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**An Annotated Bibliography of Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*:
Secondary Sources from 1960 to the Present**

Introduction

Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away* (*VBA*), regarded as being insignificant by initial reviewers when the novel was published in 1960, is now acknowledged as one of the major literary texts. The original recognition of the book was both positive and negative. Most contemporary reviewers criticized *VBA*. As O'Connor recalls, they "seem to have read the book in fifteen minutes and written the review in ten."¹ On the other hand, academics evaluated it highly, and analyzed its Christianity first, and then other aspects such as its symbolism, Southernness, and the psychological characteristics. This annotated bibliography chronologically compiles critical changes of Flannery O'Connor's *VBA* as the first annotated bibliography.

The dominant criticisms have been on Christianity, since O'Connor regarded herself as a Catholic writer and it is a novel about prophets and baptism. Initial reviewers evaluated *VBA* lower because of the lack of conviction, even though Christianity was the capital theme of the novel. Particularly, the novel was criticized for its "Book II" and the figuration of rational Rayber the antagonist, which took seven years for O'Connor to finish writing. In spite of those indictments, O'Connor's intention and sense of mission to "burn

[the reader's] eyes clean"² was not immediately identified, and only a few critics recognized it. For example, as early as 1968, Clinton W. Trowbridge paid attention to Rayber as the devil in his critical essay, "The Symbolic Vision of Flannery O'Connor: Patterns of Imagery in *The Violent Bear It Away*." Also, John F. Desmond and Richard Giannone, both leading scholars of O'Connor, mainly discussed the novel's religious aspects as a significant device for the novel.³

Meanwhile, non-Christianity criticisms also appeared over the last five decades. In the 1960's, the novel's structure was highly evaluated, and there were many symbolist analyses. In the 1970's, O'Connor's use of language, her Southernness, and psychological aspects were discussed as well as Catholicism. Freudian theory started to be applied to *VBA* in the 1980's. Family relationships within *VBA* were often studied in this period. Gender and sexuality studies were added from the 1990's. Comparative studies of O'Connor and other writers became more common in this period. Since 2000, there have been interpretations and criticisms from various viewpoints. Some analyze it in the aspect of race or class; others return to the discussion of symbolism.

One of the authentic annotated bibliographies has been R. Neil Scott's *Flannery O'Connor: An Annotated Reference Guide to Criticism* (2002), but it only contains criticism on O'Connor's works in a limited period, that is, from 1975 to 2000, (dissertations and Master's theses from 1961 to 2000). He also published *Flannery O'Connor: The Contemporary Reviews* in 2009 which contains reviews from 1959 to 1963 on *VBA* in full text. It helps the reader to know the initial response to the novel, but it excludes seven more reviews which this bibliography has collected. As for the bibliography of essays on *VBA* in Japanese, Hajime Noguchi's *Nihon ni okeru Flannery O'Connor Bunken Shoshi* (Bibliography on Flannery O'Connor in Japan) (Tokyo: Bunka Shobou Hakubun-Sha, 2007) will be helpful to the interested Japanese readers, although it does not

have annotations.

This annotated bibliography succeeds and supplements Scott's work by focusing on criticism after the year 2000, including critical pieces published before 1975, and collecting the reviews on *VBA*, which are excluded from Scott's book. This bibliography consists of contemporary reviews, critical essays and articles, and book-length studies on *VBA*. It has collected the criticism, which was available from the novel's publication in 1960 to the present. Essays written in languages other than English and which have no English abstracts are listed without annotations. In order to depict the critical history of *VBA*, a total of 134 entries have been divided into three categories (book reviews, journal articles, and books), and listed in chronological order. Author, journal, and subject indexes are given as appendices. The sources used for searching the material were as follows: *MLA International Bibliography* online, *Humanity Abstract*, *Questia*, *ProQuest* (DAI), *Amazon.co.jp.*, *Amazon.com.*, and *Flannery O'Connor: An Annotated Reference Guide to Criticism*. The key words used for the search were "Flannery O'Connor" and "The Violent Bear It Away."

More than a hundred researchers are introduced in this annotated bibliography. One may notice its religious dimensions have been the most prevailing aspect for understanding the novel, but the study of *VBA* is far from complete, as there are analyses of *VBA* outside of Christianity through other dimensions. Therefore, this bibliography should be of use for the further investigation of the novel and the advent of various interpretations.

Notes

¹ Flannery O'Connor, *The Habit of Being: Letters of Flannery O'Connor*, ed. Sally Fitzgerald (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1988) 389.

² Originally, "THE PROPHET I RAISE UP OUT OF THIS BOY WILL BURN YOUR EYES CLEAN," in *VBA* on page 76.

³ For instance, Desmond analyzes the description of "the Word and the Act" (1973), the eschatology in the novel (1983), and the refusal of the sacrament and the church (2005), while Giannone discusses the motif of the lion of Judah (1985), the role of protagonist as the desert prophet (1997), God's mercy in *VBA* (1999), and the ditch imagery which is "eschatological hollow" (2008).

List of Abbreviations

a) Books

VBA: *The Violent Bear It Away*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1960.

WB: *Wise Blood*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1952.

b) Journals

FOB: *Flannery O'Connor Bulletin*

FOR: *Flannery O'Connor Review*

NCL: *Notes on Contemporary Literature*

RL: *Religion and Literature*

SL: *Sewanee Review*

SLJ: *Southern Literary Journal*

SLI: *Studies in the Literary Imagination*

c) Others

DAI: Dissertation Abstract International

Secondary Sources

a) Contemporary Reviews

1966

1. **Bannon, Barbara. Rev. of *The Violent Bear It Away*, by Flannery O'Connor, *Publisher's Weekly* 27 June 1966: 102.**

Evaluates the style of *VBA* by O'Connor, and she introduces the novel as a "[m]acabre, grotesque and bizarre" story of Tarwater the country orphan.

2. **Wilson, Martha. "Writer's Gifts Apparent." *Baton Rouge Advocate* 6 Nov. 1966: N. pag.**

Unavailable as of November, 2010.

1969

3. **"Close-ups." *Times Literary Supplement* 10 July 1969: 745.**

In the article, both Old Tarwater and Rayber in *VBA* are regarded as mad. It evaluates the close-up way of writing, i.e., her detailed descriptions in the novel, as O'Connor's artistry.

4. **Shrapnel, Norman. "Different Kinds of Comedy." *Manchester Guardian Weekly* 10 July 1969: 15.**

Criticizes *VBA* as "another old Southern fry-up." Shrapnel comments that it is as if William Blake had been transported to Tennessee by "mule-cart." He regards *VBA* as a humorous novel, particularly the characterization of Old Tarwater.

5. Seymour-Smith, Martin. "Stupefying Power." *Spectator* 223 16 Aug. 1969: 210-11.

Criticizes *VBA* as a novel that lacks perfection, unlike O'Connor's short stories.

However, he regards the novel as one of the most unique books in its decade.

1980

6. Campbell, James. "Four-Hour Week." *New Statesman* 7 Nov. 1980: 26-27.

According to Campbell, O'Connor writes economical and vivid prose, including *VBA*. He evaluates O'Connor's use of detailed grotesqueness and her novel's sharpness.

1985

7. Connolly, Cressida. "Bad Tastes." *Books and Bookmen* Aug. 1985: 36.

Compares O'Connor to McCullers and she remarks that although they both write about the South and the grotesque, O'Connor's characters are spiritually, not physically, grotesque. She regards the murder and rape in *VBA* negatively.

b) **Critical Essays and Articles**

1960

- 8. Sumner J., Ferris. "The Outside and the Inside: Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 3.2 (1960): 11-19.**

Concludes that though *The Violent Bear It Away* parallels O'Connor's other stories, it surpasses them in its structure; each part of three is independent from the others, and each chapter effectively accumulates to construct the whole novel. Sumner states that it contains some of O'Connor's significant symbols: water, bringing life and death; fire, destroying and purifying; eyes, revealing and forcing purpose; and physical disability, mirroring a spiritual infirmity. Sumner pays close attention to Young Tarwater and Rayber, and she claims that the novel's violent world is projected into the characters, and that O'Connor describes the Christian tragedy in her novel.

1962

- 9. McCown, Robert M. "The Education of a Prophet: A Study of Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Kansas Magazine* (1962): 73-78.**

According to McCown, O'Connor describes "prophetic violence" in *VBA* as a talented writer. He claims that the novel has not been understood correctly because of a lack of understanding of "character-symbols" that O'Connor uses. He explains symbolism in the novel elaborately; he regards Powderhead as the Garden of Eden, the city as Babylon or nasty Nineveh. He regards the corkscrew as the symbols of material blessing. McCown thinks the way of Young Tarwater's birth is like the

original sin.

- 10. Nolde, M. Simon** “*The Violent Bear It Away: A Study in Imagery.*” *Xavier University Studies* 1 (1962): 180-94.

Demonstrates the two struggles in O’Connor’s *VBA*, the struggle of Young Tarwater and the struggle of Rayber. Nolde indicates that although they are both baptized by the old prophet, Old Tarwater, when they are young, they take the different way to rebel against the old man. Also he explains that the important role of the flashback in the novel as a “structural device.” He discusses the significance of O’Connor’s imagery, and he concludes that the novel deals with Young Tarwater’s journey, which is the path to faith.

1964

- 11. Jeremy, Sister.** “*The Violent Bear It Away: A Linguistic Education.*” *Renascence: Essays on Value in Literature* 17 (1964): 11-16.

Analyzes *VBA* from the aspect of linguistics, that is, Young Tarwater’s language learning. She explains that there are several language teachers for Young Tarwater in the novel. Jeremy regards this novel as a process of Young Tarwater’s acquiring his own language as a prophet. She focuses on each teacher—Old Tarwater, Rayber, Buford Munson, Meeks, the truck driver, and Lucette Carmody—and examines their voices for Young Tarwater. Jeremy concludes that when Young Tarwater hears a voice with a non-human accent and syntax directly in his heart, unlike with his ears or within his head, the education of Young Tarwater is complete.

1968

12. Burns, Stuart L. “Flannery O’Connor’s *The Violent Bear It Away*: Apotheosis in Failure.” *SR 76 (1968)*: 319-36.

Shows that O’Connor’s *VBA* has a structural pattern which describes the revelation of Young Tarwater. According to Burns, through his failure, Young Tarwater achieves his independence. In his essay, Burns points out the ironic comments on modern society which the novel shows in the text. He emphasizes that Young Tarwater is described as Jonah the prophet. Burns regards Young Tarwater’s being raped as a “self-betrayal” because the seducer is his own *alter ego*: It is, the loud “stranger” which is the voice in his head. Burns states that Young Tarwater’s setting the forest on fire is a “self-purification.”

13. Trowbridge, Clinton W. “The Symbolic Vision of Flannery O’Connor: Patterns of Imagery in *The Violent Bear It Away*.” *SR 76 (1968)*: 298-318.

