

©2007

Natasha Hurley

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

GETTING AROUND: CIRCULATION AND THE RISE OF THE GAY AND
LESBIAN NOVEL

by

NATASHA HURLEY

A Dissertation submitted to the
Graduate School-New Brunswick
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in

Literatures in English

written under the direction of

PROFESSOR MICHAEL WARNER

and approved by

____Michael McKeon____

____Meredith McGill____

____Eric Savoy____

New Brunswick, New Jersey

October, 2007

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

By NATASHA HURLEY

Dissertation Director:
Michael Warner

My dissertation reorients the prevailing understanding that the gay and lesbian novel came into view in response to the emergence of homosexuality as a concept. I argue that the gay and lesbian novel has a much longer history, which I trace by considering the literary circulation of homosexual types—types that through course of the nineteenth century accrete more and more language to themselves while also generating new abstract terms to describe same-sex sexual sociability. Eighteenth-century literature was sparsely populated by minor characters or fleeting episodes of desire expressed between members of the same sex. By the end of the nineteenth century, minor characters evolve into protagonists and their episodic encounters are either multiplied or developed into novel-length narratives with the texture of entire worlds. “Getting Around” thus takes as its focus the development not just of queer characters or subjects, but of queer protagonists and complete narrative worlds in which those protagonists make sense.

My chapters focus both on the ways authors respond to the language of sexual types in other texts and on the ways other texts respond to them as they continue to circulate. My first chapter argues that Herman Melville's *Typee* has gradually acquired its status as a queer text: in the ways Melville engages with sexuality in missionary writings and in the way other writers engage with sexuality in *Typee*. This influence can be seen fully in Charles Warren Stoddard's writing, which I explore in Chapter Two. Stoddard's depictions of sexual sociability between men in the South Seas respond directly to Melville's and are, in turn, nurtured by Stoddard's wide circuits of literary and social circulation. My third chapter charts the circulation of female sexual types, tracing the overlapping, and mutually constituting, relationships between old maids and lesbians that are central to the social worlds depicted by Sarah Orne Jewett and Henry James. My final chapter turns fully to James's *The Bostonians*. In the space of one novel, I argue, James dramatizes the processes of sexual type production and social circulation that I have been documenting in American literature throughout the nineteenth century.

Acknowledgements

Getting Around does not just describe, but owes its very existence to, circulation. I have had the good fortune to move about the world among many amazing individuals, communities of scholars, and caring friends—all of whom have nourished my life and work by allowing me to circulate within and between them. Without them, this dissertation might never have come to fruition.

Several people have more than earned their places at the top of this list for their unflagging support and encouragement—and for believing I could finish at the times when I was sure I could not. Barbara Markovits has steered me through many a dark night of the soul with her combination of great wisdom and pragmatism. And every graduate program in the world should be so lucky as to have a Cheryl Robinson, that perfect combination of kindness and shrewdness, who always knows how to save the day (and, when necessary, the circus). More than anyone, however, Susanne Luhmann has been there every day, with *boa* and without, making life brighter and more airy. Smart, tender, and an amazing reader of words and people, she is my best friend and the joy of my life.

As my very first intellectual community, my family in Newfoundland taught me the values of having a rich life of the mind as well as a lively household. My parents, Nick and Sylvia Hurley, saw to it that there was a steady supply of books in the house and made me believe I could do and be anything. My siblings—Andrea, Paul, and Kenneth—showed me how it is that a small group of people can develop a shared language by appropriating the soundbites of others, a practice we share to this day. My grandmothers, family matriarchs Mary Hall and Rose Hurley, furnished us with many of

those soundbites and stories and heaped us with stern—but also soft—love. My uncles—Wayne, Gervase, Eugene, and David—encouraged us relentlessly (and sometimes deviously). I remain convinced that the culture of dinner table debate that defines many Newfoundland families is one of the reasons I still love a good intense discussion. Today, our family has scattered to and multiplied within points beyond the small town of North River. But its collective love of words, books, good food, and drink have been instrumental to the production of these pages.

In more direct ways, the people I met at Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax, inspired me specifically to a PhD in literary studies. Rosemarie Sampson first showed me what the Mount had to offer, while Martha Westwater saw to it that I chose to study English over Math or French. But Steven Bruhm, Peter Schwenger, Rhoda Zuk, and Chris Ferns made the study of literature the most exciting thing I could imagine. They have become more than professorial idols: they have been incredible friends and colleagues, without whom I cannot imagine having arrived at this point in my life. Steven, in particular, has been an exceptional advisor, collaborator, and supporter. I owe to him a bigger debt of gratitude than words can say.

More generally, my time as both student and lecturer at MSVU, enabled me to develop relationships with people who continue to be my closest allies and comrades. I am deeply grateful to Adele Poirier for hanging out with me in the turret and for many a Christmas-tree caper; to Goran Stanivukovic for hiring me and for our years-long shared fascination with an Adam-Phillips-style analysis of the world; to Teresa Heffernan (also for hiring me) and for many dinners and nights on the futon in Toronto; to Shawn Miner for long walks on the beach and too many trips in the U-Haul; to Bill Adams for all the

late-night drinks and debates; and to (the sadly late) Emily Givner, the memory of whose passion for books, writing, and cheesecake, I hold near and dear to my heart.

My brief year of MA study at the University of Western Ontario was also formative for my academic development. Here, in the classes particularly of Tilottama Rajan and Elizabeth Harvey, I immersed myself fully in heady climes of theory. I benefited from their seemingly endless patience (as I encountered a steep learning curve) and, later, from their excellent advice as I chose a graduate school for my doctoral work. I carry with me several lasting friendships from my time at Western: with Shelley Hulan (my Congress colleague), with Theresa Smalec, and, above all, with Edie Snook—a friend for all the crunch-times, academic and not.

I carried the influences of all of these people and places with me to (and from) New Brunswick, NJ, where I embarked on a doctoral roller coaster ride at Rutgers University. I tip my hat to a significant committee of people who enabled me to come out on top, especially after my hiatus from the program halfway through. As graduate director, Myra Jehlen single-handedly facilitated my return to Rutgers by restoring funding I thought I had forfeited. She also softened my return landing by inviting me into her dissertation writing group, where I was exposed to and encouraged by her unparalleled close reading skills. That learning was top of mind in every quotation analysis in this document. Michael McKeon also enthusiastically welcomed my return and, throughout the writing of my dissertation, seemed at every turn to surpass his own reputation as a paragon of academic knowledge and integrity. I could not have triumphed without him. Meredith McGill, in her roles as graduate director and third reader, always came through with timely and pragmatic advice to smooth my way. Above all, I have

Michael Warner to thank for supervising my dissertation work from start to finish. His quick mind, uncompromising intellectual standards, and graceful writing allowed me to see what academic writing can be, at its best. I have come away from my entire experience at Rutgers with a solid sense of the kind of intellectual I want to become—and a clear outline of the standards I hope to establish for myself.

A long list of Rutgers friends also supported me, fed me, and read my work. Particular thanks are due Mary Jo Watts, Sara Warner, Carla MacDougall, Laurie Marhoefer, Terri Geller, Danielle Bobker, Sina Queyras, Jeff Scraba, Luis Iglesias, Jenny Worley, Jane Elliot.

One of the best things about being at Rutgers was the way the program facilitated my going to other places while I was still connected to New Jersey. Through a Mellon Fellowship, I was able to do archival research at the University of California (Berkeley) and at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester. And, as I was about halfway through my dissertation, I was lucky to have had the most enlivening intellectual experience of my career thus far funded by another Mellon grant when I got to participate in the School of Criticism and Theory at Cornell University in 2005. SCT restored my intellectual intensity at a time when I thought I had spent it all, energizing me for the final push toward the end of doctoral degree. Sepp Gumbrecht led an amazing seminar on the Production of Presence, and became one of the many fine friends who all made SCT a fun and challenging place to be.

I am also extremely grateful to the people I met at in Sudbury, Ontario, which became my home away from home while I wrote my dissertation. Stephen Andrews and Thorneloe University supplied me with office space, library facilities, and part-time

teaching work. Ian McLennan hosted many a Friday night dinners and allowed us ready use of his car. Andrea Levan, Diana Coholic, Patrice Mihilewski, Kate Tilliczek, Ron Srigley, and Gary Kinsman, all made for engaging interlocutors and great playmates.

During my final writing year, I had the good fortune to land a one-year Visiting Assistant Professorship at Macalester College. The year I spent in the Twin Cities was one of my happiest and most productive. For this, I thank, first of all, Steve Burt for persuading me to take the job. I also wanted to thank my colleagues, my fabulous students and the RAUCOUS writing group at Macalester. What made my year in Minneapolis so memorable, however, was having in my life Diane Brown, Amy diGennaro, Chris Willcox, Jasper DiGennaro-Wilcox, and Emmett DiGennaro-Wilcox. It's amazing to me how one short year can produce family-like bonds. Sunday work dates with Diane enabled me, finally, to finish writing, and our Saturday walks allowed me to realize how connected buns are to Happy-ness. In Jasper, I was reminded of what a powerful thing thinking is in a small person with a big personality, while in Emmett I marveled at the human capacity for connection. For Amy and Chris, I have but one phrase: perfect square. And one question: when will we see you again?

In so many ways, these pages have been produced because of the ways, to borrow a phrase from the Be-Good Tanyas, "you pass through places and places pass through you. You carry them with you on the soles of your traveling shoes." I suppose, to mix metaphors beyond their capacity, I carry all these people and places with me on the soles of my sentences. From North River to Halifax, London, New Jersey, New York, and Minneapolis—my sentences have all benefited from the vibrant cultural and intellectual energy that is the by-product of circulation itself. I have been very fortunate that the

institutions who have funded my research—the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Rutgers University, and the Mellon Foundation—have all seen merit and value in creating the conditions under which I have been able to thrive within and across these spaces of ideas.

Table of Contents

Abstract of the Dissertation	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	x
Introduction Circulation and The Rise of the Gay and Lesbian Novel	1
Chapter One Acquired Queerness: The Sexual Life and Afterlife of <i>Typee</i>	35
Chapter Two Taking the Measure of Queer Circulation: The Stoddard Archive and Its Dissed Contents	95
Chapter Three Type-Complication and the Issue of Literary Old Maids	159
Chapter Four Typical? The Place of <i>The Bostonians</i> In The Literary History of Sexuality	215
Works Cited	266
Curriculum Vitae	298

Introduction: Circulation and the Rise of the Gay and Lesbian Novel

*Tell all the truth but tell it slant,
Success in circuit lies... (Emily Dickinson: epigraph to Roger Austen's
Playing the Game: The Homosexual Novel in America)*

It is rather fitting that this study of the role circulation plays in the rise of the gay and lesbian novel begins with the quotation of Roger Austen's quotation of Emily Dickinson as his epigraph to *Playing the Game: The Homosexual Novel in America*. For in the pages that follow, I will suggest that the quotation of quotation is one of the key ways in which queer literature entextualizes its own history. Austen was probably the first to insist, in a scholarly argument, that the homosexual novel in America be recognized as such, even though he was much more concerned in his study with the truth-telling part of his own epigraph, rather than the ways in which "success in circuit lies." My own study of the homosexual novel (broadened to include literature about sexual sociability between women as well) begins where Austen's epigraph ends—with a focus on literary circuits—so that I might end where Austen's study began: with the emergence of the homosexual novel in America at the end of the nineteenth century. Rather than take the homosexual novel as a category of literature whose life span is to be traced in the wake of its emergence (as Austen does), I examine the conditions of literary circulation that gave it life to begin with.

In Austen's still commonplace understanding, the homosexual novel came into view around the same time as homosexuality itself.¹ It may seem, therefore, the once

¹ The OED cites the first appearance of "homosexuality" as 1892, in Krafft-Ebbing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*. In *The History of Sexuality: Volume I, an Introduction*, Michel Foucault points to 1862 as the year, an assertion confirmed by Jonathan Ned Katz in *The Invention of Heterosexuality*. Although

homosexuality had been recognized as such, novels were written about it shortly thereafter. If we take a long view of the matter, we can see that when the novel itself was emerging and developing through the eighteenth century, it was sparsely populated by minor characters or fleeting episodes of desire expressed between members of the same sex, whom scholars have begun to recognize as prototypes of modern queer characters.² By the end of the nineteenth century, these minor characters had evolved into protagonists and their episodic encounters had either multiplied or developed into novel-length narratives with the texture of entire worlds. The sodomite had not only become a species (in Foucault's famous pronouncement); he now had an entire narrative world as his backdrop. It is the process of this literary development—of not just queer protagonists, but of complete narrative worlds in which those protagonists make sense—that my dissertation takes as its focus.

Central to understanding this process is an understanding of the role literary circulation plays in generating the detailed narrative worlds that novels require. David Leavitt and Mark Mitchell insist in the introduction to their anthology of homosexual

heterosexuality was coined at around the same time, the latter is widely understood to have emerged as a necessary alternative to homosexuality. For more on this see Diana Fuss, "Introduction," *Inside/Our: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York: Routledge, 1991); and Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2007 [1999]).

² The further back in literary history we look, the less consciously coherent same-sex sexuality appears to modern eyes—that is, if what we are looking for is the language of sexual identity that takes hold by the end of the nineteenth century. But this seeming incoherence has its own formal features and its own historical logic, whose specificity scholars have now begun to chart. We can see the episodic quality of same-sex encounters in the context of the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century across a range of texts: Delariviere Manley's *Cabal of Women* in *The New Atlantis*; Tobias Smollet's *Captain Whiffle and the Earl of Strutwell*; shorter fictional pieces like Henry Fielding's *The Female Husband*; Defoe's "The Apparition of Mrs. Veal" and the anonymously written *Love Letters Between a Certain Late Nobleman and the Famous Mr. Wilson*. Same-sex characters tend to be minor characters in longer works, central characters only in shorter works and in both cases their adventures are short in duration. See, for instance, Lisa Moore, *Dangerous Intimacies: Toward a History of the Sapphic Novel* (Durham: Duke UP, 1997); Randolph Trumbach "Sodomy Transformed: Aristocratic Libertinage, Public Reputation and the Gender Revolution of the 18th Century. Authors" *Journal of Homosexuality* (1990) 19.2: 105-124 ; Valerie Traub *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in early modern England*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002); Jonathan Goldberg, ed. *Queering the Renaissance* (Durham: Duke UP, 1994); Bruce Smith *Homosexual desire in Shakespeare's England : a cultural poetics*. (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991).

literature that “Today the study of pre-1914 homosexual literature is still a matter of pages passed from hand to hand” (xvii). What does this mean at the level of form and at the level of historical literary practice? By the beginning of the twentieth century, creative recirculation and literary accumulation had come to be recognized as central to queer literary life. In a declaration worthy of Oscar Wilde, Natalie Barney, the maven of Paris’s ex-patriot lesbian salon culture, laid out the maxim that “To mis-quote is the very foundation of original style. The success of most writers is almost entirely due to the continuous and courageous abuse of familiar misquotation” (qtd in Jay viii).³ “Familiar misquotation”—the conscious, if slanted, deployment of intertextuality—is, in Barney’s estimation, essential to the emergence of a literary style. Not incidentally, Barney came to this conclusion in a context of lesbian literary sociability. Meanwhile, another commentator on the early twentieth-century’s queer literati, Edward Prime-Stevenson, highlights the very collection and accumulation of literary texts that makes such intertextuality itself possible. This long passage from Stevenson’s story “Out of the Sun” (1913) is worth citing at length for the way it dotes on the details of such collection:

Ah, his books! The library of almost every man of like making-up, whose life has been largely solitary...is companioned from youth up by innermost literary sympathies of his type. Dayneford stood now before his bookcase, reading over mechanically the titles of a special group of volumes—mostly small ones. They were crowded into a few lower shelves, as if they sought to avoid other literary society, to keep themselves to themselves, to shun all unsympathetic observation. Tibullus, Porpertius and the Greek Antologists [sic] pressed against Al Nafsewah and Chakani and Hafiz. A little further along stood Shakespeare’s Sonnets, and those by Buonarrotti; along with Tennyson’s “In Memoriam,” Woodbery’s “The North-Shore Watch,” and Walt Whitman. Back of Platen’s bulky “Tagebuch” lay his poems. Next to them came Wilbrandt’s “Fridonlins Heimlich Ehe,” beside Rachilde’s “Les Hors Nature;” then Pernauhm’s “Die Infamen,” Emil Vacano’s “Humbug,” and a group of psychologic works by Krafft-Ebbing and Ellis and Moll. There was a thin book in which were bound together, in a richly decorated

³ Karla Jay, “Introduction,” *A Perilous Advantage: The Best of Natalie Clifford Barney*, Ed. Anna Livia (Norwich: New Victoria Publishers, 1992) viii.

arabesque cover, some six or seven stories from Martrus' French translation of "The Thousand Nights and a Night"—remorsely separated from the original companions. On a lower shelf, rested David Christie Murray's "Val Strange" and one or two other old novels; along with Dickens' "David Copperfield," the anonymous "Tim," and Vachell's "The Hill," companioned by Mayne's "Intersexes," Imre" and Sebastian au Plus Bel Age"⁴

Stevenson attributes a peculiar sort of subjectivity to books themselves: in their proximity to each other, they behave like members of a literary subculture: they are "crowded into a few lower shelves, as if they sought to avoid other literary society, to keep themselves to themselves, to shun all unsympathetic observation." This productive interaction of books that have been published across quite a swath of history is indicative of an increasing awareness of the role library accumulation plays. Most of the texts that Stevenson identifies here appear in Edward Carpenter's anthology *Iolaus: An Anthology of Friendship* (1902), a collection of texts very much like Stevenson's own anthology *The Intersexes* (1908) (referenced above under Stevenson's pseudonym, Xavier Mayne). These are the first such anthologies of gay writing; because so many such collections have emerged over the last century, they might be said, in retrospect, to mark the beginnings of a veritable genre themselves.⁵ If Barney is known for cultivating literary production by hosting lesbians at her salon, Stevenson is arguably known for an analogous kind of hosting within the pages of his books. I'd like to suggest here that we

⁴ Edward Prime-Stevenson, "Out of the Sun," *Glances Backward: An Anthology of American Homosexual Writing, 1830-1920*, Ed. James Gifford (Peterborough: Broadview P, 2007) 3-4.

⁵ These anthologies might be said to constitute something of their own literary subgenre. See Edward Carpenter, *Iolaus: And Anthology of Friendship*; Xavier Mayne (Edward Prime-Stevenson); Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gays and Lesbians in American History*; Gregory Woods, *Gay Male Literature*; Axel Nissen, *The Romantic Friendship Reader*; David Leavitt and Mark Mitchell, *Pages Passed From Hand To Hand*; James Gifford, *Glances Backward* Gene Damon and Lee Stuart, *The Lesbian in Literature: A Bibliography* (San Francisco 1967); Jeannette H. Foster, *Sex Variant Women in Literature: A Historical and Quantitative Survey* (London, 1958); Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing The Love of Men* (New York, 1981) and her anthology *Chloe Plus Olivia*; and Susan Kollelman, *Two Friends and Other Nineteenth-Century Lesbian Stories by Women*. Archival collection has been as essential to the literary study of homosexuality as the re-reading of canonical texts, and yet we have no rubrics for understanding the methodologies of queer literary collection. See essay on "The Queer Archive" by Charles Morton.

take seriously as mechanisms of queer literary production not just Barney's practice of strategic misquotation (a text's sentence-level archive of its own origins), but Stevenson's sense that books exert an influence on each other, an exertion akin to subjectivity that exceeds the agency of both authors and readers (without negating the significance of either).

While the forms of literary circulation that Barney and Stevenson highlight respectively are significant for queer literary production generally, they have particular significance for thinking about the rise of the queer novel. Novels constitute a genre that relies on the accumulation of words. Even configurations of late-nineteenth-century homosexuality as "unspeakable" or as "the love that dare not speak its name"⁶ rely on such accumulations to make visible the textual gaps and slippages that scholars have argued amount to a late-nineteenth-century idiom of sexuality.⁷ Novels require these words so that they can showcase change in their characters over time and situate those characters in described environments that often include other characters. Novels, to borrow a phrase from Andrew Marvell, require "world enough and time"⁸—so that they can elaborate precisely what his poem could not: the conditions under which a particular manner of socio-sexual relationship might flourish and reach a fuller articulation than the spare condensation of poetic lines seemed to offer him. To the degree that a gay and lesbian novel requires not just a character, a subplot, or an episode, but a protagonist, we can recognize that accounting for the development of this novel exceeds an account of the

⁶ This phrase is usually attributed to Oscar Wilde's lover, Lord Alfred Douglas. It appears in his poem, "Two Loves," first published in *The Chameleon* in 1896.

⁷ See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "The Beast in the Closet," *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: U California P, 1990) 182-212.

⁸ See Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress," *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* 8th ed., Ed. M.H. Abrams, et al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).

emergence of homosexual subjectivity. A protagonist requires a fully realized social world in prose—a world in which that protagonist makes sense, a world in which her movement and change unfold across time and in social space. A protagonist thus requires not just an understanding of complex psychology or subject-formation (otherwise the protagonist might be indistinguishable from the speaker of a lyric poem), but an understanding of the novel as a world-making project. Frequently, that world also requires detailed narration and description of setting from a perspective beyond that of the protagonist. Although there may always be examples from other genres that press on the novel's generic limits⁹ (the detailed world-making of Whitman's prosaic poetry or the lyricism of epistolary novels), the ways that words are literally organized on the page—the novel's organization as a book object—as well as what Ian Watt has called its formal realism contribute to our recognition in the everyday language world of the novel's dimensions.¹⁰ The very fact that the novel is constantly challenging its own novelty at the limits of other genres is, in fact, one of its distinguishing features. Literary and social circulation collectively create the conditions under which the novel continues to reinvent itself, often in terms that enable us to see new novel categories.

A focus on literary circulation also allows us to see the extent to which the production of a queer literary consciousness may have been the effect of the writers who contribute to literary manifestations of minority or identitarian sexual type-

⁹ See, for instance, Jonathan Culler, "Toward a Theory of Non-Genre Literature," *The Theory of the Novel*, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2000).

¹⁰ See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, ed. G.E.M. Anscombe & G.H. Wright (New York: Harper, 1972 [1969]). and *The Philosophical Investigations* 3rd ed. Trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1958) for more on the difference between making philosophical or theoretical distinctions on behalf of conceptual categories and the meanings commonly understood to attend those categories in everyday language worlds. It is precisely the extent to which the circulation of literary language in the material world produces new or revised categories of understanding like "sexuality" or "the gay and lesbian novel." I will also have more to say shortly about genre theory and novel theory as well as the utility of both for understanding the relationship between circulation and generic/conceptual change.

representations—without actually being their goal. The texts I study in this dissertation all have been understood to contribute to, anticipate, and in some cases inaugurate the literary subgenre of the gay and lesbian novel: Herman Melville’s *Typee*; Charles Warren Stoddard’s *South Sea Idyls* and *For the Pleasure of His Company: A Tale of the Misty City*; Henry James’s *The Bostonians*; and texts about the New English old maid: Catherine Sedgwick’s “The Old Maids,” Mary E. Wilkins Freeman’s “A New England Nun,” and Sarah Orne Jewett’s *Country of the Pointed Firs*. One of the most striking things about this group of texts is, first of all, their authors’ sense of their centrality to American literature more generally. In imagining the conditions of their own circulation and distribution, none of these authors aspired to write minor literature. Nor did they consciously address themselves to coterie reading publics—even if some, especially Stoddard, emerged out of such coterie reading publics and have since been read widely primarily among members of sexual subcultures or coterie reading publics. James, for example, famously described *The Bostonians* as “a very *American* tale, a tale very characteristic of our social conditions”¹¹; Melville calculated *Typee* “for popular reading or none at all.”¹² These texts have come to be seen in terms of minor literatures in the ways they have come to circulate.

Not only did this very diverse group of authors *not* anticipate how they might circulate under the aegis of queer literature, they actually look backward to other texts and contexts as they acknowledge the literary circuits in which they participate and to

¹¹ In his *Notebook* James wrote of the *Bostonians*, “The subject is strong and good, with a large rich interest. The relation of the two girls should be a study of one of those friendships between women which are so common in New England. The whole thing as local, as American, as possible, and as full of Boston: an attempt to show that I *can* write an American story” (47).

¹² Melville wrote this in a letter to *Typee*’s first publisher, John Murray (qtd. in James E. Miller, *A Reader’s Guide to Herman Melville* 33).

which they respond. In other words, they re-circulate (and thus reframe) their own reading material in their writing. Stoddard imagines himself in conversation with the poetry of Walt Whitman and the travel narratives of Herman Melville—who himself cites missionary accounts of the South Seas in *Typee* in order to expose the missionaries' shortcomings (an exposure he later edits in an American edition of the book).

Meanwhile, Catherine Maria Sedgwick can invoke what she sees as literary history's overwhelmingly thin treatment of the old maid and compare it to the richer detail her characters observe around them; and Henry James aspires to write description in a manner consistent with Alphonse Daudet's "pictorial quality." In doing so, all of these develop various modes of metacommentary on the cultures of literary circulation whereby they acknowledge the very parts of other texts that help them to scaffold their own literary projects. At the same time (and thirdly), this body of texts invokes a culture of social circulation in which these acts and forms of literary circulation make sense. Each text highlights typologies of location that resonate with our modern understandings of sexuality without being fully consonant with them. Consider the very titles of the following texts: *The Bostonians*, *Typee*, "A New England Nun," *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, *For the Pleasure of His Company: A Tale of the Misty City*. In defining characters in terms of place, rather than interior identity, they focus on sexuality as a mode of located sociability, not as a property of the self. At a time in American literature when Americans were highly concerned with literary nationalism and what it means to be American within a broader climate of English letters, it seems perfectly understandable that these American writers would likewise be concerned with the difference location

makes.¹³ But articulating what they offer to an understanding of the literary history of sexuality requires rethinking the focus on self-identity, since these texts expand parameters of social type-depictions. Place types are not psychological types or identity types in the same way that “gay,” “lesbian,” “homosexual,” or even “queer” suggest; they invite us to see identity as determined from the outside in, not from the inside out. To read these texts in terms of the subsequent emergence of sexuality as a property of the individual is thus to miss the ways in which they actually cannot be fully rationalized in the context of emergent identitarian forms of sexuality. It is to miss, in other words, what is unique about their literary contribution to the history of sexuality and what is specifically sexual about literary circulation at this historical moment more generally.¹⁴

Still, it is no coincidence that the fictional works I describe here appear at a time when identitarian categories of sexuality are only beginning to coalesce. But it is more useful to suggest that the gay and lesbian novel emerges at the intersection of two different, but connected, processes of cultural development: sexual type evolution and the emergence of a subgenre for the novel. Looking at the rise of the gay and lesbian novel, however, requires that we attend not just to the depictions of interactions, desires, or identities of characters, but to the formal productions of social worlds in which those

¹³ An impressive body of literary criticism, too vast to cite in detail, develops this claim. See, for instance, Richard Poirier, *A World Elsewhere* and Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1995).

¹⁴ In a recent article, Jonathan Goldberg and Madhavi Menon argue that queering “requires what we might term ‘unhistoricism,’” and even “homohistory,” which instead of “being the history of homos, this history would be invested in suspending the determinate sexual and chronological differences while expanding the possibilities of the nonhetero, with all its connotations of sameness, similarity, proximity, and anachronism” (1609). While I see the political appeal of rejecting historical determinacy, I suggest that in its circulation, queer history cannot be deterministic in any case. We cannot predict in advance how history may circulate, in what form, and with what other contexts/texts of circulation it may resonate. Abandoning a commitment to careful empirical historical methods that would go along with creative queer readings seems to run the risk of producing a lot of inaccurate or bad queer history in the name of the mistaken virtue we might call “suspending determinacy” for its own sake. See Jonathan Goldberg and Madhavi Menon, “Queering History,” *PMLA* 120.5 (October 2005): 1608-17.

characters make sense as protagonists. What I am suggesting, then, is that the gay and lesbian novel is also a world-making project, and that this project is not just the product of newly emergent sexual identity categories. Homosexuality doesn't just come to be named and then have novels written about it, even though the emergence of the very terms "homosexuality" and "inversion" did obviously shift the vocabulary we have for describing the novels in which they appear. It can be recognized in abstract terms only when enough concrete details have accumulated to make the abstraction possible as such. If anything, we might say that rather than the gay and lesbian novel emerging in the wake of the very term "homosexuality," the detail-accumulating, world-making project of the novel may well have made homosexuality possible as an abstraction—even if the coining of the abstraction amounts as much to a moment of discontinuity as it does continuity. (Abstractions after all are marked by their skeletal-like conceptual structure which evacuates detail, but which also evokes those missing details.)

Attending to circulation enables us to recognize both the continuity and the discontinuity here that may otherwise seem to exist as a chicken-egg paradox in the relationship between homosexuality and the gay and lesbian novel. Utterances, Mikhail Bakhtin has argued, connect the history of society to the history of language, and "not a single new language phenomenon can enter language without having traversed the long and complicated path of generic-stylistic testing and modification" (65). In this sense, the texts I examine here all bear out a variation of this observation: they illustrate that the early gay and lesbian novel is less an "invention" than a generic reconfiguration where contents previously associated with other speech genres enter the domain of the novel. In their efforts to create narrative worlds that both consolidate and exceed considerations of

the identity, sexual practices or desires of individual characters, these authors, like so many American writers, focus quite literally on the place of sexuality. The novels here appear to anticipate sexuality as we have come to know it, but they do so by looking backward, not forward to other texts—poems, stories, newspapers, and even other novels. When they refer to other texts in their writing, they sometimes embrace them, sometimes parody them, and sometimes consciously recognize the shortcomings of type-abstractions, and they find themselves pushing against the very literature with which they are in conversation. Sometimes, especially in the case of Henry James, they pay no conscious recognition to those precursors at all, allowing their form itself to archive the history of its generation. These narrative worlds become the *mise-en-scènes* of same-sex intimacies and thus amount to a literary laboratory, allowing writers to test the ways literature generates and dismantles sexual types. I argue that what gives life to these expanding narrative worlds and their attendant processes of type complication is literary circulation: the circulation of texts within the larger, extratextual, social world, and the intratextual social circulation of characters within the fictional worlds they populate.

The virtue of making sense of both type complication and novel production in terms of literary circulation is that it allows us to account for both continuity and discontinuity within the literary history of sexuality (and, indeed, in literature more generally). It allows us to see the ways earlier sexual types likewise participate in making visible later sexual types without simply seeing earlier types as historical analogues for later ones. The New England “old maid,” for instance, may be “queer” in that she is outside heteronormative marriage structures, but she is not necessarily lesbian in her attachments—despite the fact that imagining communities of unmarried women

does help to develop narrative worlds where sexual sociability between women is possible. As writers complicate the old maid figure by testing one representation of her against another, the terms of unmarried female sociability begin to shift and change. But the fact that old maids and lesbians seem to exist alongside each other in texts like “Martha’s Lady” suggests that the one category does not replace the other historically, however much they might also overlap in a text like *The Bostonians*.

Attending to literary circulation also allows us to measure accumulations and condensations of language, whether detailed descriptions or abstract types, over time. Writers can literally accumulate the words necessary to convey novelistic worlds with all the space and time they need, but literary evolution of increasingly detailed narrative worlds makes possible a paradox in type production (of which the homosexual is just one example¹⁵): that the emergence of an abstract type may owe its birth to the accumulations of concrete details. How otherwise could we call Melville’s *Typee* a gay or queer novel? The same literary and social mechanisms that facilitate the recognition of a novelistic subgenre also facilitate the emergence of a new language for sexual types. After all, sexologists and early psychoanalysts frequently relied on literature to yield examples for the diagnoses they made.

In my analysis of the ways literary circulation gives life to the expanding narrative worlds and the sexual types that populate them (whether old maids, Bohemians, Typee bachelors, or Bostonians), I situate my work in response to several (sometimes

¹⁵I have been using primarily the words “homosexual,” “gay,” “lesbian” and “queer” largely because these are the terms that seem to have persisted in usage. At the end of the nineteenth century, however, a much broader range of terms operated, including sodomites, perderasts, urnings, Uranians, simisexualists, invertes, queers, and, perhaps the queerest of all, “philharrenic.” Derived from the Greek, this last word was Stevenson’s adjective of choice in coining the category, “American Philharrenic literature” (Stevenson 4). See “From *The Intersexes*,” *Glances Backward: An Anthology of American Homosexual Writing, 1830-1920* (Peterborough: Broadview P, 2007) 4.

overlapping) bodies of scholarly literature: treatments of the novel across the history of gay and lesbian studies and through the lenses of queer theory, theories of the novel, and theories of cultural circulation. Each of the sections that follow situates my analysis in response to these bodies of scholarship.

Laying out the ways my approach responds to the work of these scholarly fields, I proceed to outline the structure of my argument, which spans four chapters, and focuses on four key types of evidence. Of primary concern in each of my chapters is intertextuality, which I see as formal metacommentary on a text's place in a particular context of circulation vis-a-vis other texts. Fleshing out the significance of this metacommentary necessarily entails looking also at what might strike us as extratextual evidence—the material conditions of the text's circulation that situate it within the history of the book: the fact that the old maid figure appears frequently in literary magazines, for instance, and the many pages of snippets from earlier reviews that appear at the beginning of the first American edition of Melville's *Typee*. The objects in which each of these texts circulate and the other texts that frame them offer us insight into the conditions under which texts circulate in their own moment, and often beyond. The third evidentiary focus that spans the chapters of my dissertation is textual description, which, as I explain below, I take to be both a site of textual accumulation (because it often appears literally in many words) and a site of textual condensation (accumulating words deceptively masks any sense that words from earlier contexts have been left behind). Henry James may claim in his notebook that he wants to write description like Daudet, but unlike other writers in this study, he conceals his acknowledgement of any overt debt to Daudet in the pages of *The Bostonians*. Finally, I look at the language of place-types,

whose status is somewhat more complicated since place-types operate as sites of textual accumulation when authors aim to complicate them (as Catherine Maria Sedgwick does in “The Old Maids”) but which operate also as sites of textual condensation when they are invoked as abstractions (as in James’s *The Bostonians*).

Collectively, my analyses of these bodies of evidence aims to further our understanding of the ways these cultural and textual objects both embed the conditions of their circulation and expands beyond themselves as they continue to circulate beyond their initial moment of publication. In these ways, I suggest they participate in the rise of the gay and lesbian novel, often in ways their authors could not have predicted in advance.

Novel Homosexuality

Path breaking work within the fields of gay and lesbian studies and from the more recent perspective of queer theory has, in so many respects, made this study possible. The sheer production of archives by scholars of gay and lesbian studies has permitted the circulation of some literary works that might otherwise have been lost to modern view, while critics from the perspective of both gay studies and queer theory generated new readings of canonical texts and authors. The veritable subgenre of anthologies, bibliographies, and documentary histories highlighted in the opening paragraph of this introduction has proven indispensable to the work in the pages of this dissertation.

At the same time, the stubbornness with which homosexuality, as an identity category, has taken hold of our scholarly imagination has, until recently, tended to obscure our view of the role of literary form not just in reflecting but in producing queer

life. Identity politics, at the level of authorship and at the level of content, has dominated the terms on which scholars have long thought about the gay and lesbian novel. We can see this in the most basic descriptions of the genre, written by scholars of queer literary history, in *Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage*—as well as more recent readings of novels that offer critiques of identity politics. In his account of the “Gay Novel,” Michael Stanton defines the gay male novel as

a form of fiction in which male homosexuality is central—not always a central problem but certainly a central concern. That said, few other absolute statements are possible. The protagonist of such a novel is likely to be gay, as are at least some of the lesser characters. Feelings of love arise; sexual acts occur; conflicts with the straight world—parents, teachers, friends, employers—happen. One way to trace the emergence of the gay male novel is to measure the frankness with which such things are described. (Stanton 518)

Although Stanton does acknowledge the queer content of earlier novels like *Fanny Hill*, the “frankness” he sets up as the defining feature of such novels’ descriptions can be observed only by recent standards of explicitness. Sherrie Innes, whose account of “The Lesbian Novel,” goes back only as far as modernism, summarizes the prevailing scholarly thinking about the subgenre in similar terms: “Exactly what features make a novel ‘lesbian’ are difficult to specify. Critics have different ideas about how to define the lesbian novel, but most agree on two points: The author must be a lesbian, and the central character or characters must be lesbian” (Innes 524).

Innes excludes novels by men (like Henry James’s *The Bostonians* and Compton Mackenzie’s *Extraordinary Women*) as well as novels written by heterosexual women (like Mary McCarthy’s *The Group*).¹⁶ Like Stanton, Innes focuses on the identity of the

¹⁶ The identity politics of queer authorship have undergone a shift in recent years. Terry Castle, editor of *The Literature of Lesbianism*, takes on this position directly in the introduction to her book, arguing for the inclusion of a much broader range of texts, many written by men and by heterosexual women. See “Introduction,” *The Literature of Lesbianism* (New York: Columbia UP, 2003) 1-56.

central character of the novel (as well as the identity of the writer)¹⁷. The other formal features that might define the novel fade into the background.

There are important historical reasons for critics' insistent embrace of the political significance of the gay and lesbian novel. Scholars have often had to assume the existence of the gay and lesbian novel (rather than chart it as such) in order to make the claim for its political significance. In *Playing the Game: The Homosexual Novel in America*, Roger Austen claims "the very existence of the homosexual novel is steadfastly denied. The reading public has been led to believe that while gay men dabble in poetry and write interesting plays and trenchant essays, the few novels they have written about themselves and their milieu have always turned out to be seriously flawed and second-rate" (xii). In a footnote to the above quotation, he even cites personal correspondence with Leslie Fiedler¹⁸ to defend his claim. Fiedler is said to have written that "he should not be thought of as having taken an 'adversary position' toward gay literature in America, yet at the same time he clings to the insistence that it has not been 'useful' to

¹⁷ This argument is an important echo of Catherine Stimpson's claim in "Zero Degree Deviancy: The Lesbian Novel in English" *Critical Inquiry* 8.2 (Winter 1981): 363-379 where her definition of the lesbian—"as writer, as character, and as reader", she says, is "conservative and severely literal. She is a woman who finds other women erotically attractive and gratifying. Of course a lesbian is more than her body, more than her flesh, but lesbianism partakes of the body, partakes of the flesh" (364).

¹⁸ Fiedler is famous for his description of "innocent homosexuality" as the central theme of American literature in *Love and Death in the American Novel*. Below he explains "why middle-class readers were not appalled at the implications of the homoerotic fable":

How could Antinous come to preside over the literature of the nineteenth-century United States, which is to say, at a time and in a place where homosexuality was regarded with a horror perhaps unmatched elsewhere and ever. Certainly, in the popular literature of the period, the "sissy," effeminate boy, nearest thing to a fairy mentionable in polite books, was a target upon which the fury of a self-conscious masculinity vented itself with especial venom. In the long run, however, so violent a disavowal of male inversion fostered an ignorance of its true nature... "evil love" could only be conceived of in connection with "evil women" and the relations of males seemed therefore healthy by definition. (349-50)

For a recent reconsideration of Fiedler's infamous statement, see 'Christopher Looby, "'Innocent Homosexuality': The Fiedler Thesis in Retrospect," *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A Case Study in Critical Controversy*, eds. Gerald Graff and James Phelan (Boston: Bedford; St. Martin's 1995) 535-51.

recognize the homosexual novel as a 'special sub-category' of American fiction. (xii).¹⁹

The critical history of the both the gay and the lesbian novel (it is, I think, possible to see similarities in the cultural processes of accumulation that give rise to both and see also the differences between them) echo Catherine Stimpson's eloquent claim that homosexual writing can never be neutral: "few, if any, homosexual texts," she writes, "can exemplify writing at the zero degree, that degree at which writing, according to Roland Barthes, is "basically in the indicative mode, or...amodal...[a] new neutral writing...[that] takes its place in the midst of ...ejaculation and judgments; without becoming involved in any of them; [that]...consists precisely in their absence"" (364—ellipses original). Even when Julie Abraham seeks to critique what she sees as "the hegemony of the lesbian novel" and what she sees as its "heterosexual plot" (xiii), she takes for granted that the lesbian novel already exists as such.

¹⁹ Louie Crew and Rictor Norton record a similar point of view in their essay, "The Homophobic Imagination," *College English* (November 1974):

One can, of course simply refrain from writing on the subject that is nearest and dearest one's heart, and continue to accumulate notes for the work-in-progress for when the time is ripe...One can write and then eschew publication, as did E.M. Forster with *Maurice*. One can arrange for private printings, as did many of the writers from 1890 to 1920. One can reverse pronouns prior to publication...call one's lover Narcissus and transform oneself into a simple country swain...can leave pointers via Greek mythology...can talk about aesthetics and spiritual friendship...can tell a tale of woe and kill off a major character in the last chapter, thereby providing evidence of redeeming social value. One can do just about everything except utter the truth. (274)

Like Stanton, Crew and Norton see truth or frankness as a sign of literary progress. But even in their analysis, "accumulating notes for the work-in-progress" is an essential part of the progress they record.

Writing about the British gay novel, Edward Carpenter and John Addington Symonds offer the following commentary:

Compared with homosexual novelists abroad, early writers of gay fiction in this country were inhibited for several reasons—puritanism had a more terrifying effect on our writers, publishers, and readers, and in general America lacked an aristocracy of gentlemen loftily above the cares and concerns of the homophobic 'lower classes.' And as opposed to their compatriots who were writing poetry, the novelists suffered from having to specify who was what to whom, a problem that writers of gay verse were often able to circumvent. But in contrast to later American novelists faced with know-it-all Freudians who prided themselves on being able to recognize a 'fairy' when they saw one, our earlier gay writers were in a position to get away with a great deal—and some of them did. (qtd in Austen 7)

More recent scholarly studies that trade less in the language of identity politics and more in considerations of sexual queerness (so as to invoke sexuality as a non-normative mode of sociability) have shifted the focus of political urgency toward considerations of literary form. Influenced by deconstruction, psychoanalysis, and post-structuralist theory, these analyses have tended to focus on rhetorical form and on the representations of social worlds within texts. Arguably the most influential of these analyses belongs to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. In “The Beast in the Closet,” she charts fin-de-siècle homosexuality as a “thematics of absence” by looking at preterition and prosopopeia, while in *Between Men*, she examines the triangulation of homosociality whereby women becomes objects of change between men.

Given the attentiveness to analyses of form within queer theory, it is somewhat surprising that no study of the formal emergence of the queer novel has yet been undertaken, especially since no genre of literature has been quite as central to the rise of queer theory as the novel. The very first sentence of *Between Men* explains that “The subject of this book is a relatively short, recent, and accessible passage of English culture, chiefly as embodied in the mid-eighteenth to nineteenth-century novel” (1). In another seminal queer theoretical work, *The Novel and the Police*, D.A. Miller points to the putative social utility of the novel to justify his own generic focus when he argues that “perhaps no openly fictional form has ever sought to ‘make a difference’ in the world more than the Victorian novel,” its point being “to confirm the novel-reader in his identity as a ‘liberal subject’”; to understand the Victorian novel’s relationship to its age, he argues, “is thus to recognize a central episode in the genealogy of our present” (x). Both Sedgwick and Miller take the novel as their site of exploration in arguments that

highlight the centrality of homosocial and homosexual bonds to the imagination of cultural life more generally. They chart shifts in the historical and linguistic representations of homosexuality, but they generally take the novel to be a stable form. Similar points of focus define analysis of lesbianism. Valerie Rohy focuses on the rhetorical structures of lesbianism in *Impossible Women: Lesbian Figures and American Literature*, while Kathryn Kent analyzes identity formation in *Making Girls Into Women: American Women's Writing and the Rise of Lesbian Identity*. Even the text that most approximates a study of the prehistory of the lesbian novel—Lisa Moore's *Dangerous Intimacies: Toward a Sapphic History of the British Novel*—sees its history, not the novel, as “Sapphic.” (A similar adjective placement marks the title of another book by Sedgwick, her edited collection of essays, *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in the Novel*, in which “queer” modifies “reading,” not the novel itself.) In the wake of such scholarly analysis of queer rhetorical structures and the emergence of queer modes of literary analysis, the moment thus seems right to bring these facets of queer literary study to bear on the rise of the queer novel, which has depended, I argue, on both the gradual production of queer rhetorics and queer readings across literary history.

In embracing the cumulative work of queer archivists and bibliographers while also assuming that gay and lesbian identity is not a determinant (but perhaps a product) of literary circulation, my investigation thus inhabits a space of inquiry that these earlier analyses collectively open up without fully exploring. My own investigation of the conditions under which the gay and lesbian novel emerges as such would not be possible without either the important political and archival work of early gay and lesbian studies scholars or the more recent efforts by queer theorists both to expand and critique the

limits of that work. I have relied often on early bibliographies and anthologies like *The Intersexes* and *The Lesbian in Literature* to piece together a dynamics of textual circulation that many scholars of gay and lesbian studies brought together. The texts they collected themselves continue to circulate in more recent collections and bibliographies, but seem often to have been left behind in the readings of canonical texts that have tended to constitute the focus of queer theoretical analyses. Equally indispensable to my study, however are the insights and reading practices produced out of these queer theoretically informed readings since they have made it possible to read the textuality of sexuality without assuming the primacy of identity politics.

The existing body of scholarship on gay, lesbian, homosexual, and queer literature is itself an excellent case study in how discourse can shape the conditions of its own circulation. The very shifts in vocabulary that mark the literary study of homosexuality (including the reclamation of “homosexuality” as term of description rather than damnation) reveal the dynamic nature of sexual types. The terms we use as well as their grammatical position in a sentence direct and shift our focus: whereas scholars suggest that we focus on gay characters of lesbian authors, queer reading directs our attention to the way we read more than the character we read or the author who writes. Language both creates and shapes our focus on particular textual objects. Just as circulation allows us to chart relationships between psychological/sexological sexual categories or earlier sexual place types, so too might circulation allow us also to understand how more recent sexual type categories, like “gay,” “lesbian,” “homosexual” and “queer” that variously overlap and oppose each other, emerge out of a complication of the other, or slip together

in maddening, if also productive, ambiguity.²⁰ It is for this reason that I suggest, in chapter one, that the reception history and scholarly treatment of Melville's *Typee* reveals that the text has an "acquired queerness."

Throughout the pages that follow, I have not committed myself to consistency in usage of the terms of sexual typing, which some readers may find ambiguous. The "queer" of queer theory emerged as a way out of the impasse of identity politics, the very spirit of which does embrace the slippage that takes place in my chapters. However unnecessarily, queer theory has nonetheless produced an impasse of another kind in its own circulation. In literary studies, queer theory's focus on primarily canonical texts overlooks the cultural significance of texts with less universalizing impulses. The work of Charles Warren Stoddard is an interesting case in point: he is astoundingly prolific; he knew and socialized with every major literary figure of his time; and his writing has been anthologized in virtually every anthology of gay male writing produced in the last one hundred years. But he has been interesting primarily to gay and lesbian studies scholars, not to queer theorists, whose largely deconstructive analytic style has not found in his work evidence of the kind of line by line formal cleverness they value. He is interesting in my analysis because, first of all, he is credited with writing one of the first gay

²⁰ It is interesting, for instance, that "queer," long synonymous with unconventional or non-normative, is, in some semantic contexts, a synonym for homosexuality, while in others it is a term preferred to (distinct from, even if it overlaps with) homosexual, gay, and lesbian. For accounts of the parameters of "queer", see Michael Warner, "Introduction," *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*, ed. Michael Warner (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1993); Judith Butler, "Critically Queer," *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993) 223-242; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Axiomatic," *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1990); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Introduction," *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke UP, 1993); Eric Savoy, "You Can't Go Homo Again: Queer Theory and the Foreclosure of Gay Studies," *English Studies in Canada* 20 (1994): 129-152. Despite the promise of queer to operate as an umbrella term for a wide range of sexual dissidence, scholars of transgender and transsexual studies have recently begun to question its limits based on the ways the term circulates. In *Sons of the Movement*, for instance, Jean Bobby Noble, remarks upon the extent to which in common parlance, "queer" nonetheless continues to be a moniker of politically hip gay and lesbian (usually white) people than the more capacious non-normative upstart term it often purports to be. See also the introduction to *The Transgender Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

American novels and secondly because he has been so roundly criticized as a bad writer, despite his own canonicity with gay literature. My point is that each emergent sexual typology, even in critical idiom, opens up one avenue of inquiry and closes down another: accumulates details while also condensing and leaving out others. To augment attention to the accumulated archives of homosexual literature and the queer modes of rhetorical analysis that have been essential to understanding the literary history of homosexuality, it is therefore important now to turn to theories of the novel as genre, which offer us the methodological tools for understanding this process of accumulation and condensation.

Novel Textuality

To understand the emergence of the gay and lesbian novel in terms beyond the emergence of homosexual types, we need to understand something more about the literary genre that is the novel: the conditions under which the novel has emerged and sustained its novelty as well as the conditions under which the novel (and, if its own history is any indication, other genres as well) produces its own spin-offs in the form of subgenres. As Claudio Guillén has suggested, genre is “a problem-solving model on the level of form” (41). It is, he explains, “an invitation to the matching...of matter and form” where “matter” is understood to be not content, but language that is “already shot through with formal elements” (36); “All previous forms, that is, become matter in the hands of the artist at work” (36).²¹ Mikhail Bakhtin, known primarily for his theory of the novel’s polyglossia, makes a similar claim in “Speech Genres.” I highlighted this claim

²¹ While I do not agree that form necessarily “matches” content (I think that often form conveys meaning that does not make itself manifest at the level of content), I do take seriously here Guillén’s point that form can become content itself.

earlier in this introduction, but it is worth recalling in this context: utterances, he argues, connect the history of society to the history of language, and “not a single new language phenomenon can enter language without having traversed the long and complicated path of generic-stylistic testing and modification” (65). Michael McKeon deploys these insights in his own account of the *Origins of the English Novel*, in his observations that inconsistency in the categories of “truth” and “virtue” are essential to the rise of the novel, in which these vestiges of older forms persist in the newer ones.²² Novels in this sense are thus products of historical and dialectical accumulation. They are parasitic upstarts, in Marthe Robert’s estimation, which somehow never really manage to overthrow the forms that they ingest.

But the dialectical process of accumulation described above necessarily entails a process of subtraction, or leaving behind, or condensing some forms and details, while embracing others. Taking a longer view of the novel’s polysemous, multivocal, and omnivorous formal features, theorists such as Northrop Frye, Walter Benjamin, and Sigmund Freud highlight the significance of devolution and condensation to the rise of the novel. Each of these theorists highlights an area of concern for a consideration of the relationship between accumulation and condensation or displacement as it relates to the rise of the gay and lesbian novel: Frye concerns himself with the ways literary form archives its own history of development; Benjamin highlights the significance of the shift from oral culture to print culture for the rise of the novel; Freud, meanwhile, sees in textual transmission a model of psychic displacement (thereby offering his own theory of textual accumulation). For Frye, first of all, realism (which Ian Watt sees as a defining

²² See Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel: 1660-1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987).

feature of the novel) itself reveals the displacement of fiction from pure mythic structure. This form, Frye suggests, allows fiction (and by extension the novel) to adapt or adjust itself to contexts by invoking earlier forms through imitation or parody. In both the “low mimetic mode” and the “parodic” mode,²³ Frye suggest that fiction archives its own generic history at the level of formal displacements. As texts gesture to their continuity with earlier forms of writing, they also register breaks or discontinuities with those earlier texts.

Benjamin, on the other hand, sees in the novel a process of displacement—of the oral story into print culture. In “The Storyteller” he argues, “What distinguishes the novel from the story (and from the epic in the narrower sense) is its essential dependence on the book. The dissemination of the novel became possible only with the invention of printing.” (section v. beginning sentence—see *Illuminations*). In understanding the rise of the gay and lesbian novel, therefore, it is important to describe what might be particular about the role print culture plays in its emergence: to take account of the text not just in terms of its meaning, but in terms of the object by which it circulates. Benjamin assumes the novel’s dialectical relationship to print culture, whereas Frye argues for fiction’s dialectical relationship with prior forms.

Freud, finally, is something of a special case, since what he offers us for an understanding of novelistic development can be gleaned only by reading him somewhat against the terms of his own argument. In this following passage from *Interpretation of Dreams* he concerns himself with psychic displacement, that is, with the recording of dreams and dream thoughts in language:

²³ See “From Anatomy of Criticism,” *The Theory of the Novel*, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2000) 122-130.

The first thing that becomes clear to anyone who compares the dream-content with the dream-thoughts is that a work of condensation on a large scale has been carried out. Dreams are brief, meager, and laconic in comparison with the range and wealth of the dream-thoughts. If a dream is written out it may perhaps fill half a page. The analysis setting out the dream thoughts underlying it may occupy six, eight or a dozen times as much space.” (149)

What interests me here is less Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of dream life than his implied theory of language accumulation. He highlights a difference between the two records of psychic activity: writing down the dream thoughts literally produces more language than writing down the mere dream. In making this distinction, Freud assumes that condensation applies only to writing down the dream itself. But we can also recognize that the dream-thoughts themselves are subject to condensation as they are written down. Freud means to argue that the dream thoughts, being the psychic origins of the dream, constitute an origin for the dream story in a psychic reality. This reality seems to exist prior to the writing of both the dream story and the dream thoughts. But if we consider Bakhtin’s and Guillén’s points about all language belonging to earlier formal incarnations, the very act of writing down the dream thoughts translates them into linguistic form. In this sense, the dream thoughts are also subject to condensation. They are more detailed accounts of the psychic conditions that produce the dream, even if they take up “a dozen times as much space.” Freud’s recorded dream thoughts are novelistic insofar as they go beyond the plot summary of the dream to include a description of the dream-life context in which the dream story unfolds. Drawing an analogy between Freud’s dream-thoughts and the novel allows us to see how textual accumulations are themselves condensations: accumulations, perhaps, of condensations. Similarly might we say that as long as the gay and lesbian novel, like any other novel, is the product of textual accumulations borne through acts of literary circulation, these accumulations

cannot be said in any way to be historically or formally complete. As detailed as they are, they leave things out or shift our focus so as to enable us to view some things more fully than others.

To the extent that it examines the prehistory of the gay and lesbian novel in terms of literary form, print cultural archives, and attends to textual detail as both accumulation and subtraction, my dissertation treats the rise of the gay and lesbian novel in terms similar to the rise of the novel more generally. But like any subgenre of the novel that emerges after the novel itself,²⁴ it is distinct because it can count the novel as a precursor to its own emergence. Unlike the novel itself, its subgenres can (and perhaps must) perforce acknowledge earlier novels as influences upon their own development. In this way, the novel's subgenres can be said to behave like minor literatures. In *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari point out that "A minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major literature" (16). They suggest that minor literatures emerge as "assemblages" (17-18), the results of what they call "deterritorializations" and "reterritorializations" of pieces of the dominant literatures. A good example of how Deleuze and Guattari's theory works in the reterritorialization of sexual culture can be seen in Didier Eribon's *Insult and the Making of the Gay Self*. Eribon traces the role of insult and the reclamation of insulting terms (like "faggot" and "dyke") within queer cultures. Expanding this analogy to the context of the gay and lesbian novel, we can say,

²⁴ For other considerations of the novel's subgenres, see, George Lukacs, *The Historical Novel* trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (London: Merlin, 1962) ; Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction; A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford UP, 1987); Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial" *The Theory of the Novel*, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2000) 882-899; Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private and The Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005).

therefore, that the novel is not just the result of literary circulation (as it was at its moment of emergence in the eighteenth century), but an influential agent of circulation. Under these conditions, characters or episodes that may be minor or not fully developed in terms of subjectivity in one novel-incarnation, like Melville's Kory-Kory in *Typee*, might nonetheless inspire more developed characters in later novels, as Kory-Kory does when Stoddard creates Kana-ana in *South Sea Idyls*. As a rubric for understanding literary development a process, circulation does not insist that we develop teleologies of generic development; instead, it enables us to see the impossibility of predicting in advance how even the most flattened, insulted, or derogatory depictions of cultural life may give life to fuller, more complex incarnations of literary genres and social types alike.

Circulation, Sexuality, and the Novel

I have been insisting throughout this introduction to my study that circulation is the motor of textual accumulation and condensation, that which makes possible the warp and woof of narrative worlds necessary for the emergence of the gay and lesbian novel. Yet the word "circulation" rarely appears in the above theories of the novel's development, despite its implicit centrality to their works. It is necessary to Frye's sense of devolution, essential to Benjamin's account of print culture's transformation of stories in novel form, and the condition under which Deleuze and Guattari can imagine the deterritorializations essential to the emergence of a minor literature. The role of circulation is just as implicitly central to the history of sexuality. Another name for the literary accumulation and condensation that leads to the visibility of the queer novel is

discursive proliferation. Our dominant model for thinking about such proliferation of sexual discourse (including, even, the very term “proliferation”) comes from Michel Foucault (although Foucault’s sense of discourse is not especially attentive to questions of genre). In *The History of Sexuality Volume I*, he argues that, in spite of efforts to repress discourse about sexuality, “[a]t the level of discourses and their domains [...] practically the opposite phenomenon occurred. There was a steady proliferation of discourses concerned with sex—specific discourses, different from one another both by their form and by their object: a discursive ferment that gathered momentum from the eighteenth century onward” (18). Foucault points particularly to “the multiplication of discourses concerning sex in the field of exercise of power itself: an institutional incitement to speak about it, and to do so more and more, a determination on the part of the agencies of power to hear it spoken about, and to cause *it* to speak through explicit articulation and endlessly accumulated detail” (18). As important as Foucault’s insights have been within the history of sexuality, we are only just beginning to explore how it is that discourses “gather momentum” or “multiply”—often in ways Foucault’s paradigm itself does not imagine (as I will explain in my chapter on Melville’s *Typee*). For this reason, the literary history of sexuality can use more thinking about the role circulation plays in discursive proliferation as well as genre formation.

Some of the best theoretical work conceptualizing the relationship between language and circulation appears in the field of linguistic anthropology by scholars like Greg Urban, Michael Silverstein and Benjamin Lee.²⁵ In *Metaphysical Community: The*

²⁵ What interests them are the processes of what they call “entextualization,” the ways in which culture comes to be translated into discourse that can circulate through the world in objects. See Benjamin Lee, *Talking Heads: Language, Metalanguage and the Semiotics of Subjectivity* (Durham: Duke UP, 1997); Greg Urban and Michael Silverstein, eds., *Natural Histories of Discourse* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996);

Interplay Between the Intellect and the Senses, Urban insists upon what he believes to be “a fundamental principle of culture, viz., discourse tends to shape itself in such a way as to maximize its circulation” (250). I think there are limits to Urban’s proposition (It is unclear how he explains discourse that does not much shape itself so as to maximize its circulation, for instance). But what is promising about his theory is the sense that it offers us a non-psychoanalytic way of thinking about the limits of individuals’ control of the language they use (and which, if he is right, also uses them). He goes further to make the case for situating meaning-making beyond the agency of people and within the agency of discourse itself:

Referential or semantic meanings are relevant to a broader public. They are also efficacious—they can get people to do things. Yet, they are ghostlike, circulating along piggy-backed on discourse forms, but themselves intangible, unseen.

Even the hardest headed skeptics among us must agree that there is something God-like about referential meanings. Discourses modify themselves so as to maintain or increase their circulation. But by what agency do they do so? You can say that agents are individuals. Individuals modify and manipulate discourses as they circulate. They are the bedrock source of change. Yet, at least insofar as the cold pole of tradition is concerned, individuals only modify what has diffused to them from others, what has seeped down over time. Circulating discourses are the end result of innumerable revisions and tinkering and refinements. Only at the hot pole of experience can they be thought of as individual products, and even there the suggestive power of prior discourse is at work. To say something new, one must use old expressive forms, which have crystallized at the cold pole of tradition. (256)

Urban admits that there may be a certain amount of agency in the sheer act of writing down discourses (“at the hot pole of experience”), but this agency does not amount to the power of invention. So much historical tinkering has gone into those “old expressive forms” that the forms themselves carry a history that can change only gradually over time.

Greg Urban, *Metaphysical Community: The Interplay Between the Intellect and the Senses* (Austin: U of Texas P, 1996); and Greg Urban, *Metaculture: How Culture Moves Through The World* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2001).

To think about literary circulation can also be to think about its significance not just in empirical ways, but in non-hermeneutic ways that often fly in the face of the meaning-making project of literary analysis. In *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey*, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht advances such a non-hermeneutic model for studies in the humanities. He does not eschew the value of interpretation, but rather suggests that “aesthetic experience is an oscillation (and sometimes an interference) between ‘presence-effects’ and ‘meaning effects’”(2). He urges us to see how materialities of culture amount to a presence in the world and thus exert power over us. He develops this theory further with respect to studies of textuality in another book, *Powers of Philology: Dynamics of Textual Scholarship*, in which he explores the terrain of philology as an examination of text as object, where its materiality, however related it may be to what it tries to say, becomes an object of exploration in its own right. Gumbrecht does offer us a program for reading texts line by line (like Benjamin Lee does, say, when he describes the metalinguistics of narration)²⁶. For him, being content not to know how exactly presence works at the moment it is felt is a key part of the aesthetic experience. But because he insists upon the power of the text’s materiality (what he would call its sheer presence), like Urban above, he has had to account for the seeming religiosity of his theory (the God-like-ness of referential meaning). Ascribing agency to cultural objects²⁷ has long been the domain of metaphor itself—where figures of speech create the illusion of agency (dismissed by some as pathetic fallacy, for instance). But if we hold open the possibility that the discourses carry with them histories of their own

²⁶ See *Talking Heads* 277-320.

