

“Can You Honestly Love a Dishonest Thing?” The Tragic Patriotism of *The Winter of Our Discontent*

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JOHN STEINBECK'S FINAL NOVEL, *The Winter of Our Discontent*, is a literary enigma. While the Nobel Prize Committee cited it as evidence of his continued importance as a writer, many of Steinbeck's contemporary critics dismissed it as a minor work from a journeyman author whose best days were behind him.¹ More recently a number of commentators have sought to rehabilitate the book and, with it, the later-Steinbeck's literary reputation.² In what follows I will bracket this debate, except insofar as it touches on the political argument of the essay, and concentrate instead on how the novel works to offer a tragic vision of America that, while critiquing the nation, nevertheless draws on a particular kind of love of country that it not only depicts but also seeks to engender in the reader.

The essay begins with an account of the ways in which *tragedy* and *tragic* are employed in the subsequent analysis. It then lays out the claims of a number of political theorists who argue that patriotism is incompatible with democratic politics. Central to their argument is the claim that patriotism necessarily excuses a nation of even its most egregious flaws and encourages its citizens to overlook the inevitable costs and conflicts of democratic life in favor of a perceived higher unity. It is a claim that would seem to be supported by the critical consensus that the novel's final act—in which its main protagonist, Ethan Hawley, steps back from the brink of suicide—is redemptive of both character and nation. By way of alternative, I offer a tragic reading of the novel and its final act, in which Ethan's decision appears hopeful but not optimistic. Arguing that a tragic worldview is

necessarily dualistic, I identify the origins of the novel's worldview in the wartime experiences of both John Steinbeck and his character. This dual perspective is made possible by, and permits, a nonredemptive and democratically productive form of patriotism, one that can support an always ongoing critique of nation.

"Apart from the Tragedy and Human Waste"

Tragedy, as Robert Pirro points out, is a highly contestable concept. It is employed in a myriad of contexts: philosophical, literary, political, journalistic, and vernacular.³ For many, as Terry Eagleton notes, tragedy simply means "very sad."⁴ Here the terms *tragedy* and *tragic* draw on a definition and distinction suggested by J. G. Finlayson's work on Greek drama. It is a distinction between tragedy as *condition* and tragedy as *response*.⁵ Tragedy as condition entails an understanding of the world as one of irreconcilable conflicts, frustrated agency, human suffering, and paradoxical demands. It is a world in which what is gained is marked by what is lost.⁶ Tragedy as response shares this worldview and seeks to provide humanity with a coping strategy for the inevitable circumstances of its existence.⁷

Greek theater offered its audiences a democratic pedagogy: a way to engage with, reflect on, and live with the inevitable costs and conflicts of democratic life and politics. It was a complex ritual that played a key role in the polis. Indeed, Christian Meier argues that "attic democracy was *as* dependent on tragedy as upon its councils and assemblies."⁸ Central to its pedagogical function was the cultivation of ambivalence, what Richard Seaford defines as "the presence of duality over unity."⁹ The Greek word *theatron*, from which we get the modern word *theater*, has been translated as "seeing place."¹⁰ While many characters in Greek drama were literally or figuratively blind—most often because of their hubristic excess—the theater allowed its audiences to see the inevitably negative consequences of such blindness. Underpinning this democratic pedagogy was the notion of "discrepant awareness," what one character sees or knows that another character does not or what the audience sees or knows that the characters do not.¹¹

It was, however, not only the plays themselves that sought to generate ambivalence in their audiences but also their setting in the Great Dionysia,

the Athenian springtime theatrical festival. There the religious and civic rituals that opened the festival and celebrated the city's strengths were tellingly juxtaposed with plays—both tragic and comedic—that problematized those same values.¹² That Steinbeck's bleak portrayal of New Baytown and its inhabitants is set between two holidays—the religious Good Friday and the civic July 4—might be thought to suggest a similar dynamic at work in *The Winter of Our Discontent*.

Tragedy as response then sought to cultivate in its audience an ambivalence of perspective, one that promoted a worldview that defied any simple categorization. It was neither a ritual of overcoming nor one of redemption. Both are denied by the recognition of the inevitability of tragedy as condition. Rather this ambivalence was, in the words of Paul Gilroy, “suffering made useful, made productive, not redemptive.”¹³ Many contemporary critics argue, however, that it is precisely this ambivalence that makes patriotism impossible.

“The Dignity of Pure Disinterested Patriots”

While patriotism has, in recent years, become central to American political discourse, it has fared less well among political theorists. George Kateb and Steven Johnston are just two of the thinkers who identify what they believe to be an inherent tension in the relationship between democracy and patriotism.¹⁴ Both thinkers associate patriotism with a singular vision, a parochial worldview, an uncritical devotion to an abstract entity, and ultimately, with killing and/or self-sacrificing death.

Describing patriotism as “a self-concern that inevitably passes into licensed self-preference,” George Kateb suggests the ways it inhibits critical reflection about the self or nation that is central to democratic politics.¹⁵ A moral principle, he argues, “[must] be conceived as universalist and asks for consistent application; it aims at respect for persons or individuals, not abstract entities of the imagination.”¹⁶ Patriotism, he suggests, is a mistake because its partiality of perspective promotes nationalism and necrophilia. “A good patriot,” Kateb observes, “does not want people in other countries to be patriots.”¹⁷ Arguing that patriotism is a group narcissism that promotes jealousy—one that needs enemies in order to define itself—Kateb declares that there is not “much difference, at least in effects, between patriotism

and nationalism” and that this close relative to nationalism leads inexorably to death.¹⁸ “Patriotism,” he asserts, “is a readiness to die and kill for what is largely a figment of the imagination. For this figment, one commits oneself to a militarized and continuously politicized conception of life. . . . Patriotism is, from its nature, a commitment to the system of premature, violent death.”¹⁹ All of which, he writes, is predicated on a “falsely sanitized or falsely heroized” narrative of nation.²⁰

