

2010

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Recommended Citation

Kelley, Lauren-Claire M. (2010) "The Mind-Body Split: Toward a Queer Temporality in Sarah Orne Jewett's *Deepland*," *Colonial Academic Alliance Undergraduate Research Journal*: Vol. 1, Article 12.

Available at: <http://publish.wm.edu/caaurj/vol1/iss1/12>

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The Mind-Body Split: Toward a Queer Temporality in Sarah Orne Jewett's Deephaven

Cover Page Note

I would like to thank Dr. Dierdre Moloney, director of George Mason's Undergraduate Apprenticeship Program, and Dr. J. Samaine Lockwood, my faculty mentor. In addition, I would like to thank Camila Jones and Jenny McKarcher for their patience and enthusiasm in helping me to revise an earlier version of this article for presentation at the CAA conference.

In the final chapter of Sarah Orne Jewett's *Deephaven* (1877), two young women relinquish the extraordinary freedom from age and gender restraints that they have enjoyed in rural Maine and speak optimistically of their return to Boston. On the verge of adulthood, Kate Lancaster and Helen Denis face the limited options available to women of the late nineteenth-century; for two young women of the middle-class, the prevalent option is marriage. In the maritime town of Deephaven, however, the girls enjoy a summer's reprieve from the pressure to marry and raise a family. They cross gender boundaries when they please, one day exchanging calls with Deephaven society, the next exchanging stories with Deephaven's sailors and learning skills, such as sailing and fishing, usually reserved for boys. But what really matters to Helen, the narrator of *Deephaven*, is the time that she spends alone with Kate. Though Helen insists that "I am not writing Kate's biography and my own, only telling you of one summer which we spent together," in the same paragraph Helen confides that "I shall be glad if you learn to know Kate a little in my stories" (24). For who would not wish to know generous, thoughtful, "dear Kate Lancaster"? (25). As much as Helen claims to be fascinated by Deephaven, dedicating most of her narrative to vignettes of the town's customs and characters, it is Kate who is the emotional center of the novel.

To read the relationship between Helen and Kate as lesbian has been a prominent, though by no means common, approach since the early nineties, when Judith Fetterley published her analysis "Reading *Deephaven* as a Lesbian Text."¹ Fetterley argues that exploring the characters and customs of Deephaven serves as "an acceptable narrative frame for the text of Helen and Kate's relationship," but the novel really "takes its shape from [Helen's] desire for Kate and expresses the anxieties as well the pleasures attendant upon that desire" (1993:166). As there are no explicitly sexual references, and certainly no explicit rejection of heterosexual love, some readers might challenge the choice to read this nineteenth-century text as lesbian. However, if we follow Fetterley's cue and read *Deephaven* through Jewett's life, it is impossible to ignore the romantic nature of the protagonists' relationship. I use the term *romantic*, however, not as a synonym for *sexual*, but as a term for the emotional attachments between women explored by Lillian Faderman in her study *Surpassing the Love of Men*. Faderman presents extensive evidence that many women in late nineteenth-century New England established such long-term, monogamous relationships, known then as Boston marriages. "Whether these unions sometimes or often included sex," concludes

¹ See Catriona Sandilands, "The Importance of Reading Queerly: Jewett's *Deephaven* as Feminist Ecology," *Isle: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 11.2 (2004): 57-77. See also Josephine Donovan, "The Unpublished Love Poetry of Sarah Orne Jewett," *Frontier: a Journal of Women Studies* 4.3 (1979): 26-31. For a more general discussion of Jewett's emotional preference for women, see Marjorie Pryse, "Archives of Female Friendship and the 'Way' Jewett Wrote," *New England Quarterly* 66.1(1993): 47-66.

Faderman, “we will never know, but if their personalities could be projected to our times, it is probable that they would see themselves as ‘women-identified women,’ i.e. what we would call lesbians, regardless of the level of their sexual interests” (190). The year after *Deephaven*’s publication, Jewett formed a monogamous relationship with a woman that was to last for 29 years, until Jewett’s death in 1909. Indeed, Fetterley suggests that *Deephaven* “may have facilitated Jewett’s life choice by allowing her to first imagine it in fiction” (165).

