过——亨利·罗思的《就说是睡着了》。此书在20世纪30年代曾经风靡一时，此后长期销声匿迹，60年代又再度受到推崇。现在这部小说则是上面提到的《时代》杂志100部优秀小说中的一部，被认为是上个世纪头50年里最为出色的美国犹太小说、最优秀的现代主义小说之一。评论家认为集子里的文章采用心理分析、社会历史主义等批评方法探讨了有关移民、族裔和文化归属等多方面的问题。

这套集子里还出现了令人信服的新论点。很长时间内海明威一直被认为是讨厌女人的大男子主义者。但在关于他的短篇小说的论述里，作者通过分析《在密执安北部》，令人信服地证明海明威其实对妇女充满同情。不仅如此，这一论断还瓦解了海明威在《太阳照样升起》中充分暴露他的厌女症的定论。

然而，作者们并不侈谈理论或玩弄理论名词，所有的论断都是既以一定的理论为基础，又对文本进行深入的分析；既把理论阐述得深入浅出，又把作品分析得丝丝入扣，让人不由得不信服。他们能够做到这一点完全是因为他们了解学生的水平和需要。

我认为《剑桥美国小说新论》是一套很好的参考书。北京大学出版社购买版权，出版这套书是个有益于外国文学研究教学的决定。

Series Editor's Preface

In literary criticism the last twenty-five years have been particularly fruitful. Since the rise of the New Criticism in the 1950s, which focused attention of critics and readers upon the text itself – apart from history, biography, and society – there has emerged a wide variety of critical methods which have brought to literary works a rich diversity of perspectives: social, historical, political, psychological, economic, ideological, and philosophical. While attention to the text itself, as taught by the New Critics, remains at the core of contemporary interpretation, the widely shared assumption that works of art generate many different kinds of interpretation has opened up possibilities for new readings and new meanings.

Before this critical revolution, many American novels had come to be taken for granted by earlier generations of readers as having an established set of recognized interpretations. There was a sense among many students that the canon was established and that the larger thematic and interpretative issues had been decided. The task of the new reader was to examine the ways in which elements such as structure, style, and imagery contributed to each novel's acknowledged purpose. But recent criticism has brought these old assumptions into question and has thereby generated a wide variety of original, and often quite surprising, interpretations of the classics, as well as of rediscovered novels such as Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, which has only recently entered the canon of works that scholars and critics study and that teachers assign their students.

The aim of The American Novel Series is to provide students of American literature and culture with introductory critical guides to

American novels now widely read and studied. Each volume is devoted to a single novel and begins with an introduction by the volume editor, a distinguished authority on the text. The introduction presents details of the novel's composition, publication history, and contemporary reception, as well as a survey of the major critical trends and readings from first publication to the present. This overview is followed by four or five original essays, specifically commissioned from senior scholars of established reputation and from outstanding younger critics. Each essay presents a distinct point of view, and together they constitute a forum of interpretative methods and of the best contemporary ideas on each text.

It is our hope that these volumes will convey the vitality of current critical work in American literature, generate new insights and excitement for students of the American novel, and inspire new respect for and new perspectives upon these major literary texts.

Emory Elliott
University of California, Riverside

Note on the Text

Sister Carrie was published by Doubleday, Page and Company of New York in early November 1900. In later years, Dreiser made only one change in the text of the novel, in 1907, when he revised a passage in Chapter 1 describing Drouet. Several reviewers of the first edition had noted Dreiser's verbatim use in the passage of a portion of one of George Ade's sketches in *Fables in Slang* (1899), and Dreiser was undoubtedly sensitive to the charge of plagiarism. The 1907 revised text served as the text for many later reprintings of *Sister Carrie*, including the popular Modern Library edition of 1932 and the frequent paperback reprints of the novel since the 1950s. In 1981, however, the University of Pennsylvania Press published an edition of *Sister Carrie* based not on Dreiser's 1907 revision of the Doubleday, Page edition but on his handwritten first draft of the novel, a draft which contains many passages later cut by Dreiser and his friend Arthur Henry as well as a different ending. Although the editors of the Pennsylvania Edition claimed that Dreiser's cuts and revisions constitute his self-censorship of the novel in order to assure its publication and that the handwritten draft is therefore the superior work, these claims have met with serious objections, and many scholars have preferred to maintain the revised text of 1907 as the principal text of the novel. The essays in this volume therefore rely primarily on the Norton Critical Edition of *Sister Carrie*, edited by Donald Pizer (New York: Norton, 1970; 2nd ed., 1991), an edition which is based on Dreiser's 1907 revision of the Doubleday, Page edition. However, all students of Dreiser have also acknowledged the importance of the Pennsylvania Edition in making available for critical use Dreiser's uncut prepublication version of the novel. Thus, several of the

essays in this volume rely occasionally on the Pennsylvania Edition for specific passages not in the Norton Edition; and the essay by Thomas P. Riggio, because of its dependence on the fuller portrayal of Carrie in the Pennsylvania Edition, cites that text primarily. Except for Riggio's essay, therefore, page references to *Sister Carrie* which appear in parentheses after quotations are to the Norton Critical Edition; page references to the novel which refer to the Pennsylvania Edition have "Penn" immediately following the page number. For Riggio's essay, page references in parentheses are to the Pennsylvania Edition; references to the Norton Edition are followed by an "N" within the parentheses.

