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How am I not myself? a semiotic analysis of images

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HOW AM I NOT MYSELF?
A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF IMAGES

by

MICHAEL G. MAIN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Honors in the Major Program in Humanities
in the College of Arts and Humanities
and in The Burnett Honors College
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term 2011

Thesis Chair: Dr. Kristin Congdon

Abstract

There has been much debate in the history of philosophy aimed at determining what it is, exactly, that makes a person who and what she is. Varying theories have offered a wide range of concepts in pursuit of the answer to this question. Some thinkers, such as B.F. Skinner, have claimed that it is observable behavior patterns that determine who and what a person is. Yet other thinkers, such as Carl Jung, have attributed unconscious motivators as being determinative in deciphering who and what a person is. Jung claims that it is the conscious and unconscious working together that determines who and what a person is.

The purpose of this thesis is to discover evidence that supports or disproves the theory of self in which the unconscious and conscious work together to determine who and/or what a person is. This is done by semiotically analyzing the Visual Products (VP) of Visual Product Producers (VPP) who were or are afflicted with Bipolar Disorder.

This thesis consists of the semiotic analysis of selected works by Jackson Pollock, Virginia Woolf, Vincent Van Gogh, and myself (Michael Main). Semiotic analysis studies how meanings are generated as opposed to what meanings are generated. It should be noted that semiotics was used strictly as a method of analysis and not as a guiding philosophy. In examining how the works of the selected VPPs generate meaning, it is hoped that evidence is produced that proves or disproves the theory of who or what a person is as determined by the interaction of the conscious and unconscious.

DEDICATION

For those who give a damn

For my mentors

And especially for my father and mother, Michael Charles
and Patricia Ann Main, both of whom never gave up on me.

Thank you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Kristin Congdon, Dr. Alvin Wang, and Dr. Bruce Janz. Also I would like to thank all those other people that did not actually end up on this page at publication.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Question Asked

The question that this thesis addresses is: what are the semiotic changes in the content of VPPs work over the three time periods that I refer to as 1) Pre-Crisis, 2) Crisis Event, and 3) Post- Crisis? It should be noted that this question has to do with personhood and the self. This is the question that guided me in my search for evidence of what is referred to in this thesis as the superordinate self, which is relayed by Jung in his book *Psyche and Symbol*. This Jungian conception of self is described in *Psyche and Symbol* as “The entity so denoted [the self] is not meant to take the place of the one that has always been known as the ego, but includes it in a superordinate concept” (1). In *Theories of Personality*, Jess Feist describes Jung’s conception of the self by stating that “the self represents the whole personality” (169). Additionally, he stresses that “the self is the subject of the whole person, conscious and unconscious” (169). Furthermore, in the fifth edition of *Theories of Personality*, Feist and Feist remind us that “the self includes both the conscious and unconscious mind, and it unites opposing elements of the psyche” (107). Throughout this thesis, this Jungian conception of self is referred to as the superordinate self.

The superordinate self can be considered as the combination of the unconscious and conscious factors and influences which result in the individual person. I am asking, therefore, what makes a person who they are? What exactly defines someone as a person and can this identity be identified in his or her creative work? Is identity found in a psychological processes or a person’s behavior or thought patterns? If so, it would suggest that a person’s self is mutable and perhaps inconstant.

Could there be, then, the possibility that what makes a particular person springs from within and is perhaps then acted upon by culture, socialization, chemical imbalance, and will power? Carl Jung tells us in his work *The Undiscovered Self*, for example, that “Archetypal forms grounded on the instincts and giving expression to them...represent the ultimate foundations of the psyche itself” (49). This would seem to indicate that there are forces that affect human behavior that are *a priori* to the conscious will of the ego. In fact, in the same work, Jung flatly states that:

Ego-consciousness would like to let its own will play this role [of a directing and ordering principle], but overlooks the existence of powerful unconscious factors which thwart its intentions. (62)

What Jung seems to be suggesting is that there are at least two parts of an individual’s self. That of the external, or observed self, which could be seen as the conscious will; and that of the internal, or superordinate self, which appears to be composed not only of the conscious will, but also of unconscious motivating factors that act upon the will itself.

How should I go about exploring this topic? As an observer, I am restricted to what I can perceive. That is to say I cannot enter into someone else’s mind and experience their subjectivity; instead, I must limit myself to what I can observe. Certainly this approach might initially seem to stand in the way of progressing my line of questioning. Let us not think to discard observable behavior however, as B.F. Skinner claims that a major tenet of Methodological Behaviorism “consider only those facts which can be objectively observed in the behavior of one person in its relation to his prior environmental history” (11). In this statement, Skinner has revealed a

possible path for research into what makes a person that person. In other words, it appears to be possible to seek signs of a superordinate self in the behavioral actions of a subject over a period of time. It can be seen, therefore, that while the explicit question that guides this inquiry has to do with changes in content of VPs over time, the implicit, or unspoken, question that drives this work is: Is there a superordinate self, and if so, how can it be identified? Is there something within human beings that guide their actions, choices, thought patterns, and behavior?

The Reasons for Asking

Furthermore, I must ask myself why these two questions respectively guide and drive this work. In a practical sense, what benefit to humanity may be derived from the attempt to answer such questions? Does it matter to the average person, immersed as we all are in our subjectivity, if what makes us who we are derives from unconscious elements inside of us or is our identity determined only by our conscious will? In answer to such questions, I would respond that self-knowledge has many consequences on how a person lives her life, as well as how one feels about oneself.

Some would say that one could think of an individual human as a partial microcosm of humanity as a whole. If that can be held as true, it would imply that knowledge of one's self is also, at least partly, knowledge of humanity. At the very least, such knowledge would offer a good starting point for a quest for knowledge about humanity. That then is a reason for justifying an academic pursuit of this particular knowledge of the self. Additionally, in this line of

questioning there may be ramifications for the concept of mental disorder and those afflicted by it.

Much contemporary treatment focuses on changing behavior and thought patterns with the help of counseling and medication. As a person with mental disorders who has undergone treatment, I have exhibited major changes in behavior and thought processes; so much so, that did I not still occupy the same physical structure (body), I would be at a loss to explain how I am still myself. Once, while pondering that question, it occurred to me that I could not definitively define who I am and what makes me Mike Main. I wondered if other mental health patients asked themselves the same question.

Who am I and what determines that seem like such a basic questions. Easy to answer and then move forward. I propose that for some, however, while the question remains basic, it is not so easily laid to rest. Replying that I am myself, only begs the question of what makes me myself. How can I be the same person who was fully immersed in subjective delusions and still be the practical and somewhat more thoughtful person I am now? One could point to growth of the self over time, explaining that all people change as they gain experience and learn. This is true enough; however, for the most part growth of the self follows a relatively linear path. It should be a narrative line if you will, where point A leads to point B, followed by a plateau at that level which then leads to point C, followed by another plateau and so on. The points may vary wildly but the path between them was well and fully traveled by the person during her lifetime.

For many mental health patients, the story is not so connected and flowing. Those with Bipolar Disorder for instance, using the same metaphor, move in a non-linear fashion, perhaps from point B to point Z, then to point A and on to point B again. This is mainly only observable from an outsider's perspective however. For the disordered person, the narrative line, while immersed into subjectivity, seems just as linear and orderly as the unaffected person. It is only with the benefit of hindsight and knowledge that the disordered person may track the disjointed progress of the growth of herself. That is to say that to the subjective self, everything makes perfect sense. It is only incoherent to those who are not immersed in that same subjectivity. Such considerations, in the light of will, behavior, and thought process-based assignments of self, would suggest that, in fact, most people are not one person throughout their lives, but are in fact several separate and discrete people who merely happen to have used the same physical structure (body). Therefore, I say that, potentially, the answers to the questions that respectively guide and drive this thesis could potentially change the way that we, as human beings, view the world, the other, and ourselves.

Pursuing the Question

The way in which I pursue my question may benefit from some discussion and clarification. I have already mentioned that the goal of this work is to discover evidence of a real self. The specific question used to guide inquiry into this matter is: what are the observable changes in semiotic content in the Visual Products (VPs) made by Visual Product Producers (VPPs) that are afflicted with Bipolar Disorder throughout three proposed stages of 1) Pre-Crisis, 2) Crisis Event, and 3) Post- Crisis? Again, I feel it should be noted that in this thesis

semiotics is used strictly as a method of analysis. That is to say that semiotics is used as a method of analysis and not as a reference to semiotic philosophy.

It is important to note the inherent drawbacks of using semiotics as a method of analysis in pursuit of the questions of this thesis. The issue here is that semiotic philosophy is concerned with the relationships present between the signifiers within a given system of meaning. In short, semiotics could be described as viewing reality as horizontally organized. In other words, there is nothing above or below the interconnected meaning system for semiotics, so that what semiotics asks is how do signifiers that are present relate to other signifiers that may or may not be present. This is problematic for this thesis as the essential point of this thesis is pursuit of evidence of a superordinate self, which is made up of a combination of conscious and unconscious factors. That is to say that this thesis uses semiotic analysis, which is oriented towards horizontal organization, to try to find evidence for something that exists below this horizontal organization. In short, this thesis attempts to use semiotic analysis to seek evidence for something that semiotics is unconcerned with.

Because of that, I must answer some important questions before I may deem the use of semiotics as a method of analysis as acceptable. One of the questions to be addressed is: if there are indeed semiotic differences between the VP analyzed over the three periods, is semiotics capable of accounting for that change? Semiotic philosophy would lead us to assume that change in semiotic features over time is to be expected, however, that change would be expected to happen gradually as well as remaining within the individual's meaning system. What if, however, there are abrupt changes in semiotic features as opposed to a more gradual evolution? I

feel that such may be indicative of something being there other than a horizontally organized web of interconnected meanings.

That being said, it is important to note what implications that has for any results produced by this thesis. I feel the most important implication of the preceding passages is that it is inherently impossible to prove or disprove any theories presented in this thesis. In other words, it is impossible to get all the way there, so to speak. In fact, the limit of this thesis would be the establishment of some correlation between the results of the semiotic analysis and the potential existence of a superordinate self.

Semiotic analysis was chosen for this thesis for its focus on the relationship between signifiers both present and absent. Using semiotics, I have identified the commonalities between VPs within the same time period. After that, I examined how any changes between differing periods relate to each other. Once again, it is important to remember that this thesis can say nothing definitive about self-continuity; it can only indicate a potential hypothesis and perhaps a justification of more research being warranted.