²⁷ For more on the agency of objects themselves see Bill Brown, *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2003); Bill Brown, ed., *Things* (Chicago, U of Chicago P, 2004); and Peter Schwenger, *The Tears of Things: The Melancholy of Physical Objects* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2006).

formations and tinkerings, we can begin to understand more fully the long paths of stylistic testing that generate discourses—as theorists of the novel have attempted to do.

Understanding the power attributed to discourses may seem to raise some eyebrows if we try to imagine whether discourse has the same kind of agency that human beings have—and whether this means we attribute less agency to humans as a result. If we pause to think about it in a slightly different register, however, we would see that our culture’s core liberal values are everywhere peppered with the insistence that words and books do things in the world—an assumption that has not yet tempered the belief in human agency. We can see the force of this belief in the ways we think about children’s literature, for instance: no body of literature is so charged with forming the very audience its existence presupposes. Children are encouraged to give themselves over to (some) discursive forces; this is the condition under which, paradoxically, we teach them that they have agency. In *The Letters of the Republic*, Michael Warner advances a more adult version of this argument when he studies “cultural meaning of printedness” (xi) in eighteenth-century North America leading up to and just beyond the moment of the revolution. If, as Warner reasons, an entity no less invested in the idea of political agency than the United States is produced through print and print circulation, then perhaps it is possible to see that acknowledging the agency of discourse is the condition under which politics itself can happen.

We have already seen the example of Edward Prime-Stevenson’s attribution of agency and sociability to books in the passage I cited at the beginning of this introduction: “crowded into a few lower shelves, as if they sought to avoid other literary society, to keep themselves to themselves, to shun all unsympathetic observation.”

Strategic mis-quotation, in Barney's phrasing, is but another way in which texts reflexively index the conditions of their own making. Each of the following chapters aims to understand further the ways discourse entextualizes the conditions for sexual type development (and complication) and the long history of circulations and tinkering that makes the queer novel visible as such.

In chapter one, a case study of Herman Melville's *Typee*, I chart two distinct, but intertwined, aspects of queer literary history generated through readings of the text: Melville's descriptions of sexual encounters—between men and among men and women; and the long critical history of identifying sexual social patterns in the text. The first of these can be traced through Melville's record of his intertextual engagement with missionary texts, indexed through his quotation and citation of those texts. The second aspect is an examination of the ways Melville's engagement with the specifically sexual aspects of missionary texts resonates with other texts the more his own texts circulate. I argue that *Typee* has gradually acquired its status as a queer text as it participates in a long process of queer type development. Only in retrospect, however, can we see exactly how Melville's text actively participates in this queer production. Melville could probably never have predicted the ways in which his text would interact with later discourses of sexuality, which suggests in effect that his text exerts an agency that outlines him, if not his reputation.

Like Melville, Charles Warren Stoddard, the focus of my second chapter, reads backward, and consciously deploys an intertextual metalanguage to reference the context of literary circulation in which he participates. His discourse holds on tightly precisely to texts like *Typee* that provide him with a language of self-understanding and literary

expression. Stoddard's writing has led some to describe him as the first gay novelist in America, a fact that looks forward from Stoddard to others who would later write such novels. I read Stoddard, instead, through his engagement with, and connections to, the writers who have come to define his literary moment (like W.D. Howells, Mark Twain, and Joaquin Miller) and whose writings ultimately help Stoddard define himself. Stoddard reveals himself to be a sentimental collector of texts, in his life and his writing. His archival tendencies ultimately allow him to see the extent to which literary discourse (his own and others) have produced him—something we can see in Stoddard's unfinished but novelistic scrapbooks toward the end of his life.

The final two chapters of my dissertation observe the processes of textual accumulation and condensation I've been describing as metatextual indices of textual circulation in nineteenth-century appearances of the old maid, who is often seen as an analogue for the modern lesbian. In chapter three, my archive covers a century of literary representations of old maids from late-eighteenth-century periodicals like *The American Magazine* through stories, essays, poems and novels by Sedgwick, Hawthorne, Freeman, Jewett up through Wharton's 1924 novel *The Old Maid* (*The 'Fifties*). They collectively test the seemingly lifelessness old maid across a range of genres and contexts, and infuse the old maid figure with the kind of transformative energy necessary for us to imagine the lesbian as a possible effect of her circulation in literature. To understand how the old maid makes visible the later lesbian, I argue that we must, perforce, recognize her as a historically distinct figure, not a lesbian euphemism.

My final chapter on Henry James's *The Bostonians* describes how, in the space of one novel, James dramatizes the processes of sexual type production and social

circulation that I have been documenting in American literature throughout the nineteenth century. The form of his narration conveys the ways type-language converges on individuals like Basil Ransom and Olive Chancellor, from outside the self, while James's descriptive language, harking back to French sources, carries with it a history of sexuality that is piggy-backed on the form itself. James's eponymous "Bostonians"—Olive Chancellor and Verena Tarrant—effectively evolve into themselves throughout James's novel, an evolution masked by the title's deft assumption that they have *been* themselves from the very start.

The logic of retroactivity at the heart of James's novel is fundamentally the paradoxical logic that underwrites the task of describing the emergence of the gay and lesbian novel itself: how do we understand the conditions under which something (the gay and lesbian novel) has come into being without already assuming its existence? The pages that follow offer one long answer to that question.

Chapter One: Acquired Queerness: The Sexual Life and Afterlife of *Typee*

In the middle of “In a Transport,” one of Charles Warren Stoddard’s now little-known *South Sea Idyls*, the narrator describes his arrival at Nouka Hiva, near the Typee valley. He surveys the landscape and explains,

I happened to know something about the place, and marked every inch of the scorching soil as we floated past groves of rose-wood, sandal-wood, and a hundred sorts of new and strange trees, looking dark and velvety in the distance; past strips of beach that shone like glass, while beyond them the cocoa-palms that towered above the low brown huts of the natives seemed to reel and nod in the intense meridian heat. A moist cloud, far up the mountain, hung above a serene and sacred haunt, and under its shelter was hidden a deep valley, whose secret has been carried to the ends of the earth; for Herman Melville has plucked out the heart of its mystery and beautiful and barbarous Typee lies naked and forsaken.

I was rather glad we could not get any nearer to it, for fear of dispelling the ideal that has so long charmed me. Catching the wind again, late in the afternoon, we lost the last outline of Nouka Hiva in the soft twilight, and said our prayers that evening as much at seas ever. (302)

It should not surprise readers of Stoddard that the “ideal that has so long charmed” his narrator is a sexual ideal. What Stoddard idealizes most in all his writing about the South Seas—a vast but understudied collection of stories, poems, letters, and even essays—are the possibilities the locale opens up for sexual sociability between men. In a letter to Walt Whitman, Stoddard

explains in detail “how delightful I find this life [in the South Seas]”—offering Whitman lengthy descriptions of intimacies defined by “bountiful and unconstrained love.”¹ This passage from “In a Transport” does not offer much by way of bountiful description: the ideal hovers above the text in a catechresis that Stoddard never explains. He does not revisit *Typee*, the Typee Valley, or Melville beyond this point in the story (although this is not the only sketch to acknowledge its debt to Melville²). It may seem to Stoddard that what Typee idealizes is so well known that it requires no description at all. Melville’s text has “carried [its secret] to the ends of the earth.” Or, perhaps, Stoddard is deploying the increasingly predictable form of the open secret—uncharacteristic in the rest of his writing. What Stoddard does not imagine, however, is that what Typee has come to idealize (not just the place the name purports to represent) may well have been transformed as its secrets have been carried to the ends of the earth.

Stoddard is not the only queer writer to recognize an earlier sexual *je-sais-quoi* in Melville’s work. By the first half of the twentieth century, writers such as E.M. Forster, Hart Crane, Robert Duncan, and Tennessee Williams would come to see in Melville’s sea novels the queerness that literary critics have recently described and articulated.³ In part, these twentieth-century readings of Melville may have been given life by the industry of literary criticism in the

¹ See *Walt Whitman; The Correspondence*, ed. Edwin Haviland Miller (New York: NYUP, 1961-69) 81-82.

² In “Prodigal in Tahiti,” Stoddard also makes direct reference to Melville’s *Omoo*. He writes,

I used to nod at the low, whitewashed “calabooses” fairly steaming in the sun, wherein Herman Melville got some chapters of “Omoo.”

Over and over again I tracked the ground of that delicious story, saying to the bread-fruit trees that had sheltered him, “Shelter me also, and whoever shall follow after, so long as your branches quiver in the wind!”

Oh reader of “Omoo,” think of “Motoo-Otoo,” actually looking warlike in these sad days, with a row of new cannons around its edge, and pyramids of balls as big as cocoa-nuts covering its shady centre.” (339).

³ Caleb Crain, “Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville’s Novels,” *American Literature* 66.1 (March 1994): 25-53. See also Justin D. Edwards, “Melville’s Peep Show: Sexual and Textual Cruises in ‘Typee,’” *ARIEL* 30.2(1999): 61-74; Marc Maufort, “Exoticism in Melville’s Early Sea Novels,” *ALW-Cahier* 11 (1991):65-75;Robert K. Martin, “‘Enviably Isles’: Melville’s South Seas,” *Modern Language Studies* 12.1: 68-76; Robert K. Martin *Hero, Captain, Stranger: Male Friendship, Social Critique, and Literary Form in Melville’s Sea Novels*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1986.

1920s that began to revalue his literary legacy in ways Melville never experienced in his lifetime after the publication of *Typee* (his only clear bestseller⁴). But Stoddard was not among that generation of writers to witness Melville's historic resuscitation. He was an avid reader and professor of literature generally, but he had a particular interest in reading and writing about exotic places and in describing the ways literature facilitated the consolidation of queer literary networks—social and textual. His continued reading of Melville (in the face of Melville's growing unpopularity at the end of the nineteenth century) is a measure of Stoddard's commitment to uncovering and assembling a literary history in which he saw himself reflected. But the fact that it was de rigeur for Stoddard's reviewers (there were many) to identify the consonance between his work and Melville's suggests, in turn, that Stoddard was not merely an idiosyncratic reader, who projected his own personal story onto Melville's text.

Still, even those scholars today who have contributed most to our understanding of a queer Melville acknowledge that most readers of *Typee* in 1846 would not see the queer resonances that we see today. Robert K. Martin explains this to us in terms of the text's hidden intertexts:

⁴ The extent to which Melville's *Typee* was an absolute bestseller in the nineteenth century has been much debated by critics. In his "Historical Note" to the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of the text, Leon Howard states emphatically that "*Typee* was never a best-seller, even by the standards of the 1840s" (298). Scholars have since modified this claim, focusing on reconsiderations of what counted as popularity and widespread circulation of the text. Sheila Post-Lauria's *Correspondent Colorings: Melville in the Marketplace*, for instance, documents *Typee*'s rise to the top of the best-seller list, situating it within the same literary culture that propelled Melville's contemporary literary compatriots to the best-seller list (a list that included George Borrow, Charles Briggs, Caroline Chesebro, James Fenimore Cooper, Fanny Forrester (Emily Chubbuck Judson), J.T. Headley, Caroline Kirkland, George Lippard, Catharine Maria Sedgwick, Anna Sophia Stephens, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Bayard Taylor). What we know about sales statistics gives us only part of the picture. During Melville's lifetime, this book sold more than any other that he wrote, an estimated 9,598 copies in the United States and 6,722 in England, even though today *Typee* is arguably eclipsed by *Moby Dick* as Melville's most read work. For sales statistics, see G. Thomas Tanselle's "The Sales of Melville's Books" in *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 18 (April 1969)195-215. We know much less about the extent to which the text circulated through pirated editions.

Melville inherited a tradition of writing about the exotic South Pacific as a primitive utopia and an erotic paradise. He introduced a variation into that debate by focusing particularly on male beauty and same-sex male relationships, even as his work with its depiction of the "naked houris" drew on long-established patterns of representation that tried to come to terms with a society that apparently offered a free circulation of sexual bodies of both sexes.

Trying to render this scene, Melville fell back on both the French tradition of the Tahitian sexual paradise and the Greek idealization of the young male body. In many ways, the scene was unreadable by Western observers, especially since the acts of invasion, conversion, and colonization had already transformed that which was being observed.⁵

Martin suggests that Western readers lacked the appropriate frame of reference for making sense of the queer scenes before them. Caleb Crain, on the other hand, argues such a failed legibility might have been part of a larger cultural code: "homosexuality and cannibalism shared a rhetorical form. Both were represented as the 'unspeakable'"(28).⁶ Both Martin and Crain seem to assume that these scenes are, indeed legible, but only to those who know how to read the signs. Under what conditions, then, does legibility become possible? And to what extent is the text itself responsible for creating those conditions of legibility? What should we make of *Typee*'s contribution to a literary history of sexuality that seems to make textual circulation and

⁶ Caleb Crain, "Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville's Novels," *American Literature* 66.1 (March 1994): 25-53. See also Justin D. Edwards, "Melville's Peep Show: Sexual and Textual Cruises in 'Typee'," *ARIEL* 30.2(1999): 61-74; Marc Maufort, "Exoticism in Melville's Early Sea Novels," *ALW-Cahier* 11 (1991):65-75;Robert K. Martin, "'Enviably Isles': Melville's South Seas," *Modern Language Studies* 12.1: 68-76.

reading crucial to the queerness we have come to associate with Melville, at least since Stoddard?

I think it is plausible to suggest that Melville's *Typee* has an acquired queerness: acquired, that is, through the ways it resonates with readers and texts that circulate after it has been published or through coterie-style readings. This is not to say that later queer readers of *Typee* made up or projected onto the text something that isn't there (although some might have). Rather, what I would like to argue, here, is that we can recognize *Typee*'s significant contribution to the emergence of queer sexual types only after they have already become legible as such. This requires looking at two distinct, although thoroughly intertwined, aspects of queer literary history that are produced through *Typee*: (1) Melville's descriptions of sexual encounters—between men and among men and women; and (2) the history of recognizing sexual social patterns as such through readings and interpretations of *Typee*. By looking at how Melville situated his own reading in his writing and at how others' reading and interpretation of Melville have situated his writing, we can see how essential reading, analysis, and textual circulation have been in the connecting the first publication of the text to the consolidation of broadly sexual and specifically queer historical types. It may be only through hindsight that we can recognize these details as part of a larger cultural phenomenon (say, the literary imagination of homosexuality), but this does not amount to a purely relativistic or teleological reading. The emergence of homosexuality as a literary phenomenon obscures the complexities that attend its own settling into a phenomenon as such.⁷

⁷The emergence of homosexuality as such is thus an excellent example of what Marx refers to as the "simple abstraction." Although Marx is concerned primarily with the category of "labour," the workings of the simple abstraction correspond nicely with the emergence of any conceptual term which aims to describe, simply, the

In the pages that follow, I outline how we might think of Melville's contribution to the literary history of sexuality—and *Typee*'s registration of sexuality's relevance to American literary history more generally—first by considering the terms on which Melville initially treats the matter of sex in the South Sea. In the first few chapters of the book, he responds in elaborate detail to existing accounts of life in the South Seas. These are largely missionary accounts from which he draws liberally at the beginning of his novel. Melville invokes that literature's horizon of generic expectations⁸ in an effort to disarticulate radically his descriptions of sexual culture from the language (largely Protestant) of sin and morality. This disarticulation of sexuality and religion within the text is ultimately incomplete for several reasons. The fact that Melville's narrator, known to the Typees as Tommo,⁹ is not a reliable raconteur makes it difficult to read his account as ideologically consistent. And these inconsistencies allow us to see both Melville's attempts, through Tommo, to consolidate the stories he has heard about sexual behavior in the South Seas and Tommo's efforts to test those stories against his own experience. Further, the layers of narration that attend his representations of both missionary aims and sexual practices create a multivocality in the text that brings sexuality and religion together as often as it attempts to separate them out from each other. The often ironic narrative layers and detailed descriptions through which he

complex conditions of the term's own emergence. See Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* Trans. Martin Nicolaus (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1873) 103-05.

⁸ The term "horizon of expectations" itself invokes a theoretical horizon of expectations, conjuring up for us, most prominently, reader-response critics such as Hans Robert Jauss (who is largely credited with the term) and well as E.D. Hirsch, Wolfgang Iser, and Stanley Fish (there are others). I do, in a sense, mean to revisit their insights, but without imputing quite so much agency to individual or singular acts of interpretation. Although genres are malleable over time, they resist their own complete undoing in the hands of a single author or a single interpretive community at a single moment in time. The horizon of generic expectations thus exerts a kind of pressure within the context of both reading and writing that the writer and reader may both inhabit and harness in recirculation without ever fully controlling.

⁹ There is some debate about what to call the narrator of *Typee*. In a recent edition of the book, Geoffrey Sanborn makes the case for referring to him as Herman Melville because his name appears as the author he encourages readers to see his account as a true story. I have chosen here to refer to the narrator as Tommo because this is the only name by which he is known in the book.

undertakes this disarticulation—about which I will say more later—offer us a complex texture of the ways details accrete, more and less earnestly (for the narrator), around the sexual pictures he draws with words.

One might expect that in the effort to repress and reform the sexual behaviour of the South Sea Islanders, the missionaries to whom Melville responds unintentionally generate more discourse about their sexual practices and behaviors—and that Melville benefits from the bounty of details these accounts provide in cautionary apostrophes. Our dominant model for thinking about such a proliferation of sexual discourse (including, even, the very term “proliferation”) comes from Michel Foucault. In *The History of Sexuality Volume I*, he famously argues that, in spite of efforts to repress discourse about sexuality, “[a]t the level of discourses and their domains, however, practically the opposite phenomenon occurred. There was a steady proliferation of discourses concerned with sex—specific discourses, different from one another both by their form and by their object: a discursive ferment that gathered momentum from the eighteenth century onward” (18). Foucault points particularly to “the multiplication of discourses concerning sex in the field of exercise of power itself: an institutional incitement to speak about it, and to do so more and more, a determination on the part of the agencies of power to hear it spoken about, and to cause *it* to speak through explicit articulation and endlessly accumulated detail” (18). We might therefore expect that the early nineteenth-century missionaries, such as Charles Stewart, whom Melville cites, would, through their attempts to exercise power, outline the sexual practices and social structures of the Marquesans “through explicit articulation and endlessly accumulated detail.”

But the missionary and travel writing to which Melville responds does not offer him much by way of “explicit articulation and endlessly accumulated detail”—as we shall see. That

they do not may measure the difference between a French textual tradition significantly influenced by the rhetorical structures of Catholic confession and an English-American textual tradition that focuses more on the positivism of Protestant conversion narratives, which are far more likely to foreground the optimistic piety of the missionaries than detailed catalogues of the natives' vices.¹⁰ That Melville accumulates so much of the textual detail that is available to him and then augments those details with a few of his own may well be one of Melville's finest accomplishments in this text: he consolidates details that are otherwise dispersed in others' accounts. In the spirit of Foucault, we might describe Melville's *Typee* as one "countereffect" of earlier efforts to "tighten up rules of decorum" on the islands. But *Typee*'s textual history reveals how complicated discursive proliferation is, across time and through the space of textual circulation—even as it exposes how thin our understanding of this complication is. Foucault describes "a discursive ferment that gathered momentum from the eighteenth century onward" (18), but we are only beginning to develop methods for understanding how texts "gather momentum" and detail "endlessly accumulates" in the context of understanding the literary history of sexuality.

Typee is an excellent case study of precisely this problem. It tells a story that has, since its publication, sparked great debate about Melville representing sex and sexuality, all

¹⁰ The missionaries' focus is spelled out less as a cure for others' vices and more as a gift being presented to the islanders. Several American agencies published instructions for the missionaries, which outline the missionaries' goals primarily in terms of what they need to accomplish among themselves as a group. See, for instance, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions., *Instructions to the missionaries about to embark for the Sandwich Islands; and to the Rev. Messrs. William Goodell, & Isaac Bird, attached to the Palestine Mission: delivered by the corresponding secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, no. 50, Cornhill., 1823). This document outlines the need for missionaries to be united and to make themselves "available for piety." It cites friendship with the natives as being one of the keys to success, but never really offers much description of what the missionaries will encounter when they arrive. I will have more to say about this and other missionary accounts later in this chapter.

I am grateful to the staff at the American Antiquarian Society for their first-rate knowledge and cheerful assistance as I sifted through documents related to missionary travels from their Hawaiian collection.

while promising that this story conveys detailed descriptions of South Seas life. The text allows us to discern different rates of accumulation and proliferation for sexual discourse—where what we now recognize as heterosexual encounters appear, quite literally, in more words than what we now recognize as homosexual encounters. If *Typee* has always invoked a measure of controversy for its representations of licentious behaviour in the South Seas, why does the sexual eroticism between men not become visible to many readers until long after the book's initial publication? Erotic relationships between men in *Typee* are presented without being narrated or named in the same ways that the erotic relationships between men and women. This would suggest not just that there are different rates of development of literary type discourse for what we come to see as heterosexual relationships and homosexual relationships; it also suggests that however imbricated they are with each other, description and narration produce distinct discursive effects in this process. *Typee*'s invocation of its generic precursors—through direct citation as well as intertextual allusion—also provides us with a measure of the distance that textual circulation can create between texts: citing texts directly, as Melville does with Porter and Ellis's representations of sexual first contact with the natives, calls attention to the distance between his account and theirs, which he marks at the very moment he is attempting to collapse that distance. In other words, the more Melville collapses others' texts to mark the base to scaffold his narrative, the more he also paradoxically measures the distance between the circulation of his own text and theirs. A much different sense of the distance between texts is conveyed when Melville draws on sources he does not cite directly, but which nonetheless work through his text, since these do not so readily highlight the intertextual boundary.

What further complicates the matter of sexual discourse in *Typee* are the ways in

which, as so many scholars have pointed out, a sexual discourse is at once a discourse of race and colonialism—in nineteenth-century terms, a discourse of civilization.¹¹ Scholars have returned over and over again to the text's anxieties about cannibalism and tattooing in particular as key points at which gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and bodily legibility each operates as an index for the others.¹² It is only, however, when we begin to translate Melville's terms forward, into the more familiar categories of race, sexuality and ethnicity, that these categories become distinct from each other and the discourse appears to be layered. Tattooing, for instance, carries with it an erotic charge in *Typee* and it is also a distinct cultural practice, of great note to Western travelers because of the ways it highlights the difference between their own experience and the context they are encountering. Tattooing reveals to us that in *Typee*, the discourse of race is a discourse of sexuality is a discourse of cultural practice—but without any framing language that invokes these simple abstractions as such. How to read these seemingly overlapping conceptual frameworks has been the challenge for many generations of critics.

So significant are these intersecting discursive histories that *Typee* has found itself as a key site of evidence for some major studies of American literature and literary anthropology. The text is central, for instance, to Larzer Ziff's *Literary Democracy: The Declaration of Cultural Independence in America* and T. Walter Herbert's *Marquesan*

¹¹ In *The Ruling Passion: British Colonial Allegory and the Paradox of Homosexual Desire* (Durham: Duke UP, 1995), Christopher Lane discusses the way colonialism does not actually sublimate, but in fact increases desire: "the empire provided opportunities for sexual expression that were denied at home" (2). Caleb Crain in "Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville's Novels," *American Literature* 66.1 (March 1994): 25-53 suggests that cannibalism and homosexuality took the same rhetorical form, that of the unspeakable, and operated in symbiosis with each other during the nineteenth-century. See also Justin D. Edwards, "Melville's Peep Show: Sexual and Textual Cruises in 'Typee,'" *ARIEL* 30.2 (1999): 61-74; Marc Maufort, "Exoticism in Melville's Early Sea Novels," *ALW-Cahier* 11 (1991): 65-75; Robert K. Martin, "'Enviably Isles': Melville's South Seas," *Modern Language Studies* 12.1: 68-76. Mitchell Breitweiser, "False sympathy in Melville's *Typee*," *American Quarterly* 34.4: 396-417.

¹² See Juniper Ellis, Caleb Crain, and others.

Encounters: Melville and the Meaning of Civilization. Each highlights the extent to which *Typee* is a touchstone for considerations of “civilization” and makes central to this analysis precisely those moments in the text where exoticism, eroticism, and cultural habits operate in tandem. Readers familiar with Ziff’s book will recall his memorable analysis of Kory-Kory, sitting on a log: “He rubs...slowly up and down...quite leisurely, but gradually quickens his pace, and waxing war in the employment...approaches the climax of his effort, he pants and gasps for breath, and his eyes almost start from the sockets with the violence of his exertions” (165). Ziff argues that “The author is here in touch with his own culturally created complexities, and their pressure upon him fuses an image of honest labor as sexual act in contrast with exploited labor as guilt-ridden sexuality” (7); he continues, “The placing of physical love behind the curtain in America is an indication of the blockages between the body politic and the human body, of which, in a persistent, classical image, it is the enlargement” (8). He concludes, “It is symbolic of the psychic wound visited upon him by civilization and of wholeness that can be reclaimed by submission to the natural—specifically, it symbolizes the malfunctioning of the sexual organ inhibited by arbitrary social codes and its restoration in a sexual environment that knows no guilt” (9). For Ziff, this scene is symptomatic of a nineteenth-century American world-view that cloaks its desire for sexual expressiveness in a language of disavowal. In presenting a world beyond the inhibitions of “civilization,” the text thus tells us a great deal more about sexuality in the world of the civilizers than it does about *Typee* itself.

A similar argument is advanced by T. Walter Herbert in *Marquesan Encounters*. His is a comparative analysis of Melville’s account with those of two writers whom Melville cites in *Typee*: Charles Stewart and Captain Porter. What interests Herbert about Melville,

Porter, and Stewart is the way each conveys “the idea of civilization” (15). This idea for Herbert seems to be related to but distinct from “images and stories.” In other words, the images and stories give him access to the very structures of culture. What concerns him centrally are the assumptions that can be drawn about American attitudes toward civilization in the nineteenth century and what can be condensed about Marquesan cultural life in the face of the competing ideological concerns that occupy Porter, Stewart, and Melville. Relying on the methods of Claude Levi-Strauss, Herbert concerns himself with the deep structures of mind and identity. Thus, he sees a certain amount of truth about Marquesan life in the similarities among Porter’s, Stewart’s, and Melville’s accounts. Herbert concludes that the three accounts really tell us more about what it meant for Americans to encounter the Marquesans themselves (21).

Both Herbert’s and Ziff’s analyses rely on critical frameworks whose terms do not literally appear in *Typee*. Ziff’s gesture to psychoanalytic symbolism and Herbert’s reliance on cultural anthropology each produces a compelling reading of *Typee*. Since the time of Herbert’s and Ziff’s analyses, new critical idioms have emerged in the fields of colonial/post-colonial studies, critical race studies, and sexuality studies that call into question the provisional cultural coherence that Ziff and Herbert argue is produced through this literature.¹³ Whether Melville is complicit with or resistant to the colonial rhetoric continues to be a subject of much debate. Although these are not the terms of the analysis I wish to

¹³ For studies of the rhetorical complexities of American colonialism in the nineteenth-century, see Wai-Chee Dimock, *Empire for Liberty: Melville and the Poetics of Individualism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1989); Lawrence Buell, “Melville and the Question of American Decolonization,” *American Literature* 64.2 (June 1992): 215-38; and Malini Johar Schueller, “Indians, Polynesians, and Empire Making,” *Genealogy and Literature*, ed. Lee Quinby (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1995): 48-67. See also David Eng’s *Racial Castration*. Eng reads Freud’s analysis of primitivism alongside Freud’s discussions of homosexuality to discuss Asian-American masculinity and its association with effeminacy and homosexuality.

pursue, most scholars acknowledge that however much Melville might wish to resist Western imperialist impulses, he remains limited by the linguistic frameworks in which he writes (and the generic expectations he invokes), as well as their political shortcomings. In other words, he, too, is implicated in colonialist rhetoric, no less so for critiquing it—even though the words “colonial” and “imperial” can be found nowhere in the text. What is perhaps more remarkable in this critical history of shifting terminology is the persistence of “sex” and “vice” as the accepted markers of the difference between civilized and indigenous cultures.

This chapter cannot account in any complete way for the persistent and complicated discursive reach of sex and sexuality in *Typee*—although this discursive reach should be an indication that what is at stake in this analysis is not merely an account of a minor literary phenomenon. It does, however, offer some examples of this reading as it aims to understand some of the ways in which *Typee* and its circulation generate the very language of sexual types by which it later comes to be understood. These sexual types that emerge inevitably fail to explain all complexities of the text that readers would have understood before the later shifts in idiom. But rather than see the text as radically disconnected from our own conceptualization of sexuality (historically other) or translate it forward into the conceptualization with which it resonates (utterly familiar), it is possible to understand the processes by which *Typee* has come to feel connected to ways we have come to understand sexual types. This involves attending, collectively, to the language that the text makes available to us for interpretation, to the history of those interpretations, and to the interpretations that the text makes part of itself. Thus can we see the ways in which the language in, around, and about *Typee* resonates beyond itself.

Melville and The Missionary Position

There has never been a time when sex did not permeate discussions about *Typee*. Almost since the moment of its initial publication, *Typee* has served as a test case for examining the limits, possibilities, and literary effects of representing sexual sociability in the South Seas—and of circulating those representations. The well-known history of the text's printing in America demonstrates the case nicely. The first version of the text to circulate in both Britain and America was published, to wide acclaim, as part of John Murray's Home and Colonial Library series in 1846, the American version having been printed from the Murray one. But when John Wiley of Wiley and Putnam expressed interest in publishing a new American edition of the text, he balked at what some reviewers had called the "voluptuousness" of the text and at Melville's critical attitude toward missionaries. As a condition of publication, he demanded that the book be expurgated of controversial sexual and political content. Editors of *Typee* today do not acknowledge the revised edition to be authoritative¹⁴ (although the revised text would enjoy numerous reprintings in America, while the original text continued to circulate in England). Melville did make the revisions Wiley wanted—sometimes eliminating entire chapters, in addition to expunging passages and changing phrases—all in an effort to increase the book's popularity.

¹⁴ Editors have drawn this conclusion because they observe that Melville did not make these editions voluntarily and because of the same kinds of sexual content and political critiques of missionary investments appear in later works like *Omoo* and *Mardi*, published by different presses. See "Note on the Texts," *Typee, Omoo, Mardi*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Herschel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle (New York: The Library of America, 1982): 1322-25. More recently, Geoffrey Sanborne endorsed the editorial decision, suggesting that it is the best compromise that could be brokered. His own edition is therefore also based on the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of *The Writings of Herman Melville*, originally published by Harrison, Hayford, Parker, and Tanselle, in 1968. Ironically, the Library of America editions are distributed by Penguin Putnam: a latter-day descendent of the same Wiley and Putnam who first published the revised American edition of *Typee*.

Still, the text did not really shake its sexy reputation. Perhaps realizing this fact, Wiley even came to depend upon it. He ultimately drew on the authority of countless reviewers who had already defined *Typee* by precisely those features to which Wiley objected in the text. This is a fact that current editions of the book cannot really include, since they place so little authority in the revised edition at all. Wiley could not seem to resist adding a lengthy advertisement to the front of the revised edition: nine lavish pages of excerpts from reviewers (two sections of reviews, from Britain and America) who repeatedly described the book as not just “charming,” but “racy.”¹⁵ No modern edition of the book reprints these pages—although they amount to clear evidence of the ways a metacritical language about the text not just indexes, but creates, the conditions of its circulation and thus transforms the reading of the text itself. Ironically, these reviews highlight as virtues the very textual vices that Wiley demanded be expurgated, producing a paradox that ultimately became invisible. Readers were told that this was a “racy” book, but its most racy elements had become muted in the pages following the reviews.

American reviews of *Typee* were divided, but reviewers on both sides recognized the book’s raciness. Melville’s detractors, particularly those averse to his representation of Christian missionaries, spoke powerfully enough to convince Wiley that sales might suffer. The most scathing critique of the book in America was probably William Oland Bourne’s. In the *New York Christian Parlor Magazine*, Bourne offers the following catalogue of *Typee*’s shortcomings, concluding with a dismissal based in his view that Melville’s account could not be true, anyway:

Before proceeding to our investigation of his statements concerning the missionaries, we remark of the book generally: 1. It is filled with the most palpable and absurd

¹⁵ See the first nine pages of the 1846 Wiley & Putnam edition of *Typee*.

contradictions; 2. These contradictions are so carelessly put together as to occur in consecutive paragraphs; 3. It is throughout laudatory of the innocence and freedom from care of the barbarians of the South Seas, particularly the Marquesans; 4. It compares their condition with civilized society as being the more desirable of the two; 5. It either excuses and willfully palliates the cannibalism and savage vices of the Polynesians, or is guilty of as great a crime in such a writer, that of ignorance of his subject; and, 6. It is redundant with bitter charges against the missionaries, piles obloquy upon their labor and its results, and broadly accuses them of being the cause of the vice, misery, destitution, and unhappiness of the Polynesians wherever they have penetrated....We are inclined to doubt seriously whether our author ever saw the Marquesas; or if he did, whether he ever resided among the Typees; or, if he did, whether this book is not a sort of romantic satire at the expense of the poor savages.¹⁶

Concerned with defending the cause of missionary work, Bourne ultimately concludes that Melville could not have been describing the situation in the Marquesas accurately—although, tellingly, he can never really decide whether the text is willfully ignorant or romantically satirical. The manner and content of the description themselves constitute evidence of its inaccuracy because they do not correspond with the philosophical aims of missionary work.

At the same time, reviewers including Nathaniel Hawthorne, recognized that Melville's tolerance of sexual morals were beyond the pale of American decorum. In the *Salem Advertiser*, Hawthorne extols the virtues of the book, noting that

¹⁶ William Oland Bourne "[TYPEE: THE TRADUCERS OF MISSIONS.](#)" *Christian Parlor Magazine* (New York: Jul 1846): 74.

[t]he author's descriptions of the native girls are voluptuously colored, yet not more so than the exigencies of the subject appear to require. He has that freedom of view—it would be too harsh to call it laxity of principle—which renders him tolerant of codes of morals that may be little in accordance with our own; a spirit proper enough to a young and adventurous sailor, and which makes his book the more wholesome to our staid landsmen. The narrative is skillfully managed, and in a literary point of view, the execution of the work is worthy of the novelty and interest of its subject.¹⁷

Ultimately, Melville became concerned that people would look on his “freedom of view” unfavourably. In a letter to John Murray, the text's first publisher, Melville wrote that:

This new edition will be a Revised one, and I can not but think that the measure will prove a judicious one.—The revision will only extend the exclusion of those parts not naturally connected with the narrative and some slight purification of style...The book is certainly calculated for popular reading, or for none at all.—If the first, why then, all passages which are calculated to offend the tastes or offer violence to the feelings of any large class of readers are certainly objectionable. —Proceeding on this principle then, I have rejected every thing, in revising the book, which refers to the missionaries....Certain “sea freedoms” also have been modified. (qtd. in James E. Miller *A Reader's Guide to Herman Melville* 33)

An exquisite irony thus attended this careful “calculation for popular reading.” Calculating for popular reading might have meant eliminating some political and sexual content, but nonetheless invoking precisely that evaded content in the apparatus surrounding the text.¹⁸ The very terms

¹⁷ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Salem Advertiser* 25 March 1846.

¹⁸ Perhaps the most ironically negative reviews of the revised edition of *Typee* are those which appear in the Hawaiian periodicals *the Friend* and the *Polynesian*, both published out of Honolulu. In “Melville and the

on which *Typee* enjoyed wide circulation led it to have a cultural life despite Wiley's effort to restrain the sexual and religious terms of that cultural life in his desired revisions. The reviews of *Typee* and Melville's response to them show us that in attempting to disarticulate Christianity from sexuality, the text's history (if not the first edition of the text itself) reveals their close relationship to each other.

The original problem for Wiley was passages like the ones in the opening pages of the book, in which the narrator, Tommo, introduces, and then exemplifies, the nature of initial contact between Westerners and the natives of the South Seas. The text has us believe that the moment of cultural contact between westerners and South Sea islanders is a moment of sexual contact. To convey this to us convincingly, Melville scaffolds his narrative by invoking at the beginning a series of separate, but parallel, accounts of other missionaries' accounts of such contact before describing his own. Unlike the epigraphs at the beginning of *Moby Dick* that precede the text without entering fully into the narrative itself, these opening anecdotes are folded into Tommo's prose at the start. The effect, as we shall see, is overwhelming: repetition and assembly of disparate pieces of text create the sense that there is an obvious type of South Seas cultural, sexual initiation. Moreover, from this beginning Melville reveals the extent to which he participates in, builds upon, and further extends the influence of the generic type. In

Missionaries," Daniel Aaron recounts the "antagonism which Melville's *Typee* and *Omoo* provoked among the so-called respectable element of the islands of the South Seas" (405). Those who wrote these reviews tended to side with the missionary point of view, not with what Aaron describes as the "minority," who believed that the natives were not depraved until after the arrival of the white man. Melville was thus vilified for some time in the pages of both papers, as Melville's marriage for instance was lampooned: the writers wondered whether Fayaway might not be offended. Aaron ends his article in sympathy with the sincerity of the editors of the paper, if not in agreement with them. He cites a passage from *the Friend* from April 1, 1853, p. 28 which recounts, he claims "with almost naïf glee" "the story of a man so enamored with the spirit of *Typee*" he "ordered fifty copies for circulation, but to complete the joke, his agent sent out the '2nd' instead of the '1,st' edition, which, by the way, was expurgated of nearly every paragraph that breathed an anti-missionary spirit. The books lay for a long time unsold on the shelves of the auctioneer's store." (qtd in Aaron p. 408). See Daniel Aaron, "Melville and the Missionaries," *The New England Quarterly* 8.3. (Sept. 1935): 404-08.

front-loading these disparate pieces of text from other writers (pieces of text that, importantly, do not usually find themselves at the beginning of other missionaries' travel narratives), Melville mobilizes for his own writing a machinery of generic influence whose momentum of generic type development extends well beyond the initial publication of *Typee* in 1846.

Before he even gets to piecing these episodes together in his story, it becomes clear to us that there is a set of expectations extending outward from the very name of the place Tommo is about to encounter. He believes he knows exactly what to think, for instance, when the captain finally assents to drop anchor near the Marquesas after six months at sea: "The Marquesas! What strange visions of outlandish things does the very name spirit up!" (13). But what he expects is nonetheless "strange" and "outlandish"—a telling index of the awkward relationship between the precision backward-looking configuration of expectation and the murky forward-looking strangeness that expectation courts but cannot fully anticipate.

The very syntax of Tommo's initial descriptions seems sure of its ordering of words, and yet also peculiarly incoherent at the sentence level. The stories he knows are represented provisionally through a series of nouns, both connected and disjointed by the long dashes between them (strikingly similar to the chapter headings throughout the book that summarize the content of each short episode). The order is particular, one assumes, and yet also, he tells us "jumbled": "Naked houris—cannibal banquets—groves of cocoa-nut—coral reefs tattooed chiefs—and bamboo temples; sunny valleys planted with bread-fruit trees—carved canoes dancing on the flashing blue waters—savage woodlands guarded by horrible idols—*heathenish rites and human sacrifices*. Such were the strangely jumbled anticipations that haunted me during our passage from the cruising ground. I felt an irresistible curiosity to see those islands" (13). We see here not just the extent to which stories have come to structure Tommo's

expectations and fuel his “irresistible curiosity”: we see also a picture of how Tommo’s mind organizes these “strangely jumbled anticipations”—laying out those semi-connected noun groups into a sequence of scenes he will see. This representation of the men’s combined curiosity, desire, hunger and water-weariness may be embodied in the ship itself--“Poor old ship! Her very looks denote her desires: how deplorably she appears”(13)—but it is Tommo (not the ship) who, in offering up the descriptions we see, allows us to see his sculpting of descriptions into narrative form.

Before the ship and its sailors actually experience their own moment of contact with the island and its residents, we get more exposition and examples from the travel of others—sometimes through gestures, sometimes through direct citation and elaborate retellings. We are referred, for instance, to William Ellis, whose *Polynesian Researches* Tommo describes as “interesting accounts of the abortive attempts made by the Tahiti Mission to establish a branch Mission upon certain islands of the group” (14). He “cannot avoid relating” a “somewhat amusing incident [that] took place in connection with these efforts” (14). The incident involved “an intrepid missionary” introducing his wife to the natives so that she might have some influence over their religious conversion. First thinking her to be a “prodigy,” the natives are fascinated with the fact that she is clothed, so they, in Tommo’s words “sought to pierce the sacred veil of calico in which [she] was enshrined, and in the gratification of their curiosity so far overstepped the limits of good breeding, as deeply to offend the lady’s sense of decorum. Her sex once ascertained, their idolatry was changed to contempt” (15). Lest the language of piercing the veil of calico be too euphemistic, Tommo states the case plainly: “to the horror of her affectionate spouse, she was stripped of her garments, and given to understand that she could no longer carry on her deceits with impunity” (15). Then, to round out the first chapter of the

book, Tommo skips ahead to his own later experience “[b]etween two and three years after the adventures recorded in this volume” to offer yet another example of female licentiousness, this time on the part of a Nukehevan Queen, who “singled out an old *salt*,” extensively tattooed:

she immediately approached the man, and pulling further open the bosom of his duck frock, and rolling up the leg of his wide trowsers, she gazes with admiration at the bright blue and vermilion pricking, thus disclosed to view. She hung over the fellow, caressing him, and expressing her delight in a variety of wild exclamations and gestures. (17)

By the time Tommo gets around to describing his own first encounter with the Marquesans, we have some sense of what to expect.

Not surprised are we when the first item on Tommo’s fantasy list, “Naked houris,” is the also the first to be checked off the list: as the Dolly approaches the beach, it sails “right into the midst of swimming nymphs, and they boarded us at every quarter” (24). The synecdoche tells the story. Ship and men alike are boarded by the nymphs, “their jet-black tresses streaming over their shoulders, and half enveloping their otherwise naked forms” (24). Thus, in an orgy, “The Dolly was fairly captured”:

Our ship was now wholly given up to every species of riot and debauchery. Not the feeblest barrier was interposed between the unholy passions of the crew and their unlimited gratification. The grossest licentiousness and the most shameful inebriety prevailed, with occasional and but short-lived interruptions, through the whole period of her stay. Alas the poor savages when exposed to the influence of these polluting examples! Unsophisticated and confiding, they are easily led into every vice and humanity weeps over the ruin thus remorselessly inflicted upon them by their European civilizers. Thrice happy are they who, inhabiting some yet undiscovered island in the

midst of the ocean, have never been brought into contaminating contact with the white man. (25)

In a nice reversal of the colonial dynamic, Tommo acknowledges the complicity—the “contaminating contact”—of “the white man.”¹⁹ Nonetheless, the sexually licentious native women fully inhabit their role as the sexual aggressors.²⁰

What Tommo calls the “abandoned voluptuousness” (25) of “the Marquesan girls” becomes overstated in Melville’s text through this accumulation of parallel examples—each presumably drawn from a separate account or experience of contact with the natives of the south seas. Such an accumulation of examples offered up in parallel over the short space of a few pages and from diverse perspectives creates the overwhelming sense that all encounters with south sea islanders are sexual in exactly this way. This is also the kind of overstatement that Melville attempts to downplay, at Wiley’s insistence, for the revised edition of the book. In the revised edition, therefore, Melville lightens his description of the above scene, literally by cutting the repetitive accumulations he originally built up.

The kind of textually accumulated sexual normativity that Melville constructs (via the figure of Tommo) raises interesting problems concerning just how Melville crafts and describes sexual encounters throughout—but also beyond—his text. It also establishes an antagonism with Christian missionary accounts that he depends upon, even when his resistance falls apart,

¹⁹ As Melville would remark in his preface to *Omoo* (1847), the sequel to *Typee* (1846), “Nowhere, perhaps, are the proverbial characteristics of sailors shown under wilder aspects, than in the South Seas” (325). “The Sperm whale fishery,” he says, was “not only peculiarly fitted to attract the most reckless seamen of all nations, but in various ways, is calculated to foster in them a spirit of utmost license” (325).

²⁰ Justin Edwards argues that the first writer to record this welcome by the Marquesan women is Nicholas Dorr—although this account is much more muted than the account Melville will eventually provide. Dorr writes: “The girls were permitted on board without hesitation. There were in general small and young, quite naked and without exception the most beautiful people I ever saw.” Porter’s version of a similar event is similarly muted: The old chief directed the young girls to swim off to us...The young men led them to the water, where they were soon divested of every covering and conducted to the boat...[O]n their entering the boat, the seamen threw their handkerchiefs to the beautiful naked young women for covering. (13).

throughout the text. He creates a narrative system against which the experiences he is about to relate can be tested and judged. In this case, Tommo's experiences seem to confirm what other storytellers have observed. Elsewhere in the text—when, for instance, Tommo tries to figure out whether he has met up with Typees or Happars and when he attempts to determine whether he's being fed pork or human flesh—Melville uses this same strategy of testing Tommo's experience against the stories he has heard in order to demonstrate the ways in which experience itself exceeds (and builds upon) the stories he has heard. These kinds of moments thus invite us to consider how important Melville's accumulated and selective reading of printed experiences (his own and others) is to the representation of his narrator's own experiences, and to the proliferation of sexual discourse in his own text. They also allow us to recognize that some sexual discourses are more distinctly marked as paradigms than others. Some descriptions of sexual behaviour—like those that open the book—are quite detailed and through their linguistic exertion enable us to see how sexual discourse proliferates unevenly in *Typee*, depending on the nature of the sexuality in question. In light of the ways in which *Typee* has been read for its queer and homosexual resonances (recently, as well as in the nineteenth century), we can observe from the outset at least two distinct, yet overlapping, levels of sexual discourse at play: the licentious and overstated heterosexuality of its opening chapters and the more understated, but nonetheless persistent, homosexual and homosocial attachments between men that become so visible to readers like Charles Warren Stoddard. We can see just how much work Melville does to facilitate the proliferation of sexual discourses in *Typee* by (a) considering the ways in which *Typee* invokes the horizon of expectations of the genre in which he's writing and (b) comparing his text's accounts of sexuality in the South Seas with the missionary and travel literature to which he responds.

First the similarities: it is undeniable that Melville does rely on common images/fantasies of Western first-contact with South Sea Islanders. The critical literature on Melville's text has already made much of this focus on the colonial encounter between the desires and expectations of sailors and missionaries and the putative sexuality of South Sea Islanders.²¹ Among the most significant contributions to the critical literature is Herbert's *Marquesan Encounters*. Not unlike Melville himself, Herbert reproduces, side by side, some of these first-contact moments from Porter (whom he describes as "a spokesman for the Enlightenment") and C.S. Stewart ("a Calvinist,"): both are referenced by name in *Typee*, conveying the sense that Melville's book is, at least at the beginning, an account of accounts. It is the significance of these textual mediations and accumulations that I wish to explore both within the context of Melville's novel and within the textual contexts where the novel circulates.

Herbert diagnoses the ways Melville's text connects "civilization" to sexuality. In Porter's account, Marquesan men "invited the sailors to shore, point[ing] to the women and the house near which they were standing, accompanying their invitation with gestures which we could not misunderstand; and the girls themselves showed no disinclination to grant every favor we might be disposed to ask" (qtd in Herbert 9). When this approach fails, "the old chief directed the young girls to swim off to us: but on the appearance of reluctance the young men led them toward the water, where they were soon divested of every covering and conducted to the boat amid the loud plaudits" (9). When the women finally reach the boat, the seamen are perfect gentlemen, who "threw [the women] their handkerchiefs for covering" (9). Stewart, on the other hand, records that both men and women swam to his ship naked and "the officers by their swords

²¹ For an analysis of tattooing in *Typee* see Juniper Ellis, "Melville and the Missionaries," *SPAN: Journal of the South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies* 48-49 (Apr-Oct 1999): 140-49.

very courteously pointed out the steps at the gangway to them” (qtd in Herbert 11).

Nonetheless, he continues, “I doubt not it is the first [ship] in which they have ever known any restitution to be placed on the grossest licentiousness” and, he adds, “the vessel was thus cleared of noise and nakedness, and the perfumes of coconut oil and other strong odors, which had greatly annoyed and disgusted us” (qtd in Herbert 11).²² The examples that Herbert supplies help to explain his argument, which goes roughly as follows: because these cultural features are common to a group of quite disparate texts, they can tell us something about the culture that those texts represents—and about the “civilization” that has produced those texts. Herbert is thus reading for a pattern of examples, reading those examples with and against each other, so as to articulate the complicated status of sexuality in conceptions of civilization

Typee has all the textual and typographical markers that these kinds of missionary ethnographies have. Its table of contents lists the descriptions contained in each chapter, a series of nouns separated by emdashes, not sentences or abstracts of chapters:

The Sea—Longings For Shore—A Land-Sick Ship—Destination of the Voyagers—The Marquesas—Adventure of a Missionary’s Wife Among the Savages—Characteristic Anecdote of the Queen of Nukuheva

²² Western accounts genuinely puzzle over why the native women would swim to foreign boats so seemingly seductively. Another missionary account explains the behaviour by way of the islanders mythology. In his *History of the Sandwich Islands* (1831), Princeton-born Baptist, Ephraim Eveleth describes this mythology as follows: Superstition had much to do with the kind reception given by the Islanders to the strangers. According to tradition, Loono, one of the ancient kings of Hawaii, slew his wife in a fit of passion. Afterwards, becoming gloomy and sullen from remorse, he wandered through the Islands seeking relief for his melancholy. And at length embarked on the ocean in a frail canoe and was never more heard of by his subjects. After his departure he was deified and worshipped by them; and as they had not ceased to expect that he would at some future time return, it was natural enough for them to conclude, when they saw the ships of foreigners, that they were bringing back their god in triumph. In consequence of a belief that they discovered the desired object in the person of Captain Cook, they covered their faces, and prostrated themselves on the ground in his presence, presented him with gifts of various kinds, and even paid him such religious homage, as is usually offered by an idolatrous people, under the influence of wild fanaticism. (12)

These lists are repeated as the heading of each chapter. The chapters are short and establish that they are driven more by description than narration. As a book, *Typee* is laid out ethnographically—similar in many respects to other published descriptions of travels, as if each chapter collects a discontinuous set of details, connected only by their sequence in time. By the time that Melville writes, however, there has come to be a tension in the genre of travel writing between recording details and crafting those details into a distinct plot. In fact, one of the earliest chroniclers of his travels in the South Seas, William Ellis, came to take great pains to distinguish between his travel writing and narrative. In 1825, he published *A journal of a tour around Hawaii, the largest of the Sandwich Islands. By a deputation from the mission on those islands*. The following year, he published *Narrative of a tour through Hawaii, or Owhyhee*, which contains, almost verbatim, the same descriptions he wrote in his journal. The difference is that he attempts to arrange them into a plot highlighted more fully as a sequence and not just an arbitrary collection of details. What he adds, in other words, is a metadiscursive level of language that aims to organize further both the writing and reading of these details. In the preface, he opined that this version would be “more agreeable than that of a daily journal” (iv). The narrative followed the same format for chapter headings as his journal. The “daily journal” format is one that most missionary accounts take. The entries are organized not by plot as a story with a beginning, a middle and an end (with a marriage or an escape as its conclusion); instead they subscribe to plot as calendar, with some details reinforcing or summarizing what is about to come. The text has more of a skeleton. The placement of details varies greatly, even if there are some structural similarities in the actual details, but there is no greater sense of narrative tension or rhythm than there was with the earlier version.

Typee more closely resembles Ellis’s second “Narrative” than his earlier “Journal” in that

it retains the headings full of details, separated and connected by dashes. But it adds that extra level of strong narrative arc that travel journals like Charles Stewart's lack. The desire for plot can be seen from the opening in the retrospective mode of narration (the promise of a "stirring adventure," and the exceptional storytelling capacity of sailors (9)); Tommo's address to the reader in the "Preface" about the story that will follow (which clearly has a beginning, a middle and an end) and his constant efforts to translate his experiences into what he sees as familiar stories. We find frequent references to *Robinson Crusoe*, echoes of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in allusions to Adam, Eve and the Garden of Eden; reminders of Sodom and Gomorrah; direct citations of the likes of Captain Cook, Ellis, and Stewart; and descriptions of nature tinged with Romanticism. At the same time, we are exposed to his anxiety that not all the details may correspond with those familiar stories: some things will appear, in the conventional promise of travel narratives, as "strange" or "incomprehensible," although they are nonetheless the "unvarnished truth" (10).²³ What we see, through the course of *Typee*'s engagement with these cited texts, is the extent to which Melville transforms the stories he cites by transposing them into a new context and framing them not only in the context of Tommo's own narrative, but allowing his reader to see how these stories seem to frame each other through sheer family resemblance. The transposed, familiar story remains inadequate to the task of assimilating all the details that Tommo describes, which is one of the ways in which Melville creates the need for his own descriptions and his own story. Whether these conventions assimilated from earlier texts and genres are an important part of determining how *Typee* was circulated and received cannot perhaps be known empirically: but their inclusion would seem to suggest that Melville believed

²³ For more on the rhetorical conventions and limitations of narrative claims about empirical truth, (i.e. the "strange therefore true" convention of the travel narrative), see Michael McKeon, *Origins of the English Novel: 1600-1740* (Baltimore: Hopkins UP, 1987) 100-117.

they were important to calculating for popular reading if only for the ways they take for granted a readerly starting point. Melville's engagement with and his representations of the narrative attitude and details from missionary accounts of life in the South Seas thus stage both his embrace of the generic expectations the missionary account create and his antagonism toward the content of those same accounts. In this way, *Typee* can be seen not just to index the context of its own circulation but to reframe the story of that circulatory context as one in which sexual details and religious terminology each frame each other and depend for their articulation on the co-existence of competing viewpoints.

Anyone who picks up a nineteenth-century text by William Ellis, Captain Porter, C.S. Stewart, or any other text from the early 1800s by a missionary or sailor is likely to have a very different experience reading about Western encounters with South Sea islanders than the one Melville offers. One does not find, in the opening pages of most missionary accounts, the kind of lavish or prurient detail that Melville records early in *Typee*. These examples of sexual-cultural contact do appear, but they take some time to find and usually they are not afforded quite the same word-count in which Melville indulges. They almost never appear early in the text (the opening chapters of Stewart's journal, for one, dote almost exclusively on the landscape); and they never appear in those original texts within a stack of similar examples as Melville provides. Some accounts will quote from others (as Ephraim Eveleth quotes from C.S. Stewart), but only because the writer believes something is better described by another—not to assemble an arsenal of examples that prove a particular point. Furthermore, the first details we learn about the natives, in many such texts, are not sexual at all. In some texts, one has to really search to find examples of the status of sexuality in the missionaries' accounts—they do not appear at the beginning, as the *sine qua non* of colonial encounters, as Herbert's analysis seems to imply. In

his *History of the Sandwich Islands* (1831), Ephraim Eveleth seems content to treat the matter only once it has been cured: in describing the success of the mission, he concludes,

Yet here are the facts; and there is no disputing them. Immortal life is brought to light, and the poor islander aspires after it, and rejoices in hope; and his hope purifies, and his aspirations exert a redeeming influence upon him. The drunkard becomes sober; the lewd person pure; the thief falls in love with honesty; and the idolator looks away from the creature to the Creator, and strives to raise his life to a heavenly standard. (142-43)

Even where the initial descriptions of natives do highlight differences in sexual behaviour and mores, the mode of description is much more muted than Melville's. Take, for instance, the following passage from Rev. Samuel Colcord Bartlett's *Sketch of the Hawaiian Mission: 1820-1862*²⁴:

While the missionaries are on their way, let us take a look at the people whom they were going to reclaim. The ten islands of the Hawaiian group—an area somewhat less than Massachusetts—were peopled by a well-formed, muscular race, with olive complexions and open countenances in the lowest states of barbarism, sensuality, and vice. The children went stark naked till they were nine or ten years old; and the men and women wore the scantiest apology for clothing, which neither sex hesitated to leave in the hut at home before they passed through the village to the surf. The king came more than once from the surf to the house of Mr. Ruggles with his five wives, all in a state of nudity; and on being informed of the impropriety, he came the next time dressed—with a pair of silk stockings and a hat! The natives had hardly more modesty or shame than so many animals. Husbands had many wives, and wives had many husbands, and exchanged each

²⁴ One assumes that this was published for the first time after 1862, although the edition I read in AAS was published in 1900, with a preface written during that year.

other at pleasure. The most revolting forms of vice, as Captain Cook had occasion to know, were practiced in open sight. When a foreign vessel came to harbor the women would swim to it in flocks for the vilest of purposes. Two thirds of all the children, probably, were destroyed in infancy—strangled or buried alive. (4-5)

Although Bartlett refers to “barbarism, sensuality, and vice,” comments on the natives’ nudity, and dismisses the polygamy he sees, he does not linger on or revel in these details. Unlike Melville, he seems to see sex as something vicious, not to be lingered on. He observes vice as a matter of fact and moves on to discuss questions of human sacrifice, science, and eating in successive paragraphs. The most revolting forms of vice “are practiced” in the passive voice, invoked only to be occluded. It is quite often the case that the islanders’ sexual behaviour will be conveyed obliquely through words like “vice” or “sensuality,” not through detailed descriptions or stories that elaborate or plot vice and sensuality. Moreover, even these oblique details do not usually appear in the text’s introduction, where they condition readers’ expectations. Where they do appear, they are usually embedded within the text, often even a hundred pages or so into the narrative.

The fact that most missionary accounts of life in the South Seas do not offer elaborate descriptions of the natives’ behaviour can be explained by the very project in which they are engaged. The missionaries’ evangelical goals are elaborated as a gift being presented to the islanders. Several American agencies published instructions for the missionaries, which outline the missionaries’ goals primarily in terms of what they need to accomplish among themselves as a group. In 1823, The [American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions](#) published *Instructions to the missionaries about to embark for the Sandwich Islands; and to the Rev. Messrs. William Goodell, & Isaac Bird, attached to the Palestine Mission: delivered by the*

corresponding secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This document outlines the need for missionaries to be united and to make themselves “available for piety.” It cites friendship with the natives as being one of the keys to success, but never really offers much description of what the missionaries will encounter when they arrive.

Another statement of the missionaries’ goals appears in a 3-page broadside in 1836, which responds to criticisms of the American missions in newspapers of the Hawaiian Islands. The *Sandwich Islands Gazette* had catalogued a series of abuses by the missionaries, to which the Sandwich Islands Mission responded: “To the friends of civilization and Christianity: Whereas differences of opinion have arisen, respecting the objects and operations of this *mission*, we feel it incumbent on us to state publicly the ends at which we aim ... The general object of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions ...” (emphasis and punctuation original).²⁵ Their most explicit statement of the project is as follows and quotes directly from an earlier document outlining their directions:

The instructions and charge given to the members of this mission, were given in public, and have been widely circulated for the inspection of the world. In these we are commanded “to aim at nothing short of covering these islands with fruitful fields and pleasant dwellings, and school and churches, and raising up the whole people to an elevated state of Christian civilization.” And to effect this, we are instructed to use our exertions, “to introduce and get into extended operation and influence among them the arts, institutions, and usages of civilized life and society: above all to convert them from their idolatries, superstitions, and vices, to the living God.”

The official story of the missionaries is that they are more interested in their own “exertions”

²⁵ The Sandwich Islands Mission. Broadside. 1836

than on cataloguing the behaviors they are trying to alter.

This does not mean that their acknowledgement of those behaviours, however thin that acknowledgement is on details, is uncomplicated. Herbert goes some distance toward articulating the intricacies of the missionaries' attitudes toward Marquesan sexuality:

The "disgust they felt for the Marquesans is a complex response. Since their repressive mechanisms were geared to sexual feeling, such feeling could only come to consciousness against resistance; it could only make itself known as it overwhelmed the barriers that had been set up to keep it from view. Such disgust is a composite of attraction and shunning, an uncomfortable state of mind that leaves the person who feels it with a considerable resentment of the person who arouses it, as well as a feeling of somehow guiltlessly having been dirtied. (131)

This attraction and its attendant shame/disgust, he continues, impacts significantly on the missionaries' capacity to discern "a fair view of their character" —and he cites an example from Stewart as evidence:

The missionaries were thrown chronically into this state by the behaviour of the Polynesians, so much so that Charles Stewart counted it as one of the main reasons why it was hard to get a fair view of their character: "a man of nice moral sensibility, and one alive to the purity of affection essential to genuine piety, is exposed, in a disgust at the licentiousness unavoidably obtruded on his notice, to lose sight of all that is pleasing and praiseworthy in the nature and conditions of the inhabitants, and to think and speak of them only as associated, in his mind, with a moral deformity and vileness that, in some respects, can scarce be equaled." (131)

What Herbert describes as the limits of "get[ting] a fair view of character" could also be

described, in literary terms, as the limits of description itself in these missionary accounts.