Reveals that in *VBA* there are important images—fire, water, the loaves, fishes, sun, and the road—which function as devices to show O’Connor’s metaphorical use of language. Trowbridge asserts that the reader must pay attention to the words in the novel and take them literally in order to understand the author’s intention of frequent and effective employment of imagery. Trowbridge notes that the name “Tarwater” relates to these images. He thinks that the words of Rayber are the words of the devil. Trowbridge argues that the four tempting characters—Meeks, the truck driver, the pervert, and the “stranger” which is a voice in Young Tarwater’s head—portray different parts of Rayber’s characteristics.

1969

14. Muller, Gilbert H. "*The Violent Bear It Away: Moral and Dramatic Sense.*"

Renascence: Essays on Value in Literature 22 (1969): 17-25.

States that O'Connor is influenced by Henry James's theory of the "moral sense," since she seems to understand the distinction of James's idea between morality and moralism. It is especially apparent in *VBA* because it describes "a perfect coincidence of the moral sense and the dramatic sense." Muller contends that O'Connor portrays the dramatic unity in her novel as well as structure and meaning in her skillful manipulation of biblical parallels. Muller thinks Old Tarwater is a violent and fanatic prophet and Baptist like John the Baptist, and Young Tarwater is a model of a Christian who is forced to recognize the ambiguity of actions.

1970

15. Smith, Francis J. "O'Connor's Religious Viewpoint in *The Violent Bear It Away.*"

Renascence: Essays on Value in Literature 22 (1970): 108-12.

Insists that *VBA* shows "the isolated fragment of revelation," which is planted and grows inside Young Tarwater. He also says that this novel is about God's kingdom, which O'Connor describes violently also in her other writings. Smith claims that a little religion and conveying God's words are dangerous things. He points out that being afraid of God, or fighting against God, or being confused about God is better than being unconcerned about God.

1972

- 16. Keller, Jane C. "The Figures of the Empiricist and the Rationalist in the Fiction of Flannery O'Connor." *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory* 28 (1972): 263-73.**

Discusses O'Connor's sarcastic description of the figures who define moral absolutes for themselves, and he explains it by using Kierkegaard's terms. Keller claims that O'Connor satirizes especially two types of men in her fiction. Both are the characters who don't believe in God, the empiricist and the rationalist. Keller names Rayber in *VBA* as the strongest rationalist in O'Connor's stories. On the other hand, Keller says that Young Tarwater is between the two types. He claims that mercy, as well as speed, is the factor which these two types received in her fiction.

- 17. Mayer, David R. "The Violent Bear It Away: Flannery O'Connor's Shaman." *SLJ* 4.2 (1972): 41-54.**

Explains that Old Tarwater, Young Tarwater, and Rayber in *VBA* are described as shamans, who curse, prophesy, and use trances in the course of their cures. Mayer claims that both Old Tarwater and Rayber are shamans since they try to cure Young Tarwater by teaching him their way, and Mayer argues that Young Tarwater is also a shaman since he experiences the hunger, the nausea, and diving into the water, which are characteristic of shamans according to Mayer. Furthermore, Young Tarwater baptizes Bishop in a trance state. At the end of the novel, Young Tarwater undergoes the initiation ritual, which is both the death and the resurrection. Mayer continues that this initiation portrays the reality which is in the purely mystical view.

1973

18. Desmond, John F. "The Mystery of the Word and the Act: *The Violent Bear It Away*." *American Benedictine Review* 24 (1973): 342-47.

Regards the "Word" in *VBA*, as the most important factor to understand O'Connor's Christian interpretation of history which is described in her fiction. According to Desmond, this novel portrays the mystery of "the Word and the Act," and he thinks that Old Tarwater is the union of word and act, and that Rayber is the figure who can think and talk but cannot act. Desmond insists that Young Tarwater, who tries to deny his great-uncle Old Tarwater and to silence the inner voice and himself, is reunited with the Word. Desmond says that Tarwater sees the true country, where "the Word is incarnated in Christ," beyond his home town, Powderhead.

19. May, John R. "*The Violent Bear It Away*: The Meaning of the Title." *FOB* 2 (1973): 83-86.

States that the meaning of the title of *VBA* has not been understood correctly because the original verse from which the novel's epigraph is taken is fairly difficult to interpret: "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven *suffereth* violence, and the violent bear it away (Mt. 11:12). The original Greek verb in the verse can be interpreted as passive or as a middle voice; so that the verb is to "manifest itself violently" or "exercises its power violently." Hence the title means: "The kingdom of heaven manifests itself violently, and men in violence take hold of it." May thinks this agrees with several of O'Connor's comments on her own fiction convincingly.

1976

- 20. Chew, Martha Elizabeth. "Aesthetic Integration in the Works of Flannery O'Connor." Diss. Boston U, 1976.**

Analyzes the "interplay of multiple themes" in O'Connor's works. She examines the interactions of the multiple themes in each of O'Connor's fictions and the effect of this interaction, whether they end in genuine thematic complexities or just confusion. Chew discusses *VBA* in chapter III, paying attention to O'Connor's description of the "sense of loss" which underlies human hostility. [DAI 44 (1983): 1453A]

- 21. Kinnebrew, Mary Jane. "Language from the Heart of Reality: A Study of Flannery O'Connor's Attitudes toward Non-Standard Dialect and Her Use of It in *Wise Blood*, *A Good Man Is Hard to Find*, and *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Linguistics in Literature* 1.3 (1976): 39-53.**

Indicates that O'Connor uses non-standard English to make her characters real, no matter how grotesque that world might be. She thinks O'Connor utilizes Southern non-standard language as a practical tool. Kinnebrew analyzes O'Connor's particular use of dialect and non-standard English in her fiction, particularly in "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," "Good Country People," *WB*, and *VBA*. She remarks that Old Tarwater has "the linguistic influence" as well as "the spiritual influence" on Young Tarwater. Also she notes that Rayber's Standard English shows his "secular education and societal norms" which is a proof of "a 'believer' without belief."

1977

- 22. Duhamel, P. Albert. "The Novelist as Prophet." *The Added Dimension: The Art and Mind of Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Melvin J. Friedman and Lewis A. Lawson. New York: Fordham UP, 1977. 88-107.**

Points out the resemblance of Tarwater's mission to the novel's function, that is, "to burn the South's eyes clean" in order to realize the true heritage of the South. He also indicates that the novel and *I'll Take My Stand*, a collection of essays which was published in the South in 1930 and influenced O'Connor, has similar purposes, to aid the South. Duhamel states that the novel is "the story of the making of a prophet." The novel holds a series of images, which function literally to awaken the reader to recognizing the "other levels of significance."

- 23. Hoffman, Frederick J. "The Search for Redemption: Flannery O'Connor's Fiction." *The Added Dimension: The Art and Mind of Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Melvin J. Friedman and Lewis A. Lawson. New York: Fordham UP, 1977. 32-48.**

Hoffman remarks that there are three major subjects in O'Connor's works: the struggle for redemption, the search for Jesus, and the meaning of "prophet." According to Hoffman, O'Connor describes "religious acts and the dilemmas," and the way to salvation is "dangerous, thorny, rocky, and devious" in O'Connor's fiction. Hoffman claims that in *VBA*, the three characters—Old Tarwater, Young Tarwater, and Rayber—embody violence, but "the urge for the religious action" are in all male characters, even in Rayber and Bishop.

24. Malin, Irving. "Flannery O'Connor and the Grotesque." *The Added Dimension: The Art and Mind of Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Melvin J. Friedman and Lewis A. Lawson. New York: Fordham UP, 1977. 108-22.

Regarding O'Connor as a "pre-Christian" like Capote, Hawkes, and McCullers, Malin argues that the grotesque theme in O'Connor's fiction does not come from her Christian faith but from "her psychological awareness." Malin emphasizes that *VBA* is a "divine comedy" since the grotesqueness of the characters raises laughter, and at the same time, cleanses the reader and the novel itself with its divinity.

25. Quinn, M. Bernetta. "Flannery O'Connor, a Realist of Distances." *The Added Dimension: The Art and Mind of Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Melvin J. Friedman and Lewis A. Lawson. New York: Fordham UP, 1977. 157-83.

Argues that the importance of O'Connor's works lies in her "prophetic vision," and O'Connor had to create a fictional prophet as a double of her prophetic-self in order to realize her mission given by God. In *VBA*, Old Tarwater appears as a prophet. The characters in the novel are grotesque since they are mentally distorted, but they respond to Young Tarwater's prophesy and "amend their lives." Quinn claims that the sun imagery in the novel symbolizes God's eyes, which monitor the characters. According to Quinn, O'Connor is a prophet who understands the present and writes for the future.

26. Rubin, Louis D., Jr. "Flannery O'Connor and the Bible Belt." *The Added Dimension: The Art and Mind of Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Melvin J. Friedman and Lewis A. Lawson. New York: Fordham UP, 1977. 49-72.

Demonstrates O'Connor's "strange union of evangelical Protestantism and Roman

Catholicism,” discussing her two novels, *WB* and *VBA*, which deal with primitive Protestantism in the South. He argues that even though the forms of her novels are grotesque, they should be subject to respect. Unlike McCullers and Caldwell, O'Connor does not emphasize physical grotesqueness; instead, she portrays mental grotesqueness. Rubin argues that O'Connor's characters in *VBA* cannot accept “the normal condition of everyday life,” which is the cause of the grotesqueness, and that this view of the grotesque is that of O'Connor's Southern fundamentalist Protestantism.

- 27. Scott, Nathan A. Jr. “Flannery O'Connor's Testimony: The Pressure of Glory.”** *The Added Dimension: The Art and Mind of Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Melvin J. Friedman and Lewis A. Lawson. New York: Fordham UP, 1977. 138-56.

Indicates that O'Connor's fiction has both a “constructive purpose” and a “negative purpose,” and *VBA* focuses on the latter. In her fiction, O'Connor tries to exhibit the “banal and trivializing” modern world, to describe the imaginal vacuity, and to baptize both the “fresh awareness of what has been lost” and the “modern imagination.” Scott argues that the origin of O'Connor's novel is the Southern Bible Belt.

- 28. Strine, Mary S. “Narrative Strategy and Communicative Design in Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*.”** *Studies in Interpretation*. Ed. Esther M. Doyle and Virginia Hastings Floyd. Vol. 2. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1977. 45-59.

Discusses the coherent total effect and theme in *VBA*, through the structure of the text by close textual analysis in order to “recognize and participate in the rhetorical dimension and communicative design of the novel,” which has not been paid much

attention to and has been wrongly evaluated by critics. According to Strine, the narrative strategy of the novel illustrates the convincing possibility, and he explains it through the elaborate study of the narration in each part of the book.

1980

- 29. Paulson, Suzanne Morrow. "Apocalypse of Self, Resurrection of the Double: Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Literature and Psychology* 30. 3-4 (1980): 100-11.**

According to Paulson, in addition to being a religious writer, O'Connor accepted Freudian theory and understood Freudian symbolism. He analyzes *VBA* through "Freudian way and the psychology of divided self," and intends to understand her story with the new possibilities, since few critics have paid attention to the author's intention in it. Paulson argues that main characters in the novel—Old Tarwater, Young Tarwater, Rayber, and Bishop—are described as doubles of each other. He discusses all the possible pairs: Old Tarwater and Young Tarwater, Old Tarwater and Rayber, Old Tarwater and Bishop, Young Tarwater and Rayber, Young Tarwater and Bishop, and Rayber and Bishop. Paulson argues that particularly Old Tarwater, the old prophet, is "implanted" into all the other characters, thus all of them work as doubles.