By VPs I am referring to works that can be seen as attempts at visual communication, be that image making or the creation of text. In essence, a VP is work that has been created which requires visual analysis for interpretation. I favor the term of VPP over the term of “artist”. This stems from my rejection of art as a relevant concept in the context of this thesis. This is due to art being, primarily, whatever the art/culture industry/establishment has positioned as art. I am not concerned with what may or may not be classified as art. Something being classified as art is irrelevant to this thesis and my question. Having therefore freed my exploration from the restricting concept of art and the dogmatic philosophies inherent in what is called art, I find

myself with enough breathing room (metaphorically) to turn and examine works that may or may not have been classified as art. Regardless of the categorization of a work(s), what I am concerned with are creations made to be looked at; that is to say the works are meant to be interacted with visually. At the very least, they are works which require looking for any attempt at analysis. I therefore shall restrict attempts at categorization to the term VPs.

In reference to being diagnosed with Bipolar/Manic Depression, I mean to indicate either a clinical diagnosis or a behavioral (post-mortem) diagnosis by a psychiatric professional (Albert Rothenberg comes to mind) that conforms to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV*, hereafter referred to as *DSM IV*. This text is published by the American Psychiatric Association with the intent of providing a standard of criteria for the classification of mental disorders and diagnosis of people suffering from a disorder. The reasoning behind this is that I wish to leave all “self-diagnosed” people to the side. While they may indeed suffer from Bipolar Disorder, they are, I feel, inadmissible for my purposes. I am, however, open to admitting VPPs from the past that have been convincingly diagnosed by mental health professionals (Ph.D. or M.D.), or who’s recorded behavior positions them as afflicted by Bipolar Disorder according to the *DSM IV*. Please refer to Appendix A for a full definition of this mental disorder and related terms.

I propose three stages to be examined in this thesis. The Pre- Crisis stage is the period that refers to works produced either before onset of symptoms or at least before the Crisis Event. The Crisis Event period could be thought of as the significant watershed event that led directly to diagnosis, commitment to a mental institution, or period of significant treatment. This is the

particular onset of symptoms that firmly and definitively positioned the person in question as disordered. The Post- Crisis period can be construed as the period of time after the VPP has been diagnosed. If the VPP has been institutionalized during the diagnosis event, then this is the period of time after the VPP has been released from an institute.

I have conducted a semiotic analysis of the VPs selected for each VPP. The semiotic features analyzed for this thesis are signifiers, modality cues, and the paradigm(s) in which the VPs were formed. I identified if the signifiers are iconic or symbolic and how they were formed. (That is, do the signifiers resemble what they are supposed to signify, and were they made using lines and/or patterns of color and what distinctive features the signifiers possess such as visible brush-strokes, layering of paint, or choice of colors.) In *Semiotics: The Basics*, Chandler tells us that an iconic signifier “is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified” (229). This is in opposition of a symbolic signifier which “does not resemble the signified but which is arbitrary or purely conventional” (Chandler 243).

As it concerns the concept of modality Daniel Chandler states in his work *Semiotics for Beginners* that:

Modality refers to the reality status accorded to or claimed by a sign, text, or genre.... In making sense of a text [VP], its interpreters make modality judgments about it...they assign it to fact or fiction, actuality or acting, live or recorded, and they assess the possibility or plausibility of the events depicted or the claims made in it.

(www.aber.ac.uk)

These modality judgments are based on the “Modality cues” of each VP “[which] include both formal features of the medium and content features” (Chandler 62). The specific modality cues examined for this thesis are: 1) Does the VP utilize perspective, and if so what kind? 2) Does the VP consist of objects containing length, width, and depth, or just length and width? 3) Were the signifiers in the VP realistic (detailed/iconic) or were they abstract (symbolic)? Realistic (iconic) signifiers physically resemble the thing they signify; whereas abstract (symbolic) signifiers must be decoded by the interpreter using semiotic codes (such as language systems or art theory). 4) Did the signifiers within the VP make use of color or were they monochromatic? 5) Was the VP a moving image, such as video, or a still image, such as an oil painting? 6) Did the VP signify a possible or an impossible situation? 7) Did the VP signify a plausible or an implausible situation? 8) Did the VP signify something that was familiar to the VPP and intended audience or unfamiliar? 9) Did the VP signify something that was current/contemporary at the time of its creation, or does it depict something in the past or future at the time of its creation? 10) Did the VP signify something geographically local or distant from the vicinity of its creation?

What I mean when I say I examined the semiotic paradigmatic features of a VP is that I identified the primary systems-of-meaning-generation. Examples of such systems are Western art theory and the written English language. Additionally, I identified less primary sub-genres such as academic writing or the Impressionistic style of painting.

Methodology

As it concerns methodology, I have:

- Examined, where possible, five separate VPs from each VPP from each of the three previously defined time periods of crisis. This means that around sixty VPs will be analyzed. The works selected and analyzed are explicitly laid out in Appendixes B-E.
- In selecting the VPs to be analyzed, I have attempted to select the VPs that seem to be the most typical of the selected period. That is to say that I have tried to select VPs that are the most representative of the VPs created during the specific period.
- All of the VPs analyzed were found in the UCF library, the Artstor website, or the books *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* by Naifeh and Smith and *Jackson Pollock: Psychoanalytic Drawings* by Wysuph.
- I employed semiotic analysis of visual images as a framework to use for the purpose of analysis of VPs. This includes analysis of the signifier creation, modality cues, and paradigms of meaning generation. To reiterate, semiotics has been used as a methodology of analysis. It is important to note that this thesis does not deal with semiotics as a philosophy.
- I have compared each analysis of a VP to the analysis of another VP by the same VPP deriving from the same period. In this way I attempted to form a foundation of similarity and/or difference for each VPP from each period.
- I compared analysis of VPs of a VPP from one period, to the analysis of VPs by the same VPP but drawn from the two remaining periods.
- After having compiled a holistic analysis for each VPP throughout the three time periods, I entered into examination of each VPP throughout the three period. In addition to this, I have

been and will continue to keep a daily journal regarding my creation of VPs, so as to aid in post-facto analysis. In such a way I hope to find either signs of the superordinate self, or signs of a lack of the same.

The VPs (other than me) whose work is to be analyzed are Jackson Pollock, Vincent Van Gogh, and Virginia Woolf. Jackson Pollock has been chosen as a VP for this research due to recorded behavior that positions him as suffering from Bipolar Disorder. In addition, Pollock created VPs before, during, and after being institutionalized. This means that there are extant VPs created by Pollock throughout the three stages. Vincent Van Gogh was chosen due to the extensive academic work diagnosing him as having Bipolar Disorder. Additionally, the VPP Virginia Woolf was chosen for the purpose of this research due to relatively large body of academic work positioning her as suffering from Bipolar Disorder. Furthermore, I have included myself in this research due to my diagnosis by the Veteran's Administration as having Bipolar disorder (among others).

The necessary backgrounds needed for this project are: A grasp of semiotic analysis as method of analysis, a strong basis of critical thought and consideration, and familiarity with the specific diagnosis with which we are here concerned; which is to be provided by reference to the *DSM IV*.

My Hypothesis and the Reasoning Behind it

As stated previously, I hope to be able to identify signs of a real self throughout the three periods. That is to say, I hope to find indicators within the works themselves that demonstrate

that those works were produced by the same person. If we look at the work of producer A from the periods of Pre- Crisis, Crisis Event, and Post- Crisis, do we see signs that link those works to the same person? We must, for purposes of this question, disregard our prior knowledge of the creator of these works and look within the works themselves for indicators that they were produced by the same person. Are the subjects similar, constant, or dissimilar? Is the method used to make shapes and forms similar, constant or dissimilar? What of the medium of the work or the materials used? What about planning and preparation of the works?

In this way, I hope to show that despite the different states of being experienced throughout the three stages described here, there is an underlying superordinate self that straddles or even transcends those states of being, which can be determined/extrapolated from the visual products or the methods of their creation produced throughout the three stages. The goal of this project is to attempt to show the existence of a superordinate self that remains more or less consistent despite the sometimes drastic behavioral and psychological changes exhibited by a person when undergoing the three stages discussed previously.

While there is much extant academic work dealing with Bipolar VPPs, it seems, for the most part, to be focused on proving or disproving theoretical links between mental disorder and creativity. There does seem to be space for research into the existence of the superordinate self through the use of semiotic methodology. As a VPP afflicted with Bipolar Disorder, I have found myself positioned in the center of the matter I propose to investigate.

Further, I have personally experienced the drastic change in behavioral and psychological patterns that are seemingly inherent throughout the three stages. I am perceived by those who

have known me well throughout the three stages as being the same person; a person who, although having undergone radical behavioral and psychological change, is essentially the same being. I myself have doubts. As I reminisce about myself throughout the three stages, I am struck by how radically different my behavioral patterns and psychological processes are. I am forced to ponder whether there is any such thing as a superordinate self, or if such a thing's supposed existence is merely an effect of the conscious will [ego]. By some manner of analysis, I have displayed such varying states of psychological and behavioral patterns that it may be indicated that the only thing that connects me with who I previously was is the fact that I occupy the same physical body. This raises the question of not only, who am/was I really, but also what it means to BE me. Is it the mere occupation of this body known as Michael Main all it takes for me to be Michael Main? Can that be all there is to it? I contingently reject this supposition.

I postulate that being a person requires much more than mere occupation of a specific physical structure, in this case a body. But if that is so, then it would seem to indicate that it is psychological and behavioral patterns that determine what it is to be a specific person. Furthermore, the potential for radical alteration of behavior when undergoing the three previously described stages may suggest that each discrete behavior pattern displayed during the three stages potentially evidences three separate persons (despite occupying the same physical body), at least in view of the primacy given to behavior by Skinner's conception of the self. However, if we employ that method of understanding, then it could be a viable statement that I am not THE Michael Glenn Main, born of my specific parents. I am merely A Michael Glenn Main, born of my specific parents; and have indeed already been at least three separate and discrete Michael Mains who only happen to have occupied the same physical structure (the

body). Furthermore, if we try to combine these two methods of identifying someone as a specific person, then one may postulate that I am the same person who has merely exhibited different personalities. But personalities, in themselves, are inherent to being categorized as a specific person, is it not so? This is a consideration that has plagued my mind and quite arguably interfered with my treatment.

The questions of who I am and what that means are arguably questions that plague the entirety of the human race. However, within the maelstrom of disorder, treatment, and change, the potentiality of these questions, and the search to answer them are vastly increased. In that, I see a bit a silver lining. For such recurrence brings with it opportunities to investigate and explain the matter in such a way that we may come closer to true understanding.

Therefore, I propose to examine the matter from my privileged position at the center of the maelstrom. Additionally, I will analyze a selection of my Bipolar VPP peers in the hopes of reaching a more holistic understanding of the self. By doing this research I hope to discover supporting evidence of Jung's conception of the self.

CHAPTER TWO: JACKSON POLLOCK

Diagnosis

Jackson Pollock was committed to an asylum in White Plains, New York in 1938 (Naifeh and Smith 314). Before being committed to this asylum, Pollock disappeared “for four days on the longest and most determined effort at self-obliteration of his life” (314). According to Naifeh and Smith, during this disappearance Pollock “wandered the streets of the Browery on the Lower East Side, drinking sherry and rotgut around the clock, passing out in the gutter” (314). This was the event that led up to Pollock’s commitment to the asylum at White Plains.

