The Use of the Grotesque in the Plays of Edward Bond.

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THE USE OF THE GROTESQUE IN THE PLAYS OF EDWARD BOND

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col. Ph.D. 1983

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THE USE OF THE GROTESQUE
IN THE PLAYS
OF EDWARD BOND

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
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in
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Theatre, and Communication Disorders

by
Ann Demling
B.A., Oklahoma State University, 1976
M.A., Oklahoma State University, 1978
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ABSTRACT

A contemporary English dramatist, Edward Bond writes plays that have often been controversial because of their use of cruelty, violence, and other forms of bizarre behavior which can be considered grotesque.

The grotesque is a concept originating in the fifteenth century as a term referring to primitive artwork combining various forms to create a fanciful design. The term broadened in the eighteenth century to include literature and drama. Possessing a negative connotation, it referred to elements which were ridiculous, incongruous, absurd, or deformed. The Romanticists of the nineteenth century favored the grotesque as a valid aesthetic element which acted as a foil to the sublime and which created variety and contrast. In the twentieth century the grotesque becomes a prevalent force in drama. Theorists recognize that it elicits a dual response of fear and humor by juxtaposing incongruous and incompatible components. Its major purpose is to challenge existent norms and standards by shocking an audience into an awareness of the arbitrary nature of reality.

Bond uses the grotesque to make the audience recognize weaknesses in the social structure. People turn into grotesques when victimized by a harsh and unjust political and
legal system. Objects associated with the grotesque include white coverings such as a sheet or bandage that become connected with violent and unnatural suffering and death. Execution or punishment devices such as the crucifix, the jail, and the gibbet are also associated with the grotesque. Most significantly, Bond uses the grotesque to depict the moral growth of some of his protagonists, who must confront the grotesque and/or become grotesque in order to experience self-realization.

As a didactic element, the grotesque threatens to overwhelm its context, thus failing to orient the audience to the thematic statement. Bond has tended to decrease his use of the grotesque, although it still emerges in his plays to give emotional focus to his dialectic.
THE USE OF THE GROTESQUE IN THE PLAYS OF EDWARD BOND

Introduction

In assessing Edward Bond's contribution as a dramatist, Richard Scharine comments, "Bond is unique among English playwrights in that he has a world view, an evaluation of human potential and the conditions that obstruct it, that has remained consistent from his earliest work to his most recent."¹ Bond's total commitment to an examination of his society has resulted in extremes of critical reception seldom accorded to many writers. Born in Holloway, North London in 1934, Bond's lower class background contributed to his critical outlook on society. His father had been a farm laborer who was forced to move to London when he could not find work in the country. When the war started, Bond was sent to the Cornwall countryside to live with his grandparents. This displacement from his family, Bond states, "obviously had an enormous influence on me. . . . Disruption of that sort makes one aware of all sorts of things that one normally wouldn't be--just the change from London to the countryside was so striking that it brought one up abruptly."²

Growing up in a war-torn country also forced Bond into an early awareness of the potential for violent disruption
underlying everyday life. He recalls collecting shrapnel in the streets after air raids and observing the total destruction of houses in which he had once been. Similarly, he remembers his reaction when a sudden explosion in a park stripped the trees bare of leaves. The memory, he states, "was one of the reasons I wrote that scene [the baby's killing] in Saved. There was always the possibility that violence could really explode."\(^3\) Bond adds that his awareness of human evil partially derived from his knowledge of Hitler: "He was a human being, yet he was behaving in a way which was inhuman, grotesque. It created in one's world an image of total evil, you see, which was very curious because it wasn't explained by anything which one had experienced before."\(^4\) Bond's disillusion reflects that of a generation of post-World War II dramatists whose works, as John Russell Taylor describes, contain "a violence harnessed in various ways, through ritual, theatrical formalism, tight verbal control, comic endistancemment, but still inescapably there as a motive force in writing."\(^5\)

After the war Bond returned to London, where he attended a modern secondary school until he was fifteen. Maintaining that "what was obsessively in the minds of everybody in the school was obedience, and some sort of conformity,"\(^6\) Bond asserts that the only worthwhile contribution to his education and subsequent career occurred when at the age of fourteen he attended a performance of Macbeth starring Donald Wolfit. He contends that "for the very first time in my
life . . . I met somebody who was actually talking about my problems, about the life I'd been living, the political society around me."^7

After leaving school, he took odd jobs in factories, interrupted by a stint in the National Service for two years (1953-55). In the army Bond was confronted with "medieval" class distinctions and "brazen brutality."^8 It was in the service, however, that he wrote his first serious work, a short story, and he started writing what he admits was "very bad verse."^9 When Bond was about twenty-two he began writing plays, prompted by the emergence of the new types of plays and playwrights that Osborne had launched in 1956 with Look Back in Anger. Bond also cites the influence of Wolfit's Macbeth and his own desire to explore and develop images and words as factors in his decision to try the dramatic form.^10

Late in 1958 the young playwright joined the Writer's Group at the Royal Court Theatre. The group's purpose was to allow the theatre's growing number of new dramatists an opportunity to learn more about their craft through discussion and participation in various improvisations and other acting exercises. Including playwrights like Ann Jellicoe, John Arden, Arnold Wesker, Keith Johnstone, and Wole Soyinka,^11 the Writer's Group and its activities, as Bond notes, "made the members aware of the plastic, visual nature of theater."^12 Moreover, Bond affirms that his association with the Royal Court provided the working environment
and discipline necessary for a developing artist: "The Court had the resources (or at least pretended it had) of a major European theatre—it didn't have the money, but it certainly had the actors, designers and directors. . . . This was a very fortunate thing for writers because it meant their work was subjected to the greatest scrutiny and pressure during production, and so they learnt to write to a certain standard." 13

Bond's first produced play was The Pope's Wedding, performed at the Royal Court in 1962. The work was successful enough to be nominated for the Charles Henry Foyle New Play Award, and George Devine, Artistic Director of the Royal Court, commissioned a second play. This next work was Saved (1965), a production that catapulted Bond and the Royal Court into the middle of a controversy that catalyzed and eventually caused the abolition of England's censorship law—a law that had held sway since 1843. When Bond refused to make changes in the script, especially in a scene in which a baby is brutally stoned to death, the Lord Chamberlain refused to allow the play a public presentation; the English State Society then produced the play for its club members only, but it was subsequently brought up on charges that contended that strict admission policy was not enforced. Although the judge found against the Royal Court, two years later, in 1968, a bill passed which finally ended the Lord Chamberlain's power of pre-censorship over plays.

Bond's reputation as a controversial playwright grew
with the advent of *Early Morning* (1967), which was banned in its entirety for its outrageously irreverent portrayal of Queen Victoria and her family. Although the play was produced in 1968 to celebrate the twelfth anniversary of the English State Society at the Royal Court, the theatre's lessee asked that the second showing be cancelled; the play was subsequently given only for a private rehearsal for the critics. Despite these legal problems, Bond's worth as a playwright began to be acknowledged in wider circles. *Saved* won a best play award in Germany in 1967 and received other productions abroad. Ironically, as Bond contends, his early works tended to be better received in other countries, especially in Eastern Europe, than in England. At home, the Royal Court remained supportive and awarded the author the George Devine Award for *Saved* and *Early Morning* in 1965. In that same year Canon Stephen Verney of Coventry Cathedral commissioned Bond to write a play for a People and Cities Conference. In only two and a half days Bond wrote *Narrow Road to the Deep North*, where it was performed at the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry.

Public and critical recognition of Bond's work continued to increase with the success of his first three major works. In 1968 Bond shared the John Whiting Award with Peter Barnes for *Narrow Road to the Deep North*; *Saved*, *Early Morning*, and *Narrow Road* played in repertory at the Royal Court the next year. *Saved* and *Narrow Road* toured Belgrade, Venice, Prague, Lublin, and Warsaw, and *Saved* won first prize at a major
theatre festival in Belgrade. In America Joseph Papp planned to show Saved at the New York Shakespeare Festival, but it had to be shelved for financial reasons.

Bond's commitment to social and political causes motivated him to write several one-acts for various human-rights groups. He wrote "Black Mass" in 1970 for a South African Anti-Apartheid movement; "Passion" was performed for a Nuclear Disarmament Rally; Bond wrote "Stone" (1976) for a gay awareness group, and A-A-America! (1976) examined the issue of black civil rights in the United States.

With the performance of Lear in 1971 critics generally acknowledged Bond's increasing maturity as a writer. The Sea (1973), his first comedy, enjoyed popular and critical acclaim. A Berlin production of Lear won a prize at the Belgrade theatre festival; Bingo (1974) and The Fool (1975) soon followed. The former was awarded a Special Citation at the 1976 Obie Awards for the Yale Repertory Theatre's production, and the latter won Best Play of 1976 in the Plays and Players London Critics Award.

Bond wrote the script for an opera, We Come to the River, in 1976, which was presented at Covent Garden. He wrote a second version of Narrow Road, which he called The Bundle, and directed his own production of The Woman in 1978 at the National Theatre--the first new play to be staged in the Olivier Theatre. Bond also directed The Worlds, which was first performed by the Newcastle University Theatre in 1979 and then at the Royal Court Theatre.
Upstairs. In July of 1981 the Royal Court produced Bond's latest play, *Restoration*.

In addition to creating his own dramatic works, Bond has successfully adapted several classical plays, such as *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1966), *The Three Sisters* (1967), *Spring Awakening* (1975), and *The White Devil* (1976). Bond has also experimented with poetry, short stories, and has contributed to the screenplays of such noteworthy films as *Blow Up* and *Nicholas and Alexandra*. Furthermore, awards and citations of excellence have been given to such plays as *Saved*, *Narrow Road to the Deep North*, *Lear*, *Bingo* and *The Fool*--not only in England, but also in Europe and the United States. Clearly, Bond has risen from his early status as a radical, fringe-theatre writer to his current acceptance as a major playwright who has made a significant contribution to modern drama.

Because Bond's plays probe norms and values in provocative and disturbing ways, he has often been compared to such contemporary British playwrights as Pinter, Brenton, Osborne, and Arden, who frequently use violence in their writing. Bond's use of cruelty, ugliness, and violence in his art is the focus of this study; more specifically, my analysis explores the nature and function of the grotesque in Bond's plays.

Although no studies have specifically considered the concept of the grotesque in Bond's plays, many have examined the nature of the grotesque in literature, and several have
analyzed Bond's works. Wolfgang Kayser's *The Grotesque in Art and Literature* (1963) brings attention to the grotesque as a significant literary phenomenon. In addition, Lee Byron Jenning's extensive examination of the grotesque in his article, "The Ludicrous Demon" (University of California Publications in Modern Philology 1963) and Michael Steig's essay, "Defining the Grotesque: An Attempt at Synthesis" (1970) have explored the psychological mechanisms at work in audience response to the grotesque. Philip Thomson's *The Grotesque: The Critical Idiom* (1972) further clarifies the nature of the concept by comparing and contrasting it to similar concepts such as satire and irony. While most of these studies utilize examples from specific literary works in discussing the grotesque, few apply their remarks to drama, and those who do (such as Kayser) confine themselves to the absurdist drama of the 1960's and early 1970's. These works, along with other pertinent studies, will be mentioned in more detail in the next chapter.

Coult covers *The Fool* (1975), *We Come to the River* (1976), *A-A-America*! (1976) and "Stone" (1976). The most complete critical study is *Bond: A Study of His Plays*, by Malcolm Hay and Philip Roberts, published in 1980. This book provides criticism of all the plays covered by the previous works; moreover, it examines *The Bundle* (1978) and *The Woman* (1978). Hay and Roberts have also published *Edward Bond: A Companion to the Plays* (1978), which provides helpful and concise biographical and critical material pertaining to Bond and his plays. Although all of these authors comment upon Bond's use of violence and its relationship to his social and political philosophy, none has specifically analyzed what psychological and aesthetic mechanisms are at work which create the disturbing and powerful effects which are integral to Bond's dramaturgy.

This study will first establish an understanding of the nature of the grotesque by examining relevant historical developments and critical analyses. From this examination a definition of the concept for the purposes of this study will be formulated. Using this definition, the examination will endeavor to determine how the grotesque functions in the play to support or reflect Bond's dramatic statement. Questions concerning the validity of the grotesque as a predictor of shifts or alterations in audience and playwright's norms or values will also be probed.

Although the attempt to categorize a living playwright's work is necessarily arbitrary, critic Ruby Cohn suggests
three classifications for Bond's plays which will be used for the purposes of this analysis. First, she groups plays together which on the surface are realistic in style. These include *The Pope's Wedding*, *Saved*, *The Sea*, and *The Worlds*. Second, there are the plays which deal with invented or embellished history, such as *Early Morning*, "Black Mass," Bingo, *The Fool*, A-A-America!, "Stone," and *Restoration*. In the third category are those plays which Cohn terms war parables: *Narrow Road to the Deep North*, "Passion," *Lear*, *We Come to the River*, *The Bundle*, and *The Woman*. Of course, many plays do not rigidly belong entirely to one category; *Lear*, for example, can also be said to deal with invented history. However, this categorization will be helpful in tracing evolutions in form and the use of the grotesque when it is utilized in roughly the same style of play.
INTRODUCTION ENDNOTES


3 Ibid., p. 5.

4 Ibid., p. 4.


6 "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence," p. 5.

7 Ibid.


10 Ibid.


12 Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 8.


16 Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 15.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., p. 17.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid., p. 24.
CHAPTER I: THE CONCEPT OF THE GROTESQUE

The term "grotesque" has been in use since the fifteenth century, when the grottes, or chambers of Roman buildings were excavated. Fanciful murals combining human and animal motifs with foliage and floral designs decorated the grottes. From this period until late in the seventeenth century, the word "grotesque" referred only to artwork imitating these murals. Since the eighteenth century, however, the grotesque has figured significantly in literature as well as other art forms. As conceptions of truth and reality change, perceptions of the meaning and value of the grotesque have also altered. In the eighteenth century the term came to mean something ridiculous, distorted or unnatural—an absurdity in nature. The grotesque, therefore, had a negative connotation, since it deviated from the neo-classical standards of order, beauty, and reason. Frances Barasch points out, however, that one of the most popular forms of the age was the burlesque, which was marked by such grotesque elements as incongruity, exaggeration, and deformity. The grotesque comic forms gained wider acceptance as the century progressed. By 1761 in Harlequin: or a Defense of Grotesque Comic Performance, the German theorist Justus Moeser conceded that the taste for the grotesque was inherent in human nature and
had a definite moral function in exposing vice, and thus he opened the way for a wider acceptance of the concept. Nevertheless, most eighteenth century theorists accepted the grotesque only when it was used in lower comic forms such as burlesque, caricature, comic opera, or farce.3

In the early nineteenth century the grotesque began to be acknowledged as a valid method of representing man's dual nature. In 1827 Victor Hugo maintained that since Christianity stresses both man's spiritual and material essence, then art must necessarily embody the beautiful and the ugly. "In modern creations," Hugo contends, "the grotesque plays an enormous part. It is to be found everywhere; on the one hand it creates the deformed and the horrible; on the other hand, the comic, the buffoon."4 Therefore Hugo believes that the grotesque consists of both fearful and comic elements; the sublime is the soul "purified by Christian morality,"5 while the grotesque consists of baser human instincts characterized by that which is "ridiculous, ugly, inferior mentally or physically."6 Furthermore, the grotesque helps to heighten the beautiful through a variety of contrasts.7 Thus, to Hugo the grotesque functions primarily to define and delineate Christian values by depicting that which deviates from absolute standards of beauty and perfection.

The nineteenth century aesthetic philosopher John Ruskin presents a corresponding view of the grotesque. In The Stones of Venice (1851-53) he recognizes that the grotesque has both sportive and terrible aspects.8 Like Hugo, Ruskin
believes that the grotesque arises from the very essence of human nature, which prevents man from ever fully grasping the truth. The terrible merges with the beautiful in art because man "knows that hell is burning on;" his fear of sin and death exists alongside his love of God, and both need an outlet through artistic expression. Ruskin and Hugo help to delineate the change in the perspective on the grotesque that arose in the first half of the nineteenth century. Instead of regarding the term unfavorably, the Romantic theorists which Hugo and Ruskin represent looked upon the grotesque as an essential artistic expression of man's nature, the use of which provides variety and contrast to the art work.

In the twentieth century, however, the grotesque becomes an increasingly pervasive force in drama, and modern theorists have subsequently narrowed the concept and have analyzed its components to determine how it operates on the spectator. Thus, an understanding of the function and manifestation of the grotesque is necessary in order to develop an approach to studying its use in Bond's plays.

Contemporary critics agree with the Romantic theorists upon what they consider to be the most basic function of the grotesque; namely, that the use of the grotesque in literature serves to shock the audience into a recognition of the arbitrary nature of reality. Philip Thomson asserts that the grotesque functions to make the audience see the real world "from a fresh perspective which, though it be a
strange and disturbing one, is nevertheless valid and realistic." Just as the nineteenth century philosophers looked upon the use of the grotesque as a way of indicating a transcendental reality, modern theorists also recognize the ability of the grotesque to point the way to different standards or norms. For example, William Van O'Conner maintains, "The grotesque, as a genre or a form of modern literature, simultaneously confronts the anti-poetic and the ugly and presents them, when viewed out of the side of the eye, as the closest we can come to the sublime. The grotesque affronts our sense of established order and satisfies, or partly satisfies, our need for at least a tentative, a more flexible ordering." Consequently, the presence of the grotesque signals the reader or the audience to examine more closely the established order of the reality presented in the art work and hence to question existent norms and standards. In her analysis of the grotesque in the novels of Charles Dickens, for example, Nancy Hill concludes that the author habitually uses the grotesque as a means of raising the consciousness of his readers: "Because it establishes a mood of tension and imbalance, grotesque art can be profoundly disquieting and can be used by the serious artist as a means of awakening his readers to social concerns." Other theorists point out that in its broadest sense, the grotesque is more than a protest against a social order, but it indicates, as O'Connor asserts, an underlying "cosmic pointlessness." Wolfgang Kayser, who wrote one of the
first contemporary works to give serious attention to the
grotesque, agrees with O'Connor that the "grotesque is not
concerned with individual actions or the destruction of the
moral order (although both factors may be partly involved).
It is primarily the expression of our failure to orient
ourselves in the physical universe." To Kayser the gro­
tesque is the Estranged World, the sudden appearance of
which disrupts norms or standards. Thus the grotesque is
a cosmic, unexplainable invading force; to explain it would
weaken it, Kayser maintains. Kayser's definition of the
concept allies itself closely with the absurdist movement
of the mid-twentieth century. It is not surprising, there­
fore, that a playwright often associated with absurdism,
Friedrich Duerrenmatt, forms a similar opinion of the phe­
nomenon. The grotesque to Duerrenmatt is "only a way of
expressing in a tangible manner, of making us perceive
physically the paradoxical, the form of the unformed, the
face of a world without a face." The artist uses the gro­
tesque as an attempt to give imaginative expression and
structure to that which is unknowable; as Lily Bess Campbell
notes, it is an attempt "to grasp the incomprehensible." In the same way, Frances Barasch maintains that "the artists
of different ages, instinctively or consciously, expressed
in fantasies of mixed humor and fear, the common perception
that the total human experience is beyond logical ordering."  

The stress upon the metaphysical and often ambiguous
nature of the concept has dissatisfied other critics, who
have turned instead to a more psychologically-oriented analysis of the grotesque. Philologist Lee Byron Jennings examines the imaginative and artistic impulses which give rise to the grotesque. The emotions of fear and humor which are inherent in the concept must, he states, "have a point of contact deep within the mind, a point at which they interact to form peculiarly distorted images." The grotesque, then, is often the focal point "for everything that the author fears and abhors, the opposite of all he holds up as ideal." To Jennings the impulse to create the grotesque is unconscious, although the author may possess conscious motives which closely match the inner mechanism producing the grotesque.

Michael Steig, like Jennings, prefers to examine the psychological aspects of the grotesque, although Steig focuses upon audience reception of the grotesque rather than upon the author's mental processes. Like most theorists, Steig recognizes the dual elements of humor and fear which are integral to the emotional response to the grotesque. The fear is a product of repressed infantile wishes and desires, since the grotesque may induce aggressive or sexual impulses or life-threatening situations. The comic element counteracts this fear to some degree by rendering the fearful object ludicrous, but Steig adds that the degree of distortion needed to achieve the ludicrous may itself contribute to the sinister effect. Summarizing the basic effects of the grotesque, Steig asserts that
the dual emotional responses of laughter and fear "return us to childhood—the one attempts a liberation from fear, while the other attempts a liberation from inhibition." 27

Although these theorists differ to some degree in their perceptions of how the grotesque operates, they all regard it as serving a serious purpose in literature. Some critics like Kayser and O'Connor may regard the grotesque as primarily an expression of cosmic absurdity or alienation, while others like Steig or Jennings prefer to view it as a reflection of psychological impulses within the artist and/or audience. Whatever its source, the grotesque seeks to upset norms and standards and thus to call them into question.

Any discussion of the function of the grotesque is incomplete without looking at the specific nature and manifestation of that which can be called grotesque. Because of its didactic function, the grotesque can be closely aligned with satire; however, most analyses point out that its key effect is emotional rather than intellectual. For example, Steig asserts that "whatever the theoretical difficulties with what Monroe Beardsley calls 'affective' definitions, such an approach appears unavoidable with the grotesque." 28 Kayser also emphasizes that the grotesque "is experienced only in the act of reception;" 29 the grotesque therefore develops as a reaction against the stress on classical, objective artwork and focuses instead on art which is based to a large degree upon emotional response. 30 Thus the
grotesque is mostly irrational or even anti-rational in its effect.

A study of the composition of the grotesque helps to reveal how it works to elicit an emotional response. The grotesque has a definite structure, a concrete manifestation. Furthermore, this manifestation contains a juxtaposition of contrasting elements which results in a disturbing tension. Thomson, for instance, defines the grotesque as "the unresolved clash of incompatibles in work and response." Gerhard Mensching in *Das Groteske im Modernen Drama* forms a similar definition, stating that the main characteristic of the grotesque is the merging or crossing of two opposite levels of representation "without offering the reader the possibility of finding his bearings." Most theorists have identified the conflicting elements or responses as the comic and the fearful. One element may predominate over the other, but neither can take over entirely. Jennings contends that the fear arises when an object or situation disrupts the observer's standards or principles, and the ludicrous aspect functions as a disarming mechanism that helps to distance the spectator from the fearful element and consequently which restores a balance in the emotions.

Steig maintains that the defense mechanism which Jennings describes can operate even in an almost totally fearsome or totally comic figure. In the former the alien quality can enhance the observer's anxiety, yet the audience's
awareness of the distortion removes some of the threat from the grotesque figure by depriving it of its humanity and turning the figure into an object. Jennings notes that the detachment from the fear-provoking object is also partially achieved in the act of artistic contemplation and hence in awareness of the work as an artistic creation. In almost totally comic figures some fear may be provoked if the character is associated with taboo vices such as licentiousness or narcissism, but the guilt the audience experiences at identifying with this behavior is alleviated to a degree by making the figure appear ridiculous.

If the grotesque is in part achieved from the juxtaposition of incongruous elements which induce fear and amusement, the element of distortion or exaggeration can help strengthen these emotions. States of reality are violated so that the grotesque occurs in a suddenly chaotic world. Categories dissolve, as Kayser describes, in "the fusion of realms which we know to be separated, the abolition of the law of statics, the loss of identity, the distortion of 'natural' size and shape, the suspension of the category of objects, the destruction of personality, and the fragmentation of the historical order." Human figures which turn grotesque must still retain a recognizably human basis, but the recognition only adds to the feelings of horror and amusement. As Thomson observes, "Mirth at something which fails to conform to accepted standards and norms gives way to fear (and anger) when these norms are seen to
be seriously threatened or attacked."

The grotesque, then, involves a combination of several characteristics: it is a concrete, visual phenomenon which creates a disturbing emotional effect of fear and amusement through a fusion or juxtaposition of incongruous elements. This incongruity involves a distortion or exaggeration of something with a recognizably human basis. The spectator thus experiences fear when he perceives that accepted norms are suddenly and unexplainably inverted; at the same time, the distortion engenders amusement as the observer seeks detachment from fear. However, he can never achieve total equilibrium, for the grotesque effect depends upon an unresolved tension of opposites. As Fritz Gysin points out, the grotesque is a transitional phenomenon which does not simply alternate between categories, but belongs to each simultaneously.

A brief comparison of the grotesque to similar literary devices or modes might further clarify and differentiate the concept. It has already been mentioned that the grotesque differs from satire because it is aimed primarily at the emotions rather than the intellect. Thomson notes in addition that often satire depends upon an alternation in responses, whereas the grotesque aims at producing a simultaneous response: "Normally in satire there is an alternation or at least a distinction, between the ludicrous smallness which excites derisive laughter and the gross evil which arouses anger. The grotesque writer would
present ludicrous smallness and gross evil as being one, indistinguishable. Furthermore, in satire norms are often inverted as in the grotesque in order to attack them, but the satirist usually makes it evident that there are existent standards to which he wishes a return. The author of the grotesque, on the other hand, seeks an emotional disharmony that precludes the objectivity needed to perceive the author's moral stance. Nevertheless, theorists acknowledge that the grotesque is a useful tool of the satirist; it can be used to add the emotional punch that embellishes the satiric intent. Modes related to satire, such as irony, parody, and caricature, turn grotesque when they achieve a certain radicality in both content and form. This radicality turns a conventional form into something problematic for the audience; again, as Alfred D. White maintains, the grotesque is useful as a literary device which enhances satire, irony, and caricature.

Critics have often compared the grotesque to the absurd; indeed, Kayser believes that the grotesque is the expression of the absurd. However, Thomson emphasizes that the grotesque possesses a concrete form or manifestation, whereas the absurd "can only be perceived as content, as a quality, a feeling or atmosphere, an attitude or world view. The formal means of presenting it are many and varied." Although the grotesque can be found in tragi-comedy, again it differs in form. As in satire, tragi-comedy tends to alternate between two modes (of tragedy and comedy)
rather than producing a fusion of the two. Karl S. Guthke, in *Modern Tragicomedy*, coins the term grotesque-absurd to refer to an aesthetic category in which the terrible aspect of the grotesque predominates over the comic and in which the world is presented as weirdly distorted; Guthke asserts that tragi-comedy takes place in a more realistic world. Frances Barasch points out, however, that this description is not definitive, for some plays such as *Peer Gynt* and *King Lear* do not fall easily into the categories of either tragi-comedy or the grotesque-absurd. Again, the problem of categorization might best be solved by viewing the grotesque as an element that can occur within the tragi-comedy to create a certain emotional effect.

Finally, the grotesque can be distinguished from fantasy. Freud's concept of the uncanny is similar in many ways to the grotesque and its relationship to the fantastic. The uncanny occurs when borderlines blur between reality and the imaginary. The imaginary becomes real "when a symbol takes over the full functions of the thing it symbolizes." The uncanny often takes symbolic form; as Jennings suggests, the grotesque is often a concrete manifestation of the author's internal anxieties and fears. Although the grotesque can be a transitional element between the real and fantastic, as Thomson asserts, the grotesque has a realistic basis and cannot occur in a totally fantastic world. In pure fantasy the audience remains undisturbed by the bizarre, for it accepts the strange as part of the unreal world.
established in the art work; on the other hand, the dis-turbing effect generated by the grotesque depends upon the unexpected intrusion of the abnormal into a realistically-based environment. The grotesque effect hinges upon reversals of norms and standards that are inherent in the audience's perspective of reality.

The grotesque often manifests itself in the form of figures, objects, and situations. These categories are not discrete and often combinations of these occur. As Gysin indicates, a grotesque figure may or may not derive from a grotesque situation, but a grotesque object usually results from the grotesque situation. The grotesque figure is that whose humanity is undermined through deformity or distortion. Gysin provides specific details, noting traits such as "the discordance of body and soul (or mind), incoherent behavior, the assumption of extraneous traits from the animal, vegetable, mineral, or mechanical domain or from the domain of death, or because of a combination of these features." Motion is also an important aspect of the grotesque figure, object, or situation. Jennings believes that the emotional disturbance the spectator experiences is in part triggered by his viewing of the actual disintegration and transformation of the figure into a grotesque. Jennings adds that the grotesque figure may multiply, giving the impression that "nature has not only shown a random deviation from its customary norms but has actually begun to abandon them and to bring forth,
instead, a succession of monstrosities."\(^{53}\)

A grotesque character or figure may come close to turning into a grotesque object. Kayser lists some characteristic subjects or objects of grotesque art: "nocturnal or fearsome animals, jungle-type foliage, inorganic machines (fused with the inorganic often), human beings transposed into puppets, robots, macabre masks."\(^{54}\)

The intermingling of grotesque figures and objects often produces the grotesque situation. Gysin defines the latter as a "state of affairs in which the incongruity of various factors evokes a concrete image of an estranged world."\(^{55}\) In the same way Jennings notes, "There must be a basic incongruity inherent in the structure of the concrete world presented to us in the scene--an incongruity that defies further analysis and engages our attention in its own right."\(^{56}\) Gysin again provides specific examples, such as violation of natural laws or space and time, cause and effect, presence of incompatible juxtaposition of elements and figures.\(^{57}\) Distortion, alienation, and animation are three common traits that Gysin notes of grotesque objects, figures, and situations.\(^{58}\)

In studying Bond's plays, an examination of manifestations of the grotesque will aid in analyzing how the emotional effects of fear and amusement are activated. These manifestations will then be put into perspective with the rest of the work to determine what specific part they play in its dramatic effect. This analysis ought to help
delineate norms or standards that Bond seeks to challenge; thus this examination can contribute to our knowledge of the artistic and imaginative vision at work in Bond's plays.
ENDNOTES: CHAPTER ONE


2 Ibid., p. 95.

3 Ibid., p. 96.


5 Ibid., p. 687.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.


9 Ibid., p. 153.

10 Ibid., p. 142.

11 Ibid., p. 137.


17 Ibid., p. 184.
18 Ibid., p. 187.
21 Barasch, p. 164.
23 Ibid., p. 24.
26 Ibid., p. 256.
27 Ibid., p. 260.
28 Steig, p. 253.
29 Kayser, p. 181.
30 Ibid.
31 Thomson, p. 27.
33 Jennings, pp. 11-12.
34 Steig, p. 258.
35 Jennings, p. 12.
36 Steig, p. 259.
37 Kayser, p. 185.
38 Thomson, p. 24.
40 Thomson, p. 42.
41 Ibid., p. 28.
43 Thomason, pp. 31-32.
44 Ibid., p. 63.
45 Quoted in Barasch, p. 149.
46 Quoted in Barasch, pp. 161-162.
47 Ibid.
49 Thomason, p. 23.
50 Gysin, p. 29.
51 Ibid.
52 Jennings, p. 19.
53 Ibid., p. 20.
54 Kayser, pp. 182-184.
55 Gysin, p. 30.
56 Jennings, p. 21.
57 Gysin, p. 30.
58 Ibid., p. 27.
CHAPTER 2: THE PLAYS OF SURFACE REALISM:
The Pope's Wedding, Saved, The Sea, and The Worlds

The four plays which most nearly fall into a realistic style are The Pope's Wedding (1962), Saved (1965), The Sea (1973), and The Worlds (1979). The term "surface" realism is used because although the characters and their environments may at first appear to represent an atmosphere of everyday life and manner, events occur which challenge the viewer's acceptance of what is "normal." The grotesque is a vital factor in evoking this challenge, for its appearance usually contains distortion that overcomes the bounds of strict naturalism. Bond confirms that he wants to discourage a production too cluttered with realistic detail because "I . . . want to concentrate on certain things--not just verbal things, but also on certain objects." Within the framework of realism Bond uses the grotesque sparingly, yet with often powerful effect. In each play at least one grotesque figure appears, and in each at least one scene is predominantly grotesque.

Bond's first produced play, The Pope's Wedding, centers around the growing fascination of a young lower-class worker, Scopey, with a derelict hermit, Alen. This fascination finally becomes an obsession that culminates in the murder
of the old man. A series of short scenes juxtaposes two apparently contrasting existences: the everyday marital and social life of Scopey, his wife, and his friends; and the shabby, isolated existence of the hermit. Significantly, the two individuals who represent each standard are also characters who possess or grow to possess the most notable grotesque characteristics. This possession or development of the grotesque signals the presence of norms, values, and standards which are mutable or questionable in some way; therefore, it is important to examine the nature of the society which Bond depicts.

The lives which Scopey and his friends lead revolve around attempts to alleviate their monotonous work and social existences. The little spending money they have is spent on beer, cigarettes, and women. They release the tension of boredom and sexual frustration in violent horse-play and coarse jests. For example, the first scene opens as Bill, one of the dominant members of the gang, forces Scopey's head under his armpit and simultaneously pummels Scopey's backside with his fists in an apparent attempt to punish Scopey for failing to lend him some money. The remainder of the scene establishes the gang's rituals—lewd boasts about sexual prowess, attempts to cadge cigarettes, and complaints about the boss' tyrannies. At this point there is little to differentiate Scopey from the rest of the young men; he also participates in the casual violence and engages in the rude sexual banter. But he becomes
their hero when, as a last-minute substitute in the big cricket match, he scores the winning point. Since in the gang's value system athletic ability is practically synonymous with sexual prowess, it is fitting that Scopey, who was Bill's substitute in the match, wins Bill's girl, whom he later marries. Admiring his heroic appearance, she coos, "You look beautiful all in white." The significance of surface appearance and its relationship to internal reality develops into a central theme in the play. Bond maintains that the "important thing is not to be intrigued or puzzled by images, but always to understand them. So that what I wanted to do was to try and get inside the image, and see what it was all about. That is what Scopey does in the play, and in the end he kills a man and wears his clothes in order to find out. And of course there's nothing there."3

Although he shares the values of his class, Scopey possesses a certain type of inquisitiveness and a willingness to explore his world that distinguishes his outlook from the attitude of dull acceptance which his friends possess. His victory, for instance, came not from luck, but from long hours of practice. As his friends surmise, "They reckon 'e's been out trainin' on the common early mornin's for months. . . . 'E must a been countin' on gettin' in the team some time" (p. 256). In the same way, when his girlfriend Pat and her friend June show him a postcard of a distant town, and June pronounces the place
as "nice," Scopey evinces an unwillingness to accept the surface appearance as definitive. He replies, "Yoo can't tell. . . . Yoo need more than that. Yoo'd 'ave t' see more" (p. 265). Yet he remains drawn to the image, despite his skepticism; he adds, "I'd like a stick postcards all over the room" (p. 265).

These qualities of curiosity and endeavor lead Scopey into his encounters with Alen, the old man for whom Scopey's wife shops and cleans. If Scopey represents values of the larger society to which he belongs, then Alen's isolation indicates a rejection of those norms. Bond endows Alen with several grotesque traits. Most important is his alienation from the rest of the townspeople, who regard him with a mixture of scorn and fear--reactions that indicate their perception of him as a grotesque figure. For instance, one of Scopey's pals blames Alen for the gang's bad luck when their boss refuses to let Bill play in the cricket match. He maintains, "I reckon owd Alen's put 'is curse on us. . . . Our owd telly broke down last Wednesday an' the owd man reckon that's count a 'e cursed us on mum tellin' all the village about Sarah Neat's baby" (p. 243). Similarly, after the team's victory, one of the boys wants to celebrate by "turn[ing] owd Alen's dump over" (p. 256). The others agree, calling Alen a "dirty owd diddy boy" (p. 256), and another wants to "smash 'is 'ead in" (p. 256). Alen figures in their eyes as an almost mystical avenger and scapegoat. They give no reasons for their hatred, nor do they even
speculate about the origin of Alen's isolation; it is enough
that he is removed from their way of life.

Alen's actual appearance partially reinforces and par-
tially demolishes the image that the villagers have helped
to establish. He lives in a filthy bare hut made of cor-
rugated iron; stacks of newspapers are scattered through the
room. The unnatural condition of the old man's environment
is a visual indice of his unusual life. Furthermore, the
first scene in which Alen appears emphasizes the aberrant,
mechanical movement that is characteristic of the grotesque.
Bond writes the scene entirely in stage directions which
depict Alen's ritual of waiting for Scopey's wife to come
with provisions: "He stands by the door. He is rigid. He
listens. He goes to the table. . . . He takes a paper from
the floor. He goes to the wall and places the paper on the
stack. . . . He slowly withdraws into himself" (p. 244).
When Pat appears, he is childishly stubborn and nervously
insistent that someone is prowling outside. His fear is so
intense that "he is shaken with convulsions. His throat
rattles. He panics" (p. 260) when Scopey intrudes, and he
hides behind the bed like a child to avoid detection. These
details of his behavior underline the image of a diminished
human being, clinging to a ramshackle life in a decaying
mind and body. He sums up his complaints himself: "Dirty
owd diddies, scratchin' be me door, no decent vittels, no
milk, an' all me own cookin' a cope with an' I 'ont 'ardly
got the grip in 'ands a gimp howd on a knife count a me
cripplin'" (p. 259). Alen's behavior helps to engender the pathos and humor that are part of the audience's response to the grotesque.