1981

- 30. Coghill, Sheila Renee. "Symbolism in the Fiction of Flannery O'Connor." Diss. Ball State U, 1981.**

Investigates “the symbols and their functions” in O’Connor’s works, showing O’Connor’s ability to raise ordinary “objects, actions, people and statements” to the “symbolical level.” She also reveals the way of O’Connor’s observation and interpretation of her view of landscapes as a Catholic writer. Coghill divides the symbols into three types: “dominant symbols,” which control and illuminate the meaning of the story; “recurring symbols,” which are nature symbols; object symbols; and “specific symbols,” which bear the spiritual changes. In *VBA*, all three symbols are contained and they convey O’Connor’s religious views in her fiction. [DAI 42 (1982): 3598A]

31. Driggers, Stephen Gause. “Imaginative Discovery in the Flannery O’Connor Typescripts.” Diss. Indiana U, 1981.

Demonstrates O’Connor’s “consistent search” for the revelatory actions, examining the typescripts by O’Connor of her fiction, including *VBA*. He shows the “Christian paradigm of the progress of faith,” which was identified by Kierkegaard as “the movement from the knight of infinite resignation to the knight of faith,” as well as “a storyteller’s paradigm,” which is based on myth. [DAI 42 (1982): 5120A]

32. Russ, Donald Devere. “Family in the Fiction of Flannery O’Connor.” Diss. Georgia State U, 1981.

Remarks that O’Connor’s use of the family is one of the most significant factors in her fiction since it ranges across her Catholicism, Southernness, and “use of violence and the grotesque.” He discusses the connection between O’Connor’s fictional families and her meanings for them in his dissertation. Russ deals with *VBA* to reveal the “new two-fold meaning” of the family. The sacred and “ultimately

destructive secular bonds” are described in the novel. He points out the shift of meaning of family in O’Connor’s fiction. [DAI 42 (1981): 705A-06A]

1982

- 33. Albert, Marie Louise Hannibal. “Children of the Confederacy: A Study of New South Themes in Porter, Welty, McCullers, and O’Connor.” Diss. U of Hawaii, 1982.**

Investigates the “image of the modern South” which is represented in the four major authors, including O’Connor, in the “Southern Literary Renaissance Period.” She examines “the significant cultural documents” in their works, showing the compound of “traditional Southern and modern industrial ways of life” which they encouraged. Albert handles *VBA* to study the use of children in the fiction, which has the theme of “love and order,” “good and evil,” and “progress.” [DAI 43 (1983): 2664A]

- 34. Arnold, Marilyn. “*The Violent Bear It Away: Flannery O’Connor’s Reluctant Compromise with Mercy.*” *McNeese Review* 28 (1981-1982): 25-33.**

Studies violence, mercy, and justice in O’Connor’s *VBA* mentioning the meaning of the title. He says that the violence is necessary in the novel for the expression of love. He indicates the Biblical paradoxes of justice and mercy. Particularly, O’Connor’s works, including the novel, lack the love of neighbor which is one of God’s great laws about love. Also, Arnold introduces O’Connor’s idea of love: the “strict religious conviction” is essential for the human gesture of love, and without the conviction, the love becomes a meaningless and horrible one.

35. Lacoste, Andre Pierre. "Mercy, Grace, Sin in the Religious Vision of Graham Greene, Flannery O'Connor, and Walker Percy." Diss. Tulane U, 1982.

Explores "the different elements" of Greene, O'Connor, and Percy in order to achieve salvation and examines "the different modes" of their dramatizing themes, confirming "their claim to being accomplished storytellers." He argues that O'Connor portrays the force of the "divine grace" as a "shocking, violent moment of recognition, realization, and reversal" in several of her fictions, including *VBA*.
[DAI 44 (1983): 166A]

36. Pope, Robert. "Beginnings." *Georgia Review* 36.4 (1982): 733-51.

Claims that the beginning of a novel is the most important part since it is an entrance to the thing which is new for the reader and the thing which the reader wants to remember. He explains the five selections of the author's beginnings and why they are prominent. Among Franz Kafka, Jorge Luis Borges, Vladimir Nabokov, and Gabriel Barcia Marquez, Pope mentions Flannery O'Connor and her second novel, *VBA*, and he emphasizes the remarkable aspect of its first sentence, apprising its exquisite length and the rapid rhythm of the sentence's movement.

37. Shaw, Patrick W. "The Violent Bear It Away and the Irony of False Seeing." *Texas Review* 3.2 (1982): 49-59.

Analyzes irony in O'Connor's *VBA*, which has not been studied fully. He insists that the novel is described by ironic narrative devices, despite O'Connor's own comment. He explains ironies in the novel: character's small eyes, Young Tarwater's drowning of Bishop, the Carmody episode, Young Tarwater's spiritual

deformity, and the sexual problem in *Young Tarwater*. Shaw regards O'Connor as one of the best ironists, and he states that irony in the novel intensifies O'Connor's Christian orthodoxy because the novel is a story of theodicy.

1983

- 38. Desmond, John F. "Flannery O'Connor and the History behind the History." *Modern Age: A Quarterly Review* 27.3-4 (1983): 290-96.**

Discusses the relationship between Southern literature and history, mentioning some Southern writers, such as Faulkner, Warren, Welty, and O'Connor. He insists that O'Connor's *VBA* is based on her rejection of aesthetic memory and admission of "dynamic of history" and "eschatology." According to Desmond, Old Tarwater is a character who attempts to make Christianity appropriate by means of memory, and he was aware of the transcendent reality.

- 39. Hopkins, Karen Jeanne. "An Exercise in Adjudication: Interpretations of Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." Diss. Bowling Green State U, 1982.**

Studies the "current state of practical literary criticism," examining the critics' assumptions and styles in interpreting fiction. She reveals the logical errors by the former critics which were caused by the "attempt to disguise the involvement of the reader in the process of producing meaning from text." Hopkins concludes that the meaning of the text includes the response of the reader in *VBA*. [DAI 43.10 (1983): 3318A]

- 40. Scouten, Kenneth. "The Schoolteacher as a Devil in *The Violent Bear It Away*." *FOB 12 (1983): 35-46.***

Claims that Rayber is the most significant satanic character in *VBA*, although many critics point to the stranger's voice and the homosexual rapist. Three devils appear in the novel: "the friendly voice" as "the alter-ego devil," Rayber as a schoolteacher devil who causes Young Tarwater's rape by giving him the corkscrew, and the lavender shirted rapist. But Scouten claims that Rayber represents sterile and destructive 'knowledge,' like the snake in Eden, and as Satan, as a devil like Mephistopheles in *Doctor Faustus*. Rayber causes physical death and spiritual death. He tries to corrupt Young Tarwater, to deny God's "Word," and to destroy the Garden. At the end of the novel, Young Tarwater rejects Rayber the devil and obtains salvation. Scouten states that Young Tarwater serves "the Lord's purpose" as a prophet, against the devil's intentions in the end.

1984

- 41. Bamberg, Marie Luise. "A Note on the Motif of Midday Crisis in Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *American Notes & Queries 23 (1984) 19-21.***

Indicates that "the motif of midday crisis" in *VBA* is one significant aspect of the sun imagery in O'Connor's literature. Bamberg explains that the critical situations for Young Tarwater's initiation take place at noon in the novel, dramatizing his mental and sexual growth; the voice of "stranger," which disturbs the Southern rural county's silence, and the "noonday devil," who rides the lavender car and wears a lavender shirt, are both the embodiments of the devil, and cause the "midday crisis" and they become the trauma for Young Tarwater. But in the end,

they make Young Tarwater aware of “his need for redemption” and he achieves the transformation to a real prophet.

42. Leonard, Joan. “Violence and Community in the Fiction of Flannery O’Connor and Muriel Spark.” Diss. Emory U, 1984.

Pays attention to O’Connor and Spark as Roman Catholic writers, showing the influence on “the limitations of the human condition” by violence and community, as well as “the possibilities for a renewed vision of community,” using *VBA* partly in her discussion. [DAI 45 (1984): 1748A]

43. Paulson, Suzanne Morrow. “Flannery O’Connor’s Divided Vision: Apocalypse of Self, Resurrection of the Double.” Diss. U of Minnesota, 1984.

Examines the doubles in O’Connor’s fiction, paying attention to the influence which O’Connor received. Paulson regards *VBA* as “the form of a death-haunted parent seeking.” She states that it is obvious that O’Connor’s works are influenced by Jung and Neumann in the dominant parent-child relationship and a “male-female dichotomy.” [DAI 45.5 (1984): 1399A]

1985

44. Buzan, Mary. “The Difficult Heroism of Francis Marion Tarwater.” *FOB* 14 (1985): 33-43.

Explains that Young Tarwater’s transformation in the end of *VBA* is his victory over “strangers,” i.e., the characters Young Tarwater encounters and his own “strange” internal voice. Buzan considers strangers in the novel as devils who Young Tarwater

meets in the course of his progress from victim to hero, devils who tempt him to “dissolution and damnation.” Buzan indicates that the reader tends to interpret Young Tarwater’s change as either an effect of madness due to his accepting of the prophetic vocation and his being raped; or as a “*Bildungsroman*” or “Southern Gothic *Huckleberry Finn*.” However, Buzan insists that Young Tarwater’s transformation is a triumph over his enemies.

- 45. Duhamel, P. Albert. “Flannery O’Connor’s Violent View of Reality.” *Critical Essays on Flannery O’Connor*. Ed. Melvin Friedman and Beverly Lyon Clark. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1985. 29-34.**

Summarizing O’Connor’s early works, Duhamel claims that O’Connor describes “the man’s refusal to see things” in *VBA*. He indicates that O’Connor’s South cannot be applied to other Southern writers’ descriptions of the South. Duhamel also points out the agreement between the great-uncle’s phrase and O’Connor’s: “the roots of the eye are in the heart.”

- 46. Giannone, Richard. “The Lion of Judah in the Thought and Design of *The Violent Bear It Away*.” *FOB* 14 (1985): 25-32.**

Pays close attention to the episode of the sculpted lion in Chapter VI of *VBA*, claiming that it functions as a spiritual lesson for Young Tarwater. Giannone thinks that “the divine readiness,” given by the lion, helps Young Tarwater survive his trials of prophecy. He remarks that this scene has not been analyzed fully yet in spite of its importance, relating to the lion in the Book of Daniel. Giannone regards the stone lion in the park as “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.”

47. Kehl, D. G. "Flannery O'Connor's Catholicon: The Source and Significance of the Name 'Tarwater.'" *NCL* 15.2 (1985): 2-3.

Argues that Old Tarwater's name in *VBA* is a metonym and metaphor, for his family name "Tarwater" alerts the reader to "the cleansing, purgative power of water." He continues that Old Tarwater is a character who cures the spiritual illness of his grand-nephew, Young Tarwater, and that Old Tarwater is a symbol of baptism. Kehl regards Old Tarwater as a skeptical Catholic, and he states that Old Tarwater works in medicine which suits O'Connor's purposes in the novel.