Once committed, the staff at the White Plains asylum categorized Pollock as “an inebriate [alcoholic/drunk] and a proper study for treatment” (315). In speaking of this commitment of Pollock to an asylum, C.L. Wysuph tells us that “Jackson was hospitalized...at the Westchester Division of New York Hospital for treatment of acute alcoholism” (13). There, his case was picked up by Dr. James Hardin Wall, who specialized in “alcoholic psychosis” (Naifeh and Smith 317). Pollock left the White Plains asylum “just two months after being admitted” (Naifeh and Smith 319).

Following a relapse, Pollock, in early 1939, began therapy with Dr. Joseph Henderson. He diagnosed Pollock as having “a schizophrenia-like disorder characterized by alternating periods of violent aggression and paralysis or withdrawal” (Naifeh and Smith 359-360). Under Henderson’s care, Pollock began to explore his unconscious through the making of images.

The official diagnosis presented for Pollock was that of “acute alcoholism” (Wysuph 13) and/or “alcoholic psychosis” (Naifeh and Smith 317) along with “a schizophrenia-like disorder characterized by alternating periods of violent aggression and paralysis or withdrawal” (Naifeh and Smith 359-360). It is this last diagnosis from Henderson that gives support to the suggestion of Bipolar Disorder as a diagnosis for Pollock. Some of the supporting facts for such a diagnosis follow. Wysuph states that:

Lee Krasner [Pollock’s wife] described him thus: “Whatever Jackson felt, he felt more intensely that anyone I’ve ever known when he was angry he was angrier; when he was happy, he was happier; when he was quiet, he was quieter” ...a of man of extremes. (10)

Such a description can be easily perceived as indicative of Bipolar Disorder. Individuals who are afflicted with Bipolar Disorder usually spend most of their emotional lives in one extreme or another. Indeed, with Bipolar Disorder, the middle ground is the hardest to attain, if attainable at all.

Furthermore, Naifeh and Smith tell us that Pollock alternated “between soul-searching conversations with Peter Busa and random explosions of anxious rage” (249). Additionally, they reveal to us Busa’s puzzlement “by the two Jackson Pollocks” (250). This is an indication of diametrically opposed behavior patterns that is typical affliction by Bipolar Disorder. In short, it is supporting evidence for Pollock’s gryoscopying behavior patterns. Moreover, Naifeh and Smith claim that “Plotted on a graph, his [Pollock’s] emotional life would have been a wavy line with two-year intervals between crests” (470). This type of emotional pattern I find to be highly indicative of Bipolar Disorder. There are many more such examples of Jackson Pollock’s

behavioral pattern that reinforce this diagnosis. In fact, they are too numerable to examine exhaustively in the present work. I find it quite arguable to state that there is a significant chance that Pollock was misdiagnosed by modern standards and I therefore claim Bipolar Disorder as a diagnosis for Jackson Pollock.

The Arrangement of the Periods

The three periods that have been identified for study within this work are, as previously mentioned, those of Pre- Crisis, Crisis Event, and Post- Crisis. The benefits of these divisions of the selected VPPs lives are that they are clear-cut, simple, and easy to understand. The drawback, however, of these periods as it concerns Jackson Pollock, are that his life, like most peoples' lives, is not clear-cut, simple, or easy to understand. The simple distinctions of artificially created systems of examination do not easily fit on any one individual's life.

Therefore, it would seem that some explication of what I have chosen to include into each category is needed. Jackson Pollock first entered therapy in January 1937 (Naifeh and Smith 302). Needless to say, it is very tempting to begin the period of Crisis Event here. Certainly, it has some merit, being as it is Pollock's first encounter with mental health therapy. However, it would perhaps be more beneficial for the purposes of this work if Pollock's period of Crisis Event were centered more on his first commitment to an asylum. This is due to the clear break from influences in the outside world that is involved with psychiatric commitment. Furthermore, commitment to an institution is a drastic step, even in contemporary times. During Pollock's time in commitment to an asylum it was even more drastic. It is during this period of commitment in

White Plains that Pollock's serious attention was called to his emotional disorders. Therefore, Pollock's Crisis Event period begins with this commitment.

Following the argument of when Pollock's Crisis Event period should begin, comes the question of when it should end. Indeed, it is tempting to end the period with Pollock's release from the asylum. Yet it must be noted that Pollock's term of commitment lasted only "two months" (Naifeh and Smith 319). Additionally, Pollock entered therapy with Dr. Henderson in early 1939 (Naifeh and Smith 326). It is apparent then, that perhaps Pollock was released too early from his commitment and might be justifiably argued to still be within the Crisis Event period. Tellingly, Pollock's therapy with Dr. Henderson lasted a year and a half (Naifeh and Smith 326). This is indicative of a continued Crisis Event period. Additionally, for Pollock, the time period within which he attended therapy with Dr. Henderson was one of the longest periods of treatment by the same doctor that Pollock experienced.

It would seem applicable then, to extend Pollock's Crisis Event period to include his time with Dr. Henderson. Dr. Henderson "in 1940...left New York to set up practice in San Francisco" (Wysuph 10). Although Pollock continued therapy with a variety of different doctors, none of them appear to have enough criteria to justify extending the Crisis Event period any further.

Semiotic Comparison

Pollock Pre- Crisis

The VPs analyzed from the Pre-Crisis period are *Departure*, *Self-Portrait*, *Studies 1*, *Studies 2*, and *Studies 3*. As it concerns signifiers and their creation, all VPs selected for analysis that were created by Pollock during the Pre- Crisis period make are a type, as opposed to a token, and make use of iconic, or realistic, signifiers. Additionally, *Studies 1*, *Studies 2*, and *Studies 3* create signifiers using lines, shading, and negative space. *Departure* and *Self-Portrait* use patterns of colors as well as lines to create signifiers. These two VPs that have color both use the colors green, brown, black, red, and yellow.

As it concerns the modality cues in the VPs from this period, *Departure*, *Self-Portrait*, *Studies 1*, and *Studies 2* use some type of perspective while *Studies 3* contains no apparent perspective. All five of the VPs analyzed from this period make use of flat images that have at least a somewhat realistic appearance. Furthermore, *Studies 1*, *Studies 2*, and *Studies 3* do not use color, while *Departure* and *Self-Portrait* do. All VPs analyzed from this period are still images that are both possible and plausible. Moreover, all the VPs analyzed from this period were current at the time of their creation as well as being situated locally. In other words, the semiotic features of these VPs do not claim to be removed from their creator in either time or space.

The primary system of meaning, or paradigm, which shaped all five of the VPs analyzed from this period, is that of Western art theory. These VPs were additionally shaped by the paradigm of Western art tradition. The theme for *Studies 1*, *Studies 2*, and *Studies 3* is that of practice sketches, or studies. *Departure* and *Self-Portrait* each possess a dark and moody theme.

The results of the analysis of the five VPs analyzed from Pollock's period of Pre- Crisis can be seen as quite startling. This is due to the five VPs analyzed semiotic features being so closely similar. In fact, all of the examined semiotic features of the selected VPs are an exact match to each other; excepting the features of themes and the use of color. This would seem to be indicative of at least some support for the theory of a superordinate self. Furthermore, such similarity in the paradigmatic feature of systems of meaning generation is to be at least somewhat expected as Pollock was raised in a Western culture and was therefore habituated to the use of Western systems of meaning generation. In *Semiotics: The Basics*, Chandler claims that:

We learn to read the world in terms of the codes and conventions [paradigms] which are dominant within the specific socio-cultural contexts and roles within which we are socialized. (156)

It should be noted, however, that while such similarity was to be expected, that does not necessarily mean that the similarity is not potentially significant. Therefore, the results of the analysis of the five selected VPs from this period should be seen as leaning towards the support of the theory of the superordinate self.

Pollock Crisis Event

The VPs analyzed from this period are *Plate 31, Head, Plate 57, Crucifixion Hoover, and Plate 70*. As it concerns signifiers and their creation in the VPs selected for analysis from Pollock's Crisis Event period. All five VPs selected for analysis that were created by Pollock during the Crisis Event period are a type, or a unique work. In all five of Pollock's VPs analyzed

from this period there is a mixture of iconic and symbolic signifiers. All the VPs from this period create signifiers using lines. *Crucifixion Hoover*, *Head*, and *Plate 57* used patterns of colors in addition to lines and space. Additionally, *Plate 57*, *Crucifixion Hoover*, and *Head* shared the color yellow.

Moving on to the modality cues present in these VPs, none of the VPs analyzed from this period makes use of any type of perspective; *Plate 57*, *Head*, *Plate 70*, and *Plate 31* consist of flat images. All use a mixture of detailed (realistic) with abstract images as signifiers and use still images to generate meaning. *Crucifixion Hoover*, *Head*, and *Plate 57* contain color. All of the VPs selected except *Plate 57* present possible yet implausible situations. Additionally, none of VPs analyzed from this period are situated in time or space.

The primary system of meaning generation, or paradigm, in which all VPs analyzed from this period were formed is that of Western art theory. This is then further molded by Jung's psycho-analytic system of meaning generation. Moreover, these VPs share the theme of representing the unconscious, which is indicative of influence from Jungian psycho-analytical paradigm.

The results of the analyses of the selected VPs from Pollock's Crisis Event period highlight a remarkable amount of similarity in the semiotic features examined. Such strong trends of similarity in the features examined should not go un-noted. Indeed, the trend towards consistency displayed in the analyzed VPs acts to lend support to the theory of the superordinate self.

Pollock Post- Crisis

The VPs analyzed from this period are *Autumn Rhythm*, *Echo*, *Night Sounds*, *Gothic*, and *Easter and the Totem*. Of the five analyzed VPs created by Pollock during this period, all five are a type. Furthermore, these five VPs all make use of symbolic signifiers. Moreover, signifiers in all five VPs were created using patterns of colors and lines. All of the VPs analyzed make use of the color black. The color white appears in all of the VPs analyzed from this period except for *Gothic*. *Night Sounds*, *Gothic*, and *Easter and the Totem* use the colors yellow, orange, and pink.

There is a strong trend towards consistency displayed in the modality cues presented by the VPs from Pollock's Post- Crisis period. In fact, none of the VPs analyzed use perspective, while utilizing paint layering to create a third dimension. Additionally, all five of the VPs from this period that were selected for analysis use abstract signifiers, contain color, and are still images. Furthermore, all of the VPs analyzed signify both impossible and implausible situations. Moreover, none of the analyzed VPs from period are situated in either time or space.

The primary meaning generation paradigm present in all of the VPs analyzed from this period is that of Western art theory. Furthermore, all five VPs analyzed were additionally shaped by the Abstract Expressionism system of meaning generation. Additionally, all five of the VPs analyzed from this period make use of the theme of expressing the unconscious.