The developing relationship between Scopey and Alen is an important focal point in the play, and Bond himself notes that he often establishes a destructive relationship between polar characters. The conflict is important "because they all involve the other in death. The development of the plays can be seen most clearly in the developing situation between these pairs." To Alen Scopey represents the outside world, a world which Alen fears because it has rejected him. Conversely, to Scopey Alen is an enigma, a mysterious figure reputed to possess almost supranormal abilities, such as the casting of spells. The dichotomy between Alen's shadowy background and his present ramshackle existence intrigues the youth. Bond contends that he specifically wishes to dramatize the often ironic discrepancy between legend and fact: "Why is it that people change very often into a sort of dramatic opposite of themselves? You see someone who is very old, and they tell you about their youth, and you think, well, how could you have done all those things and now become this? And what the idea was, was to see how something could go so drastically wrong." 5

As Scopey and Alen interact, the difference between them lessens. The grotesque increasingly manifests itself as their interaction continues; its presence indicates a disruption and confusion in the standards each character
represents. Scopey's early confrontations with the hermit, although not grotesque in themselves, nevertheless demonstrate his growing fascination with Alen's nature and lifestyle, while foreshadowing the violence which culminates in the final grotesque scenes.

Scopey first visits Alen ostensibly to retrieve Pat's handbag, but his curiosity becomes evident as he insistently questions and comments upon Alen's environment: "What's the paper for? That your work? . . . What's this for? (Touches a box with his boot). What's this? (He taps the couch with his boot). You ought to keep a dog. . . . Can you lock up all right?" (p. 268). The alien surroundings are grotesque to Scopey because of their very strangeness; the grotesque components of absurdity and fear begin to disquiet Scopey. Consequently, commonplace objects like a box or a sofa transform into something unnatural. Unconsciously struggling to resolve the tension between repugnance and attraction which Alen's grotesque environment evokes, Scopey takes refuge in the brashly insolent behavior of the gang member. Nervous that Alen will tell his wife about his visit, Scopey half threatens and half pleads with the hermit, "Oi, you tellin' 'er I been 'ere? . . . Don't. All right? Doo it'll get a me an I'll want a know why mate. I 'ont never been out 'ere 'an yoo 'ont seen nothin' of me" (p. 268). The young man's hostility again emanates from his anxiety that any undue attention to the old hermit might tarnish his image with his friends; he attempts to counteract his curiosity and concern
with a toughness that he believes is more befitting his reputation in the town.

Nevertheless Scopey fails to overcome his desire to investigate the old man's identity. The reason for his attraction at this point in the plot is only suggested, but it is evident that Scopey begins to detach himself from the machismo identity that he must assume in the outside society. He takes over the cleaning duties from Pat, for instance, and his reactions to Alen are at times maternal and even filial. As Scopey prepares food and sweeps, he scolds and cajoles Alen in a motherly fashion and even feeds him by hand as though feeding a child. Thus Scopey feels free to act outside of the strictly masculine role that he must fulfill in his own society. More significantly, Scopey begins to evince his desire to share or to assume some of Alen's identity when he introduces the idea that Alen might be Pat's father: "They say yoo run after Pat's mum one time. But even Pat don't know the truth a that. . . . I wouldn't put it past yoo t'be 'er dad. . . . We could be in the same family. . . . Ha, yoo could be my dad-in-law" (p. 279). By demonstrating Scopey's desire to assume different kinds of roles than he possesses in his everyday life, Bond lays fertile ground for the grotesque, the effect of which depends upon the unexpected transitions in established norms and relationships. Furthermore, as Scopey is progressively drawn into Alen's world, his standing in the larger social world becomes increasingly precarious. For instance,
Scopey spends most of his work and leisure time in visits to the hermit, and because Pat suspects he is seeing another woman, she resumes her relationship with her old boyfriend. Finally, Scopey loses his job because of his repeated absences from work to visit Alen.

The pivotal scene that triggers the final grotesque situation further traces the shift in identities between Alen and Scopey. The two are now on compatible and even friendly terms, and the taciturn Alen finally begins to answer some of Scopey's questions about his past, a past that the young man has endowed in his imagination with romance and adventure. For instance, Scopey has discovered a faded photograph of a woman, and in his desire to delve beneath the surface, he avidly inquires about the hermit's relationship with her. Alen, however, replies that he merely bought the photograph at a junk shop and thus does not know who she is. But Scopey's interest begins to activate Alen's, who admits, "I used a keep interestin' things. Anythin' interestin'. I'd like a see 'em myself if yoo ferret 'em out" (p. 288). Finally, in an important symbolic gesture, Alen gives Scopey one of his most prized possessions, a duplicate of the old great army coat which Alen himself always wears. Scopey regards the coat as a token of the almost mystical qualities which he subconsciously believes Alen possesses. When he tries on the coat he asks, "Doo it make me look bigger, doo it? . . . I feel bigger" (p. 289). However, Pat interrupts with a
knock; Scopey mirrors Alen's earlier action by hiding behind the bed to avoid detection.

Pat's intrusion disrupts the merging of the two identities, for it reminds them of the old relationships and roles that the outside society demands they fulfill. For instance, Pat reminds Scopey of his husbandly failures when she voices her suspicions that he is cheating on her and also hints that she has her own lover waiting outside. The men engage in an implicit sexual rivalry as well, for Pat's visit makes Alen want to resume his previous dependent relationship with her. "I like gals... When she comin' back?" (p. 294), he returns when Scopey jealously accuses, "Yoo was glad a see 'er" (p. 293).

Angered and humiliated that Alen rejects his friendship, Scopey attacks the myths surrounding the hermit's past:
"In the war they reckon yoo was flashin' secrets a the jerries with a Woolworth's torch. Yoo couldn't even light a cigarette... I thought yoo 'ad them papers for keepin'. All yoo want 'em for's t'stare outside... Yoo're at that crack all day!... It all goos on outside an' yoo just watch!" (p. 294). Finally, Scopey in effect asks Alen to justify his existence. "What yoo 'ere for?" (p. 296), he taunts, which forces Alen to admit, "I forget. My mum 'an dad moved all over. We always stopped just outside places. We were the last 'ouse in the village... I never stopped gooin' after people. They stopped gooin' after me" (p. 296). This final admission explodes Scopey's illusions about Alen;
far from being inviolately aloof from social mores, Alen is really a pathetic outcast who wants to join in society but is refused that admittance. In beginning to realize the hollowness of his beliefs, Scopey must reevaluate his own behavior and his relationships.

These scenes are important, then, in establishing and juxtaposing the apparently antithetical norms represented by Alen and the villagers. Vaguely dissatisfied with the superficial values and attitudes of his wife and friends, Scopey instinctively turns to one who lives outside of that society, only to discover that Alen too is trapped into playing a socially-prescribed role. In his turn, Alen finds in Scopey some of the acceptance which has been denied him all his life; ironically, each imposes a false identity upon the other, and when this identity crumbles, nothing is left to replace it. "The truth about [Alen's] charisma," Bond emphasizes, "is that it's based on nothing."^6

A short scene involving Scopey's friends occurs after Scopey's discovery of the real reason for Alen's isolation which emphasizes the casual brutality of the youths. One girl betrays sexual excitement after watching a bloodthirsty boxing match on television, and the gang resolves to torment Alen "just for a laugh" (p. 297). The next scene occurs at Alen's hut, and the stage directions establish an eerie atmosphere in which Scopey, dressed in the great coat he has inherited from Alen, mirrors the same mechanical behavior exhibited by Alen in the old man's first appearance:
"There are seven or eight tins of food on the table. One of them has been opened. Down left there is a bundle on the floor. Scopey stands up right on the pile of papers. . . . He steps down and picks up the broom. He sweeps. . . . He looks up--his head is held stiff. He listens. Pause. He drops his head to just below the normal position, pulling his neck into his shoulders, his chin horizontal. He shivers" (p. 299). As Scopey's friends arrive, shouting obscene taunts and throwing rocks at the hut, Scopey sits motionless. Alen is nowhere to be seen.

The scene is grotesque in nature, and Scopey himself takes on grotesque traits. The young man's seemingly mindless and irrational activity, which replicates Alen's, combined with his wearing of similar clothing, creates a disturbing atmosphere that is further strengthened by Alen's absence. Bond's refusal to show directly what happened to the old man and his implications that something unsettling did happen, adds to the tension necessary for the occurrence of the grotesque effect. In addition to the disturbance created by incongruous behavior, the scene also contains the ludicrous; the gang's coarse jests provide an undercurrent of black humor, and Scopey's robotlike actions also suggest a link with the comic. With the grotesque the same actions which create fear can also arouse humor.

After this scene, Bond interjects an episode involving Scopey, his wife, and her current lover, Bill. As the latter two prepare to go to a pub, Pat accuses Scopey of holding
back her allowance and failing to provide her with enough money to look after Alen. To add to his humiliation, his rival Bill lends her the money. Scopey aimlessly roams around the house after they leave, then exits, presumably to return to Alen's hut. This scene highlights Scopey's inability to return to his former position in the community. Jobless, friendless, and now wifeless, he feels impelled to return to the only environment left to him.

The final scene contains fewer than twenty lines, yet its impact is the strongest because of its grotesque element. In the opening description objects multiply to create the disturbing atmosphere that is the mark of the grotesque: "Scopey sits down stage slightly left on a box. He wears his greatcoat. There are five hundred tins of food on the table and floor. They are heaped round Scopey and the bundle down left. Only five of the tins have been opened" (p. 307). Pat enters and asks Scopey where the "owd boy" is. She goes to the "bundle" and discovers Alen's decayed corpse, invisible to the audience. Bond suggests the full horror of the scene with a minimum of dialogue:

SCOPEY: I 'oisted the flap a month back. 'Is 'ead's like a fish.

PAT: 'E's dead.

SCOPEY: All silver scales.

PAT: Why 'ent yoo come?

SCOPEY: I took one 'and on 'is throat and one 'eld 'im up be the 'air.

PAT: Why?
SCOPEY: One 'and.

PAT: That's 'is coat.

SCOPEY: I stole it.

PAT: They'll 'ang you.

SCOPEY: One be the 'air.

PAT: Stay there. I 'ont be far. (Off) Bill! Bill!

BILL: (far off) What?

PAT: (off) 'Elp! (pp. 307-308)

The horror of the situation predominates, although the very economy of the language and Scopey's fascination with the details of the strangling add an edge of macabre humor to the scene. Alen has turned into a grotesque object, a decaying corpse. Scopey himself is a fully grotesque figure, horrible and yet pathetic. He fulfills the scapegoat role more completely than Alen had ever done because he actually commits a crime, while Alen was only suspected of criminal activity.

In *The Pope's Wedding* the grotesque becomes an appropriate vehicle for expressing the disorientation and disintegration of social values. Scopey's dissolution from a vigorous youth to a vacuous automaton results from his inability to find a meaningful identity in his society. As Richard Scharine notes, "The Bond Innocent is an existential optimist, 'clutching at straws' in an attempt to preserve his humanity within an inhuman society. Although they are all destroyed or stalemated, their continuing attempts indicate, in whatever debased form, the survival of goodness
on the earth." The grotesque functions as a visual metaphor that expresses the incompatible juxtaposition of the empty, materialistic concerns of the larger society and the human desire to shape and control one's identity in that society. Scharine suggests that the play's very title indicates this fusion of disparate elements, for the wedding of a Pope is an incongruous event. However inarticulately he may express or even realize it, Scopey's willingness to explore his own nature and that of his environment separates him from the others, just as Alen has been set apart by his inability to adjust to accepted norms. Scharine suggests that Alen's murder is an existential expression of Scopey's realization that a purely isolated existence such as he thought Alen possessed can never be achieved; a man can never entirely escape from his social bonds. The grotesque embodies the paradox inherent in Scopey's final desperate action.

_Saved_, the play that launched Bond's career in the early 1960's, bears similarities to _The Pope's Wedding_ in aspects of structure, character, and theme. Its plot also centers around a young man who struggles in the face of an indifferent and even hostile background to find value in his life. Again, Bond uses the grotesque to add emotional dimension and impact to the play. The grotesque surfaces most overtly in one crucial scene, although elements appear in other scenes which foreshadow the grotesque situation.

In the society that Bond portrays, men and women tend
to regard each other as objects, with sex a commodity casually obtained and used. For instance, in the first scene Pam and Len enter the living room in order to have sexual intercourse, avoiding the bedroom because, as Pam remarks off-handedly, "Bed ain' made." As soon as they sit down, Len asks Pam her name, to which she replies, "Yer ain' arf nosey" (p. 23). But later, when he asks to stay the night, she objects, "Bligh! I only juss met yer" (p. 26). They then engage in comparisons of each other's sexual conquests. "'Ow many times yer 'ad it this week?" (p. 26), Len asks, and the questions soon turn into a series of sexual jokes, culminating in a game of double entendre in which Len and Pam eat candy while making suggestive remarks for the benefit of Pam's father, who is preparing to go to work. Clearly, to them love and sex are entirely separate and even antithetical values; Pam's reluctance to allow Len intimacy extending beyond a few hours demonstrates the spiritual poverty of her existence.

The relationship between Pam's parents, Mary and Harry, reflects this same impoverishment. They have lived together for years without speaking to each other or acknowledging each other's existence. "Ow'd it start?" (p. 34) Len asks, but Pam answers with typical apathy, "Never arst" (p. 34). Len sympathizes, "Must a' bin bloody rotten when yer was a kid" (p. 34), and Pam reveals that an older brother of her was killed by a bomb in a park, suggesting the background of personal unhappiness which haunts her family. Like
Scopey, Len persists in probing into the reasons and the causes for behavior. As he tells Pam, "I never got yer placed till I saw yer ol' people" (p. 35). As Len suggests and as Bond continually underscores in the play, a background void of cultural and emotional nourishment produces people whose behavior will reflect this deprivation.

To Bond violence is one reaction of human beings against an environment thus impoverished, and the grotesque in Saved partially derives from violent behavior, as it does in The Pope's Wedding. Saved contains several interchanges among a gang of youths which foreshadow the culmination of aggression and violence. In their first conversation, they callously discuss the accidental killing of a young boy by a member of the gang. Although the grotesque is not directly manifested in overt physical form, their description of the accident evokes and reinforces an atmosphere in which the grotesque can appear. Pete, the youth responsible for the accident, describes how it happened: "What a carry-on! 'E come runnin' round be'ind the bus. Only a nipper. Like a flash I thought right, yer nasty bastard. Only ten or twelve. I jumps right down on me revver an' bang I got 'im on me off-side an' 'e shoots right out under this lorry comin' straight on" (p. 38). The others exult in the gory details and add their own: "Crunch," "Blood all over the shop" (p. 38), they snicker, but another challenges Pete's account: "Garn! Yer never seen 'im. . . . 'It 'im before yer knew 'e was comin" (p. 38), but Pete retorts, "Think I
can't drive?" (p. 38). In this dialogue Bond describes a segment of society in which standard moral values are inverted and human life subordinate to the vicious thrills of the chase. One boy even brags about "shootin' up the yeller niggers" (p. 39) in the war. What gives further delight to these young men is that established authority lends its own stamp of approval to the boy's murder; "Accidents is legal" (p. 38), as one member puts it. "The law thanks 'im for 'is 'elp" (p. 38), another adds. In the remainder of the scene they jest and boast crudely about their sexual conquests, jokes that escalate when Len and Mary, Pam's mother, become unwitting targets for their comments. This scene sets up the attitudes which instigate the brutal and grotesque actions in the park sequence. By using grim humor and coarse yet vivid dialogue, Bond ironically compares two sets of norms which would seem to be antithetical--the values of a hooligan gang and those of a social and legal system that supposedly protects its members from the activities of the former. This episode is important in laying fertile ground for the shifts in norms that characterize the grotesque.

The scene in which the baby is killed is the most emotionally powerful in the play, and again the grotesque becomes a significant factor in triggering the impact. The action begins placidly; Len is fishing with Fred, the current object of Pam's infatuation and the purported father of her baby. Although Len still wants Pam himself, the two get along amiably, until Pam arrives pushing the baby in his
pram. Her real objective is to plead with the indifferent Fred to go out with her again; when he rejects her, she departs angrily, leaving the baby behind.

The other gang members enter, bored and eager for some outlet for their sexual energies. Discovering the baby carriage, they soon engage in violent horseplay, pushing it savagely at each other. Their attention soon focuses on the baby itself; Pete, the erstwhile child murderer, pulls the baby's hair. The others grow fascinated with the baby's helplessness, and they try to outdo each other in its harrassment. They throw its dirty diaper around, spit on it, hit it, and rub excrement in its face. Finally, they notice that Fred has remained aloof from the game; they give him a stone and urge him to throw it at the baby. He hesitates but then acquiesces, and the others join in the vicious game until they hear the bells signalling the park's closing; they then flee to avoid being locked in.

The grotesque manifests itself in objects, characters, and in the overall situation; and its effect operates on several levels. With the same callousness with which they had viewed the death of the child Pete had run over, they look upon the baby as an object rather than a fellow human being. When one warns them not to hurt the child, they reply, "Yer can't... Not at that age... Course yer can't, no feelin's. Like animals" (p. 77). To them the baby is a grotesque; they call it ugly and are both disgusted and amused by its behavior. The audience, however, can only
be shocked by the actions of the gang; the gang members
come grotesque themselves in their lack of human regard
for an innocent young life. Yet Bond wishes to indict the
audience themselves, to challenge the complacency that in-
sulates them from awareness of the social values which
instigate or contribute to inhuman behavior. Bond maintains
that while viewing Saved the audience should realize "the
nature of its society, what the nature of its problems are,
and therefore what sort of solutions are needed."11 John
Worthen agrees that Bond's use of violence evokes horror but
also prompts a secondary response of reflection or recogni-
tion. Worthen believes that the climactic stoning sequence
has been adequately set up throughout the play; therefore,
audience members who are merely repulsed rather than en-
lightened have failed to pay enough attention to the nature
of the characters and their environment.12 However, other
critics fault Bond for introducing what they believe is an
act of arbitrary and gratuitous violence which violates the
naturalistic style established in earlier scenes. The Times
reviewer called Saved "a blockishly naturalistic piece"
which "does nothing to lay bare the motives for violence
and appeals to no emotions beyond those aroused by the act
itself."13 Errol Durbach explores the metaphor of child-
murder in Bond's plays; Durback contends that the playwright
uses the motif as a symbol of society's failure to protect
its inhabitants, but Saved fails to convey the social message
to an audience because its "frame of reference remains too
narrow and its structure too limited for an adequate dramatization of the metaphor.\textsuperscript{14} John Russell Taylor agrees with Durbach that the gang scenes clash in style with the domestic family scenes,\textsuperscript{15} and adds, "Perhaps what the play needs, in fact, is not less violence but more, some sort of real sadistic kick which might urge audiences, however shamefacedly, to identify with these characters and share their emotions, instead of coolly watching the actor going through motions of violence."\textsuperscript{16} Arthur Arnold similarly maintains that the style of the previous scenes does not properly prepare for the intensity of the park scene; he states, "The difficulty with Saved is too much realism, too well done."\textsuperscript{17}

The source of critical disagreement lies in the nature and use of the grotesque. The grotesque maintains a delicate balance between horror and amusement; a tip in the direction of the former may so violate the necessary detachment provided by the latter that an audience finds it impossible to place the scene within its larger context. In The Pope's Wedding the murder occurs offstage, and the grotesque is mostly embodied in Scopey's physical disintegration; in Saved the audience actually witnesses the violent act, and the grotesque embodied in the characters and their actions thus intrudes more immediately and threateningly upon their sensibilities. Also, the targets of the violence in each play are different in the emotions they evoke. Scopey and Alen are adults who have partially contributed to their
own downfall; the baby in Saved is an innocent and hapless being. Furthermore, Scopey and Alen possess traits that the audience can view as grotesque, while the baby is a grotesque object only in the eyes of the gang. As Taylor suggests, perhaps the stoning scene needs more of the grotesque, at least in the objects of the author's attack, so that the tone does not suddenly shift to extreme pathos or even melodrama. On the other hand, the shocking nature of the action does force the viewer to attempt to confront the rationale for the scene and the motivations for the gang's behavior. While the action escalates in a rather sudden and unexpected manner, as is customary with the grotesque, Bond has established the framework for the hostility in other scenes, such as in the description of the accident victim and also in a scene wherein Pam's family indifferently ignores the baby's cries while pursuing their own petty arguments and interests. In further defense of the scene, it could be argued that an audience that reacts too extremely might in fact be backing away from their own feelings of guilt in identifying with the gang's aggressiveness; as Worthen points out, "Our reaction of horror lets us off too lightly, and isolates us in a secure sense of what is proper."\textsuperscript{18} Nevertheless, as Steig maintains in his view of the grotesque, the object needs enough distortion to allow the observer to rid himself somewhat from the anxiety provoked by the emotions of fear. A director of the scene, therefore, must endeavor to reconcile the surface realism
of the dialogue and characters with the challenge to this reality which the grotesque usually offers. Bond uses the grotesque sparingly in *Saved*; except for the park scene there is little evidence of the grotesque in the play, yet Bond remarks that the scene is crucial in setting the pattern for the remainder of the plot: "I wanted to show that violence and what you could call misdirected sex cannot be indulged in in an interlude from normal life and then forgotten; the agent is affected as well as the victim. These effects change the structure of his life in less obvious but more far-reaching ways than the effects of social exposure or punishment. They force compromise and give psychological wounds that often turn the remainder of his life into tragedy."¹⁹

Similarly, in the two early plays of Bond's career, the grotesque punctuates the discrepancy between social mores and human nature. In *The Pope's Wedding* the grotesque appears as a visual symbol of the disintegration of Scopey's personal values. In *Saved* the grotesque is centered less in an individual and becomes a product of the disharmony between societal norms that are legal and economic and values that are moral and humane.²⁰ Violence occurs often in Bond's plays, and while the grotesque is not always a direct equivalent, it is usually a by-product of violent action because of its emotionally disruptive and de-humanizing effect. Yet as Bond asserts, "Violence is a means not an end,"²¹ and therefore its appearance signals situations "in
which people are at such physical and emotional risk that their life is neither natural nor free." The grotesque appears when such a tension exists between reality and spirit. Significantly, the grotesque scenes in The Pope's Wedding occur more frequently as Scopey's illusions about Alen disintegrate; in Saved Len manages to salvage some dignity and worth in an almost hopeless situation, and the grotesque correspondingly diminishes in the later scenes.

In the "Author's Note" to Saved, Bond says of Len, "He lives with people at their worst and most hopeless . . . and does not turn away from them. I cannot imagine an optimism more tenacious, disciplined or honest than his." Produced in 1973, The Sea is the first play that Bond has labelled a comedy. Since the comic form often contains situations in which exaggeration and incongruity appear, the grotesque may occur as an element that heightens or acts as a foil to the comic. The grotesque in The Sea is associated with madness, eccentricity, and death, although its appearance is minimal. In addition, its emotional effect tips more towards the comic than the horrible, unlike The Pope's Wedding or Saved.

Bond sets the action of The Sea in a small town on the east coast of England in 1907. The opening establishes an atmosphere of chaos similar to Shakespeare's The Tempest: "Empty stage. Darkness and thunder. Wind roars, whines, crashes and screams over the water. Masses of water swell up, rattle and churn, and crash back into the sea. Gravel
and sand grind slowly. The earth trembles. Willy, a young man, shouts for help as he flounders in the sea and searches for his companion, Colin, who is lost. Along with the physical disorder, the individuals on land seem equally disturbed. The first person Willy appeals to is the drunkard Evens, who sings away oblivious of the young man’s plight. And the second man, Hatch, drives Willy back into the sea instead of helping him, crying, "I knew you were coming. We'll fight you, you filthy beast" (p. 58). These strange encounters move Willy to plead, "Are you all mad? Where am I?" (p. 58). The scene ends as he again searches desperately for his friend.

This opening sequence describes a world in which behavior is unnatural and a man risks as much or more peril from his fellow human beings than from a hostile environment. As Worthen maintains, the environment of The Sea is not the Arcadian world of Prospero's island, for "The Sea is mostly concerned with suffering and hatred, and [demonstrates] that people's humiliation and self-exposure is very hard to bear, for them and for us."25

In The Sea Bond presents a gallery of characters ranging from the normative or mildly eccentric to the lunatic. Of the last, the town's draper, Hatch, is the prime example; and his behavior most closely embodies the grotesque. Hatch leads a small group of men who believe that aliens from space are invading their town in the form of shipwrecked sailors. Bond satirizes prejudice against foreigners and
immigrants in Hatch's description of the "invaders": "Their world's threatened by disaster. If they think we're a crowd of weak fools they'll all come here. By the million. They'll take our jobs and our homes. . . . We'll be slaves working all our lives to make goods for sale on other planets" (p. 66). Believing Willy to be one of these aliens, the group Hatch leads vows to keep close watch on him; their suspicions extend even to the drowned Colin and to Evens, the cynical recluse who lives on the beach.

For much of the play Hatch's lunacy adds to the comedy and functions as an ironic counterpoint to the Victorian conventionality of townspeople such as the domineering Mrs. Rafi and the timid Mrs. Tilehouse. However, his madness turns threatening when the redoubtable Mrs. Rafi refuses to pay for some expensive material she has ordered because she has discovered Hatch refused to help Willy and Colin during the tempest. She tells him, "Certainly you haven't found your proper place in our community. It would be better if you were to close your shop and leave" (p. 80). Aware that she has threatened his whole livelihood, he pleads, "You will take the material, Mrs. Rafi? This whole shop's tied up in it. . . . I couldn't set up in the larger towns. . . . D'you want me to crawl, Mrs. Rafi?" (p. 89). Finally, Hatch breaks down entirely and turns his wrath against Willy; he contends that Mrs. Rafi fails to see that "the whole community's threatened by that swine . . . We don't let anyone land here now. They'll drown. I'll kick them
under with my boot" (p. 89). His rage and desperation mount as he tries to force Mrs. Rafi to pay for the draperies; finally, he hits her with his cutting shears and runs off. Bond sets the stage for the grotesque situation that occurs later. Hatch's final mental collapse is triggered by his inability to function in the narrowly prescribed limits of his society. As in the earlier plays, Bond's comedy turns ugly and veers toward the grotesque when a character clashes with economic and legal forces. Like the youths in The Pope's Wedding and Saved, Hatch seeks an innocent scapegoat; in this case it is Willy who provides the outlet for rage which is activated by societal pressures.

The next scene on the beach opens with the appearance of a grotesque object. The stage is empty except for the presence of Colin's distorted figure. His body is clothed but his jersey is "pulled up over the head and the arms, which are lifted up and bent at the elbows in the act of removing the jersey--so the jersey forms a hood covering the head, neck, shoulders, arms and hands. . . . The top half of the body is on the beach and the rest in the water" (p. 96). The unnatural position and appearance of the body is a gruesome reminder of the tragedy that opened the action; yet the distortion also distances the audience by diminishing the humanity of the figure. When Willy discovers the body, he wonders at the foreignness of this object, which was formerly his best friend: "How will they get you into the box? You're a corpse and they'll break your arms.
You're so helpless. They'll cut your clothes and fold you up like a dummy. What's on your face now? Is it quiet, or swollen with water, or scratched?" (p. 101).

Hatch enters, making a grotesque sound that is "high, inarticulate, sing-song, whining, mad" (p. 101). He discovers Colin's body and believes that it is Willy, lying asleep. "This is the quiet place where the sea monsters breed and play and lie in the sun" (p. 101), Hatch observes. Hatch regards Willy as a grotesque being even as his own behavior becomes increasingly abnormal. Bond here uses the grotesque in a double sense, which enriches and intensifies the emotional impact of the scene. In this way the grotesque becomes a fun house mirror, presenting weirdly distorted and multiplying images that vivify the grotesqueness of human nature when it suffers from social injustice.

Seeing his chance, Hatch frenziedly stabs the corpse, but when no blood but only water spurts from the body, he exclaims, "How do I know he's dead? . . . Cut it! Tear it! Rip it! Slash it!" (p. 101). He flees when he notices others coming and determines to watch to see if they bury the body; if they do Hatch believes it will prove that he has succeeded in killing the invader because they "can't bury something that's still alive" (p. 102).

The grotesqueness of Hatch's mad actions serves to counterpoint Willy's maturation, as he faces the reality of life and death. Earlier in the scene he has told Colin's fiancee, Rose, "If you look at life closely it is unbearable.
What people suffer, what they do to each other, how they hate themselves . . . It is all unbearable but that is where you have to find your strength. Where else is there?" (p. 100). Witnessing Hatch's behavior enables Willy to re-affirm his belief in living. Instead of reacting with hate or horror, he asks, "What does it matter? You can't hurt the dead. How can you desecrate dust? (Shrugs.) He's just dead bait for a mad man" (p. 102). Bond juxtaposes Willy's quiet strength and unflinching vision with the other characters' hysteria and hypocrisy, especially in the brilliantly comic scene which follows.

The townspeople gather on the seaside cliff to throw Colin's ashes into the ocean. In its confusion and commotion the action is mostly farcical, yet its very vitality and exaggeration connect the scene with the grotesque situation. What begins as an elaborately ceremonious funeral turns into a petty rivalry between Mrs. Rafi and the heretofore submissive Mrs. Tilehouse; the latter competes with Mrs. Rafi's hymn-singing by prolonging the psalm with an elaborate descant. While looking for her smelling salts, Mrs. Tilehouse interpolates muttered comments into Mrs. Rafi's histrionic recitation of a funeral ode. The two ladies argue, other women cry, and one faints; Hatch enters and rejoices when he believes his enemy is dead at last; the others try to catch him; and Mrs. Rafi even throws handfuls of Colin's ashes at him. Finally, Hatch sees Willy, whom he had thought dead, and breaks down at this evidence of
his failure to conquer his foe. As they take him away, Hatch cries, "I don't know if you're all ghosts or if you still have time to save yourselves. I'm out of touch. I tried to save you from your foolishness and selfishness . . . Now someone else will come and take my place and no one will help you . . . No one can help you now" (p. 110). The mood has turned from absurdity to pathos; after the others leave Mrs. Rafi urges Willy to take Rose away with him. She realizes that she herself is a victim of the society that she nominally rules. She admits, "I've always been a forceful woman. I was brought up to be. People expect my class to shout at them. . . . I'm so tired of them. I'm tired of being a side-show in their little world. Nothing else was open to me. . . . Has anything been worthwhile? No. I've thrown my life away" (p. 113). It is too late for her to transcend social class restrictions, but she wants Rose to escape a similar fate.

The reflective mood established continues into the final scene, in which Willy and Evens discuss the cycle of creation and destruction. Significantly, Evens compares the universe to a grotesque image—a "shambolling, lolloping great rat" (p. 119) which feeds on the debris of destruction and breeds new life until it becomes the rat catcher, which in turn kills the rat and starts the process of life and death over again. Yet to Evens the process is positive, because as he explains, "All destruction is finally petty and in the end life laughs at death. . . . Suffering is a universal language and everything that has a voice is human"
(p. 120). Ultimately, Evens urges Willy to go out and try to find the answers to existence: "Don't give up hope. That's always silly. The truth's waiting for you, it's very patient, and you'll find it. Remember, I've told you these things so that you won't despair. But you must still change the world" (p. 121).

In The Sea Bond most clearly and articulately expresses a vision that was only suggested in The Pope's Wedding and Saved. In his program note to The Sea Bond argues vehemently against the idea of absurdism or nihilism. To him "the sea is a symbol of hope justified by constant new chances and opportunities. Life becomes meaningless when you stop acting on the things that concern you most: your moral involvement in society. . . . If I had to name my theatre I would call it The Rational Theatre" (p. 124). In Bond's rational theatre, then, the grotesque is a symbol of its antithesis, the irrational; yet it also embodies elements of the moral order from which it deviates. Hatch, whose actions and character are mostly allied to the grotesque, is a man who acts on his beliefs, however demented or misguided. He errs by focusing his attack outside of his own world and society. With the grotesque the author deliberately presents the norm out of kilter, so that its very abnormality raises the questions which Willy and Evens contemplate in the final scene. Willy's predecessors, Scopey and Len, also try to seek meaning beyond the surface nature of reality. Scopey fails and Len only instinctively resorts to meaningful action. Willy,
however, becomes intellectually aware of what he faces, even if he does not yet fully comprehend the nature of the action he must take. Ironically, Willy is the successor whom Hatch predicted would take his place; however, the demented fun house reflection has been replaced by a directness and clarity of vision in Willy; as Worthen states, the "disaster of the first scene, and the stresses of the society we see, are met and matched by the assertion of possibility—and only this kind of assertion, made in this way could make any sense." 26

In the development from The Pope's Wedding and Saved to The Sea, Bond increasingly widens his presentation of society. In the first two plays most of the characters are members of the lower classes; Bond shows the effects of the class structure but in an indirect, implicit manner. Nevertheless, in Saved legal institutions such as the courtroom and the jail assume significance in the action. With The Sea, however, Bond includes actual representatives of the upper class, particularly in the character of Mrs. Rafi. He thus allows interaction among almost all segments of society, from Mrs. Rafi to Hatch and his cohorts. In addition, Willy, Evens, and even Mrs. Rafi are articulate spokesmen for the ideas which Bond wishes to examine in the play. In 1977 Bond wrote of his increasing desire to deal with the nature of the social structure: "Theatre is a way of judging society and helping to change it. . . . I feel I must deal with problems always more and more from a social view. . . . It's
only when an individual understands the nature of his society that he begins to understand himself and is able to make judgements about himself."

In these three plays the use of the grotesque reflects Bond's concern with revealing the conflict between social classes. Its manifestation usually occurs when individuals seek an outlet for the hostility or aggression which they feel, whether consciously or not, towards social authorities or institutions. Since this outlet often encompasses violence and/or aberrant behavior, the grotesque often is connected with violent or mad action. Thus the grotesque becomes a visual and emotive focal point. However, Bond uses the grotesque in only one or two key scenes or images; perhaps this is because the framework of realism can only contain minimal use of the grotesque or else the verisimilitude of the action suffers.

With The Worlds (1979) Bond continues to clarify and shape the social dialectic that he has begun in the earlier works. More so than in the previous plays, he presents what is in essence a dialogue in which points and counterpoints are enunciated between social opponents such as capitalists and socialists, activists and pacifists, employers and employees. Particularly, in The Worlds Bond looks at the nature of revolution and tries to answer if and when violence is ever justified as the means to social change. In his essay "On Violence," Bond presents his view of the problem of terrorism: "Reason is not yet always effective, and we
are still at a stage when to create a rational society we may sometimes have to use irrational means. . . . left-wing political violence is justified when it helps to create a more rational society, and when that help cannot be given in a pacific form." If The Sea ends with Evens' injunction that action is the only way to combat social evil, then The Worlds presents characters who do take action, however extreme. In a letter to Tony Coult Bond wrote, "We musn't write only problem plays, we must write answer plays--or at least plays which make answers clearer and more practical." There are no definitive solutions presented in The Worlds, but Bond concerns himself most predominantly with the careful articulation of the problem as he sees it.

The grotesque in The Worlds corresponds closely to its usage in The Sea. As in the funeral scene in the earlier play, The Worlds contains a scene which delineates the breakdown of social decorum in a frantic and often farcical manner which may not be grotesque in any one object, but in which the juxtaposition of incongruous actions triggers an emotional effect close to the grotesque. Secondly, the grotesque is embodied in an unnatural figure similar to that of Colin's body in The Sea.

The action centers around the kidnapping of Trench, head of a large corporation whose members are on strike. His abductors insist that the strikers' demands be met or they will shoot Trench. Trench escapes unharmed when an informer reveals the terrorists' hiding place; however, when he
returns, the board members of his corporation tell him they have voted him off the board because he had consistently refused to allow company shares of stock to be sold to the public. Disillusioned and embittered, Trench nevertheless invites them to a farewell dinner at which he will unveil the portrait he has commissioned of himself and his fellow board members.

It is at this dinner that events occur that reflect the breakdown in social mores and reveal the irrational underneath their civilized facades. After treating his companions to a fine repast, Trench attacks them for their treachery: "Knife someone in the back because you can't look them in the face. Arrogance! Betray your friend for thirty pieces of silver and invest it on the stock exchange." But the unveiling of the supposed group portrait reveals the depth of Trench's bitterness. Underneath the veil is a photographer's prop depicting a tropical beach with a life-size cut-out of a muscle man and a blonde in swimsuits. Both have a hole on top of the neck through which heads are pushed for the photograph. With this revelation of Trench's concept of them, the men and their wives swiftly expose their true natures. One woman pokes her head through the hole and then begins to strip. Harris breaks down sobbing and continues throughout the scene; another wife chases the stripper, attempting to get her dressed; when this endeavor fails, she throws a tantrum. A man sits on the floor and sips his drink; a woman wanders around smiling and trying to calm the
others. In the meanwhile Trench continues his indictment: "O god o god o god! That there's no justice! People like you--smash smash smash! You smile and read reports and smash!" (p. 49). When left alone, Trench sits on the floor and admits, "I'm afraid" (p. 50).

The juxtaposition of erratic forms of behavior creates an image of a world in which norms are disintegrating. The scene marks the transition in Trench from staunch representative of the entrenched capitalistic system to a disillusioned outcast from that society. Fittingly, the scene ends Part One, for it delineates the end of Trench's previous existence. Afterwards Trench becomes one of Bond's typically reclusive characters; like Alen and especially Evens, he eschews the values of established society. At the beginning of the next part, the audience learns that he has bought the run-down building in which he had been held captive, taking with him the photographer's prop as a reminder of the cardboard values of his former compatriots. However, Trench has nothing to replace those values except cynicism and despair. Appropriately, his speeches often contain grotesque images which betray his moral confusion: "It's strange not meeting people. But then, I'm no longer soiled by them. . . . Their horizon is the end of a pig trough. They tear the clothes from the living and the rags from the dead. Till they die and go in a plastic coffin to be burned. They have violence on their faces as if they'd been painted by a savage. Their hands are frayed ends of rope taken from old parcels. Voices
like sound coming out of a wound" (p. 55). The grotesqueness of the imagery reinforces the unresolved tensions in Trench's vision of reality; he longs for the peace of the world's oblivion yet he confesses, "The human voice still gives me pain" (p. 77). He gives refuge to the very terrorists who had once threatened his life, but even they recognize the emptiness of his behavior. One of them says of his former friends, "You saw through them but you put nothing in their place. They're a civilization without morals. You're a culture of despair. Absurd and empty. You let them think they can still produce a human soul. A hermit to sit on an island and tell them they're nothing" (p. 76).