But if Jewett succeeded in establishing a long-term relationship, her characters are less self-assured. Fetterley argues that Helen writes *Deephaven* as consolation for the permanent lesbian haven that the girls fail to establish in the town. Thus, Fetterley joins many critics in interpreting the girls’ return to Boston as a defeat. In terms of a lesbian reading, the return implies compliance with the heterosexual narrative of courtship, marriage, and childbirth; once back in Boston, these single, middle-class girls will be viewed first and foremost as candidates for marriage. The girls manage to delay the progression toward marriage by recreating themselves as young girls, but, at least explicitly, this “regressive fiction” is abandoned at the end of the summer (Fetterley 168). Kate proposes copying the Ladies of Llangollen and establishing a permanent household, but the girls soon abandon the idea; the regressive fiction will not be developed into a “grown-up” version.² Helen cannot transfer her relationship with Kate to Boston because Helen fears that lesbianism is, as Fetterley puts it, a “socially regressive act” that will lock Helen out of time, casting her forever as a girl who refuses to grow up (169).

Helen’s problematic relation to time resonates with key themes in queer studies of temporality. (For an explanation of my decision to discuss queer instead of lesbian temporality, see the appendix.) Arguing that “sexuality has a specifically temporal politics,” queer theorists challenge the traditional vision of time as linear and progressive (Freeman 2007: 160). Such a temporal scheme, claim queer theorists, insists on the sequence of heterosexual marriage and childbirth as normative. The configuration of time as progressive and linear is so engrained in dominant modes of thinking about human development and sexuality that deviations from hetero-norms are vulnerable to accusations of resisting reality, of refusing to “grow up.”³ Fetterley suggests that Helen wonders if she

² See Jewett, *Deephaven*, 135. The Ladies of Llangollen were Sarah Ponsonby and Lady Eleanor Butler, who after ten years of close friendship decided to elope in order to escape the marriages arranged by their respective families. In 1778, the women created a haven in Plas Newydd, Llangollen, where they were visited by celebrated literary and political figures (Faderman 74-5).

³ See Annamarie Jagose, *Inconsequence: Lesbian Representation and the Logic of Sexual Sequence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002). Jagose examines the popular view of lesbians as suspended in juvenile time.

can grow up without marrying. Helen worries that she cannot grow up a lesbian (169).⁴ Thus, Fetterley implies that Helen's failure to keep her relationship with Kate is linked to Helen's failure to perceive the normal relation to time as anything but progressive.

Perhaps Helen does not *conquer* her anxiety about her relation to time. I contend, however, that Helen accomplishes more in the way of negotiating her anxiety than Fetterley concedes. Paradoxically, the source of Helen's anxiety—the division between mind and body, dramatized in the regressive fiction—also provides the means of attenuating her anxiety. In the first part of this study, I demonstrate how *Deephaven's* last chapter implies that the protagonists establish a division between the mind and the body more enduring than the regressive fiction described by Fetterley. In the second part, I use the mind-body split as a framework for discussing how *Deephaven*, by destabilizing the link between time and the body, leads to queer ways of thinking about temporality.

The Time of the Body

In her introduction to the special issue of *GLQ* devoted to queer temporality, Elizabeth Freeman notes that our perceptions of normative sexuality are bound to ideas about the productivity of the body. Because homosexual relations are traditionally not (re)productive, they are often figured as having no future. Freeman observes: "In...some popular imaginations, we supposedly have no children, no succeeding generations, no meaningful way to contribute to society, ... and nothing to offer most political tomorrows" (165). Whatever the challenges facing queer theorists today, the odds against Helen are worse. Helen lives in a society that ties the female identity almost exclusively to the body. In nineteenth-century America, women were expected to contribute to society not through their minds, but through their bodies. Instead of pursuing a career, women typically married and raised children, fulfilling their biological destiny, so to speak. A woman who deviated from this pattern would at best be described as eccentric, at worst, "unnatural." Hence Helen's fear that if she chooses to keep her lesbian relationship with Kate, such a choice shuts her "out of the communal flow of generational time" (Fetterley 169). She fears being perceived as someone like poor Miss Chauncey, who is "trapped in the stopped time of an insane fantasy"

⁴ Fetterley discusses the significance of the character Miss Chauncey, who appears in the penultimate chapter, in relation to Helen's anxiety about prolonging the summer's idyll and establishing a lesbian relationship with Kate in *Deephaven*. As I will describe later, Kate and Helen recast themselves as young girls. Helen finds her fiction eerily echoed by Miss Chauncey, whom tragedy has reduced to insanity. Once the belle of *Deephaven's* most prominent family, Miss Chauncey lives alone in her dilapidated house, convinced that she is the same Miss Chauncey of sixty years ago. The fate of Miss Chauncey, who is suspended in her "regressive fantasies," Fetterley argues, implies the danger of lingering in the past (169).