Once again, the VPs from this period show a very strong tendency to share similar semiotic features between themselves. In fact, the semiotic features examined in the VPs analyzed from this period match up relatively nicely. This could be perceived as potentially lending support to the theory of the superordinate self.

CHAPTER THREE: VINCENT VAN GOGH

Diagnosis

The mental illness suffered by Vincent Van Gogh certainly seems to have been a mystery to those medical professionals who attempted to treat him during his lifetime; however, thanks to the scholarly pursuits of knowledge about Van Gogh, many academic professionals, as well as medical professionals have studied his life as well as his work, and offer us solid hope of a contemporary diagnosis. R.E. Hemphill reveals to us in his article “The Illness of Vincent Van Gogh” in the publication of *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, that “In my opinion Van Gogh was a manic depressive who developed confusional episodes and fits in the last two years of his life due to the toxic action of thujone, the active agent of absinthe, to which he had become addicted” (28). It is therefore certainly apparent that R.E. Hemphill considered Van Gogh to suffer from a form of Manic Depression.

This assuredly at least begins to open a door for inclusion of Vincent Van Gogh as a VPP who suffered from Bipolar Disorder. This impression is further reinforced by Hemphill later in the same work when he states that “Van Gogh’s mental illness, complicated by alcoholism and a form of epilepsy, was a manic depressive psychosis” (30). Taken together, both of these statements offer a convincing argument for the consideration of Van Gogh as suffering from a form of Bipolar Disorder. Indeed, within the same article, Hemphill examines what is known of Van Gogh’s life and behaviors to support his diagnosis of Van Gogh being afflicted with a “manic depressive psychosis” (30).

Furthermore, one can find agreement with Hemphill's diagnosis of Van Gogh as suffering from Manic Depression in the work *Manic Depression and Creativity* written by Jablow Hershman and Julian Lieb. In this text, they speak of the ill effects that Manic Depression had on Van Gogh, saying "Manic-Depression harried him [Van Gogh] across the frontier that separates generosity and sacrifice from self-destruction" (142). This statement by itself lends support to Hemphill's diagnosis of Van Gogh. Moreover, Hershman and Lieb go on to state that "The terrible force that warped his [Van Gogh's] personality...was acute Manic-Depression" (146). With the agreement between Hemphill, Hershman, and Lieb on their diagnosis of Van Gogh as Manic Depressive, a way forward opens for inquiry into Van Gogh's work for the purposes of semiotic analysis.

The Arrangement of Periods

Having discussed and decided upon the applicability of diagnosis as it concerns Van Gogh, an argument must be put forth concerning the arrangement of the three categories of 1) Pre- Crisis, 2) Crisis Event, and 3) Post- Crisis periods in Van Gogh's life. As with Jackson Pollock, Van Gogh lived life in such a way that complicates the overlay of simple concept categories onto his complex life. Van Gogh suffered from his mental disorder throughout his life. However, we are told by Dietrich Blumer in his article "The Illness of Van Gogh" for *American Journal of Psychiatry* that in 1888, "Van Gogh's illness evolved and reached psychotic dimensions for the first time" (520). The incident to which Blumer is referring is the infamous ear cutting for which Van Gogh is so well known. Blumer writes:

On Christmas Eve 1888, after Gauguin [who had been living with Van Gogh] already had announced he would leave, Van Gogh suddenly threw a glass of absinthe in Gauguin's face, then was brought home and put to bed by his companion. A bizarre sequence of events ensued. When Gauguin left their house, Van Gogh followed and approached him with an open razor, was repelled, went home, and cut off part of his left earlobe, which he then presented to Rachel, his favorite prostitute. The police were alerted; he was found unconscious at his home and was hospitalized. There he lapsed into an acute psychotic state with agitation, hallucinations, and delusions that required 3 days of solitary confinement. He retained no memory of his attacks on Gauguin, the self-mutilation, or the early part of his stay at the hospital. (520-521)

So Blumer suggest to us a most opportune occasion for the proposed demarcation of Van Gogh's complex life into three simple periods. Furthermore, in discussing Van Gogh's internment in a hospital for his mental disorder, Barry Panter tells us that "Vincent was hospitalized at the hospital in Arles, and then in the asylum at St. Remy, where he stayed for approximately a year" (Panter 9). This episode and internment then appears to be an excellent place to end Van Gogh's period of Pre- Crisis and to begin his period of Crisis Event.

A continuation of the practice of ending the Pre- Crisis period and beginning the Crisis Event period with the first internment in a mental health facility seen previously in the chapter about Jackson Pollock seems to be a good idea. At the very least, such a choice will help produce a sort of continuity between the periods of the VPPs included in this thesis. Furthermore, it

seems both expedient and proper to extend Van Gogh's period of Crisis Event until the time he left the care of St. Remy on May 16, 1890 (Hershman and Lieb 171).

Here then, is where the end of Van Gogh's Event Crisis period shall be marked, with the brief remaining time up until Van Gogh's death on July 29, 1890 (Hershman and Lieb 173).

Therefore, the period of Van Gogh's Pre- Crisis shall be from his birth up until the time of his internment in a hospital at Arles and a mental health institution at St. Remy. Following this theme, Van Gogh's period of Crisis Event shall be considered to be represented as the time between which Van Gogh was hospitalized in Arles to his release from St. Remy. Therefore, Van Gogh's period of Post- Crisis shall be considered to be from his release from St. Remy until his death months later.

Semiotic Comparison

Van Gogh Pre- Crisis

The VPs analyzed from this period are *Lottery*, *Woman Grinding Coffee*, *Girls in White in the Woods*, *Digger*, and *Road in Etten*. There is a noticeable trend towards consistent semiotic features of signifier creation in the VPs selected for analysis from Van Gogh's Pre- Crisis period. Concerning signifiers and their creation in the VPs analyzed from Van Gogh's Pre- Crisis period, all five VPs are of a type. In other words, all five VPs from this period that were analyzed are unique works instead of mass-produced tokens of the originals. The signifiers used in all of these VPs are iconic. In other words, the signifiers resemble the things they are supposed to represent. Furthermore, the signifiers in all the VPs selected from this period were created using lines,

patterns of colors, and intentionally visible brushstrokes. Additionally, all five of the VPs from this period of analysis make use of the colors blue, brown, and white, while *Woman Grinding Coffee* is the only VP to not use the colors red and green.

The modality cues displayed by the analyzed VPs of the Pre- Crisis period show a strong trend towards consistency. In fact, all five VPs analyzed from this period make use of perspective, the third dimension (through the use of thickly applied paint), and abstract image formation called for by the paradigm of Impressionism. Additionally, all five VPs from this period that were selected for analysis have color and consist of still images. Furthermore, the VPs present possible as well as plausible situations and were based on things familiar to Van Gogh, as well as being situated near Van Gogh as it concerns time and distance.

There is a trend towards similarity in the paradigmatic features of the VPs selected for analysis from Van Gogh's Pre- Crisis period. All five of the VPs from this period selected for analysis were formed within the meaning generation paradigm of Western art theory. *Road in Etten*, *Girls in White in the Woods*, and *Lottery* were further shaped by the meaning generation system of Impressionism. Additionally, all of the VPs from this period were created in the medium of oil paint on canvas, with the exception of *Lottery* ; which was done in the medium of gouache (a type of watercolor that is opaque), ink, and paper. Furthermore, all five of the VPs analyzed from the Pre- Crisis period make use of the theme of recording the creator's impressions from an actual event or scene.

In reviewing the results of the analyses of the selected VPs from this period, an interesting tendency shows itself once again. This tendency is a strong trend towards consistent

use of matching semiotic features between the differing VPs analyzed. Such a trend could certainly be seen as lending support to the theory of the superordinate self.

Van Gogh Crisis Event

The VPs analyzed from this period are *The Olive Trees*, *Bedroom*, *Bench at Saint Remy*, *Portrait of Joseph Roulin*, and *Olive Orchard*. The features of sign creation in the VPs analyzed from Van Gogh's Crisis Event period show a strong trend towards consistency. Of the VPs analyzed from Van Gogh's Crisis Event period, all are a type. In other words, these VP's are original and unique works that were not created for mass-production nor mass-produced.

Additionally, the signifiers used in the VPs analyzed are iconic. These signifiers, in all five of the VPs selected, were created using patterns of colors, with all except *Olive Orchard* additionally making use of lines to form signifiers. All VPs analyzed from this period contain intentionally visible brushstrokes in the signifiers present. The colors blue, green, white, and yellow appear in all of the VPs from this period selected for analysis. *Olive Orchard*, *Bedroom*, *Bench at Saint Remy*, and *Olive Orchard* contain the color black. The VPs *Olive Orchard*, *Portrait of Joseph Roulin*, *Bench at Saint Remy*, and *Bedroom* use the color red.

As with the VPs analyzed from Van Gogh Pre- Crisis, the modality cues presented by the selected VPs from the Crisis Event period show a very strong trend towards consistency. All five of the selected VPs from this period use perspective as well as possessing a third dimension due to the thickly applied oil paint, which also contributes to the visibility of the brushstrokes. Additionally, all five of these VPs use non-abstract images as well as color. Furthermore, the analyzed VPs of this period consist of still images as well as presenting possible and plausible

situations. Moreover, the VPs selected portray things that were familiar to Van Gogh and were situated near him in time and space.

There is a strong trend towards consistency in the paradigmatic features of the VPs selected for analysis from Van Gogh's Crisis Event period. The Western art theory paradigm of meaning generation shaped the features of all five of the VPs from this period that were selected for analysis. Furthermore, these VPs were further shaped by the paradigm of Impressionism. Oil paint on canvas was the medium used for all of the selected VPs from the Crisis Event period. Additionally, these VPs all contain the theme of expressing the VPP's impressions of an actual scene or event.

Yet again, the results of the analyses of the VPs from this period show a noticeable trend in the semiotic features examined. Analysis shows a remarkable amount of similarity between the semiotic features analyzed in the VPs from the Crisis Event period. Furthermore, such a trend towards consistent semiotic features between the VPs analyzed acts to lend support to the theory of the superordinate self.

Van Gogh Post- Crisis

The VPs analyzed from this period are *Crows in Wheat*, *Bank of the Oise*, *Road with Cypress and Star*, *Flowers*, and *Les Vessenots*. The VPs selected for analysis from Van Gogh's Post- Crisis period show a trend towards consistency. All five of the VPs created by Van Gogh during the Post- Crisis period are a type, which is to say that the five VPs are all unique works that were not mass-produced nor intended for mass-production. All of the five VPs except *Crows in Wheat* make use of iconic signifiers. All five of the VPs selected from this period create

signifiers using patterns of color, with all except *Crows in Wheat* making use of lines as well. Additionally, the signifiers in all of the analyzed VPs from the Post- Crisis period were created using thickly applied oil paint with intentionally visible brushstrokes. The colors yellow, blue, green, brown, tan, black, and white appear in all five of the VPs of this period that were selected for analysis.