Like many other missionaries, Stewart has seen licentiousness, but uses his aspirations to piety as an excuse not to describe it—not even in cautionary terms. In fact, Herbert commonly points to moments where the missionaries try to avoid not just describing, but even observing, sexual licentiousness in the Marquesans.

The fact that these missionary accounts do not erect elaborate descriptions of sexual life in the South Seas thus seems striking, or at least somewhat unexpected, given Melville's treatment of first-contact in the opening pages of his book. In stipulating these generic expectations, Melville goes some distance toward showing us how the missionary accounts themselves are resignified through their reconstruction. Melville thus also puts both himself and his reader in a position to test the generic expectations that he assumes his reader to have, creating the effect of testing even his own account against theirs—a fact that is central to understanding the operation of the book's irony and the narrator's ambivalence toward the very authorities he invokes.

Melville's use of irony is essential to both his successes and his failures because it is the textual form in which his ambivalence toward religion presents itself. Tommo's ambivalence seems to be produced by his simultaneous distrust of missionary accounts and his dependence on those accounts for knowledge about the South Seas—an ambivalence that becomes visible to us when Tommo must test his own authority as a narrator against the same stories he has told us authoritatively. Having escaped the Dolly and encountered the Typees, he and Toby must decide whether the Typees are cannibals, as they have heard. This encounter exposes a large gap between the stories Tommo and Toby have heard and the experience they have yet to have. Their job is to discern whether the natives are hiding the

malicious practice from them. Tommo is relying, interestingly, on the stories he has already heard about the tribe. And everything he has heard about the Typees defines them as cannibals: They are “celebrated warriors” whose escapades inspire other islanders with “unspeakable terrors” (35); “their very name is a frightful one”; it means “lover of human flesh,” and the Typees “enjoy notoriety all over the islands” (35). All the while, the Typees claim that it is the other tribes who are cannibals.

The stories that others tell in the context of the story are not all missionaries’ stories, but Melville ultimately subjects them to readers’ expectations of that genre by situating his own narrative in conversation with theirs from the opening. These stories—in print and in person—play a large role in creating tension in the text precisely because invoking them calls attention to the contrast in world views between Tommo and the natives he meets and between the storytellers and Tommo himself. Tommo never fully trusts the Typees’ motives and keeps changing his mind about whether he is benefiting or suffering from their hospitality. But he also is not sure whether to believe everything he has heard. At the beginning of the text, when Tommo is describing the natives, he also responds to a long history, which figures natives (North American natives) as ruthless beings lurking beneath the guise of friendship. He inverts the terms and names the colonizers as the savages and tells the story of Captain Porter’s attack on the Typees as an example. Porter, he says, endeavored to gratify the mortal hatred of his allies the Nukehevas and Happars [enemy tribes of the Typees] (37). Having burned their houses and temples, he “proclaimed to [the valley’s] inhabitants the spirit that reigned in the breasts of Christian soldiers” (37). Tommo continues:

Who can wonder at the deadly hatred of the Typees to all foreigners after such unprovoked atrocities? Thus it is that they whom we denominate “savages” are made to

deserve the title. When the big inhabitants of some sequestered island first descry the “big canoe” of the European rolling through the blue waters towards their shores, they rush down to the beach in crowds, and with open arms stand ready to embrace the strangers. Fatal embrace! They fold to the bosoms the vipers whose sting is destined to poison all their joys; and the instinctive feeling of love within their breasts is soon converted to the bitterest hate.

The enormities perpetrated in the South Seas upon some of the inoffensive islanders wellnigh pass belief. These things are seldom proclaimed at home; they happen at the very ends of the earth; they are done in a corner, and there are none to reveal them.

(37)

In a reversal of the usual story that has by now become a convention itself, the Europeans are the dissemblers. The Christians are the villains and their accounts lack precisely the details “seldom proclaimed at home” that Tommo seems poised to describe.

What becomes clear throughout the book, however, are the ways that the stories Tommo claims to have heard and read chisel out a boundary between the narrative paradigms he has been given and the details he presents. Not unlike Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Tommo wants to show us things that “are seldom proclaimed at home,” but he struggles to present those details in something like their own terms. Where Melville strives most for language to describe the Typees’ world view are those moments when he tries to conceptualize virtue, sexual behavior, and gender roles beyond the linguistic structures he knows with only the language he has in order to do so.

The problem of describing Typee “virtue” demonstrates the case nicely. Tommo says he has been told that “they [the Typees] had no word in their language to express the idea of virtue”

(151). Although he dismisses this assertion, he avers that such a statement, were it to be taken seriously, “might be met by stating that their language was almost entirely destitute of terms to express the delightful ideas conveyed by our endless catalogue of civilized crimes” (151).

Civilization, he suggests, is itself barbaric in many ways, and virtue is not the domain only of those “civilizations” who have a word for it. Virtue is connected not just to ideas of good breeding or civilization; it is connected also with standards of sexual behavior, its opposite, “vice” being the operative term for all things sexual in accounts of South Sea life up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Following upon his comments about virtue, he continues that the Typees are most happy and, he implies most virtuous, because of the things that do not characterize their way of life. First among these is money: “That ‘root of all evil’ was not to be found in the valley” (151). But also among the virtuously missing, perhaps an effect of the absence of money, is the absence of sexual unhappiness: “In this secluded abode of happiness, there were no cross old women, no cruel step-dames, no withered spinsters, no love-sick maidens, no sour old bachelors, no melancholy young men, no blubbering youngsters, and no squalling brats” (151-52). In America, what all these figures have in common is their being outside the conventional structure of marriage, even if the terms of their exclusion (and therefore the terms of their virtue) are still derived from the Christian theology that Tommo ascribed to the Protestant missionaries. It is not that there are no “old women,” “step-dames,” “spinsters,” “maidens,” “bachelors,” “young men,” or “youngster” in Typee; Tommo has observed examples of all. But in Typee they lose their pejorative adjectives. One might read this fact as evidence that Tommo’s effort to distinguish virtue and even socio-sexual states of being in Typee from their American counterparts collapses back into itself: after all, his language is no less American English for its efforts to describe the Typee social world. Unlike those moments in the text when

English simply is not up to the task and Tommo must use words like *tappa* and *Ti* to describe irreducibly foreign objects, when Tommo wants to convey a yet to be abstracted idea of virtue, English does supply him with the tools. But what this collapse of the socially foreign and the linguistically familiar nonetheless indicates is the possibility that virtue and sexuality themselves might have other forms in Typee, even if Tommo has no language to describe these forms but the one he already knows. What we can see beginning to open up here is a space for non-pejorative sexual sociability outside of traditional marriage.

It is inevitable that the opposition that Tommo tries to establish between American versions of virtue, sexual behavior, and religion and Typee versions of the same should falter under the stress of finding distinct language to describe them both—even as Tommo paradoxically succeeds in creating a sense of that distinction. His failure to name Typee virtue precisely or abstractly is therefore not evidence that Tommo ultimately can see no distinction at all. It is, rather, evidence that the intellectual work of drawing distinctions increases when one is much more intimately acquainted, as Tommo is, with one system of understanding over another. Because Tommo is thoroughly American, American values and English constructions are the tools he has available to him for making sense of what he observes.

When it comes to describing what Typee religion is, Tommo experiences a similar inability to abandon how he knows what theology is, which leads him to fall back on the linguistic and religious structures of American Protestantism. At first he professes his “inability to gratify any curiosity that may be felt with regard to the theology of the valley” (202). A few sentences later, he concludes that

An unbounded liberty of conscience seemed to prevail. Those who pleased to do so were allowed to repose implicit faith in an ill favored god with a large bottle nose and fat

shapeless arms crossed upon his breast; whilst others worshipped an image which, having no likeness either in heaven or on earth, could hardly be called an idol. As the islanders always maintained a discreet reserve, with regard to my own peculiar views on religion, I thought it would be excessively ill-bred in me to pry into theirs. (202)

The very phrase “unbounded liberty of conscience” seems to embrace what it describes as an obvious good in itself. However “ill-favored” or “shapeless” the god or how idolatrous the worship may be, the Typees have generated a religious practice that deserves the protection of privacy because its freedom is unfettered. “Unbounded,” it may be the object of suspicion, but few Americans are likely to take issue with its liberty. Still, as much as Tommo may want to believe in a “live-and-let-live” approach to the Typees’ religion, he continues to interpret it for his readers merely by describing it in terms they will understand. He believes that Kory-Kory, who takes care of his every need while he is in the valley, has told him about a “Polynesian heaven” (204); he identifies what he believes is a “chief’s mausoleum” (205); he compares the ceremonies he observes to those of the “Freemason” (210); and he describes a figure in one of the groves, an “idol,” in terms that bear strong resemblance to the biblical Adam, “the likeness of a portly naked man” who is “partly concealed by the foliage of a tree” (210). Moreover, in spite of the fact that Tommo has begun his narrative by pointing out the flaws of missionary thinking about the natives, Melville has him draw many of the same conclusions they do. Having seen Kory-Kory deface the Adam-like idol in the grove, he concludes his chapter on the Typees’ religion with the following: “I regard the Typees as a back-slidden generation. They are sunk in religious sloth, and require a spiritual revival...the tattooed clergy are altogether too-light-hearted and lazy—and their flocks are going astray” (211-12). On the one hand, it is difficult to read this passage straight. That Tommo himself “slides back” into the myths, the metaphors, and the

morals of the Protestant missions should not be taken as evidence that he is simply complicit with their aims (he is joking, after all). Which is not to say that ideologically, he is pure in his defense of the Typees and his castigation of the missionaries. Whether joking or in earnest, the only language Tommo has to draw distinctions is the restatement of the moralizing epithets he knows. At points like these, it becomes difficult to determine whether the irony is Tommo's or Melville's.

One of the biggest challenges Melville confronts in his effort to disarticulate the Typees' sexual behaviour from the language of Christianity is trying to ascertain the boundaries of what he sees as his relatively more secular project. How, in other words, can he parse his language so as to damn the missionary project without redeeming everything about Typee life? How, also, can he nonetheless inhabit a Christian worldview (as he does) and critique the tasks undertaken in its name? The status of religion in and around *Typee* is confounded by the fact that the more Tommo tries to describe the cultural life of Typee beyond missionary accounts of it, the murkier the boundary becomes between his language (peculiar in that it is simultaneously secular and Christian) and the distinctly Typee practices he wants to see as being beyond the Christian missionary worldview. Ultimately, rather than escape the impasse, Melville makes these contradictions work for him. From the very beginning of the book, Tommo sees himself as outside of any evangelical project, but the very words he has available to him to describe what he sees throw him back into the frameworks from which he wants to distance himself. The fact that he regularly invokes a range of texts from the Bible to *Robinson Crusoe* to *Paradise Lost* (texts that also evoke a range of attachments to Christian belief) also invites us to see where his translations break down—where, in other words, he strives for language beyond the familiar texts and intertexts he has already cited. The words from the native culture that he does retain—

“taboo,” “ti,” and “tappa,” for instance—throw his other descriptions into sharp relief, suggesting the degree to which he strives for literary terms beyond known English referents. By inhabiting both language worlds fully, he can aim more sharply to designate their peculiarities and their antagonisms without having to abandon either until the end. In this way, Melville’s language enacts what is “strange” and “incomprehensible” while also generating interest for readers to whom Tommo has promised a “stirring adventure.” Thus, Melville’s efforts to demarcate the boundaries between his own descriptions and the worldviews he cites point to a space in his text that cannot be fully assimilated to Western points of view—even and perhaps especially where those boundaries fail to be maintained.

It may well be the fact that these details could not be assimilated within the missionary point of view that so angered reviewers like William Bourne and thus worried John Wiley. They wanted more of a simple moral story. In the absence of this formal simplicity one of the biggest accusations Bourne could make against Melville was that these details could not possibly be accurate. What Bourne fails to realize is that Melville has perhaps done the missionary movement a service, having succeeded in both simplifying and complicating the story that the missionaries tell about their encounters with the natives of the South Seas. He simplifies it by augmenting the sexual nature of contact with the natives—collecting and assembling descriptions that amount to a textual pattern—even if he then complicates his own simplification by later relying on the same religious frameworks in whose name vice and sensuality are pitted against Christian conversion.

There are many reasons why these complications do not register within the initial reviews of *Typee*. Large among these is that fact that travel writing tended to be judged according to standards of accuracy rather than literary complexity. Which is not to say that the text was not

admired for its literary complexity: almost every major literary figure of the nineteenth-century who read *Typee*—Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson, David Thoreau—all voiced approval of the text's literary merits. But the book's claim to be telling a true story cast it beyond literary considerations into a different register of reception. It resonated with debates that also surrounded the nature of Western investment in traveling to the South Seas at all. In "calculating for popular reading," Melville tightens some of his descriptions to appear less racy and eliminates the most direct criticisms of the missionaries—implicitly taking more seriously the criticisms of his detractors than the praise of his supporters.

But those details that are already not assimilable to existing narrative frameworks of missionary aims—whether to affirm or question those frameworks—are allowed to stand and circulate freely in the text. *Typee* thus opens a description space in which we find those details which, however unassimilable to the dominant ways of thinking about civilization in the nineteenth century, come to produce and acquire queer meanings when they resonate with other details. We might even say that these are the same kind of details that Melville recognizes dispersed in the missionary accounts—details that come to be comprehensible to readers like Stoddard only after they are recognized for the resonance they have with the details dispersed in other texts.

The controversy surrounding Melville's treatment of both sex and the missionaries continued to fuel sales of *Typee* and led to the publication of further editions of the book (two in 1846—the first and then the revised edition, 1847, 1850, 1861, 1892, 1900)—and thus also facilitated the circulation of all these seemingly indigestible descriptive details. Further, the success of *Typee* generated something of its very own category of spin-off literature all of which

seem to claim some derivation from *Typee*: other first-person accounts of “going native claiming to be true stories,”²⁶ Christian adventures in the South Seas²⁷, adventure fiction²⁸; and even a whole subgenre of children’s literature.²⁹ In fact, Melville’s opening account of sexual first-contact with the native islanders had become such a stock feature of the narrative that it could not be eliminated from even the children’s literature versions. One striking example appears in Mary Hughes’s *May Morning, or A visit to the country; for little boys and little girls*, published in 1849, three years after *Typee*. The first half of this book seems to bear no relation to *Typee* until the farmer next door to the family comes by to recount his adventures in the Typee valley. Even more peculiar is the presence of a footnote in the book, acknowledging its debt to Melville: “This account is chiefly taken from a work entitled ‘Narrative of a four months’

²⁶ These included the anonymously published *The Modern Crusoe, or King of the Cannibals of the Marquesas Islands* (London: 1869, first published in *The Weekly Budget*, May–August), which actually plagiarizes Melville; Benjamin Barker, *Coriillia, or the Indian Enchantress, a Romance of the Pacific and its Islands* (Boston: Flag of our Union Office, 1847); Dora Hort, *Hena, or Life in Tahiti*, 2vol. (London: 1866), in which the wife of merchant in Pape’ete develops a romance of mixed-race; William Torrey, *Torrey’s Narrative* (Boston: 1848); James Bowman, *The Island Home, or the young Castaways* (ed. Christopher Romaunt) (Boston: 1851). Melville was also translated into German by Friedrich Wilhelm Gerstäcker, who also penned *Tahiti: Roman aus der Südsee* (Leipzig: Costenoble, 1854) (also Leipzig: Hesse & Becker, reprint); *Blau Wasser* (Leipzig: 1858); *Der kleine Wallfischfänger* [the Young Whaler] (Leipzig: Costenoble, 1856, 1858, 1876); *Inselwelt* (Leipzig: Arnold, 1860) (new ed. Düsseldorf: Droste, 1951); and *Die Missionäre, Roman aus der Südsee* (Iena: Costenoble, 1868, 3vol.). According to O’Reilly, several of Gerstacker’s books were also critical of Protestants in Tahiti.

²⁷ Bill Pearson suggests that some “twenty-odd novels [were] set in the Pacific” mostly propaganda for the missionary cause (56). These included a group of novels by W.H.G. Kingston: *Mary Liddiard, or the Missionary’s Daughter* (London: 1873). See *Rifled Sanctuaries some views of the Pacific Islands in Western Literature* (Auckland UP, 1984).

²⁸ R. M. Ballantyne developed an entire series of travel books including *The Cannibal Islands: or Captain Cook’s Adventures in the South Seas* (London: Nisbet, 1874); *Gascoyne the Sandalwood Trader: a Tale of the Pacific* (London: 1864; Jarwin and Cuffy, London: Frederick Warne); *The Island Queen: or Dethroned by Fire and Water, a tale of the Southern Hemisphere* (London: Nisbet, 1885); *The Lonely Island: or the Refuge of the Mutineers* (London: J. Nisbet, 1880); *Philosopher Jack: a Tale of the Southern Seas*, (London: Nisbet, 1879).

²⁹ *Robert Merry’s Museum* (a 19th c. literary journal devoted to publishing children’s literature) published what it claimed to be excerpts from *Typee* (They were, however, more properly paraphrases of some of the adventures in *Typee*—not taken directly from the text). To a large extent, this budding genre of literature might be attributed to the success of *Swiss Family Robinson*, but there is clearly a Melvillian twist here in the texts generated post-1846. See also Mary Austin, *Literature for Children about Oceania* (Greenwood P, 1996).

residence in the Marquesas.’ By Herman Melville.” (55fn). Although this is a very condensed version of the story, the farmer’s introduction to his story recalls the following details:

After being knocked about till the life was almost out of my body, and I had lost all consciousness of my situation, I at last recovered my senses, and found I was lying with several others of the crew, on a strand, and surrounded by a set of naked wretches, that were jumping and howling about us, like so many baboons. (36-37)

The “naked wretches” become animalistic (“like so many baboons”), primitive in the ways they surround the crew, “jumping and howling”—much like the “naked houris” who “boarded” the Dolly in Melville’s first, unedited account. In an exquisite example of the ways experience can be transformed into innocence, the baboons are “houris” desexualized, just as the narrator, too, is desexualized since he does not participate in the riotous debauchery (unlike Tommo and the member of the Dolly).

That *Typee* becomes children’s literature through subsequent acts of editing, rewriting, and recirculation is but one example of how writing about the South Seas began to take on more popular fictional form in the wake of Melville’s book. Writing about the South Seas had begun to appear in print during the eighteenth century with excitement about the investment and the South Seas bubble, but in the wake of Melville’s book,³⁰ it seems safe to argue that further

³⁰ The earliest exploration of the region dates back to the seventeenth century and was common enough knowledge for Daniel Defoe to write *An Essay on the South Sea Trade* in 1712, seven years before *Robinson Crusoe*. It had long been rumored that the decline in population was due to the natives having committed both cannibalism and infanticide. For an account of this practice and its origins, see William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, During a Residence of Nearly Six Years in the South Sea Islands*, 2 vols. (London: Fisher, 1829). See also *Exploration and Exchange: A South Seas Anthology 1680-1900*, ed. Jonathan Lamb et al (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000) provides an excellent selection of excerpts from the history of writing about the South Seas and provides succinct commentary without polemical rhetoric. See also Vanessa Smith, *Literary Culture and the Pacific: Nineteenth-Century Textual Encounters* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998); T. Walter Herbert, *Marquesan Encounters: Melville and the Meaning of Civilization* (Cambridge; London: Harvard UP, 1980), and Rod Edmond, “The Pacific/Tahiti: Queen of the South Sea Isles,” *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 139-55.

accounts of life in the South Seas came to life in print and sowed the seeds for greater and more diverse interest among the reading audience for sea novels and travel literature. The irony is that even as Melville clearly rode his own wave of popularity in following up *Typee* with *Omoo*, *Mardi*, and even *Moby Dick*—he did so with increasingly diminishing returns.

In the wake of *Typee*'s publication and popularity—spurred on by its twinned treatments of sex and religion—*Typee* thus came to embody a kind of narrative type. Enough texts accumulated in a combined mimicry and reaction against it, that it became for other writers what texts like Ellis's, Porter's, and Stewart's had become for Melville: a point of departure, but a necessary precursor. Even Mary Hughes, writing for children, felt compelled to add the appropriate footnote to *Typee*. Reviewers began to compare later South Seas writings to Melville's and to cite Melville as he himself had cited others. Thus it was that by the end of the nineteenth century, Melville floated to the top of reviewers' lists even in the face of all the imitations and derivative texts that might just as easily have served to create a category of literature that exceeded and disguised its own origins.

However much *Typee* appears to have calcified into a narrative type, reducible to the skeleton of a plot suitable even for children, the circulation of this skeleton plot also made possible the circulation of those details seemingly unassimilable to that plot—those details were filtered through that murky and seemingly boundless secular Christian framework as well as those details that did not quite fit the only officially identified romance on the island, between Tommo and Fayaway. Tommo would not claim the same attachment to Kory-Kory, the same terms of adoration for Marnoo, or the same dependence on Toby that he would claim for his avowed love-object Fayaway. The most overt language of love in the novel is reserved for

descriptions of Fayaway. But precisely because these details were important to advancing the plot of the text, they could never be left totally behind as *Typee*'s secrets were circulated to the ends of the earth. They lay in wait for readers who would perversely see something more appealing in Tommo's participation with Mehevi in the culture of the Bachelor Ti, and something attractive even in his intimacy with Kory-Kory, notwithstanding his description of Kory-Kory as a "hideous object." It would be possible to read these details as part of the formation of another narrative type, however, only when enough parallel examples could be accumulated to allow them to resonate as such.

Between Showing and Telling: Descriptive Ironies and the Queering of Melville

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when *Typee*'s queerness became visible as such to readers. It possible that Stoddard had as much to do with this as Melville's own writing—although there was no widespread acknowledgement of what Stoddard took to be obvious until years after *Typee* first appeared. The reviewers who skipped over the seemingly bland fact that the *South Sea Idyls* stories were all about love affairs between men³¹ were far more interested in identifying the similarities between Stoddard's and Melville's writings. In a review of Stoddard's *South Sea Idyls* that appeared in *Appleton's Journal of Science Literature and Art*, it becomes clear that *Typee* has settled into its status as novel and as narrative, and that in the ongoing publication of material the readings of *Typee* have begun to shift, as it resonated within the textual legacy it helped to generate:

Herman Melville, with "Omoo" and "Typee," had given us a glimpse of the Pacific-

Island life—but a glimpse so obviously seen through the glass of romance alone, that it

³¹ In *Overland Monthly*, one reviewer blithely observed, without further comment, that the plot of Stoddard's "A South Sea Idyl" concerned the protagonist's "romantic friendship with a Tahitian boy."

might pass for little more than a fancy. But, when Mr. Stoddard began to interpret for us that little-known civilization, he fell at once into so happy a middle course between realism and idealism, between poetry and admirable picturing, that what he wrote possessed the charms of both schools. Where other men have written on the same subject that have been only fanciful conceptions, but which might as well have been modeled exactly after “Rasselas,” for any true picture that they gave us, Mr. Stoddard has seized the very spirit and tone of the life of which he tells. He has created, as it were, the actual literature of the island people.³²

Remarkable here, as in many reviews of Stoddard’s book, are the terms of the reviewer’s praise. Stoddard is credited with exceeding Melville because his offering seems more “true” and because he “has seized the very spirit and tone of life of which he tells.” The very spirit and tone of life that Stoddard brings into focus is the very mode of life Stoddard described in his letter to Whitman: one where love between men is free and he can “escape the frigid manners of the Christians.”³³

But it is only in retrospect that we can recognize how Stoddard’s sustained writings about the South Seas—from his early poetry through *South Sea Idyls* to the later *For The Pleasure of his Company*—ultimately produced the broadest, most focused, narrative world view of sexual relationships between men that had existed to that point in American literature. I will have more to say about the extent to which this was made possible through Stoddard’s understanding of

³² “Literary Notes” *Appletons’ Journal of Literature, Science and Art*, (Nov 1, 1873) X.,241. 573.

³³ Arthur Herman Wilson also comments on the similarities among the work of Stoddard, Melville, Stevenson, and other writers in terms of their representations of the South Seas. See Arthur Herman Wilson, “Escape Southward” *The North American Review* (Dec 1, 1939) 248.2: 265.

literary circulation and textual accumulation and by way of his antiquarian habits in the next chapter. For now, it is worth pointing out that even though Stoddard is now recognized (where he is recognized at all) as an early gay writer, reviewers of Stoddard's work at the date of publication did not focus on his representations of same-sex sexuality as such. These were taken for granted. It was rather something about his mode of description and its assumed relationship to that licentious sensuality of South Seas life that garnered critical praise—such that as I outlined earlier in this chapter—reviewer after reviewer from William Bourne to Nathaniel Hawthorne to the range of excerpted comments included even in the edited American edition comment on the text's raciness without ever castigating its male-male erotics.

It makes sense, then, that it is precisely in description details that had yet to become consonant with the simple abstraction of homosexuality that Melville's *Typee* has come to seem queerest to readers. *Typee* is not a drama of a love affair between men, as Stoddard's stories are. But it does feature quite intense attachments between men. These kinds of relationships reach their fullest realization first at the centre of Stoddard's novels, but the language for describing them has been a long time in the making.

Melville's Tommo is at his queerest when he is describing other men and his engagement with them. From his description of Toby's "remarkably prepossessing exterior" (44) to his assessment of Marnoo as a "Polynesian Apollo" with a "cheek of feminine softness", "naked arms, brilliant eyes" and "natural eloquence" (162-64), Tommo's observations show him to be intensely compelled by the men around him (Marnoo's conduct, he says "roused my desire"). He worries that the very scenery of the island will "unman" him (61) and thus struggles "manfully" against the very natural world out of which the Typees seem to appear (75; 85). Robert K. Martin and Justin D. Edwards have cited textual antecedents to some of these

encounters in other accounts of South Seas travels. Martin argues, for instance, that Marnoo's androgyny has a history in French Tahitian literature, while Edwards points to a passage from Charles Stewart's 1815 description of a Marquesan prince as a forerunner to Melville's Marnoo: "Piaroro is a prince by nature as well as blood—one of the finest looking men I ever saw—tall and large, not very muscular, but of admirable proportions, with a general contour of figure...that would do grace to Apollo" (qtd in Edwards 24). But Melville does call attention to this intertextuality and thus foreground these encounters in terms of a narrative pattern as he did in the opening chapters of his text when he was describing sexual contact between western men and South Seas women. Only to later readers does this appear to be a pattern—largely, I think, because not enough examples have yet appeared that would lead Melville to see this particular pattern of sexual sociability between men as both a cultural and a literary conceit. After all, it is from reading *Typee* that both Martin and Edwards find themselves looking back to Dana and Stewart. Indexical markers that appear within *Typee* itself—like direct citation, repeated language, and plot details—do resonate with these texts and not others, but Melville's language does not consciously claim its similarity to those texts as it does in the beginning passages.

Which is not to say that *Typee* does not participate in queer type development in the same way that it confirms and builds upon the existence of a heterosexual narrative type development in travel/missionary writing: queer narrative type development is instead at a different stage of evolution. In a sense *Typee* begins to create its own internal patterns by accumulating instances of Tommo's fascinated descriptions of men, which begin to make visible a particular type of sexualized sociability—but it is a beginning that can be recognized as a beginning only once the type-evolution it sets in place advances further.

One place *Typee* allows us to see its relatively unconscious participation in textual pattern-development is in Melville's account of the Bachelors Ti. Scholars have recently commented on the significance and development of the bachelor type as a precursor to the homosexual and as a site for re-imagining cultural participation in ideologies of reproduction.³⁴ Writers' consciousness of the significance of this type can be seen in texts ranging from Charles Lamb's "A Bachelor's Complaint of Married People" and James Fenimore Cooper's *Notions of the Americans; Picked up by a Traveling Bachelor* through to Melville's own, later, "The Paradise of Bachelors and The Tartarus of Maids."³⁵ The fact that there was so much literary and social interest in the category of the bachelor makes it that much more interesting that Melville does not situate his treatment of bachelors in *Typee* within the same missionary intertextual frameworks that he does his moment of cultural contact. That he does not might suggest to us that however obvious the persistence of the bachelor type may have been in nineteenth-century American literary life, it does not signify easily as an exotic phenomenon or as part of the South Seas sexual type pattern that he participates in producing. Only in retrospect can we see the textuality of the bachelor life type pattern that Melville claims exists the world over. Likewise, only in retrospect can we see how *Typee* participates in that type construction.

³⁴ For examinations of the significance and emergence of the bachelor type, see, for instance, Vincent J. Bertolini, "Fireside Chastity: The Erotics of Sentimental Bachelorhood in the 1850s," *American Literature* 68.4 (1996): 707-37; Howard Chudacoff, *The Age of the Bachelor: Creating an American Subculture* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1999); Bryce Traister, "The Wandering Bachelor: Irving, Masculinity, and Authorship," *American Literature* 74.1 (2002): 111-137.

For extended explorations of the political and ideological ramifications of the bachelor figure to imaging the nation state and reproductive time, see Michael Warner, "Irving's Posterity," *ELH* 67.3 (2000): 773-799 and John Guillory, "The Bachelor State: Philosophy and Sovereignty in Bacon's New Atlantis," *Politics and the Passions, 1500-1850* Ed. Victoria Kahn, Neil Saccamano, and Daniela Coli (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2006) 49-74.

³⁵ See Charles Lamb, "A Bachelor's Complaint of Married People," *Elia* (London, 1823); or James Fenimore Cooper, *Notions of the Americans; Picked up by a Traveling Bachelor* (New York, 1828).

Melville couches Typee's bachelor life in terms of its similarity to world bachelor culture. But, as he does throughout *Typee*, he also in turn opens up space for us to see his own participation in complicating the bachelor type. Tommo makes daily visits to the Ti and remarks, "To tell the truth, Mehevi was indebted to the excellence of his viands for the honor of my repeated visits,--a matter which cannot appear singular, when it is borne in mind that bachelors, all the world over, are famous for serving up unexceptional repasts" (188). To measure the peculiarity of Typee bachelor culture, Melville translates it into the register of bachelor cultures from "around the world." The homosocial culture of the South Seas seems not to have emerged yet as singular on its own terms and coming to those terms may well constitute Melville's first contribution to literary bachelorhood. Mehevi, the chief and head of the Bachelors' Ti, occupies a complicated gender status in Tommo's descriptions. His first encounter with Mehevi leads him to feel both emasculated and manhandled: as an elder attempts to administer medical treatment to his injured leg, "Mehevi, upon the same principle which prompts an affectionate mother to hold a struggling child in a dentist's chair, restrained me in his powerful grasp, and actually encouraged the wretch in this infliction of torture" (99). As the authoritative representative of male social sexual roles, Mehevi's significance extends also to his embodiment of marital conventions in Typee. Tommo's initial sense of Mehevi as both maternally affectionate and paternally powerful extends to the ways Mehevi makes intense social and sexual attachments across sex and gender.

It is through descriptions of Mehevi, again, as Tommo conveys to us the marriage structure of the Typees--that we can begin to see how Melville's descriptions, rather than his plotting of story details, contributes to the prolonged latency with which we recognize that Tommo himself has a marriage life similar to Mehevi. Only very late in his stay with the natives

does Tommo claim that he notices any kind of “matrimonial relations in Typee” (223). Up to this point, he has noticed a wide range of relationships. Among these were what he took to be “Platonic affections” between the sexes (223) and the “confirmed bachelorhood” of Mehevi and the members of the “Ti” or “Bachelor’s Hall” (223-24). But Tommo suspects that the bachelors of the “Ti” might be “carrying on love intrigues with the maidens of the tribe” (224). He concludes that “A regular system of polygamy exists among the islanders; but of a most extraordinary nature—a plurality of husbands, instead of wives; and this solitary fact speaks volumes for the gentle disposition of the male population” (225). (Tommo seems to presume that this system produces increased male femininity.) By introducing the socio-sexual relationships among the Typees in terms of matrimony—prior to describing them in terms of “polygamy”—Tommo accomplishes yet another feat of narrative piggy-backing. He folds the relationships between men into the marriage between a man and a woman. In the context of an otherwise familiar marriage story where the woman is the identified love object, the extra man becomes a kind of accessory. Even the description of how this “regular system” operates begins with the girls and seems not quite to understand the role of this second man:

The girls are first wooed, and won, at a very tender age, by some stripling in the household in which they reside. This, however, is a mere frolic of the affections, and no formal engagement is contracted. By the time the first love has a little subsided, a second suitor presents himself, of graver years, and carries both boy and girl away to his own habitation. This disinterested and generous-hearted fellow now weds the young couple—marrying damsel and lover at the same time—and all three thenceforth live together as harmoniously as so many turtles. (226)

The presence of the woman would seem to make the marriage recognizable to non-Polynesian eyes. The language that describes this “regular system” does not offer us any other alternatives for understanding how these relationships might work and does not in any way acknowledge that this system also makes men and women equally viable lovers for other men.

There are two key examples of how this polygamous marriage works in the text, only one of which is flagged for us as such, although both demonstrate Tommo’s more pronounced linguistic self-consciousness of the love relationships between men and women (compared with his descriptions of the relationships between men). Both also demonstrate the extent to which invoking the marriage narrative becomes one condition of possibility for showing (without telling about) relationships beyond the conventional two-person marriage paradigm. The clearest example of the “regular system of polygamy” is flagged for us when Tommo exemplifies this three-person paradigm. He admits that he has observed one of these polygamous threesomes, seemingly initiated by Mehevi: “Mehevi...was not the only person upon whom the damsel Moonoony smiled—the young fellow of fifteen, who permanently resided in the house with her, was decidedly in her good graces. I sometimes beheld both him and the chief making love at the same time” (224). To whom they are making love—Moonoony or each other—is never made clear in the text. The “sometimes” indicates a kind of regularity beyond coincidence—suggesting not only that the sexual acts are worthy of notice, but also they may also subscribe to a different conception of sexual privacy than Tommo is used to. It is also notable on an action he seemed habitually to do in the past.

Even in this detached way, Tommo can describe Mehevi’s marriage, but he never acknowledges that his own network of social relationships in Typee is the other obvious

example of triangulated marriage. He never implicates himself in this system, even though his own relationship with Kory-Kory and Fayaway structurally resembles Mehevi's. Only just before Tommo leaves, and long after the point at which he has described the marriage structure, do we get a glimpse of the fact that he has been living the kind of life he has attributed to Mehevi. At this point in the text, the narrator is thinking wistfully of home and of leaving the valley. He fixates on the lonely old warrior who sits weaving cocoa-nut branches all day long and describes his act of looking: "Whenever my gentle Fayaway and Kory-Kory, laying themselves down beside me, would leave me awhile, to uninterrupted repose, I took a strange interest in the slightest movements of the eccentric old warrior" (282). This particular detail of the description is the closest the narrator comes to describing his sleeping arrangements and subtly assumes that there are times when they both do not leave him so "uninterrupted." Our intrepid narrator seems somehow divided against himself: he cannot see himself as the same kind of man that Mehevi is, although he can make Mehevi the object of his own descriptions. This moment of autochthonous identification never materializes, even though he is involved in the same structural relationship as Mehevi: the second half of the book shows us over and over that Tommo, Kory-Kory and Fayaway constitute a social unit. They appear everywhere together, even though Tommo gives us no description of himself making love either to Fayaway or to Kory-Kory.

The second striking feature of the language that describes this social arrangement of sexual relationships is the utter absence of moralizing language. Christian moralism disappears at the moment when it seems most likely to appear: the moment when, as in the opening example of the missionary wife's clash with the natives, Protestant ideas about sexuality clash with native ideas about sexual roles and sexual difference. Further, the absence of censorious language by default allows the "second suitor of graver years," whether it be Mehevi or Tommo himself, to have a relationship with both the damsel and the first lover on equal terms. Tommo perhaps reaches his own sense of limit in this regard, since the language he uses to distinguish Fayaway and Kory-Kory can never really refrain from elevating the status of his affection for Fayaway. Fayaway is clearly the avowed object of Tommo's desire. He can earnestly long for her and idealize her in the text in a way that he does not (perhaps cannot) recognize Kory-Kory. At the same time that Tommo openly desires only Fayaway, his social relationships in the Typee valley (the unit of three that he forms with Fayaway and Kory-Kory) closely mirrors the matrimonial arrangement that Mehevi has. There is no clear evidence from Tommo's description of the chief and the young man "making love at the same time" that Mehevi takes the young man as his love object. This is not to say that there are no moments at which Kory-Kory is appreciated or treated with affection: yet there is no evidence to the contrary either. This very neutrality on the matter seems to suggest the absence of a prohibition against homosexuality and already opens up possibilities for readers to see a glimmer of license for sexual relationships between men. Melville shows them, however, without actually telling them. We will eventually come to need more examples of such showing in order to recognize the emergence of a narrative type, but what already

seems to be opening up through these descriptions is a sense that narrative objectification—where one speaker describes and therefore treats the world around him, including its people as objects outside himself—can help to generate, in perhaps delayed ways, modes of understanding subjectivity. It is not just the fact that Melville shows us homoerotic relationships here, but how (and when) his descriptions of these relationship factor into our ability to see and read them.

To say that Tommo conveys an intense, even sexual, appreciation for Toby, Kory-Kory, Marnoo, and even Mehevi is to say not just that he objectifies them, but also that they exist in somehow parallel structure to the rest of world that Tommo likewise describes. After all, the Polynesians in particular are not only members of a society but features of a whole different island world.

Throughout *Typee*, all of the relationships Tommo describes are situated relationships. A very specific environment licenses them. From the very opening of the book, the landscape is described as exceptional:

From the verge of the water the land rises uniformly on all sides, with green and sloping acclivities, until from gently rolling, hill-sides and moderate elevations it insensibly swells into lofty majestic heights, whose blue outlines, ranged all around close in the view. The beautiful aspect of the shore is heightened by deep and romantic glens, which come down to it at almost equal distances, all apparently radiating from a common centre, and the upper extremities of which are lost to the eye beneath the shadow of the mountains. Down each of these little valleys flows a clear stream, here and there, assuming the form of a slender cascade, then stealing invisibly along until it bursts upon the

sight again in larger and more noisy waterfalls, and at last demurely wanders along to the sea....Nothing can exceed the imposing scenery of this bay. (34)

Tommo feels “a pang of regret that a scene so enchanting should be hidden from the world in these remote seas, and seldom meet the eyes of devoted lovers of nature” (34). Regularly he comments on the sights “that will ever be vividly impressed upon my mind” (60), claiming in conventional literary fashion, that “[h]ad a glimpse of Paradise been revealed to me I could scarcely have been more ravished with the sight” (64). At another point he says, “Over the landscape there reigned the most hushed repose, which I almost feared to break, lest, like the enchanted gardens in the fairy tale, a single syllable might dissolve the spell” (65). Tommo’s descriptions shift from extremes of alacrity to fear, usually inspired by the way he reads the environment around him—the one often turned in on itself into the other—but they always have a kind of intense visceral quality to them. When Tommo and Toby are hungry, even the rotten fruit of the “annuee” tree has a taste like no other: “no ambrosia could have been more delicious” (85).

Out of Tommo’s captivation with his physical surroundings emerges his strongest statement that connects “the tranquillizing influences of beautiful scenery, and the exhibition of human life under so novel and charming an aspect” (134). This statement sums up the following scene that has just preceded it, which suggests that particular sexual practices (exhibitions of human life) do indeed emerge out of the tranquility of the landscape:

Frequently in the afternoon [Kory-Kory] would carry me to a particular part of the stream, where the beauty of the scene produced a soothing influence upon my mind. At this place the waters flowed between grassy banks, planted

with enormous bread-fruit trees, whose cast branches, interlacing overhead, formed a leafy canopy; near the stream were several smooth black rocks. One of these, projecting several feet above the surface of the water, had upon its summit a shallow cavity, which, filly with freshly-gathered leaves, formed a delightful couch.

Here I often lay for hours, covered with a gauze-like veil of tappa, while Fayaway, seated beside me, and holding in her hand, a fan woven from the leaflets of a young cocoa-nut bough, brushed aside the insects that occasionally lighted on my face, and Kory-Kory, with a view of chasing away my melancholy, performed a thousand antics in the water before us. (134)

In comparing the trees to a canopy that transforms a rock into a couch, Tommo is already exceeding the primitivism he attributes to the landscape. But this is rather the point. The landscape, viewed through his eyes, is constantly imbued with social significance. It in fact structures his entire imagination of the social world of Typee, by way of understated comparisons with the social world Tommo knows. (A similar comparison exists in Tommo's description of the bread-fruit tree, which he first compares to the patriarchal elm in New England and then describes its edges as a "lady's collar" (138).) But Tommo's sense is that the environment naturalizes particular social relationships, even as his own comparisons call attention to the constructedness of the comparison itself.

The fact that Western travelers and observers objectify the people and lands they are describing when they write about them has come under considerable fire in recent years for the ways in which these texts deny subjectivity and even humanity to the people so described. In *American Geographics*, Bruce Harvey critiques travel writing for the

ways it projects non-Americans as features of the landscape, thus denying, ultimately, the possibility for a fully inhabitable textual subjectivity in the context of these narratives:

the locale of the non-European *as depicted* rarely becomes inhabited by complexly rendered non-Europeans themselves. Partially this is a reflection of travelistic writing itself, in which human subjects (other than the narrator, that is,) typically fold into the scenery rather than becoming dramatic actors in their own right. And partially the diminished subjectivity of non-Europeans derives from the fact that all my authors [including Melville] had an agenda, political or personal, or a combination of both, that tended to grant the Polynesian, African, Indian, or Oriental a reality only in terms of U.S. national topoi. (248)

Kory-Kory is one of the examples Harvey cites as someone “folded into the scenery.”

On the one hand, Kory-Kory’s subjectivity may well be limited within the confines of the text. Harvey insists, nonetheless, that even Kory-Kory, “behind the prison bars of his own culture” (247), can be seen as more than a narrative prop: he displays a “resistant materiality” (247) in propelling Tommo’s gaze to begin with. Problems no doubt emerge when a text that flattens figures like Kory-Kory into features of the landscape then becomes so authoritative that imagining their subjectivity becomes difficult. But it is also possible to imagine that the liberal ideal of self-possessed subjectivity is not the only ground on which characters can be recognized or exert literary influence.

Melville might never have predicted that his works would be read as part of an emerging pattern of queer writing. How could he? He might more successfully have predicted the decimation of the populations of the Marquesas, given his critique of the

“civilizing” influence of the missionaries and of Westerners more generally.³⁶ Thus was Charles Warren Stoddard able to see how, in carrying a story of the Typee Valley’s secrets “to the ends of the earth,” *Typee* “plucked out the heart of its mystery and beautiful and barbarous Typee lies naked and forsaken.” The circuits of literary circulation breed unpredictable literary products, however. The linguistic experiment that was *Typee* generated a range of responses to itself that constantly shifted emphasis to and from different aspects of the texts. To a large degree, the combination of religious and sexual controversy facilitated the textual reproductions of *Typee*, making it possible for readers to see how just what Melville actually did write became queerer and queerer in its rereadings. The stuff of both the explicitly identified sexual features of first contact accounts as well as the seemingly implied homoerotic descriptions could be more fully seen retroactively, once a full-fledged narrative type had developed—even though the type arguably could not have developed, in its American incarnation, without *Typee*. My next chapter explores what happens when *Typee*’s language of descriptive sub-plots becomes the matter of a main plot and when descriptions of others become the terms of self-description and the substance of novel-length world views in Stoddard’s writing. But what is essential to understanding this evolution are the processes by which textual circulation, accumulations, and descriptions develop literary and cultural lives both

³⁶ By the time Stoddard is writing, at the end of the nineteenth-century, we know that the populations of the Polynesian islands have been decimated. Gauguin famously went to the South Seas to paint its primitive cultures, but arrived unable to find much of it left. Henry Adams also saw in Tahiti a place for experimenting with the writing of history at its limits. He assembled/wrote *Memoirs of Marau Taaroa, the Last Queen of Tahiti*. Marau Taaroa presumably responded and her corrections were incorporated into the enlarged *Memoirs of Arii Taimai*. The fact that she claimed (or he did on her behalf) to have been the “last” queen of Tahiti is striking, but perhaps not surprising given that Europeans had been coming to the South Seas for almost two centuries. For information about the Adams text, I’m grateful to Virginia Gilmartin whose dissertation treats Adams’ South Seas writing in the context of his oeuvre. Adams’ text was printed privately (about 100 copies) and distributed among his friends, but it was never actually published in his lifetime. What Adams saw in the South Seas was the opportunity for a different kind of historical writing than he had engaged in so far.)

within and beyond their sheer presence on the pages of *Typee*, *South Sea Idyls*, and *For the Pleasure of His Company*.

Chapter Two: Taking the Measure of Queer Circulation: The Stoddard Archive and its Dissed Contents

On April 15, 1905, the front page of the *San Francisco Call* featured a large image of two authors, drawn as if facing off against each other. The headline, however, refers only to one of them, as it urges readers, in large capital letters, to “WELCOME THE AUTHOR OF THE ‘SOUTH SEA IDYLS.’” The caption below the image reads “Two distinguished Americans who were honoured guests last night at a dinner given by the Bohemian Club as a tribute to one of its founders, who returns to California to live again among the friends and scenes of his early manhood.” In the story of this event, Stoddard is clearly the hero, his significance trumping James’s in a reversal that would perplex most readers today.¹ Whereas the *Call* article quotes an entire speech complimenting Stoddard, James is an afterthought. He features only in the perfunctory last sentence of the article, which states that “A gem on canvas from the studio of Theodore Wores was presented to Henry James.”² If either the *Call* or *The Bohemian Club* recognized Henry James as the superior writer, they were not letting on.

Today, it would be hard to imagine the historical conditions under which Henry James would be trumped by Stoddard in a newspaper headline. James has come to fully inhabit the position of literary Master while Stoddard has come to inhabit the space reserved for footnotes in gay literary history. James thus warrants no introduction or

¹ Nor, it seems, did James much mind: in *Henry James: The Master* Leon Edel record that James claimed he “enjoyed being feted by the Bohemian Club, where he talked with Charles Warren Stoddard, author of books and sketches about Hawaii and Tahiti” (James qtd in Edel 286). The image above and the accompanying text appear on the front page of the *San Francisco Call* (15 April 1905) p1.

² *The Annals of the Bohemian Club* confirm what the *Call* article suggests: that James was only one of a number of speakers at the dinner in Stoddard’s honour. (Others included singer Enrico Caruso, and one Dr. Woodworth, an “eminent instructor.”)

defense, central as he is both to literary study writ large and, not incidentally, to queer literary studies in particular.³ Few, on the other hand, know the story of Stoddard's itinerant but prolific writing life: that he published poems, fiction, essays, and even editions, the most widely known concerning primarily his travels to the South Seas, his life in California, and his conversion to Catholicism; that he was among the nucleus of writers to produce California's first significant literary magazine *The Overland Monthly* (widely credited with catapulting Bret Harte into local colour fame); that he socialized and corresponded with virtually every major writer of his day; that he was a professor of English at Notre Dame; or that despite his connections, his widely regarded output, and his adventures, he died alone, unemployed, and penniless—while anxiously collecting and suturing together every of scrap of newsprint ever to bear his name.

The limited critical history of Stoddard includes these details, but does not quite know what to do with them. The few scholars who have paused to write about Stoddard throughout the twentieth century insist instead that he produced the kind well worth forgetting. Carl Stroven, whose 1939 Ph.D. dissertation remains the most comprehensive account of Stoddard's work and life, declared that "He never acquired the knack of making fiction plausible, and when he wrote it...the result was always bad" (320). John W. Crowley describes Stoddard as "a writer whose prose was as purple as his ink: a product of 'The Genteel Tradition' at its stupefying worst" (vii-viii). Robert Gale thought that he had some potential, but ultimately "became a self-indulging old sybarite who

³ Whatever we might want to say about James's own sexual life, we can say with some certainty that his works have been central to literary criticism's history of reading sexuality: from Edmund Wilson's classic Freudian analysis of *The Turn of the Screw* through Shoshana Felman's psychoanalytic deconstruction of the same text to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's famous inauguration of queer theoretical literary criticism in her treatment of "The Beast in the Jungle." Chapter five of my dissertation, which focuses on the literary form of sexual circulation in *The Bostonians*, continues in this same tradition that stakes its own claims about

neglected his great literary talent” (5). Even his most devoted champion, early gay studies scholar Roger Austen, who spent years scouring obscure archives to write a book on Stoddard that remained unfinished at Austen’s death, could not help but admit that “Stoddard’s books deserve to remain in the background” (vliiv). Stoddard has attracted these scholars’ limited attention for two reasons: one, articulated by Gale, is that Stoddard was worth a slim volume because “[h]e became a friend of distinguished writers, both regionally and internationally known” (5); two, as Austen says, he deserves attention because of “how he lived, rather than what he wrote” (xliiv). Austen thought it was important to recover Stoddard because he had a good deal to say about “men loving other men” (xliiv). Those few recent writers who want to redeem Stoddard, Justin Edwards and Gregory Tomso, follow Austen’s cue and politely sidestep the business of his writing altogether. They comment instead on his personal place in the cultural history of sexuality—as an early gay man, cruising the South Seas and reproducing established colonial or medical narrative conventions for describing homosexuality.⁴

But for someone at once so systematically overlooked and yet so persistently condemned, Charles Warren Stoddard has nonetheless enjoyed a fairly fabulous life in print.⁵ His fiction appears, often alongside James’s, in virtually every anthology of gay

James’s status in the literary history of sexuality via the history of claims made on James’s behalf. Note here about the claims made about James’s sexuality: Wendy Graham, Leon Edel, Eric Savoy, etc..

⁴For these most recent scholarly treatments of Stoddard, see Gregory Tomso, “The Queer History of Leprosy and Same-Sex Love,” *American Literary History* 14.4 (Winter 2002): 747-75 and Justin Edwards, *Exotic Journeys: Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature 1840-1930* (U of New England, P, 2001).

⁵Stoddard’s books alone include the following: *Poems of Charles Warren Stoddard* (1867); *South Sea Idyls* (1873), also produced as a British edition titled *Summer Cruising in the South Seas*; *Mashallah! A Flight into Egypt* (1881); *Cruising the South Sea*; *Lepers of Molokai* (1885); *A Troubled Heart and How it Was Comforted at Last* (1890); *Hawaiian Life, Being Lazy Letters from Low Latitudes* (1894); *Saint Anthony: The Wonder Worker of Padua* (1896); *A Cruise Under the Crescent* (1898); *Over the Rocky Mountains to Alaska* (1899); *In the Footprints of the Padres* (1902); *For the Pleasure of His Company: An Affair of the Misty City* (1903); *Exits and Entrances* (1903); *Father Damien, the Martyr of Molokai* (1901); *The Island of Tranquil Delights: A South Sea Idyl and Others* (1904). These monographs do not include Stoddard’s journalism or the many pieces of poetry, prose and non-fiction he published in various

or queer male writing published during the last one hundred years from Edward Prime-Stevenson's (Xavier Mayne's) *The Intersexes* (1908) through David Leavitt and Mark Mitchell's *Pages Passed from Hand to Hand* (1997?) and, recently, James Gifford's *Glances Backward* (2007). Jonathan Ned Katz's *Gay and Lesbian History in America* features letters between Stoddard and Whitman. Stoddard's writing has been persistently unearthed and recirculated (usually in proximity to other seemingly more famous figures) only to be readily dismissed on aesthetic grounds. Like strangers passing a car wreck, editors are somehow fascinated by Stoddard. His promoters and his critics alike display a distinctly horrified glee in dismissing his work. But no one can really explain the lingering fascination itself.⁶ It is the work of this chapter to offer an assessment of this fascination.

Certainly recognizing literary failure is essential to recognizing literary accomplishment; both are therefore necessary to the process of gay literary canon-formation. Stoddard's shortcomings thus allow us to measure the mastery of other gay or queer literature, like James's. But their almost universally recognized status as shortcomings conceals the historical process by which those shortcomings come to be

magazines such as *Overland Monthly*, *Sunset*, and *National Magazine*. Stoddard also published, with an introduction, an edition of Richard Henry Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* (1900).

⁶In one of the more insightful readings of Stoddard—contained in a review of two 1889 reprints of Stoddard's books—Thomas Yingling observes that “the difference between reading [Stoddard's only novel] *For the Pleasure of His Company* and reading the Balzac that inspired Barthes' *S/Z* is that in the Stoddard novel, codes of homosexuality are self-consciously employed as codes.” He claims the effect is “artificial but not artful,” and suggests that “it was perhaps impossible in 1903 to produce a well-formed text on a discursively de-formed topic.” Yingling sees a vacuum at the centre of [Paul Clitheroe, the protagonist of *For the Pleasure of His Company*], a character he claims to be “the textual equivalent to the vacuum homosexuality was at the turn of the century.” The incoherence of the novel's plot, Yingling continues, makes it a “representation of sexual displacement and of the inability of the homosexual to gain a socially-defined and –sanctioned identity” (91-92). See Thomas Yingling, “Review of Charles Warren Stoddard, *For The Pleasure of His Company* and *Cruising the South Seas*” *American Literary Realism* 21 (Spring 1989): 91-92. I think we can linger more on Stoddard's production and recirculation of textual codes as codes without necessarily measuring them against the yardstick of gay identity—allowing us to

recognized as such. Unconcealing this process involves assessing Stoddard's cultures of literary circulation—the literary culture that helped him to generate his work as well as the cultures that have assessed that work since—all of which contribute to the production of Stoddard as a literary figure within and beyond his own time.

Beyond explaining how it is that Stoddard has acquired the reputation he currently has is the more nebulous project of articulating what exactly we can learn from Stoddard about American literary history, and particularly about homosexuality in America (since it is queer scholars who keep going back to him) that we could not know without him. What, in other words, is this strange relationship between Stoddard's bad writing and his cultural significance? I would like to suggest in this chapter that the terms of Stoddard's aesthetic dismissal are actually key to understanding Stoddard's central status in the American history of the queer book (as opposed, say, to queering the history of the book—the latter of which does not necessarily dislodge canonical texts from the central status as objects of examination). Distinct from Melville—who did exert an important influence on Stoddard and whose unself-conscious acquired queerness I charted in the last chapter—and from James whose writing archives the formal dimensions of queer literary accumulation, Stoddard takes his cue rather from Whitman. As Whitman imagines himself hailed into the sphere of poetry by Emerson's call for a great American poet, Stoddard records, with greater demurral, the structuring influence Whitman has had on him in a letter to Horace Traubel: "Do you know what life means to me? It means everything that Walt Whitman has ever said or sung...He breathed the breath of life into me" (qtd in Austen *Genteel Pagan* 165). Stoddard is hardly the first to claim such a

see the embeddedness of these codes within a broader culture of literary exchange and circulation at the turn of the twentieth century.

thing.⁷ But Stoddard is among the earliest American writers to recognize in, through, and in response to a wide range of writers (not just Whitman, but Melville, Joaquin Miller, Bayard Taylor, and Richard Dana among others) the roles literary collation, circulation, and archivation play in producing queer life in print. We can see the results of this awareness in the mutually constituting relationship of textuality and queer sociability in Stoddard's letters, fiction, poetry, and scrapbooks.

We can take our cue from Whitman, too—if only by reading him against the grain of his correspondence with Stoddard. In his response to a letter from Stoddard, Whitman bristled at Stoddard's preference for life in the South Seas and his identification of America with “the frigid manners of the Christians.”⁸ With gentle wryness, he asks Stoddard if he recognizes “how the hard pungent, gritty, worldly experiences & qualities in American practical life also serve? How they prevent extravagant sentimentalism?” (qtd in Katz 508). The “extravagant sentimentalism” that Whitman warns Stoddard against may well be what bothers twentieth-century critics about Stoddard: he's too effusive, too idealistic, too focussed on the accumulation of adjectives to describe what he likes. But I think it is this extravagant sentimentalism that also has people coming back to rediscover and repeatedly anthologize Stoddard's writing.

What may have seemed so mawkish about Stoddard's prose, to Whitman and to others since, is, I think, central to understanding Stoddard's literary methodology: to understanding, in other words, the driving force of Stoddard's sentimental literary

⁷ See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick on the circulation of Whitman texts as markers of bourgeois homosexuality in *Between Men*. Stoddard once wrote the following to Horace Traubel: “Do you know what life means to me? It means everything that Walt Whitman has ever said or sung...He breathed the breath of life into me.” (Letter in The Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley).

⁸ Letter to Walt Whitman. April 2, 1870. Qtd in Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.* (New York: Penguin, 1976) 506.

embrace as the force of his (not incidentally) queer literary production and his consciousness of his life as a story. To understand Stoddard's literary production does not require either celebrating or damning his writing. The goal of this chapter is not to redeem or reconstruct the historical complexities of sentimental rhetoric or the language of sensibility that, as numerous scholars have argued, carries greater cultural currency than it gets credit for. (It must nonetheless be acknowledged that Stoddard was often praised by critics of the day for his sensuous prose—sentimentalism had not fallen completely out of favour. Whitman's view of Stoddard did not easily represent the majority. (I will have more to say on this later.) But I am less interested in sentimentalism as a structure of feeling than as a methodology of literary circulation.⁹

Nor do I mean to explain away what will seem to most contemporary readers Stoddard's questionable racial politics and his fetishization of young non-white men. However unpalatable such aspects of Stoddard's writing might be to modern literary tastes, the sensuousness of Stoddard's writing—which for some bordered on the sentimental and for others teetered toward the implausible—this sensuousness would, I think, be better understood in the context of Stoddard's practices of reading and writing.

⁹ For analyses of sentimentalism as rhetoric and as structure of feeling in nineteenth century American literature and beyond, see Marianne Noble, *The masochistic pleasures of sentimental literature* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000); Jerome McGann, *The Poetics of Sensibility: A Revolution in Style* (Oxford: New York: Clarendon P, 1996); Mary Louise Kete, *Sentimental collaborations : mourning and middle-class identity in nineteenth-century America* (Durham, Duke UP, 2000); Lynn Festa, *Sentimental figures of empire in eighteenth-century Britain and France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2006); Markman Ellis, *The politics of sensibility : race, gender and commerce in the sentimental novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996); Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Avon Books, 1978); Elizabeth Dillon, *The gender of freedom: fictions of liberalism and the literary public sphere* (Stanford, Stanford UP, 2004); Bruce Burgett, *Sentimental bodies : sex, gender, and citizenship in the early republic* (Princeton, Princeton UP, 1998); Herbert Ross Brown, *The sentimental novel in America, 1789-1860* (New York: Octagon, 1975); Kristin Boudreau, *Sympathy in American literature : American sentiments from Jefferson to the Jameses* (Gainesville: U Florida P, 2002); Michael Bell, *Sentimentalism, ethics, and the culture of feeling* (New York: Palgrave, 2000); Elizabeth Barnes, *States of sympathy : seduction and democracy in the American novel* (New York: Columbia, 1997); Maximilian E. Novak and Anne Mellors, eds. *Passionate encounters in a time of sensibility* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2000).

Stoddard had an exquisite sense of the ways reading is governed by modes of textual circulation and a very strong sense of the ways literature is produced through its circuits of literary and social circulation—something that even his detractors acknowledge when they refer to the vast array of people he knew during his life. The fact that the Bohemian Club and the *Call* both put such stock in recognizing Stoddard over James demonstrates this same point nicely.

Through Stoddard's exposure of the role reading and writing play in the production of text and self, we can see how important this methodology of the mawkish literary embrace is to the literary history of homosexuality. The fact that its public expression still makes us cringe may say as much about the ambivalence that continues to attend public expressions of queer sexual life and about our aversion to the mawkish conventions of romantic love more generally as it does about the limitations of Stoddard's aesthetic contribution to the literary history of sexuality. If, at the level of content, Stoddard's sensuous sentimentality is somehow no longer to our taste, its intertextuality also makes our disidentification with him (and his work) possible because it provides Stoddard with a means of producing the body of texts that are now so readily dismissed. Stoddard's writing lays bare, almost painfully, the kind of cravenness that fuels his literary production and that makes his literary accumulations possible. This pathos marks not just his sentiment, but the literary methodology that enables him to produce the sensuous sentiment as such.

Less nationalistic than Whitman and more prone to exposing the seams of his own literary patchworks, Stoddard displays a new self-consciousness of the ways queer life is generated through print circulation—where literature produces both text and society.

Stoddard's oeuvre repeatedly foregrounds his male characters' (and his own) sensuous embrace of other men and sentimental descriptions of the setting where these embraces take place. In the pages that follow, I trace the often sycophantic circuits of Stoddard's correspondence and textual production, charting the emergence of his writing and of the queer self-consciousness that emerges out of that writing as Stoddard reads his world through and with the work of so many authors that he admires. These include not just Whitman, Melville, and James, but also Bayard Taylor, Yone Noguchi, Daniel Defoe, and the Bible. Assessing Stoddard's essential relationship to this broader context of late nineteenth-century literary circulation will allow us to measure the significance of reading and of literary circulation for Stoddard's production, in his work, of a narrowly focused sense of queer life. In so doing, I suggest, we gain a solid sense of what Stoddard tells us about the literary history of homosexuality that we could not know without him.