(Fetterley 169). In order to challenge heterosexuality, Helen must first reconfigure her relation to time. She must find the means of freeing herself from her body's dependence on linear time and thus from the demands that society places on her body.

“The girls who were so happy”: Splitting the Mind from the Body

In the last chapter of *Deephaven*, Jewett explores the interplay between the body and the mind in nineteenth-century womanhood. Kate and Helen have enjoyed unprecedented autonomy and intimacy in Deephaven, yet they prepare for the return to Boston. Jewett avoids overt manifestations of conflict, but she simultaneously naturalizes the return and dramatizes it as a form of death. There is a tension between a sense of inevitability and one of loss. Although in leaving Deephaven Kate and Helen renounce the summer's independence, we are encouraged to view the return as natural; or rather, the return is tied to the body's natural development. Just as Kate and Helen cannot resist the progression of the seasons, past a certain age they cannot continue to enjoy the freedom that they have known in Deephaven.

What is the freedom that Kate and Helen experience in Deephaven? If we speak of women claiming freedom in the nineteenth-century, the tendency is to assume that such a claim entails marginalization, but in the case of Helen and Kate, freedom does mean rebellion against Deephaven's genteel society. Rather, Kate and Helen find themselves at the center of Deephaven's community, having inherited social standing from Kate's Aunt Brandon. Helen recalls, “We used...to do a great deal of social visiting, which was very pleasant,” and one of the things that the girls will remember fondly is “our importance as members of society” (139, 140).

However, the rules governing Kate and Helen's social behavior in Deephaven are different from those in Boston. Perhaps because of the exodus of Deephaven's young men, who have left the declining town in search of work, Kate and Helen enjoy more social latitude than they ever could in Boston; when exploring Deephaven and its surrounding countryside, they need not take along a chaperone. They interact socially on their own terms, as it were, without the media of “lunch-parties, and symphony concerts, and calls, and fairs, the reading club and the children's hospital” (135). They strike up friendships as easily with Mrs. Kew, the garrulous lighthouse keeper, as with fishermen at the harbor. The girls decide when to “dress as befitted our position in the town,” and when to wear clothes appropriate for “wandering on shore...or sailing or rowing” and getting smattered with “fish-scales and blackberry briers” (139). Freedom in Deephaven is the ability to change one's age to escape the confines of the body. “Sometimes in Deephaven we were between six and seven-years-old,” recounts

Helen, “but at other times we have felt irreparably grown-up...” (24). Rather than being constrained by their 24-year-old bodies, Kate and Helen can recreate themselves as young girls when they please, free to pay social calls or scramble through blackberry briars. In other words, freedom for Helen and Kate means evading the pressure to act as two ladies of marriageable age.

After enjoying such freedom in *Deephaven*, why should Helen and Kate choose to leave? Yet Helen’s vision of a future visit to *Deephaven* stresses the finality of their departure, as Helen juxtaposes her vision with images of the town’s inevitable decay. Evoking *Deephaven*’s graveyard, Helen dramatizes the girls’ departure as a form of death:

By and by the *Deephaven* warehouses will fall and be used for firewood by the fisher-people, and the wharves will be worn away by the tides. The few old gentlefolks who still linger will be dead then; and I wonder if some day Kate Lancaster and I will go down to *Deephaven* for the sake of old times, and read the epitaphs in the burying-ground, look out to sea, and talk quietly about the girls who were so happy there one summer long before (141).

While the reference to “the girls who were so happy” seems innocuous enough, that Kate and Helen talk about these girls “quietly” before the tombstones implies that they identify their *Deephaven* selves with *Deephaven*’s dead. Other images in the chapter recall death, although they are always attenuated by evocations of nature. For example, Helen imagines feeling the marsh fog “cold and wet” against their “hands and faces” as the sea settles into “sleep” (141). The departure from *Deephaven* is thus portrayed as the natural result of the change in seasons; to stay any longer, the chapter suggests, would be to spoil the girls’ experience and oppose the natural progression of time. One of the “dreariest sounds one ever hears,” muses Helen, “is the shivering rustle” of leaves that refuse to fall when “all the world [is] waiting for snow to come” (139). Helen and Kate may resist the return to town mentally, but nature pushes them back to Boston.