48. Magistrale, Tony. "Francis Tarwater's Friendly Friends: The Role of the Stranger in *The Violent Bear It Away*." *NCL* 15.3 (1985): 4-5.

Insists that *VBA* describes the "spiritual torment" of Young Tarwater, and he argues that the "friendly Stranger" who seduces Young Tarwater into corruption are portrayed as Satanic figures. Young Tarwater experiences two modes of corruption, murder and rape. Young Tarwater's inner voice orders him to drown Bishop, and later a homosexual rapist attacks him. According to Magistrale, after the rape, Young Tarwater himself becomes a stranger, and he recognizes his inner voice as an adversary, not a friend. Magistrale claims that the rape makes Young Tarwater aware that the "friendly fiend," i.e., inner voice, is the reflection of his own desire.

49. Warnke, Frank J. "A Vision Deep and Narrow." *Critical Essays on Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Melvin Friedman and Beverly Lyon Clark. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1985. 34-38.

Reveals that O'Connor's *VBA* contains many indicators of contemporary Southern fiction: the remote county farm, the mad old man, the perverse adolescent, and

“psychological realism” caused by a distorted allegorical possibility. He regards the novel as a “work of convention” with which O’Connor describes a work about compelling power. Warnke also points out that the basis of O’Connor’s “Southernness” is the ceremonial resolution with violence, and the theological orientation. Warnke says that O’Connor describes in a complex way the misery of living without God. He considers the baptism of Bishop by Young Tarwater as the baptism of an “idiot Christ” by an insane and dangerous John the Baptist.

1986

- 50. Brinkmeyer, Robert H., Jr. “A Closer Walk with Thee: Flannery O’Connor and Southern Fundamentalists.” *SLJ* 18.2 (1986): 3-13.**

According to Brinkmeyer, O’Connor is a fundamentalist writer, as well as a Catholic novelist. Brinkmeyer says that her works consist of both her knowledge and perspective of fundamentalism and her religious views as a Catholic. He claims that O’Connor shows her “debt to her homeland” particularly in *VBA*, mentioning the scene of the sermon of Lucette Carmody, the child evangelist. Brinkmeyer argues that O’Connor’s work maintains a tension between religious belief and respect for her homeland Georgia’s fundamentals.

1987

- 51. Beck, Christiane. “Flannery O’Connor’s Poetics of Space.” *Realist of Distances: Flannery O’Connor Revisited*. Ed. Karl-Heinz Westarp and Jan Nordby Gretlund. Aarhus, Den.: Aarhus UP, 1987. 136-46.**

Insists that the analysis of O'Connor's poetics of space has been insufficient, and that O'Connor's sense of place and use of space should be paid attention to more. Beck explains O'Connor's "imaginary creation" of her characters' space in the aspect of space. According to Beck, in *VBA*, the town is described as a dark limited space; while Powderhead is an edenic space. She also regards the sun in the novel as a significant factor, which shows the dynamic vertical movement.

- 52. Blasingham, Mary V. "Archetypes of the Child and of Childhood in the Fiction of Flannery O'Connor." *Realist of Distances: Flannery O'Connor Revisited*. Ed. Karl-Heinz Westarp and Jan Nordby Gretlund. Aarhus, Den.: Aarhus UP, 1987. 102-12.**

Explains that there are lots of children in Flannery O'Connor's fiction and that they embody the author's meaningful message, that is, her "invitation to psychic transformation for a synthesized Self." In *VBA*, Young Tarwater is described as an exemplary child-hero, who is controlled by dreams and fantasies, who is "pre-formed and pre-shaped by them." According to Blasingham, Young Tarwater writhes between "the forces of the secular and the transcendent." Still, he is protected by nature; the sky, the sun, the moon, the flora, and the animals. Blasingham also regards Bishop as "a divine child-God," since he resurrects Young Tarwater through his own death.

- 53. Martin, Carter "The Meanest of Them Sparkled': Beauty and Landscape in Flannery O'Connor's Fiction." *Realist of Distances: Flannery O'Connor Revisited*. Ed. Karl-Heinz Westarp and Jan Nordby Gretlund. Aarhus, Den.: Aarhus UP, 1987. 147-59.**

Discusses the use of beauty in O'Connor's works, especially her short story "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" and *VBA*. Martin says that O'Connor shows us the beauty through the grotesque human experience. In *VBA*, there are many beautiful descriptions of nature, love, and glory. Martin indicates that the beauty is described with the grotesque factors such as "pain, suffering, death, and violence." He concludes that though those beauties are about O'Connor's home state of Georgia, at the same time they are the universal beauty of a landscape which is the land of God.

54. Mathews, Marsha Caddell. "Death and Humor in the Fifties: The Ignition of Barth, Heller, Nabokov, O'Connor, Salinger, and Vonnegut." Diss. Florida State U, 1987.

Points out the significance of death and humor in a major movement in contemporary literature, analyzing American fiction of the fifties, including O'Connor's *VBA*. She claims that death has been expressed as a fear in American literature, reducing "the individual to nonexistence." [DAI 48 (1988): 1770A]

55. Olson, Steven. "Tarwater's Hats." *SLI* 20.2 (1987): 37-49.

Argues that O'Connor's work is based on the palpable and the particular despite her religious themes. Although O'Connor didn't pay much attention to her use of symbols in her fiction, there are many symbolic motifs, as some critics point out. Olson thinks that the hat is one of the significant symbols in O'Connor's work, and he regards the hat as a symbol which embodies her religious themes in *VBA*. Olson claims that the two hats which Young Tarwater wears are both gray, and these are symbols of his initiation.

- 56. Schlafer, Linda. "Pilgrims of the Absolute: Leon Bloy and Flannery O'Connor." *Realist of Distances: Flannery O'Connor Revisited*. Ed. Karl-Heinz Westarp and Jan Nordby Gretlund. Aarhus, Den.: Aarhus UP, 1987. 55-63.**

Analyzes the influence of the French authors of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century on O'Connor's works, particularly Bloy. According to Schlafer, O'Connor was a prolific reader of French Catholic fiction writers and her narrative style was influenced accordingly. O'Connor read the works of Leon Bloy in her early stage of reading French works, and according to Schlafer, his *Art and Scholasticism* structured O'Connor's aesthetic methodology. Bloy's *Pilgrim of the Absolute* had a particularly heavy influence on the portrayal of Old Tarwater in *VBA*. It was also Bloy's *The Woman Who Was Poor* which gave O'Connor the idea of the bread of life and the hunger imagery.

- 57. Washburn, Delores. "The 'Feeder' Motif in Flannery O'Connor's Fiction: A Gauge of Spiritual Efficacy." *Realist of Distances: Flannery O'Connor Revisited*. Ed. Karl-Heinz Westarp and Jan Nordby Gretlund. Aarhus, Den.: Aarhus UP, 1987. 123-34.**

Pays attention to the "feeder motif" in Flannery O'Connor's works, which has not been fully examined thus far, even though the feeding ritual is a part of daily life in the South where O'Connor lived. Speaking of *VBA*, Washburn discusses Rayber as a feeder, comparing him to Sheppard in "The Lame Shall Enter First," both failures of their feeder roles. He also discusses Old Tarwater as the most "admirable and effective" male feeder, though traditionally the feeders are female in the South. Washburn concludes that the feeder who maintains the traditional role is able to

keep a close relationship with God, like Old Tarwater.

- 58. Wilson, Carol Y. "Family as Affliction, Family as Promise in *The Violent Bear It Away*." *SLI* 20.2 (1987): 77-86.**

Discusses O'Connor's *VBA*, showing the complex family structure, since this story is told in terms of family. According to Wilson, this novel is a journey for Young Tarwater to find his father. Wilson says that all the family members are "the family of man and the family of God," and they are described by mentioning other family members. Wilson claims that through the family, the characters grow.

- 59. Chu, Yen. "The Making of a Prophet: *The Violent Bear It Away*." *American Studies/Meiguo yan jiu* [China] 17.1 (1987): 1-26.**

Insists that in *VBA*, O'Connor describes silence and mystery in a vision of God's country. Chu states that O'Connor's main technique in her fiction is irony, and the tone of the story is existential as well as naturalistic. Chu also remarks that O'Connor describes "the mystery of revelation" through Young Tarwater's struggle against God and His calling. Chu says that the novel is a violent comedy, and all violence, including the drowning of Bishop and the homosexual rape of Young Tarwater, have divine purposes.

1988

- 60. Swan, Jesse G. "Flannery O'Connor's Silence-Centered World." *FOB* 17 (1988): 82-89.**

Argues that most works of O'Connor are about the relationship between God, Satan,

and humans. He claims that these relationships are centered around sound and silence. Swan distinguishes two types of silence in O'Connor's fiction: "secular silence" and "spiritual or divine silence." Swan emphasizes that the reader should pay attention to these silences, though it is not easy because stories are written by *words* and therefore the reader has to *read for* the silence with effort. In *VBA*, the employment of "sound / silence" is the key to Tarwater's revelation.

1989

61. Choi, Insoon. "The Journey Home to the True Country: A Study of Flannery O'Connor's Fiction." Diss. U of Wisconsin, 1989.

Remarks that O'Connor's fiction is the story of a redemptive journey from home to the "true country," which Christian writers think "what is eternal and absolute." In the dissertation, Choi explains the "journey narrative" utilizing O'Connor's two novels and all of thirty-one short stories, as a main "structural device." Choi discusses *VBA* in chapter four, claiming the critical pattern of the plot is "the circular journey movement of escape from and return to God." [DAI 50 (1990): 3950A]

62. Grimes, Ronald L. "Anagogy and Ritualization: Baptism in Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *RL* 21.1 (1989): 9-26.

Explains baptism in *VBA*. He remarks that the central gesture of the novel is baptism, and water and fire relate as more significant imagery than bread. In the novel, drowning-baptism gives the reader a shock, but Grimes says that it makes perfect sense. He claims that baptism is "a symbolical act of violence" as well as "a

gesture of grace.” Grimes focuses on the “ritualization” of Young Tarwater. According to Grimes, the novel describes two principles: to avoid ritual may cause “ritual avoidance,” and to flee from something may result in being pursued.

- 63. Rigaud, Marielle.** « *The Violent Bear It Away: La Quete du pere.*” *Delta: Revue du Centre d’Etudes et de Recherche sur les Ecrivains du Sud aux Etats-Unis* 27 (1989): 45-54.

French Article. English translation is not available.

