Windows, Rooms, and Houses in Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*

Yosuke Murakami

Although no attention has been paid to them when discussing the unity of Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, the repeated references to windows, rooms, and houses in the work contribute significantly to make it a cohesive whole. "The Strength of God" contains the most elaborate treatments of windows and "Loneliness" the most involved handling of rooms. Houses are given a symbolic meaning in such stories as "Hands" and "Mother." The repeated references to windows, rooms, and houses are closely linked with one of the important subjects of *Winesburg, Ohio*: communication or lack thereof.

Key words: *Winesburg, Ohio*; unity; windows, rooms, and houses

1. Introduction

Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) has a rather uncommon structure. It is neither a traditional novel nor a usual collection of short stories.[1] Judy Jo Small appropriately calls it "a cycle of stories" (25) or "[a] story cycle" (18). As we can readily see, the unity of the story cycle is achieved primarily by the reappearing character, George Willard, a young reporter on the *Winesburg Eagle*, a weekly newspaper. He directly appears or is referred to in nineteen of all the twenty-one stories in the cycle.[2] As a matter of fact, George Willard is the central character in such stories as "Nobody Knows," "An Awakening," "Sophistication," and "Departure."[3] As Walter B. Rideout argues, we can observe, as the cycle develops, George's "inward voyage from innocence to experience, from ignorance to understanding, from apparent reality of the face of things to true reality behind or below" (175). As Rideout cogently argues, George's growth is seen in his increasing commitment to "the world of dreams" (174), in "his growing desire to be a creative writer and his increasing awareness of the meaning of that vocation" (174), and in his changing attitudes toward women (175-177). Since George's role in making the story cycle a coherent whole is evident, I will not belabor the point any further.

In his discussion of the unity of *Winesburg, Ohio*, Rideout calls our attention to two other "repeated elements" (172) in it. He makes an interesting point that Anderson set the crisis scenes of all but five of the stories "in the evening" (172). He also gives a detailed account of the repeated uses of the word "hand" in *Winesburg, Ohio* (173). It is somewhat disappointing that Rideout does not comment on the numerous references to windows, rooms, and houses in the story cycle. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, there has been no significant critical examination of these references.[4] As Sally Adair Rigsbee points out, "[the] themes most frequently identified as the unifying forces of *Winesburg, Ohio* [are] the failure of communication and the development of [George Willard as an] artist" (178). I would attempt to analyze the repeated references to windows, rooms, and houses in the story cycle and argue that, linked closely with the matter of communication, they form a very important source of unity.[5]

2. Windows

To begin with, let us look at the passage in the first paragraph of "The Philosopher," in which a human eye is compared to a window:

> [T]here was something strange about [Doctor Parcival's] eyes. The lid of the left eye twitched; it fell down and snapped up; it was exactly as though the lid of the eye were a window shade and someone stood inside the doctor's head playing with the cord. (22)

We realize that Doctor Parcival's unmentioned head is equated with an imaginary room, with his body being equated with the house in which the room is located.[6] The passage may remind you of the proverb, "The eyes are the window of the soul." This proverb obviously suggests that we can observe the state of someone's soul by looking into their eyes. It follows that a simple way to avoid having your soul searched is to close your eyes. The narrator of the passage quoted above metaphorically suggests that someone inside the room seems to periodically pull down the window shade in order to prevent people from looking in through the window. At this juncture, we should keep in mind the basic fact that a window works two ways; it permits the person inside the room to see outside through it and it permits the person outside the room to look into it. As the proverb quoted above and the passage quoted from the first paragraph of "The Philosopher" indicate, a window is closely linked to communication.

It is no wonder, then, that one of the most useful models to describe the nature of human interaction is conceived in the form of a four-pane window called "the Johari Window."[7] The Johari Window, whose name derives from the first names of its creators, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, is usually presented as a chart like the one given below.