If Helen speaks so dismally about leaving *Deephaven*, why have the young women decided not only to leave, but never to return for an extended visit? Have they even considered the possibility of staying? While much of the scholarship on *Deephaven* criticizes the novel’s heroines for failing to make an explicit choice between staying and leaving, I maintain that Kate and Helen have found other ways of negotiating the restraints on their bodies.⁵ The dramatization

⁵ For example, Ann Romines argues that the girls witness *Deephaven*’s social rituals without appreciating the power that such rituals offer to single women (“In *Deephaven*: Skirmishes near the Swamp”: 1984). In *Deephaven*, where few of the men are younger than sixty, women enjoy more authority than they would in an urban community such as Boston. Sarah

of their departure as death would be more disturbing if the young women had not already established the division between their minds and their bodies: that is, between their Deephaven selves and their 24-year-old bodies. When proposing the summer's excursion to Helen, Kate confides:

It might be dull in Deephaven for two young ladies who were fond of gay society and dependent upon excitement, I suppose; but for two little girls who were fond of each other and could play in the boats, and dig and build houses in the sea-sand, and gather shells, and carry their dolls wherever they went, what could be pleasanter? (8).

Kate speaks whimsically, perhaps, but her portrayal of the heroines as “little girls” resonates with other representations of age throughout the novel. After Kate's proposition, the protagonists never refer to themselves as “young ladies,” and only once as “young women,” instead calling themselves “girls,” as if they had left the Kate and Helen dependent on “gay society” behind in Boston. Thus, Kate and Helen's idyll in Deephaven begins as a play in perspective, a regression from “two young ladies who were fond of gay society” to “two little girls who were fond of each other” and for whom nothing “could be pleasanter” than to “play in the boats... and build houses in the sea-sand...”The division between the mind and the body extends only to a defiance of physical reality when the latter proves oppressive; the divide can be crossed.

But as the return to Boston approaches, Helen's attitude toward the regression to childhood changes. By the penultimate chapter she has ceased to refer to herself as a young girl, instead describing herself and Kate as “young women” (126). “Well-grown young women” as they now are, Kate and Helen's first reaction on being caught trespassing in an old house is to feel “like two awkward children” (126). As we have seen, the last chapter implies that the young women's future is bound to the development of their bodies; to Boston they must return. In Boston a tenuous division between mind and body will no longer justify fishing and scrambling through blackberry bushes. If Deephaven is the place where it seems that “all the clocks...and all the people with them...had stopped

Sherman attributes Helen and Kate's failure to learn from Deephaven's women to the girls' narcissistic relationship (*Sarah Orne Jewett: an American Persephone*: 1989). Both readings conform with the trend to read *Deephaven* as a failed *bildungsroman*, wherein Kate and Helen are meant to learn from the Deephaven community but never achieve the sympathy that would mark the passage to maturity, and perhaps, present staying in Deephaven as a viable option. For further discussion of this topic, see Cary Richard, ed. *Appreciation of Sarah Orne Jewett: 29 Interpretive Essays*. Waterville, Me: Colby Press, 1973. See also Wittenberg, Judith Bryant. "Re-Vision and Transformation: Deephaven and Cranford". *Colby Quarterly*: 27.3 (1991 Sept.), pp. 121-31.

years ago,” then Boston is the place of regimented time, where the young women are expected to circulate at “lunch-parties, and symphony concerts, and calls, ...the reading club and the children’s hospital” (42, 135). If they are to retain some freedom, Kate and Helen must find more enduring, more subtle, ways of subverting the temporal and physical strictures that society will soon place on their bodies.

A more subtle way of expressing the mind-body split is through narrative. Of the activities that Kate and Helen share, one of the most intriguing is the writing of a fictional journal. More than the work of a few idle moments, the journal is the product of detailed planning, written on “yellow old letter-paper” so as to look as authentic as possible. Helen confides: “We put it in the most hidden drawer by itself, and flatter ourselves that it will be regarded with great interest sometime or other” (15). Kate and Helen’s choice of recreation emphasizes their facility in imagining themselves across time, whether by recreating themselves as little girls or by investing themselves in the narrator of a fictional journal. The writing of the journal is practice, as it were, for writing Helen’s text, which will feature one narrator but record the experience of two women. The journal is hidden in its drawer and, as far as we know, abandoned, but Helen continues with her narrative. By the summer’s end, Helen and Kate must sublimate and relinquish to the burying-grounds of *Deephaven* the girls who can scramble over rocks and change their ages at will; but even so, the friends can keep the memory of their summer together. Narrative enables the young women to negotiate the now permanent division between the body and the mind: thanks to Helen’s narrative, the young women will be able to evoke “the girls who were so happy.”