- 64. Tanner, Laura E.** “Artful Assault: Representations of Violence in Twentieth Century Fiction.” *Diss. U of Pennsylvania, 1989.*

Re-examines the formal experimentations’ role in the modern fiction and he examines the violent forces’ depiction by studying the narrative strategies which underlie “the fictional representation of violence.” Tanner regards *VBA* as a violent self-conscious novels and evaluates the “format collapse” which destroys the response of the reader to the “conventions of art” as well as the violent scene. [DAI 50 (1990): 2893A]

1990

- 65. Gallagher, Janet M.** “Telling Stories about God: Narrative Voice and Epistemology in the Hebrew Bible and in the Fiction of Flannery O’Connor, Graham Greene and Cynthia Ozick.” *Diss. Fordham U, 1990.*

Investigates the “relationship between narrative voice and epistemology” in five fictions by three authors, including O’Connor’s *VBA*. She explains the “close

relationship between the epistemology in the text,” and remarks that the narrative voice in *VBA* is “a nearly biblical third-person narrator.” [DAI 51.4 (1990): 1221A]

1991

- 66. Detweiler, Jane A. “Flannery O’Connor’s Conversation with Simone Weil: *The Violent Bear It Away* as a Study of Affliction.” *Kentucky Philological Review* 6 (1991): 4-8.**

Examines the relationship between O’Connor and Weil. According to Detweiler, though O’Connor thinks Weil’s essays are ridiculous, O’Connor characterizes Weil in *VBA* in a sense: O’Connor describes afflictions in her novel, which are the centers of Weil’s characters. Detweiler indicates that the members of the “family of freaks” in the novel are all afflicted, as Weil emphasizes in her writings.

- 67. Somerville, John Nottingham, Jr. “The Significance of Space in the Fiction of Flannery O’Connor.” Diss. U of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1991.**

Suggests the dilemma in O’Connor’s criticism, which is separation between O’Connor’s world which she describes and O’Connor’s comment which she asserts. He also discusses O’Connor’s use of space by which she directs “our attention toward the invisible world of mystery,” taking up her four works, including *VBA*. [DAI 52 (1992): 3605A]

1992

- 68. Baker, J. Robert. “Flannery O’Connor’s Four-Fold Method of Allegory.” *FOB* 21**

(1992): 84-96.

Reveals the allegorical dimensions in *VBA*. According to Baker, *VBA* is the most allegorical story among O'Connor's works. He discusses Young Tarwater's adventure as a "type of prophetic succession" and as a bildungsroman. Baker regards baptism as a device of "tropological dimension." For both Bishop and Young Tarwater, it is necessary to obtain the salvation through baptism. Baker explains that Young Tatwater's hunger during his trial is both spiritual and physical, and only through accepting his mission and apocalypse can he transform into a prophet.

69. Zornado, Joseph Louis. "Flannery O'Connor: A Fiction of Unknowing." Diss. U of Connecticut, 1992.

Investigates O'Connor's works, including her letters and prose, to discover "an unusual orthodox Catholicism" which is marked by "philosophic skepticism and indebted to negative theology." He uses *VBA* to show that it is a "sacramental fiction" which challenges and redefines the sacred notion through the ritual of baptism, paralleling O'Connor's short story, "The River." [DAI 54 (1993): 1359A]

1993

70. Baker, J. Robert. "Radiant Veils and Dark Mirrors: Twentieth-Century Versions of Allegory." Diss. U of Notre Dame, 1993.

Examines the adaptation of "the allegorical mode" in the fiction by Flannery O'Connor, Walker Percy, and Thomas Pynchon. He analyzes *VBA* and shows the manner of O'Connor's fiction whose origins are "the medieval fourfold method of

allegory.” Baker points out the relationship of “the conduct, words, and clothes” to “biblical figures, their moral states, and their spiritual ends.” [DAI 54.5 (1993): 1799A]

71. Benoit, Raymond. “The Existential Intuition of Flannery O’Connor in *The Violent Bear It Away*.” *NCL* 23.4 (1993): 2-3.

Claims that both Flannery O’Connor and Soren Kierkegaard survey the corruption into secularism of the human spirit. Benoit pays attention to moving and overlooking in *VBA*, mentioning the truck driver who picks up Young Tarwater and asks him to talk to him to keep him awake, and the relationship between Young Tarwater and Rayber, who move in opposite directions. They are driven to do so and are overlooked by the reader who misunderstands O’Connor’s purposeful haziness.

72. Beutel, Katherine Piller. “Disembodied and Re-Embodied Voices: The Figure of Echo in American Gothic Texts.” *Diss. Ohio State U, 1993.*

Examines the American fiction, placing some in “a Gothic tradition,” pointing out the use of the “mythological figure of echo,” which is usually a woman’s voice that refuses “suppression and live[s] on beyond death.” Beutel claims that *VBA* uses echoes to strengthen “its questioning of the proper response to authority.” [DAI 54.11 (1994): 4090A]

73. Donahoo, Robert. “Tarwater’s March Toward the Feminine: The Role of Gender in O’Connor’s *The Violent Bear It Away*.” *CEA Critic: An Official Journal of the College English Association* 56.1 (1993): 96-106.

Explains that O’Conner’s description of Old Tarwater and Young Tarwater in *VBA*

provides new light on the interpretation of her feminine characters, which was criticized as being examples of women who hide their sex behind non-gendered names. Seemingly, O'Connor's female characters are described as having decorative and symbolic roles in her text. However, if the readers pay attention to the feminine, they realize that the feminine have controlling forces. Through Lucette Carmody's descriptions, Donahoo claims that this rejection of a woman parallels the rejection of Christ: that is, O'Connor links the feminine with the divine. He continues that Old Tarwater has a linkage between himself and the feminine, occurred by rejection. Donahoo emphasizes the connection between the rejection and the feminine, as well as Old Tarwater's role as Young Tarwater's mother. Donahoo insists that Mason is a symbol of the balanced union of male and female, and Young Tarwater embodies masculinity, rejecting his uncle's ideal. Later, Young Tarwater realizes the feminine inside him, and he gains his femininity. Donahoo claims that O'Connor's use of the feminine suggests the reexamination of gender roles for the reader.

74. Prown, Katherine Hemple. "Revisions and Evasions: Flannery O'Connor, Southern Literary Culture, and the Problem of Female Authorship." Diss. College of William and Mary, 1993.

Examines O'Connor's unpublished fiction, regarding it as "evidence of her ambivalent relationship to a literary culture" which is based on "the racial and gender-based hierarchies." Prown partly discusses *VBA* as well. [DAI 54 (1994): 3751A]

- 75. Brownlee, James Henry. "Limits, Risks, and Possibilities: Discourse and Religion in a Selection of Twentieth Century American Novels." Diss. U of Minnesota, 1994.**

Investigates "variety and struggle" in American novels "by focusing on the role of language to construct religious sensibility." He discusses O'Connor's *VBA*, as an author who searches for reinvesting "Christian orthodoxy" with meaning and effect, showing the desolation of religious language. [DAI 55 (1995): 2827A]

1995

- 76. Demory, Pamela H. "Violence and Transcendence in *Pulp Fiction* and Flannery O'Connor." *The Image of Violence in Literature, the Media, and Society*. Ed. Will Wright and Steven Kaplan. Pueblo, CO: Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery, U of Southern Colorado, 1995. 187-94.**

Discusses *Pulp Fiction* comparing it to O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" and *VBA*. According to Demory, the violence is necessary for salvation in O'Connor's fiction. That is, murder, rape, and fire make Young Tarwater to accept his calling to become a prophet in *VBA*. Demory claims that both *Pulp Fiction* and *VBA* describe "the debate between a rational and a nonrational perspective." She also mentions O'Connor's narrative strategy briefly.

- 77. Kehl, D. G. "Flannery O'Connor's 'Fourth Dimension': The Role of Sexuality in Her Fiction." *Mississippi Quarterly* 48.2 (1995): 255-76.**

Discusses sexuality in O'Connor's fiction and the use of Freud in *VBA*. According

to Kehl, O'Connor uses the Freudian imagery to describe the devils: the homosexual rapist and Meeks, the copper-flue salesman. Kehl remarks that the sexuality in O'Connor's fiction works as violence since it astounds both the characters themselves and the readers. He also reveals that modern society has the inverted values, i.e., sex takes place of Christ and faith.

- 78. Parrish, Tim. "The Killer Wears the Halo: Cormac McCarthy, Flannery O'Connor, and the American Religion." *Sacred Violence: A Reader's Companion to Cormac McCarthy*. Ed. Wade Hall and Rick Wallach. El Paso: Texas Western P, 1995. 25-39.**

Discussed the killers in the fiction of O'Connor and McCarthy. According to Parrish, the violence and the sacred are inseparable, and the "murder is an American expression of the sacred." He points out Young Tarwater's "Friend" is an "agent of grace" as well as violent. He also indicates that when Young Tarwater kills Bishop, not only Bishop the victim but also Young Tarwater the killer are saved by the very act. Moreover, Parrish argues that after being raped, Tarwater sets fire to the place of the rape to burn him clean as well as burn the place clean.

1996

- 79. Farmer, Joy A. "Mary Hood and the Speed of Grace: Catching Up with Flannery O'Connor." *Studies in Short Fiction* 33.1 (1996): 91-99.**

Compares Mary Hood's fiction to Flannery O'Connor's, and reveals the connection between them. She notes that both O'Connor's *VBA* and Hood's "Something Good for Ginnie" deal with the devils the main characters encounter in the course of their

growth. Also, Farmer indicates that both the protagonists, Young Tarwater in *VBA* and Doc in “Something Good For Ginnie,” are violated by homosexuals.

80. Witt, Jonathan Ronald. “Fearless Audiences: How Modern American Literature Flatters Us.” Diss. U of Kansas, 1996.

Contends that modern American literature describes “its protagonist’s pride as a virtue,” though such works booster the reader’s “own pride” by “flattery.” In a part of his discussion, Witt investigates *VBA* and he claims that the novel shows the author’s proficient use of “skeptical intellectual characters” in order to upset the “general intelligent reader.” [DAI (1996): 9726578A]

1997

81. Arnold, Marilyn. “Sentimentalism in the Devil’s Territory.” *Flannery O’Connor and the Christian Mystery*. Ed. John J. Murphy, Linda Hunter Adams, Richard H. Cracroft, and Susan Elizabeth Howe. Provo, UT: Center for the Study of Christian Values in Literature, Brigham Young U. 1997. 243-58.

Indicates that O’Connor regards sentimentalism as obscene as well as pornography. Arnold supports her point by comparing O’Connor to Willa Cather and Eudora Welty. However, Arnold also claims that the sentimentalism is used in portraying several minor characters in *VBA*; Meeks, the Carmodys (except the girl preacher, Lucette), and Rayber. They are not only rationalists but also romantic persons who convey the importance of love. Arnold says that much of O’Connor’s work describes “the defeat of soft sentimentalism by the concrete violence of divine grace.”

- 82. Giannone, Richard. "Warfare and Solitude: O'Connor's Prophet and the Word in the Desert." *Flannery O'Connor and the Christian Mystery*. Ed. John J. Murphy, Linda Hunter Adams, Linda Hunter, Richard H. Cracroft, and Susan Elizabeth Howe. Provo, UT Center for the Study of Christian Values in Literature, Brigham Young U, 1997. 161-89.**

According to Giannone, O'Connor's *VBA* is a story of "the ancient Egyptian desert" which is set in the South of America. He regards Young Tarwater the teenager protagonist as the offspring of "desert fathers," and his adventure as the "exodus through the desert." Giannone analyzes mainly Young Tarwater, as well as Old Tarwater, partly Bishop and some of Rayber. Also he remarks that the silence in the novel differs: Rayber's silence in which Bishop was killed is the deafness to God's words, while Bishop's silence (caused by Down's Syndrome) embodies humanity and tenderness.