Trench is caught in a spiritual void, trapped between the world of the rulers and the world of the ruled and unable to function in either. He professes to "see things as they are" (p. 76), yet unlike Evens he fails to recognize the value of action and endeavor in changing an unjust world.

If Trench is a spiritual grotesque, then Bond uses the presence of another terrorist victim as its physical manifestation. In another attempt to force the corporation to meet the demands of a second strike, the young activists mistakenly capture the chauffeur instead of the boss. Bond describes the captive as wearing "a white boiler suit, no shoes, white socks and a white hood. The face isn't seen. The legs and hands are tied. It looks like a giant maggot" (p. 57). Thus deprived of a normal human form, the figure acts semi-humanly. One captor has repeatedly to take the
figure to the bathroom; another girl "nurses" the figure by pushing a bottle of juice through the hole in its hood. These details border on the ludicrous, but the abnormality also provides an alienation which in turn causes anxiety.

When the physical grotesque confronts the spiritual grotesque, the mood turns nightmarish. When the terrorists are again discovered and forced to flee, they unloose their hostage's feet. Disoriented and unable to free its hands, the figure stumbles around until he manages to get his hood off, but he is blinded by the light. Then he sees Trench, who has put his head through the hole in the photographer's prop. Trench shoots and kills the chauffeur as the police close in.

The grotesque is used complexly in the presentation of the hooded figure. Throughout the action Bond means for our sympathies to lie with the strikers and the terrorists. The latter choose illegal action only to make the two worlds of money (the real world, as they term it) and of morality (the apparent world) one--"making morality strong so that the real world will be changed" (p. 79), as the activist Anna puts it. Yet by exploiting the abduction of a member of their own class, the chauffeur, they endanger the position of the strikers, who do not wish to support the threatened death of a fellow worker. Nevertheless, the organization heads decide that to acquiesce to the strikers in the name of benevolence to the lower classes will give them good publicity, a decision they would probably not have reached
if the chauffeur had been freed. The white figure indeed becomes the instrument for the workers' success; his death is thus needless, the act of an amoral madman.

While the white figure represents an ordinary man to some and a class symbol to others, to the nihilist Trench the figure emblemizes the bleakness of the human condition. "That white worm," he calls it, "crawling along the floor . . . . What keeps it alive? A little thread of hope or cunning or hate or malice. It doesn't know the difference under the hood. Not that it matters. As long as it can dangle on it for a time before it drops into the hole" (p. 80).

Ultimately, the figure's grotesqueness operates as a metaphor for all these views of humanity. The paradox of man's social and moral nature makes him an object of both humor and fear. "The Worlds" of the title are the worlds of humane morality, which is ineffectual, and of inhuman power, which has ultimate control. Man is a white worm caught between these two worlds unless he acts to change them. The emotional effect of the chauffeur's death creates an alienation in the audience regarding at one time or other Trench, the strikers, and the authority figures—all of whom manipulate him for their own ends. Terry, one of the strikers, perhaps expresses these ambivalencies best in his final speech: "If you're ignorant that's your excuse. But if you know what sort of world you're in you have to change it. . . . We're all terrorists. Everyone of us. We live by terror . . . . How long can we go on like this? Yet we sit here as
if we had all the time in the world. . . . When they ask me to condemn terror I shall say: No. You have no right to ask. You are a terrorist" (p. 84).

In the four plays which approximate twentieth-century life (although The Sea is set very early in the century) there are few drastic changes in the way in which Bond uses the grotesque. Of course, there is a development in maturity and cohesiveness in the structure of the plays. The sixteen scenes in The Pope's Wedding shortens to about twelve or thirteen in the subsequent works. Interestingly, the grotesque situation usually occurs in the sixth scene and tends to appear in or mark climactic moments. Again, Bond uses the grotesque to create emotional tension and add depth to the action. To Bond, the shock often experienced in viewing his plays is essential to his dramatic purpose. He contends, "Art has to be the equivalent of hooliganism on the streets. It has to be disruptive and questioning, also at the same time to give a rational explanation of the circumstances in which it is occurring."

Alen's murder, the baby's death, the corpse's mutilation, the mad clifftop funeral and portrait revelation scenes are disturbing corollaries to Bond's concept of art as an instrument of social awareness and change. These grotesque situations and objects occur when an individual becomes a victim of societal oppression, such as Hatch, or when like Scopey, he starts to experience discomfort with his social position.

Critics often remark upon Bond's use of cruelty and
violence, but these four plays contain fewer incidents of these techniques than Bond's other works. Perhaps the reason, as has been stated, is that the realistic nature of the plays makes excessive violence or bizarre actions difficult to create believably. Since Bond wants to create drama which shows "the real mechanisms of history," and the manner in which social change occurs, then he must create credible presentations of this society. The grotesque operates as a magnifying lens that enlarges and distorts this reality, and prevents the audience from feeling too complacent or comfortable with the social behavior displayed.
ENDNOTES: CHAPTER TWO

1 Bond, "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence," p. 11.


4 Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 43.


6 Ibid.

7 Scharine, p. 36.

8 Ibid., p. 39.

9 Ibid., pp. 41-42.

10 Edward Bond, Saved in Edward Bond: Plays: One, p. 21. All subsequent quotations will be cited within the text by page number.


18 Worthen, pp. 467-68.
19 Quoted in Scharine, p. 71.
20 Scharine, pp. 68-69.
21 Bond, Preface to Plays: One, p. 9.
22 Ibid., p. 11.

24 Edward Bond, Bingo and The Sea (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), p. 57. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.
25 Worthen, p. 474.
26 Ibid., p. 471.
27 Quoted in Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 74.
28 Bond, "Author's Note: On Violence," Plays: One, p. 17.
29 Quoted in Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 75.
30 Edward Bond, The Worlds with The Activists Papers (London: Eyre Methuen, 1980), p. 45. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.
33 Ibid.
CHAPTER 3: PLAYS OF INVENTED OR EMBELLISHED HISTORY:
Bingo, The Fool, Restoration

In assessing his reasons for using historical events as subjects for his plays, Bond commented, "We don't want to record things but to show the connection between things, to show how one thing leads to another, how things go wrong, and how they could be made to go well."\(^1\) One must recognize that the roots of social problems in the present can be found in a culture's past. The particular events and societies he examines are diverse, from English society in the seventeenth century to turn-of-the-century racial problems in America. His use of the grotesque also varies widely, from its controversial predominance in Early Morning to its virtual disappearance in shorter works like "Stone" or "Grandma Faust." As in the plays of surface realism, Bond often utilizes the grotesque in characters or situations in order to emphasize the debilitating and dehumanizing effects of social oppression upon human beings.

Bond's short plays that deal with various aspects of history are "Black Mass" (1970), "Stone" (1970), and A-A-America (1976), which contain "Grandma Faust" and "The
Swing." These are occasional pieces, written to commemorate specific events for specific audiences. For example, "Black Mass" was written for the anti-apartheid movement to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa, in which white police shot down almost seventy blacks. Set immediately before the incident, the action takes place in front of a church altar, before a cross upon which is nailed a life-size Christ. The Prime Minister prays before taking communion, but his mind is really on the uprising of the kaffirs, members of Bantu-speaking tribes of Southeast Africa. The police inspector enters to report that his men have shot the kaffirs but sighs, "There's no fun in shooting at people nowadays. . . . It can't hold a candle to wildfowling."

When the Prime Minister, Inspector, and Priest leave to congratulate the troops, Christ gets down from the cross, puts poison into the Prime Minister's communion wine, then remounts the cross. Upon returning, the Prime Minister drinks the wine and dies. The Inspector quickly tracks the trail of wine drops to the cross and accuses Christ. The Priest sends the Inspector away and scolds Christ, then orders him to leave to avoid contaminating the young people.

The subsequent vacancy bothers the Priest, but the Inspector offers a young police officer dressed as a Nazi as a substitute; to avoid monotony, he also drills a "relief Christ" to take over for the first young officer. The play ends with the Inspector and the Priest resuming
the communion service.

Written in a broadly satiric mode, the play creates an emotional distance between the audience and the events on stage through the overt hypocrisy of the characters and their nonchalant attitude toward the slaughter of the blacks. The obvious caricatures emphasize the lack of humane values which perpetuated the massacre. The Priest, Inspector, and Prime Minister represent the societal institutions that encourage racial oppression and genocide. For example, the Inspector's equation of the massacre with a sporting event demonstrates that he looks upon blacks the same as he does beasts to be hunted. As Scharine notes, "The Blacks butchered at Sharpeville are merely Pam's baby multiplied many times, his identity still unrecognized and his needs still ignored."^4

Although the satiric framework encourages an intellectual analysis, the replacement of Christ with the Nazi-like figures of the policemen creates a grotesque visual image that inverts evil and good and thus adds emotional impact to Bond's intellectual statement.

Whereas the substitution of a symbol of ultimate evil for one of ultimate good arouses ingrained reactions of repugnance and derision, the reaction towards a Christ who poisons a human being seems more ludicrous than horrible and embodies less of the grotesque than the former action. The audience laughs, perhaps because having no emotional identification with the authority figure who dies, it
experiences empathy and even approval for Christ's behavior. Indeed, Bond's Christ, although mute, reacts very humanly; he is bored with the Priest's harangue, just as a schoolboy is with his teacher's scolding.

Bond's humanizing of Christ makes the point that the actions of men like the Inspector and Prime Minister can drive even Christ into desperate retaliation; furthermore, his portrayal of Jesus points to an ambivalence towards religious symbols which will surface in other plays as well. Christ's easy desertion suggests both an apathy and impotence towards human affairs, for example; and Scharine comments that "Bond does not reject Christ, who appears as a decidedly sympathetic character, but he does reject Christianity." Coult agrees, maintaining that Bond tends to regard religion as a cultural fantasy or superstition used to restrict human freedom. Although Bond often uses Christian images and symbols such as crucifixion, resurrection, and redemption, they are mostly portrayed with a certain amount of irony that embellishes the atmosphere of satire and also encourages a complex emotional reaction that characterizes the grotesque.

In "Stone" Bond uses the Biblical parable of the talents to depict how a man becomes increasingly burdened and corrupted by society's injustice. In a poem called "Stone" included as a preface to the play, he writes the following:

Men are not asked who they are but ordered to be
Cut to the shape of a square world
And the head bound as surely as Old China
Bound women's feet.
Like "Black Mass," Bond wrote "Stone" for a specific issue, gay rights. However, the play does not deal specifically with homosexuality but with the nature of a society which represses human goodness and freedom. Bond wrote in a program note, "Homosexual emancipation is not possible without economic and political reforms in other parts of society." 8

The plot, in the form of an allegory, details the travails of a young man whose parents have given him seven golden talents, representing the seven virtues of prudence, sobriety, courage, justice, honesty, love, and hope. He first meets a Mason who enjoins the young man to carry a stone for him to his house. The Mason assures the Man he will get a reward when he delivers the stone. After the Man reluctantly agrees, he encounters various characters who try to get his golden talents. First, he meets a drunken Irish tramp who obtains the coins by threatening to stab himself; the young man buys the knife from him by giving him six of his talents—all but hope.

The stone grows larger and heavier as the Man seeks the Mason's house. He then meets a girl who is proprietress of the notorious Inn of the Seven Deadly Veils. She wants the guileless young man to help her with chores at the tavern, starting with the ejection of a man who has refused to pay his bill. The welsher, however, is the Tramp. They fight and the young man defeats the Tramp, recovering his coins. Soon, however, the girl wheedles them away again
with her Dance of the Seven Deadly Veils, which is a reverse of the traditional striptease because she starts the dance unclothed and progressively dons the shroudlike veils. A policeman disrupts the proceedings by arresting the Man for the murder of the Tramp and the girl for performance of an indecent dance.

The trial is presided over by a corrupt Judge and the young man is falsely accused of the killing, actually committed by the policeman. The Judge decrees that the youth be chained to the stone, which has grown in size. The talents are now worthless, having been transformed into the Seven Deadly Sins.

After long years of toil in which the stone grows steadily heavier, the Man finally comes in sight of the Mason's house. Outside the house, the Mason's servant washes the coins, which then become the original Seven Virtues. When the Man encounters the Mason, who is busily wringing blood from the stones he has collected, he asks him why his talents changed into sins. The Mason grows increasingly uncomfortable with the Man's questioning and finally orders him away. Instead of leaving, the Man kills the Mason and orders water to wash his hands.

The message of the Biblical parable of the talents (Matthew 25.14-30 and Luke 19.12-26) is that those who actively seek to increase or multiply the "talents" with which they are endowed receive God's benediction, whereas those who refuse to make use of their abilities are cast
out of God's favor. In Bond's version the young man's attempts to donate his talents or virtues meet with the obstacles of greed, pride, sloth, avarice—in short, the obstacles of the Seven Deadly Sins—until they tarnish the soul of the Man. The carrying of the stone is a futile, Sisyphus-like task, which emblemizes the burden of social success or approval. The villains or ultimate corruptors, in Bond's view, are the representatives of capitalistic authority, such as the tavern owner, who uses sexual favors to make profits, or the land-owning Judge who convicts the Man in order to raise the girl's rents, or the policeman who frames the Man for a death for which he himself was responsible. The primary representative of social injustice, however, is the Mason, the builder of the system. Luring his victims with empty promises, he fails to take responsibility for the sufferings of his servants. The result of the Mason's murder is somewhat ambiguous; the young man, like Pilate, wishes to wash his hands and either will take over the Mason's position or will go his way, having learned his lesson.

Within this allegorical framework, the grotesque is practically nonexistent, although it is suggested at the end of the girl's dance; she is left sobbing, shrouded in white sheets, similar in some respects to the appearance of the White Figure in The Worlds. Unheeded, she cries, "So naked. So naked. Cover me" (p. 55). But the brief moment possesses pathos rather than the disgust or horror which
marks the grotesque. Furthermore, although violence erupts in the fight between the Tramp and the Man and in the Mason's murder, the play as a whole has none of the sense of distortion or alienation which forms the grotesque.

In his work, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1964), Angus Fletcher explores reasons for the lack of the grotesque in "Stone" and later in "Grandma Faust." Fletcher maintains that one of the chief characteristics of allegory is its didactic nature; theme supersedes plot as the reader tries to unravel the double meaning offered by the author (p. 220). In addition, the meaning becomes less obscure as the audience becomes more familiar with the metaphorical meaning; thus, the ability to surprise the audience lessens as the predictability of the plot increases (p. 82). Diminishment of surprise also decreases the chance for the appearance of the grotesque, for its effect depends upon the unexpected and sudden inversion of value.

Bond's use of the allegorical journey or pilgrimage orients the audience to his intellectual purpose early in the action. The spectator assumes that Bond is doing more than retelling Christian parable; his interests lie instead in examining the role of social and political oppression in corrupting the spirit. If at times the meaning of certain emblems or characters are unclear, such as the true nature of the Mason or the stone, by the final encounter the enigma unravels.
Although allegory stresses the rational, Fletcher points out that, as in the grotesque, an emotional tension often emerges between two polar qualities, such as Good and Evil (p. 224). The methodical structure of allegory, which imposes meaning and order upon events in the narrative, maintains the equilibrium between these antitheses (p. 178). In modern allegory, however, which often uses irony, the subsequent inversion which marks irony often condenses or collapses the clear dichotomy established between the antagonistic values so that an increase in the emotional tension is experienced by the perceiver (p. 230).

Bond's allegory is ironical; he uses an assortment of Biblical and religious allusions--the parable of the talents, Salome's Dance, the Seven Deadly Sins, Pilate's washing of the hands, and even the idea of the Lord as builder (of mansions)--in order to sketch a contemporary Pilgrim's Progress. However, each allusion usually receives an ironic twist, such as when the girl puts on the veils instead of shedding them. Even the entire allegorical framework is partially a parody of Christian parable, for instead of depicting a man doing the right things and subsequently getting rewarded for them in heaven, Bond shows a hapless Everyman doing "right" things and getting nothing but bitter delusion in return.

The use of irony creates an aura of uncertainty or confusion in the reader, who intellectually recognizes the conflict between Christian ideology and social practice and
yet who senses the ambivalence toward Christian idealism, which Bond also expressed in "Black Mass." The atmosphere of confusion often accompanies the manifestation of the grotesque in the works of surface realism; yet in the necessarily compact short plays, the ordered nature of the allegorical structure prevents the emotional ambivalence from coming into focus; thus the grotesque is stopped from appearing.

The same observations regarding the grotesque are true of "Grandma Faust," the first part of *A-A-America!* (1976). As the title indicates, the play is a parody of the Faustian legend and uses the allegorical framework. Bond himself dubs it a burlesque, and his purpose is to comment upon racial prejudice in America.

Bond borrows cleverly and skillfully from the caricature and dialect of the American tall-tale and folk legend. The devil in this case takes the form of a grandmotherly woman in a wheelchair who is "a cross between Whistler's Mother and Grandma Moses." She promises a rather stupid Uncle Sam all the silver fish he can catch if he can capture the soul of a simple black man named Paul. To do so he must get Paul to look him fully in the eye; then Paul will be so entranced by the evil he sees there that he will take a bite of Sam's loaf of bread, which contains a large hook to snare his soul.

Paul, however, is not so simple as that; but he is finally snared and put to auction to be sold for Nigger
Foot Pie Day, a celebration similar to Thanksgiving in which people eat pie literally made from Negroes feet. At the auction he is sold for a symbolic thirty silver dollars, but Uncle Sam's scheme is foiled when he and Grandma Faust discover that they have sold two different ladies the same commodity. The two transactions cancel each other, and Paul's soul is still his. Grandma decides that Paul and Sam should fight it out; the winner takes the soul, which Bond depicts as a large black doll. The soul itself is to be the weapon used in the fight; Grandma gives Sam a lead truncheon to slip inside the doll when it is his turn to club Paul. Despite this trick, Paul uses his own strategy to escape from the arena, described as a large cage. Uncle Sam cannot escape from the cage, and Paul wins the match and uses Uncle Sam's fishing rod to catch an abundance of silver fish.

The stylized framework of action tends to remove emotional involvement. Bond tells a tongue-in-cheek fable with the overall message that the white man's bigotry will backfire because of greed and underestimation of the black man's ability to endure. Certain ideas could foster the grotesque if treated differently. For example, Bond uses the idea of cannibalism inherent in the concept of Nigger Foot Pie Day quite differently than he does in Early Morning. Unlike the latter, "Grandma Faust" contains no actual demonstration of flesh eating; instead, the equation of Nigger Foot Pie with the traditional Thanksgiving turkey
is conveyed through the colorful speech of the ludicrously
caricatured white people. For instance, auctioneer Sam
entices the crowd by telling them, "Maybe you wanna keep
him around an fatten him up a little 'fore 'n you chop him
up for pie. Jist let him run loose in the back yard. An
he'll soon plump out for slaughterin" (p. 13). The playful
treatment removes the repugnance while still making a
serious comment about prejudice.

Like the use of Biblical parable in "Stone," the
burlesque framework in itself complements the thematic
statement, for the white people, absurdly exaggerated and
distorted, become victims of the same stereotyping that the
black man has often suffered in white literature. In addi-
tion to cannibalism, the violence in the fight between Sam
and Paul could also become a grotesque element. However,
the cudgelling which Paul receives is more comparable to
the slapstick of a Punch and Judy show than to a realistic
beating.

"Grandma Faust" removes the threat of ugliness or
alienation which gives rise to the grotesque through the
broadly farcical, fantastical nature of the characters and
situation. Like the more serious allegory of "Stone,"
"Grandma Faust" is a fable or folk tale which uses a famil-
liar genre or structure to anchor the audience's expectations
and diminishes the likelihood of the sudden intrusion of
the fearsome and terrible which marks the grotesque.

Whereas "Black Mass," "Stone," and "Grandma Faust" use
primarily presentational structures to examine political and social injustice, "The Swing," which Bond labels a documentary, returns to a representational style. However, Bond presents the story as a play within a play. The setting is a theatre; a performance is about to begin. Paul, the black man of "Grandma Faust," appears again to explain the actual event upon which the plot is based. In 1911 in Livermore, Kentucky, a black man accused of murder was subjected to a gruesome form of lynching. He was tied to a swing on a stage; tickets were sold to the audience, and the occupants of the more expensive seats were allowed to shoot first at the victim, followed by those in the less expensive seats.

Paul then explains the reason for foretelling the action: "We thought it right t'give the plot away. Obvious, if there's gonna be a lynchin you'll sit more comfortable if you know exactly what seat history's sat you in." As in "Grandma Faust," Bond's purpose is to examine the roots of racial prejudice; however, the tone that Paul's preface establishes is more grimly ironic than in the burlesque. Here Bond explicitly forewarns the audience of its involvement in the action, although his version of the historical incident will veer ironically and significantly from the facts Paul has presented.

The grotesque in "The Swing" associates itself with the insanity and violence which result when individuals clash with restrictive moral and social values. If as Bond
states, "A rational, free culture is based either on a classless society or at least on the conscious struggle to remove class structures and the economic, ecological, psychological and political distortions they cause," then Bond concentrates primarily on the nature of the racial barriers which prevent the establishment of a free society.

The first two scenes of the play trace the events which culminate in the grotesque act of violence surrounding the swing. A young girl's sexual hysteria and a society's refusal to look beyond the stereotypes of class intertwine to produce tragic results.

Greta Kroll, the bookish daughter of a vaudeville actress, essays the tutoring of Ralph Skinner, the son of a local storekeeper. A strong erotic attraction builds between them, subsumed at first into an admiration of the watch fob fastened onto Greta's breast. Greta urges Ralph to touch the still-fastened watch: "The silver's so fine and delicate. Touch it. Feel: soft, burnished with touching" (p. 29). The sexual connotations multiply when Greta's empassioned reading of the Aeneid moves her to contrast the classical idealization of the human body with her society's repression of the sexual openness. Finally, she asks, "Ralph, have you--as your teacher--tell me--did you ever see a woman's breast?" (p. 30). As she continues her reading of Virgil, she uncovers one of her breasts and takes it out. Bond heightens the comic effect of this scene by juxtaposing Greta's calm rationalization of the
exposure as an "educational" experience with Ralph's growing sexual excitement as he tries to read the *Aeneid* passage. However, Greta refuses to let him touch her breast. She professes the necessity of stifling human desire. She avers, "We must understand our lives and then act as if we didn't. There are women, Ralph--men go to. I understand them too. But we can't speak of them" (p. 31).

The comic expectations that Bond has set up are interrupted by Ralph's father, who enters bloody and disheveled from an encounter with hoodlums who wrecked his store. In the ensuing excitement nobody notices Greta's absence until she re-enters, disturbed and incoherent. Her mother gets only a few details from her; she was grabbed by a man who tore the watch fob from her dress. The implications of the watch fob immediately connect the incident with the tutoring session; however, Greta's hysteria prevents any clear ascertainment of the deed or the perpetrator. Although Mr. Skinner assumes that she was raped, Mrs. Knoll remains doubtful. Skinner suspects Paul, the Krolls' black servant, but no clear evidence exists against him. When Ralph brings in Fred, suspicion falls on the latter. Fred, an aspiring electrician, admits that he was visiting Paul because the black man had taught him many electrician's skills, and he wished to establish a business with Paul as partner. Already perturbed by Paul's refusal to submit to his bullying, Skinner grows incensed by the implication that a white man can be intellectually inferior to a black.
He mocks, "You sure are an unorthodox nigger. This nigger's teacher now. Don't teach niggers like bona fide niggers teach. He teach white. Not readin an writin an anythin good an wholesome like that. He teach the wonders of science!" (p. 37). Skinner represents the entrenched social system; he boasts that he is "a foundin officer of the Justice Ridin Committee" (p. 37), a vigilante group, and thus has had "the pleasure of bouncin [niggers] on the end of their own braces strung round their neck. . . . In the good ol' days, which ain passed yet!" (p. 36).

Skinner rationalizes his eagerness to punish Fred by claiming to represent law and order. And Fred's willingness to subvert the racial caste system by treating a black as an equal makes him more dangerous than any black who opposes the system, since a clearly prescribed retribution exists for the latter but not for the former. Skinner's outrage is further exacerbated by Greta's sudden transformation into an Ophelia-like madwoman, bewilderedly searching for her "beautiful silver watch" (p. 37). "Where-o-where is my little watch gone?" (p. 37) she cries, and runs out clad only in a nightgown to search the yard. Greta's madness is the first manifestation of the grotesque in the play. Like Hatch in The Sea, she loses her reason when reason becomes an impotent defense against social and psychological forces. Unlike Hatch, her madness has no foreshadowing in the form of eccentric delusions; in Greta's case the shock comes from witnessing the pathetic destruction of an innocent
young girl. Her earlier contention that "we must understand our lives and then act as if we didn't" (p. 31) becomes an ironic commentary upon the failure to struggle against injustice and anomalies in human society. The repression of sexual freedom becomes linked with the violence generated by hostility to privilege, as demonstrated by the hoodlums' vandalism of Skinner's store. Although Bond never provides an explicit explanation of the reason for the vandalism or of the actual circumstances surrounding Greta's alleged assault, the continual allusions to lynching and other forms of vigilantism point to a social environment sowed deeply with fear and suspicion. Bond avers, "All violence is basically defensive. . . . What we have to worry about is the violence that goes with anger--the violence that is triggered off when one is threatened."12

Bond utilizes the grotesque that is associated with violence with even more chilling effect in the climactic scene involving the swing. The situation closely follows the account Paul has given in the preface, except for the ironic switch to a white instead of a black victim. The audience's knowledge of the outcome arouses a tension which Bond plays upon in order to create a suspension between horror and humor. In discussing the techniques of black humor, Terry Heller notes that when the emotions of horror and humor are juxtaposed, three possible effects result: either humor or horror predominates, or they suspend the reader equally between them.13 Bond uses comic potential
to intensify the feelings of horror; Heller states that the collapse of the comic potential destroys the audience's hopes for release from the horror they expect, and thus their dread increases with the collapse of their expectations. 14

The scene opens again with the theatrical setting. Bond's use of dark irony functions to comment upon social convention. For instance, Mrs. Kroll, Greta's mother, makes her final stage appearance. She coyly sings a song called "I Wore a Little Grey Bonnet":

Life is a milliner's show
Every young lady confesses
Even the quaker, you know
Has to take care how she dresses
So when at home I went out for a walk
I had to mind that the folks didn't talk. (p. 38)

Sung in the manner of Edwardian vaudeville, the song brings to mind the sexual hypocrisy of Victorian mores. The little grey bonnet, like Greta's watch fob, is really an object of sexual allure, since its very modesty points to what it ostensibly covers. Mrs. Kroll sings:

I wore a little grey bonnet
Lots of eyes were upon it
Though they wanted to look at me
They couldn't peep under my bonnet you see.

(pp. 38-39)

Skinner then enters to act as master of ceremonies for the ghastly show that is to follow. Skinner's speeches in themselves are commonplace patriotic sentiments; however, the context Bond sets them in--the justification of an innocent man's execution--creates the tension needed for the grotesque. Skinner, the spokesman for the entrenched social
system, proclaims, "Fellow Americans. How we run the law's the same how we live our lives. The store, street, law: one. Let the law slip: you git bad measure in the store and the sidewalk end up deathrow for the good citizen" (p. 39). This speech comments upon the inter-relationship of individual lives with social structures; inequities and bigotry in one create injustice and destruction of human dignity in the other. Skinner announces, "I declare this stage t'be a hall of justice!" (p. 39), and thus Bond establishes the stage as a metaphor for legal institutions. Furthermore, the storekeeper reinforces the idea of racial separation. He maintains to his approving audience of townspeople that "each man has his own place an rank: with his own tasks an ability t'carry them out. . . . Step out of line: you take on tasks for which you ain got abilities. In my book that's anarchy: you cut off your hands!" (p. 40).

In addition to the ironic context of Skinner's commentary, Bond increases the grotesque effect with the aura of bonhomie and geniality which Skinner exudes in his endeavors to be a good host for the evening's grim entertainment. He joshes the stagehands, promises all the gun-carrying members of the audience a voucher for free goods at his store, and even relinquishes his right to the first shot to avoid the accusation of favoritism. Finally, he leads the audience in prayer: "Lord god guide our aim. We ain numbered 'mongst them mugger-lover folk who think of the criminal all the time. We remember the victims an their loved ones lord."
Bond's use of the comic conventions of the vaudeville stage intensifies the audience's sense of guilt and horror. Bond wants them to recognize Skinner's platitudes as sentiments to which they themselves may subscribe. The grotesque juxtaposition of the ludicrous and the fearsome thereby creates a shock which then allows for reflection upon the twisted intention behind the language of law upholders and preservers. As Heller points out, the alternation between pathos and humor builds up a tension or frustration in the spectator which the author may release in the form of response or commitment to some idea. Carol Shloss, who examines the grotesque in Flannery O'Connor's works, also recognizes the value of the grotesque in questioning social values. She maintains that the grotesque is "the natural procedure of verbal protest against a too-easy faith in the integrity of established social institutions." Bond himself writes, "If we try to have two standards--one for ourselves and one for others--we must become self-critical, must live in conflict with ourselves."

Bond again subverts vaudeville conventions with the introduction of the Clown. Fred has already been tied to the swing; he waits in dreadful expectation for the first shot to be fired. The Clown's function is to intensify the pathos and horror which both Fred and the real audience experience. He teases Fred and amuses the townspeople with typical burlesque antics. He carries on an oversize pistol
and pretends to be ignorant of its working; he begs Skinner, his straightman, to let him have the first shot. Fred's swing is set going, to increase the difficulty of the shot and thus provide a more equitable chance for other audience members eager to have their turn. The Clown delays the moment of firing with inane tricks, increasing Fred's anxiety to an agonizing pitch. However, when he does fire, he squirts water instead of firing bullets. Fred's fear turns into hysterical relief, as he assumes the whole proceedings have been a monstrous joke. At the same time, the real audience also experiences a moment of release, albeit qualified with doubt. Bond has veered from the account of the historical event once, by using Fred instead of Paul as scapegoat; it is therefore possible that he could alter dramatic events again and show the prevention instead of perpetration of the shooting.

The respite is brief. The Clown suddenly shoots Fred, this time with real bullets, aiming at and hitting his foot. The other audience members then clamor for their turns. In a vicious game they call out the part of the body they want to hit and then shoot. Bond graphically describes Fred's reactions: "Fred spins, twists, jerks, screams. Blood spurts. Lights snap to half, flicker out . . . He swings slowly and silently upside down. Blood drips and swishes over the stage" (pp. 42-43). When the revolvers are empty, Skinner leads the town audience in the national anthem, hat over his heart.
The final scene takes place the next day. Fred's body is being photographed so that the participants can have mementoes of the occasion. Skinner has ordered Fred's body to be displayed outside the town; they put him in a cardboard box because, as Ralph says, "He's a mess" (p. 43). The other stagehands coarsely comment upon Greta's condition--she has turned into a whore.

Paul has quit working for Mrs. Kroll, who is disturbed because she needs help with Greta. But Ralph offers to get donations from the Justice Riders so that Greta can be institutionalized. "They always support a good cause" (p. 44), he assures her. The stagehands tease Paul, asking why he missed his one chance to see a white man killed in the style that blacks usually receive. As one remarks, "Mostly black folk die so spectacular" (p. 44). Paul's only answer is to throw a dime upon the stage and leave. The play ends as the stagehands tussle for the coin.

The effect of the swing scene is graphically shocking and grotesque, as is the callous exploitation of the body and the news of Greta's wanton behavior. The question arises, as it often does regarding Bond's plays, as to how effective the grotesque is in conveying Bond's view of socialism. Bond maintains that the language and action of the plays should be closely followed in production. "It's very important the audience shouldn't feel [that] this is just some sort of big emotional wallow in horror, that there is a certain discipline or control behind it."18
Worthen supports the awakening effect of the grotesque when used in violence, for he believes it shocks the audience into a recognition of the violent nature of their society. ¹⁹ Coult agrees, stating that the observers "have ... to confront the unforgiveable things in society before deciding what to do, and the action they take may yet, tragically, have to be violent as long as there continues to exist a violence that is socially acceptable."²⁰ Trussler also concludes, "Edward Bond does not write about violence; he writes about the effects on the human spirit of a violent environment."²¹

Certainly, in "The Swing" Bond is more overt about establishing the targets of his attack than he is in The Pope's Wedding or Saved. Skinner is the ironic spokesman for bourgeois philosophy, which thrives on rigid demarcation of social class and economic privilege. In the execution scene Bond creates empathy for Fred, the only person seemingly willing to overlook racial barriers in any way. However, Fred becomes another one of Bond's scapegoats, a hapless victim of social prejudice. The question remains, however, as to how successful the violence is in moving the audience to examine their own lives. If the disassociation between themselves and the characters is too great, then the violence seems gratuitous and fails to effect a desire for positive action. For example, Peter believes that "the real indictment of the violence in Bond's plays is not so much that it is often gratuitous (it is), or
overdone (it is), but that it is unopposed." He maintains that the extreme nature of human brutality thus causes the spectators to distance themselves from an action they believe is removed from their own lives. Peter objects that Bond's moral stance and his technique are at odds: "Time and again he creates the expectation of a moral argument made up of understanding, compassion, and unsparing inquiry; all too often he ends up as the dramatist of narcosis." In the same way, Carol Shloss agrees that if the audience fails to perceive the norm or value to which the author wishes to adhere, then "it may be impossible to see in the fiction anything more than humanity's broken condition."

Bond is perhaps more successful in emphasizing what he dislikes about society than in delineating what he views as the ideal. Shloss judges that the grotesque is often useful in showing ostensibly normal or realistic characters as being incomplete or defective, and that violence helps the audience "reevaluate realistic behavior." Similarly, Bond's depiction of commonplace domestic life in The Pope's Wedding and Saved or his creation of believable types such as Mrs. Rafi in The Sea or Gréta in "The Swing" successfully reveals the absurdities and cruelties in everyday life.

Critics had difficulty in accepting the use of violence in such plays as Saved because its usage tended to violate what they perceived as a strictly naturalistic mode of presentation; however, Bond's use of Paul as narrator or
chorus in the beginning of the play and his utilization of vaudeville convention are helpful in establishing the theatricalism of the piece. Paul reminds the spectator that this cruel event did take place in history and that the play is a dramatic comment upon it. Furthermore, the vicious games the Clown plays with Fred are in keeping with the shenanigans of burlesque comedians. The violence, although shocking, does not seem to violate the aesthetic credibility of the action as some maintained it had done in previous works because the spectator can objectify it as part of a theatrical event or convention.

If Bond's technique in incorporating violence into the action has matured in "The Swing," there is still the problem of ascertaining any positive norm in the work. Up until The Sea the presentation of human decency or personal triumph has been minimal. We can note Len's persistent loyalty to the family; Scopey's inquisitiveness; but the evolution of more dynamic action will not be complete until Lear (1971). Although "The Swing" was produced after Lear, Bond returns to a more enigmatic glimpse of personal salvation or action. This glimpse comes in the last scene, with Paul's decision to escape from servitude, although his only recourse is harsh labor in the mines. Even though he denies that Fred's death prompted his resignation, it is in keeping with his character that he must repress his true motivation in the interests of self-preservation. Furthermore, his tossing down of the dime—a significant amount of money for
someone in his position—seems to be a symbolic gesture of contempt for the white man's greed. Paul acts upon his beliefs, even if his action has meaning only for him. In this way, Bond continues to provide some support for human commitment, even if an enunciation of his philosophy of social change must wait for fuller expression in other works.

The grotesque may at times interfere to a degree with the ideology Bond wishes to convey; in Early Morning (1968) it becomes notably problematic. Early Morning, a bizarre depiction of Victorian society, aroused controversy through its distorted portraits of Queen Victoria and her family, causing its total ban in 1967, the first time a play had been completely prohibited since 1957. At the Royal Court Theatre William Gaskill produced Early Morning as a Sunday Night Production Without Decor in an attempt to get around the censorship ban. The police, present at the performance, did not close it down. However, the theatre's lessee asked that the play be withdrawn from public presentation. Early Morning was the last play banned by the Lord Chamberlain; in 1968 legislation was enacted overturning the censorship laws.

The play teems with grotesque characters, objects, and situations; and therein lies the source of most of its controversy. The preface states, "Although one of the funniest stage works of recent years, it is not a comedy, but a deeply felt modern morality, dipped in gall and in
the horror of our time, when cannibalism, real or symbolic, is not beyond the borders of possibility, and the little goodness we can perceive in the world has a scant chance of surviving, let alone multiplying.  

The baroque plot centers around the struggle for power between two unlikely antagonists, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Albert plots Victoria's death and seeks to enlist the support of his son Arthur. Arthur is a Siamese twin. His brother, George, is either neutral or supports his mother. Plots and counterplots hatch between the rival factions. Finally, Victoria succeeds in killing Albert; first she has his wine poisoned and then finishes him off by strangling him with his own garter sash. "I don't like to see them linger," she explains, "I'm a patron of the RSPCA."  

George is wounded by a pistol shot; he becomes a mental vegetable. Still attached to his brother, Arthur refuses to cut himself free, and he becomes subject to the same pain that George feels. George goes through a series of deaths. He dies from the pistol wound, but Victoria restores him to life; George kills himself later, and still affixed to Arthur, gradually disintegrates into a skeleton. Meanwhile, Victoria and Florence Nighingale (George's fiancee) become lovers.  

