The disparate and unequal ways in which love is perceived and experienced by each gender remains an important concern of feminists. Simone de Beauvoir, who has been very influential in framing the western feminist discourse on love, establishes the fundamental parameters for inquiry into the phenomenon of love. De Beauvoir recognizes that love "signifies two different things for man and woman" but stresses that it is "the difference in their situations" (de Beauvoir 1974, 713), rather than their inherent dispositions, that creates differences in the way in which each gender perceives and experiences love. Many feminists\(^1\) agree with de Beauvoir's conclusion that power imbalances are at the root of the differences that each gender experiences with respect to love; and that, because of these imbalances, woman "abandons herself" (721) to the love of man, upon which she depends for her sense of individual and social worth. De Beauvoir's solution, that a woman gain economic independence and an awareness of her "subjective existence" by "move[ing] towards ends of her

\(^1\) De Beauvoir believes woman abandons herself to man in order to gain "possession of herself and the universe he represents" (Beauvoir 1974, 719). Ti-Grace Atkinson believes through love "woman is instinctively trying to recoup her definitional and political losses by fusing with the enemy" (Jaggar 1978, 290). Sandra Lee Bartky believes love, or "the feeding of egos and the nursing of wounds," has the effect of making a woman feel that love is where her power is when in actuality it leads to a "woman's active and affective assimilation of the world according to men" (Bartky 1990, 117). Virginia Woolf states that man finds in his relationship to women "looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size" (Woolf 1929, 35). Shulamith Firestone argues love is corrupted by power and is used by men to reinforce male domination and subjectivity (Firestone 1970, 165).
own" (741), is also advocated by many feminists. Economic independence and an enhanced subjectivity, de Beauvoir believes, would allow women to experience "love in equality," or, more specifically, to experience love in the way that men are able to: as a means "toward transcendence" and "self-realization in acts" (713). While not all feminists agree with de Beauvoir's 'romantic' understanding of love – a paradigmatic description of what I shall discuss below is the male experience of 'romantic' love – it is generally believed, with the exception of Ti-Grace Atkinson,² that factors external to the ideal of 'love' itself are the source of differences each gender experiences with respect to the phenomenon of love. Shulamith Firestone, for example, believes that love is essentially a simple phenomenon – unless it has become complicated, corrupted, or obscured by an unequal balance of power (Firestone 1970, 146). But is love really a simple phenomenon? And do women who have acquired economic independence and a "subjective existence" of their own experience love in the same way that men do?

While I do not wish to deny the import of materialist claims, or the impact that gender differences have on the perception and experience of love, the feminist focus on material, social and individual equality does not permit a specific and systematic inquiry into the nature of the experience of 'romantic' love, its causes, and the consequences that this experience itself may have with respect to creating gender differences. By revealing and examining the dynamic of the philosophical principles underlying one of the earliest romantic³

² Ti-Grace Atkinson claims that "the phenomenon of love is the psychological pivot in the persecution of women" (Jaggar 1978, 289). Yet she observes that "there has been very little analytic work done on the notion of love...Philosophers usually skirt it or brush it aside by claiming it's irreducible, or irrational." (290). Atkinson analyzes the "phenomenon of love" along the lines of a "theory of attraction" (290). She uses an analogy of "magnetism" to understand the ideal of love and claims love, like magnetism, is "caused by friction or conflict." The oppression of women by men, she believes, provides the necessary conflict between the sexes that sets the magnetism of love in motion. "The woman is drawn to – attracted by – desirous of – in love with – the man. She is powerless, he is powerful." "Magnetism depends upon inequality: as long as the inequality stands there will be love as we know it (290). While Atkinson does begin to analyze love as an ideal in-itself and observes that it inherently requires differences in order to come into being, she unfortunately fails to provide any philosophical support for her theory of magnetism upon which she bases her idea of love.

³ Literary theorists debate the meaning and the usage of the term romanticism, or romantic – the two terms are generally used interchangeably. Arthur O. Lovejoy, in his influential essay, "On The Discrimination of Romanticisms" (1923) claims that
conceptions of love originating in late eighteenth century German Romanticism, I intend to give shape and expression to the invisible and undetected structure of this highly formative concept of love. Moreover, I shall show how this structure differently defines the ideas and experiences that each gender has of love; and how the experiences defined by this particular model of love affect differences between the genders with regard to the fundamental notion of modern subjectivity – purposive and expressive, creative activity.

In order to isolate the specific gender differences constructed through the experiences this model of love defines, I shall discard all other factors – social, economic, political, and racial, including the role that ideas of pre-existing gender differences play in the theorization of this concept of love – and limit the focus to heterosexual love. Of course, there are intrinsic problems in defining love. Love is generally regarded as a universal and 'a-historical' ideal that is paradoxically also a subjective and private experience. However, a specific inquiry into the German Romantic model of love is important because contemporary Western ideas and experiences of love are based upon the fundamental 'romantic' idea that the experience of love itself between two consenting individuals is an ideal worth striving toward (compared to the Platonic and Courtly constructs of love, for example). As the ideal of love signifies both a perception and an experience, a state which further complicates any analysis of love, a theoretical examination into this early romantic ideal of love will include an examination of the experience of 'romantic love.'

It is impossible to establish an origin of "Romanticism," or to attempt to unify the ideas of the various movements which we call romantic. Consequently, he suggests we "cease talking about Romanticism," or at the very least "learn to use the word 'Romanticism' in the plural" (Lovejoy 1948, 234;235). Rene Wellek argues against Lovejoy in particular for the "coherence and unity of the European romantic movement." He claims to find a unity among "the romantic views of nature, imagination, and symbol," and also in the fact that all of them opposed the mechanistic universe of the eighteenth century (Wellek 1963, 196, 181). However, this debate, which occurs within the field of literary history and criticism, is somewhat limited, as romanticism was never meant to be confined to the pages of literature or literary theory. Indeed, Schlegel, credited even by Lovejoy as participating in the only movement "which has an indisputable title to be called Romanticism, since it invented the term for its own use" (Lovejoy 1948, 235), did not believe that he was living in a romantic age. Hegel, I think, comes much closer to summarizing the spirit of the romantic: "Poetry is the universal art of the mind which has become free in its own nature, and which is not tied to find its realization in external sensuous matter, but expatiates exclusively in the inner space and inner time of the ideas and feelings" (Hegel 1993, 96). This understanding of the romantic, which transcends the pages of literary theory and pertains to ideas and feelings, is the focus of this paper.
Our investigation into the 'romantic' model of love will therefore consist of two interrelated components: one theoretical, the other practical. Addressing the former, I shall identify and describe the fundamental philosophical structure underlying the conception of love put forth by the German Romantic, Friedrich Schlegel, who coined the modern term 'romantic'. By 'structure' I mean the relationship between the elements that I show to be intrinsic to Schlegel's 'romantic' concept of love (henceforth called romantic love) and to its function. By 'function' I mean the practical effects achieved through the dynamic interplay of the elements intrinsic to the structure of romantic love. Schlegel is significant because he provides one of the earliest philosophical formulations of romantic love; and because his formulation is shaped by J.G. Fichte's theory of subjectivity. A philosophical investigation into the history of idealist notions of love shows that these various ideals of love are integrally bound to ideas of subjectivity.

Irving Singer, author of the three volume magnum opus *The Nature of Love*, credits Fichte with changing the meaning of love, inaugurating its romantic manifestation "with one grand stroke" by shifting desire from the known, as is the case with Plato's absolute idea, or the Courtly tradition's desire for a woman's specific attributes, to "something unknown" (Singer 1984, 292). This desire for the 'unknown' is in-

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4 The term romantic was conceived in opposition to classic art. While Goethe decried romanticism, calling "the classic healthy, the romantic sickly," he also claims to have first originated the romantic-classic distinction. "The idea of a distinction between classical and romantic poetry, which is now spread all over the world,... came originally from Schiller and myself... The Schlegels took up this idea, and carried it further, so that it has now been diffused all over the world; and everyone talks about classicism and romanticism - of which nobody thought fifty years ago" (Wimsatt 1957, 369). Goethe and Schiller certainly influenced the Schlegels, however, there is a consensus among scholars that the romantic-classic distinction, and the term romantic, were originated by the Schlegel brothers. See Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, Lovejoy, Mead, Wellek and Wimsatt.

5 I have derived this definition of a structure from Ti-Grace Atkinson's discussion of the concept of sexual intercourse and her idea that a structured activity is one that is regarded as a practice (Atkinson 1974, 21).

6 Irving Singer believes that "to study the history of love completely, we would have to investigate the ways in which developments of the mind - developments in ideation and idealization - are capable of altering behavior while also following a course of evolution within their own domain. This is a task for philosophy and the life sciences, but one in which very little progress has been made" (Singer 1984, 3) Regrettably, Singer does not undertake this task, which is essentially that of delimiting the relationship between idealization, love and subjectivity. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an analysis of the various ideals and developments of love in the idealist tradition (Eros, Agape, and Courtly love) we will examine the relationship of idealization, love and subjectivity in the German Romantic model of love.
trinsic to Fichte's theory of subjectivity, and is the basis for the unique form of romantic idealization that is central to the functioning of the romantic concept of love. It is my thesis that the structure of romantic love is necessarily asymmetrical and that there are positions that each gender occupies within this structure that correspond to the philosophical elements constituting the structure of romantic love. These positions are constructed through the mechanism of idealization and function in what I call the 'dialectic of romantic love' to produce different experiences of romantic love for each gender which differently affect each gender's ability to engage in creative activity, and to construct subjective limits or ego-boundaries: the masculine gender experiences an enhancement of creativity and subjectivity while the feminine gender experiences a diminishment of both.

In the practical part of this study I demonstrate how the structure of romantic love circumscribes the experiences that each gender has of romantic love and the consequences that are intrinsic to these experiences. I further create a methodology for the investigation of the parameters of experience inscribed in and defined by this structure of romantic love. These I accomplish by conducting a phenomenology of the experiences of romantic love Schlegel describes in his highly influential and then controversial autobiographical novel *Lucinde* (1799), and the experiences of love that Isadora Duncan puts forth in her autobiographical 'novel' *My Life* (1927). By 'phenomenology' I mean a systematic description of a possible form of human experi-

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7 The structure I identify is not essentially gendered. The dichotomy constituting this heterosexual structure of romantic love exists between that of the idealizer (subject, lover) and the idealized (object, beloved). Historically, however, this dichotomy has been gendered. While I focus specifically on Schlegel and Duncan, a survey of literature, poetry and film would show that traditionally the man is the active idealizer and the woman the idealized. See Ethel S. Person, who unwittingly betrays this fact (Person 1988). The reasons for this dichotomy are beyond the scope of this paper and are certainly related to the complex configurations of power imbalances existing between the genders. But this study demonstrates how the imbalance of power between the genders is further created and sustained by the uniquely gendered and romantic significations ascribed to the idealizer and the idealized and inscribed in this structure of romantic love.