- 83. Zornado, Joseph. "A Becoming Habit: Flannery O'Connor's Fiction of Unknowing." *RL* 29.2 (1997): 27-59.**

Examines O'Connor's religious attitude toward the relationship between the "sacramental and mundane," mainly comparing O'Connor's short story "The River" to *VBA*, showing baptism as a "performative act" in both stories. Zornado points out that O'Connor's publication of her letters in 1979 made clear her intentions as a Catholic writer in her second novel, and he indicates that O'Connor is influenced by St. Thomas Aquinas. Zornado insists that *VBA* is a story of critical dilemma like O'Connor's other stories. Zornado concludes that baptism becomes a symbol of the difference, the gap, and the abyss by the end of the novel. He says that O'Connor

tries to rewrite baptism, not only question it, in *VBA*.

1998

- 84. Bieber, Christina. "Called to the Beautiful: The Incarnational Art of Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Xavier Review* 18.1 (1998): 44-62.**

Indicates that O'Connor is a prophet as well as an artist, and that *VBA* shows this because the novel describes the idea of a prophet: He must struggle violently to "be true" to his indescribable vision. According to Bieber, Old Tarwater and Rayber's influence on Young Tarwater are limited since he realizes God's call and His vision by himself. Bieber claims that God's call is a gift for Young Tarwater rather than a burden. Also, she thinks that a writer's ability is also a gift from God, and both a prophet and a writer have to "identify" and "cultivate" the vision.

- 85. May, Elizabeth V. "Atomic Idioms: Authority, Identity, and Language in Novels by Mailer, O'Connor, Purdy, and Agee." *Diss. Yale U, 1998.***

Examines the "response to the post-atomic, post-Holocaust environment" in American literary Academia, dealing with O'Connor's *VBA* partly. The novels she discusses are voids with putative heroes' absence or distortion. [DAI 60.5 (1999): 1561A]

1999

- 86. Bieber, Christina Marie. "The Incarnational Art of Flannery O'Connor." *Diss. Emory U, 1999.***

Argues that O'Connor has designed her unique sacramental art to challenge "the Cartesian divisions" between "self and other," and "mind and body," which characterizes "American intellectual and spiritual life" since Emerson. In the course of the discussion, Bieber points out O'Connor's recognition of art as the incarnation which portrays "grotesque body," and she explains that *VBA* shows the embodiment of Christ. [DAI 60.6 (1999): 2023A]

- 87. Giullemmin, George. "Books Made Out of Books': Some Instances of Intertextuality with Southern Literature in Outer Dark." *Proceedings of the First European Conference on Cormac McCarthy*. Ed. David Holloway. Miami, FL: Cormac McCarthy Society, 1999. 28-34.**

Unavailable as of November 30, 2010.

2001

- 88. Andretta, Helen R. "A Berkeleyan Influence on Flannery O'Connor." *Proceedings: Northeast Region Meeting of the Conference on Christianity and Literature*. Ed. Doretta Cornell and Ruth Anne Thompson. Pleasantville, NY: Pace U, 2001. 25-38.**

Points out Bishop George Berkeley's influence on O'Connor, particularly on *VBA*. According to Andretta, the novel contains the evidence of Berkeleyan influence; the two characters named Tarwater, and the motifs of water and fire. Berkeley states in his book that tar-water is useful to heal human disease, and both Old Tarwater and Young Tarwater are prophets who heal people. Also, Andretta reveals that Berkeley regards water and fire as tools for purification and fertilizing, and she says that

O'Connor uses water and fire to cleanse in the novel. Although Berkeley is considered a minor philosopher, Andrette emphasizes the clear influence of him on O'Connor the Catholic fiction writer.

89. Petrides, Sarah I. "Landscape and Community in Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away* and Walker Percy's *Love in the Ruins*." *FOR 1* (2001-2002): 9-25.

Compares O'Connor's *VBA* to Percy's *Love in the Ruins*, and insists that although the two novels are seemingly different, they have common features; both are about the South, and both are about the southern settings. Also, both embody "social and spiritual truth" written by Roman Catholic writers who try to describe Christian understandings in their fiction, and both have tempers who seduce victims and separate them from other people and nature. Petrides emphasizes that both novels portray "the 'true landscape' of the South" which is an agricultural heaven.

2002

90. Baranowski, Anne-Marie. "Interpretation fondamentaliste des ecritures et defiguration de l'homme dans les romans de W. Faulkner et F. O'Connor." *L'Homme defigure: L'Imaginaire de la corruption et de la defiguration*. Ed. Pierre Vaydat. Villeneuve d'Ascq, France : Universite Charles de Gaulle - Lille 3, 2002. 257-68.

French Article. English Translation is not available.

91. Truffin, Sherry Roxane. "Schoolhouse Gothic: Haunted Hallways and Predatory

**Pedagogues in Late Twentieth-Century American Literature and Scholarship.”
Diss. Loyola U of Chicago, 2002.**

Discusses the “Schoolhouse Gothic” which draws on “Gothic metaphors and themes in representing and interrogating contemporary Western education.” Using *VBA* partly, Truffin claims that the school has produced “psychopaths and machines.” [DAI 63.6 (2002): 2245A]

92. Whatley, Sue Brantley. “Our Father Who Art in Heaven, Our Mother Who Art on Earth: Flannery O’Connor and the Culture of Mother Blame.” Diss. Texas A&M U, 2002.

Analyzes the “mother-child relationship” in O’Connor’s fiction which is defective and reductive, utilizing Freudian and Jungian hermeneutics. Through the discussion, Whatley deals with *VBA* as well as O’Connor’s other works, and she reveals the misconceptions of the “mother blame” criticism done by many other critics. [DAI 63.8 (2003): 2876A]

93. Yaghjian, Lucretia B. “Flannery O’Connor’s Use of Symbol, Roger Haight’s Christology and the Religious Writer.” *Theological Studies* 63.2 (2002): 268+.

Analyzes the use of symbols in O’Connor’s fiction and prose writings and Haight’s Christology, and she points out the similarity and the difference between them. According to Yaghjian, O’Connor is a “literary theologian” while Haight is a “systematic theologian,” and they have the “symbolic imagination” in common; they share the symbol’s “theological language” and the task to write “the transcendent from below” as religious writers. As to O’Connor’s fiction, Yaghjian claims that symbols work as engines. She mentions *VBA* briefly in order to show

Young Tarwater's hunger for the Bread of Life as the example of O'Connor's symbols.

2004

- 94. Andretta, Helen R. "Flannery O'Connor and Tarwater-A Coming of Age." *Conference on Christianity & Literature*. Ed. Anthony Giffone and Marlene San Miguel Groner. Farmingdale, NY: Northeast Regional Conference on Christianity and Literature, Farmingdale State U of New York, 2004. 75-77.**

Pays attention to Emmanuel Mounier's *Personalism* and *The Character of Man*, which are books O'Connor was reading when she was writing *VBA*. Andretta thinks that the two books fairly influenced *VBA*, particularly the characterization of Young Tarwater. She claims that the author O'Connor equals the protagonist Young Tarwater, because O'Connor creates Young Tarwater as a character who "literally burns away the destructive force within himself and attains finally through free choice the goodness of his nature." According to Andretta, O'Connor tried to come to terms with her illness in the course of developing Young Tarwater's character.

- 95. Khailova, Ladislava. "Where the Average White Male Scored in the Imbecile Range': Changing Paradigms of Mental Retardation in Twentieth-century Southern Fiction." *Diss. U of South Carolina, 2004.***

Discusses the essential re-evaluation of describing the disability in twentieth-century Southern fiction, dealing with "gender, race, and class." She uses *VBA* partly in her course of argument. Khailova considers O'Connor's "retardation," which points to God's grace, as a "conservative bias." [DAI 65.8 (2005): 2990A]

- 96. Thornqvist, Inger Birgitta. "Flannery O'Connor's View of the Modern Alienation from Sacramental Religion." Diss. Lunds Universitet (Sweden), 2004.**

Analyzes O'Connor's fiction, including *The Violet Bear It Away*, as mirrors of "a modern Gnostic alienation from sacramental religion in American Catholicism and American Protestant fundamentalism." She thinks that the white racism in the South appears in O'Connor's work in a form of Christian framework of redemption, and her fiction shows the "issue of integration as beyond rational solutions." [DAI 65.3 (2004): 601A]

2005

- 97. Desmond, John F. "Flannery O'Connor and Simone Weil: A Question of Sympathy." *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 8.1 (2005): 102-16.**

According to Desmond, the research of the relationship between O'Connor and Weil has not been done fully yet. He insists that after reading the works of Weil for more than seven years, O'Connor's stories, especially *VBA*, show the influence of Weil on O'Connor. Desmond claims that this novel includes several themes of Weil, for example the refusal of the sacraments and the church. Furthermore, Desmond points out the resemblance between Rayber and Weil herself. Desmond argues that Weil is the base of O'Connor's faith and art.

- 98. Hoberek, Andrew. "Liberal Antiliberalism: Mailer, O'Connor and the Gender Politics of Middle-class Ressentiment." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 33.3-4 (2005): 24+.**

Analyzes Mailer's "The White Negro" and O'Connor's fictions in the aspect of "postwar masculinity." He deals with *VBA* in his essay to discuss a confrontation between "a weakened white-color middle class" and "agents of violence" and characters that represent the middle class's golden age.

- 99. Peters, Jason. "The Source of Flannery O'Connor's 'Flung' Fish in *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes, and Reviews* 18.4 (2005): 48-53.**

Points out the frequent use of O'Connor's fish in *VBA*, and he claims that water is a repeating and controlling image in it and that the fish is a symbol of Christ. He continues that the use of the flung fish shows Young Tarwater's return from being a Manichaeon, which is represented by the description of Rayber, to a Christian view of the world, that is, here, baptism. Moreover, Peters insists that Young Tarwater is described as a flung fish himself.

2006

- 100. Ramos, Rufel Flores. "My Kind of Comedy': An Exegetical Reading of Flannery O'Connor as Medieval Drama." Diss. U of Dallas, 2006.**

Places O'Connor in a "coherent comedic tradition" that accounts for a Christian context and dark humor, and he discusses her fiction as the medieval drama using *VBA* partly. [DAI 67.4 (2006): 67A]

- 101. Sutton, Brian. "An Unconsciousness: The Influence of Flannery O'Connor's Novels on Joyce Carol Oates's 'Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been.'"**

FOR 4 (2006): 54-68.

Analyzes the correlation between Oates's "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" and O'Connor's fiction. In his discussion, he mentions *VBA*. According to Sutton, the two stories have many points in common: the teenage protagonists' characteristics and their initiation, and the resemblance between the four "strangers" in O'Connor's novel and Arnold Fiend in Oates's short story. He claims that although a writer is influenced by the former great writers generally, O'Connor's influence on Oates is significant in spite of Oates's own comment.