How to Grow a Queer Text, 1890s-style

I. Stoddard's Literary Network

Stoddard's repeated recovery as an early gay writer and his simultaneous critical dismissal on sentimental terms seem, on the one hand, to work against each other, the one highlighting and the other dismissing the significance of Stoddard's writing. But the editorial embrace and the critical dismissal of Stoddard have one thing in common: they both abstract Stoddard from the dense cultural context through which he came to understand his literature and himself. The recovery project confers on Stoddard a gay identity that he did not imagine for himself—and does not account for the embeddedness

of Stoddard's gay literature in a broader literary context. His dismissal on the other hand obscures the conditions under which Stoddard's social and literary circulation contributed to his later recognition as an early gay writer.

The sentimentalism that critics dismiss at the level of content and aesthetics in Stoddard, first of all, was not always either highlighted or indicted. In his own historical moment, Stoddard not only enjoyed the esteem, company, and endorsement of some of the most important literary figures of his time, he also did so in terms that were not reducible, or even concerned with, his gay plots.¹⁰ In the reviews of the range of work that he Stoddard published,¹¹ he seems to have obtained to least a modicum of literary success. His most widely recognized work then and now is *South Sea Idyls*, Stoddard's collection of linked short stories, first published separately in magazines and then as a single book in 1873. These stories chronicle the adventures of its unnamed, and loosely

¹⁰ Emerson judged his poems "good and interesting"; Cardinal Newman found them "elegant and touching." For a description of these early review see Roger Austen, *Genteel Pagan: The Double Life of Charles Warren Stoddard*, ed. John W. Crowley (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1991) p.33. William Dean Howells was a lifelong patron of Stoddard, and even wrote a preface to the second edition of *South Sea Idyls*, Stoddard's collection of short fiction. Howells deferred to the collection's "rare quality" and predicted that "the whole English-reading world will recognize in your work the classic it should have known before" (vi). The 1873 and 1892 editions did not succeed as they should have, according to Howells, because, in the first instance, the book had been published on the "eve of the great panic of '73" and, in the second instance, the "London publisher defamed your delicate and charming text with illustrations so vulgar and repulsive" (vi). The 1892 edition was illustrated by an English artist. Howells seems to suggest that the illustrations are almost pornographic. I have not been able to find a copy of the book with these illustrations. Rudyard Kipling also saw some genius in Stoddard's novel, originally titled *So Pleased to Have Met You*, which he described as a "rummy, queer, original fascinating" story and urged Stoddard to publish. It was Kipling who also suggested the current title, *For the Pleasure of His Company*.

¹¹ In addition to a book of poetry, his collection of short stories (which I gather was released in at least nine separate editions in America and Britain, the British version going by the title *Summer Cruising in the South Seas*), and his novel, Stoddard also was amazingly prolific as an essayist and an early scholar. Some of his sketches of California life, *In the Footprints of the Padres* continue to have a minor following. "A Bit of Old China," one of the earliest descriptions of San Francisco's Chinatown is available via Project Gutenberg and Stoddard is recognized as one of the earliest California writers. He also wrote about Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose poetry he loved from the time he was a teenager and produced an edition of Richard Henry Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*.

autobiographical, narrator as he travels through the islands of the Pacific and develops relationships, often sexual in nature, with men in those islands.

What Stoddard's contemporary reviewers regularly noticed was the quality of description in his prose that conveyed life in the South Seas so vividly. *The Literary World* hailed the collection of stories for the peculiar type of realism this description produced. *South Sea Idyls* attracted the magazine reviewer's notice because "the queer stories have a substantial basis of fact" and because "all types of the purely sensuous life, are represented in these highly colored photographs" (81). *Overland Monthly* also commented on the "idealized sketches" and remarked that "Stoddard was 'enthused' over the lovely islands of the Pacific—over their coral shores, their palm-groves, their waterfalls, their deliciously tinted peaks, their remoteness, and their amiable, sensuous people, who treated him like a brother because he fraternized with them in the mood of a poet and a humanitarian" (576-77). The reviewer continues, "if it is thought sometimes too exuberantly descriptive, or too florid and sensuous, these are qualities that will be corrected or tempered by experience" (577).¹² If what the reviewers describe as the

¹² The non-moralistic nature of these reviews arguably give us some insight into the racial construction of sexuality at this point in history, since the "sensuous people" the reviewers see in Stoddard's work can be so blithely described as foreign brown people. (In fact, Stoddard calls attention to the dimensions of such a cross-cultural encounter as well as its ironic reversals in his novella "Chumming With a Savage.") Stoddard's work makes sense in light of recent developments in queer theory that seek to understand how Western assumptions about the intersections between race and sexuality locate racial and exotic communities as sites of queer cultural production. See, for instance, Gayatri Gopinath, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke UP, 2005) and "What's Queer in Queer Studies Now?" Special issue of *Social Text* Ed. David Eng, Judith Halberstam, and Jose Estaban Munoz. No. 84/85; 23: 3/4 October 2005.

That most reviewers overlooked both the racial and the sexual dimensions of Stoddard's writing may seem all the more striking to us today given that Stoddard was a contemporary of both Oscar Wilde and Walt Whitman, both of whom were excoriated on moral grounds in the American press. The absence of pejorative adjectives within reviews of Stoddard's work can be seen, for instance, in the *Overland Monthly* where one reviewer blithely observes, without further comment, that the plot of Stoddard's "A South Sea Idyl" concerned the protagonist's "romantic friendship with a Tahitian boy." The setting itself seemed to license both a social sexual practice and an idealized and accepted mode of description for that practice. In fact, for the reviewers, Stoddard's plot seems to be incidental to his accomplishment at the level of style or form. Stoddard never caused the moral stir that Whitman did when he wrote and circulated *Leaves of*

sensuous quality of Stoddard's prose is marked by his enthusiasm, their sense of his sensuousness would seem to correspond also with the more pejorative sentimentalism that others claim marks his work.

As a description of Stoddard's work, "sensuous" is striking on a number of levels. It marks both the people of the "South Seas" and Stoddard's writing about them. What is sensuous about the people is, in Stoddard's depictions, their unabashed sexuality and, especially, the men's open willingness to be sensuous with him. But although "sensuous" describes something about Stoddard, in another sense, it does not describe Stoddard at all: to the extent that "sensuous" locates sexuality, the adjective locates it not in Stoddard per se (as a property of his self), but outside of himself in the exotic settings (primarily the South Sea islands) so described, and in his writing. The reviews suggest that Stoddard's crowning achievement as a writer emerges from his ability to bring an entire environment and its social life into view and to do so accurately. The purply prosed sentimentalism that earns Stoddard a reputation for being a bad writer by more recent standards actually seems to be the ground for his success in his own time—even if sensuousness did also have limitations that realism might have been presumed to temper (as the *Overland Monthly* reviewer intimates).

The sensuous idealism that the reviewers attribute to Stoddard's seems to have been the product of conscious formal innovation on Stoddard's part, the result, as he sees it, of combining poetry and prose. In one of his letters to Whitman Stoddard described

Grass. This is perhaps because the world Stoddard described, in all its barbaric sexuality, was a world that was not American, even though it flourished, at least in Stoddard's incarnation of it, as a product of American observation and imagination. The reviewers would have been participating in a long history of tolerating the sexual proclivities of a cultural and racial elsewhere. As central as this aspect of plot was to the fabric of the sketches and to the plots of Stoddard's stories, and as plainly presented as homosexuality was in the language of those stories, it never did this raise ire or moral hackles.

his story as the “proze idyl”(qtd in Katz 501). (The term stuck, as the whole collection of his stories became *South Sea Idyls*.) The “mood of the poet” as the reviewers see it, infuses his description of the “sensuous people” combining the spirit of poetry with the form of prose. To understand Stoddard’s project of literary fusion, we need to understand the significance he attributed to situating himself in a broad literary context of reading and writing, and thus recognize the literary sources that Stoddard recombined and recirculated in his own work.

Stoddard spent much of his life as something of a nineteenth-century literary groupie. He read widely and voraciously, and he sought to create and fix himself with the literary coteries in his time. From a young age, Stoddard sought out literary celebrities as vigorously as many of us follow rock bands or movie stars—not just Whitman and Melville. He also counted among his wide circle of friends Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens), Rudyard Kipling, Ambrose Bierce, Ina Coolbrith, Joaquin Miller, Bret Harte, Henry Adams, Robert Louis Stevenson, and William Dean Howells. Howells was particularly ardent in his support of Stoddard and consistently encouraged his work. Inspired by the examples of Melville’s *Typee* and Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, Stoddard took many excursions to the South Seas (his favourite places were Hawaii and Tahiti) where he worked as a newspaper correspondent and sought escape from those “frigid manners of the Christians” and found his “mode of life.”¹³ These travels provided Stoddard with fodder and inspiration for most of his writing well beyond the *South Sea Idyls*, writing that was published in California (where Stoddard had moved with his family as a child), in book form, as well as in newspapers and periodicals.

13 Letter to Walt Whitman. Ibid p. 503.

That sexuality was embedded within a larger range of important social and cultural concerns for Stoddard is also mirrored in the way Stoddard embedded himself within the broad literary culture of his time. One of the more peculiar artefacts in the Stoddard archive at the University of California Berkeley stages perfectly Stoddard's sentimental embrace of his literary heroes. *The Autograph Album of Charles Warren Stoddard* contains verse, prose, and signatures from an impressive array of American and English authors. But Stoddard did not just collect autographs. He used autograph-collecting as a means of producing social and literary relationships—of reaching out to writers in embarrassingly craven ways and refusing to let them go, even when they'd imagined their polite responses were complete. The scraps of text within the autograph book reveal the degree to which Stoddard and his network of literary alliances—strangers and friend alike—communicated through annotated snippets of published text.

A good indication of the texture of Stoddard's autograph book can be seen in the example of his autograph from Bayard Taylor. It is accompanied by an inserted sheet which contains, inscribed on the left, the following untitled poem by Oliver Wendell Holmes:

“O sexton of the alcoved tomb
 Where souls in Lactharn [?] cerements be,
 Tell me each living poet's doom!
 How long before his book shall die?

It matters little, soon or late,
 A day, a month, a year, an age,--
 Tend[?] oblivion in its date
 And Finis on its title-page.

* * *

Before we sighed, our griefs were Told;
 Before we smiled, our joys were sung

And all our passions shaped of old
 In accents lost to mortal tongue

* * *

Deal gently with us ye who read!
 Our longest hope is unfulfilled,--
 The promise still outruns the deed,
 The towns, but not the spies [?] we build

On the right side of the page is a short letter to Stoddard from Taylor, itself the repetition of a poem Taylor had earlier cited to Stoddard:

My dear Stoddard,
 Here is the last stanza of the poem I repeated to you:

Thou no man resent his wrong,
 Still is free the Poet's song;
 Still, a stag, his thought may leap
 O'er the herded swine and sheep,
 And in pastures far away
 Lose the Burden of the Day.

Always your friend,
 Bayard Taylor

San Francisco
 June 11, 1870.

The sheet contains yet another poem on the opposite side, Taylor's *Eldorado*, which he published in 1850 but had written in 1849 in California where he traveled to cover the Gold Rush for the *New York Tribune*. The page is obviously fragmented, its different poems framing each other, but it is also framed by the extratextual promise of enduring friendship between the two men that Taylor's closure understands to precede the writing of the letter itself. Neither generates any original prose to cement or further their bond. Taylor assembles poems; he does not write new ones. His letter suggests that this act of

assembly is nonetheless generative. At once quite private and yet evacuated of personal content, the sheet seems merely to accumulate texts that nonetheless seem to sustain, if not produce altogether, the friendly embrace that Taylor recognizes in his closure. This gesture to an enduring and unwavering friendship—“Always your friend”—may be the only original composition on the whole sheet. Convention would not have required such a grand flourish at the end of the letter. Its presence sustains the bond to which it gestures through a textuality marked by nothing more than circulation itself.

Stoddard’s correspondence on its own would make for a fascinating study of the role letters play in consolidating the publishing culture of his time. Many letters in Stoddard’s vast collection resemble the one Taylor writes to him: inserted with poems and textually scaffolded—a mini personal epistolary magazine. His own letters, and the letters to which others respond, frequently frame and produce acts of literary production. Taken collectively, these letters are also an astonishing reflection of the ways the American publishing industry at the end of the nineteenth century was both created and reflected through the sexual relationships between men. Stoddard engaged in detailed correspondence with virtually every major literary figure during his time: editors, writers, reviewers, and professors of literature.¹⁴

Within this circle of literary and social circulation, Stoddard was almost universally known as “Dad”—his children frequently lovers he had metaphorically adopted. He even published a short essay in *The National Magazine* titled “Dad’s Visit to Kipling.”¹⁵ In a

¹⁴ Stoddard was a professor of literature himself at the University of Notre Dame and later at the Catholic University in Washington. He was fired from his post in November 1901, ostensibly because the Catholic University suffered from low enrolments. He frequently gave public lectures that were well publicized and commented upon in newspapers of his time.

¹⁵ Charles Warren Stoddard, “Dad’s Visit to Kipling” *the National Magazine* (June 1905.) In a letter to Stoddard from Herbert B. Turner, a Boston publisher, refers to this article on Kipling. (July 7, 1905. Boston, MA). : **“Last month I read with delight Dad’s Visit to Kipling. I have read some of the**

letter to Howard Sutherland, dated January 14, 1903, Stoddard outlines this practice in a postscript. The body of the letter is typical of Stoddard's literary letters in that it advances his thoughts about his own novel and about other writers, notably, Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It is also typical for the ways Stoddard fuses literary analysis with personal metacommentary. The postscript carries on a parallel conversation: "What you said about Christmas and children broke my heart."¹⁶ I am an old—very old Bachelor. All my life I have been adopting sons. I can't very well adopt daughters. The boys grow up and get married and I am left the same old Bachelor, but older and more lonesome" (emphasis original).¹⁷ Whether all those who ultimately called Stoddard "Dad" were his lovers is unclear. Unmistakable, however, is the fact that the metaphoric moniker originated to mark Stoddard's sexual relationships with younger men. Could one re-assemble the collection of Stoddard's books and letters that Boston book dealer Charles E. Goodspeed auctioned off upon Stoddard's death, a fascinating cultural history could be written, detailing, through his literary practices, missives, and reflections, how very queer American publishing networks were at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Stoddard letters give us a limited sense of how central Stoddard was within this web of cultural alliances, especially toward the end of his life (and also how melancholy he had become in his exclusive reliance on his male friends—unlike many of them, Stoddard did not have a shadow married life). The collection includes folders of letters

others. They are all interesting and I have heard them spoken about. After the Christmas number is issued, how would you like a collection of these in book form adding a few more—something on Stevenson, Mark Twain, and Bret Harte would be relished keenly. Howells would probably allow you to write something about him. Why can't you do it?

Dad, did I tell you I had ordered a copy of the new edition of "Idyls"? I'm going to send it to you to autograph when I get it as it has been my custom with you."

¹⁶ What Howard said about children and Christmas was not clear from this letter; I have not been able to find the letter to which this letter is responding.

between Stoddard and various writers, ranging from Mark Twain (whom Stoddard served as a travelling secretary) Joaquin Miller, and lesser known writers of his day such as Howard Sutherland and Yone Noguchi, as well as important literary editors like William Dean Howells and Frank Putnam, long-time editor of *The National Magazine*. The interconnectedness of the various figures in Stoddard's life can be gleaned from looking at just a few examples from these letters. Many of these adopted children, like *National Magazine* editor Frank Putnam and Japanese-American poet Yone Noguchi¹⁸, were, or would become, married with children, although marriage did not completely displace their attachments to Stoddard. Noguchi was long a favourite lover of Stoddard, even after he married Ethel Ames, who was a frequent editor and reviewer of Stoddard's work (and one of Stoddard's intimate correspondents¹⁹). Putnam, who commissioned a year's worth of stories from Stoddard for the *National Magazine*, likewise retained and even facilitated his attachment to the bachelor world that Stoddard headlined. In June 1904, Stoddard wrote to Noguchi that

Frank Putnam wrote me a line saying that his wife and little ones are going away as soon as they are able to travel and then you will come to him and help keep Bachelors Hall. Won't that be jolly? O, then we shall see each other and be happy....O, Yone, dear! If only I had my little Bungalow and money enough to run it how happy we

¹⁷ Letter from Stoddard to Howard Sutherland, 14 July 1903. Stoddard Papers, Bancroft Library.

¹⁸ Stoddard was introduced to Noguchi through another literary companion, Joaquin Miller. Noguchi lived first with Miller and later with Stoddard for a while. Stoddard's role in supporting and facilitating Noguchi's rise as one of the earliest Japanese-American writers would make for a fascinating study, especially given the multiple love triangles in which Stoddard and Noguchi were involved.

¹⁹ Stoddard's letters reveal elaborate, parallel correspondences with Noguchi and Ames during their period of courtship, during which Stoddard was obviously also Noguchi's lover. Ames was a reviewer of Stoddard's work, but it was also clear from Stoddard's correspondence with editors including Frank Putnam, that he resented Ames's work and would often point out her grammatical and factual errors. On several occasions, he asked others if they would allow him to edit Ames's work.

might be! Well: we visit and make the most of what we have and thank God that we are not starving as so many poor people are.²⁰

Stoddard's letters overall enact through circulation the relationships they aim to congeal through metaphor. Strangers interpolate themselves into Stoddard's queer family of friends and lovers through the language of familial intimacy.²¹ The traffic through literature does not just describe, but sutures an elaborate network of queer relationships within the system of American publishing circles—all operating through the sentimental embrace of epistolary form.²²

While Stoddard's letters, on their own terms, reveal his yearning for literary and sexual connection to other men, this mode of making connection was generative for Stoddard in other ways. It helped him actually to produce fictional writing. The best example of how Stoddard's letters facilitate his literary production beyond letters themselves can be seen in his correspondence with Whitman.

II. Corresponding Strangers

On February 8, 1867, as an aspiring young poet, Stoddard first wrote to Whitman, sending him some of his poems, requesting Whitman's autograph, and hoping to engage his literary hero in a sustained correspondence.²³ Whitman did not respond and for two

²⁰ Letter from Stoddard to Yone Noguchi, June 1904. Stoddard Papers, Bancroft Library

²¹ Arthur MacKay, for instance, one of Stoddard's admirers, wrote several letters to Stoddard, enclosing poems or referring to magazines he'd received in the mail. All his letters were signed, "Your Kid"; Mackay even signed one, on behalf of all the "Kids": "All the clan send their love—as does your Kid—Arthur L. MacKay." Letter to Stoddard from Arthur L. MacKay. (20 August, 1905) Stoddard Papers, Bancroft Library.

²² See fn15 above, letter to Stoddard from Herbert B. Turner, dated July 7, 1905, which also addresses Stoddard's status at the heart of the late 19th century publishing world.

²³ Around the same time, Stoddard also wrote to Herman Melville, sending him, as he had sent Whitman, a selection of his poetry and attempting to enter into conversation about their respective histories of travel in Hawaii. Although Melville did respond, he did so only briefly and all too politely: "I have read with much

years Stoddard left well enough alone. But in 1869, a slightly more mature Stoddard tried again.²⁴ This time, Stoddard seemed to have thought more carefully about how to pitch himself to his favourite poet. He crafted his letter in such a way that Whitman's poetry might hail him into Whitman's sphere. Writing from Honolulu, Hawaii in March, 1869, Stoddard appealed to Whitman by recycling Whitman's trademark apostrophe in order to articulate, by analogy, the relationship he imagined between himself and Whitman: a relationship between the lyric speaker and the anonymous stranger that Whitman articulates in "To You":

To Walt Whitman.

May I quote you a couplet from your Leaves of Grass? "Stranger! If you passing, meet me, and desire to speak to me, why should you not speak to me? And why should I not speak to you?"

I am the stranger who, passing, desires to speak to you. Once before I have done so offering you a few feeble verses. I don't wonder why? you did not reply to them. Now my voice is stronger. I ask--why will you not speak to me? (qtd in Katz 501)

To engage Whitman further, Stoddard's letter continues by describing some of the experiences and impressions he acquired as a traveler in the South Seas. By implication, he extends Whitman's metaphor of the stranger into this following description, worth quoting at length since it acts also as the germ for one of Stoddard's *South Sea Idyls*:

So fortunate as to be travelling [*sic*] in these very interesting Islands I have done wonders in my intercourse with these natives. For the first time I act as my

pleasure the printed Verses you sent me, and, among others, was quite struck with the little effusion, 'Cherries and Grapes.' I do not wonder that you found no traces of me at the Hawaiian Islands" (Melville *Correspondence* 399 not sure if I have this in RefWorks?). Stoddard's "little effusions" were not enough to forge a connection with either writer.

²⁴ There is but inconclusive proof that Stoddard may also have tried to write again to Melville. Melville's edited correspondence indicates that among Melville's letters appeared a leaf to which, at one time, Melville attached the copy of a second letter "To Charles Warren Stoddard." This letter has been lost, however, so we cannot really know the nature of the writers' further correspondence. What we know of the way Stoddard fashioned his writing with respect to Melville persists in direct references to Melville in Stoddard's prose works.

nature prompts me. It would not answer in America, as a general principle, not even in California where men are tolerably bold. This is my mode of life.

At dusk I reach some village--a few grass huts by the sea or in some valley. The native villagers gather about me, for strangers are not common in these parts. I observe them closely. Superb looking, many of them. Fine hairs, glorious eyes that question, observe and then trust or distrust with an infallible instinct. Proud defiant lips, a matchless physique, grace and freedom in every motion.

I mark one, a lad of eighteen or twenty years, who is regarding me. I call him to me, ask his name, giving mine in return. He speaks it over and over, manipulating my body unconsciously, as it were, with bountiful and unconstrained love. I go to his grass house, eat with him his simple food, sleep with him upon his mats, and at night sometimes waken to find him watching me with earnest patient looks, his arm over my breast and around me. In the morning he hates to have me go. I hate as much to leave him. Over and over I think of him as I travel: he doubtless recalls me sometimes, perhaps wishes me back with him. We were known to one another perhaps twelve hours. Yet I cannot forget him. Everything that pertains to him now interests me. (qtd. in Katz 501-02)

Stoddard refracts his reading of Whitman's poem through the lens of his own experience.

Adopting Whitman's tone of description (even repeating references to "grass huts" and the "grass house"), Stoddard assumes the position of Whitman's lyric speaker, describing to Whitman the lad who regards him, just as Whitman has described the stranger he has encountered. Whitman's poetic form thus furnishes Stoddard with a means of organizing his sexual experience. Both Whitman and the lad are strangers to him, and so the letter multiplies the layers of stranger sociability: the one operating within the text of the letter and the other through the form of the letter itself.

Of course the letter adds something that was never there in the poem: contextual detail in the form of setting. "To a Stranger" is one of Whitman's shortest, most compact lyrics. Stoddard treats it as the skeleton on which he can hang his details and, eventually, grow his story as an event that unfolds across time and in a very specific space.

Whitman's stranger could, perhaps, be anyone, but Stoddard's stranger could not.

Whitman's "you" is abstract: Stoddard's "you" is, first Whitman and secondly, in the description of his encounter, a specific "lad of eighteen or twenty years." The main action of Whitman's poem is speaking; speaking is likewise central to Stoddard's hailing of Whitman. But in transposing the social structure of Whitman's poem, which hails the stranger through direct address, into the first person description of an event with a third person in the past tense, the main action of the encounter is "regarding" and embracing. Stoddard's encounter with the South Seas stranger is explicitly an encounter between bodies more than voices. And there are no shaming or pejorative adjectives in Stoddard's language; the passage aims to conceal nothing. (Actually Stoddard seems to boast of his encounter, appealing to Whitman through detail.) Whitman's poem organizes the social structure Stoddard's letter, but Stoddard's description affixes to it details that the lyric can only intimate.

If one of key differences between Whitman's poem and Stoddard's letter is the degree of description, this description has emerged through a rather paradoxical structure of reading. Stoddard claims that the spirit in which he reads Whitman ultimately makes his description possible, as if Whitman's poem has been reading him as he is reading it. Under these conditions of readerly exchange, Stoddard imagines himself producing his description of the boy "manipulating my body unconsciously, as it were, with bountiful and unconstrained love." He thus craves more of Whitman, in word and image:

You will easily imagine, my dear sir, how delightful I find this life. I read your Poems with a new spirit, to understand them as few may be able to. And I wish more than ever that I might possess a few lines from your pen. I want your personal magnetism to quicken mine. How else shall I have it? Do write me a few lines for they will be of immense value to me.

I wish it were possible to get your photograph. The small lithograph I have of you is not wholly satisfactory. But I would not ask so much of you. Only a page with your name and mine as you write it. Is this too much? (502)

The chiasmus of reading is complete: Stoddard reads Whitman, understands Whitman's language also to be reading him, and then rereads Whitman's poems "with a new spirit." He counts himself among a select group of readers, who can read Whitman's work with a knowing wink to a speaker who, they believe, acknowledges them.

In the ensuing correspondence between Whitman and Stoddard, this relationship of environment to sexual expression and formal tone begins to take further shape. Perhaps both flattered and intrigued, Whitman finally did reply to Stoddard, albeit briefly and with epistolary restraint: the letter, in other words, was short but sweet. Whitman admitted that "Those tender & primitive personal relationships away off there in the Pacific Islands, as described by you, touched me deeply" (502). He did also send the longed-for photograph, which Stoddard adored. Whitman draws back though when he points out, "I do not write many letters, but like to meet people" (502). It would be another year before Whitman would hear from Stoddard again, but in the meantime, the scene Stoddard described to Whitman in his letter—of meeting the eighteen-year-old boy in Hawaii—had flourished into Stoddard's "A South Sea Idyl" published in the *Overland Monthly*, September 1869. (The story would grow again, later, into Stoddard's novella-like, three-part story, "Chumming with a Savage.")

The encounter that Stoddard had described to Whitman in the letter developed into the following description, which has grown further, accumulating all the damaging sentimental adjectives and adverbs that people have grown to hate in Stoddard. This growing of description is nonetheless significant for the ways that description carries the weight of emotional attachment—exceeding the lyric context of the Whitman poem out

of which it grew. The resulting passage is worth citing in detail—precisely because it is the sheer accumulation of language in the form of detail that I think Stoddard’s writing showcases as it builds a narrative encounter, textually, out of the admixture of Whitman’s poem, Stoddard’s letters, and his readings and experiences about encounters between men in the South Seas:

Fate, or the Doctor, or something else, brought me first to this loveliest of valleys, so shut out from everything else but itself, that there were no temptations which might not be satisfied. Well! Here, as I was looking about at the singular loveliness of the place—you know this was my first glimpse of it; its abrupt walls, hung with tapestries of fern and clambering convolvulus; at one end two exquisite water-falls, rivaling one another in whiteness and airiness—at the other the sea, the real South Sea, breaking and foaming over a genuine reef, even rippling the placid current of the river, that slipped quietly down to its embracing tide from the deep basins at these water-falls—right in the midst of all this, before I had been ten minutes in the valley, I saw a straw hat, bound with wreaths of fern and *maile*; under it a snow-white garment, rather short all around, low in the neck, and with no sleeves whatever.

There was no sex to that garment; it was the spontaneous offspring of a scant material and a large necessity. I’d seen plenty of that sort of thing, but never upon a model like this, so entirely tropical—almost Oriental. As this singular phenomenon made directly for me, and having come within reach, there stopped and stated, I asked its name, using one of my seven stock phrases for the purpose; I found it was called Kana-ana. Down it went into my note-book; for I knew I was to have an experience with this young scion of a race of chiefs. Sure enough, I have had it. He continued to regard me steadily without embarrassment. He seated himself before me; I felt myself at the mercy of one whose calm analysis was questioning every motive of my soul. This age inquirer was, perhaps sixteen years old. His eye was so earnest and so honest, I could return his look. I saw a round, full, rather girlish face; lips ripe and expressive—not quite so sensual as those of most of his race; not a bad nose by any means; eyes perfectly glorious—regular almonds—with the mythical lashes “that sweep,” etc, etc. The smile, which presently transfigured his face was of a nature that flatter you into submission against your will.

Having weighed me in his balance—and you may be sure his instincts didn’t cheat him (they don’t do that sort of thing)—he placed his two hands on my two knees, and declared “I was his best friend, as he was mine; I must come at once to his house, and there live always with him.” What could I do but go? (66-67)

The passage itself points us in several ways to Stoddard's sense that origins of agency, both sexual and authorial, exceed the self—an important acknowledgment of the ways language accumulates through his text. First, the narrator's sentences regularly displace him from the position of grammatical subject: he regularly foregrounds the external origins of his own desire and his actions. It is "Fate or the doctor or something else" that has brought him here, and further, we find him hailed as much by the environment he is describing and apprehending.

Consider the way the lad/lover is introduced. He is actually a feature of the landscape, presented to us, through a structure of synecdoche, as a series of parts framed by assumptions about the context in which those parts appear. The lad appears first as a set of clothes, "a straw hat, bound with wreaths of fern and *maile*; under it a snow-white garment, rather short all around, low in the neck, with no sleeves whatsoever" (66). And, though he is marked by the purity associated with his "snow-white garment," the narrator understands his attraction to the boy not only as an attraction to purity, but also as an attraction to temptation: after all, "this loveliest of valleys, [was] so shut out from every thing but itself, that there were no temptation which might not be satisfied" (20).

The description and displacement that structures the sexual encounter further obfuscate the origins of agency at precisely the moment at which agency would appear to be foregrounded. Most of the wooing appears to be the boy's shameless work: "He continued to regard me steadily, without embarrassment." But the lad's agency itself has been licensed by the landscape out of which he has appeared. And it is description itself, as it shifts almost imperceptibly from the landscape to the lad himself, that transforms him into an object of desire: "His eye was so earnest and so honest"; his "round, full,

rather girlish face; lips ripe and expressive” with “not a bad nose, “eyes perfectly glorious—regular almonds—with the mythical lashes” and “the smile which presently transfigured his face.” The power the boy has is very much like the power landscape itself has: it is “nature that flatters you into submission against your will.” In the context of description, conscious decision seems to be lost in the verdure.

Nor is the scene without its recognition of the ways writing itself anticipates the encounter. Even before we get the description of Kana-ana, we are told that the first thing the narrator does is write Kana-ana’s name in his notebook—an action that precedes the smile and the steady gaze from Kana-ana himself: “Down [the name] went into my note-book; for I knew I was to have an experience with this young scion of a race of chiefs. Sure enough, I have had it.” Only after Kana-ana’s name is written in the notebook does he pursue the narrator: The act of writing seems to have been a decisive move on Stoddard’s part. The narrator cannot quite decide who makes the decisive moves here. At the sentence level, his own powers of observation—the ostensible origins of description—are not completely within his power. The description of the erotic encounter blends so easily into the romanticized description of the environment that the sublimity of the natural world seems to dissolve the ownership of desire into a feature of the body and infuse into the writing itself.

Fleshing out the skeleton of Whitman’s lyric apostrophe is hardly a straightforward project for Stoddard. The deferred subjectivity of Stoddard’s sentences and his writing of Kana-ana’s name before he can logically know anything of its import do gesture to a complex mode of sexual sociability—where desire is not conceived to

originate within the self—that has existed at least since the eighteenth-century.²⁵ But I’d like to suggest as well, that for Stoddard, it’s not just the narrator’s desire whose origins are beyond the self. The origins of the writing of desire are likewise beyond the bounded imagination of the author.

Stoddard relies on his own history of reading (which we could also describe as the history of others’ writing) to develop his modes of description, with all their symbolic associations, as much as he relies on Whitman for his paradigm of stranger sociability. As I suggested at the beginning of chapter one in my discussion of Melville, Stoddard acknowledges that Melville has long nourished his ideal of South Seas life. In another of the stories that comprise his later collection of *South Sea Idyls*, he would write that he knew something about Typee because “Herman Melville has plucked out the heart of its mystery and beautiful and barbarous Typee lies naked and forsaken” (302). His narrator claims, “I was rather glad we could not get any nearer to it, for fear of dispelling the ideal that has so long charmed me” (302). As I suggested in the earlier chapter on Melville, it is precisely out of Melville’s descriptions of his own narrator’s encounters with men in the South Seas that readings of the text’s queerness have emerged. Stoddard also gestured regularly to his fondness for other description-laden texts of sea-faring life such as *Robinson Crusoe*, and Richard Henry Dana’s *Two Years Before the Mast*.

We can also see the traces of Bayard Taylor, another of Stoddard’s beloved poets, in the long passage that he develops above. Taylor’s “To a Persian Boy: In the Bazaar at Smyrna” also bears a striking resemblance to the scene Stoddard describes:

²⁵ Jonathan Kramnick makes the argument that John Wilmot, the second Earl of Rochester depicts a similar structure of sexual desire in his poetry of the British Restoration era. The origins of desire in these poems are grammatically outside the speaking subject—in the social world. See Jonathan Kramnick “Rochester and the History of Sexuality” *ELH* 2000: rest of citation?

The gorgeous blossoms of that magic tree
 Beneath whose shade I sat a thousand nights,
 Breathed from their opening petals all delights
 Embalmed in spice of Orient Poesy,
 When first, young Persian, I beheld thine eyes,
 And felt the wonder of thy beauty grow
 Within my brain, as some fair planet's glow
 Deepens, and fills the summer evening skies.
 From under thy dark lashes shone on me
 The rich, voluptuous soul of Eastern land,
 Impassioned, tender, calm, serenely sad—
 Such as immortal Hafiz felt when he
 Sang by the fountain-streams of Rocnabad
 Or in the bowers of blissful Samarcand.²⁶

Recall that the boy in Stoddard's story was "a model...so entirely tropical—almost Oriental." It is hard to believe that Stoddard did not have Taylor in mind, especially since the very title of another Taylor poem, "An Oriental Idyl" conjures up the genre in which Stoddard so clearly claims to be writing.

Like the Whitman lyric that structures the sexual sociability in Stoddard's writing, the environment of Stoddard's prose and the ways of writing about it in Stoddard's descriptions owe a debt to other literary depictions of similar locations. What is striking

²⁶ Bayard Taylor "To a Persian Boy" *The Columbia anthology of gay literature : readings from Western antiquity to the present day*. Ed. Byrne R.S. Fone. New York: Columbia UP, 1998. 571.

about the passage is the way it establishes a set of connections, almost seamlessly, between the beauty of the landscape and the narrator's sexual attraction to the boy. The apostrophe to the stranger, taken from Whitman, still structures the encounter between the two men. But it is no longer abstract. The scene acquires a setting and specific details. The skeleton of stranger sociability is shrouded with descriptive language that idealizes the environment all the while showcasing the interconnectedness of social and literary circulation. This described setting that is the *mise-en-scène* for the characters therein, is the site of an accumulated textual consciousness. The influence of Taylor, Melville, Dana, and Whitman (perhaps others as well) can all be traced throughout Stoddard's opening passage. To write about the mode of life Stoddard so cherishes in the South Seas is to put in play, with various degrees of authorial consciousness, the range of associations that have accrued to description within the South Seas. The mass of such literary accumulations allows Stoddard to condense what has been more sparsely sprinkled throughout texts of these other writers into a single encounter. Through the concrete description details it offers, the location paradoxically becomes generic. The environment of Stoddard's story is no longer specified as Hawaii (as it was in Stoddard's earlier letter to Whitman). It has become a generic south sea island environment, typifying the kind of sociability it showcases all the more for its lack of specificity.

III. The Making of a Proze Idyl

Proud of his accomplishment, Stoddard does not just publish the resulting "South Sea Idyl" in *The Overland Monthly*. After returning to San Francisco early in 1870, Stoddard could not resist sending Whitman a copy of his "South Sea Idyl" (the one

excerpted above). He attaches to the story another letter that, again foregrounds Whitman as a source of inspiration, appealing to him in bold urgency and overdetermined identification, and coining the writing he has sent a “proze idyl”:

To Walt Whitman

In the name of CALAMUS listen to me! before me hangs your beautiful photograph, twice precious, since it is your gift to me. Near at hand lies your beloved volume and with it the Notes of Mr. Burroughs.

May I not thank you for your picture and your letter? May I not tell you over and over that where I go you go with me, in poem and picture and the little volume of notes also, for I read and reread trying to see you in the flesh as I so long to see you!

I wrote you last from the Sandwich Islands. I shall before long be even further from you than ever, for I think of sailing towards Tahiti in about five weeks. I know there is but one hope for me. I must get in amongst people who are not afraid of instincts and who scorn hypocrisy. I am numbed with the frigid manners of the Christians; barbarism has given me the fullest joy of my life and I long to return to it and be satisfied. May I not send you a proze idyl wherein I confess how dear it is to me? There is much truth in it and I am praying that you may like it a little. If I could only know that it has pleased you I should bless my stars fervently....

You say you “don’t write many letters.” O, if you would only reply to this within the month! I could then go to the South Seas feeling sure of your friendship and I should try to live the real life there for your sake as well as for my own. Forgive me if I have worried you: I will be silent and thoughtful in future, but in any case know, dear friend, that I am grateful for your indulgence. Affectionately yours,

Charles Warren Stoddard (qtd in Katz 502)

The generically hybrid term “proze idyl” marks the tension that emerges out of Stoddard’s literary fusion as well as the tension that Whitman would come to recognize between his own work (and world view) and Stoddard’s. Stoddard’s strategy of addressing Whitman has not changed from the last letter. But by hailing him “in the name of Calamus,” he unwittingly (and thus ironically), marks his own divergence from Whitman. Stoddard’s Calamus is not Whitman’s. For Stoddard the “name of Calamus” is transportable, whereas for Stoddard’s Whitman it is distinctly American. The gap

between Whitman's context and Stoddard's also plays itself out in Stoddard's assumption that Whitman needs someone to live life for his sake because, he assumes, Whitman cannot live the life he might want in America. Whitman may indeed go wherever Stoddard goes in both spirit and text, but Stoddard is, in part, also rejecting something in Whitman in order to escape what is at the heart of Whitman's poetry: American life.

Stoddard cannot bear "the frigid manners of the Christians," which he associates with America, and effectively establishes a dichotomy between America and the South Seas. Shuttling back and forth between these two modes of life ultimately structures all of the longer prose he will come to write. In the South Seas, he finds people are less afraid of "instincts" and less prone to "hypocrisy." But Stoddard's own sense of utopianism clouds his very reading of Whitman and leads him to construct a false homology. Whitman does not shrink from what Stoddard sees as the obsequiousness of American life; its contradictions and hypocrisies are a source of Whitman's creative energy and connection. For Stoddard, these contradictions and hypocrisies are an albatross.

None of Stoddard's contradictions are lost on Whitman, who is quick to see not only where Stoddard misreads him, but also where Stoddard's own preoccupations translate into particular forms of description. Horace Traubel, Whitman's friend and secretary, reports that when he and Whitman read through this letter in Camden, Whitman described Stoddard as follows:

he is of a simple and direct naive nature--never seemed to fit in very well with things here: many of the finest spirits don't--seem born for another planet--seem to have got here by mistake: they are not too bad--not: they are too good: they take their stand on a plane higher than the average practice. You would think they

would be respected for that, but they are not: they are almost universally agreed to be fools--they are derided rather than revered. (444-45)

Whitman's tone with Traubel shifts markedly from his tone with Stoddard. Rather than defend American grittiness in the face of Stoddard's resistance to it, he defends Stoddard's fine spirit. Stoddard's nature, according to Whitman, corresponds with a particular mode of expression: "simple" "direct" and "naïve," itself, we assume, connected to what Whitman would describe in his next response to Stoddard as the "extravagant sentimentalism" that America would prevent.

I have just reread the sweet story all over, & find it indeed soothing & nourishing after its kind, like the atmosphere. As to you, I do not of course object to your emotional & adhesive nature, & the outlet thereof, but warmly approve them--but do you know (perhaps you do), how the hard, pungent, gritty, worldly experiences & qualities in American practical life also serve? How they prevent extravagant sentimentalism? & how they are not without their own great value & even joy?

It arises in my mind as I write, to say something of that kind to you--

I am not a little comforted when I learn that the young men dwell in though upon me & my utterances--as you do--& I frankly send you my love--& I hope that we shall one day meet--

--I wish to hear from you always,

Walt Whitman

In connecting the tone of Stoddard's story with the atmosphere it describes (and in which it was written), Whitman describes and acknowledges a mode of queer being and writing that is diametrically opposed to modes of writing and being widely associated with writers like Oscar Wilde and Henry James at around the same time in history. He makes a gentle but firm distinction between Stoddard's predilections and his own preference for the "pungent, gritty, worldly experiences & qualities in American practical life"—all the while encouraging Stoddard to continue reading his work in that "new spirit" to which Stoddard referred in the earlier letter. Whatever Whitman's qualms over Stoddard's

sentimental, direct, or naïve expression might be, he nonetheless sees something worth encouraging in this new spirit of reading.

The Stoddard-Whitman correspondence, and the literature Stoddard produces out of it, demonstrates that this new spirit of reading has some peculiar consequences for writing. That Whitman approves Stoddard's "emotional and adhesive nature" despite its being lived and written in ways he does not himself choose acknowledges a wider range of ways that adhesion might be lived and written—wider, that is, than we have heretofore acknowledged historically. Stoddard's sentimental embrace of Whitman, to the point of importing Whitman's mode of address into his own letters and writing, would certainly make his writing derivative. And yet Stoddard also reveals that even his own methodology of sentimental embrace does not merely reproduce the literature like that which he admires most. Stoddard's reading of and engagement with Whitman's American practicality is an indication that practicality is not just an alternative to extravagant sentimentalism; it is one of its origins. This relationship between sentimental South Seas adhesion and practical American adhesion becomes a key dialectic for Stoddard. Working through its dimensions, shuttling back and forth from one context to another within his prose, and thus accumulating a range of literary language and descriptions to these different forms of adhesion becomes the generating force for Stoddard's longest prose works: the novella "Chumming with a Savage" that "A South Sea Idyl" would next become, and his only novel *For the Pleasure of his Company: A Tale of the Misty City*.

IV. Fictional Circulations: Chumming With "Extravagant Sentimentalism"

Even more than the “South Sea Idyl” that served as its germ, “Chumming With a Savage” emerges out of the process of literary circulation that is highlighted in the Whitman correspondence. When “A South Sea Idyl” evolves into the three-part “Chumming With a Savage,” the second part of the text, ironically titled “How I Converted My Cannibal,” brings the narrator’s lover, Kana-ana (the young lad), to America to live. The narrator, however, recognizes the experiment as a dismal failure. They (the narrator and Kana-ana) cannot reproduce in America the bliss of their encounter in the South Seas: Kana-ana must return to his home. In part three, the narrator returns to the South Seas only to discover that Kana-ana has died, having taken a canoe and paddled into the ocean, either to escape his loneliness in suicide or to return to his lover in America. A figure for Stoddard’s own idealizations and disappointments, Kana-ana is as much a literary device that allows Stoddard to work through the significance of circulation as he is a less fully realized character in his own right. As Stoddard’s lover, he is certainly important to structuring the novella around a central queer relationship (and thus to establishing the narrator as a protagonist). But he operates more fully as a yardstick by which Stoddard can take the measure for his readers of the issues of social and literary circulation. At the level of tone, Kana-ana allows Stoddard to experiment with the interface between extravagant sentimentalism and the gritty practicality of America as he and Kana-ana move, at different rates, between America and the South Seas.

The resulting story highlights Stoddard’s ambivalence toward both the sentimental life he embraces in the South Seas and the American practical life that he chooses over and over again. Stoddard would always idealize his experiences in the

South Seas and describe them longingly in his writing at the same time that he could never seem to reconcile “adhesion” with “American practical life.” The struggle to do so plays itself out in his writings at the level of style. It produces a plot structure for him that enables him to play out his preoccupation across fictional time.

The tone in “Chumming With a Savage” frequently appears to depend on the conditions of its characters’ social circulation—their shuttling back and forth between America and the South Seas and the surprising reversals of the primitive/civilized dichotomy implied in that shuttling. The first-person narrator, who describes the encounters in America, frequently speaks in ironic reversals, often invoking the language of conversion, so often displayed in American writing about the South Seas, to expose its limitations. (In this sense, Stoddard again, reveals his debt to Melville.) Wryly inhabiting the role of missionary himself, the narrator points out that to convert Kana-ana is, above all, to school him in the arts of hypocrisy: “I could teach him to dress, you know; to say a very good thing to your face and a very bad one to your back; to sleep well in church, and rejoice duly when the preacher had got to the last ‘Amen’.” (36). No such hypocrisy was necessary in the South Seas, where the narrator’s tone is marked by ejaculations and the sentences by exclamation marks. The mode of life is highlighted not by hypocrisy, but by natural expression: “If it is a question of how long a man may withstand the seductions of nature, I have solved it in one case; for as was as natural as possible in about three days” (28). Irony and sentimental naturalism persist as if they were codes for artifice and earnestness respectively. Form itself thus indexes the conditions of social and literary circulation through the very distinctions Stoddard makes between irony and sentimentalism.

But as we have already seen through Stoddard's correspondence with Whitman, even the most earnest ejaculations and descriptions of natural experience rely on existing literary conventions for their expression. It might seem, then, that one of the greater ironies of Stoddard's text is that its writer, so resistant to the "frigid manners of the Christians," relies quite heavily on Christian reference in his writing. Unlike Whitman and Melville, Stoddard never sought to be the darling of the American literary marketplace and certainly never considered himself to be speaking as the poet of America. He struggled throughout his life to earn a living by his pen, but never really "calculated for popular reading" as Melville did with *Typee*.²⁷ But Stoddard's reliance on Christian frameworks gestures not only to his own complicated views on religion and Christianity.²⁸ Stoddard's focus on the motif of the Prodigal Son (arguably more significant within the Catholic than, say, the Puritan tradition of Christianity) demonstrates the extent to which this biblical story had much the same literary status for Stoddard as Whitman's poetry, Melville's prose, or, it must also be pointed out, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.²⁹

The most sustained treatment of the prodigal son motif appears throughout "Chumming With a Savage" (although there is at least one other occasion in which he figures his narrator as a "prodigal son": in the last of the *South Sea Idyls*, "Prodigal in

²⁷ Stoddard first went to Hawaii as a newspaper correspondent, though he did not really define himself according to the audience he sought. Upon his return from the South Seas on one occasion, Stoddard even thought he might go on a lecture tour, but he was told by friends that the time for lecture tours really had passed.

²⁸ Later in his life, Stoddard became a convert to Catholicism: he taught literature at both University of Notre Dame and the Catholic University in Washington. He wrote regularly for the *Ave Maria*, a Catholic literary periodical and wrote numerous non-fictional pieces on Catholic life in the South Seas, in California, and . For more on the appeals of Catholicism for emerging queer cultures in the late nineteenth-century, see Ellis Hanson, *Decadence and Catholicism* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997)..

Tahiti”). In the first section of the story, the narrator appears to play prodigal son to the Doctor, his traveling mate, who accompanies him to this “loveliest of valleys” and whom he establishes as the only father figure in the story—even if he is also “perfectly savage” (19). He becomes savage, we are led to believe, by observing the narrator flirting with the natives. The moment of the narrator’s renunciation of all the doctor represents takes place when the narrator confesses his love for the “dear fellow,” Kana-ana:

He [the Doctor] tried to talk me over to the paths of virtue and propriety; but I would not be talked over. Then the final blast was blown; war was declared at once. The Doctor never spoke again, but to abuse me; and off he rode in high dudgeon, and the sun kept going down on his wrath. Thereupon I renounced all the follies of this world, actually hating civilization, and feeling entirely above the formalities of society. I resolved on the spot to be a barbarian, and, perhaps, dwell forever and ever in this secluded spot. (24)

It is not the doctor to whom the narrator will ever really return in the spirit of the prodigal son, but what the Doctor represents as a “savage” custodian of “civilization”—one who speaks of “virtue and propriety,” but reinforces it with “abuse” and sanctimony. Stoddard establishes the key device for framing his tales: his narrators’ struggles within and against the forces of civilization, wherein primitivism itself becomes a metaphor that figures the relationship between competing versions of civilization, and sentimental style characterizes an idealized outside to contradictions in American life. The story of the prodigal son is detached from its specific Christian framework, even as its Christian residue takes on greater power as a metaphor for all culture.

If American life has produced a sort of closet for Stoddard, the same “barbaric manners of the Christians” that he complained about to Whitman produce a kind of queer

²⁹ Like Tommo, Stoddard’s narrator regularly compared himself with Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe: he finds that “Robinson Crusoe must have had some tedious rehearsals before he acquired that perfect resignation to Providence which delights us in book form” (26) and refers at another point to his “Crusoe life” (31).

cordon sanitaire for him in the south sea islands. Recall the narrator's statement, cited earlier, that "Fate or the Doctor, or something else, brought me first to this loveliest of valleys, so shut out from everything but itself that there were no temptations which might not be satisfied" (19-20). The narrator has indeed been brought here and can make sense of the "here," "this loveliest of valleys" only by comparison: it is "shut out from everything"; it exists in a place far away from another place in which the temptations might not be satisfied. The temptation, it is clear, says our narrator, is a temptation of nature, not individual: "If it is a question of? how long a man may withstand the seductions of nature, and the consolations and conveniences of the state of nature, I have solved it in one case; for I was as natural as possible in about three days" (28).

Becoming natural is only partially about shedding the conventions of civilization; it is just as much about becoming part of the environment that surrounds him. This is an environment that shuns artifice and secrecy in favour of stating the obvious. The narrator and Kana-ana lounge languidly in bed and the narrator revels in conveying the details: "Again and again he would come with a delicious banana to the bed where I was lying, and insist upon my gorging myself, when I had but barely recovered from a late orgie of fruit, flesh, or fowl. He would mesmerize me into a most refreshing sleep with a prolonged and pleasing manipulation" (32).

But on the other hand, Stoddard's struggle with "the frigid manners of the Christians" encroaches upon the very language of this idealization. Although the narrator is besotted with the lover he takes, his descriptions of Kana-ana often flirt with an odd form of catachresis: in the following passage, for instance, Stoddard's narrator imagines Kana-ana imagining him, gone:

Kana-ana was still asleep, but he never let loose his hold on me, as though he feared his pale-faced friend would fade away from him. He lay close by me. His sleek figure, supple and graceful in repose, was the embodiment of free, untrammelled youth. You brought up under cover know nothing of its luxuriousness. How I longed to take him over the sea with me and show him something of life as we find it. (26)

This staging of his own importance through the eyes of his lover seems to be an index more of the narrator's desire to resolve his own longing and love with life at home in America. At this point in the story, it is never clear what, exactly, he would want to "show" Kana-ana "of life as we find it." But the very impulse *to show* is itself a desire for two worlds to meet. Where they meet most often is in metaphor or simile as they do above when we are told Kana-ana holds on "*as though* he feared his pale-faced friend would fade away from him." Similar interfaces of world through poetics take place regularly in the text. The narrator struggles for language to describe what he sees, often translating the environment into a known vocabulary or concept, whether it be the experience that he imagines Robinson Crusoe to have had, or the wreath of berries on the bedpost that he suggests "might have come from England in the Elizabethan era and [on a boat that had] been wrecked off the coast; hence the mystery of its presence" (25).

The figure of the narrator as prodigal seems designed to mediate the very contradictory nature of escaping from America but being bound by Americanism. He is distracted by thought that

I was indeed beguiled; I was growing to like the little heathen altogether too well. What should I do when I was at last compelled to return out of my seclusion, and find no soul so faithful and loving in all the earth beside? Day by day this thought grew with me and with it I realized the necessity of a speedy departure.

There were those in the world I could still remember with that exquisitely painful pleasure that is the secret of true love. Those still voices seemed incessantly to call me, and something in my heart answered them of its own accord. (29)

The “painful pleasure” is not just a secret of true love, but a feeling that arises from being pulled by two different worlds (and two different modes of description) at once: one that raises the spectre of loneliness and the other that promises a companion who is faithful and loving. These two worlds come together, retrospectively, in the sentimentally inflected phrase “that exquisitely painful pleasure that is the secret of true love”—exactly the kind of writing that has made critics of Stoddard cringe. Stoddard cannot step outside the rhetorical confines that he sees produced by American barbarism and frigidity, although he is also trying to occupy a space that its negativity generates. The text’s contradictions structure the narrative at same time that they become a foil for the idealization of the queer life Stoddard describes. In the face of the two options he sees, his narrator “realizes the necessity of a speedy departure.” He doesn’t actually choose sentiment over practicality. The text holds both together, whether it aims to or not.

Whether Stoddard successfully resolves or works through the contradictions that erupt when America meets the South Seas (and irony meets sentimentality) or whether sentimentality might be redeemed for its complex representations of queer life and love is all beside the point. What interests me in these examples are the ways in which Stoddard’s texts can be seen to suggest a model of textual accumulation for a mode of life that Stoddard does not see fully embraced around him.

It is less significant, therefore, that Stoddard equates queer life with prodigality, than that he uses the known story to generate a literary modality of being, which he sees emerging in the literature around him, but not fully embraced. Like Whitman’s apostrophe, the parable of the prodigal son provides Stoddard with a skeleton on which to hang a broader exploration of queer life. Transposing that structure into a new context is

a conservative move on the one hand: it looks backward to a known story. But on the other hand, Stoddard invokes the Christian allegory of repentance from the story of the prodigal son in order to turn it on its head. The first part of the story ends, strangely, with the narrator telling us that he “arose and went unto my father. I wanted to finish up the Prodigal business” (34). It is not clear who this father is. We have not been introduced to any father in the story, but the stern fatherly figure of the Doctor, whom the narrator claims not to have spoken to since they were on the island. The father in question might be an abstraction or his actual father, neither of which matters terribly, though, since the allegorical structure of what the narrator describes hereafter elevates the “father” to abstraction anyway:

I ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him, and said unto him, “Father *if* I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, I’m afraid I don’t care much. Don’t kill anything. I don’t want any calf. Take back the ring, I don’t deserve it; for I’d give more this minute to see that dear little velvet skinned, coffee-colored Kana-ana than anything else in the wide world—because he hated business and so do I. He’s a regular brick, father, molded of the purest clay, and baked in God’s sunshine. He’s about half sunshine himself; and above all others, and more than any one else ever can, he loved your Prodigal. (35)

In this ending, the parable expands as the abstract position of Prodigal is inhabited not just by the Doctor/father who would love the son, but by Kana-ana who has also “loved [his] Prodigal.” The passage also suggests that one way to move outside the paradigm of sin and virtue that the parable evokes is to move through it. Sin itself is framed in the conditional tense, the “*if*” italicized: “*if* I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, I’m afraid I don’t care much.” He imagines the father’s responding in terms as the biblical father of the prodigal son does, but he wants neither ring, nor calf. Kana-ana himself would be the reward—a reward that in the next part of the three-part tale, the narrator will give to himself by sending for Kana-ana. By refiguring the end of the

parable, the narrator rejects the structure of sin in favour of an ethics of love that itself redeems his own prodigality. Doing so means fully inhabiting the language of the parable—recirculating it by re-contextualizing it, not just rejecting it. The very twist of the ending, the possibility of refusing the paradigm of sin on the character's part, depends upon Stoddard's acknowledgement of the force of its original biblical tale and the embrace of its language.

Stoddard continues to inhabit the language of religion to expose its shortcomings with respect to colonialism and sexuality in the next section of the story as well. Its title is "How I Converted my Cannibal" but Kana-ana is never really converted, nor is he a cannibal. The narrator presents himself ironically, as one who will use the institutions of colonialism to noble ends. He cannot even take his own best intentions seriously in the retelling. For instance, he writes to the Colonel of the Royal Guards, "begging him to catch Kana-ana, when his folks weren't looking and send him to my address marked C.O.D. for I was just dying to see him. That was how I trapped my little heathen and began to be a missionary, all by myself" (37). Although he adopts the language of the missionary, he does so to stage the violence of the very effort. By the end of the story, the narrator concludes that "[I]t was this civilization that had wounded him, till the thought of his easy and pleasurable life among the barbarians stung him to madness" (44). If the overdetermination of sending for Kana-ana C.O.D. were not enough to give the game away, sentimental description returns to drive the point home. Speaking in indirect apostrophe to Kana-ana, the narrator effuses:

Poor longing soul! I would you had never left the life best suited to you—that liberty which alone could give expression to your wonderful capacities. Not many are so rich in instincts to read Nature, to translate her revelations, to speak of her as an orator endowed with her surpassing eloquence. (45)

The kind of eloquence that the narrator attributes to Kana-ana is borne of a particular kind of liberty and of instincts themselves. But it is also a kind of eloquence that the narrator himself shifts into when he describes both Kana-ana and life in the South Seas. It is the sense that revelations can be “translated,” that Nature itself gives rise to particular forms of speech.

If it is this quality that both Kana-ana and the narrator miss most, it is a quality of expression that, again, Stoddard sets up as being at odds with forms of social and linguistic expression in America. As we have already seen, dissemblance is the very marker of American life. Stoddard may deploy sentimental language; he may even long for the earnestness he associates with it: but in the wake of Whitman’s letter to him, he can no longer claim to be naively sentimental. He inhabits this sentimentalism so excessively that he seems to come out the other side of it, shuttling back and forth between life in America and life in the South Seas. Each move is attended by its own melancholy, occasioned by the lover who must leave, understood through the contexts in the story that frame it.

In the same way that Stoddard himself felt compelled to leave Kana-ana and the island, he also feels Kana-ana must return home to his own loved ones (not C.O.D., one assumes). Not surprisingly, then, the third and final part of “Chumming With a Savage,” titled “Barbarian Days” sends the narrator back to the South Seas where he undertakes to reacquaint himself with Kana-ana. In the opening pages, he described himself on the boat: “Sitting there on the after-deck, I had asked myself more than once, if life were made up of placid days like this, how long would life be sweet? I gave it up every time; for one is not inclined to consider so curiously as to press any problem to a solution in

those indolent latitudes” (49). If an excess of placidity numbs curiosity and inspires indolence, Stoddard’s narrator is its counterexample since he is already wary of the effects the environment may have. He sees the “dear barbarians, who hate civilization almost as much as I do and are certainly quite as idolatrous and indolent as I aspire to be” (54). But in courting further encounters with the South Sea islanders, he is also courting, while meditating on, a problem that he can never solve, but which his writing illustrates beautifully.

At the level of content, the problem as the narrator sees it is tied directly to incommensurate forms of sociality. Life in the South Seas is fundamentally incompatible with American interventions. When he learns that Kana-ana has died, he chastises himself for polluting Kana-ana’s childlike nature, and oddly enough, for making Kana-ana the prodigal, since Kana-ana has been the one to leave his father and his home. But he is clear that the blame is his own: “What business had I to touch so sensitive an organism; susceptible of infinite impressions, but inescapable, in its prodigality, of separating and dismissing the evil, and retaining only the good...Of what use to him could be a knowledge of the artifices of society? Simply a temptation and a snare!” (61). The narrator implicitly sees the cause of Kana-ana’s death as circulation itself: if only the narrator had not made him susceptible to “infinite impressions”—a solution possible if either the narrator or Kana-ana (or both) had just stayed home. Their “prodigality” (as well as their pleasure) would have been circumvented—and the need even to see the story in terms of prodigality might have been avoided. After all, the story itself, with the restoration of order that return secures has, in this case, been no cure for what comes to ail Kana-ana.

The problem of sociability is already a problem intimately bound to stories, even at the plot level. Kana-ana's mother tells the narrator that although Kana-ana returned home full of stories and excitement about his travels,

the exhilaration wore off, after a time. Then came the reaction; an undefined unsatisfied longing. Life became a burden. The seed of dissension had fallen in fresh and fallow; it was a souvenir of his sojourn among use. He, the child of Nature, must now follow out the artificial and hollow life of the world, or die unsatisfied; for he could not return to his original sphere of trust and contentment. He had learned to doubt all things, as naturally as any of us...I believe he was distracted with the problem of society, and I cannot wonder at it. (62)

Kana-ana, burdened by his stories, finds life after his return to the fold an artifice: he sets to sea in a canoe and later washes up on the beach, a victim of "the problem of society." But he is also a victim of stories: the stories that led the narrator to him to begin with and the stories that produced a longing in him for something beyond his "original sphere." Knowing other stories changes the way he experiences the world: the "problem of society" that Stoddard thematizes as the problem of cross-cultural contact becomes visible as such in this text by way of both social and literary circulation.

We have already seen how this problem of society presents itself in terms of tone. But "Chumming With A Savage" demonstrates the extent to which tone, being also an index of particular place-stories, accounts for plot production within the parameters of late nineteenth-century realism. The elements of tone conceptualized in Stoddard's correspondence with Whitman, combined with the kinds of description Stoddard attributes to Melville and the biblical motif that structures his account, collectively enable Stoddard to produce a sustained plot that spans fictional time and space. Stoddard's novella emerges out of the tension in tone that defines the narrative voice, but structured largely through the lenses of the stories he already knew and loved. Intertextuality does

not just furnish Stoddard with a means of demonstrating how well-read he is or act as a way of scaffolding his stories, although it does accomplish both these things. More significantly, Stoddard's embrace of these texts and writers offers him a means of accumulating language around a particular "mode of life" that is distinctly queer. It also facilitates the emergence of queer self-consciousness for him. Whitman and Melville name for Stoddard ways of being in the world that he had not seen anywhere else. Stoddard's queer self-consciousness is, in other words, profoundly literary.