	Known to self	Unknown to self
Known to others	Open	Blind
Unknown to others	Hidden	Unknown

The four gray quadrants, representing the four panes of a window, indicate four different types of personal awareness. If we assume that the window above is my window and that I am interacting with you, the "open" quadrant represents things about me the knowledge of which both you and I share. Thus, as far as I know, I communicate with you only via the open quadrant. The "blind" quadrant represents things that you know about me but I am not aware of myself. If you choose to call my attention to a habit of mine that I have been unaware of so far, for example, it moves to the open quadrant. It is quite possible that I am sending out to you a large amount of information about me via the blind quadrant without being aware of it. The "hidden" quadrant represents things that I know about myself, but you are not aware of. It is as if I always keep a window shade pulled down over this particular pane. If I disclose a secret desire of mine to you, my act is to be construed as moving it to the open quadrant. The "unknown" quadrant represents things that neither I know about myself, nor you know about me. It is important to remember that in the Johari model, each person is represented by their own window. Therefore, an interaction between two parties can be modeled as two dynamically active Johari windows.

A literal window as our channel of communication, of course, does not merely function vis-à-vis humans. Let us look at the very first paragraph of "The Book of the Grotesque," a prefatory piece in *Winesburg, Ohio*, placed before the story cycle:

> The writer, an old man with a white mustache, had some difficulty in getting into bed. The windows of the house in which he lived were high and he wanted to look at the trees when he awoke in the morning. A carpenter came to fix the bed so that it would be on a level with the window. (5)

The passage appears to be innocent enough, but it contains the first of the many instances of a person's attempt to connect themselves with the outside world through a window. Judging from the fact that the narrator of the piece later talks of "the young thing inside him" (7) that prevented him from becoming a grotesque, the trees the old writer wants to see appear to symbolize vitality and youth.[8]

Another memorable instance of a person's looking at the outside world through windows occurs in "The Mother." Elizabeth Willard, George's mother, has been ill for some time and she spends many long days in her room, sitting in a chair by a window and staring through it out into the main street of Winesburg. As the narrator chooses not to tell us what she actually stares at, we get the impression that whatever she sees has no deep impact on her. In spite of her nominal gesture of looking out through the window at the outside world, she doesn't seem to feel that she has any part of it. On the other hand, what she sees in an alleyway through another window thoroughly repels her, so that she stops looking out through it.[9] Unlike the old writer in "The Book of the Grotesque," who seeks to gain energy from what he sees through a window of his room, Elizabeth withdraws into her private world, isolated from what she sees through the windows of her room.

In "Paper Pills," we encounter another person who sits for hours by a window:

> [Doctor Reefy] smoked a cob pipe and after his wife's death sat all day in his empty office close by a window that was covered with cobwebs. He never opened the window. Once on a hot day in August he tried but found it stuck fast and after that he forgot all about it. (14)

It is needless to say that this is not a mere description of the physical condition of the window. The window stuck fast and covered with cobwebs is an index of Doctor Reefy's relation to the outside world. He got married late in his life and his wife died a few months later. After his wife's death, Doctor Reefy has chosen not to get involved deeply with another human being. He has resigned himself to living in isolation, completely "forgotten" (14) by the townspeople of Winesburg. The passage quoted above conveys to us the depth of his grief over his wife's death.

Let us now turn to the very beginning of "Loneliness":

> [Enoch] was the son of Mrs. Al Robinson who once owned a farm on a side road leading off Trunion Pike, east of Winesburg and two miles beyond the town limits. The farm-house was painted brown and the blinds to all of the windows facing the road were kept closed. (91)

As we read on, we begin to realize that Enoch's crippled mentality may have derived, at least partially, from his life with his mother, who kept the world shut out from them.