8 Isadora Duncan was very aware of the "Art of writing," and claimed that her autobiography, "if written well," would be "more interesting than any novel and more adventurous than any cinema" (Duncan 1927, 1). Indeed, she believes that her autobiography could become "a great work," as "no woman has ever told the whole truth of her life" (3). And while she does not claim to "possess the pen of a Cervantes or even of a Casanova," Isadora places herself among the ranks of Rousseau and Whitman. Interestingly, it is Schlegel who laid the foundation for including autobiographies among literature.
ence, in this case, defined by the structure of the concept of romantic love, which I shall use to understand the experiences of Schelgel and Duncan. Duncan is a good example for representing the experience that a woman may have of romantic love because she expresses her intellectual debts to the Romantics, but, more importantly, lives and advocates the romantic ideology of art and love. Although Duncan lived almost a century after Schelgel introduced his controversial idea of love, her contemporaries were no more willing to accept the basic principles of romantic love than were Schlegel's. Consequently, like Schlegel, who was reproached by Kierkegaard, among many, for being morally bankrupt, Duncan suffered the outrage of her contemporaries for practicing the romantic ideology of love – a western ideology of love that, I claim, is based upon a structure that is historically durable and continues to unconsciously define the parameters of experience for those who fall into this particular structure of love.\footnote{Irving Singer believes we „live in an age that romanticism has permeated for two hundred years, the popular ideology of the Western world seems to concern itself with little besides love.“ He also states that „Romantic love...has dominated the modern world.“ (Singer 1966, xi; 50).}

Indeed, Duncan’s practice of love gained her such notoriety that Morton Hunt in *The Natural History of Love* singles her out as „the very symbol of flaming feminism,“ as she „exemplifies a basic position of feminism – that sexual love should be an ecstatic experience for woman,“\footnote{Hunt goes on to say that Duncan was „fortunate to die in an automobile accident in 1927“ „in her fading, thick-waisted middle age“ (Hunt 1959, 347).} rather than, for example, a consequence of her life-long devotion to her husband (Hunt 1959, 347). Most importantly, the romantic ideal of love to which Duncan subscribes is believed, by Schlegel, to make possible artistic creativity and production. Significantly, Duncan sympathizes with the romantic belief in the ideal harmony of art and love, and equally in the romantic ideology of artistic creativity that romantic love supports. *My Life*, however, is fundamentally a novel describing the turmoil and conflict that Duncan experiences over her inability to reconcile the creation of her art with her experiences of love: „My life has known but two great motives, Love and Art – and often Love destroyed Art, and often the imperious call of Art put a tragic end to Love. For these two have no accord, but only constant battle“ (Duncan 1927, 239). I explain this paradoxical conflict experienced by Duncan – a woman who certainly „moved towards ends of her own“ and clearly had a „subjective existence“ of her own – by using the structure of romantic love to
understand her experiences of love and to answer this paper's fundamental question: Why was Duncan, who believed in the ideal harmony of art and love, unable to reconcile the two in her life? And why does the romantic model of love, which conditioned her conception and experience of love, impede her art while the same model of love works to enhance the artistic production of her male counterparts?

This paper is divided into three sections. Section One examines the structure of subjectivity J.G. Fichte develops in *The Science of Knowledge* (1794) and shows how this structure is modified and incorporated into Schlegel's theories of „romantic poetry“ and „irony“ — theories which underpin and are put into practice in Schlegel's conception of love. In Section Two, I turn to Schlegel's novel *Lucinde* and demonstrate how his romantic idea of love fits into the same dialectical structure of his theory of romantic poetry, and, indeed, is what makes romantic poetry possible. I also utilize the structure of romantic love to understand the experiences of love described by Schelgel in *Lucinde*. In Section Three, I use the structure of romantic love to understand the experiences of love Duncan discusses in *My Life*, and, by doing so, demonstrate how this structure may be utilized to identify and analyze contemporary experiences of this particular form of romantic love.

Section One: Romantic poetry and Fichte's theory of subjectivity

Schlegel coined the term romantic\(^\text{11}\) in reference to poetry and introduced\(^\text{12}\) it into European and North American literature at the time that he and his brother August started the journal *Athenaeum* (1798), around which the Romantic movement\(^\text{13}\) gathered. In opposition to

\(^1\) The etymology of the term romantic is traced to the vernacular languages stemming from mediaeval Latin. These languages were called romance languages, and the literature written in them was called romance. The romance designated fictitious tales that emphasized what was sentimental, chivalrous, extravagant, and unrealistic. Romances were viewed condescendingly, as was the language used to write them. The Schlegel brothers modernized the term and gave it a positive value.

\(^2\) It was only upon direct or indirect contact with the Schlegel brothers that the term romantic began to be used in literary contexts outside of Germany (Wellek 1963, 138). Madame de Steal, who met with August Schlegel, is credited with spreading throughout Europe the Schlegel brothers idea of the „romantic“ in her *De L'Allemagne*.

\(^3\) The core group of Romantics are: Friedrich Schlegel, Dorothea Schlegel, August Wilhelm Schlegel, Caroline Schlegel, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Ludwig Tieck, and Novalis (Baron Friedrich von Hardenberg). The „Romantic“ philosophers are J.G. Fichte and F.W.J. Schelling. Schelling was more active in the Romantic movement.
classical poetry, Schlegel defines romantic poetry as "infinite," "free," and forever "becoming" (see A. Fragment 116, below). Significantly, Schlegel states that "the romantic is not so much a literary genre as an element of poetry" (Schlegel 1968, 101), and that "in a sense all poetry is or should be romantic" (AF,116). Moreover, "the greatest part of poetry is concerned with the art of living and the knowledge of human nature!" (Schlegel 1971, I 89).

Schlegel identifies love as the "source and soul" of romantic poetry; therefore, he believes that love is essential to the art of living and to the acquisition of knowledge of human nature (Schlegel 1968, 99). As its source and soul, love occupies a unique position within Schlegel's theory of romantic poetry. Love is both internal (primordial) to the concept of romantic poetry, its soul, and external to the concept, as that which makes romantic poetry possible, i.e., its source.

In his novel Lucinde, Schlegel presents his ideas of love in the hopes that he may liberate women and men from the unnatural "prudery" that, in his day, restricts the free play of love between the sexes. But Schlegel is mostly concerned with sexually liberating women, for love is "an innate gift with woman, by whose grace and favor alone man can discover and acquire it" (Schlegel 1971, 59). Woman is, therefore, the source of love. And, as love is the source and soul of romantic poetry, she is the means by which the Romantic man comes to acquire knowledge of human nature and the art of living. However, while Schlegel deems love essential to his theory of the romantic, he never refers to his ideal of love as romantic. We will therefore need to understand his theory of romantic poetry to understand his romantic idea of love, and, eventually, how love and woman, the source of love, function in the realization of romantic poetry.

There are three aspects to Schlegel's theory of romantic poetry: poetry, irony and love. All three elements are implicit in Schlegel's

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14 Schlegel defines classical art as static and perfect. It is concerned with capturing the general nature of things and achieving a limited and finite union with nature. This perfect union was achieved by the Ancients because they had a cyclical and instinctual relationship to nature. The Moderns' relationship to nature is complicated by reason and reflexivity and is, therefore, unable to achieve such a naive communion with nature. Romantic poetry is, therefore, progressive, infinite and forever becoming. Classical poetry, on the other hand, emphasizes imitation and objective truth.
What's Gender Got to do With it?

most famous Fragment, *Athenaeum* 116, where he defines romantic poetry:

Romantic poetry is a progressive, universal poetry. Its aim isn't merely to...put poetry in touch with philosophy and rhetoric. It tries to and should mix and fuse poetry and prose, inspiration and criticism, the poetry of art and the poetry of nature; and make poetry lively and sociable and life and society poetical...It can so lose itself in what it describes that one might believe it exists only to characterize poetical individuals of all sorts; and yet there is still no form so fit for expressing the entire spirit of the author: so that many artists who started out to write only a novel ended up by providing us with a portrait of themselves...And it can also – more than any other form – hover at the midpoint between portrayed and portrayer, free of all real and ideal self-interest, on the wings of reflection, and can raise that reflection again and again to a higher power, can multiply it in an endless succession of mirrors...Other kinds of poetry are finished and can now be analyzed. The romantic kind of poetry is still in the state of becoming; that, in fact, is its real essence: that it should forever be becoming and never be perfected...It alone is infinite, just as it alone is free; and it recognizes as its first commandment that the will of the poet can tolerate no law above itself. The romantic kind of poetry is the only one that is more than a kind, that is, as it were, poetry itself: for in a certain sense all poetry is or should be romantic.

To make sense of romantic poetry I shall fit it within the basic structure of Fichte's model of consciousness and self-consciousness as presented in *The Science of Knowledge* (1794); indeed, romanticism cannot be understood outside of the framework of German Idealism, which serves as the ideological basis of the movement. By interpreting Schlegel's Fragment on romantic poetry through the basic paradigm of Fichte's structure of self-consciousness, I provide an idealist interpretation of romantic poetry, rather than a realist interpretation upheld most notably by Professor Manfred Frank, who believes that

15 Schlegel criticized much of Fichte's philosophy, but he nevertheless attended many of his lectures and claims that "the French Revolution, Fichte's philosophy, and Goethe's *Meister* are the greatest tendencies of the age" (Schelgel 1971, A 216). Moreover, Schlegel, who contends that philosophy and poetry must be put into dialogue with each other, also deemed Fichte's philosophy "fittest for the poet," as it "originates in freedom...and shows how the human spirit impresses its laws on all things and how the world is a work of art" (AF 168). I consider this idea of freedom to serve as the basis of Schlegel's theory of the romantic, which introduces the idea that life is to be lived as a work of art, and art is to represent the "entire spirit of the author." For a discussion of the significance of the union of poetry and philosophy see *Athenaeum Fragments* 131, 137, 168, 295, 304 and 451 (Schelgel 1971).
Germany Romanticism cannot be assimilated to German Idealism. Frank holds that romantic thought, heavily influenced by Jacobi, is compatible with a basic tenet of realism, that that which has being or, we might say, the essence of our reality — cannot be traced back to determinations of consciousness (Frank 1998, 8); that is, being is prior to our consciousness; we feel it but don’t produce nor even constitute it (173). Likewise, with respect to the self, Schlegel creates a space for infinite progress and becoming with a realist foundation that seeks to discover the original I whose certainty, evolving from a pre-reflective self-feeling is as incomprehensible as one is to oneself (46, 196-198). The consequence of Professor Frank’s realist interpretation of romanticism is that the self is no longer the master in its own house (Frank 1995, 76). But as is well known, romanticism embraces contradiction. I shall point to a contradiction in Schlegel’s own thought and concede that while he may ultimately believe in a reality independent of the I, an I that is itself awaiting discovery, by reflecting upon this pre-reflective self-feeling — accessed most importantly through love and within a uniquely intersubjective context — in a manner compatible with Fichte’s structure of self-consciousness, Schlegel reduces becoming to a successive process of reflection that occurs within the self. This interpretation is in line with Kierkegaard’s view of the romantic who is but a personality trapped in reflection, who develops only in a successive process (Kierkegaard 1989, 293). More specifically, I show how feeling in general is subsumed into reflection through the dialectic of romantic love for the purposes of acquiring knowledge of the signal romantic idea of an inner-self, or the entire spirit of the author, which romantic poetry is so fitted to express; this knowledge of the author’s spirit, a spirit that seems to be filled with a (genetic) content that progressively unfolds and yearns for expression, contributes to the acquisition of knowledge of human nature. Nonetheless, I reveal the relation between feeling and reflection by interpreting love through the structure of poetry; for as Schlegel indicates, love and poetry are, in fact, inextricably linked.