Kateb’s claims about dishonesty, jealousy, necrophilia, and singularity of vision are echoed in Steven Johnston’s work. Patriotism, according to Johnston, “feeds on death.” As such, any attempt to theorize “healthy forms of patriotism” is inevitably doomed to failure.²¹ Indeed, the intoxicating power of patriotism is so great, Johnston argues, that even Socrates, the wisest man in Athens, willingly chose his own death over life in exile.²² Such problematic choices, Johnston suggests, are the result of patriotism’s blindly narcissistic outlook. By placing certain values—such as the life of a people or the identity of the nation as a perpetual project—beyond question, patriotism promotes a willingness to overlook the disparities between a nation’s professed ideals and its political realities.²³ Thus any attempt to build a critical acknowledgment of a nation’s failings into an expression of national pride, Johnston argues, inevitably devolves into self-congratulation, giving that magnanimous nation yet another reason to love itself.²⁴ Indeed, much of Johnston’s argument rests on an extended reflection on the impossibilities or misplacement of love in democratic politics.²⁵ Fourth of July parades, the pledge of allegiance, and war memorials, he argues, all suggest the ways in which patriotism demands persistent inculcation. Citizens are, and must be, repeatedly taught to love their country. For Johnston, this reveals a contradiction. “Perhaps,” he writes, “a political order that must make a point of fostering patriotism does not deserve the love it represents.”²⁶ Patriotic love is, he suggests, uncritical, manufactured, and destructive. “Exclusivity, among other things, is what renders love special. Should it fade, transfer, or die out, love becomes capable of the most horrendous crimes. Thus love,” he writes, “is intrinsically bound up with the intense passion of jealousy.”²⁷ This passion, Johnston argues, makes patriotism ultimately “a politics of hate.”²⁸ It is the “Manichean logic” of this hate, jealousy, and exclusivity that makes patriotism antagonistic, and thus anathema, to democracy.²⁹ As such, he dismisses the idea that patriotism might be tragic and thus open to engaged debate.³⁰ Its outlook is, he suggests, unequivocal and univocal.³¹

“An Unmitigated, Unredeemable Rascal”

Evidence for the claim that patriotism promotes a willingness to overlook a nation's flaws can be found in much of the commentary on Steinbeck's *The Winter of Our Discontent*. For, even as a number of scholars acknowledge the bleakness of Steinbeck's picture of New Baytown—and by extension America—they nevertheless seek to let America off Steinbeck's critical hook by presenting the book's deeply ambiguous ending as redemptive, both of Ethan and of his nation.

“Ethan,” Michael J. Meyer argues, “finds the potential for redemption in the Hawley talisman which his daughter Ellen has secreted away in his coat pocket.”³² Indeed, Meyer sees national and personal redemption as a persistent theme in Steinbeck's work and draws a parallel between the endings of *The Winter of Our Discontent* and *The Grapes of Wrath*: “Just as the positive act of Rosasharn's breast-feeding the indigent man who is starving in the barn in *The Grapes of Wrath* encourages readers to believe that brotherhood and caring will eventually overcome evil and will once again be valued by the Okies as well as the Californians, so Ethan's refusal to commit suicide in order to maintain the light offers an optimistic outlook and a conviction that Mammon will never completely conquer America. Instead, the forces of good . . . will triumph over the forces of evil.”³³ Such moments of redemption, Meyer suggests, situate Steinbeck within the tradition of the jeremiad: a form of speech in which a community is repeatedly condemned for its sins. What distinguishes the *American* jeremiad from its predecessors is the promise of redemption. “In their case,” writes Sacvan Bercovitch of the early Americans, “they believed God's punishments were *corrective*, not destructive. Here, as nowhere else, His vengeance was a sign of love, a father's rod used to improve the errant child. In short, their punishments confirmed their promise.”³⁴ Thus, even as Jonathan Edwards condemns the community in his famous sermon and paradigmatic jeremiad, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” he holds out the hope that the damned might nevertheless secure the possibility (but only the *possibility*) of salvation by submitting themselves to the demands of church doctrine.

According to Meyer's reading of the novel, Steinbeck condemns the nation but holds out hope for change. Steinbeck is the father and his readers his wayward children. Certainly this would seem to be the implication of the scolding paternalism of the novel's epigraph. “Readers,” writes Steinbeck,

“seeking to identify the fictional people and places described would do better to inspect their own communities and search their own hearts, for this book is about a large part of America today.” In the epigraph, Susan Shillinglaw argues, Steinbeck suggests that his novel “is a parable of corruption and redemption.”³⁵ This is also the view of Hiroshi Kaname and Barbara A. Heavilin, who identify in Steinbeck’s novel a “satirical but loving patriotism” that nevertheless redeems the nation.³⁶ “Ethan,” they write, “like the American people as a whole whom he symbolizes, does not slip backwards into the darkness, but rather steps forward into a light that may be shining dimly but which, nevertheless, is still shining.”³⁷ Indeed, for Kaname and Heavilin the redemptive nature of the novel, and of Steinbeck’s entire oeuvre, is never in doubt. “Like those of Emerson and Whitman,” they write, “the works of John Steinbeck reveal his unabashed love for his country and its people, his belief that they shall long endure.”³⁸ Briefly acknowledging and then choosing to ignore the less than positive picture of America painted in the novel, they conclude that with *The Winter of Our Discontent* “as patriot and bard Steinbeck . . . has written a paean to the American people.”³⁹

The idea that the novel is one of punishment and redemption finds its fullest expression perhaps in Stephen K. George’s essay on *The Winter of Our Discontent*. George finds parallels between Ethan’s decision to live and the decision of those who—on George’s account at least—chose to give their lives on September 11, 2001: “The final redemptive act at the novel’s end, when Ethan rejects suicide and struggles out of the sea to return the family talisman to its new owner, his daughter Ellen, has been played out again in the sacrifice of firefighters, police, rescue workers, and even civilians aboard a plane over Pennsylvania, all of whom gave their lives—some figuratively, some literally—in reaffirming what is best about America.”⁴⁰ Setting aside what it might mean to give one’s life figuratively, George’s comparison of Ethan’s actions with those of the 9/11 responders and passengers on Flight 93 would seem to provide the best evidence for Kateb’s and Johnston’s claims that patriotism clouds the careful deliberation and good judgment necessary for democratic politics.