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1

Introduction

DONALD PIZER

SISTER CARRIE, like *Madame Bovary* and *The Waste Land*, is both a major work of art and an important landmark in the development of literary modernism. A distinctive characteristic of works of this kind is their centrality in efforts to define the nature of modern thought and expression. Almost always controversial and even held in contempt at their appearance, such works have continued to stimulate critical anxiety right up to the present. What is the new sensibility here expressed, it is asked, and how can our understanding of this sensibility aid our understanding of the intellectual and cultural space we continue to occupy? Unlike Flaubert's masterpiece of irony and Eliot's great symbolic poem, *Sister Carrie* also raises important questions about the very nature of significant art. How can a novel seemingly so unconsciously shaped and so inept in its devices and language hold generation after generation of sophisticated readers? It is at the complex intersection of these two lines of inquiry – *Sister Carrie* as a novel which achieves its penetrating insight into our lives almost in spite of itself – that much criticism of the work has both flourished and floundered.

Theodore Dreiser's life and career from his birth in 1870 to the appearance of *Sister Carrie* in 1900 are intimately related both to the depth and to the awkwardness of the novel.[1] Dreiser's father was a German Catholic immigrant, his mother of Pennsylvania Mennonite farm background, and the family large and poor. Other American writers had grown up in limited circumstances, but no major American author before Dreiser participated so fully in the new industrial and urban world of America in the late nineteenth century – a world in which hosts of immigrant poor struggled to

gain a foothold in the vast sprawl of an emerging metropolis. This had not been the principal fact of the youth of William Dean Howells, Mark Twain, or Henry James, the major writers of the generation just prior to Dreiser's, nor was it that of Stephen Crane or Frank Norris, Dreiser's foremost contemporaries, even though they wrote about the new urban life of their time. It was Dreiser alone who had been hustled as a child from one small Indiana town to the next while his father struggled to make a living and who as an adolescent and again as a young man had been plunged into the hurly-burly of Chicago and had precariously held on there as dishwasher, stove cleaner, freight car tracer, warehouse clerk, and laundry truck driver until finally, in early 1892, he broke into newspaper work as a reporter for the Chicago *Globe*.

During the next eight years Dreiser, by dint of hard work and a tenacious will, carved out a career for himself in journalism. By early 1894 he was a successful reporter for the St. Louis *Republic* and was on the verge of marrying a local schoolteacher of good family. But, like Carrie herself, he restlessly wanted something vaguely "higher" or "better" than this fate and so pushed on until, after short stays in Toledo and Pittsburgh, he landed, in late 1894, in New York. There, after some struggle, and at a point much like the down-and-out stage of Hurstwood's New York career, he managed to push his way to the top of the highly competitive popular journalism world of the 1890s – first as editor of *Ev'ry Month*, a magazine devoted largely to the publication of sheet music, and then as a free-lance contributor to the many new ten-cent magazines which had sprung up in the 1890s. From late 1897 to late 1899, when he began *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser ground out over 100 articles on such subjects as "Haunts of Nathaniel Hawthorne," "The Chicago Drainage Canal," and "Women Who Have Won Distinction in Music," becoming a leader in the field.

So this was the Dreiser who in October 1899 sat down to write *Sister Carrie*. He had experienced – as he later recorded in his remarkable autobiographies *Dawn* (1931) and *Newspaper Days* (1922) – the rough edges of life as had few American authors. He had also known, in his own life and in those of his brothers and sisters, the core of hope and expectation – usually thwarted but occasionally fulfilled – seemingly inherent in the American expe-

rience. As a writer, he had developed a journalistic facility, but since he had not yet attempted to write about life as he knew it, he had seldom expressed himself beyond the conventions of the newspaper report and the magazine article. (Almost all of Dreiser's creative work up to the summer before he began *Sister Carrie* had consisted of lachrymose magazine verse.) He came to the writing of *Sister Carrie*, in other words, intending to say something true and resonant about the new American experience he had encountered at first hand, but he also came with only a half-formed sense of how to do so. The novels of Balzac and Hardy, two of his early enthusiasms, had revealed to him that the modern novel could deal profoundly and movingly with the conditions of modern life by depicting the lives of common people. But aside from these rough guides he had to find his own way.