Arthur finally hatches a scheme to kill everyone, ending human suffering. His men and Victoria's participate in a tug-of-war contest. Victoria's side, at Arthur's
signal, lets go of the rope, sending Arthur's men over the cliff. However, the cliff crumbles away when Victoria's side runs to the edge to gloat over the demise of their foes. When everyone is killed, they all go to a heaven in which cannibalism is rampant, but the eaten parties are able to regenerate themselves. The cannibalism reflects an earlier scene in which two modern young people are on trial for eating a man who pushed in front of them in a cinema line. Arthur, however, refuses to succumb to cannibalism; his rebellious stance earns him many disciples but also foments yet more plots against him by his family. Finally, he too is eaten, but he succeeds in resurrecting himself. He ascends unnoticed as the heavenly cannibalism continues.

Even from this brief recounting, the reasons for the controversies surrounding the play become obvious. The grotesque effect arises from the continual perversion of expectations and the constant challenging of preconceptions the audience holds about social history. Bond contends that by doing this he intends "to take away all the known landmarks that might have led to false assumptions. It's like taking the labels off tins, so that you have to open them up to see what's inside--because so many of the labels were false anyway." As with the shorter plays, Bond delves into history "to try and look at things that go wrong when they begin to go wrong." To Bond, "the things that go wrong" concern the social and moral codes which Victorian society solidified and passed on to the current
generation. Trussler agrees that Bond uses Victoria as a symbol of the moral malaise engendered by the nineteenth-century. Scharine adds that the insanity of the characters and their behavior is a "metaphor for the socialized morality that results from accepting as necessary the constraints society places on men." Heaven is thus the ultimate expression of a social order in which "constant aggression without emotion and without consequence" can occur.

Bond utilizes several techniques to engender the grotesque, such as the continual reversals in the portrayal of historical personages, especially in their sexual behavior. Victoria, the supposed model of social propriety, is a matricide as well as husband-killer. She rapes Florence and then carries on a lesbian relationship with her. Florence herself, the "angel of mercy" of the Crimean War, is portrayed as a hapless simpleton, whose chief solace for her patients is sexual rather than medicinal. She turns whore after the tug-of-war kills almost everybody else and dies when Disraeli and Gladstone get too "excited," as she says, and presumably kill her in erotic frenzy.

By portraying these people as contrary to what an audience expects, Bond creates a dissonant effect which precludes too facile a categorization or judgment of his intention. Instead, the discrepancy between expectations and appearance forces preconceptions about history and society into a new light. Of course, the sometimes ludicrous and
horrible effects that excessive moral and sexual repression had upon individuals in Victorian society have by now been well documented and examined; however, Bond wishes to prevent the spectator from dismissing these anomalies as archaic or isolated deviancies from the norm. By making representatives of the most respectable part of British society act as monstrously as any Sweeney Todd or Jack the Ripper, he calls into question the attitudes and values which these figures represent. As the preface states, the play is "not about Queen Victoria, but about her reign and about its influence on us today." Bond echoes this idea with his own inscription to the play: "The events of this play are true."

A second method which creates a link between the events of an embellished past and the events of contemporary life is the use of anachronism. Although their mere presence is not in itself grotesque, the contemporary characters who appear in the story help to create or amplify incongruities which give rise to horror and humor. The first notable intrusion of anachronism occurs in the trial of Len and Joyce, two modern Londoners who are on trial for killing and eating a man who pushed in front of them in the cinema line. Despite the grimness of the charge, the ludicrous couple remain oblivious to the enormity of the crime. Instead, they bicker over inconsequential details, much as a husband and wife do when one tries to tell a story and the other interrupts with his or her own version. First,
they quibble about the name of the film; Len offers "Buried Alive on Hampstead Heath," but Joyce insists upon "Policeman in Black Nylons." The titles satirize the contemporary media's obsession with violence and sexual perversion. Similarly, Bond comments upon the fascination of the working class with sports when Joyce and Len argue about the exact newspaper page upon which their team's picture is located. Len's description of the murder is graphic. Irritated by the long wait in line and embarrassed by a hunger which starts his stomach rumbling, Len finally erupts into violence when he spies the man taking cuts ahead of them. "I grabs 'is ears," he recounts, "jerks 'im back by the 'ead, she karati-chops 'im cross the front of 'is throat with the use of 'er 'andbag, and down'e goes like a sack with a 'ole both ends--right?--An she starts stabbin' 'im with 'er stilletos, in twist out" (p. 22). Len finishes off his victim by dropping a manhole cover on his head.

The account is gruesome in content; the style of narration intensifies both horror and humor with its air of cheery casualness. However, the ultimate grotesquerie is the account of the cannibalism and the attitude which it conveys toward human life. Again, the grotesque effect emerges from the inversion of values and the subsequent combination of laughter and detestation aroused in the audience. The couple seem to regard cannibalism as a natural and inevitable part of the punishment meted out to an offender. While the mutilation and devouring of a human
being is treated as the norm, Joyce maintains a twisted prudery when she explains that she stripped him in preparation for the feast but kept his underwear on. "I don't 'old with this rudery yer get" (p. 23) she sniffs. She also complains about the unfairness of those who stole pieces of the victim when they were not in line. She asserts, "Thass was wrong. They ain even paid t' go in!" (p. 23).

Len too defends his actions when Joyce hints that he was wrong to share their victim with others in line. Len upholds his own virtue, explaining, "Yer can't nosh an not offer round, can yer? Some a the fellas off the queue give us a 'and, a' I 'ad a loan a this 'atchet from some ol' girl waiting' t' cross the street. Yer 'ad t' offer 'im" (p. 23).

By showing cruelty and barbarism as normative behavior, Bond attempts to force the observer into a more critical frame of mind. Bond's use of anachronism disrupts the idea that the events of the play are merely irreverent yet humorous spoofs of historical personages. As Trussler notes, Bond's use of contemporary characters "has the positive effect of refusing an audience the moral funk-hole of safe historical separation." The use of cannibalism in Early Morning represents a behavior normally considered to be one of the most drastic and unnatural to civilized man as a commonplace activity in order to shock the audience's sensibilities and to create an awareness of the author's real targets.
Len and Joyce's crime needs to be put in the context of the larger social order presented in the play before Bond's purpose can be clarified. While it is true that the legal system disapproves of cannibalism, or else the culprits would not be put on trial, the trial itself is a travesty of justice. The verdict of guilty is clearly foregone; before Len or Joyce can even present a defense Victoria threatens to sentence. Albert cautions that it "would look better" (p. 23) if the defendants were allowed legal defense, but no one rises to take on the task. Arthur, however, refuses to accept the surface details of the crime. He insistently asks Len why he killed the man, but Len angers at the question and retorts, "I done it! Thass that! . . . I got right a be guilty same as you! An you next matey! You ain out a reach!" (p. 26).

Len indeed prophesies the trial's effect upon Arthur, for it catalyzes him to question the cruelty around him. Bond maintains that the play traces Arthur's maturation process in which Arthur learns to question and to rebel against social convention. 38

In delineating Arthur's moral development, Bond uses the grotesque again in the form of George's bodily dismemberment and disintegration. Arthur's attempts to free himself from George's physical attachment reflects his struggle to achieve independence from his unhealthy social environment. Bond explains the frequent usage of this "insistent skeleton" in his plays: "There is a certain sort
of struggle in people about various parts of themselves, some of which as one gets older one has to get rid of. And if one can't get unity between these various personalities, then one can't achieve coherent action." George is Arthur's socialized self, the part which desires to remain under Victoria's protection and guidance. Arthur is debilitated because he feels George's pain. When George is accidentally shot at the picnic, Arthur claims, "The bullet's in him. I feel his pain" (p. 38). However, he refuses to cut George off from him, even when his brother's mind is destroyed, for he partly fears that he himself might be killed if his brother dies. Significantly, George shares Arthur's heart; he is a remnant of Arthur's emotional ties to his past life. Also, as long as George lives, he is legal king because being first-born, he is legitimate heir. His presence prevents Arthur from achieving power, and Arthur's hesitancy to kill him by cutting him away results in part from Arthur's unwillingness to take responsibility for social change.

In a scene which somewhat parodies Hamlet, Albert's ghost arises from the grave and urges Arthur, "Kill the Queen. Make yourself King. Let me die in peace" (p. 49). After Arthur replies that George is the King, Arthur retorts, "Kill him too" (p. 49). After Arthur still refuses, Albert runs after George with a sword with which he had been buried, trying to cut him away from his brother. The crowing of the cock sends him back to the grave before he
can succeed, however. George then accuses Arthur of really wanting his death; Arthur denies it, but George dies anyway. Arthur refuses even then to free himself and carries the corpse with him to a cave. Victoria's soldiers discover them, and they are ordered in front of a firing squad. As a last request Arthur asks that Victoria resurrect George. She grants him the request, not expecting results, but George returns to life, albeit reluctantly. After learning Arthur requested his restoration, George accuses, "Of course! It's you! Only you would drag me back to this misery! . . . Misery! You taught me that, why can't you learn it?--and let me die in peace!" (p. 61).

This last speech triggers the second phase of Arthur's development. He decides that only in death can man achieve respite from the cruelty and brutality in life. Subsequently, the next step in human progress is to find "the great traitor: who kills both sides, his and theirs" (p. 70). Arthur decides to become that traitor himself. Like Trench in The Worlds, Arthur chooses the nihilistic view that life is utterly empty and futile and man is nothing but an insect that needs eradication. He avers, "That's what's wrong with the world; it's inhabited. To live! Life is evil spelt backwards. It is also an anagram of vile" (p. 73). He thus hatches his plot to kill everybody in a tug-of-war match. As Arthur questions the evil around him, George, now a skeleton still attached, progressively disintegrates until only a skull and a few bones remain. Such a gradual
removal of George's presence seems to indicate Arthur's approach to complete freedom and independence from previous social mores. However, Arthur's illusions collapse when he realizes that death is not the answer to bettering the human condition. As with Albert, Bond uses the appearance of ghosts to reinforce his point.

After Arthur succeeds in killing both his men and Victoria's, he proceeds to kill himself in order to complete his work. A line of ghosts of the men who have been killed arise dressed in black cowls. As Arthur sees them, he boasts, "I'm proud. I've lived a good life. Arthur the good. I set you free. You'll always be free" (p. 81). At that point, however, the ghosts draw apart and reveal that they are still joined together. Shocked by this evidence of his error in believing himself their liberator, he desperately tries to breathe life into them; but it is too late. As Arthur dies, the ghostly George emerges and re-attaches himself to his brother. As Bond states, "I see society as a wilderness inhabited (I should say haunted) by ghosts in chains." The appearance of the grotesque in the form of skeletons and ghosts symbolizes Arthur's failure to transcend the values of his society. The use of wholesale death and destruction, such as Arthur admires in Hitler, is a weapon of social moralization, no matter the goal or ideal it is used to attain.

The culmination of the grotesque significantly occurs in heaven, for there normative values are completely
inverted. In heaven Arthur is put on trial; Len's prophecy that what happened to him could also happen to Arthur comes true. To be admitted to this heaven one must first be declared guilty of a full catalogue of offenses, ranging from picking one's nose to raping grannies, grandads and little children. "Nothing has any consequences here--so there's no pain" (p. 88), Victoria explains; disgusting personal habits and abnormal criminal acts receive the same importance--that is, none at all. Moreover, cannibalism is the most frequent pastime in heaven; people grow back again "like crabs" (p. 88), as George observes. When the omnipresent Len offers Arthur the leg of a man as gratitude for a good turn Arthur had once done him, Arthur whispers, "I'm not dead. O God, let me die" (p. 88). He still suffers; therefore he believes he is alive. In Bond's heaven, as Scharine notes, literal death equals spiritual death.42 The cannibalism which was only reported on earth becomes fully actualized in heaven. People are hung, pulled apart, then eaten. Worthen comments that although cannibalism may be horrifying, it is a logical activity of individuals who place so little value on life.43

In heaven Arthur achieves full maturation. He refuses to take part in cannibalism, and by doing so he causes George to starve. The two are still emotionally connected. But Arthur tells Florence, "There's something I can't kill--and they can't kill it for me" (p. 102). Victoria realizes that Arthur's rebellion challenges the placidity of heaven;
she determines to kill Arthur once and for all. She pro-
tests, "There was peace in heaven till Arthur got here. I
can't stand people who are destructive by nature. He
doesn't belong here. He hasn't got the gift of happiness"
(p. 96). Furthermore, her son's obstinacy has started a
cult following of people who are starting to feel pain; as
Victoria complains, "He's infected them with his lunacy
. . . He's their messiah" (p. 97). Victoria and Albert
then strangle Arthur with his own beard and eat him. How-
ever, Arthur succeeds in convincing Florence to save his
head. He discovers that he loves her and this discovery
prompts him to come to terms with life and all its pain.
To Florence he exults, "I'm like a fire in the sea or the
sun underground. I'm alive. You love me" (p. 110).

In a darkly comic and grotesque scene Florence endeavors
to hide Arthur's head from Victoria by placing it under her
skirt. Arthur takes advantage of his location in mischie-
vous ways, and poor Florence tries to walk with his head
between her legs in order to convince his parents that
nothing is wrong. However, George hungrily sniffs out the
"meat," and runs off with it. Victoria determines that
this time he will truly be dead and therefore untroublesome.
She nails Arthur's regenerated body into a coffin, using
her teeth as nails. But Arthur steps out of the coffin
anyway; his hair and beard are long, and he is draped in
a long white garment. He rises in the air, hands crossed
on chest in a typical resurrection pose. The others eat,
oblivious to Arthur's ascension, as Victoria intones, "There's no dirt in heaven. There's only peace and happiness, law and order, consent and co-operation. My life's work has borne fruit. It's settled" (p. 120).

The crucial scene depicts Arthur's final physical and spiritual transcendence from the moral torpor of those around him. Trussler maintains that Arthur's ability to overcome the restrictive nature of the social code makes the play more optimistic than Saved because "Arthur is able to survive an even bleaker confrontation with reality."44 Bond's use of the grotesque as presented through bodily dismemberment, cannibalism, ghosts, and brutality, creates an exaggerated, monstrous view of a society which has become complacent, stagnant, and morally corrupt.

Some critics fault Early Morning for creating too many grotesque situations and characters, which overwhelm the viewer's comprehension of Bond's statement. A reviewer in Crowell's Handbook of Contemporary Drama concludes, "If the play's point is that behind the grand statements and recorded policies of recent history there lies only a welter of meaningless events, it is weakened rather than strengthened by the gross distortions imposed upon historical personages."45 Similarly, Arthur Arnold faults Early Morning for "too much surrealism, not well enough done, too many images clamoring for attention."46 The technique, he continues, proves more effective as a cinematic method, and the play lacks "an overall sustaining image" to support
Bond's statement. Trussler agrees but adds, "Early Morning is . . . an arresting gothic vision: but it is the only one of Bond's plays in which the moral force of the vision is diffused by the overwhelming physicality of the experience." Trussler also comments that the allegorical structure of the play is problematic, since the nature of allegory depends upon the audience's possession and recognition of a clear moral framework. Trussler judges that the allegorical structure of Early Morning is used "to challenge a moral viewpoint which, whilst it is certainly no longer fixed, is nevertheless still widely held."

Whereas the short plays such as "Stone" and "Grandma Faust" are able to sustain their allegorical structure while still infusing elements of irony, they do so by creating enough distance between audience and work so that the intellectual or objective analysis can still be applied. In Early Morning, however, the graphically shocking nature of the grotesque images prevents the audience from reaching an objective stance. Worthen comments upon the effect the play has upon disturbing critical equanimity: "We see what appears to be normality; it quickly turns to a horrifying comedy; our sanity insists that it cannot be the last word."

 Critics faulted Saved for using the grotesque in too naturalistic a framework, but they criticized Early Morning for creating an unrealistic style which obscures the underlying social commentary. None of Bond's works after Early Morning quite approach its multiplicity of horrifying
images coupled with sardonic humor. Ruby Cohn judges, "From Shakespeare Bond borrows the large tragic conception intensified by grotesque humor."  

Whereas *Early Morning* deals with a much distorted melange of political and social events ostensibly occurring in the Victorian era, *Bingo* (1974), *The Fool* (1975), and *Restoration* (1981) focus on specific historical events. Yet Bond's purpose is the same—to examine the roots of contemporary social problems. Bond writes that these plays look at "society at . . . important stages of cultural development. . . . Writers ought to spend some time dealing with the great ages of the past so that we don't fall into the error of believing in a golden age when all the answers were known--and if we could recreate the social conditions of that age we could possess these answers." Both *Bingo* and *The Fool* specifically analyze the artist's relationship to society, while *Restoration* examines the bases of class divisions.

*Bingo* depicts the last years of William Shakespeare's life, 1615-1616. Unlike the rather baroque mixture of time, events, and characters in *Early Morning*, Bond maintains that *Bingo* "is based on the material historical facts so far as they're known, and on psychological truth so far as I know it." In structure and in use of the grotesque it resembles the plays of surface realism. Like *The Sea*, the grotesque manifests itself in disturbed or mad behavior and demonstrates the effects of unnatural or brutal death.
Bingo, however, lacks the droll eccentricity of The Sea or the antic humor of Early Morning; as Cohn puts it, the laughter in this play "thin[s] toward zero."

Bond's point in Bingo is that an artist's life must reflect the same commitment and involvement in human relationships as his art does. "Art is always sane," Bond explains; "It always insists on the truth, and tries to express the justice and order that are necessary to sanity but are usually destroyed by society." But, he continues, Shakespeare's life failed to show this "need for sanity and its political expression, justice. . . . His behavior as a property-owner made him closer to Goneril than Lear. He supported and benefited from the Goneril-society--with its prisons, workhouses, whipping, starvation, mutilation, pulpit-hysteria and all the rest of it."

Specifically, Bond cites Shakespeare's failure to resist the land enclosures at Welcombe near Stratford. As a landowner, Shakespeare would profit from the higher rents he could charge on enclosed land, but the fencing off of the land forced poor tenant farmers out onto the roads with no recourse but beggary. In Bond's view, Shakespeare's passivity contributed to the social injustice and suffering resulting from the enclosures. Ultimately, Bond's major statement in Bingo echoes that of The Sea and The Worlds, that "you can only change your life by changing society and the role you have to play in it." When one's artistic values are at odds with the social life he leads, as Bond
believes Shakespeare's was, then one's art becomes a lie. And "if you lie the world stops being sane, there is no justice to condemn suffering, and no difference between guilt and innocence--and only the mad know how to live with so much despair."60

Bond uses the grotesque as an illustration of the insanity which results when the innocent suffer. Two characters especially--the Old Man and the Young Woman--exhibit Bond's most prevalent pattern of the grotesque. They are victims and scapegoats. Significantly, they carry no other identity than that of age, gender, and social role; for their function is to typify social relationships and behavior that exist in an unjust environment.

The Old Man is Shakespeare's gardener, an occupation which reflects his early and robust nature. Despite his age, his libido remains active; he still lures young girls behind hedges. However, his mind is that of a child; he is a diminished human being. The reason for his mental disturbance is grotesquely comic; his wife explains that he was impressed into the navy during a war. He was brought home when a man who was in the process of killing somebody else swung back his axe and hit the Old Man's head with the blunt end. The ironic humor is immediately darkened when his wife describes the pathetic effect his disability has on him; "He's a boy that remember what 's like t' be a man. He still hev a proper feelin' for his pride, that yont gone. Hard, that is--like bein' tied up
to a clown. Some nights he come hwome an' cry all hours."61

The Old Man's sensitivity extends itself to the Young Woman, whom he protects from the authorities. When the constables capture her for vagrancy, he cries, "They'll hang her. O dear, I do hate a hanging. People runnin' through the streets laughin' an' sportin'. . . . I allus enjoyed hangings when I were a boy. Now I can't abide 'em" (p. 19).

As well as compassion, the Old Man exhibits a delight in life which often acts as a foil to Shakespeare's cold apathy and despair. For example, when the poet wanders through a field of fresh snow, he remarks, "How clean and empty the snow is. A sea without life. An empty glass" (p. 39). The Old Man, however, exults in the snow as though it were a living creature: "I saw the fields turn white. She had a little heap set top on her yead. Like a cap. I made a slide down side t'hill. Whee! I hed such a toime. I like snow. Yont yo'?" (p. 40).

Like the Old Man, the Young Woman whom he befriends is another innocent whose mental deficiency was brought about by an inhumane social code. Orphaned and made homeless by the enclosures, she wanders through the countryside. Whipped for vagrancy, she has become as childlike as the Old Man. She describes her plight: "Yont whip us, sir? I were whip afore an' fell down in the road" (p. 9). She is pathetically defenseless against the harshness of those like the Doctor, who contends, "Doctors whip mad people.
I'd like to follow my own inclinations and let you off but I have to protect the public. . . . If you lead your sort of life you must learn to pay for it. Take her to the lock-up" (p. 9).

Forced out of a conventional existence, she and the Old Man are able to discern and laugh at the foibles of those entrenched in society. They explain to Shakespeare the delight they experience in their observations of people:

OLD MAN: She's a poor creature. But us still hev some fun.

YOUNG WOMAN: O ah, us's allus laughin'.

SHAKESPEARE: At what?

OLD MAN: O--people?

YOUNG WOMAN: What they put on t'wear.

OLD MAN: They hats!

YOUNG WOMAN: An' what they say.

OLD MAN: Try t' tell yo' yo' yont know your own name.

YOUNG WOMAN: Gallopin' arter this an' that--but they mustn't pant! 'Howdedo.'

OLD MAN: 'Howdedo.'

YOUNG WOMAN: Us laugh so us hev t' cover us yeads--

OLD MAN: So us yont git caught. (p. 14)

These two misfits resemble other of Bond's grotesques. In their alienation from society they are akin to Alen, yet they can laugh at the folly they instinctively sense around them. Like almost all the other grotesques in Bond's poetic vision, they are relatively innocent but are victims of
social morality. Inevitably, they are destroyed by that society. The Old Man is accidentally shot by his own son, a fanatical Puritan who resists the enclosures through sabotage. He mistakes his father for a law officer and kills him—ironically, in the Old Man's beloved snow-covered fields. Although he fights one injustice, the Son fails to make the necessary commitment to human values, for he circumvents responsibility for the murder by attributing the act to God: "I kill him. That'll have t' be go over proper in my yead. Lord god'll say. Likely he done it a purpose. Why else'd he affect one a his chosen with a harsh cross? The yand a god's in it someplace" (p. 50).

The Young Woman's fate is even more brutal. Like Colin in The Sea, the graphic depiction of her body after death shocks the audience with its abnormality and pathos. Unlike Colin's death, her execution is clearly a demonstration of the callousness of legal institutions in dealing with the poor and suffering. Whereas the audience never gets an opportunity to know Colin as a human being, in Bingo Bond gives the Young Woman enough stage time so that the audience can sympathize with her sufferings and empathize with her childlike innocence. Her death is more moving and more effective in reinforcing Bond's view of social oppression.

The authorities finally catch the Young Woman, whom they suspect has been aiding in setting the fires which
have been interfering with the enclosures. They hang her and then put her on a gibbet. Bond describes the gibbet as an "upright post with two short beams forming a narrow cleft. The Young Woman's head is in this and her body is suspended against the post. A sack is wrapped round her from hips to ankles. A rope is wound round the sack and the top half of her body to steady her against the post. . . . She has been dead one day. The face is grey, the eyes closed and the hair has become whispy [sic]" (p. 20). The physical presence is in itself horrible, and Bond intensifies the horror by counteracting it with a scene of ordinary domestic life. The use of dramatic contrast to intensify the emotional impact of a scene is a technique Bond uses often. In The Sea, for instance, he contrasts the presence of Colin's broken body with the intimate discussion of the two lovers, Willy and Rose. But in Bingo and in other works he uses juxtaposition to highlight the ways in which people grow increasingly desensitized to pain and suffering. Hay and Roberts also note the use of the technique: "One fundamental characteristic of Bond's plays . . . is the use of juxtaposition, counterpoint and contrast, often involving two or more points of focus on the stage, to create a dialectic through which the issues in any one scene are presented." 62 The effect of counterpoint also is important in manifesting the grotesque, for it aids in providing the balance in emotional effect that is necessary to prevent the scene from becoming purely tragic or pathetic.
Besides the gibbet, in this scene two other focal points emerge: the figure of Shakespeare, who sits silently on a bench facing the audience and the presence of two laborers, Joan and Jerome, who choose the ground in front of the hill upon which the gibbet stands as the site for their picnic lunch. Joan and Jerome are the equivalents of Len and Joyce in *Early Morning*, for they represent the view of the working classes. After regarding the body, Joan reflects, "By roights they ought-a put her on a bonfire, for lightin' fires. Or starve her in a cage for beggary" (p. 21). They continue their lunch, eating ravenously and indulging in light-hearted quarrels. When the Puritans, Wally and the Son, enter, they discuss the hanging in a clinical matter. They commend her for going to her death obediently; Joan remembers, "Proper state her were in. Yont heard a word parson say, poor chap. But she went good as gold" (p. 22). Jerome adds, "He say up yo' git, my gal, an' up she git" (p. 22). Joan offers more details which describe the girl's suffering: "When her toime come she couldn't hold a candle straight t' see where she were goin'. She die summat slow. No family or friends t' swing on her legs" (p. 22). Since Joan and Jerome's livelihood depends upon their working of the enclosed farmland, their attitude reflects that of the un-enlightened--those who are too blinded by self-interest to recognize the threat to humanity which her death represents. Therefore they condemn the girl for lighting fires which
destroy the fences. To Bond, who subtitles the play "Scenes of money and death," the couple's behavior typifies those who replace human values with money values. He asserts, "A consumer society depends on its members being avaricious, ostentatious, gluttonous, envious, wasteful, selfish and inhuman. Officially we teach morality but if we all became 'good' the economy would collapse. Affluent people can't afford ten commandments."

The representatives of religious morality are Wally and the Son. Like the laborers they also fail to exhibit compassion or understanding for the girl. To them the suffering and death of another is a spiritual sign of the Lord's fearful power to punish sin. The Son proclaims, "Death bring out her true life; brothers. Look, her eyes be shut agin the truth. There's blood trickle down the corner a her mouth. Her teeth snap at her flesh while her die. Be solemn, brother, think a lord god. . . . Day an' day an' day he set the sun t' rise an' shine a way for his saints on earth an' us throw us shadow cross it. God weep" (p. 23). Theirs is a dark religion which emphasizes sin and death rather than love and life. They negate humane values as obstacles in God's path. As the Son exhorts, "O harden your yeart with a gladsome mind, good people. Tent for us t' question lord god's way. Sin were 'er cross an her bore it afore us for a sign. Lord god send the wolf an' the shepherd to the sheep" (p. 24).

Contrary to the couple's flinty pragmatism or the
Puritans' cold zealotry, Shakespeare finally becomes sensitive to human cruelty. The girl's execution reminds him of the vicious bear baitings he has witnessed. He wonders, "What does it cost to stay alive? I'm stupefied at the suffering I've seen. . . . There's no higher wisdom of silence. No face brooding over the water. When I go to my theatre I walk under sixteen severed heads on a gate. You hear bears in the pit while my characters talk" (p. 26).

He turns to the gibbet and comments, "The marks on her face are men's hands. Won't they be washed away?" (p. 28).

This scene marks the end of the second part; as in Bond's other plays, a confrontation with the grotesque catalyzes the protagonist's discovery that his society needs to be changed. Peter acknowledges that "Bingo is a play of conscience. The very structure shows its severe moral intention: the first three scenes relate Shakespeare's offense, the second three present his retribution."

Stricken with remorse for his part in robbing the people of their living by supporting the enclosures, he realizes that his efforts to secure comfort have contributed to human misery: "I howled when they suffered, but they were whipped and hanged so that I could be free. . . . if children go in rags we make the wind. If the table's empty we blight the harvest. . . . God made the elements but we inflict them on each other" (p. 48). Like his own character of Lear, Shakespeare finally acknowledges his responsibility for the welfare of others.
The retribution he decides upon is suicide. Shakespeare is one of the few major characters in Bond's plays who takes his own life. Arthur had done so in Early Morning but was resurrected in heaven so that he could learn to value life. While other characters kill or are themselves killed, the deaths often contribute in some way to positive human action or they catalyze a recognition of the need for that action in others. To Shakespeare, however, it is too late for restitution except in death. Furthermore, he perpetuates the money values by passing on his wealth to his stolidly middle-class and property conscious daughter and wife. However, even in this action there are ironic overtones, for history reports that the playwright left his wife only his second-best bed, and Judith received much less in the will than her sister Susanna. Bond concludes the last scene as Judith desperately searches for another version of the will, refusing to believe the one her father has had handed to her through the door is the final one. In her search, she notices her father writhing on the floor in agony from the poison he has taken. She ignores him, ascribing his pain to a "little attack" (p. 51) and goes on frenziedly searching as the play ends.

Bingo seems to lack the vitality of Bond's other works, especially in its central character. To Bond, active or restless curiosity indicates a pro-life instinct, which is evident in characters such as Scopey, Len, Arthur, and Willy. In this play, however, the pro-life instinct
resides in auxiliary characters like the Old Man and the Young Woman, but they are killed. Those left alive in the play either are the representatives of conventional morality or dissenters like the Puritans who live for a spiritual future rather than the present. Peter condemns Bond for portraying characters who remain oblivious to the sufferings of others, and Bond's biographer in Crowell's Handbook agrees that "circumstances, psychology, and the failure of communication combine to prevent co-operation." Perhaps these criticisms apply more directly to Bingo than other of Bond's plays which have received the same comments.

Bingo is also more explicit in its ideological statements than Early Morning, Saved, or The Pope's Wedding. Shakespeare's soliloquies in the latter portions of the play present Bond's themes: that a writer should examine the causes of human conflict ("But only a god or a devil can write in other men's blood and not ask why they spilt it and what it cost" [p. 43]); that money subverts human values ("I loved you with money. . . . But money always turns to hate" [p. 41]); and that an artist must involve himself in bettering the human condition ("There's a taste of bitterness in my mouth. . . . I could have done so much" [p. 48]). However, Peter deems that the dialogue is overwritten and over-intellectualized: "Bond the puritan moralist executes Shakespeare; Bond the poet . . . seems to co-operate without conviction." Trussler believes that Bingo "elaborates commonplace sentiment," while Worthen...
contends that the characters are too much mouthpieces for varying ideologies: "I don't believe they move inside us, as worrying part of our own humanity, with the insistence of, say, the characters of The Sea." Trussler, on the other hand, admires the vivid characterization of the supporting characters. While passive protagonists have become commonplace in contemporary drama, they seem out of place in Bond's dramatic vision, which demands involvement and commitment in human affairs. Shakespeare's passivity places him in the background instead of creating a focal point for the action. The play demands that an audience use their knowledge of Shakespearean drama with its persistently questing protagonists in order to counterpoint the withdrawn individual presented on stage. While it is this very withdrawal which Bond wishes to criticize, the observer wishes to see more of the intellectual strength and vitality which must lie behind the great creative vision at work in Shakespeare's drama. It seems ironic that the most grotesque characters are the most alive. Despite or perhaps because of their damaged mental faculties, the Old Man and the Young Woman exhibit a willingness to open themselves up to life, even if this willingness results in their ultimate destruction. Because the grotesque is often a by-product of some aspect of the life processes, whether from decay, generation, or movement, it can often dominate a scene in which it occurs. Bond's plays at times have been faulted for letting the cruel and abnormal overshadow
the work, and in Bingo the characters which manifest the grotesque are perhaps more interesting than the central figure.

In The Fool the central character himself becomes a grotesque in much the same way as do the two supporting characters in Bingo. In this case, society's refusal to grant an artist serious consideration triggers his mental collapse. Bingo probes the necessity for an artist to become involved in the social development of his environment: The Fool examines society's need to grant an artist a voice in creating a healthy culture. The protagonist of The Fool is John Clare, a farm laborer who wrote poetry about the time of the Industrial Revolution. The grotesque closely corresponds with Clare's mental deterioration; ghosts, violence, and madness increase as Clare's insanity progressively isolates him from society. As in Bingo, supporting characters either inflict or are victims of violence when they fight the industrialization which threatens their livelihoods.

In The Fool the upper and lower classes conflict when the men of property strip their lands of forests and game and dam their streams to provide factories with the raw materials for manufacture. The laborers who depend upon farm tenantry to feed their families are thus left destitute. The first acts of violence occur when some of the workers strike back by robbing and vandalizing the houses of the rich. A young boy, Lawrence, is shot and drags himself
into the underbrush of the forest. Echoes of the White Figure of *The Worlds* appear in Bond's description of the boy: "His head is wrapped in the sheet. It seems an enormous bundle. He starts to cry." The boy's attempts to crawl are pathetically futile. His blood soaks the sheet, which unwinds from his head and drags over the ground, creating a shroudlike effect. Indeed, the sheet literally becomes a shroud when the gentlemen who have been robbed kill him. The ghostly image created by the winding sheet and the boy's suffering creates the grotesque, which Bond uses to elicit a sympathetic response for the plight of the workers.

A second, closely-connected grotesque image occurs in the same scene. Representing the conventional morality used by the upper classes to lend an air of sanctimony to their abuse of the land, the Parson happens upon the wounded boy in the forest. He recognizes the breach which has split the classes apart. For example, he wonders if when "I ride down a lane and meet a labourer can we look each other in the face? I baptized him and we can't give each other a decent good morning. . . . We'll be reduced to relying on anger or strength or our wits--master and servant. And then what are we?--animals trying to live in houses" (p. 21). Nevertheless, he is too ensconced in his own privileged position to understand anything but the most superficial reasons for their criminal actions. Just as Lawrence becomes a victim of upper class violence, the
Parson functions as a target for the anger of the workers. Blaming the gentry for the boy's hurt, the laborers strip the clergyman of his jewelry and fine clothes; in their eyes his finery is a badge of the materialistic instinct which has been the major force in robbing them of their living. As Lawrence lies shivering in his bloody sheet, they strip the Parson of his clothing. They then taunt him for his plump, soft skin: "Where you stole that flesh boy?" Darkie mocks, "Your flesh is stolen goods. You're covered in stolen goods when you strip! . . . You call us thief when we took silver. You took us flesh!" (p. 24). Darkie then forces the Parson to cover himself with the boy's bloody linen.

Bond uses the parallel images of the pathetic young worker and the more ludicrous clergyman to produce an emotional focus to the idea of class exploitation. Unlike most of his other plays, a member of the entrenched social system is also made physically grotesque; Bond therefore suggests that social injustice debases rich and poor alike. As Bond states in his introduction to The Fool, "An animal doesn't know it's an animal but when men are irrational they know or sense that they are worse, more lost, than animals" (p. ix).

An even more visually forceful use of counterpoint which contributes to the grotesque effect occurs in a scene set in Hyde Park. As Clare discusses his poetry with a fellow artist, Charles Lamb, and two of his patrons, a
brutal boxing match between an Irishman and a black man
takes place in the background. Bond uses this scene to
present two conflicting views of the artist's purpose in
society. Clare's benefactress, Mrs. Emmerson, represents
the Romantic view of art as the expression of spiritual
truths and ethereal beauty. She gushes, "See, Mr. Clare,
we have grass and trees in this park. Do they not inspire
you? O to be touched by the wings! The rushing of the
spirit! We earthly ones can but crane our necks to watch
you soar!" (p. 36). She and the Admiral, another patron,
object to the social criticism in Clare's poems. These
criticisms, as the Admiral puts it, "smack of radicalism"
(p. 42). He asks, "Who controls the brute in man? Polite
society. Well, your verse undermines its authority. There'd
be chaos" (p. 43). Bond specifically attacks this view of
human nature in his introduction: "Our myth is that we are
essentially violent but that there are scientific and tech­
nological means of controlling our violence--and we live out
our myth by creating the weapons of death" (p. xi).

Bond also faults those like Mrs. Emmerson and the
Admiral who believe art has no relationship to society.
When Mrs. Emmerson tells Charles Lamb that as a poet he has
"no call to go round putting ideas in people's heads" (p.
39), she represents to Bond the common nineteenth-century
idea "that Art was not a necessity, and was not an element
in the sanity of ordinary people."75 Opposing her viewpoint
is the poet and essayist Charles Lamb. He tells her, "Truth
isn't governed by the laws of supply and demand. When it's scarce its price goes down. . . . The goddess of wisdom is a bird of prey, the owl. . . . If you try to let her out she savages your hand. Only a wise man tries to do that--or another sort of fool" (p. 39). Bond affirms Lamb's view. He states, "Art is beautiful only in the broadest sense because it can include death and ugliness. But it can never commit itself to despair or the irrational" (p. xvi).

The background fight creates an ironic framework for the characters' discussion, since its vicious nature brings home the nature of the reality which Clare's benefactors wish to evade. As the match continues, the spectators grow increasingly more callous and bloodthirsty. One asserts, "Don't thrash him too soon. No better pastime than watching a big punchy bruiser taking punishment. Don't let the fella duck it by passing out" (p. 41). Another shouts, "Blood on his gob! Pump the fella's tummy up in his mouth" (p. 44).

The fight also evokes ethnic and racial prejudice; it is significant that the opponents are members of oppressed groups--the Irish and the blacks. The black, Porter, is called a "black ape" (p. 41); and even the Admiral's praise reinforces racial stereotypes: "Well done the black man! Had them on our ships. Go to pieces in a storm--all whites of eyes and flashing teeth--but put a cutlass in their hands and bellow at them--what soldiers!" (p. 45). About the Irishman they urge, "Send him back to his Irish bog" (p. 41), and "insolent celtic puppy. . . . take his feet off the
ground. . . . No better sight than watching them knocked through the air" (p. 45).