102. Thornqvist, Inger. "The Church-Historical Origin of O'Connor's Blood Symbolism." *Flannery O'Connor's Radical Reality*. Ed. Jan Nordby Gretlund and Karl-Heinz Westarp. Columbia: U of South Carolina P, 2006. 85-101.

Claims that O'Connor's readings of the history of the early church are the reason for her use of blood as a symbol, since blood is "the medium of divine, signals" in that history. He insists that O'Connor describes the inner divine which pulls one to sacrifice oneself for God in *VBA*.

2007

103. Ambrosiano, Jason. "From the Blood of Abel to His Own': Intersubjectivity and Salvation in Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *FOR 5 (2007): 131-40.*

Argues that a prophet should struggle with "God's silence" and he or she may live in solitude, haunted by God's absence after His voice vanishes. However, Young Tarwater in *VBA* is not solitary: his "spiritual struggle" is shared with his relatives,

that is, Old Tarwater, Rayber, and Bishop. Ambrosiano also points out the relationships between Kierkegaard and Hazel Motes in *WB*, and Kierkegaard and Young Tarwater, as well as the influences of Martin Heidegger, Martin Buber, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty on O'Connor.

104. Bangsund, Jenny Christine. "Dwelling among Mortals: Narratives of Disability and Revelation in Twentieth-Century American Fiction." Diss. Duquesne U, 2007.

Discusses the "mental and physical disabilities" and "religious imagery" which is based on "the Judeo-Christian tradition," partly using *VBA*. She analyzes "the representation of disability," mentioning the "associations of divine revelation" which reflect the "traditions of biblical narrative." She challenges the "standard of normalcy that excludes the disabled characters from full participation in their communities." [DAI 68. 2 (2007): 569A]

105. Segriff, Joseph Michael. "Unraveling Religiosity: Deconstructing Rationalism and Fundamentalism in Flannery O'Connor's Rural Male Characters." Diss. Drew U, 2007.

Divides the main male protagonists in O'Connor's fiction into two groups; one is men who are "irrational and provide something more than a religious explanation for their actions" and the other is men "who are psychologically grotesque, who act irrationally, and who use religious thought or faith to justify their overt actions." He uses *VBA* partly in his argument. [DAI 68.9 (2008): 68A]

- 106. Desmond, John F. "By Force of Will: Flannery O'Connor, the Broken Synthesis, and the Problem with Rayber." *FOR 6* (2008): 135-46.**

Analyzes O'Connor's problem with creating Rayber in *VBA*. He points out O'Connor's own comment: the problem comes from her limitation of imagination because Rayber, who is the modern "intellectual" unbeliever, is an unfamiliar person for O'Connor. He also indicates that Rayber himself has an interval between "rational self" and violent, mad self. In other words, he has a problem of a split between "emotional self" and "intellectual self."

- 107. Giannone, Richard. "Making It in Darkness." *FOR 6* (2008): 103-18.**

Claims that O'Connor's fiction describes the ditch imagery in several forms. He regards the ditch as an "eschatological hollows." According to Giannone, the ditch portrays "essential drama" in O'Connor's works. He compares Hazel Motes in *WB* and the Misfit in "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" to Young Tarwater in *VBA*, and he remarks that they are all enthusiastic advocates of nihilism, murderers, and "seekers." Giannone states that Young Tarwater comes out of "the ditch of new knowledge" to grave obligation in the end of the novel.

2009

- 108. Omnus, Wiebke. "The Word in the World: 'Fallen Preachers' in Zora Neale Hurston's *Jonah's Gourd Vine* and Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Diss. Universite de Montreal*, 2009.**

Investigates Hurston and O'Connor from the aspect of the description of "the sacred and the secular" and "the Word and the world." Omnus compares *Jonah's Gourd*

Vine and *VBA* on the standpoint of philosophical models and intertexts, which relate to Christian ministry, and Omnus regards them as part of the Southern Renaissance. According to Omnus, both writers “re-evaluate and reclaim aspects of Southern culture,” and each describe a journey to liberation. [DAI 71.5 (2010): A]

109. Robillard, Douglas, Jr. “Diabolical Ventriloquism in C. S. Lewis, Flannery O’Connor and Clive Barker.” *Philological Review* 35.1 (2009): 11-28.

Explains the demons in the works of Lewis, O’Connor, and Barker. He indicates that the devil enters Young Tarwater’s body, becomes an inner voice of him, and tries to seduce and control him, using the devil’s syntax and language in O’Connor’s *VBA*. Robillard reveals that O’Connor intends to describe the devil as Lucifer, so this “diabolical ventriloquism” is quite religious, like Lewis’s. Robillard argues that the devil is motivated by hungers and he rapes Tarwater in the shape of the lavender shirt stranger, whose skin became pink, evoking the image of vampirism.

110. Wood, Ralph C. “Climbing into the Starry Field and Shouting Hallelujah: O’Connor’s Vision of the World to Come.” *Bloom’s Modern Critical Views: Flannery O’Connor*. New Edition. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House. 2009. 103-17.

Wood analyzes George Rayber in *VBA*, comparing him to Ivan Karamazov in *The Brothers Karamazov*. He states that Rayber is a nihilist who has a strange desire to love everything. Also, Wood regards Rayber as “a secular monk,” since he understands “the real meaning of divine love,” though he implicitly encourages the drowning of Bishop by Young Tarwater’s hands. Wood explains that O’Connor’s

“eschatological vision” works as salvation and her stories, including *VBA*, end in a “glad moment of grace” which on the surface looks violent.

c) **Books and Book Chapters**

1966

- 111. Hyman, Stanley Edgar. *Flannery O'Connor*. U of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers Ser. 54. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1966.**

Demonstrates that O'Connor's *VBA* is integrated by symbolism, a common trait of her literature in general. According to Hyman, the novel has three important symbols: burning, spiritual feeding (that is, "the bread of life"), and the holy idiot (Bishop). He defines this novel as the masterpiece of O'Connor, because of its perfect narrative structure and use of language. He claims that each of the strangers who Young Tarwater encounters in his initiation journey is Satan. The devils appear in the forms of Young Tarwater's inner voice, Meeks, the truck driver, and the homosexual rapist. Through his initiation with them, Young Tarwater becomes both a prophet and a madman.

1971

- 112. Driskell, Leon V. & Brittain, Joan T. "A Second Novel & Related Stories." *The Eternal Crossroads: The Art of Flannery O'Connor*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1971. 81-103.**

Discusses the relationship between *VBA* and four of O'Connor's short stories, "You Can't Be Poorer than Dead," "The Artificial Nigger," "The River," and particularly, "The Lame Shall Enter First." Driskell and Brittain point out the common family relationships in the novel and the stories, that is, the grandfather-grandson relationship, uncle-nephew relationship, and the social worker-delinquent

relationship, all of which *VBA* contains. Also Driskell and Brittain indicate that the novel borrows passages from the Bible, 1 Peter 5:8 and 1 Kings 13. They criticize preceding works of criticism by Stanley Edgar Hyman and Robert Fitzgerald, arguing their misreading of the novel on the interpretation of the epigraph from the Gospel, Matthew 11:12, and of the author's position in the story.

1972

- 113. Eggenschwiler, David. "The Arc and the Circle: *Wise Blood* and *The Violent Bear It Away*." *The Christian Humanism of Flannery O'Connor*. Wayne State UP, Detroit, Michigan. 1972. 101-40.**

Argues that *VBA* indicates O'Connor's understanding for man's way to love and to hate God. He pays close attention to the three main characters in the novel: Old Tarwater, Young Tarwater, and Rayber. He regards Young Tarwater as a metaphorical Everyman, who struggles between the "good angel" and the "evil angel." Eggenschwiler thinks Old Tarwater in the country is the good angel, while Rayber in the city is the evil one. He also regards both Old Tarwater and Rayber as false prophets because of their characteristics and behavior.

- 114. Feeley, Kathleen. "The Tattooed Christ: A Prophet's View of Reality." *Flannery O'Connor: Voice of the Peacock*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers UP, 1972. 140-77.**

Suggests that O'Connor portrays "the biblical paradigm" of a prophet's call in *VBA* to show the mystery of man's freedom to choose between accepting or rejecting destiny. Feeley discusses Young Tarwater's struggle between the influence of Old Tarwater and of Rayber, and also under God's mission. She insists that by "doing"

Young Tarwater can control his own life completely. She indicates that the theme of the novel is O'Connor's attention to "the visible world" and "the spiritual life."

115. Hendin, Josephine. "Growing Up: Two Novels." *The World of Flannery O'Connor*. Indiana UP, 1972. 43-61.

Regards O'Connor's two novels, *WB* and *VBA* as initiation stories, and she also thinks of them as stories about "impossibility of growing up, the destruction of hope, and the demolition of personality." She considers that the structure of *VBA* contains O'Connor's major themes, i.e., the use of double and the repetition of the struggle for the same conflict. Hendin explains the relationships between Old Tarwater and Bishop, and Rayber and Bishop, as the images of doubles. Also, she notes that Young Tarwater is raped by the homosexual stranger, who she thinks is the future double of Young Tarwater. Hendin points out that the novel starts and ends with the encounter with the stranger. The rape is the initiation for Young Tarwater; After that, he decides to continue to play the role of child instead of growing up. Here, Hendin manifests the impossibility of growing up in the novel.

116. Orvell, Miles. "The Violent Bear It Away." *Invisible Parade: The Fiction of Flannery O'Connor*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1972. 96-125.

Analyzes *VBA* from the aspect of narrative. He claims that O'Connor uses the narrative perspective to describe the "inner dimensions of certain actions or events." He remarks that O'Connor's narration is a complex relation between "word, deed, and some outside force." Orvell highly evaluates the beginning and the ending of the novel. According to Orvell, the beginning embodies the archetype of the whole story, and the last chapter and the ending are perfectly written. Also Orvell notes

that Tarwater in *VBA* resembles Hazel Motes in *WB*, because both violently struggle against God. However, he criticizes the novel's middle part as unsuccessfully dramatized.

This book was republished as *Flannery O'Connor: An Introduction* in 1991.

1973

117. Stephens, Martha. "The Violent Bear It Away." *The Question of Flannery O'Connor*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1973. 98-143.

Highly evaluates the opening and the ending sections in O'Connor's *VBA*. She points out the influence of Faulkner and Twain on "the country humor" in O'Connor's works, particularly in the novel. Stephens also argues that the ending of *WB*, O'Connor's first novel, connects to the beginning of *VBA*, and the two novels have the same thesis in common. Stephens says that O'Connor uses her narrative strategy in *VBA* effectively.

118. Walters, Dorothy. "More Prophets Called: *The Violent Bear It Away* and 'The Lame Shall Enter First.'" *Flannery O'Connor*. Twayne, 1973. 90-104.

Compares *VBA* to *WB* and states that the novels are similar in the way of struggle, fear, and surrender. She points out the character's agreement in the two novels; however, she says that they differ in the final effect from the protagonists' struggles. Walters also reveals that there are four significant symbolic imageries in *VBA*: water, earth, air, and fire. She indicates the relationship between O'Connor and Hawthorne, particularly the resemblance of Rayber to Chillingworth or Ethan Brand.