It is perhaps not Steinbeck who is what Kaname and Heavilin call an “unabashed patriot”—and here it is useful to recall that *unabashed* is a synonym for *shameless*, just as *paean* means *hymn of victory*—but rather those who would read his novel, and his broader body of work, as necessarily redemptive. For even as they acknowledge Steinbeck’s critique of America,

these scholars suggest, in the manner identified by Johnston, that the very existence of the critique is what makes the nation not only worthy of its citizens' love but also beyond meaningful reproach. In this they not only negate Steinbeck's critique but also deny his tragic vision.

“A Little Hope, Even Hopeless Hope, Never Hurt Anybody”

As a number of essays in this volume have made clear, Steinbeck was deeply committed to promoting progressive social change through his literature and journalism. As such, any suggestion that he might have a tragic worldview—his commitment to theater notwithstanding (see chapter 3, by Donna Kornhaber)—would seem to be an anathema to this widely held view of Steinbeck and his art. Indeed, many on the political Left contend that a tragic worldview is diametrically opposed to political action. Writing in 1944, C. Wright Mills accused American intellectuals of a “political failure of nerve” and argued that a tragic view of life promoted a retreat from political responsibility, thereby making “one's goal simply that of understanding.”⁴¹ A tragic sensibility, it has been suggested, promotes a debilitating fatalism, or nihilism counterproductive to political action. It is perhaps for this reason that so many commentators on *The Winter of Our Discontent* have been keen to identify what they perceive to be the—albeit sometimes qualified—hope that underpins Steinbeck's final literary work. For if Steinbeck's later vision of America is a tragic one, he would appear to have nothing to offer his country except nihilism.

Given Steinbeck's largely negative account of New Baytown, and by extension America, populated by the corrupt, the conniving, and the condemned, such an apparently nihilistic perspective is perhaps not too hard to discern. However, rather than engaging with the depth and complexity of Steinbeck's work and facing the hard truths his characters face—and must continue to face—many Steinbeck scholars impose an overly simplistic account of hope on the novel. It is an interpretation in which, as Meyer's work illustrates, hope is understood as synonymous with optimism. In his account of the American jeremiad, for example, Meyer glosses over the contingency of redemption and fails to recognize that while salvation is possible, it is far from secured.⁴² Similarly, his account of the ending of *The Grapes of Wrath* fails to recognize that the hope is possible only because of the death

of a child: that what is gained is marked by what is lost. There is, however, a richer understanding of hope within the tradition of American political thought, one that, far from being synonymous with optimism, recognizes and embraces the tragedy of human existence. Viewing Steinbeck's last novel through this lens reveals much about his dualistic vision of America.

"What the American public always wants," William Dean Howells famously observed, "is a tragedy with a happy ending."⁴³ Tragedies do not, however, have happy endings; such territory is the purview of melodrama.⁴⁴ Tragedies may have what Paul Gilroy calls "productive" endings.⁴⁵ Such endings leave the viewer or the reader with a deeper understanding of the tragedy of condition. They do not, however, necessarily rob her of the impetus to seek to alleviate those conditions, even as she recognizes the impossibility of their being overcome.

Cornel West—a leading theorist of the relationship between a "tragic sense" and social hope—calls tragedy "a kind of 'Good Friday' state of existence in which one is seemingly forever on the cross"—appropriate enough for a novel that begins at Easter. The crucified are, West suggests, "sustained by a hope against hope for a potential and possible triumphant state of affairs."⁴⁶ The apparently paradoxical relationship between hope, an understanding of tragedy as condition, and political agency is resolved by an understanding of the *nature* of the hope—the "hope against hope" or a "hopeless hope"—that West, W. E. B. Du Bois, and indeed, Steinbeck's Ethan Hawley, all identify.⁴⁷ Such hope does not entail an expectation of fulfillment but rather constitutes what Eddie Glaude Jr. has called "a regulative ideal toward which we aspire but which ultimately defies historical fulfillment."⁴⁸ It is an ideal that, even as we recognize it is unattainable, continues to regulate our behavior. We might think, for example, of the "more perfect union" promised by the U.S. Constitution, the tragic dimensions of which have been articulated by orators from Abraham Lincoln to Barack Obama.⁴⁹

It is perhaps no surprise that the leading theorists of this tragic "hope against hope" are African American.⁵⁰ The insider/outsider perspective of being black in the United States, argued Du Bois, permitted African Americans what he called a "second sight," a perspective that, Robert Gooding-Williams observes, permits one "to see the world as it is disclosed to a social group different from one's own . . . thus as it is ordinarily not available to be seen."⁵¹ Given the relative absence of black Americans from Steinbeck's

work—the brief cameo offered by the two “Negro ladies” in the grocery store in *The Winter of Our Discontent* is indicative of their peripheral role in the America he describes—turning to an African American tradition to explain the tragic hope of Steinbeck’s patriotic vision may seem something of a stretch.⁵² What connects Steinbeck’s novel to this black tragic outlook is the dual perspectives that both embody and seek to inculcate in their audiences.⁵³

The Greek word *theoros*, from which we derive the modern word *theory*, referred both to an activity of watching and judging—such as in the theater—and to a person whose job it was to visit other city-states and report back on their activities. As the history of political theory suggests, journeys and return—such as for de Tocqueville—or the insider/outsider perspective of exile—such as for Thucydides and Machiavelli—permit a complex and critical perspective on the theorists’ own community.⁵⁴ Implicit in both understandings of the term *theoros* is, then, a dual perspective, one that we see not only in Ethan Hawley but also in the construction of the novel.

“For Myself, I Can Double Think”

The Winter of Our Discontent employs two narrative voices: a third-person narrator who appears in the first two chapters of each section of the novel and the first-person perspective of Ethan Hawley. Steinbeck’s technique has drawn criticism from, among others, Warren French, who argues that the switch in perspectives produced “the destruction of any consistent identification between Hawley and the reader.”⁵⁵ Stephen George, however, says—albeit anachronistically—that the novel offers a “deliberate use of postmodern techniques, primarily with the narrative voice.”⁵⁶ George cites John Ditsky, who, noting the multiple references to mirrors in the text, concludes that it is “a novel about mirrors.”⁵⁷ While few except George would be willing to ascribe to Steinbeck the narrative strategies of postmodernism, the playfulness of Nabokov, or even the identity games and persistent narrative misdirection of Philip Roth—all of whom are far more thoroughgoing in their approach than Steinbeck in his brief foray into this experimental narrative territory—there is, nevertheless, a duality to Steinbeck’s approach that may serve two functions.