The match ends with the black man's victory; his backers collect their bets, leaving the Irishman exhausted and penniless. Clare asks him, "Did he hurt yoo boy?" (p. 47), to which the Irishman retorts, "What bloody stupid English question is that? D'you think I have no feelin's?" (p. 47). But in the eyes of the English, they are dehumanized commodities to be exploited for profit. One backer even refers to the food he has bought for a fighter as "straw and oats and water" (p. 47). The insensitive treatment of the boxers, who are forced into painful degradation for the sake of a livelihood, mirrors the brutalized condition of the laborers. Bond's placing of the fight in the middle of a peaceful park parallels the park scene in Saved to some extent, for the setting acts as a disturbing contrast to the nature of the action. Furthermore, the obliviousness of the patrons to the vulgarity of the match creates an emotional dissonance for the audience which can also be painfully comic. For instance, after such lines from the backers as "Hack at him Porter. Up the blackman" and "Left jab then tap the solar plexus" (p. 37), Mrs. Emmerson comments, "This is a popular refuge for poets. Away from the hot London streets" (p. 37). The inherent irony of the scene therefore places the everyday into a probing light. As Coult notes, Bond "writes about ordinary things and shows them to be extraordinary. Cruelty is ordinary in the sense that it is commonplace. To see it
as extraordinary, too, is to remain sensitive to the offence it gives to sanity." 76

The next scene portrays the social and domestic opposition to his writing which gradually erodes Clare's spirit and foreshadows the fully grotesque occurrences in the scene which follows. Five years have passed and Clare cannot sell his poems. Nagged by his wife to take up farm work again, Clare protests, "Can't live like that. Can't help what I am. God know I wish I couldn't write me name! But my mind git full a songs an' I on't feel a man if I on't write 'em down" (p. 50). His plight increasingly reminds him of the boxers: "Us'll hev t' git a proper job. Somethin' drastic t' bring in proper money. Set up boxin'. They git paid for bein' knocked about. I git knock about. Why on't I paid for it?" (p. 54). Clare recognizes that his society places more value on the pummeling of men's flesh than on artistic creativity.

Concerned with what to her are incoherent ramblings, Patty Clare calls upon the town authorities to have her husband treated for mental illness. Clare turns on them bitterly, defending his artistic creativity as having more value than their occupations: "You cut your fields up small so you could eat 'em better. I've eat my portion of the universe an' I shall die of it. It was bitter fruit. But I had more out the stones in your field than you had out the harvest" (p. 57). The scene ends as he is taken away by force to the asylum.
The scene which follows vividly demonstrates Clare's mental confusion; it contains several grotesque figures which emanate from Clare's disturbed imagination. After four years in the asylum he has escaped. He encounters two figures from his past--the defiant laborer Darkie, who had been hung for his part in the robberies, and Mary, a gypsy girl who was once Clare's lover. Significantly, Clare envisions Darkie as a boxer, physically and mentally diminished from his bouts. His ex-lover Mary also suffers the ravages of age and destitution. Bond describes her as "grotesque, filthy, ugly" (p. 60). They are both symbols of freedom; Darkie combines the rebellious spirit of the laborer with the endurance of the boxers. Mary represents sexual liberation to Clare, who has always regarded her as his "real" wife. He tells her, "I had you once. Lived all my life off that. . . . Everything goo t' gither in you" (p. 61). But they are grotesques, victims like Clare of conventional morality and social repression. Darkie, for example, bears the mark of the hangman's rope on his neck. He has been blinded by beatings and cannot take nourishment. When Mary gives him bread, he moans, "On't kip in. Chew an' chew but on't know how t' swallow. . . . I'm hungry an' I can't swallow" (pp. 62-63). His inability to eat though starving recalls George and Arthur's situation in Early Morning, which also symbolized a lack of spiritual and moral nourishment in their environment.

Clare loses consciousness and the entrance of three
Irish workers disrupts the surrealistic nature of the scene. They are the substantial counterparts of the dream characters, for like them they live on the edge of society, searching for work on the land from which they have been displaced. Despite their poverty, they face life with a vigorously earthy humor. One remarks wryly, "I'll never git rich: I work too bloody hard" (p. 63). When Clare awakens and informs them that his woman (Mary) is off in the forest, they eagerly offer him food if he will let them lie with her. Of course, they fail to find her, but their efforts to retaliate are interrupted by the entrance of the gameskeeper, who runs them off. Clare then realizes that Mary and Darkie were only figments of his imagination, and he muses upon what he could have done if they had been real: "We should hev come t' gither. She git the bread. He crack the heads when they come after us. An' I--I'ld hev teach him how to eat. I am a poet an' I teach men how to eat" (p. 66). But salvation is impossible at this point, and he resigns himself to going home to wait for the asylum keeper.

The final scene takes place in the asylum. Twenty-three years have past since Clare has seen his wife. At the urging of Lord Milton she comes to visit. At this point Clare is an old, pathetically shrunken man who stammers incoherently; only Mary Lamb, Charles' mad sister, can interpret. Clare's physical and mental decay are grotesque. Bond describes him as a "shrivelled puppet. His head nods like a doll's. His face is white" (p. 68). The presence
of the other inmates adds to the effect of absurdity and waste. A man in a straight-jacket rolls in, "old, grey, . . . and completely unrecognizable. He makes rhythmic sounds. . . . His neck is stretched stiff" (p. 68). Mary Lamb brags of setting her brother's coach on fire, but a man who believes he is Napoleon claims she is only trying to impress since her brother really died of drink.

Despite the apparent hopelessness of the scene, Bond maintains in his introduction that he did not mean it to be without affirmation: "In this scene I've tried to show that rational processes were still being worked out even in the apparently insane world of nineteenth-century Europe" (p. xvi). Indeed, the overall atmosphere evoked is that of a gently nostalgic sadness rather than violent mental upheaval. Lord Milton regrets the way that technological changes have affected the next generation: "I hate my son. A vicious bastard. I was cruel sometime. Foolish. But did I hate? No. Never a hater. He hates. Flicks his wrist as if he's holding a whip. . . . In love with his factories" (p. 69). Patty also expresses some regret for the turn their lives have taken: "Sorry you on't had a proper life. Us hev t' make the most of what there is. . . . Learn some way t' stay on top. I'd be a fool t' cry now" (p. 71). Although there is little of the explicit recognition of responsibility such as Shakespeare experiences, Bond professes that he wishes the meaning to be realized by the audience rather than by the characters: "I want to
make the play be more a statement to the audience which the audience has to complete. I want to say, look, this is what happened, this is the story of the man's life. This is what made these things happen."\textsuperscript{77}

Bond's use of the grotesque in \textit{The Fool} integrates efficiently with the play's structure. Unlike the overwhelming profusion of grotesquely disturbing images in \textit{Early Morning}, the manifestation of the grotesque in \textit{The Fool} correlates logically with Clare's disintegration. Bond maintains aesthetic probability in the work while still providing it with emotional depth and focus.

While \textit{Bingo} examines social conditions in the seventeenth century and \textit{Early Morning} and \textit{The Fool} in the nineteenth century, \textit{Restoration} (1981) explores the social structure of eighteenth century England. However, Bond also notes on the playbill that it could be set at "another place at another time." As the title implies, Bond uses many of the conventions of Restoration comedy, but Robert Hewison notes that his message concerns "property, and how ownership of property leads to ownership of the law, and ownership of language."\textsuperscript{78} Bond continues his examination of societal problems; in \textit{Restoration} he points a finger at internal conflicts which keep the lower class subservient to the upper and middle classes. Irving Wardle observes that Bond's pitting of servant against servant "introduces an element of social complexity beyond the black and white class divisions."\textsuperscript{79}

In conveying the theme, Bond chooses a style which
incorporates the witty dialogue and farcical action of Restoration comedy with Brechtian songs which break the action by commenting directly upon it. The grotesque almost disappears in this play, but in the few minutes when it does emerge, it corresponds with previous patterns which associate the element with violence and suffering.

As is usual with Bond, characters are defined by the varying degree of social consciousness which they possess. The upper classes, the most obviously caricatured, provide much of the humor. The opening scene introduces the foppish Lord Are, a dissolute aristocrat whose fortunes have been depleted to the point where he must seek the hand of a wealthy iron manufacturer's daughter, Ann Hardache. Are concerns himself only with superficial appearances; he contrives to win Ann's affection by having his servant prop him against a tree in the languid pose of a country gentleman, a portrait of which he handily brings with him to study. He disdains the natural beauty of the country and treats his servants with haughty arrogance. Once married, Are treats his wife with equal contempt. Possessing a degree of cunning, he uses his wit merely to further his own ends. Are represents the mercenary values of the ruling class, wherein resides ultimate power. As Are describes himself, "In my person I am society, the symbol of authority, the figurehead of law and order."80

Are's frank self-awareness contrasts with the hypocrisy of Hardache, Ann's father. The merchant wants to marry off
his daughter in order to buy the accoutrements and power of titled authority, but he pays lip service to the sanctity of domestic life. His daughter Ann is shallow and shrewish, whose main desire is to become a wealthy widow as quickly as possible. "Can't you find one in a wheel-chair," she complains, "or at least on a crutch, so a body might hope?" (p. 12). These characters not only provide comic relief, but more significantly symbolize the exploitative nature of the upper and middle classes. Each depends upon the other; the middle class provides the wealth which sustains the nobility, and the nobility grants the privileges of blood by interbreeding with the bourgeois.

The relationship of the different classes provides the focus of the play, but Bond centers primarily on those characteristics of the serving classes which contribute to social stratification. Like the upper classes, the servants exhibit different degrees of awareness. The majority are either too steeped in self-interest or too accepting of traditional mores to desire to circumvent the system. Mrs. Hedges and her son, Bob, naively and unquestioningly follow the social code. "Disorder's unprofitable all round" (p. 17), the Mother maintains; she believes that any disruption of the conventional order will upset decorum, and chaos will result. She takes pride in her ability to polish the silver, an ability learned because her family "polished this silver so long the pattern's rub off" (p. 28). With no desire or opportunity to become educated, she does not even
want to enjoy the material possessions she safeguards. When her daughter-in-law urges her to use the silver herself, she retorts, "Don't be cheeky. Bad 'nough clean 'em t' let others make 'em dirty" (p. 28). Such simple pragmatism may increase efficiency, but Bond will demonstrate how it helps to cause the destruction of her family.

Bob Hedges, her son, has a similar outlook. He trusts the legal and social system will do ultimate good; his naivety promulgates class divisions. Bob asserts, "Ten't a question of good. Question of law. Ont break it usself, an' if someone else do: we stay on the right side an' tell" (p. 33). His unwillingness to question convention, like his mother's, contributes to his downfall.

The city servant, Frank, contrasts with the Hedges because he is fully aware of the machinations of society; this recognition allows him to maneuver within that society to his advantage. One of Bond's amoral characters, his utter cynicism creates a spiritual void that can be as destructive as the Hedges' gullibility. Frank defends his theft of a spoon by contending, "Yer have to steal in my job if yer wanna live. Yer fetch an' carry for 'em, pick 'em up, get 'em upstairs, put 'em to bed, clean up the spew. Stands to reason they drop anythin'--it's yourn" (p. 33).

Rose, the black servant and Bob's wife, attains the fullest integration of reason and compassion. Her slave heritage aligns her sympathies with those socially oppressed. She knows how to circumvent authority, although even she
must experience personal tragedy before she can take the most direct course against injustice.

When these varying outlooks clash, the grotesque is most in evidence. When a spoon is found missing, Bob and his mother fear the social and legal repercussions that will ensue if the culprit goes free. They suspect Frank, and they provoke him into confession. In order to keep Frank safely confined while they summon the officials, the servants shut him up in a trunk. The terrified culprit kicks the trunk violently. Convinced he is suffocating, Frank cries, "Can't breathe! Help! I'll die!" (Shakes the lid with his hands, then tramples his feet on the end of the chest. . . . All the while he groans)" (p. 35). The trunk takes on characteristics of the grotesque, since Frank's struggles lend it almost human animation. The incongruous mixture of the animate and inanimate reinforces the abnormality of Frank's plight. This confrontation with suffering triggers Rose's determination to help Frank escape. She enters, observes the chest, then frees Frank. Furthermore, she arranges to hide him in the barn until the hue and cry over his escape abates.

When Bob accuses her of betrayal, she reminds him that her background has schooled her well in the ways of white man's justice, and her compassion lies therefore with those who receive the brunt of it. "I won't do the things I grew up to hate" (p. 38), she tells her husband. The song which concludes the scene raises the questions of morality which
Rose has contemplated:

A man sits hunched in a cell  
People dance in the street  
Shall we stretch our hands through the bars  
Or run to the street and dance in triumph? (p. 40)

Later, the tables turn on Bob when he himself becomes the accused; in this case the grotesque punctuates the satire against the upper class and also helps to emphasize the callousness with which the nobility treats the lower class. Once again the grotesque becomes associated with a scapegoat. Now Are's wife, Ann, frets at his refusal to allow her to go to London. She schemes to disguise herself as a ghost to frighten him into granting her desire. But Are remains unmoved by the appearance of the "apparition," and instead castigates her for her unfashionable attire: "Ye gad! What d'ye know of fashion? I'll wear something a sight more sprightly to be buried in!" (p. 41). In an attempt to evoke his paternal feelings, Ann tells him in her role of ghost that his wife is pregnant and must return to London or "'tis forever cursed" (p. 41). This plan backfires, for Are asserts that he will be the one instead of his wife to flee to London, because her "morning sickness will be nauseous" (p. 42).

Ann perseveres in her attempts to dissuade Lord Are, until she finally goads him into taking up his rapier against her. He explains, "I would not be inhospital to anyone but ye have a place. . . . A man may breakfast at peace in his home before he's reminded there is religion--or it's not England!" (p. 43). With those words, he runs her through with his sword. Realizing then who she really is, Are dreads that if
found out, he would look ridiculous. He props her up in her chair at the table and playfully addresses the corpse: "Faith thy silence is wonderful! Hadst thou behaved so when thou livest thou mightst have lived longer" (p. 44).

Up to this point the grotesque emanates from the combination of Are's nonchalance with the enormity of what he has done, although Ann and Are are distanced enough from the audience's sympathies to prevent any strong emotional reactions other than laughter to the murder. The humor darkens, however, when Are decides to pin the deed on Bob. When the servant comes with Are's breakfast, he sees Ann's body and becomes unnerved. Are takes advantage of his fright and tells Bob that the ghost is coming after him. He advises the hapless youth to shut his eyes "lest it ensnare" (p. 48) him, and to hold out the rapier. Are then picks up Ann's body and advances it toward Bob, while making ghost sounds. As the terrified servant cowers, Are pushes Ann onto the point of the rapier that Bob holds. When she topples off the point, Are tells Bob that she was merely masquerading as a prank, and that Bob has murdered her. Assuring the young man that he will help him, Are urges Mrs. Hedges, who has entered, to go for the magistrate. To save his mother the anguish, Bob offers to turn himself in, but Are contends, "'Tis handsome Bob, but I cannot let a murderer wander the fields. Superstition is rife: the hands would refuse to harvest" (p. 49). Are leaves to summon a messenger, and mother and son console each other by the fact that Are and
his powerful friends will protect them. Describing his complete lack of rebellious feelings, Mrs. Hedges cries, "Yoo ont step out a line before--not till yoo married. . . . Why! if they had to find an ordinary chap they ont find one more ordinary than yoo boy" (p. 49). But it is not the meek who inherit the earth, as Bond will point out, but the wealthy.

This scene climaxes the first part of the play's action. The grotesque reinforces the farcical tone, but Are's victimization of Bob also reminds the audience of the point being made—that the ruling class takes advantage of the lower class, and that the lower class abets this oppression through its refusal to challenge their masters' authority. Even Ann gains some sympathy when her body is so scurrilously handled. Her transformation into a grotesque figure thereby mitigates somewhat the negative reaction engendered by her previous behavior. Are's treatment of her and Bob demonstrates a cunningness unevidenced before. The grotesque catalyzes these various reactions in both characters and audience.

The darkest side of the grotesque manifests in the next scene, which begins the second part. Frank and Bob are both incarcerated, and their attitudes, although vastly different, again emblemit values which Bond wishes to point to as defeatist. Rose begins to suspect the real circumstances of Ann's murder, but Are uses the virtues of pride and patriotism as weapons in persuading Bob against giving damaging testimony. Are wheedles, "Would ye give evidence against me
Bob. A lord dragged down by a working man? 'Tis against all civil order... Make me a fool or a villain and the mob will dance in the street. If ye will be innocent, Bob, anarchy must triumph, your windows be broken, your mother's head cracked and your wife stoned for a blackmoor" (p. 56).

"The Gentleman," the song which follows Are's plea, re-states the idea that injustice is usually carried out in the name of morality: "When white hands will do the work, why make your hands red?" (p. 57). Despite Rose's urgings, Bob submits to Are's arguments, maintaining, "We accuse him we'll starve gal. Never git another job's long's we live" (p. 57).

While Bob chooses to acquiesce to social dictates, Frank exhibits complete anarchism in his bitter hatred for all law and morality. He rails against Are and the Parson and boasts about his criminal exploits after his escape: "Sold the silver and lived like a lord. Whored in the mornin', whored in the afternoon, whored in the even' when I weren't pissed!" (p. 57). Even the Parson recognizes that Frank is beyond all reason because he is beyond all hope: "When they're to hang there's nothing to threaten them with. Not even hell. In this atheistical age they don't believe in it" (p. 58).

Frank's desperation has already made him spiritually and mentally grotesque, and soon his suffering turns him into a physical grotesque as well. He raves at Are, and falls onto the floor in a fit. The action remains unseen but is described by the Parson: "Your lordship's adjacency brings on convulsions.
He crawls upon his stomach on the floor. He'll die before scaffolding day!" (p. 59). He further calls Frank a "serpent or a great newt! . . . 'Tis from Revelations!" (p. 59). Finally, Frank appears and "lurches into the cell. His hands are manacled. His leg chain pulls him short and he crashes to the floor" (p. 60). The action concludes with the "Song of Talking," sung by Bob and Frank, which details the spiritual alienation which separates human beings until violence and suffering force them into realizing and sharing their basic humanity. The song describes how a tough, silent man is felled one day by the accidental blow of a press-hammer. His comrade, moved by the inexplicableness of the event and the man, "nurse[s] him on the concrete floor" (p. 60) as he dies.

In Restoration Bond continues his denunciation of the types of mentality which promulgate the artificiality of the class structure. Bob's gullible trust and Frank's amoral despair only promote the self-serving interests of the bourgeois and the nobility. Frank's rebellion at least gives him a certain type of courage, which seems more admirable than Bob's frightened subservience, but his physical and mental deterioration emphasizes his impotence. With no dignity left to reinstate his value as a human being, Frank's metamorphosis into a grotesque forces the audience to try to recognize the source of his devaluation. As Bond stresses in the closing song, sometimes a person must undergo the shock of witnessing man in extreme suffering before he can
connect with him.

The remainder of the play traces Bob's, and especially Rose's, awareness of their degraded condition. Finally recognizing Are's duplicity, Bob asks, "Where did I go wrong? I know well enough. . . . Long ago I should hev put my boot in their teeth every time the bastards smiled at me. But I've left it late. Now it's dark. Black. Black. Black" (pp. 78-79). It is too late for Bob to make restitution for his blindness, and he is led to the gallows with Frank at the end, an unwitting puppet of the social machine.

Although Rose from the beginning understands the nature of the social system, her efforts to save her husband fail. She enlists Hardache's aid, for she knows Hardache will gain Ann's inheritance if Are is convicted of murder. But Hardache betrays her by making a deal with Are; if Are will sign over the rights to the coal deposits under his lands, Hardache will allow him to keep his title and lands. Monetary interests are Hardache's Bible, as Rose has realized, but they prove treacherous foundations for her schemes. In a second attempt she appeals to Lord Are's mother, who was turned out of the house by her son. Lady Are at first refuses, declaring, "If Society protest every time the law is an ass no one will respect it" (p. 82). But Rose's spirited anger changes her mind, and she decides to revenge herself against her son by granting Bob a pardon; to add sauce to her vengeance she decides to send him a copy of the reprieve. However, Are bribes the messenger to relinquish the original and in a
maliciously sly maneuver, Are gives the life-saving document to Bob's illiterate mother, who mistakenly believes it to be kindling and burns it. Her ignorance and unquestioning faith in the rights of the nobility become the instruments of her son's demise and her own desolation.

The final scene purveys the most crucial message to be gained from the gloomy action of the second half--that only through knowledge and action can man change his condition. Rose stands alone on London Bridge after her husband's execution, her speech full of grotesque imagery: "I stand on London Bridge. Bodies float in the sky and sink towards the horizon. Crocodiles drift in the Thames. . . . Men walk the streets with chains hanging from their mouths. . . . What have I learned? If nothing, then I was hanged" (p. 99). She sings the final song, the title of which summarizes the play's major idea: "Man Is What He Knows." It concludes, "But we may know who we are and where we go" (p. 100). Rose resolves to seek active restitution for her husband's death: "I must have one hand of iron and the other of steel" (p. 100).

Although the grotesque appears with less intensity or frequency than in the other history plays, it serves the same purpose of helping to locate the emotional and rational responses of the audience. The grotesque is mostly connected with violence, such as Frank's imprisonment and Ann's murder; Wardle notes the vivid effect of these moments: "Much the most vital passages in Restoration are those when violence
takes over either above or below stairs." The grotesque evokes the emotional response which directs the audience's sympathies while the songs convey the rational expression of Bond's ideology. Some critics have objected to their didactic effect. Wendy Salkind states, "Many of the songs' allegories tend to preach at us, and the political statement is made palatable only through its juxtaposition with the frivolity and wit of the dialogue." Wardle disapproves of "Bond's folk drama style: presenting dire events in a matter-of-fact manner, and breaking off for sage parables--as if told to children but serving only to confuse the issue." In Restoration Bond continues a movement away from reliance upon the grotesque as a shock technique which startles viewers into reflection and turns instead toward a more explicit pronouncement of his perspective in dialogue or lyric, subsequently opening him to charges of excessive moralism or didacticism. These criticisms are ironic in the light of previous accusations that Bond's profusion of brutal and abnormal events obfuscated his rational purpose. Nevertheless, the motif of physical and mental deviancy in Restoration has the same effect as in the other history plays--to dramatize the psychical consequences of social values that conflict with human needs. If at times the grotesque threatens to overshadow or subvert the rational contemplation of the dialectic at work in the plays, it nevertheless is a consistent and powerful metaphor which remains close to the heart of Bond's vision of art. "Art has always looked at the
atrocities of the age in which it was created," he avers; in this way it "places the individual in the world and interprets the world in accordance with possibilities and human needs."
ENDNOTES: CHAPTER THREE


3 Bond, "Black Mass," Gambit 5, No. 17, 48-55. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.

4 Scharine, The Plays of Edward Bond, p. 17.

5 Ibid., p. 267.


7 Bond, Prefatory poem in A-A-America! and Stone (London: Eyre Methuen, 1976), p. 46. Subsequent references to "Stone" will be taken from this edition and cited within the text by page number.


9 Bond, "Grandma Faust," in A-A-America! and Stone, p. 7. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.


11 Bond, Letter to Tony Coult, quoted in Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 75.


14 Heller, p. 20.
15 Ibid., pp. 16-17.


23 Ibid.

24 Ibid., p. 30.

25 Shloss, pp. 41-42.

26 Ibid., p. 49.


28 Ibid., p. 70.


30 Bond, *Early Morning*, p. 36. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.


32 Bond, Interview with Tony Coult, *Plays and Players*, p. 10.

33 Trussler, p. 16.

34 Scharine, p. 100.


36 Anon., Preface to *Early Morning*, no page.
37 Trussler, p. 25.
38 Coult, pp. 55-56.
40 Ibid.
42 Scharine, p. 264.
43 Worthen, p. 472.
44 Trussler, p. 16.
47 Arnold, pp. 17-18.
48 Trussler, p. 18.
49 Ibid., p. 16.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
52 Cohn, in Contemporary Dramatists, p. 104.
55 Cohn, in Contemporary Dramatists, p. 104.
56 Bond, Introduction to Bingo, p. xi.
57 Ibid., p. xii.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid., p. xvi.
60 Ibid., pp. x-xi.
Bond, Bingo, in Bingo and The Sea, p. 11. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.

Hay and Roberts, Bond: A Study of His Plays, p. 271.

Bond, Introduction to Bingo, p. xiii.

Ibid.

Peter, p. 29.


Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 43.

Peter, p. 28.


Peter, p. 32.

Trussler, p. 32.

Worthen, p. 478.

Trussler, p. 33.

Bond, The Fool, in The Fool and We Come to the River (London: Eyre Methuen, 1976), p. 18. Subsequent references to The Fool will be taken from this edition and cited within the text by page number.

Bond, Interview with Coult, Plays and Players, p. 10.

Coult, Interview, Plays and Players, p. 11.

Bond, Interview with Coult, p. 10.


Bond, Restoration, in Restoration and The Cat (London: Eyre Methuen, 1981), p. 56. Subsequent references to Restoration will be taken from this edition and cited by page number.


83 Wardle, p. 15a.
84 Bond, Introduction to The Fool, p. xvi.
85 Ibid., p. xv.

Bond examines history in order to delve into the origins of contemporary social conflict, and in his view no examination can be complete without studying the behavior of human beings at war. To Bond people are not innately aggressive but forced to act that way when their society is irrational. In "Scenes of War and Freedom" he writes, "H-bombs and death camps cannot be blamed on human nature. They are the consequences of social organisation. It follows that war is not a consequence of human nature but of society. So a society without war is possible." Many of Bond's plays are therefore war parables; like the history plays they establish environments superficially removed from contemporary locales or societies but in which characters struggle against the forces of violent aggression. The grotesque is a culmination of the unnatural behavior to which people resort when forced by cultural and social pressures. In these plays a protagonist evolves who suffers, experiences regeneration, and then rebels against the existing social order. This figure usually becomes a grotesque or is a central figure around which grotesque characters or situations coalesce.

In 1968 Bond wrote Narrow Road to the Deep North for
an international conference on People and Cities; the play was to serve as a basis for a discussion of the ideal city.\textsuperscript{2} As with \textit{Saved} and \textit{Early Morning}, the Lord Chamberlain demanded revisions in the script, which Bond refused to grant. However, director Jane Howell and Canon Stephen Vernay (who had commissioned the play) persuaded Bond to make the compromise, and the license was granted.\textsuperscript{3} The play toured Europe with \textit{Saved} and was most successful in Eastern Europe. Gaskill believed that its allegorical structure made it more accessible to these audiences than did the naturalistic style of \textit{Saved}.\textsuperscript{4}

The play's action takes place in Japan "about the seventeenth, eighteenth or nineteenth centuries," as the playbill indicates. The introduction, based upon an incident in haiku poet Matsuo Basho's \textit{The Records of a Weather-Exposed Skeleton}, involves the abandonment of a baby whose poor parents leave it by the river because they cannot afford another child. The poet encounters the infant on his journey to the north to seek enlightenment. He decides that heaven has willed that the child be left to its fate. Basho continues on his way, leaving the baby on the river bank. Bond asserts that Basho's disregard of the basic human instinct to protect children demonstrates that the society which he represents is corrupt: "In an ideal society he would have picked that baby up, gone off the stage, and there would have been no necessity for a play."\textsuperscript{5}

The next scene, thirty years later, depicts Basho's
return from the north. Having failed to find intellectual awakening there, he determines, "You get enlightenment where you are." On his return he discovers that a great new city has arisen, built by Shogo, a former outlaw who deposed the former emperor. But the new city is no utopia; as Basho and a young man named Kiro talk, a line of prisoners shackled by the neck and each holding a sack shuffles onstage. Kiro reveals that the prisoners are criminals who will be forced into the sacks and thrown into the river to drown. As they march, they chant, "Shogo is head of the city / Shogo is protector and friend" (p. 11). At the rear of the line an old prisoner stumbles; he tries to chant but is too ill or drunk to be coherent. The guard who pulls him along mocks, "You'll be dead before you get there and I'll have to drag your carcass and throw it in the river!" (p. 12).

With these opening scenes Bond establishes the climate of fear fostered by a harsh authority. The incongruity of the hapless prisoners and their forced paean to their executioner promotes the atmosphere of pathos and irony which characterizes the grotesque. Like Shakespeare in Bingo, Basho is an artist whose cold intellectuality prevents him from achieving any emotional identification with human beings. For example, after residing in the city for two years he moves away from the river because relatives of drowned prisoners had kept running into his garden to weep, trampling his vegetables. Basho also fears that Shogo will arrest him. As the poet avers, "He knows I've got enlightenment--and he
doesn't like people who know something he doesn't" (p. 13). True to his fears, soldiers come to take him to Shogo.

On the way to the new emperor another incident occurs which is grotesque. A group of young Buddhist priests, becoming increasingly intoxicated, cavort along the road. One of them, Kiro, picks up a pot, a sacred vessel, and places it on his head. It becomes stuck and their revelry immediately changes to dread, for they are afraid to desecrate the vessel by breaking it. Bond emphasizes the passivity of institutionalized religion; the priests believe they can pray the pot off, but their orisons fail. Finally, Basho arrives on his way to see Shogo. He asks Kiro to "think small" (p. 21); when this sort of meditation also proves fruitless, Basho remarks, "I can't help you, you still haven't learned anything. You live in darkness. You would have to make the pot think big, and that's definitely beyond your powers" (p. 21). Nevertheless, Basho decides to bring Kiro with him to the new ruler. The other priests follow with the ark upon which the pot had been carried. They cover Kiro with a sheet to avoid "a scandal" (p. 22).

The appearance of Kiro with the pot upon his head is grotesque because the sight is disturbing as well as comic. For example, as Kiro starts to strangle, he frantically struggles and groans. In addition, he has spilt his wine down the front of his robe, creating a vivid red stain which resembles blood. The inane attempts to pray or meditate the pot from the young man's head help to balance and yet to
enhance the anxiety provoked by Kiro's plight. Finally, the addition of the sheet creates a shroudlke, eerie effect similar to that evoked by the same motif in "Stone," The Fool, The Worlds and Restoration. Intellectually, the scene reinforces the attack Bond makes against organized religion and intellectual elitism. For example, the priests' vapidity, Basho's superciliousness, and their reverence for the artifact at the expense of the man enhance the satire aimed at social institutions.

The remainder of the first part introduces the major characters of Shogo and the Britishers, Georgina and her brother the Commodore, and escalates the violence and cruelty which culminates in the play's second half. The brutal nature of Shogo's court establishes itself at once in the next scene. A shout offstage brings a man on with a spear stuck through him. He struggles and dies as Shogo enters. Shogo reveals that the man is the Chief Police Inspector, who was the victim of an assassination attempt meant for Shogo. The ruler maintains, "It's his own fault for not doing his job properly" (p. 22). The attempt is only one of many, but nobody is ever caught. Shogo fears the "circle that never stops getting smaller" (p. 22). Yet he refuses the fatalistic philosophy of those like Basho; he is a man of action. For example, when Basho brings in Kiro and taunts, "You built the biggest city in the world. You can't get a pot off a priest's head" (p. 24), Shogo replies "What can I do? I can only do what you can do! My hands are only like yours."
There isn't some political skill or trick called taking pots off priests' heads!" (p. 26). He then takes a hammer and breaks the pot, releasing the suffocating priest. The action infuriates Basho, who protests, "He knew the pot was sacred. Of course, that's only a symbol, but we need symbols to protect us from ourselves. If he destroys them, there's no future" (p. 27). But to Shogo the future lies in establishing and preserving the perfect city, which "has the best drains, schools, churches, water, houses, food, laws, hospitals" (p. 28). Like Victoria's heaven or Heros' Athens, Bond's utopias are always ironic, since their perfection can be maintained only through ruthless despotism. As Shogo tells Kiro, "You think I'm evil. I'm not--I'm the lesser of two evils. People are born in a tiger's mouth. I snatch them out and some of them get caught on the teeth--that's what you're blaming me for" (p. 29). Shogo believes that "life makes people unhappy" (p. 29), not society. Coult maintains that Shogo "creates his own morality out of the chaos and despair of his own experience."^7

In the name of expediency Shogo can destroy as well as preserve life. For instance, as soon as he releases Kiro, he orders the drowning of a peasant who is unable to identify the man who tried to assassinate Shogo. Yet he summons Basho because he wants the poet to rear the deposed emperor's two-year-old son; he desires that the boy be kept in ignorance of his true origins so that he will not try later to claim rule over the city. Ironically, Basho now has the
chance to save the life of a child, just as he had before, but this time Shogo forces him to make the pro-life decision. Therefore, Shogo does not wantonly or indiscriminately destroy life, but he is as much a victim of socialized morality as Hatch is in *The Sea*. Shogo kills to preserve his society and becomes a hero. However, Hatch is deemed mad for the same reason and action; he lets a man drown to protect his society against alien influence. Scharine consequently notes that "society disapproves of madness but only society can decide who is mad." Shogo himself recognizes that he rules only because society gives him sanction: "I am the city because I made it, but I made it in the image of other men. People wanted to follow me--so I had to lead them. I can't help shaping history--it's my gift, like [Kiro's] piety" (p. 30). For Bond Shogo symbolizes society; his crimes and his benevolences represent an entire culture.

Georgina and her brother George, the Commodore, also seek to impose their ideas upon the city. They are two English Victorians whose help Basho enlists in wresting power from Shogo. Although they maintain that their goal is to civilize the Asian barbarians, each is really interested in exploiting the city. The Commodore wants to industrialize, while his sister desires to convert the Orientals to Christianity. They are caricatures, much like the Victorians in *Early Morning*. For example, Georgina evinces the behavior of the conventionally righteous do-gooder who ignores the use of violence and cruelty as long as the surface proprieties
are upheld. She tells Basho, "We will give you soldiers and
guns to kill your enemies--and in return you must love Jesus,
give up bad language, forswear cards, refuse spicedy foods,
abandon women, forsake drink and--stop singing on Sundays
... except hymns and the authorized responses" (p. 32).
Scharine observes that Basho and Georgina are alike in empha-
sizing forms of religion over its content. 10

With their help Basho plans to rebel against Shogo,
establishing the dead emperor's child as heir. However,
the English couple prefer the plan which Shogo had advocated,
to bring up the child as a peasant and to keep him ignorant
of his birth. Armed with Western weapons and gun powder,
they soon overthrow Shogo, who escapes with Kiro to the north.

In the second part the conflict escalates as Shogo
retaliates against Basho and the English. Two extreme acts
of bloodshed manifest the grotesque, the first of which
contributes to Georgina's sudden madness. The second half
opens on a comic note, however, as Georgina reveals the
changes she has made in the city: "I've been running the
city a week, haven't we, George? I've relaid the sewers,
straightened the streets, shut the 'music' houses, put a
curfew on for nine-thirty, and recoded the law. That was on
Monday" (p. 39). She "converts" the Buddhist priests by
handing them clerical collars. But when Basho commends her
for ruling more mercifully than Shogo, she disagrees: "Well,
Shogo ruled by atrocity... instead of atrocity I use
morality. I persuade people--in their hearts--that they are
sin, and that they have evil thoughts, and that they're greedy and violent and destructive, and--more than anything else--that their bodies must be hidden, and that sex is nasty and corrupting and must be secret" (p. 42). She seeks the same kind of authoritarianism as Shogo, only she operates on people psychologically rather than physically.11

Her control is short-lived, however, for Shogo obtains guns also and re-takes the city. The first act of atrocity occurs as Georgina flees with five of her pupils. The children are identical in looks and dress, but one of them is the child emperor. Shogo overtakes them and demands to know which is the ruler, but Georgina tells him that only Basho knows, and Basho cannot be found. Shogo desperately tries to identify the child. He entreats, "Which one of you's the Emperor's son? Please! D'you want to make me do something terrible? Basho! Basho! Help me! Help me! Help me!" (p. 51). Finally he orders all of the children to be killed. The soldiers take them off and return with their bodies. Shogo orders a ruthless razing of the city, insisting, "I'll level the city and begin again, and this time there won't be any mistakes. My city will last a thousand years" (p. 51).

Scharine reports that the director and designer used some of the stylization of the Noh theatre in producing the play. For the scene in which the children are slaughtered, they used dolls instead of actors.12 Therefore, while the idea of the murder shocks, the horror was mitigated in production by the use of this convention. Although the
stylistization adds nothing ludicrous, it helps to balance an emotional effect otherwise more terrible than sportive. Bond wishes to create a certain amount of empathy for all the characters involved in the massacre, believing that "everybody in that scene is a victim." Even Georgina becomes more human when the full import of the children's slaughter causes her suddenly to lose her sanity, just as Greta had done in "The Swing." Also like the latter, Georgina's madness is closely connected with sexuality. She dances and sings, "Naughty boys ... Dirty hands ... Nasty hands ... Keep your hands still! Tight together! ... Stop playing with your sins!" (p. 52).