Some people might feel that I am making too big an issue out of the references to the windows in *Winesburg, Ohio*. I believe, however, that they are altogether intended, not haphazard at all. Sherwood Anderson habitually referred to windows when he was dwelling on the matter of communication with others. We can observe one instance of it in his writing about his life in a room in a Chicago rooming house, where he wrote the stories in *Winesburg, Ohio*:

> Sometimes it had seemed to me when, as a young man, I sat at the window of that room, that each person who passed along the street below, under the light, shouted

> his secret up to me.
>
> I was myself and still I fled out of myself. It seemed to me that I went into the others. ("The Finding" 157)

When describing the power of sentences, Anderson once even used the simile: "The sentences are like windows looking into houses."[10] Furthermore, according to Welford Dunaway Taylor, Anderson one time lived alone in an upstairs room with a raised bed placed beside the window (20), just as the old writer in "The Book of the Grotesque" does. Thus, inside and outside of *Winesburg, Ohio*, Anderson was fully conscious of windows as a two-way tool for communication.

The most elaborate use of a window in *Winesburg, Ohio* is to be found in "The Strength of God," in which the Reverend Curtis Hartman's deliverance from a temptation is described. On a Sunday morning, he sees, through the open window of a little room in the bell tower of his church, a young woman in her room in the house next door, lying in her bed while smoking a cigarette and reading a book. The woman is Kate Swift, George's former teacher. Of course, Curtis Hartman sees Kate through the window of her own room. Thus, the situation somewhat resembles a case of human interaction between two parties modeled as two active Johari windows. There are, however, two major differences. First of all, the window of the little room in the bell tower is not a regular window but a stained-glass window. One of its primary functions is to block the view of the outside world, while letting the light filter through.[11] As Hartman is in the room to pray to God for strength and courage as a minister, one can argue that he should have the stained-glass window closed at the time. The very fact that he has the window open on this particular occasion may point to Hartman's hidden desire to escape from the closed world of his religious duty. Second, Kate Swift is not aware that Curtis Hartman is looking through the window into her room.

When Hartman sees Kate in her bed for the first time, he immediately closes the window. As he does not approve of smoking women, he thinks of the young woman next door as a sinful woman. What is more important is that he finds himself unable to shake off the image of "the bare shoulders and white throat" (81) of the woman. As he is tempted to see the young woman in her bed again, one morning he breaks a corner of the window with a stone. Peeking through the hole, he waits for the shade of her room to be raised. When the shade is raised, however, Hartman learns that Kate Swift is not in her room. It is Kate's mother who has raised the shade. Hartman is overjoyed that he is delivered from his voyeuristic desire. Subsequently he discovers that Kate habitually reads books in the evenings, lying in her bed.

> Three times during the early fall and winter of that year Curtis Hartman crept out of his house to the room in the bell tower to sit in the darkness looking at the figure of Kate Swift lying in her bed [. . .]. (83)

Eventually he reaches the point where he despairingly declares, "If my nature is such that I cannot resist sin, I shall give myself over to sin [. . .] and if I am a creature of carnal lusts I will live then for my lusts" (84). One winter night, however, Curtis Hartman is finally delivered from the temptation to surreptitiously look at Kate Swift in her bed:

> In the room next door a lamp was lighted and the waiting man stared into an empty bed. Then upon the bed before his eyes a naked woman threw herself. Lying face downward she wept and beat with her fists upon the pillow. With a final outburst of weeping she half arose, and in the presence of the man who had waited to look and to think [lustful] thoughts the woman of sin began to pray. (85)

Curtis Hartman interprets Kate's gesture as arising from her repenting of her sinful way of life. Believing that God has manifested himself in the praying figure of Kate Swift, Hartman breaks the glass of the window with his fist so that it will have to be wholly replaced. The hole in the glass through which he has peeped at Kate will be gone.[12] Now Hartman feels that he is forever delivered from temptation.