First, perhaps the switch between narrators is meant to alert the reader to the perspectival nature of any story. It may be an approach that Steinbeck

employs but never quite resolves to his own satisfaction. Whereas his heavy-handed didacticism in the novel's epigraph—where Steinbeck more or less suggests that the reader sit in a corner and think about what he or she has done—implies an allegorical quality to the text, Ethan Hawley's later observation—that the man who tells stories “must think of who is hearing or reading, for a story has as many versions as it has readers. Everyone takes what he wants or can from it and thus changes it to his measure. Some pick out parts and reject the rest, some strain the story through their mesh of prejudice, some paint it with their own delight”—suggests the author's tragic recognition that his work might fall on deaf ears.⁵⁸ Indeed, the persistence of misrecognition and an inability of characters to make themselves heard or understood, or themselves to hear or understand—itself a key aspect of Greek tragedy—is central to the novel. Had, for example, Ethan been able to hear his daughter, or had she been able to express more clearly her concerns about her brother's plagiarism—a failure that, despite the elliptical nature of her approach, she blames on him: “You never listen, really listen”—the family's embarrassment over Allen's cheating might have been avoided.⁵⁹

Second, Steinbeck may have meant this narrative dualism to reflect Ethan's own dualistic worldview: his own theoretical perspective. Ethan observes, “I wonder about people who say they haven't time to think. For myself, I can double think. I find that weighing vegetables, passing the time of day with customers, fighting or loving Mary, coping with the children—none of these prevents a second and continuing layer of thinking, wondering, conjecturing. Surely this must be true of everyone. Maybe not having time to think is not having the wish to think.”⁶⁰ Ethan is, unlike many characters in the novel, unable to turn off his thoughts. He lives with a persistent dualism: in his job—happy but unhappy; in his family relationships—loving but unloving; and in his community—engaged with its values but aware of their corrupt foundation. Steinbeck uses Ethan's narration to demonstrate and cultivate a discrepant awareness, showing how what certain characters believe to be true is far from being the case. Mary, for example, understands very little about her husband. “When I am troubled,” Ethan observes, “I play a game of silly so that my dear will not catch trouble from me. She hasn't found out yet, or if she has, I'll never know it.”⁶¹ Mary does not understand that the silliness masks her husband's anger and depression. “I am glad you are silly again,” she declares. “It's awful when you're

gloomy.” As in Greek tragedy, she is, however, sometimes aware enough to recognize a gulf between them, even as she is unable to name it. “I never know what you’re thinking,” she observes.⁶²

That Ethan epitomizes the dualistic perspective—and perhaps the ambivalence of his creator—that is displayed in the tragic sense outlined by Cornel West and others raises the question of the origins of his perspective. Why, that is, is he able to offer insight into New Baytown, and by extension America, that most of the other characters in the text cannot?⁶³ Tellingly, many scholars regard Greek tragedy as a ritual of mourning and homecoming for the citizen-soldiers who made up the polity.⁶⁴ Given this, and the novel’s multiple references to Ethan’s military and wartime experiences, it would appear that it is the main narrator’s status as a veteran that affords him the ambivalent perspective of the *theoros*. Identifying the importance of this experience to Ethan’s worldview—and indeed, to that of his creator—not only highlights a much-overlooked but important aspect of the novel, but it also permits critical reflection on the questions of patriotism and redemption that have dominated the novel’s critical reception.

“Much of My Talk Is Addressed to People Who Are Dead”

Speaking of her brother’s return from his stint reporting on World War II, Steinbeck’s sister observed, “John wasn’t himself when he got home. The humor was gone, the play knocked right out of him. The war changed him.” The view was widely shared among his family and friends.⁶⁵ (For a discussion of Steinbeck’s wartime experiences, see chapter 12, by Mimi R. Gladstein and James H. Meredith.) Tom Brokaw’s popular 1998 book *The Greatest Generation* venerates those who fought the war and returned home to build a better, more just, and more equitable America. Brokaw writes, “When the war was over, the men and women who had been involved, in uniform and in civilian capacities, joined in joyous and short-lived celebrations, then immediately began the task of rebuilding their lives . . . battle-scarred and exhausted, but oh so happy to be home. The war had taught them what mattered most in their lives and they wanted now to settle down and live.”⁶⁶ Brokaw’s narrative has, however, come to obscure the rather more complicated experiences of wartime returnees, such as Steinbeck, and indeed, of the polity to which they were returning. Newspaper and magazine stories of

the period expressed the anxiety felt by the general public, asking questions such as “Will your boy be a killer when he returns home?” and suggesting that veterans should spend time in reorientation camps before they were permitted back into society.⁶⁷ The much-vaunted veterans’ benefits, including the GI Bill, were, moreover, frequently resented by the civilian population. A 1946 article in the *Saturday Evening Post* declared that the bill had proved to be “a tempting invitation to the shirker, the goldbricker, and the occasional crook.”⁶⁸ Little wonder, perhaps, that a 1947 poll found that one-third of all veterans felt estranged from civilian life; and another, that 20 percent of veterans felt “completely hostile to civilians.”⁶⁹ Similarly, narratives of return more complicated than those described by Brokaw were offered by William Wyler’s 1946 film *The Best Years of Our Lives*, by Sloan Wilson’s 1955 novel *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, and by the 1956 film adaption of the novel, starring Gregory Peck. *The Winter of Our Discontent* seems to be a novel in a similar vein.