And profoundly cumulative. Stoddard, after all, was a collector: first of others' signatures, books and phrases and later of his own aphorisms,³⁰ experiences, and every appearance he ever made in print. His only novel is a thinly veiled autobiography, the first queer novel to be set in San Francisco. Stoddard spent the later years of his life collecting, through various newswire services, every piece of print to publish his name: every story, poem, announcement, and newspaper article. "Chumming With A Savage" illustrates the result of this accumulation and Stoddard's use of collection to gather into himself and his texts the language he needed to generate his prose idyls.

The South Sea Idyls themselves, of which "Chumming With a Savage" is but one, are an accumulation of experiences: separate, but linked stories, that all seem to feature the same unnamed narrator. These *South Sea Idyls*, like the novella it contains, are a significant by-product of Stoddard's "extravagant sentimentalism."

³⁰ Stoddard's papers contain a notebook devoted almost entirely to recording sentences or aphorisms that occurred to him or that he heard through the day—evidence perhaps of Stoddard at his most Wildean. Wilde apparently expressed regret at not getting to meet Stoddard. He did visit the Studios of Isobel Strong, who wrote to Stoddard that "[Wilde] was delightfully entertaining, and said the only thing he regretted about California was that he had not seen the Yosemite Valley and Charley Stoddard. But you Charley, are the real aesthete—he affects what to you is natural and he has not your languor, grace, or beautiful voice and so the general verdict is that we have a better aesthete at home than this fellow who came all these miles to 'show off'" (Letter in the Huntington Library; qtd in Austen *Genteel Pagan* 98).

As Stoddard's writing grows in length and scope, his intertextual methodology also enables us to see the building blocks and stages of Stoddard's literary production, his fictional writing the product of numerous literary recombinations. I've focussed above primarily on Whitman's stranger-sociability, Taylor's Oriental boy, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Melville's descriptions, and the parable of the Prodigal Son, although there are numerous others. It is no coincidence that in the wake of publishing *The South Sea Idyls* Stoddard's attention will turn to transforming serial encounters into a narrative whole, first in his only novel, the autobiographical *For the Pleasure of His Company* and later, when he begins to piece together his own literary life in the form of scrapbooks. What began, for Stoddard, as literary hero-worship and his understanding of queer life through literary pastiche ultimately enabled him to produce a novel, a protagonist, and ultimately himself, in textual form.

“More or Less Spoony”: Paul Clitheroe's Theory of The Novel

Stoddard's first and only novel was the last sustained work of fiction he would publish in his life. It could not have been written, I don't think, unless the *South Sea Idyls* had come first. Even then it was written (and rewritten) slowly, the source of great anxiety for Stoddard.³¹ *For The Pleasure of His Company: An Affair of the Misty: Thrice Told* was first published by A.M. Robertson in 1903. (It has been largely out of print since.) The book went through an array of titles—*So Glad to Have Met You*, *Summer Cloud*, and *The Bohemian* before getting the title that stuck from Rudyard Kipling. Not

³¹ Stoddard wrote in his unpublished diary of the fear that possessed him about writing and publishing this book. Which of these caused him the most anxiety is unclear. In the pages that follow, all unpublished material and material collected for Stoddard's scrapbook comes from the Stoddard papers at the Bancroft

surprisingly, it was in a letter to Stoddard that Kipling suggested the title and encouraged changes in the “rummy queer, original, fascinating” story that Stoddard was then preparing. He suggested a “closer knot-shape” for the structure.³² Stoddard adopted Kipling’s suggestions, although it must also be said that the novel’s three-part structure is quite similar to that of “Chumming With A Savage.” The novel tells the story of Paul Clitheroe, his turns at writing, acting and love in San Francisco. Although Clitheroe moves around the Bay Area in the three sections of his book, the ending sees his escape from America into the arms of three naked South Sea Islanders, with whom he sails away. Considered autobiographical by both Stoddard and its readers, the text that finally emerged has since been described (by publicists for The Gay Sunshine Press, who reprinted it 1987) as “the first relatively open American novel with homosexual themes” (back cover).

The emergence of this novel out of Stoddard’s intertextual processes of literary accumulation and re-circulation, in a condensed sense, reminiscent of the emergence of the novel itself.³³ It combines the words, documents, and experiences of Stoddard’s life amount in a coherent fictional history that circulates around a single protagonist. Like the prehistory of the novel itself, the prehistory of *For the Pleasure of His Company* is multi-generic: it draws less on the categories of history and romance than its eighteenth-century counterpart, drawing instead on lyric poetry and travel-writing as they themselves are transposed into the novella that was Stoddard’s most sustained prose work before his novel. Unlike the emergent eighteenth-century novel, however, *For the Pleasure of His*

Library. Only when clippings that retain tags from the clipping services Stoddard used can be effectively referenced. References are supplied where available.

³² See fn15 for the origin of this quotation in “Dad’s Visit to Kipling.”

Company does emerge into a literary context where the novel has long been recognized as a distinct, if constantly evolving, genre. In this context, the novel has been seen retrospectively as a hallmark of the emerging sub-genre, the gay novel.

The fact that Paul Clitheroe imagines both his life and his own writing in contradistinction to the conventions of the novel as he knows it is thus paradoxically essential to the novel's generic novelty. In the middle of Book II, we find his [and also Stoddard's] most detailed reflections on novel-writing in the form of a conversation between Paul Clitheroe and the tomboy Miss Juno, whom he calls Jack. Their tête-à-tête begins as a meditation on the place of convention in storytelling, but eventually becomes a conversation about idiom, practiced writing and the kind of novel each of them would write. Paul is encouraging Miss Juno to become a writer and is convinced that she will be good at it not only because she can spin a good yarn, but also because she has been a reader all her life, a fact that Paul claims means she has "the knack of the thing, the telling of a story, the developing of a plot, the final wind-up of the whole concern, right at your tongue's end" (102). The terms on which he proceeds to convince her amount to a debate about whether literary conventions shift in response to other literature or in response to life experience. The debate, in other words, concerns the terms of literary realism where his larger point seems to be that conventional narrative style draws on what Mikhail Bakhtin has described as speech genres: ordinary conversations that can infuse established conventions of storytelling. Paul assumes that real life conversations shift, supplement, or renews conventions of storytelling whereas Miss Juno believes that such experiments in prose are not so easily transposed. The "natural style" of one context

³³ For a detailed analysis of the rise of the English novel see Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1660-1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987).

may not translate well into another. In having his characters try to resolve this very point, Stoddard's shows how the tension between convention and adventure itself generates prose. What they debate as a matter of content is the very question that Stoddard's own personal history of the book plays out.

It is not surprising, then, that Paul and Jack's conversation leads them to ponder the nature of the book and the status of conventions of love within the novel itself. In hypothesizing what it might look like to include their own "thin" conversation in a novel, Paul meditates further on what his own unconventional novel might look like. Notably, it is the conventions of love that would mark the difference for Clitheroe's novel: resisting conventions altogether would be pointless and besides, how else would the unconventional people know themselves? The passage is worth reproducing as a whole as a kind of manifesto for Clitheroe's (if not Stoddard's) queer novel:

"If it helped to give a clue to our character and our motives, we could [put this into a book]. The thing is to be interesting: if we are interesting, in ourselves, by reason of our original charm or our unconventionality, almost anything we might say or do ought to interest others. Conventional people are never interesting."

"Yet the majority of mankind is conventional to a degree; the conventionals help to fill up; their habitual love of conventionality, or their fear of the unconventional is what keeps them in their places. This is very fortunate. On the other hand, a world full of people too clever to be kept in their proper spheres, would be simply intolerable. But there is no danger of this!"

"Yes, you are right," said Paul after a moment's pause; — "you are interesting, and this why I like you so well."

"You mean I am unconventional?"

"Exactly. And, as I said before, that is why I'm so awfully fond of you. By Jove, I'm so glad I'm not in love with you, Jack."

"So am I, old boy; I couldn't put up with all that at all; you'd have to go by the next train, you know; you would, really. And yet, if we are to write a novel apiece we shall be obliged to put love into it; love with a very large L."

"No we wouldn't; I'm sure we wouldn't."

Miss Juno shook her golden locks in doubt—Paul went on persistently:—“I’m dead sure we wouldn’t; and to prove it some day I’ll write a story without its pair of lovers; everybody shall be more or less spoony—but nobody shall be really in love.” (page?)

“More or less spoony—but nobody shall be really in love”: this is Paul Clitheroe’s alternative to the love plot of a novel, hampered in his estimation by its “pair of lovers.” Miss Juno doubts even the possibility of producing a novel that does not have a central love story between a pair of lovers. Nobody need ever be in love in that conventional sense. When Miss Juno insists that such a book would “not be a story at all”, Paul continues that the “spoony novel” might correspond to his own life:

“It would be a history, or a fragment of a history, a glimpse of life at any rate, and that is as much as we ever get of the lives of those around us. Why can’t I tell you the story of one fellow—of myself for example; how one day I met this person, and then the next I met that person, and next week someone else comes on to the stage, struts his little hour and departs. I’m not trying to give my audience, my readers, any knowledge of that other fellow. My reader must see for himself how each of those fellows in his own way has influenced me.” (104)

The plot structure as well as the model of sociological influence that Paul outlines both correspond with Stoddard’s own model of literary production. Clitheroe’s story is not the story of a pair of lovers, but a story defined by serial social, often sexual, encounters. It is also a story of influence: how each of these social embraces exerts its influence on the story Paul tells about his life. Clitheroe’s description of his story as a fragmented one has, in turn, led critics including Roger Austen and Robert Gale to conclude, respectively, that *For the Pleasure of His Company* is “an ‘anti-novel’ or a ‘non-novel’” (Austen 6), that “must rank as one of the strangest novels ever written” (Gale 42).

But Paul Clitheroe does not just model Stoddard’s own model of influence, love conventions, and literary sentimentalism. He has an increased self-consciousness that his

own story is the product of these influences^s—not just the sum of them. In a reversal that seems surprising in light of Stoddard’s earlier writing, Paul Clitheroe emphasizes that his story is not significant only for the ways people influence him, but because it is, in fact, his story:

“The story is my story, a study of myself, nothing more or less. If the reader doesn’t like me he may lay me down in my cloth or paper cover, and have nothing more to do with me. I’m not a hero, perhaps it’s not so much my fault as my misfortune. That people are interested in me, and show it in a thousand different ways, assures me that *my* story, not the story of those with whom I’m thrown in contact, is what interests me. It’s a narrow-gauge, single track story, but runs through a delightful bit of country, and if my reader wants to look out of my windows and see things as I see them and find out how they influence me, he is welcome; if he doesn’t, he may get off at the very next station and change cars for Elsewhere.” (104)

Rather than see the world largely through the lenses of other people, as I have been arguing Stoddard’s writing frequently does, Paul suggests that the reader may now be able to see the world through his eyes and words: in a story that “runs through a delightful bit of country” and “if my reader wants to look out of my windows and see things as I see them and find out how they influence me.”

This is not to say that Stoddard abandons his sentimental mode altogether. Rather, he evokes it at precisely the moment when Miss Juno presents to him all that he would be up against in literary history. She herself feels “obliged to put love in [her novel]” —even if she cannot conjure up enough earnestness to bolster her own position. She responds to Paul by insisting, “I shall have love in my story,” with “an amusing touch of sentiment that on her lips sounded like polite comedy” (105). Jack may have it on her lips, but in the conversation’s crescendo, Paul insists that he shall sprinkle that touch of sentiment on his adjectives:

“You may have all the love you like, and appeal to the same old novel reader who has been reading the same sort of love-story for the last hundred years, and when you’ve finished your work and your reader has stood by you to the sweet or bitter end, no one will be any wiser or better. You’ve taught nothing, you’ve untaught nothing—and there you are!”

“Oh! A young man with a mission! Do you propose to revolutionize? No; revolutions only soil the water. You might as well try to make water flow uphill as to really revolutionize anything. I’d beautify the banks of the stream, and round the sharp turns in it, and weed it out, and sow water-lilies, and set the white swan with her snow-flecked breast afloat. That’s what I’d do!”

“That’s the art of a landscape gardener; I don’t clearly see how it is of benefit to the novelist, Paul! Now, honestly, is it? You don’t catch my meaning, Jack; girls are deuced dull, you know,—I mean obtuse.” Miss Juno flushed. “I wasn’t referring to the novel; I was saying that instead of writing my all in a vain effort to revolutionize anything in particular, I’d try to get all the good I could out of the existing evil, and make the best of it. (105)

Paul’s life may be a counterpoint to the conventional love story, but he does not exactly aim to be a literary revolutionary. The word “sentiment” may not appear here, but Paul’s language is everywhere laced with it. As manifestos for the aesthetics of the novel go, Paul Clitheroe’s must be among the most sentimentally abstruse: beautifying the banks of the stream, rounding out the sharp turns, weeding out the stream, sowing water-lilies, and setting the white swan with her snow-flecked breast afloat. Even his metaphors for writing a novel are metaphors of setting. Nature presents itself as a set of conventions, and Clitheroe aims to modify them in the service of beauty, not revolution. Conventions of style and genre may very well be obligations that verge on becoming burdens to Paul Clitheroe, but he recognizes the futility of rebelling against them. He opts to work through convention, not against it.

The “more or less spoony” aesthetic project of *For the Pleasure of His Company* operates at the intersection of sentimental style and a love plot structured by serial monogamy between men where “nobody shall be really in love.” Spooniness allows

Stoddard, on the one hand, to stand to one side of a plot focused on a pair of lovers without completely undermining it. Love relationships between men—replete with all kind of suspense and identifications that many love plots evoke—are central to the novel without overtaking the plot. In this novel, nobody really *is* in love, not ultimately, but it's not as if they don't believe in the possibility of love. At the beginning of the book, Paul fall hard for the charmingly shallow Foxlair, who swindles Paul and all his friends, leaving Paul not bitter but naively optimistic that Foxlair will eventually return to make everything right. Later in the book, Paul falls in love gain, this time with Grattan Field. Little Mama, the fag-hag who has assembled her queerly Erratic Order of Young Knighthood, has facilitated the match. But the relationship peters out, even after the kind of dramatic confrontation (reminiscent of Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*) that initially brings them together. We are invited to consider that the two men will live happily ever after—the confrontation does, after all, occur near the end of the book. But the spoony plot prevails and Paul abandons San Francisco altogether for a boatful of naked South Seas islanders. Stoddard's "more or less spoony" aesthetic project features long descriptive passages that aim at "beautifying the banks of the stream, and rounding the sharp turns in it, and weeding it out" at the same time that he proposes a life story for his main character in which he inhabits aspects of quite a conventional life (he tries to fall in love, tries to be an economic success, tries to be a successful writer), subjecting those conventions to their own limits when they fail to secure the ending we might expect.

But even though Stoddard's novel affords him the opportunity to dramatize his theory of novel writing, the novel does not dramatize its success on conventional terms.

Quite the opposite. In a turn of events that foretells the obliquity of Stoddard's own novel, Paul's aspiration to write the novel of his life is trumped by Jack/Miss Juno. She has the last laugh since she has written the successful novel. Her novel is published anonymously in America, pseudonymously in England, and translated into German and French. We never know whether there is love in it or whether her audience is "the same old novel reader who has been reading the same sort of love-story for the last hundred years." Paul, on the other hand, grows more and more destitute. Although he is well-known as a writer, Paul, like Stoddard himself, cannot make enough money to live. When editors are asked why they will not hire Clitheroe for newspaper work, they say, "He is of no service in a newspaper office; he has had no journalistic train[ing]; though he were to write like an angel, once consigned to reportorial desk he would act like a fool. He can do certain kinds of writing as no one else on the Coast has done it; that is his forte; he must stick to it; other people can do other kinds of writing as well as he can" (137). Clitheroe thus feels utterly imprisoned by the genre of his own forte: "he began to feel as if he were writing himself out; as if he were repeating over and over [the] self-same words in the self-same way" (137). Having strutted around San Francisco, moving from one stranger to the next, and struggling to survive economically, Paul eventually decides to leave the Misty City, and escape into the arms of three naked south sea islanders, "Old friends these, pals in the past, young chiefs from an island he had loved and mourned" (188). Even this is as much an escape *from* a dire economic environment as it is an escape to love, though the language of his leaving never allows us to relinquish fully the idea that Paul has in fact finally found happiness in love.

Unlike “Chumming With A Savage,” *For the Pleasure of His Company* did not literally emerge out of the Stoddard’s literary correspondence (despite the encouragement he gets from Kipling). It is not as highly intertextual or as imitative as some of Stoddard’s earlier writings. If Paul Clitheroe bears any intentional resemblance to heterosexual men or women who have followed similar paths of promiscuity or serial monogamy, Stoddard does not let on. His writing within and about his own fiction does not concern itself much with figures like Don Juan, Casanova, or Fanny Hill—each of whom might be said to have something in common with Paul Clitheroe

The history of Stoddard’s earlier writing nonetheless shadows *For the Pleasure of His Company*, facilitating, I think, Clitheroe’s self-consciousness that his story is indeed his own, and not just the story of those who have influenced him. By moving through the conventions he would seem to resist, Clitheroe can show us the extent to which his own life story exceeds the very influences upon it. To see *For the Pleasure of His Company* as merely a strange, idiosyncratic failure would be, literally, to miss the boat at the end. This boat full of naked South Sea islanders also carries in it the history of Stoddard’s literary development, his circuits of circulation, and the means by which he comes to recognize (and become anxious about) his story on its own terms. However much Paul Clitheroe might prefer South Seas life to life in the Misty City, there has been a strong sense that the South Seas had provided a shadow life for him all along. He had traveled to the South Seas before. In many important ways, Stoddard’s own writing about the South Seas in his idyls also provides for him a kind of shadow narrative. It is in these stories that he first experiments with the features of plots he comes to associate with his novel’s “spooniness”: the beautifying of conventions in the service of his own aesthetics,

his focus on the way environments circumscribe realism, and his flirtation with/refusal of love plots that feature a single pair of lovers. Clitheroe's attachment to his own spoony literary ideals and to a strangely unconventional participation in conventions may afford him little success in terms of getting everything he wants. But in the act of striving for what he wants on conventional terms, he showcases a rather unconventional modality of life. And once Clitheroe recognizes that his story is his own—not just the story of those who have influenced him—so too does Stoddard seem to recognize that he can see himself through his collection of other people's writings. At this point, toward the end of his life, Stoddard thus begins to collect himself.

Stoddard's Would-Be Scrapbooks: The Embrace of a Queer Literary Self

The collection of Stoddard papers at the Bancroft Library is an impressive archive not just of Stoddard's writing, but of his self-archiving tendencies toward the end of his life. Probably because Stoddard has become such a minor figure, his papers are not fully organized (a fact for which the library staff apologized repeatedly during my time there). Countless envelopes full of newspaper clippings fill the cartons of Stoddard papers. The precise contents of these envelopes are not known or reflected in the library's notes on the collection. The clippings are folded haphazardly, in no particular order: to take one clipping out of any envelope means taking out the entire tangled mess of clippings. And yet, what may be strikingly disorganized by library archivists' standards nonetheless offers a glimpse into how obsessively organized Stoddard himself was as he collected his life in print in the first decade of the twentieth century.

There are two categories of clippings: ones that Stoddard himself had seemingly kept on his own and ones that had been sent to him (and, later, to his friend, the poet Ina Coolbrith) by various newsclipping services, especially the Henry Romeike clipping company. Each clipping in the later category is attached to a bibliographic tag from the company, indicating the publishing venue, the initial publication date, and page number. Some clippings are a mere sentence in length, fished out of a longer column of literary notes. Others span as many as ten pages. Some, clearly those of Stoddard's own finding, have been literally cut out of magazines whose binding stitches remain on the edges of the page. Others are entire newspaper pages that might contain only a picture of Stoddard or a very short paragraph on his work or life.

Collectively, the clippings do not discriminate according to genre or authorship. Stoddard's poems, short stories, non-fictional essays, and reviews all are clipped. So, too, are all poems, stories, essays and reviews ever to mention Stoddard's name or the name of someone he loved or befriended. Those articles about Stoddard (as opposed to those by him) need not have been celebratory reviews, although many were. One article, in fact (which Stoddard has clipped at least three times), "The Gossip of Railwaymen" from *The San Francisco Call* (n.d) parodies Stoddard's sense of self-importance—mocking his disbelief that he cannot charm his way to a free fare on the train because the railway men have no idea who he is.

Sifting through the envelopes of clipping makes it clear that collecting himself in print had not been a consistently detailed life-long practice for Stoddard. Some clippings are rather more yellowed than others; other clearly survived the fire resulting from the great earthquake in San Francisco (these are contained within an envelope full of

clippings collected after the earthquake itself). But there is a density of clippings from after 1900, which the envelopes that contain pre-1900 clippings cannot match. One envelope contains articles and poems by Stoddard from 1868 to 1898; another contains reviews of his work that span 1878 to 1901. Every year after 1900 has its own envelope of writing and reviews respectively. There is one envelope of clippings that dates beyond Stoddard's death in 1908 that includes his obituaries and various remembrances as well as reviews of a posthumous collection of his poetry that Ina Coolbrith edited. Upon Stoddard's death, the news clipping services began to address all the Stoddard clippings to her.

Another box of the Stoddard materials suggests what the Stoddard clippings might have become had the author not died. It contains three scrapbooks, only one of which is full, organized something like a literary magazine of Stoddard's life. The opening page of the full scrapbook (a black book with "Scrapbook" written on the spine in gold lettering) contains poems from 1867. Stoddard labels this "Vol 3rd". It includes poems, clipped from their original sources and fastened inside the scrapbook, with publication info.

The other two unfinished scrapbooks organize some of the years of Stoddard's later life and reflect Stoddard's sense of his own story in the context of his literary and social circulations. They present him in much the same terms as Paul Clitheroe imagined his own life: "That people are interested in me, and show in a thousand different ways, assures me that *my* story, not the story of those with whom I'm thrown in contact, is what interests me." (104) Stoddard shows his own story in conjunction with the overlapping lovers and literary celebrities he has known—all of which he showcases through the print

life they have enjoyed in newspapers, magazines, and letters. A green “Scrapbook” (embossed on the outside front cover) seems to organize much of Stoddard’s time in Washington D.C. when he taught at the Catholic University. Its clippings are not all about Stoddard (though most are), and not all actually include places and dates of publication. Of particular note here is Stoddard’s preservation of the poem “Socrates In Camden, With A Look Round: Written after first meeting the American Poet, Walt Whitman, at Camden, New Jersey,” published in *The Academy* Aug. 15, 1885. London England.” It is unclear whether this is Stoddard’s own poem or a poem by another writer, but it is a good example of the ways Stoddard had begun to imagine more officially the ways his personal and his literary self-consciousness—his sentimental embrace of literary personalities—were mutually constituting.

In the third scrapbook, black and red but only one-quarter full, Stoddard situates himself quite prominently within the literary culture of his time, a position that he highlights often in third person accounts: through the clippings of others’ comments on him. This book opens with a full-page photo of Stoddard, printed in *The National Magazine* November 1904. The caption reads

Charles Warren Stoddard: ‘South Sea Idyls’ has become a classic throughout the English-reading world. It stamped its author at once as one of the foremost living literary artists. In the roll of living American men of letters there are less than a dozen—James, Howells, Twain, Markham, Harris, Read, McGaffey, Aldrich, Miller, Stedman and Riley—who can be ranked with the author of the ‘Idyls.’ And all his other books sustain the impression of his exquisite artistic sensibility, his utter fidelity to the highest ideals of craftsmanship. (225).

The next piece in the scrapbook is from the next issue of *The National Magazine* December 1904: “In the Bungalow with Charles Warren Stoddard: A Protest Against Modernism” By Yone Noguchi. Stoddard reprints the entirety, which fully and openly

acknowledges the nature of his relationship to Noguchi. Its central status at the beginning of the scrapbook can be explained through the following excerpts that highlight unequivocally the sexuality of this literary friendship:

So, our love (love between Stoddard and me, by Buddha's name) was sealed one Spring day, '97. Sweet Haru—it's more melodious than "Spring"—usually bringing a basketful of some sort of surprise! I climbed up the hill—those days I spent with Joaquin Miller, loitering among the roses and carnations—and threw my kisses toward Charley's 'Bungalow' in Washington. Eternally dear "Charley" (as he was called in California)! The air was delicious. I gathered all the poppies and buttercups, and put them in a sprinkler. I offered it to my imaginary Charley. From day immemorial he had appeared a sort of saint, —a half-saint at least. If he ever accepted my offering!

He continues, later, "We slept in the same bed, Charley and I. Awakening in the night I observed that light in the holy water font, a large crimson heart—now isn't that that like Charley..." Through Noguchi, Stoddard also has a record of the extent of his literary circles:

If I ever could have written all he told me in those immortal hours—it would be worse than a three-decker. It was not only his own biography, but the biography of his friends, his old California and London and Latin Quarter and Egyptian days, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Joaquin Miller, Robert Louis Stevenson, Walt Whitman, Robert Browning, Kate Field, George Eliot, Mrs Atherton, Grace Greenwood, Mrs Burnett, Thomas Janvier, Kipling, the Japanese poet boy Yone Noguchi, Bliss Carman, Gelett Burgess, Dick Savage—everybody!

He has told some of it himself since! In "Exits and Entrances," in "The Troubled Heart," in "For the Pleasure of His Company," and now just lately in "The Island of Tranquil Delights"—and he has many a tale left to unfold, —oh, the half is not yet told!

So I listened, in what supreme delight can be imagined. When he touched upon his visit to George Eliot, the tears came to my eyes. Not that his narrative was pathetic—it was just the other way,—oh that rare Comic Muse that is his own Guardian! But just at that time I had a keep personal intimacy with Dorothea Brooke, with Silas Marner and Maggie Tulliver, and the very mention of Dad's having crossed the threshold of their creator was enough! (n.p.)

Noguchi also describes his collection of letters: from Max Nordau, a poem from Professor Van Dyke, William Rosetti, acknowledgement from the Queen of England, and

a bundle of letters from Stoddard. Nor is Noguchi the only lover to be featured in this incomplete scrapbook. There are references to Stoddard's bungalow in Washington where he lived with Jule and Mexique, a "mademoiselle"—the "nearest he ever got to woman—Stoddard said—so that was why" (314). Stoddard has also included a sheet from *The National* for 1905, a full page announcement of the words Stoddard has been engaged to write in 1905: "In the Valley of the Shadow of the Sky-Scrapers."; "Ouida: At Home in Florence—An Interview"; "Prentice Mulford: A Personal Sketch of Him as I Knew Him"; "Rudyard Kipling In His Brattleboro Home, As I Saw Him"; "Recollections of Kate Field" as well as chapters from Mark Twain's autobiography in which Twain spends five pages discussing the time when Stoddard worked for him as a secretary.³⁴

In these scrapbooks, Stoddard inverts the model of sentimental embrace that he displayed throughout his earlier writing. Rather than understand himself through the words, form, and works of others, as he does in addressing Whitman or invoking Melville, Stoddard's scrapbooks highlight others' production of him in print: the choice, for some, to publish him (and thus frame him through the significance of their own print publications) and the choice, for others, to recognize him in their own writing. The scrapbooks, unfinished though they may be, forecast themselves as the accumulated, but collected episodes of Stoddard encounters with a variety of male others. Like his scrapbooks, Stoddard's autobiography "Confessions of an Unnaturalist," would remain unfinished and unpublished, despite their recognition that the sum of his experiences amount to a peculiar kind of story that was only beginning to emerge in sustained and detailed fashion.

³⁴ *The North American Review*. (3 May 1907): 7-12.

Conclusion; or The Importance of Being Derivative

The fact that Stoddard's writing becomes its most autobiographical toward the end of his life would seem to suggest that Stoddard was the last to recognize the extent to which his story was, indeed, peculiar. Which is not to say that Stoddard was the last to know himself as such: he recognized his mode of desire and himself through the literature he read. The terms of his self-knowledge were borne of reading and writing, his sentimental embrace of his literary heroes and what even his detractors have recognized as his sensuous embrace of the settings in which he imagined himself and his characters thriving most.

What is thus remarkable about Stoddard—what we might not know otherwise without him, then—derives not merely from the fact that he wrote or that his archive exists as such, but rather from his meta-archival consciousness and the evolution of that consciousness through mechanisms external to himself: his sense of the ways queer life relies on, and participates in, print circulation to consolidate itself as such. The isolation of Stoddard's literary texts from their circuits and contexts of circulation has so far made it possible for us to miss what is important about them—the way they archive the conditions of their own circulation—as they work through the tensions and complications of generating and reflecting desire in language. As a mode of being social and literary in the world—not merely a mode of being?

Situating Stoddard's writing in the context of his reading and seeing its connection to its paths of circulation (before and beyond his death) thus gives us new purchase on the value of being derivative for the production of queer life and literature.

The ambivalence with which Whitman reads Stoddard's "extravagant sentimentalism" has rendered invisible Stoddard's status as a writer and his significance to the literary world in which he wrote. Understanding the cultural productivity of sentimental reading and writing expands our history of sexuality beyond our understanding, still dominant, of the love that dare not speak its name. Stoddard exemplifies the ways in which his sexual and his writing life were mutually constitutive, producing textual accumulations, not just absences in speech—all in a context in which the literary culture of the late nineteenth century in America and sexual culture between men were likewise each constituted by the other.

Chapter Three: Type-Complication and the Issue of Literary Old Maids

In 1922, when Edith Wharton published her serialized novella, *The Old Maid: The 'Fifties*, it must have seemed logical for her to imagine Charlotte Lovell, the book's title character, as a quaint anachronism. Not only is she displaced historically in this chapter, but she is also displaced at the level of narrative voice: although the story is ostensibly about her, Charlotte's is not even the central consciousness of the novel that tells her story. We experience the events of the novella from the perspective of her conniving cousin, Delia Ralston. Wharton's choice of historical setting as well as protagonist seems both conscious and striking. The text's title itself makes this old maid—a woman of meager means, who bears a child out of wedlock and must rely on her cousin to keep the secret while helping raise her child—exemplary of the 1850s.¹

It is no coincidence, I'd like to suggest, that the figure of the old maid enters Wharton's historical novel around the same time that the modern lesbian comes fully into view as such—or that Wharton needs to reach back as far as 1850 to situate her imagined old maid as merely a failed heterosexual, by marrying and child-rearing standards (Charlotte can give birth, but she does not earn the right to raise her own child in the context of the novel—official mothering is the domain of the married Delia). By the late nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, the literary old maid has come to inhabit the same fictional contexts as the literary lesbian. By the end of the nineteenth-

¹ It has often been said that the old maid seems to disappear from literature in the twentieth-century. For some time the view was so widespread, that several recent books take as their starting point a reclamation of the figure, arguing that she is still alive and kicking, living in a striking array of novels for so seemingly obsolete a figure. See *Old Maids to Radical Spinsters: Unmarried Women in the Twentieth-Century Novel, Spinster Tales and Womanly Possibilities* and Sheila Jeffreys' *The Spinster and Her Enemies*. (Include publication info?) The virtue of these studies—the correction of an oversight—only highlights the persistent perception of a disappearance that Wharton begins to chart.

century, especially in fiction about women in New England such as Sarah Orne Jewett's Maine stories and Henry James's *The Bostonians*, the old maid and the lesbian overlap conceptually to such an extent that they become almost indistinguishable. This near-fusion by the end of the nineteenth-century may help to explain why Wharton chose to set her story in the 1850s and not, say, the 1880s or 90s. But what Wharton's choice also allows us to see quite clearly is the (at least imagined) historical specificity of a type—the old maid.

Although it has become commonplace to see the old maid as a socially queer literary and thus a historical analogue for the lesbian, I argue here that we might better understand the relationship between the two in terms of type-complication: the process by which one textual version of a social type (in this case, the often abstractly depicted old maid) comes to be tested against a range of details that extend or complicate her social and textual boundaries so as to make the imagination of another type (the lesbian, marked by her sexual sociability with other women) possible. As the old maid accrues to herself an increasing amount of detail, it also, in turn, becomes increasingly possible to envision her and the socio-textual space around her in extended fictional, and eventually novelistic proportions. In this space, which opens up the possibility of old maids' primary social attachments existing within communities of other old maids, both the old maid and the lesbian, whose sociability is sexual, can become potential protagonists. But this type-complication is possible only if we begin by recognizing the extent to which, however socially queer the old maid may be, she is, nonetheless, not necessarily lesbian in her queerness. Beginning with this distinction that Wharton implicitly makes is, I think, a necessary condition for investigating the processes of recirculation and type-complication

that make it possible for the lesbian to seem as if she emerges out of the paradigm of the old maid.

In its seeming anachronism, Wharton's *The Old Maid: The 'Fifties* highlights the unpredictable nature of literary type circulation that makes it possible for the old maid constantly to be resignified as she is tested against a range of literary contexts—such that she can seem variously to be parallel to, and then inextricably linked with, lesbianism, only later (as in Wharton's version) to be disarticulated from that same entanglement. Part of what makes this possible is the very abstraction at the heart of types themselves: types can be translated into a range of specific examples. But a careful examination of the twinned (if overlapping) literary histories of the old maid and of the lesbian exposes the limits of such a range at any given moment in literary history. In other words, the old maid will not be anything the reader or writer wants her to be at any one point in history. As I shall show in the following pages, this is because the very processes of type-complication are localized, connected to particular reading practices, to the textual histories embedded in the forms of texts themselves, and to modes of literary expression—all of which draw not only on the energy of striving beyond the boundaries of abstract types, but also on the conventions of literary circulation.

One of the key ways we can see this process being played out is in those moments of description that articulate the old maid's but also the lesbian's relationship to the social and linguistic environments of the text. This process of type-complication highlights, at the level of form, a kind of emotional and linguistic striving to create contexts and language worlds for modes of sexual sociability that seem to be at odds with their contexts. A striving to articulate the terms on which being an old maid has a place in

both social and textual worlds does, I think, facilitate the parallel and, ultimately, overlapping world-making that surrounds sexual sociability between women. But, as I will suggest toward the end of this chapter, if the success of this project is the creation of a literary world in which characters like lesbians and old maids fit, this success comes at a cost, too. For at precisely the moment when these characters seem to fit so nicely, abandoning the textual striving toward world-creation also shifts the terms of self-reference for the characters within those worlds. Once the old maid and the lesbian can be imagined as belonging somewhere, the characters and the literature in which those characters appear also seem to lose the sense of striving beyond themselves that generated their world-making efforts to begin with.

* * *

If we consider her appearance across a range of American literary magazines at the end of the eighteenth century (as I will show shortly), the old maid would seem to be something of a minor, stock character—abstracted from most contexts and often seen to be at odds with them. Thinly conceived, but roundly renounced, she seemed to be everywhere and yet belonging nowhere. She (presumably) appears in quite short snippets, letters, or poems—almost always as a nameless personage, referred to by others and even signing her name to letters simply as “Old Maid.” She rarely has a name of her own or anything that looks like an individualized life. Old maids like those in Frances Brooke’s weekly periodical (1755-56)² and Arthur Murphy’s play notwithstanding, we

² Brooke’s *The Old Maid* ran as a weekly publication and was written under the pseudonym, “Mary Singleton, Spinster”. It may well count as one of the earliest and most sustained instances of type complication for the old maid. The periodical ran for twenty-two issues from November 1755 until July 1756, and was later collated as a single volume in 1764. Throughout the series Brooke disputes prejudice against unmarried women through the persona of spiritedly independent Mary. Topics include experiences of courtship and marriage, often in an ironic tone.

What is also striking about Brooke’s Mary is the way, in signing her name “Mary Singleton,

tend not to think of the eighteenth-century as the golden age of the Old Maid: we are far more likely to recall her strong historical associations with New England at the end of the nineteenth century. But, as I've already suggested, by the end of the nineteenth-century, the old maid has acquired quite a series of lives for herself. If she was once transcendently homeless, the old maid came to make her home in a range of particular literary places, none more prominently than New England. We can see this range in the following montage of textual moments: Basil Ransom's observation in *The Bostonians* that Olive Chancellor "was unmarried by every implication of her being. She was a spinster as Shelley was a lyric poet, or as the month of August is sultry" (47); Louisa Ellis's considerate refusal of Joe Dagget in favour of her embroidery and her dog in Freeman's "A New England Nun"; Celia's culminating Thanksgiving Day feast for all the town's spinsters and her resolve to adopt two girls and bring them up as "dyed-in-the-wool old maids" in Cooke's "How Celia Changed Her Mind"; the custodial ways of Stowe's Aunts Roxy and Ruey on Orr's Island; Jewett's Miss Harriet Pyne's, whose "scheme of life was as faultless as the miniature landscape of a Japanese garden" (212). The 1850s do, of course, furnish us with some memorable old maids like Hawthorne's Hepzibah and Stowe's Miss Ophelia. But old maids populate American literature to such

Spinster," she highlights the extent to which spinster and old maid have come to be synonymous. By the middle of the nineteenth century, at least in most American writing, old maid becomes the preferred term—even though, generally speaking, where "spinster" does appear (even in Brooke's periodical), it seems to have shed its originary association with the occupation of spinning. For more basic information on Brooke and her writing, see <http://www.chawtonhouse.org/library/biographies/brooke.html>. For scholarly treatment of this periodical, see, for instance, K. J. H. Berland, "A Tax on Old Maids and Bachelors: Frances Brooke's *Old Maid*," in *Eighteenth-Century Women and the Arts*, ed. Frederick Keener and Susan Lorsch (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) 29-35; Lorraine McMullen, "Frances Brooke's *Old Maid*: New Ideas in Entertaining Form," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* (1989) 669-70; Elizabeth Larsen, "A Text of Identity: Frances Brooke and the Rhetoric of the Aging Spinster," *Journal of Aging and Identity* 4.4 (December 1999): 255-68; Min Wild, "Prodigious Wisdom: Civic Humanism in Frances Brooke's *Old Maid*," *Women's Writing* 5.3 (1998): 421-35.

an extent in the latter half of the nineteenth-century one scholar has even attempted to parse a range of old maid types (she lists seven³).

Literary criticism of the old maid has tended to revolve around the extent to which the old maid is either repressed or subversive. The critical history of Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman's "A New England Nun" (1887) is a nice barometer of these trends in the critical analysis of old maids in terms of gender and sexuality. For many years, the dominant reading of this story focused on Louisa Ellis's repressed sexuality. In *The American 1890s*, Larzer Ziff claims it was "an example of sexual sublimation" (293). Jay Martin comments on the story's "passive sterility" (150) and Perry Westbrook accuses her of having "permit[ted] herself to become unfitted for life" (58-59). In his biography of Freeman, Edward Foster insists that "it is precisely the absence of desire, and striving which is the story's grimly ironic point" (105). David Hirsch chimes in with the claim that she exemplifies the "suppression of the Dionysian" (131). Even feminist critics, who have otherwise tried to reclaim the significance of the spinster figure, have found in Louisa Ellis a model of frigidity and fear. Barbara Johns concludes that "The sexual fear is unmistakable" (44) and argues that "Louisa Ellis is the clearest example of a character marked by "a penchant for order, a preference for the indoors, and a solitude akin to a religious retreat that makes the spinsters who are more tolerated than respected in New England Society" (43). The most important feminist revision of this argument belongs to Marjorie Pryse who quieted the existing orthodoxy only to replace it with her own insistence on Louisa Ellis's subversiveness: In analyzing "A New England Nun" without bias against solitary women, the reader discovers that within the world Louisa inhabits,

³ See Dorothy Yost Deegan, *The Stereotype of the Single Woman in American Novels: A Social Study with Implications for the Education of Women*. (New York: King's Crown P, 1951).

she becomes heroic, active, wise, ambitious, and even transcendent, hardly the woman Freeman's critics and biographers have depicted. In choosing solitude, Louisa creates an alternative pattern of living for a woman who possesses, like her, "'the enthusiasm of an artist' ([Freeman] 9)" (289-90). Subversive, not servile, Louisa Ellis went from being a wallflower to a feminist heroine with the stroke of Pryse's pen. And she did it with gusto. Appropriating the implied psychoanalytic approach of the earlier critics and using it against them, Pryse read images of sexuality throughout the story: the three aprons she wears, for instance suggest "symbolic if not actual defense of her own virginity" (293).

More recently, critics have extended the argument about the old maid's subversiveness to make of her a queer literary figure. Often described as a historical analogue for the modern lesbian and more properly the modern queer, the old maid has become something of a rallying point for recent feminist and queer scholarship. In books like *Old Maids to Radical Spinsters: Unmarried Women in the Twentieth-Century Novel* and *The Spinster and Her Enemies*, the old maid is read as an oppositional figure. In "The Politics of Collaboration in *The Whole Family*" (in the collection *Old Maids to Radical Spinsters*), Dale Bauer, for instance reads spinsters as inherently subversive: "remaining outside the marriage market promises a way to subvert a rigidified nineteenth-century culture" (108). Increasingly, as scholarly attention has turned to the history of sexuality, many of these stories have come to be read and collected as part of a tradition of lesbian literature, with no less emphasis on their subversiveness. By far, most of this attention has been paid to writers at the end of the nineteenth century, especially Sarah Orne Jewett who is widely known to have been part of a Boston marriage with Annie Fields for most of her life, but who also wrote fiction set in Maine, often featuring

spinsters or widows, some of whom developed intimate erotic attachments with each other.⁴ In her documentation of types of spinsters, Barbara Johns does not really have a category for the type of spinster who was attracted to other women. Other critics have since read some of the stories she cites (such as Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman's "A Moral Exigency") as examples of intimacy that is, in Emily Toth's words, "uncomfortably excessive" (12). It is precisely the "uncomfortably excessive" that recent queer critics have delighted in uncovering. Of these, Susan Koppelman is responsible for claiming a veritable sub-genre of lesbian writing in the nineteenth century with her collection of stories: *Two Friends and Other Nineteenth-Century Lesbian Stories by American Women Writers*.

In much recent work, scholars have begun to notice in local color writing, an abundance of women who either exist outside of traditional marriage structures (old maids and spinsters, for instance) or who, even if they are married, seem to have bad marriages or strive to create attachments beyond their marriages.⁵ In their recent book, *Writing Out of Place*, Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse go so far as to claim that the sexual subversiveness that has been claimed on behalf of this body of fiction has been foundational for American regional writing. They argue that in their account of regional

⁴ Although Jewett's most famous text is *Country of the Pointed Firs*, there is a reasonable level of agreement among critics that Jewett's representations of sexual love between women appear in *Deephaven*, "The Queen's Twin," and "Martha's Lady."

⁵ It is often argued that this explosion of fiction that imagines the lives of women beyond marriage (even from within the boundaries of married life) was propelled by the simple fact that in post-civil war United States, particularly in the northeast, there was an unprecedented number of unmarried women, women who, furthermore, would have no prospect of marriage. Alice Kessler-Harris points out in *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in America* that after the Civil War, more women than ever before remained women in the United States: "The *New York Times* estimated in 1869 that about a quarter of a million young women in the eastern seaboard states could ever look forward to any matrimonial alliance, because they outnumbered men by that much" (98). It is not surprising, therefore, that writers would begin to imagine lives for those women who would never be married by either choice or circumstance. Indeed, spinsters are ubiquitous in nineteenth-century American literature. Spinster characters were obviously not all imagined as perverse or as erotically attracted to other women. For more on the types of spinsters and nineteenth-century women, see Barbara Johns, Emily Toth, and Kathryn R. Kent.

writing (that is, regional writing by women) “regionalism enters fiction by way of the queer” (315): “the very form of regionalist fiction is queer and queer in a way that touches on issues of sexuality” (316) and they “see it as a precursor to what could legitimately be called lesbian literature” (319). Most of the stories they offer to document their claims appear in the 1880s or later. Their analysis documents a wide range of texts, most of which appear in their earlier co-edited anthology *American Women Regionalists*: Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *the Pearl of Orr’s Island* (1861-62), Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman’s “A New England Nun” (1887), Rose Terry Cooke’s “How Celia Changed Her Mind” (1891), Cary’s “My Grandfather.” Despite the mandate of queer theory to offer an alternative to identity politics, however, Fetterley and Pryse nonetheless identify queerness with identity and interiority of characters. They focus on the production of regionalism by way of “queer consciousness”—which assumes a coherence of that consciousness on behalf of either the writers or the central characters. (This distinction is often elided as the argument shifts from biographical to narratological claims.) The individual’s “sense of being queer” grammatically transforms “queer” into a kind of identity-state unintended by the contemporary queer theorists they cite: queerness, they assume, “shapes the consciousness” (316) that produces our historically first set of regionalist texts (all of which are late-century texts). Queer consciousness thus is presumed to precede not just regional writing, but sociability itself.

None of these analyses, to my mind, accounts for the complexity of the literary type-complication in American literature that makes the parallels and overlaps between the literary old maid and the modern lesbian seem so obvious to us. Nor are the political paradigms through which we read old maid figures like Louisa Ellis much help in

understanding this historical problem—except insofar as we might say, for example, that Louisa Ellis can conceivably stand in opposition to heteronormativity and still be sexually repressed. In which case, we still have a problem in explaining how it is that what seems most subversive can also be, from another perspective, quite sexually conservative. To see the old maid as “queer” only in her resistance to heteronormativity obscures the precise status of the old maid in lesbian literary history and what exactly makes it possible for us to identify the nub of her queerness and what, if anything, is sexual about it. No existing account adequately resolves the contradictions in this history: on the one hand, the centrality of the old maid stimulates detailed consideration of the literary form that being unmarried takes. At the same time, the old maid figure is resolutely assumed to be a sexual failure. She is imagined precisely (and paradoxically) as an asexual type: one who somehow fails at heterosexual love (for a multitude of reasons: being choosy, making the wrong choice) or someone who was never interested in it to begin with. It is easy to see why the old maid is a queer figure, but it is harder to see what makes her a historical forerunner to lesbian sexuality.⁶ But the historical connection can, I think, be gleaned in its complexity if we compare not just the literary examples of old maids and lesbians, but the overlapping processes of type-complication make them legible to begin with, and which, in fact, undo the fantasies of coherence that obtain when we think about types. It is therefore the nature of the worlds and descriptive details that coalesce around these types of non-heterosexual female sexualities that offer

⁶ Such an argument would hold only in the context of claims such as Adrienne Richs’s “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 5. 4 (1980): 631 - 660. Rich includes in her lesbian continuum all women who have significant relationships to other women.

us some insight into the ways in which women's sexuality in nineteenth-century literature became visible.

What interests me here is the process of this literary evolution at play, the ways the literature about old maids incorporates moments of type-complication into itself, and the effects of this evolution on the textual imagination of worlds where sexual sociability between women is central. On its own terms, this process of type-complication is interesting for the social configurations that come to be described in response to received wisdoms and conventional narratives about what it means to be an old maid. A key mode of type-complication is the testing of an existing type-concept against other detailed representations of types-in-the-world through acts of reading. The effect is two-fold: (1) an accumulation of textual detail (quite literally, more words) that round out the presumed flatness of the type and (2) the situation of the type in the world, such that the boundary between the figure and its contexts becomes blurred. This circulatory energy complicates received textual wisdoms about old maids in a number of ways: through outright questioning of the narrow construction of old maids in print; through a multiplication of representations of old maids, first across periodicals quite broadly, but eventually within the confines of single literary works; and ultimately through an expansion of details that create round characters of old maids—details that describe unmarried women in more complicated socio-sexual lives and root them more firmly in a particular cultural location. The terms of this cultural location arguably appear to us most concretely in texts where female characters are described in fully articulated contexts—in contradistinction to the existing terms of type.

Consider, for instance, Catharine Maria Sedgwick's 1834 short story "The Old Maids." Its title alone signals a shift from the singular to the plural "old maids." The plural form was rarely used in periodical literature only thirty years before. Indeed, what is remarkable about Sedgwick's story is its collection across a mere six pages of *The Ladies Companion* magazine of more individualized old maids than have appeared across the pages of many periodicals during the last decade of the eighteenth century. The plural form as Sedgwick uses it allows her to offer a collection of discrete examples under the umbrella of a type that otherwise seemed to be universal and abstract.

Sedgwick's story, a conversation between Mrs. Seton and Anne is essentially an articulation of the conditions under which being an old maid is preferable to being married. An older woman they know has just married and Mrs. Seton is none too pleased. The problem, they decide at the outset, is in part a problem of terminology: "there are terrors in the name," one explains; the other responds: "Yes, I know there are; and women are daily scared by them into unequal and wretched connections" (141). Mrs. Seton proceeds to summarize and then respond to the burdensome term, "old maid." "The name," she continues,

"does not designate a condition, but a species. It calls up the idea of a faded, bony, wrinkled, skinny, jaundiced personage, whose mind has dwindled to a point—who has outlived her natural affection—survived every love but love of self, and self-guarded by that Cerberus suspicion—in whom the follies of youth are fresh when all its charms are gone—who has retained, in all their grace, the silliest passions of the silliest women—love of dress, of pleasure, of admiration, who, in short, is in the condition of the spirits in the ancients' Tartarus, an

impalpable essence tormented with the desires of humanity. Now turn, my dear Anne, from this hideous picture to some of our acquaintance who certainly have missed the happiest destiny of woman but who dwell in light, the emanation of their own goodness. I shall refer you to actual living examples—no fictions.”

“No fictions, indeed, for then you must return for the McTabs and Grizzles.”

“Whatever your philanthropy may hope for that most neglected portion of our sex, no author has ventured so far from nature as to pourtray an attractive old maid. Even Mackenzie, with a spirit as gentle as my Uncle Toby’s and as tender as that of his own ‘Man of Feeling’ has written an essay in ridicule of ‘old maids.’” (141)

As Mrs. Seton goes on to describe a range of old maids she has known, she exemplifies (through argument by example itself) a process of a type’s linguistic evolution in the context of widely circulated but narrow literary convention. In the passage above, Mrs. Seton responds to other writers’ treatments of narrowly conceived socio-sexual types and tests representations of that type against the world around her. The conversational structure of the story, in turn, dramatizes a mode of readerly (and writerly) response to existing linguistic structures: at once Mrs. Seton is a model of type-revision and complication, even as she confirms the power of fictional types (like the McTabs and Grizzles) to organize matches beyond the world of the text.

The perceived negativity of the “old maid” stimulates Mrs. Seton to imagine the conditions under which being an old maid is preferable to being married. The only positive *textual* example she can come up with is that of the biblical Rebecca: “Perhaps

not one of the fair young creatures who has dropped a tear over the beautiful sentence that closes the history of Minna has been conscious that she was offering involuntary homage to the angelic virtues of an *old maid*” (142). But from this, she puzzles out a moral to her listener and expands her range of examples to include women in her immediate environment. While she ultimately maintains *ipso facto* that no woman ought to “*prefer* the single life” (143), she very clearly insists, “I would have young ladies believe that all beautiful and lovely young women do not of course get married—that charms and virtues may exist, and find employment in single life—that a single woman, an old maid (I will not eschew the name) may love and be loved if she has not a husband, and children of her own” (142). Included in her list of women who might have good cause not to wed are women like Flora M’Ivor who “has been surrounded by circumstances that have caused her thoughts and affections to flow in some other channel than love” (and who “need not wed a chance Waverly” (142)); women like Violet Flint who mothers her widowed brother’s children; Sarah Lee, who tends kindly to people and strawberry beds alike; and those such as Lucy Ray, who “has lived in others and for others with such an entire forgetfulness of self...has through every discouragement and disability reached a height but ‘little lower than that of angels’; and when now her flickering light disappears, she will be lamented almost as tenderly (alas! for that almost) as if she were a mother” (143). What unites all these examples is the self-abnegation—where women become supporting actors to the main drama of society, part of the landscape of domesticity itself—something that Mrs. Seton spells out in greater detail as she recounts the story of Lizzy Grey, a school teacher whose younger sister (the girl she essentially mothered) ultimately marries her fiancé. As individualized as each example

is, then, the brevity of each and its relative paucity of detail combined with the pattern of self-sacrifice offers us a limited account of the “attractive old maid.”

Nonetheless, if we look at literary representations of old maids just before and shortly after the publication of “The Old Maids,” it becomes clear that Sedgwick’s story registers a shift that does not necessarily amount to a clear transformation of the earlier type of “old maid.” One of the most popular stories told by and about unmarried women at the end of the 18th century was that they became “old maids” not because they couldn’t have got married, but because they were too choosy. “The Heron: A Tale for the old Maids,” a short allegorical poem, published first in 1744 in *The American Magazine* and reprinted in 1785 in *The Boston Magazine*, for instance, concludes with a warning to the old maid reader, comparing her to the poem’s central figure, the Heron:

he who scorn’d their Betters so,
 Scorns them—and lets the Gudgeons go;
 And now all gone, both good and bad;
 (A Finn on no Terms to be had)
 Poor Long-shanks seeing no great Choice,
 Knew ‘twas Folly to be nice;
 And so to make his Supper sure,
 Eat snails like an Epicure. (657)

The old maid appears in this poem only indirectly—as represented by the Heron (gendered male)—a fact that belies the paucity of detail in which old maids might be imagined in print, even as the poem assumes that the implicit comparison will resonate obviously because readers should know already what it means to be this particular type.

The conventions through which old maids are understood may be thin, but they attend most of the appearances of the old maid in print at the end of the eighteenth-century in American periodicals. The same conception of the old maid as one who had plenty of options in her youth, only to find herself unmarried at the ripe “old” age of about twenty-five, are sprinkled throughout magazines of the time, in short, curt snippets, and in a range of genres: in poems like the “Epigram on an Old Maid who married her Servant” (1776)⁷ and “The Old Maid’s Soliloquy” (1785)⁸, in letters like that from “An Old Maid” to the Bachelor of *The Pennsylvania Magazine* (1776)⁹, and in literary personae like *Worcester Magazine*’s Tom Taciturn.¹⁰ All offer similar stories of women (some from first-person recorders) who describe, in retrospect, having received no shortage of marriage offers in their youth—only to remain single in their middle or older years. None paints the figure of the old maid in great detail; nor does any offer anything more than a few lines of reflection on the figure they clearly paint on the outside of society more generally. Paradoxically, the old maid is a staple, albeit abstracted, character in this periodical literature, but one who can be imagined only as a type and not as an individual. She thus bears out Mrs. Seton’s observation that “no author has ventured so far from nature as to pourtray an attractive old maid.”

The proper place of old maids has, in fact, dogged the figure since her inception. From early in the eighteenth century, it was commonplace to see old maids and spinsters recognized in terms of an existential dislocation. Writing about her unmarried status in

⁷ This poem was published anonymously. See “Epigram on an Old Maid, who married her Servant” *The Pennsylvania Magazine; or, American Monthly Museum* (Apr 1776); Vol. 2: p. 191.

⁸ Also anonymous. “The Old Maid’s Soliloquy” *The Columbian Magazine* (Nov 1787); 1.15; p. 782.

⁹ Anonymous, “AN OLD MAID” *The Pennsylvania Magazine; or, American Monthly Museum* (Jun 1776) 2: p. 267.

¹⁰ Taciturn, Tom [pseud?] “For the WORCESTER MAGAZINE.” *Worcester Magazine ... Containing Politicks, Miscellanies, Poetry, and News* ..(Jun 1786) 13: p.150.

1719, in England, J. Roberts says, “I write myself spinster, because the laws of my country call me so” (135)¹¹. English law recognizes her, but she nevertheless concludes “As for us poor Spinsters, we must certainly go away to France also” (349). By the end of the century, the old maid’s displacement would become so commonplace as to be joke-worthy. Oliver Goldsmith’s Tony Lumpkin of *She Stoops to Conquer* hyperbolically invokes the rhetorical conventions of weddings in order to refuse marriage to Constantia Neville: “Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of BLANK place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife” (V.iv). The dislocation here is paradoxical: the spinster belongs elsewhere (or nowhere), but this is, effectively, no less a way of placing the spinster in both English and American contexts. It is precisely the assumption that J. Roberts must *go* to France that makes her spinsterhood most English. Thus, the imagined dislocation of the spinster is its own form of location. The limitation of this awkward embrace is that the old maid rarely acquired a level of complexity—in terms of roundness of character or of plot detail surrounding her—where the spinster appears in literary contexts.

As Sedgwick’s “The Old Maids” suggests, however, this tradition—of situating the old maid in one literary context while proclaiming her to be at odds with that context or belonging more properly to another—generates its own counter-tradition in print. Readers (like Sedgwick) and characters (like Mrs. Seton) alike tested the givenness of literary types against the world around them—as if to read literature in utterly non-aesthetic ways. (The McTabs and Miss Grizzles are not *just* literary characters; they exert influence on women’s choices beyond the realm of the imaginary.) The extent to

¹¹ See the OED entry for “spinster.”

which even this counter-reading is mired in a tradition of textual conventions can be seen in the ways that Sedgwick, through Mrs. Seton, launches a defense of old maidenhood on religious and biblical grounds. Biblical exegesis, adapted to a fictional context, is marshaled in the service of creative and redemptive terms for the old maid.

Still, it is not as if Sedgwick's and Mrs. Seton's responses to other texts can be reduced to a way of reading that looks only backwards—especially in light of the text's desire to exceed existing fictional portrayals of old maids. Sedgwick's experiment in type-complication shows us the extent to which detailed descriptions of particular examples accumulate literary substance to existing types and conventions. The demand for descriptive particularity around individuals, in turn, opens up the possibility of imagining more than one type of life for the old maid. As a substantial body of mid-nineteenth-century literature suggests, the prominence of the old maid licensed a particular kind of imagination of women's sexual-sociability outside marriage—and indeed, sometimes inside marriage, too.

In 1845, for instance, Margaret Fuller described the rise of the class “contemptuously designated as old maids” and their broadening social roles: not only did there seem to be more old maids, but they were becoming more central to the social world itself. “The business of society has become so complex,” she observes, “that it could now scarcely be carried on without the presence of these despised auxiliaries; and detachments from the army of aunts and uncles are wanted to stop gaps in every hedge. They rove about, mental and moral Ishmaelites, pitching their tents amid the fixed and ornamented homes of men” (298). In explaining this sociological phenomenon, Fuller contrasts the old maid with married people, those marked by a “fullness of being,” that

leads her to ponder the extent to which old maids and bachelors have “taken root on earth” and in society. Once seen as averse to society, old maids, she points out, are no longer “auxiliaries: instead they are central to workings of society itself” (298).

This is not to say that the tradition of existential dislocation has been left entirely behind. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Miss Ophelia and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s Hepzibah Pyncheon strongly suggest otherwise. In fact, Miss Ophelia qualifies as precisely the kind of old-maid-Ishmaelite that Fuller had in mind: just as she appears in “the fixed and ornamented home” of Augustine St. Clare in New Orleans, she is also at once fixed as a New Englander. The description we have of her and of the place from which she hails depicts her as a doubly displaced New Englander. First of all, Miss Ophelia has arrived in New Orleans in the face of her mother’s wondering whether it “wasn’t an awful wicked place”: “it seemed to [her mother] most equal to going to the Sandwich Islands, or anywhere among the heathen” (245). But Miss Feely has done so precisely because, after forty-five years in New England, she hasn’t seemed to fit there, either. Nonetheless, in the opening description of Miss Ophelia as both a product of her Northern environment and a cultivator of the Southern environment to which she has moved, the woman who is arguably the moral conscience of the novel finds herself strangely situated: both an extension of and an affront to the locations that would claim her as part of them.

The example of Hepzibah Pyncheon is slightly different. Miss Ophelia is essential to the world of New Orleans in the ways Fuller describes even if she does not really belong there. Hepzibah, on the other hand, belongs so fully in the gloomy House of the Seven Gables that her fate and demeanor are almost indistinguishable from those of the house. This house is more than a *mise-en-scène*; it amounts almost to being a

character itself: “like a human countenance” (11). The house once “impregnated the whole air” with the smell of festivity (16), and a feminized “Seven Gables” “presented the aspect of a whole sisterhood of edifices breathing through the spiral of one chimney” (17). Hepzibah’s failure to marry is itself revisited upon the house, which seems almost to mimic her being in the world. Despite being intricately sutured to her domestic space, Hepzibah is also dramatically alienated from the social world of the town. In chapter II, after we have been introduced to the house and its familial history, we learn that “The Old Maid was alone in the house. Alone, except for a certain respectable and orderly young man, an artist” who lives in another gable—“quite a house by itself, indeed”; “for above a quarter of a century gone by, she has dwelt in strict seclusion, taking no part in the business of life, and just as little in its intercourse and pleasures” (33). Even Hepzibah’s pillow is “solitary” (32).

What the narrator says to us directly about Hepzibah is undoubtedly complicated by all the ways in which the novel dramatizes Hepzibah’s interactions with all the other characters in the book. However identified she may be with the crumbling Pyncheon house/heritage and however reluctant she is to form social attachments, she appears to us as intimately attached to a home, —even if that home itself is so haunted by its own troubled relationship to its owners, the town, and the very environs that all its inhabitants abandon for Judge Pyncheon’s house by the end.