In what follows I shall define the dialectical structure of consciousness theorized by Fichte and show that it is implicit in the above definition of romantic poetry by using it to understand how poetry hover[s] between the portrayed (the work of art, object) and the portrayer (the artist, subject); and how this hovering occasions an endless series of reflection, constituting the infinite essence of romantic poetry. By using Fichte’s dialectical structure of consciousness to make manifest the dialectical structure of romantic poetry, it
will become apparent that Schlegel’s theory of romantic poetry is a theory of romantic-poetic subjectivity (I shall interchangeably use the terms romantic poetry and romantic subjectivity). Stated differently, romantic poetry describes a structure through which the poet realizes and expresses his inner-self, or spirit. It is important to note the role of the "infinite" and its relation to the construction of subjectivity, for, as we shall see, woman will come to signify what I term the 'infinite ideal' within the structure of romantic love and will be the occasion for the romantic poet’s infinite self-reflection and creativity.

Fichte places at the ground of all consciousness the "infinite self," which is described as "pure activity:" "the pure activity of the self alone, and the pure self alone, are infinite" (Fichte 1982, 226). The infinite here refers to the self’s "unbounded," "unconditioned," and "undetermined" absolute activity (117). By nature, this self must posit (or project) itself into the world, for "the source of all reality is the self, for this is what is posited immediately and absolutely" (97, 129). For purposes of discussion, Fichte divides the self’s activity into two opposing activities: a "self-reverting" one that contains within it the principle of inward reflection; and an "infinitely outreaching activity" that makes reflection and creative outward activity possible. The self’s inward and outward activities are united by the self’s primordial "demand" that it "encompass all reality and exhaust the infinite" (244) – an endless task that the self infinitely strives to fulfill through its productive activity in the world and its subjective reflection upon this activity.

Initially, the two directions of the self are indistinguishable and the self is unconscious. To fulfill its demand, the self’s infinite activity must encounter a limit: "If the self did not bound itself it would not be infinite" (192). A limit to the self occasions the self to go outside of itself, since it must, by nature, act to transcend (overcome) this limit; it also forces the self’s activity back upon itself, thereby making self-reflection possible. As the self is pure, self-reverting activity, "the self can never limit itself" (249). Hence, the limit that occasions both the self’s outward activity and its consequent self-reflection must be external to the self, an object, which Fichte terms a "not-self:" "Without an external prime mover it [the self] would never have acted, and since its existence consists solely in acting, it would never have existed either" (246). However, the object that limits the self and occasions activity and self-reflection is not entirely independent of the self, for it would not "exist for the self" were the self not equipped with the ability to "leave itself open" to the influence of an object, which it does by "transfer[ing] its energy" to it. Consequent-
ly, the object that initially limits the self is also the occasion for the self to limit itself: "No Thou (object), no I (subject): no I, no Thou" (173).

At this point, however, the self is in "conflict" with itself, as it must be limited and limit itself in order to act in the world and become knowledgeable and aware of the world and itself. Yet it must also continue to act until it exhausts the infinite, as this is what the self does by virtue of being a self. The "striving" toward the unknown, or the self's infinite striving (which is the practical counterpart to the theoretical infinitely outreaching activity of the self) is felt from out of this conflict. This infinite striving, which is inseparable from Fichte's principle of the imagination, is the driving force of Fichte's theory of subjectivity, Schlegel's theory of romantic poetry, and the romantic conception of love. We must therefore attend closely to its characteristics and to its function.

The self is infinite with respect to its activity and to its demand to know itself as infinite through reflecting upon its productive activity in the world. However the self's infinite activity ceases to be infinite in reflection, "for as soon as we reflect upon it, it necessarily becomes finite" (237). If the self is to strive towards its infinitude, there must be something within the self that drives it to transcend itself, or to overcome its finitude in reflection. This something is what Fichte calls a "longing," which conditions the self's activity and turns it into a "striving", "for something totally unknown" (265). Through this striving the self transcends its finitude (the self limited in reflection) by projecting beyond the limiting object an infinite boundary, or unknown horizon, toward which it will strive to make known. We shall call this infinite boundary, or unknown horizon, which allows for continuous self-reflection and self-transcendence, the "infinite ideal." The infinite ideal is to be understood as the horizon which is a product of the infinite self's originary act. It is the field, the arena, or world, that the infinite self opens for itself by positing itself; and it arises from the striving, or longing, of the self to know itself as infinite. Of course, in reflection this infinite ideal becomes finite.

Already we see that there is a "reciprocity" between the finite self (limited in reflection) and the infinitely striving self. This reciprocity is made possible by "the wonderful power of productive imagination" (188), a faculty that, to the Romantics great approval, Fichte claims supports the "entire mechanism of the mind." The imagination turns the "conflict" within the self into a "self-reproducing" conflict through the dialectic that it produces between the infinite and the finite self: It "wavers in the middle between determination and non-determination, between finite and infinite" (194). The imagination
brings to the self the object that limits the self and takes it into reflection; it allows for a „reciprocity“ between the subject and the object, holding them together and „waver[ing]“ between them so that they can be synthesized in reflection; and it posits an infinite ideal beyond the object that is fixed in reflection. The infinite ideal circumscribes the limits of the object taken up into reflection (the object is therefore dependent upon the self’s infinite striving), and further prompts the finite self to transcend itself. The self transcends the self that is limited in reflection by striving to make known the unknown (infinite ideal), and so on ad infinitum.

Schlegel, I argue, models his theory of romantic poetry upon the dialectical structure of Fichte’s theory of subjectivity; however, rather than striving to encompass all of reality through the self’s productive activity in the world, Schlegel limits this reality to the „inner-nature“ of the self, and strives to make conscious and give expression to the „entire spirit of the author,“ or poet. As romantic poetry is the form most fitted for expressing the entire spirit of the author, and as it „alone is infinite,“ or forever becoming, the spirit of the author must also be in a state of forever becoming. I therefore interpret the „spirit of the author“ as infinite in accordance with the infinite essence of romantic poetry. The author’s infinite spirit, like Fichte’s principle of an unconscious infinite self, is to be distinguished from the “portrayer”, or the artist, who is limited by the work of art – Fichte’s finite self. Expression of the author’s spirit is dependent upon the „hover[ing]“ power of poetry, which is what makes poetic reflection possible. This hovering power of poetry is based upon Fichte’s dialectic of the „waver[ing]“ imagination. However, from Athenaeum Fragment 116, it is not clear how poetry „hovers“ between the portrayer (the artist, subject) and the portrayed (the work of art, object); nor is it clear how, through this hovering, reflection is multiplied in an endless succession of mirrors whereby poetry – the author’s spirit – is in an infinite state of becoming (unfolding, developing, or, from the point of criticism, always open for interpretation). Thus far, Fichte’s wavering imagination is only presupposed functionally by Schlegel in the idea of a „hovering“ poetry. Schlegel says little about the imagination; however, in his conception of irony we find a counterpart to Fichte’s faculty of the imagination which makes possible the hovering, dialectical power of poetry. Irony, therefore, must be understood as the romantic faculty equivalent in function to Fichte’s imagination. Because woman signifies the infinite ideal within the structure of romantic love, she is precluded from this hovering; I will therefore speak of the artist in the masculine pronoun.
In *Critical Fragment* 42, Schlegel defines irony as "the mood that surveys everything and rises infinitely above all limitations." In *Critical Fragment* 108, he says, irony "is the freest of all licenses, for by its means one transcends oneself; and yet it is the most lawful, for it is absolutely necessary." In *Athenaeum Fragment* 51, irony is defined as the point that is "continuously fluctuating between self-creation and self-destruction." In its fluctuating capacity, Irony is the faculty by which poetry hovers between the work of art (the portrayed, object) and its creator (the portrayer, artist). By rising above the limitations of the work of art, the poet, in the manner set forth by Fichte's dialectical movement of the self, simultaneously transcends his own limitations set by him in his reflexive relationship to the work of art. Through the hovering power of poetry – the fluctuating ironic mood – the poet dialectically limits himself in his reflection upon the work of art – self-creation – and transcends himself by striving beyond himself in reflection – self-destruction. But toward what? There must be a positing of the infinite ideal if reflection is to be endless and poetry (the author's spirit) infinite, i.e., forever becoming. And this positing, this product of the self's longing to know itself as infinite by positing itself, occurs only at the prompting of a limit which the self strives to overcome through transcension.

Here is where Schlegel's brand of subjectivity differs from Fichte's. Fichte's imagination wavers above the real and ideal object, the finite and the infinite self. The real object prompts the self to limit itself in reflection and to transcend itself, since the self must strive to transcend its limitations to try to realize its infinitude. The self transcends itself by actively striving beyond the self limited in reflection toward some unknown horizon that the imagination projects into the world beyond the real object that limits the self. By this infinite striving to make known the unknown, infinite ideal, the self engages in a dialectic of infinite self-reflection and self-transcendence. The essence of Fichte's self is infinite, productive activity. The essence of Schlegel's self, on the other hand, is infinite self-reflection. Therefore, Schlegel's romantic infinite takes on a slightly different function from that of Fichte's; the infinite ideal is posited in the work of art by the Romantic faculty of irony for the sole purpose of inward reflection, rather than outward activity and worldly involvement. It should be noted that while the infinite ideal is always projected beyond the determinate object, indeed, is that which determines the object, it does not have to extend outside of it. By continually raising the limits of the art work (that object upon which the artist reflects) to the infinite the Romantic poet can engage in a
series of endless self-reflection (self-creation) and self-transcendence (self-destruction).