The novel’s multiple references to combat, war, and killing make manifest the centrality of Ethan’s wartime experiences to his ambivalence about America. Although the term post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) did not become a part of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychology Association* until 1980, it was but a belated recognition of a long-standing phenomenon depicted by the Greeks in plays such as *Ajax* and *Herakles* and identified as “soldier’s heart” during the American Civil War, and as “shell-shock” in World War I. Ethan displays multiple symptoms of the disorder and *nearly* admits as much. “When it was going on,” he observes of the war, “I’m not sure I knew its agony because I was busy and unutterably tired, but afterward that unit of a day and a night and a day came back to me over and over again in my night thoughts until it was like that insanity they call battle fatigue and once named shell-shock.”⁷⁰ Despite his reluctance to admit the psychological impact of his wartime experiences—he expresses a disdain for “assembly-line psychoanalysts”—Ethan displays many of the diagnostic symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.⁷¹

As with many veterans, Ethan has trouble sleeping. “I fight off sleep,” he declares, “at the same time craving it.”⁷² Much of his introspective and critical reflection takes place on long walks in the very early hours of the morning. Tellingly, such walks repeatedly take him past the war memorial on which his name is inscribed (unusually, perhaps) as a survivor of the

conflict.⁷³ After he notes that the dead are listed below the living, Ethan’s suicidal thoughts—also illustrated by his partial recitation of the “to be, or not to be” speech from *Hamlet* and his wading into the ocean at the end of the novel—rise to the surface.⁷⁴ “For a brief moment, I wished I could be with them in the lower files.”⁷⁵ When Ethan does sleep, he is troubled by dreams of his military experiences. “Early in the morning a flight of [jets] boomed through and I jumped awake, a little trembly,” he observes. “They must have made me dream of those German 88-milimeter all-purpose rifles we used to admire and fear so much.”⁷⁶

The extent to which Ethan struggles with his war experiences is suggested by his efforts to compartmentalize them. He recounts the—decidedly Nietzschean—method employed by his sergeant, who suggested that instead of trying to block out the horrors of war, one should embrace them.⁷⁷ Similarly, recounting the method of avoidance employed by his commander—“the best officer I ever had”—Ethan observes that he employs the same method when his “attention should be as uninterrupted as possible.”⁷⁸ This suggests, perhaps, that much of his lack of focus and introspection are symptomatic of a man haunted, as he admits, by “ghosts.”⁷⁹

That Ethan is unsuccessful in his attempts to deal with his war experiences is suggested by his not-infrequent anger and panic attacks. Twice in the first chapter alone Ethan is quick to anger, first with Mr. Baker the banker, and second with his boss, Marullo.⁸⁰ We are told that “Ethan’s top blew-off with a bang.”⁸¹ Later Ethan struggles to contain himself in a disagreement with his wife, Mary: “The intent to wound raises rage. I could feel the fever rise in me. Ugly, desperate words moved up like venom. I felt a sour hatefulness.”⁸² Likewise, during a conversation with Mary and Margie Young-Hunt, Ethan struggles to contain what seems to be a flashback or panic attack: “A flare of searing pain formed in my bowels and moved upward until it speared and tore at the place just under my ribs. A great wind roared in my ears and drove me like a helpless ship, dismasted before it could shorten sail. I tasted bitter salt and I saw a pulsing heaving room. Every warning signal screamed danger, screamed havoc, screamed shock. It caught me as I passed behind my ladies’ chairs and doubled me over in quaking agony, and just as suddenly it was gone.”⁸³

During Ethan’s panic attack he refers to his *two* ladies—Mary *and* Margie Young-Hunt. This reveals a further problem that Ethan shares with many veterans, particularly those of the Second World War: their marriage

to and postwar alienation from spouses whom they hardly knew at the time of their wedding. Ethan declares, “I can see both of us, maybe more clearly now than then, a nervous, frightened Second Lieutenant Hawley with a weekend pass, and the soft, petal-cheeked, sweet-smelling darling of a girl. . . . How serious we were, how deadly serious. I was going to be killed and she was prepared to devote her life to my heroic memory. It was one of a million identical dreams of a million olive uniforms and cotton prints.”⁸⁴ The marriage was based, in part, on Ethan’s idea of what women should be rather than who Mary was. “Even if I hadn’t wanted to marry Mary,” he observes, “her constancy would have forced me to for the perpetuation of the world dream of fair and faithful women.”⁸⁵ It is perhaps telling that Ethan seems to have a greater understanding with Margie Young-Hunt. She too recognizes the dual nature of New Baytown—the disparity between the professed morals of its community pillars and their private sexual conduct—and has herself experienced violence at the hands of men.⁸⁶

Given Ethan’s frequent bitterness about his war service—“When I joined up to fight the foe, I didn’t know him,” he observes of the enemy, here personified by the Italian store owner Marullo. “When I came back he was here. When I went broke, he took over the store and gave me a job.”⁸⁷ Ethan (and his creator) might be thought to have sympathy with at least some of the arguments offered by Kateb and Johnston. Certainly, he is plagued by memories of the kind of killing that Kateb and Johnston identify as the direct product of patriotism. Although Ethan declares, “I don’t feel guilt for the German lives I took,” his denial seems more like that of a man attempting to suppress his wartime memories, trying to rationalize that which he feels or knows to be wrong.⁸⁸ Indeed, this suppression of moral feeling is central to his later success in business. It is success that is predicated on his ability to rationalize his actions toward both Danny Taylor—the guilt for which he tellingly accepts “as one accepts a wound in successful combat”—and Marullo.⁸⁹ “He was,” Ethan declares of his former boss, “a foreigner, a wop, a criminal, a tyrant, a squeezer of the poor, a bastard, and eight kinds of son of a bitch. I having destroyed him, it was only natural that his faults and crimes should become blindingly apparent to me.”⁹⁰ Ethan recognizes that this demonization of the enemy makes it possible for men such as himself to become killers. “How do you get ordinary Joes to slaughter people in a war?” he asks. The verb *slaughter*—which he uses more than once when discussing the war—suggests far more violence

than the term *killing* might. “Well, it helps if the enemy looks different or talks different. But then how about civil war? Well the Yankees ate babies and the Rebs starved prisoners. That helps.”⁹¹

Like Odysseus returned from the Trojan War, then, Ethan reflects on his birthplace, disguised, in his case, as a mild-mannered, well-meaning shop clerk. But it is clear that beneath this exterior lies a damaged individual whose interior monologue reveals a dualistic perspective on New Baytown. This dualism defies any categorization of the novel as simply redemptive of either Ethan or America.