The most grotesque violence culminates in the final scene. Basho's men finally capture Shogo and bring him to a mock trial. The import of Basho's abandonment of the child comes full circle when they discover that Shogo was of humble birth; he was left on the river bank to starve and possibly was the infant Basho had refused to save. When the artist learns this, he piously asserts, "If I had looked in its eyes I would have seen the devil, and I would have put it in the water and held it under with these poet's hands ... I am a poet and I would have known" (p. 56). But as Errol Durbach observes, Basho's act of cruelty and indifference in leaving the baby behind emblemizes the spiritual aridity and passivity of which Shogo only takes advantage in order to control an entire society. As he demonstrates in his other works, Bond regards inaction and retreat from responsibility as
being worse than any attempt to adhere to one's beliefs, however misguided. Bond asserts, "If there is a criminal in [Narrow Road] it's Basho." Shogo's punishment is horrible; he is totally dismembered. Bond describes the effect: "Shogo's naked body is nailed to the placard. It has been hacked to pieces and loosely assembled upside down. The limbs have been nailed in roughly the right position, but the whole body is askew and the limbs don't meet the trunk. The head hangs down with the mouth wide open. The genitals are intact" (p. 56). The people's celebration of the grotesque execution further underlines the horror. They mill around, shout, wave, and hit tamborines; Basho announces, "Shogo is dead! The sin is broken! Let the new city live forever!" (p. 57). The crowd consequently views Shogo's death as an atonement for the crimes committed either by him or in his name. Although perhaps more responsible than the victims in Bingo or in The Fool, Shogo, like them, is also a scapegoat. Scharine compares Shogo's death to Christ's crucifixion, while Coult adds that it is a sacrifice without any hope of heavenly grace. The juxtaposition of images of horror and salvation heightens the emotional ambivalency created by the grotesque.

Bond concludes the play with a final sacrifice. After witnessing Shogo's defeat, Kiro commits ritual suicide. Again Bond describes the act in graphic detail: "Kiro sticks the knife blade in the left side of his stomach, draws it across to the right on a line just below the navel, twists
it and gives it a little jerk. His face has been expressionless, but on the final jerk he stretches his neck, bends his head back and a little to the right, flattens his lips and inhales—as if he were trying to stop a sneeze" (pp. 57-58). The script provides a counteraction which is darkly comical and creates a grotesque situation; when the mad Georgina notices Kiro's disrobing and his taking out of the knife, she believes he is about to rape and kill her. She screams, "He's going to murder me! Murdered before I'm raped! I shan't know what it's like!" (p. 57). She shuts her eyes to pray, and when she feels Kiro's blood spraying her she cries, "He's coming! I can hear him coming! There's something wet!" (p. 58). In production red paper streamers represented the disembowelment; as in the portrayal of the children's death, the use of a stylized violence lessens the emotional effect of the atrocity.

Kiro's suicide is similar to Shakespeare's, since it seems to be a reaction to the guilt he experiences at having followed Shogo. However, Bond gives Kiro no final speech such as Shakespeare had to elucidate his motivations. Worthen maintains that Kiro's action signifies an evasion of responsibility, and this view correlates with Bond's basically pro-life philosophy. Furthermore, another action counterpoints the suicide, which can be interpreted either as an affirmation of life or as a further negation of existence. As Kiro dies, a man clambers up from the river where he had almost drowned. He fails to notice Kiro's death throes and
dries himself off as the play ends. Scharine regards the man's self-recovery as a resurrection which adds a hopeful note.\textsuperscript{20} Worthen agrees, maintaining that Bond mitigates the pessimism of the suicide with a "sense of life reasserted."\textsuperscript{21} However, Durbach views the man's failure to notice Kiro's agony as a comment upon "the sense of total isolation in an indifferent universe."\textsuperscript{22} If one puts the play alongside Bond's other works as well as his essays, then the former view seems more suited to Bond's stance against nihilism. \textit{Narrow Road to the Deep North} is an early play which, like \textit{The Pope's Wedding} and \textit{Saved}, contains more ambivalence in character and theme than later works in which Bond more openly states his viewpoint. For example, Irving Wardle notes that "for most of the way Mr. Bond simply shows events and refrains from editorializing."\textsuperscript{23} In addition, Durbach believes that the parable type of structure tends to distance the emotional response in favor of a more intellectual response.\textsuperscript{24}

\textit{Narrow Road to the Deep North} maintains or continues thematic concepts of preceding plays. Scharine comments, "Its targets are the same: leadership in all forms, particularly the twin pillars of society, government and religion, and the force they use to insure their continuity."\textsuperscript{25} As in the earlier works, the grotesque centralizes emotional reactions of fear and laughter around those who suffer either directly or indirectly from a society which prizes civic perfection or abstract principle at the expense of
humane values. The slaughter of innocent children, mutilation or abnormal suffering and death, and mental imbalance are patterns of behavior or action which Bond consistently uses in creating the grotesque.

Like Narrow Road, the short play "Passion" uses a grotesque sacrifice to create a shocked awareness of the unnatural behavior engendered by the technology of war. Similar to "Black Mass," its use of dark humor aims at bureaucratic and religious hypocrisy. The play was presented as part of a Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Festival of Life on Easter Sunday in 1971. The Royal Court produced the work in the open-air at a racecourse. Director Bill Bryden used the grandstand as the stage, and the audience, who were on the racetrack itself, looked up at the performance. The actors used a microphone to narrate.

The plot begins with a narrator's explanation of the first scene: an old woman's son has been killed in war and his body sent back to her. As she pantomimes mourning, the Dead Soldier speaks for her. His speech contains grotesque imagery when he describes his death in the third person: "He lifted his head and was shot in the face. . . . When it was getting dark the crows found him and he felt their claws as they landed on his face and he heard them cawing. Then he felt them picking at strips of his flesh as if they were tugging worms from the earth, and in a little while he died." The Old Woman decides to ask the queen to resurrect him.

The next action occurs at the court, and the Queen and
her Prime Minister appear. Bond indicates in the stage
directions that the characters should be types and thus
exaggerated in manner and appearance. In addition, Bond
uses language to heighten the atmosphere of absurdity. The
Queen, in her palace supposedly "having great thoughts on
behalf of her people" (p. 66), enters singing a nonsensical
song and playing with a yo-yo. The Prime Minister does
likewise. The Queen's speeches are ludicrous. When the
Prime Minister bids her good day, she responds, "Ideal
weather for bowling / swimming / running / jumping / giving
a garden party / getting crowned / getting married / making
your will / taking in lodgers / lifting up your heart /
counting your blessings / or departing this life. Select
the word or phrase of your choice and delete the others as
appropriate" (p. 66). She personifies the bureaucrat or
official who evades responsibility through vacillation and
platitudes.

When the Prime Minister informs the Queen of the Old
Woman's request, they send for the Magician, a man so wise
he can play with two yo-yo's at once. The Magician tells
them that they can appease the Old Woman by turning the Dead
Soldier into a war memorial; the Queen can then unveil him.
Also, he has invented a bomb "with a bang twice as loud as
anyone else's" (p. 67) to drop on their enemy. She can
thus launch the bomb at the same time as she unveils the
memorial.

With this combination of caricature, absurdity, and
satire Bond establishes an atmosphere in which the grotesque can appear. Indeed, the most grotesque visual image occurs in the next scene at the combination monument-and-launching pad. In a comic buildup the vacuous monarch forgets which button launches the bomb and which unveils the statue; she then gets her finger stuck on the button, but finally succeeds in sending the bomb on its way. She cries to the missile, "Bon voyage / send us a postcard / don't drink water from the tap / be kind to the froggies, remember they haven't had our advantages" (p. 67).

Again Bond creates comic expectations as the Queen endeavors to find her dedicatory speech for the war memorial. After sorting through love letters, shopping lists, and other debris, she locates the poem, "The Monument," which on the surface is a piece of doggerel:

This monument is very nice
It stands so still in wind and ice
And never frowns or makes a cry
Just stares ahead into the sky
That's why I think it's very good. (p. 68)

Despite its superficial inanity, the poem emphasizes the viewpoint of those who promote war--that the "best" citizens are those who make the least amount of trouble or protest.

After reading the poem the Queen unveils the statue, revealing a horrendous sight. The memorial is a full-sized cross upon which is nailed a crucified pig which wears a soldier's helmet. The National Anthem plays as the Queen, Magician, and Prime Minister salute the statue. The image of the sacrificed pig creates a feeling of shock and
absurdity, and at the same time symbolizes the dehumanization associated with war. Regarding the replacement for her son, the mother begins to understand the true nature of pain. She observes, "And now I look I do see my son's face--and his mouth--and his eyes. He was such a quiet, kind, inward boy. He seemed to suffer such a lot and I could never really help him. Yes, I know him now" (p. 68).

The moment of reflection is short-lived, for the enemy retaliates with an even bigger bomb which utterly destroys the society. The Narrator describes the ruins: "There was nothing left. Everything was burned or broken and blown away. There was only a storm of dust and a howling wind. They could hear dogs yelping in the ruins but they could never catch one to eat" (p. 68). Scharine comments that in this play Bond introduces the idea of technology's responsibility for increased social aggression.

When the Queen appeals to her Prime Minister for a solution, he assumes the scrambled speech which she had hitherto employed: "The matter is receiving my urgent attention / being completely ignored / is under review / has got out of hand / is being left over / awaiting development / totally beyond my very limited capacities" (p. 68). Meanwhile, the Magician examines the dust for a clue to their predicament. The Narrator then announces the entrance of Christ and Buddha. The latter supports the weary Messiah, who is on his way to his crucifixion. Christ realizes the urgency of his mission: "Everywhere children are crying,
mothers and fathers are groaning, and old men and women are shrieking as if they were mad. All the animals are broken and bleeding. I must die soon so that the world can be healed" (p. 68). When the two divinities approach the cross upon which the pig is crucified, Christ discovers the futility of his sacrifice. He cries, "I can't be crucified for men because they've already crucified themselves, wasted their life in misery, destroyed their homes and run like madmen over the fields stamping on the animals and plants and everything that lived" (p. 68). As if to point up his words, the Magician suddenly proclaims that he has found a way to make another bomb from dust. Christ and Buddha depart sadly when faced with this lack of compassion and reason, and the monarch and her aids exit exultantly. The Narrator introduces the last action; the Old Woman finds the body of her son, who has been blown up from his grave. He seems to speak, although it is "only gas escaping from his decaying body and passing out through his teeth" (p. 69). The Dead Soldier speaks the final poem, which is a repudiation of war. "I have learned that a pig is a form of lamb / And power is impotence" (p. 69), he asserts. Although grotesque, the crucified pig functions as a metaphor for the suffering of the innocents, a recurrent component of Bond's dramatic vision which he usually evinces in grotesque form. Coult maintains that Bond's imagery is sensual because it evokes dignity and vulnerability. Scharine also notes Bond's use of central images, such as Alen's hut in The Pope's Wedding,
the stoning scene in Saved, the sea and the village in The Sea, and the cross in this play and in "Black Mass." Bond's dark satire creates an appropriate climate in which a shocking execution or sacrifice occurs to counterpoint the major themes with a disturbing visual image.

With Lear (1971) Bond reaches in his writing a climactic point which coalesces many of the images, characters, and themes of the earlier works. Yet the central character of Lear differs from previous protagonists since he explicitly acknowledges the faults in his former moral vision and then actively seeks to change his society for the better. Bond himself recognizes that although Lear forms a continuum with works such as Saved, The Pope's Wedding, and Early Morning, the line breaks because "Lear is not Len." Scharine agrees that "Lear travels the greatest dramatic distance of any Bond character," adding "For the first time, too, we see positive evidence that the Innocent character has passed his vision onto others within society." Lear forms a link with representational plays like The Sea or The Worlds and with history plays like Bingo and Restoration, in which characters finally recognize the erroneous vision which they and their society have imposed, to the detriment of human values.

Lear parallels Early Morning in the largeness of its scope; intense images of cruelty and ferocious inhumanity crowd the events of the play so that critics again disagree over the effectiveness of violence in the work. In his
preface Bond writes about the nature of violence in man and in society. He justifies his concern by stating, "People who do not want writers to write about violence want to stop them writing about us and our time. It would be immoral not to write about violence." As in Early Morning the grotesque predominates, especially when connected with violence. For instance, Scharine judges that although Lear approaches the representationalism of earlier works, the "events of Lear are grotesque and difficult to believe." Like its Shakespearean predecessor, Bond's Lear is an ironic parable or fairy tale, a tragedy hovering on the brink of black satire. Wardle comments that the world of Bond's Lear "shrinks to a monochrome dungeon where terrified and merciless insects enact an endless cycle of political atrocity." Another critic acknowledges the force of the play's grotesqueries but sees a hopeful note: "The play's horrors, then, have their perhaps overemphatic place in plot and theme: they also, you feel, reflect authentic pain and anger. . . . Yet another horror, you say; but not one that quite eradicates the impression of human nobility, briefly and precariously achieved."  

The plot of Lear resembles Shakespeare's play to some degree: Lear, a powerful ruler of a society, has two malicious daughters. Their machinations force him from power: he suffers bitterly but finds comfort with humbler people who shelter him. His sufferings drive him mad, but they also force him to confront his own responsibility in
causing pain to others. Consequently, he learns to treasure the basic human values of love and compassion, and he inspires others to admire those ideas. He dies at the end, but hope emerges that a new, better society will generate from the old. Bond himself summarizes the structure of the play: "Act One shows a world dominated by myth. Act Two shows the clash between myth and reality, between superstitious men and the autonomous world. Act Three shows a resolution of this, in the world we prove real by dying in it."  

Unlike Shakespeare's Lear, Bond's protagonist does not give away his power. In fact, the opening scene illustrates the extent of Lear's authority and demonstrates his part in creating the type of society that eventually causes his downfall. A central image in Lear is the wall which the king is building in order to keep out his enemies, the Duke of Cornwall and the Duke of the North. For workers the King has conscripted the surrounding farmers, preventing them from tilling their own land. In retaliation they continually try to sabotage the wall's construction. Lear insists that he must be harsh until the wall is built, after which they can rest in its protection. "I'm not free to be kind or merciful," he asserts, "I must build the fortress." Lear himself shoots a worker who accidentally killed another laborer, because, as he states, "the work's slow, I must do something to make the officers move" (p. 4).

Such an implacable stance is ostensibly opposed by his two daughters, Bodice and Fontanelle. Against their father's
wishes, they are betrothed to his enemies, North and Cornwall. They beg Lear to save the life of the worker; they urge him to tear down the wall, since he will no longer need it once the Dukes become his sons-in-law. Lear repudiates them much as Shakespeare's Lear does Cordelia. "I knew it would come to this!" he shouts, "I knew you were malicious! I built my wall against you as well as my other enemies!" (p. 7). When left alone, the daughters plot to attack their father.

The parallel of the daughters to Cordelia in the first scene is illusory. The two are really Regan and Goneril at their most duplicitous. Their evil nature shows in a grotesque scene in which they torture Warrington, an officer of their father's who has informed the ruler of the daughters' attempts to bribe him into betraying Lear. In addition each has planned to have her own husband killed so that she can marry Warrington and have him run the country. Warrington compares to Edmund, although his loyalty resembles Kent's. The daughters' forces capture Warrington, and Bodice and Fontanelle arrange separately to have his tongue cut out so that he will not betray each sister to the other. Doubtful that even muteness will prevent his betrayal of them, the sisters decide to put him to death. Their cruelty demands a lingering death, however, and they watch as a soldier carries out their wishes. The gruesomeness of the scene is mitigated by the use of humor. For example, Fontanelle is overtly childish in her delight at witnessing the torture. When she urges, "Use the boot! Jump on him! Jump on his head!"
the soldier retorts, "Lay off, lady, lay off! 'Oo's killin' 'im, me or you?" (p. 14). Meanwhile, in an activity reminiscent of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Bodice calmly knits during the torture. Her viciousness is more subtle than Fontanelle's and therefore more sadistic. For example, she forces the soldier to beg for Warrington's life. When the confused private muses, "What a pair!—0 spare 'im, mum" (p. 14), Bodice merely returns, "No" (p. 15). She explains, "I shall refuse his pardon. That always gives me my deepest satisfaction" (p. 15). She then deafens Warrington with her knitting needles. As she pokes them in his ears, she states, "I'll just jog these in and out a little. Doodee, doodee, doodee, doo" (p. 15). Bodice then commands the soldier to let Warrington loose as an example to the people. The scene leaves no doubt as to the exaggerated evil in the daughters' nature. Ruby Cohn calls them "sadistic monsters," and believes that Shakespeare's are more credible as human beings. However, Bond consistently uses types or caricatures in his works, especially those whose structure is parabolic or allegoric, to emphasize the lack of humanity effected by society. The exaggeration also aids in providing a degree of intellectual objectivity through evoking a comic response. Coult comments at length upon the need for this use of humor: "Bond's technique of emotional counterpoint creates a riveting tension in which comedy frames and controls the violence. The actual act of violence provokes only disgust, despair, or an impotent desire for revenge. With the comedy to
control it, and comedy which itself makes points about the peculiar class-relationship between the soldier and the two sisters, the audience's judgement is solicited, so holding the emotion in check without for a moment diminishing it. Cohn also acknowledges "a complex effect of intensification and mitigation of the horror through the caricatural nature of perpetrators." Both critics aptly describe the working of the grotesque.

Warrington appears in the following scene, again as a grotesque figure. The scene takes place in the woods, by the house of the Gravedigger's Boy. Lear flees from his daughters' armies and arrives exhausted in front of the hut, where he starts to eat food that has been left outside. Like Shakespeare's Lear, he blames his children for his sufferings: "My daughters have taken the bread from my stomach. They grind it with my tears and the cries of famished children and eat. The night is a black cloth on their table and the stars are crumbs, and I am a famished dog that sits on the earth and howls" (p. 17). As he talks Warrington creeps up behind him with a knife. He is described as "crippled and his face looks as if it's covered with bad plastic surgery" (p. 17). His pain and disfigurement turn him wild, forcing him to act more like an animal than a man. The Gravedigger's Boy reveals that he sets food out for the "wild man" just as one would for a stray beast. Warrington hides in the well when the Boy enters, but later that night he attacks Lear with the knife and then escapes. Badly frightened, Lear believes he
sees a ghost; he cries, "He's dead! I saw his face! It was like a stone! I shall die!" (p. 22).

This episode contains little of the sardonic humor which marks the previous torture scene; but the grotesque further illustrates the abnormal effect of violence upon human beings. In his preface Bond writes that "human aggression has an important feature that makes it more destructive than the aggression of other animals. It is animal aggression, but it has to be accommodated by our human minds, and presumably it appears to us as more alarming and frightening than it does to other animals" (p. xi). The grotesque imagery suggests Warrington's unnatural state of being--he is a man treated as a brute by brutish people. He reacts aggressively because it is part of man's nature to react aggressively to life-threatening forces. As Bond's preface indicates, "As animals we react to threat in a natural, biological way; but we must also react in more complicated ways as human beings--mentally, emotionally and morally. It is because we cannot do this successfully that we no longer function as a species" (p. xi). Because Warrington is reduced to utter deprivation, he blindly and almost instinctually directs his fury at the man primarily responsible for his sufferings, Lear. In his turn Lear recognizes, however irrationally, the shadow of his own guilt when he believes Warrington is a ghost which presages his own death. The use of ghosts in Bond's plays often signifies spiritual and moral decay, such as do the inhabitants of heaven in Early Morning. Just as Georgina
becomes haunted by the memories of the children who are slaughtered, Lear will be driven mad by reminders of his past acts of aggression.

In his plays Bond frequently ends each act with the most violent and grotesque actions. The scene ending Act One begins peacefully, as a carpenter brings a cradle for the Boy's pregnant wife. Lulled by their secluded domesticity, Lear desires to stay there. "It's so simple and easy here" (p. 25), he states. The Boy disturbs his complacency by discussing the wall. Unaware of Lear's identity, he describes the horrors suffered by those working on the wall: "Their feet used to swell with the mud. The stink of it even when you were asleep! Living in a grave! He [Lear] should come here--I'd go back to my old job and dig a grave for him! We used to dig his wall up at nights, when they were working near here" (pp. 25-26).

Their peaceful existence disintegrates with the appearance of soldiers hunting for the escaped king. Lear and the Boy's wife are hanging sheets on the line. The Boy is off-stage, bringing up Warrington's body from the well in which he had hid. The soldiers take the wife and hide with her behind the sheets. When the Boy enters he senses something is wrong and shouts his wife's name for the first time--she is Cordelia. The soldiers shoot him, and he clutches a sheet, pulling it down to reveal Cordelia, whom a soldier is preparing to rape. Then the Boy "turns slowly away and as he does so the sheet folds round him. For a second he stands
in silence with the white sheet draped round him. Only his head is seen, pushed back in shock with his eyes and mouth open. He stands rigid. Suddenly a huge red stain spreads on the sheet" (p. 30). The action parallels other grotesque images in which a person becomes literally enshrouded in a white covering, as in "Stone," The Fool, and The Worlds. Again the idea of ghosts emanates from the grotesque; the Gravedigger's Boy is an innocent victim of the aggression instituted by Lear and spread by his society. The manner of his death foreshadows his later appearance as a literal ghost who will haunt Lear until the latter frees himself of the past. The Boy's death thus adds one more debt of atonement onto Lear's slate. In a final onslaught of uncontrolled violence the soldiers slaughter the Boy's pigs, take Cordelia inside and rape her, throw the Boy and Warrington's bodies into the well, and take Lear prisoner. The soldier who has killed the pigs enters covered in blood and intent on having his turn at Cordelia. The scene ends as the Carpenter follows him in, kills the soldier with a chisel, and then shoots the men inside the hut. The bloodbath fittingly climaxes the horror set in motion from the very first action on stage. Lear has started his progress toward regeneration, for he is subjected to the evil he has in part wrought and thereby begins to value a life removed from power. The frequency and degree of the atrocities in this final scene create a grotesque situation, which establishes an atmosphere of disturbance and promotes an awareness of a world grossly out of
balance. However, the Carpenter's arrival at the end indicates a turn in the action, for the conflict now encompasses the common people as well as the armies of the rulers. The Carpenter's occupation and his function in saving Cordelia suggest a Christ figure. The rape kills Cordelia's baby; again Bond depicts the death of an innocent child to emphasize the suffering engendered by human aggression. To carry the Christian imagery further, Cordelia herself suggests a madonna figure, and significantly she is finally identified as the third "daughter," the tragic heroine in Shakespeare's Lear. However, Bond will typically play upon the audience's expectations with ironic twists. For instance, instead of evincing Christian passivity, the Carpenter counters violence with violence, although in this society it is practically the only means to effect change. Scharine agrees that violent action must combat social oppression in order to ensure human survival.44

In the second act Lear finally rejects the life he had formerly led, yet he must still struggle with his desire to retreat from the world of action. Bond illustrates this latter conflict with the use of a grotesque figure, the Ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy. Lear himself takes on grotesque traits of mental and physical decay.

The act opens with Lear's trial for treason. The court personnel are corrupt and the proceeding is a travesty. Lear refuses to recognize his daughters or even claim his own identity; instead he views himself in terms of grotesque
images. For example, when Bodice forces him to look into a mirror so that he will admit his identity, he sees himself as a caged and broken animal: "There's a poor animal with blood on its head and tears running down its face. . . . Look! Look! Have pity. Look at its claws trying to open the cage. It's dragging its broken body over the floor" (p. 35). Later he proclaims, "There's an animal in a cage. I must let it out or the earth will be destroyed. There'll be great fires and the water will dry up. All the people will be burned and the wind will blow their ashes into huge columns of dust and they'll go round and round the earth for ever!" (p. 37). Coult observes that the use of animal imagery traces Lear's moral development; in the first act he applies animal terms to others, such as his daughters, whereas in this act he begins to apply the images to himself, although they are self-pitying. He must therefore learn to place himself and others in a fuller perspective. Scharine adds that the cage symbolizes social structures and institutions.

Lear's mental imbalance prepares the entrance of the Ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy. The apparition appears to Lear in prison, and "his skin and clothes are faded. There's old, dry blood on them" (p. 37). Just as he had helped Lear to learn to value the simple life, the Ghost provides spiritual comfort for Lear in his suffering. For example, when the old man wants to see his daughters, the Ghost summons the spirits of Bodice and Fontanelle as they were when young girls doting on their father. Their presence not only solaces Lear, but
also reminds him of an important point—the adult women are products of a socialization process which began long before their birth. For instance, the girls dress in anticipation of seeing their father, but his homecoming is associated with the death of the soldiers who have been in battle with him. Bodice announces, "They're burying soldiers in the churchyard. Father's brought the coffins on carts" (p. 38). Fontanelle adds, "This morning I lay in bed and watched the wind pulling the curtains. Pull, pull, pull ... Now I can hear that terrible bell" (p. 38). Violence and death are part of their earliest background; they have learned cruelty through imitation of their elders. Lear partially realizes this when he urges Bodice to take off the dress she has donned, the dress of her dead mother. "Take it off!" Lear demands, "Yes, or you will always wear it! Bodice! My poor child, you might as well have worn her shroud" (p. 39). The daughters' apparitions leave, however, when they hear the tolling of the funeral bells that ring for the dead soldiers. Fontanelle notices the multitudes who die and will continue to die in war: "They're waiting. There's a long line behind the coffins. They're standing so still!" (p. 41). As a result of their appearance Lear begins to recognize his failure to acknowledge the sufferings of those he killed: "I killed so many people and never looked at one of their faces" (p. 42). The Ghost helps Lear to achieve some awareness of his responsibility, but the Boy himself depends upon Lear. "Let me stay with you, Lear," he pleads,
"When I died I went somewhere. I don't know where it was. I waited and nothing happened. And then I started to rot, like a body in the ground. . . . I'm young but my stomach's shrivelled up and the hair's turned white" (p. 42). The Ghost refuses to accept his own death; consequently, his existence is unnatural for it can be sustained only with Lear's agreement. They live in a symbiotic relationship which points up their isolation from society. Like George and Arthur in Early Morning or Shogo and Kiro in Narrow Road to the Deep North, one aids the other in prompting concern for humanity; yet their mutual dependency evokes a false sense of security and isolation. The effect of this insulation will become more evident in the last act.

The remainder of the act details the ascendancy of the rebel forces under the leadership of Cordelia and the Carpenter, now married. In addition, the depiction of the daughters' deaths and of Lear's blinding are fully grotesque. Although Bodice and Fontanelle are caricatures of villainy, nevertheless Bodice realizes and reiterates the idea that social circumstances have trapped her into her role. She muses, "They say decide this and that, but I don't decide anything. My decisions are forced on me. . . . I'm trapped" (p. 48). Indeed, the rebels capture the sisters, and they undergo the same kind of treatment they had inflicted upon their prisoners, although their captors are more hardened than sadistic.

Fontanelle is captured, shot, and her body is subjected to an autopsy. Present in the same cell, Lear looks on as
the prison doctor methodically explains the procedure. The doctor is interested in the scientific precision of the operation, but Lear sees the autopsy as a demonstration of his daughter's basic humanity, now divorced from her callous hatred. He wonders, "She sleeps inside like a lion and a lamb and a child. . . . If I had known she was so beautiful . . . Her body was made by the hand of a child, so sure and nothing unclean . . . If I had known this beauty and patience and care, how I would have loved her" (p. 59). His realization catalyzes his self-recognition and then his acceptance of responsibility in helping to destroy her. In a grotesque action he plunges his hands into her body and takes out her entrails. He cries, "Look! I killed her! Her blood is on my hands! . . . And now I must begin again. I must walk through my life, step after step, I must walk in weariness and bitterness, I must become a child, hungry and stripped and shivering in blood, I must open my eyes and see!" (p. 60). Cohn cites the grotesque operation as "at once horrifying and farcical as in Guignol."48 Coult comments in the same way upon the weirdness of Lear's reaction, which is "a terrible, almost ludicrous admiration because only a hugely-violated body can be seen in that state, and only a mind in some bizarre extremity could find beauty in such a sight."49 Yet Cohn also views Lear's behavior as a step toward self-knowledge and compassion,50 and Scharine believes that in this scene Bond attacks the idea that human nature is innately evil.51 Bond also satirizes the technology which tends to
reduce human beings to objects. In his preface Bond contends, "For us the end will probably be quicker because the aggression we generate will be massively expressed through out technology" (p. xii). For instance, the scene in which Lear is blinded attacks inhumane invention. In order to make Lear "politically ineffective" (p. 62), as the doctor terms it, he has rigged a device which can remove a person's eyeballs with the utmost efficiency. Bond explains that the intrusion of obviously modern techniques and equipment adds to the intensity of the horror: "The anachronisms are for the horrible moments in a dream when you know it's a dream but can't help being afraid. The anachronisms must increase and not lessen the seriousness." The doctor explains, "With this device you extract the eye undamaged and then it can be put to good use. It's based on a scouting gadget I had as a boy" (p. 63). Like his description of the autopsy, the physician explains the gruesome process in a comically pedantic manner which simultaneously intensifies and objectifies the action. "Understand, this isn't an instrument of torture," he offers, "but a scientific device. See how it clips the lid back to leave it unmarked" (p. 63). He removes the eye and adds, "Note how the eye passes into the lower chamber and is received into a soothing solution of formaldehyde crystals" (p. 63). The attitude of scientific detachment contrasts with Lear's agony. He screams, "The roaring in my head. I see blood. Blood in my mouth. My hands--undo my hands and let me kill
"myself" (p. 64). The Ghost, who has been present throughout, comforts him by assuring him that "people will be kind to you now. Surely you've suffered enough" (p. 64).

Scharine argues that this grotesque scene is necessary for several reasons. First, Lear must depend upon others in the last act to test and illustrate his newly won humility. Furthermore, it continues the image of the bloody, caged animal. Also, the scene develops the idea of technology that dehumanizes in the name of knowledge or progress. Finally, the blindness is similar to Gloucester's in symbolizing Lear's growing insight. Bond notes in the preface that "Lear is blind till they take his eyes away, and by then he has begun to see, to understand" (p. xiii).

The final scene in this act further illustrates Lear's regeneration and emphasizes the cyclic progression of the conflict. As Lear stumbles along over a field near the wall, he encounters a farmer, his wife, and their son. They tell him that they have been dispossessed from their land because the new government has started to rebuild the wall which had been destroyed in the war. Once again the soldiers are conscripting labor and the farmer and his wife are joining the work force and the son the army. Horrified at their plans Lear asks, "They feed you and clothe you--is that why you can't see? All life seeks its safety. A wolf, a fox, a horse--they'd run away, they're sane. Why d'you run to meet your butchers? Why?" (p. 66). As he leaves, Lear vows to persuade Cordelia to stop the construction. The Ghost
tells him that people never listen, but Lear cries, "I can't be silent! . . . I must stop her before I die!" (p. 67). With his need to act Lear is ready to move into the final stage of his moral development, in which he re-joins the world to try to make it better.

The manifestation of the grotesque diminishes in the last act, as Lear achieves full realization of his new humanitarian vision. The appearance of the Ghost, the major embodiment of the grotesque, represents the struggle within Lear to remain sequestered from social conflict or to make deliberate efforts to change society. In this act the gradual decay of the Ghost symbolizes the decay of Lear's past values.

After being blinded, Lear takes refuge in the country, where some young people care for him and try to protect him from the outside world. Nevertheless, a kind of mythic reputation grows around Lear and his new morality, which encourages deserters from Cordelia's government to seek him out. One refugee relates what the workers on the wall believe about Lear: "Yer wan'a get rid a the army an' blow up the wall, an' shut the camps an' send the prisoners home. Yer give money to a deserter" (p. 71). Despite the warnings of his protectors, Lear grants refuge to those who ask it, even to the prison orderly who gave him his meals. Lear answers his friends' protests with a philosophy similar to the Christian doctrine of doing unto others: "I came here when I was cold and hungry and afraid. I wasn't turned away,
and I won't turn anyone away. . . . That's how I'll end my life. I'll be shut up in a grave soon, and till then this door is open" (p. 79).

Lear's compassion draws a growing number of followers, and Lear preaches to them. He uses the image of the caged animal again, but his parable contains little of the pitiful and savage imagery of his earlier speeches. Instead, he tells of a man who lost his voice and discovered that a bird had captured it. He caged the bird and planned to pretend to sing while the bird really sang for him. However, the bird groaned and cried at being caged, and the king for whom the man wished to sing had him punished. The man freed the bird, muttering "The king's a fool." The bird took up the phrase and spread it throughout the forest, until the king heard it. He had the bird broken and displayed as an example. Meanwhile, the man experienced the bird's pain and suffered so that he was locked up in a cage for the remainder of his life. In this fable Lear focuses on the social repercussions of injustice rather than on his previous concern with self-suffering and self-pity.

Lear's actual confrontation with the authorities in power illustrates that his philosophy is still incomplete. Since Bond believes strongly in activism, Lear needs to express his ideas through action. Scharine explains that Lear possesses a flaw even after his blinding: "Lear wants to be free and nonpolitical, an impossible desire in the age he has created. . . . To give men hope, as Lear does,
and to allow their position to remain hopeless, is to become a social institution.⁵⁴ One of Lear's protectors, Thomas, similarly expresses his discontent with Lear's insistence upon hiding people: "We talk to people but we don't really help them. . . . It's dangerous to tell the truth, truth without power is always dangerous" (p. 76).

Lear learns the correctness of Thomas' words when officers from Cordelia tell him he must stop preaching and collaborate peacefully with the authorities. Fearfully Lear acquiesces and laments his lack of power: "I'm old, I should know how to live by now, but I know nothing, I can do nothing, I am nothing" (p. 80). At this moment of despair the Gravedigger's Boy's Ghost returns, "thinner, shrunk, a livid white" (p. 80). If he had served as Lear's Fool, or moral guide, in the previous act, now he represents the unhealthy part of Lear which wants to flee from responsibility. He urges Lear to succumb to Cordelia's offer: "There's too much. Send these people away. Let them learn to bear their own sufferings. . . . That's the world you have to learn to live in" (pp. 80-81). He even offers to poison the well so that no one can live there. Scharine notes that the Boy represents the idea of a "Golden Age that Lear destroyed through his centralization policies."⁵⁵ As Lear progresses beyond his adherence to the past ideals and to the Ghost's regressive policy, the Boy becomes less human in appearance and more skeletal, more grotesque; he becomes an eerie combination of irreconcilable qualities--living humanity and dead concepts.
The Ghost's decay becomes more noticeable as he and Lear flee to the woods, where the old man is to meet Cordelia at last. The directions describe the apparition's disintegration: "Its flesh has dried up, its hair is matted, its face is like a seashell, the eyes are full of terror" (p. 82). The Ghost acknowledges his inevitable end but is desperately afraid of it: "I knew how to live. . . . It was so easy, I had everything I wanted here. . . . Now I'm dead I'm afraid of death" (p. 83). Scharine asserts that while Lear learns to value simple humanity, the Ghost recognizes that he cannot exist simply in Lear's society. His only recourse therefore is to "move backward beyond birth." Consequently, the discord evoked by the grotesque equals the disharmony between past and present, between pacifist and activist philosophies.

The two philosophies clash also in the meeting between Lear and Cordelia. As Scharine observes, Cordelia believes herself to be constructing a new Golden Age, which the wall will keep inviolate. Like Heros, Victoria, and even Lear himself, Cordelia strives for a utopian society which represses humane values when they conflict with progress toward the ideal. Cordelia tells Lear than when she watched the slaying of her husband and the accompanying atrocities, she vowed to create a new world: "I watched and I said we won't be at the mercy of brutes anymore, we'll live a new life and help one another. The government's creating that new life--you must stop speaking against us" (p. 83).
However, she ignores all moral scruples to accomplish her goals. She tells Lear, "yes, you sound like the voice of my conscience. But if you listened to everything your conscience told you you'd go mad. You'd never get anything done--and there's a lot to do, some of it very hard" (p. 84). Cordelia's relationship with Lear clarifies, for she resembles the ex-king's actual daughters in her valuation of power as the ultimate achievement, just as Lear had done and had taught his offspring; she is therefore a spiritual daughter.58

Lear counters her pragmatic philosophy with the one for which he has suffered a great deal in order to learn: the upholding of man's tenuous link with man. He declares, "If a God had made the world, might would always be right, that would be so wise, we'd be spared so much suffering. But we made the world--our of our smallness and weakness. Our lives are awkward and fragile and we have only one thing to keep us sane: pity, and the man without pity is mad" (p. 84). Akin to existentialism in its insistence upon man's accountability for all action, the philosophy to which Lear adheres denigrates a view which negates humanity in the name of perfection. Lear accuses, "Your Law always does more harm than crime, and your morality is a form of violence" (p. 85).

With Lear's final rejection of isolation or collaboration, the Ghost must disappear. While following Cordelia off he is attacked by the pigs which he had tended when alive. He stumbles in again, covered with blood. He pleads with
Lear to help him, but Lear recognizes, "It's far too late! You were killed long ago! You must die! I love you, I'll always remember you, but I can't help you. Die, for your sake die!" (p. 86). With Lear's renunciation the Ghost drops dead at his feet, freeing Lear to act upon his resolutions. In the preface Bond explains that the Ghost's death is an inevitable and necessary sacrifice to Lear's maturity: "Some things were lost to us long ago as a species, but we all seem to have to live through part of the act of losing them. We have to learn to do this without guilt or rancour or callousness--or socialized morality. So Lear's ghost isn't one of the angry ghosts from Early Morning, but something different" (pp. xiii-xiv).

In the concluding scene Lear approaches the wall, picks up a shovel, and digs a few shovelfuls. When confronted by guards, he calmly states, "I'm not as fit as I was. But I can still make my mark" (p. 88). A soldier fires, Lear is wounded but perseveres in his digging. The guard shoots again, and Lear dies instantly. He is left alone on the stage as the workers and soldiers disperse. Typical of Bond's plays, the final mood is neither completely uplifting nor entirely depressing. He asserts in the preface, "There is no need for pessimism or resignation, and this play is certainly not either of these things. . . . the truth is always ground for pessimism when it is discovered, but one soon comes to see it as an opportunity" (p. xiii).

Lear marks a turning point in Bond's dramatic vision
because it contains a protagonist who explicitly commits himself to positive action rather than remaining an inarticulate or passive victim. While Wardle faults Bond as a dramatic thinker because "he is inclined to substitute mud-slinging for logic," he yet commends "the searing authenticity of what he sees." Similarly, Cohn describes the growth of Bond's heroes: "Instead of preaching a rational gospel . . . [Bond] fills an almost bare stage with whole societies from which and against which heroes arise, who learn through their suffering to act responsibly. This resembles the pathos-mathos of classical tragedy, but it is translated into a modern godless world."