“My Old Self”: Time in Jewett’s Life, Time in *Deephaven*

Is Helen’s narrative just a means of recalling the summer’s idyll? Or does her narrative, by enabling her to relive experiences independently of her body, imply new ways of relating to time? In order to answer these questions, let us set aside *Deephaven* for a moment in order to examine another of Jewett’s works. In many ways, *Deephaven* is the development of an earlier text titled “Grown-Up.” Jewett published this autobiographical piece in 1872, five years before the novel’s publication. Like *Deephaven*, “Grown-Up” foregrounds tension between the temporality of the body and that of the mind; for like Helen and Kate, the narrator of “Grown-Up” distinguishes between her grown-up body, which is tied to the present, and her mind, which can inhabit the past as well as the present. She does not refute her changing body, nor does she express a desire to live perpetually in childhood, remarking that “it is rather pleasant to be grown-up, after all” (Jewett 1872). “Grown-Up” implies that its narrator can resign herself to her adult body because her concept of her “self” is not restricted to any one division of time, to

wit, past or present. While her body's temporality is linear and progressive, her self's temporality is continuous and bidirectional.

The narrator looks to the past as well as the present to formulate a sense of self. "Sometimes we realize," she notes, "...that the little head began ways of thinking which never have been outgrown." Although she admits that "this may be an undesirable habit," she wishes "for glimpses of my old self face to face in the sunlight and shadow of the old days." It is not enough for the narrator to live in the moment; her consciousness must extend beyond the present, or the time of her body, to seek resonance with the past. Mobility of the mind, or the ability to cast oneself in different times and roles, is important for any writer; but for Jewett, who drew upon personal and communal past for much of her fiction, access to the past was fundamental. Jewett's biographer Paula Blanchard is not the only writer to comment on the "temporal transparency" of Jewett's work (1994: 201). Blanchard is, however, one of the few to suggest that, for Jewett, time was linked to creative agency. Discussing the importance of Jewett's childhood home in South Berwick, Maine, Blanchard claims that Berwick gave Jewett "the right to be a child, ... the freedom to go careening down a hill or write a story... [and] it nourished her personal sense of time, which embraced not only her own childhood and adulthood, but the lives of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and elderly neighbors" (2). Jewett's fiction, which often takes place in rural settings, weaves memories of Jewett's childhood with stories collected from neighbors, relatives, and travelers. From the individual voices of a Jewett novel or short story emerges a narrative that binds the community together, creating a sense not just of continuity, but of simultaneity, between past and present.

When Jewett, speaking through the narrator of "Grown-Up," cannot find "glimpses of [her] old self," she mourns more than the loss of memories: she mourns the concomitant loss of self-integrity. "It is strange how little we remember about ourselves," she muses.

It is melancholy how slight a control we have over memory—how much vanishes of which we think we never shall lose sight...We have no more idea what happened during entire weeks and months than if we had spent them in the delirium of fever...We remember an incident here and there; the sight of some face we used to know brings back some new recollections; but we feel that the best of our treasures are hidden away from us and have a certain sense that we are defrauded.

Nowhere else in the narrative does she speak with such intensity, even when she confesses that after sledding by herself "I was beginning to see the pathetic side of my occupation, and to tell myself that I was grown-up." She can observe calmly

that “I was altogether too tall to coast upon such a short sled,” but at the thought of the vanished “weeks and months,” her tone approaches panic.

Retaining memories of the child she was is a way of exercising agency, of overcoming the physical reality of her body. By recognizing that the self is not bound to the same linear time as the body, the narrator of “Grown-Up” can perceive the self as distinct from the body. In the nineteenth-century context, this means that she can resist when society seeks to determine her identity by her biological gender. She need not fulfill her “natural” destiny through marriage in order to claim an identity as a mature woman; her identity is informed by experiences outside the progression towards marriage.