The Romantic raises the work of art’s (object’s) limits to the infinite by “removing its limitations, by idealizing it“ (Lovejoy 1955, 225). Removing, or rising above, the limitations of an object is the peculiar form of idealization that the Romantic realizes through the faculty of irony, which rises infinitely above all limitations. We shall at times refer to this romantic idealization as “infinitization;“ the process by which the Romantic idealizes, or removes the limits of an object, “infinitizing;“ and, as previously stated, the horizon that is idealized from out of which an object will be taken into reflection, the infinite ideal.

Essentially, to raise an object’s limitations to the infinite – to idealize it – is to continue to see in the object something previously unseen, to discover something previously unknown. This form of romantic idealization is a manifestation of Fichte’s longing for “something totally unknown.“ Novalis, Schlegel’s Romantic compatriot, provides another interpretation of idealization; he calls it romanticizing: “By giving the common a noble meaning, the ordinary a mysterious aspect, the known the dignity of the unknown, the finite the appearance of the infinite – I romanticize“ (Wernaer 1966, 34). Idealization, or romanticization, occurs when the Romantic projects the infinite ideal onto the object – rather than beyond it – that is, when he conceives of the object as an infinite horizon, subsequently prompting a dialectic between the subject (artist) and the object (work of art) which occurs in reflection. Theoretically, the dialectic between the subject and object can go on endlessly, provided the Romantic continues to idealize the object by removing, or rising above, its limitations, i.e., as long as the Romantic continues to discover in the object something previously unknown by constantly infinitizing it. However, because the idealized work of art (object), upon which the poet reflects, is a product of the expression of the poet’s spirit, it cannot initially serve as a limit to the self, which must come from outside of the self. For the poet cannot externalize, or express, his “spirit“ in poetic words, nor can he acquire knowledge of himself by

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16 While I am here speaking of the work of art as a product of the artist’s expression, the work of art may also be one that is created by an other. For, the work of art, one’s own or that created by an other, is the expression of the author’s spirit; and, as human nature is believed to be uniform to all human individuals, reflection upon a work of art brings knowledge of human nature which is, paradoxically, at the same time, a discovery of one’s own spirit. However, it is outside the scope of this paper to analyze this notion of human nature beyond what is necessary for our purposes.
reflecting upon the art work, without first having distanced himself from himself in order to reflect upon himself. From out of this self-reflection comes the material for romantic poetry, and not before. Irony is the faculty through which the poet gains this necessary distance by hovering between the work of art (what would be the limiting object) and himself in his relationship to the work of art. Yet irony cannot be activated without a limit, for it is the faculty that rises above all limitations, and, as it stands, there is nothing limiting the romantic self. The poem, which is incidental to romantic poetry, can serve as an object of reflection, as an external limit to the self, and as an object onto which the romantic projects the infinite ideal. It can serve as the idealized object that the poet continually rises above, and, in doing so, engages in an endless series of reflection. However, before the poet can reflect upon or create a work of art, the romantic self must first encounter an obstacle (limit) external to the self which allows it to internally divide itself, a division necessary for self-reflection and activity, and one that the self cannot initially instigate autonomously. Without an external object to prompt the self to action, the romantic self is trapped within an vicious circle of empty reflection. Love is Schlegel’s solution out of this circle; love is what makes poetic creation and self-reflection possible.

In his "Letter About The Novel," written to instruct Dorethea, Schlegel’s beloved, on the virtues of poetry, Schlegel further defines his conception of romantic poetry by adding to it the elements of love and feeling. "The romantic," he states, is that which "represents a sentimental theme in a fantastic form" (Schlegel 1968, 98). The sentimental is "that which appeals to us, where feeling prevails...The source and soul of all these emotions is love, and the spirit of love must hover everywhere invisibly visible in romantic poetry" (99). In the "Letter," Schlegel also explicitly states that romantic poetry is to represent the "subjective mood" of the artist and must therefore be "based entirely on a historical foundation, far more than we know and believe" (102, 100). Indeed, Schlegel thinks that "[t]he artist who doesn’t reveal himself completely is a contemptible slave" (Schlegel 1971, I 113). It is not surprising that Schlegel chooses love as the vehicle allowing the Romantic to express his entire spirit – to reveal himself completely – through "feeling" – that ineffable "natural" response evoked by another individual who may provide direct intersubjective access to the essence of human nature within a uniquely individual context. This reliance on feeling is especially important since Romanticism develops in opposition to the Enlightenment principles of reason, technology, science, and appeals to the fear of per-
ceived homogenization and alienation brought about by capitalism and the rise of mass markets. What may be surprising, however, is that Schlegel subsumes both love and feeling into his structure of romantic subjectivity: "Feeling (for a particular art, science, person, etc.) is divided spirit, is self-restriction: hence a result of self-creation and self-destruction" – Irony! (CF 28). With this notion of self-restriction, Schlegel surmounts Fichte’s dictum that the self can never limit itself and proclaims the uniqueness and modern appeal of romantic subjectivity – the self tries to limit itself; this is the power of irony. Self-limiting is implicit in the fact that the object of reflection, that which limits the self and that which the self transcends, is a product of the subject’s creation – the portrayer is portrayed.

In our reading of Lucinde, we will see how woman, or love – Schlegel equates the two – is the source and soul of romantic poetry, but not simply because she is the source of love, but because she makes romantic poetry possible by serving as both an external limit to the self, and as the infinite ideal, the constantly idealized object that will make infinite self-reflection possible. We shall also see how through love Schlegel strengthens his power of self-restriction to go on to create himself as a work of art.

Section Two: Friedrich Schlegel, Lucinde (1799)

In Lucinde, Schlegel intends to lay the foundation for a revolution in the conception and practice of love in the Western world. Operating under the belief that the sexes would experience a range of pleasures and emotions that had hitherto been repressed and unknown, Schlegel tries to free heterosexual love from the societal mores governing the codes of sexuality – including marriage – in order to reach the heights of this experience. To convert men into his religion of love, he aims to free them from "the faintest taint of bourgeois morality" and "every sort of compulsion" (Schlegel 1971, 79). But of particular concern to Schlegel, as noted above, is the "impression this fantastic novel would make on women," as woman is the source of love, and "contains love completely within herself, a love of whose inexhaustible essence we youths are forever learning and understanding only a little more" (60). Woman, therefore, has the fundamental task of "educat[ing]" men into the mysteries of love, "for by nature man feels a need for love, but has no notion what it is like"(59). She must

17 Schlegel states that Lucinde "must achieve: namely the re-creation and integration of the most beautiful chaos of sublime harmonies and fascinating pleasures" (Schlegel 1971, 45).
be liberated from the "unnaturalness" of "prudery" imposed upon her by society so that the "fire of [her] love" may burst forth, but, significantly, be "liberat[ed]" by man (61-62).

While Lucinde gained the support of Schlegel's Romantic circle of friends, it was met with the general condemnation of the public. Critics deemed it an "aesthetic monstrosity" which was "morally as well as poetically formless and contemptible" (Firchow 1971, 8). Even Kierkegaard, who acknowledges Schlegel's attempt to free love from societal forces that "have been especially indefatigable in making love as tame, as housebroken, as sluggish, as dull, as useful and usable as any other domestic animal — in short, as unerotic as possible," condemns Lucinde, "a very obscene book," for being morally bankrupt, charging that it denies the spirit for the sake of the flesh (Kierkegaard 1989, 286). Although Schlegel, believing he lived in an "unromantic age," did not re-publish Lucinde along with his great works, probably as a result of his conversion to Catholicism, he did believe that "in the nineteenth century every human being, every reader, will find Lucinde innocent" (Schlegel 1968, 269). Indeed, Lucinde is arguably the most popular work to come out of the German Romantic movement, and, according to Kierkegaard, it became "the gospel of the Young Germany and the system for its Rehabilitation des Fleisches" (Kierkegaard 1989, 286). It is my contention that the structure of love Schlegel establishes in Lucinde created a conception and experience of love that is unconsciously embedded in the western psyche of today.

Most importantly, Lucinde is a novel revealing how, through love, man develops into an artist. We shall follow the development of Schlegel's autobiographical protagonist from uncreative, frustrated, aspiring artist, to artist, and explain this development by placing love within the structure of romantic poetry. This allows us to expose the "dialectic of romantic love," and to examine the way in which woman functions to create romantic subjectivity, or poetry. At this point it is only fair to mention that Schlegel, by worshipping and liberating love, and holding woman to be its source, believed he was helping to advance women living in patriarchal society and enslaved by rules governing their sexuality. In fact, in his Fragments Schlegel calls for the formal education\(^\text{18}\) and the liberation of women. However, it

\(^{18}\) In fragment no. 115 of Ideas Schlegel states "If you want to achieve great things, then inspire and educate women and young men. Here, if anywhere, fresh strength and health are still to be found, and this is the way that the most important reforms have been accomplished" (Schlegel 1971, 251-252).
seems that his call for liberation is integrally bound to his conception of love, which requires that a woman be free to respond to man’s idealization of her, that is, to „the call“ of love, and to sustain the interest of her lover. Indeed, Lucinde is mostly concerned with educating women of the virtues of acting as free sexual beings. Since we are concerned with isolating the gender differences that are inscribed in and through the structure of romantic love, we shall leave unexamined the ideas of gender that may have influenced Schlegel’s ideas of love.19

Lucinde is divided into thirteen sections. The first six sections are a preparation for the central section, and the last six sections elaborate the ideas advanced in section seven. I shall construct a narrative by selecting passages from the central section entitled „Apprenticeship for Manhood.“ This section describes the manner by which Schlegel’s autobiographical protagonist, Julius, arrives at an awareness of himself as a unique individual and as an artist through the love of various women, culminating in his love for Lucinde, a.k.a. Dorothea, Schlegel’s beloved and future wife. Following the selections from Schlegel’s „Apprenticeship“ section, I expose the structure underlying romantic love by drawing on Schlegel’s theory of the romantic and using it to analyze the contents of this section. I also use the structure of romantic love to understand how love enables Julius to acquire knowledge of his inner-self and engage in artistic creativity. It is important to keep in mind that Schlegel believes poetry, which includes the novel, to be the vehicle allowing man to access the infinite. Lucinde is therefore not solely a novel about love, but rather a philosophical treatise attempting to reveal (construct) the true meaning and significance of love for man in his journey towards self-knowledge and artistic creativity.