"The Strength of God" and "The Teacher," which is placed immediately after it, form a complimentary pair. We learn from "The Teacher" the reason why Kate Swift wept and prayed in the preceding story, "The Strength of God." It was due to the failure of her communion with George Willard. After reading "The Teacher," therefore, we realize that Curtis Hartman's interpretation of Kate's gestures is completely misguided. Anderson presents a case of a person's ironic misunderstanding of another with a clever use of windows in these stories.

3. Rooms and Houses

The repeated references to rooms and houses in *Winesburg, Ohio* contribute to its unity just as those to windows do. As rooms and houses are closely associated with windows, I have already made some passing observations about them. At this juncture, let me pay closer attention to Anderson's references to rooms and houses.

The initial paragraph of "Hands," the very first story of the cycle, begins as follows:

> Upon the half decayed veranda of a small frame house that stood near the edge of a ravine near the town of Winseburg, Ohio, a fat little old man [Wing Biddlebaum] walked nervously up and down. (9)

It turns out that this brief passage encapsulates Biddlebaum's relationship with the other residents of Winesburg. He has chosen to live on the periphery of the town, as he does "not think of himself as in any way a part of the life of the town" (9). For twenty years, he has lived all alone in Winesburg. Now he is walking nervously up and down on the veranda of his house waiting for George Willard, the only person that has come close to him. It is in the late afternoon. Although Biddlebaum feels secure only when he is inside his house, hidden away from the world, he has ventured out to be on a sort of fringe of the house, where the world within the house and the external world meet. For a short while, he even goes across a field to the road leading to the town in anticipation of George's visit, but he soon escapes back to the veranda to walk up and down upon it until dark. After a simple supper, he goes out again to walk upon the veranda, wishing for the presence of George Willard.[13] Thus, the lone figure of Biddlebaum walking on the veranda of his house comes to eloquently signify a mixture of his feelings: loneliness, estrangement, and hunger for communion.

As we have seen already, the unity of the story cycle is achieved primarily by the reappearing character, George Willard. We have also observed that the focus is on his growth. In "Hands," the first story of the cycle, he is already sensitive enough to be curious about Beddlebaum's hands:

> [George Willard] had many times wanted to ask about the hands. At times an almost overwhelming curiosity had taken hold of him. He felt that there must be a reason for their strange activity and their inclination to keep hidden away [. . .]. (10)

George, however, never gets around to asking Wing about his hands, saying to himself, "There's something wrong, but I don't want to know what it is" (11). George is still quite passive in his dealings with people. The narrator says that George sometimes walks in the evenings out to "Wing Biddlebaum's house" (9). It is not clear whether George goes into Biddlebaum's house or not, but I contend that it is reasonable to assume that George has talks with Biddlebaum on the veranda, never going into the house itself, because Biddlebaum's house is symbolically equated with his mind or consciousness. In any case, it is proper and fitting that George never comes to see Biddlebaum on this particular occasion. At the very end of the story, Biddlebaum withdraws into his house and his solitary private world. We can assume that his house has more than one room. As he lives alone, however, it is not necessary to specify a room in his house particularly as his.[14]

Doctor Parcival in "The Philosopher" is a strange character. Coming to Winesburg five years before the narrative begins, he has few patients, and yet he does not seem to lack money. Perhaps, as he suggests to George Willard, he has committed murder or theft. He also tells George about his strange family background. There is no way for us to determine whether his claims to these past events are valid or not. In any case, Dr. Parcival likes George and George himself looks forward to the doctor's visits to his newspaper office for lengthy talks. Furthermore, we are told that, prior to Dr. Parcival's adventure described at the end of the story, George has been going each morning for a month to spend "an hour" (26) in Dr. Parcival's office. It is worth noting that the office has a characteristic of a private space as Dr. Parcival sleeps in it. (23)

As we recall, in the first paragraph of "The Philosopher," Dr. Parcival's head is equated with a room. In a reverse way, a room equipped with windows is to be symbolically equated with a person's head equipped with eyes.[15] George's growth is suggested, then, by his one-hour morning visit to Dr. Parcival's office. He is no longer afraid of exploring the secret workings of another person's mind.