1974

- 119. Browning, Preston M., Jr. "The Violent Bear It Away." *Flannery O'Connor*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1974. 72-98.**

Investigates *VBA*, remarking that the novel deals with the prophetic theme more directly compared to her other works. He also states that through the theme of revelation, O'Connor shows her intention to describe man's inner religious attitude, as an artist, as a prophet, and as a writer. Browning regards the death of Bishop as a revelation of Rayber. Browning thinks that Young Tarwater's revelation is complete when "he decided to act."

- 120. Oates, Joyce Carol. "The Visionary Art of Flannery O'Connor." *New Heaven, New Earth: The Visionary Experience in Literature*. New York: Vanguard P, 1974. 141-76.**

Oates discusses the significant influence of Kierkegaard and Kafka on O'Connor, indicating that some critics tend to think, inappropriately, it is Faulkner and West, because the use of grotesque description and O'Connor's styles are similar to them. Oates argues that O'Connor is so religious that the reader cannot understand her works outside of a religious context. She insists that O'Connor's two novels, *WB* and *VBA*, have the same theme, that is, "the romance of the 'mad shadow of Jesus'" and freedom of the souls. Oates thinks that the novel is structured on the traditional doom in *VBA*. Young Tarwater and Bishop's fates are determined from the beginning.

1976

121. May, John R. "The Novels." *The Pruning Word: The Parables of Flannery O'Connor*. Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame P, 1976. 125-50.

Examines the "dramatic movement" in O'Connor's two novels, *WB* and *VBA*, which is supported by O'Connor's specific linguistic patterns. According to May, *VBA* is told in the coercive "interpretive language," and its central metaphor is the Sower, taken from the parable of the New Testament. May discusses the importance of the image of the seed, since Old Tarwater is a prophet of "the New Covenant" and he plants seeds in Rayber and Young Tarwater, causing an inevitable hunger for "the bread of life." May evaluates the novel as O'Connor's best work in the "hermeneutic perspective."

122. McFarland, Dorothy Tuck. "The Violent Bear It Away." *Flannery O'Connor*. New York: Frederick Ungar P, 1976. 91-111.

Pays attention to freedom in O'Connor's *VBA*. She claims that although the styles differ, both *WB* and *VBA* deal with the same theme, struggle and liberation. Young Tarwater tries to *do no* to gain his freedom, but it does not bring it; instead, he loses his individuality, effected by Rayber. McFarland remarks that both Rayber and Young Tarwater resist the Holy, and the former succeeds and the latter fails.

1980

123. Shloss, Carol. "Control of Distance in *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Flannery O'Connor's Dark Comedies: The Limits of Inference*. Southern Literary Studies.

Boston Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1980. 81-101.

Indicates that the problem of O'Connor's fiction is that "the conflict between spiritual life and rational life, as encountered dramatically, is real." Shloss parallels the story of Jonah the prophet and Young Tarwater in *VBA*, and she reveals that the difference between them is their spiritual mission, which comes to Jonah "directly and unambiguously" from God, while it comes to Young Tarwater through his great-uncle. Shloss emphasizes that the dramatic influence on Young Tarwater is Old Tarwater, who seems to be mad. She also notes that in the novel, Elijah, Elisha, Moses, Daniel, and Jonah are included and described in Young Tarwater's four days in the city.

1982**124. Asals, Frederick. "The Violent Bear It Away." *Flannery O'Connor: The Imagination of Extremity*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1982. 160-97.**

Compares O'Connor's two novels, *WB* and *VBA*. He asserts that the two novels have some aspects in common; for instance, both protagonists are young fundamentalists who try to challenge their "religious heritage" and both are rather "ascetic." Asals says that the two novels are clearly different from O'Connor's other stories because she writes about *heroes* in the novels while she writes about *ordinary people* in her short stories. Asals suggests the interpretation of *VBA* by using Jung's "Psychological Approach to the Trinity," since the novel is controlled by the number three, "the mystical number of the Trinity.

1986

- 125. Gentry, Marshall Bruce. "The 'Demonic' O'Connor: *The Violent Bear It Away* and 'The Lame Shall Enter First.'" *Flannery O'Connor's Religion of the Grotesque*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1986. 142-59.**

Examines the relationship between John Hawkes and Flannery O'Connor through an analysis of O'Connor's *VBA*. Gentry states that though their views of the devil were different, O'Connor thought that the works of O'Connor's and Hawkes's were similar. Gentry emphasizes the importance of analyzing narration in the novel, and the role of Young Tarwater's "friend," who is Young Tarwater's devil as well as his own creation. He argues that though the inner voice drives Young Tarwater to change and rebel against his mission of baptizing Bishop, Young Tarwater's "transformation" occurred not by the outer forces but by the proper process for being ready to transform. Gentry regards the baptizing of Bishop and Young Tarwater's being raped as merely factors of transformation, not the very reason for it.

1994

- 126. Johansen, Ruthann Knechel. "The Novels: From Annunciation to Apocalypse." *The Narrative Secret of Flannery O'Connor: The Trickster as Interpreter*. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 1994. 112-49.**

Scrutinizes O'Connor's narrative structures in her two novels, *WB* and *VBA*. Johansen discusses them in four aspects: first, "narrative shape of the novels;" second, "the novels' themes;" third, "the linguistic techniques;" and fourth, "the interrelation of prophets and tricksters," which is discussed in the former chapter.

Johansen argues that Flannery O'Connor's frequent use of repetition, which describes the human epic in her fiction, functions not only to recall the past experience but also to connect the past to the present, constructing or destroying "the communal."

1995

- 127. Whitt, Margaret Earley. "The Violent Bear It Away." *Understanding Flannery O'Connor*. Columbia: U of South Carolina P, 1995. 85-108.**

Analyzes the names in *VBA*. First, he studies the meaning of the title of the novel. Then he investigates the names in the novel: the names of Tarwater, Francis Marion, Mason, Bufford Munson, Carmody, and the name of the county place Powderhead. He emphasizes that O'Connor's intention to choose those names shows her embodiment of her own comments: "the longer you look at one subject, the more of the world you see in it." Whitt also points out the importance of baptism in the novel, remarking that it provides the second life to the characters.

1999

- 128. Giannone, Richard. "The Price of Love—*The Violent Bear It Away*." *Flannery O'Connor and the Mystery of Love*. New York: Fordham UP, 1999. 115-53.**

Discusses O'Connor's *VBA* as a story of love. The novel, which describes the initiation of Young Tarwater the hero, provides the theme of "the violence of love," and O'Connor's understanding of that is particularly obvious in Lucette's sermon. Giannone thinks that the rejection of love causes Tarwater's fall. He also claims

that the lavender devil's rape of Young Tarwater is the judgment for him as well as the salvation: this rape makes Young Tarwater realize God's mercy.

2000

- 129. Ben-Bassat, Hedda. "Vision Without Prophets: Violence Without Fission of Subjectivity in Flannery O'Connor." *Prophets without Vision: Subjectivity and the Sacred in Contemporary American Writing*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2000. 65-86.**

States that O'Connor differs from other writers on the point of "theological reading" which invites her rhetoric. He analyzes the "theological, metaphysical, or ontological question" and construction and destruction of the subject. According to Ben-Bassat, *VBA* illustrates the vacant rituals, and young Tarwater gains "a new prophetic sight and insight" when the moment, which shatters and burns himself, comes.

2004

- 130. Srigley, Susan. "The Violence of Love: *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Flannery O'Connor's Sacramental Art*. Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame P, 2004. 91-133.**

Analyzes *VBA* in nine aspects: Young Tarwater, Old Tarwater and Rayber's "Freedom and Control;" Matthew 11:12 and the epigraph in the novel; character's "Freedom and Eternal Responsibility;" "Education" of Young Tarwater; about "Baptism;" "Burial" of Mason; about "Bishop" and relationships around him; Young Tarwater's "Resistance;" and his "Judgment and Vision." According to

Srigley, “the tension of human incompleteness” is the theme of O’Connor’s fiction, including this novel. She indicates that Young Tarwater is Cain as well as Abel, and the rape of Young Tarwater is a revelation for him.

2005

- 131. Lake, Christina Bieber. “Transcending the Transcendentalists: Bishop as Beauty in *The Violent Bear It Away*.” *The Incarnational Art of Flannery O’Connor*. Macon, GA: Mercer UP, 2005. 141-78.**

Explains love in *VBA*. She insists that in *VBA*, O’Connor tries to rewrite the former novel, *WB*, since the two novels share similar themes. This rewriting is completed when Bishop is killed and baptized by Young Tarwater. According to Lake, Bishop is “a complex and living incarnation of the beauty;” though he is grotesque, he is the “divine mystery.” Lake reveals that Bishop is not Christ nor a symbol of Christ, but he is the true beauty. Lake also discusses about the violence. She indicates that there are both good violence and bad violence in the novel, and she argues that the blindness of the reader and the characters cause the violence.

2006

- 132. Darretta, John Lawrence. “*The Violent Bear It Away* (1960).” *Before the Sun Has Set: Retribution in the Fiction of Flannery O’Connor*. New York: Peter Lang, 2006. 87-104.**

Argues that *VBA* is a story about “wise blood” like O’Connor’s first novel, *WB*. In the novel, Young Tarwater’s “wisdom in blood” disturbs his refusal of his mission.

According to Darretta, this novel shows O'Connor's well-balanced vision. It is a novel of a Christ-haunted family and each of three parts describes the three characters' stories: Part I is Old Tarwater's, Part II is Rayber's, and Part III is Young Tarwater's. Darretta also reveals that Young Tarwater is raped three times: spiritually by Old Tarwater, intellectually by Rayber, and physically by the pervert. He explains that the double voices in Young Tarwater keep the balance inside him between Old Tarwater and Rayber.

2007

- 133. Ciuba, Gary M. "‘Like a Boulder Blocking Your Path:’ O'Connor's Skandalon in *The Violent Bear It Away*." *Desire, Violence, and Divinity in Modern Southern Fiction: Katherine Anne Porter, Flannery O'Connor, Cormac McCarthy, Walker Percy*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 2007. 115-64.**

Insists that O'Connor places the skandalon at the center of the novel *VBA*. According to Ciuba, O'Connor thought that every story is closely related to history. Ciuba claims that O'Connor's description of the skandalon, which is embodied in the countryside of Tennessee, shows the system of the century, which is concealed behind the horrors. Ciuba says that both Young Tarwater and Rayber cannot overcome the skandalon in the novel. He emphasizes that the novel uses the skandalon, the stumbling stone, as symbolic of things which the characters cannot "bear away."

2008

134. Embry, Charles R. "Novel of Divine Presence: Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*." *The Philosopher and the Storyteller: Eric Voegelin and Twentieth - Century Literature*. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 2008. 117-40.

Claims that O'Connor intended to embody the experience of mystery in *VBA*. Embry parallels Eric Voegelin, the philosopher, and Flannery O'Connor, the storyteller. According to Embry, O'Connor invites her readers to recognize that they have become alienated from the true source of humanity through her story. Embry discusses the novel on the basis of reenactment, which is the center of the book. He explains that *VBA* is a "cosmion," "a reflection of the unity of the cosmos as a whole" in the words of Voegelin.

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