Julius is described as a solitary man who loved, but „everything he loved and thought of with love was isolated and disconnected.“ „His mind didn’t try to keep the reins of self-control close, but heedlessly threw them off in order to plunge greedily and wantonly into the chaos of inner life.“ His „boundless passion“ led him from object to object while turning back, „doubly enraged, on itself and him, in order

19 Throughout Lucinde, and in his Fragments, Schlegel explicitly maintains the gendered distinctions that align woman with passivity and nature, and man with action and reason — distinctions that may have served as the foundation for his conceptualizing woman as the signifier of the infinite ideal. However, the signification of woman as the infinite ideal, in my view, takes on a meaning of its own.
to feed on the core of his heart. "There burned in him a love without an object which shattered his inner being." (Schlegel 1971, 77-78, my emphasis).

Julius's "solitude was shattered by a sacred picture of innocence which struck his soul like a bolt of lightening." He remembered a "sweet child" from his youth that "he couldn't live without," and so decided to "risk everything" to "possess" her. Initially, he had difficulty attaining his "goal" with this "innocent" girl and reproached himself for "being too clumsy even to seduce a child." Nevertheless, he was confident that he would have her, as he detected "a very definite tendency toward unbounded passion" that she denied him and herself, not out of her own "feeling," but "more out of a belief in some impersonal law." One day he caught her off guard and dreaming. The time was right, thought Julius. He began to caress her. She responded with "bashful sensuality." "He fell into a frenzy of rapture. A stream of entreaties, flatteries, and sophisms flew from his lips." Slowly she began to give "herself willingly" to Julius. He went "mad with ecstasy." Suddenly, however, she began to cry. Julius, at this point a believer in "feminine virtue," let his "victim" go. "The moment of opportunity had passed." (79-80).

From this experience, which "was decisive for his whole life," we can see that Julius is led to an awareness of his power to actively seduce a woman. Indeed, he recognizes that "by his interest in her" alone, he is able to draw her "soul toward him like a flower inclining itself toward the light of the sun" (79). Julius also realizes, by releasing his victim, an "action" he later regrets, that he has the power to limit himself and to control his passion — the ability to autonomously set a limit to oneself is decisive for the development of romantic subjectivity and is instigated by irony.

Once again, Julius was left to the "fire of his suppressed love." He attempted to regain mastery over himself by directing his "boundless
passion" towards Lisette, a prostitute whom he wanted to "possess for himself alone." "He made up his mind to try and gain her love and allowed this object to fill up his heart completely." Lisette "bewitched" Julius simply by providing him with the "illusion" that he held "special significance" for her. However, Julius soon discovered that "her forwardness was merely a deception," and realized that most of his "troubles" were a result not of Lisette's actions, but of his "own willfulness and exaggerated sensitivity." It was only a matter of time, he thought, before he would "seize the favorable opportunity in order to arrive unhindered at his goal." By besieging her "with earnest attentions" and allowing her to feel like she held special significance for him, by getting her to become "completely attached to him," Julius eventually won her heart. Nevertheless, he soon realized that he could not overcome the "feeling of disdain which her position and her depravity produced in him." This must have come as a shock to Lisette who believed, according to Julius, that he, more than any other man, "understood her inner-self so well." "When she announced to him unexpectedly that he was to become a father," Julius left Lisette, but not before hearing that she had killed herself. (81-86).

Lisette's death deeply disturbed Julius. But what troubled him most about this "experience" was that Lisette proved to be "too unique an exception" to provide Julius with a "true understanding of women" (88). However, from this experience he learns that a woman has an "inexhaustible variety of sensuality," and that if a man "pleased" her she would "fall into a beautiful, bacchantic fury: wild, extravagant, and insatiable...a ravishing adoration of the male" (86). Nonetheless, his experience with Lisette led him to fear his "passionate nature," and, subsequently, to break off all contact with women. He would now devote himself entirely to friendships, a form of relationship which Schlegel believes inherently precludes women as "it must have fixed limits" (75).

Julius spent long days chatting with his chums. They discussed art, virtues, life, and the "divine quality of male friendship" (85).

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22 In the section "Fidelity and Playfulness," Lucinde asks Julius if he truly believes women to be "incapable of friendship." He responds: "Yes, but the incapacity, I believe, is to be found in the nature of friendship itself than woman. Everything you love, you love completely, like your lover or child...For you friendship is too many-sided. Friendships have to be completely spiritual and must have fixed limits. Your womanly nature would be destroyed by this division: more subtly perhaps, but just as completely as it would be in a purely sensual, loveless relationship" (Schlegel 1971, 74-75). Again, Schlegel is promoting his idea that women lack the ability to set limits to and for themselves.
Yet, while he and his friends had great aims and ambitions, they never seemed to get beyond "high-sounding phrases" and "splendid hopes" (89). "Julius didn’t progress or arrive at a clearer understanding: he didn’t act and didn’t create" (89, my emphasis). With this realization, Julius fell into a state of despair and would have ended his life had he "been at all capable of arriving at any decision" (91).

"This malady, like all others before it, was cured the moment he caught sight of a woman, a unique woman who moved him to the very depths of his heart for the first time." Julius was convinced that "this woman was the only right one and that this impression of his would be eternal." But to his upset, Julius discovered that this woman had "chosen and given herself" to another man. Nevertheless, he silently began to "worship" "the mistress of his heart" who "became for him the foundation and fixed center of a new world," for he believed that she secretly desired him as well. He was inspired to create again, though "his character had been tempered in the fiery sorrows of godlike love." Consequently, his paintings "were stiff and rigid...there was no grace." (91-94).

"But soon he forgot these and similar trivia, for he met a girl who, like himself, was an artist, and passionately worshipped beauty." (Though Schlegel tells, that for her painting is not "an art" but "a labor of love." ) Her name was Lucinde. "Lucinde had a decided bent for the romantic. He was struck by this further similarity to himself and was always discovering new ones." She had "renounced all ties and social rules." She "lived a completely free and independent life," and belonged "to that part of mankind that doesn’t inhabit the ordinary world but rather a world that it conceives and creates." Julius found intense satisfaction in his relationship with this "magnificent woman...and yet every delay was intolerable." "They hadn’t known each other for very long and Julius only dared to speak single, disconnected words to her, words full of meaning but not very clear." This "goddess" foresaw that Julius would be more loving and faithful to her after her "surrender." Days later, "she gave herself to him forever and opened up to him the depths of her soul." (97-99).

But Julius was not in love with Lucinde. It took him two years to realize that "love - a completely simple and indivisible emotion for woman - can be for man only an alternation and mixture of passion, friendship, and sensuality; and with happy astonishment he saw that not only did he love infinitely, but that he was the object of an infinite love" (101). At this time, he also came to the realization that while he and Lucinde shared "a fundamental similarity," "now he was
forced to discover new differences every day" (101). Julius recognized in Lucinde a beauty that "consisted precisely in its harmonious variety and change" (103).

The more richly her character revealed itself, the more various and intimate did their communion become. He had not suspected before that her originality would be as inexhaustible as her love. Even her outward appearance seemed to be younger and more glowing when she was with him; and in this way too her spirit was illuminated through contact with his spirit and shaped itself into new forms and new worlds (101).

Julius began to paint again and witnessed his artistic style turn from "stiff" and "rigid," to "unique" and "natural."

Just as his artistic style developed and he was able to achieve with ease what he had been unable to accomplish with all his powers of exertion and hard work before, so too his life now came to be a work of art for him, imperceptible, without his knowing how it happened. A light entered his soul: he saw and surveyed all the parts of his life and the structure of the whole clearly and truly because he stood at its center. He felt that he would never lose this unity; the mystery of his life had been resolved and he had found the Word. It seemed to him that everything in his life had been predestined and created since the beginning of time so that he would find the answer in love (102).

Analysis

Prior to his initiation into the mysteries of love, and at every point during which he was without the love of a woman, Julius "didn't act and didn't create." Through numerous love affairs, culminating in his communion with Lucinde, his artistic style developed, while simultaneously he stood at the center of his life. "Without his knowing how it happened" the mystery of his life had been solved and his life became for him a work of art. But how did it happen? How did Julius gradually develop into an artist and acquire self-knowledge – find his center – through his passionate encounters with women? Schlegel tells us that he finds the "answer in love."

Like poetry, Schlegel defines love as an "infinite being" which leads the Romantic to "something higher, the infinite" (Schlegel 1968, 99). As discussed above, love is an element that is integral to the structure of romantic poetry; it therefore shares in its structure and function. But I am arguing something more: Love, and the object and symbol of love, woman, is the possibility for the creation of romantic poetry. Schlegel is explicit: without love, Julius does not "create," and he does not arrive at "a clearer understanding." And this is be-
cause he lacks the ability to set limits to himself: "his mind didn’t try to keep the reins of self-control close," but abandoned itself "into the chaos of inner life."

Previously we said that romantic poetry is unable to fulfill its function of creating romantic-poetic subjectivity, for the poet is trapped within a self-reverting circle of empty reflection without an external object that will limit the self and allow the self to limit itself. This is why, without an "object" toward which to direct his "boundless passion," Julius's passion doubles back into the chaos of his inner life and he is unable to act or to create. Stated differently, "there burned in him a love without an object which shattered his inner being," and, therefore, made it impossible for him to act or to create. Earlier, Schlegel stated that "the spirit of love must hover everywhere invisibly visible in romantic poetry." This dual capacity of love (invisibly visible) allows it to occupy a position both internal to the dialectical structure of romantic subjectivity, and external to its structure – as the element (external limit) making romantic poetry possible. Woman is this external limit.

However, we also said that what is unique to romantic subjectivity is that the poet tries to realize the essence of his infinite spirit through endless poetic-reflection, and, most significantly, through self-limitation. Consequently, the poet posits the infinite ideal in the work of art, the objective manifestation of his infinite spirit which he may theoretically reflect upon endlessly by continually raising and rising above its limits, and simultaneously his own. But it is important to keep in mind that the work of art does not exist prior to love. In fact, the work of art is incidental to the structure of romantic poetry, the goal of which is to realize the infinite depths of the poet's spirit: "not art and works of art make the artist, but feeling and inspiration and impulse" (Schlegel 1971, C 63). Woman, or love is believed to be the "inspiration," the source eliciting the feeling of love within Schlegel's conception of romantic poetry. But as Schlegel incorporates the feeling of love into his theory of romantic poetry, it is not feeling, but reflection upon this feeling that really "makes" the artist. Self-reflection occurs through a dialectic between the artist and the infinitized work of art, or object. In the structure of romantic love, woman, an external object, occupies the position that the work of art occupies within the structure of romantic poetry. By serving as the infinite ideal, she allows the poet to reflect upon his inner-self in an infinite manner through a dialectic of self-creation and self-destruction. How, then, does a woman come to signify the infinite ideal, and how does the dialectic of romantic love operate?
What's Gender Got to do With it?