The VPs selected for analysis from Van Gogh's Post- Crisis period all show a strong trend towards consistency in their modality cues. All five of these VPs use perspective and the heavy application of paint to give a third dimension to the works. Four of these five VPs use non-abstract images with the remaining VP using abstract images. All five of the selected VPs from this period use color and are still images. Additionally, these five VPs present possible and plausible situations that were familiar to the VPP as well as being situated near the VPP in time and space.

Five of the five VPs analyzed from Van Gogh's Post- Crisis period were created within the meaning generation paradigm of Western art theory. All five of the selected VPs were also further shaped by the demands of the Impressionism paradigm. Furthermore, all of the analyzed VPs from this period were created in the medium of oil paint and canvas and contain the theme of presenting the VPP's impressions of an event or thing actually witnessed by Van Gogh.

Again the results of the analyses performed on the selected VPs from this period present something quite noticeable. Much like the VPs selected for analysis from Van Gogh's Pre- Crisis and Crisis Event, the VPs selected from Van Gogh's Post- Crisis period show a trend towards

consistency. Such similarities could be potentially seen as supporting the theory of the superordinate self.

CHAPTER FOUR: VIRGINIA WOOLF

Diagnosis

The mental disorder suffered by Virginia Woolf has been the subject of much extant academic work. The most diagnostic tendency of those academics and mental health professionals that have turned their analytic gaze on Woolf is that of Bipolar Disorder or of the highly similar diagnosis of Manic-Depression. Indeed, in an article published in *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, Katherine Dalsimer tells us that “From the age of 13, Woolf had symptoms that today would be diagnosed as Bipolar Disorder...mood swings from severe depression to manic excitement”(809).

Lending support to the this diagnosis are the words of Mary Ann Caws, who tells us that Woolf’s mood swings were “So violent and apparent...that she [Woolf] feared she might be thought...a crazed writer”(85). The obviousness of Woolf’s mood swings certainly act to lend credence to the diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder afflicting Woolf. Additionally, it would seem that Woolf was “clear-eyed about herself. She [Woolf] would question Smyth as she would her other friends...wondering how she might control...her moods with their violent manic-depressive alternations” (Caws 85). Adding more support to the diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder as it concerns Woolf is the text *Virginia Woolf: Bloomsbury and Beyond* by Anthony Curtis, who tells of 13 year old Woolf as becoming “painfully excitable and nervous and then intolerably depressed” (24). From the arguments of these and other thinkers pondering the mental condition of Woolf, it becomes plain that the diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder for Woolf is an acceptable one. Indeed, the

pattern of manic energy followed by crippling depression seems to be one that existed throughout most of Woolf's life

The Arrangement of Periods

In the face of the somewhat overwhelming academic work classifying Woolf as suffering from Bipolar Disorder; it would appear that the more difficult portion of our work here would be the placement of the Crisis Event period upon the writer's life story. We know from the work of Katherine Dalsimer that behavioral evidence of Bipolar Disorder begins to show itself in Woolf's life around the age of 13. Indeed, Mary Ann Caws tells us that 1895, Woolf's thirteenth year, is also the year of the death of Woolf's mother, as well as the year of "the first of Virginia's early breakdowns" (127). It would seem then, that the year of 1895 could be seen as an appropriate marker for the beginning of Woolf's Crisis Event period.

Unfortunately, due to the era in which Woolf lived, the psychiatric community was relatively unequipped to effectively diagnose and treat Woolf's mental disorder. It seems, therefore, inappropriate to restrict the duration of the Crisis Event period unnecessarily. So, with consideration towards the concept of the Crisis Event period, it does seem acceptable to extend the duration of the Crisis Event period to the year 1913. This is the year, Caws tells us, and that "Virginia had a third mental breakdown and attempts suicide" (128). As the period of Crisis Event was conceived of so as to account for the watershed event, or series of events, that make it apparent to the VPP that they suffer from some type of mental disorder. The occurrence of three breakdowns, as well as a suicide attempt, certainly strongly suggests that by the year of 1913, at

the latest, Woolf was aware of being afflicted by some type of mental disorder. This suicide attempt in September (Curtis 239) seems an acceptable place to mark the end of Woolf's Crisis Event period. As such, the period of Post- Crisis will begin in September 1913, and extend on to the tragic suicide that ended Woolf's life.

Semiotic Comparison

Woolf Pre- Crisis

The VPs analyzed from this period are entitled *Hyde Park Gate News-vol.1 no.47*, *Hyde Park Gate News-vol.1 no.9*, *Hyde Park Gate New- vol.1 no.48*, *Hyde Park Gate News-vol.2 no.41*, and *Hyde Park Gate News-vo.2 no.1*. The VPs created by Virginia Woolf during the Pre-Crisis period that were selected for analysis show a noticeable trend towards consistency in the area of signifiers and their creation. All five of the VPs from this period selected for analysis were originally of a type. That is to say, that they were all unique works that were not intended for mass-production. Despite this, all of the VPs selected from this period were later converted into tokens of themselves intended for mass-production by someone other than Woolf. All five of the selected VPs from this period use symbolic signifiers that were created using lines which form letters and borders.

The modality cues presented by the analyzed VPs from Woolf's Pre- Crisis period show a tendency towards consistency. In fact, these VPs all show the exact same modality cues. None of these VPs uses perspective, while they all make use of flat images. Additionally, the VPs selected from this period all use abstract signifiers to generate meaning. The five VPs from this

period that were analyzed are all monochromatic as well as being still images. Furthermore, all five VPs present possible and plausible situations that were familiar to the VPP. Moreover, these five VPs are situated near the creator in space in time.

There is a trend of consistency in the paradigmatic features of the VPs analyzed from Woolf's Pre- Crisis period. All of the VPs analyzed from this period were formed within the meaning generation system of the written English language as well as the system of family newspapers created by juveniles that "were a favorite pastime in literary 19th century families" (Gill Lowe vii). All of the original VPs from this period, except for *Hyde Park Gate News-vol.1 no.9*, were created using the medium of cream paper and pencil, with *Hyde Park Gate News-vol.1 no.9* being created using blue lined paper and pencil. The medium used for the tokens of all five of these original VPs is paper and ink press printing.

It is obvious that there is trending towards the consistent use of semiotic features when reviewing the results of the analyses from this period. It should be noted, however, that the VPs analyzed of Woolf's are images of written text. Because of the nature of written systems of meaning generation, a higher degree of similarity should not be unanticipated. While this acts to lessen the significance of semiotic similarities, it in no way should be construed as being wholly dismissive of the significance of such similarities. Therefore, these semiotic similarities should be viewed as lending mild, and perhaps conditional, support of the theory of the superordinate self.

Woolf Crisis Event

The VPs analyzed from this period are *The Stranger in London*, *The New Religion*, *On a Faithful Friend*, *Mrs. Grundy's Crucifix*, and *Sterne*. A consistent trend towards similarity is shown in features of signifiers and their creation in the VPs selected for analysis from Woolf's Crisis Event period. All five of the analyzed VPs from this period are tokens, with the original manuscript being intended as a model for mass-production. In other words, these VPs were not only mass-produced for consumer consumption, they were created with this intent specifically in mind. All of the signifiers used in the analyzed VPs of this period are symbolic as well as being created using lines.

Like the VPs selected from Woolf's Pre- Crisis period, the modality cues presented by the analyzed VPs from Woolf's Crisis Event period are extremely similar to each other. All five of these VPs make no use of perspective as well as consisting of flat images. The signifiers used in these five selected VPs are abstract, monochromatic, and consist of still images. Moreover, all the VPs selected from this period present both possible and plausible situations that were familiar to Woolf. Additionally, all VPs analyzed from this period are situated nearby the VPP as it concerns time and space.

Again there is a strong trend of similarity in the paradigmatic features of the VPs analyzed from Woolf's Crisis Event period. All the VPs selected from this period were formed in the written English language paradigm of meaning generation as well as the sub-system of Western academic writing with standard of reference citation. The theme of disapproval is present in *The Stranger in London*, *The New Religion*, and *Mrs. Grundy's Crucifix*. *Sterne* and *On a Faithful Friend* use the themes of contemplation and respectively nostalgia.

There is, once again, an obvious trend in the consistent use of semiotic features when reviewing the results of the analyses from Woolf's Crisis Event period. It should be remembered that the VPs analyzed of Woolf's are images of written text. Due to this, a higher degree of similarity should not be unanticipated. While this anticipation does act to lessen the significance of semiotic similarities, it in no way should be construed as being wholly dismissive of the similarities significance. Therefore, these semiotic similarities should be viewed as lending mild, perhaps conditional, support of the theory of the superordinate self.

Woolf Post- Crisis

The VPs analyzed from this period are *A Society*, *Gothic Romance*, *Social Life in England*, *Thoreau*, and *The War from the Street*. Yet again there is a very strong trend of consistency that shows itself in the features of signifiers and their creation in the five works selected for analysis from Woolf's Post- Crisis period. All of the VPs selected from this period are tokens, with their original manuscripts being intended for conversion into tokens for mass-production. Again, all of the signifiers present within these selected VPs are symbolic and were formed using lines.

Once more, a trend towards similarity is presented in the modality cues present in the VPs analyzed from Woolf's Post- Crisis period. In other words, all modality cues are, once again, exactly similar for the VPs analyzed from this period. None of these VPs uses perspective, while all of the VPs use monochromatic, abstract, and flat still images. Furthermore, the VPs analyzed from this period all present both possible and plausible situations that were familiar to

the VPP. Moreover, all VPs analyzed from Woolf's Post- Crisis period are located near the VPP as it concerns time and space.

The paradigmatic features of the VPs selected for analysis from this period once again show a very strong trend towards similarity. All five of the VPs from this period were formed within the meaning generation paradigm of the written English language, all except *A Society* additionally influenced by the requirements of the Western academic writing meaning generation paradigm. Furthermore, *The War from the Street*, *Thoreau*, *Social Life in England*, and *Gothic Romance* make use of the theme of contemplation.

Once more, there is a tendency for the consistent use of semiotic features in reviewing the results of the analyses from this period. Again, however, it must be noted that the VPs selected from this period are images of written text. The nature of written systems of meaning generation is such that a higher degree of similarity should be anticipated. While this expectation can act to lessen the significance of the observed semiotic similarities, in no way should this be construed as completely negating the significance of such similarities. Therefore, these semiotic similarities should be viewed as lending conditional support to the theory of the superordinate self.