What is significant about both these novels are the awkward terms in which they locate these supporting characters. Each character fits a particular location from which they are, in the larger context, displaced. The extent to which these characters are central to and in accord with the world that surrounds them in part defines their status as minor

characters within these novels. The larger story of the novel embraces them, but only insofar as they earn subplots.¹² The old maid is constantly tested against her environment, even as she comes to be defined by it.

Nonetheless, there are some tests to which she is really never put. Whereas the old maid of the eighteenth-century periodicals was presumed to have been too choosy by rejecting husbands, Hepzibah and Miss Ophelia have had more limited suitors and presumably even less active sexual desire—past or present. The spinster has become a solitary figure, who is not only at odds with the social, but also at odds with the sexual.¹³ However queer a figure the old maid may cut, she is limited as a sexual type by her presumed asexuality. (Ironically, Edith Wharton imagines Charlotte Lovell, the 1850s old maid, because of, not despite, her active sexuality.)

However outside and in some cases resistant to heterosexual normality the 1850s old maid may appear to be—in other words, however queer she may seem to readers today—she is not yet widely connected, at the level of content, to the literary history of overtly acknowledged sexual love between women. Before the end of the nineteenth century, examples of sexual intimacy between, or sexual desire among, women rarely appear in old maid literature. In part, this is because spinsters appear to us so frequently as solitary figures. There is little sense of a spinster sub-culture as there would be by the end of the nineteenth-century in, say, the suffrage and abolitionist movements or women's writing circles in New England. Suffice it to say that, by and large, mid-

¹² Sexual love between women often appears in fleeting literary moments and rarely finds itself the central focus of extended narratives. See Lisa Moore, *Dangerous Intimacies: Toward a Sapphic History of the British Novel*.

¹³ We can see this also in Melville's *The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids* (1855): much more could be said about this text, but it is significant that the bachelors are described in terms that convey a certain sensuality and a sense of belonging evidenced by their aristocratic names while the anonymous maids seem stripped of any sensual life by their toil as mill workers.

century lesbianism exists beyond old maid literature: often in pornographic texts and, as we shall see presently, in gothic texts and texts about pastoral or exotic, often orientalist, locales.

Separate though these literary traditions may be, however, at the level of form, there is a symbiotic relationship between them. The literary renderings of sexualized relationships between women do, I think, benefit from the type-complication and modes of textual self-consciousness that allow the old maid to be imagined in a literary fullness not in evidence at the end of the eighteenth century. This is not only because this body of literature opens up possibilities for conceptualizing women's sexuality beyond the social institution of marriage. It is also because the literary old maid circulates more widely and more freely and thus can expand the world-imagining of the old maid figure at a more rapid rate. It thus becomes possible, even likely, for the lesbian to logically become part of the widening world and life possibilities that are generated around the old maid. Still, it is not as if the literary circulation of the old maid acquires such a level of complexity that the figure of lesbian can be so easily slotted in. The emerging literature of lesbianism is subject to its own warp and woof of type-complication. There is a twist, however. Unlike the lesbian, who has yet to coalesce as such, the old maid—as a figure and as a phrase—appears to be a known entity at any one point in time, even if she is subject to change through processes of recirculation. Where the literature of the old maid tests the elasticity of the phrase “old maid” and highlights the shifting boundaries of its social meaning, literature that treats sexual desire between women does not work with the same abstractions of type. They work instead with already complex literary vignettes or thumbnail sketches. Nonetheless, a similar impulse toward type-complication can be

discerned in this literature. If we look at what happens in nineteenth-century texts that more overtly take up consideration of erotic love between women, we can see a similar preoccupation with describing and placing erotic attachments between women in language worlds. What also becomes clear, however, is that there is no equivalent catchphrase like “old maid” to test against a series of contextualized examples. Instead, descriptions of places (at the level of both form and context) operate as strange (and textually elaborate) versions of types themselves. They operate through intertextual structures and, in turn, by calling up existing ways of thinking and writing about the locations of sexuality. As we shall see in the examples below, the very evidence of this intertextuality and its attendant descriptions appears in literally more words.

One short story that overtly takes up the sexual love of one woman for another in this layered way, calling on conventions of the gothic and of British romanticism, is Rose Terry (Cooke)’s “My Visitation” (1858).¹⁴ Unlike literature about the old maid, this story does not directly complicate an abstract type. It invokes a series of texts which hover in and overlap throughout. The story begins with the following epigraph from Tennyson:

¹⁴ Cooke did not marry until later in life. When she published this story, she did so as Rose Terry. Today’s readers would probably recognize her as Rose Terry Cooke. Although Terry has been recognized—especially by commentators on nineteenth-century American women’s writing—this particular story has received scant attention. It was not included in any of the collections of Terry’s work and resurfaced recently only in Susan Koppelman’s collection, *Two Friends*. Apart from passing references in broadly sketched introductions, the only critical attention paid to this story has been Ralph J. Poole’s “Body/Rituals: The (Homo)Erotics of Death in Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Rose Terry Cooke, and Edgar Allan Poe,” *Soft Canons: American Women Writers and Masculine Tradition*, Ed. Karen L. Kilcup (Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1999) 239-61. Terry’s most well-known story is arguably “How Celia Changed Her Mind,” which was included in *Huckleberries* (1891). The title character begins and ends the story as an old maid, with a brief excursion into a harsh marriage in-between. By the end, she resolves to bring up children as “dyed-in-the-wool old maids.” The elements we most readily identify with the local color tradition are more pronounced here: strong dialect writing, clear sense of the peculiarities of place. This story was also included in Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse’s *American Women Regionalists* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992) 137-53 as well as Elizabeth Ammons’s collection of Terry’s work, *How Celia Changed her Mind and Selected Stories*. Other commentators on Terry include Van Wyck Brooks (briefly) in *New England Indian Summer* (New York: Dutton, 1859) 89-90.

“Is not this she of whom

When first she came, all flushed you said to me,

* * * * * *

Now could you share your thought; now should men see

Two women faster welded in one love

Than pairs of wedlock?”

“The Princess”¹⁵

We then learn rather quickly that the first person-narrator has been lying in bed reading Bronte’s *Shirley*; she sometimes tells her story by ventriloquizing Wordsworth; and at another point, when the narrator is at the beach in Maine, she is read “some quaint German story, some incredibly exquisite bit of Tennyson, some sensitively musical passage of Kingsley, or, better and more apt, a song or a poem of Shelley’s—vivid, spiritual, supernatural; the ideal of poetry; the leaping flame-tongue of lonely genius hanging in mid-air, self-poised, self-containing, glorious, and unattainable” (32). I will say more about the conditions under which the Romantics are invoked in the mediation of the narrator’s relationship to her surroundings. For now, though, I’d like to consider the ways this textual scaffolding connects to the kind of story the narrator seeks to tell and her conceptualization of her emotional incoherence, which she stages deftly through conventions of narrative incoherence.

The narrator’s opening anxiety about her story’s status as story strikes an odd note. It seems at once over-determined, banal, and yet surprisingly genuine. Of all the

¹⁵ Terry does not provide the specific reference for this poem, beyond the title, assuming no doubt that the poem and its author would be well-known to her audience. These lines are extracted from Canto VI of Tennyson’s long poem, *The Princess: A Medley* (1847). Terry’s version includes asterisks that the original poem does not. She has not excluded any lines from the excerpt.

texts that the narrator invokes throughout the story, that opening “exquisite bit of Tennyson” arguably relates most closely to the story she tells—although a case can be made that *Shirley* also fits within such a tradition. In what is one of the more stunningly blunt declarations of nineteenth-century lesbianism, she describes “falling passionately in love with Eleanore Wyse” (26)—a phrasing that she consciously chooses, for, as she says, “no other phrase expresses the blind, irrational, all-enduring devotion I gave to her; no less vivid word belongs to that madness” (26). This opening epigraph creates the sense that the story we are about to hear aims to supplement Tennyson’s tale: actually sharing the thought of “Two women faster welded in one love/Than pairs of wedlock.” But the line of influence is not uncomplicated. Having created this intertext for herself, the speaker actually begins her story with a pronounced statement of her worry that the story does not hang together. Such a worry might be justified if the speaker believes herself to be telling a kind of story that has not been told before. But the worry itself takes the fairly conventional form—that of a gothic convention that renders it almost banal:

If this story is incoherent—arranged rather for the writer’s thought than for the reader’s eye—it is because the brain which dictated it reeled with sharp assaults of the memory, that living anguish that abides while earth passes away into silence; and because the hand that wrote it trembled with electric thrills from a past that can not die, forever fresh in the soul it tested and tortured—powerful after the flight of years as in its first agony, to fill the dim eye with tears, and throb the languid pulses with fresh fever and passion.

Take, then, the record as it stands, and ask not from a cry of mortal pain
the liquid cadence and accurate noting of an operatic bravura. (24)

The “languid pulses,” “sharp assaults of the memory,” and “electric thrills from the past” all explain why the few commentators on Cooke’s story remark on Terry’s formal and thematic affinities with Poe.¹⁶ Further, as Terry Castle has argued in *The Apparitional Lesbian*, a discernable literary tradition depicts lesbian desire through ghostly figures.¹⁷ This tradition, in fact, continues beyond Cooke in other nineteenth-century stories like Elizabeth Stuart Phelps’s “Since I Died” (1873) and Alice Brown’s “There and Here” (1897). All the stories in this tradition, it might be said, frame sexual desire between women by a condition of impossibility. Stories like these make it possible to extend further backward into the nineteenth-century critic Valerie Rohy’s contention that impossibility is itself the condition of possibility for lesbianism.¹⁸

But Cooke’s narrator does not make Eleanor’s death the condition under which she can articulate her desire; rather, Eleanor’s death creates the conditions under which she can put her passion to rest. In other words, the story tries to articulate the conditions under which the narrator’s consciously sexual love for Eleanor is a live phenomenon. The gothic frame is indeed a convention, but it may also mask a genuine sense of

¹⁶ Elizabeth Ammons suggests that she took up “the short story technique, as Poe had set it forth”; Ralph J. Poole also details parallels between Terry’s story and Poe’s works (he points to “Ligeia,” “Berenice,” “Morella,” and “Eleonora” in particular). See “Body/Rituals: (Homo)Erotics in Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Rose Terry Cooke, and Edgar Allan Poe” in *Soft Canons: American Women Writers and Masculine Traditions*, Ed. Karen Kilcup. Indeed the story first appears in *Putnams*, a magazine that published some of Poe’s work.

¹⁷ In *The Apparitional Lesbian*, Terry Castle looks back as far as the eighteenth century to diagnose what she sees as a pattern of ghostly lesbianism in history: “Once the lesbian has been defined as ghostly—the better to drain her of any sensual or moral authority—she can then be exorcized” (6). Among the pre-1858 texts that Castle uses to bolster her claims are Daniel Defoe’s *The Apparition of Mrs Veal*, Denis Diderot’s *La Religieuse*, Théophile Gautier’s *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, and Baudelaire’s poem, “Femmes Damnées” from *Les Fleurs du Mal*. She argues that this pattern extends up into twentieth-century literature, as well.

¹⁸ See Valerie Rohy’s *Impossible Women: Lesbian figures & American literature*. (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2000).

incoherence, if we consider the absence of a literary tradition of sustained or detailed life narratives about sexual love between women. Throughout the story, Cooke assembles a montage of literary conventions as if to create a sense of coherence for this story. Just as the story reaches for literary precursors, so too does the narrator reach outside herself for an understanding of her emotional life from the outside in.

For this narrator, the sense of belonging and fitting in a particular setting structures both the way she understands her attachment to Eleanor as well as the way she recovers from the heartbreak of that attachment. She translates the story of her love for Eleanor into a hieroglyphic legend, part of which reads,

Not did I like to see the goddess moved expression did not become her; the soul that pierced those deep eyes was eager, unquiet, despotic; nothing divine, indeed, yet in my eyes, it was the unresting hasting meteor that flashed and faded through mists of earth toward its rest—where I knew not, but its flickering seemed to me atmospheric. (27)

Later, she describes the way that Eleanor's presence affects her, "as sunshine does, with a sense of warm life and delight" (27); she comments on Eleanor's "starry height above common people" (28). And when she discovers, "I never could have loved any man as I did her," and knows that this is an unrequited love, she tells us that she "went from home to new scenes and fresh atmosphere" (30). At Gloucester Beach in Maine, the speaker finds the scenery mediated by her emotional life. Here, she reads Wordsworth, finding that "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her" and her sense of equilibrium is restored. She passes the time with a man who will become her husband by the end of the story—one who also had fallen for Eleanor. Gradually, she says, "I felt a life stealing

back to its deserted and chilly conduits; I basked like a cactus or a lizard into brighter tints and a gayer existence” (31). Herman knows that the narrator’s love for Eleanor is all that stands between him and marriage and so he waits, sitting with her “under the old cedars that shed aromatic scents upon the sun-thrilled air,” reading Tennyson and Shelley to her (31-32). After she hears that Eleanor has died, and after she has returned from the beach, does the ghostly Eleanor (whom she designates *It*) begin to pervade the narrator’s immediate surroundings. This haunting persists until Christmas when, after the narrator responds to Eleanor’s cry “Forgive! Forgive!” we learn “A gleam of rapture and rest relaxed the brow, the sad eyes; love ineffable glowed along each lineament and transfused to splendor the frigid moulding of snow” (41). At every turn, we can see the ways in which the narrator appeals both to the world around her as well as to conventions of describing that world as a means of grasping for emotional coherence. Eleanor’s presence, whether real or imagined, sometimes interrupts that easy co-extensiveness. At other times she seems to anchor it. Coherence for this narrator does not seem to be about establishing and maintaining a bounded self. Rather, the coherence of the story seems to rest on establishing a credible relationship between the plot (the description and resolution of the love story) and the world in which that plot is set. The story thus showcases a narrator reaching beyond herself and reaching toward (and extending) pieces of well-known literature. The speaker’s depiction of a story so consciously about sexual love amounts to more than an expression of desire or a sense of identity. It strives to create both a social world and a language world beyond the expression of individual desire.

To an extent, sexual desire between women has always had a worldliness about it, embodied usually in the ways that Western writers and travelers fetishized the places that seemed most exotic to them. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said famously observed that “sexual experience [is] unobtainable in Europe” and “a different type of sexuality” not only promoted Orientalist fantasies but helped fuel European imperialism from the early modern period onward (190). As a range of recent respondents to the wave of thinking inspired by Said have begun to argue, however, the inverse is also true: imperialism itself promoted particular sexual fantasies, too.¹⁹ As I argue elsewhere in this dissertation,

¹⁹ With respect specifically to homosexuality, this can be seen particularly in the body of criticism that brings together post-colonial studies and queer theory. See, for instance, Robert Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality* (New York: Routledge, 2003) and *Imperial Desire: Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature*, Ed. Philip Holden and Richard J. Ruppel (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003); Christopher Lane, *The Ruling Passion: British colonial allegory and the paradox of homosexual desire* (Durham: Duke UP, 1995); *In a Queer Place: Sexuality and Belonging in British and European Contexts*, Ed. Kate Chedgzoy, Emma Francis, and Murray Pratt (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

A great deal of the work in this context has focused on male desire. Joseph A. Boone has found “the sexual politics of colonial narrative” nowhere so explicitly thematized “as in those voyages to the Near East recorded or imagined by Western men”, for whom “the geopolitical realities of the Arabic Orient become a psychic screen on which to project fantasies of illicit sexuality and unbridled excess”; “Vacation cruises: or, the homoerotics of Orientalism,” *PMLA* 110.1 (January 1995): 89–107; this passage p. 89. See also Donald H. Mengay, “Arabian rites: T.E. Lawrence’s *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and the erotics of empire,” in Richard A. Barney and Grant Holly (eds) “The culture of filth,” (*Genre*, 27.4 (Winter 1994): 395–416; Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) 46–7; Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man’s World* (Hammersmith, London: HarperCollins Academic, 1991) 226.

But a large body of literature has also focused on the peculiar status of women as both agents and objects of desire. See, for instance Felicity Nussbaum’s exploration of feminotopias in *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore, MD, and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995) 135–66, and Ruth Bernard Yeazell’s treatment of women travelers in textual practice, *Harems of the Mind: Passages of Western Art and Literature* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2000) 84–93. In a recent article, Christopher Lane highlights the difficulties that female agency and sexual desire pose for scholars of empire and sexuality who consider writing by and about female travelers. Often seen as either complicit with imperialism or as radically other to it, women travelers seem to be misunderstood by critics who overlook the ambiguity of eroticization that attends women travelers and their conceptualization of and attraction to the sexuality of the women they meet/see. Lane looks specifically at the writing of Mary Kingsley and in effect contextualizes the more well-known literature of sapphism and orientalism that emerges around the writing of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. See Christopher Lane, “Fantasies of ‘Lady Pioneers,’ Between Narrative and Theory” *Imperial Desire: Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature*, Ed. Philip Holden and Richard J. Ruppel (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003) 90–114. For more on sapphism and orientalism in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, see Nussbaum (above) and, more recently John C. Benyon’s “Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s Sapphic Vision” in *Imperial Desire*.

exotic locales were not the only sites of sexual desire between women (other likely sites are women's educational spaces, including convents, and pornographic parodies of those spaces). What we can see emerging, however, is the extent to which different kinds of places carry highly charged Sapphic sexual connotations. In this sense, we might say that particular places themselves, like the Turkish harem, circumscribe forms of exotic sexuality that can be invoked through the bundle of language that describes them without fully naming or reducing them as such.²⁰ In the context of a transatlantic literary marketplace, those sexual fantasies were obviously not the sole property of Europe. They circulate with the literature in American contexts and infuse the published writings of Americans, too. What we can see from literary locations of sexual desire between women is not just that places carry sexual connotations with them; these literary places

See also Susan S. Lanser's consideration of anonymity and lesbianism in "The Author's Queer Clothes: Anonymity, Sex(uality), and The Travels and Adventures of Mademoiselle de Richelieu." *The Faces of Anonymity: Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publications from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Robert Griffin (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 81-102; Sally O'Driscoll "'Lesbian' Literary History in the Eighteenth Century" *Women and Literary History: 'For There She Was'* Ed. Katherine Binhammer and Jeanne Wood (Newark, DE, London, England: U of Delaware P, Associated UP, 2003) 64-73.

²⁰ In her survey of early twentieth-century lesbian magazine fiction, Lillian Faderman makes the influential, if disputed, argument that

before the 1920s women were permitted a broader spectrum of expressions of love for their own sex, primarily for two reasons: (1) love relationships between women were not threatening, since it was understood that women would marry if they could, for economic and social reasons, despite such affectional ties; (2) it was generally believed that women, being for the most part nonsexual outside of procreative activity, were entirely unlikely to engage in "improper...intimate relations" with other females, and that those few who did transgress were easily identifiable through external characteristics. Although, as Hamilton points out, by the mid-nineteenth century there were a number of French and German novels that dealt with love between women in a manner that suggested decadence and corruption, those novels—and even the late nineteenth-century "discoveries" of medical men—were familiar to the mass of the population. Thus it was that popular magazine fiction, well into the twentieth century, could depict female-female love relationships with an openness that later became, as I shall discuss, impossible. (102)

As Faderman suggests, mid-century French and German texts were instrumental in making love between women familiar to a wide readership. But at the same time that Balzac, Zola, and others were being read by many Americans, American writers themselves were producing texts in English that read sexual illicitness back into those European contexts—even as they borrowed the stylistics of realism (particularly from France) to produce their own indigenous literature (this literary nationalism, ironically, is also arguably the effect of a French writer, Hippolyte Taine, whose 1863 *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise* began to see literature in terms of national boundaries).

also have a formal history which writers invoke and re-circulate as they offer expanded narratives about place and sexuality.

A good example of a writer who uses the formal history of place to expand upon and test the language of love between women is Octave Thanet. Writing under the pen name of Alice French,²¹ Thanet published a short story titled “My Lorelei” in *The Western* (1880). Its author and protagonist, Mrs. Louis Danton, develops an extra-marital attachment to another woman, named Undine, while traveling in Germany. Heidelberg is the site of the tale—itself presumably drawn from the author’s experience (recorded in

²¹French explained in interviews that the first name of her pseudonym had been derived from that of her roommate at Andover Academy, Octavia Putnam. The last name, she took from the printing on a boxcar she once saw. She liked the name because it could be taken as either male or female. Lillian Faderman averred that “Octave seemed to view humanity as having three sexes—men, women, and Octave Thanet” even though Faderman also suggests, “Thanet saw only the model of heterosexuality around her and never questioned its morality.” Thanet was reasonably prolific in her time: she wrote six novels, published nine volumes of stories—none of which reprinted “My Lorelei”—and some essays, and also edited a collection of *The Best Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (1890). According to her biographer, George McMichael, “For thirty years, she was one of the highest paid authors in the United States” (1). To date, however, few critical commentaries of her work exist: one biography of her life by George McMichael, aptly titled *Journey to Obscurity: The Life of Octave Thanet* (U of Nebraska P, 1965). Thanet’s persistent obscurity can be explained by the fact that, however intimate she became with the dialects of poor white and black workers in Clover Bend Arkansas (dialects that featured prominently in her later writings and strongly situate them within the local color tradition), she was profoundly conservative when it came to questions of race and gender. She was a staunch advocate of traditional roles for women and spoke out against both suffrage and pacificism. Koppelman summarizes Thanet as “anti-labor union, a xenophobic who portrayed foreigners as sinister figures, and a racist caricaturist; she opposed Prohibition and helped to organize against the suffragists, whom she saw as in league with all those whom she opposed” (78). Later in her work, she would become fascinated with social and national types: her writings in the 1890s included essays such as “The Tramp in Four Centuries,” “The English Workingman and the Commercial Crises,” “Sketches of American Types: The Provincials,” “Sketches of American Types: The Working Man” and “The Contented Masses.” She published her first story in 1878, “Communists and Capitalists.”

It seems, plausible, therefore, to assume that either French herself or her editors might have found the “My Lorelei” story inconsistent with, or unrelated to, her later political views. I think an argument could be made, however, that Thanet/French’s literary conservatism played a strong role in the writing of this story, just as it would for other writers grasping toward familiar forms to make sense of content that had fewer literary conventions to call its own.

her journal) of her European tour with her father.²² (Thanet also edited *The Best Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague (1689-1762)*.)

Not unlike Rose Terry, Thanet constructs the textuality through which one female character understands her passionate attachment to another out of the references to other, famous literary examples—examples that also call attention to the place and setting of the relationship in question. Also, like Cooke, Thanet engages a series of overt literary references in the telling of her story. The title makes the most obvious connection: “My Lorelei: a Heidelberg Romance.” Nineteenth-century readers would have been well aware of the link between Heidelberg and German Romantic poet Heinrich Heine’s famous poem about the Lorelei: a legendary Greek siren whose song lured sailors to their death.²³ And not only does this narrator, Constance, call the other woman “my Lorelei” but this Lorelei figure’s actual name is not Lorelei, but Undine. The “Lorelei” is a type that becomes complicated when used to describe a situation that is similar to Undine in only the most basic sense: they are both sirens. In a reversal of the Lorelei story, however, it is Undine, the Lorelei figure who dies, not the sailor/narrator she has lured. The name “Undine” itself can be seen to interrupt the coherence of the Lorelei tale,

²² Thanet/French’s papers are housed at the Newberry Library in Chicago. Her journals have never been published and there is no other source for this information in print. I have not been able to verify McMichael’s claim, although it hardly seems unreasonable and his biography relies heavily on this archive.

²³ References to the famous Lorelei tale could be found in just about any nineteenth-century periodical. In fact, during the decades preceding the publication of “My Lorelei,” such references abounded in literary and artistic magazines, not only in places one might expect, like *The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature*. During the 1870s, Lady Blanche Murphy published a series of stories set on the Rhine in magazines such as *Frank Leslie’s Popular Monthly* and *Lippincott’s*. Indeed she could never resist making at least one reference to the Lorelei at some point in these stories. Heinrich Heine, and his Lorelei especially, seems to appeal particularly to women: Emma Lazarus translated and published some of Heine’s poems in 1867. Others, like Rachel Pomeroy published poems titled “Lorelei” while countless others regularly dropped in references to Lorelei without ever feeling the need to explain the reference itself: it was presumed to be so widely known that neither its origin nor its author needed to be identified. I have an entire file of periodical pieces from American magazines that refer to the Lorelei story, some more casually than others. No others that I’ve been able to find insist upon any lesbian reading of the story, although most treat that tale as an exotic myth.

drawing as it does on La Motte-Fouqué's 1811 story of the water-nymph of the same name. As in Hans Christian Andersen's later and now more familiar story, "The Little Mermaid," Undine assumes human form to gain a soul through marriage in the La Motte-Fouqué tale. At one point in "My Lorelei," the narrator, Constance, is even reading the French *Undine* aloud to her companions. What distinguishes Octave Thanet's Lorelei from the many references to Lorelei appearing in periodical writing at this time is the way Thanet does not just refer to the story, but adopts the story as a frame for her own tale.

The intertexts of the Lorelei and Undine stories not only layer but exacerbate a temporal displacement, which the text highlights in its descriptions of place. The story—told through a series of journal entries—begins in Heidelberg:

We have been here two weeks; we expect to be here two months. The town is a queer, quaint, many-gabled, abominably paved place, with the famous Heidelberger Schloss shouldering its red walls through the trees of the western hills, like the Middle Ages looking down on us. When the sun sets, its rugged towers are outlined against a golden background, such as Fra Angelico gives his Madonnas. Our hotel fronts the Anlage, a charming street, of which only one side is bordered with cream-colored brick, while the other rolls back in the wooded hills, where the White Caps hold their Kneipen, and the band plays on summer nights. (81)

Heidelberg is marked by its sensuality, its pastoral quality, and its mythic proportions. The landscape has a kind of temporal agency and logic presented to us in the phrase, "The Middle Ages look down on us." Later, Constance concludes, "I seem to have

stepped out of the bustle and hurry and struggle of modern life. It is bliss after Chicago” (84). What convinced her is the public sexual culture that she observes and she proceeds to describe a pair of lovers, who linger, ensconced in each other:

Occasionally, he would take her hand and hold it for a few moments, smiling. He had providently spread a gay handkerchief on the grass, for his clothes were new, beyond a doubt; but several times the *restauration* waiters brought them beer, and at noon, they ate a great deal of bread and cheese and a large sausage, which they appeared to have brought with them. When night fell, and we went homeward, we overtook them, walking hand in hand among the trees. They looked supremely satisfied with life; possibly a trifle stolid, but innocent as Arcadia. Undine glanced up at them as they passed. “They are happy,” she said; “probably they are very lately married; but fancy two Americans spending a day in such a way!”

“I don’t like American lovers,” said I. (84)

Just as these German lovers appear as a feature of the environment, so too does Constance experience Heine’s Lorelei, quite literally as a feature of her surroundings—an aural accessory to a scene that begins as a visual panorama and ends in the words of Heine’s poem:

The sun had sunk below the horizon; only a few crimson streaks, like the careless strokes of an emptied brush, stained the yellow glow in the west. Far below us was spread the town, a huddle of pointed roofs and church spires; directly beneath, the Neckar ran noiselessly over its rocks; to the right and to the left stretched the hills. The near hills were green, and checkered with corn-fields and

vineyards; but in the distance the dark purple outlines looked darker against the yellow sea of light. The shadows of the ruined towers lay long and heavy on the grass. Away to the right, a solitary nightingale was singing; and as we stood listening for a moment, vaguely awed by the beauty and the melancholy of the scene, some students, out of sight, began Heine's song: —

Du has Diamanten und Perlen

Has Alles was Menchenbegehr,

Und has dite schönsten Augen, —

Men Liebchen, was willst du mehr? (86) [*sic*]²⁴

The Lorelei emerges almost seamlessly out of its context to become a double frame—a feature of the landscape and a narrative that organizes the action. Constance's cousin, Ted, hums the refrain of the song with his arm around Undine, who is clearly the “Du” of the first line. (Ted is engaged to be married to Undine, but is also flirting with another character, Grace Willmott. A man who chased Grace eventually kills Undine inadvertently). But more importantly, the song appears as a frame from the narrator's first-person perspective. Undine becomes a Lorelei figure, not for Ted but for Constance, who hereafter refers to her as her Lorelei at least twice (85, 87). As we come to see, the one irreducible feature that Heine's Lorelei and Constance's Lorelei share are these beautiful eyes, the “schönsten Augen,” which interrupt all of Constance's efforts to have us see her desire for Undine differently.

²⁴ The rough translation of these lines is as follows:

You have diamonds and pearls
Have everything that Men desire
And have the most beautiful eyes —
My sweetheart, what else can you want/desire?

The original German is odd, however: what Thanet records as “Menchenbegehr” (Menschen begehren) should be two words—a subject and a verb.

This song becomes so powerful a framing device for Constance's perception of Undine, that it resists all of Constance's effort to recast her love for Undine as, at one point, maternal, and at another, sisterly. Consider the following scene:

That evening, passing Undine's door, it opening and she came out; by the map-light her face looked pale. For the first time, she seemed to me not the beautiful, cold lorelei [sic] about whom I was weaving a fanciful romance, but a girl who had no mother, and who was too much to have many friends. Almost involuntarily, I drew her to me and kissed her. The faintest flush tinged her cheek. I can't describe how oddly she looked at me, saying, "Then I don't chill you, Constance."

"Not to mention," said I, laughing. Then I kissed her again. It is possible she was pleased at something; it is possible she was hurt at something. I half believed she is as puzzled over the pleasure or the pain, as I am puzzled over that curious look in her eyes." (87)

Constance writes that she kisses Undine because Undine looks orphaned, like "a girl who had no mother." Yet this mother-daughter reframing of the more persistent Lorelei frame cannot undo the emotional puzzle that hangs over the scene at the end. Pleasure and pain seem indistinguishable for both in the wake of this apparently involuntary show of affection. In the last sentence of the description, the language of Lorelei once again emerges, as Constance puzzles over "that curious look in her eyes." The maternalism that Constance invokes to explain her kissing Undine cannot quite do the job of containing her befuddlement. Heine's song, with its focus on Lorelei's bewitching eyes, creeps back as the more dominant textual mediator. One gets the sense in reading the

story that Constance experiments with this language of motherhood and sisterhood, testing each language configuration against the relationship before her. Neither sticks. The Lorelei and its context persist as the best way to?

Later, as the subplot thickens, so too does Constance's jealousy on Undine's behalf. The party has had an unpleasant encounter with the "cretin" who, we learn retrospectively, eventually stabs Undine. Ted continues to flirt with Grace Willmott; Constance frets. She begins to hope that Undine does not care for Ted. In fact, she tells Undine that she is too good for Ted. Undine's reply exerts a force that organizes our way of thinking about all the love-relationships in the story—and at the very moment when the plot seems to be reaching its apex:

“I don't know about that”, she said, “and besides, Constance, we don't love people because they are good, but because we can't help it.”

Nothing appropriate occurring to me to say, I said nothing; but I felt, with a rush of thankfulness so intense that it was pain, how much I respected Louis.

(93)

The evacuation of agency from desire articulated here by Undine is striking. “We can't help” loving some people. In this story, desire seems somehow to emerge out of the landscape like the Lorelei song itself. In fact, the pain of desire that strikes Constance seems always to be triggered by and filtered through her surroundings. The last time that Constance talked about emotional feeling as pain was just after she had kissed Undine. The diary writing turns from Undine's summary of love to a sentence-long summary of her fatigue—flagged again by the singing of the Lorelei siren song. The next day the

party is scheduled to travel to Schwetzingen and as Constance withdraws to her room, we are told,

A wretched old German, with a villainous voice, promenades beneath my window, singing over and over again the first two lines of the Lorelei:

“Ich weiss nicht was solt es bedeten, [*sic*]²⁵

Das ich so taurig bin!”

I am tired; I am out of spirits; I wish I could sleep a long, long time.” (93)

The Lorelei leitmotif—as soundtrack, as love object, as intertext, and as a marker of Germany being a place out of modern time—reaches its crescendo at this point in the text. It solidifies the pain of love and organizes the story of a love that seems to be structured by this place out of time.

But the relationship and the story organized by Heine’s poem also generates another kind of story in the end: one that seems to offer a modern alternative to traditional structures of entailment and inheritance. The tale ends with a retrospective report of Undine/Lorelei’s death, which takes place the day after, when Constance and her party go off to Heidelberg Castle. There is a death-bed declaration of love and a parting kiss. One might be inclined to read Undine’s death as a death of possibility. But Undine herself sees it as a strange opportunity. She is determined to lay out to whom she will bequeath her wealth. Undine’s message primarily concerns entailment, but the event assumes the weight of the repeated references to the framing poem and its infusion of the two women’s attachment to each other:

²⁵ Again, the German would appear to be either transcribed incorrectly by the editor or written incorrectly by Thanet. This phrase should read “soll es bedeuten/ Dass ich so Traurig bin!”

“I have left half my property to Ted; then I have left something to Aunt Eliza, — all she would take, you know she is rich; and I have left some fifty thousand in legacies to some poor people I have known; the rest I have given to you. You are my sister, Constance; you will take my money, won’t you? It makes me happy to think of your having it.”

What could I say to her? I sat silent with a heavy heart, while one by one, the street lights sprang out of the darkness, and by their gleam I took my last look of my darling’s face.

They were singing over among the hills the same little love-song of Heine’s, which I heard, for the first time, the day we visited the castle: —

Du has Diamanten und Perlen

Has Alles was Menchenbegehr,

Und has die schönsten Augen, —

Mein Liebchen, was willst du mehr?

She turned those ‘loveliest eyes’ wistfully up to mine. “*You* will always love me, Con, won’t you? Now call Ted. Kiss me first.” Even as I kissed her, I felt her lips stir with a smile. “Connie, do you remember the day at the castle, when I wished? Well, the ring is a true fairy, for I wished Ted might love me as long as I lived—and he will” (97).

Even as Undine is wishing that her fiancé will love her as long as she lives, she hopes that Constance will love her always. It is Constance, indeed, who gets the last kiss.

Knowing this, even when Ted bursts in, proclaiming his love, Constance wryly remarks, “Yes, he might kiss her hands and her hair, show his useless remorse in any frantic way

he would, —it did not matter what he did any more, for Undine lay there with her last smile forever fixed on her beautiful mouth; as if dead she smiled at his pain, as living she smiled at her own” (97-98).

Constance’s death is thus the occasion for a curiously modern structure of inheritance—the deathbed parceling out of belongings amounts to an oral will for Undine, who chooses to leave her wealth to her friends and lovers, not to her family. This is excused because Undine’s aunt is rich, but the story closes with a line that makes it clear that Constance was a very particular kind of friend to Undine. The experience and the inheritance have proven nourishing. In Constance’s closing words, “As for me, Undine’s legacy has prospered with us. I am more in love with my husband than ever. My dear mother is still with us. On the whole, I am a very happy woman—but I have never made another friend” (98). Undine’s death makes Constance more sure of her marriage, but just as sure of what Undine has meant to her.

What is notable in both “My Visitation” and “My Lorelei” is the fact that there is no existing type language against which to test the social belonging of Sapphic sexuality in these texts. Instead, what Lévi-Strauss would call mythemes (in this case, they are not always mythic in proportion) come to be recirculated and resignified. In appealing to what seems to be old (or older) stories, a tale like “My Visitation” gravitates toward what seems outside of modernity and in doing so generates quite a modern narrative. This process depends on the accumulation of the kinds of details we attribute to description. The fact that descriptions themselves have formal literary properties can be seen in the ways that at precisely those moments of textual description, both Cooke and Thanet invoke literary conventions to create their textual worlds. Although Cooke describes a

pristine rural American world while Thanet describes a history-laden German one the strategies they employ are remarkably similar.²⁶

²⁶ These conceptualizations of exotic otherness (embodied here in the figure of Lorelei), in turn, infused the terms of American self-reference beyond the fantasy realm of fiction. Consider the following piece of writing submitted to *The Art Amateur: a Monthly Journal Devoted to Art in the Household* (1879-1903). Published only a few months after Thanet's story, Viola Alpina's "The Lorelei's Den—a New England Studio" outlines in several detailed paragraphs, the transformation of a friend's studio into a den of exoticism:

It is a square, uncarpeted room, with Persian rugs before the door and between the two north windows, and a large, soft crimson rug in the middle of the floor. Brass andirons shine in a cheerful open fireplace, hemmed in by a brass-rimmed wire fender. The chimney-piece is decorated with a row of tiles, studies in wild-flowers—and two relief medallions, portraits of Napoleon I and Josephine—the latter especially beautiful. On the high wooden mantel shelf are several places of dark-blue India ware, a Chinese salver with red flowers on a dull blue ground, and two jointed Chinese dolls, in blue and yellow native dresses, executing a fantastic dance in the friendly shade of an immense red-flowered pitcher. A small, quaintly-shaped iron lamp (like an antique chafing-dish) hangs by its high curved handle just before Napoleon's stern face, and across the stone front of the fireplace, above the tiles, is fastened the long, black, polished stem of a Turkish meerschaum smoked by Louis Kossuth one night, years ago, as he sat in the library downstairs. Another relic is this curious old yellow and green box, upon which stands an unframed oil painting of a pert little darkey in a blue shirt; in front of him, on the box cover, is perched the sauciest and tiniest of Chinese slippers, with a turned up toe!

Leaving the fascinating fireplace, we come to a closet-door, above which are three bamboo canes and some Japanese fans. The door itself is covered with an unframed oil painting. The corner of the wall between closet and window is also covered with oil sketches, dried grasses and bits of queer Chinese paper. A walnut bracket with a bust of Minerva, a key, a large old-fashioned blue umbrella, and a green one to match, complete this bewildering corner.

Then comes the secretary—at which I am writing—its four shelves filled with bric-à-brac and books—the latter mostly German, including the works of Schiller, Goethe, Uhland and Heine. On the corner of the secretary hang three gay chatelaine bags of yellow silk, embroidered with flowers; twined carelessly around them are some charming mementoes of the Lorelei's foreign travel—rosaries, carved in amber, in coral, in white and red ivory, in olive-wood, and one, perfumed, of Turkish pressed rose-leaves. The window corner beyond the secretary is adorned with an exquisite dreamy little water-color sketch of "Mythenstein" and the "lake of the four canton," in which the purple shadow of distant mountains falls across the deep blue water. All along the wall are more paintings mostly of French peasant women. Above these hang a framed photograph of a public garden in Hanover [*sic*]; a bunch of dried cat-tails, fastened to the wall; and a sketch of golden-rod, and purple asters.

Continuing our voyage "around the room," we come next to an open cabinet, its five shelves filled with dainty china. Above, is draped a wide India scarf, against whose dark crimson folds, an alabaster statuette of the Gladiator, and of Ariadne, stand out finely. Two shelves hold China plaques, decorated by the Lorelei's artist pencil; tête-à-tête sets, coffee cups and saucers, and some beautiful spode plates. Below are pieces of undecorated china, sketches and portfolios of engravings, screened from view by two exquisite scarfs or veils of Canton crape—one, white striped with yellow satin; the other brilliant with crimson and blue flowers.

Now we come to the door of exit—above it is a crayon drawing of a Capuchin monk, and on the door is one of a Franciscan. An old-fashioned mirror framed in black and gilt hangs above a chest of drawers, covered with a bright India shawl. Over it are more sketches, and upon it a dark-blue "ginger-jar," twined with bamboo cords, and a black cup and saucer. There two painting-tables stand just in front of the third window. *Their* contents I despair of enumerating; but on the wall above the artist's head, as she sits with her profile to the light, and sunshine

It would seem that, if old maid literature is engaged in type-complication that tests an abstraction against detail, a way to think about what “My Visitation” and “My Lorelei” are doing is to look at them in terms of type-accumulation. As I’ve been trying to suggest, although these different kinds of linguistic type treatments take place in what seem to be parallel literary traditions (in terms of current critical idioms), it may make sense to suggest that one kind of type-testing makes possible another kind of type accumulation. This might seem a logical conclusion to draw in light of the fact that the lesbian type emerges at the end of the nineteenth century and she can be seen so often in the kind of local color literature that also features old maids. The process by which this movement takes place in language also interrupts what would appear on some counts to be a teleological assumption that the only logical end of this descriptive accumulation is type-creation. One thing that the literature of the old maid shows us is the unpredictability of literary type-testing. The very fact that the old maid and the lesbian separate again in twentieth-century literature—the old maid restored to her earlier status as failed heterosexual, as opposed to active lesbian—indicates the extent to which literature often works both toward and against the very phenomenon of literary types.

Seeing both the old maid literature and the emergent lesbian literature as involved in similar processes of world making and type-testing does not, however, fully account

glinting her hair, are the most charming things: a stork, gray and tall, standing meditatively among the reeds; wild roses, white daisies, and bright birds. (3).

“The Lorelei’s Den” is a small-scale Crystal Palace, containing tchotchkas not only from Germany, but from India, China, France, and Turkey. The story suggests the degree to which local color eccentricities are defined by global exoticism. The New England woman’s creation of space is fused with the Lorelei myth, indexing the flow of textual traffic not just from the rural localities to the cities, but from the cities back to the regions again. By the 1890s, local color writing would acquire a self-consciousness about the conditions of its circulation that, as Brad Evans has argued, produced the concept of the “chic” within its own fictional boundaries—chic, that is, as the cachet that the movement of both people and texts from rural to urban settings came to generate. See “Howellsian Chic: The Local Color of Cosmopolitanism” *ELH* 71(2004): 775-812.

for what distinguishes these parallel processes. There does still seem to be a formal difference here that might be accounted for in the fact that neither the Cooke nor the Thanet stories has the equivalent of a social-type term like “old maid” to complicate.²⁷ But what if we were also to consider place descriptions and their attendant conventions as type-carriers? In other words, that places themselves carry their own abstracted stories that persist not in type-language, but in details themselves? This might be one way of distinguishing what we see in the Cooke and Thanet stories from what we see in the old maid literature, but also of accounting for similar preoccupations with types and places as they relate to modes of sociability for women outside of marriage. Cooke and Thanet would seem to be engaged in a project of type-complication quite similar to those of writers about old maids, if less widely shared. They complicate sexual place-types without necessarily complicating existing social types: the social type may not yet exist as such, but the place-type does. The effect nonetheless is a literary reorganization of social life that accommodates and includes sexual sociability between women. This analysis does not assume the teleological movement toward sexuality as identity, but instead highlights a paradoxically backward-looking energy. By invoking textual traditions of location and description, both strains of literature effectively disperse individual characters into a context, undoing their sense of coherence so as to refashion and recast their terms of self-reference. Seen this way, both these bodies of literature, at the level of literary form would seem to be connected to a larger effort to carve out in

²⁷ Here, I think it might be helpful to contrast this analysis against a piece of literature that might trade in such social-type language. I’ve thought of perhaps the “tommy”—in, say, Cather’s “Tommy the Unsentimental”—but it seems too late to work in the context of the Cooke and Thanet analysis. There is also the nineteenth-century Sappho, but this is more of a poetic tradition.

writing the relationship of individuals to their surroundings in terms of subject-object dynamics.

In the larger scheme of things, then, these bodies of literature are separate but also peculiar, sometimes overlapping, examples of literature increasingly concerned with its roots in places. Collectively they enable us to explore the interrelation of two kinds of historical phenomena that might seem unrelated: (1) the sexual love between women that has been domesticated primarily as an exotic, ancient, or foreign phenomenon, or as in the pornographic, just immoral, if titillating²⁸; and (2) that the creation of stories rooted in place is perhaps also facilitated by an increasing desire in Anglo-American literary culture, from the beginning to the middle of the nineteenth-century, to conceptualize the emergence of subjectivity out of engagements with nature and landscape.

One remaining question is why now? What is so significant about these descriptive moments at this moment in literary history? By the middle of the nineteenth century, there is a good deal of critical discussion about the significance of descriptions of environment, and particularly nature, to self-understanding and representation. Two of the most important contributions to this conversation belong to John Ruskin and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In “The Poet,” Emerson famously argues that “[t]he Universe is the externization of the soul....Since everything in nature answers to a moral power, if any phenomenon remains brute and dark it is because the corresponding faculty in the observer is not yet active” (728). In light of these comments, we might judge the landscape of the narrator of “My Visitation” to be an “externizing” of a transcendental

²⁸ As I suggest in my chapter on Henry James, there is a stronger tradition of response to pornography about sexual love between women in France—which only further highlights for English writers the foreign exoticism of the project.

soul—not necessarily her own, if we follow Emerson—but the landscape does become anthropomorphized.

This is the very kind of project that Ruskin criticizes, however, when he discusses the “pathetic fallacy” in *Modern Painters*.²⁹ Conventionally understood, the pathetic fallacy is the attribution of human emotions to inanimate objects or things. In coining the term, Ruskin undertakes to distinguish the speaker’s biased perception of nature looking back at him from the power of nature itself: “‘Blue’ does *not* mean the *sensation* caused by a gentian on the human eye; but it means the *power* of producing that sensation; and this power is always there, in the thing, whether we are there to experience it or not, and would remain there though there were not left a man on the face of the earth. Precisely in the same way gunpowder has a power of exploding.”³⁰ (1433) What Ruskin is critical of is the tendency of poets and painters to assume that nature behaves like humans. But this does not mean he evacuates the external world of a power to transform human behaviour and self-understanding. He wants, rather, to emphasize

the difference between the ordinary, proper, and true appearances of things to us; and the extraordinary, or false appearances, when we are under the influence of emotion, or contemplative fancy; false appearances, I say, as being entirely unconnected with any real power or character in the object, and only imputed to it by us. For instance —

The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mould

Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold. (1434)

²⁹ Citations here are taken from John Ruskin, “Of the Pathetic Fallacy,” *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* 8th ed., Ed. M.H. Abrams, et al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000) 1432-37.

³⁰ Sorry for the missing page numbers here: I returned the book to the library without inserting them and did not get back to it.

Ruskin seeks precisely to distinguish the “real power of character in the object” from what is “only imputed to it by us.” In what continues to be the most powerful recent reading of Ruskin, J. Hillis Miller points to the difficulty of making this distinction in language. He argues that even where we attempt to account for the “real power of character in the object,” in the language we choose to carry that power, the best we can do is veil the object. In effect, even if we resist reading the object through the imputations of the speaker, we must at least read the object through the imputations of the writer. Either way, we seem to be trapped in a system of imputation, where setting acquires the personality and power of the perceiver who describes or writes. The effect of Emerson’s description of the problem affords us a little more room to maneuver in that he opens the possibility of unconscious projection: “if any phenomenon remains brute and dark it is because the corresponding faculty in the observer is not yet active” (278). Still, we are left with the sense that the power and faculty belong to a bounded self, however inactive the “corresponding faculty” may be. But Ruskin’s original formulation of the object-object relationship actually goes further in allowing for the possibility that an encounter with the external world allows for a transformation of self-in-the-world—not just a projection of self into the world. As he says, “‘Blue’ means the *power* of producing that sensation; and this power is always there, in the thing, whether we are there to experience it or not, and would remain there though there were not left a man on the face of the earth.” Ruskin’s formulation of ? allows us to hold onto both the sense that humans attribute power to nature that is really their own at the same time that he allows for nature to have its own particular power. The combination of humans’ ability to attribute power to nature (whether Ruskin likes it or not) and nature’s own perceived

power highlights the overdetermined sense (highlighted, perhaps, nowhere less than in discussions of literary nationalism) that the particulars of place are themselves generative and disruptive.

What the literature I have been discussing here so far highlights are the ways that description, which by definitions\ presents a scene by breaking it down into minute components, creates worlds even as it dismantles the boundaries of selves by locating them *in* descriptions. Description, we might even say, is the opposite of the kind of literary abstraction we associate with types—which is why each works well to prop up and undo the other. Types are perhaps discernable once enough detail has accumulated around them and yet those same types are complicated when tested against new details. We might even go so far as to say that homosexuality, as a type of human behaviour, can only become “the love that dare not speak its name” once enough details have accumulated around it that it can be invoked in a setting without being fully described. But is there something that makes this an especially sexualized problem beyond just a literary-type problem?

Leo Bersani has argued that sexuality emerges precisely out of self shattering into the social. He makes precisely this argument in *The Freudian Body*. And, in *A Future For Astyanax*, Bersani argues that social encounters dissolve the boundaries of individual types for Henry James’s characters. It is no coincidence, I don’t think, that a large number of writers in the nineteenth-century gravitate toward queer sexualities as a key means of testing abstract types against detailed contexts. Many of the most important texts of nineteenth-century American literature do precisely this.³¹ But there is also

³¹ Leslie Fiedler famously argued that “innocent homosexuality” is the *sine qua non* of American literature. See *Love and Death in the American Novel*.

something distinct about the literature I've been describing in its treatment of female sexuality. The old maid literature, as well as Thanet's and Cooke's stories, all strive toward describing a world and finding a language for that world in which their characters' dramas make sense. This striving is essential. We get the sense in all of these texts that the lack of fit drives the search for a fit. It is occasional for a text to reach outside itself for other texts, for characters to try to find language that they don't fully have. The entire effort is disruptive, even self-shattering at moments. It may be painful for readers to identify with those characters who seem out of place and not fully comfortable. But there is an energy to this writing that, I think, is also lacking when all the pieces do come together and the characters do fit their contexts quite well. We can see both the benefits and the short-comings of literature that seems to move beyond this sense of striving for a world and for linguistic conventions to describe that world in a text like Sarah Orne Jewett's "Martha's Lady"—a text that displays the convergence of the old maid literature and literary representations of sexual love between women and which also attempts to expand the scope of the tales we have seen so far from short story into novella.

The long history of type complication I've been describing through this chapter lies beneath the surface of "Martha's Lady." This history infuses the text through a number of well-chosen words and images that coalesce in the effort to tell the story of the life-long passionate love of one woman, the maid, Martha, for Helena Vernon, the cousin of Martha's employer, Miss Harriet Pyne. The scene of the tale itself is tellingly facilitated by the old maid figure, Miss Pyne, in whose house the story unfolds (and

whose main occupation in the story, it seems, is to witness its unfolding³²). Interestingly, Harriet is always described to us in terms of the advantages of old maidenhood: “She was the last of her family, and was by no means old; but being the last, and wanted to live with people much older than herself, she had formed all the habits of a serious elderly person. Ladies of her age, a little past thirty, often wore discreet caps in those days, especially if they were married, but being single, Miss Harriet clung to youth in this respect, making one concession of keeping her waving chestnut hair as smooth and stiffly arranged as possible” (203). And later, we learn of the “protest in her heart against the uncertainties of married life” (213). Helena, Harriet’s Boston cousin, is defined from the outset by her exotic Indian clothing and “the good breeding of her city home” (204). When the story begins, we are told that everyone knew Miss Pyne “had company” because “One of the chairs had a crimson silk shawl thrown carelessly over its straight back, and a passer-by who looked in through the latticed gate between the tall gate-posts, with the white urns, might think that this piece of shining East Indian color was a huge red lily that had suddenly bloomed against the syringe bush” (202-03). The shawl is metaphorized into a feature of the environment. We also learn that “There was something about the look of the crimson silk shawl in the front yard to make one suspect that the sober customs of the best house in a quiet New England village were all being set at defiance” (203). Later, the narrator describes Helena as a “siren in India muslin” (209). By contrast, Martha, Harriet’s maid, wears “heavy blue checked gingham” and could “climb the cherry-tree like a boy” (207). In fact, our first introduction to Martha is

³² Regularly, the narrator describes Harriet watching both Helena’s and Martha’s routines and emotions: “Cousin Harriet looked on at a succession of ingenious and, on the whole, innocent attempts at pleasure”; “is Harriet, who presently came to the garden steps to watch like a hen at the water’s edge” (206); “Martha scattered crumbs to the birds that Helena once fed while Miss Pyne watched from the dining-room window” (216).

through Harriet's wondering "in agony if Martha were properly attired to go to the door" (204). Martha is defined from the opening of the story by dullness, indifferences, and clumsiness, as Harriet frets regularly over Martha's domestic skills. It is through the alliance Martha forges with Helena that she actually learns best how to do the things central to setting up and running Harriet Pyne's house. They bond over the picking of cherries and through careful consideration of where flowers should be placed and how. Martha realizes that "she not only knew what love was like, but she knew love's dear ambitions" (208). Before she leaves, Helena says to her "I wish you would think of me sometimes after I go away. Won't you promise?" and the bright young face suddenly grew grave. "I have hard times myself; I don't always learn things that I ought to learn, I don't always put things straight. I wish you wouldn't forget me ever, and would just believe in me" (211). The ways Martha has of loving and remembering Helena in her absence all are mediated by and represented through elements of Martha's surroundings.

In fact, the ways in which the narrator translates key emotional states and memories into a language of environment or landscape are central to understanding the characters in this narrative. Toward the end of the story, and forty years after the beginning two chapters, both unmarried women—Harriet and Martha—are presented to us through descriptions of settings. Harriet, for instance, "had long ago made all her decisions, and settled all the necessary questions; her scheme of life was as faultless as the miniature landscape of a Japanese garden, and as easily kept in order" (212). If Harriet's life was a landscape of sorts, then Martha was a feature of that landscape: "She was unconsciously beautiful like a saint, like the picturesque ? of a lonely tree which lived to shelter unnumbered lives and to stand quietly in its place." (215). In turn, Martha

remembers her love by pulling out the handkerchief Helena sent her with a piece of wedding cake and “once in two or three years she sprinkled it as if it were a flower” (215) and by following Helena around the globe in spirit on an atlas, in effect transforming Helena quite literally into a place:

A worn old geography often stood open at the map of Europe on the light-stand in her room, and a little old-fashioned gilt button, set with a piece of glass like a ruby, that had broken and fallen from the trimming of one of Helena’s dresses, was used to mark the city of her dwelling-place. In the changes of a diplomatic life Martha followed her lady all about the map. (216)

(This, by the way, is the only moment where Helena appears as “Martha’s Lady”). When Martha recalls bits of news that she has heard about Helena’s life, the narrator tells us that

These things seemed far away and vague, as if they belonged to a story and not to life itself; the true links with the past were quite different. There was the unvarying flock of ground-sparrows that Helena had begun to feed; every morning Martha scattered crumbs for them from the side doorsteps while Miss Pyne watched from the dining-room window, and they were counted and cherished year by year. (216)

At the end of story, Martha and Helena are in the room that Martha restored to its adjective? state during Helena’s first visit. Helena finally remarks: “You have always remembered, haven’t you, Martha dear?” she said. “Won’t you please kiss me good-night” (219).

It would be hard not to see Martha as a heartbreaking figure. We get the sense that she is so very tied to her milieu that she cannot do anything to further her own desire—except through the routines she has established in memory of Helena, themselves products of maintaining that milieu. We might be relieved or thrilled that Martha’s affection is finally returned in the last lines of the story, but it is not hard to see that Martha’s problem is, in some ways, that she has come to fit too well. In one sense, Martha’s belonging is a mark of success if we think of the increasing tendency, in the fiction we have read through so far, for characters literally to find places for themselves in the world and for writers to find ways to describe those character-setting relationships. The type-complications and literary testing we have seen in the old maid literature and in the two examples of texts about women’s sexual sociability mobilize a kind of rhetorical energy precisely in their striving to establish a context in which these characters make sense. But when they finally do—where the old maid and the lesbian seem to come together in a story like “Martha’s Lady”—the putative success is, I think, limited. If we see the represented discomfort and the ensuing disruption of a subject-world boundary as central to sexuality, then something of that energy-producing rupture has disappeared. In this sense, Martha has something in common with Freeman’s Louisa Ellis—even if Martha’s story ends differently.

Recall that “A New England Nun” charts Louisa Ellis’s coming to the decision that she ultimately prefers the intimacy of her physical surroundings to the intimacy of marriage. The main action of the story appears to be the refusal of sexual desire, in favour of maintaining a seemingly static world. Louisa’s attachment to surroundings *is*, I think, a way of making sense of her sexual desire (even if she is asexual). But Louisa

fits so well into her context that the story depicts her as if she is in a textual vacuum. She has become so well sutured to her environment and her routine that she is not available for any form of sexual attachment.

The fit, in other words, can be too perfect. In his famous definition of local color from *Crumbling Idols* (1894), Hamlin Garland insists that local color fiction “has such quality of texture and background that it could not have been written in any other place or by anyone else than a native” (64). This sense of an utter fit with one’s environment creates the illusion that the quirky types of local color fiction, old maids and lesbians included, have a place in the world. Recently the assumptions about the authenticity of such a smooth connection have been subject to trenchant analysis and a lively critical discussion has emerged concerning how the regional and the local function, at the end of the century, in relationship to national and even global structures. Many critics have read local color writing as a site of resistance to normative nationality—a way of understanding the nation by way of its regional peculiarities. The most recent critical work to reprise this thesis is Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse’s book *Writing Out of Place*, which focuses primarily on gender and form in regional writing. This argument, however, dates back at least as far as Garland himself, and continues a long-standing tradition of seeing regionalism and local color writing as somehow subversive of hegemonic national standard. Reacting strongly against this privileging of the rural life as a kind of subversive nationalism and the resulting idealization of that pristine connection, Amy Kaplan and Richard Brodhead have been dominant proponents of the recently articulated view that these rurally set tales are the fantasy of the metropole and ultimately a commodity fetish. In her essay, “Nation, Region and Empire,” Kaplan, for

instance, describes regional writing as a kind of “literary tourism”—defined by the “perspective of the modern urban outsider who projects onto the native a pristine authentic space immune to the historical changes shaping their own lives” (252). In *Cultures of Letters*, Brodhead, similarly, insists upon the ways regionalism is bound up with “class privilege and cultural hierarchy” (141), regarding the mode as a kind of “cultural elegy...memorializing a cultural order passing from life,” a “record of a loved thing lost in reality” (120). The problem, we might say, rests in assuming that even types who are so seamlessly sutured to their contexts are more realistic or more subversive than those who are more eccentric to their environments.

Seen this way, both the testing of the old maid against a detailed environment and the complication of place-types seem to reach their greatest success as well as their points of exhaustion in local color fiction. With the advent of the new discourses of sexology and psychology to explain psycho-sexual and socio-sexual behaviour, however, there would come to be new linguistic laboratories for type-complication. The old maid and the lesbian would come to occupy distinct categories—represented in works as diverse as Catherine Wells’s *The Beautiful House*, Edith Wharton’s *The Old Maid: The ‘Fifties* and Radclyffe Hall’s *The Well of Loneliness*. This is not to say that context would cease to have any significance for representations of either lesbians or old maids. But the spatial terms of that anxious striving for self understanding would come to be more psychological than spatial. A good example of this internalization is Gertrude Stein’s 1903 formulation in *Q.E.D.*: “It is one of the peculiarities of American womanhood that the body of a coquette often encloses the soul of a prude and the angular form of a spinster is possessed by a nature of the tropics.” (10) Stein focuses less on the form of

literary externalizing (to adjust Emerson's term) and more on the ways that the external itself is internalized. Implicit in her statement is the assumption that the tropics are a sexual place-type available to begin with to make sense of inner life. Already the lesbian and the spinster are on their way to further type-complication—replete with all the ambivalence about fitting into the world that we see in “Martha's Lady.” The path of stylistic testing that the old maid has traveled, across this period of roughly a hundred years and across an astonishing array of different texts, with all the baggage of her ambivalence, would make it possible for Henry James to condense and adumbrate a contained process of type complication within the pages of a single novel: *The Bostonians*.

Chapter Four: Typical? The Place of *The Bostonians* in the Literary History of Sexuality

At the beginning of Henry James's *The Bostonians*, Olive Chancellor and Verena Tarrant are two women who happen to live in Boston. Only by the middle of the book do they become the eponymous "Bostonians." This evolution occurs through the novel's structure of oblique narration where what we know about them is conveyed by the narrator through the represented consciousness of other characters. (They first appear to us as "the Bostonians" in Book Second when the narrator describes the thoughts of Olive's sister, Mrs. Luna, whose "motive was spite and not tenderness for the Bostonians" (280). It is Basil Ransom, however, the Southern spoiler of the Bostonians' romance, for who the phrase carries the most weight. We have regular, if indirect, access to Ransom's thoughts about "the Bostonians" as the narrator depicts him brooding over Verena and strategizing ways to win her from Olive (282;339;342¹).) The book's title might initially suggest to us that all the characters of the novel collectively constitute the Bostonians² (on the first page, Mrs. Luna calls our attention to the fact that "No one tells

¹ "Olive would whisk Verena off to these appointments directly after lunch; she flattered herself that she could arrange matters so that there would not be half an hour in the day during which Basil Ransom, complacently calling, would find the Bostonians in the house" (282); "He knew that the Bostonians had been drawn thither [Cape Cod], for the hot weeks, by its sedative influence" (339); "He reflected that it would hardly do to begin his attack that night; he ought to give the Bostonians a certain amount of notice of his appearance on the scene" (342).