Enoch Robinson, the central character of "Loneliness," is also a strange character. Inviting George to his room one evening, Enoch tells George about his strange experience in New York. Again, a character makes an intimate revelation in his room to George Willard. At the time, the narrator says, George goes to Enoch's room willingly enough, as he "[has] never been more curious in his life" (96). We notice that George is becoming increasingly interested in other people's secret emotions and ideas. Later, George makes a new move when Enoch tries to break off his story just before the climactic end:

> George Willard shook his head and a note of command came into his voice. "Don't stop now. Tell me the rest of it," he commanded sharply. "What happened? Tell me the rest of the story." (98)

Thus, George's growth is seen in his increasing desire to share a person's hidden emotions and ideas in the person's private room.

We have already observed how Wing Biddlebaum in "Hands," in seeking George Willard's company, ventures away from the veranda of his house, only to retreat to it in fright. Alice Hindman, the main character of "Adventure," makes a somewhat parallel move. One rainy night, she ventures out of her room and out of her house, only to hurry back to her room in a state of panic. At 16, Alice had her first sexual experience with Ned Curry the day before he left Winesburg to seek a career in a city. Since then, Alice has led an unfulfilled lonely life. When she was 22, her father died suddenly. Her mother got remarried to Bush Milton, a carriage painter, three years later. Living with the married couple has apparently intensified her feeling of being unwanted and unloved. At 27, when both her mother and father-in-law are out, she acts very impulsively one rainy night after she undresses in her room.

> Without stopping to think of what she intended to do, she ran downstairs through the dark house and out into the rain. As she stood on the little grass plot before the house and felt the cold rain on her body a mad desire to run naked through the streets took possession of her. (63)

Feeling rejuvenated by the rain, Alice calls to a man who is stumbling homeward in front of her house, "Wait! [. . .] Don't go away. Whoever you are, you must wait" (64). The man, somewhat hearing impaired, does not make out what she has said. Immediately afterward, Alice crawls back to the house, frightened at the thought of what she has done. She then heads toward her room.

> When she got to her own room she bolted the door and drew her dressing table across the doorway. Her body shook as with a chill and her hands trembled so that she had difficulty getting into her nightdress. When she got into bed she buried her face in the pillow and wept broken-heartedly. "What is the matter with me? I will do something dreadful if I am not careful," she thought [and turned] her face to the wall [. . .]. (64)

Escaping back into her room and barricading the door itself is a highly significant gesture. She chooses to immure herself in a small private world of hers. Turning her face to the wall suggests that she is resigned to leading a completely solitary life.

As we have already observed, in "Mother," Elizabeth Willard, who has been sick for some time, spends many long days alone in her room. Her room is located in "in an obscure corner" (18) of the New Willard House, a "disorderly old hotel" (16) with "the faded wall-paper and the ragged carpets" (16). The building is generally characterized with its "shabbiness" (18). To the best of my knowledge, no attention has been paid to the possible meaning that we can derive from the fact that George Willard has been raised in a hotel, not in a regular home. It is important to realize, however, that George has grown up in constant contact with a large number of "transient guests" (18). Furthermore, due to some special arrangement of their rooms, George's room is situated a little away from Elizabeth's. The distance between their rooms suggests a psychological distance between George and his mother.

As a room is repeatedly equated with the occupant's mind or consciousness in *Winesburg, Ohio*, we have a creepy feeling as we learn that Elizabeth goes into George's room once in a while when George is out, doing his job as a reporter. Alone in her son's room and unknown to anybody else, she goes through "a ceremony that [is] half a prayer, half a demand, addressed to the skies" (17). In a similar vein, there is a significant gesture on the part of Elizabeth in the middle of the story. When George has not visited her for several days at the time of her illness, Elizabeth, worried and alarmed, ventures out of her room to head for George's room.