CHAPTER FIVE: MICHAEL MAIN

Diagnosis

I was diagnosed in May of 2008 as having Bipolar Disorder, along with another disorder that I won't discuss here. Previously, as a child, I had been committed to psychiatric institutions a few times, be they rehab or a juvenile psychiatric ward. The diagnoses received from those varying institutions ranged from Major Depression to undiagnosed social and personality disorders. The diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder was later made by a psychiatrist working for the Veteran's Administration during adulthood.

After receiving diagnosis from the V.A. I was committed to the Mental Health and Detoxification ward in the V.A. hospital located in Gainesville, Florida. I remained in the Gainesville hospital for a period of one week. After that I was discharged to out-patient therapy in my hometown of Daytona Beach, Florida. For a period of about one year I remained in denial of my mental disorders, refusing medication, becoming more and more regularly violent, as well as accelerating drug abuse, and in general spinning more and more out of control at a quicker and quicker rate. This pattern of self-destruction was abruptly stopped almost a year later following my enrollment in Brazilian Ju-Jitsu classes taught by Todd Cutler, who is originally from Ohio. After beginning Brazilian Ju-Jitsu lessons my behavior suddenly stabilized and my taking of medication became a great deal more routine, while simultaneously my drinking and drug abuse became much less prevalent in my behavior patterns.

The Arrangement of Periods

Once again the question is raised of how to arrange the three periods of analysis to best fit onto the course of my life. In the cases of Pollock and Van Gogh, I began the period of Event Crisis with the first commitment to an institution for mental disorders. However, in my specific case that technique of selection does not appear to be so applicable. This seems especially true in light of the diverse diagnoses received from the varying mental institutions. Therefore, I feel the most accurate and advantageous placement of the Crisis Event period would be to begin with my commitment to the V.A. hospital in Gainesville in May 2008. This period would end with, or around, the beginning of Brazilian Ju-Jitsu in April 2009. In support of this decision, I would mention that there was a coherent behavior pattern on my part during that time period. Additionally, this coherent behavior pattern has a sudden and abrupt end during April 2009, which I feel supports the decision to end the Crisis Event period at that time.

Semiotic Comparison

My Pre- Crisis

My VPs selected for analysis from this period are *Thesis Selections 1,2,3,4* and 5. There is a notable consistency in my VPs selected for analysis from the Pre- Crisis period as it concerns signifiers and their creation. All of the VPs analyzed are a type. In other words, these five VPs are all unique creation that were neither intended for mass-production nor mass-produced by someone else. The signifiers present in all the VPs analyzed from this period are symbolic and were formed using lines of ink.

There is a very strong similarity in the modality cues present in all of the VPs analyzed from this period. None of these VPs use perspective while at the same time, these VPs all make use of monochromatic images that are both flat and still. The situations presented by all five of these VPs are both possible and plausible. Moreover, the VPs represent things that are familiar to me as well as being situated nearby me in time and space at the time of creation.

The paradigmatic features of my VPs selected for analysis from this period are almost all exactly the same. The varying themes present within these VPs being the only paradigmatic aspect that differs between VPs. All of the VPs selected were formed using the paradigm of meaning generation of the written English (American colloquial) language, as well as being further shaped by the influences of the Free Verse poetry paradigm. The medium used for the creation of all analyzed VPs from this period is that of ink and paper. The theme of angst is present in two of the five VPs analyzed from this period. Additionally, the theme of hostility shows itself in two of the other VPs from this period of analysis, while the theme of depression and inadequacy is present in the remaining VP analyzed from the Pre- Crisis period.

That there is a trend for the consistent use of semiotic features becomes obvious upon reviewing the results of the analyses from this period. Remember, though, that my VPs analyzed are images of written text. Due to the nature of written systems of meaning generation, a higher degree of similarity should be anticipated. This does act to lessen the significance of semiotic similarities. However, this should not be seen as being dismissing the significance of such similarities. These semiotic similarities should be viewed as lending mild support of the theory of the superordinate self.

My Crisis Event

My VPs analyzed from this period are *Model Truck*, *WarHammer 40k figure 1*, and *WarHammer 40k figure 2*. There is a noticeable trend towards similarity between the features of signifiers and their creation in the three VPs created during the Crisis Event period. All VPs from this period are tokens. In fact, they are all mass-produced models of somewhat varying types that were created with the intention of consumer consumption. The three VPs from this period are all iconic, resembling the things they signify. *WarHammer 40k figure 1*, and *WarHammer 40k figure 2* use pre-formed pewter parts, glue, and acrylic paint for the creation of signifiers, with *Model Truck* making use of pre-formed plastic parts and glue to create signifiers.

The modality cues contained within the VPs from this period are also quite similar. All three VPs are fully three dimensional, non-abstract, and make use of color. Additionally, the three VPs from this period are still images illustrating something possible. *Model Truck* presents itself as plausible while the remaining two present themselves as implausible. All three signify something familiar to me. *WarHammer 40k figure 1*, and *WarHammer 40k figure 2* are situated in a far distant and fictional future, while *Model Truck* is situated in contemporary times. Similarly, the same two VPs are situated in a fictional universe, with the remaining VP not being situated in any specific place.

The paradigmatic features of the three VPs from the Crisis Event period are highly similar. All three of these VPs selected were formed within the paradigm of recreational model building. The medium used by *WarHammer 40k figure 1*, and *WarHammer 40k figure 2* is pewter, glue, and acrylic paint. The remaining VP was created in the medium of plastic and glue. The themes of recreation and relaxation are present in all three VPs from this period.

There is a trend in the consistency of semiotic features that becomes obvious when reviewing the results of the analyses from this period. Because of the nature of the paradigm in which these VPs were created, there is a lessening of the significance of semiotic similarities. However, this should not be construed as being dismissive of the significance of such similarities. These semiotic similarities should be viewed as lending mild support of the theory of the superordinate self.

My Post- Crisis

My VPs analyzed from this period are *Dastardly Bastard*, *Slavery's Been Flipped*, *Self-Reflection*, *Shit-Talk*, and *Beat Poet*. Yet again, there is a tendency towards similarity as it concerns the signifiers present and their creation in the analyzed VPs from this period. The five VPs analyzed from the period of Post- Crisis are all a type, which is a unique creation. Furthermore, all signifiers present in these VPs are symbolic. In addition, the signifiers from all five of these VPs were created using lines of ink.

Once more, there is a high degree of similarity between the VPs analyzed from this period as it concerns modality cues. None of these VPs use perspective, while all of them use flat, abstract, monochrome, and still images for meaning generation. Additionally, all five VPs from the Post- Crisis period that were selected for analysis present possible and plausible situations that were familiar to me. *Self-Reflection*, *Shit-Talk*, and *Beat Poet* are situated contemporarily in time to their creation, while *Dastardly Bastard* and *Slavery's Been Flipped* are not situated in any specific time. None of the VPs analyzed from this period were situated in space.

A strong similarity of paradigmatic features shows itself in the five VPs analyzed from the Post- Crisis period. All of the five analyzed VPs were formed within the paradigm of meaning generation of the written English language (American colloquial), and were then further shaped by the paradigm of Free Verse poetry. Ink and paper was the medium I used to create every one of the five VPs analyzed from this period. The theme of anger, hostility, and angst is present in all of the VPs analyzed except *Self-Reflection*, which uses the theme of self-reflection and regret.

That there is a trend in the consistent use of semiotic features is apparent when reviewing the results of the analyses from this period. Take note, however, that my VPs analyzed from this period are images of written text. Because of the nature of written systems of meaning generation, a higher degree of similarity is to be expected. This does act to lessen the significance of semiotic similarities. Yet this should not be construed as being totally dismissive of the significance of these similarities. These semiotic similarities can be viewed as lending mild support of the theory of the superordinate self.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Pollock's Similarities of Content and Formation Throughout Periods

In considering the semiotic features of Pollock's analyzed VPs in the individual periods of Pre- Crisis, Crisis Event, and Post- Crisis, the semiotic features examined show a tendency toward consistency within each given period. When the lens of analysis is pulled back to compare across time periods, it becomes readily apparent that the similarities do not, for the most part, stay constant. Every VP of Pollock's selected for analysis from each period was a type, or unique work. Furthermore, every VP analyzed throughout the three periods was a still, or non-moving, image. Additionally, every one of Pollock's VPs that was analyzed was shaped by the meaning generation system of Western art theory. As mentioned in the reviews of VPs from individual periods, such adherence to meaning systems is to be somewhat expected. This is not to say, however, that such a consideration renders the observed proclivity for a specific meaning system wholly insignificant.

There are ten VPs total that make use of patterns of color to form signifiers. Of those ten, seven VPs contain the color black. In addition, half of the VPs that contain color have yellow in them. Furthermore, thirteen of the fifteen VPs analyzed made use of lines to form signifiers.

Van Gogh's Similarities of Content and Formation Throughout Periods

When we consider the similarities in semiotic features in the work of Van Gogh, we are presented with a strong showing of consistent semiotic features not only within the individual

time periods, but across the three periods as well. Van Gogh “always worked from subjects” (Hemphill 5). This is certainly true for all the VPs analyzed for this thesis. It is therefore apparent that Van Gogh consistently chose to create VPs based on factual events. There are also several other semiotic features that appear in every VP analyzed for this thesis.

Every VP of Van Gogh’s selected for analysis was a type, or unique work as well as being shaped by the Western art theory paradigm of meaning generation. All fifteen VPs selected make use of perspective and are still images. Furthermore, every analyzed VP presented situations that were possible, plausible, and familiar. Moreover, all VPs selected for this thesis presented things near Van Gogh in both time and space. The colors green, blue, and white appear in all fourteen of the VPs analyzed containing color. The color yellow appears in thirteen of the fourteen VPs with color. Additionally, fourteen of the fifteen use non-abstract signifiers. Oil and canvas is used as a medium in thirteen of the analyzed VPs. The meaning system of Impressionism can be perceived in thirteen of the fifteen VPs. In addition, intentionally visible brushstrokes have a showing in thirteen of the fifteen VPs analyzed.

Woolf’s Similarities of Content and Formation Throughout Periods

Upon examination of Virginia Woolf’s work, her strict adherence to the system of the written English language becomes readily apparent. Additionally, the modality cues presented by her work tend to be highly similar if not exactly the same. This is due in large part to her adherence to the meaning generation system of written English language, in which every VP analyzed for this thesis was formed. Because of the nature of written language systems, the

modality cues tend to be highly similar as they are shaped by the written system. However, there are five modality cues this thesis examined which allow flexibility and change within written systems. These modality cues are possibility, plausibility, familiarity with things presented, and the location in time/space of the signified in relation to the VPP.

I bring this up to emphasize the significance in the exact match of those specific modality cues in every VP of Woolf's analyzed. Additionally, it should be noted that every VP analyzed for this thesis was shaped by more than one paradigm of meaning generation. It should be noted as well that almost all of Woolf's VPs analyzed, even those she made as a child, have become mass-produced tokens of her original manuscripts. Ten of the fifteen VPs selected for this thesis were intended for such mass-production, while the remaining five imitate mass-produced newspapers.