This process had begun in the summer of 1899. Dreiser had again reached a plateau in his career and again, like the ever-rocking Carrie, had become restless. Recently married to Sara White (also called Sallie or Jug), the conventional-minded Missouri schoolteacher he had been engaged to for over four years, he was also at the height of his success as a popular journalist. From this resting place of stability and achievement Dreiser was pushed into the hazardous waters of fiction by his friend Arthur Henry. He had met Henry in the spring of 1894, when Henry – then an editor of the Toledo *Blade* – had employed him briefly during the time when Dreiser was gradually making his way toward New York. The two men immediately became friends. Although Henry was never to write anything of importance, and although his ideas never extended beyond the obvious, he shared with Dreiser at this point in Dreiser's career a romantic enthusiasm for the possibilities of life and, more specifically, for their own possibilities as writers. So when Henry turned up in New York in the summer of 1897, himself somewhat adrift, the two renewed their friendship, and Henry invited Dreiser to join him at his home on the Maumee River, near Toledo. But Dreiser, who at this point was just beginning his free-lance career after two years of editing *Ev'ry Month*, could not take up the invitation until the summer of 1899. Then, accompanied by Jug, he spent over two months on the Maumee with Henry and his wife.

It was in this setting, and at this moment of equilibrium, that Dreiser, encouraged by Henry, made his first full-scale effort to write fiction. He had attempted a few imitative stories during his early days in New York, and he had written a number of minor semifictional sketches while editing *Ev'ry Month*. But now, at twenty-eight, he made a concerted effort for the first time. The four stories that he wrote that summer, all of which were published in 1901 and later collected in *Free and Other Stories* (1918), differ widely in subject matter and theme. But all contain themes which were to preoccupy Dreiser not only in his early novels but throughout his career. It was as though the act of turning to fiction had suddenly crystallized his essential response to life as his other authorial roles – reporter, editorial writer, poet, popular journalist – had not. Perhaps the most significant of these stories were "McEwen of the Shining Slave Makers" and "Nigger Jeff." Both are personal allegories, in the same way that the careers of Carrie and Hurstwood represent some of Dreiser's deepest feelings about himself. In both stories, a detached observer – McEwen watching groups of warring ants at his feet, the young newspaperman Davies sent to report a rape case and its aftermath – is plunged into the turmoil of powerful feelings and violent action that he has been observing and so acquires a recognition of the tragic center of life. This core of emotion and struggle, Dreiser appears to be saying, must be understood if life at its deepest level is to be understood, and it is the function of the writer to force the reader – as McEwen and Davies have been forced – into an acceptance of this truth. "I'll get it all in," Davies cries at the end of "Nigger Jeff," after having seen and responded to the powerful feelings preceding and following Jeff's lynching. And this no doubt was Dreiser's own unvoiced declaration of intent as he began his career as an imaginative writer.

By the end of the summer Henry had a plan. He would move to New York, where he and Dreiser would continue to write for the popular magazines, but each would also attempt to write a novel. And so, back in New York in October 1899, Dreiser, as he later recalled, wrote the words "Sister Carrie" at the top of a leaf of the small yellow sheets he used for his writing at that time, and began. Many modern authors setting out to write a first novel have turned

to exploitation of some aspect of their own early lives, both because this material is close at hand and because its truthfulness is seemingly authenticated by the writer's first-hand experience. Dreiser, as he began *Sister Carrie*, does not appear to reflect this truism, since the story he was to tell was that of his sister Emma. But by the time Dreiser completed *Sister Carrie*, both Carrie and Hurstwood had become so expressive of his own conception of himself, and especially of his hopes and fears, that their stories had indeed in essence become his own story.

Emma Wilhelmina, the second of Dreiser's five sisters, was eight years older than Theodore. Like all the Dreiser children (Dreiser also had four brothers), at least as Dreiser remembered them, she had resented the restrictions of small town life and of her father's strict religious moralism and had rebelled. Rebellion in her case took the form of leaving home for Chicago, where in early 1886, after some years of living with an architect, she had established a relationship with L. A. Hopkins. Hopkins worked for Chapin and Gore, a firm which owned a number of prominent Chicago saloons; he also had a wife and children. The affair between Emma and Hopkins moved in the direction of domestic farce when Mrs. Hopkins hired a detective to follow her husband. One night, when Hopkins's location had been determined, she and a policeman confronted Emma and Hopkins in bed. ("My God! ma, is that you?" one newspaper report had Hopkins exclaiming.)[2] In response, Hopkins engineered an escape – after taking some $3,500 from his employer's safe, he and Emma (with Emma a willing participant) fled by train for Canada en route to New York. Motivated either by close pursuit or cold feet, Hopkins returned almost all the money while he and Emma were still in Montreal, at which point they were permitted to continue to New York without further police action. By the time Dreiser arrived in New York in late 1894, Hopkins and Emma were in poor circumstances. Hopkins appeared to be permanently out of work, and Emma was unhappily running a seedy rooming house. Several months later Dreiser played a major role in a ruse which permitted Emma to leave Hopkins, who then disappeared from view. Emma herself was later to marry and become a stout working-class housewife.

Dreiser's impulse, in turning to Emma and Hopkins's Chicago