² Readers might be forgiven for making the assumption that all the characters collectively constitute the "Bostonians" not only because James has not distinguished some Bostonians from others, but also because readers would have been long used to reading about characters situated in Boston. What distinguishes James's treatment of Boston, from the perspective of his critics, is what they saw as the scathingly ironic treatment of his characters, which for some, verged on a satire of Boston itself. Indeed, *The Bostonians* that we read today we might not recognize from the reviews it received. These reviews were so overwhelmingly unfavorable that James ultimately decided not to issue a New York edition (with preface) of this novel among his collected works (Scribner's 1907-09). He would later say that he regretted the decision not to include it, claiming "I would have liked to write that preface" (*Letters* 498-99). At the time of the book's publication, he wrote to his brother, "If I have displeased people, as I hear, by calling the book *The Bostonians* this was done wholly without invidious intention. I hadn't a dream of generalizing...I

fibs in Boston”); however, only Olive and Verena, together, are called “the Bostonians” within the novel. That “The Bostonians” effectively evolve into *themselves* throughout James's novel is masked by the title's deft assumption that they have *been* themselves from the very start.

Today, it might seem obvious to us, as it has been to a wide range of critics, that James's “Bostonians” can readily be categorized as lesbians and James's novel as a lesbian novel. From our twenty-first-century vantage point, it is easy to see what Olive Chancellor and Verena anticipate. David Van Leer summarizes this critical perspective when he describes Olive as “certainly the first fully conceived lesbian protagonist in modern fiction” (93). *The Bostonians*, by extension, is widely considered to be among the first lesbian novels. Given its plot parallels with numerous later novels, like Catherine Wells's 1912 serial novel *The Beautiful House* and Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, James might be said to have inaugurated the triangulated plot design wherein a relationship between women ends when one of them prefers the life and embrace of a man, a conventional marriage instead of a Boston marriage. (Whether this is a happy or a tragic ending depends on your taste.) The very term, “The Bostonians,” may even conjure up the idea of “Boston marriages,” which persists as a complicated euphemism for female homosexuality for fin-de-siècle lesbianism itself.³ (Another is Olive's “morbidness,”—which we will discuss further, momentarily.)

shall write another. “The Other Bostonians” (*Letters* 99-100). None of the reviews that I have found comment extensively on the sexuality of the characters. For a sense of what nineteenth-century readers might have expected in novels about Boston, see Frances Weston Carruth's survey, “Boston in Fiction” (1901) *The Bookman; a Review of Books and Life* (1895-1933); Dec 1901; 14, 4 pg. 364. Not sure how to format the Carruth citation? Carruth charts the way most nineteenth-century fiction incorporated Boston's monuments, buildings, and landscapes.

³ It is commonly claimed, by scholars such as Lillian Faderman, Jonathan Ned Katz, and others that “Boston marriage” was the term in circulation to describe passionate, if sometimes asexual,

But James's novel does not just archive an early conceptualization of lesbianism; its narration and description collectively archiving and showcase the role social and literary circulation play in the making of *The Bostonians*. Just as James's novel has a kind of after-life in the genre of the lesbian novel, it also has a past life that lingers in the form of the novel, which can see in the novel's use of narration to illustrate the social logic of typing and in its very descriptions of places themselves. Place-types and their descriptions operate, as I have argued from the beginning of this dissertation, as a repository of both historical assumptions about how place defines its characters from the outside in. For James, as we shall see, description is also a deftly concealed index of his intertextuality and his fascination with French naturalist fiction. One way to think about how James's *Bostonians* evolve is through a dialogic process of both testing his characters against and relying on the history of the discourse he will use to describe them.⁴ Another is to think about how descriptions of particular places in Boston recall

companionships between women—usually very educated women—at the end of the nineteenth century. Famous Boston marriages include those between Sarah Orne Jewett and Annie Fields. I have had trouble, however, finding documentation that confirms the use of this precise term “Boston marriage” during the time period and wonder whether James's novel did not in fact help to consolidate this “type” of relationship. The closest I have come to finding a historical source on the matter is a description of these relationships by Mark DeWolfe Howe, editor of *Atlantic Monthly*. He suggested that such a relationship between women was “a union—there is no truer word for it” (qtd in Howe 83). Helen Huntington Howe, in *The Gentle Americans: Biography of a Breed* (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1965) recalls anecdotal evidence from her parents' generation about these unions. But debate about whether these “marriages” were sexual or asexual in nature seems to be a recent preoccupation and notably, one that does not preoccupy scholars of heterosexual unions. For more information about the specifically “homosexual” history of Boston and on Boston marriages in particular, see The History Project, comp., *Improper Bostonians: Lesbian and Gay History from the Puritans to Playland* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998) and, Lillian Faderman's *Surpassing the Love of Men*.

⁴In the case of *The Bostonians*, the very indeterminate nature of this past-life is reflected in the contemporary reviews of James's novel, most of which either ignore what contemporary critics see as the lesbian bond between Olive and Verena or, interestingly enough, importing a quotation from the novel to let it speak for itself. *The Boston Evening Traveler* cites Ransom's assessment of Olive as “a single old maid” and then cites the narrator's description of Olive as “unmarried by every implication of her being... she was a spinster as Shelley was a lyric poet or as the month of August is sultry” (*Henry James The Contemporary Reviews* 157); two reviewers suggests mildly that “both Miss Chancellor and Basil fall in love with the fascinating Verena,” but none belabors the point in any meaningful fashion. If the

the long history of the erotics of female-female education that piggy-back on the form James uses to convey them. *The Bostonians*, as both a title and term, also calls attention to a paradox of the seeming continuity in our literary historical understanding of sexuality. *The Bostonians* focuses on characters, but defines them by their setting, which by nature is external to them—in formal features that also are the novel, but originate outside that novel, too.

At a basic level, Olive and Verena are defined by Boston, just as Boston is defined by them, a move that fuses them to the context in which they appear. The title fixes our attention on individuals at the same time that it siphons attention away from individuation and toward the environment that makes them legible. If “the Bostonians” as a term does index a sexual relationship, it does so in ways that exceed our conception of sexuality as a property of the individual. Further, the evolution in the term’s usage throughout the novel calls attention to the process of its own unfolding, offering us an understanding of the ways a language of sexual sociability ultimately evolves not just within space, but across time.

It is the task of this chapter to investigate these concomitant unfoldings of literary language and modes of sexual sociability through the language of place that defines them. We might say here at the outset that in its attention to evolution and the workings of a language of types, *The Bostonians* consolidates in one literary work, what has been ongoing across the literature about old maids in the shorter fiction I just discussed in chapter three. It internalizes, at the level of form, and dramatizes, at the level of content, the cumulative process of typification that has been at work in the circulation of

relationship between the Bostonians was one reason for the reviewers’ dislike, they never articulated this reason as such.

magazine fiction where fictional conventions of understanding characters by way of their contexts have been emerging. James never explicitly acknowledged any debt of influence to the likes of Olive Thanet or Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman. But like them, he circulated his fiction in literary magazines and he was fully aware of the conventions and context of writing with which his own work resonates. James's notebooks reveal that he is fully aware that there is a particular type of New England woman in the making. And as we already have seen, the women in these stories, which accumulate at a rapid pace by the end of the nineteenth century, frequently hail, literally, from New England landscapes—defined by their place in ways not unlike “the Bostonians.” By the time this type of New England woman finds her way into James's novel, she has moved from the country to the city. She has moved from being the central figure of discretely serialized stories to being the central figure of a serially circulated novel. Nonetheless, in the figures of Olive Chancellor and Verena Tarrant, this New England woman still lives in the pages of a magazine insofar as James's novel was published serially in *The Century Magazine*. In *The Bostonians*, however, her existence has expanded, generically: to have acquired world enough and time to be at the heart of a novel. Broadly speaking, then, this chapter aims to understand how James makes “the Bostonians.” This making can be seen in terms of a process of typification and in terms of the pressure that the resulting language of types exerts within the text.

This effort to parse the literary history of sexuality in terms of genre and by way of *The Bostonians* responds to and attempts to work through the dilemma confronted by any scholar who investigates the history of sexuality more generally and the history of homosexuality specifically. Crudely speaking, this is a dilemma of difference versus

similarity: do we look to the past as a way of understanding the origins of contemporary sexuality or do we see in the past very particular modes of sexual sociability that are distinct from our own? The question has taken the form of long standing debate among scholars, many of whom situate themselves within the same critical tradition. Numerous scholars (Jonathan Ned Katz and David Halperin deserve particular mention) have argued that homosexuality, as most of us currently understand it, has a conceptual life span of only about one hundred years, extending back only as far as the late nineteenth century.⁵ To impose modern terminologies of understanding sexuality back beyond this time would amount to anachronism. But as a range of other scholars (think of Bruce Smith, Valerie Traub, and Glenn Burger) have pointed out, representations of same-sex sexuality have a much longer literary history in English, extending back, according to some accounts, at least as far as Chaucer. This longer history sheds important light on our modern understandings of sexuality. Two things are worth pointing out within this critical history. One, whether scholars are interested in similarities to or differences from present forms of sexuality, the overwhelming tendency in this body of work is to focus on questions of individual identity and desire. Two, a mere glance at some of the titles of the books in this field would offer a cursory index of the ways in which this debate amounts to a problem of language.⁶ How do we make sense of language that resembles

⁵ See, again, Foucault's famous pronouncement in *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I* that "the sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (43). See also Jonathan Ned Katz and David Halperin's *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality*.

⁶ Some examples: Valerie Traub *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002); Terry Castle, ed. *The Literature of Lesbianism: a historical anthology from Ariosto to Stonewall* (New York: Columbia UP, 2003); Martha Vicinus, *Intimate Friends: Women Who Loved Women* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2004); John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Lilian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: Quill William Morrow, 1981); Kathryn R. Kent, *Making Girls into Women: American Women's Writing and the Rise of Lesbian Identity* (Durham: Duke UP, 2003).

or seems to describe familiar social structures, but which, ultimately is not the language we continue to use? How do we talk about Renaissance lesbianism? Romantic friendship in the nineteenth century? Do terms like “proto-lesbian” or “queer” just fudge (not to say queer) the whole enterprise? The problem is not just one of terminology or reconciling different language that describes the same thing; rather the problem concerns the ways that language itself construes (or misconstrues), with varying degrees of historical accuracy, the very object it purports to describe.

The particular case of *The Bostonians* (and the ways it has been understood) can be seen as symptomatic of this problem generated by the historical nature of the language of sexuality. What enables later readers to see *The Bostonians* as a lesbian novel is the standardization of a language of sexuality that has not yet taken place by 1885-86 when *The Bostonians* is first published. But it is close enough in time that many scholars have felt comfortable making the translation from terms that seem almost to describe sexuality into sexuality itself. James often does offer us a glimpse of Olive’s peculiar sexual dissidence when his narrator points out, for instance, that “There are women who are unmarried by accident, and others who are unmarried by option; but Olive Chancellor was unmarried by every implication of her being. She was a spinster as Shelley was a lyric poet, or as the month of August is sultry” (47). Olive is not just unmarried, but existentially unmarried. Being unmarried is what she does and what she is. But even here, where James comes closest to making Olive’s sexual status a property of her “being,” he presents us with a description that holds being in tension with a social obligation. Her being is defined as much by a relationship (or lack of it) to the world outside her as it is by any desire that emanates from her. There is a residue in this

comparison that cannot be rationalized by reducing Olive's existentially unmarried status to her being, *tout court*.

Indeed, much of the evidence we see for reading James's Bostonians as lesbians requires an act of translation, precisely because the novel never really trades in the language we now use to describe sexuality. The closest he comes to characterizing his Bostonians in medical or psychological terms is in his depiction of Olive as morbid.⁷ Indeed John Stokes suggests morbidity was indeed a nineteenth-century euphemism for homosexuality (source? 27). But this reading of morbidity as euphemism also should give us pause enough to consider the historical parameters of our translating euphemism itself. Consider the following passage, often cited by critics as evidence, even code, for Olive's euphemistic lesbianism:

Basil Ransom was a young man of first-rate intelligence, but conscious of the narrow range, as yet, of his experience. He was on his guard against generalizations which might be hasty; but he had arrived at two or three that were of value to a gentleman lately admitted to the New York bar and looking out for clients. One of them was to the effect that the simplest division it is possible to make of the human race is into people who take things hard and the people who

⁷ The *OED* records indicate that at the end of the nineteenth century "morbid" referred to diseased or physical ailments. In recorded examples, however, "morbid" more often gestures less to physical states than it does to mental states. For instance, M.O. Warren (1775) refers to the "morbid brain," Wordsworth to "morbid pleasure" (1798), and Kingsley to "morbid melancholy" (1942). William James in *Varieties of Religious Experience* writes, "The athletic attitude tends ever to break down, and it inevitably does break down even in the most stalwart when...morbid fears invade the mind" (46). Frequently, in the recorded examples, but not always, the word "morbid" is applied to women. In T. H. Hall Caine's *Son of Hagar* III. iv, we read, "You morbid little woman, you shall be happy again." The *OED* does not confirm Stokes's reading of morbid as euphemism for lesbianism, although Martha Vicinus provides several examples of morbid being used in the late nineteenth century to indicate gender crossing in men as well as in women. See *Intimate Friends* pp 148, 199, 206, and 221. See also the *OED* entry on "morbid" and William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience: A study in human nature : being the Gifford Lectures on natural religion delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-1902* (New York; London: Longmans, Green, 1902).

take them easy. He perceived very quickly that Miss Chancellor belonged to the former class. This was written so intensely in her delicate face that he felt an unformulated pity for her before they had exchanged twenty words. He himself, by nature, took things easy; if he had put on the screw of late, it was after reflection, and because circumstances pressed him close. But this pale girl, with her light-green eyes, her pointed features and nervous manner, was visibly morbid; it was as plain as day that she was morbid. Poor Ransom announced this fact to himself as if he had made a great discovery; but in reality he had never been so 'Boetian' as at that moment. It proved nothing of any importance, with regard to Miss Chancellor, to say that she was morbid; any sufficient account of her would lie very much to the rear of that. Why was she morbid, and why was her morbidness typical? Ransom might have exulted if he had gone back far enough to explain that mystery. (41)

What is worth noting first is that this is Ransom's thinking reflected, again, through the voice of the narrator. Ransom's first-rate intelligence, we are told, cannot prevent him from observing what is moreover obvious (although his experience of the world is thin): Olive is "visibly morbid." So obvious is Olive's morbidity that Ransom is transfixed by it, nor can the narrator avoid repeating it: the word "morbid" is hammered into Ransom's consciousness (and ours) no fewer than five times in the last few sentences of this passage. The repetition is almost at odds with the distance irony is supposed to create. Repetition seems to create the illusion of verification and statistical accumulation, however subjective, while ironic narration is supposed to distance us from those very conclusions. In other words, although we are presumably supposed to see the distance

between ourselves and the narrator, the narrator and Ransom, and finally, Ransom and Olive, the repetition of the word has a cumulative and defining effect. As we have already seen, Olive's morbidity has calcified into evidence for her lesbianism ever since. Nonetheless, the obviousness of Olive's morbidity is at odds with the mystery of its source. After all, we are *also* told, "It proved nothing of any importance, with regard to Miss Chancellor, to say that she was morbid; any sufficient account of her would lie very much to the rear of that." Why her morbidness was typical is much more uncertain: "Ransom might have exulted if he had gone back far enough to explain that mystery." Indeed, Olive's morbidness becomes both typical and mysterious in the same moment. What becomes increasingly clear as we confront not just the evidence, but the form this evidence takes, is that status as a sexual type is much more mysterious and complex than we have thus far understood—its coherence undone by the ironic distance through which we see Olive as well as the range of implied comparisons that make Olive legible to other characters in the novel. If Ransom's assessment is any indication, making sense of what is typical requires looking backward from Olive, to see what is "to the rear of that." Likewise, we might say that the first part of James's novel lays out what is "to the rear" of the Bostonians becoming "the Bostonians." This rhetoric of place might be seen to look forward to her, but not necessarily in ways we might expect. James's (and Ransom's) preoccupation with what is "typical" in this passage presents itself throughout *The Bostonians* as characters attempt to judge, make sense of, and even prop up other characters. The terms they have for doing so pre-exist the circumstances in which they appear to the characters. Typification in *The Bostonians* is more mysterious than it has been so far given credit for, in large part because of the novel's formal awareness of how

much the language of type depends, weirdly, on its own evolution across time and space within the text. This chapter thus focuses on the myriad and necessarily converging ways that the text enables the Bostonians to become types: the narrative layers that place Olive at the center of a novelistic panopticon where types appear by way of perspective; the intertextual layers which bubble beneath the surface of James's text; James's intense interest in telling a story about *place*; and the ongoing sense embodied not in Olive, but in Basil and in the Tarrants, that sexual sociability is bound up with fantasies of civic order and the public face of social life. It may be time, in other words, to relieve Olive of her symbolic responsibility as the foundational lesbian of the novel, so as to understand the ways in which the world of the novel—its social apparatus with its attendant perspectives and circulations—both find her, as well as Verena, and, ultimately exceed them both. James has created not just a character, but enacts a world, already in the making before he imagines it, a world in which that character makes sense.

Understanding how he does so requires understanding the importance of place to James's writing and how his sense of place makes legible the situatedness as well as the temporality of sexual typification. Much as "The Bostonians" masks the linked formal and social processes by which the novel generates the characters of its own title, so too does the modern language of sexuality, usually sexological and psychological, mask the formal and social processes by which sexuality itself came to be recognized as such. The pages that follow engage in a further investigation of these complex contexts and processes that James both invokes and creates for his Bostonians.

I. The History and Temporality of Type

It might be said that the business of the novel has, since its inception, been the business of typification: explaining how a person whose status is inconsistent becomes (or fails to become) a particular type (rake, gentleman, lady). Indeed, we have seen throughout the examinations of this dissertation the functioning of type-complication. But according to the OED, “typification” as a word that designates the process or action of typifying does not appear until the nineteenth century. The first recorded use is by Jeremy Bentham: “A distant and fanciful analogy,” he says, “which there is between the event typified and the real event made use of for typification” (OED). It is precisely in the abstruse quality of this statement that part of the mystery of typification lies. It is not by accident that the action of typification is described here in the passive voice; passivity is essential to the word. The very clumsiness of the word “typification” ensues from its grammatical use in the passive voice. But what it stumbles over is its own sense of process and the implied, but absent, agent of the process by which typification takes place. This sense of an actorless process persists in other recorded uses of the term in the nineteenth century as well, all of which seem to gesture to typification as an act of language, often the effect of metaphor, not of human agents exactly. An 1845 *Blackwood’s Magazine*, for instance, contains the following sentence: “The four-paned rattling window of that clumsy typefication of slowness, misnamed a diligence” (qtd in the OED). Similarly in Baker’s *Plea for Romanizers*, we read “The typification, the earnest and the pledge by outward miracle, of the reality of the sacramental grace.” (26). Even the definition of “typification” in the OED appears to confer activity on language: “Typification: the action of typifying; representation by a type or symbol; also, that

which typifies, or serves as a type, symbol, or specimen of something: an exemplification.” It is the type or symbol that represents. The “that” in the phrase “that which typifies” remains unclear. In the case of types represented in language, it is the very word “type” itself that typifies something.⁸

Theorists of typology, in fact, attest to the generative quality of types, the way in which they give rise, at later times, to variations of themselves.⁹ In *The Classic*, Frank Kermode offers the following explanation:

Strictly speaking, a type is distinguished from a symbol or allegory in that it is constituted by an historical event or person (as Christ makes Jonah the type of his resurrection, and St. Paul the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites a type of baptism. A type therefore can be identified only when fulfilled by its antitype, a later event in a providentially structured history; the Old Covenant is a type of the new) ...

Types are essentially what Auerbach has in mind when he speaks of *figurae*, events or persons that are themselves, but may presage others. Their purpose, to put it too simply, is to accommodate the events and persons of a superseded order of time to a new one. A writer conscious of standing on a watershed between past and present might well be interested in typology, though

⁸ In the OED records for “type and typify,” we can see the ways in which these words prefigure typification without fully embodying it. Earlier definitions of “type” and “typify” suggest a relationship between a thing and its class or a thing and a class of things that it inaugurates into being. The word “type” is used as far back as the Renaissance to designate a symbol or representative of a class. Examples come from the likes of Spenser’s *Fairie Queene* (That fare Ilands right, Which thou dost vayne in Type of Faery land, Elizas blessed field, that Albion hight). “Type” extends back just as far as a verb, meaning not only to “be the type or symbol of” something, but also, in its theological sense, to “prefigure or foreshadow something as a type.” In 1596, H. Claphams, for instance, points out how the bible “specially typed out Our spotless Priest Jesus.”

⁹ See, for instance, William Madsen’s *From Shadowy Types to Truth; Studies in Milton's symbolism* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1968) and Ursula Brumm’s *American Thought and Religious Typology* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1970) as well as Eric Auerbach’s *Figura*. (Paris: Belin, 1993).

his use of the word 'type' might not have the exactness required by scholars, and he might let it be contaminated by other devices for accommodating an old veiled sense to a new order of time. (89-90)

What Kermode is insisting upon here, with essential recourse to Auerbach, is the way in which types come to be accommodated to later times and places, often in the service of innovation. (As his discussion continues, he argues that American writers like Hawthorne and Emerson "loosened up the concept" (90)).

In *The Bostonians*, Henry James trades consciously in the language of types. He seems fully aware that if the anti-type marks its own distance in time and space from the initial type, then that type by necessity leaves a residue on that antitype. And vice versa: Olive's fulfillment of morbidity somehow makes the quality of morbidity recognizable—at least as Basil Ransom sees it. In this case, it may well be the type that makes the anti-type legible as such. When Basil Ransom muses about Olive's "typical" morbidity, he realizes that the mystery of it goes well beyond the example of Olive, that something beyond Olive finds its residue in her, even though this something is beyond Ransom's ken. On the one hand, we might think about James as providing an innovation upon old types; another would be to suggest that the pre-existing types are the lenses through which Ransom sees Olive, even if he is unaware of the types' origins.¹⁰

¹⁰ Recent studies of Henry James have unearthed a veritable obsession in James with type. Scholars have observed the ways in which the complexity of James's writing amounts to an undoing of types without really facilitating their disappearance. Two examples of this scholarship focus on the way types permeate James's realism. Stuart Burrows, in his treatment of "The Real Thing" offers what he sees as a critical corrective to readings of the story: commentators often see photography in James's story as establishing "the real thing," but Burrows suggest that "'The Real Thing' insists on the impossibility of clear-cut distinctions between the real and represented things"(257). In Stuart Burrows' estimation, James's story, "The Real Thing," "acknowledges its reliance on stock national and racial types in order to reveal the importance of stereotypes to all forms of representation" (260); his characters experience the world through the 'already seen' of the stereotype (261). James also utilizes this screen of the "already seen" throughout his novel (in the production of "the Bostonians"). In *Henry James and the Writing of Race and Nation*, Sara

This dialectical relationship between type and anti-type goes some distance toward helping us explain the paradox of typology at the heart of *The Bostonians*, for it allows James to convey to us typological continuity and discontinuity all at once—without assuming a teleological relationship between them. Indeed, this sense of type as simultaneously innovative and conservative persists in James's treatment of types throughout *The Bostonians*. Throughout the novel, James demonstrates a keen awareness that typification is a process with its own temporality. James's ongoing effort to define and describe his main characters as Bostonians participates in two temporal movements. The history of the language of type suggests to us that types are future oriented: they “presage” or prefigure. Corollary to this suggestion is the sense that anti-types are backward looking.¹¹ James is working in both registers at once. In the first instance, James would seem to be an innovator; he builds up a type within the novel (the slow evolution of “the Bostonians,” which we will discuss in greater detail shortly). At the

Blair argues that James negotiates without overturning racial and national types, evincing the complicated ways in which such types can operate.

A large body of work also treats questions of gender and sexuality, often in terms that see James as deconstructing types. In *A Future For Astyanax*, Leo Bersani has argued that social encounters dissolve the boundaries of individual types for Henry James's characters. In her highly influential discussion of “The Beast in the Jungle,” Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick observes that even through the forms of the unspeakable and across a thematics of absence, homosexual types persist, defined by structures of preterition and the unspoken. In *Henry James and the Suspense of Masculinity*, Leland Person argues that James subverts stereotypes of masculinity, though in doing so, also acknowledges that types operate as an implied foil for James's writing. One thing all of these disparate works might be seen to have in common is an interest in the encounter of the apparent flatness of social types with the formal complexity of James's fiction, such that through the Jamesian prism, types persist through and in new, highly wrought forms of literary expressions.

¹¹ Another way to see this would be in light of Mary Poovey's work which describes how, by the 1830s, as a by-product of the rise of statistical thinking, induction would come to be seen as interconnected with deduction. In *A History of the Modern Fact*, Poovey points out that by the 1830s, through the work of John Stuart Mill and John Herschel a shift occurred in scientific thinking and its relationship to social policy: “it was no longer sufficient simply to celebrate induction. Instead, [Herschel] wanted to demonstrate that induction was actually dependent on deduction, just as a responsible application of deduction required induction...By suggesting that induction and deduction are stages in a single method, he laid the groundwork for specifying the steps by which one moved back and forth between observed particulars and theoretical generalization to produce ever more inclusive versions of knowledge” (318). It would not be a stretch to think about Henry James as a novelist interested in pressing the limits of this particular dialectic, the laboratory of the social realm.

same time, from the beginning of the novel, a wide range of characters trades liberally and consciously in the language of type—the effect of which practically collapses any possibility of temporality, but shutting down the possibility of change for characters who are seen as types from the perspective of other characters.

For the types whose evolution he does not dramatize, James offers us a glimpse of the ways that the language of type glibly organizes characters' perceptions into categories that exist prior to those perceptions. In these cases, listed in the next paragraph, the language of type operates as an often dismissive shorthand, which gestures to a body of knowledge signified by, but never fully unpacked through that language of type. The language of type is consciously backward-looking: "typing" pulls bodies of past assumptions and received wisdoms to bear on immediate circumstances. One character will judge another, indirectly, as a type or as "typical" even as this point of view is offered to us through the free indirect discourse of the narrator. There is almost no character in the novel that is not described as some sort of type. But it is almost never a compliment to be seen as a type in James's world.

II. The Rhetorical Space of Type

Throughout *The Bostonians*, the language of type requires physical space¹² and expresses itself in terms of rhetorical space. Typification in *The Bostonians* is complicated throughout the novel by the fact that the language of type appears through a process of invested, but indirect observation; that is, one character will judge another as a type or as "typical" even as this point of view is offered to us through the free, indirect

¹² For articles on treatment of place in James, see Janet Wolf Bowen, "Architectural Envy: 'A Figure is Nothing Without a Setting' in Henry James's *The Bostonians*" *New England Quarterly* 65 (1992): 3-23; Mark McGurl, "Social Geometries: Taking Place in Henry James" *Representations* 68 (1999): 59-83; John D. Ballam "Henry James and a 'Sense' of Place: Modalities of Perception" *The Henry James E-Journal* 8 March 2004. Available: <http://www2.newpaltz.edu/~hathawar/ejournal8.html>.

discourse of the narrator. There is almost no character in the novel who is not described as some sort of type. But the description is always imposed by someone else, in the wake of an observation and often offered from the ironic perspective of the limitedly omniscient narrator. Basil Ransom is perhaps the character most likely to reduce those around him to types, the clearest example of which is his assessment of Olive Chancellor: “nothing would induce [Basil] to make love to such a type as [Olive]” (47). But he also sees Dr. Prance as a type (“if his cousin could have been even of this type Basil would have felt himself more fortunate” (73); he makes sense of the librarian at Harvard (“he considered with attention the young lady’s fair ringlets and refined, anxious expression, saying to himself that this was in the highest degree a New England type.” (245)); and Ransom loathed Verena’s father, Selah Tarrant (“he was intensely familiar—that is, his type was; he was simply the detested carpet-bagger. He was false, cunning, vulgar, ignoble; the cheapest kind of human product” (82)). He even sees Verena herself through the lens of type. In a telling transposition, we are told “He had read, of old, of the improvisatrice of Italy, and this was a chastened, modern, American version of the type, a New England Corinna, with a mission instead of a lyre” (265). In all these cases, Ransom imports generalizations as a way to make sense of a context whose details he does not know by experience. He can thus judge through a combination of first encounters and induction, where typing imports a kind of stock knowledge. The language of type would also seem to collapse its temporality in terms of *evolving* perceptions, creating the illusion that the before of conception is the same as the after of perception.

But Basil is not the only character to type so readily. Olive is just as quick to judge. She sees it as an intellectual failure to resort to understanding people as types. Still, she cannot escape her own thoughts. She exhibits disdain for the Tarrants: “As we know, she had forbidden herself this emotion as regards individuals; and she flattered herself that she considered the Tarrants as a type, a deplorable one, a class that, with the public at large, discredited the cause of the new truths” (127). She has just as little time for Henry Burrage and his “type” or for his mother: “She wished to heaven that conceited young men with time on their hands would leave Verena alone; but evidently they wouldn’t, and her best safety was in seeing as many as should turn up. If the type should become frequent, she would very soon judge it. If Olive had not been so grim, she would have had a smile to spare for the frankness with which the girl herself adopted this theory” (161); “But how could Olive believe that, when she saw the type to which Mrs. Burrage belonged—a type into which nature herself had inserted a face turned in the very opposite way from all earnest and improving things?” (301).

From this brief survey, it would appear that Olive reduces to a “type” anyone who might compete with her for Verena’s attention. But notably, Olive never reduces Basil Ransom to a type (perhaps because she takes him so seriously as a threat); further, Verena is not exempt from appearing to Olive as a type, either, albeit in positive, not negative terms: from Verena’s perspective, we’re told that “Olive was the very type and model of the “gifted being;” her qualities had not been bought and paid for; they were like some brilliant birthday-present, left at the door by an unknown messenger, to be delightful for ever as an inexhaustible legacy, and amusing for ever from the obscurity of its source” (132). Olive may be the novel’s protagonist, but the narrator plays no

favourites: Olive earns no more compliments as a type from the narrator than from Ransom.

These judgments—whether by Basil, Ransom, or the narrator—all amount to social exposure. When one character regards another as a type, it is never a compliment. The distance that the ironic narration creates is essential to the novel's panopticon quality. The form measures distance in space as much as allegiances. Contempt exudes from Olive's reduction of people to types, just as Ransom's understanding of people as types marks his desire to master them as unknown objects of his perception. Even when Verena more generously declares to Olive that she is sympathetic to Ransom because he is "the type of the reactionary" (287) whose mind she wants to change, she is offering a well intended, though ultimately lame, insult, designed to appease Olive. In all of these examples, the very word "type" protrudes from its context, breaking ranks with the descriptive subtlety that is one of the hallmarks of James's writing.

Following Hannah Arendt, we might even say that the very language of type puts the typed person at odds with society itself. Type acquires a greater edge under conditions in which conformity is expected (however unrealistic that conformity might be). In *The Human Condition*, Arendt identifies modern society with this kind of "conformism, the assumption that men behave and do not act with respect to each other" (41-42). The modern science of economics, which coincides with the rise of the social, she argues, "could achieve a scientific character only when men had become social beings and unanimously followed certain patterns of behavior, so that those who did not keep the rules could be considered to be asocial or abnormal" (42). Not coincidentally, for Arendt, the novel is "the only entirely social art form" (39). This claim makes a good

deal of sense to me, which is why the novel can offer us a glimpse of sexuality as a mode of sociability. In turn, I would add, few novelists are as complexly social as Henry James.

James's complex version of the social is a product not just of his shrewd observations of the world around him (he famously advised a writer that she should "strive to be the one on whom nothing is lost" (source?)). As we have seen, this complexity ensues from the forms James uses to create sociality itself. In spite of their range, the examples above collectively reveal the interconnectedness of the social and formal process of typing in the novel. The judgments above require the distance of physical space between observer and observed (a distance constantly both highlighted and collapsed by the narrator). The layers of distance, in turn, generate rhetorical space. In other words, their social complexity takes a quite specific form. We need the ironic distance that James creates in the instances where his characters "type" others. This provides us with a glimpse of what may happen when "the Bostonians" themselves become a type. Ultimately, we will see that the making of "the Bostonians" will require not just the exposure of distanced perspectives, but the accumulation of perspectives and repeated exposures that make the typing convincing. This accumulation of perspectives, of episodes, and ultimately of competing types—all filtered through the panoptical irony created through the narrator—may well be what distinguishes James's novel from the magazine fiction we examined in the last chapter. Where the central characters in those stories strove beyond themselves—looking to their environments (and the language that conveys them) for some way to make sense of their social relationships—James demonstrates the way that social relationships are always understood beyond individuals

themselves, anyway. As we will see, presently, James's marking of Olive and Verena as peculiar, indeed abnormal Bostonians emerges because we can see the ways *they are seen by others*. This only possible because they are both ensconced within the Boston world. Through Basil Ransom, they come to be seen as eccentric to the Boston world in which they move—just as eccentric to it, paradoxically, as Ransom himself is from the start. Ultimately, being ensconced within the world of Boston becomes the condition of possibility for others, like Ransom, Mrs. Luna, and even the narrator, to comment on Olive and Verena's peculiarity.

What the various meditations on type thus far should make clear is the extent to which types, in their social locutions, are not terms of self-reference. Further, at the level of form, typification as a process requires publicity, the distance of perspective and judgment, as well as repetition to be meaningful. If James is doing something new, its newness has been mistakenly associated with the rise of identitarian social categories that come into being after *The Bostonians* is published and which seem far more focused on individual self-reference. Whatever newness exists is made possible by the contexts of literary and social circulation that converge in James's writing. *The Bostonians* obviously stands precisely on a watershed in the literary history of sexuality in that it has been understood as a first type of novel. But this understanding alone overlooks the essence of James's project, which was never to write a lesbian novel. As he says, in a notebook entry we will examine in detail later in this chapter, his goal is to prove he can write an American novel. This frame already indicates that James understands his characters not in the register of sexuality in which they have come to be most widely known, but as characters defined by place. This is not to say, however, that there is no connection

between place and sexuality; on the contrary, it is to insist upon this historical connection. As I've been trying to suggest, it is possible to see the various idioms of place operating collectively *as* a language of sexuality before the fact, operating through a kind of global, ethnographic imaginary. James's work threads this association through his writing even as the novel evinces symptoms of his era's increasing tendency to shift the burden of sexual dissidence from place to person. What *The Bostonians* shows us is the extent to which the last place we will find the sexual subjectivity of "the Bostonians" is within the Bostonians themselves. The next following sections will explain just how large a role social and textual circulation plays in creating the conditions under which "the Bostonians" come to be imagined as types and how the form of James's writing is tied up with these modes of circulation that create types from the outside in.

III. *The Making of "The Bostonians" I: The Form of Their Place in the Text*

From the opening lines of *The Bostonians*, James establishes his focus on the dimensions and idiom of place to make sense of his characters. He calls attention to the space between characters within the very places that, ultimately, seem to read them as much as they read each other. What ensues, with every mention of Boston or what is Bostonian about Olive's house or even Olive herself, is a gradual process of accumulation and of seeing the characters through a slightly shifting prism of linguistic expectations and sociological assumptions. The novel opens with the following scene: Olive's sister, Mrs. Luna, announces to the waiting Basil Ransom that,

“Olive will come down in about ten minutes; she told me to tell you that. About ten; that is exactly like Olive. Neither five nor fifteen, and yet not ten exactly, but either nine or eleven. She didn’t tell me to say she was glad to see you, because she doesn’t know whether she is or not, and she wouldn’t for the world expose herself to telling a fib. She is very honest, is Olive Chancellor; she is full of rectitude. Nobody tells fibs in Boston; I don’t know what to make of them all. Well, I am very glad to see you, at any rate.” (35)

Whether Mrs. Luna is right that “Nobody tells fibs in Boston” or when, a couple of sentences later, she describes Boston as an “unprevaricating city” (35), her opening lines set the tone—at once earnest and ironic—with respect to the novel. Mrs. Luna wants to be believed of course (and at this point, we have no choice but to believe her: she is our only source of information); but she undermines herself by accusing everyone else in Boston of wanting the same thing. She invites Ransom to think about Bostonians in particular casts of truth and irony. Though he finds Mrs. Luna rather too familiar, he is happy to play her game:

He threw [the book] down at the approach of Mrs. Luna, laughed, shook hands with her, and said in answer to her last remark, "You imply that you do tell fibs. Perhaps that is one."

“Oh no; there is nothing wonderful in my being glad to see you,” Mrs. Luna rejoined, “when I tell you that I have been three long weeks in this unprevaricating city.”

“That has an unflattering sound for me,” said the young man. “I pretend not to prevaricate.”

“Dear me, what's the good of being a Southerner?” the lady asked. (35)

In “pretending not to prevaricate,” Ransom appears to claim his status as an outsider, a non-Bostonian—even though he is also quick to point out that earnestness is no guarantee of one’s honesty when he says “You imply that you do tell fibs.” Pretending not to prevaricate under such circumstances may well be indistinguishable from being unprevaricating. For Mrs. Luna, being a Southerner entitles one to prevarication in precisely the flirtatious way that Basil engages her here. Her status as a comic figure might well lead us to dismiss the ways in which she reads the characters around her were it not for the fact that everyone else in the text, the narrator included, reads in this way, too. We are encouraged to see Basil Ransom’s Southernness as a marker of his speech and his character. Just sentences later, James’s narrator explains to us that the imprint of that Southernness has been stamped into his speech:

He came, in fact, from Mississippi, and he spoke very perceptibly with the accent of that country. It is not in my power to reproduce by any combination of characters this charming dialect; but the initiated reader will have no difficulty in evoking the sound, which is to be associated in the present instance with nothing vulgar or vain...the reader who desires to read with the senses as well as with the reason, is entreated not to forget that he prolonged his consonants and swallowed his vowels, that he was guilty of elisions and interpolations which were equally unexpected, and that his discourse was pervaded by something sultry and vast, something almost African in its rich, basking tone, something that suggested the teeming expanse of the cotton-field. (36)

Ransom's speech, like Mrs. Luna's assumptions, is teeming with an unspoken racialized history that speaks through him.¹³ It is thus in this context of tapping into an existing archive of information that the making of "the Bostonians" begins. It establishes, first of all, a comparative base by which people in Boston and people from the South are defined and pits them against each other. As Mrs. Luna and Basil Ransom encircle each other rhetorically, Mrs. Luna attempts to close the unfamiliar space between them, by offering information about her sister.

This physical and rhetorical dance does not just create, from the beginning, the voyeuristic narrative distance James will need for his irony to work. It allows him to circulate descriptions about Olive through other characters before we get to meet her. At the beginning of the novel, Ransom doesn't know that he will eventually be engaged in (and win) a battle over Olive's soon-to-be protégé, Verena Tarrant. He doesn't know much about Olive at all. But he does have a framework for understanding Olive that he imports to make sense of her before he even meets her. Even without Mrs. Luna's help, he knows and assumes a good deal about Boston and its inhabitants. He is disappointed, but not surprised, therefore, when Mrs. Luna, informs him that Olive is a "female Jacobin," a "roaring radical":

"Well I suppose I might have known that," he continued at last.

"You might have known what?" [Mrs. Luna asks]

"Well, that Miss Chancellor would be all that you say. She was brought up in the city of reform."

¹³ This is precisely the argument that Walter Benn Michaels makes about James's representation of Ransom in "Local Colors" *MLN* 113.4 (Sept. 1998): 734-56. In conjuring up the image of (but never actually giving us) Ransom's dialect as connected to the plantation, James, according to Michaels, refuses the conventions of local color fiction. *The Bostonians*, he maintains vehemently, is not local color fiction, although the novel does implicitly respond to this body of literature.

“Oh, it isn’t the city; it’s just Olive Chancellor. She would reform the solar system if she could get a hold of it” (38).

In this exchange, we already see a tension emerging between two competing ways of explaining Olive Chancellor before either Ransom or the reader has met her in person: Ransom sees Olive as a symbol of the city itself, part of the dominant reforming ways he associates with Boston as a whole; Mrs. Luna sees her as an extremist and attributes Olive’s reforming nature to her peculiarity: “it isn’t the city; it’s just Olive Chancellor.” Mrs. Luna, though, is hardly a source of authority in the novel. In the economy of the novel, it becomes clear that Ransom’s opinion should be taken more seriously than Mrs. Luna’s.

This circulation of language about Olive is essential to the ways the novel allows us to make sense of her. Throughout Book First, Ransom relies on what he has already heard about Boston to organize his perceptions—not unlike James himself, whose novel depends on what his readers have already heard and read. In this sense, type actively offers Ransom a way of reading that takes place through him, one that is not exactly generated by him. Consider the way that the narrator describes Ransom’s reading of Olive’s house and the agency that accrues to things in this passage:

Nevertheless it seemed to him he had never seen an interior that was so much an interior as this queer corridor-shaped drawing-room of his new-found kinswoman; he had never felt himself in the presence of so much organized privacy or of so many objects that spoke of habits and tastes. Most of the people he had hitherto known had no tastes; they had a few habits, but these were not of a sort that required much upholstery. He had not as yet been in many houses in New York,

and he had never before seen so many accessories. The general character of the place struck him as Bostonian; this was, in fact, very much what he had supposed Boston to be. He had always heard Boston was a city of culture, and now there was culture in Miss Chancellor's tables and sofas, in the books that were everywhere, on little shelves like brackets (as if a book were a statuette), in the photographs and water-colours that covered the walls, in the curtains that were festooned rather stiffly in the doorways. (46)

It is the general character of the place, literally the interior of Olive's home but also exterior to Olive's self, which is Bostonian; the culture of the city and of Olive persists in its things. The very objects in Olive's house are said to "speak"; but they don't tell Ransom anything he doesn't already know. This is not a process of discovery, but one of confirmation. In an act of circular reading, Ransom sees "very much what he had supposed Boston to be"; that is, he attaches to the environment he observes, a story about that environment that precedes his encounter with it. This encounter leads him to conclude that although "he had for a moment a whimsical vision of becoming a partner in so flourishing a firm" (by marrying Olive), "it was very easy for him to remark to himself that nothing would induce him to make love to such a type as that" (47). In this moment, we observe Ransom distancing himself from Olive, at the same time that the narrator distances Ransom from us. His snide thought exposes just as much about himself as about Olive, but reveals how indebted we are to the space surrounding both characters for our understanding of them. (Nor is Olive herself any more generous than Ransom in her regard of him. She writes to Basil because his family was cousins to her and because it is "what her mother would have done" (page?). Olive's sense of duty is hereditary and her

sense of the South about as reductive as her assessment of Ransom as “too simply—too Mississippian” (44).)

Rarely does James steer us away from any understanding of either Olive or Ransom created by dint of the environment of their upbringing—Olive by the city of Boston, and Basil by the plantation of Mississippi. The significance of these places never really fades from view. At precisely the moment in which we get a glimpse of Olive’s interior, the language which describes that interiority, like that of her house, exceeds her person and locates itself in the strange subjectivity afforded to the speaking things. Likewise, we are reminded of Ransom’s service to the Confederacy in the Civil War, just as we are reminded that Olive has a fabulous view of Back Bay.

There is only one occasion on which Olive Chancellor is described to us as a Bostonian in the singular, and it is through the eyes of the narrator when he is describing Olive’s refusal of courtship and marriage. The narrator describes it to us as part of Olive’s making peace with Verena’s entertainment of male suitors:

Olive could enter, to a certain extent, into that; she herself had had a phase (some time after her father’s death--her mother’s had preceded his—when she bought the little house in Charles Street and began to live alone), during which she accompanied gentlemen to respectable places of amusement. She was accordingly not shocked at the idea of such adventures on Verena’s part; than which, indeed, judging from her own experience, nothing could well have been less adventurous. Her recollections of these expeditions were as of something solemn and edifying—of the earnest interest in her welfare exhibited by her companion (there were few occasions on which the young Bostonian appeared to more advantage),

of the comfort of other friends sitting near, who were sure to know whom she was with, of serious discussion between the acts in regard to the behaviour of the characters in the piece, and of the speech at the end with which, as the young man quitted her at her door, she rewarded his civility—"I must thank you for a very pleasant evening." She always felt that she made that too prim; her lips stiffened themselves as she spoke. But the whole affair had always a primness; this was discernible even to Olive's very limited sense of humour. It was not so religious as going to evening-service at King's Chapel; but it was the next thing to it. Of course all girls didn't do it; there were families that viewed such a custom with disfavour. But this was where the girls were of the romping sort; there had to be some things they were known not to do. (134)

In observing in a parenthetical note that "there were few occasions on which the young Bostonian appeared to more advantage" the narrator highlights the advantage that Olive is refusing. For her, it is a matter of "custom" to entertain young men, but when she speaks, her lips reflexively "stiffen themselves," much like the curtains that Basil Ransom described in her drawing room.

This is one of only a few uses of the word "Bostonian" before the middle of Book Second, when Olive and Verena are referred to, collectively, as "The Bostonians" for the first time. The first, as we have already seen, appears in Ransom's assessment of Olive's drawing room. The second appears very close to it, when Olive reluctantly invites Ransom to her meeting after dinner. At this point, Ransom has already heard from Mrs. Luna about the meeting and thus feels comfortable in asking "Is it something very Bostonian? I should like to see that" (49). Olive does really respond to his question, but

later in the conversation, when Ransom has again emphasized that he sees the evening as “such a chance to see Boston,” Olive responds: “It isn’t Boston—it’s humanity.” By this point in the text, however, Basil’s association of Olive and her activities has been repeated so many times that Olive’s effort to universalize her activities (by claiming they are not about Boston, but about “humanity”) is futile. To Ransom, Olive is already a particular kind of Bostonian, about whom he may want to know more, but only just to confirm his prejudices.

This gradual accumulation of detail and repetition that solidifies Olive’s status as a Bostonian through the eyes of Basil Ransom reaches its apotheosis in the last chapter of Book First. This is when Verena moves into Olive’s house on Charles Street: “Verena was completely under the charm” (178); [Olive] had never known greater pleasure” (178); “Nothing happened to dissipate the good omens with which her partnership with Verena Tarrant was at present surrounded. They threw themselves into study” (182); and Olive remarks on “the way her companion rose with the level of the civilization that surrounded her, the way she assimilated all delicacies and absorbed all tradition” (184). We are told that

They admired the sunsets, they rejoiced in the ruddy spots projected upon the parlour-wall, they followed the darkening perspective in fanciful excursions.

They watched the stellar points come out at last in a colder heaven and then, shuddering a little arm in arm, they turned away, with a sense that the winter night was even more cruel than the tyranny of men. (185)

This lengthy record of the intimate and educative life on Charles Street leads up to the following observation by the narrator:

All this doubtless sounds rather dry, and I hasten to add that our friends were not always shut up in Miss Chancellor's strenuous parlour. In spite of Olive's desire to keep her precious inmate to herself and to bend her attention upon their common studies, in spite of her constantly reminding Verena that this winter was to be purely educative and that the platitudes of the satisfied and unregenerate would have little to teach her, in spite, in short, of the severe and constant duality of our young women, it must not be supposed that their life had not many personal confluents and tributaries. Individual and original as Miss Chancellor was universally acknowledged to be, she was yet a typical Bostonian, and as a typical Bostonian she could not fail to belong in some degree to a "Set." It had been said of her that she was in it but not of it; but she was of it enough to go occasionally into other houses and to receive their occupants in her own. It was her belief that she filled her tea-pot with the spoon of hospitality, and made a good many select spirits feel that they were welcome under her roof at convenient hours. (186-87)

Up to this point, our sense of Olive as a type has been defined through a combination of her agitation on behalf of women and through Boston's general reputation for reform. Here, Olive comes to be understood in the context of a slightly different social network. Her relationship to Verena now defines her as part of a particular "set"—"in it, but not of it" and yet circulating through it and having the "occupants" of "other houses" move through her own. The phrase "in it but not of it" is similar to Basil Ransom's earlier sense of the objects speaking their Bostonian culture to him. The category of "Bostonian" lays claim to those it names and thrusts them into a web of sociability.

Whereas the novel had earlier described Olive going to meetings outside her home and hosting individual official visits, the narrator stresses here the practice of one house's occupants visiting another's.

This social circulation seems instrumental to Olive and Verena's becoming "the Bostonians." Even Basil Ransom, until the moment he whisks Verena away from her debut at the Music Hall, refers to them as such, however ironically, as if "the Bostonians" were their collective name. Throughout Books Second and Third, the narrator's represented speech and thought of a range of characters consolidates this collective status: We are told at one point that "[Mrs. Luna's] motive was spite, and not tenderness for the Bostonians" (281); that "there would not be half an hour in the day during which Basil Ransom, complacently calling, would find the Bostonians in the house" (282); and later that "[Basil] knew that the Bostonians had been drawn thither [to the Cape], for the hot weeks, by its sedative influence, by the conviction that its toneless air would minister to perfect rest" (339). It is almost as if Ransom is inspired by the consolidation of "the Bostonians" as such (as much as he is also encouraged by Verena), for "He [even] reflected that it would hardly do to begin his attack that night; he ought to give the Bostonians a certain amount of notice of his appearance on the scene" (342).

Each time that Basil reflects on the "the Bostonians," one gets the distinct sense that he does so very deliberately, as if he is thinking about his own act of perception, or that the narrator offers us Ransom's observations very deliberately. Ransom's last visit to the Cape, three chapters from the end, is punctuated by two scenes in which Basil apperceives Olive and Verena: "Like his friends the Bostonians he was very nervous; there were days when he felt that he must rush back to the margin of that mild inlet; the

voices of the air whispered to him that in his absence he was being outwitted “ (392). By this point in the novel, we have long known that “the Bostonians” are not Ransom’s friends. He remarks moments later,

It was the afternoon-train that had brought him back from Provincetown, and in the evening he ascertained that the Bostonians had not deserted the field. There were lights in the windows of the house under the elms, and he stood where he had stood that evening with Doctor Prance and listened to the waves of Verena’s voice, as she rehearsed her lecture. There were no waves this time, no sounds, and no sign of life but the lamps; the place had apparently not ceased to be given over to the conscious silence described by Doctor Prance. (393)

The “conscious silence” attributed to Doctor Prance’s description ensues from Miss Birdseye’s death and marks the mourning that hovers in the air. But Ransom’s concern with the lack of life he observes is not really a preoccupation with the absent Miss Birdseye, but with the absent voice of Verena Tarrant. As confident as Ransom is, he is also never entirely sure that “the Bostonians” as a unit might not prove indivisible. For each time the narrator conveys Ransom’s thoughts about “the Bostonians,” these thoughts continually enact the unity that Ransom’s actions aim to undo. At each turn, whether it is in singular or plural form, the word “Bostonian” conjures up an image that exists in excess of both the individual Bostonian as well as the individual circumstances and actions attributed to her. Within the text, James’s attention to cumulative language, repetition, and ironic distance thus produces a plenitude of language, tinged with ambivalence, to buttress his Bostonians. Although Olive and Verena are ostensibly the primary objects of interest in this novel, everywhere the novel tries to sharpen its focus

on them, the language of the novel generates a field around them that ultimately directs us away. This double movement, formulated through the perspective of Basil Ransom, that threatens to fragment “the Bostonians” even as they are coming together, is what generates the heaping dose of ambivalence that attends their consolidation as types. Even when the Bostonians have been divided, as we shall see, this ambivalence persists in the closing tones of the novel. What becomes apparent is the sheer quantity of language that goes into creating and describing “the Bostonians” as we come to know them, which focuses our attention on a very different kind of evidence in the literary history of sexuality. This plenitude of language thus calls for different ways to conceptualize the literary history of homosexuality, broadly construed, whose critical traditions have tended to focus on reading for what has been missing, untold, or unspeakable, except through euphemism.

IV. The Making of “The Bostonians” II: Forms of Publicity and Their Hidden Histories of Sexuality

We have just observed some of the ways in which form dramatizes the significance of space and location to the making of “the Bostonians” via narrative perspective within the social relationships of the novel. For James, description is tied not just to narrative complexity, but to the aesthetics of world-making more generally, which generates a plenitude of language. Nowhere do novels generate this plenitude of language more than in those places where they describe their milieu. It would be no exaggeration to suggest that James was obsessed with the details of milieu in producing

The Bostonians. Importantly, James does not just focus on place as a way of figuring and exfoliating the social relationships among the characters in his novel. In fact, it is more the other way around: his Bostonians give him a way of writing about a particular place, America. From the very germ of James's novel, outlined in his notebook, we get a strong sense of how James imagines the connections among the key constellation of issues we have been examining thus far: place, types, publicity, the relationship between two women in Boston and the literary forms that organize them:

The subject is strong and good, with a large rich interest. The relation of the two girls should be a study of one of those friendships between women which are so common in New England. The whole thing as local, as American, as possible, and as full of Boston: an attempt to show that I *can* write an American story.

There must, indispensably, be a type of newspaper man—the man whose ideal is the energetic reporter. I should like to *bafouer* the vulgarity and hideousness of this—the impudent invasion of privacy—the extinction of all conception of privacy, etc. Daudet's *Évangéliste* has given me the idea of this thing. If only I could do something with that *pictorial* quality! At any rate, the subject is very national, very typical. I wished to write a very *American* tale, a tale very characteristic of our social conditions, and I asked myself what was the most salient and peculiar point of our social life. The answer was: the situation of women, the decline of the sentiment of sex, the agitation on their behalf. (47)

James's concern with types defined by place is so prominent here as to be almost overdetermined. Above all, he is attempting to write a quintessentially American novel: “very national, very typical,” “characteristic of our social conditions.” But to get there,

James takes both an allegorical and an intertextual route. The “local” is elevated to the national by virtue of parallel structure: “the whole thing as local, as American, as possible, and as full of Boston.” It may seem obvious that for years, Boston had been an elevated representative of American life. But the Boston that James describes is not a Boston hungover from Puritan life (though it cannot shed itself of this tradition, whose seriousness lends credence to the symbolic status of Boston as the site of James’s American novel). It is the Boston of the suffrage movement. His interest in “the Bostonians” is an interest not just in them for their own sake, but for their symbolic national status. While James may be drawing on Boston’s (and New England’s) traditional national significance, he does so to mark a shift in national character, calling attention to a new “salient and peculiar point of our social life.” The novel’s focus on the “relation of two girls” is both central and incidental to the project: central in that James sees this relation as an irreducible signifier of American life; incidental in that it is a vehicle for a commentary on American life, not in itself James’s primary object of interest. This is important because James is pointing to the centrality of these relationships to national life, not to their marginality or their locality. That James sees himself participating in the writing not of niche literature, but of national literature, is first of all important to establish, given that his text may be considered as part of a niche literature.¹⁴

¹⁴ For articles on treatment of place in James, see Janet Wolf Bowen “Architectural Envy: ‘A Figure is Nothing Without a Setting’ in Henry James’s *The Bostonians*” *New England Quarterly* 65 (1992): 3-23; Mark McGurl, “Social Geometries: Taking Place in Henry James” *Representations* 68 (1999) 59-83; John D. Ballam “Henry James and a ‘Sense’ of Place: Modalities of Perception” *The Henry James E-Journal* 8 March 2004. Available: <http://www2.newpaltz.edu/~hathawar/ejournal8.html>. ?Is this footnote repeated on purpose? See note 13.

In his thinking about these friendships between women as typically American, two things preoccupy James: one is the invasive rise of publicity, or what he terms the “impudent invasion of privacy”; the other is “that *pictorial* quality” that he would like to import from Daudet. Nowhere in the text does James explicitly acknowledge Daudet. And only in the minor figure of the newspaper man, Matthias Parson, whom he ridicules, does he provide us with a figure who intrudes on the characters’ privacy. Rather, as we have observed, the more effective way that James attempts to “bafouer” and expose the impudent invasions of privacy is through his use of irony. Both Daudet’s “pictorial quality” and James’s meditations on privacy thus can be seen to persist in the form of James’s text, the first through the distancing effect of ironic narration and the second through the descriptive quality of environment that has led many commentators to regard the period during which James writes *The Bostonians* as his “naturalist” period.¹⁵ Each of these formal elements conceals a history connected to the literary and social sexuality of non-normative sexuality, as James would have known it. It is worth elaborating here on the ways this secret history persists, not so much in the gaps of the novel, but in those moments where the text offers us the most language.

In the notebook’s description of *The Bostonians*, the history of James’s contempt for “the demise of privacy” owes itself not (or not only) to James’s disdain for newspapermen. This disdain for the press is itself tied to the James family’s odd connection to the history of the Oneida community founded by John Noyes in upstate

¹⁵ In *Henry James and the Naturalist Movement*, Lyall H. Powers suggests that this period begins with James’s essay “The Art of Fiction” and from among his major fictional works includes *The Bostonians*, *The Princess Cassamassima*, and *The Tragic Muse*. His earliest work of literary criticism *French Poets and Novelists* registers James’s long-standing interest in the group of French realists and naturalists that James called “the grandson’s of Balzac” in “A Small Boy and Others” (33). For more on the relationship of Henry James to Naturalism, see also Lyall’s “James’s Debt to Alphonse Daudet: The Appeal of Poetic Naturalism,” *The Constant Recognition: Studies in Anglo-French Literary Relations*, ed. Frederick J. Hoffman; and Mari-Reine Garnier’s *Henry James et la France*.

New York. As a young man, Henry James Sr. had been a temporary supporter of the religious commune, whose unorthodox sexual customs included male continence (a form of birth control based in preventing ejaculation), mutual criticism (a method of public censure for moral wrongs) and, perhaps the most controversial, the system of complex marriage, a system of polyamory whereby every man was married to every woman and vice versa. In order for any couple to co-habitate, they had to gain the permission of a third person or group of persons and stipulate that they would not be exclusive sexual partners. A system of “ascending fellowship” was used to introduce virgins into the system of “complex marriage.”¹⁶ Although he later changed his mind, James Sr. was recorded as having said of the male leaders at Oneida that “they were fathers and husbands and brothers like myself” (qtd in Habegger 57).

Some twenty-two years (and his changed mind) later, this statement would come back to haunt him. In a series of letters, Henry James Sr. waded into a debate about suffrage and “Woman’s Rights.” In this context, Henry Sr. wrote a letter on marriage that was excerpted and published much later in *Woodhull and Claflin’s Weekly*. The best account of this whole affair can be found in Alfred Habegger’s book *Henry James and the “Woman Business.”* The salient parts for our purposes here are that a piece of this letter was excerpted and circulated so as to make it appear that James was a supporter of free love. The argument of his letter, essentially, was that the exclusive nature of

¹⁶ For further discussion of the Oneida community, see *Free Love in Utopia: John Humphrey Noyes and the Origin of the Oneida Community*, a collection of documents compiled by George Wallingford Noyes and edited by Lawrence Foster (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2001). See also Lawrence Foster, *Women, Family, and Utopia: Communal experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons* (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1991); Tirzah Miller Herrick, *Desire and Duty at Oneida*, ed. Robert S. Fogerty (Bloomington, Indiana UP, 2000); Victor Hawley, *Special Love/Special Sex: An Oneida Community Diary*, ed. Robert S. Fogerty (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1994); Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality* (New York: Oxford UP, 1981).

marriage actually stimulated spiritual growth in a man. But in the letter, he wrote, rhetorically, that

I marry my wife under the impression that she is literally perfect, and is going to exhaust my capacity of desire ever after. Ere long I discover my mistake...My good habits, my good breeding, my hearty respect for my wife...prevent my ever letting her suspect this conflict going on in my bosom; but there is nevertheless, a ceaseless conflict between law and liberty, between conscience and inclination...[Others may get divorced, he proclaimed], but as for me I will abide in my chains. (qtd in Habegger 55)

The letter set off a storm of controversy and sensational public debate and seriously tarnished the reputation of Henry Sr., who was now taken to be a bad father and husband. He was widely seen as a defender of Henry Ward Beecher, who had been accused of adultery, in print. Scrutiny by the press was relentless. Henry James Jr. returned from Europe in September of 1874 right on the heels of the whole affair and was disgusted by the press's prurient interest in his family's personal life. Later, James Jr. would come to associate the intrusiveness of the nineteenth-century paparazzi with the very topic of Oneida. In a bristling review of Charles Nordhoff's book *The Communistic Societies of the United States*, for instance, James insists that "The whole scene [at Oneida] is an attempt to organize and glorify the detestable tendency toward the complete effacement of privacy in life and thought everywhere so rampant with us nowadays" (*Literary Criticism I* 567). In a fashion uncharacteristic for James, he seems unable (or unwilling) to distinguish the journalists' exposure of his family's private life from the issue that so concerned the press about his father. Thus does the demise of privacy that interests

James so much in the writing of *The Bostonians* emerge out of ideas about the possibilities for elaborating alternative sexual cultures in America.