Main's Similarities of Content and Formation Throughout Periods

In consideration of my own VPs throughout the three periods, it becomes easily perceivable that there are no semiotic features which manifest themselves across all three time periods. This is due to the extreme change in meaning generating paradigms experienced during the Crisis -Event period. Additionally, during the Crisis Event there was a complete change in mediums utilized. There are, however, remarkable similarities in the semiotic features of the work produced in the Pre- Crisis and Post- Crisis periods. So that, while work from each period strongly corresponds to other work from the same period; similarities in semiotic features in works from different periods manifest themselves only in the Pre- Crisis and Post- Crisis stages.

Evidence of the Superordinate Self and Possible Implications

Unfortunately, no conclusive evidence was found definitively indicating the existence of the superordinate self. Indubitably, there were many similarities of semiotic features throughout the three periods for most of the VPPs included in this thesis. It should be noted once again; however, that choice of paradigms of meaning generation could be seen as being a function of the era and culture in which the VPPs developed in. For example, it is not surprising that people who are born and raised in countries where English is the dominant language should be expected to speak English. Truly, it would be more significant if the VPPs who displayed adherence to Western systems were born, raised, and produced work in the East. Such juxtaposition could easily be seen as support of the theory of the superordinate self. As it stands, however, such adherence to cultural systems is inconclusive.

That Pollock showed a tendency to create unique works of still images shaped by Western art theory, while Van Gogh created signifiers from things he saw in life is certainly encouraging. For even within the over-arching system of Western art, there is seemingly nothing stopping VPPs from alternating their orientation of working from life to looking within themselves for inspiration, and vice versa, as it pleases them; or as they feel moved to.

Virginia Woolf's firm commitment to the mass-produced printed word could also be seen as another strand of support for the theory. In fact, it could be said that the paradigm of seeing VPs specifically as something to sell could also be seen as semiotic evidence supporting the theory of the superordinate self. The semiotic similarities of my works from the Pre- Crisis and Post- Crisis period could be said to potentially be seen as refuting the concept of the

superordinate self. Remember the complete change of all semiotic features at the beginning and end of the Crisis Event period. This sudden break from former semiotic features followed by the sudden reversion to those same semiotic features should most likely be seen as evidence against the theory of the superordinate self.

I would say then that any evidence discovered in this thesis supporting of the existence of the superordinate self is inconclusive. Not that that means the evidence uncovered is pointless or worthless. Surely, enough evidence has been found to warrant more study in a similar vein. Refinements to the investigative methodology used have occurred to me during the course of this research. These are refinements that, I feel, would lead to much more productive research in the pursuit of evidence of the theory.

Given the amount of VPs produced by most of the VPPs treated in this work, the works selected for analysis fall far short of the VPP's complete opus of work. It is therefore possible that in the restriction of the works selected, other works that may have held evidence for or against the existence of the superordinate self were overlooked. I would therefore recommend that further research in this vein should focus on one VPP and analyze all their extant work. Furthermore, I would recommend limiting the specific semiotic features examined to the signifiers present in the VPs, and how they were created. Likely, for such research to become revelatory, one might want to build a portfolio of such individual case studies. Moreover, instead of analyzing the works of famous VPPs, studying a willing and contemporary individual who has been officially diagnosed would perhaps be more beneficial. It would certainly alleviate the need

for posthumous diagnosis. This would expedite the placement of the three periods as well as help alleviate the need for second and third hand diagnoses.

Additionally, I suggest that future research focus on VPPs who are afflicted with a personality disorder, such as Borderline Personality Disorder, instead of those with Bipolar Disorder. There are drastic changes to personality undergone in personality disorders. Such a change would therefore highlight the significance of semiotic similarities of works produced by the VPP. I would also recommend that the VPP selected for study be officially diagnosed by a qualified mental health professional.

Some possible implications present themselves during the examination of the similarities in the semiotic features across the three time periods. Among them is the implication of the possibility of one day making real progress towards the discovery of evidence for the superordinate self. I would say that another implication of the evidence discovered in this thesis is a compelling argument for more research to be done on the subject. It is readily apparent that this will be no open and shut case. I feel justified in claiming to have made a respectable start however.

When ordering the VPPs within this thesis from the most amount of semiotic consistency to the least amount, the resultant list is: 1) Virginia Woolf, 2) Vincent Van Gogh, 3) Jackson Pollock, and 4) myself. Something that becomes apparent with this listing is that the two VPPs whose analyzed work shows the most semiotic consistency are those two who lived in the earliest eras.

It should be noted that the four VPPs whose works were analyzed in this thesis in a varying array of historical eras. Van Gogh lived from 1853 to 1890, Woolf lived from 1882 to 1941, Pollock lived from 1912 until 1956, and I began life in 1981. This is notable due to the varying accepted responses to mental disorder during each of the VPs lives. For instance, we know, thanks to Mary Ann Caws, that Woolf “had been treated, in 1913-15, with the infamous milk diet, supposed to calm one down: she was forced to consume every day four or five pints” (81). We also know that Woolf was directed to attempt rest cures throughout her life, boarding at a house with a nurse to care for her (Curtis 236-241).

Such treatment is in sharp contrast with my own, contemporary, treatment regimen of inpatient stabilization and observation combined with psycho-pharmaceuticals as well as group and individual psychotherapy, which was followed by out-patient treatment consisting of psycho-pharmaceuticals and individual counseling sessions. The disparity between these two treatment regimens can certainly be seen as potentially influencing the psychological make-up of the individual patient. Moreover, since the VPs underwent differing treatment regimens, it is arguable that the particular treatments had a pronounced effect on the VPs produced by the particular VPP. In particular, the use of psychopharmacology could be a key factor in explaining the shifts of semiotic choices evident in my own works. We should therefore briefly examine the differing mental health practices experienced by the selected VPPs.

Rene Spiegel, in her work *Psychopharmacology: An Introduction*, relays the historical development of psychopharmacology. In it, she states that:

Psychopharmacology initially emerged very gradually in modern times. One of the earliest compendia of psychopharmacology to appear in German was authored by P.J.

Schneider (1824) and describes in some 600 pages methods of psychiatric therapy used at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The description is indiscriminating on the majority of points and includes many measures which to us seem to be cruel or naïve, insufficiently tested, and often contradictory. (31)

So we see that Van Gogh was born twenty-nine years after this early compendium. A compendium which certainly seems to be woefully inadequate considering Spiegel's description of its contents. However, also in the early nineteenth century, J.E. Esquirol and Ph. Pinel created "a classification of mental illness based on observation and statistical comparison" (Spiegel 31). In addition to this, Spiegel tells us that "In 1818, Esquirol drew up an expert report on French madhouses at the request of the Home Office, and this shattering report formed the basis of a thorough reform of psychiatry" (31).

From this we may extrapolate that while Van Gogh was certainly better treated than he would have been in earlier eras, his treatment remains a far cry from my own contemporary treatment. This is especially true in regards to the lithium regimen that I have been assigned, as "its antimanic properties and prophylactic effect in depression" (46) were not recognized until a little before 1950 (43). This of course means that lithium, a key player in contemporary treatment of Bipolar Disorder, was not used for mental health purposes during Van Gogh's time.

Virginia Woolf came into being in 1882, some seventeen years after "a psychiatric classification was created, essential features of which still remain valid today" (Spiegel 32) by Emil Kraepelin. Spiegel tells us that "Kraepelin's textbook on psychiatry (1899) makes various references to the use of pharmaceuticals in the treatment of the mentally ill" (32). This indicates that Woolf had a greater chance than Van Gogh to be treated by the use of

psychopharmaceuticals. However, thanks to Spiegel, we know that from 1917 until the introduction of lithium into the mental health picture, common methods of treatment for mental health were Malaria therapy, Sleep therapy, Insulin shock, Psychosurgery, and Electro-shock (43). This tells us that while psychopharmacology was co-existent with Woolf and Van Gogh, it is doubtful if such methods formed the core of their treatment regimens.

Jackson Pollock was born in 1912. During this time the use of psychopharmaceuticals was slowly but surely gaining ground in the psychiatric treatment of the mental disordered. However, the next breakthrough in psychopharmaceuticals didn't happen until the late 1940s. Spiegel states that "several initially unrelated developmental trends converged at the end of the 1940s in the most fortuitous fashion and...led to the most significant advance in psychiatric therapy for many years" (34).

Unfortunately for Pollock, this development happened about six years before his death. Moreover, this breakthrough happened in Europe while Pollock lived in America. In addition to that, the American psychiatric field was divided until World War II, with "interdisciplinary tensions between academics and practitioners that gave rise to splinter groups throughout the 1930s were tempered as academic pursuits and applied psychologists joined forces to serve their country during wartime" (Cautin 22). Such was the psychiatric milieu Pollock entered in 1939. These two factors combined with Pollock's proclivity for not fully engaging with treatment make it seem unlikely that Pollock was either significantly medicated or medicated for a significant time. For the most part, it would appear that Pollock likely used his therapy for creative inspiration as opposed to genuinely seeking therapeutic remedy for his mental health issues.

In comparison to the treatments available to Woolf, Van Gogh, and Pollock, I was lucky enough to be born in an era where medical technology and knowledge allows for a more specific and effective treatment regimen for Bipolar Disorder. In addition to that, the actual diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder in this era, unlike previous eras, exists, making diagnosis and treatment of the disorder possible. Moreover, my treatment regimen consists of several psychopharmaceuticals combined with regular counseling sessions with a psychologist. In this way, my treatment benefits from both the psychiatric and psychological viewpoints and methods. I feel this makes for a more complete and effective treatment regimen than was available to the other VPPs in this thesis. It should also be noted that the very completeness and effectiveness of treatment may have contributed to the lack of semiotic consistency in my VPs. If such is true, then it is possible that the semiotic break between the Crisis Event period and the Pre/Post-Crisis periods was at least partially affected by my intake of powerful psychopharmaceuticals.

In Closing

In summation, this research has conducted a semiotic analysis of the selected VPs created by VPPs who can be said to have suffered from Bipolar Disorder, with the stipulation of similarity between the diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder and Manic-Depressive Disorder. Each of the VPPs lives was divided into three periods for the purpose of this study. These three periods are 1) Pre- Crisis, 2) Crisis Event, and 3) Post- Crisis. Where possible, five works from each period for each VPP were selected for analysis. The works were selected as being the most typical productions of that period; so that, while Pollock did produce ceramics, none of his ceramics were selected for semiotic analysis because they are not examples of his typical work.

Furthermore, the semiotic similarities and dissimilarities between works from the same period as well as works from other periods were examined.