In its use of the grotesque Lear bears similarities and differences to the two major plays which precede it, Early Morning and Narrow Road to the Deep North. Like them the play contains several graphic and often bloody scenes which manifest the grotesque through their aberrant juxtapositions of the darkly comic and the horribly obscene. Unlike Early Morning, Lear counters the disturbing effects of the violent and the abnormal with an overtly positive protagonist. In addition, the nearly realistic or representational framework of Lear helps to anchor the audience's awareness of the play's theme more successfully than Early Morning's chaotic and sometimes confusing structure. Consequently, Lear is closer to the more austere style of Narrow Road. Wardle describes Lear as "concentrated, economical, at once nightmarishly extravagant and coldly austere."
just as he commends Narrow Road for its simplicity and economy. The grotesque images in Lear (to an even greater extent than those in Narrow Road) coalesce around the protagonist in such a way that they underline his development. When Lear is still in power the grotesques are those like Warrington who undeservedly undergo intense sufferings, thus embellishing the tyrannical nature of Lear's regime. After Lear topples from authority, he himself becomes the victim, the sufferer. Significantly, he is haunted by the ghost of a simple man for whose death Lear is partially responsible. Finally, Bond demonstrates the sacrifice of Lear's innocence in the form of the decay and death of the grotesque Boy. Unlike Shogo's, Lear's death evinces none of the grotesque, for it is neither horrible nor absurd, but instead possesses dignity and even grandeur, which brings it closer to the sublime than the grotesque.

We Come to the River (1976), an opera libretto, closely resembles Lear, for it depicts the growing awareness of a central figure who also falls from power, becomes blind, then purveys a new, humane gospel. William Mann considers it "characteristic of his work, with themes of madness, extreme violence, and concern with the careless wickedness of an authority as much desperate as malign."

The opening scenes detail the environment of casual violence and trace the General's responsibility in continuing it. He announces a final victory over rebel forces and determines to crush absolutely any further opposition.
Already over 22,000 men have died or been wounded. The common soldiers celebrate, but in a desperate fashion, since they realize that killing is only a prelude to more misery. When one soldier declares, "I'll be happy as long as no one tells me to kill and then bury what I've killed," another returns, "You can't get out. You will work hard, it will be cold, it will rain. Your wife will always be tired. You'll have eight children and three will live. And they'll be as thin as prisoners of war and walk like wounded soldiers." Bond illustrates that the common people suffer most from war. Even the whores who entertain the men mourn for a young officer whose legs were shot off. In a grotesque juxtaposition of the romantic and the realistic, a major mounts a prostitute as she lies on the table; meanwhile the other officers surround the pair and "raise candelabras over their heads. It suggests romantic pictures of officers listening to girls playing the piano" (p. 88). The scene concludes as the whore still reminisces about the mutilated soldier and the officers sing a song which emphasizes their failure to perceive the ugliness they have engendered:

When our schooldays are over  
We will meet  
And live the dreams  
We are dreaming now.  (p. 88)

The General's encounters with the ordinary people, however, are most significant in demonstrating his move toward regeneration. In his meeting with a deserter, he expresses the philosophy of power, which is also Cordelia's. He tells
the frightened young soldier, "There is no victory--you only win time you need to prepare for the next war. It will come, and the soldiers will want to run away--they always will. I must make them stay. You will be shot in the morning" (p. 86). To him human life is always expedient and subordinate to the maintenance of authority. The General's assurance begins to erode, however, when his doctor tells him that he is going blind. The blindness is also a metaphor for the infection of aggression, which sooner or later affects a whole society. The doctor even compares the spread of the affliction to a battle: "When you look at a battlefield you see things I can't. You send troops somewhere and the effect spreads--I can't see it but you can. Suddenly it affects another part of the field, far away, hours, days later. It decides victory and defeat. . . . The wound behind your knee has worked in the same way. You are going blind" (p. 90).

Shocked into an altered perception, the General wanders out onto a battlefield, shuts his eyes, and listens to the sound of the dying men. In addition, he encounters a young woman, her child, and an old woman who search the wounded to find the Young Woman's husband and also to loot the bodies. In a grotesque scene the Young Woman stumbles upon the half-buried body of a soldier, whom she believes to be her husband. The face is so mutilated that he is unrecognizable but the girl insists. The General angers at her persistence and scoffs, "So you know he's dead, you know he's buried. So what can you do? Nothing. There are thousands of dead men here" (p. 96).
Although mentally unbalanced, the Young Woman recognizes the basic humanity which links her to all men. She in turn accuses the General, "Have you killed so many men, seen so many bodies? You don't know what you look at any more!" (p. 96). The General disavows his responsibility: "I killed no one. They are war dead. They gave their lives" (p. 96). But the Young Woman sits by the corpse, nurses her baby, and holds the dead man's hand. She declares, "I shall sit here and hold his hand. When it turns to bone I will cover it with my own hand" (p. 96). To her the soldier is more than a dead object but is a representative of all living men, who deserve compassion and love.

This meeting with the grotesque--the girl's obsession with the corpse--triggers a new awareness of suffering within the General. Amidst the pomp and ceremony of a military review, he disturbs the other guests when he mutters, "You see, I was not prepared: the old woman cried. I've seen the strong cry, but not the weak. Why wasn't I prepared to see how the weak cry?" (p. 99).

But the innocent must suffer even more before the General can finally break from his previous beliefs. He returns to the women and the child to question them further about their circumstances, but the Governor and his aides follow him and, perturbed by the General's behavior, they order the execution of the Young Woman for looting. The General protests but they counter that since he has resigned from the army his orders are futile. They kill her and the Governor commands
them to bind the General and send him to a madhouse. "It must be made clear that these are the acts of a madman," the Governor asserts, "and do not reflect on the emperor" (p. 101). However, the General now realizes that the truly insane action is the murder of the innocent Young Woman. He wonders at the incongruities involved: "Her blood runs over the stones and the law is stronger by one more death, the armed men are stronger by the strength of one woman who was too mad to know who they were" (p. 101).

With his realization of the enormity of the actions of his former comrades, the General finally relinquishes his association with them and identifies instead with the persecuted. When the soldiers chase the Old Woman, who has fled with the baby, the General joins her in her "curse of children." He proclaims, "I curse you with the voice of children. With the death of children. You should father no children. They will be born old and white and dead. With hands red from your crimes. With eyes dazed from your violence. With fingers writhing like strangler's rope. Their breath will stink of your victims' graves" (p. 104). The grotesque imagery reinforces the General's change in his perception of human beings as mere pawns in a power game; he now sees them as vulnerable creatures affected by cruelty even unto future generations. The grotesque continues to focus the conflict between the philosophy of power and the philosophy of humanity. The unnatural yet moving compassion of the Young Woman towards the dead soldier and the anomalous
association of children with the old, diseased, and corrupt creates the idea and feeling of an inverted morality, which upholds death over life. Within this grotesque moral environment, the Old Woman's only recourse is death; she jumps into the river with the baby.

With his new-found perception the General is ready to inhabit the world of the mad, also a world of the grotesque. The second part begins in the madhouse, where the insane move and speak in isolated fragmentation. They sing monologues which contain extremely grotesque imagery. One tells of a man who refused to convert to Christianity and was therefore crucified and forced to swallow an adder, which gnawed its way through the man's body. A second describes the horrible death of a boy who contracted dysentery and from whose anus worms continued to crawl even after he died. Also, the singer tells of a child who died of starvation and was partially eaten by a wolf. A third relates a story similar to that in "The Swing"--the mutilation and torture of a black man whose execution is staged as a performance in which the audience fired shots at the victim. A fourth describes the mass slaughter of people by the SS; a fifth the effect of an atomic explosion, and the last the misery and fear of a jungle rebellion. These monologues create a universal framework which underlines and embellishes specific horrors of the play. Although not a concrete manifestation of the grotesque, the vivid depictions of the songs establish the appropriate atmosphere for its appearance. As in Bond's
other works, madness is often a result of brutal victimization and unnatural suffering. Coupled with the frequently comic delusions associated with mental disturbance, the strangeness inherent in the world of the insane often produces the grotesque.

The mad seek refuge from their harsh circumstances by envisioning an imaginary island; they even build an invisible boat that will allow them to "sail" to the island. The island is a metaphor of isolation and withdrawal. Significantly, the General refuses to believe in the island. He cries, "These voices are like flies! Tell them there is no river! No island! The river is dead!" (p. 107). The other inmates grow angry at his renunciation; they threaten, "He destroys our island! You take the river away! Kick him! Hit him! Throw him in the river!" (p. 108).

The General is not totally cut off from the outside world; a soldier visits him and details the horrors raging in the city, where torture is common and the people are starving. He tells the General, "The people write your name on the walls. You are their hero: You attacked the emperor. None of the leaders had spoken against him before! Help us now. Tell us what we shall do" (p. 107). Like Lear, the General becomes a Messianic figure. Afraid of the threat he poses to social stability, the Governor offers the General freedom if he will return as nominal head of the army: "We need your moral, symbolic support," he pleads (p. 109). But the General answers, "Tell the emperor you can do nothing
to save him! Nothing!" (p. 109).

The social turbulence continues until finally an assassin kills the Governor. The emperor orders the blinding of the General to incapacitate him for good, claiming, "Even my enemies wouldn't follow a blind leader" (p. 114). The blinding scene parallels Lear's to a great extent. Like the king, the General becomes so tormented by guilt and pain that he wishes to die. When he learns that the Governor's assassin was the young soldier who had visited him, and that after murdering the Governor he had then killed his wife, children and himself, the General rages as he is put into a strait-jacket, "I live in a cage--that should make me mad! I've lived long enough to earn death! Young men die. Mothers die. Children die. Why must I live on and on?" (p. 116). Just as Lear had done, the General still needs to move beyond self-destructive remorse to a more constructive understanding of the nature of cruelty and suffering.

Although his actual blinding is not as gruesome as Lear's, the General's loss of sight, like Lear's symbolizes a new insight. As he sits helplessly bound the assassins enter and draw a knife across his eyes, finally blinding him. At this point the General "sees" the people who had been killed--the deserter, the Young Woman, the Old Woman and the child. The General asks them for the truth: "Tell me! Will the world go mad? Will a terrible sun burn it till it is a desert littered with dead? Answer me! Let me be sane before I die" (p. 118). In a striking use of counterpoint
Bond presents the simultaneous actions of the songs of the dead with the events of the asylum. The dead are joined by other children, soldiers, and prisoners who are wounded and blood-stained. They sing in polar images of life and death, destruction and beauty: "The dark ice melts in the sun / The rain runs into the river" (p. 120); "Pink flesh in the steel shell"; "Where the earth was trod to dry circles they heap flowers" (p. 122). Juxtaposed with the poetry of the song are the ugly events on stage; the assassins bribe the Doctor to sign a medical certificate signifying the General's blindness was due to natural causes. In paranoid fear that the General with his new perception will take their river away, the mad people attack and smother him with sheets and blankets. They believe that they are drowning him. The attendants chase them off, leaving on the stage the dead General still covered by sheets, and the Young Woman's child lying in its wrappings. The effect suggests the idea of the General's rebirth, since he has now joined the world of the Innocents who suffered, died, and are now at rest.

In *We Come to the River* the use of counterpoint becomes a predominant technique. To stage the simultaneous scenes, the production used three acting areas. The musical score by Hans Werner Henze added to the juxtaposition by using music styles at odds with the happenings on stage. For example, a ludicrous floor-sweeping scene conducted by a tyrannic drill sergeant who wants even the broom handles washed occurs at the same time as the deserter's execution.
The former was accompanied by a scherzando jig and the latter by the crucifixus from Bach's B Minor Mass. Mann comments that the simultaneity "activates a visual as well as musical counterpoint of continual fascination and brilliance." He adds that the music had "rhythmic vitality, underpinning the euphony and the violence." On the other hand, reviewer Patrick Carnegy finds the use of counterpoint confusing at times, and he notes the discordant effect of the technique: "Everywhere the consolations and diversions of 'traditional' music are mercilessly framed by parody or irony." Although Mann believes there was enough variety in the action to balance the violence, Carnegy asks, "Has the new left humanitarian no more potent language than that of frayed shock tactics and extravaganza?"

Although the idea of moral growth and regeneration compares to Lear, as is suitable to an operatic style, the grotesque events often are more lyrical and poetic in effect than they are savagely comic or horrendous. Although Bond often uses music in his plays, it usually has the Brechtian effect of providing intellectual distance and mitigating the effect of violence. While Henze's score contributes to the ironic discordance or discrepancy Bond means to evoke in the action, nevertheless the operatic structure provides a certain amount of aesthetic distancing which the more representational style of Lear lacks. As Carnegy comments, "Even under extreme provocation, whether by Bacchic frenzy or battlefield brutality, Henze remains an Apolline composer,
always able to reach down a classical musical form to bring a consoling order to the rough and tumble of life."\textsuperscript{71} The structure of the work somewhat mutes the impact of the grotesque, since it lessens the sense of immediate identification with the events on stage. Similarly, the production of Narrow Road to the Deep North lessened the effect of horror by using dolls for children and streamers for blood; the conventions called attention to themselves as conventions, just as the operatic chorus and music emphasized the theatrical in We Come to the River. An awareness of the stage disengages the emotions and activates the intellect. Therefore, the emotional impact necessary for the grotesque diminishes.

In The Bundle (1978) Bond returns to a previous play, Narrow Road, and again examines the results of following or ignoring the human conscience. However, in this new version Bond focuses upon conflict which brings about positive rather than negative social change. In his prefatory essay to the play, "A Note on Dramatic Method," Bond explains the social basis of dramatic production: "Art portrays present-day human beings who are conscious, or potentially conscious, of a utopian society--and who desire to achieve it. It shows the desire, the possibility, the action necessary to achieve it, and the practical standards that can be used to assess this action and the moral standards that can be used to judge it."\textsuperscript{72} The Bundle dramatizes "how the words 'good' and 'bad,' and moral concepts in
In this essay Bond introduces a dramatic technique relating to the grotesque. Bond asserts, "All theatre is political--Coward's as well as Brecht's--and theatre always emphasizes the social in art" (pp. xxii-xxiii). Therefore art is a vital factor in making an audience aware of their society and its functioning. However, Bond maintains that people in modern society have become so programmed by the "overt teaching and subtler persuasions of social institutions administering to the philosophy and needs of an obsolescent ruling class" (p. xiv) that they will fail to receive a "correct interpretation" (p. xiv) from a straightforward, representational account of an event. Consequently, the dramatist must do what Bond terms as "dramatizing the analysis" (p. xviii); that is, he must provide as many dramatic indicators as possible to point up his thematic or interpretive stance. He mentions Brecht's use of placards to caption a scene as a technique that dramatizes the analysis, for example. This means of encouraging interpretation, however, is not a mere intellectualization or abstraction, but includes "those crises in a story when the audience are asked to be not passive victims or witnesses, but interpreters of experience, agents of the future, restoring meaning to action by recreating self-consciousness" (p. xx). In addition, Bond mentions scenes in the play which highlight
the interpretation, and significantly, these are often scenes which contain the grotesque. By using vividly powerful images and actions to call attention to social inequities, the grotesque becomes a vital technique in dramatizing the analysis of the play.

The Bundle starts the same as its earlier version; Basho, the haiku poet, seeks enlightenment, but here he seeks it so that he may be worthy enough to become a judge of the fenland villages. In The Bundle Basho is more obviously self-interested than in Narrow Road. When the Ferryman asks for the penny fare, Basho protests, "Is your life so useful, your soul full of such brightness, your trade done with such courtesy—that you can charge enlightenment a penny on its journey into the world?"73 Similarly, when he discovers the abandoned child on the river bank, the poet declares that the child is a trap put in his path by heaven to lure him away from the road to enlightenment. But, he adds, "If the child had been big it could have carried my bundle. Then heaven's purpose would have been clear" (p. 2).

After Basho leaves, the impoverished Ferryman struggles with his conscience, which urges him to take the child, and with his fear that the child will be too much of a financial strain for his wife and him. However, he succumbs to humanitarian instincts and rescues the child. Unlike Narrow Road, Bond illustrates at the beginning the child's fate instead of letting the audience assume that the baby
will die from abandonment. Also, Basho's selfishly elitist view is balanced by the Ferryman's compassion.

The next scene occurs fourteen years later and portrays the character of the almost grown child, Wang. The boy and his father illegally fish in the landowner's river because their only means of livelihood, the Boat, has been confiscated for taxes. As Wang and the Ferryman argue about social injustice, Bond sets up the dialectic which continues throughout the play; the Ferryman argues that while it is a hardship to have to pay excessive taxes, nevertheless their subservience to the landowner guarantees them protection against outlaws. "We're his property. It's in his interest to look after us" (p. 6), he maintains. On the other side, Wang questions the right of the ruling class to take away their means of support and thus force them to resort to illegal means just to obtain sustenance. Wang notes the inherent contradiction: "We steal the fish to stay alive to pay taxes so that there'll be no more stealing" (p. 6).

They are interrupted by Basho's entrance. The poet still seeks the way to the deep north; after fourteen years of futile search, he has wandered back to the starting place. Bond emphasizes Basho's pretentious philosophy when, alarmed at encountering the same ferryman he had met so long before, he faints. Revived by the father and son, he awakes and exclaims that he has at last found enlightenment. They eagerly ask him what he has discovered, but Basho self-righteously answers, "Do not ask for enlightenment till
you're ready to lose all" (p. 9). Such a smugly superior attitude held by one so foolishly inept is clearly a satirical job at intellectual and religious elitism.

Despite Basho's proclaimed monopoly on enlightenment, his more pragmatic position as judge saves Wang, the Ferryman, and himself from charges of poaching when the keepers discover and accuse them. When the officers threaten to prosecute Basho, and Wang and the Ferryman protest that he is a renowned poet, they sneer, "Is he a poet? Throw him in the water and see if he shouts alas!" (p. 10). But when they learn he is the new judge of the district, they become immediately respectful and let the three of them go. The scene establishes three different philosophical views—the common worker who blindly subscribes to the system which oppresses him, the potential rebel who begins to question this discrepancy, and the artistic intellectual who believes himself aloof from mere men but who nevertheless uses his position in the system to his own advantage.

The third scene dramatically underlines what happens when these views come into conflict. The use of the grotesque situation aids in creating the emotional link between audience and idea, which Bond has described in the preface as "dramatizing the analysis." The scene also puts Wang in a position which parallels that of the Ferryman in the earlier scene; he must decide whether to make a desperate sacrifice in order to save the lives of others. The scene is set in the village burial brounds, where flood refugees have fled.
to escape the rising waters. They are exhausted, destitute, and hungry. The landowner has commandeered the only boat that can rescue them, and the keepers who pilot the vessel demand payment from anyone who wishes salvation. They take the last possessions of the needy, even the only jacket an old man owns to keep him from freezing. The Ferryman offers the meagre contents of his bundle, but the keepers spurn these. Therefore, the old man's only recourse is to offer Wang as an indentured servant. At first Wang refuses to be made a slave, but his parents remind him that he owes his life to them. To add to the desperateness of their predicament, offstage voices of others in the graveyard shout that the graves are beginning to fall into the water. Furthermore, the cries of a woman in labor slowly escalate during the action until they come to a climax and fade off into the general sounds of the crowd. A voice shouts, "Help. Help. The woman has given birth! I'm up to my neck in mud. Bodies are being washed out of the ground. The dead are floating around us" (p. 21). The paradoxical juxtaposition of the living threatened with death, and the sudden animation of the dead creates a grotesque situation which forcefully punctuates the idea of a social system which puts more value on the dead (who are given the safest and most valuable land in which to be buried) than on the living. In the midst of this topsy-turvy situation, Wang finally crumbles and cries, "Buy me! Buy me! Buy me!" (p. 21) so that he and his parents will be saved. In the preface Bond
specifically cites Wang's cries of capitulation as examples of his technique of dramatizing the analysis (p. xviii), especially in his choice of the word "buy," which reflects upon the enormity of a capitalistic system in which human beings are bought and sold like cattle.

The following situation again parallels the earlier scene in which the baby is abandoned. For a second time Wang must choose to act as savior or destroyer. Bond observes in the preface that "the choice and ordering of scenes is decided by the analysis" (p. xix). He adds that the "epic's structure must have meaning--it is not a collection of scenes showing that meaning is logically possible. This unity comes from the analysis, which demonstrates, embodies cause and effect in a coherent way" (p. xx). Bond points to the relationship between this scene and the first as a deliberate parallelism which illustrates his meaning (p. xx).

The nine years of Wang's indenture have passed; they have been spent under Basho, who has educated the young man and who now urges the reluctant Wang to remain with him as friend and helper. When Basho spies another infant left on the bank, he uses it as a reason for Wang to stay. He declares, "For a moment I see into heaven. Once before--a child by the river... What should we seek this time? Always enlightenment. Heaven has done this. You take the child. Live with it in my house. Then you will find the way" (p. 25).
He leaves Wang alone with the decision, just as Wang's adopted father had been years before. Like the Ferryman, Wang also must choose between a course that would save one life but burden Wang with more years of servitude--or he can elect a harsher choice which would free Wang but end an innocent life. The decision is further complicated when a woman who turns out to be the child's mother enters to check on the baby she had to abandon in order to feed her other children. She also begs Wang to take the baby. The woman represents those like Wang's father who submit to life's indecencies without protest. She admits, "I didn't choose my life. These things happened to me. I don't ask anymore. I'm an animal" (p. 28). She is so entrenched in the opportunistic capitalism of her society that when Wang gives her Basho's expensive art supplies, she believes that he is buying her child, and thus her action in giving away the child is now justified. She exults, "Then it's a transaction. A part of the law. I haven't left my child. I sold him. . . . Now--I'm a good woman and you're a good man" (p. 28).

She leaves and once more Wang must make his choice. As the Ferryman had done earlier, Wang vacillates between the two courses. To him the child represents a whole world of wrong and aeons of inequity. "You've been lying there for hundreds of years," he tells the baby; "I trip over you every time I come out of the door!" (p. 29). Wang despairs that even if he saves this one child, there are thousands
of others who will die: "Is this all?--one little gush of sweetness and I pick up a child? Who picks up the rest? How can I hold my arms wide enough to hold them all? ... Must the whole world lie by this river like a corpse?" (p. 29). Finally, he imagines that the baby symbolizes the force of socialized morality, which forces men into the roles of killers. He cries, "Your arms are too strong! They crush me like a prison! ... If there was a gun in your hand you'd pull it! You would kill!" (p. 29). With this final vision Wang hurls the child into the river; as he does so, he holds onto the white sheet in which the child had been wrapped, and it unravels in the wind. The action is shocking and is meant to be in order to involve the audience in the problem and its solution.  

Howard Davies, to whom Bond dedicates the play, explains the import of this grotesque action: "There always comes a point in Bond's plays when the main character has to face a vision of horror—that the world we live in is hell." The image evoked by the white sheet occurs in many other plays, such as "Stone," The Fool, Lear, and We Come to the River; it is a motif often associated with the grotesque in Bond's works because it recalls deathlike images of shrouds and apparitions. In addition, the whiteness evokes the idea of purity and innocence, and Bond frequently uses it in depicting the death of an innocent young person, as in The Bundle. The concrete image reinforces the unnatural act which precedes it. Whether the killing of the child is justifiable or not,
it does signal Wang's break away from his past subservience to social authority and morality.

As Wang flees from conventional society, he encounters those who live on its fringes--the outlaws. Outcasts have suffered the most and subsequently are often connected with the grotesque. Scene Five opens with a violent fight similar to the boxing match in *The Fool*. Like the latter, juxtaposition of violence with the callous indifference of the spectators adds humor which simultaneously heightens and equalizes the savagery of the action.

The combatants are two thieves, Tiger and Kaka, who argue over a piece of loot, a bell. The two young men are simple-minded, and the musical object fascinates them, just as children are attracted to bright toys. Bond's dialogue also emphasizes their simplicity; they speak mostly in one-word sentences. For instance, as Tiger takes the bell from Kaka, he asserts, "Kaka--knife. Bell--me. (Taps his chest with his finger.) Musical" (p. 30). When their argument escalates into a fight, the other thieves disinterestedly continue dividing the booty. However, they throw in half-hearted comments which reveal how common violence is in their world. The young girl, Sheoul, comments as she looks at a hat, "Kill him. Break his leg. Throw him up and break his arm" (p. 31). She and Tor-Quo, the other gang member, continue discussing their haul and are more interested in what they will have for dinner than in the outcome of the fight.
Finally, Tiger overcomes Kaka, but Tiger's victory is short-lived, since Kaka has taken the clapper from the bell. Before the fight can resume, the others detect Wang stumbling through the swamp, and they quickly set a trap to lure him, reminiscent of the Biblical Good Samaritan's plight. Tiger pretends to be wounded from an outlaw's attack and cries for help. However, Wang is too preoccupied with the sights of suffering he has witnessed to take heed. And when he does finally notice Tiger, he accuses, "Poor!—and you let yourself be robbed? . . . Let someone else get blood on their hands—so you can be simple and honest and good! You deserve what you got!" (p. 33). He then knocks Tiger unconscious, but the other thieves fall upon him and bind him. Greatly amused at Tiger's discomfort, Kaka giggles, "Tiger will kill you. . . . Tiger jabs eyes out with his stump [one of his hands is gone] and strangles with his hand. Hoo. Windpipe comes out of their mouth: plop!" (p. 33).

In this scene Bond continues to interpolate the comic with the dangerous; Wang's failure to play the role of the Good Samaritan perplexes the thieves, yet they are cunning enough to capture him anyway. Furthermore, while they chortle at their companion's plight, they also delight in reminding their victim of the cruelties Tiger can inflict. This combination of the comic with the brutal establishes a grotesque atmosphere in which events are unpredictable and, therefore, more emotionally disquieting to the spectator. The scene focuses upon the jungle-like existence forced upon those who
cannot fit into a conventional world and who must rebel against it in order to survive.

Tiger dramatizes the social conditions which thrust them into their present life. In order to frighten Wang he tells him the grotesque tale of how he lost his hand. A drought came to his village. A wealthy man took advantage of the people's misfortunes and dispossessed many, including Tiger. He begged this man for a job; the man beckoned to him, Tiger followed and then strangled the man with one hand. After the man was dead, Tiger continued holding him by the neck with the one hand and walked down the street to display the corpse to the villagers. The simplicity of his speech heightens the horror while it also provides grim humor. He concludes his tale: "Off to court house. Judge says question: 'Have you murdered?' Hold up corpse. Show. Judge tells soldiers: 'He let's go--or chop!' Hold corpse up! High! Show! Chop! Corpse falls. Hand still on throat. Judge saw" (p. 35).

Although they purportedly defy the law, it still intimidates and awes them to a great extent. For example, when they hunt through Wang's pocket, they discover some of Basho's poems. Only barely literate, they can make out only enough of them to infer that they are official documents which endow Wang with great authority. Miserably frightened, the outlaws assure Wang, "Sir, we don't rob rich--only poor. ... and we don't hurt! We respect uniform" (p. 36). However, after they release Wang, the young man informs them
he, like them, flees the law. He now wishes to join a band of thieves. To convince them of his cause, he uses Tiger's technique of dramatization. In this way he shows them that the landowners who exploit the poor are even more culpable than the thieves for spreading destitution. Want ends the scene with a poem: "What is enlightenment? / Understanding who is the thief / And what is the great light" (p. 39). By leading the band Wang can at last begin to realize his commitment to social change.

The second part of The Bundle depicts conflict which the proletariat foments and continues, unlike works such as We Come to the River, in which the lower classes are merely victims. In comparing the plot to The Woman, Hay and Roberts maintain, "Both plays present unjust and irrational societies and explain the practical and moral paradoxes involved in confronting and changing them."76 In Bond's plays the grotesque is an apt metaphor for conveying moral paradox; therefore, the appearance of the grotesque increases correspondingly with the escalation of aggression between classes.

Wang is now leader of the bandits, and he has turned their petty crimes into the more serious channel of social revolution. Basho has put a price upon Wang's head, and the next scene opens as he and soldiers intrude upon the Ferryman's home to seek information about Wang from the old man and his wife. The Ferryman agrees obsequiously to inform upon his son, but has secretly been keeping in touch with Wang. Wang implicates the couple even more earnestly
when he asks the Ferryman to use his boat to take rifles to the village. Once the villagers are armed, Wang declares, "Then everything follows: Food, clothes, bedding, medicine—and more! Understanding, knowledge" (p. 45). When his reluctant father asks how wisdom relates to rifles, Wang tells him that the poor are kept that way because the landowner refuses to build levees to prevent the river from flooding. He continues, "The landowner needs to do one thing. Only one. Keep us in ignorance. The river does that for him. So take the river and make it ours! That's why rifles are food and clothes and knowledge!" (p. 46).

The Ferryman, however, fears that if anything should happen to them, his wife, who is dying of cancer, will be left alone and defenseless against the pain. As he had realized with the baby thrown into the river, Wang contends that some must inevitably suffer for the eventual survival of many. He thus scoffs at morality which represents social change: "You saints who crucify the world so that you can be good! You keep us in dirt and ignorance! Force us into the mud with your dirty morality!" (p. 47). In the ultimate accusation against his father, Wang insists that the Ferryman in effect killed his wife when he rescued Wang, because he took food from her to feed the child. Harsh as Wang's judgments are, nevertheless they force the couple into realizing their responsibility for their world, in which even a small action like the rescue of a baby can have much larger repercussions. The Ferryman acknowledges, "Yes. If you'd
drowned in the river someone else would have been asked the same question. . . . I've loved and hated. The river kept me alive and almost killed me. Now it will carry the rifles" (p. 48).

Bond further illustrates the conflict between Wang's morality and conventional morality in the ensuing scene. The woman who had abandoned the baby in the fourth scene sits with a stone cangue, or yoke, bolted around her neck; this is her punishment for stealing a cabbage leaf to make soup for her husband. Two water sellers exploit her misery to get people to buy their water; they exhort them for pity's sake to buy the woman a cup of water. The superficiality of their morality shows as they insult each other's commodity: "Don't buy his grandmother's pee holy fathers--it's sacrilege!" (p. 52). Disguised, Wang and Tiger watch the woman's sufferings but cannot act, for the soldiers are also on the watch. Wang reiterates his version of morality as compared to theirs: "The landowner still controls. If we're kind to the woman--he must be crueller to the people. . . . the government makes not only laws, but a morality, a way of life, what people are in their very nature. We have not yet earned the right to be kind. I say it with blood in my mouth. When the landowner is no longer feared then our kindness will move mountains" (p. 54). And blood does literally run from Wang's mouth as he bites his lip to keep from shouting his anger at her treatment. Again, Bond uses this overt action to demonstrate his idea that Wang's
compassion must be kept in abeyance until his social vision can be realized.  

Wang's philosophy bears fruit when the soldiers bring the news that the landowner is fleeing as the rebellion grows stronger. Wang decides that now they can safely act to free the woman. He explains, "Now--suddenly--a brick falls from the top! The first sign of weakness. The people see it--a sign of our strength! The wall cracks! Now pull it down!" (p. 57). The people who witness the act are at first afraid to help Wang; even the woman they release whimpers with fright. But finally Wang persuades the water sellers to do something unique, for them--to give, not sell, the woman and her husband water. At first aghast at this request, they soon marvel at this new perception of freedom, for they have been as shackled as the prisoners by the restraints of their own brand of morality. The stage directions indicate the first water seller's rebirth of humane instinct: "Observing himself in amazement, watching the running water as if it were the first time he had seen it, handling the water can as if it had just dropped from space" (p. 60), he pours the water. Wang's compassionate example in freeing the woman catalyzes the humanity of others, but in the next scene it is a vision of the grotesque which prompts rebellion in another.

Again Basho and his soldiers try to force the Ferryman to help them. This time, however, they know about his assistance in ferrying the rifles. Basho tells the old man
that he will watch from the window and the soldiers will lie in wait as the Ferryman pilots the boat to Wang. To intimidate him further, the soldiers bring in Tiger. The directions note that his "hair and face are covered with several patchy layers of dry, faded blood. The upper part of his body is knotted in a sheet" (p. 61). They have cut off Tiger's other hand and have cut out his tongue; furthermore, they make him debase himself by forcing him to initiate the sounds of a chicken, a sheep, and a pig. For the last, they force him down on all fours, maintaining, "That's the right posture for well brought up pigs" (p. 62). Despite the grotesque cruelty of the soldiers, Bond contends that they "are used to their work and too bored with it to enjoy it. Really they act out of fear--amateur mountain climbers: a show of calm, hollow inside" (p. 61).

Instead of quelling it, confrontation with such vivid suffering only solidifies the Ferryman's determination to help his son. In an action paralleling Wang's, he gives Tiger a bowl of water, even though the soldiers soon take it away. To himself he wonders, "We have minds to see how we suffer. Why don't we use them to change the world? A god would wipe us off the board with a cloud: a mistake. But as there is only ourselves shouldn't we change our lives so that we don't suffer? Or at least suffer only in changing them?" (p. 64). Bob Peck, the actor portraying the Ferryman, judges that the torture of Tiger is necessary to motivate the old man's resolution: "As a result of coming into
contact with this mutilated, tongueless man, and knowing that Wang is next in line unless he does something about it, he decides the only useful thing he can do is to save Wang!"

Because he knows he is being closely watched and his wife held hostage, the Ferryman realizes that he must use only the subtlest and most private signal to warn Wang of the soldiers' presence. Therefore he drops his pole in the water, something Wang would recognize as totally uncharacteristic of an accomplished ferryman. They escape, but Basho realizes the trick and orders the old man killed. Bond evokes utmost pathos in his depiction of the old man's death. The violence occurs offstage but is vividly conveyed as the audience hears the Ferryman's cries as of "a wet bundle being hit" (p. 69). The soldiers beat him with the pole he had dropped. Onstage, the old, dying woman shuffles to the window. She removes the gag with which she had been silenced, and the audience hears "as if tuned in on a radio, the weak, persistent sound of her cry, on one note" (p. 69). The soldiers beat the old man as mercilessly as they had Tiger. They beat his hands, they kick him, and one asks, "Why do they struggle at that age? . . . Cantankerous old sod" (p. 69). Finally, there are only a few splashes and the wife's cry ends. As in the baby's drowning, Bond uses the technique of counterpoint, often evocative of the grotesque, to engage the audience's empathy without sentimentality but with full emotional force.

The final scenes illustrate that the Ferryman's
sacrifice is not in vain. The landowners retreat for good, forcing Basho to follow. The workers plan to build banks on the river, although some people are still afraid of the wall's breaking. The atmosphere, however, is jovial as they cheerfully tease one another. The lightness abruptly ends when they discover the drowned body of a comrade. Basho enters, now shrivelled and weak, ragged and dirty. Similar to Hatch in *The Sea*, suffering drives Basho to the edge of sanity. Also like the draper, the poet is a grotesque figure who attacks a corpse. Basho believes that the dead man has the enlightenment which the disillusioned artist still seeks. He shakes the corpse, screaming, "Tell me... The way... The Way... I will be told! Tell me the way!... Or I will shake the life from your soul" (p. 77).

When the people stop him, Basho continues wandering through the audience, asking for the narrow road to the deep north. As he does so, Wang tells his friends a parable of a man who carries a king on his back over the river. He continues to carry the king for many years, never realizing that the ruler has died. "That is the worse story," Wang observes, "To carry the dead on your back" (p. 78). He concludes with the moral, not only of the parable but of the entire play: "We live in a time of great change. It is easy to find monsters--and as easy to find heroes. To judge rightly what is good--to choose between good and evil--that is all that it is to be human" (p. 78).

*The Bundle*, like the more recent plays such as *The
Worlds and The Woman, demonstrates the progression from a restrictive society to a more rational one, often through the means of revolution. As John Peter puts it, the play "begins as a parable for tormented humanists and ends up as a parable for optimistic revolutionaries." However, the playwright purposely limits his vision of the rational society to a mere glimpse which illuminates the potential rather than the absolute fulfillment of an idea. In the preface to Lear, he claims, "I have not tried to say what the future should be like, because that is a mistake. If your plan of the future is too rigid you start to coerce people to fit into it. We do not need a plan of the future, we need a method of change" (p. xiii).

Bond's interest in demonstrating problems and solutions in this work often subjects him to critical attack. John Peter, for instance, disagrees with Bond's ideology: "Writing about revolution is the opium of the conscious-stricken Western intellectual. The real thing is very different. For all its honesty of intent, Bond's play is a lie about the world." Guido Almansi's review also criticizes the moralistic tone of the play: "Bond does not spare us any Biblical scourge except the grasshoppers." Almansi argues that, like Basho, Bond makes his living from exploiting the artistic nature of child sacrifice. Moreover, the critic contends that Basho fails to come across as the villain which Bond wishes to portray: "Bond repeats so many times that Basho is despicable that we tend to sympathize with
this harmless remote Oriental Figure." However, Bond does not necessarily wish to portray individuals as absolutely good or bad. In the first Narrow Road, for example, Bond maintains that in the child slaughter scene he wishes to present all the participants sympathetically. Similarly, in his prefatory essay to The Bundle Bond claims to avoid merely caricaturing the ruling class. He writes, "The analysis of an event must not swamp the recording of it. We have to show the mask under the face not the mask on it. Perhaps we should show members of the ruling class in the way they see themselves." (p. xvii). While in this play Basho more obviously purveys the privileged class' doctrine than in Narrow Road, wherein Georgina and the Commodore maintain this function, his mentally-diminished condition at the end of the play makes him more an object of pity than censure. In this portrayal of Basho the use of the grotesque aids in producing the emotional ambivalency evoked by the poet's state; the viewer's antipathy toward the character diminishes at witnessing Basho's pitiable condition, yet the attack on the corpse and his futile perseverance in searching for enlightenment also make him a figure of ridicule.