“You’ve Got Every Right to Be Proud”

Central to Steinbeck’s vision in *The Winter of Our Discontent* is the notion that the highest values of American society have tainted origins. The narrator repeatedly advances the Augustinian notion that social and political respectability are a simple matter of success, rather than an indicator of moral worth. In Augustine’s *The City of God* a pirate asks an emperor, “What thou meanest by seizing the whole earth; but because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, whilst thou who dost it with a great fleet art styled an emperor.”⁹² Ethan Hawley returns to that theme throughout the novel. He observes of his ancestors, “They successfully combined piracy and puritanism, which aren’t so unlike when you come right down to it. Both had a strong dislike for opposition and both had a roving eye for other people’s property.”⁹³ Similarly, Ethan—contra Johnston, perhaps—acknowledges the double-edged nature of patriotism: “My ancestors, those highly revered ship-owners and captains, surely had commissions to raid commerce in the Revolution and again in 1812. Very patriotic and virtuous. But to the British they were pirates, and what they took they kept. That’s how the family fortune started that was lost by my father. That’s where the money that makes money came from. We can be proud of it.”⁹⁴ The searing irony in the last sentence of this passage is repeated throughout the novel. Ethan recalls that many of America’s greatest families obtained their exalted status through unscrupulous means, such as selling beef to the British while America was still at war with the mother nation or selling defective rifles to the army—an even greater irony for Ethan, perhaps, in that his father lost the family fortune by investing in munitions.⁹⁵ Similarly, Ethan turns repeatedly to the suggestion that Mr. Baker’s bank fortune was predicated

upon insurance fraud: the deliberate razing of the ship the *Belle-Adair*, which was jointly owned by Mr. Baker and Ethan's grandfathers.⁹⁶

Ethan's Augustinian awareness of the tainted origins of the commercial successes upon which the nation, and New Baytown, was built is linked to his sardonic observations about the nature of morality. "If the laws of thinking are the laws of things," observes Ethan early on in the novel, "then morals are relative too, and manner and sin—that's relative too in a relative universe. Has to be. No getting away from it."⁹⁷ Later, Ethan tells his son, in a tone of bitter irony, "Allen! There are unchanging rules of conduct, of courtesy, of honesty, yes even of energy. It's time I taught you to give them lip service at least."⁹⁸ Similarly, Ethan, contemplating the actions that would return his family fortune, asks himself, "What are morals? Are they simply words?"⁹⁹ Looking outward beyond America, he returns again to the notion that might makes right: "To most of the world I remember how, when Hitler moved unchecked and triumphant, many honorable men sought and found virtues in him. And Mussolini made the trains run on time, and Vichy collaborated for the good of France, and whatever else Stalin was, he was strong. Strength and success—they are above morality, above criticism."¹⁰⁰ It is perhaps telling that the novel moves toward July 4, a holiday that, as Willie the cop notes, has become corrupted: "The glorious Fourth is always a mess. Coming on a Monday, there'll be just that much more accidents and fights and drunks—out of town drunks."¹⁰¹ That it is July 4, 1960, the day on which the U.S. flag with the fiftieth star, representing Hawaii, was first raised is perhaps even more telling, given Ethan's comments about the respectability of power and about the history of colonial expansion that led to Hawaii's entry into the union.¹⁰²

In a May 1960 letter to Frank and Fatima Loesser, Steinbeck notes his early preparations for the book that would become *Travels with Charley*. "I'm going to learn about my own country," he writes. "I've lost the flavor and taste and sound of it."¹⁰³ Having returned from an extended stay in England, Steinbeck had found himself at odds with his country. His insider/outsider perspective is suggested by a comment upon a visit to California. "Tom Wolfe was right. You can't go home again because home has ceased to exist except in the mothballs of memory."¹⁰⁴ This dual perspective drives the novel. Steinbeck's own status as a *theoros* informs the perspective of the novel's narrator. Given the rather bleak vision of America depicted in the novel—certainly compared to the more positive, albeit qualified, vision

in *Travels with Charley* and *America and Americans* (see chapter 13, by Robert Hughes)—the question of whether *The Winter of Discontent* can in any way be considered a patriotic novel might legitimately be asked.

In light of the text’s unrelenting criticism of corruption, commercialism, the absence of integrity, and the fundamental dishonesty of New Baytown and America, it is not entirely clear that the Steinbeck of *The Winter of Discontent* could be said to love his country. It is perhaps for this reason that many critics have placed so much hermeneutic weight on the rather thin reed of Ethan’s decision to live at the end of the novel. Critics suggest that Ethan finds something for which to live, most obviously his daughter Ellen. Nevertheless, such a reading oversimplifies an emotionally complex relationship. Ethan declares of his daughter, “I do love her, and that’s odd because she is everything I detest in anyone else.”¹⁰⁵ His statement resembles the kind of uncritical love that Johnston believes is inherent to patriotism: the willingness to overlook fault. But Ethan also observes, “I love her, but I am somewhat in fear of her because I don’t understand her.”¹⁰⁶ It is a comment that might just as easily apply to his nation.

It would appear that there is a rather more complex love underpinning Steinbeck’s depiction of his country than that which would make the ending of the novel simply redemptive, one that suggests patriotism—whose root is the Latin word *patria*, for father—might better be perceived of as a familial rather than a romantic attachment. Viewed from this perspective Steinbeck’s nonredemptive, tragic love of country becomes evident.

“Can You Honestly Love a Dishonest Thing?”

“We are ashamed,” Isaiah Berlin once observed, “of what our brothers or our friends do; of what strangers do we might disapprove, but we do not feel ashamed.”¹⁰⁷ Berlin’s observation suggests that the palpable sense of anger over and disappointment in America that pervades *The Winter of Our Discontent* could come only from one attached to the nation. Were Steinbeck not so connected, perhaps, the vision of America that he presents in the novel might be less indignant and, indeed, more redemptive. Steinbeck seems to recognize, however, that the love that underpins patriotism is not, as Kateb and Johnston would have it, romantic but familial. As such, it carries with it recognition of the flaws of the love object rather than simply the idealized vision that Johnston and Kateb ascribe to romantic love. Given

Steinbeck's own tangled and complex family life, it is perhaps not too much of a stretch to suggest that he was aware of the tragic difficulties of this kind of love.