A woman signifies the infinite ideal through the romantic belief in her "unbounded passion" (rather than a boundless passion) and "inexhaustible" love. This unbounded passion constitutes the field, or arena, that is the infinite ideal. Julius infinitizes a woman by continually raising her limits to the infinite, by continuing to discover in her something previously unknown, and this is how her inexhaustible love unfolds itself into an endless play of "harmonious variety and change," and an "inexhaustible variety of sensuality." This construction of woman in the ideal of the infinite accords with Schlegel's conception of woman in the *Fragments* where he states that the "very essence of [woman] is poetry" (I 127); and, as we know, the essence of poetry is infinite, or always becoming. A woman is infinitized by the Romantic through words and actions: "A stream of entreaties, flatteries, and sophisms flew from his lips;" he besieges her with "earnest attentions;" he speaks "single, disconnected words to her, words full of meaning but not very clear." By these words and actions intent on liberating a woman's love, words and actions which are the manifestation of the longing and drive for something unknown, Julius infinitizes a woman, and, consequently, leaves himself by focusing entirely upon the external object, woman, (he allows Lisette, "this object to fill up his heart completely"). Woman is believed to elicit, or inspire, these words; this is why woman is considered the source of love; although, it is, in fact, man who is the source of romantic love. For it is the Romantic man that liberates love; and this liberation occurs only when woman feels, by way of infinitization, that she is the "mistress of his heart." Only when woman responds to the call of love, or to man's idealization (infinitization) of her, is love liberated. Nevertheless, Julius does not merely recognize the power of his words and actions in the creation of this love, this "infinite being." By projecting his boundless passion onto woman, passion he initially experiences as "disconnected," "isolated," and "chaotic" without a woman's enclosure, Julius posits for himself an infinite ideal (unknown horizon) toward which he strives to make known in order to acquire self-knowledge through self-limitation and self-transcendence.

Self-knowledge, disclosed in self-reflection, occurs through the dialectic of romantic poetry (the hovering above portrayed and portrayee), and is occasioned by the faculty of irony (which rises above all limitations). The same dialectic operates in love. In the dialectic of romantic love, Julius projects onto woman the infinite ideal – manifest in her harmonious variety and change – so to set limits to himself by making this infinite ideal known in reflection. He does this by distancing himself from (hovering above) the infinitized woman
and himself in his relationship to this woman. This distancing through love is evinced when Julius says to Lucinde, "I implored you to be insatiable. Still, I listened with cool composure for every faint sign of bliss...I didn't simply enjoy but felt and enjoyed the enjoyment itself" (44). However, in the moment of reflection both the self's infinite reflective possibilities and the infinite ideal become finite. As the aim of the Romantic man is to realize his subjectivity (poetry) as infinite, i.e., to never stop acquiring knowledge of his inner-self, and as love is the means by which Schlegel strives toward infinite self-knowledge, the lover must transcend his limitations. He does this by perpetually extending a woman's limits further out to the infinite, by continuing to discover in her something previously unknown. By hovering above and continually overcoming the limits of woman, the dialectic of romantic love is sustained as Julius simultaneously rises above his own limits set by him in his reflexive relationship to woman. In other words, self-knowledge (self-creation) and self-transcendence (self-destruction) are occasioned in relationship to woman who reveals to the Romantic various dimensions of himself in the variations of his relationship to this ever-changing, infinitized, object of love. Through the dialectic of romantic love the Romantic man acquires the self-knowledge that serves as the material for his poetry.

What could not be accomplished in the dialectic of romantic poetry, discussed above, is achieved through the dialectic of romantic love. By positing the infinite ideal in the limiting capacity of the external object, the Romantic posits for himself a limit that allows him to set limits to himself from out of his own self. Indeed, rather than losing himself to love, or to woman, Schlegel conceives of love as a medium through which the Romantic man gains self-control and the capacity for self-limitation. This self-control, or "self-restriction," as Schlegel puts is, is of the essence of his definition of feeling, noted above (CF 28).

We have seen how romantic subjectivity is constructed through the dialectic of romantic love by projecting onto woman the infinite ideal. In fact, Schlegel claims that "[o]nly through love and the consciousness of love does man become man" (I 83). However, Schlegel constructs his theory of love out of and on top of his ideas of romantic subjectivity, building upon Fichte's theory of subjectivity. We shall carry over into the section on Isadora Duncan the essential structure and function of romantic love without assuming the validity of romantic subjectivity — which is, nevertheless, integral to romantic love. (Just as the Christian concept of "grace" can be utilized and understood without reference to, or knowledge of, the theological
principles upon which it is based, so too can one utilize the concept of „romantic love“ without explicit reference to German Idealism.) What we want to keep in mind is that the dialectic of romantic love sustains itself through a dynamic interaction between the idealizer and the idealized (infinite ideal). Out of this dialectic, Schlegel’s Romantic man sets a limit to himself by reflecting upon himself in his relationship to woman – self-creation. He also simultaneously transcends his limitations – self-destruction – by extending the limits of his ideal further out to the infinite, and so on ad infinitum. Only in this way is the dialectic of romantic love sustained. Self-reflection and self-transcendence occur through the faculty of irony by which the lover hovers between, or distances himself from his infinitization of woman and from his relationship to this infinitized/idealized object of love, or the infinite ideal. It is through this distancing that self-transcendence is made possible, for it is in hovering above the self that the romantic may reflect upon that self in order to then transcend it and strive toward a new experience of the self. Duncan occupies the position of the infinitized object of love, and, consequently, has a different phenomenological experience of love; the same constitutive limits that Schlegel constructs in love, Duncan will lose to the experience of love.

Section Three: Isadora Duncan, My Life (1927)

In My Life, Duncan refers to the British Romantics Blake, Keats, Byron, and Shelley, whom her mother read to her as a child. Byron and Shelley read Schlegel’s lecture notes and incorporated his fundamental idea of the romantic into their own thoughts (Wellek 1965, 8). Duncan also read Heine, was „carried away by“ Schopenhauer, and „Nietzsche’s philosophy ravished [her] being.“ Though, Duncan’s direct acquaintance with Romantic ideas is incidental, as she embodies in her life the fundamental spirit of Schlegel’s romanticism.

Duncan, the pioneer of modern dance, is an independent woman living outside of the mainstream society. She is a champion of a woman’s right to love outside of marriage, and opposes the capitalism and materialism of her day. Along with Fichte and the Romantics, she believes that the individual is free and must take responsibility for the creation of his or her own life. Duncan upholds the romantic ideology of art, believing that art should represent, and be the expression of, the artist’s inner-self, or „soul“ (Duncan 1927, 75). She subscribes to the romantic idea of love, believing that love should be freely engaged in by consenting individuals for the sake of the expe-
rience of love itself. Most significantly, Duncan believes in the romantic union of art and love: "I have often been asked whether I consider love higher than art, and I have replied that I cannot separate them, for the artist is the only lover" (Duncan 1927, 5). However, unlike Schlegel, she cannot not reconcile her art with love.

In this section I consider what Schlegel did not: how romantic love functions for the idealized object of love – in this case, Duncan. However, this is difficult. Fichte provides a basic structure for understanding the dialectical movement of self-consciousness. He also provides the theoretical principles for the notion of the infinite ideal, and explains the role that this ideal plays within the dialectic of self-consciousness. Schlegel describes how the infinite ideal is projected onto objects through the process of idealization. By drawing upon Fichte’s dialectical theory of self-consciousness we were able to understand how idealization works for the idealizer through the dialectic of romantic love to create romantic subjectivity. However, to my knowledge, there is no theoretical framework explaining the effects of the internalization of idealization. For this reason, we must explain how idealization effects Duncan by examining the consequences of her experiences of love and contrasting them with those of Schlegel’s, using the structure of romantic love as a framework.

The format of this section is like that of the previous section’s. I construct a narrative by selecting passages from My Life. Following selections from My Life, is an analysis wherein I use the structure of romantic love as a paradigm to understand Duncan’s experiences of love and to explain the conflict in her life between art and love. It is important to keep in mind the degree to which Duncan is idealized by her lovers, and her particular experiences of being in love. I shall begin with Duncan’s general framework of love which is most poignantly expressed in her account of the "great lover Gabriel d’Annunzio."

According to Duncan, D’Annunzio had the power to make any woman feel "that she is the centre of the universe." Indeed, "so great a lover was Gabriel d’Annunzio that he could transform the most commonplace mortal to the momentary appearance of a celestial being“ (6).

When D’Annunzio loves a woman, he lifts her spirit from this earth to the divine region where Beatrice moves and shines...There was an epoch in Paris when the cult of D’Annunzio rose to such a height that he was loved by all the most famous beauties. At that time he flung over each favorite in turn a shining veil. She rose above the heads of ordinary mortals and walked surrounded by strange radiance. But when the
caprice of the poet ended, this veil vanished, the radiance was eclipsed, and the woman turned again to common clay. She herself did not know what had happened to her, but she was conscious of a descent to earth, and looking back at the transformation of herself when adored by D’Annunzio, she realized that in all her life she would never again find this genius of love...that was the genius of D'Annunzio. He made each woman feel she was a goddess in a different domain (5-6).

Duncan came into contact with this great lover and found it extremely difficult to resist his romanticizing, but resist she did, for she refused to become one of the members of the D’Annunzio cult. Instead, she aimed to experience the "metamorphosis" induced by love with that "one great lover" whom she thought she had found in Budapest.

Duncan’s dancing took Budapest by storm. At the end of her performance she "improvised 'The Blue Danube' of Strauss." "The effect," she says, "was an electric shock. The whole audience sprang to their feet in such a delirium of enthusiasm that I had to repeat the waltz many times before they would behave less like mad people" (100). From amidst the cheering crowd, Duncan returned the gaze of the man who was to "transform the chaste nymph that [she] was, into a wild and careless Bacchante" (100).

Duncan and her mother went to the theater to watch this man perform the part of Romeo in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." After the performance, "Romeo," as she called him, professed his love, proclaiming: "Your face is like a flower. You are my flower. My flower - my flower, which in Hungarian means angel" (101). He also exclaimed: "since I met you, I know what love would do to Romeo’s voice. Only now do I know. For, Isadora, you made me for the first time know what Romeo’s love was like...Ah...adorned, flower faced girl, you have inspired me. By this love I will become indeed a great artist" (102).