> By the door of her son's room the mother knelt upon the floor and listened for some sound from within. When she heard the boy moving about and talking in low tones a smile came to her lips. George Willard had a habit of talking aloud to himself and to hear him doing so had always given his mother a peculiar pleasure. [. . .] In the darkness in the hallway by the door the sick woman arose and started again toward her own room. (18-19)

It turns out, however, that Elizabeth totally misunderstands what is going on in George's room, as Curtis Hartman misinterprets Kate Swift's gesture in her room in "The Strength of God." George is not alone in his room, talking to himself, and it is most likely that Elizabeth hears Tom Willard, George's father, talking to his son.

Elizabeth's talk with Dr. Reefy narrated in "Death," Kate Swift's talk with George Willard narrated in "The Teacher," and Seth Richmond's talk with George related in "The Thinker" all significantly involve either a private office or a private room. The most extended treatment of a character's relationship with his or her room, however, is seen in "Loneliness," a story which concerns Enoch Robinson. Actually, the narrator says, "The story of Enoch is in fact the story of a room almost more than it is the story of a man" (92). Enoch grew up on a farm east of Winesburg. At 21, he went to New York, hoping to develop his talent in art. After a strange experience with a domineering woman, however, he came back to live in Winesburg, frustrated and defeated.

Arriving in New York, Enoch rented a room facing Washington Square in a lodging house. At first, many guests visited him in his room, but he soon stopped inviting them into the room and developed "the habit of locking the door" (94), as he found himself unable to express his feelings to them.

> He began to think that enough people had visited him, that he did not need people any more. With quick imagination he began to invent his own people to whom he could really talk and to whom he explained the things he had been unable to explain to living people. (94)

Thus, instead of dealing with real people, Enoch retreated into the companionship of imaginary people. Although he later got married, his marriage in an apartment in Brooklyn was a disastrous failure, because he found himself choking in the apartment, unable to deal with actual people, his wife and children. He secretly re-rented his first room facing Washington Square, and after divorcing his wife, he lived in the room happily among the people that his imagination had invented. One day, he met a woman who began to visit him in his room. Eventually, Enoch had to send her away because he felt that he was being engulfed by her. In his room in Winesburg, Enoch tells George:

> "She sat there in the room with me and she was too big for the room. I felt that she was driving everything else away. [. . .] I wanted her to understand [me] but, don't you see, I couldn't let her understand. I felt that then she would know everything, that I would be submerged, drowned out, you see." (97-98)

By letting her come into his room and understand his mind, Enoch was about to give her the absolute power to control him. Eventually the woman went away, but, Enoch explains to George, she took away with her all the people that Enoch had invented. His room was emptied. That is, his mind was emptied. Enoch, then, had to return to Winesburg in defeat. Concerning "Loneliness," Anderson wrote to Waldo Frank, an editor of *Seven Arts*: "A writer knows when a story is good, and that story is good."[16] "Loneliness" is, indeed, a very intriguing story involving ingenious uses of rooms as a symbolic space.

4. Conclusion

It is impractical to discuss all the details concerning the windows, rooms, and houses in *Winesburg, Ohio* here, but what I have said so far sufficiently indicates that a certain degree of unity of the work is achieved by Anderson's skillful handling of situations involving windows, rooms, and houses in various stories. It is surprising to me that no sustained attention has ever been paid to them. The crucial point is that widows, rooms, and houses in *Winesburg, Ohio* are inseparably linked with what many people perceives to be one of its central subjects: communication or lack thereof.

Notes

[1] In his "Introduction" to the Viking edition of *Winesburg, Ohio*, Malcolm Cowley properly likens it to William Faulkner's *The Unvanquished* and *Go Down, Moses*, John Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat* and *The Pastures of Heaven*, and Erskine Caldwell's *Georgia Boy* (14). Kim Townsend, on the other hand, correctly sees a structural similarity in *Winesburg, Ohio* and Sarah Orne Jewett's *Country of the Pointed Firs* (208).