In the case of Ellen, for example, the redemptive version of Ethan's decision to live—"Else another light might go out"—misses his own fear of his daughter.¹⁰⁸ Ellen is far from the perfect light that would make the tale redemptive. Her decision to alert the authorities to her brother's plagiarism might, for example, be regarded as morally praiseworthy, as evidence of a decency and goodness that is otherwise lacking in New Baytown. Yet such an account overlooks the manner in which she exposes Allen: not quietly to her parents but in the most humiliating way possible. Indeed, the pleasure that she takes in setting up Allen's exposure—the cruelty of her act, paralleling the similarly underhanded actions of her father when having Marullo deported—is suggested by her apparent excitement at what initially appears to be Allen's success: "You'd think it was Ellen had won honorable mention," Mary said. "She's even prouder than if *she* was the celebrity. Look at the cake she baked.' It was a tall white cake with HERO written on its top in red, green, yellow, and blue letters."¹⁰⁹ Ellen takes similar pleasure in deceiving her father: "I do love you,' she said. 'Isn't it exciting? And isn't Allen wonderful? It's like he's born to it.'" "And this," observes Ethan, "was the girl I had thought very selfish and a little mean."¹¹⁰ The light that purportedly redeems Ethan and the novel has, perhaps, already gone out, if indeed it ever really shone.

In this way, even if Ethan believes that his daughter is a source of redemption—and it is not clear that this is indeed the case—Steinbeck appears to appeal over the heads of his characters to suggest otherwise to his reader. In this the discrepant awareness between what the reader knows and what the characters know suggests the novel's tragic vision. Steinbeck is hopeful but not optimistic about America. His is perhaps a rage against the dying of the light, a hope against hope. Even as he recognizes the possibilities of misinterpretation—evidenced, perhaps, by those who see the novel's ending as optimistic rather than as tragically hopeful—Steinbeck remains an engaged artist whose work aims at bringing the country he desires into being, even as he acknowledges that the odds are against him. In this he challenges both himself and the reader to do better. A 1959 letter to Adlai Stevenson perhaps best captures his awareness of the magnitude of the task. His invitation to Stevenson in the final sentence is the challenge to

us, his readers: “Someone has to reinspect our system and that soon. We can’t expect to raise our children to be good and honorable men when the city, the state, the government, the corporations all offer higher rewards for chicanery and deceit than probity and truth. On all levels it is rigged, Adlai. Maybe nothing can be done about it, but I am stupid enough and naively hopeful enough to want to try. How about you?”¹¹¹

Notes

I wish to thank Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh and the anonymous reviewers for the University Press of Kentucky for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this essay.

1. See, for example, “Books: Damnation of Ethan Hawley,” review of *The Winter of Our Discontent*, by John Steinbeck, *Time*, June 23, 1961, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,894545,00.html>.

2. Stephen K. George, “The Contemporary Nature of Steinbeck’s *Winter*: Artistry, Integrity, and September 11,” in *A John Steinbeck Reader: Essays in Honor of Stephen K. George*, ed. Barbara Heavilin (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 11–21; and the essays in Barbara Heavilin, ed., *Steinbeck Yearbook*, vol. 1, *The Winter of Our Discontent* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2000).

3. Robert C. Pirro, *The Politics of Tragedy and Democratic Citizenship* (New York: Continuum, 2011).

4. Terry Eagleton, *Sweet Violence: The Idea of the Tragic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 1.

5. The terms are my own, but they draw on Finlayson’s work. James Finlayson, “Conflict and Resolution in Hegel’s Theory of the Tragic,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 37, no. 3 (1999): 493–520. I am grateful to Joel Schwartz for drawing this essay to my attention.

6. I am grateful to Steven Johnston for this formulation.

7. Simon Stow, “Agonistic Homegoing: Frederick Douglass, Joseph Lowery, and the Democratic Value of African American Public Mourning,” *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 4 (2010): 682.

8. Christian Meier, *The Political Art of Greek Tragedy*, trans. Andrew Webber (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 219; emphasis in the original.

9. Richard Seaford, “Historicizing Tragic Ambivalence: The Vote of Athena,” in *History, Tragedy, Theory: Dialogues on Athenian Drama*, ed. Barbara Goff (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 202.

10. Christopher Rocco, *Tragedy and Enlightenment: Athenian Political*

Thought and the Dilemmas of Modernity (Berkeley: University of California Press), 110.

11. Froma I. Zeitlin, "Playing the Other: Theater, Theatricality, and the Feminine in Greek Drama," *Representations* 11 (1985): 75.

12. Simon Goldhill, *Love, Sex, and Tragedy: How the Ancient World Shapes Our Lives* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004).

13. Paul Gilroy, *Darker than Blue: On the Moral Economies of Black Atlantic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 150.

14. For an extended discussion of the costs and benefits of patriotism to democratic politics, see Martha Nussbaum, *For Love of Country*, ed. Joshua Cohen (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002).

15. George Kateb, *Patriotism and Other Mistakes* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006), 9.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., 10.

18. Ibid., 9.

19. Ibid., 8.

20. Ibid.

21. Steven Johnston, *The Truth about Patriotism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), 162–63.

22. Ibid., 64–88.

23. Ibid., 23.

24. Ibid., 32.

25. Ibid., 165.

26. Ibid., 25.

27. Steven Johnston, "This Patriotism Which Is Not One," *Polity* 34, no. 3 (2002), 307.

28. Ibid., 312.

29. Johnston, *Truth about Patriotism*, 13.

30. Although Johnston seems to qualify this claim somewhat in a later article: Steven Johnston, "American Dionysia," *Contemporary Political Theory* 8, no. 3 (2009): 255–75.

31. Johnston, *Truth about Patriotism*, 59.

32. Michael J. Meyer, "American Jeremiads: *The Winter of Our Discontent* and *Into The Woods*," *Theory in Action* 3, no. 1 (January 2010): 92.

33. Michael J. Meyer, "In \$\$\$\$ We Trust: Steinbeck's Jeremiad against Mammon in *The Winter of Our Discontent*," in Heavilin, *Steinbeck Yearbook*, 135.

34. Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 8.

35. Susan Shillinglaw, introduction to John Steinbeck, *The Winter of Our Discontent* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008), i.