Romeo’s love also inspired Duncan, but not to become a more outstanding artist. Rather, his love had the opposite effect, resulting in the abdication of her art. She quotes a voice in her brain saying to her:

Yes, I admit, all else in life, including your Art, is as vapour and nonsense to the glory of this moment, and, for this moment, willingly I abdicate to dissolution, destruction, death...Let those judge me who can, but blame Nature or God, that He has made this one moment to be worth more, and more desirable, than all else in the Universe that we, who know, can experience (105).
Duncan continued to tour Hungary receiving "ovations" for each of her performances, "but in spite of the ecstasy which my Art gave me, and the adulation of the public, I suffered continually with intolerable longing for my Romeo... I felt I would give up all this success, and even my Art, for one moment in his arms again, and I ached for the day of my return to Budapest" (106). When Duncan returned to Budapest she found that the production of "Romeo and Juliet" had ended. Her Romeo now donned the role of Mark Anthony, and like the change in roles, Duncan perceived a change in his love: "Was it that the artistic, intense temperament was so influenced by this change in role? I don’t know, but I did know that the first naïve passion and love of my Romeo had changed... all the passionate interest centered in the Roman populace and I, his Juliet, was no longer the central interest" (106-107, my emphasis).

"Romeo" wanted to marry Duncan and keep her by his side at each of his performances, but the thought of such an arrangement sent a "strange chill and heaviness" down her spine – this was not Duncan’s idea of love (107). Her manager "saved" her by getting her a contract to tour Vienna. But she was so traumatized by having to depart from her Romeo, or, more precisely, by no longer being the primary object of his interest, that upon arriving in Vienna she fell ill and was placed in a clinic for care (107).

Duncan then vowed to channel all her energy into dance: "The sorrow, the pains and the disillusions of Love, I transformed in my Art" (108). Her career soared. For two years she remained "chaste" and swore "never to desert Art for Love again" (108). "But Love was to awaken again within me, though in a very different form. Or was it the same Eros, only in another mask?" (147).

Duncan received an invitation to perform at the Richard Wagner festival in Bayreuth. She danced to Wagner’s "Tannhauser." So moving was her performance that Cosima Wagner proclaimed she was "inspired by the Master himself" (151). The force of her performance also had an enchanting effect on the man who would soon become her lover.

Duncan was awakened by a friend who informed her that the famous artist Heinrich Thode, who was currently authoring the life of Saint Francis, had been standing beneath her window, gazing into her room for the past week. She ran outside to greet him.

He was like a man in a dream, and regarded me with eyes filled with prayer and light. As I returned his gaze, suddenly I was uplifted and, with him, traversed heavenly spheres or paths of shining light. Such ex-
quisite ecstasy of love I had never felt before. It transformed by being, which became all luminous... Again, I experienced that transcendental, ethereal feeling of flight into the heavens (148, my emphasis).

While the lovers were never sexually united, Duncan explains, „his treatment of me had so sensitized my entire being that I needed only a touch, sometimes a look, to give me all the keenest pleasure and intensity of love“ (159).

Duncan continued to perform and to discuss her art, but it was only a matter of time before she was completely „overcome by the ecstasy of a love born of the cult of St. Francis... the yearning pain, the haunted remorse, the sorrowful sacrifice, the theme of Love calling Death“(158). Heinrich carried on with his work, but Duncan’s performances suffered along with her health: „I finally could eat nothing at all, and was attacked by a queer faintness which gave to my dancing a more and more vaporous quality“ (159). Once more, she claims to have been saved from this „dangerous state“ by her manager who engaged her on a tour to perform in Russia.

After touring Russia, Duncan returned to Germany. While dancing for a full house in Berlin, she sensed the presence of a man, the theatre stage designer Gordon Craig, whom she would soon recognize as her soul mate. After the performance a „beautiful being“ ran up to „me“ and began to shout in an angry tone: „You are marvelous!... You are wonderful! But why have you stolen my ideas? Where did you get my scenery?“ „Duncan replied: „These are my own blue curtains. I have invented them when I was five years old, and I have danced before them ever since!“ „No!“ replied Craig, „They are my décor’s and my ideas! But you are the being I imagined in them. You are the living realisation of all my dreams“ (180).

Duncan lavished in „inspiring the great love of this genius“ (185). His „imagination“ was so great that she compares him to „a creature like Shelley, made of fire and lightening“ (184). She ran off with him and for two weeks left her art and did not perform as scheduled. Indeed, she was „like one hypnotised“ (181). Craig, on the other hand, „preferred to turn from love-making before satiety set in, and to translate the fiery energy of his youth to the magic of his art“ (183). Eventually they began to fight – and he, to see other women. Moreover, Craig was so demanding that it came down to a choice, „Either Craig’s Art or mine“ (209). Duncan chose her art.

Duncan goes on to have a few more romances. All, like those before them, she recounts, „ended badly“ (348). The last romance Duncan tells about in My Life was with the pianist Walter Rummer.
Again, she describes it as the most "hallowed" and "ethereal" love of her life.

It seemed as if we had created a spiritual entity quite apart from ourselves, and, as sound and gesture flowed up to the Infinite, another answer echoed from above.

I believe that from the psychic force of this musical moment, when our two spirits were so attuned in the holy energy of love, we were on the verge of another world (350).

Analysis

Duncan suffers over what she perceives as an irreconcilable conflict between the two forces governing her life: Art and Love. Reflecting on this conflict, Duncan seems to blame the fickleness and caprice of her lovers: "I loved, but I now knew something of the fickleness and selfish caprice of what men call love, and this sacrifice coming for my Art – perhaps fatal for my Art – my work“ (Duncan 1927, 239). Duncan does not seem to suspect that these traits she associates with man’s love may be a result of her lovers inability to maintain their infinitizations of her, and, thus, to sustain the dialectic of romantic love. She also does not associate illusion – “Ah! above all – illusion of what men call happiness – through the envelop of flesh, through the appearance, illusion – what men call love (348)“ – with idealization, or the two former with love. For while she may have arrived at the above conclusions regarding male love retrospectively, while writing My Life, these conclusions did not impact her thoughts of what it meant to be a "great lover," epitomized in her description of the "genius of love," D’Annunzio. But why did Duncan’s experiences of love result in her inability to create her art? For she was not only incapacitated from creating her art by the failures of her romances, but she also ceased to perform her art while in the heights of her beatific experiences of love.

Duncan, I do not think, would have asked this question. She accepts the romantic form of love as the only true form of love, sent by "Nature or God," and blames God for making "this moment to be worth more....than all else in the Universe“ (she was a self-proclaimed atheist). But God, unless He has changed his idea of love from the time of Plato, did not design this form of love. Nor did it come from a discriminating Nature intent on making women pay the price of sacrificing their art for love. It is more significant that Duncan’s conflict results from the position that she occupies as the infinite ideal within the structure of romantic love, rather than as a result of
some phenomenon inherent to the *experience* of some unidentified „holy energy of love.“

Moreover, I do not think that Duncan’s conflict between art and love can be explained solely by appealing to gender inequalities caused by the social and political context of a masculinist regime, as Shulamith Firestone may have it (see endnote n. 1). Duncan lived her entire life fighting against sexism and considers herself a foremother of the „Woman’s Movement of the present day“ in her „fight against marriage and for the emancipation of women and for the right of women to have a child or children as it pleased her, and to uphold her right and virtue“ (187, 17). Indeed, Duncan felt that by engaging in „free-love“ she was asserting her autonomy as a woman. Sexism made life more difficult for Duncan, but it did not *directly cause* the conflict in her life between art and love. For it was not an internalization of sexist ideology that shaped Duncan’s experiences of love, but an internalization of romantic ideology which gave shape and meaning to her life.

De Beauvoir’s explanation discussed in the introduction also does not suffice, as Duncan was quite a developed subjectivity who greatly believed in her art, overcoming every obstacle to go on to become a world renowned dancer and founder of dance schools in Europe and the former Soviet Union. And most significantly, Duncan did not honor love to escape from the calling of her art, or from herself by abandoning herself to a man, as Atkinson, Bartky, and de Beauvoir may have it (see endnote no. 1). When finding herself forced to choose between love and art, Duncan always chose her art, albeit only when her relationships lost their „romantic“ intensity. Duncan falls into love because she quests for the absolute experience of love itself. Love is not a means for her to acquire a sense of self by merging with a man. Love is for her a religion, so to speak, in the Schlegelian, rather than the Beauvoirvian sense. Why, then, is Duncan, who believes in the ideal harmony of art and love, unable to reconcile the two in her life? Why did the form of love that she practiced impede her art, while the same form of love worked to enhance the artistic production of her male counterparts? Why couldn’t Duncan have both,

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23 Isadora had two children out of wedlock. In a car accident they died in their youth. She also, eventually, married the Bolshevik poet Sergei Essenin and lived with him in Russia where the marriage laws were acceptable to her, and where she founded a new school of dance with the support of the Russian government.

24 Simone de Beauvoir claims that a woman views man as a „God“ with whom she strives to merge, and through whom she tries to gain her self-worth. Consequently, „Love becomes for her a religion.“
love and art, operating harmoniously in her life? I, like Schlegel, find the answer in love.

The romantic model of love, I suggest, both structures and conditions Duncan’s ideas and experiences of love, and is responsible for her inability to reconcile her art with love. In the previous section I argued that romantic subjectivity – essentially infinite self-reflection arrived at through a dialectic of self-limitation (self-creation) and self-transcendence (self-destruction) – is constructed through Schlegel’s model of love; and Woman is idealized as the signifier of the infinite ideal because a dialectic between the self-reflective, finite self, and the infinite ideal that is a product of the self’s infinite striving, is inherent to the structure of both romantic subjectivity and love. There are three interrelated aspects that distinguish Duncan’s experience of love from that of Schlegel’s.

First, Duncan occupies the position of the infinite ideal within the structure of romantic love. The dialectic of romantic love begins for Duncan with the internalization of her lovers idealizations of her. By describing herself through her lovers eyes, Duncan unwittingly betrays her own infinitization. Romeo imagined she was an „angel;“ Thode wondered at her „with eyes filled with prayer and light,“ „like a man in a dream;“ Craig confessed she was „the living realisation of all [his] dreams.“ Like the women who are infinitized in Schlegel’s Lucinde, seen as beings constituted by an „unbounded passion,“ and „harmonious variety and change,“ Duncan signifies for each of her lovers an indefinable and inconceivable image of an ideal woman. This inconceivable, ideal woman, I submit, resembles Schlegel’s infinite ideal woman, for Duncan is idealized as a being that has no fixed boundaries or limits; she is the living realization of her lovers’ imaginations, the symbol of their desires for something unknown, desires which are ironically cast as something vaguely known – an angel, a goddess, a dream. By internalizing the projection of the infinite ideal Duncan is made to feel as though she is the whole of her lover’s world, the „central interest“ of her lover. When she no longer feels the center of her lover’s world, she experiences the demise of love. True, Duncan also idealizes her lovers and their idealizations of her, which serve to heighten her experiences of love; however, love does not manifest itself in Duncan’s life prior to her lovers’ idealizations of her. Being infinitized signifies for Duncan the birth of romantic love as much as the act of infinitizing signifies the birth of love for Schlegel.

