*In an interview shortly before the release of Percy’s novel, The Second Coming, he commented on his conception of modern consciousness and authentic and inauthentic modes of being. Noting on the condition of his protagonist, Percy likened the protagonist’s dilemma with the modern condition in that we have “experienced a loss of sovereignty which has occurred in the lives of most of us as well, even though we appear to be freer, to have more, to be more individualistic, to have access to more than any people on earth. Despite this, a loss of sovereignty has occurred so that we are more subject to invisible authority”*

*Respond*

*In "The Loss of the Creature" Walker Percy offers a number of examples of how we lose "sovereignty" over our world, but he also suggests how we might "recover" our access to this world. There are many ways, of course, in which Percy's observations and analyses are connected to Berger's “Ways of Seeing” In this paper I'd like you to think about the ways in which "performed symbolic complexes" shape our ways of understanding our experience, creating what Percy refers to as a "double deprivation" (576) and what Berger calls a "double loss" (108). And I'd like you to develop a complex theory of "recovery," suggesting explicit techniques that we might use to regain our sovereignty and our historical "situation."*

*Suggestions*

*A few questions that might get you going with this:*

*How do institutions, which are run by "experts" and "specialists," influence our ways of "seeing" (perceiving, thinking about, interpreting) the world? And how do we, as individuals, respond to the institutional practices prescribed by experts and specialists? To what extent are you "free," and to what extent are you constrained? How are your ways of thinking about your experience shaped by others? And how do you go about recovering your authority over your thoughts?*