This secret history of the origins of James's disgust with the effacement of privacy is not completely obscured in *The Bostonians*. It attaches directly to the Tarrant family as evidence of their oddness and which, in turn, attaches to Verena. The notebook entry would seem to suggest that it is the treatment of the suffrage plot that would expose the demise of privacy. The clearer tie to Oneida in the text, however, is Verena's father, Selah Tarrant, who was once himself a member of the community. Although we get a strong sense of Olive's oddness and morbidity throughout the text, Verena, too, has inherited a legacy of perversity. We learn early in the novel that Verena's father had been "for a while a member of the celebrated Cayuga community, where there were no wives, or no husbands, or something of that sort (Mrs. Tarrant could never remember)" (93). Mrs. Tarrant, we are told, had

incurred the displeasure of her family, who gave her husband to understand that, much as they desired to remove the shackles from the slave, there were kinds of behaviour which struck them as too unfettered. These had prevailed, to their thinking, at Cayuga, and they naturally felt it was no use for him to say that his residence there had been (for him—the community still existed) but a momentary episode, inasmuch as there was little to be urged for the spiritual picnics and vegetarian camp-meetings in which the discountenanced pair now sought consolation. (93-94)

The widespread contempt for Selah Tarrant takes on a particular relish in the text, from the perspectives of both Olive Chancellor and Basil Ransom. Whereas, as we have

already seen, Olive resents the taint the Tarrants lend to the cause of “new truth,”

Ransom’s assessment is more scathing for its own sake:

Ransom simply loathed him, from the moment he opened his mouth; he was intensely familiar—that is, his type was; he was simply the detested carpet-bagger. He was false, cunning, vulgar, ignoble; the cheapest kind of human product. That he should be the father of a delicate, pretty girl, who was apparently clever too, whether she had a gift or no, this was an annoying, disconcerting fact.

(82)

Although James substitutes his association of the demise of privacy with the Oneida community for an association of the demise of privacy with the Bostonian community he depicts, the world of Boston and the world of the Cayugas are markedly different in the way they are presented to us in James’s novel. The difference can be seen again in the way James situates one in a climate of complex description but not the other. The language of type that defines “the Bostonians” appears alongside scrupulously narrated detail that in fact often works against the reductive language of type. There is no such detail to provide texture for the Cayuga/Oneida community in the novel. Stripped from any context that might lend depth to his experience there (as the context of Boston deepens the complexity of Olive Chancellor’s representation, for instance), Selah Tarrant, in dogged pursuit of publicity from the newspapermen, has no source of complexity. He is thus rendered practically synonymous with the obsequious Matthias Pardon, just as Oneida and the demise of privacy have become synonymous for Henry James.

The level of detail that marks the stark difference in the text between James's rich painting of his Bostonians and his rather impoverished thumbprint of the Oneida community is a direct result of the other formal preoccupation apparent in his *Notebook* entry: James's interest in "pictorial quality," which, as promised, carries with it another secret history that extends far back in French literature. As in any novel, some characters—usually those central to the text—are shrouded in details; others are not and are therefore allowed to stand as more flat types. In his longing to imitate the "pictorial quality" of Alphonse Daudet's *L'Évangéliste*, James establishes both his appreciation of and resistance to Daudet's form of description. But he also worries that, at the level of content, his text may seem derivative. Much as James might like to see form as distinct from content, he realizes the extent to which his admiration of Daudet's form cannot fully leave Daudet's content behind. No doubt he fears that Daudet's title character in *L'Évangéliste*, Mme Autheman might resemble Olive Chancellor too much. A rich Protestant proselytizer in France, she controls the entire town and eventually wins the soul of a young Catholic girl, who leaves her family and would-be husband to join the missionary cause. Earlier in the same notebook entry as above, James exclaims "Daudet's *Évangéliste* has given me the idea for the thing." What appeals to James about Daudet is the manner of description that brings the environment itself to life. Unlike Zola and Flaubert, Daudet, in James's estimation, wrote by "quick instantaneous vision," not relying so much on "the taking of notes." Like James, Daudet defines his novel as a novel about place: its subtitle is "Roman Parisien." *L'Évangéliste* is published in 1883, *The Bostonians* in 1886, and later, in 1896, Daudet supplies what might be read as a rejoinder, *Sappho: Parisian Manners*, the last piece that would make the three novels a

kind of dialogic trilogy.¹⁷ In another notebook entry later, James also insists that his novel resembles another French text, Balzac's *La Fille aux Yeux D'or*. This novella features a battle between an estranged brother and sister for the title character, a young Creole woman who has been lover to both. In all these cases, the form James admires so much is in how these French writers craft stories about sexual or intense love between women. James thus imports into his work both the triangulated lesbian plots as well as a particular quality of description, which establishes a symbiotic textual relationship between the description of place and the ethnographic quality of that description as it relates to women's sexual sociability. As James argues in "The Art of Fiction," description itself is a way of telling a story; the distinction between description and narration is false. ("I cannot imagine composition existing in a series of blocks, not conceive, in any novel worth discussing at all, of a passage of description that is not in its intention narrative" (13)). It is not just that the descriptive, pictorial quality is associated with French naturalism; it is associated, in turn, with representations of same-sex sexuality between women.

This tradition is not only associated with French realist texts, but with texts, usually in the history of pornography, in which one woman educates another in the ways of sexuality. At least since Samuel Pepys's famous effort to read *L'École des Filles* with one hand, English readers and writers have looked to French literature for sexually illicit educational exchanges between women. In *The Invention of Pornography*, Lynn Hunt

¹⁷ In *Interpretation of Dreams*, Sigmund Freud would use the stair-climbing sequence from Daudet's *Sappho* to meditate on dreams arising from repressed homosexual impulses. See pp. 390-95, 439. In the scene, the lover carries a woman up the stairs, finding her quite light at first, but the higher he goes and the closer he gets to the bedroom, the more burdened he feels by the weight. Freud interprets the burden as the burden of heterosexuality, which increases the closer the analysand gets to the bedroom.

points to two key texts in the rise of the pornographic tradition in France that locate the origins of pornography in satires of Catholicism and debates about education for women: *L'école des filles: la philosophie des dames* and *L'academie des dames*.¹⁸ In fact, there is a substantial body of literature in both French and English, often satiric, set first in convents or nunneries where women could be educated, but later, with the secularization of women's education, extended to places concerned with the sub-cultural context devoted to the education of women (including brothels). Janet Todd has suggested that "Lesbianism had always been a voyeuristic topic in pornographic or semi-pornographic works for men, especially those from France, where the convent was synonymous with titillating forms of female sexuality" (30).¹⁹ The texts within this tradition of the titillating convent all bear out the extent to which this culture of place is understood in terms of a culture of sexuality. Even though the dialogues between women usually concerned the passing on of heterosexual knowledge (women talking about how to have sex with men), it was not uncommon, as in *L'École des Filles* for the women to be turned on by their own sexual language. By the end of the nineteenth century, the dialogue form of these texts in English (and their accommodations to English, such as *The Whore's Rhetorick* (1683)) has gradually expanded into modes of description and more detailed plots (as we see in *Venus in the Cloister*, Diderot's *Memoirs of a Nun*, and even *Letters from a Portuguese Nun*). What persists, however, across the range of formal innovations is the stubborn association of female-only spaces for education with a shared language of

¹⁸ In "Sometimes a Sceptre is Only a Sceptre:: pornography and politics in Restoration England" (which appears in *The Invention of Pornography*), Joan de Jean argues that *L'école des filles* does not properly belong to this tradition of French pornography because it doesn't really fit the generic categories; but the text was certainly treated as pornography by many readers. See Lynn Hunt, ed., *The Invention of Pornography: 1500-1800* (New York: Zone, 1993)

¹⁹ See also Margaret Cavendish's *The Convent of Pleasure*; Mary Astell's *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*; and John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*.

sexuality between women. This long-standing association of illicit sexual sociability with sites of women's education persists into the America that James is describing. In *At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present*, Carl Degler quotes a report delivered to the American Medical Association in 1899, warning against the dangers of young women going to college:

The young girls, thus thrown together manifest an increasing affection by the usual tokens: They kiss each other fondly on every occasion. They embrace each other with mutual satisfaction. It is most natural, in the interchange of visits for them to sleep together. They learn the pleasure of direct contact, and in the course of their fondling they resort to cunni-linguistic practices...after this the normal sex act fails to satisfy her. (157)

Implied in some of these texts, and overtly stated in others, is the overwhelming (even overdetermined) sense that educating women together will lead to lesbianism—all because the environment facilitates both physical closeness and the pleasures of “direct contact” in a context of intense intellectual engagement. The female body is stimulated both by learning and by the proximity of other bodies, even if they are female. (A veritable subgenre of short fiction set in women's colleges emerges in the United States in the early twentieth century along precisely these lines. See for instance Josephine Daskam Dodge's *Smith College Stories* (1900), Mary MacLane's *The Story of Mary MacLane* (1902), Mary Constance Dubois' “The Lass of the Silver Sword” (1908-09), and Jennette Lee's “The Cat and the King” (1919). It seems to be no coincidence that the French writers to whom James looked for formal inspiration, like Daudet, also seem tied

to a complex tradition in France which associates sexual sociability between women with educational environments.

Of course, it would be a stretch to suggest that all forms of description in French naturalism bear the trace of what we now recognize as lesbianism. However, two things are clear: first, there is a persistent and longstanding imagination of sexual sociability developing between women in women's only spaces; second the French texts that James cites as the most probable texts in the Naturalist tradition offer accounts of female same-sex love. The "pictorial quality" of Daudet's writing attaches itself to the very particular depiction of one woman, Mme Autheman, (who has affixed multiple bolts on her bedroom door so that her husband cannot enter), in pursuit of a young protégé who will enter the female community of, ironically, Protestants, in France.

It is not mere coincidence, therefore, that James infuses his own descriptions of Boston with a narrative quality that reflects the social relationships being formulated in the text. We have seen this tendency to code descriptions with character exposition already in many of the examples cited thus far (Basil's perception of Olive's drawing room; Olive and Verena reading books intensely and then walking arm in arm outside). Another good example can be seen in the narrator's description of the view from Olive's drawing room just after Verena moves in with Olive:

The western windows of Olive's drawing-room, looking over the water, took in the red sunsets of winter; the long, low bridge that crawled, on its staggering posts, across the Charles; the casual patches of ice and snow; the desolate suburban horizons, peeled and made bald by the rigour of the season; the general hard, cold void of the prospect; the extrusion, at Charlestown, at Cambridge, of a

few chimneys and steeples, straight, sordid tubes of factories and engine-shops, or spare, heavenward finger of the New England meeting-house. There was something inexorable in the poverty of the scene, shameful in the meanness of its details, which gave a collective impression of boards and tin and frozen earth, sheds and rotting piles, railway-lines striding flat across a thoroughfare of puddles, and tracks of the humbler, the universal horse-car, traversing obliquely this path of danger; loose fences, vacant lots, mounds of refuse, yards bestrewn with iron pipes, telegraph poles, and bare wooden backs of places. Verena thought such a view lovely, and she was by no means without excuse when, as the afternoon closed, the ugly picture was tinted with a clear, cold rosiness. The air, in its windless chill, seemed to tinkle like a crystal, the faintest gradations of tone were perceptible in the sky, the west became deep and delicate, everything grew doubly distinct before taking on the dimness of evening. There were pink flushes on snow, “tender” reflections in patches of stiffened marsh, sounds of car-bells, no longer vulgar, but almost silvery, on the long bridge, lonely outlines of distant dusky undulations against the fading glow. These agreeable effects used to light up that end of the drawing-room, and Olive often sat at the window with her companion before it was time for the lamp. (pages ?)

From the beginning of this passage, our apprehension of the scene is organized by the fact that it is the windows themselves that “look out.” The meeting house rises to view. Although there is something “shameful in the meanness of the details” (perhaps akin to the way Olive has paid the Tarrants to let Verena stay with her), once Verena appears in the paragraph, she appears to lend a “clear, cold rosiness to the scene” and air “tinkles.”

And, in spite of the professed ugliness and vulgarity that the narrator attributes to the scene, the effect on Olive is nonetheless “agreeable” and “lights up that end of the drawing room.” The scene itself is thus imbued with all the complications of the relationship itself: the foreboding sense of the scene’s “inexorable poverty,” the “path of danger” and yet also a certain loveliness and pleasant affect. Through the “pictorial quality” a scene of intimacy emerges.

The drawing room, we should remember, is also the scene of Verena’s education.

V. The Bostonians and the Art of Fictional Sexuality

In “Speech Genres,” Mikhail Bakhtin argues that utterances connect the history of society to the history of language, and “not a single new language phenomenon can enter language without having traversed the long and complicated path of generic-stylistic testing and modification” (65). In the spirit of Bakhtin, therefore, we might see *The Bostonians* not just as part of a newly emerging genre (the lesbian novel), but the effect of “a long and complicated path of generic-stylistic testing and modification.” Several histories of sexuality as an idiom of place speak through both the form and content of the text. Other stories and histories that we have not explored here also persist in the traces of influence that organized James’s thinking about both novel-writing and relationships between women (the influence of Hawthorne,²⁰ for instance, especially *The Blithedale Romance* and certainly his experience of his sister, Alice’s relationship to Katherine

²⁰ In his critical biography *Hawthorne* (1880), James sees his own preoccupations reflected in Hawthorne, when he writes that Hawthorne “testifies to the sentiments of the society in which he flourished almost as pertinently (proportions observed) as Balzac and some of his descendents—Mme Flaubert and Zola—testify to the manners and morals of the French people” (4).

Loring²¹). Types are not invented, but reconfigured, perhaps even diffused through James's text such that the genres read their way into James's novel. Seen in this light, we may need to think of James's novel not just as the anti-type it has been all along, but as an archive of the very ways anti-types emerge to begin with, which would make James's novel a study of both types as objects as well as a reflection on typological consciousness. This would see James both looking back upon, but also carrying with him, something that he looks back upon.

Except this does not fully accord with the persistent critical sense that something is beginning to change around the time that James is writing, and not merely with the shift to identitarian forms of sexuality defined in the burgeoning fields of sexology and psychoanalysis. The novel is not just a story of an individual; it is a world-making project. James was a conscious theoretician of the novel and perceived the novel in English to be undergoing a period of reanimation, at least in its critical apprehension. In "The Art of Fiction," which he wrote just before *The Bostonians*, he observes,

Only a short time ago it might have been supposed that the English novel was not what the French call *discutable*. It had no air of having a theory, a conviction, a consciousness of itself behind it—of being the expression of an artistic faith, the result of choice and comparison....It was, however, *naïf* ...and evidently if it be destined to suffer in any way for having listed its naiveté it has now an idea of

²¹ Among the many commentators on the significance of James's life to his writing, Leon Edel remains the most authoritative. On the question of Alice and Katherine, he writes: "[James] nevertheless noted the extent to which Alice leaned upon her powerful friend, Katharine Loring. Miss Loring had quite taken over the foreground of Alice's life and entered her daily well-being and her nervous prostrations. Alice had described her friend shortly after meeting her as having "all the mere brute superiority which distinguishes man from woman, combined with all the distinctively feminine virtues. There is nothing she cannot do from hewing wood and drawing water to driving runaway horses and educating all the women in North America." James was to observe this relationship closely. One might say that the figure of Olive Chancellor in *The Bostonians* had appeared upon the novelists' doorstep" (287-88).

making sure of the corresponding advantages...During the period I have alluded to there was a comfortable good-humoured feeling abroad that a novel is a novel, as a pudding is a pudding, and that our only business with it could be to swallow it. But within a year or two, for some reason or other, there have been signs of returning animation—the era of discussion would appear to have been to a certain extent opened. (4)

Whether it is historically true that the English novel suffered through a period of critical complacency is beside the point here. In his own reflections on form, James clearly considered himself an innovator.

But at this moment in history, what might it mean to “open an era of discussion” within the novel in terms of sexuality? The stories we have available to us thus far would suggest that James is an innovator because he began to formulate a version of an identity-based social group. And yet, in light of the analysis above, to cast James as a pioneer storyteller about identitarian forms of sexuality would seem to flatten all of the formal and social complexity that attends his efforts to convey how those Bostonians ultimately evolve into themselves, not to mention the ways that evolution is thwarted and undermined along the way. We would suddenly miss what distinguishes the novel both from the literature that comes before and after it.

How, then, do we think about James’s contribution to the emergence of the lesbian novel? James’s contribution to the emerging genre is, I believe, tied to his fastidious attention to the “pictorial quality” he so admired in Daudet’s writing. Although the genealogies and analogues of James’s novel are long, varied, and sometimes even invisible in the actual text, James engages them to productive ends. The result is a

different sense of scope. James simultaneously offers us a narrowing focus on his “Bostonians” and expands the level of detail with which he paints their world. The cumulative effect of this “pictorial detail” lends complexity to characters and worlds that, for a long time, featured in episodes or sub-plots and persisted as minor literary characters. That James traces the process of typification (and perhaps even its demise) across the time and space of a novel may constitute James’s best contribution to the rise of the lesbian novel. The contribution may well have been an unwitting one, considering James’s disdain for the demise of privacy that he associated with the increasing public debate about sexual cultures. There is no evidence, for instance, that James likes his Bostonians any more than he likes any other characters in the novel. The ending of the text, after all, leaves everyone punished: Ransom may have won the girl, but as he leaves Olive preparing to address the abandoned crowd at the Music Hall, we see a crying Verena Tarrant and close with this final observation from the narrator: “It is to be feared that with the union, so far from brilliant, into which she was about to enter, these were not the last tears she was destined to shed” (433). It would be fair to say, though, that the narrator’s persistent ambivalence toward his Bostonians will continue to speak through the details of many more lesbian novels. Indeed, it may well be that the ambivalence James generates toward social sexual types—through his ironically distanced, though detailed and repeated attention to the process of typification—will be his greatest contribution to the genre he helped found. Who is to say how that ambivalence will continue to circulate?

Works Cited

- "“WELCOME THE AUTHOR OF THE ‘SOUTH SEA IDYLS’”." San Francisco Call
April 15 1905: 1.
- Aaron, Daniel. Melville and the Missionaries. Vol. 8. New England Quarterly,
Incorporated, 1935.
- Abraham, Julie. Are Girls Necessary? : Lesbian Writing and Modern Histories. New
York: Routledge, 1996.
- Adams, Henry. Memoirs of Marau Taaroa, Last Queen of Tahiti. [n.p.]: Privately printed,
1893.
- Aldrich, Robert. Colonialism and Homosexuality. London ; New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Andersen, H. C.,Foreman, Michael. Hans Andersen : His Classic Fairy Tales. 1st ed. in
the U.S.A ed. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1978.
- Anonymous. "Epigram on an Old Maid, Who Married Her Servant." The Pennsylvania
Magazine; or, American Monthly Museum April 1776: 191.
- . "AN OLD MAID." The Pennsylvania Magazine; or, American Monthly Museum
June 1776: 267.
- . "The Old Maid's Soliloquy " The Columbian Magazine November 1787: 782.
- Appiah, Kwane Anthony. "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in
Postcolonial?" Theory of the Novel : A Historical Approach. Ed. Michael
McKeon. Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. 882-899.
- Arendt, Hannah. The Human Condition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.
- Armstrong, Nancy. Desire and Domestic Fiction : A Political History of the Novel. New
York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

- Astell, Mary Springborg, Patricia. A Serious Proposal to the Ladies. Parts I & II. London; Brookfield, Vt., USA: Pickering & Chatto, 1997.
- Auerbach, Eric Bernier, Marc Andr, and Pref. et Trad. Figura. Paris: Belin, 1993.
- Austen, Roger, and John W. Crowley. Genteel Pagan : The Double Life of Charles Warren Stoddard. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Austen, Roger. Playing the Game : The Homosexual Novel in America. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1977.
- Austin, Mary. Literature for Children and Young Adults about Oceania : Analysis and Annotated Bibliography with Additional Readings for Adults. Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996.
- Bacon, Josephine Dodge Daskam. Smith College Stories; Ten Stories. Freeport, N.Y: Books for Libraries Press, 1969.
- Baker, Arthur. A Plea for "Romanizers" (so-Called) in the Anglican Communion : A Letter to the Lord Bishop of London. London: J. Masters, 1850.
- Bakhtin, M. M., Holquist, Michael, and Caryl Emerson. Speech Genres and Other Late Essays. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986.
- Ballam, John D. "Henry James and a 'Sense' of Place: Modalities of Perception." The Henry James E-Journal. 8 (2004): May 23, 2007.
<<http://www2.newpaltz.edu/~hathawar/ejourn8.html>>.
- Ballantyne, R. The Cannibal Islands, Or, Captain Cook's Adventures in the South Seas. London: J. Nisbet.
- . Gascoyne, the Sandal-Wood Trader : A Tale of the Pacific. London: J. Nisbet, 1869.

---. The Island Queen : Or, Dethroned by Fire and Water : A Tale of the Southern Hemisphere. London: J. Nisbet, 1885.

---. The Lonely Island, Or, the Refuge of the Mutineers. London: J. Nisbet, 1880.

---. Philosopher Jack : A Tale of the Southern Seas. London: James Nisbet Co., 1880.

Barker, Benjamin. Corilia, Or, the Indian Enchantress a Romance of the Pacific and its Islands. Boston: Flag of Our Union Office, 1847.

Barnes, Elizabeth. States of Sympathy : Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Barney, Richard Allen. The Culture of Filth. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1994.

Barrin, Jean, ca. Venus in the Cloister, Or the Nun in Her Smock. in Curious Dialogues, Addressed to the Lady Abbess of Loves Paradice. London: Printed for H. Rodes, next dore to the Bear Tavern near Bride-Lane in Fleet-Street, 1683.

Barthes, Roland Sontag, Susan. A Barthes Reader. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.

Bartlett, Samuel. Historical Sketch of the Hawaiian Mission. Boston: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1900.

Bell, Michael. Sentimentalism, Ethics, and the Culture of Feeling. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ;; New York: Palgrave, 2000.

Benjamin, Walter. Illuminations. Uniform Title: Illuminationen. English. 1st ed. ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968.

Benyon, John C. "Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Sapphic Vision." Imperial Desire : Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature. Ed. Philip Holden and Richard R.

Ruppel. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

- Berland, K. J. H. "A Tax on Old Maids and Bachelors: Francis Brooke's Old Maid." Eighteenth-Century Women and the Arts. Ed. Frederick M. Keener and Susan E. Lorsch. New York ; London: Greenwood, Projected Date: 8902, 1989. 29-35.
- Bersani, Leo. The Freudian Body : Psychoanalysis and Art. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- . A Future for Astyanax : Character and Desire in Literature. 1st ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1976.
- Bertolini, Vincent J. Fireside Chastity: The Erotics of Sentimental Bachelorhood in the 1850s. Vol. 68. [Durham, N.C.]: Duke University Press., 1996.
- Blair, Sara. Henry James and the Writing of Race and Nation. Cambridge England] ;; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Bohemian Club (San Francisco, Calif.), et al. "The Annals of the Bohemian Club." (1880-1800s).
- Boone, Joseph. Vacation Cruises Or, the Homoerotics of Orientalism. Vol. 110. Baltimore: The Association, 1995.
- Boudreau, Kristin. Sympathy in American Literature : American Sentiments from Jefferson to the Jameses. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002.
- Bourne, William Oland. "Typee: The Traducer of the Missions." Christian Parlor Magazine July 1846: 74-84.
- Bowen, Jane. "Architectural Envy: 'A Figure is Nothing without a Setting' in Henry James's the Bostonians." The New England quarterly 65.1 (1992): 3.
- Bowman, James. The Island Home Or, the Young Cast-Aways. Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1852.

- Brietweiser, Mitchell. "False Sympathy in Melville's Typee." American quarterly 34.4 (1982): 396.
- Bristow, Joseph. Empire Boys : Adventures in a Man's World. London ; New York, N.Y.: Unwin Hyman, 1991.
- Brodhead, Richard H. Cultures of Letters : Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth-Century America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Brooke, Frances. "The Old Maid." (1755-1756)
- Brooks, Van Wyck. New England : Indian Summer, 1865-1915. 1st ed. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1940.
- Brown, Alice. "There and here." Two Friends and Other Nineteenth-Century Lesbian Stories by American Women Writers. Ed. Susan Koppelman. New York: Meridian, 1994.
- Brown, Bill. A Sense of Things : The Object Matter of American Literature. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- . Things. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Brown, Herbert Ross. The Sentimental Novel in America, 1789-1860. New York: Octagon Books, 1975.
- Brumm, Ursula. American Thought and Religious Typology. Uniform Title: Religiöse Typologie Im Amerikanischen Denken. English. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1970.
- Buell, Lawrence. The Environmental Imagination : Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995.

- . "Melville and the Question of American Decolonization." American literature 64.2 (1992): 215.
- Burgett, Bruce. Sentimental Bodies : Sex, Gender, and Citizenship in the Early Republic. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Burrows, Stuart. "Stereotyping Henry James." The Henry James review 23.3 (2002): 255.
- Butler, Judith. "Critically Queer." Bodies that Matter : On the Discursive Limits of "Sex". New York: Routledge, 1993. 223-242.
- Caine, Hall, Sir. A Son of Hagar ; She's all the World to Me. New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1916.
- Carpenter, Edward, and D. Steven . Corey. Ioläus : An Anthology of Friendship. London : Swan Sonnenschein ; Manchester; Boston: The author; Goodspeed, 1902.
- Carruth, Frances Weston. "Boston Fiction." The Bookman; a Review of Books and Life. 1901. 364.
- Castle, Terry. The Apparitional Lesbian : Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.
- . The Literature of Lesbianism : A Historical Anthology from Ariosto to Stonewall. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- . The Literature of Lesbianism : A Historical Anthology from Ariosto to Stonewall. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Chedgzoy, Kate. Francis,Emma.Pratt, Murray. In a Queer Place : Sexuality and Belonging in British and European Contexts. Aldershot, Hampshire, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.

Chudacoff, Howard. The Age of the Bachelor : Creating an American Subculture.

Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Cooke, Rose Terry. "My Visitation." "How Celia Changed Her Mind" and Selected

Stories. Ed. Rose Terry Ammons Cooke Elizabeth. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers

University Press, 1986.

Cooper, James Fenimore. Notions of the Americans Picked Up by a Travelling Bachelor.

New York: Ungar, 1963.

Crain, Caleb. "Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville's

Novels." American literature 66.1 (1994): 25.

Crew, Louie, and Rictor Norton. "The Homophobic Imagination: An Editorial." College

English 36.3 (1974): 272-90.

Culler, Jonathan. "Toward a Theory of Non-Genre Literature." Theory of the Novel : A

Historical Approach. Ed. Michael McKeon. Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins

University Press, 2000.

Cyr, Myriam Alcoforado, Mariana, et al. Letters of a Portuguese Nun : Uncovering the

Mystery Behind a Seventeenth-Century Forbidden Love, a Historical Mystery. 1st

ed. New York: Hyperion, 2006.

Damon, Gene Stuart, Lee, and Daughters of Bilitis. The Lesbian in Literature : A

Bibliography. San Francisco: Daughters of Bilitis, 1967.

Dana, Richard Henry. Stoddard, Charles Warren. Two Years before the Mast. New York:

D. Appleton and company, 1900.

Defoe, Daniel. An Essay on the South-Seas Trade. : With an Enquiry into the Grounds and Reasons of the Present Dislike and Complaint Against the Settlement of a.

London:, 1712.

Defoe, Daniel, and True relation of the apparition of one Mrs. Veal. Schonhorn,Manuel.

Accounts of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1965.

Degler, Carl N. At Odds : Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

Deleuze, Gilles Guattari, Félix. Kafka : Toward a Minor Literature. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

D'Emilio, John. Freedman,Estelle B. Intimate Matters : A History of Sexuality in America. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.

Diderot, Denis Birrell, Francis. Memoirs of a Nun (La Religieuse). London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1928.

Dillon, Elizabeth Maddock. The Gender of Freedom : Fictions of Liberalism and the Literary Public Sphere. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Dimock, Wai-chee. Empire for Liberty : Melville and the Poetics of Individualism. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Doan, Laura L. Old Maids to Radical Spinsters : Unmarried Women in the Twentieth-Century Novel. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991.

Dorothy Yost Deegan. The Stereotype of the Single Woman in American Novels: A Social Study with Implications for the Education of Women. New York: King's Crown Press, 1951.

Douglas, Lord Alfred. "Two Loves." The Chameleon 1.1 (1894)

Douglas, Ann. The Feminization of American Culture. 1st ed. New York: Knopf, 1977.

Du Bois, Mary Constance. The Lass of the Silver Sword. New York: The Century Co, 1909.

Edel, Leon. Henry James. Palgrave Publishers, 2000.

---. Henry James. the Master, 1901-1916. 1st ed. ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972.

---. Literary Criticism, I: Essays on Literature American Writers English Writers. Library of America, 1984.

Edmond, Rod. "The Pacific/Tahiti: Queen of the South Sea Isles." The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing. Ed. Peter Hulme. Cambridge U.K. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 139.

Edwards, Justin. Exotic Journeys : Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature, 1840-1930. Hanover: University of New Hampshire published by University Press of New England.

Edwards, Justin. "Melville's Peep-show: Sexual and Textual Cruises in 'Typee'." Ariel 30.2 (1999): 61.

Ellis, William. A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands. Boston; New York: Crocker Brewster J.P. Haven, 1825.

---. Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii, Or Owhyhee with Remarks on the History, Traditions, Manners, Customs, and Language of the Inhabitants of the. London: For the author by H. Fisher and P. Jackson, 1826.

- . Polynesian Researches, during a Residence of nearly Six Years in the South Sea Islands, Including Descriptions of the Natural History and Scenery of. London: Fisher Son Jackson, 1829.
- Ellis, Juniper. "Melville and the Missionaries." Span: Journal of the South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies 48-49 (1999): 140.
- Ellis, Markman. The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel. Cambridge UP, 1996.
- Ellis, William. Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii, Or Owhyhee; with Remarks on the History, Traditions, Manners, Customs, and Language of the Inhabitants of the Sandwich Island. London: For the author, by H. Fiser, son, and P. Jackson, 1826.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo. Essays on the Poet and Nature. Girard, Kan: Haldeman-Julius Co, 1924.
- Eng, David. Racial Castration : Managing Masculinity in Asian America. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.
- Eng, David L., Judith Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz. "What's Queer about Queer Studies Now?" Social Text 23.3 (2005): 1-17.
- Eribon, Didier Lucey, Michael. Insult and the Making of the Gay Self. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.
- Evans, Brad. Howellsian Chic: The Local Color of Cosmopolitanism. Vol. 71. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

- Eveleth, Ephraim. History of the Sandwich Islands : With an Account of the American Mission Established there in 1820. with a Supplement, Embracing the History of the... Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1831.
- Faderman, Lillian. Chloe Plus Olivia : An Anthology of Lesbian Literature from the Seventeenth Century to the Present. New York: Viking, 1994.
- . Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers : A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
- . Surpassing the Love of Men : Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present. 1st ed. New York: Morrow, 1981.
- Felman, Shoshana. "Turning the Screw of Interpretation." Yale French studies 55-56 (1977): 94.
- Festa, Lynn M. Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- Festa, Lynn. Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France. Johns Hopkins UP, 2006.
- Fetterley, Judith Pryse, Marjorie. Writing Out of Place : Regionalism, Women, and American Literary Culture. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.
- Fetterley, Judith, and Marjorie Pryse. American Women Regionalists, 1850-1910. 1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 1992.
- Fiedler, Leslie A. Love and Death in the American Novel. Rev. ed. New York: Stein and Day, 1966.
- Fielding, Henry. Jones, Claude Edward. The Female Husband, and Other Writings. Liverpool: University Press, 1960.

- Foster, Edward. Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. New York: Hendricks House, 1956.
- Foster, Jeannette H. Sex Variant Women in Literature : A Historical and Quantitative Survey. 1st ed. ed. New York: Vantage Press, 1956.
- Foster, Lawrence. Religion and Sexuality : Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- . Women, Family, and Utopia : Communal Experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons. 1st ed. Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 1991.
- Foucault, Michel. The History of Sexuality. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Freeman, Mary Eleanor Wilkins. A New England Nun, and Other Stories. Ridgewood, N.J: Gregg Press, 1967.
- French, Alice. "My Lorelei: A Heidelberg Romance--from the Diary of Mrs Louis Danton Lynde " Two Friends and Other Nineteenth-Century Lesbian Stories by American Women Writers. Ed. Susan Koppelman. New York: Meridian, 1994. 81-98.
- Freud, Sigmund Crick, Joyce. The Interpretation of Dreams. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Frye, Northrop. "From Anatomy of Criticism." The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740. Ed. Michael McKeon. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. 122-130.
- Fuller, Margaret. Woman in the Nineteenth Century. New York: Norton, 1971.
- Fuss, Diana. "Introduction." Inside/out : Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories. Ed. Diana Fuss. New York: Routledge, 1991.

- Gale, Robert. Charles Warren Stoddard. Boise Idaho: Boise State University.
- Garland, Hamlin. Crumbling Idols; Twelve Essays on Art and Literature. Gainesville, Fla: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1952.
- Garnier, Marie Reine. Henry James Et La France. Paris: H. Champion, 1927.
- Garwood, Rebecca. "Frances Brooke (1724-1789)." Chawton House Library.
<<http://www.chawtonhouse.org/library/biographies/brooke.html>>.
- Gerstacker, Friedrich. Blau Wasser : Skizzen Aus See- Und Inselleben : Aus Dem Matrosenleben : Aus Der See. Jena: H. Costenoble, 1906.
- . Inselwelt: Gesammelte Erzählungen. Leipzig:, 1860.
- . Tahiti. Roman Aus Der Sudsee.. Berlin: Neufeld Henius.
- Gerstacker, Friedrich. Der Kleine Wallfischfanger. Jena: H. Costenoble.
- Gifford, James. Glances Backward : An Anthology of American Homosexual Writing, 1830-1920. Peterborough Ont. Orchard Park NY: Broadview Press.
- Goldberg, Jonathan, ed.. *Queering the Renaissance*. Durham: Duke UP, 1994.
- Goldberg, Jonathan, and Madhavi Menon. "Queering History." PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America 120.5 (2005): 1608-17.
- Goldberg, Jonathan. Queering the Renaissance. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994.
- Goldsmith, Oliver. Hopper, Vincent Foster, and Gerald B. Lahey. She Stoops to Conquer. Great Neck, N.Y: Barron's Educational Series, 1958.
- Goodell, William. Instructions to the Missionaries about to Embark for the Sandwich Islands : And to the Rev. Messrs. William Goodell, Isaac Bird, Attached to the. Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1823.

- Gopinath, Gayatri. Impossible Desires : Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.
- Greenblatt, Stephen, and M. H. Abrams. The Norton Anthology of English Literature. 8th ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.
- Guillen, Claudio. Literature as System; Essays Toward the Theory of Literary History. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Guillory, John. "The Bachelor State: Philosophy and Sovereignty in Bacon's New Atlantis." Politics and the Passions, 1500-1850. Ed. Victoria Kahn. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 49.
- Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich, and Inc NetLibrary. "Production of presence what meaning cannot convey." Stanford University Press. 2004.
- . The Powers of Philology : Dynamics of Textual Scholarship. Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 2003.
- Habegger, Alfr. The Father : A Life of Henry James, Sr. 1st ed. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1994.
- . Henry James and the "Woman Business". Cambridge England] ;; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Hall, Radclyffe. The Well of Loneliness. 1st Anchor Books ed. New York: Anchor Books, 1990.
- Halperin, David M. One Hundred Years of Homosexuality : And Other Essays on Greek Love. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Hanson, Ellis. Decadence and Catholicism. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Harrison Hayford, Herschel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle. "“Note on the Texts” "

Typee, Omoo, Mard. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Herschel Parker, and G. Thomas

Tanselle. New York: The Library of America, 1982. 1322-25.

Harry Houdini Collection (Library of Congress), and John Davis Batchelder Collection

(Library of Congress). "The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature, Science,
and Art." (1844-1898)

Harvey, Bruce. American Geographics : U. S. National Narratives and the Representation
of the Non-European World, 1830-1865. Stanford University Press, 2001.

Hawley, Victor. Fogarty, Robert S. Special love/special Sex : An Oneida Community
Diary. 1st ed. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1994.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Review of Typee." The Salem Advertiser 25 March 1846.

---. The Blithedale Romance. New York: Norton, 1958.

---. The House of the Seven Gables. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1950.

Hayes, Kevin J. Henry James : The Contemporary Reviews. Cambridge ;; New York:
Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Heine, Heinrich Lazarus, Emma. Poems and Ballads of Heinrich Heine. New York: Hurst
& Co, 1880s.

Turner, Herbert B. Letter to Charles Warren Stoddard., 1905.

Herbert, T. Walter. Marquesan Encounters: Melville and the Meaning of Civilization.
Harvard UP, 1980.

Herrick, Tirzah Miller, . Fogarty, Robert S. Desire and Duty at Oneida : Tirzah Miller's
Intimate Memoir. Bloomington ; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000.

- History Project (Boston, Mass.). Improper Bostonians : Lesbian and Gay History from the Puritans to Playland. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.
- Holden, Philip, and Richard R. Ruppel. Imperial Desire : Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- Hort, Dora. Hena Or, Life in Tahiti. : By Mrs. Alfred Hort. in Two Volumes. London: Saunders Otley and Co. 66 Brook Street W., 1866.
- Howe, Helen. The Gentle Americans, 1864-1960 Biography of a Breed. New York: Harper Row, 1965.
- Hughs, Mary. May Morning : Or, A Visit to the Country for Little Boys and Girls. Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1849.
- Hunt, Lynn Avery. The Invention of Pornography : Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500-1800. New York; Cambridge, Mass: Zone Books, 1993.
- Hyam, Ronald. Empire and Sexuality : The British Experience. Manchester; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990.
- Innes, Sherrie. "The Lesbian Novel." The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage : A Reader's Companion to the Writers and their Works, from Antiquity to the Present. Ed. Claude J. Summers. Rev. ed. New York: Routledge, 2002. 524.
- James, Henry. The Bostonians, a Novel. New York: Modern Library, 1956.
- . French Poets and Novelists. 1st ed. ed. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964.
- . Hawthorne. Ithaca, N.Y: Great Seal Books, 1956.
- . The Novels and Tales of Henry James. [New York: C. Scribner's sons, 1907.
- . The Complete Notebooks of Henry James. Ed. Leon Edel and Lyall Harris Powers. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

- James, William. The Varieties of Religious Experience, a Study in Human Nature. New York; London: Longmans, Green, 1902.
- Jay, Karla. "Introduction." A Perilous Advantage : The Best of Natalie Clifford Barney. Ed. Natalie Clifford Barney and Anna Livia. Norwich, Vt: New Victoria Publishers, 1992. viii.
- Jeffreys, Sheila. The Spinster and Her Enemies : Feminism and Sexuality, 1880-1930. London ; Boston: Pandora Press, 1985.
- Jewett, Sarah Orne. "Martha's Lady." Best Stories of Sarah Orne Jewett. Ed. Charles Waugh, Martin Greenberg, and Josephine Donovan, Augusta, Me: L. Tapley, 1988.
- Jewett, Sarah Orne Cary, Richard. Deephaven, and Other Stories. New Haven: College & University Press, 1966.
- Jewett, Sarah Orne Cather, Willa. The Country of the Pointed Firs : And Other Stories. Anchor Books ed. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday & Co, 1956.
- Jewett, Sarah Orne. The Queen's Twin and Other Stories. New York: Garrett Press, 1969.
- . A White Heron, a Story of Maine. New York: Crowell, 1963.
- Kaplan, Amy. "Nation, Region, and Empire." The Columbia History of the American Novel. Ed. Emory Elliott and Cathy N. Davidson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
- Katz, Jonathan Ned. Gay American History : Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A. New York: Penguin, 1976.
- Katz, Jonathan. The Invention of Heterosexuality. New York: Dutton, 1995.

- Kent, Kathryn R. Making Girls into Women : American Women's Writing and the Rise of Lesbian Identity. Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Kermode, Frank. The Classic : Literary Images of Permanence and Change. Reissued, with corrections and a foreword ed. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1983.
- Kessler-Harris, Alice. Out to Work : A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Kete, Mary Louise. Sentimental Collaborations : Mourning and Middle-Class Identity in Nineteenth-Century America. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Kingston, William. Mary Liddiard: Or, the Missionary's Daughter. A Tale of the Pacific. London: Gall Inglis, 1873.
- Koppelman, Susan. Two Friends and Other Nineteenth-Century Lesbian Stories by American Women Writers. New York: Meridian, 1994.
- Kramnick, Jonathan. Rochester and the History of Sexuality. Vol. 69. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- La Motte-Fouque, Friedrich Heinrich Karl, Freiherr de. Senger, Joachim Henry. Undine. New York, Cincinnati: American Book Co, 1903.
- Lamb, Charles. Essays of Elia. London: Dent.
- Lamb, Jonathan. Exploration Exchange : A South Seas Anthology, 1680-1900. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Lane, Christopher. "Fantasies of "Lady Pioneers," between Narrative and Theory."
Imperial Desire : Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature. Ed. Philip Holden and Richard R. Ruppel. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

- Lane, Christopher. The Ruling Passion : British Colonial Allegory and the Paradox of Homosexual Desire. Durham: Duke University Press, 1995.
- Lanser, Susan S. "Author's Queer Clothes: Anonymity, Sex(Uality), and the Travels and Adventures of Mademoiselle De Richelieu." The Faces of Anonymity : Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publications from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century. Ed. Robert J. Griffin. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. 81-102.
- Larsen, Elizabeth. "A Text of Identity: Frances Brooke and the Rhetoric of the Aging Spinster." The Journal of Aging and Identity 4.4 (1999): 255-68.
- Leavitt, David, and Mark Mitchell. Pages Passed from Hand to Hand : The Hidden Tradition of Homosexual Literature in English from 1748 to 1914. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997.
- Lee, Jennette. "The Cat and the King." Women on Women 2 : An Anthology of American Lesbian Short Fiction. Ed. Naomi Nestle Holoch Joan. New York: Plume, 1993.
- Lee, Benjamin. Talking Heads : Language, Metalanguage, and the Semiotics of Subjectivity. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
- "Literary Notes." Appletons' Journal of Literature, Science and Art X.241 (1873): 573.
- Looby, Christopher. "'Innocent Homosexuality': The Fiedler Thesis in Retrospect." Adventures of Huckleberry Finn : A Case Study in Critical Controversy. Ed. Gerald Graff and James Phelan. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995. 535-551.

- Love-Letters between a Certain Late Nobleman and the Famous Mr. Wilson :
Discovering the True History of the Rise and Surprising Grandeur of the
Celebrated Beau. London: Printed for A. Moore, 1723.
- Lukacs, George. The Historical Novel. Repr ed. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981.
- MacLane, Mary. The Story of Mary MacLane. Chicago: H.S. Stone, 1902.
- Madsen, William G. From Shadowy Types to Truth; Studies in Milton's Symbolism. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.
- Manley, Mrs. The Novels of Mary Delarivière Manley. Gainesville, Fla: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1971.
- Marchalonis, Shirley. Critical Essays on Mary Wilkins Freeman. Boston, Mass: G.K. Hall, 1991.
- Martin, Robert K. 'Enviably Isles': Melville's South Seas. Vol. 12. Brockport, N.Y.: Northeast Modern Language Association, 1982.
- . Hero, Captain, and Stranger : Male Friendship, Social Critique, and Literary Form in the Sea Novels of Herman Melville. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- . "Melville, Herman." gltq, Inc. July 24, 2006 2006. May 16, 2007
<www.gltq.com/literature/melville_h.html>.
- Martin, Jay. Harvests of Change: American Literature, 1865-1914. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, 1967.
- Marvell, Andrew. "To His Coy Mistress." The Norton Anthology of English Literature. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt and M. H. Abrams. 8th ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.

- Marx, Karl. Grundrisse : Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft). Harmondsworth Eng. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973.
- Maufort, Marc. Exoticism in Melville's Early Sea Novels. Vol. 11., 1991.
- Mayne, Xavier. The Intersexes : A History of Similisexualism as a Problem in Social Life. New York: Arno Press, 1975.
- McGann, Jerome J. The Poetics of Sensibility : A Revolution in Literary Style. Oxford ; New York: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- McGurl, Mark. Social Geographies: Taking Place in Henry James. Vol. 68. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.
- McKeon, Michael. "Generic Transformation and Social Change: Rethinking the Rise of the Novel." Cultural Critique 1 (1985): 159-81.
- . The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740. Baltimore; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987. xi, 1987.
- . The Secret History of Domesticity : Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
- McMichael, George L. Journey to Obscurity; the Life of Octave Thanet. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.
- McMullen, Lorraine. "Frances Brooke's Old Maid: New Ideas in Entertaining Form." Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century (1989): 669-70.
- Melville, Herman. Correspondence. Ed. Lynn Horth. Evanston; Chicago: Northwestern University Press; Newberry Library, 1993.

- . Narrative of a Four Months' Residence among the Natives of a Valley of the Marquesas Islands; Or, A Peep at Polynesian Life. Uniform Title: Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life. London: J. Murray, 1846.
- . Omoo. New York: Heritage Press, 1967.
- . "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids." Melville's Short Fiction, 1853-1856. Ed. William Dillingham. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- . "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids." The Complete Stories of Herman Melville. Ed. Herman Leyda Melville Jay. New York: Random House, 1949.
- . Typee : A Peep at Polynesian Life Omoo : A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas Mardi, and a Voyage Thither. New York: Library of America, 1982.
- . Typee : Complete Text with Introduction, Historical Contexts, Critical Essays. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.,
- . Typee a Peep at Polynesian Life. Evanston Ill. Chicago: Northwestern University Press Newberry Library, 1968.
- . Typee : A Peep at Polynesian Life. during a Four Months' Residence in a Valley of the Marquesas. New York, Wiley and Putnam: etc, 1846.
- . Typee a Peep at Polynesian Life during a Four Months' Residence in a Valley of the Marquesas. Rev. ed., with a sequel ed. New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1846.
- Michaels, Walter. "Local Colors." MLN, 113. 734.
- Miller, D. A. The Novel and the Police. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- Miller, James. A Reader's Guide to Herman Melville. Farrar, 1962.

- Moore, Lisa Lynne. Dangerous Intimacies : Toward a Sapphic History of the British Novel. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Newcastle, Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of, Brown University, and Women Writers Project. "The convent of pleasure, 1668 Women Writers Project first electronic edition." Brown University Women Writers Project. 1999-.
<<http://www.wwp.brown.edu/texts/cavendish.68e-convent.html>;
- Nissen, Axel. The Romantic Friendship Reader : Love Stories between Men in Victorian America. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2003.
- Noble, Jean Bobby. Sons of the Movement : FtMs Risking Incoherence on a Post-Queer Cultural Landscape. Toronto: Women's Press, 2006.
- Noble, Marianne. The Masochistic Pleasures of Sentimental Literature. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Novak, Maximillian E. Mellor, Anne Kostelanetz. Passionate Encounters in a Time of Sensibility. Newark; London: University of Delaware Press; Associated University Presses, 2000.
- Noyes, George Wallingford Foster, Lawrence. Free Love in Utopia : John Humphrey Noyes and the Origin of the Oneida Community. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001.
- Nussbaum, Felicity. Torrid Zones : Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- O'Driscoll, Sally. "'Lesbian' Literary History in the Eighteenth Century." Women and Literary History : "for there She was". Ed. Katherine Binhammer and Jeanne Wood. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003.

- Pallavicino, Ferrante. The Whore's Rhetorick, Calculated to the Meridian of London and Conformed to the Rules of Art, in Two Dialogues. New York: I. Obolensky, 1961.
- Pearson, Bill. Rifled Sanctuaries : Some Views of the Pacific Islands in Western Literature to 1900. [Auckland] [Oxford New York]: Auckland University Press Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Phelps, Elizabeth Stuart. "Since I Died." Two Friends and Other Nineteenth-Century Lesbian Stories by American Women Writers. Ed. Susan Koppelman. New York: Meridian, 1994.
- Poirier, Richard. A World Elsewhere; the Place of Style in American Literature. New York, Oxford University Press:, 1966.
- Poole, Ralph J. "Body/rituals : The (Homo)Erotics of Death in Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Rose Terry Cooke, and Edgar Allan Poe." Soft Canons : American Women Writers and Masculine Tradition. Ed. Karen L. Kilcup. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999. 239-261.
- Poovey, Mary. A History of the Modern Fact : Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Post-Lauria, Sheila. Correspondent Colorings : Melville in the Marketplace. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press., 1996.
- Powers, Lyall Harris. Henry James and the Naturalist Movement. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1971.

Prime-Stevenson, Edward. "From the Intersexes." Glances Backward : An Anthology of American Homosexual Writing, 1830-1920. Ed. James Gifford. Peterborough,

Ont. ; Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2007.

---. "Out of the Sun." Glances Backward : An Anthology of American Homosexual Writing, 1830-1920. Ed. James Gifford. Peterborough, Ont. ; Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2007. 3-4.

Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." Signs 5.4 (1980): 631-60.

Robert, Marthe. Origins of the Novel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.

Rohy, Valerie. Impossible Women : Lesbian Figures & American Literature. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000.

Ruskin, John. "Of the Pathetic Fallacy." The Norton Anthology of English Literature. Ed. M. H. Abrams and Greenblatt Stephen. 7th ed. New York: Norton, 2000. 1432-1437.

Ruskin, John Barrie, David. Modern Painters. New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1987.

Said, Edward W. Orientalism. 1st ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

Savoy, Eric. "You can't Go Homo again: Queer Theory and the Foreclosure of Gay Studies." English Studies in Canada 20.2 (1994): 129-52.

Schueller, Malini Johar. "Indians, Polynesians, and Empire Making." Genealogy and Literature. Ed. Lee Quinby. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.

Schwenger, Peter. The Tears of Things : Melancholy and Physical Objects. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2006.

- Sedgwick Eve, Kosofsky. "The Beast in the Closet: James and the Writing of Homosexual Panic." Ed. Elaine Showalter. New York: , 1989.
- Sedgwick, Catharine Maria. "Old Maids." Old Maids : Short Stories by Nineteenth Century US Women Writers. Ed. Susan Koppelman. Boston: Pandora Press, 1984.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "The Beast in the Closet." Epistemology of the Closet. Berkeley: U of California P, 1990. 182-212.
- . Between Men : English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.
- . Novel Gazing : Queer Readings in Fiction. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997.
- . Tendencies. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Silverstein, Michael, and Greg Urban. Natural Histories of Discourse. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Simpson, J. A. Weiner, E.S.C., and Oxford University Press. The Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd ed. / prepared by J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner ed. Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Smith, Bruce. Homosexual desire in Shakespeare's England : a cultural poetics. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Smith, Vanessa. Literary Culture and the Pacific : Nineteenth-Century Textual Encounters. Cambridge New York NY USA: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Smollett, Tobias George Roscoe, Thomas, and George . Cruikshank. The Adventures of Roderick Random. London; J. Andrews: James Cochrane and Co., (11 Waterloo Place, Pall Mall); (167 New Bond Street), 1831.

Spenser, Edmund Smith,J.C., and Ernest De Selincourt. The Fairie Queene. Ware: Wordsworth, 1999.

Stanton, Michael N. "The Novel: Gay Male." The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage : A Reader's Companion to the Writers and their Works, from Antiquity to the Present. Ed. Claude J. Summers. Rev. ed. New York: Routledge, 2002. 518-523.

Stein, Gertrude. Writings, 1903-1932. New York: Library of America, 1998.

Stewart, C. S. Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands, during the Years, 1823, 1824, and 1825: Including Remarks on the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants ... Uniform Title: Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean and Residence at the Sandwich Islands. Facsim. reproduction of the 3d ed. of 1830. Index by Margaret Apple ed. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press for Friends of the Library of Hawaii, 1970.

Stimpson, Catharine R. "Zero Degree Deviancy: The Lesbian Novel in English." Critical Inquiry 8.2 (1981): 363-79.

Stoddard, Charles Warren. The Autograph Album of Charles Warren Stoddard. Vol. S---. ---. Collection of Papers., 1867-1918.

---. "Chumming with a Savage." South Sea Idyls. Boston: J.R. Osgood, 1873. 18.

---. Father Damien : The Martyr of Molokai. San Francisco: Catholic Truth Society, 1901.

---. Letter to Howard Sutherland., 1903.

- . Letter to Yone Noguchi., 1904.
- . "A South-Sea Idyl." Overland Monthly 3.3 (1969): 258.
- . Stoddard (Charles Warren) Collection of Papers., 1867-1918. Bancroft Library,
University of California, Berkeley.
- Stoddard, Charles Warren. Charles Warren Stoddard Letters and Manuscripts : To Frank
Arthur Putnam, 1903-1906., 1903-1906.
- . A Cruise Under the Crescent; from Suez to San Marco. Chicago: New York, Rand,
McNally & Co, 1898.
- . Exits and Entrances; a Book of Essays and Sketches. Freeport, N.Y: Books for
Libraries Press, 1969.
- . For the Pleasure of His Company : An Affair of the Misty City. San Francisco: Gay
Sunshine Press, 1987.
- . Hawaiian Life being Lazy Letters from Low Latitudes. Chicago ; New York: F.T.
Neely, 1894.
- . In the Footprints of the Padres. New and enl. ed.; introduction by Charles Phillips ed.
San Francisco: A.M. Robertson, 1912.
- . The Island of Tranquil Delights : A South Sea Idyl, and Others. 3d ed. Boston: H.B.
Turner, 1905.
- . The Lepers of Molokai. Notre Dame, Ind: "Ave Maria" Press, 1908.
- . Mashallah! A Flight into Egypt. New York: D. Appleton, 1881.
- . Mashallah! A Flight into Egypt. New York: D. Appleton, 1881.
- . Over the Rocky Mountains to Alaska. St. Louis, Mo: B. Herder, 1899.
- . Poems. San Francisco: A. Roman, 1867.

- . South-Sea Idyls. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1892.
- . South-Sea Idyls. Boston: J.R. Osgood, 1873.
- . Summer Cruising in the South Seas. London: Chatto and Windus, 1874.
- . A Troubled Heart : And how it was Comforted at Last. Notre Dame, Ind: J.A. Lyons, 1885.
- . The Wonder-Worker of Padua. Notre Dame, Ind: The Ave Maria, 1896.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher. The Pearl of Orr's Island; a Story of the Coast of Maine. Ridgewood, N.J: Gregg Press, 1967.
- . Uncle Tom's Cabin, Or, Life among the Lowly ; the Minister's Wooing ; Oldtown Folks. New York: Literary Classics of the United States : Distributed by the Viking Press, 1982.
- Stroven, Carl. A Life of Charles Warren Stoddard., 1939.
- Stryker, Susan Whittle, Stephen. The Transgender Studies Reader. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Taaroa, Marau. Memoires De Marau Taaroa, Derniere Reine De Tahiti. Paris: Muse?e de l'homme, 1971.
- Taine, Hippolyte. History of English Literature Uniform Title: Histoire De La Litterature Anglaise. English. New York: F. Ungar Pub. Co, 1965.
- Tanselle, G. Thomas. "The Sales of Meville's Books." Harvard Library Bulletin 18 (1969): 195.
- Taylor, Bayard. "To a Persian Boy: In the Bazaar at Smyrna." The Columbia Anthology of Gay Literature : Readings from Western Antiquity to the Present Day. Ed. Byrne R. S. Fone. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. 571.

Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson, Baron. Copeland, Charles Townsend, and Henry Milner ed.

Rideout. The Princess; a Medley. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and company, 1899.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Instructions to the Missionaries about to Embark for the Sandwich Islands; and to the Rev. Messrs. William Goodell, & Isaac Bird, Attached to the Palestine Mission: Delivered by the Corresponding Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions., 1823.

The Sandwich Islands Mission. "Broadside. " (1836)

Todd, Janet M. Women's Friendship in Literature. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.

Tom Taciturn [pseud?]. "For the WORCESTER MAGAZINE." Worcester Magazine ... Containing Politicks, Miscellanies, Poetry, and News. 13 (1786): 150.

Tomso, Gregory. "The Queer History of Leprosy and Same-Sex Love." American Literary History 14.4 (2002): 747.

Torrey, William, b.1814. Torrey's Narrative; Or, the Life and Adventures of William Torrey, Who ... was Held a Captive by the Cannibals of the Marquesas .. Boston: Press of A. J. Wright, 1848.

Toth, Emily. Regionalism and the Female Imagination : A Collection of Essays. New York, N.Y: Human Sciences Press, 1985.

Traister, Bryce. "The Wandering Bachelor: Irving, Masculinity, and Authorship." American literature 74.1 (2002): 111.

Traub, Valerie. The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England. Cambridge ;; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

- Trumbach, Randolph. "Sodomy Transformed: Aristocratic Libertinage, Public Reputation and the Gender Revolution of the 18th Century Authors" Journal of Homosexuality (1990) 19.2: 105-124.
- Turner, Herbert B. Letter to Charles Warren Stoddard., 1905.
- Urban, Greg. Metaculture : How Culture Moves through the World. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- . Metaphysical Community : The Interplay of the Senses and the Intellect. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996.
- Vicinus, Martha. Intimate Friends : Women Who Loved Women, 1778-1928. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Warner, Michael, and Social Text Collective. Fear of a Queer Planet : Queer Politics and Social Theory. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.
- Warner, Michael. "Irving's Posterity." ELH 67.3 (2000): 773.
- . The Letters of the Republic : Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1990.
- Wells, Catherine Wells,H.G. The Book of Catherine Wells. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, Doran, 1928.
- Westbrook, Perry D. Mary Wilkins Freeman. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1967.
- Wharton, Edith. Old New York. New York: Scribner, 1964.
- Whitman, Walt. The Correspondence. [New York]: New York University Press, 1961.
- Wild, Min. "'Prodigious Wisdom': Civic Humanism in Frances Brooke's Old Maid." Women's writing 5.3 (1998): 421.

Wilson, Arthur Herman. "'Escape Southward'." The North American Review 1
December 1939: 265.

Wilson, Edmund. "The Ambiguity of Henry James." The Turn of the Screw :
Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism. Ed. Henry Esch James Deborah and
Jonathan Warren. 2nd ed. / edited by Deborah Esch and Jonathan Warren ed. New
York: W.W. Norton, 1998.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig Anscombe, G.E.M., and G. H. von ed. Wright. On Certainty.
Uniform Title: Über Gewissheit. English & German. New York: Harper, 1969.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig Anscombe, G.E.M. Philosophical Investigations : The English Text
of the Third Edition. Eaglewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1958.

Woods, Gregory. A History of Gay Literature : The Male Tradition. New Haven: Yale
University Press, 1998.

Yeazell, Ruth Bernard. Harems of the Mind : Passages of Western Art and Literature.
New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Yingling, Thomas. "Review of Charles Warren Stoddard, for the Pleasure of His
Company and Cruising the South Seas." American Literary Realism 21.Spring
1989 (1989): 91-92.

Ziff, Larzer. The American 1890s; Life and Times of a Lost Generation. New York:
Viking Press, 1966.

---. Literary Democracy: The Declaration of Cultural Independence in America. Viking,
1981.

Natasha Hurley

Education

- 2007 Ph.D. Literatures in English, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey New Brunswick, NJ
- 2005 School of Criticism and Theory, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
- 1999 MA Literatures in English, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ
- 1996 M.A. English The University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario
- 1995 B.A. (Honours), Mount Saint Vincent University Halifax, Nova Scotia

Teaching and Professional Experience

Teaching Positions

- 2006-2007 Visiting Assistant Professor, Macalester College, St. Paul MN
- 2004-2007 Distance Learning Instructor and Consultant, Laurentian University
- 2003-2006 Teaching Assistant, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
- 1996-97; 1999-2003 Lecturer, Mount St. Vincent University, Halifax, NS
- 2001-2002 Lecturer, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS
- 2001-2003 Lecturer, St. Mary's University, Halifax, NS
- 1995-96 Teaching Assistant, The University of Western Ontario

Research Assistantships

- 2004-2005 Research Assistant to Teresa Heffernan: Post-Apocalyptic Culture
- 2000-2001 Research Assistant to Peter Schwenger: The Tears of Things
- 2000 Research Assistant to Janice Ristock: Abuse in Lesbian Relationships
- 1999-2001 Research Assistant to Goran Stanivukovic: The English Renaissance and the Mediterranean

Publications

Edited Collections

Ed. (with Steven Bruhm) *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children* Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2004.

Articles

“Henry James and the Sexuality of Literature” *The Blackwell Companion to Henry James*. Ed.

Greg Zacharias (forthcoming 2008).

“Lyric Pronouncements, the Cachet of the Offended Reader, and the Limits of ‘The Public Good’” (Readers’ Forum on Bill C-20/C-12) *English Studies in Canada*. 29:3-4 (December 2003): 40-51.

Michael Warner, Natasha Hurley, Luis Iglesias, Sonia Di Loreto, Jeffrey Scraba, and Sandra Young. “Soliloquy ‘Lately Spoken at the African Theatre’: Race and the Public Sphere in New York City, 1821” *American Literature* 73.1 (March 2001): 1-46. Reprinted in Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone, 2002). Winner of the Foerster Prize for best essay in *American Literature* (2001).

Book Reviews

Feminist Engagements: Reading, Resisting, and Revisioning Male Theorists in Education and Cultural Studies. Ed Kathleen Weiler. New York: Routledge, 2001. In *Atlantis: A Women’s Studies Journal*. Fall 2003. 27:3.

Jean Bobby Noble. *Sons of the Movement: FtMs Risking Incoherence on a Post-Queer Cultural Landscape*. Toronto: Women’s Press, 2006. In *Atlantis a Women’s Studies Journal* Spring 2007).