Secondly, while love gave Duncan access to transcendence, which is the ultimate aim of romantic love, the form of transcendence that
she realizes results not in an ability to set limits to the self, but rather in a loss of this ability. By internalizing her lovers' infinitizations of her, Duncan's "soul went up from [her] body"; "as I returned his gaze I was lifted, and with him traversed heavenly spheres." More explicitly, she describes her experience of love as a "transcendental, ethereal feeling of flight into the heavens." With her ascent into the heavens, Duncan paradoxically transcends the limits of her subjectivity, or ego boundaries, but at the same time she has no limits to transcend. She experiences what may be called a 'selfless-transcendence' that results in an ethereal sense of self. This is not the self-transcendence that Schlegel realizes by distancing himself from his relationship to his beloved so to set new limits to his self, which he may then transcend, etc. The experience that Duncan has of a selfless-transcendence (described by her at times as a longing for death) is similar to the immanence of woman de Beauvoir describes, where a woman "lose[s] herself, body and soul, in him who is represented to her as the absolute" (de Beauvoir 1974, 713). Only, Duncan does not lose herself in man; she loses herself to her own experience of self-less transcendence, and, as a consequence, she loses the ability to act, as she has no standpoint external to her experience of selfless-transcendence from which she may stand to create. Indeed, it is not man who signifies the absolute within this model of love, but rather woman in her capacity as the infinite ideal. Instead of claiming that Duncan desires to lose herself in love so to avoid taking responsibility for her life, as de Beauvoir would suggest, I propose that Duncan loses "the clear vision of Doric columns and the reasoning wisdom of Socrates" (Duncan 1927, 158) upon falling into the structure of romantic love itself.

Thirdly, Duncan does not hover between herself and her lover, or distance herself from her lover and from her relationship to her lover. This fact is operative to the position that she occupies within the structure of romantic love, and to its consequence. As the infinitized object of love, Duncan realizes a selfless-transcendence which results in a loss of subjective limits leaving her with no point from which to stand over, or "hover" above her lover and herself in relationship to her lover. And, vice versa, because she does not distance herself from her relationship to her lover, she is unable to distance herself from her experience of love. This is evinced by the fact that Duncan only recounts being idealized by her lovers and her own experiences of love; Schlegel, on the other hand, tells not of his experience of love, but of the munificent qualities of the woman that he idealizes and the way in which he is able to draw "her soul toward him like a flower inclining itself toward the light of the sun." Therefore, Duncan does not strengthen or reflective-
ly enlarge the bounds of her subjectivity through this model of love, which requires a dialectic occasioned by a hovering between the self-reflective, finite self (that she has lost) and the infinitely striving self that posits the infinite ideal. It is also likely that the actual feelings en-gendering Duncan's experiences of selfless-transcendence differ from those of Schlegel's, as she does not subsume her feelings into a general quest for self-knowledge in the service of romantic poetry. Moreover, while Duncan denies that love, in any way, contributes to the creation of her art, it may be that the particular form of selfless-transcendence she experiences does have some affect in her creative process. However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to address the differences in feeling and creativity that she may have experienced as a consequence of the position that she occupies within this structure of romantic love.

Duncan did not seem to recognize that she had participated in the illusion of love. She did not know that her lovers’ idealizations of her would eventually wane and that she would no longer signify the infinite ideal; her lovers also may not have known that they would be unable to maintain their idealizations of her. Nor was Duncan aware that she could not uphold a mysterious persona, or keep her lovers forever intrigued and entertained. Indeed, Duncan did not know that she had fallen into a structure of love that requires the ideal of the infinite as a limit that must be perpetually overcome in order to sustain itself. When her lover’s infinitization of her wore off, she failed to experience the dialectic of romantic love, and, like the women romanticized by D’Annunzio, “turned again to common clay” and either went into a state of “neurasthenia,” or entered into a clinic for care. At that point, she was certainly incapacitated from creating her art.

**Conclusion**

In this paper we have looked at Friedrich Schlegel’s romantic conception of love and have seen how it can be grasped as a structure that is patterned upon the dialectical structure of Fichte’s model of subjectivity. We have also applied the structure of romantic love to both Schlegel’s and Isadora Duncan’s experiences of love to show how the structure of romantic love may be used to analyze experiences of love; and to impart how romantic love functions to produce for each gender a different experience of love caused by the positions that each gender occupies within its structure. To claim with de Beauvoir, Solomon, Singer, Person, and countless others that love is gender-neutral\(^\text{25}\) and affects the sexes differently due to their gender stations within society and their

subjective awareness prior to the loving relationship, is to fail to recognize the productive power of this construct of love, which, with or without our conscious awareness, structures and conditions the thoughts and experiences of those who keep alive the "romantic" spirit. Indeed, just as we are able to speak of works of art as romantic or impressionist by drawing on aesthetic theories, we should be able to identify and explain experiences of love by drawing on theories of love. Why romantic love produces the experiences that it does based upon the positions that the lover and beloved occupy within its structure is perhaps ultimately a question for psychology. Philosophically, however, I have hopefully pointed out these positions, and shown how they are established by revealing the structure of romantic love; I have also described the dynamic operation, and the function of these positions within the dialectic of romantic love. To show the extent to which this romantic structure of love conditions the thoughts and experiences of those who fall into its structure would require the application of this structure of romantic love to numerous individual "romantic" experiences of love represented in literature, song, film, or by personal narrative. This would be accomplished by comparing the overt dynamic of romantic love, the dynamic between the idealized and idealizer, and the form that idealization takes — infinitization — with the covert effects that it produces for each gender with respect to subjectivity and directed, purposive activity.

26 In fact, Schlegel believes that love should become a science: "Though Genius isn't something that can be produced arbitrarily, it is freely willed — like wit, love, and faith, which one day will have to become arts and sciences" (Schlegel 1971, CF 16).

27 The 'idealization' of women has predominately been interpreted by male philosophers as a positive recognition of women, heralding the birth of feminism. Romantic scholar Jacques Barzun writes: "Often what we call idealization in romantic love is simply the recognition that a woman is a person worth respecting, as well as an object of desire — it is the germ of feminism" (Barzun 1943, 127). Singer also believes that the idealization of woman, beginning with the Courtly love, occasioned the "medieval outburst of feminism." "The Feudal lady, a pawn of local politics, a bartered bride regardless of her rank, could hardly hope to exercise much power; but she might well attain beauty. For such as she, what could be more attractive than a doctrine that idealized the male's submission to values she embodied to the extent that she made herself more beautiful?" (Singer 1987, 13). Singer observes that this "outburst of feminism" continues with the romantic idealization of woman.

28 I have many times heard women express sympathy for men because they are expected to initiate romances with women. What is not commonly discussed is how the process of actively initiating a romance may work to strengthen the male ego and serve as an experience that leads men to further initiate projects and create in general.
More importantly, in this paper I wish to have brought to awareness the practical consequences and dynamic of this Romantic model of love. For the true irony of romantic love is that it fails to allow an individual to experience the unknown depths of oneself in relationship to the discovery of certain unknown depths dwelling in an other. This is because the Romantic is dependent upon the beloved in order to reflect upon himself, while at the same time he must continually construct the beloved in the ideal of the infinite — rather than be overcome by the beloved — to sustain the dialectic of romantic love. And, as it is imperative to the romantic structure of love that the beloved be infinitized, or lack fixed limits, the beloved is also dependent upon the constant idealization of her lover to experience this form of romantic love. Schlegel says to Lucinde: "My yearning for you is boundless and always unsatisfied" (Schlegel 1971, 127); similarly, the dialectic of romantic love left Duncan with a "delirious thirst for a point that [she] required" (Duncan 1927, 149). This unfulfilled longing is what Hegel calls the romantic "bad infinity," which represents a constant striving for that something, the great unknown, that can never be attained. Romantic love is the epitome of bad infinity.

It is interesting to note that what we know about the construction of woman in the ideal of the infinite seriously challenges Cixous’s suggestion that a woman recognize herself as a "limitlessly changing ensemble, a cosmos tirelessly traversed by Eros, an immense astral space not organized around any one sun" (Marks 1981, 259). It is as if Cixous, and Irigaray, who suggests that a woman represent herself in writing as "fluid," take up Schlegel’s idea of an ever-changing, or

Kierkegaard has an interesting critique of irony, a term he uses interchangeably with romanticism as meaning the same thing, which we can apply to romantic love. Kierkegaard, understands irony as the mode by which the romantic acquires freedom, and sees irony as the active force operating in Lucinde. He states that irony "watches over itself and fears nothing more than that some impression or other might overwhelm it, because not until one is free in that way does one live poetically, and, as is well known, irony’s great requirement was to live poetically" (Kierkegaard 1989, 280). The freedom that irony demands is a freedom from "actuality" for "it has nothing higher than itself" (279). Kierkegaard firmly believes that actuality is the task that the individual must fulfill by feeling the "earnestness of responsibility" for his or her actions, and, above all, by adopting a position of "resignation" (289) that allows the individual to be impacted by forces outside of his or her control thereby realizing a "true inward infinity:" "It is indeed one thing to compose oneself poetically; it is something else to be composed poetically" (280). In that the lover does not allow himself to be affected by another subjectivity, we can say, along with Kierkegaard, that the romantic man fears nothing more than to allow himself to be exposed to the radical otherness of his beloved.
infinitized woman, believing, somehow, that this construction of woman stands outside of male discourse and may act to disrupt the "phallic law." This belief is based upon the premise that woman signifies "lack" – a premise which this study turns inside out – and that an excess of the feminine would subvert the phallic economy.  

Perhaps some variation of this form of romantic love can be saved; for romantic love does not necessarily have to result in bad infinity, especially if the lovers are aware of its dynamic and may play with it. But essentially, I think, we need to restructure and re-conceive the aim of love, and its relationship to the construction of subjectivity. More importantly, I think that love will have to be re-conceived in conjunction with some sort of an ethic that transcends state and religious intervention. Hannah Arendt, in a letter written to Martin Heidegger in 1928, provides a hint of the (romantic) ethic that I have in mind: "If there is a God, I will love you better after death."

The outcome of this study supports Irigaray’s conclusion that woman allows "the subject, to reduplicate itself, to reflect itself by itself," (Irigaray 1985, 75); however, Irigaray believes that this autonomous self-realization on the part of man results from his positioning woman as a "mirror, most often hidden" that passively reflects the image of man. We have seen, however, that as the infinite ideal a woman is not passive, but serves as a limit which must be overcome through love precisely by making known what is imagined to be her "limitlessly changing ensemble." In respect to romantic love, woman is not to be passive but, on the contrary, an object of constant intrigue and amusement.