This was done with the creation and completion of a semiotic analysis worksheet drawn from the work of David Chandler (*Semiotics for Beginners*). This work then moved through a discussion of each VPP on an individual basis. Following that, an examination of any evidence discovered was offered along with possible implications of the results of this thesis. No conclusive evidence was found supporting the existence of the superordinate self. There was, however, firm enough evidence discovered to warrant further research. In addition to this, suggestions for the refinement of the methodology used for the benefit of future research were offered. It would seem that while nothing has been proved or disproved definitively by this research, space has been opened for further pursuit of knowledge. I respectfully request that others interested in these matters to use this thesis as a stepping stone for further research.

Appendix A

APPENDIX A: *DSM IV* DEFINITION OF BIPOLAR DISORDER AND RELATED TERMS

Bipolar I Disorder--Diagnostic Features:

The essential feature of Bipolar I Disorder is a clinical course that is characterized by the occurrence of one or more Manic Episodes or Mixed Episodes. Often individuals have also had one or more Major Depressive Episodes. Episodes of Substance-Induced Mood Disorder (due to the direct effects of a medication, or other somatic treatments for depression, a drug of abuse, or toxin exposure) or of Mood Disorder Due to a General Medical Condition do not count toward a diagnosis of Bipolar I Disorder. In addition, the episodes are not better accounted for by Schizoaffective Disorder and are not superimposed on Schizophrenia, Schizophreniform Disorder, Delusional Disorder, or Psychotic Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (*DSM-IV*, 350).

Bipolar II Disorder--Diagnostic Features:

The essential feature of Bipolar II Disorder is a clinical course that is characterized by the occurrence of one or more Major Depressive Episodes accompanied by at least one Hypomanic Episode. Hypomanic Episodes should not be confused with the several days of euthymia that may follow remission of a Major Depressive Episode. Episodes of Substance- Induced Mood Disorder (due to the direct effects of a medication, or other somatic treatments for depression, a drug of abuse, or toxin exposure) or of Mood Disorder Due to a General Medical Condition do not count toward a diagnosis of Bipolar I Disorder. In addition, the episodes are not better

accounted for by Schizoaffective Disorder and are not superimposed on Schizophrenia, Schizophreniform Disorder, Delusional Disorder, or Psychotic Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (*DSM-IV*, 359).

For a deeper understanding of these two descriptions, here follows a description of the terms Major Depressive Episode, Manic Episode, Mixed episode, and Hypomanic Episode provided by the *DSM IV*:

Criteria for Major Depressive Episode:

A. Five (or more) of the following symptoms have been present during the same 2-week period and represent a change from previous functioning; at least one of the symptoms is either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.

Note: Do not include symptoms that are clearly due to a general medical condition, or mood-incongruent delusions or hallucinations.

1) Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad or empty) or observation made by others (e.g. appears tearful).

Note: In children and adolescents, can be irritable mood.

2) Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day (as indicated by either subjective account or observation made by others)

3) Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (e.g., a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month), or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day.

Note: In children, consider failure to make expected weight gains.

4) Insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day

5) Psychomotor agitation or retardation nearly every day (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings of restlessness or being slowed down)

6) Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day

7) Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick)

8) Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day (either by subjective account or as observed by others)

9) Recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide

B. The symptoms do not meet criteria for a Mixed Episode.

C. The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

D. The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition (e.g., hypothyroidism).

E. The symptoms are not better accounted for by bereavement, i.e., after the loss of a loved one, the symptoms persist for longer than 2 months or are characterized by marked functional impairment, morbid preoccupation with worthlessness, suicidal ideation, psychotic symptoms, or psychomotor retardation (*DSM-IV*, 327).

Criteria for Mixed Episode:

A. The criteria are met both for a Manic Episode and for a Major Depressive Episode (except for duration) nearly every day during at least a 1-week period.

B. The mood disturbance is sufficiently severe to cause marked impairment in occupational functioning or in usual social activities or relationships with others, or to necessitate hospitalization to prevent harm to self or others, or there are psychotic features.

C. The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication, or other treatment) or a general medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism) (*DSM-IV*, 335).

Criteria for Hypomanic Episode:

A. A distinct period of persistently elevated, expansive, or irritable mood, lasting throughout at least 4 days, that is clearly different from the usual non-depressed mood.

B. During the period of mood disturbance, three (or more) of the following symptoms have persisted (four if the mood is only irritable) and have been present to a significant degree:

- 1) inflated self-esteem or grandiosity
- 2) Decreased need for sleep (e.g., feels rested after only 3 hours of sleep)
- 3) More talkative than usual or pressure to keep talking
- 4) Flight of ideas or subjective experience that thoughts are racing
- 5) Distractibility (i.e., attention too easily drawn to unimportant or irrelevant external stimuli)
- 6) Increase in goal-directed activity (either socially, at work or school, or sexually) or psychomotor agitation
- 7) Excessive involvement in pleasurable activities that have a high potential for painful consequences (e.g., engaging in unrestrained buying sprees, sexual indiscretions, or foolish business investments)

C. The episode is associated with an unequivocal change in functioning that is uncharacteristic of the person when not symptomatic.

D. The disturbance in mood and the change in functioning are observable by others.

E. The episode is not severe enough to cause marked impairment in social or occupational functioning, or to necessitate hospitalization, and there are no psychotic features.

F. The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication, or other treatment) or a general medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism) (*DSM-IV*, 338).

Appendix B

APPENDIX B: ANALYZED WORKS OF JACKSON POLLOCK

Pre-Crisis

1) "Departure." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

2) Naifeh, Stephen, and Gregory Smith. Jackson Pollock: An American Saga-Self Portrait. 1st.

Aiken: Woodward/White, Inc, 1989. Insert. Print.

3) "Studies-1." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

4) "Studies-2." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

5) "Studies-3." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

Crisis Event

6) Wysuph, C.L. Jackson Pollock: Psychoanalytic Drawings-Crucifixion Hoover. New York:

Horizon Press, 1970. 33. Print.

7) "Head." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

8) Wysuph, C.L. Jackson Pollock: Psychoanalytic Drawings-Plate 31. New York:

9) Wysuph, C.L. Jackson Pollock: Psychoanalytic Drawings-Plate 57. New York:

Horizon Press, 1970. 89. Print.

10) Wysuph, C.L. Jackson Pollock: Psychoanalytic Drawings-Plate 70. New York:

Horizon Press, 1970. 102. Print.

Post-Crisis

11) "Autumn Rhythm (number 30)." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

12) "Easter and the Totem." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

13) "Echo." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

14) "Gothic." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

15) "Night Sounds." Artstor. Web. 20 Jan 2011.

Horizon Press, 1970. 63. Print.

Appendix C

APPENDIX C: ANALYZED WORKS OF VINCENT VAN GOGH

Pre-Crisis

- 1) "Digger." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 2) "Girls in White in the Woods." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 3) "Lottery." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 4) "Road in Etten." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 5) "Woman Grinding Coffee." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.

Crisis Event

- 6) "The Olive Trees." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 7) "Bedroom." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 8) "Bench at St. Remy." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 9) "Olive Orchard." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 10) "Portrait of Joseph Roulin." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.

Crisis Event

- 11) "Bank of the Oise." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.
- 12) "Crows in the Wheat." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.

13) "Irisés." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.

14) "Les Vessenots, Auvers." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.

15) "Road with Cypress and Star." Artstor. Web. 2 Feb 2011.

Appendix D

APPENDIX D: ANALYZED WORKS OF VIRGINIA WOOLF

Pre-Crisis

- 1) Woolf, Virginia/ "Vol. I, No.9 Monday, 6th April 1891." Hyde Park Gate News: The Stephen Family Newspaper. Ed. Gill Lowe. London: Hesperus Press Limited, 2005. 3-5. Print.
- 2) Woolf, Virginia/ "Vol. I, No.47 Monday, 30th November 1891." Hyde Park Gate News: The Stephen Family Newspaper. Ed. Gill Lowe. London: Hesperus Press Limited, 2005. 6-8. Print.
- 3) Woolf, Virginia/ "Vol. I, No.48 Monday, 7th December 1891." Hyde Park Gate News: The Stephen Family Newspaper. Ed. Gill Lowe. London: Hesperus Press Limited, 2005. 9-11. Print.
- 4) Woolf, Virginia/ "Vol. II, No.1 Monday, 11th January 1892." Hyde Park Gate News: The Stephen Family Newspaper. Ed. Gill Lowe. London: Hesperus Press Limited, 2005. 21-23. Print.
- 5) Woolf, Virginia/ "Vol. II, No.41 Monday, 24th October 1892." Hyde Park Gate News: The Stephen Family Newspaper. Ed. Gill Lowe. London: Hesperus Press Limited, 2005. 128-131. Print.

Crisis Event

6) Woolf, Virginia. "On a Faithful Friend." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. I 1904-1912*. Ed.

Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1986. 12-15. Print.

7) Woolf, Virginia. "Mrs. Grudy's Crucifix." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. I 1904-1912*.

Ed. Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1986. 111-112.

Print.

8) Woolf, Virginia. "The New Religion." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. I 1904-1912*. Ed.

Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1986. 148-150.

Print.

9) Woolf, Virginia. "The Stranger in London." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. I 1904-1912*.

Ed. Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1986. 200-204.

Print.

10) Woolf, Virginia. "Sterne." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. I 1904-1912*.

Ed. Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1986. 280-288.

Print.

Post-Crisis

11) Woolf, Virginia. "Social Life in England." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. II 1912-1918*.

Ed. Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1987. 64-67.

Print.

12) Woolf, Virginia. "Thoreau." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. II 1912-1918.*

Ed. Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1987. 132-140.

Print.

13) Woolf, Virginia. "The War from the Street." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. III 1919-*

1924. Ed. Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1988. 3-4.

Print.

14) Woolf, Virginia. "Gothic Romance." *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Vol. III 1919-1924.*

Ed. Andrew McNeillie. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1988. 304-307.

Print.

15) Woolf, Virginia. "A Society." *Monday or Tuesday. 2nd.* London: Hesperus Press, 2003. 7-

23. Print.

Appendix E

APPENDIX E: ANALYZED WORKS OF MICHAEL MAIN

Pre-Crisis

- 1) “Untitled-Thesis Selection 1.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 2) “Untitled-Thesis Selection 2.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 3) “Untitled-Thesis Selection 3.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 4) “Untitled-Thesis Selection 4.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 5) “Untitled-Thesis Selection 5.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.

Crisis Event

- 6) “Model Truck-Thesis Selection 6.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 7) “War Hammer40k Miniature-Thesis Selection 7.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 8) “War Hammer40k Miniature-Thesis Selection 8.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.

Post-Crisis

- 9) “Beat Poet-Thesis Selection 13.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 10) “Dastardly Bastard Selection 9.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 11) “Self-Reflection-Thesis Selection 11.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.
- 12) “Shit Talk-Thesis Selection 12.” Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.

13) "Slavery's Been Flipped-Thesis Selection 10." Personal Collection. 16 Feb 2011.

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