For Jewett, this means that she can claim professional independence, countering the “heterosexual imperative” to (re)produce with her own form of productivity: the shaping of the past into fiction (Freeman 162). But as long as Jewett’s memories continue to vanish, her perception of her self and of the world around her will be limited to linear, progressive time, and to the time of her contested body.

The narrator of “Grown-Up” is thus “defrauded” of her sense of autonomy by the memory that she cannot control. Prefiguring the implied burial in *Deephaven*, she cries, “We think about you very tenderly, little friends, as if you were dead, instead of grown-up.” But as long as she relies on unstructured memory to formulate her identity, she must always feel this sense of fragmentation, this sense of being divided from her self by her body. Her dilemma is, then, how can she control memory so that she can always cross temporal boundaries, transcending her body’s limitation to the present?

Toward a Queer Temporality

Deephaven offers a solution to this dilemma in Helen’s crafting of narrative: using narrative, Helen can control her memory, resisting time’s relentless progression. She regresses, but not randomly. As Judith Fetterley observes, Helen reconstructs the summer’s events so as to foreground her time with Kate. The act of narration is in itself a manipulation of time; the non-linear structure of *Deephaven* emphasizes Helen’s control over time through narrative. Fetterley also claims that in writing her text Helen at least assumes “control over the presentation of self” (180). The logical development of this claim is to consider how in writing *Deephaven* Helen might also control the presentation of the self’s relation to time. If Helen enjoys the agency to reconfigure time through narrative, might she not also reconfigure her relation to time? Through narrative, might Helen not also break free from a linear temporality, transcending her body and the strictures that society imposes on her body?

Thus, Helen's narrative offers more in the way of alleviating Helen's anxiety about her relation to time than Judith Fetterley's reading implies. In Fetterley's analysis, the regression to childhood masks the protagonists' "aggressive occupation" of Deephaven as a lesbian space, making Kate's plan "safe because not adult or serious, and safe because only temporary" (169). Transience is the condition of this regressive fiction, which can outlast the summer only in Helen's narrative. But the last chapter suggests that the girls *do* extend the regressive fiction beyond the summer. They enact a division between the reality of the body and the mind's ability to perceive the self as elsewhere. The act of recovery through narrative is also an act of resistance to linear time. If developing a queer temporality is to break free of the heterosexual model that confines a woman's life to a linear, reproductive progression, then Helen has already taken the first steps, first by dividing her mind from her body, then by expressing and sustaining that division through narrative. The mind-body split implied in *Deephaven* is the first step toward recognizing that one's identity, one's sense of self, need not be determined by one's physical reality. Jewett, certainly, achieved a sense of self distinct from her body: ignoring society's injunction to marry and raise a family, Sarah Orne Jewett pursued a career and shared a relationship with Annie Fields that lasted for almost three decades.

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Appendix

If Fetterley reads *Deephaven* as a lesbian text, why do I discuss not *lesbian*, but *queer* temporality? Although *queer* is popularly used as synonymous to *lesbian*, in scholarly discourse *queer* typically signifies emotional and sexual behaviors that resist the binary opposition of heterosexuality to homosexuality. In the late nineteenth-century, *lesbian* was just emerging as a sexual identity in the sense that we understand today. Jewett's lifestyle and fiction portray a marked emotional preference for women, but she would not have identified herself as a lesbian. In a note justifying her decision to apply the term *lesbian* to a nineteenth-century text, Fetterley cites Adrienne Rich's article "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (1980), arguing that if *Deephaven* is "not read as a lesbian text, it will be read as a heterosexual one" (Fetterley183). (Rich contrasts the pressure to justify the use of the term *lesbian* with the lack of pressure to prove that a given text is *straight*.) The use of the term *queer* obviates Fetterley's dilemma by allowing us to read *Deephaven* without identifying the text as either *lesbian* or *straight*. Furthermore, in *Tendencies*, one of the seminal studies in the field, Eve Sedgwick describes queer theory as in part the discussion of "dimensions that can't be subsumed under gender and sexuality at all" (9). Queer theory explores how different experiences of ethnicity, race, nationality, and time intersect with and influence our experiences of sexuality. While I have stressed that I do not consider the relationship of *Deephaven*'s protagonists to be sexual, I do believe that their manipulations of both time and the relationship between the mind and the body enable Kate and Helen to maintain their intense emotional attachment. Thus, the girls' experience of time is *queer*, defying the popular configuration of time as linear and reproductive without requiring them to step out of the progression entirely and live as lesbians in the modern sense of the word.