[2] I do not count "The Book of the Grotesque" among the cycle of stories as I consider it prefatory to the entire cycle.

[3] "Paper Pills," from which George is absent, has a general thematic link with the rest of the story cycle. Furthermore, "Death" partly deals with the special relationship between George's mother and Doctor Reefy, the protagonist of "Paper Pills." Thus, one can easily argue that it is an integral part of the story cycle. On the contrary, it would have been better for the other story from which George is absent, "Godliness," to be left out from the cycle, as it appears to have a fairly weak thematic link with the rest of the cycle. For a contrary view as to the link of "Godliness" to the whole of the cycle, see Joseph Dewey, "No God in the Sky and No God in Myself: 'Godliness' and Anderson's *Winesburg*."

[4] My observation is based on a perusing of an excellent critical survey, *A Reader's Guide to the Short Stories of Sherwood Anderson* by Judy Jo Small.

[5] Sally Adair Rigsbee maintains that "[the] meaning Sherwood Anderson gives to the characters of women and to the qualities of the feminine is an important source of unity in *Winesburg, Ohio*" (178).

[6] There is a well-known literary antecedent which might have led to Anderson's formulation. In Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher," the narrator refers twice to the "eye-like" (1, 2) windows on the façade of Roderick Usher's decayed mansion. In this case, then, the façade of the mansion is equated with a face and the mansion itself, by extension, is equated with a head. Thus, as we read about the narrator entering "the Gothic archway of the hall" (4), we have an eerie feeling that we are entering a gigantic human head through its mouth. As it turns out, we are headed for the brain, that is, Roderick's chamber. Our

ultimate concern is the state of Roderick's actual brain, which we gradually learn is fatally diseased.

[7] The explanation of the Johari Window is based on the information given on Duen His Yen's website.

[8] Sally Adair Rigsbee suggests that the old writer who appears in "The Book of the Grotesque" is the persona of the narrator of [the story cycle] (188). It would be more appropriate, however, to regard the narrator of "The Book of the Grotesque" as identical with the narrator of the story cycle.

[9] Elizabeth Willard witnesses a feud between a baker and a cat through the window. As the narrator says that she stops looking along the alleyway through the window "after watching a prolonged and ineffectual outburst on the part of the baker" (17), it is clear that Elizabeth identifies herself with the baker. It is, therefore, inadequate to see Elizabeth's "identification with the sufferings of the alley cat" as Judy Jo Small does (63) in this episode.

[10] Quoted from Sherwood Anderson's *A Story Teller's Story* in David Stouck, "Anderson's Expressionist Art," 219.

[11] It is, therefore, improper to claim that "the little window command[s] a view of a young lady's bedroom," as an anonymous reviewer of *Winesburg, Ohio* does ("Sordid Tales" 164).

[12] Although David Stouck asserts that "the bleeding fist of Reverend Hartman [. . .] signal[s his] pain and [. . .] frustrated desire [. . .] to make connections to others" (224), the reverse is the case. Hartman's bleeding fist, which he triumphantly holds up for George to see, is a sign of his retreat back into the closure of his old world represented by the little room in the bell tower of his church.

[13] I believe that Anderson intended a parallel situation in "Sophistication," the penultimate story of the cycle, in which Helen White sits on the veranda of her house, thinking of George Willard and hoping to see him. Contrary to the situation presented in "Hands," George is heading for her house and they soon meet each other.

[14] As Biddlebaum sleeps in "a folding cot by the screen door that led to the porch" (13), it is possible that the house has only one room. In any case, his placing the bed near the screen door seems to indicate his desire to be linked with the outside world.

[15] For a classic example of a house equated with a head, see note 6 above.

[16] See Howard Mumford Jones and Walter B. Rideout, eds., *Letters of Sherwood Anderson* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953) 5.

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