36. Hiroshi Kaname and Barbara A. Heavilin, “John Steinbeck’s Patriotism in *The Winter of Our Discontent*,” in Heavilin, *Steinbeck Yearbook*, 173.

37. *Ibid.*, 183.

38. *Ibid.*, 173.

39. *Ibid.*, 182.

40. George, “Contemporary Nature,” 19. While there can be little doubt that 9/11 first responders displayed great bravery and devotion to duty, the suggestion that they “gave their lives” suggests a willingness to die that belies the communication problems and poor emergency planning that, in many cases, led to their deaths. See Jim Dwyer and Kevin Flynn, *102 Minutes: The Untold Story of the Fight to Survive inside the Twin Towers* (New York: New York Times Books, 2005).

41. C. Wright Mills, “The Social Role of the Intellectual” (1944), quoted in Pirro, *Politics of Tragedy*, 15.

42. See, for example, George Shulman, *American Prophecy: Race and Redemption in American Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

43. Quoted in Edith Wharton, *A Backward Glance* (New York: Scribner’s, 1933), 147.

44. See, for example, Elisabeth Anker, “Villains, Victims, and Heroes: Media, Melodrama, and September 11,” *Journal of Communication* 55 (2005): 22–37.

45. Paul Gilroy, *Darker Than Blue: On the Moral Economies of Black Atlantic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 150.

46. Cornel West, “Prophetic Christian as Organic Intellectual: Martin Luther King, Jr.,” in *The Cornel West Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 427.

47. Steinbeck, *The Winter of Our Discontent* (New York: Penguin Books), 78.

48. Eddie Glaude Jr., *Exodus! Race, Religion and Nation in Early Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000), 112.

49. See Barack Obama, “A More Perfect Union,” video and transcript of a speech delivered at Philadelphia, Penn., March 18, 2008, <http://my.barackobama.com/page/content/hisownwords/>.

50. Stow, “Agonistic Homegoing,” 691.

51. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2003), 9; Robert Gooding-Williams, *In the Shadow of Du Bois: Afro-modern Political Thought in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 78.

52. Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*, 144. Though, in keeping with Kateb’s and Johnston’s critiques of patriotism, Ethan does observe that “the Army

discovered that black and white no longer fight each other when they have something else to fight in company" (224).

53. As I have argued elsewhere, in the case of African Americans this dual perspective—this tragic hope against hope—has been largely obscured in the mainstream of American politics by popular narratives of the civil rights struggle in which the hopes of black Americans are thought to have been fulfilled by the civil rights movement, by the election of America's first black president, and/or by the emergence of a supposedly postracial nation. Stow, "Agonistic Homegoing," 684. A myriad of statistics pointing to ongoing race-based inequalities in the United States and the reservations expressed by Cornel West and Tavis Smiley, among others, about the benefits to African Americans of the election of the first black president suggest, nevertheless, that such ambivalence does and should persist. Don Terry, "A Delicate Balancing Act for the Black Agenda," *New York Times*, March 19, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/19/us/19cncagenda.html?scp=3&sq=tavis%20smiley%20Barack%20bama&st=cse>.

54. See, for example, Patrick Deneen, *The Odyssey of Political Theory: The Politics of Departure and Return* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003).

55. Warren French, "Steinbeck's Winter Tale," *Modern Fiction Studies* 2 (1965): 66–74.

56. George, "Contemporary Nature," 13. While George is perhaps right to situate the novel among a group of novels from the 1950s and 1960s that employed experimental narrative forms, the use of the term *postmodern* to describe them is too casual and historically problematic. See François Cusset, *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, and Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

57. John Ditsky, "The Devil Quotes Scripture: Biblical Misattribution and *The Winter of Our Discontent*," *San Jose Studies* 15, no. 2 (1989): 19–28. There are ten references to mirrors and to what they reveal in a text that is less than three hundred pages long.

58. Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*, 70.

59. *Ibid.*, 149.

60. *Ibid.*, 186.

61. *Ibid.*, 44.

62. *Ibid.*, 55.

63. With the exception, perhaps, of Margie Young-Hunt, the character with whom Ethan has most in common.

64. See Jonathan Shay, *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming* (New York: Scribner, 2002).

65. Quoted in Jay Parini, *John Steinbeck: A Biography* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 338.

66. Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 1998), xix–xx.

67. Thomas Childers, *Soldier from the War Returning: The Greatest Generation’s Troubled Homecoming from World War II* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 2009), 6.

68. *Ibid.*, 217. Similarly, the paper asked, “Are we making a bum out of G.I. Joe?” (8).

69. *Ibid.*, 8.

70. Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*, 89.

71. *Ibid.*, 154. Much of this description of PTSD is drawn from Shay, *Odysseus in America*.

72. Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*, 35.

73. *Ibid.*, 48, 203.

74. *Ibid.*, 122.

75. *Ibid.*, 203.

76. *Ibid.*, 154.

77. *Ibid.*, 90.

78. *Ibid.*, 190–91.

79. *Ibid.*, 61.

80. *Ibid.*, 14.

81. *Ibid.*, 21.

82. *Ibid.*, 113.

83. *Ibid.*, 77.

84. *Ibid.*, 39.

85. *Ibid.*

86. *Ibid.*, 159.

87. *Ibid.*, 179.

88. *Ibid.*, 92.

89. *Ibid.*, 216.

90. *Ibid.*, 219.

91. *Ibid.*, 56.

92. St. Augustine, *The Political Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2002), 30. See also Hannah Arendt’s observation, “Whatever brotherhood human beings may be capable of has grown out of fratricide, whatever political organization men may have achieved has its origins in crime.” *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 20.

93. Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*, 37.

94. *Ibid.*, 57.

95. *Ibid.*, 107.

96. *Ibid.*, 251.

97. Ibid., 56–57.
98. Ibid., 120.
99. Ibid., 187.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid., 204.
102. See Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004).
103. Quoted in Parini, *John Steinbeck*, 503.
104. Quoted in *ibid.*, 512.
105. Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*, 75.
106. Ibid., 125.
107. Quoted in Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 98.
108. Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*, 276.
109. Ibid., 259.
110. Ibid., 261.
111. John Steinbeck, *America and Americans and Selected Nonfiction*, ed. Susan Shillinglaw and Jackson J. Benson (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 109.