The Woman delves even further back than The Bundle into ancient history and myth to the time of the Trojan War. Bond maintains that he wanted to show that Greek classicism is not a valid ideal for contemporary society. In the play he thus opposes two figures who represent the "classical values of beauty and order" and the "new proletarian direction of
Produced at the National Theatre in 1978 and directed by Bond himself, the play is one of Bond's more recent works. The use of the violent and the abnormal decreases; therefore, the use of the grotesque diminishes. Instead, Bond establishes a dialectic in dialogue rather than through situation. Hay and Roberts compare this decrease in overt violence to Greek tragedy, wherein violent events occur offstage. Bond himself explains in "Notes on Acting The Woman" that "most of the emotion occurs between the scenes and that the scenes show the consequences of these emotions. . . . Very few blows should be struck in the play because when they are struck they should be a knockout." Subtitled "Scenes of War and Freedom," the play falls into two parts; the first half relates the final days of the Trojan War and the second depicts peace and the events which threaten it. In the first part when the grotesque does occur, it manifests itself in individuals who are victims of the war or in those who contribute to suffering. In the third scene a group of Greek soldiers guard the walls of Troy, a task they have endured for five years. It is an unnatural activity, as one explains, like "staring at the back of a mirror for five years. You end up forgetting what you look like." Another remarks, "That wall's marked you for life. . . . When we're daft old buggers we'll talk about it for hours--as if this was the good time" (p. 22).

The sight of three veiled women running towards them
interrupts their speculations. Pleased at the women's apparent eagerness, the soldiers embrace them. But when one removes a veil, they discover their faces are deformed from the plague. The women are using themselves as agents of infection. The soldiers kill two of them and express their disgust at their appearance. One exclaims, "God. Skin like a slug" (p. 24). Their horror mounts as they note the smoke rising from Troy as the infected bodies are burned. Thersites wonders, "A pall of black smoke is being slowly lowered over the city as if it was a coffin--and they go on fighting!" (p. 25). Another remarks, "That'll stink . . . Great oily black smuts in your hair and clothes and food" (p. 25). The physical effects of the plague reflect the spiritual ravages upon both Greeks and Trojans. The former fear the infection will spread to their camp, but their leader Heros looks upon the plague as a sign of encroaching victory for them: "You speak as if the plague was punishing us! Troy has the plague! Can't you see?--the goddess has taken us one more step closer to victory!" (p. 26). Despite Heros' optimism, the prevalent mood is that of horror and doom which, like the smoke from the city, acts as an overhanging pall over the men's spirits.

An even fuller depiction of the grotesque effects of the war upon the Trojans occurs in scene twelve. Hecuba's son (known only as Son) is a fanatic priest who seeks to revive the desire to fight in the dispirited people. Bond centralizes the cause of the war, not in Helen, but in a
statue, the Goddess of Good Fortune. Hecuba had urged Priam to capture the statue from the Greeks in the hope that it would revive their sagging economy; the Greeks laid siege to Troy in order to recapture the statue. However, the Goddess has engendered internal conflict; Hecuba wants to end the war and return the statue, but her Son wrests power from her and determines to use the statue to reinforce his own authority, for he does not even believe the Goddess holds mystical power. He states, "That stone--is only a stone. . . . I'm off to the temple to weep and wail and inspire the people. I shall be the man who stands on the street corner of history with a rope round his neck and beckons the spectators to come and be hanged" (p. 47). Like Trench in The Worlds, he represents the death principle and the spirit of cynicism and despair.

The Son's plan backfires when he misjudges the feelings of the members of the populace who have born the brunt of the War. They enter as the Son and the middle-class bystanders pray to the Goddess for vengeance. Bond describes the crowd as "the poor, starved, wounded, sick, lame, crazed. Some have early symptoms of plague. They are all filthy and in rags" (p. 48). They stab the Son and procure the statue; in a frenzy of hatred they decide to give the Goddess of Good Fortune to the Greeks. They cry, "Let the Greeks have her! They deserve her! . . . No more Bitch! Bitch out! Plague out! War out! Famine out!" (p. 49). Their celebratory actions convey the grotesque combination of glee and
pain: "The Beggars spin, stamp, shout, chant, laugh, cry--but above all dance and sing. A Beggar collapses. Some clutch themselves and each other in pain and excitement. Some wave rags like flags and handkerchiefs" (p. 49).
Deformity and misery elicit an emotional response which either reinforces or counteracts the intellectual polemic of the dialogue. As is characteristic of Bond, the grotesques are mostly members of the lower classes--the scape­goats of the irrational processes in society which inflict war and cruelty. However, the scene which concludes the first part reflects the grotesque in the action of a social leader, Hecuba. At the opening of the play Hecuba becomes leader of Troy when her husband Priam dies. Although the originator of Troy's troubles because she urged the stealing of the statue, she has since realized the need to end the war. She befriends Ismene, Hero's wife, who has offered herself as hostage and spokesman for the Greeks. Both women, intelligent and sensitive to the social repercussions of war, subsequently are victimized by those blind to its irrationality. Ismene takes the Trojans' side and urges the Greeks to go home without the statue. She becomes an outcast and is considered a traitor. Moreover, she is sentenced to immurement for her betrayal. Hecuba also is driven from power and becomes a mere figurehead when she desires the removal of the statue. When the Greeks succeed at last in breaching the walls of Troy, they violate the agreement they had made ensuring that they would not sack the city. Along
with the looting, they slay the inhabitants, and enslave the women. As a culmination of the violence, they wrench Hecuba's grandson Astyanax away from his mother and throw him off the walls to prevent a potential heir from arising to lead the Trojans. In despair at witnessing the destruction of her city and horrified by the death of her grandson, Hecuba rushes offstage and blinds herself in one eye; she returns and confronts Heros with her mutilation: "Let that man see my face! Where? Where? Fetch that man-child to my feet and make him see my face" (p. 61). She blinds herself so that she will not have to look at the men responsible for the ruin of her people. She says of Heros, "I see him in my head... Still there! Is there no way to put him out of sight?" (p. 61).

To compound the horrible effect of Hecuba's blindness, the looters return boasting of their savagery. For instance, Nestor, the oldest and supposedly the wisest of the Greeks, tells how he obtained his new helmet: "Chopped chap's head off--then shook it out the helmet" (pp. 62-63). He brags, "Rah! Rah! Wasn't I brave lads! I skipped like a goat. Blood on the sword at my age! What? I showed some of my generation to the grave" (p. 62). The ludicrous nature of his boasts adds to the savagery of the scene; finally, the first half ends as the soldiers tap on the wall behind which Ismene is entombed. There is no answer; the voices of rationality have been silenced. This last scene, a culmination of the madness and destruction of wars, contains the
most overt acts of violence and frequently manifests the grotesque.

The second part opens on an island twelve years later. Hecuba and Ismene had been given shelter by the islanders after a mighty tempest had wrecked their ship as they were leaving Troy, landing them on the island's shores. Ismene was saved from death when soldiers broke into the wall to rob the jewels she had buried with her, has lost her wits and is mentally a child. Hecuba, half-blind, wears a plug over her bad eye. Hay and Roberts note that the structure reflects the change from chaos to order, from the multiplicity of scenes and locales in the first part to a uniform setting in the second. In the same way the physical and mental disabilities of the women parallel the impairment to their previous outlooks and judgments. For example, Bond states that Ismene "believes that the world is fundamentally a rational place and therefore simply to record the truth is a valuable thing because it becomes part of the experience of other people and changes them." He adds that she becomes a child again to show the ineffectiveness of her intellect; she has to learn over again. Similarly, Hecuba's use of the eye plug symbolizes her refusal to face the world; instead she desires to retreat from the past and future. The outside world intrudes upon her serenity when Heros returns from his newly rebuilt Athenian society and demands the statue. The statue was on Hecuba's boat during the storm, and she had ordered it thrown overboard. Heros
believes that the Goddess' "simple stone will remind us that the wise are humble" (p. 79). But Ismene suspects Heros' intentions and asks Hecuba to remove her eye plug in order to help ascertain the men's true nature. Hecuba answers, "If I uncovered my eye--I'd have to keep it uncovered, once I'd seen the light! I won't! The dead are dead, the past is past, my children are gone. Ismene, don't remind me!" (p. 82).

Ismene's insistence finally persuades the older woman; however, she sees nothing when she uncovers her eye; she is now truly blind. Hecuba cries, "I've been blind for years and didn't know it. I thought I could choose!" (p. 84). But she hopes that Ismene will perhaps regain her understanding, and Hecuba discovers the full extent of her love for Ismene: "Oh my child, my child--the child I haven't lost. You love me. And look, a blind old woman covered in tears because she loves her daughter" (p. 85).

Bond reaffirms the value of commitment and involvement. If the dramatist often associates mental and physical deformity with the consequences of social injustice and oppression, he also often endows these victims with a sensitivity and vitality that help to balance their deficiencies. Therefore, while the deformities which Hecuba and Ismene bear are a result of inequities in their social systems, they are also badges of the responsibility to which they must awaken.

Significantly, another maimed figure appears and becomes the islanders' ultimate savior. He is called simply the Man.
The directions note, he appears "deformed, short and has dark hair and pitted skin" (p. 73). Like Ismene and Hecuba he has suffered at the hands of the Greeks and has fled to the island for sanctuary. A miner, his version of Athenian society negates Heros' claim that the Greeks "have replaced fear with reason, violence with law, chaos with order, plunder with work" (p. 79). The Man tells Heros of the miners' plight: "When you build your new city our hell grew with it. It's not true the guilty go to hell: only the weak" (p. 97). The miners "follow the bend of the seams. They're put there by the devil. Our bodies are twisted round his finger in the dark. Like string. When we're too old to dig we go to the top--corpses surfacing!" (p. 98).

Hay and Roberts maintain that the Man is a representative of the destitute mob in the first part, who then assumes a major role. Bond directed that his deformity should coincide with his social situation; when Hecuba allows him to stay on the island and help care for Ismene, his limp became less marked; when Heros confronts him and reminds him of the past, his limp becomes more noticeable. Like Hecuba his love for Ismene renews him and strengthens his resolve to fight Heros and thus save the lives of the villagers, whom Heros has threatened to kill if the statue remains unfound.

Hecuba concocts a subterfuge that ironically relies upon the seemingly impossible task of overcoming both her and the Man's handicaps. She tells Heros that she has had
a dream in which she was told that the Goddess would send
a sign of her whereabouts to the winner of a footrace around
the island. The contestants will be Heros and the Man; the
loser will be killed by the victor. Nestor will judge the
race, and Hecuba will witness the race from a hill. On
the day of the race, the Man comes in ahead of Heros; Nestor
assumes he has given up and disqualifies him. However,
Hecuba, pretending she can see, claims that she saw Heros
stop and fall asleep under a tree, allowing the Man to over­
take him and win. The villagers support her claim, and the
Man kills Heros as was agreed upon. Nestor angrily calls
for restitution, but Hecuba asks him if the recovery of the
statue is worth the same bloodshed it had caused in the war.
"Remember Troy!' she urges, "The cost! . . . what did he
want? . . . A little stone in the sea . . . Is it a wonder
he's dead?" (p. 106). Nestor replies, "But I say to myself,
shouldn't I ask what is justice? There's too much truth in
this story. I can't find the loose ends" (p. 107).

Hecuba's life at this point is also a "loose end" which
Bond must tie before the play ends. Just as a storm saved
her life, one now ends it. The Man recounts how she died,
in a speech which is full of intensely grotesque images:
"The waterspout picked her up from the beach and carried
her into the fields. She was caught in a fence like a piece
of sheep's wool. When the spout passed over her it ripped
out her hair and her eyes. Her tits were sticking up like
knives. Her face was screwed up and her tongue--a long
thin tongue—was poking out" (p. 108). According to Hay and Roberts, Hecuba's death demonstrates the burdens and costs of change. Perhaps her death must occur as a kind of poetic justice, a final restitution for her responsibility in starting the war and retreating from that responsibility.

While Hecuba's death is a grim reminder of the consequences of guilt, the play ends on a positive note. Ismene tells the Man, "Since you've loved me my mind's begun to clear" (p. 108). The Man warns, "I may disgust you" (p. 108), but she answers, "No, never" (p. 108). A new generation is left to found a newer, more rational order based upon the values of love and peace.

The grotesque as a device for triggering recognition or enlightenment in other characters or in the audience forms a consistent pattern in the war parables. In each play a grotesque death, torture, or mutilation catalyzes a recognition of another as to the negative aspects of his society and his part in contributing to that injustice. The massacre of the children in Narrow Road motivates Georgina's mental collapse; Shogo's crucifixion prompts Kiro's act of seppuku, the Oriental acknowledgement of guilt or disgrace; similarly, the replacement of the dead soldier's monument with a crucified pig in "Passion" causes the mother's discovery of the effect of human suffering in society. Lear's regeneration derives from his witnessing the results of Warrington's torture, the Gravedigger Boy's death, and Fontanelle's autopsy. Also, Cordelia becomes
a strong leader only after undergoing brutal rape and observing her husband's murder. Furthermore, Lear's grotesque blinding is necessary for him to see his way to moral responsibility. We Come to the River also depicts the growth of awareness in the General as he faces encroaching blindness; moreover, his encounter with the young woman and her concern for a faceless corpse catapults him into a new vision of humanity. Finally, Tiger's disfigurement moves the Ferryman to take an active part in Wang's revolution, and Ismene's mental impairment triggers Hecuba's awareness of her own social responsibilities. As well as instigating characters' enlightenment, the grotesque creates the dissonance necessary to involve an audience emotionally and intellectually with Bond's ideology, although his statements themselves may at times be obtrusive. Nevertheless, the expression of Bond's aesthetic and political vision hinges upon the integral association of the demonic and the ludicrous. As John Peter states, "Bond's plays are the grim masterpieces of the English puritan conscience."
ENDNOTES: CHAPTER FOUR


3 Ibid., pp. 125-126.

4 Ibid., pp. 127-128.


8 Scharine, pp. 260-261.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p. 136.

11 Ibid., p. 146.

12 Ibid., p. 155.


16 Scharine, p. 153.


18 Scharine, p. 155.


21 Worthen, p. 472.
22 Durbach, p. 487.
24 Durbach, p. 484.
25 Scharine, p. 152.
26 Described by director Bill Bryden in letter to Scharine, quoted in Scharine, p. 174.
27 Bond, "Passion," Plays and Players 18, No. 9 (June 1970), p. 66. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.
28 Scharine, p. 178.
29 Ibid., p. 175.
30 Coult, p. 81.
31 Scharine, pp. 273-274.
33 Scharine, p. 221.
34 Ibid., p. 222.
36 Scharine, p. 286.
39 Bond, "Author's Note to Lear," p. xiv.
40 Bond, Lear (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), p. 5. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.
42 Coult, pp. 80-81.
43 Cohn, Modern Shakespeare Offshoots, p. 260.
44 Scharine, p. 215.
45 Coult, p. 37.
46 Scharine, p. 204.
47 Scharine, p. 236.
49 Coult, p. 38.
50 Cohn, *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, p. 262.
51 Scharine, pp. 194-195.
53 Scharine, p. 208.
54 Ibid., p. 212.
55 Ibid., p. 201.
56 Ibid., p. 211.
58 Ibid., p. 219
59 Wardle, Review of Lear, p. 11a.
60 Cohn, *Contemporary Dramatists*, p. 105.
61 Wardle, Review of Lear, p. 11a.
62 Wardle, Review of Narrow Road, p. 13a.
63 William Mann, Review of *We Come to the River*, *The Times*, 13 July 1976, p. 11, cols. 3-6.
64 Bond, *We Come to the River*, in *The Fool and We Come to the River* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1976), p. 84. Subsequent references will be cited within the text by page number.
65 William Mann, p. 11, cols. 3-6.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
69 Mann, p. 11, cols 3-6.
70 Carnegie, p. 16a.
71 Ibid.
72 The Bundle (London: Eyre Methuen, 1978), p. xii. Subsequent references to this essay will be cited within the text by page number.
73 Bond, The Bundle, p. 1. Subsequent references to the play will be cited within the text by page number.
74 Hay and Roberts, Bond: A Study of His Plays, p. 280.
75 Quoted in Hay and Roberts, p. 280.
76 Hay and Roberts, pp. 239-240.
78 Quoted in Hay and Roberts, p. 283.
80 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 See note 13, this chapter.
85 Quoted in Hay and Roberts, p. 239.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
88 Hay and Roberts, p. 255.
90 Bond, The Woman, p. 22. Subsequent references to the play will be cited within the text by page number.
91 Hay and Roberts, p. 240.
92 Quoted in Hay and Roberts, pp. 249-250.
93 Ibid., p. 257.
94 Hay and Roberts, pp. 258-259.
95 Ibid., p. 259.
96 Ibid., p. 263.
97 Peter, Review of The Bundle, 37b.
CONCLUSION

To understand Bond's plays fully the reader or viewer must be aware of the socialist perspective from which Bond writes. In his view the function of the contemporary writer is "to analyze and explain our society and say what's probably going to happen to us." Moreover, the artist's commitment must extend to every level of his life, not merely his artistic work. Bond's involvement with various social causes and his increasingly frequent directorship of his own plays underlines his sense of artistic responsibility.

The degree to which his socialistic concerns reveal themselves corresponds with his development as a playwright. In The Pope's Wedding the significance of Scopey's social background is subordinate in effect to the relationship between two individuals. Bond focuses more strongly on gang behavior in Saved, although the sociological blame for the juvenile delinquency still remains implicit. In Early Morning Bond attempts to divorce the action from details of contemporary life in order to delve into historical roots of present day morality, a morality which he believes stultifies man's instinct to better himself. In his "Note to Spring Awakening," Bond contends that "it's not pornography that corrupts and produces violence . . . but the
The glamorisation of public-school, clean-cut moral virtue."^2 The often hypocritical nature of Victorian conventionality becomes the target, therefore, in Early Morning and in Narrow Road to the Deep North.

As well as socialized morality, Bond attacks capitalistic development of inhumane institutions and technologies that are used for wholesale destruction and tyranny. Social and legal enforcements such as jails, wars, and schools become powerful weapons to subjugate human freedom.\(^3\) Seemingly to compensate for this use of force, governments provide the people with continually more consumer goods to foster the illusion of happiness.\(^4\) In Bond's view, then, capitalism is not a cure but a cause of social ills.

Bond's stringent attacks upon his society often have opened him to charges of nihilism or extreme pessimism, charges which Bond refutes in such plays as Lear and The Sea by depicting protagonists who clearly recognize and transcend the delusions created by their previous social values. He explicitly explores various aspects regarding the artist's involvement in his society by portraying, in Bingo, an artist who fails in his responsibility to society and in The Fool, one who becomes involved but who is rejected for these attempts by an indifferent culture.

The Bundle, The Woman, and The Worlds probe into the value of forceful rebellion in fomenting social change. The dialectic is overtly expressed and conveyed between antagonists and protagonists. Bond recognizes that terrorism is an
extreme recourse which brings its own moral problems; Nevertheless, he maintains that it is often the only means to induce a humane order into an inbred and corrupt social morality. He writes, "We're trapped in a cultural inflation of threat and counter-threat, and this conflict can't create its own solution. The solution, either good or bad, must be imposed from the outside. And if it's good, it can't be sanctioned by our present social morality. Either way our present social system must be replaced." 5

In making the audience aware of the problematic nature of society and morality, Bond often challenges accepted and sanctioned institutions. For instance, Christianity becomes suspect when it stresses passivity rather than action, or future gratification instead of present rewards. Similarly, artistic masterpieces by those like Shakespeare or Basho fail in Bond's eyes because the creators failed to practice the humanistic vision evinced in their works.

Although assigning political labels can often be arbitrary or misleading, comparing Bond's philosophy to that of aesthetic Marxism can help in placing the dramatist within a broader political and social perspective. In Marxism and Modern Literature (1967) Gaylord C. Le Roy defines Marxism as "a revolutionary philosophy designed among other things to conserve, transform and recreate the intellectual and cultural heritage. It proposes to rebuild social institutions in order to salvage and eventually to enrich the tradition by taking it as the starting point of a new humanist culture that will
transcend the old because of new sources of strength provided by the socialist organization of society. The artist must involve himself in "the conflicts of the age . . . in order to preserve confidence in man's capacity to create a society that will serve human needs." In Marxism and Literary Criticism (1976) Terry Eagleton affirms that the social ideology of Marxism is "the product of the concrete social relations into which men enter at a particular time and place; it is the way those class relations are experienced, legitimized and perpetuated." Bond too emphasizes the responsibility of social interaction in shaping culture; when these social relationships are "civilized," then violence diminishes.

Bond's concern for tracing the sources of moral malaise reflects the Marxists' emphasis upon the need to be aware of historical development. According to Eagleton, the artist must look outside of his contemporary environment, "because our own history links us to those ancient societies; we find in them an undeveloped phase of the forces which condition us." In examining the foundations of his society, however, the Marxist writer does not confine himself to a particular style or form, as long as his ultimate goal is to produce a "significant advance toward a truthful picture of the life, thought and feeling of men." Although Marxist critics often use the term "social realism" to define their aesthetic philosophy, a work is deemed realistic if it succeeds
in showing the total complexity of a society and in revealing those forces "which lay bare the society's inner structure and dynamic." Therefore, a work may use symbolism or other nonrealistic devices if they ultimately help to clarify the interrelationships of men and society. Two artistic philosophies and their corollary forms to which Marxists object, however, are naturalism and absurdism; the latter is called "formalism" by Eagleton and "modernism" by Le Roy. Naturalism fails to go beyond surface detail in order to explore the real essence of social relationships, and it places too much stress on psychology rather than history in shaping human personalities. Absurdist art fails to account for man's social nature; Le Roy maintains that what he calls "modernism" is alien to social realism because it tends to "depict man as hopelessly and irredeemably isolated or . . . will represent the human situation as being incomprehensible; it will debase the image of man by portraying him as essentially victimized and brutalized." Ironically, critics have accused Bond of being both too naturalistic and too negative. Consequently, he has avoided the same type of representationalism of his first two plays, and he has strongly defended himself against the charge of pessimism as he develops his portrayal of protagonists who struggle towards a humanistic philosophy through direct social action.

How much Bond has been directly and consciously affected by Marxist philosophy may never be completely ascertained. However, the basic tenets of his aesthetic vision, noted
both in the prefaces and plays, correspond to the basic tenets of Marxist theorists; the best art is that which portrays the individual within the context of past and present cultures, de-humanization results from capitalism, and a political system which needs to be replaced with the socialist ethic; and the artist can use various means and forms to represent his ideology, as long as the emphasis remains upon the individual's power to institute positive change.

With these concepts in mind, the reader or viewer of Bond's plays can better understand his use of the grotesque as an element which helps define and strengthen his social philosophy. To summarize its definition, the grotesque is a dramatic or literary element or device in which incongruous elements are coupled to elicit a dual response of fear and amusement. It takes physical form, although its manifestation is often prepared for through the depiction of an unsettled social environment and through dialogue and description evoking grotesque images.

In Bond's plays the grotesque helps to provide emotional reinforcement to frequently satirical frameworks. Several patterns subsequently emerge as the grotesque gives physical form to abstract concepts which Bond wishes to attack. People turn into grotesques when victimized by a harsh and unjust political and legal system. These victims are physically and mentally diminished in some way and often live on the fringes of established society. They are the poor, the young, the artistic, the criminal, the insane and the crippled, their
deterioration Bond vividly presents in the action.

A frequent object associated with the depiction of human dissolution is that of a white sheet or covering used in an unnatural way, usually to enshroud the individual, who has figuratively lost his humanity. The white sheet relates to other means by which people are put to death; these are cruel but legal punishments which cause the death or suffering of a victim; therefore, they take on the abnormal traits of the grotesque. The gibbet, the jail, the yoke, and the stone exemplify social oppression. The crucifix, especially, focalizes the discrepancy between religion as an ideal and religion as an institution. The mutilated Shogo, the South African soldier, the slaughtered pig replace Christ, just as authoritarianism replaces Christianity. Those who have endured such unnatural deaths often appear as ghosts, such as the cannibalistic specters in *Early Morning* or the unhappy Gravedigger's Boy in *Lear*. They are grotesque reminders of society's failure to integrate its surface morality with its pragmatic policy.

Perhaps the most significant use of the grotesque in connection with a human being is Bond's depiction of individuals who must undergo intense physical and mental anguish before they can relinquish the values of a repressive society in favor of those of a more humane system. These characters must either become grotesques or confront the grotesque in order to achieve self-discovery. Continually, Bond expresses the need for individual action, and the courage of people
like Lear, Arthur, and the General lends heroism to their efforts. Operating as a foil to the positive protagonists are those who recognize the emptiness of the social system but who adopt utterly cynical and even nihilistic philosophies. Spiritual grotesques like Trench or even Cordelia are as much the antagonists as the more obviously drawn characters like Victoria or Basho. With overt villains, the grotesque is usually a product of exaggeration and caricature and aligns itself more with its comic side, while the cynical pragmatists or despairing nihilists connect with its dark side. The fullest expression of the grotesque hence appears in the protagonists like Lear, who at one point or another take on traits from the two other types of grotesque characters as they progress towards social consciousness. Because of its emotional roots, the grotesque becomes a significant focus for the audience's attention. The characters who remain grotesque throughout the plays are usually victims whose predicaments prompt an uneasy blend of fear and laughter; the emotional reaction evokes subsequent intellectual response which Bond hopes will make the audience aware of the social factors which have crippled these characters. At the opposite end of the spectrum are the one-dimensional villains who may be intellectually aware of their social responsibility, but who have too much invested in the system to want to free themselves from it. More often the antagonists are like Cordelia; they rebel against an entrenched system but in their desire to create
an ideal society, they resort to the same repressive means used by the old system. Or their awareness may produce a black negativism which renders them powerless to act. Usually free of physical distortion, they are more often the means by which Bond reinforces the intellectual dialectic; however, their involvement in grotesque situations (such as Trench's shooting of the White Figure) often associates them with the emotional response to the grotesque. The most advanced step in the evolution occurs when a character in authority falls from power, suffers or confronts suffering, and becomes active in social change. In effect, the protagonist whose awareness is triggered by the grotesque should parallel the reactions of the audience, whom Bond wants to be shocked into a recognition of the need for responsible social commitment.

The reason for Bond's use of the grotesque is fairly consistent in his plays. However, the style of the play may dictate a different manner and degree of usage. For example, the plays of surface realism use the grotesque only in one or two key moments, but these moments are crucial in challenging the social norms presented. However, in the intensity of the emotional response to the grotesque incidence, the audience may fail to accompany that reaction with the intellectual judgment necessary to place that act within its appropriate context, because it has expected a continuation rather than a disruption of the established realism. The audience's reaction to the baby's death in Saved
partially resulted from the scene's break in style from the domestic realism of previous episodes. In later works such as *The Sea* and *The Worlds* Bond consequently integrates the grotesque more successfully into the plot. *The Sea*, for example, establishes a world of comic eccentricism and blatant hypocrisy in which the grotesque operates as a believable corollary. *The Worlds* also contains farcical moments; also, the Brechtian device of monologues in which the characters directly address the audience prepares for a deviancy from strict representationalism.

The historical parables provide even broader scope for the use of the grotesque, since the action is directly removed from contemporary manners and mores. Nevertheless, the audience's expectations must be carefully handled to achieve the appropriate balance of verisimilitude and the disruption of it through the grotesque. *Early Morning*, in its attempts to challenge the moral sanctions given to certain historical personages and incidents, left audiences with little else than the confusing impression of a melange of comic and ghoulish images. If the grotesque unbalances the viewer's expectations, there must still be some indication of what shifts must be made in the audience's perspectives to attain equilibrium.

The short plays like "Black Mass," "Passion," "Grandma Faust," "The Swing," and "Stone," which concentrate on specific social issues, are limited more by length than style. Bond wrote these works for audiences whose interests
lay largely with leftist concerns, such as nuclear disarmament or civil rights. He subsequently uses the economic devices of ironic caricature and concentrates the grotesque in a central shocking image such as the crucifixion or the swing. "Grandma Faust" lacked even this centrifugal image, perhaps because its message is best conveyed through its allegorical framework and folksy humor. On the other hand, "The Swing" recreates a specific historical event which was probably unfamiliar to the audience. Therefore, Bond returns to a more realistic framework to recreate the story, although he interpolates the device of narrator to keep the spectators aware of the story as a story and to provide enough aesthetic distance to allow the audience to concentrate on the social message as well as the shocking events. "Stone" is more problematic in structure because Bond couches the theme in the framework of pseudo-Biblical allegory. If Bond wishes to focus on social injustice, the Biblical allusions may turn viewers' attention instead to what they may conceive of as a satire against Christianity. Although Bond has contended that part of the origin of socialized morality lies in Christian dogma, it is difficult always to integrate that idea with the attack against capitalism. The play deals with many complex issues difficult to express in the rather clear-cut nature of allegory.

The full-length history plays other than Early Morning endeavor to orient the viewer into a specific historical climate by creating a representational environment. The
grotesque is used most frequently in the presentation of characters victimized by an increasingly capitalistic society, which subverts human rights in the name of technological progress. Bingo is atypical of most of Bond's plays, since the central figure, Shakespeare, chooses death rather than active social restitution. However, Bond may have believed that it would be violating the factual details of history too much to portray any other ending. John Clare, the title character of The Fool, remains fixed in his social outlook. He is ultimately defeated and destroyed by an uncaring society; he remains a victim, and it is therefore difficult to see in him the almost tragically heroic grandeur of Lear. Heroic characters do appear in The Woman and to a lesser degree in Restoration. Again Bond focuses upon individuals exploited and destroyed by social forces, although a few do arise to oppose these wrongs. Whereas The Woman examines internal weaknesses within the echelons of authority, Restoration focuses instead upon the basis for class divisions, especially in locating the responsibility for stagnation within the lower classes themselves. Bond contends that the servants help to foster their own oppression by failing to unite in rebelling against the upper classes.

As with the history plays, the war parables use the grotesque to help establish the social dialectic. Although its usage in part emphasizes the horrors of war, Bond is not relaying a strictly pacifist message. Instead, he uses the grotesque to punctuate the need for social change, even
if this change must be effected through violent means. In Narrow Road to the Deep North he dramatizes the fallacy inherent in the idea of a "perfect" city where peace can be maintained only through the subtly repressive means of socialized morality. Its sequel, The Bundle, explores the necessity for a revolution which must temporarily disregard standards of individual decency and morality when these values impede action for the larger welfare. The grotesque in both plays associates with violence and madness, but the horror of Shogo's dismemberment and execution is unmatched in The Bundle, perhaps because Bond wishes to emphasize the positive effects of revolution. The shocking effect of the image produces an ambiguity in the ending of Narrow Road which tends to leave the viewer less clearly oriented to the social theme than does the conclusion of The Bundle.

Lear and We Come to the River present protagonists alike in their transition from autocratic rulers to rebellious outcasts; however, the difference in dramatic form influences the effect of the grotesque. Lear contains a variety of grotesque characters and events, but their presence helps to delineate Lear's moral enlightenment. The appearance of the grotesque decreases as Lear achieves awareness; consequently, it subtly enhances the ideological pattern of the play. The operatic style of We Come to the River mitigates the emotional impact of the grotesque by the very nature of the musical framework, which acts to formalize or distance the spectator by creating an awareness
of the theatricalism of the events. While such an awareness
does not preclude response to the grotesque, it does compli­
cate the reaction by adding an intellectual factor to a
process which is mostly irrational.

While almost all of Bond's work uses the grotesque in
some way, its appearance has tended to decrease. From The
Pope's Wedding in 1962 to Lear in 1971, the grotesque is a
product of extremely violent and physical suffering and
death. Lear, however, focuses upon a protagonist who is
easier to identify with than Scopey, Len, or Arthur. In
Lear Bond finds a method to integrate the grotesque with his
ideology. In approximately the middle portion of his career
(1971-1976) the main characters follow the pattern of Lear--
they are able to understand and to articulate the socialist
perspective. The grotesque is fully in evidence, but not
as in overwhelming or as shocking a fashion as in plays like
Early Morning or even Lear; instead Bond relies increasingly
upon an explicit dialectic established through dialogue.
This trend continues in The Bundle, The Woman, The Worlds,
and Restoration, in which Bond presents tentative answers
to the problems set forth in preceding plays. In his defense
of a socialist viewpoint, he prefers to use rational discourse
and argument, with the grotesque reserved for the most climac­
tic moments. For instance, in The Woman Hecuba's brutal
death by the storm is only reported, not shown, as probably
it would have been in earlier plays.

There may be several reasons for the decrease in the
grotesque. As a neophyte playwright Bond was influenced by dramatists such as Beckett and Pinter, in whose plays images are important and language only a circuitous route to aesthetic purpose or meaning. On the other hand, his association with the Royal Court playwrights familiarized him with the so-called "kitchen sink" school, which often depicted minutely detailed working-class environments. These factors may have influenced works like Saved, with their felicity to lower-class dialect and mores, and also non-realistic efforts like Early Morning, with its range of absurd images and characters. The avant-garde drama of the 1960's and 1970's stressed forms which were deliberately anti-rational and primarily emotional in effect. In this form the grotesque becomes vitally important in forcing the audience to examine norms which they have taken for granted. However, as a disruptor of preconceptions, the grotesque may inadvertently overwhelm the rational processes to such an extent that, as happened to Bond, the audience sees only a gratuitous and sordid series of shocking occurrences with little value. Upon the use of cannibalism in Early Morning, Wardle commented, "What remains unclear is the relationship of this monstrous image to the facts of existence; or any sign of the theatrical imagination that might give it self-sufficient authority."16 Defending himself against such criticism, Bond makes the point that the horror of social cruelty outweighs his dramatic presentation. Of the grotesque scenes in Lear he comments, "But I always make a point of making them less
disturbing and upsetting than facts I know of. I always know there are things worse than this I could write about."¹⁷

But even Bond acknowledges the darkness of the vision which prompted Lear, the play which marks the break in style between the intensely grotesque view of society presented in the early plays and the increasingly positive outlook which starts in Lear. Bond maintains, "But I had to write Lear before I wrote The Sea. One has to have a whole vision of life. One has to admit the dark things, the hopeless things, the destructive things, but one shouldn't lose one's balance. So if one's going to write a play like Lear, in order to give oneself the courage to write that, one must also have in one's mind 'Yes but there's also The Sea.'"¹⁸

With his writing of The Sea Bond formulated his idea of a "rational theatre." A growing commitment to socialist doctrine prompts Bond to propound his philosophy more overtly, thus opening him to the charge of didacticism. But Bond contends that "you cannot create art without a philosophy, nor can you sustain an artistic movement without one."¹⁹ Because the disturbing quality of the grotesque can threaten rational interpretation, its appearance diminishes in the more overtly socialist plays, although it is still important in highlighting dramatic shifts in a character's vision.

Changes in theatrical styles and audience expectations also suggest reasons for alterations in Bond's dramatic treatment of the grotesque. As avant-garde drama gains wider acceptance and its techniques grow more familiar, the
playwright's ability to disturb the audience's sensibilities with the same devices proportionally decreases. Some assimilation of its techniques is likely to occur into more traditional styles. In the same way, the grotesque may be largely anti-bourgeois in nature, as many theorists contend, but it is still susceptible to the modifications inherent in changing dramatic styles and perceptions.

The avant-garde drama itself may become so accepted that it becomes absorbed into the mainstream. Other genres then emerge to replace the function of challenging aesthetic standards. Similarly, Bond has established himself as a notable playwright; the diversity of dramatic styles that he has employed evinces a desire to explore a wide range of possible dramatic effects. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the techniques which instigated controversy in his early career would meet with less notoriety today because audiences and critics are more likely to expect them. Ruby Cohn appreciates his attempts to stretch himself as an artist. She writes, "Though Bond's reach occasionally exceeds his grasp, the reach itself is rare and exhilarating."20

It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate the function of the grotesque in the drama of the last ten or fifteen years. Theorists of the grotesque have noted that it tends to occur more frequently and overtly in transitional epochs in which social standards are in the process of changing. Therefore it is interesting and valuable for literary scholars to be aware of the grotesque in contemporary
works. More studies need to be done which examine the possible differences between the effect of the grotesque as used in non-dramatic versus dramatic literature. Further awareness by directors and performers of the implications of the grotesque in production would be a significant addition in script analysis. For artists concerned with questioning or disrupting preconceptions, familiarity with the grotesque as a vital and significant aesthetic tool is a necessity.
ENDNOTES: CONCLUSION

1 Quoted in Hay and Roberts, Companion, p. 45.


3 Ibid., p. xxix.


5 Bond, "Note to Spring Awakening," p. xxxii.


7 Ibid., p. 9.


9 Bond, "On Violence," Author's Note to Plays: One, p. 12.

10 Eagleton, p. 13.

11 Le Roy, p. 20.

12 Eagleton, p. 28.

13 Le Roy, p. 20.

14 Eagleton, p. 31.

15 Le Roy, p. 22.

16 Wardle, "Muddled Fantasy on Brutalization," The Times, 8 April 1968, 6c.

17 Bond, Interview with Ronald Hayman, The Times, 22 May 1973, 11 g.

18 Bond, Interview with Ronald Hayman, 11 g.


20 Cohn, Contemporary Dramatists, p. 103.

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Major Field: Speech Communication, Theatre, and Communication Disorders

Title of Thesis: The Use of the Grotesque in the Plays of Edward Bond

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